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THE ORIGINS OF MODERN RUSSIA

JAN KUCHARZEWSKI

THE ORIGINS OF MODERN RUSSIA

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INTRODUCTORY NOTE

IN THE MIDST of the uncertainties and the tensions of our distraught post-war world, there is no complex of questions more constant and urgent in the Western world than those bearing upon the basic nature and ultimate aims of Russia. The fact that these questions persist unabated in the face of the multitude of books, articles and radio and journalistic reports that crowd our press, measures both the complexity of the subject and the desire of the West to understand, if at all possible, the roots of Russian behavior which, on the face of it, offers many points of unpredictability and apparent arbitrariness.

Most of the present-day writers on Russia find so much to hold their interest in the current scene that they are unable or disinclined to go deeper than the intriguing surface. But so striking a phenomenon as the Soviet Union must certainly have deep roots. As the visible structure of a tree is inseparably connected with the structure of the root system, so the Russia of 1948 must have roots that reach back hundreds of years. It is this below-the-surface root system that Jan Kucharzewski examines with such penetration in the present work, an abridged translation of his seven volume classic *Od białego caratu do czerwonego* (From White Tsardom to Red) — published in Warsaw from 1923-1935.

There are few men alive who have had the opportunity, the wish or the capacity to make the examination of Russia's spiritual development in the past century which lies before us in this book. This simple fact measures the importance of the work.

Jan Kucharzewski was born (1876), raised and educated in Russian Poland. He studied abroad from 1899 to 1901 and returned to Warsaw to teach in such Polish higher institutions as were allowed by the Russian administration. Active from the first in secret Polish patriotic organizations, he soon found his métier in research into the social and intellectual background of Poland's quest for independence and Russia's negative attitude to that urge.

The war of 1914-1918 brought Poland her chance, and Kucharzew-

ski, then in Switzerland, in cooperation with Ignace Paderewski, Henryk Sienkiewicz and other like-minded Poles living in neutral or Allied countries plunged into the struggle to inform the West of Poland's rights and to guide Polish opinion and action so as to avoid mistakes made in previous crises. When Germany pushed the Russians eastward — late in 1916, it seemed opportune in order to gain Polish support to make the gesture of setting up an autonomous Poland. Kucharzewski was asked by the Polish Regency Council early in 1917 to assume the premiership of a Polish government — a post he accepted with grave misgivings that same summer. But when Germany's intentions toward Poland became clear at the Treaty of Brest Litovsk (Feb. 9, 1918), Kucharzewski resigned in protest two days later, declaring that the Polish people demanded an independent democratic state of their own. When victory finally came, many posts, including that of premier, were at various times offered to him, but he felt his greatest contribution to Central European peace and understanding would be the clear and definite formulation of the results of his researches into Russian history and thought, and he declined offers of high public office and university professorship to devote himself exclusively to the study we have before us in his own abridgement. He had ready for the press three additional volumes which constituted an analysis of the internal developments in Russia under the reign of Nicholas II and the transition to bolshevism. At the time of the German invasion in the fall of 1939, during the bombardment of Warsaw a German incendiary shell hit his home. His library and notes were completely destroyed. He now feels it is better to publish the essence of the original text than to wait until a continuation might be prepared.

Kucharzewski has grasped a most significant fact in analyzing the currents of thought and agitation that led to the Bolshevik Revolution. The ideas of the Bolshevik Revolution were largely elaborated outside Russia and the Russians who worked for the Revolution did so, for the greater part, on non-Russian soil. Many of them spent some time in Russian prisons or in Siberian exile, but their constructive work was done in France, Switzerland, Italy, England, Belgium, and to a lesser degree in Germany. The men who made the Russian Revolution did little of their lifework in Russia.

Bakunin, Herzen, Plekhanov, whether inspired by Marx and Engels or preaching their own revolutionary doctrines, formulated their doctrine while living in the bourgeois West. Their native Russian nihilism was, in the course of their life and commerce with Western socialists, their close study of the French Revolution, and their participation in the events of 1848 in Western Europe, inevitably colored by Western presuppositions. This paradoxical fact would appear not to have re-

ceived its proper attention at the hands of those who write so voluminously on the intriguing question of why the Russians behave as they do.

Even the startling, if somewhat confused, *Philosophical Letter* of Chaadayev was Western in its presuppositions. Nicholas I thought him insane. He may indeed have been a neurotic in very delicate psychological imbalance, but the provocative ideas in his essays drew their force from his study of French and English historians and philosophers.

There is yet another point which is of the essence for Kucharzewski's study, the consistent pattern of retardation in all absorptions and appreciation of new and revolutionary ideas. Ideas which were advanced in clear and distinct form in the 30's and 40's of the nineteenth century by Russians living and writing in the West, do not become the actionable property even of the intelligentsia within Russia for four to five decades. The Russian peasantry were not the originators of ideas of social revolt as had been the case in medieval France, Italy, England and indeed in the Holy Roman Empire. In Russia such ideas had to be borrowed from the outside, and mediated by Russians who read and travelled in the West. The process of diffusion, reformulation and appropriation took time. We thus find the ideas of Bakunin and Plekhanov agitating progressive circles in Russia in the later years of Nicholas II. The insulation of tsarist Russia from the West, the generally rigid censorship, might account for some of this lag, but in larger measure the reason lay deeper — in the complex of native Russian distrust of the West, in the long centuries of Slavic resistance to Latinism, in the deep hold the threefold concept voiced by Uvarov — Orthodoxy, autocracy and nationalism — had upon the whole Russian people. The West would obviously be justified in wondering why such socialist ideas as it produced in the nineteenth century should have developed in Soviet Russia into a social and political system, so unrecognizable to the Western world. Upon that question Kucharzewski's study throws much penetrating light. Both the direction and the extent of the process of amalgamation or of fecundation of western social democracy in an atmosphere dominated by mysticism, autocracy, and nihilism would have to differ greatly from what took place in the West, where popular understanding, social discipline and long habits of popular control made change and development of any sort a vastly different procedure.

In view of an apparent current revival of Pan-Slav slogans and aims, Kucharzewski's analysis of nineteenth century Pan-Slavism is especially significant. He adduces much evidence to show that Russian thinkers have never been really Pan-Slavist. They have usually been Pan-Russian. For the sake of argument, we may pass over Catherine II's treatment of Poland, but the bloody and ruthless suppression of the Polish revolutions of 1830-31 and 1863, and the bitterness of official and

private expression against the Poles as Latinized, Western, and Catholic, only bring into higher relief Kucharzewski's contention that to the Russian 'Slav' or 'Pan-Slav' meant Russian and only Russian. Even Herzen, who professed a deep friendship for the Polish cause, suggested that Poland would do better to unite with Russia, the natural point of gravitation of all Slavs. It is essentially arresting to see a man of Herzen's native intelligence and wide travel and reading commit such an egregious lapse of historical understanding. If a thousand years of history shows anything at all about the various Slavic peoples, it shows that they are not Pan-Slavist. They would long ago have united if they had wanted to. Certainly the West has done little that is effective or attractive to keep them in its orbit. Why the Slavs of the West and the South remain to this day in the face of Western caprice, unreliability and gross ungraciousness fundamentally Western in their orientation, is at the roots of the leading psycho-political question of our day. This acute and illuminating study of a widely read and analytically minded Pole will contribute greatly to an understanding of that question.

S. HARRISON THOMSON

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PREFACE

THIS BOOK CONTAINS the condensed essence of a seven volume work on modern tsarist Russia, published in Polish in the period between World Wars I and II, and brought up to and including the reign of Tsar Alexander III. I have collected and prepared abundant materials pertaining to the reign of the last Tsar, Nicholas II and to the outbreak of the revolution of 1917. In September 1939 German bombs hit the author's apartment in Warsaw and destroyed his library composed of nine thousand volumes, and his archives. The materials for the concluding volumes of my work suffered complete destruction.

The main stimulus for writing this work was derived from the outbreak, course and result of the Russian Revolution of 1917. The outcome of the revolution was different than had been anticipated by the educated Russian public and by enlightened foreign observers of Russia whose judgment was mainly formed on the basis of the predictions of Russian opposition or revolutionary leaders and writers of a liberal and democratic hue. The setting up of a Communist-Bolshevik rule eight months after the fall of tsardom caused the amazement of the world. For some time the opinion prevailed that the new system was a shortlived episode called forth by transitory circumstances, by foreign influences, that it was a brief interval between the rule of tsardom and a system of absolute freedom that had been long heralded by numerous revolutionists.

The Russian émigrés, yesterday's opponents of tsardom, today's opponents of the Bolshevik-Soviet system, maintained that it was a transitory creation, foreign to the life of Russia, not corresponding to the aspirations of the Russian revolution, imposed by a numerically insignificant minority, to a large extent the result of foreign intrigue. Nevertheless a critical sense, based on comparative historical experience, indicated that a system so extreme in destroying the forms of the system itself, and at the same time so maximalist and dictatorial, that had arisen and was establishing itself on the ruins of tsardom and on the ruins of antitsarist, liberal-democratic or socialist opposition, was the result of centuries and had a deep, historical, internal foundation.

In depicting the characteristics of tsarist Russia in accordance with historical truth it is impossible to avoid dark colors. Let us, however, confront the judgments of this book about the leaders and followers of tsardom and about the people of that past epoch with the writings of the most prominent political writers of a critical tendency, such as Chaadayev, Belinski, Lavrov, Chernyshevski, Dobrolubov, Pisarev, not to mention Bakunin, or such novelists and essayists as Gogol, author of *The Government Inspector* and of *Dead Souls,* Shchedrin-Saltykov in all his sketches and tales, and even the Olympian Turgenev as the author of *Fathers and Children,* and *Smoke.* Obviously we do not try to compare the account and the critical judgment of this book from the point of view of its literary style with the magnificent works of the majority of the writers mentioned, some of them unexcelled in their gift of imagery and their talent of characterizing men and events. We have taken the liberty of making this comparison only from the point of view of the sharpness and glaringness of the criticisms, in regard of contents and form. The descriptions and accounts of this book are not only less vivid but also less extreme.

Anyone who is familiar with the old revolutionary, or even only opposition literature of tsarist times, especially the publications which could appear outside Russia and thus were free from the curbs of censorship, knows what glaring terms of condemnation were used by the authors not only when the representatives of the government and of the landowners' and bureaucratic class were concerned, but even in the case of the liberal portion of the public and of the revolutionists themselves when they belonged to other factions than the author. Let us take for instance the opinions and expressions of the generally refined writer Alexander Herzen about his contemporary young generation of émigré revolutionists, and on the other hand the gibes and words of biting contempt which the revolutionary youth of the time does not spare Herzen and his entourage.

The majority of the revolutionists, while severely judging the Russian reality under tsardom, idealized the future Russian revolution. According to them the civilization of the West, the product of many centuries of development, had accumulated powerful obstacles on the way to building the system of the future. The older, already rottening nations encounter on the road to a radical upheaval a great hindrance, their rich, long past, survivals and prejudices to which they had become used for generations and to which they are strongly attached. Consequently their future system, if it were to be renewed according to their own desires and programs, would in the best case be a compromise between the desire for a new future, better than the present, and the attachment to the past which had too powerfully grown into their souls.

Russia did not have these obstacles, her civilizational juniority would make her the leading country in the future world order; the breaking of the fetters of all slavery, the realization of absolute freedom and equality, the destruction of the bourgeois-capitalist system based on inequality and exploitation, and the disappearance of the remnants of feudalism, would be the characteristics of that radiant future. Russia is the chosen nation of revolution. For the Western nations it is more difficult to reach the *other shore* as Herzen calls the world of the future that would follow the universal revolution of which Russia would be the leader. The French Revolution and the later nineteenth century revolutions in France and in other Western countries did not bring the perfection of which their leaders and planners had dreamed, because soon after the victory of revolutions the slogans of upheaval had to make a compromise with the traditions of absolutism, feudalism and of all aberrations and prejudices of the past among which the Russian revolutionists counted above all religion. Therefore, from the revolutionary standpoint, the West is constantly accused of being insolubly linked with the bourgeois-capitalist system, of being incapable of revolutionary radicalism in practice, and of lacking the *lust of destruction* which according to Bakunin is a creative lust.

Russia was in an incomparably better situation, her past civilization was a light, evanescent tinge which she would easily shake off and start building an entirely new world. This would be the realization of the programs originated and envisioned by Western minds, but their integral putting into effect could only be achieved by the young, fresh Russian nation and by Slavdom led by it as the vanguard of a bright future. Some of the Slavonic nations, as especially Poland, had for centuries absorbed too many elements of Western life which had stifled and poisoned their Slavonic substance. If they do not want to rot away their only salvation lay in submitting to the leadership of Russia who, according to Herzen's prediction, would be the peaceful head of the new union — *mirnoy glavoy novago soyuza*. Herzen was the most eloquent prophet of that myth of the Russian revolution, of Russian revolutionary messianism.

• • •

It was a tragic illusion to believe that the West was fettered by the past which was hindering its progress to the goal of the future, while Russia was free from any fetters, that she was able to effect a complete separation from the past, that in her collective soul she did not have the ballast of past centuries. Russia was shackled by her own centuries long enslavement; the slavery of centuries formed her spiritual ballast, it had implanted in the people's minds the habits of despotism, love for

arbitrariness, belief in the necessity of coercion, lack of respect for law and man's freedom, disregard for human individuality. That past created the conviction, difficult to eradicate, that man is a tool, material for the achievement of intended aims and the putting into effect of programs. The belief became established that when the aim was good, that is corresponded with the views of the members of a party or camp on general welfare, then it was permissible or even necessary to force people of different opinions to work for that objective, and to compulsory solidarity with the objective and the forcibly set ways leading to it. When the attainment of the established objectives is concerned all principles of present morality which constitute the canon, created by centuries of human civilization, may be trampled upon. Let us take Zaychnevski's revolutionary proclamation *Young Russia*, the *Revolutionary's Catechism,* written, as research has proved, by Bakunin, or the entire activity of Nechayev and many other documents of revolutionary maximalism.

Seemingly unexpected despotism appears in the programs and activities of Russian revolutionists who were regarded as anarchists. Bakunin, for many years generally treated as a leading anarchist, appears rather after later, recent research into his biographical sources as an advocate of a peculiar anarcho-despotism.

There moreover remained in the Russian souls, as an inheritance of the past, a wish to dominate other nations, a desire to preserve old conquests and make new ones, an old, secular craving for annexation and Russification of foreign lands. The idea of the exceptional ability of Russia to bring about an upheaval on earth is an earnest of revolutionary aggressiveness. Idealizing the Russian revolution, belief in Russia's possession of the talisman of regenerating the world immersed in the errors and prejudices of the rotten West, contain the seeds of Red imperialism: Russia draws peoples into the orbit of her system, rejuvenating, perfecting mankind, for their own good. This idea is spontaneously and subconsciously linked with the idea of Russia's political and social leadership among future mankind, built on new foundations, and converges with the old idea of Moscow – the third Rome, with the idea of world domination. And continued aggressiveness, based on the new ideology and faithful to the old instincts impels to the preservation of dictatorship, serves to justify it at home, for alien peoples can only be kept enslaved by force and coercion.

One more element of the inheritance of the past was leading to the resurgence, the palingenesis of enduring dictatorship after the fall of tsardom. Alexis de Tocqueville writes in his work *L'Ancien Régime et la Révolution* (Book III, chapter IV): "Only an ingenious mind can save a monarch who had intended to give his subjects relief after long

oppression." Tocqueville has here in mind the inheritance of the Bourbons, the French monarchy, much milder, especially in its later existence, than the Russian one. This is indirectly proved by the tragic fate of the Tsars, reformers of modern Russia, who out of conviction or under the pressure of overpowering circumstances, undertook reforms aiming either at restricting the arbitrariness of the government or at mitigating the lot of the lower classes. Nicholas I and Alexander III, regarded as consistent despots, do not die a violent death. The reign of Alexander I who was considered a comparatively liberal, though wavering, ruler concludes with a wide-spread conspiracy which soon after his death comes into the open and breaks out as the attempt of the so-called Decembrists. The reformer Alexander II dies at the hands of conspirators. The fate of Nicholas II is well-known. Despotism or anarchy is for a considerable time the alternative for a state which had passed through centuries of slavery; when it frees itself from one long lasting historical form of absolutism, it will take some time before it frees itself from the essence of the old rule. Slavery of centuries cannot produce in the subjects civic discipline, voluntary legality, a sense of the necessity of submitting to the law, respect for order, subordinating the arbitrariness of the individual to the principle of the common good guarded by law which at the same time protects the rights of the citizen. It produces for a long time an elemental dislike of the imposed and hated juridico-political reality, craving for destruction, aversion against any government and any law, a spontaneous anarchism, an overthrow of law and state. A long school of slavery cannot produce a sense of the necessity of law combining the protection of order and freedom. All government and all law are for long identified with oppression.

This spontaneous anarchism of the masses, hatred of any authority, besides an inveterate passive resignation of submitting to the commands of force, favors the calling to life of a new organization of absolute, dictatorial, ultra-police coercion. Thus the age-old despotism, defeated as one historical category, regenerates aided by a number of factors constituting the inheritance of the past: the instinct of despotism inherent in the souls of the new rulers, the urge of conquests, of dominating foreign nations which is only possible by means of crushing their natural aspirations through oppression; finally the lack of democracy, of a historical school of civic development of the masses, propitious to the spontaneous rise of a new powerful organization of coercion, in the name of a *raison d'état* seemingly diametrically different but in its essence akin to the former.

The above mentioned causes of the continued existence of absolutism in post-revolutionary Russia have their roots in the native past. Besides them there exists a cause of a general nature for the introduc-

tion and preservation of a dictatorship which results from the establishment of the Communist system in Russia. The essence of the Communist doctrine is always and everywhere opposed by the individualistic, libertarian aspirations of the human being. The planners of Communist upheavals, instinctively conscious of the constant threat to their program by that powerful factor, starting at least with Babeuf, author of a Communist conspiracy in France at the close of the eighteenth century, advance beforehand the postulate of dictatorship motivating its necessity by the lack of preparation on the part of the population, brought up under conditions of social inequality and political slavery, to adopt that system and to appreciate its values.

Like the old one the new *raison d'état* is not content with a system of coercion but applies a system of demagogy the task of which is to anaesthetize the population as much as possible against the weak aspects of its legal, social and economic situation. One sphere of the demagogy, the national political one, is *mutatis mutandis* rather faithfully modeled on the old one: flattering the national pride of the population. The Russian nation is a chosen people marching today in the lead of regenerating mankind. The cult of the immensity of the state, of the glory of the leading nation, the myth of world domination is to make man acquiesce in his manysidedly underprivileged condition, in accordance with the words put by the great poet Lermontov into the mouth of a character of one of his poems: "Let me be a slave, but the slave of the master of the world" (*Puskay ya rab, no rab tsaria vselennoy*).

The other aspect of demagogy is the social sphere, the ostentatious satisfaction, the social maximalism of the masses with regard of the old upper, well-to-do, educated, privileged class, the ruin, or at least degradation of that class, historical revenge, not only a levelling, but also reversed privilege. The old tsardom attached to itself the bureaucratic, military, landowners' and nobility classes, and eventually also the great industrial and business bourgeoisie by privileges and admission to power. Now the former upper class is degraded, expropriated, placed under suspicion, decimated or forced to leave the country. And somewhere behind the screen of equality rise the palingenesis of new privilege, of a new caste system, a new social élite, but accompanied by an all-powerful propaganda of the advantages of the system, by stifling voices of criticism and by cutting the people off from other nations, and by blunting the critical sense, especially of the generation brought up by the new system.

The basic, spontaneous fidelity of Russia's restorers to the aspirations of the old, hated and combatted tsarist system is typically reflected

in Russo-Polish relations. We devote much space to them, because tsarist Russia put the subjugation of Poland at the head of her aggressive and Russifying tasks and the system applied to Poland was for the Russian governments a school, a nursery of their attitude towards other nations already annexed or those which Russia wanted to catch in her snare. The picture of tsarist Russia's attitude towards Poland has been often glaringly, plastically, sometimes magnificently presented by outstanding Russian revolutionists and writers such as Bakunin and Herzen.

Let us take Bakunin's famous speech delivered a hundred years ago at the headquarters of the Polish émigrés in Paris on November 29, 1847, at the annual commemoration of the Polish Rising of 1830 against Russian rule. In that address the condemnation of tsarist rule was categorical, expressed in strong and scathing words: "That war had been undertaken in the interest of despotism" – said Bakunin. "Everywhere the name of Russian sounds like a synonym of brutal oppression and ignominious slavery... Our rulers use our arm to subjugate the world."

Because of the help that the Polish émigrés had given to the founding and organizing of the *Free Russian Printing Shop* abroad Alexander Herzen wrote in 1853 a warm-hearted article entitled "The Poles Are Forgiving Us": "Blood and tears, a desperate struggle and a frightful defeat have tied Poland and Russia together. Russia has torn Poland's living body piece by piece, rending away province after province, and like an inescapable misfortune, like an ominous cloud, she drew nearer to Poland's heart. Where she could not take by force she took by cunning; she sold her for money to her own enemies, and shared the loot with them."

When in April, 1861, the Russian authorities in Warsaw met a peaceful patriotic procession of the population with rifle shots, Herzen wrote on May 1 in his paper *Kolokol* (The Bell) published in London:

"Poland, thou Mater Dolorosa! with arms crossed over our breast we implore thee from the heights to which thou hast risen through thy new martyrdom, do not reproach us with the humiliation that was inflicted upon us by thy hangmen, our compatriots! Forget thou wert right! Do not avail thyself of our infamy! We shall understand and appreciate thy sad silence and the words of curse and condemnation we shall utter will be darker than all thy words."

Bakunin, Herzen and other Russian revolutionists of that period denounced the oppression of the Poles at the hands of tsarist Russia and eloquently presented Poland's wrongs. However, planning the area and system of the future post-revolutionary Russia which was to head Slavdom, they beforehand included Poland in that future *federation*. This was a tragic contrast between the noble thoughts and feelings of those men when the attitude of tsarist Russia towards Poland was concerned

and their aspirations, subconsciously imperialistic by nature, which appeared to them as a manifestation of goodwill towards Poland, solicitude for her security and the concordance of her future existence with the principles of social and political progress that would be most watchfully guarded by future Russia.

It was this inner conflict which the famous Russian revolutionary writer, Nicholas Chernyshevski had probably in mind. The well-known revolutionary Russian writer and longtime émigré, Bervi-Flerovski relates that... "on the eve of the Polish January (1863) insurrection a Russo-Polish meeting had been arranged in Petersburg for the purpose of getting closer together before a common action. Suddenly Chernyshevski's voice rang amidst the din of the cordial conversation: 'Do not trust us! We shall cheat you!' "

Therefore the democratic Polish émigrés of that period, with headquarters in Western Europe, and main centers at first in Paris and since the second French Empire mainly in England, maintained in general friendly relations with Russian émigrés, met them on the common ground of ideological struggle against tsardom, but were unable to reach agreement with them when the planning and establishment of the mutual relation of the two nations in the future was concerned. Polish émigré papers were the first in Europe to state that the Russian revolutionists were envisaging the inclusion of several nations, the Poles among them, into the new system of which Russia was to be the protagonist, and a long dictatorship in that system of the future.

* * *

The main incentive to writing the original of this work about Russia was a desire to explain what had happened after the fall of tsardom; this intention lent the work a characteristic noted by the reviewers from the beginning. The author concentrated above all on the phenomena which proved decisive for the future of Russia, that is those in which rested the foundation, the essence of the group mind of the nation, developed by the many centuries of the history of the state. It was the expression of a striving to ascertain and explain the basic characteristics of that great society, and of its essence that had outlived the historical category of tsardom.

We know how extremely susceptible the Russian public had always been to criticism on the part of foreigners, we know with what animosity it had more than a hundred years ago received the critical study of Custine, though the Russians expressed more severe judgments about their own nation than he did. In men of the nationalist-Slavophil trend this super-sensitiveness to criticism resulted from the apotheosis of their own nation regarded by them as a superior type in comparison with the

nations of the West. In men of the revolutionary trend, looking at tsarist Russia critically as a backward country in comparison with the West, but idealizing the Russia of tomorrow, post-tsarist Russia, the attitude to criticism on the part of foreigners was more complicated, but in general equally disaffected.

They felt their nation's retardment in historical development, their cultural juniority, but at the same time regarded their country as the chosen people of the future: a combination of the complex of cultural inferiority with revolutionary messianism, with the myth of the chosen people of the future as the source of national pride. They treated the critical judgments of foreigners as the narrow-minded opinions of representatives of senescent, feudal-bourgeois nations about a young, fresh nation, full of unlimited possibilities.

Presenting what is dictated by our conviction and based on a long search for the truth we recall the words of a profound expert on Russia, the outstanding Polish émigré and writer, Bronisław Zaleski, with which he concludes his critical study of Bakunin's attitude to the Polish cause, published in Paris in 1862: "We have considered it our fraternal duty to make the above remarks about Russia."

There was in Russia a group of democrats, men often of great talent and enthusiasm, who played a prominent part in public life in the last period of tsardom. Their aspirations were drowned in the immense wave of the elements of the past and swallowed by the preponderant tide of maximalism, renewed nihilism and neo-dictatorship. As it turned out they stood apart from the main historical track over which the Russian troika was speeding towards the immediate goal of the future. The dreams of those idealists remained visions of the future, did not exercise any decisive influence on the immediate future, and remained as a memory and spiritual bequest of the creative activity of a comparatively small élite, cut off from the masses. Even had they remained in Russia and had not perished, they would have been what their protoplasts in the reign of Nicholas I had been, superfluous people, *lishniye ludi*, domestic émigrés. As Russian reality deviated from their visions and they had to leave their country, when comparing the present system with the milder rule of the declining period of tsardom more approximating the West, they succumbed to a perhaps psychologically understandable, but historically unjustified idealization of the old Russia. The causal connection of tsarist Russia with the developments that took place after her fall cannot be denied. Perhaps the creative activity of those Russians and their younger followers has not vanished without leaving a trace, perhaps it will one day emerge to the surface, become the share of multitudes and imprint its mark on the life of Russia.

JAN KUCHARZEWSKI

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THE ORIGINS OF MODERN RUSSIA

I.

THE CANDLE OF IVAN KALITA

IN THE AUTUMN of 1848, in the period of the most vehement reactionary frenzy in Russia, the Moscow Society of History and Antiquities printed in its publication the translation of an old book, well known to Karamzin, published as early as 1591, by Fletcher, the English envoy, sent by Queen Elizabeth to Tsar Feodor Yoanovich in 1588. When the Minister of Education, Uvarov, received a copy of the book he immediately submitted to Tsar Nicholas I an alarming report. The whole edition was confiscated, the Society's chairman, Sergey Strogonov, severely reprimanded, while its secretary, Professor Bodianski, was deprived of his post and deported to Kazan.

These reprisals, even considering the extreme severity of contemporary censorship, came unexpectedly, as the censorship law permitted the printing of any writings about Russia pertaining to the period preceding the Romanov dynasty.

The whole affair was attributed to Uvarov's personal intrigue directed against Strogonov. But today we know that before Uvarov had addressed the Tsar, an alarm on account of Fletcher's book was raised by the vigilant zealots of official patriotism, Michael Pogodin and Shevyrev. The liberal-minded censor Nikitenko, after having secured a copy of the confiscated book, entered the following ironic remark in his diary of 1848: "Indeed, it was impossible to print such a book at this time."

Twelve years later, during the reign of Alexander II, in a most propitious period of reforms, Bodianski again endeavored to obtain permission to have Fletcher's book put into circulation. "What application can this Englishman's account about Russia at the end of the sixteenth century have to Russia of the second half of the nineteenth century," he wrote. "In 1848 men with bad intentions might have drawn some parallel between the Russians of the Terrible Tsar with those of the Benevolent Tsar."

However, even the brazen posthumous adulation for Nicholas I, called the benevolent Tsar, and the Byzantine frankincense for the epoch of Alexander II were of no avail. The confiscation of the dangerous book was not lifted even then.

Only in 1906 could the Russian version of Fletcher's book make its public appearance.

The sensitiveness of the censorship of Nicholas' and Alexander's times to a work by which the astute Englishman denounced Moscow a few years after the death of the Terrible Tsar, was significant. A cool analysis of the sixteenth century Muscovite tyranny sounded even in the nineteenth century as a devastating criticism of the system. Confronting what Fletcher writes about the rule of Boris Godunov, the *de facto* regent at the side of the weak Feodor, with the régime of modern Russia, we are astonished at the striking similarity. During the reigns of the Alexanders and the Nicholases the machinery is more complex, sometimes more civilized, but the components of the system are the same: the substance survived without change.

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In 1853 Nicholas I made a disastrous step: he declared war on Turkey which was backed by Western Europe. In Russia, drunk with its faith in the Tsar's power, two dates were compared: 1453, the capture of Constantinople by the Turks, and 1853, the signal for the city's reconquest from the infidels.

As regards the continuity of Russian policy in the course of centuries another comparison of dates suggests itself. Five hundred years before the Crimean War Symeon the Proud, Grand Duke of Moscow, son of Ivan Kalita, left a testament in which he adjured his son lest in the future "his parents' memory cease and the candle be extinguished."

The candle lit by Ivan Kalita, the founder of Muscovite power, seemed to go out at times, as during the great storm in the period of the Usurpers. But the nation itself used to rekindle its flame anew and its light has endured until now.

The state illumined by Kalita's candle at the time of Duke Symeon was not large. The Duchy of Moscow was weak then and weighed down by the ignominious Tartar yoke. Liberation from that yoke was the Princes' dream. But what was their program for the future, of what did the Prince dream, grasping Kalita's candle in his hand?

"If one would ask those princes what they intended to do after having become free" – says a Russian historian – "they would be probably unable to develop any other program except the old, traditional one which had grown instinctive: to strive and gather still more, to cheat and commit acts of violence, with the sole purpose of gaining the

greatest possible power and the greatest possible amount of money."[1]

The main task of the Dukes of Moscow was the expansion of their state. This expansion was given appearances of law and justice; it was called the unification of Russian lands. In reality this unification took place by means of force and terrible cruelties, against the will of the population. The fiction of national unification was a hypocritical pretext, designed to cover acts of force, while violence was accompanied by hypocrisy. Moscow's expansion went on spontaneously. Situated in the middle of a continent, at the sources of great rivers leading to the Arctic Ocean, and to the Baltic, Black and Caspian Seas, Moscow expanded in all directions and, subjugating scores of foreign tribes and little states, all the time united *Russian* lands. When she was undertaking an expedition against some country, she announced beforehand that she was legally entitled to it. Already in her beginnings she showed mastery in finding and establishing property claims to other territories. While subjugating countries, she destroyed their separate governments, exterminated or imprisoned the ruling and powerful families, suppressed the population. An urge towards sameness, uniformity, an ominous levelling frenzy became the instinct of the government and of the nation.

The incorporation of ever new territories went hand in hand with the constant growth of the power of the Dukes, the later Tsars. Everything that opposed or was able to oppose him in the conquered land, the Tsar of Moscow used to eliminate or exterminate, thus establishing his exclusive power. The dynastic princes, the boyars, the clergy gradually bowed to the Tsar's authority. Already Ivan III was a despot on a large scale. His son Vasily was a tyrant whose unlimited power over his subjects filled with amazement Maximilian's envoy Herberstein. Herberstein posed the question that Custine asked himself more than three centuries later after visiting Nicholas' Russia: is it the Tsars who trained such slaves for themselves, or is it the people who, by their slavish submissiveness, trained such tyrants for themselves?

It seemed that Vasily reached the height of despotism. This illusion will be repeated during each successive reign. Tyranny is a force that cannot stand still, it must increase or fall. Each of the successors on the Tsar's throne will always find the possibility of imposing stronger curbs, of finding and suppressing some hidden forces of resistance. The nation endures everything. Vasily III was succeeded by Ivan the Terrible who waged a most cruel domestic struggle against the alleged rivals of tsardom and with monstrous ruthlessness murdered and exterminated a considerable majority of the dynastic and aristocratic families.

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[1] P. Miliukov, *Ocherki po istorii russkoy kultury* (Outlines of Russian Culture), Vol. III, Part I, p. 29.

The parallelism of territorial growth and increase of tyranny imprinted an imperishable mark on the political consciousness of the Tsar's subjects. In the Russian's mind a connection of cause and effect became established between these two symptoms. Expansion of the state, and increase of its power is inseparably linked with the despotism of the ruler. The Tsars are surrounded with the halo of the only aggrandizers of the homeland. This conviction about the inseparable connection of the might of the state with the unlimited power of the Tsar became firmly established and passed from generation to generation as a hereditary instinct. This conviction is also shared by foreign observers of Russia. In Russia slavery is patriotism, states the Polish writer Mochnacki.

Attempts to limit the despotic power are treated by the Tsars as treason of the state and nation. Undertaking punishment and tortures, Ivan denounces the condemned princes and boyars before the people of Moscow as traitors. The striving to place the law above autocracy is revolt and treason.

In that system, based on the parallelism of conquest and tyranny, there exists mutual interdependence and harmony between domestic and foreign policy. Since the time of Vasily the Blind, the West has shown an ever increasing interest in Moscow. The growth of the Turkish danger after the conquest of Constantinople may be regarded as the turning point. In looking for available forces against the Turks, Europe, headed by the Pope, turns its eyes towards the Power, co-religious with defeated Byzantium, which rises in the East, and strives to win it for the struggle against the Crescent.

Against this background there develops an interesting diplomatic game in which the rulers of Moscow for the first time prove their political ability. This is the starting point of Moscow's European policy. The early Tsars show skillful control of both the domestic and foreign spheres, supporting the one by means of the other, then successively utilizing both, in order to achieve two aims: strengthening the Tsar's authority at home and enhancing the prestige of Moscow's power abroad. On the one hand the Tsar's unlimited rule over his subjects intensifies the prestige of the Tsar's power abroad and contributes to diplomatic successes. On the other hand the growing authority of Moscow's power in Europe establishes and strengthens the Tsar's position in relation to his subjects.

The attitude of the West towards Moscow has certain permanent characteristics evident during the reigns of Ivan III as well as of Ni-

cholas I. From the time it established contact with Moscow the West overestimates its material power.

Europe was impressed with the immense power concentrated in the hands of the Tsar, and looked with respect and fear at the despot who always had at his disposal tremendous might, able at his bidding to harness all the forces and means of the nation for the aggrandizement of the strength of his state.

Meager knowledge of Moscow and its distance from Western Europe contributed to the rise of fantastic legends about the boundless riches and immense power of the Muscovite ruler. The vast areas, over which extended the Tsar's rule, stimulated imagination and suggested a picture of incredible sway and invincibility.

Again, the Tsars and their servants from the very beginning excelled in the art of presenting Moscow's strength on an enlarged scale. All those rulers, from the Ivans to Catherine and Nicholas I, possessed the art of overawing the world with their power, which was more superficial than real, as it had no stable foundations in social organization and domestic order.

The art of prestige was cultivated by the Tsar permanently and traditionally.

While overestimating the material power of tsardom, the West did not sufficiently appreciate its spiritual factors. It had no idea of the immense ambition and conceit, the endurance, continuity and shrewdness of Moscow's policy. This ignorance of the spiritual springs had characterized the attitude of the West towards Russia until most recent times. The result of this was the paradoxical fact that Moscow, though illiterate and barbarian, has from the beginning better comprehended the policy of European nations than the latter, though enlightened, have fathomed the secrets of Moscow's policy. In its contacts with the West, Moscow was from the beginning suspicious and wary lest the cunning enlightened Europeans cheat the Muscovites and use Moscow's power for their own ends. Since its first contact with Europe, Moscow's policy has been cautious, distrustful, reserved, apprehensive of succumbing to the powerful wiles of the West. This characteristic has become permanent in Russian policy. Russia usually quickly forgave and forgot, at least seemingly, military defeats; by these, as it were, she felt less humiliated. She readily sought alliance with her adversaries of yesterday. While applying force at home, she readily humbled herself before the stronger ones, but she never forgave diplomatic defeats. These left her ashamed, angry and with a feeling of intellectual and cultural inferiority. From the time she threw off the Tartar yoke and got in touch with Europe, Russia feared nothing more than being regarded by the civilized world as a barbarian nation. This

was civilizational snobbishness, Muscovy being concerned about appearances and world opinion.

On the other hand the Western nations treated Muscovy and her diplomats with naive haughtiness resulting from a sense of their own superiority, keener intellectual sagacity and greater political maturity. The results of this were the diplomatic defeats of the West.

It has to be admitted that the men whom Muscovy used as envoys gave the impression of such uncouth ruffians that it was difficult to suspect cunning and finesse under this barbarian cover. Let us give the measure of this uncouthness in the words of a Russian historian: "From time to time a Russian ambassador would appear in Europe, but the Moscow officials who by decree of the government became improvised diplomats, were by no means prepared for the rôle of observers of European life. These men, without the knowledge of foreign languages, reading with difficulty from their copybooks, word for word, their official speeches, were anxious only not to do or say an improper thing that might compromise the Tsar's honor or expose them to official punishment. They were not disinclined to avail themselves from time to time, of the freedom of life to which they were not accustomed, but the manner in which they understood that freedom provoked resentment among the chance witnesses of their revelries. In the eyes of the European witnesses this was more than barbarity, it was outright bestiality and filthiness. From pleasures in the European taste, from interests in travels, scenery of nature, monuments of art, achievements of culture, they were separated by a Chinese wall erected by their own intellectual and moral uncouthness. Wherever they appeared they carried with themselves their own atmosphere in the literal and figurative sense. The lodgings in which they had stayed had to be aired and cleaned for at least a week. Whenever they appeared in the street, dressed in brocades and silks of red, yellow or green color, in long coats with tremendously high collars and immensely long sleeves, in fur caps of Asiatic design, a crowd of staring onlookers would gather around them. It was as it were, a masquerade, a religious procession, an ethnological curiosity brought by an ingenious showman from overseas lands together with crocodiles from the Nile and lions from Africa. When towards the close of the seventeenth century it was realized in Moscow how bad was the impression created abroad by these homegrown diplomats, they began to be replaced by foreigners residing in Russia. The experiences and wordly manners of the latter in turn caused the astonishment of European diplomacy accustomed to deal with *grobianita Moscovitica.*"[2]

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[2] P. Miliukov, *Ocherki po istorii russkoy kultury,* Vol. III, pp. 103, 104.

In the contact of Moscow with the West, the decisive asset in the diplomatic game, – namely, better knowledge of the partner, – proved to be with barbarian Moscow. In 1453 Constantinople fell. All Christendom was now threatened by Turkish invasion. The Pope, the Italian Republics and the German Emperor felt themselves in greatest danger. The eyes of those European rulers turned towards distant Moscow. That Power, situated at the edge of Europe, primitive and naive, ardently attached to the Greek Orthodox faith, with a childlike obedience to its great master, seemed to them to be sent by Providence to stem the Turkish onslaught. They thought it would suffice to inspire the barbarian ruler with the ambition of liberating Constantinople, to excite his fancy with the crown of Byzantium, and to play upon the religious sentiments of the ruler and his advisers. Rome's further aim loomed as a distant prospect. Constantinople fell a few years after the Union of Florence which had opened the era of unification of the Churches. If it proved possible to undermine the resistance of proud and enlightened Byzantium, how much easier should the matter prove when Byzantium, Bulgaria and Serbia, the most enlightened countries of Orthodoxy, bowed to the Moslem yoke, and when only Moscow was left, culturally weak and deprived, after the fall of the political centers of enlightened Orthodoxy, of the support of the Eastern mother Church and consequently so much easier to be converted.

Such were the beginnings of the conception of Russia's embracing Catholicism. Moscow derived appreciable advantages from these delusions. Acting at once with great political shrewdness, skill and vision of her future rôle, she quickly saw through the policy of the West, its arcana and aims. Having found out that the West overestimated her material power, she realized the advantages of that legend for herself and henceforth zealously kept it alive. The Tsar's agents, though barbarians in mind and manners, spread the cult of their master's might with effective discipline and intuition.

The traits of the national character, permeating in the course of centuries the policy of the state, developed in the hard struggle against fate, in the cruel domestic disputes of the princes, tribes and families, and in the fight against the Tartars. Obstinacy and ruthlessness, ability to conceal thoughts and plans, successive use in the political game of intimidation and blandishment as well as cunning, *avita fraus*, and finally a hereditary slyness, of which later Pope Gregory XVI, frequently deceived by Nicholas I, was to complain so bitterly, – these were the main national traits. Rome's recurrent complaints against Moscow's frauds, from Possevino to Gregory XVI and later, prove how difficult it is to eradicate a false assumption that lower education goes hand in hand with simplicity and kindheartedness in politics. Under the in-

fluence of historical fate, Moscow developed fraudulence and servility, and knew how to transform them in politics into a specific kind of Machiavellism. Moscow's ambition which, as it increasingly scored unparalleled success, changed into claims of world domination, was underestimated. The Princes' pride, humiliated during the two and a half centuries of the Tartar yoke, was in turn fed by the fulsome compliments which the European rulers, anxious to make of her an instrument of their plans by means of blandishments, bestowed upon Moscow. Later there was naive astonishment when the Tsar, whose barbarian mind had been fired by visions of greatness, was swelling with pride which was soon to turn against the improvident adulators.

When Germans, travelling in the Moscow state as volunteers of the Emperor's policy, tried to find out whether it would not be possible to win Ivan III's friendship by offering him the title of King, they met with disappointment. Ivan did not at all cherish the rôle of a second-rate monarch obtaining his investiture from the hands of a foreign Emperor; he replied that the monarchs of Moscow held their power by the grace of God, that they had inherited it from their forbears, and prayed to God to permit them and their children to retain that ancient dignity. Political sagacity caused the uncouth Ivan, unfamiliar with the hierarchy of European monarchs, to make the most adroit reply under the circumstances. Though refusing to accept a reward for his services as an ally in the form of an empty title, Ivan, however, readily took up the idea of common armed action against the King of Poland to wrest from him the Lithuanian and Ruthenian lands, and ceremoniously assumed the title of Gosudar of All the Russias. This is a sample of the henceforth often repeated result of the Russo-European diplomatic game. A European Power wishing to win the Moscow Tsar for its aims suggests to him either the extension of his state or additional lustre to his crown by supporting claims of whose fictitiousness the West itself is strongly convinced. The Tsar, skilfully declining to serve the aims of the West, nevertheless eagerly accepts the suggestions, transforms his alleged titles into fictitious ancient rights of his crown and realizes his claims at a time suitable to him.

The Powers that were anxious to induce Moscow to a crusade against the Turks, tried to convince the Tsars of Moscow that on them lay the duty of expelling the Turks from Europe. Knowing well that in order to undertake such a difficult task Moscow must first be lured by considerable advantages, the Powers tried to play on the pride and greediness of the Tsars, suggesting to them their successor rights to Byzantium.

One is particularly impressed when comparing the centuries. In the fifteenth century the Pope, Venice, the Yugoslavs, the Germans and the Hungarians all sought to create for the Duke of Moscow a special legal and religious title to vindicate Byzantium for himself. Yet, in the middle of the nineteenth century, a European coalition was formed against Russia when the latter raised particular claims to a possible succession of Turkey.

When the brother of Byzantium's last Emperor, Thomas Palaeologus, found shelter in Rome with Pope Paul II, a political idea was conceived there of marrying his daughter Sophia to Ivan III. The marriage took place in 1472. Already in the next year the Venetian Senate reminded Ivan that the right of succession to the Byzantine throne had passed from his wife to him and his family.

If the Western Powers imagined that Ivan would follow the example of Ladislas of Varna, King of Poland, and that in case he would be persuaded to do so his power would be equal to the task, this can only be explained by the fact that they had no idea of the Tsar's character and of the real strength of the Muscovite state. The immediate goals of that state were very far removed from the idea of liberating Constantinople. At that time Moscow was still a vassal of the Golden Horde and only a few years later did Ivan succeed in liberating himself completely from the Tartar yoke. At the time when the Western nations headed by the Pope wanted to see in the Moscow ruler the defender of the Cross against the Crescent, Ivan was in close alliance with the Moslem ruler, Mengli-Girey, Khan of the Crimean Tartars, who, competing with the Golden Horde, helped Moscow to triumph, to the future ruin of his own state. While dilettante European statesmen were envisaging the march of Ivan's cohorts against Constantinople, the Turks were taking possession of the Crimea, conquered the Genoese colonies and, in 1475, subjugated the Khan of the Crimean Tartars. The latter sought support against the Sultan in Moscow. The Turks occupied Azov, set a Pasha there, and built a fortress, making it a key position of their domination over the Northern shore of the Black and Azov Seas. Indeed, in those hard times Moscow's control of Constantinople was but a remote possibility.

Just when Ivan was expected to fight Islam he, having married the proud Byzantine princess, increased the splendor of his house, assumed the double-headed eagle as the emblem of his state and subjugated the rich republic of Novgorod. After freeing himself from the vassalage of the Golden Horde, Ivan needed the alliance with the Mohammedan Khan of the Crimea to fight Catholic Poland, from which he wanted to wrest her Lithuanian and Ruthenian lands. While blessed by Rome for the struggle in defense of the Christian faith, the Tsar

instead started a war against Poland, stating openly as his motive the defense of Orthodoxy against Catholicism. Orthodoxy was not endangered, the Lithuanian and Ruthenian Orthodox believers did not want to belong to Moscow, but Ivan needed a pretext. A deliberate lie was manufactured to the effect that Ivan's daughter, married to Alexander the Jagellon, was persecuted because of her Eastern faith. The Tsars who did not tolerate their wives to profess a religion different from theirs accused the tolerant Jagellonians of religious coercion. From then on Moscow always used religion as a justification for aggressive wars and as a means of inciting its subjects to these wars. The ignorance of East-European affairs, prevailing also in the following centuries in the West, often enabled Moscow to exploit this gross falsification. When during the Crimean War Polish émigré diplomats published, in French, a collection of documents illustrating through the example of Poland the traditional Russian policy, they included also the letter of Ivan's allegedly persecuted daughter to her father. Helen asserted that she enjoyed complete religious freedom and appealed to her father to stop the fraudulent war.

The West, moreover, was completely mistaken as to the impression which the fall of Constantinople created in Moscow. This fall coincided with the period of a bitter religious feud between Moscow and Byzantium which seemed to point to the creation of a separate national Moscow church. The Moscow princes had for a long time disapproved of Byzantium's interference in the affairs of the Moscow church. After the introduction of Christianity the Russian church constituted a metropolis of the Patriarchate of Constantinople. The Greek-Orthodox church recognized the authority of the Byzantine Emperor in matters of religion and ecclesiastical hierarchy, hence the Emperor exercised influence on the appointment of Metropolitans and interfered in the religious affairs of Russia. When the Moscow Principality became strengthened, the aspiration to national independence, which characterized its rulers, revolted against the interference of the Byzantine Emperor. Already at the close of the fourteenth century Duke Vasily I ordered the omission of the Byzantine Emperor from church prayers. The Patriarch of Constantinople, however, rebuked Vasily and explained to him that the holy, that is Byzantine, Emperor was entitled to respect not only in lay life but also in the Church and, referring to the Apostle Peter, he maintained that this respect was due only one Emperor and not to those who usurp the imperial title. This was a reference to the Serbian and Bulgarian Tsars. In the fourteenth century Prince Alexander of Bulgaria and Stephen Dushan of Serbia assumed the title of Tsar; in both Slavonic countries there was antagonism towards the Greeks; both rulers entertained the idea of conquering Con-

stantinople; both states tried to make their churches independent from the Patriarch of Constantinople. Stephen founded a separate Serbian patriarchate, while Bulgaria had already earlier established her own patriarchate, first in Ohrida, then in Tirnovo.

Moscow's first emancipatory manifestations with regard to Byzantium were an imitation of the more enlightened South Slav nations. Moscow's Russian nationalism always copies foreign models. Even those things which the Russians wanted to present as possessing an original national character appear, after closer investigation, as having been copied from abroad. Early South Slav nationalism was a model for Moscow nationalism, in the same way as later Moscow Slavophilism, garbed in national costume, was a copy of German nationalist theories. Striving for political and religious independence is combined in Moscow with a great facility of absorbing and assimilating foreign trends.

The Duke of Muscovy kept in mind the theory of Caesaropapism developed by the Patriarchs from the South. He was angered by the foreign Emperor's interference in church affairs; but after the fall of that foreign authority he himself, on the model of Byzantium, extended his power over the church. Hierarchs of foreign origin were looked upon in Moscow with growing disfavor, and finally the crisis came. The Metropolitan of Moscow, Isidore, a Greek, went to Italy to attend the eighth Oecumenical Council which culminated in the adoption, in 1439, of the Union of Florence. The mere news of the Metropolitan's journey to the Catholics created a scandal, and the news of the Union exasperated both the Tsar and the clergy of Moscow. Isidore was dismissed and the bishop of Razan, Jonas, was appointed in his place. The presence at the Council of Emperor John Palaeologus was exploited in Moscow to lower Byzantium's prestige. The separation of the Moscow metropolis was imminent. The fall of Byzantium facilitated the nationalization of the Moscow church. The fall was interpreted in Moscow as divine punishment for Byzantium's defection from Orthodoxy and for the godless union with Rome. The Greeks themselves taught Moscow to hate Rome, and that hatred was eagerly accepted by the barbarian tribe, unduly inclined to xenophobia, and hatred of foreign faith, speech and customs.

Moscow's conceit had grown. She became convinced that it was she who had preserved Christ's faith in its ideal purity, while the countries with contaminated Orthodoxy fell, as a punishment, under the rule of the infidel. Moscow is God's chosen people – such is the spiritual foundation of the megalomania that gradually penetrates the consciousness of her illiterate population. As early as the end of the fifteenth century, the theory originates, not without the influence of Southern Slavdom, that Moscow is the third Rome; Philotheus, abbot of the Pskov

monastery, developed the idea in a letter to Ivan III. Thus, the first Rome fell because of its heresy, the second Rome, Constantinople, was captured by the Ishmaelites, the descendants of Agar, while the holy apostolic Church of the third Rome – Moscow – shines over the world brighter than the sun. The Tsar of Moscow is the only Christian Tsar on earth. Two Romes fell, the third one stands, and there will be no fourth. The Tsar of All the Russias, as Ivan III begins calling himself, is to preserve the true faith until Christ's second coming on earth.

Moscow fulfilled the ideal of the Orthodox, Slavic Tsar, envisioned earlier in the South Slav states. The theory of the third Rome was copied from the Bulgarian idea, conceived in the fourteenth century, of a new Constantinople which was to be the city of Tirnovo. Consequently, when Moscow was to be from then on forever the center of the true faith and her Tsar was to be by the will of God the world's only Christian monarch, the reconquest of Constantinople, contaminated by its connection with heretic Rome, was not a most pressing matter.

This significant trend of Muscovite mentality escaped the West which understood Moscow only superficially. Perhaps Antonio Possevino would not have exposed himself in the sixteenth century to the barbarian gibes of Ivan the Terrible and would not have delivered in Moscow a tirade stating that Constantinople fell in consequence of defection from Rome, if he had known how readily the hierarchs and Tsars of Moscow had accepted one hundred years earlier the convenient theory that its fall was caused by just the opposite reason. It was this theory that enabled Moscow not to involve the young state in the Crusades.

The ignorance of the West permitted the Tsars to deceive the Western Powers with the hope of Moscow's help against the Turks; in this respect no one equalled Ivan the Terrible in mocking the Pope and the German Emperor. In the meantime the King of Poland, Stephen Batory, advanced ever deeper into his state, and the tyrant who had treated him with haughtiness and brutal insults, calling him a Turkish vassal, now sent to the King his envoys, Pushkin and Pisemski, with humble entreaties and ordering them to suffer all affronts and even lashings.[3] Ivan sent his envoy Shevrygin to the German Emperor asking for help and maintaining that Stephen was waging war because of Ivan's friendship with Maximilian. To the Pope, on the other hand, he complained of Batory's malice and maintained that he, Ivan, ardently desired to march against the Sultan together with the other Christian monarchs,

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[3] Karamzin, *Istoria Gosudarstva Rosiiskago* (History of the Russian State), Vol. IX. Sergey Soloviev, *Istoria Rossii s drevneyshikh vremion* (History of Russia Since the Oldest Times), Vol. VI, Third edition, Moscow 1867, pp. 335-346. The mediation of Pope Gregory between Stephen Batory and Ivan IV the Terrible is discussed on the basis of source material by Le Père Pierling, S. J., *La Russie et le Saint Siège*, Paris, Librairie Plon 1897, Tome II, Livre I, ch. I-III, pp. 1-181.

and that he wished to live in close friendship with Rome. The Pope sent Antonio Possevino. In vain did Batory warn Possevino in Wilno that the Tsar would deceive the Pope. Possevino was received in Moscow with reverence and pomp. In the interview with him the Tsar did not reject the union of Churches or the war against Turkey, but mainly insisted on peace with Batory. After the Jesuit, famous for his wisdom and knowledge, had successfully mediated between the King and the Tsar, and the peace so much desired by Ivan the Terrible was concluded, Possevino again appeared in Moscow to obtain the results of his action. The Tsar greeted him with irony, mixing perfidy with rudeness. The Tsar's triumph over the Pope's envoy in that diplomatic duel was complete. When Possevino began speaking of the union of Churches the Tsar replied that everyone praised his own religion and warned against religious discussions as they led to quarrels, while he, Ivan, did not want quarrels but peace and love. When Possevino urged a union of Churches and in return promised him Kiev and Byzantium, the Tsar answered with exquisite irony that he was modest, coveted no new kingdoms in this world and desired only God's mercy beyond the grave. When Possevino in the presence of the Tsar's court continued to discuss fervently and called the Pope Holy Father, Ivan gave the Pope, through his envoy, a lesson of humility and, finally, unable to maintain the tone of biting hypocrisy, he called the Pope a wolf, but immediately afterwards restrained himself and expressed regret that contrary to his warning Possevino had started the debate which always ended unpleasantly. Ivan's further discussion with the envoy was a mixture of hypocrisy and rudeness, and the envoy, without having obtained anything except a few sable pelts for the Pope and himself, left Moscow. It should be added that Ivan who called Batory a Turkish vassal and accused him before the Pope of connections with the Moslems, was at that time himself paying tribute to the Crimean Khan, the Sultan's vassal.

The tendentious legends composed by cunning Levantines and Yugoslavs to stimulate the Constantinopolitan ambitions of Moscow's princes, and sometimes only for flattery out of personal calculation, had a result not quite expected: the princes accepted and utilized the legends, however, without the obligations that constituted the underlying motive of the idea. When written by more enlightened foreign writers, the legends maintained some measure and a shadow of probability, but in the barbaric adaptation of the Moscow "scholars" they became ridiculous nonsense. However, they were imbued with a leading thought: they deliberately by-passed Byzantium more and more and placed the

Moscow Tsars beside the Roman Emperors, while tracing the Russian Church directly back to the first Apostles. The Third Rome was developing an ideology which, while disregarding the Second Rome, was to oppose it to the First Rome. Yet Moscow did not disregard the legends which reserved Moscow's future claims to Constantinople. One of them referred to an alleged old prophecy according to which Constantinople was to succumb to the Ishmaelite yoke, from which it was to be liberated by a fair-haired tribe, *xanton genos*. That fair-haired tribe, *rusyi rod*, was now interpreted as Russian tribe, *russkii rod*. Thus an orthographical error – says a Russian historian – gave rise to the historic Russian mission with regard to St. Sophia's shrine in Constantinople. The Tsars took cognizance of these legends and for the time being put them into the archives. As long as Turkey was a strong empire threatening the whole of Christendom, the Tsars left the task of fighting the Crescent to Poland, Hungary, Venice, the German Emperor, the Pope. But when from the centuries-long struggle against the Christian Catholic states Turkey emerged weakened, when the Ottoman power began to retreat and when, in turn, the question of the division of its possessions came into view, Russia dusted off the imagined titles and started appropriate action.

The fall of Byzantium enabled Moscow to complete the nationalization of the church. In 1589 Moscow obtained her own patriarch. For the privilege of independence from the Greek patriarch, the metropolitans and bishops now paid the price of dependence on the Moscow Tsar. The example of the Emperor of Byzantium was a guiding star for the Tsar of Moscow. Following in the footsteps of the Greek clergy the Moscow metropolitans submitted to Moscow Caesaropapism. From the end of the fifteenth to the middle of the sixteenth centuries the three hierarchs of the Moscow church, Joseph, Daniel and Macarius, gradually completed the submission of the church to the Tsar's leadership. The example was set by the abbot of the Volokolamsk monastery, Joseph Sanin, an enemy of reasoning and advocate of the clergy's blind obedience to, and close connection with, the state. One of Joseph's disciples formulated his idea as follows: "reasoning is the mother of all lusts." Joseph's followers demanded severe punishment on quibblers and apostates, regarding as such anyone who dared to think instead of blindly repeating the text of books acknowledged as sacred. They eradicated from the church both thought and feeling and replaced them with form, letter and ritual. They made of the church a state institution based on command and blind submission. They propagated the principle of gratifying the Tsar's power, claiming that they were rendering unto Caesar what was Caesar's, but in contradiction to the spirit of Christianity they widened the scope of what was Caesar's and increas-

ingly narrowed the scope of what was God's. The clergy, while protecting the Tsar's power by religious sanction, was submissive and helpful to the Tsars in all their political plans. In return for this the Tsar let the monasteries keep their immense estates, entrusted the clergy with education, or rather with the right to guard general ignorance, and appointed natives instead of Greeks, as it was practiced hitherto, to higher ecclesiastical posts.

To illustrate the Moscow Tsars' policy, let us cast a fleeting glance on Moscow's attitude to Turkey at the time when the Catholic states wanted to see in the Tsar the powerful conqueror of the Crescent and when the Tsar derived great political advantages from that imagined rôle attributed to him. The husband of Sophia Palaeologus, while assuming the double eagle as his coat-of-arms and lending a ready ear to prophecies and legends assigning to him the Byzantine heritage, did not hesitate to cultivate most friendly relations with the Sultan. Towards the end of the fifteenth century there appeared in Constantinople the first tsarist envoy, Pleshcheyev. His mission was very modest and ridiculously remote from the threatening mission for the recovery of Constantinople which the West at that time imputed to the Tsar. Pleshcheyev came to ask the Sultan, as the conqueror of the Genoese colonies in the Crimea, to grant the Moscow merchants their former freedom of trade. However Pleshcheyev showed great susceptibility in questions of etiquette and demanded high honors for himself. Thus from the very beginning the Russian rulers endeavored to maintain the prestige of power which became Moscow's traditional weapon in foreign policy. The sable pelts with which the wagons accompanying the envoys were loaded, were a prototype of the tinkling weapon which has never failed to render excellent services to Russian foreign policy.[4]

Vasily III went further than his father and suggested to Selim an alliance against Poland. When Maximilian's envoy, Herberstein, displayed in glowing colors the Sultan's power before the Tsar, the result of the imperial envoy's eloquence was directly opposite from the one intended. Frightened by the Turkish danger, Vasily hastened to establish friendly relations with the Sultan. In 1571, Ivan the Terrible suggested to the Sultan an alliance against the Christian rulers of the West, but Turkey demanded the cession of Kazan and Astrakhan without which she would not entertain the idea of an alliance. Nevertheless, while seeking Turkish friendship, Ivan was able during the war against Batory to win the help of the Pope, whom he deceived with the hope of an expedition against Turkey. The same humble policy towards Tur-

[4] I. E. Zabelin, "Posolskiya puteshestviya v Turtsiu v XVIII stoletii (Envoys' Trips to Turkey in the Eighteenth Century), *Russkaya Starina* (Russian Antiquities), Vol. XX, 1877.

key was conducted by Tsar Feodor, son of Ivan IV, or rather by the country's actual regent, Boris Godunov. While beguiling the West with negotiations concerning adherence to the anti-Turkish league Feodor simultaneously sent to Constantinople his envoy Nashchokin whose task was to win for Moscow the Sultan's friendship informing him that Moscow, continuing in loyal friendship towards him, rejected all offers of the West.

"We refuse to listen to the Emperor, the monarchs of Spain and Lithuania, the Pope and the Shah, who appeal to us that together with them we should draw our sword against the head of the Moslems," the Tsar wrote to the Sultan.[5]

After the Times of Troubles, the Romanov dynasty followed the same conciliatory policy towards Turkey. But also towards Turkey the Romanovs conducted an equivocal policy, secretly mobilizing the Cossacks against the Turks and publicly disclaiming any participation in their incursions. The Don Cossacks even succeeded, to Turkey's dismay, in capturing the fortress of Azov in 1637 which they held until 1642. The Tsar was afraid to come openly to the Cossacks' assistance which they requested; he was apprehensive of attacking the Sultan.

The truce of Andrussovo, in 1667, giving Moscow the Dnieper line as frontier and the possession, temporary in principle but eventually for good, of Kiev, broadened Moscow's operational base against Turkey. From then on Moscow was to expand towards the Black Sea not only along the Don but also along the Dnieper.

At the time when Turkey was preparing a great blow against Christendom, a blow averted only by Sobieski's victory at Vienna, there stayed in Constantinople the Tsar's envoy Voznitsin, sent there on a friendly mission, who because of the Sultan's irritation at other Powers, had an exceptionally friendly reception. Soon Moscow, this time promising aid against the Turks, obtained in 1686 a peace advantageous for herself, but disastrous for Poland, Kiev, the old capital of the Ukraine, having become Muscovy's permanent possession.

We have thus reached the threshold of the period in which Russia started action against a weakened Turkey. We shall examine this action separately in another place. Here we would only like to touch briefly upon the foreign policy of the old pre-Peter Muscovy, in order to complete this outline.

* * *

An eloquent interpretation of the centuries-long history of Muscovite Russia was offered by Karamzin. In his political memoranda as

[5] Karamzin, *Istoria*, Vol. X. S. Soloviev, *Istoria Rossii*, Vol. VII, Third edition, Moscow 1870, pp. 335, 336, 338, 342.

well as in his history of Russia he was an ingenious, talented exponent of the Russian nation's instincts and aspirations. He appealed to the Russians' imagination, pride and sentiments, he stimulated in them the sense of their country's splendor, and raised territorial and material magnitude to the level of moral and spiritual greatness. He directed the Russians' mind toward a remote goal and made them pass with forbearance and gratitude over the black, cruel activity of the aggrandizers of the Russian state; with a patriot's indulgence to all the crimes of the Tsars, he explained that without force and savage violence, without wronging and destroying peoples, it would have been impossible to build a great Russian empire. He presented an immense panorama, extending over centuries, of conquests, annexations, innumerable acts of the destruction of states and their incorporation with Russia, and pointed to the great road, covered with the corpses of men and peoples, leading to the greatness of the state. In the midst of blood, corpses, ruins and devastation he showed the prospect of a historic mission, found fascination in the unchecked march of tsardom to ever new conquests and expansions, and imbued Russian minds with this enchantment.

In the introduction to his work Karamzin gives a picture of Russia's greatness: she is a unique, hitherto unknown power, her growth is miraculous. He even goes so far as to say that his nation spread the Christian faith among the pagans not with the sword as did the nations of the West, but solely by example and moral influence.

"Let us look at the area of that unique power: the mind grows numb. Not even Rome in its greatness, ruling from the Tiber to the Caucasus, to the Elbe and the African sands, could ever match it. Is it not astonishing that territories separated from each other by perennial natural barriers, by immense deserts and impassable forests, by cold and hot climates, such as Astrakhan and Lapland, Siberia and Bessarabia, should have formed one empire with Moscow? Or is the diversity of its inhabitants, multinational, heterogeneous and so remote from each other in their level of education, any less marvelous? Like America, Russia has her savages, like other European countries she also gathers the fruits of many years of civic life. One need not be a Russian, one only has to think, to read with interest the history of a nation which by its bravery and audacity won domination of one ninth of the world, discovered lands, hitherto unknown to anyone, introduced them into the general system of geography and history, and, unlike other zealots of Christianity in Europe and America, enlightened them with divine faith, without violence, without crimes but only by the example of her own superiority."

In his introduction Karamzin mentions his favorite hero, Ivan III,

whom he puts above Peter, as the creator of Muscovite power and a prudent reformer. "The reign of Ivan III alone presents a rare wealth for history and I, for one, do not know a monarch more worthy to live and shine in its temple. The rays of his glory fall on Peter's cradle."

In volume VI, describing the reign of Ivan III, Karamzin dwells with predilection and special attention on the conquest of Veliki Novgorod accomplished by Ivan by means of the combined tactics of force and cunning. Ivan undertook his expedition against Novgorod in 1471. It was accompanied by terrible atrocities. "Smoke, flames, rivers of blood, wailing and cries flowed to the Ilmen from East and West. The Muscovites showed indescribable fury. Neither the poor peasants nor women were spared." The detachment of troops sent by the Novgorod inhabitants was beaten. The Muscovites "killed five hundred, dispersed the rest, and with cruelty characteristic of the age, cut off the prisoners' noses and lips, and thus mutilated, sent them back to Novgorod." The Novgorodians were seized with terror. "Everywhere the shouts Moscow, Moscow! were heard." Karamzin describes admiringly the tactics of Ivan who already after the first expedition could have conquered Novgorod, but did not do so. "He believed that a nation, for centuries accustomed to the advantages of freedom, would not at once give up its beautiful dreams, that domestic revolts and uprisings would disperse the strength of the Muscovite state, needed for external safety; he felt that old habits should be weakened by new ones and that freedom, before being abolished, should first be abridged so that the citizens, relinquishing one right after another, should become accustomed to their own impotence, that they should pay dearly for the remnants of freedom, and that finally, exhausted by the fear of future oppression, they should prefer quiet peace under absolutist monarchial power to liberty. Ivan forgave the Novgorodians, enriched his treasury with silver and instituted the supreme power of the prince in the courts of law and in politics; but he did not, so to say, lose sight of this people's state, he tried to increase in it the number of people devoted to him, he sowed discord among the boyars and the people, he appeared in the administering of justice as a defender of innocence, he did much good and promised more."

In 1475 Ivan came to Novgorod and after a ceremonious welcome received the complaints of the population which with dull naiveté rallied under the protection of the Muscovite prince. "Whole streets demanded through their plenipotentiaries protection on the part of the prince and accused the highest officials." The Tsar tried the accused ones and ordered the imprisonment of a number of boyars. Only then the Novgorodians began to rub their eyes. "This act of arbitrariness struck the Novgorodians, but all of them, casting down their eyes, kept

silent." Ivan received rich gifts and left Novgorod. "Archbishop Theophilus and the higher dignitaries accompanied the Tsar to the first stop where he had dinner with them and appeared jovial and satisfied. However the fate of that people's state was already determined in his mind." In 1478 Ivan unexpectedly sent to the Novgorodians an embassy with the question whether they were prepared "to swear an oath to him as their integral ruler, sole legislator and judge." The Novgorodians were amazed. "A general commotion prevailed. They had endured Ivan's arbitrariness in the courts of law as something extraordinary, but they were frightened at the idea that this extraordinary state should become law." They gave a negative reply.

Ivan decided to bring his ominous game to an end. "Ivan was not accustomed to yielding and had undoubtedly foreseen the Novgorodians' refusal, but he only wanted to gain an appearance of justice in the dispute. Having received their bold reply, he regretfully announced to the Metropolitan Gerontius, his mother and the boyars that Novgorod, which had voluntarily given him the title of gosudar, now denied it, made him a liar in the face of the whole Russian land and announced that it would betray the most sacred oaths, Orthodoxy and homeland. The Metropolitan, the court and all Moscow believed that those rebels should feel the whole burden of the Tsar's anger. Prayers began in the churches..."

The cruel, savage conquest of the famous republic ensued. Karamzin, always declaiming his love for mankind, for education and republican virtues, reflects upon the ruin of Veliki Novgorod. "Novgorod, which for more than six centuries was renowned in Russia and Europe as a people's state, or republic, and which indeed had the form of a democracy, surrendered to Ivan. The patterns of Novgorod's political system are to be sought in the original system of all people's states, from Athens and Sparta to Unterwalden and Glarus... Its inhabitants boasted of never having been the slaves of the Mongols like other Russians, of not knowing the *baskaks* and of never having been under the rule of their tyranny. In their artless simplicity the chronicles of Novgorod present features which catch the imagination..." Karamzin quotes examples of their bravery, magnanimity and civic virtues. "We find certain stable principles in the actions of this, frequently lightminded, people. It was characteristic of it not to boast of success, show moderation in good fortune, constancy in defeat, give shelter to exiles, keep agreements, and the Novgorodians' pledged word, honor and soul, often served in lieu of an oath."

This pearl of the Russian lands was suppressed by a people trained in the savage school of Mongol slavery. Let us hear what the panegyrist of freedom has to say about this. "Though it is peculiar for the human

heart to be favorably inclined towards republics based on the cardinal rights of cherished freedom; though the very dangers and troubles of republics, propagating magnanimity, attract the minds, particularly of the young and inexperienced; though the Novgorodians, possessing a people's government, undoubtedly differed by their noble characteristics from other Russians degraded by Mongol tyranny, nevertheless in this case history should praise Ivan's mind because the raison d'état dictated to him the strengthening of Russia by closely uniting the parts into a whole that it might attain independence and greatness... The Russian historian who loves human as well as political virtues can say: Ivan was worthy to crush the weak Novgorod freedom for he wanted the durable good of all Russia."

Novgorod was subjugated. Three centuries later the same fate was to befall Poland. The conquered republic of Novgorod experienced tragic vicissitudes. For some time the spirit of freedom and the hope of liberation still survived there. Simply and concisely, as something natural and unavoidable, Karamzin describes the martyrology of the subjugated state. In 1479 Ivan deprived Archbishop Theophilus of his post, "allegedly for secret plotting with Lithuania," and deported him to Moscow. This was only one episode of the policy of pacification and unification. "The spirit of freedom could not disappear at once in a nation which had enjoyed it for so many centuries, and though there was no open revolt, Ivan saw the discontent and heard the secret complaints of the Novgorodians; the hope that freedom might return still lived in their hearts... In order to stamp out this dangerous spirit Ivan resorted to a drastic means; in 1481 he ordered the imprisonment of outstanding men... and soon afterwards of all principal boyars, while their movable and immovable property was handed over to the *gosudar*. Those accused of treason were submitted to torture. They themselves denounced each other, but, condemned to death, they declared that their mutual accusations were calumnies extorted by tortures. Ivan had them imprisoned; others, obviously innocent, were given estates in Muscovite territories... In 1488 the Governor of Novgorod, Jacob Zakharyevich, executed and hanged many wealthy men who wanted to kill him, and sent to Moscow more than eight thousand boyars, outstanding citizens and merchants, who received land in Vladimir, Murom, Nizhnii Novgorod, Pereyaslav, Yuryev, Rostov, and Kostroma, while Muscovites were sent to their lands in Novgorod. Through this resettlement Novgorod was subdued for ever. *Only the corpse remained, the soul vanished;* other inhabitants, different customs, peculiar to absolutism, were introduced."

Guided by his political instinct Ivan devised his own method of conquering neighboring countries. When the idea of annexing a country to Moscow took root in his head, he first endeavored to extend his

beneficent care, he tried to win the favor of the lower class and assiduously discredited the local upper class in the eyes of the people; that class was in his opinion the most dangerous adversary of his plans as it preserved the principles and traditions of freedom and independence. Subsequently he sought a pretext for intervention; taking advantage of his gradually established influence in the country, and of his *de facto* sovereignty, acquired through his protection of the lower class, he suddenly demanded formal submission. Naturally, he met opposition; he then accused the country of falsehood, of not keeping faith, of treason, of plotting with his enemies. He would enact a comedy of indignation and sorrow which, four hundred years later, Nicholas Milutin will notice in the countenance of savage Muraviev. The country's occupation by force would be followed by executions and mass deportation of men of the upper classes, replaced by new arrivals from Moscow. There remains a corpse, the soul vanishes...

In case of a weaker country Ivan acts more quickly and quietly. In 1485 he annexes to Moscow the principality of Tver. "In his mind Ivan decided its fate as previously he had decided the fate of Novgorod. He began to oppress Michael's land and subjects, and if they annoyed the Muscovites in any way, he threatened them and demanded punishment; but when the Muscovites took their property and inflicted the most ruthless wrongs, there was neither trial nor punishment for them..." In this way Ivan accustomed the population of Tver to the idea that it was better to have him for their master rather than for a hostile neighbor. The matter was soon ended by the annexation of the Tver principality.

Ivan became the idol of his nation. "Ivan III was one of the very few monarchs chosen by Providence to determine for a long time the fate of nations; he is a hero not only of Russian but of universal history. Having fathomed the secrets of autocracy, he became, as it were, an earthly God for the Russians, who from that time astonished all other nations by their boundless submission to the monarch's will. As a monarch Ivan stands on the highest level of greatness..."[6]

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The best guide for those who would like to look behind the scenes of the Russia of Nicholas I, her court, aristocracy and dignitaries, can be found in the Frenchman Custine. The authors who wrote and published their works in Russia could not, because of the censorship, present a full picture of the country. This had to come from the émigrés: the

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[6] *History of the Russian State*, Suvorin's edition, Vol. VI, pp. 32, 33, 86-96, 114-122, 155, 156, 299-306. Cf. S. Soloviev, *Istoria Rossii*, Vol. V, Third edition, Moscow 1864, pp. 7-47.

colorful, but often inaccurate Golovin, the more serious Dolgorukov, and above all the brilliant Herzen. But even the latter does not re-create the characteristic features of the Russian people with such perfection as Custine. None grasps so keenly and re-creates so plastically, as does this Frenchman, the features which were peculiar to Russia and which made Russia drastically different from the nations of the West. The émigré writers were themselves sons and pupils of Russian society and were more deeply rooted in it than they supposed. As he meets Russia, Custine displays a reaction of the son of an old civilization, an astonishment and at times a dismay, that lend vivid colors to his pen and drama to his account. He commits errors of fact, he is by no means a source for the knowledge of facts and events, but he is a first-rate authority for the study of national character, especially in the upper classes. The method adopted by him, or rather intuitively applied, of describing people, conversations, group scenes and at the same time of revealing his own thoughts and feelings that filled his soul under the immediate impact of these impressions, together with a tremendous gift for observation and great writing ability, account for the fact that he does not tire the reader either by a superabundance of details, or by a monotony of reflections; he intermingles his observations with reflection and in support of his conclusions he immediately finds new, freshly observed facts which give him material for new conclusions. Not even historical works based on numerous archives show us so vividly the inside of the Russia of Nicholas as do the four volumes of Custine. In his observations we sometimes find contradictions; but in the majority of cases this is not a misunderstanding, but a true reflection of life that went on in wholly unparalleled conditions.

Marquis Astolphe Custine came to Russia in 1839. As an aristocrat, the grandson of a famous general guillotined in 1793, the son of the diplomat and soldier, Renaud Phillippe Custine, who followed his father to the scaffold in 1794, the Marquis Custine had free access not only to aristocratic and high official salons, but also to the Imperial palace. Custine was preceded by the reputation of a legitimist, clerical and die-hard aristocrat, which was a good recommendation at the Petersburg court. On several occasions Nicholas entered into long and interesting conversations with him and was convinced that the Frenchman was completely under the spell of his favor, courtesy and sincerity. Indeed, in the Orleans monarchy Custine represented the extreme right, was an advocate of the class monarchy, and was neither in favor of a democratic intermixture of classes, nor of a competition of the tribune with the throne. He went to Russia as to a country free from the political weaknesses of post-revolutionary France. But what he saw was not Charles X or even Louis XIV but a modernized Ivan the Terrible. All

Western contrasts, conservatism and liberalism, France of the Bourbons and of Orleans, seemed small to him in comparison with the sharp antithesis of civilization and superficially polished barbarism which, with each day spent in Russia, appeared with increasing distinctness before his eyes. During his few months' visit in Russia he constantly tried to penetrate the thin varnish of civilization which covered all Russian spheres of life, and to expose to light its ominous interior.

The astonishment and indignation of the enlightened Russians, including the Tsar, after the appearance of Custine's book, was enormous; it was not only reminiscent of, but considerably surpassed, the storm caused by the appearance of Chaadayev's *Philosophical Letter*. Custine could hardly be considered a madman, and it was impossible to destroy or burn his shocking book. We shall see later that action was taken against the book. In the meantime, we shall attempt to review briefly the main theses of what was probably the most penetrating nineteenth century book about Russia.

Already aboard the boat carrying him to the shores of Russia Custine met old Prince K. (Kozlovski), an intelligent man indulging in radical phraseology. The conversation with him was for Custine an introduction to the knowledge of Russia and the Russian prince's witty and colorful tirades, quoted by the French author, are on the whole in harmony with his own later observations made on the spot.[7] Kozlovski explained to Custine that Russian despotism depended very little on the personal qualities of the ruler. It was an age-old system inseparably linked and deeply connected with militant and aggressive Orthodoxy. The persecution of Poland – Kozlovski said – was based on profound, cold calculation; the acts of cruelty were praiseworthy in the eyes of Orthodox Russians; it was the Holy Ghost who was giving the ruler the power to rise above all human feelings and God was blessing the executor of the holy aim: in the light of that belief judges and executioners were the more sacred the more cruel they were.[8]

For the keen Frenchman revelations began from the moment of approaching the Russian shores; where another traveler would only see a picturesque or banal aspect, he perceived the omnipresent soul of the system. On reaching the Russian port, he witnessed a naval review arranged for the Tsar. In comparison with the British fleet the Russian navy, that mirage of sea power, which some fifteen years later, during the Eastern War was to disperse like a phantom, gave Custine the im-

[7] *La Russie en 1839*, par le Marquis de Custine. Third edition, Paris 1846. Vol. I, p. 146.

[8] Custine probably felt himself free to quote Prince Kozlovski's utterances and to mention the first letter of his name only because at the time the book was published (1843) Kozlovski was already dead.

pression of giants designed to parade before the Tsar, wooden courtiers plying the sea in honor of the Emperor. The maneuvers appeared to Custine to be but a tremendous puerility staged to satisfy a despot's whim. Russia – he concluded – was a country where great efforts were made to achieve a slender result. A large scale puerility was a monstrosity possible only under tyranny, and probably its most terrible symptom. In other countries, when people were making strenuous efforts, they did so to achieve momentous results; from blindly submissive peoples the ruler could exact fearful sacrifices to achieve small results.[9]

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After closer observation the Russian state appeared to Custine as one huge prison whose keys were held by the Tsar. The great distances facilitated both oppression and revolt, and only a revolted soldier could be a freeman. The Russian regime was based on camp discipline instead of civic order; it was a state of war which was the normal state of the people. The government ruled over everything but was unable to give life to anything. Whereas in the countries of mechanical progress in the West even timber and metal seemed to have a soul, in Russia people looked as if they were made of wood. Even the movements of the people in the streets were stiff and constrained, gestures did not express the will of the persons who were making them. That despotism wanted to be stronger than nature: God creates the future, and the Tsar would like to transform the past. The despot's whim would like to have retroactive power. The question arises as to what man was to do with his thoughts. The Russians were machines, needlessly endowed with thought. Already free conversation was conspiracy, and thought – revolt. Man thinks in order to improve his own and other people's fate, but if man cannot change anything, the thought for want of better use, festers in the mind and poisons it. Despotism, a product of impatience and laziness, is an imagined sickness of peoples which permitted themselves to be convinced that they could not exist without tyranny. What did man do to God – asks Custine – that He condemned sixty million people to live in Russia![10]

The ruler of Russia constantly acts and poses. When Custine was to appear before the Tsar for the first time, he was warned that in order to make a good impression he should show reverence and appear apprehensive. Nicholas' face assumed a threefold expression: the most frequent one was anxious severity, more rarely solemnity, and finally the mask of courtesy. Lack of ease, constraint, that greatest misfortune of

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[9] *Op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 199-201.

[10] *Op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 185, 210, 216, 252, 254, 255, 283, 284, 300, 316; Vol. II, pp. 39, 128; Vol. IV, p. 311.

Russia, was reflected in the face of the ruler: he wore several masks, but had no unrestrained expression of his own.

Elsewhere in Europe a court, even the most magnificent one, was a spectacle, while in Russia the court was a power. From end to end the empire breathed with the spirit of the court.

The Tsar constantly felt the burden of constraint weighing down on him; he was restless, fidgeted like a lion in a cage, tossed like a patient in fever, he walked, went riding, arranged parades, went to sea. The Tsarina, the children, cousins, favorites, servants, — they all were drawn into the whirl of incessant court life and amused themselves until dropping dead. What people dreaded most at that court was leisure — a sign of boredom and emptiness.

The court made the impression of a theatre where the director constantly supervises, and the players constantly rehearse. Both the director and the players spend their lives in preparing, correcting and endlessly improving the unfinished comedy whose name is civilization of the North. The longer one observes the court, the more he pities its chief. His power avoids ridiculousness solely through terror and secrecy.

The despot's punishment is his universal responsibility. Not accountable for anything politically, he is responsible for everything — as Providence: the natural consequence of the usurpation of divine rights. A monarch, who agrees to be recognized as something more than a mortal being, assumes responsibility for all evil that heaven may visit upon the earth during his reign. From this political fanaticism arise susceptibilities unknown in other countries. An accident is treated as a matter of state, as a lack of consideration due to the Tsar from God. A bad turn of fate is regarded as a hint of revolt, the independence of nature seems a bad example. A fly hovering about at an inopportune moment, during a court festival, humiliates the Tsar.[11]

Prince Kozlovski had explained to Custine on the boat that centuries of despotism in Russia had demoralized both the ruler and his subjects. After having observed Russia the Frenchman confirmed this diagnosis. The opinion is often expressed — Custine writes — that the madness of the system is the result of the madness hereditary in the Tsar's family. This is a false optimism, the evil lies in the system itself — says Custine. The Russian Tsar would have to be an angel or at least a genius to preserve his sanity after twenty years of office. Still more appalling is the fact that the madness passes to his subjects. Nicholas called his people's habit of slavery the genius of the nation. "Despotism exists in Russia, it is the essence of my government but it is in harmony with the genius of the nation," he told Custine. An idolatrous democracy developed in that country: equality of the subjects in slavery. The high-

[11] *Op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 306, 315, 316, 324, 351, 358, 362, 372; Vol. II, p. 187.

est power is respected as religion whose authority is independent from the personal merit of the priests; virtues of the monarchs are superfluous here. The tyrant demands of his people not only submissiveness, but satisfaction with their yoke and a smile on their faces. The people and the ruler became inebriated together, both drinking from the cup of tyranny.[12]

Custine saw manifestations of the Russians' servility before he even set foot on their soil. At Ems he met the heir to the Russian throne with a suite of courtiers and aides-de-camp. He was struck by their servile behavior towards the Grand Duke; but when the latter left, the same men would at once change their tone and manners, from humble and submissive their behavior would become loud, haughty and challenging. This sudden transition from servility to impertinence struck Custine disagreeably. This was not the usual etiquette known at other courts, but a spontaneous servility with an underlying arrogance. This mixture of haughtiness and obsequiousness was repulsive to the son of an old culture. When at a later date he frequently observed insincerely cringing Russian courtiers, he formed his conception that the Russian system was a tyranny, moderated by regicide. As he was becoming acquainted with the history of Russia, he obtained an increasingly better understanding of that system, a legacy of many past centuries. Other peoples suffered tyranny, the Russian nation liked it, and that was significant. A reign like that of Ivan the Terrible forever blinds the soul of the nation which humbly suffered it to the end. The crime of offending humanity debases nations till later, remote generations. Blind submission of the subjects, their silence and their fidelity to mad tyrants are ominous qualities. Submission when pushed to the limits which it reached in the subjects of Ivan the Terrible, is no longer patience, it is a passion: here lies the solution of the riddle. The Russians of Nicholas I are worthy descendants of the subjects of Ivan the Terrible.[13]

A nation whose soul has been distorted by centuries of enslavement, regards the kindness of the ruler as weakness. Fear paralyzes it, inexorable severity forces it to its knees, and forgiveness emboldens it; it is impossible to convince it, one can only subjugate it. This phenomenon explains the tactics of the despot, but does not justify it. The government should educate the people to humaneness. Nicholas I did not forgive the Decembrists for he believed that he owed to himself and his nation inflexible severity. Kindness, apart from being incompatible with his nature, seemed to him a weakness by which he would jeopardize his power. Accustomed to measure the Tsar's power by the fear which it created, Nicholas would regard his pity as forfeiting the code of poli-

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[12] *Op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 143, 144, 354; Vol. II, pp. 46, 202; Vol. III, pp. 211, 221.
[13] *Op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 5; Vol. III, pp. 168, 170, 205

tical morality. And yet the Tsar's omnipotent power would only then be complete if he had the power to forgive: Nicholas was only bold enough to punish. Cruelty, even if it had not been the Tsar's innate defect, would have been the inevitable consequence of the position assumed by him, which he could not and did not want to relinquish. The Tsar's lot is glamorous exile. After studying Russia, Custine had the impression that Nicholas' head, like that of Janus, had two faces and that violence, exile, slavery and Siberia were engraved on the invisible side of the Tsar's face.[14]

It is painful to note how in Russia man's life is reduced to the hope of making obeisance to the ruler and obtaining a smile from him. A nation, tyrannized by a despot, has always deserved its fate, tyranny is the work of nations. Custine makes the confession that, although a die-hard aristocrat in France, he felt a democrat in Russia: a French peasant or small bourgeois were more free than a Russian magnate.[15]

As soon as he entered Russian soil Custine was struck by that country's complete distinctiveness, the existence of which he had not suspected. The more he penetrated Russian life, the stronger this distinctiveness appeared, the more glaring and negative. Almost immediately upon entering Russia — writes Custine — one notices that the social life created by the Russians can serve only their own exclusive purpose. One has to be a Russian in order to live in Russia, though on the surface everything takes place as elsewhere. The difference lies in the essence of the matter.

The appearance of Petersburg is a sample and symbol of the character of the whole Empire: pretentious imitation of the forms of an old civilization without a serious attempt at creating original things evolved from the nature of the country and nation, pomp without substance, tinsel without style. The statues, copied from classical monuments, whose features, styles, posture are out of harmony with the nature of the landscape, color of the sky, climate, as well as with the faces, attire and customs of the people, are like heroes taken prisoner by the enemy. Temples fallen, as it were, from the mountain peaks of Greece to the marshes of Lapland, the palaces of pagan gods which so admirably crown the promontories of the Ionian shores with their austere contours of horizontal lines and glitter from afar in the sun with gilded marble on the rocks of Peloponnesus, on the ruins of antique acropolises, look in Russia like great masses of plaster and lime. The Russians should have surrounded themselves with edifices of slender forms with per-

[14] *Op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 316; Vol III, pp. 23, 30, 32, 337
[15] *Op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 271, 289, 309, 380; Vol. II, p. 307

pendicular lines designed to pierce the polar sky and break the monotony of the gray and marshy steppes forming the landscape around Petersburg. The architecture that would suit that country is not the column of the Parthenon, nor the cupola of the Pantheon, but rather the tower of Peking. In a country to which nature has denied any mountainous terrain it behoves man to erect mountains.

Custine sees the same empty and pretentious imitation in all spheres of the life of the educated class. Russia, late in acquiring civilization, was deprived, through the impatience of her rulers, of the deep current of gradual and slow culture. She did not pass through the internal work which creates great nations. In that country, the people, as it was moulded by the Tsars, is like an immense hothouse filled with beautiful exotic plants. The first result of civilization is the facilitation of material life, but in Russia everything is difficult and burdensome; it is a country of needless formalities, technical deficiencies, disorder and filth; in hotels resembling those in Europe, the guests are plagued by swarms of bugs. Apathy mixed with slyness is the dominating feature of the population. Even Russian courtesy is ceremonious rather than natural and passes into tiresome exaggeration.[16]

Predilection for all new things is a Russian mania. The main fault of the Russians is not that they are what they are; what should be condemned in them is their pretending that they are what the French are.

Oscillating for four centuries between Europe and Asia, Russia was as yet unable to impress the mark of her spirit on the history of human thought; extraneous influences obliterated her national character. Imitation and sarcasm are the main talents which Custine attributes to the Russians of that class with which he came in contact. The Russian is a born imitator and consequently, first of all, an observer, but that talent, peculiar to juvenile nations, often degenerates into spying. Sarcasm is but the ineffectual consolation of the subjugated. The Russians are cold, cunning, witty, not very sentimental, like all people devoured by ambition; they have great susceptibility and considerable coldness, sarcasm and vanity combined with cunning, a product of slavery.

Society people speak in artificial, fluty voices; in a disagreeably sweet tone they will tell you in a mellifluous voice that the Russian serf is the happiest of men. In higher society there is a continuous conspiracy of smiling faces against truth to accommodate the despot. This is reminiscent of Lady Montague's prescription for behavior in Turkey: fondle the favorites, avoid the unhappy ones, trust no one. This society began its contact with culture by excesses. When debauchery is no longer sufficient to kill the boredom which saps the mind under tyranny,

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[16] *Op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 226, 227, 228, 257, 288, 303, Vol. IV, pp. 322, 323, 325.

man enters the road of crime. Under such a rule it is dangerous to show higher aspirations: the man disclosing them is a Prometheus warning Jove that he wants to steal his fire.[17]

Custine was struck by the Russians' tremendous anxiety about the opinion the foreigner forms about their country. European opinion is a spectre which constantly pursues and secretly afflicts their minds. It is difficult to show in this respect less independence than they do. They would agree to be worse and more uncouth if only they could be regarded as better and more civilized. They do not understand that civilization is not a fashion or an artifice but a force which operates by itself, a root which produces the stalk, creates the flower and bears fruit. They fear lest they be considered barbarians of the North. There are remedies against primitive savagery; there is no medicine for the mania of pretending to be what one is not.

* * *

Russia is a country where everybody belongs to a conspiracy designed to mislead the foreigner (*enguirlander l'étranger*). There are two Russias — writes Custine — Russia as she is, and a Russia which the Russians would like to show to Europe. From behind the latter, the keen Frenchman managed to see the former, the true one: according to him, Russia is a great theatrical hall where one can see from all boxes what takes place behind the scenes. He is able to see not only through gross lies, but also through more subtle mystifications. He met two kinds of Russians: those who, combining cautiousness with self-respect, praise their country excessively, and those who pretending to be more civilized and refined, display either profound contempt or exaggerated modesty when speaking about Russia. This is only a more subtle way of misleading a vigilant foreigner, but to him who grasped its purpose even this subtlety appears as an unwitting avowal and as an apprehension of saying the truth. Custine saw through both the categories of mystifiers, but he was looking for a third kind — simple and sincere Russians — and, as he says, was looking for them in vain.

The example of falsehood comes from above, from the highest quarters of the state which head the constant war against truth. The subjects accept subserviently, and even not without satisfaction, these lies of the ruler who tries to convince them that they are well governed and happy. This hypocrisy of tyranny, however rude, seems to the slaves almost a flattery: the despot makes an effort to conceal the real nature of his rule, this being a kind of consideration involuntarily shown to the subject. Lying is so humiliating that compelling the despot to hypocri-

[17] *Op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 326, 379, Vol. II, pp. 128, 132, 226, 324, 388, Vol. III, pp. 113, 331, 374, Vol. IV, pp. 318, 319, 345, 351, 360, 368.

sy is a sort of vengeance which is a consolation for the victim of the yoke. This is a peculiar country which produces only slaves accepting, on their knees, opinions imposed upon them, spies who have no opinion of their own so that they might all the easier catch the opinions of others, and sneerers who exaggerate the evil.

Custine knows how to grasp the tragicomic aspect of official falsehood which flows from the throne and is accepted with humility and reverence by the subjects. He describes the wedding of the daughter of Nicholas I to Prince Maximilian Leuchtenberg. The bridegroom is the son of Eugene Beauharnais and grandson of Josephine, wife of Napoleon I. The crown over his head is held by Count Pahlen, the Russian ambassador in Paris, the son of the famous Pahlen, assassin of Paul I, father of Nicholas I. By his symbolic presence at the ceremony he invokes heaven to visit its blessing on the head of the husband of Paul's granddaughter.[18]

In this gloomy state where the lustre of the Tsar eclipses the sun, it is hard to live. The man who laughs there is either a comedian, a flatterer or a drunkard. It is a state of mute people, each spirit wears a uniform. Russia produces good diplomats and good spies. Human speech is a counterfeit key serving to open the locks of others. Upon crossing the Russian frontier the foreigner is treated like a criminal. Not only resistance to the authorities, but even the justification of obedience is already considered an attempt against the foundations of the state.

Where life is so unendurable people must try to forget the world by becoming benumbed and overcome with liquor and to drive away sad thoughts by means of the most inane and stupefying entertainment. Only empty, trifling or wanton amusements are permitted in that state. Of Western authors the most popular with the Russians is Paul de Kock. Life itself is too dreadful to make people enjoy serious literature; farce, idyl or panegyric are the forms of literature most prevalent under a despotic rule. Drinking is the greatest national pastime. To feel happy, people have to stupefy themselves to be happy. Not only is debauchery widespread among all classes, but it has a peculiar attraction; social order is based on oppression; disturbance and break in the established order assume the appearance of courage and vigor; licentiousness is regarded as liberalism; a libertine and rake are heroes. Stories of the notorious dissipation of monks and nuns are widespread.

Another more serious intoxication, incalculable in its consequences, is the dreams of ambition. Under the hard shell of tsarist oppression there lie, dormant and seething, stifled political passions, distorted in their manifestations. In this connection Custine was struck by the

[18] *Op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 184-5, 207, 291, 332, Vol. II, pp. 116-7, Vol. IV, p. 331.

analogy as well as the difference between republican France and tsarist Russia. There – democracy, here – despotism abolished established social barriers, overthrew hierarchy and opened an outlet for those who would rise from a lowly state to the top. The means of ascendancy are different: in France, a man may achieve everything by stepping down from the rostrum on which he won popularity; in Russia, by insinuating himself into the grace of the court. Rank, official position, is the social galvanism of Russia, it is the passion towering above all others. Catching with his vigilant ear this rumble of unsatisfied ambitions Custine sees under the delusive cover that hides Russia's concealed life, a dangerous reservoir, hermetically closed and placed on a fire that spreads increasingly. The threat of an explosion grows gradually.

Besides the ambition of rising to higher positions in the state, the Tsar's subject is pervaded by national ambition fed from above, by dreams about the power of the tsarist state, visions of ever new conquests, aggressions and hegemony in the world. This power, considered sacred, fed on political superstition, has two roads open to it: either to prove that it is human, that is to suspend the cruel operation of its own tyranny and permit itself to be crushed, or lead its believers to world conquest in order to prove that it is truly divine. Thus tsardom becomes a school of political conceit.

Dreams of world domination are a consolation and encouragement for people living under such a rule. Observing the free countries of the West, where political passions and struggles manifest themselves in a stormy fashion and give the impression of disorder and weakness, and then looking at Russia, fastened with dreadful rigor and imposing in her solemn tranquillity, the slaves of Petersburg think and say: Europe follows the road once followed by Poland, it spends and weakens itself by empty liberalism, while Russia remains powerful just because she does not know liberty; let us suffer under our yoke and we shall exact a high price from other nations for our humiliation.

The soul of the Russian nation is agitated by an immense restless ambition. That nation, by nature aggressive and greedy because of its own want, pays in advance by humiliating subservience to its rulers for the hope of submitting other peoples to its tyranny. The glory and riches which it hopes to acquire turn its mind from the disgrace it experiences, and in order to wash off the stain of his ignominious sacrifice of all political and personal freedom, the slave, bent to his knees dreams of world domination.[19]

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[19] *Op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 255, Vol. II, pp. 63, 120, 128, 141, 195, 307, 308, Vol. III, pp. 356, 397, Vol. IV, pp. 354, 355.

Custine's searching mind at times turns away from contemporary Russian conditions and tries to forecast the future of that peculiar country. Nowhere else in the world did he feel so strongly pervaded with the sense of the instability of human things, as in Petersburg. Should this capital which has no roots either in history or in the soil, be only for one day forgotten by its ruler, should a new policy direct the monarch's thought somewhere else, the granite hidden under the water will crumble, the low lands inundated by water will return to their original state and the old wilderness will again take possession over its ancient abode. Either Russia will not fulfil her destiny, or Moscow will again become the capital of the nation for it alone possesses the seeds of Russian uniqueness and originality.

But on the other hand Custine has in that old capital a vision of the dreadful crimes of the Tsars throughout the centuries. It seems to him that out of all the gates of the Kremlin there emerges a procession of iniquities to flood Russia. To make good and amend the ominous work of centuries, not even the best efforts of one ruler or the elimination of one tyrant would suffice. In Russia it is necessary to fight not the tyrant alone but tyranny. Despotism reigns on the throne, but tyranny penetrates everywhere. The morals of a nation are the result of the gradual influence of laws on customs and of customs on laws. A Russian magnate who, when seized with anger, does not beat his serf to death is regarded as a humanitarian. It would be unjust to accuse the Tsar of all the misfortunes of the nation: the strength of one man would not be equal to the task with which the monarch would be faced who suddenly decided to rule humanely over an inhuman nation. It would be impossible today to govern Russia at once as other European countries are governed. The example of mitigating the customs should be given from above. But what can be expected from a nation of flatterers who themselves are flattered by their ruler? Instead of raising the masses to his level, the ruler tries to lower himself to their level. Today Russia is more remote from freedom than the majority of the peoples of the world. Tomorrow, amid revolt, massacre and conflagrations, the peasant may shout: Long live liberty – up to the confines of Siberia. The illiterate and cruel people may knife the bellies of its masters, may revolt against its sullen tyrants and redden the waters of the Volga with their blood, but that will not make it more free as a result: barbarism is the yoke. The road to the liberation of these people does not lead through the bombastic proclamation of freedom; slavery should be made impossible by developing in the nation's soul the human feelings that are still lacking in Russia.[20]

[20] *Op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 285, 286; Vol. II, p. 207; Vol. III, pp. 58, 121, 122, 168, 271; Vol. IV, pp. 327, 337.

Custine was leaving Paris with the conviction that a close alliance between France and Russia should form the basis of the European system. However, having observed the Russian nation at close quarters and familiarized himself with the spirit of its government, he came to the conclusion that Russia was separated from the rest of the civilized world by her political system based on religious fanaticism. He left Russia with the conviction that France should look for support in nations whose needs and levels are more akin to her own. As a result of his observation he felt that Moscow was more a part of Asia than of Europe. The spirit of the East hovers over Russia who abdicates her rôle and tries to follow the path of the West. A Chinese wall exists between France and Russia. In spite of the claims with which the Russians were inspired by Peter, Siberia begins close beyond the Vistula. Two things and one person were worth the journey to Russia: the Neva during the white nights, the Moscow Kremlin in moonlight, and the Emperor of Russia. This is all of picturesque, historic and political Russia — he writes — making an obvious allusion to the French work of Leonard Chodźko about Poland, which had then just appeared under a similar title.

Custine regarded close relations of the West with Russia as impossible, first because of the Russian's deep-seated prejudice againt Western foreigners. The Russians do not want to show their grudge against observers coming from afar. Every Russian of the lower class, suspicious by nature, hates foreigners out of ignorance and national prejudice. Every Russian of the upper classes, equally suspicious, fears them, for he regards them as hostile to himself and as convinced of their superiority. Violent jealousy and childish envy that cannot be disarmed guide the majority of Russians in their relations with foreigners. They try to hide the true features of Russian life, and are ashamed not so much of their faults as of their nothingness. Russia dates from yesterday and her history is rich only in promises.

But on the other hand, a Westerner feels very badly in Russia. One must live for a while in this desert without rest, in this prison without relaxation, that is called Russia, to comprehend the fullness of liberty which he enjoys in other European countries irrespective of their form of government. Should your son ever be dissatisfied with France — writes Custine — tell him: go to Russia. Such a journey is useful for every foreigner; he who will observe that country well enough, will be satisfied with life in any other place.

Custine deplores the fact that foreigners who write on Russia help the Russians in deceiving the world. Can one be more treacherously complacent (*traitreusement complaisant*) than are most writers coming here from all parts of Europe to get sentimental over the moving inti-

macy that exists between the Tsar and his people! What is this mass, called people, whose alleged intimacy with its rulers Europe considers it her duty to praise inanely? They are the slaves of slaves.

It is high time to say the truth about the Russians. Time has come when these people who with such perspicacity reveal the faults and ridiculous aspects of European societies, should accustom themselves to bear the honest judgment of strangers. If they want to be recognized by the nations of Europe and deal with them on the basis of equality, they should acquiesce to hear judgment about themselves.

After a few months' stay Custine left Russia. "I shall never forget what I felt as I was crossing the Niemen to reach Tilsit" – he writes. "A bird escaping from its cage or from under the cover of a pneumatic machine would not be so happy. I can say, I can write what I think, I am free!, I exclaimed. I was particularly struck with the ease of the peasants and the joyfulness of the peasant women: their good humor filled me almost with fear, it was an independence whose consequences I feared for them, I had already forgotten what it looked like... Passing through the streets of Tilsit and later of Koenigsberg, I thought I was witnessing a Venetian carnival"... And yet he was only halfway between the free West and the great prison of Russia.[21]

* * *

The literary campaign undertaken by official and semi-official Russia against Custine's book was both characteristic and amusing. Xavier Labentski, right hand man of Nesselrode, senior Counsellor of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, published in 1843 a pamphlet in French, translated into German and English, obviously at government expense.[22] Jacob Tolstoy, a Russian political agent, maintained in Paris by Department III of the Tsar's chancellery, and used for confidential services, prepared two publications to crush Custine.[23] Finally, Bulharyn's notorious fellow-writer, the venal Nicholas Gretch, who was abroad in 1843 and maintained a lively correspondence with Dubelt, at that time the actual chief of the Russian secret police, wrote a polemical pamphlet in the French and German languages.[24] Of course, the authors of these studies presented to the government handsome bills for their diligence. The corrupted Gretch associated himself with the French writer Hippolyte

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[21] *Op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 347, 351, Vol. II, pp. 121, 123, 321 Vol. IV, pp. 298, 300, 339, 345, 355, 375.

[22] *Un mot sur l'ouvrage de Mr. Custine, intitulé "La Russie en 1839."* Paris, 1843

[23] *La Russie en 1839, rêvée par Mr. de Custine, ou lettres sur cet ouvrage écrites de Francfort.* Paris, 1844, under the pseudonym of J. Yakovleff. The title of the second is: *Lettre d'un Russe à un journaliste français sur les diatribes de la presse anti-russe.* That letter is allegedly dated from Petersburg. February 1844, and is addressed to St. Marc-Girardin.

[24] *Examen de l'ouvrage de M. de Custine "La Russie en 1839".* Trad. du russe par A. Kouznetzoff. Paris 1844. German edition published in Heidelberg.

Auger who, for a generous reward from Russia, which he "sincerely loved," was ready to contribute to her rehabilitation. Gretch submitted to the Russian Government the plan of writing and producing in the Théâtre de la Porte St. Martin a vaudeville entitled *Voyage en Russie* which was to ridicule Custine. When, however, Gretch warned Dubelt beforehand that it would be necessary to give a large bribe to have this play produced in Paris, and when Auger himself hastened to Petersburg and presented himself to Benckendorf and Dubelt, they came to the conclusion that such zealots could by their ardor ridicule not so much Custine but Russia, and the matter did not go beyond the sphere of patriotic projects.[25]

Tiutchev deplored the fact that Russia, slandered by Custine, found only such defenders who "out of excessive zeal are able to raise their umbrellas quickly to protect the peak of Mont Blanc from the heat of day." However, he himself followed their example and published a polemical pamphlet against Custine.[26]

The result of all these pamphlets could only be such as is always the case with inept polemics against an outstanding work: advertisement for the work. Moreover, the defense of Russia by such vulgar minds as Gretch could only compromise the matter. Herzen understood this at once: "The Tsar's defense by Gretch against Custine is an astonishing fact; it accuses the government much more than does Custine by the apology itself and also by what it praises. Open lies, insolent references to facts generally known, but presented quite differently; vulgar views and arrogant intimacy, advertised to show our astonishing intimacy in the relations with the Emperor. There are pages that strike us by the cynicism of a slave who lost all respect for human dignity. Gretch disgraced the cause in the name of which he raised his ignominious voice. But denying the facts known to everybody, Gretch doubly strengthens the force of the diatribe."[27]

It was Herzen who evaluated Custine's book most pertinently and justly from a reasonable Russian viewpoint. "This is undoubtedly the most interesting and reasonable book ever written about Russia by a foreigner. There are mistakes and many superficial things, but there is real talent of a traveler and observer, a profound view capable of grasping the whole from a few fragments. He best grasped the artificiality evident at every step, and the boastfulness of those elements of European life which exist in Russia only for display. We find strikingly per-

[25] The whole affair of Gretch is described in the study by M. Lemke *Nikolayevskiye zhandarmy* (Nicholas' Gendarmes).

[26] *Lettre d'un Russe à M. Gust. Kolb, rédacteur de la "Gazette Universelle,"* Munich 1844. Reprinted in *Russkii Arkhiv* of 1873.

[27] A. I. Herzen. *Sochineniya,* (Works) Vol. VI, Petersburg 1905, p. 110.

tinent expressions. The author's tenderness and conscientiousness lend this book particular significance. It is by no means hostile to us, on the contrary he rather studied us with love and, loving us, he could not refrain from lashing many things... This book makes a painful impression on the Russian; his head drops and his arms sag; it is painful, for you feel the terrible truth, and it is distressing that it should take a foreigner to put his finger on the ailing spot; and many things win you for him, and above all his love of the people."

A month later, in November 1843, Herzen again returns to Custine's book: "This book affects me like torture, like a stone weighing heavily on my chest; I do not look at its defects, the essence of Custine's view is correct; that terrible society and that country are Russia. His eyes see humiliatingly much."[28]

In the pain of the wounded national feeling and in the simultaneous admission that the profound analyst of Russia was right, the ardent, honest soul of Alexander Herzen is fully reflected.

[28] Vol. VI, pp. 88, 89, 90. Details about Custine in the reminiscences of Elizabeth Lvov, *Russkaya Starina*, 1880, Vol. XXIX, pp. 208, 209.

2.

THE PEASANTS

In November 1892 Andrew Dickson White, appointed Minister to Russia by the President of the United States, Harrison, entered with curiosity the country with which he was linked by memories of his youth. Thirty-eight years earlier he had come in the late fall of 1854 to Petersburg as a young man of twenty-two, to take up his post as attaché of the American Legation. He had then arrived at a decisive moment, the beginning of the Crimean War; he witnessed Russia's defeat, the death of Nicholas I, the ascension to the throne of Alexander II, and at the onset of the new era in 1855, he left Russia.

Now, after thirty-seven years, he was returning to that country. He expected to find great changes. Since that time the twenty-five years long reign of Alexander II and more than a decade of his son's rule had elapsed. In the outside world White had heard about the reforms of Alexander II, the great achievement of the peasants' emancipation from serfdom, the progress of civilization made by Russia since the period of Nicholas. Indeed, he noticed changes as soon as he crossed the frontier. When many years ago he was leaving Russia, it took him seven days and seven nights in an uncomfortable stagecoach to reach the frontier from the capital; at that time Russia had only the Nicholas railway between the two capitals and a short line connecting Petersburg with Gatchina. Now Russia possessed a whole system of railway lines, the Siberian railroad was under construction. White traversed the distance from the frontier to Petersburg in a comfortable coach in a day and a half.

The observant American noticed, however, at once from a number of familiar symptoms that, as before, Russia was a country different from the nations of the civilized world. He was particularly struck by one thing: On the faces, in the external appearance, and in the beha-

vior of the people, whom he observed from the windows of his car, he found no change since the time he had left Russia.

"The *muzhik* remained, to all appearances, what he was before; in fact, as our train drew into St. Petersburg, the peasants with their sheepskin kaftans, cropped hair, and stupid faces brought back the old impressions so vividly that I seemed not to have been absent a week. The old atmosphere of repression was evident everywhere. I had begun my experience of it under Nicholas I..."[1]

This first impression was strengthened after White had spent some time in the Russia of Alexander III. "I stayed long in Russia before and after the emancipation of the peasants. I do not want to question the noble intentions of Alexander II and his collaborators, but I must say that if there is at all any difference in the peasants' situation before the reform and after it, it is hardly noticeable."

The foregoing was written at the close of Alexander III's reign. Twelve years later Russia was again roused by the spirit of reform, the Japanese war broke out, its defeats were followed by revolutionary commotions, the dormant peasants were awakened and the conflagration of the agrarian movement began to spread. Russia finally obtained a representative assembly in which also the peasants were present. Foreigners who now, after a longer absence, arrived in Russia, expected this time to see a country spiritually renewed and transformed. Let us examine the impressions of a Frenchman, known for his active friendship for Russia, a connoisseur and popularizer of Russian literature in the West, Viscount Melchior de Vogüé. In 1909, after a twenty years' absence, de Vogüé came to the centenary of Gogol's birth. Upon crossing the frontier he looked for the changes of which he had heard so much. He again found the same poor cottages and the same "motionless silhouettes." He saw the same unchanged peasant, and looking at him recalled the words from Gogol's *Dead Souls*: "Life looked at him through a small turbid window pane covered with snow."[2]

From the Crimean War to the eve of World War I more than half a century passed; many changes, many reforms took place, but Gogol's *Dead Souls* still remained the key to the knowledge of the peasant's mind. If the observations of the foreign visitors were not superficial, then the lack of change in peasant psychology from the time of cruel serfdom and Nicholas' tyranny to the constitutional era is a fact of tremendous significance, explaining the fate of Russia from the period of Alexander II's reforms until the present day.

Looking back at the hundred-year long struggle of enlightened

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[1] *Autobiography of Andrew Dickson White.* Two volumes. London. MacMillan and Co. 1905. Vol. II, p. 6.

[2] V-te E. M. de Vogüé, *Les Routes,* Third edition, Paris 1919, pp. 54-55.

Russia against the tsarist system we see successive generations of fighters entering and leaving the scene: first the Decembrists, followed by the small group of youth of Stankevich's generation, from which emerge the first founders of Russian socialism and anarchism, Herzen and Bakunin; these go abroad. Belinski dies, then come the disciples of Petrashevski, only to be followed, after their dispersion, by the nihilists, immortalized by Turgenev. Soon there appears a large group of populist propagandists, and right along come the organizers of peasant revolts, followed by the terrorists and trends of most recent formation. They die on the gallows, go to Siberia, live in exile, and only in exceptional cases do they end their lives at home in hard struggle against tyranny, like Belinski and Mikhailovski.

Since Radishchev at the time of Catherine II, these fighters for a better future of Russia ardently defend the largest class of the nation — the peasants. They fight for the peasants' cause, but not in their name and without a mandate, because the peasants do not know of the struggle waged for their welfare by the educated class. The educated friends of the people dream of its future, like a mother over the cradle of her child, to use the words of Leroy-Beaulieu; they proclaim the unusual virtues of that people and predict a glorious future for it. But when they address this propaganda to the peasants themselves and expect some reaction from them, the peasants receive these avowals distrustfully and silently. In the upper class, among the educated minority, there is feverish activity, Western theories are accepted at once and applied to the visions of Russia's future. There appears the cult of Hegel whose teachings are to be the *algebra of revolution*. The youth eagerly adopts the theories of the French socialists, S. Simon, Charles Fourier, Cabet. Then, against the background of materialistic philosophy, there rises the nihilist. The Bakuninists and Lavrists make their appearance. All these feverish researches and fanatically proclaimed doctrines are directed towards one goal, the solution of the great problem: how to bring to light these treasures of new life which are said to lie unconceived, in the bosom of the Russian people, how to extract from the depth the mysterious current whose existence is ardently believed in and which, after piercing the crust of slavery and being released, is to renew and regenerate not only Russia but all mankind.

While in the educated class the dream of Russia's people passes from generation to generation, the fetish in the sheepskin cloak or in the colored shirt buttoned at the side up to the neck, when the learned friends address him, is silent, or utters some evasive or humble sentences, hiding the real thought, crushes the cap in his hand, bows, smiles or looks askance with concealed ill-will. During the century long struggle of enlightened Russia against tsardom the mysterious figure of the

muzhik stands in the background of the stage: he may be a spectator, extra or player, perhaps the main character, the protagonist of the future. What will he do when he stirs, whom will he aid, the fighters of the revolution or the guardians of the tsarist order? Perhaps he will stir and trample upon both.

A tormenting riddle. If we want to throw some light on it, let us place more confidence in a creative Russian writer than in a doctrinaire populist. Let us see how Gogol presents against the background of the Russian village dreamers like Tentetnikov, Manilov, who wish to bring relief to the peasants during their serfdom. Gogol renders in a few words the distrustful, contemptuous and grudging attitude of the peasant to the idealist master. "The peasant from Tentetnikov's village when asked what kind of man their master was, gave no reply." Turgenev's Bazarov imagines that as a radical, nihilist and plebeian, treating the older generation of the Kirsanovs with deliberate arrogance, he will be able to reach a perfect understanding with the peasant and starts talking to him in an intimate and vulgarly ironic tone. The peasant puts him off with a deliberately fatuous sentence, assures him that "the more severe the master, the more pleasant it is for the peasant" and speaks mockingly of him to his neighbor. "Alas" — says Turgenev — "Bazarov, the self-confident Bazarov, did not suspect that in the eyes of the peasants he was a kind of fool." The peasant felt a grudge and distrust of the ideologist-master Tentetnikov and of the radical intellectual.

Michael Petrashevski made in 1847 an attempt to convince the peasants of the benefits of phalansteries arranged according to the program of Charles Fourier.

Petrashevski owned a small village in a marshy place on the outskirts of a pine forest. The peasants led a miserable existence, the huts rotted, and in 1847 the elder applied to Petrashevski for timber to rebuild the huts.

It occurred to Petrashevski to apply Fourierism, though on a small scale. He explained to the elder that the peasants would profit if he were to build for the entire population of the village, composed of seven families, a spacious house in the forest. Each family would have a separate room for itself, there would be a common kitchen to cook the food and a common hall for winter work, recreation and entertainment; the farm buildings, livestock and machinery would be community-owned. Petrashevski displayed before the elder an alluring picture of the advantages of that system, promised to arrange everything at his own expense, to buy tools, kitchen utensils, pots, glasses and spoons. The elder listened, bowed humbly and replied to all questions of the master whether the new plan would not be better than the old conditions: "Your pleasure, Master; you know better, we are ignorant people;

we shall do what you command." All attempts at extricating his own opinion were futile.

Already Petrashevski sensed that the peasants were recalcitrant about his reform, but he believed that the immense advantages of this first Russian phalanstery would soon convince the simpletons steeped in routine. Therefore, he started building that house in the middle of the pine forest, work proceeded rapidly, and before winter the house was completed. During the construction our Fourierist under the sway of Nicholas I gave the peasants explanations as to the plan and destination of the building, initiated them into the system of the future life and asked whether they were satisfied. The peasants followed him with the expression of men sentenced to prison and muttered gloomily: "We are very satisfied. It will be according to your wish."

The peasants were scheduled to move to their new quarters on Christmas Day 1847. On the eve of the moving, Petrashevski once more went to the whole phalanstery with the peasants, handed over the livestock to them, and ordered the horses and cattle to be transferred in the morning to the new stables and sheds and the supplies to be placed in the barns. When he came on the next day to welcome the peasants on the new farm he found only smouldering beams. During the night the peasants had set fire to the farm which burned down with all buildings and livestock. Petrashevski, bitterly disappointed, told this story to a friend who conveyed these details of the building of the first and last peasant phalanstery in Russia to posterity.[3]

How this peasant mentality which must have been the result of centuries, originated, how it survived the reform of 1861, a reform called exaggeratedly the emancipation of the Russian peasant, how it maintained itself for more than half a century after the reform and came into the open in 1917, almost unchanged since the period of Pugachev – these are questions requiring a look into the past and the presentation of the vicissitudes of the peasant problem in at least a brief outline.

The organization of the peasants in Russia formed the component

[3] Petrashevski was not discouraged by this experience. In a note submitted to the Investigation Committee at the trial, he stated that a five year education was necessary for people, already warped by existing conditions, to accept Fourier's system. He maintained before the Investigation Committee that Charles Fourier's teachings were not a utopia and that they could be put into effect within five to six years. Details about the phalanstery, based on the reliable account of Petrashevski's friend Zotov, are to be found in V. I. Semyovski's study "M. V. Butashevich-Petrashevski," *Golos Minuvshago* (Voice of the Past), August 1913, pp. 58, 59, 60. Another person, K. Vesolovski, tells about Petrashevski's lectures on Fourierism for janitors in St. Petersburg. Asked by Petrashevski after his first lecture whether they understood it, they answered in the affirmative and received 20 *kopecks* each. To the second lecture the janitors brought more of their colleagues. The lecture was longer and the janitors having received 5 *kopecks* each grumbled that in spite of a greater loss of time they received less money.

part and, as it were, the foundation of the great social structure which was the result of the deliberate action of the state authority in the Muscovite period. When the state, after its liberation from the Tartar yoke, began quickly to develop and grow, the authority of the Grand Duke did not meet any social class capable of opposing its strength as well as its acquired rights to the monarch's power. At that time in the West the process of the creation of the modern state was starting; it found a whole complicated social structure, grown in the course of many centuries, and settled in stable forms, hallowed by tradition, a rich, strong lay feudal class, the clergy, powerfully organized and subject to Rome, cities with a well developed municipal system, and at the bottom the peasant class whose duties and rights were circumscribed by the regulations of written and common law.

The state authority bent on absolutism and centralization was heading deliberately and unwittingly for the transformation of the mosaic of classes into a modern society composed of citizens with equal rights. In its levelling tendency the state was unable to obliterate the tradition of class rights and liberties, and when since the French Revolution absolutism, already crushed in England, began gradually to yield ground also on the Continent to modern constitutional democratic systems, the new principles of civic liberties were, as it were, an expansion and democratization of the spirit of freedom which previously, in the form of class rights and church privileges, obstinately opposed the omnipotence of the state. There existed an unbroken tradition of rights, graduated in the various classes according to their degree of privileges, but even in the lowest class, the peasants, never falling to a state of complete lawlessness. In addition, there existed several centuries of unbroken culture which did not permit the states, even when despotism reigned supreme, to sink to the level of barbarism and tyranny of an Eastern type.

In Russia the rising despotic monarchy did not find any stronger social forces, and moreover it found general ignorance and an extremely low cultural level. From this raw material of social classes the monarchy easily made the pulp from which it created a new social system completely subordinated to the main tasks of the state. The building of society came from above, from the grand ducal power; the formation of social classes was preceded here by the establishment and power of the state authority.

What were the main tasks of the state in accordance with which the Tsars moulded from a barbarous and slave population, as if from clay, the social system of Russia? The Muscovite tsardom at once became a typical military state, the aim of which was external defense and conquest of contiguous territories. Especially in the first period of the growth of power this expansion took place spontaneously rather than

on the basis of a prearranged plan. This required a large army and considerable means. The growth and expansion of the State surpassed from the beginning its administrative capacity and its economic and cultural resources. To extract from the still uncivilized and immense country the means to conduct a grand policy and to wage constant wars was the main task. Striving to achieve this principal mission the Tsars disregarded the peace, welfare, property, and life of their subjects and unhesitantingly sacrificed them to the one sole aim.

Since the end of the fifteenth century, *i.e.* since the reign of Ivan III, the Tsars begin to apply the system of granting estates to their subjects on condition that the beneficiaries would do military service. That system was copied from Byzantium, from which it was taken over by the South Slavs and, in the course of time, by the Turks. While expanding his possessions, Ivan III expropriated the owners and distributed the land among his warriors. Thus in 1488 he dispossessed more than 8000 landowners in the Republic of Novgorod and distributed the property among his men on condition of rendering military service. These *pomestiya* or landed estates were also lavishly distributed by Ivan III's successors. Especially Ivan IV the Terrible, unscrupulously dispossessed the old proprietors, *votchinniki*, both in conquered territories and in Muscovy. He did not hesitate to repeat the expropriation several times, giving land to the men whom he considered particularly devoted to him. Thus a class of landowners in the service of the Tsar developed during the century extending from the beginning of the reign of Ivan III to the end of that of Ivan IV. The owner of such an estate, *pomeshchik*, held it from the Tsar's hands as a servant of the throne, *sluzhiliy chelovek*. Thus a whole class of people was simultaneously linked to the soil and to the service of the state. The poor, yet aggressive state paid its servants in land and in peasants settled on it, the income from land being an equivalent of pay or salary.

This system (*pomestnaya sistema*) developed during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and was gradually extended to the estates held by private title as hereditary property (*votchina, votchinnik*); the owners of these estates were equalized with the *pomeshchiki, i.e.* were obliged to render state service. The whole system was based on the idea that the land of the entire state and its population constituted the Tsar's property, a view inseparably linking the monarch's power over the state with his right to, and possession of, the land on which the population lived. This view, peculiar also to mediaeval Western Europe, became in Russia, in view of the absence of a strong nobility and the weakness of acquired rights, not a legal fiction resulting only in some restraints for the feudal owners, as in the West, but a living law, ruthlessly applied. When in his old age the *pomeshchik* became incapable of

state service, the Tsar would take away his property and hand it over to his son. When state service ceased in the family, the title to the possession of the land became extinct and the estate reverted to the Tsar. Only in the seventeenth century the rules were somewhat eased, the principle itself remaining inviolate. Thus when in the case of a *pomeshchik's* death there remained minor children, the estate was left in the possession of the family in anticipation of the son's majority; and sometimes, even when there was no son, the estate was transferred to the daughter's husband.

The system of treating landed estates as returnable benefices, conditioned by rendering state service, lasted almost three centuries and left a deep mark on the consciousness of the whole nation. Peter I's ukase of 1714 granted to the nobility the hereditary possession of their estates, but tied it by still more severe rules to obligatory state service. Only the ukase of Peter III of 1762 released the nobility from obligatory state service, and only since then dates in Russia the possession of landed estates by title of private, civil ownership.

At the close of the sixteenth century the Muscovite state agrarian system was supplemented by the attachment of the peasant to the soil; during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the peasants' serfdom was developed and established, the leading idea being in this case, as well as in relation to the landowners, the political purpose. The peasant was attached to the soil for fiscal purposes, to establish the place of his tax responsibility; peasant labor became the landowner's reward for services to the state; attachment to the soil made it impossible for the peasant to move from his place and it secured labor to the landowner. Since then the situation of the peasant became extremely hard. In view of the barbarism of the *pomeshchiki,* their treatment of the peasants was cruel. It may be said, however, that until 1762 the peasant did not feel so underprivileged socially as he did later. Each wrong of a social class is measured by comparison with other classes. Until 1762 the landowner was also in bondage, he rendered compulsory statute-labor. The peasant depended on his master as the Tsar's servant, it was a political dependence, he rendered service to the Tsar; the landowner carried out the Tsar's command to which both, master and peasant, were liable. News of the 1762 manifesto liberating the nobility, reached the peasants and became associated with the version which was to stick forever in the peasants' mind, that the liberation of the masters from the Tsar's service was linked with the emancipation of the peasants from the master's service, but that the masters concealed this part of the Tsar's manifesto.

The aggravation of the relationship between master and peasant was caused also by other factors. About the middle of the eighteenth

century, under the influence of the reforms of Peter I and court manners modeled on the West, there began the external Europeanization of Russian nobility; from then on the landowner began to be much more clearly distinct in external refinement, dress and way of life from the peasant than hitherto. He became for the peasant a stranger, a domestic foreigner. Meanwhile in that very period the peasant's serfdom was growing increasingly dreadful. In 1747, the right of selling the peasant, applied already in the seventeenth century, was legally recognized. In 1760 the landowner obtained the right to deport the peasant to Siberia, and in 1767 the peasants lost the right of complaint against the lord. Catherine II's decree of 1785 concerning the privileges of the nobility (*Zhalovannaya gramota dvorianstvu*) definitely recognized the peasant as the inalienable property of the nobleman. The landowner's right of sending the peasant to hard labor for insolence, and the prohibition of lodging complaints against landowners, punishable by knouting and deportation for life to the mines of Nerchinsk, were confirmed. Giving the landowners such immense power, the legislator charged them with responsibility for the payment of taxes and the supply of recruits and imposed on them the duty of feeding the peasants in case of famine and providing them with seeds in case of bad crops. At the time when the French Revolution was promoting the abolition of the vestiges of feudalism and when the Four-Year Diet in Poland was preparing an improvement of the peasants' lot, in Russia the peasant was delivered into complete bondage of the lord. This took place in the reign of Catherine II, who at the same time wanted to be celebrated as the protectress of the physiocrats and encyclopaedists and discoursed upon the advantages of freedom.

The nineteenth century finds the Russian peasant in the state of most severe serfdom. He has no right to leave his abode, or be transferred to another class. He cannot marry without his master's consent, he cannot become the owner of real estate, and even his chattels are not legally safeguarded against appropriation by the master. The lord can demand from the peasant any kind of labor; he can transfer a peasant doing farm work to service in the manor and *vice versa*; he has full disciplinary authority; he can send his peasants to the army, to hard labor or to Siberia. It is true that the law makes the reservation that the master should not punish the peasants in such a way as to endanger their lives, cripple or ruin them, but these rules are admonitions rather than prohibitions, since the peasant's complaint against the lord is strictly forbidden, and the administrative authorities back the landlords on whom, more often than not, they are financially dependent.

To understand fully the psychology of the Russian peasant in the further development of the agrarian question, it must be remembered

that private land ownership in Russia dated only from the eighteenth century, indeed only since the ukase of Peter III, and that this short period could by no means dislodge from the peasant's mind the idea of the Tsar as the supreme owner of all landed property in Russia, an idea based on three centuries of history during which the attributes of the ruler and owner of all Russian land, *imperator* and *dominus* were actually united in the Tsar's person. The land belonged, in a temporal sense, to the Tsar, in a religious sense to God, the Orthodox peasants had a natural right to that land, while the lord was an intruder and usurper: such was the peasant's idea, the secret thought of the *muzhik* which he concealed under a mask of humbleness and submission. From 1762 to 1861 only one century had elapsed. The ukase of 1861 revived in the peasant's mind the unextinguished faith that the Tsar could take the land away from the lords and give it to the peasants. The old Moscow despotism that knew no acquired private rights, was a long school of expropriation instincts for the peasant. The continued reign of autocracy in the nineteenth century maintained in the peasant the vivid hope that he might, at any moment, obtain land and liberty from the Tsar's hands. Against this psychological background, rumors easily originated that the Tsar had already proclaimed his beneficent will, but that the lords had concealed that will from the peasants.

The peasant's dependence on the landlord in Russia was never strictly defined by the law. The state regulated this relationship in an extremely general way, leaving immense scope to the lord's arbitrariness. Some outstanding Russian historians are of the opinion that the *tabula rasa* of the lord-peasant relationship was very advantageous to the latter, as it made possible the introduction in 1861 of a new legal relationship with one stroke of the pen. The reform filled the vacuum easily and without friction, while in the West it took centuries to do away with the complex feudal norms. This supposed advantage belongs to the category of those alleged advantages which the Russians, from Slavophils on, attribute to their cultural juniority, such as the advantage of the lack of knighthood traditions, Renaissance, private property etc. These were ominous advantages. Indeed it was easier in Russia than in the West to introduce a new legal order with one stroke of the Tsar's pen, but it soon became apparent that such an improvisation had no foundation in the social system or in the consciousness of the nation, and it was no less easy to change, with another stroke of the pen, the new state of affairs to a different one.

The complex feudal law of the West, though extremely burdensome to the peasant, was nevertheless a two-way norm, a law which imposed certain duties, it was *dura lex, sed lex*. Positive law always restricts arbitrariness of the stronger, and of absolute force. Such a law creates in

the oppressed class the desire of changing the unjust law to a better, more just, and more favorable law. The state of arbitrariness, on the other hand does not create in the masses a tendency to change the law, but to abolish all law, hatred of any dependence, any social bonds, a spontaneous endeavor to free themselves from constraint and force. If that arbitrariness is disguised with the name and force of the government and the prestige of its general rules, the conviction arises in the masses that laws are only a fig leaf for the despotism and greediness of the possessing classes. There appear, as a chronic phenomenon, spontaneous, political and social revolt, and maximalist tendencies towards expropriation and anarchism. Under the crust of dreadful social bondage lies dormant the impulse to overthrow any authority and to seize all land. The revolutionary maximalism of the people, concealed and suppressed, but bursting forth at any occasion, creates a national atmosphere and psychology which manifests itself, in the educated class, by the revolutionary maximalism of the intelligentsia.

The timid measures towards the improvement of the peasant's lot, undertaken by the predecessors of Alexander II, date back to Paul I who by his ukase of 1797 limited serf labor to three days a week. The ukase, however, was so formulated that, as was stated by Radishchev, it was rather an admonition than a binding law. On the other hand, Paul, having given 600,000 peasants to the landlords, increased the number of serfs.

The sweeping plans of Alexander I conceived in the beginning of his reign brought only small results in the peasant question. In 1803 a ukase was issued about free farmers, by which the landowners were authorized to make contracts with peasants giving them personal liberty and a plot of land, in exchange for payment in money, in kind or in services. The results of that ukase were not considerable. In the reign of Alexander I, the number of peasants who obtained freedom on the basis of the ukase was 47,153 males, while in the reign of Nicholas I, 67,149.[4]

Since Alexander I began the practice of confidential committees

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[4] *Russkaya Starina,* May 1888. V. Semyovski. "Krestianskii Vopros." pp. 308, 334. The history of the peasants in Russia until the reform of 1861 was presented on the basis of source material by V. Semyovski in an extensive study. Important fragments of his work are published in *R. Starina*: May, 1888, "The Peasant Question in Russia in the Eighteenth and the First Half of the Nineteenth Centuries." February 1887. "The Peasants' Struggle Against the Power of the Landlords in the Reign of Nicholas I." October, November and December 1887. "Sketches from the History of the Peasant Question in the First Half of the Nineteenth Century." – Valuable for the study of the peasant question is Part I of P. Miliukov's well-known work on the history of Russian culture. For the epoch of Alexander I and particularly of Nicholas I of importance is *Graf Kiselev i yego vremia* by Zablotski-Desyatovski, especially vol. II and the documents contained in vol. IV. In vol. IV, pp. 271-346 an important

on the peasant question which deliberated almost uninterruptedly for more than half a century without any result. The classical period of those secret committees was the reign of Nicholas I. The constant discussion of the peasant problem was motivated by the fear of a peasant mass revolt, while the Tsars' vacillation and apprehension was caused by fear lest by crushing one of the pillars of the system, peasant serfdom, the road be opened to the fall of autocracy, and also by anxiety not to push away from the throne the bureaucrat-landowning class. The tsarist system hesitated between fear of Pugachev and the memory of Paul's death at the hands of dignitaries and magnates. The Tsars expressed their apprehensions as to the danger of a peasant revolt openly in the confidential committees. Alexander I concluded one of his addresses in the "unofficial committee" with the words: "We must satisfy the peasant masses for they may become dangerous when, conscious of their strength, they revolt."

The government of Nicholas I tried to keep foreign nations in the dark about the conditions of the peasants, their misery and chronic revolts. When Custine voiced his dismay and sympathy for the unhappy Russian peasant, immediately Russian and obsequious foreign writers hastened to the rescue of the tsarist government and represented the *muzhik* as living a simple, peaceful, patriarchal life, satisfied with his lot and praising the Tsar. Reality defied this official lie, and the government knew what the real situation was. In times of bad crops, the peasants fell into misery and famine visited immense areas. In 1833 the crops were poor in Russia's southern provinces. When the famine assumed catastrophic proportions and the Governors, as it was their custom, presented a rosy picture of the situation, Nicholas sent his aide-de-camp Dyakov with a few other officers to investigate the matter on the spot. The Tsar trusted only military men who were close to the court; they were to remedy an economic calamity. The delegates' reports were gloomy, though they by no means told the whole truth, and it is not even evident that they closely examined the peasants' situation. They rather relied on the landowners' information and in their reports they stressed the difficult situation of the nobility who were forced to feed the peasants, and in addition they pointed out the misery of the military

memorandum by Zablotski-Desyatovski is reprinted which we shall quote further. Russian literature concerning the peasant question is very abundant. For persons not knowing Russian *L'Empire des Tsars* by A. Leroy-Beaulieu, especially vol. I, chapters VII and VIII and vol. II chapter I, should be mentioned. A short outline of the peasant question in *Handwörterbuch der Staatswissenschaften*, vol. II. Jena 1899, article "Die Bauernbefreiung in Russland" by Wl. Simkhovich, pp. 399-423 contains an extensive bibliography of the subject. A. Kornilov, "Die Bauernfrage" (pp. 361-416) in *Russen über Russland*, a collective work published in Frankfurt-on-Main, 1906. The pre-World War period is briefly presented by Otto Hoetzsch, *Russland*, Berlin, 1915, chapter V, "Agrarfrage und Agrarreform."

pensioners and officials. From that picture the situation of the peasants may well be imagined. Here is an excerpt from General Dyakov's report concerning the Yekaterinoslav province: "For relief to the poor, General Dyakov handed to the governor 10,000 roubles, and also distributed relief personally. Among those who applied there were, besides beggars, many old pensioned officials and soldiers. In the cities of Bakhmut and Slavyanoserbsk, General Dyakov found so many beggars and people of all classes, among them retired officers, their wives, and also soldiers, that he was constantly besieged by these people imploring to be saved from death by starvation. No less trying was the situation of the peasants who not only suffered bad crops, but had lost their livestock from a plague. Because of lack of flour the peasants baked bread with an admixture of acorns, oak leaves and orach."[5]

Bad crops occurred again in 1839 and 1840 — three years of famine in one decade. Information about these two years is supplied by a noteworthy document, a long memorandum about the condition of the peasants, written by A. Zablotski-Desyatovski, collaborator and confidant of Count Paul Kiselev. Kiselev, at that time Minister of State Domains, was among the upper classes an isolated advocate of the peasant question in the reign of Nicholas I. His aspirations, however, did not go so far as the emancipation of the peasants. In his opinion the reform of 1861 went too far.[6] Andrei Zablotski-Desyatovski, who died in 1881, as a member of the State Council, State Secretary and actual Privy Councillor, visited in 1841, on Kiselev's order, the central provinces, to investigate the peasant problem on the spot. To camouflage the delicate mission, Kiselev ordered Zablotski to set out on a journey accompanied by one official, supposedly to examine the administration of the state domains, but in reality to investigate the situation of the serfs. After his return, Zablotski submitted an extensive memorandum which, as far as is known, Kiselev did not present to the Emperor. Zablotski, however, wrote his memorandum with the idea that it would be submitted to the Tsar and the higher authorities and that its contents could be checked, and therefore, far from exaggerating the picture, he omitted many drastic matters.

The document presents a very gloomy picture of the condition of the largest class of the Russian nation in the brilliant reign of Nicholas I. The peasants' existence is extremely miserable. Huts with chimneys are

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[5] S. M. Seredonin. *Istoricheskii Obzor Deyatelnosti Komiteta Ministrov* (Historical Survey of the Activity of the Committee of Ministers), Vol. II, Part 1, p. 189, Vol. II, Part II, p. 302ff. On Dyakov's report Nicholas wrote the remark: "Dreadful reading! Count Vorontsov does not inform me of anything..."

[6] "Quant à la question nationale du jour je me trouve en effet débordé" Kiselev wrote to Sumarokov after the reform of 1861. A. Zablotski-Desyatovski, *Graf Kiselev*, vol. II, p. 354. — About Zablotski-Desyatovski and his services for the reform see *Russkaya Starina*, Vol. XXXIII, 1882, pp. 532-560.

rare, most of them are without chimneys, with very small windows, as the peasants think it is warmer in them. While the fire is on in the winter the hut presents the following sight: "The door is widely open, the smoke fills the room, the grown-ups stand in the hallway or outside, the children sit or lie on the ground, half-frozen from cold, wrapped in rags, or at the most, in their father's sheepskin coat. A woman hustles at the stove, blinking her eyes, coughing and choking with smoke. Finally the heating ends and the housewife hastens to lock the door, that it might be warmer in the room, and often she closes it with the poisonous vapor... Colds, headaches and rheumatism are frequent among the peasants..." The mortality of children up to five is tremendous. Next to the huts stand the magnificent residences of the lords.

This lack of elementary hygiene, these inhuman conditions were found by Zablotski everywhere. In the autumn of 1840 the driver stops before his home in the Tula province. From the outside the house looks comparatively decent, and the travelling investigators enter: "It was a dark autumn night; we entered the hut, but we could remain in it only a few minutes: the smoke from the chip bit us in the eyes. Opposite the door at the chip sat four or five women, spinning; to the left, on a bundle of straw, lay the driver's sick brother, unconscious and speechless; he hurt himself falling from an oak tree, while shaking off acorns; his young wife busies herself around him in silence, treating him with *kvass;* to the right, two soldiers eat borshch, adding water to it. Meanwhile, the brother of the sick man tried to get horses for us; upon entering the hut he did not even ask about the patient's health. This savage helplessness of the peasant in his trouble, this apparent torpidness is heartrending..."

Some landlords want to raise the technical level of the peasant dwellings, for instance by building stone houses for the peasants. But upon entering such a house one finds that because of poverty and lack of culture the peasants do not at all feel well there. "The life and condition of the peasant do not by any means improve from it. On the contrary, as he has not yet reached the level on which an orderly and beautiful dwelling gives one pleasure, the peasant is ill at ease and equally dirty in it."

In the Voronezh province, a landowner built a whole row of stone houses for the peasants. "The first step into such a house convinces one that the peasant continues to live, as before, if not worse. The walls are damp, there is dirt on the benches, here and there are pigs or a calf, in the middle of the room is a heap of garbage in which lies a dirty, sick child in rags, hardly a human being..."

The home requirements of the peasants are quite primitive. They have no beds or bedding, they sleep on benches or on the stove and

cover themselves with sheepskin coats or jackets, putting sackcloth and straw underneath. Beggary is extremely widespread. There are estates where the peasants' common occupation is vagrancy and begging in the neighboring villages. In case of bad crops famine spreads like pestilence. In 1840-41 a number of provinces were affected by bad crops. The misery was appalling. The landowners admitted that the situation of the peasants was dreadful. Let us quote an account of the landowners from Tula province: "During the winters of famine the situation of the peasants and their families is terrible. Acorns, bark, grass from the marshes, in a word everything is used for food. The peasants have no money to buy salt. People become poisoned or get diarrhoea, swell or grow thin, terrible diseases appear. Milk would be helpful, but the cow has been sold and there is nothing that could be given to the dying. The women lose their nourishment and infants die like flies. Nobody knows about this because nobody dared to write or speak openly about it, and besides, how many people would look into a peasant's cottage? It is no secret that years of famine are not rare phenomena, on the contrary, they occur periodically."

Having presented this gloomy picture of the peasant's material condition, Zablotski in turn describes his moral character. The peasant has lost his human dignity, he accepts insults with indifference, endures his bondage with resignation, and the most dangerous symptom is that he looks indifferently on the violation of family and marriage laws. The masters' immoral conduct towards the peasants comes into the open only when the master, besides debauchery, commits atrocities, when he mistreats people. Then the peasants, losing their patience, bring the moral depravities of the masters to light. "However, criminal relations with the peasants' wives and daughters do not always anger them too deeply, and this is particularly true about the women." The driver, telling Zablotski about the conduct of landowner M. in the Razan province concluded as follows: "Whether you like it or not, each woman and girl belongs to him and there is nothing strange in this, because they are peasant women and serfs."

For a girl's permission to marry a ransom is taken by the master, for instance 100 roubles, and nobody asks about the girl's consent. "In the Kaluga province fathers sell their daughters, whether a girl wants to marry or not. The father takes 60, or at the most 70 roubles, and of course spends them on drinks. Now [1840], due to the high price of grain, the price for girls has fallen to 40 roubles."

"As far as family virtues are concerned, the peasants of private estates are not worse than the peasants in state domains, because it is impossible to be worse in that respect."

"In the Novgorod province we happened to attend a court trial on

the complaint of an old woman against her husband for an affair with his daughter-in-law. The local police official spoke about this as of a common thing."

"In many provinces we were assured that the majority of legal actions for adultery among the peasants were based on similar transgressions. But these cases do by no means give a faithful picture of the real situation, as they are started in consequence of complaints resulting from jealousy. However, this feeling is very seldom found among our peasants."

"On the way from Tambov to Razan we changed horses in the village of Chernovske Khutory on a wealthy farm inhabited by three married brothers. It was August 16. The peasants were inebriated. One of the brothers began to offer his wife, demanding a rouble for it."

"The whole company laughed with great joy and praised the daredevil. In fun we pointed to the wife of the second brother Grishka, but the latter did not agree to trade his wife. Oh, said the first brother with a sigh, if it were later in the evening, it would not be necessary to ask the husband, a glass of vodka and 20 kopecks would be sufficient, but now it is still light..."

"Similar examples of cynicism are by no means an exception. They may be found at every turn."

"A girl's innocence has no great price in the eyes of our peasants to such an extent that in the Kaluga province the father and mother tell the bridegroom: take her as she is, and don't look for what you won't find."

The landlords not only know about this demoralization, but they themselves largely contribute to its spread. This is known from a number of diaries and memoirs of the period directly preceding the reform of 1861. The following is an account from the Saratov province.

"The estate of Mr. Z. is situated not far from the village B. The owner did not live on the estate, but came every year for a few weeks' stay. His estate — two villages with about hundred houses — was managed by an ex-soldier married to the owner's former housekeeper. Every year the manager prepared for the day of the master's arrival a list of all grown-up girls and handed it to him. The latter took each girl in succession for three or four days as a maid. As soon as the list was exhausted he went to the other village. And this went on year in, year out."[7]

The blindness of the landlords who are not at all alarmed by the peasants' demoralization, is striking. "In all its relations with the common people," writes Zablotski, "the upper class does not see in them an

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[7] *Russkaya Starina*, Vol. XXVII, 1880. "Zapiski selskago svyashchennika." (Recollections of a Village Priest) p. 77.

aim, but only a means, labor, and nothing more. All that could educate and develop human qualities in them was shoved away, at first through ignorance, and later by the system which was founded on the unjust and antisocial idea that it is easier to rule savages."

From time to time, there appear in a peasant man or woman the normal feelings of jealousy and moral indignation, but then they assume cruel, savage characteristics. In the Penza province, a wife angered at her husband because of his relationship with her sister, locked him in the barn while it was burning and he perished in the flames.[8]

The memorandum also discusses other faults of the peasant, such as drunkenness, lack of the sense of honor, absence of true religious feeling: the latter is caused by the lack of any influence of the clergy, who are held in contempt by the educated class and in disregard by the peasants.

Is there not a single ray of light in these dead souls? Did the official observer see nothing except darkness and crime? Yes, he did. Even from this abyss of humiliation the human soul aspires to the light. The struggle of this eternal revolt of the human soul against the overwhelming power of force and violence is the most tragic feature in the tragic lot of the *muzhik*.

"A Razan landowner, Titov, related an interesting fact: he had a literate cowherd. Between work the young peasants went to him to learn the alphabet and paid a rouble for his teaching. Titov would have liked to found a school but was afraid of an intervention of the school director: the authorities would demand a report, the formalities would kill the matter."

This is an eloquent picture. Young peasants learn secretly and instead of spending their hard-earned rouble at the inn they pay their teacher. The landowner would like to establish a school but is afraid of the authorities. Perhaps, if there were more enlightened Titovs, ways could have been found to raise the educational standard, but unfortunately it is otherwise.

"Besides this (*i.e.* obstacles on the part of the authorities), the education of the peasants meets insurmountable obstacles on the part of the landowners themselves. The majority are convinced that education is not only useless to the peasants but is even detrimental to them, that they use it for bad purposes, become cheaters, forgers of passports etc."

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[8] In general, the fate of the married woman is very hard in that class. Custom recommends the beating of women as useful. In the Kaluga province a bloodstained woman came to the village court complaining against her father-in-law who had beaten her for having been late in bringing lunch into the field. The court decreed that if freedom were given to the women, life would become impossible, and decided to have the woman flogged. (Zablotski-Desyatovski's memorandum).

The greatest tragedy is that these landlords are right. As long as the peasant remained an object it was an additional atrocity to educate him. "Literacy" – writes Zablotski about the peasants who had obtained some education – "enlightened only the peasant's head, but, far from making him a human being, it only strengthened his desire for freedom. It is very natural that all their faculties are directed towards freeing themselves from their hard bondage by cunning or cheating."

The condition of a man who, having obtained education, continues to remain in bondage, is unbearable. "The late Professor Pavlov used to quote striking examples of alumni of the Moscow agricultural school who came from serf families. He exchanged correspondence with his pupils and their letters were mostly filled with heartrending complaints against bondage which, in view of their education, was becoming unbearable for them. A certain young man, after having managed an estate for two years, asked the landowner as a favor and reward for his irreproachable zeal, to be sent to military service. The landowner complied with his request."

And it is well known what military service was like in the reign of Nicholas I.

The clergy were so ignorant that they could not enlighten the people. "The more sensible among the hierarchs understand this, when they do not permit the priests to explain the gospel; such an order was given, for instance, by the bishop of Razan."

The most threatening symptom were peasant revolts which formed a chronic phenomenon. They took place constantly since the middle of the eighteenth century, at the beginning of each reign. At each change of a ruler rumors spread that a change for the better was to be expected in the situation of the peasants. After the death of Catherine II riots broke out in seventeen provinces. The reign of Nicholas I started with revolts in many localities. The basis of the revolts was usually the legend spread by some agitator, for instance the soldier Semyonov in the Kiev region in 1826, and in which the peasants blindly believed, that allegedly the Tsar decided to distribute the land among them and give them freedom. Even after a revolt had been quelled in blood, the belief persisted among the peasants that the lords bribed the authorities and frustrated the execution of the Tsar's will. The Tsars' manifestos, like the one issued in 1826, warning against the mystifications of the agitators, made no impression.

The revolts continued. As early as 1827 an official account stated that, "the spirit of unrest and license spread to such an extent that the peasants completely refused obedience and admonitions remained with-

out any effect." Troops were brought to the threatened estates, the main culprits were handed over to court martial and deported to Siberia, for settlement or hard labor. In the subsequent years the revolts continued unabated. The authorities coming to the places of disturbance immediately ordered the cruel mass flogging of the peasants. As is evident from descriptions of such punishment, for instance in the estate of Prince Leonidas Golitzin in the Razan province in 1847, the majority of the peasants, ordered to submit to their master, refused to do so. During the mass flogging a weak, frail boy, believed to be one of the agitators, unmercifully beaten, bit the ground in order not to scream. During the flogging of the men, the women threw themselves into ponds and were it not for compulsory rescue they would have paid with their lives for their desperate protest. During the quelling of riots in the Viatka province in 1834, each of the main culprits received 6,000 lashes with a whip in the presence of the peasants summoned as spectators, while others received 2,500, 1,000 and 200 lashes each.

After the flogging, one of the women, having learned that her husband had been the first to submit, threw herself into the pond. In 1840, during riots in the Vitebsk province, in view of the threatening attitude of a thousand peasants, a detachment of troops opened regular fire during which, according to an official report, 21 peasants were killed and 24 wounded. Also in this case the punishment was cruel, the main culprits were subjected on the spot to a flogging of from 4,000 to 5,000 lashes and were deported to Siberia.

The revolts broke out independently in various localities. In 1845 there were riots on 32 estates situated in 17 provinces; in 1846 on 27 estates in 16 provinces; in 1847 on 35 estates in 25 provinces; in 1848 on 54 estates in 27 provinces. The number of peasants subjected to punishment after these revolts was very considerable. After the riots in the village of Pisarevka, Voronezh province, in 1848, 1,000 "less guilty" peasants were subjected to a corrective punishment, while the main culprits were driven through the lines (*skvoz stroy*). In 1849 in the Putivel county, Kursk province, 10,000 peasants participated in riots which embraced several estates, and four squadrons of cavalry were used to quell them. All told, during the reign of Nicholas I, in the period from 1826 to 1854, there were 556 peasant revolts, an average of 19 per year. This number, however, comprises only officially confirmed revolts, but probably a much greater number of such riots were never reported to higher authorities. In his memorandum quoted above Zablotski-Desyatovski writes about peasant revolts during the reign of Nicholas I: "Many of these affairs do not come to the knowledge of higher authorities but are frequently settled in a domestic fashion." This domestic fashion consisted of quick and immediate application of terror by the

landowners, sometimes with the help of the lower local authorities, without alarming the higher ones.

The sources of the mass revolts were always the same: The burdensome lot, want and oppression of the peasants; and, against the background of this misery, an irresistible inclination to believe in the most fantastic tales, provided they promised land and freedom to the peasants. In view of this constant excitement of the peasant masses there spontaneously arose utopian legends and the movement spread like wildfire until it was suppressed. In the middle of March, 1847, unrest broke out among the peasants in the Vitebsk province. For three years there were poor crops in that district and the peasants suffered great poverty. In the atmosphere of these three years of misery, they seized upon the strangest versions of these legends with yearning hope.

The government's decrees concerning the transfer of the peasants from the state domains in the Vitebsk area into the interior of the empire, were understood by them as the first step toward the transfer of the peasants from private estates to other lands. The tendency to leave the places where conditions were so bad and move to somewhere, to another place, where freedom and plenty awaited them, seized the peasants' minds with irresistible force.

The starving peasants of the Sebezh county disposed of their belongings far below value. In April, 1847, they set out with their families towards Pskov province. Their example was contagious. They were followed *en masse* by the peasants of the Drisna and Nevel counties. The Nevel peasants, preparing for the expedition, bought guns and powder, made bullets, and beat their plowshares into pikes. Crowds of peasants with their wives and children marched towards the north, headed for Petersburg, their figure reaching 10,000 persons. All the peasants of the Vitebsk province were ready to follow them. Expostulations of the educated people had no effect, and to the remarks of the priests the peasants answered: "Father, God led the Israelites out of the land of Egypt, but we are still in it." In the Velike Luki county, Pskov province, some local officials tried to stop a large group of peasants with a small detachment of troops. The peasants beat the soldiers and one official with fence palings, and took another official prisoner. To curb this spontaneous exodus from the land of Egypt, it was necessary to use considerable military force. The number of peasants who left their places, together with their wives and children, amounted to 30,000 people. The authorities had to employ one entire infantry regiment, a battalion and two companies from another regiment, a battalion of the Vitebsk garrison, and detachments of invalids. Command over these united armed forces was assumed by the Governor General, Prince Andrei Golitzin. Groups of peasants were caught and sent back to their old places, use

try, met from the start powerful obstacles. The tragedy of the great national problem was understood by George Samarin who in 1861 wrote to Nicholas Milutin: "The principal problem of the moment is... that the peasants, enlightened by means of slow experience, should acquiesce in the idea of regular and gradual progress within the limits of the decree, and that they should give up the vague hope of obtaining their Eldorado, brought about by some *coup d'état.* That is the question."[12]

The village priest, author of a diary about the period of the peasant reform, whom we have quoted several times, says that in some localities the peasants, having heard the manifesto, asked whether they still were serfs or free men. The peasants' doubts were not surprising, as the rules of the *ukase* were so complicated that even today it is difficult to find a legal definition for the state in which the Russian peasants found themselves after the reform. The decree defines their new position in a rather negative way, as that of peasants who have emerged from serfdom.[13]

First of all, this was by no means a decree about the emancipation of the peasants, analogous to the law of 1864 for the Congress Kingdom of Poland, where the peasants had enjoyed personal freedom since the Code of Napoleon. On the contrary, the Russian decree clearly established the landlords' ownership of all the land utilized by the peasants, including the farmsteads.

The law decrees that the landlords, while keeping the ownership of all the lands that belong to them, grant to the peasants, in return for certain defined services, the right of permanent utilization of the farmsteads. Moreover, to safeguard the peasants' livelihood and the fulfilment of their duties towards the state and the landlords, the latter should grant to them the utilization of the soil.

This was the endowment of the peasants with land. In return for the abolition of serfdom and the duties connected with it the peasants were obliged to certain services in favor of the masters, defined by agreement, or in case no agreement was reached, determined by the state. In relation to the masters they remained peasants "temporarily obliged." By force of the decree the peasants became the owners only of the chattels and livestock they possessed, and had the right to acquire land as property for themselves.

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[12] A. L. Beaulieu, *L'Empire des Tsars.* Vol. I, pp. 426, 445, 446, 468

[13] The law concerning the peasant class was a supplement to Vol. IX of the Code of Laws and was divided into a series of special laws. The legal rules quoted below are taken from three laws: The general law concerning the peasants who emerged from serfdom; the law concerning the purchase of peasant farms and state aid to the peasants who emerged from serfdom; the law concerning the purchase of peasant farms and state aid to the peasants purchasing land; the law concerning the agrarian organization of the peasants.

The peasants could immediately, if they wanted to and had the necessary means, buy their farmsteads. To buy the land they utilized, it was necessary to obtain the master's consent. In case of such consent the state came to the peasant's assistance, granting loans which the peasant paid back in instalments.

Consequently, there developed, since the reform, a complicated relationship of lord and peasant to the land, reminiscent of the mediaeval divided ownership (*dominium divisum*). The landlord retained the title of ownership (*dominium directum*), while the peasant had the right of permanent utilization (*dominium utile*), paying tenure or rendering services. The purchase of peasant lands became obligatory, that is independent of the master's will, only in 1881, by force of the decree of Alexander III. The force of the decree began in 1883 and the purchasing instalments extended over 49 years. Consequently, only in 1932 all the land given to the peasants for utilization in 1861 was to become their property. The *ukase* of 1905 shortened that period, amortizing all instalments from 1907 on.[14]

After the reform the peasants' position became dangerously complicated from the economic point of view. The basis adopted for land endowment was the plot of ground allotted by the master to the peasant during serfdom. This plot, however, could be either increased, if it did not reach the minimum established by the *ukase*, or reduced, if it exceeded the accepted maximum. The maximum and minimum were determined variably, depending on the kind of soil and its productiveness. In the black soil provinces the established minimum was low, and about 24% of the land hitherto forming the peasants' plot was taken and added to the landlords' land. According to the estimates of Professor Yanson the peasants' material situation considerably deteriorated in the black soil provinces after the reform in comparison with their former status. In other provinces the amount of land restored to the landlords from the peasant plots was much lower. The reduction of their former plots was regarded by the peasants as robbery, contrary to the real intention of the Tsar, and carried out arbitrarily by the lords and by officials bribed by them. The change in the legal aspect of owning land by the peasants after the reform was incomprehensible to them.

The peasants from state domains obtained comparatively the largest allotment of land, the peasants from apanage estates a lesser one, while those from private estates the smallest of all. The amount of *desiatins* (1 desiatin: 2.7 acres) averaged for family heads in the whole Empire 6.7 *desiatins* in state domains, 4.9 in apanage lands, and 3.2 in private

[14] The head tax which the peasants had to pay since Peter the Great was abolished in 1886.

estates. In the black soil provinces the average area was much smaller, amounting, for instance, in the Poltava and Kiev provinces only to 1.2 *desiatins*. However, in view of the standard of agriculture in Russia, the size of a farm capable of feeding an average peasant family was, according to the productiveness of the soil, from 5 to 10 *desiatins*. As peasant farms did not reach that size before the reform, the small acreage of peasant holdings after 1861 should not be ascribed, as is done by some authors, to their reduction caused by the maximum established by the reform.

The land reform law included a measure, known after the name of its author Gagarin, permitting the landlords to conclude agreements with the peasants with the view of effecting their emancipation free of charge. In that case the peasant obtained without any payment ¼ of the maximum of the peasant share established for the given locality to be owned by him and relinquished all claims on the master. Many peasants, lured by the desire to obtain land in complete ownership free of payment, agreed to these contracts and limited themselves to dwarf holdings which were at once called beggar's shares.

The critical situation of the peasants after the reform appears in its full extent, when one considers that the financial obligations resting on the peasant holdings, *i.e.* taxes payable to the state and payments to the master, in most cases consumed the whole income and often exceeded it. This was proved several years after the reform by the estimates of Professor Yanson. In a number of provinces the burdens were many times greater than the income derived from the farm. In the Petersburg province they amounted to 150% of the income, in Viatka to 200%, in Pskov to 213%, in Smolensk to 220%, in Kostroma to 240%, in Tver to 252%, in Vladimir to 270%, while in the Novgorod province, in case of smaller peasant holdings, to 275-565%. In consequence of this, arrears in payments grew alarmingly and made of the peasant an insolvent debtor. Again, the peasant, wanting to feed his family, was unable to limit himself to his farm alone. He had to lease another plot from the master to support his family and discharge, at least partially, the obligations incumbent on his holding. He had to pay the tenure for the new plot by working on the master's field, *i.e.* by serf labor. Consequently, the peasant's legal and economic position after the reform is both complicated and critical: he is the "temporarily obligated" utilizer of his farm, the ownership of which remained with the master. He is, moreover, of necessity, the tenant of a plot of the master's land and his farmhand. This state of affairs was not a surprise. In the final formulating of the 1861 reform it was the interests of the landowners that were taken into consideration and the agrarian conditions were arranged in such a way as to assure cheap labor to the masters.

This situation constantly deteriorated. The commission to investigate the causes of the impoverishment of central Russia reached, at the beginning of the twentieth century, disquieting conclusions concerning the status of peasant holdings. The peasant population had grown from 52 to more than 86 million. The area of a peasant farm, as decreed by the *ukase,* averaged in 1850 4.8 *desiatins,* in 1880 3.5 *desiatins,* while in 1900 it was 2.6 *desiatins.* Though the amount of peasant land had grown, apart from the land decreed by the *ukase,* by fifteen million *desiatins,* even this constituted only ⅓ *desiatin* per male.

Land hunger was growing. The peasant continued to look covetously at state, apanage and private land. But did the means of solving the agrarian question lie in this new expropriation? Let us take the figures. According to the estimate of Professor Yanson, the peasants from private estates obtained in 1861, 35 million *desiatins* of land, those from state domains more than 70 million, and those of apanage estates 4.5 million, while more than 3 million were in the possession of colonists. Altogether, the area of peasant lands reached 120 million *desiatins.* About 100 million remained in the hands of landowners, more than 150 million in the hands of the state, and 7.5 million *desiatins* in the possession of apanages.

However, 69% of the immense area of state-owned land was forest, 28.4% uncultivated soil, and only 2.6% cultivated soil. Consequently not quite 3 million *desiatins* could still be transferred to the peasants.

In the landlords' estates the area of cultivated soil was, at the most, equal to the area of the landowner's land awarded in 1861 to the peasants, that is 35 millions. This was supplemented by about 5 million *desiatins* from the apanage lands. But out of this land, which was not in the peasants' possession on the basis of the *ukase,* 19.5 million was still held in lease by the peasants. Thus, even the whole supply of cultivated land that could be expropriated was not large enough to assure to the rapidly growing population a sufficient amount of land, in accordance with the standard of agriculture in Russia.

The lack of land in an immense country, larger in area than the rest of Europe and thinly populated, is among the contradictions and anomalies of Russian life the greatest paradox. The peasant, unable to feed his family from his soil, and covetously eying the master's land, is the protocell of the great organism breathing the spirit of aggressive expansion. That spirit is present in the whole and in each atom: it does not penetrate inwards but spreads out. As to the master, whose land is secretly coveted by the peasant, he regards the land as a source of income, divides it into small portions, which he gives to communes and peasant families for cultivation, while he himself hastens to the capital and to the court, to ranks and decorations. There lives in him the old

owner of the *pomestiye,* the estate, given him by the Tsar for his services. The legal compulsion of service ceased since Peter III, but custom and the landowner's own interest require that he belong to the men in uniform and maintain permanent connections with the ruling circles. Only when he has backing in those circles, does he enjoy prestige in his neighborhood and have the local bureaucracy at his service. In the upper sphere, to which the landlord strives to belong, there is understanding for broader interests, for matters of state, but the political psychology of that class is closely akin to the socio-agrarian psychology of the peasant. Here and there the aspirations are directed not inwards but outwards. There is always lack of land, always striving for land. Russia is constantly to spread, to absorb and annex foreign territories. She looks with envy at civilized countries, incorporated in the Empire, takes away churches, buildings, funds, incomes. She ceaselessly looks with hungry eyes beyond her frontiers, she dreams of extending her power ever further and further: there is a continued lack of land, a perennial anxiety, impoverishment inside the country, *oskudeniye tsentra.*

What can there be in common between the eternal restlessness of a peasant who, after the manifesto, sees in his dream a large field and covets its possession, and the restlessness of a Danilevski and a Dostoyevski, who dream of Constantinople and of the Russian flag dominating the Levant? The socio-economic and cultural foundations of these visions are the same. Lack of joy derived from work and creation, the incapability or impossibility of making one's country or farm flourishing through the incessant continuous work of generations. There is no pride taken in the peaceful work of centuries, that pride which in civilized countries is also felt by the classes fighting for a better position for themselves in the nation, there is no respect for the monuments of age-old culture. There is also uneasiness at the thought that the next-door neighbor has greater resources, there are vague instincts of a Scythian ready to leave, even forever, his miserable abode, whenever he hears of flourishing countries and cities where rich booty awaits the conqueror.

Until that psychology changes, the craving for land will last forever. The problems inseparably linked in Russia with any social or political reform were lack of culture, lack of individuals responsible for their actions and capable of controlling their passions, and the necessity of developing such individuals. The clear realization of this is perhaps the main characteristic feature of the "Westerners" in the reign of Nicholas I. They expected a better future for Russia not from the alleged age-old providential institutions, such as village community (*mir*) or from the unusual mystical virtues of the Russian people, but from the simple means, by which nations rose from barbarism to civilization, *i.e.* general education, obviously possible only after the abolition of serf-

dom, an act which they constantly demanded. The ideas of the Westerners were adopted by the enlightened generation in the reign of Alexander II, which strove to raise culture through provincial self-government. They were under attack from two sides: the revolutionaries accused them of liberal doctrinairism and moderatism, the reactionaries almost of national treason. In the light of the experience through which Russia passes today, prepared by the inveterate reaction and applied to the living body of the nation by the extremists of revolution, it may not be amiss to recall the presentiments and endeavors guided by clear instinct. Let us take examples from the history of the struggle of the provincial self-government for education. We shall take one eloquent and typical example. The scene is the Kharkov *zemstvo* in 1897. A considerable sum is to be allotted for peasant education. The well-known leader Nicholas Kovalevski speaks:

"The task of our *zemstvo* is to combat poverty and illiteracy. Poverty and illiteracy are the main causes of all evil... Which of these two sores is more painful, it is difficult to say. It is only true that they are closely and inseparably linked with each other and that a causal interdependence exists between them: we are poor because we are ignorant, and we are ignorant because we are poor. How to get out of this magic circle, from which end to start the cure?"

"Of course, it is desirable that we conduct the struggle simultaneously on two sectors and by purely economic as well as educational means; but it should be remembered that the main root of the evil is ignorance. Though we are undeniably poor, we possess natural resources, no less rich than our happier neighbors, from which to draw wealth, but we cannot utilize them. The peasants of Kharkov province possess 2,846,746 *desiatins* of *ukase* land alone, *i.e.* 31,000 square kilometers, which means that they have over one and a half times more land than there is in the whole Württemberg kingdom, while the peasant population of the Kharkov province is almost equal to the number of the inhabitants of Württemberg. But in Württemberg, the population is flourishing, while with us, where there is one and half times more land, and in addition magnificent black soil, the population complains of being cramped and wants to move to Siberia. Indeed, our population lives in very poor circumstances, so that the first bad crops ruin the farms..."

"How then, can we account for the fact that the inhabitants of Württemberg, holding one and a half times smaller plots of arable land, are well-fed, rich and satisfied, while our peasants are weak and poor? Obviously, apart from other reasons, this is caused to a considerable extent by lack of culture."

"The lower the degree of man's culture, the more space he needs for his existence. When our forefathers lived from hunting, thousands

of *desiatins* had to be in their possession and if these *desiatins* were lacking, our forefathers complained of being cramped. The next stage, pastoral life, was satisfied with a hundred *desiatins*. Subsequently, the agricultural stage, with the system of crop rotation, was satisfied with ten *desiatins*. Finally, with the present three crop rotation it is said that five *desiatins* are necessary, but the European farmer lives on one *desiatin* and yet eats and drinks well, clothes himself, educates his children, and saves for a rainy day."

The Russian population should adopt European culture. A guide in this is, first of all, the school.

"School matters should not be regarded as of secondary concern and as a liberal plaything. The school profoundly influences the economic, spiritual, and political life of the nation."

Now, what is the state of elementary schools in the Kharkov province? If one wished to give the possibility of attending elementary schools only to boys, it would be necessary to add to the 523 existing schools 799 new ones, *i.e.* to increase the number of schools by 152%. As so far the normal growth of schools is 0.7% per year, 217 (152 : 0.7 — 217) years are necessary to make it possible for boys alone to acquire elementary education.

Some persons maintain that the establishment and upkeep of those schools should be the concern of the peasants, because it is their children who study there. If one should argue in this way, in view of the poverty and ignorance of the peasants, it would be necessary to wait longer than 217 years for the completion of the school system for boys. But is it really true that only the peasants are concerned with the development of elementary education?

"Are the representatives of big, middle, and small landed property, not to mention the Government, not interested in the cultural level of the peasant population surrounding them?... Whatever you might say, the representatives of our intelligentsia will not cease to be considered barbarians by the civilized world as long as we continue to be surrounded by ignorant masses. Schools should be founded at the expense of *zemstvos*, irrespective of the fact whether or not the peasant will contribute financially to these schools. The understanding for the necessity of learning grows in the masses only with the progress of education; the school itself produces the people striving to spread it. But what is the state of the school system in the Kharkov province in comparison with the West? In Bohemia, an area somewhat smaller than the Kharkov province, there are 4945 elementary schools with a 7-year curriculum. In Denmark, whose area is 30% smaller than the Kharkov province, there exist 2940 elementary schools. In the still more enlightened Württemberg, occupying an area equal to two counties of the Kharkov

province, there are 4031 elementary schools. On the other hand the Kharkov province possesses only 523 schools."[15]

It is difficult to describe more strikingly the neglect of peasant education in Russia thirty-six years after the reform and to demonstrate more forcefully the connection of the agrarian question with the problem of national culture. To illustrate the attitude of the educated and influential circles, it should be added that as a result of Kovalevski's proposal the *zemstvo* assembly voted 200,000 roubles annually for peasant education. The reactionary minority of the *zemstvo* agitated against this decision, and the local authorities vetoed it.

The necessity of peasant education was by no means generally recognized in Russia. In the reign of Nicholas I, Gogol wrote: "To want to teach a peasant is pure nonsense; the main thing is that the peasant has no time at all for it." Paul Miliukov, in his speech in the Third Duma, quoted the opinion of Naryshkin that a peasant who knows how to read and write has confused notions. The Government and the reactionaries believed that by impeding the growth of education they curb the impetus of the social aspirations of the peasant, and thus keep him in a patriarchal state for the security of both the empire and the possessing class. This was a fatal blunder. The Government saw an enemy in education, but did not see it in ignorance. It believed that education aroused social appetites; it did not understand that the peasant's inability to rise to a higher standard through culture, would awaken in him the desire to rise to a higher standard through social levelling and expropriation.

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How, under these circumstances, could the peasant develop simple, clear notions about law, about that which was permitted and what was prohibited, what belonged to him, and what did not belong to him? This transitory stage, intermediate between freedom and serfdom, between the right of peasant ownership of the land, as established by the *ukase*, and the master's right to that land, was created, as it were, to leave the peasant conscious of the injustice done him, while arousing in him covetousness. The contradiction between the ideal of peasant emancipation, as proclaimed from the throne, and the state of the peasant's dependence, nurtured this sense of injustice. The peasant felt how the tie of the new legal order entwined him, and he felt this tie as a continuation of serfdom. The disentanglement of such ties was not part of the peasant's psychology. He dreamed of cutting them with an axe. The peasant-master relationship was now of a more complicated character: it

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[15] *Byloye*, June, 1907, "Zemskoye Dvizheniye do Obrazovaniya Partii Narodnoy Svobody," (The Land Self-Government Movement before the Creation of the National Freedom Party) by L. P. Belokonski, pp. 211-216.

was no longer the former absolute serfdom, but a legal and economic dependence. However, here a new question arose. Did freedom really begin where the peasant's dependence on the master ended? This question is connected with another one. Was the peasant before the reform dependent only on his master? Not at all. He was dependent on the village community, the *mir*, praised by the Slavophils as an age-old traditional institution. The existence of the village community as a legal entity, the community tenure of land, and of the village assembly, *mir*, as the peasant's authority, had a decisive influence on the development of the agrarian question. This dependence of the peasant on the *mir* was not abolished by the reform, but on the contrary, it appeared with still greater clarity after the personal legal dependence of the peasant on the master had ceased.

We have seen that after the reform the peasant did not become by law the owner of the land, but merely an usufructuary. It should be added that he did not become the individual hereditary holder of his plot; the law never treats him as such. The right of utilization belonged collectively to the whole village community which gave individual farms into the possession of its members, and at certain intervals, about every 15 years, redistributed the community land among the peasants, according to the changes in family status of the holders during that time. This right of collective possession of land and the right of its periodical distribution among the members of the community, was one of the attributes of the village assembly, the *mir*. Another important competence resulted from the collective responsibility of the members of the *mir* for the duties, services and payments incumbent on the peasant group.

This collective responsibility resulted in the inviolability of the ties linking the member of the community with the whole group. Wherever he might find himself, and in whatever occupation he might engage, he remained a member of his community and had to render his share of services and payments. Moreover, to leave his place of residence, the peasant needed a passport, the issuance of which in turn depended on the *mir*. In a word, an inviolable tie existed between the peasant and the village community, the peasant was the subject of the community.

The institution of the collective tenure of land and the rule of the *mir*, an obstacle in the growth of the peasant's culture and wealth, was glorified by the Slavophils and later also by the *Narodniki* (People's Party members). The spiritual protoplast of the *Narodniki*, Herzen, with all the forces of his talent spread the legend about the ancient Russian commune, that survived providentially and which was to become a bridge over which Russia would pass directly to the collectivist system, by-passing the bourgeois stage. Herzen adopted the idea of the providential rôle of the Russian commune from the Slavophils, and combined

it with his own social-revolutionary ideas. In contrast to this, the rôle of the commune was conservative in the interpretation of the Slavophils, like Samarin. As early as 1847, Samarin stated that the collectivist idea, which the West tried to realize by means of revolution, had been already fulfilled among the peasants of Russia. Consequently, the rural commune was in the opinion of the Slavophils a kind of small-pox vaccination which was to protect the Russian organism from that illness. "The Germanic race, or more exactly, the Romance-Germanic world" — wrote Samarin — "reached the abstract formula, and demanded a principle that constitutes the nature of the Slavic race. The latter gives a living answer, inherent in its very existence, to the last question of the Western world." That last question which Samarin, for reason of censorship did not call by name, was obviously socialism. Even before the Slavophils, the Russian commune was well known by Pestel, and still earlier, in the eighteenth century (1788), it was specifically treated in Boltin's book.

The Slavophil idea about the rôle of the Russian commune was popularized in the West by Baron August Haxthausen, a high Prussian official, and expert in agrarian questions. With the permission of Nicholas I and with recommendations from the Russian authorities, he made a tour of Russia in 1842-1844. The result of his journey was a three-volume work in German, published with the material assistance of the Russian Government and with the knowledge of Nicholas. It was entitled *Studies On the Internal State, the Life of the People, and In Particular the Agrarian System of Russia,* and was published within the years 1847-1852. Haxthausen believed that Western Europe was threatened with social revolution. During his stay in Moscow, he came in touch with Khomiakov and Constantine Aksakov, and under their influence he reached the conclusion that Russia was free of agrarian pauperism because, thanks to the land commune, the peasant was always assured of a share in the land and thus Russia was secure from a revolution which was imminent in the West.[16]

However, during the Crimean war, a young scholar, Boris Chicherin, published first an article in the *Ruskii Vestnik,* and then a whole study, *On the Provincial Institutions in Russia,* and shed a new light on the commune. He demonstrated that the Russian commune was not at all an age-old institution that survived from prehistoric times, but a later arrangement created deliberately by the state for fiscal purposes. The origin of that commune system dates back to the end of the sixteenth century, from the time when the peasant became affixed to the

[16] Haxthausen noticed in the Russian peasant nomadic inclinations. His formulation was that the Russian peasant has "eine mächtige Vaterlandsliebe, aber kein Heimatsgefühl."

soil. Its purpose was to insure efficient tax levy by instituting the collective responsibility of tax payers. The discovery of Chicherin was very important. The later investigations of Kluchevski and Miliukov led to modifications and supplements, while they maintained and confirmed the original thesis. According to Miliukov, the establishment of the commune as the basis of the tax paying organization was the result of the excessive growth of the needs of the state caused by foreign policy, in addition to the low economic level of the country. The beginnings of the institution date from Tartar times, *i.e.*, the thirteenth century. The Tartars created that organization in order to levy the tributes from the population more easily. The Muscovite princes inherited that system from the Tartars. The communal peasant organization, binding its members by the collective obligation of making payments regularly and rendering services, was introduced not only by the princes but also by private landowners.

During the debate on the emancipation of the peasants in the reign of Alexander II, the majority of the members of the commission was in favor of abolishing the commune as an institution detrimental to economic progress. Such an opinion was held by the Minister of Interior, Lanskoy, while the commune was most strongly defended by the Slavophil Samarin and his opinion was to a large extent taken into consideration. At that time the system of communal holding of land existed in thirty provinces.

Thus the legend about the Russian commune as an ancient institution of peasant communism was scientifically undermined by Chicherin as early as 1856. However, it is characteristic of faith that it cannot be swayed by argumentation and so in 1861 Herzen constantly dreams of an imminent revolutionary flood in Europe and of a peasant Ark in which Russia would be saved. At that time he wrote: "Where will the tempest begin? Will it be in the extinguished French volcano, or on the bottom of the sea of English life, where the wind does not reach, where one does not hear the storms, where light itself hardly penetrates?"

"But will it at all begin in England or in France?" he asks, and gives the old answer that the Russian nation is closest to revolution. "Our black soil is more receptive to the seeds collected from Western fields."

It is difficult to find more tragic illusions than those cherished by both the Slavophil-westerners and the populist-radicals concerning the providential rôle of the communal system. The collective holding of land and the periodical redistribution of the soil did not at all give the advantages which the Slavophils and Haxthausen, following their model, saw in them. They did not stop impoverishment and did not prevent the growth of the proletariat. On the contrary, the constantly progressing comminution of peasant holdings, caused by the growth of families, led

to the formation of dwarf farms which, in view of bad agricultural methods, caused the poverty of the farmers. Tuhan-Baranovski, in his work about the Russian factory, states that in the Moscow province 94% of the factory workers were peasants who belonged to the *mir* and were unable to get a living from the soil. Their connection with the *mir* continued, they were collectively responsible for the communal taxes, and could obtain passports to stay and work in the factories only by permission of the commune.

The institution of communal holding of land was no obstacle to proletarianism; on the contrary, it tended to increase impoverishment. Nor was it a school of brotherly communism as Herzen, and later the populists imagined. It was, however, a practical school of expropriation. The division of land was, in the eyes of the peasants, an expression of the right to the land which every peasant born within the commune possessed, at the expense of those who owned the land. Already Anatol Leroy-Beaulieu noticed that the tendencies toward a new distribution of land after 1861 were strengthened by those periodical divisions of land. Indeed, in the system of regular divisions of land, the peasants could not develop into industrious farmers anxious to improve the farm and leave it to their children and grandchildren. When the peasant is constantly faced with a new division of land, he has no purpose in intensive cultivation of his holding, but tries to derive immediate profit from it. Consequently, this is a school of exploitation which is an obstacle to the raising of agricultural standards; it hampers the development of enterprising economic individuality in the peasant and does not permit the formation of a farmer attached to his land and cultivating his soil with pride and with the intention of leaving an orderly farm to his children.

The duty of collective responsibility for its members, incumbent on the commune, was an old fiscal measure, making it easier for the government to levy taxes. That system corresponded to a primitive form of the state; it was a survival and relic of the barbarian period when the Tartar and later the Muscovite state, treated the peasants as a herd. Thus, this method, which survived even to the twentieth century, is characterized by Witte, as a convenient method of the taxation of the human herd in a despotic state, instead of the modern system of the citizen's individual responsibility for state assessments. Collective responsibility had clearly negative consequences for the economic conditions of the population as well as its cultural development. It was a material burden for industrious and capable peasants, and a boon for loafers and drunkards, making the former responsible for the latter groups. It broke the direct relationship of the peasant with the state. It placed between the peasant and the state the commune,

and continued in a changed form the old state of affairs when the peasant felt a double subject, — a subject of the subject of the Tsar. It retarded the civic development of the peasant and the growth of his human individuality. These peasants, already liberated from serfdom, but dependent upon the commune, were compared by Leroy-Beaulieu to a herd deprived of its shepherd, but bound together, treading in one spot, and unable to move forward.

Only in the twentieth century, 45 years after the peasant reform, the government, at the initiative of Stolypin and influenced by considerations of a socio-political nature, undertook the abolition of communal holding of land in order to develop a conservative small landholder by individualizing small agrarian holdings. History, so patient for Russia during the centuries, this time did not allow her to see the results of that belated reform.

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The reform of 1861 did not grant the peasants equal rights with the rest of the population. The peasants had their special laws codified separately in volume 9 of the *Collection of Laws*. Volume 10, which contained the Civil Laws, did not apply to the peasants. In their civil, family, and property relations the peasants were subject to "common" law, which in practice meant their subjection to the arbitrary jurisdiction of communal courts. The principles of the Court Reform of Alexander II, modelled on the Western judicial system, did not apply to these communal courts.

One of the special laws decreed corporal punishments for the peasants, applicable to a very great extent. The communal courts had the right to decree flogging for a number of offenses. It should not be forgotten that, according to Russian legislation, exemption from corporal punishment was a special privilege enjoyed by selected categories of citizens. To the common man, corporal punishment was applied; the peasants and townspeople were subject to flogging.[17]

The reform of 1861 did not at all free the peasants from corporal punishment.[18] The communal court decreed flogging up to 20 lashes for offending lower officials such as provincial guards, bailiffs, forest and field guards, for disturbing the peace, for beggary, for offending re-

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[17] *Code of Penal and Corrective Punishments*, edition of 1885, annexe to Article 30.

[18] The law concerning communal courts refers corporal punishment to the rules of the law about punishments decreed by Justices of the Peace and to the rules of the *Code of Penal and Corrective Punishments, viz.*, corporal punishment was applied in the case of offenses and transgressions foreseen in articles 31, 38, 49, 132, 134, 135, 140-143 and 180 of the Law about punishment and in articles 169, 172 and 174 of the *Code of Punishments* (articles 36 and 38 of the *Law concerning Communal Courts.*) The entire code of laws concerning the peasants was contained in volume 9 of the *Collection of Laws.*

latives in the ascending line, for assault and battery, for the threat of murder or arson, for the children's refusal to support their poor parents, for purchasing stolen goods, for theft, fraud or the attempt to perpetrate these acts. For all these offenses and transgressions, the criminal code for Justices of the Peace stipulates for persons of the privileged classes other punishments: arrest, imprisonment, or fines. The Communal Court can apply corporal punishment if an offense was committed a second time within a year, for which the defendant had already served his term, or for accumulation of several offenses punishable by incarceration. (Article 37, Law concerning Communal Courts).

The law concerning Communal Courts decrees for peasants corporal punishment even for offenses which in the case of persons of other classes are not considered offenses subject to principal or corrective punishment, such as defaulting a contract to work by non-appearance or by leaving it arbitrarily, for being a spendthrift and drunkard, if these bad qualities bring about a disorganization of the farm.

Nor do the "special laws" of the peasants in this field of penal law end there. In cases of petty offenses, the Communal Court is to be guided by the judicial law for the peasants of state domains.[19] That law, among others, decrees the incarceration of people who repeatedly bother the authorities with unjustified requests, or who become intoxicated on holidays before the end of the Church services. A peasant found completely drunk in a public place is sentenced to forced labor for one day. He who "is more drunk than sober for the greater part of the year" is subject to flogging. The same punishment is imposed on the one who buys vodka by pawning his clothing, domestic furnishings, livestock, farm implements, or crops not yet gathered from the field. The same punishment is imposed on the one who because of negligence, laziness, drunkenness, or debauchery disrupts his farm and fails to pay taxes. One day's incarceration is imposed on the one who crosses frozen rivers, endangering his life unnecessarily, or who crosses a river in time of a gale or when it is filled with ice floes. A person guilty of refusing assistance in case of a flood or fire is punishable by incarceration or flogging.[20]

This naive penal casuistry, combined with the inveterate conviction that the peasants could only be curbed by beating, opened the way to an unlimited practice of flogging, a practice preserved in its full extent after that solemn act which was called the Emancipation of the Peasants. The right to inflict corporal punishment in cases qualified as offenses of lower officials, default of contract to work, non-payment of taxes,

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[19] On the basis of Article 102 of the *Law concerning Communal Courts* (Edition of 1876, note 1).

[20] Articles 478, 493, 495, 496, 497, 498, 513, 514.

combined with the complete confusion of the administrative and judicial authorities in peasant matters, particularly since the establishment in 1889 of provincial chiefs, produced the practice of regularly compelling the peasants to work on the master's land, to pay taxes exceeding his income, by beating, and to corporal punishment of the peasant at the demand of a provincial guard who always could provoke an offense on the part of the peasant.

All these practices were well known to Anatol Leroy-Beaulieu, the writer from whom Europe learned about the state of the peasant problem in Russia. He knew very well that flogging of peasants as an "administrative measure," that is to say without any guarantee of justice, was still more widely applied than corporal punishment inflicted by court sentences.[21] And yet, he wrote very serenely and indulgently about the application of corporal punishment in Russia and explained it as a concession of the legislator to popular customs.[22]

"The former serf, beaten and lashed for centuries, is accustomed to birching and patriarchal punishment. He does not at all feel its disgrace and offers his back without shame. His mind is still too realistic and positive not to perceive the merits of this type of punishment; and he appreciates birching without prejudice. Birching costs neither time nor money. After birching a man works and sleeps better — says an old proverb."

"Custom has still preserved birching in meting out justice in the villages, and custom will gradually abolish it. One of the superior qualities of common law over written law is the fact that the former changes and improves imperceptibly together with custom and ideas the progress of which it follows. The legislator was guided by good inspiration in not violating the peasant traditions and customs and contenting himself with abolishing that humiliating punishment for the classes subject to written law. When the peasant will grasp the whole ignominy, the complete disgrace of that punishment, the Communal Courts will cease

[21] *L'Empire des Tsars*, Vol. II, Second edition, 1886, p. 311.

[22] The statistics of Communal Court sentences in Russia indicate that corporal punishment was very often applied by those courts. For instance according to Smirnov's statistics of the Vladimir province within 1866-1868 out of 5,452 sentences 2,063 were corporal punishment cases; within 1872-74, out of 10,884 cases 4,396 were corporal punishment sentences. Russian law up to most recent times applied corporal punishment not only in the case of peasants. According to Article 1,261 of the *Code of Principal and Corrective Punishments*, a deckhand or sailor, who is disobedient to a ship's commander in fulfilling his duties, is subject to corporal punishment up to five lashes. Article 1,377 of that code stipulates for a juvenile artisan a punishment up to ten lashes for arbitrary desertion of the master, disregard or laziness. Also the commercial law (Vol. XI, *Collection of Laws*, part 2, edition of 1893) decrees corporal punishment. On the basis of Art. 298, a ship commander can administer to a deckhand five strokes with a line or a rod for slow execution of orders in an emergency. Art. 299 authorizes the captain to administer 12 lashes with a line on the back of a deckhand, if the latter mutinies during a voyage.

to impose it on the *muzhik*. The birch will, of itself, fall from the hand of the judge, and the law finally prohibiting its use, will only sanction the progress of customs."[23]

The Russian reactionaries justified the flogging of the peasant and keeping him in ignorance by a similar, quasi-kindhearted patriarchal viewpoint: the peasants are not sufficiently mature for education and equal rights, they cannot yet do without birching, etc. Such reasoning creates a vicious circle: by its system of punishment the government kills the peasants' dignity and postpones the abolition of humiliating punishment to the time when dignity will develop in the peasants' soul. It keeps him in ignorance, motivating this by his lack of a feeling for the necessity of education. In what way could the peasant demonstrate his abhorrence of flogging when the punishment is legal? Only by revolt, which always opened the way to mass flogging.

There is nothing more hopeless than the preservation of corporal punishment and the separation of the peasant from the privileged class by the ignominious practice of flogging after the Tsar-Emancipator had solemnly proclaimed the peasant's personal freedom. The peasants continued to be the *beaten class*, as they were approvingly called by the *democratic* general Muraviev Amurski. As long as corporal punishment existed, personal dignity could not develop. In the trial of Vera Zasulich defense counsel Alexandrov eloquently deplored the ineradicable practice of the whip and the perennial Russian belief in it. The practice of corporal punishment, legally lasting in Russia to 1905, and *de facto* even longer, was a continuous school of savagery and cruelty: the *beaten class*, when liberated, will understand its freedom, as it was always understood by the slave when he finally won impunity – as the right to revenge, but by more brutal and cruel means, corresponding to his nature degraded in slavery.

The main object of the peasant reform was not achieved. At the beginning of the twentieth century, forty years after the reform, the agrarian question became inflamed more dangerously than on the eve of the 1861 reform, and again the watchword of the peasant's true freedom and second emancipation was heard. The necessity of a new reform was announced from the throne. On December 12 (old style), 1904, Nicholas II issued his famous *ukase* to the Senate, opening the period of reforms, and proclaiming the "improvement" of the existing state of affairs. The *ukase* stated in its preamble that the peasant question was the object of deliberations and study of a special group which collects materials and examines the problem. "We command" – the *ukase* read – "that this work should bring about the unification of the laws con-

[23] *L'Empire des Tsars*, Vol. II, Second edition, 1886, pp. 309, 310.

being made of firearms. About 600 people could not be found.

It is noteworthy that the peasants, though armed, behaved quietly so long as they were not attacked, and when questioned by the authorities where they were going, said they were going to the Tsar to show him with what kind of bread they were fed by their masters. Heavy punishment was meted out, on the Tsar's order, to the Vitebsk peasants who wanted to complain to him about their wrongs. The number of the punished, according to to official data, reached 4,000 persons.

Still more serious was the agitation among the peasants which started simultaneously with hostilities in the Crimean War. After the ukase concerning the enlistment of volunteers in the Navy was issued in April, 1854, rumors spread among the peasants that voluntary enlistment would free them from serfdom. The movement started in the Razan province and spread to the Tambov, Vladimir and Nizhniy Novgorod regions, eventually embracing ten provinces. The peasants were leaving their work and going to the provincial capitals and to Moscow to enlist in the Navy. The authorities used severe measures to curb this enthusiasm for naval service. However, when early in 1855 a ukase was issued about enlistment in the land army, again agitation developed among the peasants.

It was in this state of internal seething that the peasant question entered into the new reign. On his deathbed, Nicholas, amid the defeats of the Crimean War, complained to his son, the succeeding Tsar, that he was unable to leave to his successor a quiet and happy country. This deathbed statement was but another evidence of the theatrical verbiage with which the Tsar covered his inherent falseness in which he lived his entire life. Was the unsuccessful struggle against the allies, the heaviest burden he left to his successor? Was not the incessant internal strife which had seethed under enforced calm — a problem aggravated during his thirty years of reign and which he deliberately left to be settled by Alexander II, — a far heavier burden?

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Having examined, without prejudice or illusion, the foundations of that immense state, having studied what the vast majority of its population is like, by what it lives, and on the other hand considering the rôle of that state in the world, we see a great historical misunderstanding. This tremendous mystification will sooner or later lead to a great revelation that will confuse all estimates of superficial calculators who draw the fictitious Russia, the Russia of appearances, into their estimates. The state maintains that it guards order, law and even Christian principles in Europe, that it is a mainstay of conservatism, stability of institutions and the surest barrier against revolution. Let us,

however, examine its interior. The populace is without education and culture, has no sense of law or respect for woman's honor, is not even attached to its farmstead and village, the only homeland it understands. The peasants leave their patrimonies without regret and migrate to distant places where conditions are allegedly better; they are in a transitional period between nomadism and a settled condition; they hate the state as the eternal violence; above all they hate the educated lords who have in their hands so much power, riches, knowledge, and especially the land destined by God for the peasants, land which the Orthodox Tsar will sooner or later return to the people.

What will happen when the iron fetters imprisoning this population will break? This could happen in case of a thorough military defeat; it could have happened after the death of Nicholas I, if the Western Allies had waged war until the complete crushing of Russian power. It is not difficult to guess what would have happened then; after 1917 the riddle was solved.

This people, when liberated, will first manifest the spontaneous force of the elements. It will crush, without the will to crush, as a released force, blindly smashing ahead, unbridled and thoughtless. Knowing no inner restraint this crushing force smashes ahead until it meets an external barrier or spends itself. This is the intinctive maximalism of the element, which can be called a maximalist program only in the sense in which one can speak of the program of a raging fire which wants to burn, devour and destroy as much as possible.

This is the biological, subconscious, sub-social aspect of the great turmoil which constantly hangs over Russia as a threat. But it also has its own social aspect connected with the first, but superior to it. This unrest has also its conscious, or almost conscious, sphere of feelings, desires, some general hazy ideas, it has the urge of freeing itself from social and political bondage. This urge, born of the suffering of generations, fed by the hatred of centuries, appears as the desire of throwing off any authority and any laws; it is elemental anarchism. If the leading concept of that sphere has a denying, negative character, the second concept – the land – puts before the people a positive, physically attainable aim: the seizure by the people of non-peasant land, that is, the land of estate owners, of the Church, monasteries, State. It is a blind lust for domestic conquest which constantly and profoundly agitates the immense organism, and which forms a strange counterpart of that other lust of kindred nature, which animates the upper, political, educated classes of the nation, the lust of the conquest of foreign lands, the lust of destroying, inside the nation, foreign religions and foreign nationalities. A great unrest devours that state from the bottom to the top amid the apparent quiet of the cemetery. The lust for conquest grows as

the main passion amid desert and desolation, amid barbarism and ignorance, amid the ominous dormancy of the creative force of the nation. The leading tendency is not to create, to cultivate, to fertilize by obstinate effort what belongs to me, but to reach out for what belongs to others, what is cultivated by the effort of others. The form, the aspect, and the object of this main passion is different in the educated class, and among the illiterate people; yet, the profound secret nature of the passion is the same here and there. The ignorance of the masses, so diligently preserved, was undermining the entire structure, making it frail and unstable. The tsarist system tied its existence to the ignorance of the masses, in the belief that the education of the masses would be its death sentence, but was unable to grasp the gloomy threat of barbarism. It considered the power of ignorance its ally, without realizing with what kind of ally it linked its fate. It felt gratified that that ally could always be released against the educated enemies of tsardom, but it did not wish to recognize that the ward, released from the chain, might well devour its guardian.

The ignorance of the Russian peasant was realized in Russia as well as in the West, but his very primitiveness was thought to be the guarantee of his peacefulness and permanent resignation. People formed arbitrary conceptions about the peasant suggested by naive optimism and they believed that he was held in obedience and humility towards the authorities not only by iron constraint, but also by his inner, blind, religious devotion to the Tsar and the Orthodox Church. People did not take the trouble to reflect on what the Tsar really meant to the people and what were the true social consequences of the peasants' belief in the Tsar's omnipotence. What was not clearly kept in mind was the fact that in Russia the educated class and the people lived side by side, separated from each other by several centuries of intellectual development, and that though the main political and social ideas could well have the same name for both classes, the essential meanings of these concepts were radically different. God, Tsar, Homeland, these concepts were understood by the people in their own peculiar way. The Tsar of the people was not the Tsar of Derzhavin, Karamzin, Pushkin, Gogol, Orlov and Menshikov. When Nicholas I in a conversation with a deputation of the Moscow nobility calls himself the first nobleman of his country, incidentally applying this medieval term to Russia, contrary to historical truth and contrary to the nature of his office, the Tsar's definition and the peasants' ideas of the Tsar, appear as antipodes. This serious misunderstanding contained a nucleus of grave danger.

The peasants' imagination molded the idea of the Tsar to the measure of its age-old most bold and most secret desires. The Tsar is a beneficent ruler who wished happiness to his people, and who so far could

not put his intentions into effect, because between the Tsar and the people rises the accursed barrier – *sredosteniye* – the lords and officials. God is on high and the Tsar far away, but from this distance he looks with kindness on the peasants, as does the Christian God on the poor and oppressed. In the peasants' vision of a better future, the Tsar is the avenger of the peasants' wrongs, their defender against the officials, the restrainer of the lords. Sometimes the peasants, like the Vitebsk peasants in 1847, leave their villages and trek in great numbers to the Tsar's residence to tell him the truth about their wrongs. They are flogged, they must return to their places, where they continue to dream their vision of the Tsar, the silent god who will never speak to them.

On examining this *muzhik* legend of the Tsar, we must admire the calm of those who believed that tsarist Russia was established on the granite foundation of the people believing in the Tsar. This deception was spread in eloquent words by Dostoyevski who saw the revolutionary bacillus only in the *demons* of the intelligentsia infected with the theories of the West. With all their hatred for the lords and officialdom, the peasants looked with hope towards the Tsar. This dreamed-of Tsar is an entirely different being from the one who resides in the Winter Palace. The peasant, listening to the hymn in honor of the Tsar, "rule and infuse terror in thine enemies, Orthodox Tsar," also thought of his domestic enemy, of his oppressor, and placed his hope in the severe lord of lords. The peasant, stirred by the passion for revenge on the lords, chooses the Tsar for his patron, peasant riots are always linked with the rumor that the Tsar, the supreme distributor of land, already gave land and freedom to the people, but that the Tsar's decree was concealed from them. Sometimes the version is circulated that the Tsar ordered the peasants to attack the lords, rebels against the Tsar's will, and the peasants' oppressors.

Peasant agitators constantly emerging as if from under the ground, summon the peasants to fight and read to them some alleged manifestos. An arch-example of such appeals runs as follows:

"By the grace of God, we, Peter III, Emperor and autocrat of all the Russias, decree by this our *ukase* that the peasants, who until now were serfs of their masters, become directly subject to the crown. Without demanding the drafting of recruits, head-tax or any other financial levies, we give into their possession lands, forests, meadows and fisheries without payment and without rent, and we free them from all payments until now exacted by the evil-doers – the nobility, by the city oppressors and by the judges..."

"And while our name is today by God's decree covered with glory in Russia, we command, by this our own order that the entire nobility in

their estates be apprehended, executed, hanged, as the enemies of our authority, destroyers of the state and pillagers of the peasants, and that they be dealt with as they, having no Christianity in themselves, dealt with their peasants. After the robber-lords have been killed, everyone shall enjoy a quiet and peaceful life forever and forever."

This is Pugachev's manifesto which used the name of the murdered Peter III. While for the deputation of the nobility the Tsar was the first nobleman of the country, for the peasants he was a Pugachev in the cap of Monomach. The road from Government palaces and country manors to peasant huts and to the hermitages of the *Starovertsi* (old-believers) hidden in the forests was at the same time the road from the White Tsar to the Red Tsar, the idea of whom lived in the masses in the times of tsarist Russia. The emblem of that people's Tsar is not the double-headed Byzantine eagle which the peasant did not understand at all, but rather the red cock (*krasnyi petukh*) crowing the signal to the conflagration of revenge, the peasant illumination in honor of the Tsar-avenger.

Nor can the peasant revolt be stopped by religion. During the peasant wars in Germany in the third decade of the sixteenth century, the destruction of castles, murders and looting all went on in the name of "Christian freedom." The Anabaptist Thomas Munzer incited the people to murder the lords as pagans, enemies of the true faith. Likewise the appeals of Pugachev, whose ranks were joined by the *Starovertsi* sectarians, pictured the lords as apostates from Christianity. The God of the *muzhik* does not demand from him respect for the present godless social state; he is the God of agrarian revolution, the God of peasant wars, the Red God. In the notorious conclusion of the famous poem by Alexander Blok, "Twelve," there is probably not only blasphemy. At the head of the twelve Red Guardsmen whose path is marked with murder, walks Christ with a red flag. The poet who so diligently studied and so deeply loved the old Russian religious spirit unwittingly continues the social ideas of the people. The Red Christ, the avenger of the people's wrongs, is evolved out of the spirit of the pagan sectarian idea of Pugachev.

Thus, there were in Russia two forces: tsardom, the despotic and bureaucratic organization of the immense state — and the people. Barbarism was older than tsardom. It was not its product, it was rather tsardom that had arisen as the emanation of barbarism; but having once arisen and established itself, tsardom preserved barbarism; instead of liquidating it, tsardom perpetuated it; it polished Russia and covered her with a varnish of culture. But the masses of the people persisted in an almost primitive state. A fatal symbiosis developed. Tsardom preserved barbarism, while barbarism by its mere persistence perpetuated

tyranny as the proper form of the state with a barbarous people. When tsardom undertook reforms and made a breach in the Chinese wall encompassing Russia, the crowd rushed towards that breach crushing everything in its way. When the element gained freedom of action, there ensued inevitable catastrophe, the test and symbol of which was at the beginning of the reign of the last Tsar the terrible catastrophe in the field of Khodin.

In such cases the tsarist régime eagerly defended order, placed in the breach soldiers with rifles and cannons, shot at the crowd and filled the breach; it felt powerless when reforms were concerned and was strengthened in the belief that it was necessary to persist in the old methods.

When educated Russia undertook the liquidation of barbarism, when in the masses themselves an urge toward the light was awakened, then the alarmed despotism extinguished the light and saved endangered barbarism. A combination of two powers, tyranny and barbarism, developed. Both powers became deeply rooted in the life and soul of the nation and one might fear that the diabolic tyranny of oppression and barbarism would survive the present form of despotism — tsardom. Barbarism will hold its position and by its very existence will call a new tyranny to life.

Tyranny, keeping the people in ignorance and oppression for centuries, creates in them a negation of state and law, a spontaneous anarchism among the masses. This state nihilism, this political iconoclasm of the population, make necessary the continuation of despotism, and the spontaneous rise of a new one in place of the old, when the former collapses. When a people, trained by centuries of culture and law, has a sense of the usefulness and necessity of law and state, a compromise is easily effected between the requirements of the state and the interest of the citizen, between duty and freedom. Even if in that case there is no harmony between the compulsory demand of the state and the voluntary sacrifice of the citizen, they are separated by distance, not by chasm; there is a dispute about the limits of power and sacrifices, but there is no dispute about the *raison d'être* itself of the existence of the state. Then we have a state in which the government's power is limited, controlled by the people, and in which guarantees of civic rights exist. When, however, the people regard the state as a superfluous organization of compulsion and exploitation, external compulsion becomes the only tie between the state and its subject. A state composed of a vast majority of individuals with a negative attitude towards it, maintains itself only by external compulsion and despotism emerges as the prerequisite of such a state's existence.

These observations suggest themselves when we pass on to the

reforms of Alexander II, and particularly to the major one of them, the peasant reform. The reformer-Tsar was faced with a tremendous task. He was to liquidate serfdom and barbarism, renew the social foundations, regenerate Russia. We know that the task did not succeed. Let us examine its execution.

The official descriptions of the peasants' joy, after the 1861 manifesto was read to them, were in striking contradiction with the facts. The proclamation of the reform with its complicated legal provisions caused distrust and disappointment among the peasants. Almost general among them was the belief that it was not the freedom that the Tsar granted them, but a document counterfeited by the lords and the authorities, incomplete, insufficient, evasive, from which the lords would probably derive profit for themselves. One of the enthusiasts of the reform, George Samarin, wrote in September 1861, more than half a year after the manifesto was issued, a letter, full of bitterness, to one of the principal promoters of the reform, Nicholas Milutin. Samarin stated that the reform did not at all pacify the peasants' minds. "The main obstacle is the peasants' distrust of everything and everybody. In their eyes there is nothing inviolable or impossible." This peasant maximalism continues to be concealed by the mask of humility, hypocrisy and secrecy towards the masters. "To all that is said to them they answer: we are ignorant, *batiushka,* we know nothing, but we argue thus: what the Tsar orders should be carried out. — What is written in this book, is the Tsar's will. — How should we know this, we are ignorant, we do not know what is contained in that book...One has a despondent feeling that all conversations flow down them as water down a rock. The peasants obey the orders, but in their innermost souls they remain faithful to their hopes, and much time will elapse before they will give them up."[9]

This distrust was the peasants' first reaction to the publication of the manifesto. In the interesting memoirs of a village priest at the time of the 1861 reform one finds the following reminiscences about the proclamation of the manifesto in the estate of Prince K. in the Saratov province: "While the manifesto was read, the peasants stood with bowed heads and it was evident that they did not expect anything good for themselves from that freedom. They listened to the manifesto as to a verdict condemning them to deportation." In some localities the peasants at first were happy when told that freedom was given them. But when it was explained that the title of ownership to the land remained in the hands of the landowners, that the peasants would not receive for here-

[9] A. Leroy-Beaulieu, *L'Empire des Tsars,* Vol. I, Third edition, 1890, p. 425.

ditary use the whole land they had cultivated during serfdom, that a part of it would go to the lord, and that the peasants would be permitted to hold it only as tenure and that they would have to buy their portion, they saddened and said: "What kind of freedom is this?... Let things remain as they were."[10]

In many localities the peasants openly accused the priests who read the manifesto to them, of having been bribed by the lords, and of reading a falsified decree of the Tsar. The act of reform, failing to satisfy the peasants, revealed more clearly their proper aspirations and their real attitude to the lords. Many landowners, deceived by the peasants' servile submissiveness during serfdom, were surprised by the unexpected revelation of the peasants' hatred. Prince Cherkasski wrote to Milutin in July, 1861, that only the "radical distrust of the whole bearded Orthodox population towards the nobility" convinced the landowners that they did not have the peasants' confidence.[11]

* * *

The peasants' dissatisfaction after the reform was general. Most of them, however, did not lose their confidence in the Tsar; on the contrary, they believed that the act of 1861 was the first step on the road to the peasant's emancipation and granting him land. In one of the counties where the peasants obtained in 1861 an exceptionally big portion of land, they were asked a few years later whether they were satisfied. "Yes" – they said – "but we have the strong hope that the Tsar will not forget our children and in due time will give them land, too." The reform of 1861 convinced some skeptics that they could never expect true freedom to be granted them. Several years after the reform an aged peasant woman told Anatol Leroy-Beaulieu that her late husband saw in his dream, at the time of the manifesto, a field and said to her in the morning: "I know what this means: we shall never be free." Thus, while some continued to dream of the Tsar as the giver of land and freedom, others lost that faith, but by no means lost the desire for land and freedom. They were the forbears of those peasants who at the time of the catastrophe of their state will aspire to the fulfilment of their age-old longing, will want to obtain land, be it from the hands of the Tsars or of his assassins.

The principal task of the peasant reform, the transformation of the serf, who hated the existing conditions and dreamed of a radical change, into a peaceful and civilized farmer, who would be attached to his soil and farm, and would gradually become a conscious citizen of his coun-

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[10] "Zapiski selskago sviashchennika," *Russkaya Starina*, vol. XXVII, 1880, pp. 55, 56, 459.

[11] A. L. Beaulieu. *L'Empire des Tsars*, Vol. I, p. 419.

cerning the peasants with the general laws of the Empire and that it should facilitate the safeguarding, for persons of that class, of the enjoyment of the status of free peasants, citizens with equal rights, promised them by the Tsar-Emancipator."

This was a clear avowal that the main object of the reform, proclaimed by Alexander II, still required realization. Who will achieve this task, the White Tsar, or that other figure whose advent was anticipated at the beginning of the nineteenth century by Russia's profound observer, Joseph de Maistre, and whose character he defined tersely as "Pugachev from the university." Was the storm approaching which Lermontov envisioned prophetically, eighty-six years before the fall of tsardom, at the time of its greatest power, in the reign of Nicholas I, when the throne seemed to stand firm as a rock? In his poem *Prophecy* which, obviously, could not appear in print, he painted a gloomy picture of the future catastrophe:

"A year, a black year for Russia will come, when the crown will fall off the Tsars' head. The people will forget their old love for them, and the masses will feed on blood and murder. The destroyed law will protect neither women nor innocent children. And the fetid corpses will cause pestilence in the desolate villages and call its victims from the huts. Famine will torment the unfortunate country and the rivers will be red from the reflexes of fires."

3.

RESTLESS INTELLIGENTSIA

LOOKING TODAY, from a distance of more than a century, at the Decembrists' trial, one feels sorry not only for the five men who perished on the gallows; not only for the several scores who were buried alive in Siberia, nor for those noble-minded women who followed them into exile. One misses with regret that type of Russian who then loomed as a herald of an early rebirth of Russia, and who was brutally swept away from Russian life. The Decembrist generation had that fullness of life, and that spiritual health which do not appear any more in the subsequent generations. It was a type of man free from what Herzen was later to call Russian distortion (*russkii nadlom*). It was the first Russian generation to outrun tsardom and leave it behind.

Up to the Congress of Vienna, more or less, the Tsars were the leaders, often compelling the nation by brutal force to follow them on the path of progress, as was the case with Peter I. Both Catherine II and Alexander I, in the first years of their reigns were in their attempts at reforms ahead of the large majority of the enlightened, or rather semi-enlightened classes which, at that time, constituted Russia's higher social stratum. It was only the generation which had grown up after the Napoleonic wars, that started making and discussing plans for the restoration of Russia, and that, while Alexander I was gradually growing more reactionary, decided to take the initiative of their practical realization. These enthusiastic reformers, aware of the growing number of their adherents, which was to reach the figure of six thousand, having in the immediate past neither any experience nor any memory of a mass defeat, forged eagerly ahead. They did not, they had no time to, realize clearly either the dull indifference of the masses towards their aims, or the faint-heartedness of the public that was soon to disown them as traitors to their country.

In that generation there awoke for the first time in Russia's history, a national and cultural consciousness, the sense of the need of developing the native elements of Russian life, and of making Russia follow more quickly in the footsteps of the more enlightened nations. The acute antinomy between the Westerners and Slavophils did not as yet exist among them. The zeal of reformers overshadowed in them the craving for revenge. They knew the joy of creative effort, but not that of destruction. There was no feeling of bitterness, no hatred in their souls. They were free from dogmatic doctrinairism and gloomy fanaticism.

This brilliant group of young men making ready to storm the citadel of oppression suddenly disappeared as if in a abyss. Their adherents who were left alive were terrorized into silence, and tried to erase the errors of their youth by their later conduct. The generation which succeeded them, *i.e.* the first generation of the reign of Nicholas I, had not forgotten that brighter era when, in their youth, they had come in touch with the recent reminiscences of the great wars, and with the tradition of 1812. The lofty, heroic atmosphere of great historical events and great political movements had left its trace in their youthful souls. Like their elder brothers, they had absorbed the battle-cries which were then inspiring the Western world, those of Lafayette and Godefroy Cavaignac. The breath of enthusiasm which had touched them in their early youth left an indelible imprint for the rest of their lives. "I remember the appearance of the first songs of *Onegin* and the first scenes of *Gore ot Uma*" – wrote Herzen in 1864 to a friend. – "I remember how the dignified poem of Ryleyev, interrupting Griboyedov's laughter, rang like churchbells in the first week of Lent." He cherished to the end of his days the reminiscences of that generation of Decembrists, the remembrance "of bright faces and hopes, of bright laughter and bright tears." Associated with narratives of 1812, reminiscences of that period formed in his memory "the golden background of the icon setting off with still greater clearness the black faces of the saints."

Those younger brothers of the Decembrists found themselves in the icy atmosphere of the reign of Nicholas I; their youthful enthusiasm could find no outlet in those gloomy days that followed and dragged on endlessly. Moral distortion and spiritual death threatened the young generation which could find no way out of such a maze.

"Lost, miserable, superfluous people were appearing, not knowing where to go, that is not knowing either their aim or their way, yet conscious that they could not continue to live such a life, men torn away from somewhere, abandoned in some dangerous spot as children in the woods. The older ones among them were Decembrists who escaped; and we were closing the procession as street urchins following the

march of a departing regiment. And we were growing up to become superfluous people..."

In the fourth decade of the nineteenth century Herzen came in contact with two outstanding representatives of the period of Alexander I, P. Chaadayev and Michael Orlov, a friend of the Decembrists, who owed his escape to his brother Alexey's influential position at the Court. Both of them were broken men, as it were, the type and prototype of superfluous men.

The young generation which followed that of Herzen's, did not know those veterans of a great era any more. They grew up in a horrible spiritual atmosphere; without any examples, any men worthy of admiration. They reached manhood without respect or affection for their fathers whom they saw bowing before the authorities, intent on their careers, indulging in gambling and debauchery, incapable of action.

"Having much to hate and to despise, they had almost nothing to love and to respect. Whole spheres of inner life remain unknown, forever walled up in the heart of a man who had never felt a boundless love for his mother, or a deep respect for the fathers, *maestri*."

Young people of Herzen's generation, who graduated from the universities in the fourth decade of the nineteenth century, preserved some remnants of the tradition of the era of Alexander I. But when these "convicts of education" were leaving school to enter practical life, they no longer had the self-reliant enthusiasm of Pushkin after his graduation, nor the proud inflexible courage of the Decembrist, Lunin. To start with, their idol, French liberalism, was after the July Revolution only a shadow of the old liberalism of the Restoration period. Secondly, they gradually began to realize that in the Russia of Nicholas I their liberalism contributed to their isolation, that they had against themselves the terrible strength of the government and of the frightened or sincerely reactionary public opinion, and that, and this was worst of all, the plain people did not understand them at all and did not want to have anything in common with them.

"Each fact, each year confirmed the terrible truth that not only the government was against them with its gallows and spies, with the hoop with which the executioner squeezed the head of Pestel and with Nicholas who was putting this hoop on entire Russia, but also that the masses were not with them, or, at least, were complete strangers; and even if the masses were dissatisfied, it was with something quite different from that with which they were dissatisfied."

Herzen went abroad, and there published his appeal to "reach the other shore." The younger brothers of the Decembrists stayed in Russia, increasing the number of embittered people; great numbers were losing their spirit and abandoning their banner. This should cause no

surprise, however. One needs only to read Herzen's diary, to realize the distress of a man who in his loneliness faced the reprisals of the government and the indifference of the masses.

The product of such conditions was the *superfluous* man who was aware that his aspirations, his talents and knowledge were of no avail in the nation's life, the type of man who because of enforced idleness had become a moral wreck. Moral distortion began when the individual came in immediate contact with reality, the "vile Russian reality", as it was called by Belinski. Individuals, however, whose reason and feelings were protesting against the régime and the deplorable conditions in which people were compelled to live, soon came to realize that they could not free their souls from the miasmata of decomposition with which the system was inoculating not only its adherents but its adversaries as well.

And this is where the deeper tragedy of those men began: the conflict of man with himself, fomented by the growing consciousness of the chasm between his aspirations and his life, sterile and idle. Some of those men worried to the end of their lives, unable to stifle their moral restlessness resulting from a sense of their co-responsibility for the destinies of their country because of their passivity and neglect of their civic duty. Others, and these were more numerous, calmed down; in the course of time their aspirations faded and became obliterated, and eventually they blended integrally with the base reality.

These *superfluous* men of the Nicholas period were later reproached with having been unable to make proper use of their energy. Let us analyze their situation more closely.

The omnipotent state organization required of educated men to become either a wheel in the tremendous government machinery, or to retire to private life and not interfere with public affairs. Honest people with civic aspirations loathed the former. Yet some of them entered the government's service, where an overwhelming power forced them into an age-old routine, and their best intentions were drowned in an ocean of lawlessness. Even though an individual remained honest himself, he had to connive at innumerable abuses and acts of violence. Let us take the avowals of one of these better men who at that time entered the Government's service, and not even the confessions of a radical like Herzen who probably would have been unable to adapt himself to any bureaucratic routine, but those of the moderate, loyal, enlightened and honest Nikitenko who served as a professor and simultaneously as a censor, and who finally, in the reign of Alexander II, became one of the oppressors of the printed word.

Nikitenko kept aloof from any, even theoretical, political movement, devoting himself to learning and teaching, yet it is evident from his avowals that his life was a chain of moral distresses. The progress of learning was an anomaly in a country where oppression and violence prevailed.

"A sad spectacle that of our people," he wrote under the date of January 15, 1841. – "No noble aspirations, no justice, no simplicity, nor honor in their mores. Little souls spend themselves in the little gossips of social chaos. Wisdom and fraud appear synonymous. The term – honest man – means with us a simpleton, almost a dunce. Social demoralization is so great that the conceptions of honor and justice are regarded either as characteristics of weak souls or as symptoms of over-enthusiastic romanticism. Our education is but hypocrisy. We study without love for learning, without a sense of dignity, without feeling the need for truth. Indeed, why should we care to acquire knowledge in school, when our life and our public are warring against all great ideas and truths, and when any attempt to realize some idea if justice, of the good and of public welfare is branded and prosecuted as a crime. What is the use of developing noble aspirations if, sooner or later, one has to join the majority in order to avoid becoming a victim."

On October 28, 1841, Nikitenko wrote down the following: "For us in Russia the era of moral needs has not yet arrived. Our social structure stifles any development of our moral forces, and woe to him who, because of his social status, has to exert his energy in that direction. His position is the most difficult, because it is based upon falsehood. This is not the thing we need. Why should knowledge be taught? Where is it needed here? It has no support in life and is only a scholastic bungling of ideas. Man involuntarily finds himself in the company of charlatans. Especially my branch of studies is an utter absurdity and contradiction. I am to lecture on Russian literature, but where is it? Is literature with us a legitimate study? The only refuge left is the dead realm of theory. I am cheating people as well as myself using such words as progress, trend of thought, basic ideas of art. All this is important, and greatly so, where there exist public opinion and intellectual and political interests, but here we simply indulge in empty talk. Words, words, words! Having to live on words and for the sake of words, while one's soul craves truth, and one's reason is eager to obtain sure and lasting results – this is real, deep distress. Often, very often I feel oppressed by a deep and gloomy sense of my nothingness. Were I living among savages I would go fishing and hunting and I would be doing some work, and now I play with dreams and illusions like a child or a fool. Oh, I would write the story of my life with

my heart's blood! Cursed be the age of imaginary official obligation of moral activity, without any real necessity — where society imposes upon one duties it despises itself."

A man who was not in government service, was barred from any public activity, as the state extended its monopoly over everything. To be sure, a landowner could do agricultural work, but even here, as we are told by the moderate Kavelin, there was a domain of an enlightened man's tragic conflicts with his own conscience. Violence and oppression permeated rural conditions and even the best people underwent the demoralizing influence of the inflamed and rankling social conditions in the era of serfdom. Individual efforts were helpless against the ignorance and savagery of the masses. What was needed was a tremendous, organized, collective effort of all enlightened elements in Russia; but any attempt, however modest, at such an organized action was treated by the government as high treason. Hardly had people begun an, even theoretical, discussion of any social initiative when they became first the object of observation, then of investigation and, finally, of reprisals on the part of the authorities. The so-called conspiracy of Petrashevski was but an attempt to bring together people eager to discuss the means of improving the inveterate deficiencies of Russian life.

People of exceptional moral stamina and exceptional talents, like Belinski, succeeded in achieving much even under such circumstances. Yet this was possible only at the price of continuous and dreary struggle which the average man could not afford.

"I feel exhausted" — wrote Belinski to Botkin on March 14, 1840. "Wherever I look, my soul revolts, my feelings are offended. Our circle dispersed and will disperse still more. Where to lay one's head, where is sympathy, understanding, humanity? We are living in a dreadful age, we must suffer so that our grandchildren may live a better life..."

In his letter of July 13 of the same year, he wrote: "The situation is tragic, indeed. I feel dejected, looking at a society in which villains and paltry mediocrities play a dominant role, while all nobleminded and gifted people live in disgraceful idleness on a desert island..."

Not less depressed was Herzen as long as he lived in Russia. He, too, was thinking of future generations. Just as the contemporary generation of intelligent Poles cherished the hope of a great European war, the Russians placed their hopes in a coming upheaval, and offered their sufferings as a sacrifice for the future generations that were to come after the dawn. On September 10, 1842, Herzen wrote down in his diary that only the movement and bustle of life were stifling his inward pain. In moments of quiet and reflection there rings in his soul "the eternal voice of sadness and indignation, the clamor of the

spirit craving for the fullness of a human, free life."

"Will future generations understand and appreciate the full horror, the full tragedy of our existence?" – he wrote on September 11, 1842. – "And yet our sufferings are a seedling out of which their happiness will grow. Will they understand why we are lazy, why we are in search of all kinds of pleasure, why we drink wine etc., why our arm does not reach out for great action, why even in moments of rapture sadness does not leave us? Let them pause and ponder with grief before tombstones under which we will rest: we have deserved their sorrow. Was there ever such an era in the history of any country? Rome in the last centuries of her existence – and even not that. There there were sacred memories; there was a past; man, embittered by the state of his country, could find solace in the bosom of the young religion which had emerged in all its purity and poetry. We are killed by the emptiness and chaos of our past and at the present time by the lack of any universal interests."

"The age we are living in" – he wrote three years later, on October 29, 1845 – "is terrible for our country, and no way out is in sight."

The type of superfluous man consists of a great many factors which form the background against which Russia's modern intellectual culture develops. Reflected in that type is the adventitious, imitative character of Russian culture, lacking roots deeply embedded in the Russian soil. "A crazy class of semi-Europeans" as Griboyedov in one of his articles called the Russian intelligentsia then in the making. Already toward the end of the era of Alexander I, Griboyedov had observed and artistically re-created the prototype of the superfluous man, Chatski. Pushkin's Onegin, Lermontov's Pechorin, Herzen's Beltov, and a series of Turgenev's characters headed by the incomparable Rudin, were the first figures of that type in Russian literature. The classical era of superfluous men was the reign of Nicholas I. The type, however, did not disappear in years to follow. In the days of Alexander II, it was less numerous, to appear again more frequently in the reign of Alexander III, re-created by the pen of Chekhov.

In addition to the crushing influence of despotism the psychology of the superfluous man evinces the influence of that fragility of Russian culture which cause these men, separated from the masses by their education, to feel like strangers and exiles in their own country.

"Look around" – wrote Chaadayev in his famous *Philosophical Letter*. – "Does it not seem that we are all, as it were, in permanent exile. We look like wanderers, no one has a definite sphere of existence, having no good habits or principles in any domain, not even a home. There is nothing stable, nothing necessary; everything is fluid and passes, leaving no traces either on the surface, or in ourselves. At home

we are as if aliens, in the cities we look like nomads, more so even than those nomads who tend their herds on our steppes, for these peoples are more attached to their pastures than we are to our cities..."

Thus wrote Chaadayev in the days of Nicholas I. After the Bolshevik revolution, Dmitri Merezhkovski, as if seconding the views of the great superfluous man of the Nicholas era, said: "We thought that Russia was our home, but she is only a tent..."

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Chaadayev's personality deserves a closer analysis.

"By the supreme will of heaven – born in the fetters of the Tsar's service, – he would have been a Brutus in Rome, a Pericles in Athens – and here he is a hussar officer." These words were addressed by young Pushkin to Chaadayev's portrait in 1817.

Chaadayev was an interesting figure reminiscent of Chatski in Griboyedov's satire. He had an encyclopaedic and truly European education and polish, belonged by birth to higher society and excellently wielded both pen and spoken word. Having retired from military service during the reign of Alexander I, he devoted himself to the study of history and theology, visited Europe, and after his return settled in Moscow where he at once occupied an exceptional position in society and literary circles. In a Russia deprived of a parliamentary tribune, freedom of the press, public meetings and political organizations, the private *salon* became the only place where people of education could exchange their views. There Chaadayev displayed the gift of his eloquence and subjected the sores of Russia's social life to his enlightened criticism. In addition he wrote treatises which circulated in manuscript copies and made generally known the name of the author who, at that time, had none of his essays printed as yet.

One of his treatises, published in 1836 in the periodical *Telescope*, at once attained great publicity. It was his famous "Philosophical Letter" the contents of which did not awaken the vigilance of either the loyal editor Nadezhdin or the censor and the authorities, and as a consequence brought stern repressions on the culprits. "There is a terrible storm in the censor's office and in literature" noted Nikitenko in his diary after the publication of Chaadayev's essay. The author's cousin and biographer, Zhikharev, wrote: "Ever since the Russian people began to read and write, since the first appearance of books and papers, no literary or scientific event, either before or after, even Pushkin's death not excepted, has exerted such a deep impression and such a wide influence, none gained such a quick and far-flung publicity.."

"It was a shot that rang forth in a dark night" – wrote Herzen. "Whether something drowned and let the world know that it had

perished; whether it was a signal, a cry for help, the news of dawn or that there would be none; whatever it was, one had to wake up. What may two or three pages published in a monthly periodical mean? And yet, such was the power of speech, the power of the word in a silent country unused to hear an independent voice, that Chaadayev's letter gave a shock to the entire thinking Russia... It was dangerous to speak, and there was nothing to say. Suddenly a sad figure rose silently and demanded to speak in order to utter quietly his *lasciate ogni speranza.*"

At that time, in the summer of 1836, Herzen lived in exile in Viatka when the mail brought him a copy of the *Telescope.* He began to read the "Philosophical Letter" which was published anonymously. "From the second, third page my attention was arrested by the sad and serious tone. Every word breathed long suffering, already subdued, but still painful. Only people who have been thinking a great deal and have experienced much not in theory but in their own lives, write that way. I continued to read – the letter was growing, it was becoming a dismal indictment of Russia... And this was published in Russian by an unknown author. I was afraid, I was going insane.."

Let us make a summary of the "Philosophical Letter" using the author's text. "We have never walked hand in hand with other nations," – says the author about Russia. – "We do not belong to any of the great families of mankind, either to the West or to the East, we do not have the tradition of either. We exist as if beyond the limits of time and we were never touched by the universal education of humanity. All nations have lived through a period of exuberant, spontaneous, stormy activity. That period gave them their most vivid memories, their poetry, their legends, their most fruitful ideas. That uncommonly interesting era in the life of nations is their youth. We do not have anything of that kind. In the very beginning we had savage barbarism, then crass superstition, afterwards the cruel, humiliating yoke of the invaders, a yoke, the traces of which have not been fully blotted out as yet in our way of life. The national era corresponding to youth, is in our country filled with a dusky, colorless existence, lacking strength and energy. We have no fascinating reminiscences, no powerful, instructive models in our popular legends. We live in a kind of indifference to everything, we have no past and no future. And if we take part in something, we do so not for the purpose of attaining a true, really necessary and universal welfare, but as a lighthearted infant holding out its hands for a rattle which it sees in a stranger's hand without understanding either its meaning or use. The first years of modern history spent in immobile ignorance left no traces in our minds. Detached by a peculiar decree of destiny from the general life of mankind, we did

not derive anything from the ideas which nations obtain in their tradition. To equal enlightened nations, we should anew begin for ourselves the whole education of the human race. We came to this world as illegitimate children, without any heritage, without any connection with the people who preceded us.

"We are treading the path of history so strangely that each step we make is irretrievably lost for us. This is the result of our foreign, imitative education. We have no independent evolution of our own, we have no logical progress. Old ideas are destroyed by new ones, for the latter do not spring from the former, but emerge with us from God knows where. We grow but we do not mature.

"Nations are moral entities just as individuals. While it takes years to develop an individual, it takes centuries to form a nation. We belong to a group of nations which seem not to be as yet an indispensable part of mankind, but which exist in order to teach the world a lesson when the proper time comes. Such a destiny will, undoubtedly, be useful. But who knows when we shall find our place among mankind, and how many misfortunes we are fated to suffer, before our destinies are fulfilled.

"The nations of Europe have one common physiognomy, as if the birthmark of one family. In spite of being divided into a Latin and Teutonic, into a Southern and Northern branch, there is a common bond between them. And besides this common feature each of them possesses its own character, formed by history and tradition. Ideas of duty, justice, law, and order have their origin in facts and constitute the necessary foundations of society. This is the atmosphere of the West; it is more than history, more than psychology: it is the physiology of the European. What can we, in our country, substitute for all that? Even in our eyes I find something indefinite, cold, resembling the facial expression of peoples standing on the lower rungs of the social ladder.[1] On my visit to foreign countries, especially Southern ones, where people have such animated, expressive faces, I used to compare them with my compatriots, and I was always struck by the muteness of our faces.

"Situated between the Orient and the Occident, leaning with one elbow on China, and on Germany with the other, we should combine in ourselves two spiritual elements: imagination and wisdom. We should unite in our civilization the history of the whole world. But such has not been our lot. The experience of centuries does not exist for us. Anchorets of the world, we did not give anything to it, nor take any-

[1] Similar remarks were made by Mickiewicz in his lectures at the Collège de France.

thing from it. To the whole of human thought we did not add even a single idea. We did not contribute in anything to the betterment of the human race, and we have warped everything that we have borrowed from progress. We did not invent anything, and from the invention of others we have adapted only deceitful appearances and superfluous luxuries. To call attention to ourselves we would have to expand from the Bering Strait to the Oder.

"Persecuted by evil destiny, we obtained the first seeds of our intellectual and moral culture from a demoralized Byzantium held in contempt by all nations. A shallow vanity had just detached her from universal brotherhood, and we were the recipients of her ideology warped by human passion. In those days the quickening principle of unity was animating all Europe. Though calling ourselves Christians, we remained stagnant while western Christendom progressed majestically on the path traced by its divine Founder. The world was undergoing a transformation while we vegetated in our hovels of wood and clay. In short, the new destinies of mankind were not fulfilled for us; for us, Christians, the fruits of Christianity did not ripen. It is incontestable that we are Christians; but are not the Abyssinians Christians too? Is one to believe that these mean defections from divine and human truths will bring heaven to this earth?"

The author concluded his "Letter" with the expression of a religious faith in the future of mankind: "A blissful faith in mankind's future happiness fills my soul when, throttled by the miserable reality surrounding me, I want to take a breath of pure air and look at a brighter sky... It may appear that I have gone too far in attacking our country. By no means. I have told the truth, and have not yet expressed it fully. After all, Christian thought abhors infatuation, and the more nationalistic prejudices, because they most of all divide people among themselves."

The dateline under the letter read: "Necropolis, December 1, 1829."

What was the result of this significant publication? The official world was thrown into a commotion.

The liberal Moscow curator, Count Strogonov, the Petersburg metropolitan, Serafim, the Minister of Education Uvarov, not to mention lesser figures like Vigel, went appealing to whomever they could, to the Tsar, to Count Benckendorf, then the Chief of the III Department of the Imperial Chancellery, that is the secret police, demanding punishment for those guilty of such a scandal. Tsar Nicholas wrote on the education minister's report the following decision: "Having read the article I find that its contents are a mixture of impertinent absurdities,

worthy of a lunatic... Neither the editor nor the censor can be excused. Have the magazine closed at once, both culprits discharged and brought here for investigations."[2]

In the meantime the authorities had found out that Chaadayev was the author of the "Letter." After a conference with the Tsar, Benckendorf prepared the following note to the governor general of Moscow, Prince Golitzin, the Tsar having added in his own handwriting the words "very good" on the text:

"The periodical *Telescope* had published in its last issue (No. 15) an article entitled 'Philosophical Letter' the author of which is Mr. Chaadayev residing in Moscow. The article, undoubtedly already known to you, has aroused universal amazement among the inhabitants of Moscow. The author speaks of Russia, of the Russian people, their ideas, religion and history with such contempt that it is inconceivable how a Russian could degrade himself to such an extent as to write things of that sort. But the residents of our ancient capital, always known for their clear, common sense and filled with the feeling of dignity of the Russian nation, have immediately realized that such an article could not have been written by their compatriot who would have fully preserved a sound mind, and therefore — as we are being informed — they not only did not turn their indignation against Mr. Chaadayev, but on the contrary, they express their sincere regret on account of the mental derangement by which he was affected and which was the only reason for his writing such nonsense. News has been received here that the sympathy on account of Mr. Chaadayev's unfortunate condition is shared by the Moscow public. It is therefore His Imperial Majesty's wish that you undertake the necessary means to supply Mr. Chaadayev with medical care and attention. His Imperial Majesty orders you to entrust an able physician with Mr. Chaadayev's treatment and to instruct the physician to visit Mr. Chaadayev absolutely every morning. An order should also be issued to the effect that Mr. Chaadayev should not expose himself to the harmful influence of the present damp and cold weather, in short that all necessary steps should be taken to have his health improved. His Imperial Majesty wants you to send him a monthly report on Mr. Chaadayev's condition."

This memorable document of bureaucratic humor brings the Nicholas era nearer to that of Ivan the Terrible who used to scoff publicly at his victims. Chaadayev was officially declared insane and interned in his home as in the cell of a lunatic asylum.

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[2] The documents pertaining to the Chaadayev affair, as well as to the relation of the III Department of the Imperial Chancellery to the Russian writers are given in the work of M. Lemke *Nikolayevskiye Zhandarmy*, based upon the archives of the III Department.

While this was the attitude of the Russian Government towards Chaadayev's "Letter," what was the attitude of enlightened public opinion in Russia? In this respect the evidence is unanimous: Chaadayev's philippic against tsarist Russia met with violent indignation. Custine, who had visited Russia in 1839 and had his reminiscences fresh in mind, wrote about the impression created by Chaadayev's "Letter": "In all Russia there were not enough Siberias, mines, knouts to punish a man who had betrayed God and his country. Petersburg and holy Moscow flared up." Prince Odoyevski wrote from Petersburg to Shevyrev: "The uproar in the *salons* here is hard to imagine." "Here the enragement (*osterveneniye*) continues", wrote A. Turgenev from Moscow to Prince Vyazemski.

Chaadayev was isolated. The Tsar had decreed that he was insane. Public opinion considered him a criminal, guilty of blasphemy, of contempt of nation and church. Only a small group of forbearing people believed he had erred in good faith.

That feeling of loneliness explains to some extent Chaadayev's spiritual depression which overcame him after the publication of his "Letter." All private as well as official testimonies agree in that.

Pondering later in life over those hard years, Chaadayev spoke with much greater bitterness of the attitude of the public than of the conduct of the government. "The government" – he wrote in *Apology of an Insane* which only a year after his death was published abroad in French – "strictly speaking only did its duty. One may even say that the severity then applied towards me was not in any way extraordinary, for it positively by no means exceeded the expectation of a great portion of the public. Indeed, what else should the government, even well intentioned, have done than to comply with what it sincerely believed was the serious desire of the country? As to the public clamor, this is a different matter." He then went on upbraiding the dull chauvinism of his compatriots.

Chaadayev had signed an obligation that he would never publish any of his writings again. Thus, his legal writing activities in Russia were finished. But after a painful and humiliating period of medical observation, Chaadayev gradually had his rights of a mentally normal man restored; this was due not only to his contrition and manifestations of loyalty, but also to the fact that his famous letter had never questioned the principle of autocracy. Of the three foundations of tsardom Chaadayev attacked two: the Orthodox religion and official patriotism, leaving inviolate the third one: autocracy. On the contrary, he clearly condemned in his letter the Decembrist attempt.

In the whole history of those hard times, I do not know any other life that would be such a glaring illustration of the power of the system

and of the atmosphere crushing prominent individualities, as the life of Peter Chaadayev.

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The superfluous man represents a transitory stage between the type of the Decembrist of the end of the reign of Alexander I, and that of the nihilist who concludes the era of Nicholas I, as later the populist propagandist constitutes a transitory stage between the nihilist-individualist and the terrorist, between Bazarov and Zhelabov. The nearer we are the close of the Nicholas era, the more remote the transitory type becomes from that of the Decembrist and passes into that of the future nihilist. The spiritual process of the development of the nihilist type is of extreme importance for the history of the Russian intelligentsia. It is so because the stubborn negator-nihilist represents in the history of Russia's internal revolution the first variety of what, fifty years later, is to be the Bolshevik type. The nihilist developed in the reign of Nicholas I. Successive periods only maintained the substance of the type amidst changed conditions and scientific doctrines. The process that the internal revolution underwent in the reign of Nicholas I, is of a decisive and ominous importance for Russia's later history. In studying the genesis of the Russian revolution one must devote to that period the most careful attention.

The generation that immediately preceded the nihilists are the Petrashevski followers. Born in the third decade of the nineteenth century, they could have no reminiscences of a brighter era, their first impressions being those of their school years which coincided with the Nicholas oppression, when — as Herzen used to say — the leaden eyes of the Tsar looked at a young boy from everywhere.

The so-called Petrashevski conspiracy, uncovered in 1849, actually consisted of a number of debating circles which met every Friday in Michael Petrashevski's Petersburg home. In provincial towns this center had what might be called branches founded by the participants of Petrashevski's Petersburg *jours fixes,* as these allegedly dangerous meetings were called by a historian of the movement. At these *jours fixes* manuscripts condemned by the censor were read, fiery orations were delivered, the government was criticized, and dreams of a future ideal system for Russia and all mankind were indulged in.

In 1848 Petrashevski conferred with several of his friends about the organization of a society. The conferences, however, resulted in failure because of a diversity of views. A common critical attitude towards the government was the only bond uniting the members, but even in this respect there was no unanimity as to the degree and limits of the criticism. They were a loose group of men who were attracted by the interesting topics discussed at the meetings, and they met together

because there were in the Petersburg of those days no places where people of an alert mind could meet for discussions.

Reports of those meetings reached the government. Liprandi, an official of the Ministry of the Interior, was charged with investigating the character of those meetings. Liprandi delegated his subordinate Antonelli, who succeeded in gaining admission to the meetings, and sent secret information on what was going on. Antonelli's report may serve as a model of a tendentious and fantastic elaboration of a spy. According to the police version, the whole affair grew to the size of a gigantic propaganda which supposedly had already begun to penetrate into all strata of the population and threatened the State with disaster. The undefined and elusive character of the agitation of a loose group, the lack of any rules, regulations and norms gave scope to insinuations about the fantastic proportions and results of the action.

At the meetings, political and social problems were discussed, plans of reforms were made, the participants found in those dreams relief and escape from the oppressive feeling of the political terror under which they all lived. Some of the members took notes of these conversations and developed bold projects, including the assassination of the Tsar. All those fragments and episodes were presented in the report as links of a great conspiracy. "I inferred from all this" – wrote the tsarist police agent – "that it was not a small and isolated plot, but an all-embracing plan of a universal disturbance, subversion and destruction." The report quoted increasing numbers of peasant rebellions against their landlords and linked them with the uncovered conspiracy. In view of the fact that several pedagogues had attended the meetings, Liprandi argued: "In this case the intended aim and expected results are too clear to require further expatiation; one such teacher could every year impart his ideas to scores and hundreds of young men who later dispersed all over the country."[3]

According to the reports, it was something worse than a conspiracy. Strictly speaking, a conspiracy embraces a limited number of persons, while in this case, it was a propaganda association aimed at inciting the masses. "Ordinary conspiracies are usually composed of people of the same class, more or less close to each other because of their social position. Thus, for instance, the members of the 1825 plot belonged exclusively to the nobility, and in addition most of them were army officers. In this case, however, we found next to officers of the Guard and officials of the Foreign Office, students, minor artists, merchants, townsmen, even shopkeepers dealing in tobacco. Evidently, the net had been spread so as to catch the entire population."

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[3] "Notes of J. P. Liprandi," *Russkaya Starina*, Vol. VI, 1872.

Liprandi stated further, with considerable exaggeration, that the alleged conspirators were full of enthusiasm and energy, and describes those qualities in a way which may serve as a good illustration of the attitude of the tsarist officials towards the world of ideas.

"It sufficed to see that conviction, that enthusiasm and, I may say, that fanaticism which animated the society in its intentions. Conspirators guided by some private consideration or passion, such as revenge, calculation, unappeased ambitions, etc., are less dangerous and cannot so easily inculcate others with their own criminal feelings and win them over. I have met such people in this case too, but in most of those young men I found a radical exasperation against the existing state of things, without any personal motives, resulting from their inebriation with visionary utopias which prevail in Western Europe and have until now penetrated to us unhampered, by means of literary works and even school instruction. Blindly devoted to these utopias they imagine that they have been called to regenerate the entire social life and reconstruct all mankind, and they are ready to be the apostles and martyrs of this unfortunate delusion. One may expect anything from people of that kind. They will not stop, they will not recoil before anything because according to their ideas they are acting not for their own profit but for the good of entire mankind, not for the present moment, but for eternity..."

A significant confession, indeed. People called to protect the régime fear most of all deep conviction, enthusiasm, love for mankind; they regard an egoist, careerist, a practical materialist as a type of citizen safe for the State. With clear conscience they send provocateurs and spies to a group of enthusiasts, ruin the most enlightened people, and demoralize their own tools. To the barbarism and corruption they add falsehood and hypocrisy, describing their hunted victims as depraved and mean individuals. The same thing happened after the conspiracy of the Decembrists; the same was done after the trial of Petrashevski and his followers. The verdict against them contained the following:

"In Russia where the holy faith, love for the emperor and loyalty to the throne have their foundation in the inborn traits of the nation and have been until now inviolably preserved in all hearts, only a handful of people of no importance, mostly young and demoralized, dreamed of the possibility of trampling upon the most sacred laws of religion, of the legal order and of property."[4]

Unlike the Decembrists, the Petrashevski group did not limit their dreams to overthrowing despotism and establishing a constitutional

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[4] *Russkii Invalid,* December 22, old style, 1849, No. 276.

democratic system. They dreamed of an entirely new social, political and cultural order for all humanity, basing their visions upon the theories of Charles Fourier. The latter wanted to make mankind happy, to abolish any compulsion, to organize man's work in conformity with human impulses (*attraction passionnée*), to do away with physical, moral and intellectual misery, by abolishing the modern division of countries into villages and cities and by establishing big buildings for organized work, phalansteries, equipped with all new inventions and surrounded by nature. Fourier's unlimited imagination went still further: he wanted to introduce beneficent changes in nature itself, eliminate sickness, and considerably prolong life. All these dreams of Fourier, containing sound proposals as well as fantastic absurdities, found admirers among young writers, artists, state employees, army officers, university students and tradesmen, shut in in a country where the words liberty, progress, democracy could be pronounced only in a whisper.

All those reveries appear to us as something unbelievable and ridiculous, if we take into consideration that the people who made such fantastic plans of transforming modern civilization and eliminating all shortcomings of life, were living in Petersburg of the era of Nicholas I under circumstances which made even Western countries as France and England, not to speak of Fourier's utopias, appear a paradise on earth. This was the view of Dostoyevski, one of the defendants, who declared at the trial: "Fourierism in our country can exist only in the pages of a book or in the soft and tender soul of a dreamer in the form of an idyll or a poem consisting of twenty-four cantos. The system of Fourier cannot cause serious harm, and if a Fourierist harms any one, it is only himself, according to the opinion of sane people. I believe that there is nothing more ridiculous than superfluous activities."

Contrary to Dostoyevski's view, calculated after all at minimizing the accusations, there was in that fanatic admiration for an utopia something more than ridiculousness alone. The Decembrists and the followers of Petrashevski represent two stages separated from each other by hardly twenty-five years of the reign of Nicholas I. The Decembrists dreamed of modernizing Russia after the pattern of enlightened Western nations, while preserving Russia's distinct peculiarities. The Petrashevski group dreamed of reorganizing Russia as well as the whole world after the pattern of most extreme Western utopias.

One of the former followers of Petrashevski, the playwright Palm, was to describe in his novel *Alexey Slobodin*, published in 1874 under the pseudonym of P. Alminski, the atmosphere in which the Petrashevski generation had grown up. Bound by censorship, he spoke of the Nicholas oppression in veiled language and described the origin of the Petrashevski movement as follows:

"In that night there was born and grew up a a generation of people who had to suffer many hardships and many bitter reproaches. In their childhood they had attentively observed the triumph of stupidity around them, and having reached youth they became aware that there was no work for them in their native country. And this was the origin of the pale, anemic type of superfluous people (*lishniye ludi*) on the one hand, and of equally abnormal heralds of a remote ideal, on the other."

The Petrashevski's followers belonged to that second category.

"The whole strength of the young minds turned in that direction, to study that world which opened before them, a world of current problems, energetic protests, festering wounds of real pain and enrapturing systems which were to bring mankind universal happiness. A tremendous boldness of thinking blazed up. Paris newspapers, beginning with February 24 (1848), were bringing some nervous excitement. In Petersburg cafés papers were passing from hand to hand; often things went so far that someone grasped a paper, leaped on the table and, surrounded by a crowd, would read aloud the decrees of the provisional government and the speeches delivered by Louis Blanc in the Luxembourg Palace..."

The above remarks of Palm are valuable. Young men, excited by events in Western Europe, completely deprived of public political and social discussion, and even more from public activity, cease to distinguish between the practicable and the impracticable; between what was immediately feasible and what could be possible only in a distant future, or to remain a utopia forever. When in the Russia of Tsar Nicholas I, any aspirations towards reforms, to better the lot of the peasants, to ease censorship, to improve the administration of justice, was a chimera, and when reducing one's aspirations to a modest scope does by no means guarantee their realization, why not give free rein to criticism and imagination? Inasmuch as the adoption of even modest political and social reforms would require the overturn of tsarist despotism, why not be bold in mapping out the plan of reforms? As the dreams are temporarily impracticable, let their inanity be compensated and requited by their boldness. As destruction is only permissible in the realm of thought, man avails himself of the superiority which pure thought has over practical action, of its vigor, élan, and boundlessness. If there had been a little understanding of the human soul in those who held back successive generations from public activities, as well as from free expression of their elementary civic concerns, and to whom honest patriotism was synonymous with revolt, they would have foreseen that such an espousing of utopia could not but become the ruling passion of people who were deprived of freedom of speech,

of teaching, of a free press, and who did not feel satisfied with ranks and decorations, wine and gambling.

Among the crimes of which the defendants were accused was their participation in a birthday dinner in honor of Charles Fourier and the delivery of speeches suited to the occasion. Today, those speeches would appear ridiculous, were it not for our knowledge of the hopeless political conditions that compelled people to indulge in dreams, and were it not for the death sentence which the military tribunal had rendered against the authors of those speeches, and which was commuted only by an act of tsarist mercy.

"I start speaking with emotion" – said young Khanykov – "which our meeting and the event we are celebrating tonight arouse in my heart, and which will bring about the rebirth of our planet and of humanity inhabiting it..." He further spoke of "that new world, discovered by the master, and a contrast to the existing state of things." He foresaw that the enacting of these new principles would require a struggle. "But we shall not be afraid of that struggle as it will be called forth by the irrefutable proof of our doctrine, by our close friendly union in all corners of the globe, in the name of the principles and laws of that doctrine. The turning point is near."

"Life such as it is exists at present is hard and miserable" – said young Akhsharumov – "we all feel unhappy. Can anyone be happy in the society in which we live?..." The speaker believed that the death pangs of the entire world had already started. "All that old, enormous structure of centuries will topple and crumble crushing many of us in its ruins, but life will be reborn and people will live in prosperity, happiness and joy... Tonight – at this first dinner of Fourierists in Russia all of them are present: not much more than ten people. Everything starts from little things and grows to be large..."

The speaker was an ardent partisan of Fourier's plan to abolish the division of the world into cities and villages. He saw in his imagination the future destruction of cities and that prospect had for him an irresistible charm.

"To destroy the capital and the cities, and use all the material for other structures and to transform this whole life of tortures, disasters, misery, shame, disgrace into a life of beauty and exuberance, a life of wealth and happiness, and to cover this beggarly earth with palaces, fruits, and to decorate it with flowers – this is our goal. We shall begin such a revolution here, in our country, and the whole earth will conclude it. Soon the human race will be liberated from its unbearable sufferings."

Let us remember the above speech as an enslaved generation's

confession of secret instincts which were to be expressed in action by the grandsons of Petrashevski's followers. The intolerable consciousness of the distress and disgrace of life, the feverish clinging to theories promising a radical liberation, an impatient craving for the destruction of the centers of present-day civilization; a belief that it is Russia's historical task to give the world the signal of revolution which will build up a new world upon the ruins of the old one; all these symptoms, the result of terrible slavery, will grow in power as a swelling torrent which undermines and carries off the seemingly unshakable foundations of tsardom. Fourierism supplied only a transitory phraseology for the expression of desires which were deeply rooted in the souls and resulted from living in bondage. A specific Russian revolutionary Messianism led Herzen and Ogarev to Saint-Simonism, the followers of Petrashevski to Fourier, Bakunin to Proudhon, and the subsequent generations — to Marx. After the crushing of the Decembrist revolt Saint-Simonists appeared in Russia, suffered exile in Siberia, and had to emigrate abroad. Then came the enthusiasts of Fourierism. Again, after the breaking of that movement there followed a new type, more crude, brutal, educated in the school of materialism, matured during the dreadful period of terror, in the era between the revolution of 1848 and Russia's defeat in the Crimean War: — the Nihilist.

The dominant trend of Russia's internal revolution is in its initial phase the antithesis of Russian reality, first of all the antithesis of tsardom. This is its primary concern and passion: dogmatic negation of everything that stems from the present state, striving for an entirely new life. This extremism of negation constitutes one characteristic, fraught with consequences, of Russia's internal revolution.

We are, however, faced with a strange revelation. In the state of protest which opposes the existing State, one finds features strikingly resembling the reality it combats. The Russian, while turning away from reality, is unable to root out its influence from his own soul; he turns away with hatred from tsarist despotism, and yet, in his visions of a better tomorrow, despotism is beforehand recognized as legitimate. The more strenuous his efforts to create something entirely new and the greater the extremes he is ready to adopt, the closer he comes to those ancient extremes he had formerly anathematized. By some fatality the kingdom of the future is unconsciously patterned after tsardom; it is the reflection of the latter, nay, its caricature. The spirit of tsardom has bewitched the brains and the arm of the Russian building a new country; it watches over the work of the revolution and shapes the new structure according to the old model. A curse, indeed. The crystal palace of the future will be but the old Winter Palace occupied by the new rulers, only more spattered with blood

and more filthy. The mirage of the future long floats over the skies of the white Russian night and enchants the people with its silvery rays. At closer examination, however, one sees that it is the astral body of tsardom, the same valley of tears and violence, hovering between the earth and the abyss that seems heaven to the people.

Michael Muraviev used to boast that he belonged to those Muravievs who acted as hangmen, but not to those who were hanged. To belong to the former class was the privilege, the *ultima ratio* of the ruling class. To avenge the hanging of Pestel and Ryleyev, of Zhelabov and Perovskaya, there must be scaffolds for their murderers: this is, with the inexorable fatalism of man's psychology, the subconscious substance of the bloody dream pursued in Russia for one hundred years, from the days when the youthful Herzen took his secret oath at a church celebration in honor of the execution of the Decembrists. The dream of the future became the dream of revenge and the dream about one's own despotism. Out of those visions arises slowly a new counter-tsardom, the power of the future, bearing the illusory semblance of the future State of lofty ideals. The outlines of the future revolution and even of its successive stages soon reveal themselves. One element of the catastrophe is the joy of negation of everything that exists, the other one, the permeation of the State based on negation with the spirit of the old system. We have here the image of the two stages of the future revolution: the stage of anarchy, the dissolution of all ties, the destruction of everything sacred, and the second stage, the palingenesis of despotism. Russian reality poisoned the dreams of the revolutionists and demoralized revolution before it had matured. There was enough venom to dissolve tsarist Russia and to poison the new Russia.

In opposing their dreams to Russian reality, the revolutionaries deluded themselves and the world. They were themselves, body and soul, part of that reality against which they rebelled. They denied the element from which they had risen themselves; heredity does not disappear by the fact that the son renounces his parents. The edifice they were constructing, eager to give it a different shape, was built of the same materials as the old one; other materials were not available. From under the new plaster old bricks were visible. Sometimes unconsciously, and sometimes consciously, it was modeled after the old building. Moreover, because of their living for long years in the realm of sterile desires where thought soars into boundless space, the revolutionaries were bound to reduce to extreme consequences, to absurdity the characteristics they had absorbed, they were bound to develop hyperdespotism. Tsarist despotism had in the practice of life gained a certain polish and adapted itself to life, it could not fail to realize that there was a limit to arbitrariness.

Counter-tsarism, after many years of tiresome expectation of a new era, began with putting into effect those very follies of which the crowned despots had sometimes dreamed, but which they had never realized because they had reckoned with the common sense and judgment of mankind. The old despotism was an antiquated and rusty bureaucratic machine, guided by interest rather than by conviction, sceptical, at least since the reign of Alexander II, as to the stability of its foundation, galvanized by official nationalism. Its more enlightened representatives were painfully aware that they represented a force of the past, antiquated from a historical viewpoint and already isolated from civilized mankind. Counter-tsarism acted with the ardor of a proselyte under the comforting illusion that it was inaugurating a new life for the world; it wanted to lean upon a new class, untouched by history, and was ready to bring to the surface, without any considerations, all the barbarism which, up to then, had been held in leash by the Tsars.

The intelligentsia, protesting against the tsarist government, demanded civic liberties, but this did not mean that they themselves had a deep-rooted respect for liberty as Europe and America understand it; that is, freedom within the limits of law guaranteeing respect for the liberty of other people and differing from license. Fanatically believing that they preserved truth and pointed out the only path to salvation, they were ready to impose their credo by all means at their disposal.

There prevailed the ineradicable conviction that man has the right to impose his will upon others, the only thing that matters being the aim. Having once chosen as their goal the happiness of Russia, according to their program, they felt sure that they had the right to use other people as tools to that end, even under compulsion. Man was considered a means for achieving political and social ends, an object for the realization of a doctrine. From a historical and sociological viewpoint this was comprehensible. The notion of liberty associated with that of law develops as a result of a long civilization. In ancient Rome that conception had been formulated by Cicero: *omnes legum servi sumus, ut liberi esse possimus* (we are all the slaves of the laws in order that we might be free. — *Cicero pro Cluentio*). The same idea had been formulated in modern times by Montesquieu, in the same spirit though in other words. Political freedom — he taught — does not consist in doing whatever one likes. "Liberty is the right to do everything that is permitted by the laws."[5] Political liberty consists in that

[5] *L'Esprit des lois*, Book XI, Chapter III.

the citizen feels secure as long as he abides by the laws.[6] Such an idea of liberty cannot develop under despotism.[7]

Political despotism as well as the serfdom of the peasants were the two factors which obscured the notion of man's liberty among the Russian intelligentsia. Man becomes imbued even with that despotism of which he himself is the victim, as well as with the one which he himself applies to his own subordinates. He gets demoralized by his servitude as well as by his own despotism. The pioneers of Russian culture in the nineteenth century came first, almost exclusively, from the landowner class. The spirit of the serfdom period outlasted the agrarian reform, as did the mentality of the landowner class, who, because of the weakness of the bourgeoisie, remained for years the dominating element of enlightened Russia. Having become the rulers of souls they treated them as the landowner, *pomeshchik*, treated his serfs. Disregard for human individuality, the habit of imposing one's own will, a tendency to regard any controversy as a proof of stupidity or bad faith: these are the characteristic traits of Russian publicists, commoners included, such as Belinski and Bakunin, Dobrolubov and Pisarev, Dostoyevski and Leo Tolstoy, not to mention the contemporary ones.

Apart from these tendencies, absorbed from the social atmosphere and from education, the very political and moral situation of people fighting despotism, and yet subject to it, was bound to produce the type of an inexorable fighter for whom all means were good, the type of man who viewed his own leniency as treachery and who experienced a continuous state of irascibility, *ozlobleniye,* which became a characteristic feature of the revolutionary intelligentsia. The intelligentsia prepared themselves to fight for Russia's future under most difficult conditions. They were ceaselessly spied upon, hunted, imprisoned, deported and persecuted by the police and the censor. They lived in anguish, in perpetual danger, in a feverish, nervous and mental tension, struggling against their own weaknesses and the flaws of slavery. They lived conscious of their mission to maintain a lively contact between their nation and civilized mankind, to prevent the Russian people from growing savage.

They were surrounded by the masses who did not understand their

[6] *Op. cit.*, Book XI, Chapter VI.

[7] Speaking of the notion of liberty among various nations, Montesquieu also mentions Russia: "Some people have for a long time taken liberty for the habit of wearing long beards." (Book XI, Chapter II) Montesquieu refers here to the reforms of Peter I. On the whole however, Montesquieu, as well as Voltaire, rather overrated the progress of the Europeanization of Russia in the eighteenth century, relying upon unverified reports on the results of the reforms. (*Op. cit.*, Book XIX, Chapter XIV).

ideas, and who looked at the intelligentsia's efforts to save them from torpor, as a sick animal distrustfully eying the approaching physician. They had against them the gigantic, implacable apparatus of a superior power. They believed fanatically that they were the only force which could save their nation from spiritual death, and appealed to living people to join their ranks. When a man realizes that he is saving his neighbor from fire, drowning or suicide, he considers it his right and duty to use force or ruse. Faith in his own mission, a continuously threatening danger, an atmosphere of violence surrounding man and penetrating into his soul, produce a type that not only hates the government, but also considers any opinion concerning the weal of the nation, differing from his own, a lack of will to achieve this weal and a betrayal of the ideal. Blinded by hatred in which creative thought is stifled by an impassioned craving for revenge, he permits his feelings of vindictiveness and anger to become stronger than his will to regenerate Russia.

One of the factors which had a tremendous influence on the development of the doctrinarian, dogmatic, intolerant mentality of the Russian intelligentsia was censorship. In a state, governed by the law, there develops respect for civic liberty as Montesquieu understood it, liberty within the framework of law; whereas a despotic State produces the type of rebellious slave aspiring to unlimited liberty for himself, and ready to trample upon the freedom of others, a type at once despotic and anarchic. These general results of two political systems are particularly connected with the attitude of the State to human thought and speech. Where freedom of speech exists, the citizen becomes social-minded, there is a clash of opinions which is conducive to self-criticism, the faculty of understanding and of respecting the views of others, and tolerance develop, the chances of objective thinking increase. A stern censorship paralyzes the exchange of views and isolates the individual within the compass of his own thoughts. A naive subjectivism, shutting itself up within the individual's ego, develops. Selfhood becomes for the individual the only reality and the only law, and he begins to consider external reality as existing only for him. An atmosphere is created that favors the arising of sectarian mentality and the type of doctrinaire appears, who builds his own dogmatic programs and arbitrarily requires other people to believe in those programs.

Such doctrinaires, deprived of material power, are always ready to apply moral terror against dissenters. They demand full freedom for themselves; they do not recognize any authority outside of their own dogmatic canon; and moreover, they do not recognize even the logical obligations which result from a consistent adherence to their program. Their conceptions are replete with inconsistencies and so-

phisms, it is an anarcho-despotism rebelling against any yoke, even that of logic.

* * *

The study of modern Russia presents a number of difficult sociological problems. First, one has to deal with two strata of the population separated from each other by an abyss of divergent notions. In his book on Russia, Anatol Leroy-Beaulieu emphasized repeatedly that the enlightened class and the common people of Russia belonged to different historical periods. In the chapter on religion in Russia he stated that the enlightened Russian class lived in the eighteenth century, while the populace continued to live in the fifteenth and perhaps even in the thirteenth century. Speaking of Russian religious sects, Leroy-Beaulieu remarked that the phenomena of that domain dated back fifteen centuries, or to the fourth century of our era. Obviously it is difficult to fix the chronology of Russia's civilization. In his later study devoted to the reign of Alexander III the same author told his Western readers that Russia was still living in the period of Isabella of Castile, that is not in the eighteenth but towards the end of the fifteenth century.

Especially as far as the educated class is concerned it is difficult to compare the spiritual state of Russia with some definite era through which the West had passed. The phenomena corresponding to various, sometimes remote from each other, epochs of the West, are rather intermingled, and add up to a complicated picture full of inner contradictions.[8] That spiritual mosaic has been frequently explained as the result of the crossing of European and Asiatic influences, for which the term *Eurasia* was coined. Often, however, that which is called Russia's *Asiaticism*, is simultaneously a historically lower degree of European civilization. The Western nations passed through analogous *Asiatic* eras some or several centuries ago. The Russian educated class easily adopts modern ideas and eagerly absorbs the latest trends of thought, and the most recent dreams of the West. Considered from that viewpoint, Russian mentality is contemporary with that of Europe, it may even appear sometimes as taking the lead. These ideas, however, fall upon the ground of a lower civilization. Amidst the political customs reminiscent of ancient Assyria, there appears the dream of Ica-

[8] J. I. Kraszewski keenly grasps that peculiarity of Russia: "Russia is shaken by various trends... Whether these ideas result from a diversity of races, or from a different degree of civilization, it is hard to determine. From a state corresponding to that of the V or VI up to the XIX centuries in Europe one may find within the vast borders of that country representatives of all ages, of all denominations; idolatry, sectarian fanaticism, tolerant scepticism, atheism, nihilism and armed proselytism are intermingled there. There is between them no point of contact; some of them display their activities quite openly, others do it in secret and on various stages more or less visible to the eyes of a European observer." B. Bolesławita, *Rachunki* (Accounts), Fourth year, for 1869, Poznań, 1870, pp. 108, 109.

ria. And it is precisely here that one finds the explanation of the "Russian aspect" of Western theories, mentioned by Dostoyevski. If one takes into consideration the sphere of instincts, impulses, the sphere of the subconscious which guides human actions and transforms man's ideas, one will conclude that enlightened Russia is by no means far remote from the Russia of the masses. The latter does not know the modern Western theories which are eagerly studied by the enlightened class. The Russian side of the theory, appearing in the mentality of the Russian intelligentsia, is precisely a proof of its penetration by native, popular currents.

Leroy-Beaulieu was aware of that appurtenance of the Russian soul to two eras, and of the inner antinomy resulting therefrom. He stated, that, in spite of the spread of positivism in Russia, Russian mentality was still in the stage which the author of positivism, Comte, following in the footsteps of Saint-Simon, had called theological. Some keener Russians were also conscious of it. Herzen stressed it in his analysis of Russian Hegelianism, Greek-Orthodox Hegelianism, and of its believers, the priests of science. Turgenev remarked that the Russian "left to himself, turns inevitably an Old-believer."[9]

We are facing here, indeed, an interesting phenomenon. Ever since materialistic philosophy began to gain ground, *i.e.* from the middle of the nineteenth century, the Russian intelligentsia appears completely divested of religion, though they had never left the theological stage. In his well-known study on *Underground Russia* Stepniak (Kravchinski) devoted to the first period of nihilism the following remarks:

"The first battle was fought in the domain of religion, but here it was neither long nor stubborn. Victory was won immediately, for there is no country in the world where religion is so shallow-rooted among the enlightened class, as in Russia. The old generation held fast to the Orthodox church, more for propriety's sake than out of conviction. But when a group of young writers equipped with the data of the natural sciences and positivistic philosophy, gifted and full of enthusiasm characteristic of proselytes, started the attack, Christianity tumbled down like an old half-ruined edifice which remains standing solely because it occurred to no one to overturn it."

Stepniak uses the words: religion, church, Christianity as if they were synonymous. As far as Russia is concerned one must carefully differentiate between these terms: desertion from the official church was not synonymous with destroying religion; and to preserve religion was not synonymous, either, with preserving Christianity. It suffices to peruse the subsequent chapters of Stepniak's book to see what happened after that destruction of religion.

[9] Letter to Herzen of December 25, 1867.

"Thus the battle was won almost without any effort, won definitively and irrevocably. Materialism became a sort of dominant religion of the enlightened class, and it seems superfluous to expatiate upon the importance of that liberation from all religious superstitions for the entire further development of the revolutionary movement."

Materialism and atheism became a religion. Western observers of Russia were always struck by the dualism of Russian sobriety and mysticism, the combination of critical sense and utopian spirit. To try to explain the Russian revolutionary movement exclusively by social and economic factors would be just as erroneous as tracing the psychology of primitive man exclusively from his concern for material existence. In the soul of primitive man concern for food, crops, material benefit is associated with worship of the mysterious power manifesting itself in the forces of nature. The overemphasis of the social and economic factors in the study of nations produces always a distorted picture which, in the case of Russia, becomes sheer caricature. The development of religious ideas in Russia was of tremendous, decisive importance for the evolution of the basic political and social ideas.

Chaadayev maintained in his *Philosophical Letter* that Christianity, torn away from its Western trunk, had never penetrated deeply into Russian life and that, as far as religious life was concerned, nineteenth century Russia could be compared with Abyssinia. This judgment seems paradoxical. Yet, while attempting to fix the date of the first penetration of the Christian spirit into Russia, even such an idealizer of Russia's religious life as the Slavophil Alexey Khomiakov maintains that the Russian people in the pre-Mongol period had been able to adopt only the liturgical side of Christianity. Modern historians, such as Paul Miliukov, share Professor Golubinski's view that in the pre-Mongol era the people of Russia had not had time to adopt either the substance or the ritual of Christianity but had remained pagan. The pagan religion had reached a high degree of development before the baptism of Russia, and continued to develop even after that.

Under the Mongol yoke, after the separation of Muscovy's population from the civilized world, Christianity could not develop normally. People accepted the form, numerous churches were built, a ritualistic piety was growing, people were standing for long hours in church, prostrated themselves, and observed severe fast. Simultaneously the Church was shutting itself up and separating more and more from the rest of the Greek Eastern world; the enlightened Greek clergy were gradually replaced by local priests whose intellectual level was very low, and of which the *Hundred Heads Council* complained so strongly in the sixteenth century. Amidst isolation and ignorance xenophobia was rife, while the notion that true faith had been preserved only in

Moscow Russia, took deeper and deeper roots. The Latins were not Christians, and Byzantium was gradually losing the Orthodox truth. The Moscow clergy was horror-stricken by the news of the Union of Florence and the rapprochement between the Greek-Eastern Church and Rome. The fall of Byzantium put the final touch to the spreading of the thesis that Moscow was the "Third Rome." As far back as the fifteenth century, *igumen* Philotheus advised Ivan III that he was the only Christian ruler on earth, the natural Tsar of all Christians.

Thus was formed the doctrine of the chosen people, which passed from the realm of religion into that of lay affairs, into the sphere of politics. The doctrine of the chosen people is bound, in its evolution, to develop into Messianism, into a belief in an exclusive universal mission of one's own nation. Firmly believing that their people alone had preserved the true faith, the Muscovite theologians began to apply to Moscow the text of the Old Testament relating to the chosen people and its Covenant with the Lord. The chosen people is collectively the holder of the higher truth, the manyheaded vicar of the true God on earth. The Lord entrusted the chosen people with the secret of the true faith. Other nations err, their cult is distorted and false, but it is the true God, and not their false gods who govern their destinies. The national God, therefore, having made a covenant with His people, is also the ruler of other peoples, the lord of the whole world. It is the task of the chosen people to convert the rest of mankind to the true faith. It has a historical, universal mission, entrusted only to itself. Against the background of this faith the conviction was bound to arise of the Russian primacy among the nations of the world, the right to hegemony, spiritual or material, according to the scope and the degree of their intellectual development. Other nations play a secondary, ancillary rôle. The chosen people has a great mission.

Despite the four centuries separating them, the distance from the *igumen* Philotheus to Dostoyevski is not great. Dostoyevski expressed the principles of national Messianism through the medium of Shatov, one of the characters of his novel *The Demons*. But as can be easily seen from his *Diary of a Writer*, the ecstatic effusions of Shatov expressed the thoughts of the author.

Dostoyevski reproduced with solemn earnestness the conversation of Shatov, afterwards murdered by the conspirators, with the idol of the *Demons*, Stavrogin. In a state of mystic ecstasy Shatov says:

"The aim of any national movement, in any nation and in any period, is exclusively the seeking of God, absolutely of its own God and faith in Him as the only true God. God represents the synthetic individuality of the whole nation from its beginning to its end. At no time in history have all or many nations had one God in common, but each

always had its separate God. It is a sign of the destruction of nationality when nations begin to have gods in common. When nations begin to have gods in common, then the gods disappear and faith in them dies out together with the nations themselves. The stronger a nation, the more distinct is its God. There has never been a nation without religion, that is without the notion of good and evil. Every nation has its own idea of good and evil, and its own good and its own evil. When nations begin to have ideas of good and evil in common, they die out, and the very difference between good and evil begins to fade and disappear."

Here Stavrogin remarks that Shatov reduces the notion of God to a mere attribute of a nation, but this Shatov denies vehemently.

"On the contrary, I raise the nation to God. Has it ever been otherwise? A nation is the body of God. Any nation remains a nation only as long as it has its separate god, and excludes all other gods without any compromise, and as long as it believes that it will win with the help of its god and expel all other gods from the world. This was from the beginning of time the belief of everybody, of all great nations, at least of all more prominent ones which were leaders of humanity. The Jews lived only to see the true God, and they left the true God to the world. The Greeks worshipped nature and bequeathed their religion to the world, that is their philosophy and art. Rome idolized the nation in the State and left the State to the nations. France throughout her long history was only an embodiment and development of the Roman god and if she eventually cast her Roman god into the abyss and plunged into atheism, which for the time being is called socialism there, she did so only because atheism is after all sounder than Roman Catholicism. When a great nation does not believe that truth rests in it alone, when it does not believe that it alone is able and called upon to resuscitate all others and to save them with its truth, it immediately turns from being a great nation into ethnographical material. A truly great nation can never agree to play a secondary part in the world, not even a prominent part, but only and exclusively the first part. Once it loses that faith it ceases to be a nation."

This whole argumentation leads to the final conclusion which Shatov expresses with perfect candor: "There is but one truth, consequently only one nation can have the true God, even should other nations have their own distinct and great gods. The only nation which carries God in itself (*bogonosets*), is the Russian nation." Shatov believes that the new coming of Christ will occur in Russia.

Dostoyevski's own views scattered all over his voluminous *Diary of a Writer*, do not greatly differ from Shatov's opinions.

"Russia, before Peter the Great, understood that she was the hold-

er of a great value not to be found anywhere else — Orthodoxy; that she was preserving the truth of Christ, but already the real truth, the real face of Christ which has been bedimmed in all religious denominations and in all other nations. This jewel, this eternal truth entrusted to Russia, according to the opinion of the best Russians of the time, released, as it were, their conscience from the duty of seeking any other enlightenment. In Moscow people came to the conviction that any closer contact with Europe would demoralize and harmfully affect the Russian mind and the Russian idea, corrupt Orthodoxy and lead Russia to perdition, as it did all other nations."[10]

Dostoyevski blamed old Moscow for that isolation; he praised Peter I for bringing Russia closer to the West. Did he blame the Muscovite tsardom for having kept the nation in a state of stagnation, and praise Peter for his attempts to introduce into Russia European reforms? By no means. "In her isolation ancient Russia began to follow a wrong path, to be guilty towards mankind for she decided to leave her greatest jewel unused, to leave Orthodoxy for herself and to shut herself up from the rest of the world."

Such is the logical argumentation of a prophet of the chosen people. Peter I did not open a window for Russia to look into Europe, but he opened it for Europe, left in spiritual darkness, to look into Russia. Only then was Europe, cut off from truth, able to see the light from the Orient. *Videntes stellam gavisi sunt gaudio magno valde.*

When Dostoyevski speaks of the exclusive universal mission of his nation, of the exclusive universal humanity of the Russians, the hypocrisy and nationalistic megalomania might appear monstrous, if we did not feel that we find ourselves in a remote period of history, and not in the times of Isabella of Castile, as Leroy-Beaulieu would like us to believe, but far earlier — before the days of the Apostle Paul. Coming in contact with the West, Russia revealed something that was "only peculiar to the Russian nation." She revealed "an almost brotherly love for other nations." Russia alone felt the need to "serve" mankind. In meeting other nations, Russia displayed an extraordinary magnanimity: "Our reconciliation with their civilizations and forms, our forgiveness of their ideals, even if they would not agree with ours."

Only the Russian nation has a universal mission to accomplish. They began to understand it in the days of Peter I: "We became aware of our universal mission, of our individuality and of our rôle in humanity; we could not fail to realize that that mission and that rôle were unlike the rôle and the mission of other nations; for all other nations live exclusively for themselves and in themselves."

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[10] *Dnevnik Pisatela,* Vol. II, 1876. Ladyzhnikov's edition of 1922, p. 287 ff.

In the name of that Russian mission to serve mankind, Dostoyevski demanded, to begin with, that Russia dominate all Slavonic nations, "the unification of all Slavdom under the wings of Russia." Russia demanded it not out of lust of power, but for the good of the Slavonic nations in order "to transform them and place them in proper relation to Europe and mankind." To fulfill that mission Russia must also have Constantinople.

Just as in the fifteenth century doctrines of a "Third Rome," dictated by fanaticism as well as nationalistic and sectarian demagogy, found eager followers, so four centuries later the mystic and frenzy-like apotheosis of the Russian idea by Dostoyevski found among the Russians a willing ear. His famous speech at the Pushkin celebration in June, 1880, enraptured his audience, and entirely overshadowed the sober speech of Ivan Turgenev who did not flatter the Russians. Dostoyevski's enchanted listeners were told by him that Pushkin, as a universal genius, able to grasp the mentality of all nations, stood isolated among the geniuses of the world, towering high above them, and that in this respect he only expressed the superiority of the Russians over all nations of the world: "Our poet (Pushkin) creates out of himself something almost miraculous, something unheard-of and unseen before him anywhere and in anyone. Indeed, in European literature there were men of tremendous greatness, geniuses, Shakespeare, Cervantes, Schiller. But show at least one among these geniuses who would possess such a capability of universal susceptibility as our Pushkin. This peculiarity, the main peculiarity of our nation, he shares with our nation and through it above all he is our national poet." Dostoyevski concluded that only the Russian was a "universal man" (*vsechelovek*), and that it is Russia's destiny to utter in the future the final word of the great universal harmony.

* * *

Thus, from whatever side one approaches that nation enclosed in a seemingly unbreakable iron hoop of a great and powerful State, one discovers symptoms which justify the dismal forebodings agitating the mind of the great Lermontov. The agricultural conditions cause and foment a permanent revolutionary atmosphere that smolders underneath and at any occasion emerges to the surface. The intelligentsia, having no access to public activities, dreamed of a radical overturn: spiritually they felt attracted to a dogmatic faith in doctrines which promised a radical extermination of all evil on earth. They made plans for doing away with the prevailing system of wrongs and violence, plans unconsciously patterned after that very system as far as spirit and methods were concerned. Among the masses of the peasantry and of the bourgeoisie underground currents of religious revolt easily mingl-

ed, especially among the peasantry, with social and political revolt. Radical demands of reforms were made even by those indifferent to religious and sectarian doctrines. And above the heterogeneous ferment with its fatal tendency to combine into one distinctive force that agitated the villages and towns, there hovered the old mystic faith in the primacy of the Russian nation, a faith often deceptively disguised and unconscious of its own nature. That faith lends to the underground seething a peculiar character, a trend to precipitate the world into chaos over which the spirit of Russia, called to create a new world upon its own model, would hover. That vague instinct draws closer to each other elements apparently diametrically opposed, the fanatics of Orthodoxy and the fanatics of revolution, Slavophils and nihilists. Moreover, this unextinguishable impulse brings closer distant historical periods, the *igumen* Philotheus of the fifteenth century with Theodore Dostoyevski, and even with Herzen and Bakunin.

That deep, yet by both parties bashfully concealed affinity of Russian nationalism with the striving for universal revolution, was noticed and approvingly commented upon by Dostoyevski, in spite of his implacable attitude towards the revolutionists whom he considered the direct descendants of the Westerners. The most odious of the *Demons*, Peter Verkhovenski, is the son of a Westerner. Dostoyevski expatiated upon the subject in an essay which he published in June, 1876, under the title *My Paradox*. Clouds of a Balkan war were just gathering, and the Western Powers, just as before the Crimean War, watched Russia's political movements with distrust. Dostoyevski found that the Russians were not popular in the West. Europeans were astonished by the fact that when staying in Western European countries the Russians distinctly favored the extreme left, and often even actively joined such organizations. Europe ascribed this phenomenon to the inclination of barbarians to destroy culture. The fact is undeniable: even Russians of very high social standing sympathized with the left in the West – not with liberals, but with members of the Paris Commune of 1871.

Dostoyevski found an answer to the question why the Russian Westerners were joining in the West the extreme left, that is the negators of contemporary Europe. In that phenomenon was reflected "the protesting Russian soul to which European culture has always been, since the days of Peter the Great, hateful and in many respects proved foreign to the Russian soul."

"Of course, this process took place almost always unconsciously, yet valuable was the fact that the Russian instinct (*chutiyo russkoye*) did not die; though unconsciously, the Russian soul was protesting in the name of its Russianism, in the name of its oppressed Russian element."

Peter I opened a window into Europe and through that window the Russians saw many bad things against which their nature protested: "it protested not because of its Tartar element, but actually rather thanks to the fact that it concealed within itself something loftier and better than what it saw through that window."

"I repeat that all this ocurred in a very odd way: our ardent Westerners, the champions of reform, became simultaneously the negators of Europe and joined the ranks of the extreme left... Well, the result was that there they proved the most ardent Russians, fighters for Russia and for the Russian spirit, which, if it were then explained to them, they would have accepted with laughter or dismay. Doubtless, they were not conscious of the loftiness of their protest. On the contrary, they had for over two centuries ignored that loftiness of theirs, more than that, even their self-respect. By acting so they amazed Europe, but the result was that it was they who proved to be the real Russians."

As an example, Dostoyevski cites Belinski who in Russia fought the Slavophils as a Westerner, but in the West was a partisan of the extreme left which was opposed to the whole system of European civilization.[11]

"What would have been his astonishment had he been told by these very Slavophils that he was himself the most radical fighter for Russian truth, for Russian individuality, for all he had rejected in Russia for Europe, what he considered a fairy tale? What would he have done, had he been proven to be the true conservative just because he was a socialist and a revolutionist in Europe? And indeed, such was, more or less the situation. Both sides had committed a big mistake: all contemporary Westerners confused Russia with Europe; they had seriously taken Russia for Europe and then, disavowing Europe and its social order, they thought that the same negation could be applied to Russia, while Russia was not Europe at all, but solely wore a European uniform, but under that uniform there was an entirely different being."

Dostoyevski defined that human being from a Slavophil viewpoint. While the West, satiated with individualism, was just getting ready for the communal principle, for collectivism, and approached it by way of revolution, Russia had that element in her nature and did not need

[11] Let it be said in parenthesis that Belinski was not particularly well suited to serve as an example in this case. Dostoyevski's remarks may refer only to the short period of his activities as a writer. In later years he inclined rather towards a liberal democracy. On the other hand, Dostoyevski's remarks were true as far as Herzen was concerned. If Dostoyevski did not mention Herzen, it was probably only because of the hatred he felt for him. He called Herzen the most humiliating name he could use with regard to his adversary: *Gentilhomme russe et citoyen du monde.* He did not want to consider him an unconscious tool of the Russian God: *gesta Dei per Moscovitos.* For similar reasons he did not mention Bakunin, whose life was an amazing confirmation of Dostoyevski's *Paradox.*

any revolution. According to the Slavophils "everything that people demand in Europe, has been in Russia for a long time, at least as a nucleus and a possibility, and even constitutes her essence, only not in the form of revolution but in the form of divine truth, of the truth of Christ which in days to come will be fulfilled on earth and which is to be found in its fullness in the Greek-Orthodox church."

"If the Russian sentiment was then of help to the Slavophils, Belinski had it too, so that the Slavophils could consider him their best friend. This I repeat was a serious misunderstanding on both sides. Apollo Grigoryev said recently that had Belinski lived longer, he would have certainly joined the Slavophil group. This opinion was meaningful."

Some Russians, having come in contact with Europe, lost their national individuality, but those rather joined European conservatives, and sometimes even became Roman Catholics. This was the same phenomenon — the contrast between Russia and Europe — only in reverse.

"Conservatives in Europe, and on the other hand, absolute negators of Russia, they became Russia's destroyers and enemies! Such was the result brought about by the transformation of a Russian into a real European, by his becoming a true son of civilization. It follows from this that a Russian, having become a real European, cannot fail to become simultaneously a natural enemy of Russia. Thus we obtained two types of civilized Russians: the European Belinski, with his negative attitude towards Europe, became a Russian in the highest degree, in spite of all the errors proclaimed by him about Russia, while the native descendant of an ancient family, the Russian Prince Gagarin, having turned European, considered it his duty not only to adopt Catholicism but even to become a Jesuit. Tell me now which one of them is more likely a friend of Russia?"

"Does not my second example (from the extreme right) confirm my initial paradox that Russian socialists and communards, above all, are not Europeans and that they will in the end become true and excellent Russians, when the misunderstandings vanish and when they come to know Russia." The Russian negators of Europe have their own deeply rooted national reason; they become revolutionaries "for reasons which, for the time being are unknown to us (and which are kept secret by those who know)."

"In a word," concludes Dostoyevski, "we are revolutionaries, so to say, because of some inner necessity, even so to say, because of our conservatism."

After the above argumentation Dostoyevski approached the Eastern problem and justified Russia's claims. Thus, a Russian contributing to the destruction of Western civilization became in the full sense of the word a preserver of the greatness and primacy of Russia in the

world. The phantom of a fight for the Near East between Russia and the West reminded Dostoyevski of the Russians who had acted as destroyers in the West, and he suddenly became aware of their patriotic rôle.

This brings involuntarily to mind Herzen's announcement of the ruin of the West and Russia's triumph in Constantinople, in 1854, twenty-two years earlier, in the beginning of the Crimean War. It is worth noticing that those reactions of the Russian revolutionaries were in accord with the official Russian *raison d'état*, under the influence of the Russian instinct which Dostoyevski had so shrewdly perceived. Looking back still another twenty years, we witness the evolution of the Eastern question which was a classic test of all the traditional arcana of Russian policy.

It was in 1833, in the year of Nicholas' attempt on the independence of Turkey, in the era of the treaty of Unkiar Skelessi, that a prominent Pole, observing the tactics of Russian policies from his deathbed, wrote the following remarks: "The elasticity and flexibility of the policies of the Petersburg Cabinet is beyond all imagination. Wherever anarchy may be harmful, wherever a country's strength may be weakened by such means, the Petersburg Cabinet joins the disturbers of order, causes discord, becomes the guarantor of rebellion and civil war."[12]

The author of the *Paradox* may have condemned the *Demons* too ruthlessly. He would have surely absolved them, had they transferred their activities to the West. In conformity with the *Paradox* formula, Nechayev, a revolutionary whose case afforded Dostoyevski the topic for his *Demons*, as long as he was active in the West at Bakunin's side, was a true and excellent Russian unconscious of being a patriot directed by the Russian instinct towards a universal revolution. Did the demon, possessed with the frenzy of destruction, diverge so far from the messianist Shatov who believed in a Russian God and in the paganism of the rest of the world? The former, like Herzen, inspired by Russian sentiment, could come to believe in a Russia of the people, which would give birth to a new world. Shatov, absorbed in the mirage of a universal mission of his nation, arrived at the negation of European culture. Does one not feel the throbbing of that Russian instinct also in the soul of the demon, Peter Verkhovenski, when, in an ecstatic trance, he paints to Stavrogin the picture of the coming revolution:

"And the storm will begin! The earth will moan; the sea will surge, and the mess will fall to pieces. Then we shall begin to think how to erect a stone edifice. For the first time! We, we alone, shall be the builders!"

[12] M. Mochnacki, "Relations of the Petersburg Cabinet with the Pasha of Egypt," *Pamiętnik Emigracji Polskiej* (The Polish Emigration's Review), April 6, 1833.

4.

TOWARDS THE OTHER SHORE

THE EARLY RUIN of our present civilization, which the Russian Fourierists had preached with so much enthusiasm, was expounded with far greater brilliancy by Alexander Herzen. From his early years the vision of that expected ruin had exerted a magnetic attraction upon his youthful imagination. One meets, even in contemporary literature, with the opinion that it was but the European revolution of 1848 and 1849, with its results incomplete in France, and negative in central Europe, which caused a change in Herzen's views, that is the transition from his enchantment with the forms of Western life to his disappointment and pessimism in relation to Europe. As a matter of fact Herzen's critical attitude towards Western Europe, and his prophecies of an imminent catastrophe of European civilization, are of an earlier date than 1848. It was Strakhov who first called attention to that. As an adherent of Danilevski, however, he appraised Herzen's evolution from a negative, reactionary and Slavophil viewpoint.

The lack of faith in the stability of Western civilization is a characteristic trait of prominent Russian minds. In Herzen, Bakunin and the followers of Petrashevski these predictions of the ruin of civilization appear in connection with their revolutionary theories. There is, however, a significant fact which has been stressed by Herzen himself and after him by Strakhov, namely that Karamzin who certainly was not a revolutionary dreamer, had at the close of the eighteenth century foretold the fall of Western civilization; his jeremiads of 1794 were as if a prologue to Herzen's meditations after 1848. These Cassandra-like prophecies of the Russians, so thoroughly in accord with their secret expectations, had a deeper foundation. The Russians did not fully appreciate the durability of civilization, for, not having in the course of centuries participated in the effort of its creation, they saw only the surface of European life, and as if a beautiful edifice artificially erected

upon it, the foundations of which remained invisible to their superficial observation. Whenever a revolutionary storm broke out in the West, the Russians believed that the edifice would crumble into ruins. They thought that the theories of social revolution contained an irrevocable verdict of doom for the structure that had no deeply rooted foundations. This is one of the reasons explaining their credulous faith in a coming catastrophe. There were also additional reasons resulting from Russia's history, explaining the joy derived from this faith, and the radiant hopes connected with the approaching disaster.

Karamzin suggests an analogy between the contemporary Occident and the civilized states of the ancient Orient, which had perished. Herzen was from his early youth fascinated by the analogy between ancient Rome of the period of decline and modern Europe.

Using the sentimental tone of the eighteenth century Karamzin grieves over the ruin of civilization. Yet he believes in it with strange facility and eagerness.

"The eighteenth century is ending" – he writes in 1794, the year of the Terror of the French Revolution. "Century of enlightenment, I do not recognize you. I do not recognize you in blood and flames! Amidst murders and among ruins I do not recognize you! Heavenly beauty has disappeared – snakes are hissing in its place: What metamorphosis!"

Karamzin asks himself whether by some mysterious law of history mankind, after it had reached the summit of enlightenment, is not plunged again into barbarism. After a brief review of universal history, he is confirmed in the belief that humanity is on the eve of disaster. The present generation, proud of its scientific progress, thought that they had reached the *shore* of perfection, but now, that goal disappears in a dreary, mysterious mist...

For Karamzin, a eulogist of the past, the longed-for *shore* disappears in the mist and the tempest of the Great Revolution. For Herzen, the prophet of the future, the *other shore,* the shore of liberation, only begins to emerge from the haze during the terrible revolution, amidst the conflagration of the old world.

* * *

Herzen's views on the future destiny of mankind were first perceptible in his *Letters on the Study of Nature,* published in Russia between 1844 and 1845. They found a fuller expression, in later years, in his prophecies of the approaching revolution. The Hegelian scheme of evolution from thesis through antithesis to synthesis was adopted by Herzen as the historical formula for the progress of mankind from the Greco-Roman period, through its decline, the Middle Ages, to modern society. Applied to the philosophy of history, that Hegelian scheme be-

came for Herzen, in the course of time, his algebra of revolution. Thoughts on the ruin of the ancient world, transferred by way of analogy into the present, appear as a permanently recurring motif in Herzen's later works. Herzen denies progress as a lasting, eternal form of gradual evolution. According to him, progress takes place only within a given period. When the period reaches its final stage, it brings about inner contradictions, approaches its limit and is topped by unsurmountable obstacles barring further development. A further progress of mankind requires then a decisive turning point, a catastrophe, the crushing of the vapid forms of the moribund period and the rising therefrom of a qualitatively new life. Such views of progress reveal the influence of Giovanni Battista Vico and his theories of the passing of humanity through a cycle, successive periods of growth, flowering and decline. From his abundant readings Herzen selects whatever he needs for the construction of his socio-historical ideology which appears, though still in dim outlines, already in his earliest works.

The thought of the approaching ruin of contemporary civilization recurs in the philosophical articles which Herzen wrote in the first period of his literary activity.

In his articles on "Dilettantism in Scholarship," particularly in the last of them, "Buddhism in Scholarship," published in 1843, Herzen, adapting himself to the requirements of censorship, combined the Saint-Simonist dreams of a new Christianity with Hegel's dialectics, and significantly spoke of mankind's approaching coming of age. He goes back as far as the early Christian era, but it was evident that what he had in mind, was the future. St. Augustine preached the kingdom of God upon the ruins of the old world. This was Christianity's inherent idea which had not been understood for centuries. It was not more than a century ago that mankind became aware of the kind of life it had been living until then, and that science began answering the enigmas of history; conscious action was to follow soon.

"Out of the gates of the temple of knowledge humanity will emerge proudly, inspired by knowledge, *omnia sua secum portans*, to build the kingdom of God... But how will that come to pass? The question of how belongs to the future. We may have a presentiment of that future... When the time comes, the lightning of events will split the clouds, will burn all obstacles, and the future, like Pallas Athene, will be born in full armor."

In his *Letters on the Study of Nature* Herzen tried to interpret by examples of the past how "the lightning of events splits the clouds." He pointed to the struggle between Christianity and the ancient world to show that a new era may begin only after the destruction of the preceding one.

"Vanquished, old forms are not buried at once" – he wrote in his fourth letter entitled "The Last Period of Ancient Science." The durability and stubborness of vanishing forms are based upon their inner force of self-preservation, inherent in the existing world. Reminiscences and hope, *status quo* and progress – these are the antinomies of history, its *two shores*. The force of self-preservation arouses in the soul sacred memories, dear and native, it summons one home where his carefree youth was spent, and forgets that this home has become narrow and has almost crumbled. The golden age is the starting point for that trend... Though hope vanquishes memories at every turn, the struggle is bitter and long. The past defends itself stubbornly, this is understandable..."

Attempts are made to preserve the old forms. Let us take Julian the Apostate. In his days the problem of the very existence of the ancient world was posed with terrible clearness. Julian was a passionate dreamer, a man of great spiritual energy. "In his person the ancient world became purified and resplendent, as if consciously preparing itself to die an honest and dignified death. He was a strong-willed, noble-minded man, a genius. But all that was of no avail. A gloomy poetic atmosphere surrounds the people of the past. There is something touching in their funeral procession which is moving backwards, in their ever vain attempts to resuscitate a corpse.

"The last period preceding a new phase of life is hard, unbearable for every thinking person; all questions become disagreeable and people are ready to take the most absurd decisions so as to reassure themselves. Fanatical beliefs persist beside cold lack of faith, mad hopes beside despair. People are tormented by forebodings; there is a craving for events, and yet, seemingly nothing happens.

"It is a dull, underground work, a tiring pregnancy, a time of afflictions and suffering... Those poor transient generations usually perish in the middle of the way, exhausted by their feverish condition. These are generations doomed to extinction, not belonging to this or any other world."

The new world solemnly met in the person of the Apostle Paul the old world, and conquered.

In his fifth letter, devoted to scholasticism, Herzen discusses the new, Christian world. He continuously returns to the notion of Christianity considered as a negation, as the destruction of the old world.

"Christianity was a complete antithesis of the ancient world. Let us take St. Augustine's *De Civitate Dei*, and the polemical writings of the early Christian authors; they will show us how to renounce what is old and obsolete. Christianity was a simple, sharp antithesis of the ancient world. The contrast between the Christian and the ancient viewpoint required a transformation, not a remodelling."

* * *

In January, 1847, Herzen, having legally obtained a passport, went to a Western spa. He crossed the frontier never to return to Russia again. With a feeling of joy he finally stepped on foreign soil. At the Prussian frontier he thought that he had lost his passport, and would not be permitted to continue his journey. He felt depressed, fearing that he would have to return to his country.

"It was as if I were back in Petersburg. The figures of Kokoshkin, Sakhtynski, Dubelt and Nicholas loomed in my mind. No traveling for me, no Paris, no freedom of the press, no parliament and theatres... I shall see again department officials, police inspectors and all kinds of other policemen, constables with two shining buttons looking backwards..."

But the passport was found. There was an outburst of joy and the journey could be continued to Koenigsberg.

"I arrived in Koenigsberg, we were happy, a heavy burden fell off my chest, the unpleasant feeling of fear, the piercing feeling of suspicion vanished. In a bookstore's display window caricatures of Nicholas were exhibited. I immediately seized upon them and bought the whole stock. The same night I went to a small, dirty, second-rate theatre, but even from there I returned excited not because of the actors but because of the public which, in its majority, consisted of working men and young people. Between the acts they all spoke loud and freely, and they all put on their hats. Such ease, greater serenity and vivaciousness strike the Russian when he crosses the frontier. The Petersburg government is to such an extent brutal and crude, so exclusively despotic, that it likes to intimidate people; it wants everybody to tremble before it, in a word, it wants not only authority, but also its *mise en scène*. Antechambers and barracks are the ideal of social order for the Petersburg Tsars."

And yet Herzen had at that time hardly reached the country of Frederic William IV, the brother-in-law of Nicholas. Having crossed Prussia he stopped for a short time in Cologne. The first enthusiasm for the West was fading, the dreary pictures of Nicholas and Dubelt receded to a misty background. There appears a significant, surly tone in Herzen's travel impressions. This is how he describes his impressions from Cologne in the first series of his "Letters from the Avenue Marigny" written in 1847 for the periodical *Sovremennik*:

"Let us take a walk through the streets of Cologne. What a multitude of things: indestructible walls, heavy Romanesque churches, a colossal model of a Gothic Cathedral, the home of Knights Templars, dismal warrior-monks standing gloomily at the borderline between feudalism and centralization; a Jesuits' college, dismal monk-warriors stand-

ing gloomily at the borderline between Papacy and Reformation; Renaissance churches, government buildings erected in the period of the one, indivisible Republic; new fortifications reminding one of the Napoleonic era, and, finally, scaffoldings around the Cathedral... Everywhere memories, everywhere legends. Look up: two white marble horseheads appear in a fourth story window, a miracle happened here. Look down: here is the place where Christ appeared several centuries ago to a praying boy and accepted an apple from him... How old is this country! How old is Europe! Tens of centuries stare at you from behind every carved stone, and from every limited judgment. Behind a European's back one sees a long procession of majestic figures, as if the parade of the royal spectres in *Macbeth*.

"Behold all the events that occurred on the Rhine between the time when Charlemagne used to sit in the well-known Aix-la-Chapelle chair and the days when a woman with fiery eyes, the swarthy Creole who was the Empress of the French, used to rest in that chair after a walk. And what happened before and after? Gray dust-covered monuments lend Europe an excessively aristocratic physiognomy, offensive for those who do not have so many eminent ancestors and so many great traditions. Our brother, the Scythian, sometimes feels ill at ease among these inherited riches and hereditary ruins. The foreigner who finds himself in the great family hall where every picture, every object are dear to the descendants and alien to him, feels embarrassed. He looks with curiosity at the relics lovingly remembered by the natives, while he has to be told about the things known to the others from the cradle.

"But, on the other hand, is not that the country of our thoughts and culture? By bringing us closer to Europe did not Peter I ensure our right of inheritance? Or did we not acquire it ourselves by making Europe's problems, cares and sufferings, as well as her acquired experience and acquired wisdom — our own? Our past is poor. We do not want to invent any heraldic fables. We have few memories of our own. Yet this is not a misfortune because Europe's memories and her past have become our memory and our past.

"The European remains under the influence of his past and cannot free himself from it. For him modernity is the roof of a many-storied building; for us and for North America it is a high terrace, a foundation. What is an attic for him, is a ground floor for us. We begin — at that end. One cannot help recalling the lines:

Dich stört nicht im Innern
In lebendiger Zeit,
Unnützes Erinnern
Und vergeblicher Streit!

...And this is why I do not think of Cologne, nor of her Cathedral, but of a long row of huts and of creaking snow..."

* * *

The first "Letter from Avenue Marigny" casts a great deal of light upon Herzen's entire system which he gradually developed in later years. And as this system was evolved from the depths of the Russian soul, the "Letter" also points out the path to be pursued by Russian revolutionary thought.

Herzen greeted Europe with an outburst of joy. She was for him the embodiment of the dreams of his youth. From Koenigsberg to Paris he greeted Europe as his own country whose customs, culture and spirit were closer to him than the plague-stricken area (*morovaya polosa*), as later he was to call the Russia of Nicholas I. These were his first impressions, but gradually he began to feel a stranger in that Europe of which he had dreamt since childhood days. Civilization is the product of older, more enlightened nations. Strange are the feelings of the visitor who arrives from an enormous, snow-covered country, dotted here and there with simple, miserable huts and sparse cities glittering as if with tinsel, with a poor imitation of Western life.

He feels humiliated by the wealth of that civilization. He, a Scythian, a stepson of history, belated in his education and thrown off the track, feels wronged and embittered when facing those people who for generations have enjoyed the privilege of culture. A Westerner in his own country, he becomes aware, when coming in contact with the West, of the contrast: Russia and Europe, on the one hand a long line of snow-covered huts, poor, but dear and indigenous, growing dearer as the picture becomes a memory, and on the other hand, Romanesque and Gothic shrines, their walls covered with the mold of centuries, and memories and legends clinging to them.

Soon, however, the Westerner who traced his spiritual descent to Europe, awakens in him again: did not Peter I incorporate Russia in Europe? Her past has since then been the past of Russia. An adopted child is the heir of his foster parents. But adoption cannot replace real filiation. And here the wronged national feeling prompts the sophism: that rich past shackles free progress. This thought, timid at first, becomes, as time goes by, the cornerstone of his theory. In the meantime the poor stepson of civilization utters a few significant words of contempt for the riches which he is unable to make fully his own: superfluous reminiscences; back of every limited judgment lurk tens of centuries. The inherited wealth begins to appear to him as a burden rather than a treasure.

Such were the thoughts and feelings of a Scythian who had gone abroad, a man of genius whose keen intelligence grasped all problems

and riddles of the West, and who described the heights of civilization in a charming way. These were complex thoughts and feelings, diverse and discordant. Civilization had for him an irresistible charm. He admired it, but in his inmost soul resentment and envy were budding. He cannot escape the charm, but neither can he get rid of painful feelings, *Odi et amo.* The Scythian of genius lacks tradition; unknown to him are the instincts which only many centuries of civilization can give, a civilization uninterrupted, passing from generation to generation.

When Herzen first came in contact with Western civilization, he must have recalled the dismal words uttered years before by Chaadayev, that fell like lead on his mind and left him forever engrossed in sad meditation. "We came to this world," wrote Chaadayev, "as illegitimate children without any heritage, without any connection with those who had preceded us. We did not assimilate any of the instructive lessons of history. Each of us must himself resume the broken thread of affinity with mankind. Things that elsewhere have become habits and instincts, must be hammered into our heads. Our reminiscences do not go beyond yesterday. We are, as it were, strangers to ourselves..."

The curse of the inferior civilization of his own nation vividly re-echoed in Herzen's soul when he looked at the Cologne Cathedral, and later at the walls of Paris. What was he to do? How could he ward off that curse? "To equal the enlightened nations we should ourselves pass through the entire education of mankind. Obviously, this is a great effort, and perhaps it could not be achieved within one generation," were the stern words of Chaadayev. Hence, the only thing to do is to return to Europe's grammar school, as in the days of Peter I. Not an alluring prospect. Herzen believed to have found another solution to the problem and he expressed it in the following comparison: the roof of the tall edifice of civilization is like a finished terrace upon which, as upon a foundation. Russia will continue to build a higher structure.

The moment when, having come in contact with the West, the greatest publicist of modern Russia became aware that he was a Scythian, contained an ill-boding revelation for the future.

At the time of the revolution Alexander Blok seems to have resumed Herzen's thought in his noted poem, *The Scythians.* Addressing the old world, he appeals to it to stop like Oedipus before the sphinx-like enigma of Russia:

"Russia — the Sphinx. Now happy, now sad, dripping with black blood, she looks at you with hatred and love!"

The sphinx understands Europe and knows her thoroughly.

"We love everything: the fire of cold figures and the gift of divine visions. Everything appeals to us: the penetrating Gallic thought and the gloomy Germanic genius.

"We remember everything: the hell of the streets of Paris, and the refreshing coolness of Venice, the distant aroma of lemon groves and the smoking buildings of Cologne...

"We love the flesh, its taste and color and its suffocating, deadly odor... Is it our fault if your skeleton shall one day clatter in the embrace of our caressing paws?"

The latter vision, as the result of the combined love and hatred of the sphinx for Europe, had also been brought forward by Herzen, but as yet without the above hooligan-like imagery. Playing with dreary visions and gloomy prophecies, Herzen used to pause before some majestic outline of the world's ruins, and avoided drastic pictures of bloodshed, murder and vandalism.

* * *

In his first "Letter from Avenue Marigny" Herzen, having made a few remarks regarding senile Europe burdened with the heritage of the past, again goes back to his trip abroad:

"I arrived in Koenigsberg. The following day I went to have a look at the city, and suddenly I felt young again. It seemed to me that all the passers-by were looking straight into my eyes, and I did the same. Then I had a table d'hôte dinner and over a bottle I told how bad the trip and how bad the road from Tilsit were, while the waiter and the Germans were listening." And he felt happy that for these bold remarks about the poor roads in Prussia he was no longer threatened with a visit of the secret police.

But as his fear of the Russian police subsided, Herzen began to consider the blessings of civilization and the legal system of the West an ordinary thing and he felt bored. "It looks nicer and more pleasant on the other shore of the Rhine, which does not mean that everything is right over there. Boredom everywhere... In Paris gay boredom, in London safe boredom, in Rome majestic boredom, in Madrid sultry boredom, in Vienna boredom sultry..."

Custine felt that in the dreary atmosphere of tyranny and constant fear under the reign of Nicholas man could have various feelings, but that there never was boredom. Did the subjects of Nicholas lack in Western Europe the pungent spice of constant risk, of continuously walking on the edge of a precipice? Freedom and safety dazzled for a brief moment only; then came boredom. A man who expects a tile from the roof to drop on his head, is not bored, but experiences deadly agony. Can anyone relish his torment to such an extent as to feel bored when it disappears? Such phenomena remind one of the era of Ivan the Terrible. His subjects were never bored: tortures and death came upon them unexpectedly. Later the people bewailed the Tsar's death.

In the subsequent letters from Avenue Marigny Herzen already

delivers tirades against the French bourgeoisie. "Scribe," he writes in the second "Letter," "is a courtier, a publicist, a preacher, a teacher, a buffoon and a poet of the bourgeoisie. The bourgeois cry in the theatre, moved by their own virtues described by Scribe, as well as by his heroism from behind the counter and by his grocer-like poetry... The bourgeoisie has no great past and no future whatever." "The bourgeoisie is selfishly cowardly," he writes in his fourth "Letter." "It is able to rise to heroism only in the defense of its property, interests and profits. Property is its only religion..."

These wholesale opinions of Herzen about the bourgeoisie of the West evoked consternation among the Westerners who had remained in Russia.

Soon afterwards Herzen wrote his most prominent work entitled *From the Other Shore*. The first chapter was written in Italy at the end of 1847. The presentiment of an approaching historical catastrophe forms the background of that letter.

"The world in which we live is dying. It should be buried so that the heirs might breathe more freely. But people insist upon curing it, and delay death.

"We live in a world which has lost its reason, senile and exhausted. We prop it, while we want to overturn it, and we bend its clumsy forms to our convictions, unaware that their first iota means its death verdict.

"The old world stooped in its outworn aristocratic livery; especially after 1830 its complexion has become ash gray.

"This is the *facies hippocratica* from which the physicians recognize that death has raised its scythe.

"People here are talking of phalansteries, of democracy and socialism. The world listens and understands nothing. From time to time it smiles, nodding its head and recalling the ancient dreams in which it also once believed... With senile indifference it looks at Communists and Jesuits, at pastors and Jacobins, at the Rothschild brothers, and at those who are dying from starvation. It looks at everything that passes before its eyes, clenching its fist with a few francs in it, for which it is ready to die or become a murderer."

The thought of the ruin of civilization haunts Herzen's mind. On the eve of the fall of Rome the future of the world rested in the catacombs where the Christians were hiding, and in the forests where savage Germanic tribes were camping. The ancient Roman civilization was not without charm for Herzen, yet his sympathies were rather with the savage Teutons. "The civilization of Rome was far superior and more human than the life of the barbarians" but "the savage Teutons were in their spontaneity potentially superior to the enlightened Romans."

At the bottom of Herzen's thoughts there is the leading idea, not yet fully crystallized, but acting as a hidden spring, that a great revolutionary disaster is an unavoidable fatal necessity. Progress, a gradual advance towards higher forms of life is an illusion, dangerous and harmful to the masses. "If progress is the goal, whom are we working for? Who is the Moloch who, when the workers are approaching him, instead of rewarding them, retreats and as a consolation for the exhausted and doomed masses who cry to him *morituri te salutant* answers only with the bitter jibe that after their death it will be beautiful on earth? Are you sentencing your contemporaries to play the miserable rôle of caryatids that support the terrace upon which other people will dance one day, or perhaps, to the rôle of wretched laborers who, up to their knees in mud, pull a boat with the mysterious fleece and the humble incription 'progress in the future' on its flag. An infinitely distant goal is not a goal but rather a ruse."

Soon afterwards important events occurred. The February revolution of 1848 broke out. Herzen was at that time in Italy. He hurried to France. Here he witnessed first the inner strife between republican democracy and socialism. The Luxembourg Committee and the national workshops had either to result in the establishment of a socialist republic or to disappear. Jules Simon defined the February revolution as follows: "Liberals agitated in favor of a republic of which they were afraid, while at the last hour the republicans introduced a universal ballot favoring socialism by which they were appalled."

The outbreak of the workers' rising of Paris in June, 1848, its ruthless crushing by General Cavaignac, the election of Louis Napoleon to the presidency, his *coup d'état* of December, 1851, and the proclamation of the Empire a year later, all these events succeeded each other quickly after the fall of the Orléans monarchy. Herzen witnessed the June revolution of 1848. "I loved Paris passionately," he wrote, "at the moment when the bells of St. Sulpice church summoned the insurrectionists to arms. After June, I found Paris loathsome."

From that day on Herzen became an open believer in, and advocate of, a radical revolution. The present world should not be reformed but destroyed. The overturn of the monarchy in France and the establishment of the republic did not make him happy. On the contrary, it rather alarmed him. He was becoming more and more an extremist: *aut Caesar, aut nihil,* either destruction of the existing system or rather reaction. Reaction unconsciously prepares the ground for a great upheaval, while a half-hearted revolution that leaves the principles of the present social system untouched, and introduces a change of the form of government and social reforms is a dangerous delusion. In the light of such a revolutionary maximalism the Second French Republic

appeared to him as the "final dream and poetical illusion of the old world." Accepting the thesis of an early unavoidable decay of the present civilization Herzen spoke of its exhaustion and obsolescence as of something obvious. But when the question arises of what should be substituted for the present system, Herzen indulges in generalities and considers destruction the chief task. In this he differs from many theorists of the revolution to whom he often refers. Saint-Simon had outlined his "new industrial system"; Fourier had given a detailed picture of a new world based upon the organization of phalansteries; Cabet had painted an entrancing picture of the system of "Icaria." Even the anarchist Proudhon had proposed positive foundations for a new social and political system based upon mutualism and federalism. Herzen was a lyricist of destruction. His imagination was stimulated by the vision of the ruin of the present world which constantly reminded him of the destruction of Roman civilization. But when it comes to describing the organization of the new world, his imagination shows him but a general, great and misty picture of universal liberation, happiness and rejuvenation of mankind. Destruction itself appears to him as a majestic and yet melancholy act, as a solemn funeral. He does not see the blood, the victims, and the ruins, or, at least, he passes over them in silence. Himself attached to the old world by bonds of culture and by his personal fortune, he nevertheless prophesies, under the influence of some powerful semi-conscious impulse, the ruin of the world and though dreading it, invokes it.

He maintains that the contemporary political régime of France and other European nations is irreconcilable with either freedom or equality: "People can never be free and equal as long as these social forms and this civilization exist." According to him, the reactionaries have always been more consistent and more profound than the liberals. They knew that injustice was an inherent part of the present system. Far from wishing to destroy this world, they consistently preserved injustice.

"Do you think that Metternich and Guizot did not see the injustice of the social order that surrounded them? But they saw that this injustice was so deeply ingrained in the whole organism that, at the slightest touch, the whole edifice would tumble down. And having come to understand this they became the guardians of the *status quo*. The liberals, on the other hand, unbridled democracy and want to return to the old order. Who is more right in this case?..."

The present civilization degenerates. "All things become dwarfish and wither upon sterile soil; there are no talents, no creative forces, no will power. The world has outlived the era of its glory. The era of Schiller and Goethe has passed away as did those of Raphael and Buo-

narroti, of Voltaire and Rousseau, of Mirabeau and Danton. The brilliant period of industrialism is passing; it has outlived itself just as the brilliant period of the aristocracy; everybody is getting poorer without making any one richer; there is no credit; everybody lives from day to day; the mode of life becomes less and less elegant. Everybody restricts himself, is afraid, lives like a shopkeeper. The small bourgeoisie's habits have become universal. Nobody settles down in one place: everything is temporary, venal, fragile.

"It is a hard period similar to the one which oppressed people in the third century when even the vices of ancient Rome were vanishing, when the emperors were becoming sluggish and the legions pacific. Energetic and restless people were suffering from boredom to such an extent that they fled in mass somewhere to the steppes of Thebaide, abandoning in public squares bags full of gold and parting forever from their country and their ancient gods. Such a time is coming for us. Our restlessness is increasing."

The February Revolution marked the beginning of the great upheaval. "On February 24, 1848, the heavy cloud that hung over Europe and let no one breathe, burst. There was lightning after lightning, thunder was followed by thunder, the earth was shaking... The fifth act of the tragedy had begun."

The liberals who had stopped half-way and hampered the progress of the revolution were more obnoxious conservatives than Radetzky and Windischgraetz. The destroyer of the old world felt that there is a greater spiritual affinity between him and the destroyers of the revolution than between him and the democrats, liberals and republicans. The subduers of the revolution were accomplishing the task of destruction, bringing the salutary catastrophe nearer.

"What kind of conservative is Radetzky? He destroys everything, he nearly blew up the Milan cathedral. Do you seriously consider that it is conservatism when today the Croats take Austrian cities by storm and leave no stone untouched? Neither they nor their generals know what they are doing, but at any rate they *do not conserve*. The most harmful sort of conservatism is the republican one."

Herzen writes with irony of *revolutionary conservatives* who deplore the shortcomings of the French Constitution, and bemoan the fact that the Frankfort assembly was ineffective, that Charles Albert failed to establish an independent Italy and that Pius IX proved a disappointment to democracy. "This, precisely, is conservatism. Had your wishes been fulfilled, the old world would have been solemnly exculpated. The reaction has saved the movement, the reaction has discarded its masks and thereby saved the revolution."

The conditions prevailing in Europe before 1848, as well as those

following the revolution, the Orléans monarchy as well as the Second Republic, are but two forms of slavery, two aspects of the old world. "There is slavery on both sides; on one side it is cunningly hidden under the name of liberty, and therefore dangerous; on the other side savage and bestial, and therefore, conspicuous." Herzen, evidently, has a preference for that pre-revolutionary slavery. However, he hates both the fallen monarchy and the newly established republic: "Let them fight each other; let them devour each other, and pull each other into the grave. Whichever of them wins, falsehood or force, it will not be our victory."

But what gospel should be preached now? "Proclaim the news of death" — answers Herzen — "show the people every new wound on the breast of the old world, every advance in destruction. Show them the weakness of its undertakings, the futility of its claims. Convince them that it cannot be cured, that it lacks support and self-confidence.. Proclaim death as the good tidings of the approaching redemption."

In this dialogue between the author and a revolutionary conservative the latter persistently asks for an answer to the question what should be done after everything is destroyed. Herzen answers: "Destruction creates and clears the site, and that is already creation; it does away with a series of lies, and that already is truth. The future is beyond politics, the future hovers above the chaos of all political and social aspirations. Out of them it will take the yarn with which to weave the shroud for the past, and the swaddling clothes for the newborn child. The new life born out of the struggle of conservatism with utopia, does not enter in the form expected by either side: it is a transformed, different being, composed of memories and hopes..."

In the subsequent chapters the colors grow darker. In chapter VI, which he wrote in the last months of 1849, Herzen gives the reader a gloomy, *macabre* picture of the expiring world.

"Nations like dynasties, are becoming dull before their death. Their perceptions get blunted. They lose their mind as the Merovingians, conceived in debauchery and incest, dying as if in a haze, having never attained consciousness; like the aristocracy, degenerate with morbid cretinism, a dwarfed Europe will end her miserable life in the darkness of mental dullness, in a languid atmosphere devoid of arts and the power of poetry. Feeble, weak, stupid generations will somehow live until the eruption, until one kind or another of lava will cover them with a shroud of stone, dooming them to the oblivion of chronicles."

"And then? Then spring will come. A new life will bud on their tombstones; a youthful barbarity full of unsettled but healthy forces will replace the senile barbarity; a savage unengendered force will

distend the breast of new nations, inaugurating a new cycle of events, the third volume of universal history."

At this point Herzen again returns to the question of what will be the characteristic trait of the new world, and finally tells us that the next stage of mankind is to be socialism which will develop to its extreme consequences, to absurdity. Then a new revolutionary tide will rise, the program of which, thus far unknown, will prepare a new upheaval.

One may guess that according to Herzen's presentiments, the new revolution would take a turn toward anarchy as a protest against the tyranny of economic and social collectivism. That anarchic note, that trend to overturn not only existing authorities and existing compulsion but any authority and any compulsion, is Herzen's manifest tendency. He criticizes past revolutions and follows exactly, in his reasoning, the spirit and methods of Max Stirner. Past revolutions, spiritual as well as political, were limited to replacing old authorities by new ones, and led to an amended edition of ancient Europe.

Herzen begins the last chapter of his work *From the Other Shore* with a quotation from Proudhon: "*Ce n'est pas Catilina qui est à vos portes, c'est la mort.* (It is not Catilina who stands at your gates, it is death)". Between the Rome of Julius Caesar and the Rome of Gregory VII stands the death of the old world. "Between Europe of Gregory VII, Martin Luther, the Convention and Napoleon there is not death but evolution, modification and growth." This Christian world has, however, come to the point where further progress is impossible. It faces extermination and death. "Many people do not notice the death only because by death they understand some kind of annihilation. Death does not annihilate the components, but merely releases them from their former compound, and leaves them free to exist in other conditions." The prophecy of the death of the old world constitutes the main conclusion at which the author arrives in his essay *From the Other Shore.*

The coup d'état of Louis Napoleon took place on December 2, 1851. Herzen salutes that attempt which inaugurated actual autocracy while nominally preserving the Republic, as a desirable clarification of the situation, as a further step towards the ruin of the old world.

In a letter which he wrote from Nice at the end of 1851 Herzen greeted the arrival of the New Year with the following apostrophe: "Vive la mort, my friends! A Happy New Year! Let us now be consistent! Let us now be strong and hold on to our convictions!

"For many years we have seen the approaching death. We were

called ominous ravens, while we were only guilty of truth and of expressing it openly.

"At last this world of appearances, senile, outdated, disintegrating, ambiguous, insincere, reaching falsehood and the confusion of all conceptions, has crumbled as does everything that loses its reason, a world which stopped at impracticable combinations, at impossible compromises, at faint-hearted concessions. The loathsome dusk has disappeared. There are no more equivocal insinuations which sustained the vain hopes on both sides. The expected dark night has come, we are a step nearer to the morn.

"Everything is over: a representative republic and a constitutional monarchy, the freedom of the press and inalienable rights of man; open courts and an elected parliament. Breathing becomes easier, and the air purer. Everything has become frightfully simple and coarse... Wherever you look, there is barbarity at the bottom and at the top, in palaces and in workshops. Who will finish, accomplish the task? The decrepit barbarism of the sceptre or the licentious barbarism of communism? The blood-stained sword or the red flag?..."

Foreseeing the coming of tsarism in France, the Scythian feels more at ease. He foretells the path which will now lead mankind to the terrible, redeeming disaster. The future activities of Louis Napoleon will be headed for tyranny. He will destroy his adversaries. Literature and poetry will be suppressed. France will become silent. Finally, Napoleon will need war and for that purpose he will need money. Where will he get it? From the capitalists. This will be the beginning of an imperial communism, and whatever happens in France will also spread to other countries. Herzen visualizes an approaching international disaster, to which that war will be a prologue.

"All Europe will come off the hinge and will be drawn into a universal turmoil. State frontiers will be changed, nations will merge into different combinations; nationalities will be broken and humiliated. Cities taken by storm, looted, will be pauperized. Education will decline; factories will stop; villages will be depopulated and the soil will be left uncultivated, as it was after the Thirty Years' War. Weary nations will surrender to everything; military despotism will replace law and all government. The victors will then start to fight for the booty. Scared civilization and industry will escape to England or America, trying to save their money, their science, or the work they had commenced. Europe will look like Bohemia after the Hussites.

"Then, at the edge of perdition and disaster, another war will break out – a civil war.

"Contemporary state existence with its civilization will perish; it will be, as Proudhon politely expresses it, liquidated.

"Do you regret civilization? I too, regret it, but the masses do not. Humility in the face of irrevocable destiny! Let us enter the New Year with firm step!"

Herzen underwent in those days a still more significant change of his views. Not long ago, when he was comparing Russia with the West, he had experienced such a keen sense of inferiority that when he crossed the Prussian frontier he felt liberated and happy. How far away was he now from his former enthusiasm of a Westerner!

In the fall of 1851 Michelet published in the Paris paper *L'Evénement* his "Legend of Kosciuszko," written in beautiful, fiery language, full of warm sympathy for Poland. In that inspired composition Michelet leveled a stern accusation at Tsar Nicholas' Russia, the oppressor of Poland. Herzen answered from Nice with an open letter. He did not limit himself to defending his country, which would have been comprehensible from a patriotic viewpoint, but expressed the belief that Russia would regenerate putrid and decrepit Europe. He idealized Russia's shortcomings, her primitiveness and cultural juniority, and built upon these negative qualities the theory of Russian revolutionary messianism. Herzen's optimism regarding Russia and his pessimism regarding the future of the West cast ample light upon the origins and peculiarities of the Russian revolution from the day its aims had been first formulated by its great theorist. We are confronted with the legend of the rotten West in a revolutionary edition.

Herzen believed that Russia's most difficult period was nearing its end. The great problem, Russia's "to be or not be", was soon to be solved. Not long ago he had dreamed of Russia's Europeanization. Now, in the period of France's reborn Caesarism, he considered that idea childish. *Ex oriente lux.* It is Russia that will settle the accounts of the old world and regenerate mankind. He now speaks with boldness and pride about Russia's barbarism just as if he were speaking of the simplicity of the Galilean fishermen, carrying the good tidings to the world.

"With growing restlessness people are asking each other" — he writes in his open letter to Michelet — "whether old Europe, that decrepit Proteus, that disintegrating organism, will have enough strength for her rebirth. Indeed, a terrible question!

"Will old Europe be able to renew her cooling blood and throw herself into the unfordable future, to which the way leads through the ruins of the ancestral home, through the wreck of ancient civilizations, through trampled treasures of modern education?"

Her legacy of civilization will prove to Europe an obstacle to accomplish a radical revolution.

"Amidst that chaos, amidst that mortal fear and tormenting rege-

neration, in a world crumbling to dust around the cradle, man naturally looks towards the East.

"Over there, like a dark mountain looming in the mist, there appears a hostile, menacing nation. At times it seems that it rushes like an avalanche against Europe, that like an impatient heir it is ready to accelerate her slow death."

Herzen reviews the history of the stupendous growth of Moscow's power. Europe knows the history of the Tsars but she does not know anything about the Russian nation of which the most contradictory views are circulating in Europe.

"There is something tragic in that senile absent-mindedness with which the old world confuses all information about its adversary.

"In that mixture of contradictory opinions there is such a repetition of absurdities, such a sad superficiality, such stubborn prejudices, that one spontaneously looks to ancient Rome for a comparison.

"In those days, too, on the eve of the upheaval, on the day preceding the victory of the barbarians, one heard proclaimed the immortality of Rome, the powerless insanity of the Nazarenes as well as the futility of the movement that was starting in the barbarian world."

In his tirades about Russia's revolutionary messianism Herzen compares the Russians one time with the barbarians who destroyed the Roman Empire, and another time with the Nazarenes.

In his answer to Michelet, Herzen deals with the Polish-Russian problem from a Russian-Panslavist viewpoint. "The Slavonic world aims at unity, that tendency became evident immediately after Napoleon's invasion. The idea of Slavonic federation had its origin in the revolutionary plans of Pestel and Muraviev."

"It is very possible that during the war of 1830 there prevailed in Poland the feeling of exclusive nationality and of very understandable hostility. Since then, however, the activities of Mickiewicz, the historical and philological studies of numerous Slavs and a deeper knowledge of European nations acquired at the heavy price of exile, have turned Polish thought in an entirely different direction."

Herzen refers to the sympathy which the local Russian population had shown towards the Polish exiles, to Bakunin's speech delivered in Paris in 1847, to the friendly feelings for Russia of some Polish exiles such as Biernacki, the former Minister of the Treasury during the Rising. He then comes forward with the thesis that the existence of separate Latin and Germanic nations is a fact as well as a necessity, while all Slavonic nations should act as one race.

"The solidarity uniting Poland with Russia and the whole Slavonic world is undeniable and manifest. More than that: without Russia there is no future for Slavdom; without Russia it will not develop,

it will dissolve and be absorbed by the German element; it will become Austrian and lose its independence.

"I believe that all Germanic and Latin nations are necessary in the European world, for they exist in it as the result of a definite necessity... On the same basis the Slavonic world may claim its right to unity, the more so as it is composed of one race. The nucleus of crystallization, the center to which the Slavonic world striving for unity gravitates, is Russia."

Herzen asks himself what element inherent in Slavdom guarantees it full development in the future, and answers the question by saying that it is the element which corresponds to the revolutionary idea in Europe.

Here he arrives at a point known to Michelet from the work of the German Haxthausen, namely at the thesis of the ancient agrarian communism, preserved in Russia since prehistoric times. According to it, the soil belonging to the village community was allotted to individual peasant families not as their property, but as a periodically renewed usufruct. Together with this agrarian collectivism Russia is said to have preserved a traditional administration by village communities (*mir*), a sort of democratic commune, autonomous in the local affairs of the village. On the basis of this discovery Herzen reaches a conclusion of great significance. The communal system which had preserved the principles of collectivism in the elementary cell of Russian life, the commune, is an invaluable asset. The Russian nation has escaped economic and legal individualism, did not yet enter the bourgeois stage, has preserved primitive collectivism, and thanks to such a fortunate decree of fate, is ready to adopt future collectivism without experiencing the awful economic, social and spiritual upheaval which Europe, steeped in individualism and bourgeoisie, will be unable to avoid.[1]

"The communal organization, though badly shaken, resisted governmental interference and happily lived to see the expansion of socialism in Europe. This circumstance is of immense importance to Russia."

The discovery of communal rule and collective ownership of soil permits Herzen to glorify the barbarian primitiveness of Russia. Russia was the only nation that preserved the ark of the covenant between a patriarchal past and a radiant future.

"So you see" – he writes in his letter to Michelet – "how fortu-

[1] Haxthausen's discovery had deeply impressed Herzen. In the foreword to the Russian edition of his work *From the Other Shore*, dated March 1, 1849 one finds the following observation: "We have been waiting for a German to commend us to Europe. Isn't it a shame?"

nate for Russia that the village community did not disappear, that private ownership did not comminute communal property. How fortunate for the Russian nation that it remained outside all political movements, outside European civilization which would have surely undermined the village community, and which has at present reached self-negation, in socialism."

The Russian peasant has kept that treasure. Here Herzen laid the foundation of the movement which was later to expand so widely as populism, *narodnichestvo.*

'Taking her first step towards a social revolution, Europe met a people who fulfilled in a semi-savage and immature way, but nevertheless fullfilled the task of a lasting division of the land among the tillers of the soil. And remember, please, that the great example is not given us by enlightened Russia but by her peasants. Those of us Russians who have gone through Western civilization are no more than a means, a leaven, an intermediary between the Russian people and the Russian revolution. The man of the future in Russia is the peasant, just as the laborer is in France. This being the case" – he adds with proud irony – "does not the Russian peasant have some title to your forbearance?"

Russia is to derive still other advantages from the youth of her civilization. After the accession of Nicholas I to the throne, the characteristic tone of Russian thought became widely manifest. "The significant trait of that trend is the tragic liberation of conscience, a merciless negation, a bitter irony and a tormenting introspection. Sometimes all this ends in insane laughter, but in that laughter there is nothing gay."

There is in the Russian soul a terrific force of negation, a great destructive power that will not stop before anything.

"A thinking Russian is the most independent man in the world. What can hold him back? Respect for the past? For what is the starting point of modern Russias's history if not the negation of nationality and of tradition?

"On the other hand the past of the Western nations serves us only as an example and nothing else. We do not consider ourselves the testamentary executors of their will. We share your doubts but your faith leaves us cold. We share your hatreds, but we do not understand your attachment to your ancestral heritage. We are too oppressed, too unhappy to be content with half-freedom. You are tied by scruples, you are restrained by mental reservations; we have neither scruples nor reservations, we only lack force..."

Thus we have an early prophecy of what will happen when the new Russia will become conscious of her power...

"Hence the irony, the boredom that devour us, make us mad and push us ahead. We sacrifice ourselves without any hope, out of gall, out of boredom... There is, indeed, a touch of insanity in our life, but there is nothing banal, stagnant, bourgeois in it...

"Do not accuse us of immorality because we do not respect what you respect. Can one reproach a foundling with not respecting his parents? We are independent because we begin life anew. We are independent because we do not possess anything. We have almost nothing to love. All our memories are permeated with bitterness.

"What do we, the younger, the disinherited brothers care for your traditional duties? What respect can we have for your Romano-barbarian legality, that awkward edifice without light and air, patched up in the Middle Ages, replastered by a libertine bourgeoisie? Agreed that the robberies committed daily in Russian courts are still worse, but it does not follow from this that there is any justice in your courts and laws.

"We are bound by too many chains voluntarily to put new ones on ourselves. We do not accept anything from our enemies.

"Russia will never be Protestant. Russia will never be *juste milieu.*

"Russia will never start a revolution to free herself from the Tsar, and to replace him by tsar-represantatives, tsar-judges, tsar-policemen. Perhaps we are asking too much and shall achieve nothing, perhaps, but in spite of everything we do not lose hope."

These were the outlines of the Russian revolution as drawn by the great writer: a utopian trend to overthrow any authority, the abolition of any coercion, maximalism and extremism of destruction, and faith that Russia will regenerate the senile world.

The origins of this trend that seems to link revolution with Slavophil delusions had been developing in Herzen's mind for years, when he was still living in Russia, in the period of his dispute with the Slavophils. Slavophil arguments impressed him greatly. Under the date of November 10, 1843, Herzen records in his diary that he had a very interesting dispute with Samarin.

"They (the Slavophils) say that the fruit of European life will ripen in the Slavonic world, that Europe, having arrived in her science at the negation of what exists, and having forecast the future in matters pertaining to socialism and communism, has fulfilled her role." On January 24, 1844, he criticized in his diary the illusions of the Slavophils concerning the past of Slavdom, but he shares their views regarding the part which the Slavs are called to play in the future, under Russia's aegis.

The Slavophil idea that the fruit of European life will ripen among the Slavonic nations, became, as years went by, Herzen's guiding thought. The idea is typically Russian. The West creates ideas, Russia profits by them. The task of creating is left to the West, while Russia's rôle is to lead future mankind, by availing herself of the achievements of other nations. Such a conception satisfies the self-esteem of the Russians and permits them to dispense with laying the foundations.

* * *

In February, 1854, at the beginning of the Crimean War, Herzen, in a letter to Riberol, publisher of the periodical *L'Homme*, further developed the ideas expressed more than two years before in his letter to Michelet. The Russian is eager to go abroad. He crosses the frontier in a state of intoxication. Even Koenigsberg appears to him a city of freedom. But soon something begins to ail him in the West. "We lack elbow-room, space, we just feel uneasy." He is at first ashamed of that feeling. "In vain do we attempt to impart senile features to our young faces. In vain do we put on an outworn tight jacket. Sooner or later the jacket tears and the naked breast of the barbarian appears. He blushes with shame for not knowing how to wear somebody else's coat."

"The famous saying *grattez un Russe et vous trouverez un barbare* (Scratch a Russian and you will find a barbarian) is perfectly justified." The relation between real Europe and the Russian's vision of her, is like that between the life of Christian nations and the Gospel. That life was forming for centuries and absorbed all kinds of filth and hereditary ailments. "Many nations lived, became exhausted and perished in that torrent of Western history which carried away their bones and their corpses, their thoughts and their dreams."

"A new world may be created only out of chaos. But the old world is still strong." The man of the West rooted in the old institutions, does not feel their burden as painfully as the Russian. Poorer than a Bedouin or a Jew, possessing no tradition, the Russian eagerly throws himself on books written in the West, and then goes to Europe. "He finds there what an Ostrogoth would have found in the fourth or fifth centuries, who read the works of St. Augustine, and came to Rome to seek the Kingdom of God.

"Mediaeval pilgrims at least found in Jerusalem an empty tomb. The resurrection of the Lord was again confirmed. The Russian finds in Europe an empty cradle and a woman exhausted by a tiring childbirth. Will she live, will the child live?"

Western revolutionaries do not satisfy the Russian. "The inconsistency of the revolutionaries and their half-measures shock us deeply. They support with one hand what they break with the other. They re-

gret the old world. Some of them are afraid of logical consequences, others are unable to comprehend them. Almost all of them still stand on the shore where there are palaces, churches and courts."

The Russian alone is bold enough to reach the other shore. Moreover his own life, the life of his people, are on the other shore. It only needs to be cultivated in a modern way.

In the same period, at the beginning of 1854, Herzen published his interesting letters to Linton, editor of *The English Republic.* The outbreak of the Crimean War stimulated Herzen's hope that the final reckoning with the old world was approaching, and increased at the same time his pan-Slavic aspirations. The Slavonic peoples, except Russia, had not thus far been able to maintain their independence. "Only Poland stayed independent and powerful. This was so because she was less Slavonic than other nations; she was Catholic, and Catholicism is inconsistent with the genius of the Slavs. Poland preserved her independence because she infringed upon racial unity and came closer to the Western nations."

It is evident from this that as he was more and more relinquishing his earlier program of a Westerner, Herzen simultaneously drew closer to revolutionary extremism and racial chauvinism: to Slavophilism.

On the eve of the Crimean War he saw two great problems in Europe: the social question and the Russian question. "These two questions, indeed, are but one. The Russian question is the new restlessness of the barbarians sensing the approaching death of the old world, the *memento mori* of that world. They (the Russians) will surely kill it, if it has not itself the strength of transforming itself.

"Indeed, socialism will not be able to transform the disintegrating society and put an end to its existence — Russia will accomplish it. I do not assert that it is necessary, but only that it is possible."

In his letter to Linton, Herzen discusses the future of Russia. He formulates and finds a characteristic solution for the question, whether Russia is to undergo successively and gradually all the stages of European evolution, or whether she will be able to catch up at once with the West, availing herself of the historical experience and knowledge accumulated by it. Herzen favors the latter possibility.

"We should pass, perhaps, through all the hard and sorrowful experiences of the historical evolution of our predecessors just as an embryo passes before birth through all the lower stages of zoological existence. The accomplished work and the achieved results become the universal property, they are the collective guarantee of progress, the primogeniture of mankind. Every pupil must find for himself a solu-

tion to Euclid's theorem. Yet how tremendous is the difference between the work of Euclid who discovered it, and the work of a contemporary schoolboy!

"Russia has gone through her embryogeny in 'the European class'. The Russian people do not need to start that hard work anew. Why should they shed their blood to arrive at the same semi-solutions we have reached, the importance of which consists only in the fact that through them we have arrived at other problems and at new aspirations.

"Through socialism the revolutionary idea may become a people's idea in Russia. While in Europe socialism is taken for the banner of disorder and horror, in Russia it is, on the contrary, like a rainbow which heralds the nation's future development."

Herzen saluted the outbreak of the Crimean War as the beginning of the Slavonic era. The Slavs will raise the banner of socialism, and Constantinople will be the capital of the united Slavs. "The Taborite, a man of communal life, rubs his eyes. Was he awakened by socialism? Where will he plant his banner?... The real capital of the united Slavs is Constantinople, the Rome of the Eastern Church, the center of all Slavo-Greeks, Byzantium, surrounded by a Slavo-Hellenic population."

Everything seems merged in that vision: the pan-Slavist idea, the triumph of Russia as the leader of Slavdom, carrying the red banner, and the conquest of Constantinople by that Slavonic Red Russia. "Anyhow, this war is an *introduzione maestosa e marziale* of the Slavonic world to universal history, and simultaneously *una marcia funebre* of the old world."

On the eve of the Crimean War Herzen and the Slavophils believed in the approaching triumph of Slavdom and the regeneration of the world by the latter. A mystical faith in the religious Slavonic mission of Russia plunged Herzen into polemics with more persistent Westerners. In his article "Some More Variations on an Old Theme," written in 1857, a polemic with Ivan Turgenev, not mentioned by name, Herzen arrives at the following conclusions: "This is why, dear friend, to the tune of this gloomy, heart-rending *Requiem*, amidst the dark night that descends upon the tired and ailing West, I turn away from the death-bed moaning of the great fighter whom I respect, but who cannot be helped, and I look with hope at our native East, rejoicing inwardly that I am a Russian".

* * *

Hopes connected with the Crimean War having faded away, Herzen persisted in his expectation of a universal catastrophe, and continued to idealize the civilizational backwardness of his nation. In the introduction to his "Letters from France and Italy", written in 1858 during the reign of Alexander II, Herzen reviewed his odyssey in

foreign countries: "Having begun it with a shout of joy when crossing the frontier, I concluded it with a spiritual return to my country. Faith in Russia saved me on the edge of moral perdition."

He takes pride in asserting that his country surpasses other nations in its readiness for a radical upheaval. The West is panic-stricken at the thought of it. "Our fear is an imitation, a borrowed, lunar feeling and consequently unjustified, artificial,... With us everything is still so shaky, indefinite, forced, not adapted to our needs and size, that we should be glad when the foreign coat tears and we should look for another more suitable one wherever we may find it. The reason why we have outrun Europe in some matters and are more free than she, is that we remained behind her."

"The liberals perceived the phantom of socialism and became frightened. No wonder, they had something to lose. The liberals were afraid to lose their liberty – we do not have it. They feared the State's interference with their industries – in our country the State interferes with everything. The liberals dreaded the loss of individual rights – we still have to acquire them. A man who lives in a furnished room can move much easier than the one who has his own house.

"Europe goes down because she cannot liberate herself from her ballast; in it are the treasures which she has amassed during a long and perilous voyage. With us the ballast is artificial. Let's throw it overboard and go ahead full-sail into the open sea!" Revolution does not frighten Russia. "Don't be afraid, calm yourselves, there is a lightning rod on our field – communal ownership of the soil."

Lack of tradition, a historical *tabula rasa* – as a blessing – this is the idea which Herzen illustrates with examples and supports with innumerable arguments. When, under the reign of Alexander II, the first steps towards the peasant reform were being taken, Herzen stated in 1859 with gratification, that Russia would actually greatly profit by the fact that she never had a mediaeval knighthood.

"Is it not better that our Rohans from Tambov, and our Noailles from Kaluga did not pass through the era of knighthood, but simply paraded in the armor of ancient knights, not unlike those savages of the Marquesas Islands who visited Dumont d'Urville's ship, clad in European uniforms with epaulets, but wearing no trousers?"

Herzen's theory of Russia's special capability to bring about a radical revolution was most graphically set forth in his article entitled "Mortuos plango", published in the New Year's edition of the *Kolokol* (the Bell) of 1862.

"European life and civilization", he wrote, "were put on us the way boys in London, in order to sell it, sew a puppy of plebeian origin into the downy skin of an aristocratic dog. The puppy, washed and

combed, runs in its Bologna jacket around the drawing rooms, sleeps on sofas, but, unfortunately grows up until the seams of the false pelt begin to rip."

The West has reached the final limit of its progress, which, however, does not constitute a limit for Russia. The West has sufficiently matured to recognize the necessity of a radical upheaval, but it is not able to accomplish it; it is afraid. "But is this the limit for us, foundlings and stepsons of Western civilization?"

Russia has no memories, traditions, customs and monuments of civilization which would impede her progress towards the goal of a revolution.

"The plaster on our buildings has not yet dried, our ruins have aged not because of their years but because of lack of foundations... Is there any stone or any street we should regret? Is it the Winter Palace, or the Tsarina's Meadows (*Tsaritsyn Lug*) where for a century and a half soldiers were daily beaten up, or the *Staraya Russa* where they were cut to death by the scores? Or should we regret the servants' quarters, those spider-webs, where whole generations lost their strength and perished from exhaustion; where old men were beaten to death and children raped still a year ago, and perhaps even later?

"No, we shall never again stumble on *our* Europe.?

"One century and a half of most inhuman vexations and humiliations unheard-of in the chronicles of the world, a century and a half of tortures, only to reach the edge of the same precipice where all Western nations are to be found... Whom and what shall we be sorry for?"

And then he ponders what an enlightened son of an upper-class family, and a peasant boy would like to save of Russian tradition. The former can feel only disgust for the horrible tradition of his ancestors. It is doubtless a confession of Herzen's personal feelings, awakened in the past by tales of bygone days, and his own experiences.

"We have grown up in the neighborhood of stables where our fathers and grandfathers used to whip their serfs, and next to the houses where the maids were living, and where the masters *rested* after their work. They were at the same time tormentors of their soldiers; they looted whole provinces and were sending to hard labor, without quarter, the children of their own and of others.

"Do you imagine that, if anyone of their sons has saved his soul, he will not look on with tearless eyes when the house of correction of our civilization will burst in flames from all four sides?

"And do you imagine that that other man whose father and grandfather were whipped, whose head was shaved, whose wife, sister and daughter were raped, will feel any regrets either?

"Are you scared? If so, come over to us, there is plenty of room. With the common people you will not perish; they will welcome you and will not remember the past. Let the dead bury their dead. You will not resuscitate them. You may only grieve for them. One should call only the living ones, therefore we call to them. Answer us: is there any living man present? 'Vivos Voco!'."

Here Herzen, as a prophet of the revolution, stood upon a ground more real than in the past when he thought of building a future Russia upon the foundation of the village communities. He pointed to a more elementary, more real basis of the ruthless character of the coming upheaval: Where the past is pervaded with the tradition of savagery, the reckoning will be dreadful. But Herzen was wrong in assuming optimistically that the people would forget the past. Neither did he give deeper consideration to the question, with whom he himself would side in the hour of the bloody settlement.

Herzen was not a disciplined, positive political mind. He was not even a consistent socialist or anarchist. But he was a Russian who by the keenness of his intellect surpassed most of his contemporary compatriots, and who had at the same time absorbed all the characteristic traits and aberrations of the collective Russian soul revolting against the hard lot of the nation. Before we arrive at general conclusions, let us quote a few characteristic facts from the rich chronicle of his relations with the leaders of the Western democracies. This Russian émigré who, having left his country, already in Koenigsberg breathed joyfully as in a free land, became soon disappointed in all democratic governments of Europe. He, a subject of Nicholas I, sharply rebuked James Fazy, the radical president of the Geneva government, for his alleged severity in treating the émigrés who streamed from all sides into Switzerland after the revolutionary movements of 1848 and 1849. As a matter of fact, no one could have shown more consideration than did James Fazy to those numerous political refugees from various countries who, having found a hospitable asylum in the neutral Swiss Republic, continued their activity against their own governments and drew Switzerland into conflicts with foreign States. Though Fazy was compelled to issue stern regulations against political émigrés and ordered them to leave the territory of the canton of Geneva, he winked at their continued sojourn there.

Herzen describes one of such scenes which took place on the Pont des Bergues in Geneva. Herzen was taking a walk with Fazy. They happened to meet the sub-prefect who ironically asked the Geneva president whether a certain émigré who had been expelled from the

canton, had already left. Fazy answered that the person in question had left long ago. As soon as the sub-prefect had disappeared, Fazy grasped Herzen's hand, and pointing at a man who was quietly smoking a cigar, said: "That's him! Let's cross the street to avoid meeting that bandit. This truly, is hell."

"I could not refrain from laughing", says Herzen, "to be sure, it was the refugee expelled from Geneva who was taking a walk on the Pont des Bergues."

Herzen's gaiety indicated that the gendarmes of Nicholas were to him at that time but an unpleasant reminiscence. His friends, however, who had remained in Russia, and who were being exiled to Siberia for a word of sympathy with those political émigrés, would probably not have seen anything funny in those Geneva customs, as long as they stayed in Russia themselves.

Yet, because of the expulsion of a German émigré Herzen sharply blamed Fazy. "There is no security any more in Geneva," he reprimanded the "Geneva tyrant"; "I am afraid to walk the streets." A sharp dispute followed in which Herzen in a raised voice, accused Fazy of talking nonsense. "You refuse to see the difference between respect for the law and slavery," replied Fazy, *"c'est parfaitement russe."*

The liberation of Europe by revolutionary Russia was Herzen's recurring thought. The liberation of nations was a phrase reiterated for centuries by the aggressive Russian imperialism. Herzen unconsciously transposed that notion into the realm of spiritual imperialism, and called the recasting of the world after the pattern of Russian dreams, its liberation and redemption.

In his book published during the First World War, *La Russie et la Guerre,* Grégoire Alexinsky quotes the following anecdote as a proof of the humanitarian spirit prevailing in the Russian army. A Russian non-commissioned officer, fond of writing poetry, is being treated in a hospital in Erivan. In one of his poems one finds the following lines:

"Here is Mount Ararat. It has a brooding look...
One would think it was waiting to be set free."

The hospital physician, who was told about his patient's daydreams replied: "Oh yes, the idea of liberation is widely diffused among our soldiers."[2]

The theory of a world catastrophe develops in the brilliant Russian mind of Herzen simultaneously with his doubt whether Russia would be able to emerge from her tragedy by usual evolutionary means. Russia was to assist with all her power in levelling down that old world

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[2] Grégoire Alexinsky, *La Russie et la Guerre,* Paris, 1915, pp. 282, 283, English edition: *Russia and the Great War,* translated by Bernard Miall, New York, Scribner's, 1915, pp. 289, 290.

in the construction of which she did not herself play any rôle and to which she did not contribute anything. She took many an advantage from it, giving nothing in return. And her humiliation will come to an end. She will clear the ground for the construction of phalansteries for mankind, and will begin that construction work with the full power of her youth, not only enjoying equal rights with others, but leading them.

If we had any doubts as to the subconscious patriotic motives of Herzen we should observe his attitude after the death of Nicholas I. After a short period of hesitation, Russia, under the rule of Alexander II, inaugurated a series of reforms: the emancipation of the peasants, local self-government, and a modern judiciary. Herzen wholeheartedly favored the reform. His London paper *Kolokol* branded the enemies of the reform, heartened and encouraged its partisans. The agrarian reform made him pay homage to Alexander II whom he saluted as the liberator of Russia with the words: *Galilaee, vicisti.* Later on, seeing the reform slacken, Herzen warned and implored the Tsar. Finally, with reaction taking a new sway, he repeatedly returned to his old program: to revolution, and revolutionary propaganda.

Herzen's sympathy with the great work of reform in Russia, and his praise for Alexander II were comprehensible from the viewpoint of Russian patriotism. That praise, however, looked strange when compared with Herzen's pessimistic, ironical, nay, hateful attitude towards much more important and far-reaching political reforms, whenever they occurred in the West.

With regard to the West Herzen ridiculed the liberals and constitutionalists, derided parliamentarianism and democratic reform and asserted that should the Second Republic in France be consolidated without succumbing to Bonapartism, it should be only a patch on an old outworn cloak, solely a delay in the unavoidable disintegration of the old world. Herzen's attitude towards the West was: the worse the better; as to Russia, however he greeted with exultation even the slightest improvement. As a matter of fact Alexander II never did propose to give Russia a constitution. He left the foundations of autocracy untouched. He modernized absolutism; he followed in the steps of Peter I, Catherine II and Alexander I. What Alexander II established in Russia, was not even that *juste-milieu,* constitutional and liberal, which Herzen ridiculed in the West, but ancient despotism strengthened by the support he found in the masses, at best, a democratized Caesarism so mercilessly scoffed at by Herzen in the case of Napoleon III.

To the West Herzen inexorably applied extremism of negation and maximalism of destruction. As far as Russia was concerned his revolutionary extremism was only in the nature of an answer to the despotic and reactionary extremism of Nicholas I, as the *ultima ratio* to be ap-

plied in case of an unshaken and irreconcilable attitude of tsardom. But the least ray of hope that Russia may choose the path of progress awakened in Herzen's soul the warmest patriotic feelings, making him forget his revolutionary doctrine. Then the same Herzen who prophesied the destruction of the West, blessed the Tsar. Solicitude for the weal of living generations remained silent when he described with academic calm and literary pathos the early ruin of the old world.

A typical Scythian, unable to assimilate Western civilization, his brains and his nerves quickly grasped all trends of the European nations. Mentally he was a European, but his heart remained cold. Contemporary Europe is a beautiful and precious world, but alien to him. And this attitude turned into rancor, resentment and bitterness whenever he compared the riches of Western civilization with the poverty of his own country. His heart would warm up again only when his thoughts turned to Russia, to the long line of peasant huts on the enormous expanse of snow-covered steppes, to the ignorant, oppressed peasants, to the tormented intelligentsia, to the poor humiliated Orthodox priest, to the simple-minded landowner. In his memoirs he described his country with humor, with artistic truth, with love and with filial or paternal forbearance. Whenever he turned his eyes from Russia to the West he became severe towards Europe which had received so much and which too suffered oppression and injustice, and particularly, a narrow-minded bourgeois selfishness. In Russia these shortcomings and wrongs were often much worse, but the West had lived through centuries of enlightenment and inherited an ancient civilization, and therefore did not deserve any leniency. Herzen sentenced the West to death; he called James Fazy, the radical Geneva democrat who could not make up his mind to expel a foreign revolutionary, the tyrant of Geneva. On the other hand he saluted Alexander II, the despot who let some fresh air into the Russian prison while leaving the prison gates locked, as the Galilean.

The illustrious son of a people who had as yet not shared the common life of civilized mankind, had two measures: one for his own and another for the older nations. He was above all a great propagandist of Russia in the West, the representative of a future Russia which did not as yet exist. He brilliantly described the suffering, human, plain Russia; he showed her spiritual aspirations in tsarist chains and her enslaved people craving for liberty. So eloquent was his appeal that Europe had to listen to it. In the dark era of the reign of Nicholas I, Herzen's noble voice resounded beyond the Russian lands. He gave the Russian political thought a European baptism. And so lofty was the flight of his thought that till now it soars high above Russian reality as the thought of a son of universal culture.

To Herzen the contemporary Russian generation was abnormal: they suffered from a spiritual breakdown (*russkii nadlom*), a pathological symptom of the terrible slavery. In the life accessible to the subjects of Nicholas I, serious-minded people with higher aspirations could see no reasonable goal. Finding no escape for their energy, they broke down. Pushkin threw himself into the whirl of a wild revelry and provoked his fatal duel. Others drowned their ennui in alcohol or became renegades and tools of the tsarist régime. Herzen, however, was not aware of his own breakdown. His patriot's grief over the political and moral distress of his country beclouded his judgment. His brilliant mind looked for escape from a sober appreciation of reality, and found it in irrationalism and dreams. Nothing but dreams were his myth of the liberating, redeeming rôle of the Russian village community, his hypothesis of the imminent catastrophe of the West, his conviction of Western Europe's incapability of further progress and of Russia's rôle in the transformation of the old European society.

Looking for ways for the liberation of his people, and agitated amidst obstacles rising everywhere, Herzen's mind clung to the dream of a universal cataclysm. Finding no logical solution, he looked for Apocalyptic ones. Though preaching destruction, Herzen remained in his practical precepts and in his feelings a humanitarian. He loathed bloodshed, ruins and brutal force. That duality was one of the contradictions that were bound to rend the soul of the Russian, a Scythian in his instincts, a European by his education and ideals.

Herzen felt deeply all the aspects of the tragedy of Russia. In his soul, given to musing and reminiscences of the country he had left forever, as well as to visions of a Russia of tomorrow, the restless convulsive movements of the Russian soul craving for liberty in tsarist prisons, are reflected as in a large, clear mirror. No Russian writer has so universally and vividly embodied the spirit of the Russia striving for liberation.

What does liberation mean and in what did Russia's tragedy consist? These two questions require some consideration.

The tragedy of the educated Russian consisted, obviously, above all in his being the slave of a tyranny, of a despotic, unenlightened and demoralized government. His tragedy consisted further in the ignorance, savagery and lawlessness which were the lot of the large majority of the Russian people. Up to the abolition of serfdom, the peasants were the serfs of serfs. People of education and civic consciousness regarded that barbarity of the masses as a misfortune and a dreadful danger. They sympathized with these oppressed masses of their own race, and their sympathy was rendered more bitter by the consciousness of their hereditary class complicity in those perennial wrongs of

the peasants. The upper classes in enlightened Russia under the reign of Nicholas I consisted, almost to the same degree as the Decembrist generation, of noblemen. They were sons and grandsons of the cruel oppressors of the peasant, themselves deriving profit from his labor. Out of that class there was soon to emerge the type of the contrite, repenting nobleman, *kayushchiisia dvorianin.*

The consciousness of the age-old wrongs of the peasants merged with the consciousness of the grim social danger. Those ignorant masses, hating any master or gentleman whether he be a gendarme, a revolutionist, a government employee or a writer, were, in case of a riot ever ready to rush, like a tide, against the gentlemen in frock-coats. The pioneers of revolution or reform felt their isolation from the masses, and their social helplessness. The enlightened class was conscious of the tragedy of the masses, but the masses were ignorant of the spiritual and political tragedy of the enlightened class. Between the people and the intelligentsia there was an abyss. The vast majority of the Russians had never understood the tragedy of the Decembrists. All the later circles of the Moscow idealists, such as those of Herzen, Sungurov, Stankevich, were a lost oasis in the boundless desert of ignorance. The literature of the days of Nicholas I, which had produced so many brilliant writers, was an elegant performance for a distinguished audience. The common people were not admitted to the performance; they did not understand it and turned to the tavern. The sense of isolation broke the energy of the democrats. The political situation of the friends of the masses, persecuted and hunted by the government, is doubtless very difficult. But it is still worse when they are hated and misunderstood by the people, separated from them by a spiritual distance of several centuries.

There was still another aspect of the tragedy of Russia: the consciousness of cultural inferiority in comparison with Europe. That inferiority had long been hurting the national pride of the Russians. In the times of the old Muscovy they were very susceptible to the opinion of foreigners. They tried to preserve the semblance of refinement and culture. From time immemorial Moscow outdid herself in hiding, by means of her remarkable diplomatic skill, her barbarism. The imposing edifice of Western civilization had always been an object of her covetousness and imitation. Custine had keenly observed and mercilessly described the pathological vanity of those people, their childish desire to conceal their backwardness. His every word unmasking the real cultural backwardness of Russia was burning Russian pride, like hot iron. Even at the zenith of political power, Russia remained in spiritual captivity to the West. To the Russian enlightened classes and particularly to those who came in contact with foreigners, with foriegn public opi-

nion that aspect of the national tragedy was the most painful.

Russia assimilated Western culture and skilfully imitated Western modes of life, but she always remained behind, not only with regard to the cultural level of her masses, but also with regard to a thorough education and polish of the upper classes. The distance between the West and Russia in the nineteenth century increased in spite of the semblance of her Europeanization. The West advanced more quickly and freely than Russia fettered with the chain of tyranny. Hence the peculiar attitude of Russia towards the West: a longing for the West and an aversion to it, imitation and imprecation, the *odi et amo* of Catullus.

The contrast between the ratio of the political power of Russia to the power of the Western nations. and the ratio of their civilizations became more and more striking. Educationally and culturally Russia had remained several centuries behind the West, while she was equal to the Western powers in the realm of military and diplomatic efficiency, and even, sometimes, ahead of them.

What was to be done to do away with that backwardness? Official Russia in the days of Nicholas I simply denied that inferiority. Her dignitaries and loyal writers continued to assert that, thanks to the Tsars, Russia was catching up with Europe in the realm of technology and useful education, and would soon outrun the West. On the other hand, she did not need the unsound teachings of the West and despised them.

The Slavophils, reasoning learnedly, arrived at conclusions still more comforting for Russia: they anathematized the West as a whole, and placed the old pre-Peter Moscow at the head of mankind as a model and ideal of a nation.

Sober-minded, courageous men believed that Russia should for a long time take lessons from Europe, and pointed to a long, but the only path leading to a gradual catching up with the West. No one has ever branded the backwardness of Russia more eloquently and more fiercely than Chaadayev. The Tsar had adjudged him insane, while a large majority of enlightened people considered him a calumniator of his own country. The Westerners, however, cleverly avoiding the traps of censorship, followed in the footsteps of Chaadayev.

But his ideas had never been popular. To catch up with the West would have been a task requiring endless years, especially since the tsarist régime itself was impeding the progress of its subjects. A nation which looked at Russian hegemony in Europe, and was fed on visions of world domination, could hardly reconcile itself to the idea of returning to the European elementary school as they had done in the days of Peter I. Internationally, Russia had come of age on the battlefields of the Napoleonic wars, at Borodino and Leipzig; but this did not mean

intellectual maturity. The powerful Russian nation, like the stripling (*nedorosl*) from Fonvizin's comedy, continued to face its European teacher.

Was the victorious Russian nation to learn forever from the nations which it had liberated from the "tyrant's" rule? To be sure, the Russians had reached Paris not as Eastern conquerors or barbarians, but as the liberators of France and Europe. The Cossack watered his horses in the Seine river and let them graze on the lawns of the Champs Elysées. Russia entered the Congress of Vienna with her head raised high, singed by the Moscow fire, and holding in her hands her rifles from Borodino and Leipzig.

Only when one goes deeply enough into this aspect of Russia's distress, of the tragedy of her continuously humiliated and excessively developed national ambition, can one fully comprehend Slavophilism and the extravagance of Russian nationalism. Odd as it may seem, it is only a better understanding of that distress which makes the development of Russian revolutionary thought comprehensible.

Tsarist tyranny, the barbarism of the masses and cultural backwardness leading to spiritual slavery constitute the three-fold tragedy of Russia. Was it possible for her to find a way out of this misery by means of normal evolution, through reforms?

The generation of Nicholas I, which entered life after the crushing of the Decembrist revolt, lived under the impression of that bloody demonstration which, with its five gallows and scores of deportations, confirmed once more the fact that it was an absurdity to think of limitation of the Tsars' power without an armed victory over tsardom.

One could not hope that the masses, cut off by the government from any education, would soon come of age politically. The thought that Russia would have to catch up with Western civilization was both painful and utopian. If so, a Russian aiming at the political, social and intellectual liberation of his country was impelled to look for salvation in a revolution and catastrophe. Russian thought looked subconsciously for a point of support to put a revolution in motion and grasped convulsively even the semblance of any hope. And this is where one finds an explanation of Herzen's unexpected and naive faith in the liberating rôle of the village community, *obshchina,* as well as of the enthusiastic reception of that idea by people of most divergent camps.

The thought of a saving catastrophe emerged out of the hopelessness of reform, as demonstrated by the execution of the Decembrists. The idea of entering into a new era by means of an upheaval, of a *coup d'état,* corresponded with the psychology of a nation which, for

centuries, had been brought up in the school of a military State, and consequently was putting its faith in physical force, in the solution of great national problems by means of arms and violence. The expected catastrophe was to be a world catastrophe, at least a European one, a catastrophe of the old civilization. The social aspirations of the working masses were to be the incentive of the revolution. Theories of utopian socialism were bound to meet in Russia with an enthusiastic reception. They furnished social and class watchwords which could find an echo among the masses, still indifferent to a constitution, parliamentarianism, freedom of the press and of speech. Socialism that aimed at abolishing classes, at a social levelling, appeared spiritually close to a nation like Russia where nine-tenths of the population lived a primitive life.

Both socialism and anarchism appealed simultaneously to Russian mentality. These two doctrines, so different from each other, had one point in common which had the strongest appeal to Russian imagination: the slogan of the destruction of the prevailing social and political systems of the civilized countries, and in particular the abolition of the contemporary State with its civil code. Apart from that, socialism and anarchism follow divergent roads.

Socialism must preserve compulsory organization of collective life in order to prevent a relapse into individualism as well as social and economic inequality, to bridle selfishness and the inborn inequality of man. To be sure, according to socialist doctrine, this compulsory organization will gradually relax and be replaced by a spontaneous, free collectivist system as the habits, impulses and traits of character, formed heretofore by a bourgeois society, undergo changes and are purified under the influence of the socialist system. But that is an ideal of the future while for the nearest period, after the revolution, socialism foresees a compulsory organization which will deeply permeate the life of the individual and regulate it more rigorously than the present state which gives scope to free competition and the free play of economic forces.

Anarchism on the other hand teaches that after the abolition of the present system mankind will organize its social conditions without external compulsion, on the basis of a free symbiosis and a voluntary, spontaneous mutual exchange of services. The organization of mankind will proceed from the bottom by natural unions, thanks to man's inborn impulse towards collective life and the necessity of economic collaboration. Only then a natural harmony in human relations will appear, a harmony which thus far has been warped by compulsion on the part of the State. One section of anarchism believes that a natural untrammelled evolution of social life must necessarily lead to communism which lies in the very nature of human relations. Another section, the individualistic one, believes that mankind will organize as a community

of free individuals delimiting their spheres of rights and interests by means of voluntary agreements, exchange of services, that is mutualism.

The above categories were based upon the works of Western writers. One does not find a clear dividing line between socialism and anarchism in the works of the protoplasts of the Russian revolutionary movement. Bakunin, at a time when his views were getting crystallized was a communistic anarchist who did not conceal his predilection for dictatorship, that is the most radical form of compulsion. In Herzen's writings we find enunciations in the sense of individualistic anarchism à la Marx Stirner, that is in the sense of a radical liberation of man from any fetters, any authority, parallel with enunciations reminiscent of Proudhon's mutualism or socialism. Russian revolutionary writers were interested not so much in the shaping of future conditions as in the destruction of the old world. This viewpoint which socialism and anarchism have in common represents the most characteristic trait of the leaders of Russian revolutionary thought. Herzen was a lyricist of destruction, a mystic of disaster, he was hypnotized by the vision of the ruin of the old world. It is not so much the liberation of the proletariat from the economic fetters of the bourgeoisie which attracted him to the future revolution, as the liberation of mankind from modern civilization. He was impatiently awaiting that hour, and hoped it would not be long to come. The revolution of 1848, the *coup d'état* of Louis Napoléon, the Crimean War, each of these events appeared to him a signal of the approaching cataclysm, which would leave Western Europe in ashes. The destruction of contemporary civilization in Russia seemed to him of secondary importance, for it was there but a reflex, a poor imitation, a parody of Europe. The main thing was the smashing of the metropolis of bourgeois civilization.

Thoroughly sceptical of Western civilization and seeing the pallor of death on Europe's face, *facies hippocratica*, Herzen naively believed in the talisman of the world's regeneration, preserved in the rural life of Russia. He was, indeed, an eloquent interpreter of the subconscious trend of the Russian soul to solve the national tragedy by means of a world disaster. Herzen's forebodings indicate that the expected universal revolution meant to him not so much the liberation of the lower classes as the liberation of Russia from the nightmare of her distress among the nations, from the humiliating sense of her cultural inferiority.

One may easily understand the relief felt by the Russian when he read the passionate philippics of the followers of the St. Simonists, Fourier, Cabet and Proudhon against contemporary European civilization. The awe-inspiring edifice of that civilization, looming in the distance, which for centuries absorbed the attention of the Russians, to

which leads a long, toilsome, endless road, appeared to him a decaying structure that was soon to collapse. They felt liberated from the oppressive nightmare. The goal beyond reach had, fortunately, proved a mirage... No need any more to be ashamed, to feel a foundling in the family of nations. As the civilization of which the old West had boasted is about to crash, it is not worth while any more to fight for it. One should rather stand in the first row of the wreckers.

The new doctrine opens alluring prospects for the Russian. For centuries he had been looking with longing and awe at the tower of Babel of civilization which the nations tried to ascend. He saw that the more fortunate ones were already reaching its summit, while the dark mass of his own people were clinging to its base. And lo! prophets appear announcing an early earthquake, the tower erected by the godless hands will crumble into dust. Through that dust man will easily reach the promised land, the path to which had been obstructed by the sky-high tower. What blessed discovery and what relief! The lower one is, the safer he will be, he who is nearer the base will not crash with the top. Inferiority has become superiority, the curse a blessing. How convulsively did the Russian seize that new doctrine! It permitted Russia to leave the blind track of hopelessness and enter the main line leading into the infinite, and here she was to become the vanguard. The tormenting charm which Western civilization, that beautiful, matchless, longed-for and accursed civilization, exerted upon the enlightened Scythian, was now broken. While older nations were wailing at the ruins of churches and palaces, lamenting their brethren buried under the débris, the Russian walked quietly and safely through his snow-covered steppes, amid the low humble huts. The proud demon of civilization who had for centuries jeered at the Russians, was now seized with fear and awaits its final doom. Following the appeal of the spirit of destruction which calls people to its red and black banners, the Russian is first to join the ranks and waits impatiently for the signal to smash the old walls of Europe with his hammer. He will start the work of destruction with exultation while his prophets will cry: the lust of destruction is a creative lust, long live death!

Between the passion for destruction and the age-old nationalism inherited from the Duchy of Moscow there was a strong, subconscious bond of which the Russian revolutionaries themselves were unaware. Herzen's most lyrical pages describing the extermination of the old world were most closely akin to Slavophilism. The watchful Strakhov, a follower of Danilevski, reverently quoted the pages of Herzen prophesying that of present-day Europe no stone would be left unturned.

Guided by the invincible demon of Russia, Herzen moved further and further away from his Westerner companions: from Granovski, Belinski, Ivan Turgenev, and drew closer to Proudhon and Khomiakov, Max Stirner and the Aksakovs.

There exists an affinity between the Orthodox Moscow Slavophilism and the Russian revolutionary messianism. The rotten West of the Slavophils corresponds to the bourgeoisie of the revolutionaries. Who would care to imitate that bourgeoisie which is on the threshold of its downfall? Private property, that original sin of the bourgeoisie, did not wipe out in Russia the tradition of communal life. Rewarded for her faithfulness to primitive principles, Russia will pass directly from tsarism to a communist paradise, avoiding the bourgeois purgatory. *Simplicitas sapientia.* This comes near the Slavophil apotheosis of humility, as the characteristic trait of the Russian people. In that revolutionary edition of the legend of the rotten West patriotic calculation is discernible. In the condemnation of wealth, in the exaltation of poverty, in the idolizing of the masses the Russian sees the reward which will be reaped by his country: the pariah of civilization will profit by social equalization; while others will lose their treasures, he has almost nothing to lose.

This peculiar trait was characteristic of Russian socialism from its very origin. This religion of avenging earthly wrongs is at once understood by the Russians as a revenge for the wrongs inflicted upon Russia by history which made of her the proletarian of civilization. For nineteenth century Russia socialism did not mean liberation from the bourgeoisie which at that time was still in an embryonic stage, but liberation from the nightmare of the barbarism with which she had been rebuked by Chaadayev, which had been drastically described by Custine and which Michelet had branded so mercilessly. Dreams of revolution were an outlet for alarmed patriotism, a search for means of liberation of the Russian people and for ensuring their primacy in a regenerated world. The dream of ancient Muscovy reappeared in an unexpected form. Moscow was to become the third Rome — on the other shore. Unable to catch up with Europe's cultural development, the Russian anathematized the bourgeois civilization with relief, and is eager to be in the van of the social revolution. When cities, churches and palaces will have crumbled to dust, when Europe will have become a *tabula rasa,* Russia will cease being spiritually dependent on the old world, and will with a light heart begin her work of destruction.

Having perused the works of Western Socialists, the Russian identified civilized nations as the bourgeoisie of mankind, and turned the new religion to the use of his national messianism. The people of the West were the capitalists of civilization, the heirs of antiquity, who rose proudly over the poorer nations. Their cultural superiority was an

injustice, a privilege resulting from their geographical situation. It is true that Russia had received a small heritage from Byzantium, but that miserable inheritance did not save her from poverty. Peace to the Russian huts, war on the palaces of the West – these were the real watchwords of the founder of Russian socialism. Peace and glory to the hovels scattered over the limitless expanse of Russia. For centuries they had been dozing slighted and neglected; now the hour of their triumph had struck. Blessed are the meek!

Socialism was bound to become the passion of the Russian intelligentsia; it was for them the good tidings of an approaching equality of nations in civilization. Their reasoning was as follows: the more enlightened nations dominate and exploit the backward ones; inasmuch as an ignorant and enslaved nation cannot catch up with the more enlightened and free ones, there remains for the former but one way to attain equality: the destruction of the property of the wealthier: social levelling. Such an attitude made the poorer and more ignorant nations the best qualified agents of revolutionary movements. The Russian will reach the other shore with greater facility than the European. Thus the phantom of inferiority and backwardness was driven away, that ghost that had been haunting Russia's reformers such as Radishchev, Novikov, Griboyedov, Belinski, Chaadayev and Granovski.

In socialism there was to be found not only the element of rehabilitation, but also that of idolizing the poor, the proletarians. Russian socialism extended that mystic adoration upon the Russian people, younger and poorer in spirit and in wordly goods. Revolutionary messianism became a new form of national megalomania. While Slavophils inaugurated the apotheosis of Russia's past, the revolutionaries extolled her future. Russia, the perennial victim of destiny, was to make up for the wrongs she had suffered in her past by becoming the leader of the revolution. To produce such a revolution and thus lead Russia on the great highway of history, this was, indeed, a feat worthy of a new Peter the Great. The long dreamed-of catastrophe of the old world was the great social battle of Poltava which Russia was to fight victoriously against the nations of the old civilization.

A European social revolution pulling Russia into its vortex, or – better still – a Russian revolution pulling into its whirlpool the whole globe, would cut at one stroke the Gordian knot of the complicated tragedy of Russia: it was to overthrow tsardom; it would summon the Russian masses to live an independent life, to rule the country. It would usher Russia into the family of nations not only as an equal member but as a leader.

Herzen's dream of *the other shore* is the Third International, with its capital in Moscow, in an embryonic stage.

5.

THE NIHILIST

In the memorable year 1861, the year of the peasant reform and of the first symptoms of revolutionary seething among the intelligentsia, Turgenev wrote his novel *Fathers and Children*. Published at the beginning of 1862 in the then liberal Katkov's *Russkii Vestnik*, it created a tremendous and varied impression. The conservative and reactionary reviewers received the novel with tendentious triumph. According to them the outstanding writer, regarded as a member of the liberal camp, a typical Westerner and European, pilloried the whole radical movement of the young generation.

The term nihilism was not new, but was introduced into history and popularized by Turgenev. The author himself was taken aback by the accusations; he defended, before the radical youth, the figure of Bazarov, and avowed that he had no intention of drawing a caricature of the young generation and that in his conception, Bazarov was meant to be a positive and attractive figure.

The accusations and commendations which were showered on Turgenev's work by the groups and circles of the intelligentsia overlooked the profound significance of the work, trying to find in it direct allusions to the struggles and events of the moment, and thus reduce it to the level of tendentiousness. The author, provoked by the accusations, permitted himself to be drawn into this vulgar field and, defending himself, attributed to his novel the tendency of discrediting, in the characters of the fathers, the gentry, as the leading class of the nation. In this ex-post-facto reasoned interpretation of his own work, the author himself descended to a level which did not correspond to the height of inspiration in which he created his novel. A writer of great talent had created a novel, the depth and meaning of which surpassed the mentality of his contemporaries, absorbed in the events of the present, impetuous and decisive moment.

On the other hand, Turgenev's avowals, made on several occasions, concerning the origin of the idea of the work, are very interesting. It is evident from these sincere confessions that he created Bazarov following a subconscious voice of inspiration, without reasoning and without clearly realizing the nature of the element embodied in the figure of the nihilist. He received the external stimulus to describe the type of the nihilist from meeting a certain young physician.

"The foundation of the main character, Bazarov, was provided by a certain provincial young physician," Turgenev writes in his *Literary Reminiscences*. "This interesting man was the embodiment of the element, at that time hardly awakened to life and still fermenting, which later received the name of nihilism. The impression which this man made on me was very strong but at the same time not quite clear."

Not so much by his inquisitive mind as by inspiration Turgenev sensed the nihilist current in the spiritual atmosphere of the period. He was struck by a man met by chance in whom he perceived the condensed essence of that element. From fragments of his observations, from his presentiments, the nature of which he himself could not clearly define, he created a type whose origin and rôle were not quite intelligible to himself. In a letter written in 1876 to Shchedrin-Saltykov, Turgenev said: "I am not surprised that for many people Bazarov remained a riddle. I myself do not fully realize how I have created his character. Please do not laugh, but there was some fate, something stronger than the author himself, something independent of him. I know one thing: at that time I had no preconceived idea and no tendency whatsoever; I wrote naively, as if surprised myself at what was coming from my pen."

However, Turgenev had undoubtedly in mind an outline of the figure and a general conception of its character. Concerning this we have his own extremely interesting evidence. In a letter to Sluchevski dating from 1862, he writes about the genesis of Bazarov as follows: "I envisaged a grim, savage, large figure, half grown from the soil, strong, irate, honest, and yet doomed, for it stands only on the threshold of the future; I envisaged some strange pendant to Pugachev."

The action takes place in 1859. After graduating from the University, Arcadius Kirsanov comes for the holidays to his family estate where his father, Nicholas, aged forty-four, and his uncle Paul, one year older, permanently resided. Arcadius brought with him an older classmate, the young physician Eugene Bazarov. In front of his father and uncle Arcadius referred to his friend and master as the *nihilist*. "That means a man who does not recognize anything," decided Nicholas Kirsanov. "Say who does not respect anything," added Paul. "Who views every-

thing from a critical standpoint," mitigated Arcadius. From the first moment Paul Kirsanov felt an instinctive dislike for Bazarov which he at first expressed in the form of a patronizing haughtiness. Bazarov at once countered with harsh disdain. Paul Kirsanov was the son of a general, alumnus of the Corps of Pages, a former officer, in his youth a social lion in Petersburg who travelled all over Europe following his eccentric mistress, a princess. Disappointed in love, he left the capital and his official career, settled down in his brother's house in the country and led the life of a man of the world in seclusion. Embittered, he aged rapidly, was irritable and pretentious, sought not to become rusty nor neglect himself, not to lose the type and appearance of a distinguished European and to keep abreast as well as he could of the intelectual, artistic and social life of the times. Intellectually, though his mind was rather superficial, he was a man of the 1840's with a touch of liberalism and with more and more evident tendencies towards racialism and Slavophilism peculiar to his generation; ready to toss off a few liberal sentences, but always remaining within his high military caste. From time to time he attended the local elections of the nobility and there he sometimes "provoked and frightened the landowners of the old school with liberal pronouncements." However, in relation to men of lower estate and younger ones, he instinctively assumed a tone of authority and expected from them respect for everything that was a recognized power, government, holiness. In the Russian countryside he regarded himself as a representative of Europe, of high society and tradition combined with good tone.

To the country manorhouse where Nicholas Kirsanov, who admired his older brother, held sway, came Bazarov, the son of a poor physician from the distant provinces and grandson of a sexton. He was of austere, plebeian and deliberately neglected appearance. By nature and by education he was harsh and in addition purposely brusque and provocative in his manners. From the first sentences exchanged with Paul Kirsanov, the conversation headed for a crash. Bazarov assumed the tone of disdain towards his adversary. The young physician, who did not know any other world outside the university, clinics and laboratories, spoke with inflexible self-assurance, and from the height of his recent studies of medicine and natural science and the then fashionable theory of materialism, derived from German pamphlets, he uttered apodictic, absolute and extreme judgments about everything: science, art, life, morality, his own country and the people with whom he came in contact. Two generations, two worlds, two intellectual schools apart — a clash was inevitable. Bazarov was obstinate, militant, ruthless, brutal in his arguments and manners, but almost always maintained his balance and consequent superiority. Kirsanov tried in vain to hold a pose of cool super-

ciliousness, was quickly provoked, was mediocre in a controversy and would fly into a passion, become humiliated and lose his balance. Nicholas Kirsanov would timidly support his brother and when the disputes became heated would prevent a violent clash. Arcadius, blindly admiring his friend, usually agreed with him and added his remarks which were not always appropriate, and not always in keeping with the ideas of the master who treated him with leniency and not without disdain.

Among the barrage of accusations, derisions and blasphemies that the nihilist directed at authority, and the beliefs and ideals of the fathers, there were missiles of various force and accuracy. Today we must regard as least accurate and least destructive those which in their time created the greatest sensation and which were a tribute to the materialistic doctrine absorbed from the West and uncritically received. Today they sound either like trite axioms or naive paradoxes. "Raphael is not worth a penny"; "A good chemist is twenty times more useful than any poet," popular tirades about the dependence of the spirit on the body, the reduction of the entire psychological life to sensual impressions, all this sounds like the echo of old disputes, like distorted reflections of the writings of Moleschott, and of the controversy of Karl Vogt with Rudolf Wagner. It seems that when Bazarov utters these revelations, the ironic and indulgent smile of Turgenev rests on him. As he himself admitted in his letter to Herzen in April, 1862, Turgenev felt for his nihilist "an attraction, a kind of weakness." However, the matter changed when sharp, bitter, ruthless judgments were voiced about Russia and the conditions at home; at that time Bazarov's tone became, as it were, more intense; instead of the caustic, abrupt, doctrinaire aphorisms we are faced with a philippic imbued with bitterness and grief which, however, Bazarov diligently conceals, just as he conceals and disguises with affected harshness all his other more profound feelings, such as his love for a woman, and his devotion to his parents or his friend. While Paul Kirsanov stands up quite well in a controversy concerned with materialistic tirades, his repartees become strangely weak where Russia is concerned.

In one of the discussions there came up the question of the rôle of the aristocracy in the nation. Bazarov treats the matter lightly, but finally, growing animated, he says that disputes about such principles are too exotic for Russia, and that the postulates of liberalism which have been voiced for some time, such as the parliamentary system and legal representation, do not go to the core of the matter, as that lies in the fact that the state of Russia is appalling, that she suffers from poverty and ignorance of the masses, terrible drunkenness and lack of public honesty. It is false to idealize the patriarchal life of the pea-

sant. "We are stifled by the grossest prejudices, all our share-holding companies become bankrupt only because there is a lack of honest men, ...our peasant would be glad to steal from himself in order to get a drink at the tavern." Kirsanov is indignant at this arrogant negation. "I will be ready to agree with you" – said Bazarov – "when you will show me at least one institution in our contemporary family or social existence, which would not call for a complete and inexorable negation." And when Kirsanov quotes the village commune and the peasant family, Bazarov advises him to speak about the commune with his brother who had probably come in touch with it in practice, while concerning the peasant family, he cites the custom widely spread and difficult to eradicate in Russia, a survival of pre-Christian times, according to which the father-in-law maintains actual marital relations with his daughter-in-law, who is, so to speak, the property of the head of the family. A similar criticism of rural life is expressed in a later work of Turgenev, *Dym* (Smoke), by the Westerner, Potugin, through whom, as is well known, speaks the author himself. But Bazarov's attack becomes most formidable when he berates the class of the nobility represented by the Kirsanovs, and which assumes the rôle of the pioneer of European civilization and of the guardian of national traditions. Certainly, that class which can only manage a noble indignation, or a noble humility, cannot be of any important service to Russia. As if confirming Bazarov's diagnosis, Turgenev presents the two types, of Paul and Nicholas Kirsanov, one of whom seethes with noble indignation, spending year after year in idleness, while the other, already humble in the face of the sons' attacks, is ready to recognize his defects and faults, and yield his place to them at the age of forty-four as a man who is done with life. When Paul Kirsanov defends the allegedly patriarchal, holy life of the Russian peasant, Bazarov points to the chasm by which the nobility is separated from the people, and to the artificiality and literary character of its ultra-patriotism and love of the peasant. The author again supported the nihilist when he describes how Paul Kirsanov speaks condescendingly with the peasants, sniffing eau-de-Cologne, how he defends the Russian commune, and idyllic peasant life, but how he will not long be able to live in his family estate of Mariino, and soon settles for good in Dresden. Herr Baron von Kirsanov soon becomes one of Dresden's most popular figures. He associates mostly with the English, and when he is visited by his countrymen, he expresses increasingly Slavophil views. He does not read Russian books, but on his desk he has a silver ashtray in the form of a Russian peasant's bast shoe. He is a Slavophil and lover of the people, an advocate of traditions and of the native Russian character. The derisive criticism to which the plebeian nihilist subjects the nobil-

ity discloses the historical and class character of the conflict of fathers and children. From behind the conflicts of generations, there appears in the background the conflict of social classes. In the end Arcadius revolts against the scorching criticism to which his friend subjects the whole world, from which he, Kirsanov, originates, leaves his master and takes up his position somewhere near the fathers.

Thus the old Russia of the nobility, personified in the Kirsanovs, is attacked by the intellectual proletarian, the plebeian Bazarov. And who is with and behind him? The peasants with whom he can make himself understood, as he boastfully assures Kirsanov. Is that really true? Towards the end of the novel, a cursory scene throws some light upon that question. With his tone of ironic superiority, Bazarov asks a peasant about the existence and beliefs of the people. The peasant answers obsequiously, cautiously, and distrustfully, and after Bazarov leaves, he informs his neighbors about the contents of the conversation, in a suddenly changed, severe, disdainful tone: "Well, he was talking through his hat, his tongue itched – what can you expect, he is a gent; does he understand anything?" "Self-reliant Bazarov did not suspect" – adds the author – "that in the eyes of the peasants he was a kind of fool."

During the beautiful summer days of 1859 interminable disputes go on in the Mariino manorhouse. In a raised tone of voice Bazarov fulminates against the ideals and traditions of the fathers, their beliefs and delusions. According to his own expression he mows down everything, Raphael and Pushkin, art and poetry, romanticism and liberalism. His censures are answered by the nervous, irritated voice of Paul and the gentle, mitigating voice of Nicholas Kirsanov. Is Bazarov, with his negation of ideals and traditions, art and poetry and of the whole social class which so far represented culture in Russia, really isolated and numerically weak? "We break, because we are a force," says Arcadius, supporting his friend. "Remember" – replies Paul Kirsanov – "that altogether there are four and a half of you, while of the others there are millions who will not permit you to trample their most sacred beliefs underfoot." "It works both ways" – answers Bazarov – "there are not so few of us, as you think... As you know Moscow burned down from a penny candle." If Kirsanov really thought that millions would rise to protect all those values which he defended from the nihilist, he was sadly mistaken. When Bazarov rejects the values of Raphael and Pushkin, when he says that Raphael is not worth a copper and reading Pushkin makes no sense, when he discards all authority, not only official, but also moral and cultural, he appears to the fathers sacrilegious and blasphemous. But if the intellectual debaters of the Mariino manor called in the peasants busying themselves a-

round the manor and listening to the fragments of incomprehensible conversations, and presented to them in an understandable way the essence of the dispute, it would be easily demonstrated that Bazarov is not very isolated and original. They would find that it is not even necessary to read Büchner's *Kraft und Stoff* which Bazarov recommends to Arcadius as a book to enlighten his father, to profess nihilist views; it would be demonstrated that the whole series of nihilist paradoxes regarded by the youth of the 1860's as the last word of knowledge, rests in a ready-made form in the peasants' minds, much more firmly established than the alleged communal, collectivist instincts which, according to the *narodniki,* are embedded in the souls of the Russian peasants, as the guarantee and evidence of their unusual capacity to accept the collectivist system. If the peasants with whose wrath Kirsanov tried to frighten Bazarov, were permitted to choose on the one hand between Raphael, the national poet Pushkin, the still more populist Gogol, and Koltsov, still more populist than the latter, and on the other hand ten kopecks or a glass of vodka, the result of the peasant plebiscite would be quite clear. Only, pursuing further this imaginary poll, it should be stated that its result would be the same even if to the painters and poets were added Büchner's *Kraft und Stoff* and all the intellectual Korans of the 1860's, together with the microscope which Bazarov proudly carried into the Mariino fields. This learned materialism is equally foreign to the peasants as Raphael. They have their own home-grown materialism whose instinctive postulate was expressed in the vague desire that all the learned residents of Mariino, idealists and materialists, should get out with their learned disputes and leave the whole landed matter in their possession. The descendant of the Bazarovs will be faced with the choice: either to share the fate of the Kirsanovs or to adopt peasant materialism and become that "pendant to Pugachev" whose mysterious, threatening face suddenly appeared to Turgenev when he was creating his immortal work.

For the superficial observer Bazarov is a radical *raisonneur,* a sort of Chatski from Griboyedov's *Gore ot Uma* (The Mischief of Being Clever) reappearing in the 1860's in the plebeian sphere, and brought up on materialism. Seemingly Bazarov is a *raisonneur,* doctrinaire and peaceful character. If he takes a knife, he does so only to dissect frogs, if he takes a weapon it is only to fight a duel. Did the author's conception of that figure fail?

A pendant to Pugachev, a figure dark, savage, large, doomed... The plot of the novel is not the life of the nihilist completed logically, but a short episode suddenly interrupted by the hero's death, from typhus, in his prime. The figure of Bazarov grows beyond the narrow frame of the novel's plot. If it were not for the death from an accidental infection Bazarov was certainly to live a life that would not have been quiet and average and would have met a tragic end. According to the author he was doomed, but certainly not for dissecting frogs, studying insects and carrying on discussions, however violent, with the fathers within four walls. The plot of the novel is the story of Bazarov's vacation. He came to the country to rest and make experiments in natural science. As to the debates with the fathers he carries them on only in passing, with disdain. He regards Paul Kirsanov as an "idiot", Nicholas as a played-out man who "had already sung his song." For Bazarov, a debate with such men is not even a skirmish, at the most it is dialectic practice. The force that emanates from Bazarov does not lie in his intellectual power nor in his reasoning. If Paul Kirsanov had more calm and dialectic skill, if he were less irritable and given to outbursts, he would have no difficulty in exposing Bazarov's ignorance and naive dogmatism. His main characteristic is the power of concentrated revolt, the element of fierce anger which seethes in him seeking adversaries and victims. The core of his nature is not the contents of his doctrines, but the elemental urge of proclaiming the whole inexorable truth about Russia, the irresistible desire to indulge in revealing her wounds, a revolt against her institutions and ideals, her leading classes and any kind of authority.

Bazarov himself on various occasions rationalizes his universal negation. Each time he explains it differently. Once he says that at the present moment negation is most useful, while at other times he claims that he negates because it gives him pleasure and because his brain is so constituted. Thus, once he assumes the position of social utilitarianism, while at other times that of sensual hedonism. Still, on a different occasion he will say that his negation is caused by the fact that he does not see in Russia any institution which would not call forth complete negation. These different explanations, which to a certain degree complement each other, prove that Bazarov feels an insurmountable inclination towards negation, that its cause lies in the objective state of affairs in Russian conditions, and that he is aware of it. Bazarov could change his view of philosophy, poetry, painting, Pushkin and Raphael, but the nature of his type would not suffer much by it. The basic tone of his nature would remain, that is, automatic irritation at every manifestation of respect for traditional authority, disdain for existing institutions and programs of their re-

form, whether government-sponsored or socio-liberal, unshakable certainty that he and his followers are destined to destroy that which they found.

Not only negation, but also destruction is their aim. We clearly feel that Bazarov will not long be satisfied with verbal negation, and that imperceptibly and irrevocably the negation will lead to destruction. He himself speaks with disdain about people who do nothing more than complain, condemn, and pose empty desiderata. When Paul Kirsanov raises the objection that the nihilists indulge in the same verbiage, Bazarov, the only time in the whole novel, is unable to give a pungent repartee. Perhaps he feels that this remark is justified; perhaps he does not wish to reveal the whole truth. The second assumption seems more probable, because at Kirsanov's further question whether the nihilists do not intend to act, Bazarov is at first silent and later indirectly confirms this supposition in general terms. However, Bazarov's spiritual state is in this respect so clear that we can do without his revelations and draw infallible conclusions. There is an inner determination in him, a readiness to pass from words to actions, from negation to "breaking" men. There is in him an overabundance of strength, a longing for some broader activity amid the tediousness of a restricted life with its small affairs. There is in him a great unrest. He was born with a great, unquenched anger and we feel that he and his like-minded contemporaries will not acquiesce easily in the existing conditions. He will do everything to leave no stone unturned in his desire to get rid of what to him is one great ignominy. In the meantime he engages in experiments in the natural sciences, medicine, drives the fathers to despair with his cynical paradoxes, but Arcadius, who knows him intimately, assures the older Bazarov that Eugene will certainly be a famous man and not in the field of medicine; in what field, it is difficult to say at present.

Bazarov refers vaguely several times to some cause, to their cause. There are not so few of us – he says. To that cause he recruits fighters and he rather takes men of a doubtful moral character than soft, oversensitive people. In addition to the nihilist leader, Turgenev introduces in his novel the nihilist follower, Arcadius Kirsanov, whom, incidentally. the leader eventually disqualifies and recognizes as a moral deserter from their cause, and one more figure, the young Sitnikov. When Sitnikov heard for the first time from Bazarov that there is no authority, "he felt enthusiasm." "The freedom to show and express contempt was Sitnikov's most agreeable feeling." This self-sufficiency of negation, this lack of the need for any positive statement are the characteristics of that type. When Arcadius asks Bazarov with disgust why he associates with such a figure, the latter answers: "Brother, you are still

stupid. Sitnikovs are indispensable to us. You understand. I need such idiots. It is not only the great who achieve things." But Bazarov will soon tell the honest and morally sensitive Arcadius that their ways must part, that he, a landlord's son, is unsuited for the austere life of the nihilist. "In you there is neither audacity nor anger, only youthful boldness and daring; for our cause this is not suitable. Your man, a nobleman, cannot go beyond noble humility or noble indignation, and these are trifles. You, for instance, do not fight, but consider yourselves daredevils. But we want to fight... You do not measure up to us. Unwittingly, you are interested only in yourself, you find pleasure in chiding yourself; but for us this is tedious. Give us other men, we want to break other men! You are a good boy, but you are always the soft liberal dandy."

Deliberately or unknowingly, Bazarov prepares himself for action, for fighting. He does not avoid physical pleasures, they do not destroy his equilibrium, but he is careful to preserve his peace of mind and unshakable self-control; he is afraid and ashamed of passions and profound feelings. He makes of himself a spiritual cripple, with all his will-power he develops in himself resistance to the charm of life personified in a woman of the high society and of refined culture. As an ascetic of life and a monk of nihilism, he preserves his strength but not for microscopic research and dissecting of frogs. He openly confesses that common peaceful life bores him. He yearns for a wider world. Perhaps the natural scientist would like to go to the libraries and laboratories of the capital? Not at all, he thinks of other experiments. "I want to have to do with people, even if I have to berate them." Where an all-powerful government rules over all spheres of life, there a man carrying revolt in his soul, disdain for authority, the desire to break people, must stand face to face with the government. Bazarov denies the authority of government. Turgenev intimates this, though, because of the censorship, without stating it openly. "At the present time negation is most useful, therefore we negate", says Bazarov. "Everything?", asks Paul Kirsanov. "Everything." "How is it possible, not only art, poetry, but also... it is terrible to say this..." "Everything," Bazanov repeats quietly. A man who cannot stand opposition, despotic, unable to bow his head, and in addition disregarding danger, a man who at a moment of peril, is not depressed but whose spirits rise, such a man could have become in a free country a tribune, agitator, fighter within the existing legal and political forms, even a statesman; in Russia he was bound to become a revolutionary.

Today we take up Turgenev's work with a strange feeling. The moment stands vividly before our eyes when the young nihilist comes to the country manor where the Kirsanovs lead a quiet idyllic life,

sits nonchalantly down at their table with quiet rudeness, treats his hosts with haughtiness and sneers at their beliefs, traditions and ideals. We hear Bazarov's short, abrupt, apodictic sentences uttered in a challenging tone. From the moment he entered the Mariino manorhouse tranquility vanished and irritation and depression took its place. He struck at the quiet life and almost destroyed Nicholas Kirsanov's domestic happiness. He touched with a heavy hand everything that was dear and sacred to them and everything he laid his hand on he contaminated and nipped. The residents of the Mariino manor breathed freely when the dreaded guest left them. The intruder went away, but for how long? Will there not in due time appear at Mariino his spiritual sons, but with a more threatening speech? He had come as a guest, they will come as those who issue commands. How very weak is this gentlefolk's nest, how easy to destroy! What lesson did the Kirsanovs derive from the dreadful warning? Paul Kirsanov, a stronger intellect and firmer character, went to Dresden into voluntary exile. Nicholas humbled himself and surrendered to the new force.

Describing his gloomy reminiscences of the Bolshevik revolution, the aged Sergey Volkonski, the grandson of a Decembrist, reaches back to his childhood, compares the characters from the two periods and sees in nihilism the prologue to bolshevism. Indeed, from the short epic of the nihilist written by Turgenev in inspiration, our thought involuntarily turns to the bloody tragedy of our time.

Bazarov is an expropriator who stands "at the threshold of the future". He expropriated the Kirsanovs of everything that he could, he inflicted blows in the realm of the spirit, the only realm then accessible to him. In the characteristic language of a bureaucratic society for which a dismissal from office meant, so to speak, a civil *requiem,* he calls Kirsanov, Arcadius' father, a dismissed person. He passed a verdict on old Russia, executed the fathers in effigy, expropriated them from the right to a rôle in life and from a sensible *raison d'être.* For expulsion from material life they will still wait more than half a century. Bazarov's fatal visit at Mariino was a great warning. If it is not heeded, it forebodes destruction.

The psychological state of revolt against all authority and all traditional values develops on the foundation of hatred for the existing conditions, a hatred which seizes a man's mind and becomes the center of his spiritual life. The task of negation and destruction appears to the nihilist as an aim in itself, as an absolute value; to whatever sphere he will turn, everywhere his aim is combating and abolishing the existing state of affairs and its representatives. His political activity is re-

duced to the abolition of the existing government, while his socio-economic action is limited to the elimination of the existing managers, leaders and proprietors, and his intellectual activity, to the ousting of the present representatives, annulment of their achievements and even the wiping out of whole domains such as religion and philosophy, poetry and art. As a satirical symbol of that spiritual state may serve Shchedrin's Stolpakov who "having entered Gotham on a white horse burned down the high school and abolished education." Daily creative work loses all attraction and all value. In his novel *Nov* (Virgin Soil), written fifteen years after *Fathers and Children*, Turgenev plastically presents the spiritual state of a revolutionary who wants to destroy everything and looks at any work disdainfully and skeptically from the standpoint of the desired universal revolution. "Nezhdanov asked Markelov about his social reforms made on his farm, but here Ostrodumov intervened. 'Why should we now talk about this?' he said. 'It does not matter, we will have to change everything later, anyhow'." These words made a deep impression on those present. Markelov had undertaken a number of improvements and innovations in the management but, owing to the dull routine of the population, the reforms made very little progress. Nezhdanov sees on Markelov's face an expression of fatigue. "Nezhdanov looked at Markelov, and Ostrodumov's words again ring in his head: What for? we will have to change everything later." Markelov tries to introduce discipline and impose fines on unreliable workers. One of those punished asks that his fine be abolished. "At first Markelov grew indignant and then he consented... It does not matter, we will have to change everything later."

The nihilist does not recognize anything, does not respect anything, does not believe in anything — these are current expressions. This is the public, external countenance of nihilism, but behind it there is a hidden characteristic of which the nihilist is usually not aware himself. Absolute criticism and skepticism is a psychological and practical impossibility. The nihilist must have some point of support for the Archimedean lever by means of which he wants to lift the earth from its foundation. This base must be strong since it is to give support to such a powerful instrument of destruction. This base is hidden and camouflaged so that it could be protected the more efficiently from the counter-attack of the threatened forces. When Bazarov tells Kirsanov that he denies everything, this is a falsity and an illusion. Bazarov has his own subconscious materialistic dogma. Leaning on it, he attempts to blast religion and philosophy, poetry and art, and tradition. A destroyer of authority with a dogma in his soul, hyper-criticism with regard to any authority united with naive doctrinairism, this is an internal contradiction from the standpoint of superficial logic; but from the

historico-psychological standpoint it is a consistent monoideism on a primitive, almost barbaric, foundation: that which does not agree with fetish worship is worthy of destruction. Bazarov is not aware of his naive belief, because it is a characteristic of dogmatism that the professed canon presents itself to a man's mind not as a doctrine that needs to be proved but as a simple precept of common sense, as a self-evident truth, an axiom. The theses borrowed from German materialistic pamphlets appear to Bazarov to be truths derived from the nature of things. He who does not accept them does not understand anything. It is thus that Bazarov treats his opponents. Paul Kirsanov is for him simply an idiot.

However, materialism is by no means an indispensable feature of nihilism. We know the spiritualistic nihilism of Leo Tolstoy who, while rejecting materialism and positivism, assails, more violently and recklessly than Pisarev, learning and art, Shakespeare, Hegel, Malthus, Herbert Spencer, music and the plastic arts. Nor is formal revolutionism an indispensable characteristic of nihilism. It is by no means only a paradox to discover nihilism in the thirty years' activity to Nicholas I. Sergey Witte found nihilism in the character of Pobedonostsev, chief procurator of the Holy Synod (1880-1905), an uncompromising reactionary. According to Witte he was a man of "a great political intelligence, by nature a nihilist, negationist and critic, an enemy of creative spirit, in practice an advocate of the police system."[1] In the reflections of the present-day Russian émigrés on the Soviet revolution we find interesting comparisons of nihilism and bolshevism on the basis of the dogmatic negation and trampling upon everything that does not agree with their profesed canon, common to the two trends. "Bolshevism is insolubly linked in the psychological series with nihilism, we read in one book, not in the sense that nothing absolute exists for man but in the sense that nothing exists, nothing has any value for him if it does not enter the sphere of his absolute."[2] Nihilism is a trend too deep and too extensive in Russian life to be put into the framework of a transitory intellectual current of the first half of the 1860's. There was the bloody tsarist nihilism of Ivan the Terrible, the gloomy sectarian nihilism of the arch-priest Avvakum, the materialistic

[1] *Vospominaniya* (Reminiscences). Vol. I. p. 234.

[2] *Smena Vekh* (Change of Signposts). A symposium, Prague 1921. The article by Kluchnikov pp. 28, 29. This sentence strikes us with its accuracy but we hesitate to ascribe the merit of that accuracy to the author, because we find it in an almost literal version in the well known work of Rudolf Stammler *Economy and Right*, published in 1896. Stammler applied it to materialism. "It (i.e. the materialistic conception of history) was inclined to follow the frequently repeated mistake of empiricism which did not lie in the fact of not establishing an absolute but accepting experience itself as absolute and unconditional." *Wirtschaft und Recht*, second edition, Leipzig, 1906, p. 438.

nihilism of Bazarov, the imperial-corporal-like nihilism of Nicholas I, the nihilism of Pobedonostsev, the chief procurator of the Holy Synod, the quasi-evangelical nihilism of Leo Tolstoy, the sectarian mystical nihilism of the Skoptsi, the communist nihilism of Lenin.

Nihilism is a historical sediment which for centuries has beclouded Russian life. All spheres of life are imbued with one deadening principle. The family, the church, the government, the school, landed estates, the city workshop, industry, trade, everything is ruled by external compulsion as the only moving force of life, compulsion and blind obedience far beyond necessary discipline and subordination, an overgrowth of despotism that kills creativeness, independence, joy of life and work. Due to this state of affairs, existing for centuries, outdated, disagreeing with the spirit of the time, with the progress of other nations, with the currents and influences coming from them, there develops and persists a peculiar anachronistic system of the whole social life, there grows a spiritual condition grasped half-consciously in one fragment of life by Turgenev. In all centers of education and work there is a sharp division into two worlds: on top the rulers, masters, bosses, elders, fathers, teachers; at the bottom the subjects, peasants, servants, children, pupils and youth. At the top the habit, tranformed into an instinct, of extirpating everything that is living, spontaneous, free; at the bottom revolt against that which comes from the top, against authority, command, belief, proclaimed from there and ideas implanted from there, hatred of those who are at the top. Hatred, a blind, elemental feeling, does not turn against only the people personally guilty but against the whole class or group. It does not act individually but collectively, in a wholesale manner, like the ancient blood vengeance. It is directed not only against people but also against things, conceptions, feelings, in general against all values connected with the hated ruling, powerful, commanding, and oppressing world. Such is the struggle of two worlds, these are the two centers of nihilism. The fathers and children are only fragments of the great struggle, *pars pro toto,* a symbol rather than the essence of the ominous conflict. In that system of social despotism, outspread as a polypus, various centers and links combine and the state covers with a large cupola and binds with an immense hoop that complex system into an all-Russian whole. The government is the model, guard, and protector of that *State of darkness,* according to the expression of Dobrolubov, while at the same time it is the great sower of nihilism. Sergey Soloviev found in Nicholas I "hatred for man's personal qualities, innate or acquired by work." Herzen noticed that Nicholas introduced everywhere "the element of paralysis and death" and that he left after him a country stricken with plague. Witte found characteristics of nihilism in Pobedonostsev. Ro-

zanov mentions as the main characteristic of Katkov, the defender of autocracy, the negation of the real human soul with its better tendencies and its urge to greatness.[3]

When at the beginning of the reign of Alexander II, the icebound Russian life thawed up, nihilism began to seethe and ferment at the bottom. It was then that Turgenev caught it. It depended on the further course of life whether nihilism would melt under the rays of the sun and disappear, or whether it would set in a still thicker and broader layer. Revolutionary nihilism only continues the destructive influence of tsardom itself which, harnessing to its chariot the metropolitan, the priest, the head of the family, the leader of youth, could not but lower their authority. By turning them over to the protection of the police, it vilified them and made of them the target of blind hatred on the part of the people exasperated against everything that was connected with the hated ruling power. The nihilist merely formulated and made the people conscious of the dislike that they had long felt towards the authorities whom they regarded as branches of despotism and instruments of compulsion. Nicholas I was a great patron of nihilism, and in comparison with his destructive influence the action of Pisarev or Zaytsev was a trifle. The nihilist followed a proper revolutionary instinct. The government protected the authority of the church, the family, of the chief in the office or in any profession, maintained any kind of social hierarchy, defended even the inviolability of recognized writers, and did all this for reasons of political psychotechnics.

The government considered all forms of authority as educational means of training the population in obedience and preparing loyal subjects. It regarded them as ramparts impregnable to the attacks of critical thought on the *sancta sanctorum* of the system, on the Tsar's power itself. The nihilists were guided by the same logic as the defenders of tsardom. The latter erected around the tsarist stronghold moral forts; the former, undertaking a regular siege of tsardom, first undermined the outlying fortifications. The next generations, when storming the fortress itself, owed to these revolutionary engineers the very possibility of attack. The latter destroyed the forts, their successors attacked the metropolis itself.

The young generations of the post-Crimean War period, brought up in a conservative environment, undergo in their early youth a profound spiritual process starting with a radical break with religion. "We were driven to atheism by the bad situation of the Orthodox Church", ex-

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[3] Eugene Soloviev (Andreyevich), *Ocherki iz istorii russkoy literatury XIX veka.* (Essays from the History of Russian Literature of the XIX Century). Third edition. Petersburg 1907, pp. 259, 260.

plained Kelsyev in his *Confession.*[4] Nicholas Rusanov, whose youth coincides with the 1870's, brought up in a backward merchant's family blindly attached to all traditional customs and prejudices, portrays graphically in his memoirs, published in 1923, the spiritual transformation in his early youth which in due course made a revolutionary out of him. "The matter began with a dispute about the existence of God, *i.e.* a subject which was for the Russian intelligentsia of tremendous wordly interest." Rusanov describes in great detail the religious beliefs current in his environment. It was a conglomeration of strange prejudices and soulless ritualism and it was difficult to see the light and idea of Christianity from behind the thick fog of the relics of ignorance and paganism. "A mixture of half-Christian, half-barbarian conceptions constituted the faith of the majority of the people of our community." Atheism became the spontaneous tendency of the minds nurtured since childhood in the atmosphere of such a religion. It was not the books of Western writers, which the generation of the time read with avidity, that deprived people of faith. The desire of destroying faith was a guide in the selection of books. People greedily looked in them for skillful evidence in favor of atheism and frequently found it where it was non-existent. "In that period we looked at each man of free thought, at each bold speech, at each new book above all from the point of view of our militant atheism which we experienced as a harmonious and happy family of people of one thought and one faith... The legal Russian translations of Vogt and Moleschott, the illegal translations of Feuerbach and Büchner, and for those who knew foreign languages, the originals, were the object of our constant reading and discussion. I remember with what rapture we studied Buckle, who destroyed in us the belief in the metaphysical freedom of the will and put in its place the conception of the omnipotence of atheism and we certainly would have been very sad if we had learned that the same free-thinking author of the *History of Civilization in England* shocked by his mother's death, advanced, in his analysis of Mill, in defense of the immortality of the soul, the argument that otherwise the thought of eternal separation from loved beings would be intolerable to man's consciousness. Fortunately, we did not know about this."[5]

Stepniak (Kravchinski) states that the first attacks of the nihilists were directed against religion and that this struggle was neither long nor stubborn. "Christianity fell like an old half-ruined structure... Materialism became, as it were, the ruling religion of the educated class."[6] Actually, the structure fell not because of age but because of the lack

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[4] *Arkhiv Russkoy Revolutsii* (Archive of the Russian Revolution), Vol. XI, p. 178.

[5] N.S. Rusanov. *Iz moikh Vospominanii.* (From My Reminiscences) Book I, 1923. Grzebin Publishers, Berlin, pp. 84-104.

of strong foundations. In the West it was older and withstood, in addition to materialism, many other attacks. If the first nihilists found it in ruins, who before them had strongly contributed to its decline? Those who deprived the church of independence and dignity and ordered it to bless and sprinkle with holy water the acts of official nihilism. God was treated as the supreme protector of Department III of the Tsar's chancellery *i.e.* the political police. Religion was combined with the work of the police and the nihilists attacked first of all these orthodox ramparts. In April, 1849, the police, with the Tsar's blessing, undertook the mass arrests of the patriotic youth of Petersburg who gathered for secret meetings on the initiative of Petrashevski. The chief of police, Alexey Orlov, suggested the imprisonment of the suspects. After thirteen months of secret investigation the Tsar himself was rightly doubtful whether these loose debates of the youth could be interpreted as a conspiracy. However, he ordered reprisals: "If it was merely talk, even that is in the highest degree criminal and dangerous." And he set out to accomplish the godly work in the name of God: "With God, let His will be done!" The chief of police, Alexey Orlov transmitted to the notorious Dubelt the Tsar's order concerning the arrest of all suspects, and invoked divine blessing: "May God grant you success in everything!" In the night of April 22-23, 1849, thirty odd men were arrested. Orlov advised Nicholas about it. The latter put down the following conclusion: "Glory to God."[7]

Other authorities crumbled too. In Turgenev's novel the problem of fathers and children seems to turn above all around the relation of Bazarov and Arcadius to the Kirsanov fathers. However, there is in the novel also another interesting and typical aspect *i.e.* Eugene Bazarov's relation to his own parents. The whole atmosphere of the Bazarov home is weighed down by the moral terror of the impatient, contemptuous and despotic son. This is not the result of a social and intellectual gap that opens between parents and children who achieve a much higher status than their parents: both father and son are physicians; nor is there here an ideological conflict or the struggle of two conceptions of life. As if guided by the artist's instinct, Turgenev eliminated in the relation of the son to his parents all ideological and social factors of a conflict, and yet the home atmosphere is intolerable and morbid. The father wishes his son to stay longer at home, but is afraid even to ask him to do so. When the son is mortally ill the father is afraid to call a doctor, the mother is afraid to appear in the sick-room, both being seized by some panicky fear lest they provoke their son's anger. While

[6] S. Stepniak. *Podpolnaya Rossiia* (Underground Russia), Petersburg, 1906, pp. 4, 5, 7.

[7] *Byloye.* February 1906, pp. 246-248.

in his son's presence, the father expresses even a most modest opinion with the greatest timidity, for he is sure of an automatic denial on the part of the son. The father is treated as a relic of the past, at the most deserving indulgence, whereas the mother does not even try to speak. In spite of his parents' meekness Bazarov is, as it were, irritated at the very thought that he ever could follow their opinion to any extent. This deliberate way of speaking and acting, as it were, to contradict his parents, betrays a peculiar revolt, as if the already emancipated and victorious son was taking revenge on the older generation. This attitude is characteristic of a country where in general family life was still imbued with the vivid tradition of the fathers' despotism. It is well known that Herzen, Belinski, Nekrasov grew up with the feeling of revolt against the despotism of their fathers who tyrannized the family. Also Turgenev experienced in his childhood an intolerable domestic tyranny. In the period of the post-Crimean War *spring* a deep transformation was taking place in many families. The emancipation of the children proceeded in a typical way peculiar to the shaking off of the old, outdated, anachronistic despotism. Then there takes place, in a spontaneous way, a reversal of the despotism, the master of yesterday becoming the slave, the slave of yesterday the master. Eugene Bazarov's father, the son of a sexton, had certainly grown up under the patriarchal power of his father, while in his old age he fell under the tyranny of his son. The belated patriarchate that gagged the children and wielded a club was suddenly replaced by the rule of children and the meek subservience of the parents. It is a collective revenge on the older generation for the past. The older Bazarov asks, as it were, his son's forgiveness that he is the father. The contrite father, a character of the period, appears alongside the contrite nobleman and many other contrite figures. Nekrasov is the poet of the contrite intelligentsia that asks the common people to be forgiven the sin of education and refinement. Even in school there were already at that time contrite educators and in government agencies contrite bureaucrats.

A universal revolution is yet to come but revolution in one sphere, in the family, is already achieved. The Bazarov family illustrates conditions soon after the revolution. The parents and the older people are only tolerated, like the bourgeois after the triumph of the workers' and peasants' revolution. As to Eugene Bazarov, he is a magnanimous victor. His parents were always good and indulgent to him and he himself has no desire of personal revenge. However, the actual type of the period was more implacable. Young people nurtured in their souls the feeling of fierce wrath against the older ones. In the home goes on the struggle of generations, in the school two hostile worlds face each other, the students hate the teachers. The seventeen-year-old Peter Tkachev,

involved in the Petersburg students' riot in October, 1861, is imprisoned in the Kronstadt fortress. Released after two months, he forms radical plans of renewing Russia and believes that in order to regenerate Russia all people over twenty-five years of age should be summarily killed.[8] These are significant reactions; Dostoyevski's Russian boys, as if Cicero's *oratores novi, stulti, adolescentuli,* who were to bring doom to Rome. Beside the emancipation of the children, there is also the emancipation of the woman as daughter, wife, and citizen. In no European country does the emancipation of women appear so violently and radically as in that period in Russia. Until recently subjected to the patriarchal power of father and husband, treated according to *Domostroy,* especially in the lower classes whipped, Russian woman, having tasted some education, stands up fiercely against outdated customs and prejudices and also against the legal and moral bonds resulting from monogamy. *Femina semper minor,* she suddenly shakes off old fetters like a freed person. Beside the problem Fathers and Children there appears the problem Husband and Wife, the contrite husband taking his place at the side of the contrite father. Free love is adopted, especially in the circles which assume the attitude of general protest against the existing Russia. It becomes, as it were, a component of the general desire of social reform, as propagated in Chernyshevski's novel *What to Do,* beside the practice of cooperatives and the application of Fourierism. These postulates are modeled on the living practice of life. The relationships of Natalia Ogarev with Herzen, Ludmila Shelgunov with Michael Mikhailov, Antonina Bakunin with Gambuzzi, are only a few of the more famous examples of that custom generally adopted as a symptom of the break with the routine of the past. That custom appears in a specific form as a triple friendship, as a physical, moral and political triangle. The woman, wife of the one, mistress of the other of the two friends and political collaborators, binds by her Janus-like union the two friends, Herzen with Ogarev, Mikhailov with Shelgunov, as if by a still stronger link. In a letter to Herzen Ogarev has even a name for that union: triple alliance. When Mikhailov was deported to Siberia, Nicholas Shelgunov and his wife followed him into exile voluntarily in order to continue in the Siberian waste, she the love with her lover, he the friendship with his friend.

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It is characteristic of nihilism that, having originated as a spontaneous protest against spiritual slavery and the excesses of despotism and social oppression, it imperceptibly and irrevocably crosses the line beyond which there begins the destruction of the foundations of so-

[8] B. Kozmin. *P.N. Tkachev,* Moscow, 1923, p. 19.

ciety, state and culture. Starting with a protest against the oppression of conscience and research, against extravagant conventional forms, it passes to the negation against the excesses of absolutism, against the suppression of man's rights and liberties by the state, it will deny the principle of authority and the state itself. Directed against the oppression of the lower classes and against the privileges of the upper classes, it will proclaim the extermination of those classes or its reduction to the level of pariahs. Bent on burning out a morbid outgrowth, nihilism uses such a destructive remedy that it will burn all tissues around and destroy the body itself. Having noticed sick leaves and dry branches in a tree, it will violently and joyfully uproot the whole tree. In this characteristic reaction to the nihilism from above, which allegedly suppressing only revolt against authority, and political opposition, destroys life itself, stops the sources of living creativeness and turns the country into a spiritual waste. The facility of transgressing the boundary line beyond which begins the destruction of culture is explained by the brittleness and weakness of a civilization acquired from outside and by the lack of a deep organic attachment to the ideas, feelings and institutions of which modern culture is composed. However on the part of the nihilists there was not only facility and indifference in transgressing the fatal demarcation line. There was something more; there was a stubborness and fierceness, there was a gloomy joy at the thought of destroying whole spheres of culture. This phenomenon must have had deeper historical reasons.

When the structure of old Russia based on the serfdom of the peasants, undermined at its foundations, began to totter, there appeared on it deep cracks that were not exactly new, but which hitherto were covered with the plaster of Nicholas I's period. Nihilism was an ominous crash sounding from within and proving that the Russia of Peter I was badly welded. The introduction of Western civilization was no more than the wholesale transfer of the material achievements of Western technology, the external forms of European refinement and of the results, mainly of ready formulas, of Western thought, always of the most recent vintage. Peter improvised a modern Russian nobility based on state privileges, destined to supply the necessary quota of officers and officials and to create an environment in which elements of civilization and knowledge, conceptions, customs, social forms, external appearance and dress would be adopted, developed and preserved. Peter's successors continued in the main his work, the nobility became established and acquired privileges on the basis of the *ukases* of Peter III and Catherine II. The plow of civilization touched the upper stratum but did not reach the lower layers. There developed a dangerous state of affairs and its change should have been the main aim

of the reform. For the vast majority of the population culture was something foreign and hostile, an attribute of the possessing, ruling, and oppressing class. The master's manor into whose windows the peasant peered with curiosity and fear, envy and dislike, was the only center of culture known to him. In that fortress of oppression whence came the orders to persecute, exploit and beat the peasant, there were to be found books, pictures and beautiful furniture, and learned, incomprehensible conversations, often in a foreign language, were heard. This entire culture was a symbol of social superiority and hostility. Literature directed against the serfdom of the peasants was of no avail in this respect because none of the peasants knew about Grigorovich's *Anthony Goremyka* or Turgenev's *A Sportsman's Sketches.* In the eyes of the peasant the books constituted in a material sense the master's fortune, while in the spiritual sense they were a product of the master's minds and the master's intellectual food. There was no third estate, numerous, educated, by its position more closely related to the peasants, having no power over the peasants, able to serve as a bridge between the upper and the lower classes. When the period of emancipation came, the vague unrest of the masses and the hopes of shaking off oppression were linked with the swelling of the wave of peasant nihilism hostile to the master's culture, the only one which then existed in Russia. Over the peasant ocean there emerges the growing and rapidly consolidating class of men cut off from the soil, a class composed in part of people ascending from the peasant mass on the steps of education, in part of uprooted noblemen descending from the upper strata, and in part of the educated and semi-educated proletariat emerging in ever increasing numbers from the gray social middle. That class, like the third estate of pre-revolutionary France, has so far been nothing and now wants to become everything. It is the intelligentsia. Out of this class there emerges a figure "half-grown out of the soil" that like a phantom had appeared many years previously to De Maistre and later to Turgenev and in which both recognized the same person and the same face: Pugachev from the university — said the former, — a strange *pendant* to Pugachev, said the other. There exists a genetic connection between the vague nihilism of the peasant masses, the eternal Pugachev philosophy dormant in them, and the learned nihilism, the spirit of the educated Pugachev. Here and there we find revolt against the forms of life and formulas of the state and upper classes imposed from above. In both cases there is the desire, vague or conscious respectively, to create a new culture on the ruins of the existing one. And as that culture is the only one that exists, the striving for freedom all too often degenerates into an atavistic return to savagery while the paradoxes of learned nihilism, very closely resembling the slogans of peasant ni-

hilism, are in reality reduced to the banal formulas of barbarism.

There begins the crisis of the brief period of culture implanted by the state in one social stratum. That class is dealt a blow by the peasant reform, its privileged political and legal position becomes undermined while from below, from among the intelligentsia, there arises an intellectual movement directed against the system of government, the existing social organization and also against the existing culture. That culture was marked in the eyes of young Russia, with the hateful imprint of the nobility and was burdened since its birth, from its cradle, with the original sin of the Tsar's *ukase* and privilege. The protesting group is headed by members of a class that has been treated by the state more brutally than the landed nobility. These people, driven away during Nicholas' reign from education and from schools, acquire their education at the cost of often terrible efforts. They are a stubborn and grim generation, unjust towards the better men of the Nicholas period and inclined towards a nihilist distortion, but they carry the idea of the future, the idea of building culture on a democratic basis by the living forces of the nation. This obtuse, cruel, revengeful system killed countless forces and talents. The church, the government, the school and most frequently the family as well combined to destroy the creativeness of generations, to stifle enthusiasm, to gag children from their earliest days, to produce in a great country, which used to bring forth so many capable men, a spiritual lethargy, and the quietness of the cemetery, and to rejoice in it. The nihilism of the vaguely seething peasant element and the angrily protesting intelligentsia comes as a reply to the nihilistic action of dark forces. After the madness of destruction coming from above there comes the madness of universal negation rising from below. Bazarov denies principles and ideals, nothing is sacred for him. But should not the indictment be turned in another direction and should it not be said that the Russian reality is a practical negation of those ideals and principles and that that reality must eventually produce people who will look straight into the face of the terrible truth and will call a falsehood that which is repeated as a commonplace, supposedly as an ideal and authority, but which actually is a conventional lie? "Oh you, barbershop civilization!" Such is the barbarian, absurd exclamation of Theodore Reshetnikov, the proletarian of the Russian intelligentsia. Whence comes this powerless curse against civilization? It is the reaction of despair at the sight of the living sources of national creativeness that are constantly being stopped by the perennial and invincible force. It is the reaction of the angry awareness of a vacuum and misery amid which the native yet hostile force displays rags of imitated knowledge, art, and refinement decorated with tinsel and calls it civilization. How insignificant is this rivulet of patented

culture strained by church and state censorship in comparison with that stream of creativeness which would well carry off the banks if the whole power of the immense state apparatus, the police, the school and the family had not dried and stopped the living national sources. The reaction of the nihilist is to spit into that rivulet seeping from the dirty filter of a despotic government. The nihilist of his period is called by Turgenev a doomed figure because he stands on the threshold of the future. And when circumstances will enable Bazarov's spiritual son to cross that threshold, he will unscrupulously break old Russia into pieces, will cover her ruins and will begin building something new.

6.

BAKUNIN

In the autumn of 1840 Michael Bakunin, then twenty-six years old, was leaving Russia. For the past few years he had been wanting to go to Germany, the country of philosophical studies to which Russian youth, thirsting for knowledge and possessing the necessary means, made pilgrimages in the fourth decade of the nineteenth century. Bakunin was impeded by lack of funds. He had studied Fichte and Hegel, had mastered contemporary philosophical terminology and developed his innate dialectical ability, but this was merely the intellectual preparation, in the spirit of the time, to a more thorough education, merely an introduction to a broader activity to which he was called by an inner voice. He was not a writer by vocation; during his life he frequently grasped the pen, usually for an immediate propaganda purpose. Then he wrote eloquently, convincingly, and often brilliantly. However, his proper element was agitation, debate, address and conspiracy. In his extensive and feverish activity writing was only an auxiliary function. In the Russia of Nicholas I he could not develop any broader activity to which he felt called by a vague instinct and which he was as yet unable to define himself.[1]

Bakunin felt that at home his forces were wasted. At the beginning of 1840 he wrote to Nicholas Stankevich: "My whole life and whole self-respect consisted in an abstract spiritual strength but even that was shattered by the sordid trifles of my everyday life and empty quarrels with family and friends, and perhaps by my own nothingness". He de-

[1] For Bakunin's biography I made use, apart from studies published earlier, of a three volume study in manuscript written by Dr. Max Nettlau and left in fifty copies: *The Life of Michael Bakounine — Michael Bakunin, eine Biographie.* Of the sources published in Soviet Russia three sources and studies, apart from lesser contributions, were utilized in my work, Bakunin, *Ispoved* (Confession), with an introduction by W. Polonski, Gosudarstvennoye Izdatelstvo, 1921. W. Polonski, *Bakunin,* Gosudarstvennoye Izdatelstvo, 1922. Steklov, *M. A. Bakunin, yego zhizn i deyatelnost* (Bakunin, his Life and Activity), Moscow, 1922.

cided to save himself from ruin and during 1840 he insistently asked Herzen and Ogarev to supply him with financial means enabling him to go to Germany. In April 1840, he wrote to Herzen: "I expect spiritual regeneration from that journey. I feel within myself so many strong and deep possibilities and I have done so little... I would be foolish to die without having achieved anything useful." His well-to-do friends rendered him assistance and enabled him to leave Russia.

He did so just in time. The young man of tremendous energy and physical strength, of immense ambition, great abilities and with an early developed mystic faith in his mission to play a great rôle in the broad arena of life, was consumed in his inner being, wasted away and decayed. As the son of a rather well-to-do landowner's family he could have led an idle life in the country, but in view of the large family, the neglected estate and his father's skeptical attitude towards his extensive aspirations whose nature he did not clearly realize himself, he could not count on the means necessary for further quiet study in the capital and could not even dream of going abroad on his own. Grown up in a typical landowner environment of the period of peasant serfdom, he was incapable of leading the hard existence of Belinski, who earned his living by writing; he did not have considerable means such as Ogarev, Herzen, and Botkin possessed; he could not stay abroad like Stankevich. In his chaotic existence without a defined aim, with constant lack of funds, there clearly appeared the dark aspects of Bakunin's character which will be marked to the end of his life by slovenliness in material questions, neglect of his own obligations, readiness to disregard truth and other ethical considerations whenever this seems to favor his plans, and his love for intrigue and gossip. Because of these faults, and consumed by his unsatisfied ambition, tormented by material difficulties, increasingly more irritated, he finally quarrelled with almost all his friends. Also in the ideological sphere he found himself in conflict with the majority of them when, taking as the basis the well-known thesis of Hegel, he accepted the "reasonable Russian reality", that is the system of Nicholas I. Eventually the attitude of his old friends towards him became contemptuous, and he lost the moral confidence of the majority of them for long, of some for ever. In a letter written in August, 1840, at the end of Bakunin's stay in Russia, Belinski describes a disgraceful scene when Bakunin, having gossiped about the relationship of Katkov, then a liberal young man, with Ogarev's first wife, is abused by Katkov verbally and later several times actively and behaves, in spite of his Herculean strength, with incomprehensible faint-heartedness. In a letter written by Ogarev to Herzen at that time, Bakunin is called a cad. Ogarev writes: "I regret immensely that I have lent a helpful hand to this long reptile; he is a

man to whom it is disgusting to extend one's hand." "A heap of gossips," Ivan Turgenev calls him. "A monster deprived of moral convictions", says the gentle Granovski. After Bakunin had published his first brilliant revolutionary article in Germany, Herzen, who already has made up with him and does not spare him recognition, makes the following entry in his diary, dated March 13, 1843: "a talented man, but a miserable character."

What would have become of Bakunin if he had remained in Russia? In disagreement with his friends and with himself, with an immense unsatisfied ambition, well advanced along the slippery road of philosophical acquiescence in the conditions then prevailing in Russia, with a painful lack of means, he would have probably entered the road of practical acquiescence in the official reality and then, in conformity with his nature which did not know a middle road, he would have played in that field a radical and active rôle. The help of his later fellow-exiles in London saved him at the beginning of his activity from ruin.

Bakunin spent two years studying in Berlin. In the autumn of 1842 he moved to Dresden. In October, 1842, there appeared in the periodical *Deutsche Jahrbücher,* published by Arnold Ruge in Dresden, a study entitled "Reaction in Germany," signed as, "A Fragment by a Frenchman", with the name of Jules Elysard. When the name of the real author became known, Bakunin's old friends who had remained in Russia finally learned in what direction Bakunin's mind went after a two years' stay abroad. The leading idea of the study, going considerably beyond the title, pulsated strongly and vibrated vividly and perceptibly under the foreign crust of Hegelian phraseology. Bakunin's idea was not derived from the logical arguments and quotations which he had accumulated, but from instinct and presentiment. It was evident that the dialectical apparatus was only an *ad hoc* accompaniment adjusted fairly well to the main, thundering, threatening note which rose from the depth of the spirit, and that it was older, more genuine and profound than these foreign, borrowed arguments. The author expressed this principal idea in the closing part of his study not as a conclusion, but as a prophecy, as an infallible sign already indicated by fate, already visible, unfailing, towering like a fiery pillar over miserable reality: "All nations and all classes are filled with anxious forebodings, and everyone whose life organs are not paralyzed, looks with a thrill of expectation into the approaching future which will utter the word of salvation... The air is sultry, big with storms, and therefore I appeal to our blinded brothers: 'Do penitence! The Kingdom of God draws nigh'."

The author develops this main idea against the background of the

struggle of democracy against reaction in Germany. However, he *a priori* endowed democracy, which is destined to be victorious in that struggle, with a content in harmony with the main idea, and thus predetermining the result of the victory. Democracy for him is an inexorable, destructive force whose purpose is to turn existing life into ruin. The main attacks of the author are not directed against the threat of the triumph of reaction, but against the possibility, hateful to him, of democracy's peaceful penetration into the life of nations. "The task of democracy does not lie in opposition to the existing governments and in the struggle for a constitution or politico-economic reforms which are always a compromise, but in a complete destruction of the existing system and in the creation on its ruin of a new life never before known in history... Is it possible that a force, the vital principle of which is only destruction, could enter into peaceful co-existence with the object of its destructive action?"

Such a peaceful, compromise solution is desired by opportunists, "patchers," against whom the author's main attack is directed. Wishing to denounce them most forcefully Bakunin makes an unexpected comparison. It is well known that all his life he was an anti-Semite. His relations with the famous Polish historian Lelewel in Brussels were made unpleasant for him by the constant presence of "the most obnoxious person that can be imagined" the Jew, Lubliner, who was inseparable from Lelewel. His understanding with Western socialists was constantly blocked by the hateful Karl Marx. His relations with young Russian émigrés were spoiled by his former adherent and later violent enemy, the Russian Jew, Utin. Suddenly we find the following attack against the opportunists: "Like the Polish Jews, of whom it is said that during the recent Rising they wanted to serve simultaneously both belligerents, the Poles and the Russians, on account of which they were hanged by the former and the latter, these unfortunate men exert themselves in the insoluble task of harmonizing what cannot be harmonized, and as a reward reap contempt from both sides."

Bakunin applies the dialectical method of the Hegelian Left, but his later life proves that he will twist any studies to, and utilize for, his main thesis. In addition, in the materials pertaining to his youth, we find proofs that the main idea of his study of 1842 was conceived in his brain before he had mastered Hegel's method. Prior to the Hegelian period of his studies he read Fichte and was then the philosophical mentor of Belinski. Belinski later admitted that under Bakunin's intellectual leadership he "viewed Fichte's philosophy as Robespierreism and that in the new theory he smelled the odor of blood." People who possess the mystical faith in the approaching revolution look in the Bible for a call to start it. Bakunin quotes the well-known passage of

the Apocalypse about the people who are neither cold nor hot, as directed against the "opportunists" of the age of St. John the Evangelist. In another passage of his article he uses the following quotation: "Revolutionary propaganda — writes Pentarchist — is according to its inner meaning the negation of the present political system and cannot be anything else but the destruction of that which exists." In the common parlance of the journalism of those days, Pentarchist is the author of the anonymous pamphlet *Die Europäische Pentarchie*, published in 1839 and written by the Warsaw censor Goldmann, who was used by the Russian Government as an agent for confidential foreign missions and as a reptile press writer in the German language. In reading that police agent's pamphlet Bakunin picked up a sentence and quotes it for his own benefit.

Bakunin does not reveal what this new life which will rise on the ruins of the old one will look like; the matter was not yet clear to himself. The revolution is to be carried out by the peasants, the largest and hitherto oppressed class of the population. All this is no less hazy than *the other shore*, hidden in the mist, of which Herzen was soon to speak. There is one more sentence, uttered, as it were, automatically, like a vague and significant prophecy, the first sign of yet unclear visions which in time will become the core of the program: "Even in Russia, that immense, snow-covered state, which we know so little and for which a great future may be destined, dark clouds gather presaging a storm." In that sentence Jules Elysard extended his hand to his friends who remained in Russia. Bakunin envisages a revolution in the nearest future, with the peasants as the avengers of injustices and the lawgivers of a new life. At the same time he sees a pale, still hazy picture of a new Russia already slightly illumined by the dawn appearing from the east. But all this is an outline of a vision rather than a program, drawn like in a dream by the young Anacharsis, the Scythian travelling over Hellas. "The lust of destruction is at the same time a creative lust" are his concluding words.

Bakunin was consumed by unrest, the nature of which he did not yet realize; he was agitated by some powerful forces. In a letter written in October, 1838, Belinski, who was closest to Bakunin, makes the following penetrating remark: "In my eyes you are but the manifestation of the chaotic fermentation of the elements." Bakunin himself, when he later wrote his *Confession* to Nicholas I in the dead silence of the Petersburg prison, ponders over his spontaneous gravitation towards revolution: "I felt choked and squeamish in the common, quiet atmosphere. People usually seek peace, but I was driven to despair by it. My mind was in a state of constant excitement. I should have been born somewhere in the forests of America, among the Western colonists,

where civilization barely begins and where the whole life constitutes an incessant struggle against wild men and wild nature, but not in an established human society."

Slowly from the chaotic conflict of elements one dominating force was coming to the fore. In his *Confession* Bakunin calls that force by name: "The demon of destruction was in me." The existence of this force was long sensed by the people close to Bakunin, but at first they do not realize its nature. "*Michel* has many faults and sins" – writes Belinski about him – "but there is something in him that outweighs all his defects. It is the eternal element of motion that rests in the depth of his spirit." This element finally assumed a definite direction and thus the article about reaction in Germany was born. The friends who had become estranged from *Michel,* at once sensed the spell of that profoundly national force, as yet difficult to define. Upon learning that Elysard was Bakunin, Herzen wrote down in his diary: "He washes away his old sins. I have become completely reconciled with him."

Bakunin stayed in Dresden a few months. There he became friendly with the poet, Georg Herwegh, at that time the idol of radical German youth. But when he noticed that he had attracted the attention of the Russian legation in Dresden, Bakunin left the unsafe ground of the German Reich, submissive to Nicholas I, and already in January, 1843, arrived in Switzerland. He did not go there to study and lead a quiet life. It could be expected that he would get in touch with the most ardent elements who sought refuge in Switzerland. Immediately after his arrival he wrote on February 3 to Herwegh's fiancée: "I look upon peace to which people aspire so ardently as the greatest of human misfortunes." Bakunin soon became acquainted with Wilhelm Weitling, one of the most interesting figures of the Communist movement of the nineteenth century. Weitling, a tailor's apprentice from Magdeburg, had in him something of the sectarian spirit of the people's leaders of the peasant war of 1525. Self-educated, he presented his socio-revolutionary aspirations as a new form of Christianity. Driven by the desire of agitation and motion, he travelled over Germany from city to city, went to Austria, earning his living as a tailor, and finally, in 1835, settled in Paris. There he got in touch with the underground communist movement, the tradition of which had been preserved from Babeuf's society by Buonarroti, and which, in the younger generation found a leader in Louis Auguste Blanqui. The "Society of the Seasons," founded by Bernard, Blanqui and Barbès, spread its influence over the colonies of foreign émigrés. A sort of branch of that Society

was the organization of German émigrés called "League of the Just," and Weitling was among its members. After the abortive attempt in 1839 at a communist rising in Paris, Weitling sought refuge in Switzerland. There he developed a feverish propaganda activity, and in 1842 published his book, *Guarantees of Harmony and Freedom.*

In Weitling Bakunin found for the first time a conspirator of great stature, animated by a mystic faith in the impending revolution imbued with hatred for the existing order, with a ready plan of mercilessly disposing of the bourgeoisie in case the revolution were successful. Long conversations with Weitling constituted an important stage in Bakunin's development. Some of Weitling's ideas, consistent with the instinctive tendencies of Bakunin himself, remained forever rooted in his mind. Weitling counted, in case of revolution, on the help of all uprooted elements, of paupers and criminals; he planned to mobilize the inmates of jails. Bakunin combined these plans with the tradition of Russian popular heroes who were at the same time brigands, such as Stenka Razin. The idea of utilizing social pariahs in favor of the revolution was always in his mind. Thirty years after his conversations with Weitling, again in Switzerland, he devised with the young desperado Nechayev plans that were reminiscent of Weitling's ideas.

Bakunin's attitude to communism was significant. In June, 1843, he published in the Zurich organ of the democratic party, the *Swiss Republican,* an article about communism in reply to the attacks on communist propaganda that appeared in the conservative organ, the *Swiss Observer.* He stated categorically that he was not a communist. "We once for all announce that we are not communists, that we have as little desire as the gentlemen from the *Observer* to live in a state built according to Weitling's plan, a state which does not express a free society, but a herd of animals, organized by means of compulsion and force, and concerned solely with material interests and ignoring the spiritual side of life."

However, Bakunin welcomes the communist movement with appreciation and hope, because he sees in it the lever of the desired upheaval. "We were born under a revolutionary star... We are at the dawn of a great revolutionary upheaval... That is the spirit which called communism to life."

A few years later he will repeat this in his *Confession.* He knew personally many socialists and communists of the West, but he did not share their doctrines himself. And yet he did not hesitate to write: "I followed with uninterrupted attention the socialist and, in particular, the communist movement, because I viewed it as the natural, necessary and infallible result of Western Europe's political and economic development. I saw in it a young, elemental force, not yet conscious of

itself, called to reform or to destroy completely the Western states."

Pressed by the clergy, the government of the Zurich Canton started an investigation against communist propaganda. Weitling was arrested and a number of foreigners were expelled from Switzerland. Bakunin did not feel safe in Zurich. He travelled for some time from one Swiss town to another; he lived in Geneva, Nyon, Lausanne and, for the longest period, in Bern; but he noticed the vigilance of the police even there. In February, 1844, he left Switzerland and went to Brussels.

In Brussels he met the Polish émigrés of 1831. He became particularly friendly with Lelewel. About this fact, which had an immense influence on the formation of his ideology, Bakunin wrote in his *Confession* as follows: "In Brussels I met Lelewel. There, for the first time my thought turned towards Russia and Poland. As I was then already a complete democrat, I began looking at them through the eyes of a democrat, though still vaguely and very indistinctly. The national feeling that awoke in me from a long lethargy as a result of clashing with the Polish national spirit, took up the struggle with my democratic conceptions and conclusions."

Bakunin met Lelewel frequently; he asked him about the Polish Uprising of 1830-31 and plans in case of victory and about present hopes for the future. They argued about the fate of White Ruthenia and the Ukraine. That is about all Bakunin says concerning his first contact with the Poles. Actually, the influence of that meeting was more profound than Bakunin himself realized; at any rate it was stronger and more general than he would admit in his *Confession*. The patriotism of the Polish insurrectionists and émigrés fascinated him. He had before him men who through the insurrection had challenged Nicholas I, the patron of the terrible system of police and despotism that extended its power far beyond the frontiers of Russia. Followed and hunted abroad by the vigilant eye of the Russian government, to which the police forces of foreign powers were obedient and subservient, forced to escape from that vigilant eye from Berlin to Dresden, from Dresden to Zurich and hence to other Swiss towns, eventually obliged to leave Switzerland and seek refuge in Belgium, Bakunin saw with what pusillanimity even the governments of democratic countries bowed before the first power of the continent and the first despotism of the world. The Polish émigrés were men who had had the courage to declare war on that power. What's more, the fate of the struggle hung for a time in the balance, causing mortal anxiety to Nicholas. And yet the Poles had mobilized only a part of their national forces, the rest was not yet aroused to the struggle. Now the idea was to rouse the whole mass of their nation to the struggle. In the face of that idea the democrat felt respect and the revolutionary derived encouragement.

However, Lelewel, the outstanding student of the past and the Polish democrat, touched still other chords in Bakunin's soul. The idealizer of the ancient Polish and Slavonic past, Lelewel spoke of the original people's rule in Poland, about the old agrarian community of the Slavs, about the fraternal institutions and customs, later spoiled by the class system and the oppression of the peasants which came from the West. Bakunin listened and confronted this with those ideas that took hold of him during the several years of his stay abroad. Already in Dresden he became acquainted with the trends of the utopian French socialism from the book of Lorenz Stein, which had then just appeared. In Switzerland he met the great communist self-taught, Weitling. These Western teachings confirmed him in the Robespierreism which he had derived from the doctrine of Fichte: The bloody destruction of the existing European society and, on its ruins, the rule of "democracy" on earth. And now it appeared to him that the goal, which the people of the West can reach only by means of a terrible communist revolution, was preserved in the Slavonic world as an inheritance of the distant past. It would suffice to eliminate despotism, that foreign infiltration, and scrape off the thin layer, impregnated with foreign influence, in order to build from the bottom up a new ideal system. And now, he remembered the words of the Moscow Slavophils, the friends of his youth, of Constantine Aksakov, the idealist, whom he continued to remember with sympathy. These ancient principles of community life have been preserved in Russia, least submitted to Western influences which deeply penetrated Western Slavdom and, above all, Poland.

Now Lelewel extends his brotherly hand to Bakunin, asks him to translate into Russian his fraternal appeal to the Russians, written in the first months of emigration, and stands before him as the embodiment of the watchword: "For your freedom and ours." But when, at Bakunin's request, Lelewel turns from the picture of the ancient Slavonic past and tells him about the hopes for the future, it becomes evident that before the eyes of the old émigré there appears the picture of a future Poland, democratic, free, ruled by the people, showing the Slavonic peoples the road to freedom.

Then these two men embodied two ideas, and Bakunin's "national feeling" is awakened "through the clash with the Polish national spirit." The two men began discussions about *Little and White Russia.* If Bakunin had been better aware of the "fermentation of elements" in his soul, he might have reached the conclusion that the Russian feeling was not so completely dormant in him as he believed, that, on the contrary, it lived and developed and guided his mind, his pen and his steps in Dresden, as well as in Switzerland, that it was present when he wrote his first revolutionary manifesto entitled *About Reaction in Germany,*

and also when, without sharing the communist doctrine, he felt attracted by the revolutionary teaching of Weitling.

In the meantime the avalanche of new ideas that took possession of him in Brussels clashed with the old ones; the national feeling did not yet find a common ground with his democratic tendencies; all this is still in the future, but it already exists in an embryonic state. Bakunin leaves Brussels with an increased desire for a simultaneous consideration of the problem of democracy, that is, in his understanding, the problem of creating on the ruins of the existing world a new life, never yet known in history, and of the future of his country, and besides that of the future of entire Slavdom in which his country, the largest and most genuine race, would have a decisive voice. The seeds are planted from which gradually and subconsciously the program would develop. Moreover, Brussels opened to him a more extensive and many-sided view of the ways which should be followed to achieve a universal upheaval. So far he had taken into account the current of democracy as an international force. German philosophy, that "algebra of revolution," as it was called by a friend of his, and finally Communism. Now he met the émigrés forced by their tragic situation to dream of a "commotion of peoples," and, led by his instinct as a revolutionary, he sensed in them an allied force. From the beginning he seems to have realized, however, that he and that allied patriotic democracy would not agree easily as to the means and aims, but he believed that he and they were united by many common aspirations, and that by emphasizing these aspirations it would be possible some day to lead these allies to attack, preserving for himself the secret of the ultimate aims of the campaign.

In July, 1844, Bakunin arrived in Paris and took residence in the rue de Bourgogne. He immediately dived into the cauldron of the underground movement which, though preserving the appearance of external quiet, seethed during the July monarchy and which finally exploded in 1848. Bakunin developed a feverish activity and got in touch with radical democrats, socialists and exiles of all nationalities who fled their countries either because of their socio-revolutionary convictions or because of their patriotic protests against foreign domination. We know from the reminiscences of his friend, the musician Reichel, that the main subject of his intellectual pursuits in Paris was the study of the history of the revolutionary movements that France had experienced and the study of the life and activities of the main revolutionary leaders. Bakunin soon became one of the well-known typical figures of the international revolutionary movement. With him the Russian element for

the first time entered that movement. There was something elemental and immense in his mere physical stature and something that attracted general attention in that anarchist boyar who preserved to the end of his life the appearance of a Russian lord of the serfdom period. His humor, his incomparable nonchalance, the social manners of a negligent Russian grand-seigneur, besides the conditions of life of a professional conspirator, the equanimity with which he suffered his constant want abroad — all this produced a unique type in the international Parisian anthill. Disorderly, chaotic in his work and financial matters, disregarding his own promises and obligations, intellectually lazy though very versatile, indulging himself in unheard-of illusions, imparting illusions to his environment in good, and sometimes bad faith, taking always, when revolution was concerned "the second month of pregnancy for the ninth," he often brought heavy accusations on himself. At the same time, however, that man, to the end of his life full of indefatigable and unappeased energy, broken neither by many years of terrible imprisonment nor by his feverish life going on amid constant uncertainty of material existence and amid the constant cares of a nomadic émigré, disarmed and attracted people to himself. He participates actively in the conspiratorial intrigues and the émigré cabals and, often himself the object of bitter slander, he lightheartedly and sometimes calculatingly hurls gossip and calumnies at his adversaries. However, his enthusiasm, his mystical faith in his revolutionary mission and the constant drafting of extensive daring plans, always raise him above the level of the quarrelsome émigré life. In his activity and in his writings there are many contradictions reflecting that inner struggle of the elements that takes place in his soul, contradictions magnified by carelessness, haste, impulsiveness and unbridled temperament. Wherever he appears he organizes secret unions of people devoted to him, and together with them throws himself into the whirl of agitation, gets into large international organizations and always strives there to assert his own leadership, conspiring with people close to him. Some foreigners, especially the Germans who were not forgetting regular life even amid revolutionary plans, were frightened away by Bakunin's way of life. Karl Grün has this to say about Bakunin's Parisian years: "We did not meet very often. This is explained mainly by the fact that we led an exactly opposite kind of life. Indeed, Bakunin and the other Russians did hardly anything else except reading papers. They turned day into night and night into day. They usually did not rise earlier than at twelve, they ate dinner only at six. Having stayed in the café till three, four or five in the morning, they went to bed to resume this infernal life on the next day."

After having been detained several years in a Saxon and Austrian

prison, and in Russian dungeons, Bakunin appeared abroad bearing the external marks of his long stay in jail, but with unimpaired energy. Herzen writes about him as follows: "He would discuss, propagandize, give orders, make decisions, direct, organize and encourage all day and all night long. His activity, his idleness, his appetite, his tremendous stature and constant perspiring, all this was beyond ordinary human standards, as he himself, a giant with a lion's head and tousled mane... At the age of fifty he was the same homeless Bohemian of the rue de Bourgogne, carefree about tomorrow, disregarding money and spending it freely when he had it, borrowing thoughtlessly from right and left when without it, with the same simplicity with which children take from their parents, unconcerned about its return, and with the same simplicity with which he gave to everybody his last penny, keeping for himself only what he needed for cigarettes and tea. This way of life did not hurt him, he was born to be a great vagabond, a great tramp. If somebody would ask him what he thought of the right of property, he could give the same answer that Lalande gave Napoleon about God: 'Sire, in my profession I never felt the need of it.' "

As regards Bakunin's lack of the sense of property, Herzen could have quoted, in addition to the atheist astronomer Lalande, a more native example, for instance, Gogol's Nozdrev who shows Chichikov around his estate and having reached the boundary ditch, says: "Here is the boundary, all that you see on this side belongs to me," and then pointing to the forest on the other side of the boundary line and the land beyond the forest, says: "And even on the other side all belongs to me." Herzen could also have taken some figure of his own reminiscences, the brilliant *Past and Meditations* (Byloye i Dumy), for instance, Prince George Golitzin who arrived in London in 1862 and organized Russian concerts there; he lived lavishly, spending money freely and not paying the debts he contracted, he treated his servants with familiarity, admitting them to participation in his revelries, but did not pay them their wages, and left them penniless in the streets of London. He was at the same time cordial and brutal, generous and unscrupulous. "Let Savigny and Mittermayer grasp the formula" – wrote Herzen on account of Golitzin – "and generalize, as norms, the legal conceptions that developed in the Orthodox homeland between the stable in which the servants were beaten, and the master's study in which the peasants were despoiled."

In order to understand Bakunin's life it does not suffice, following his characterizations in treatises on international anarchism, to analyze his printed works, to classify his views according to the Western European blueprints of communist anarchism, scientific socialism, or Blanquism, and to point out the doctrinal differences between him and

Proudhon or Stirner. One should also take a glance at Bakunin's homeland, and open the immortal work in which Gogol handed down to posterity the portraits of the landowners of the serfdom era. Indeed, when reading episodes of Bakunin's life, we are often reminded of Gogol's *pomeshchik* in the flesh, whom the logic of Russian life turned into a European anarchist.

In 1861 and 1862 there stayed in London the Russian bishop Pafnutius of the sect of Old Believers (Starovery). The émigrés, particularly Ogarev and Kelsyev, wanted to establish contact with him because they regarded the Old Believers as a revolutionary element. On Christmas eve of the old style, in January, 1862, the pious and austere Pafnutius sat in his lonely room in London. Suddenly some heavy steps were heard on the stairs and a basso voice rang forth with the old church hymn "When Thou wert baptized in the Jordan, oh Lord!" The door opened and a man accompanied by Kelsyev entered the room, roaring with laughter, and cordially greeted the astonished bishop. It was Bakunin, who had just escaped from his exile in Siberia. Bakunin's rowdy behavior, his jokes at the rules of the Starovery, such as the prohibition of smoking tobacco, scandalized the fanatic hierarch.[2] When reading about such episodes, Gogol's Nozdrev comes vividly to one's mind.

Herzen writes about Bakunin's defects with peculiar indulgence. "There was something childlike, kindly and simple in him; this lent him an unusual charm and attracted to him the strong and the weak... Martianov used to say: He is a great Liza, how can one be angry with her, she is a mere child!" This forbearing attitude is striking when compared with the severe judgment passed on Bakunin's character by all his closer associates at the end of his stay in Russia. Did Bakunin change morally to such an extent since that time? Not at all. Imprisoned in Russia, he flattered Nicholas in his *Confession*. Untruths came to him very easily. In Bakunin's letter to Alexander II and his generals there is a striking eagerness to express the most solemn and most pathetic conjurations, either when he wants to demonstrate his contrition, or when he gives assurances that he would not abuse their confidence in him. After getting out of Siberia, he talks abroad about his inflexible character and is regarded to the end of his life as a man who, even faced with most severe punishment, did not bow his proud revolutionary's head before the Tsars. Bakunin's attitude to his own marriage was as peculiar as his attitude to financial matters. We know from the reminiscences of the young Russian revolutionary, Mrs. Weber, who spent the last months of Bakunin's life with his family, as well as from other

[2] Reported in Dragomanov's *Pisma Bakunina k Gertsenu i Ogarevu* (Bakunin's Letters to Herzen and Ogarev).

sources, that Bakunin looked kindheartedly or indifferently on the open intercourse of his wife in their home with the Italian Gambuzzi.[3]

However, a particularly unpleasant impression of Bakunin's ethics is gained from the period of his friendly relations with Nechayev, a man who deliberately and ruthlessly trampled upon all moral principles and did not conceal the fact that he tried to achieve his revolutionary aims *per fas et nefas.* Soon after Herzen's death Bakunin clearly attempted to draw Herzen's older daughter into a relationship with Nechayev, himself arranged dates for them though he certainly must have realized how this would end for the daughter of his late friend, if she had not shown a fortunate resistance.[4] Soon afterwards Bakunin warned his friends abroad concerning Nechayev when the latter threatened Bakunin himself with blackmail: "If your friend has a wife or daughter, he (Nechayev) will attempt to seduce her, and to make her a mother, in order to pull her from the confines of official morality and force her into the revolutionary protest against society."

It must be stated that Herzen's attitude to Bakunin's ethics underwent a change from the time when the "demon of destruction" manifested itself in Bakunin and when Herzen himself despaired of Western civilization and dreamed of *the other shore.* Herzen considered it providential for his country that Russia did not pass through knighthood, feudalism, the reception of Roman law, the development of city life. He regarded it as an advantage that the layer of culture, peculiar to the ancient world, was very thin in Russia. Though in practical life he himself remained loyal to the principles of *this shore,* he felt forbearance, and even some weakness for the type in which disregard for the forms of contemporary social life appears as an element of negation of modern culture, as a fragment of universal negation.

Bakunin possessed great talent as an agitator, and the ability of winning over people whom he later often estranged by his faults. Ivan Turgenev, so unlike Bakunin in his moral and spiritual make-up and later so severely critical of him, left in the masterful scene of *Rudin* the recollection of the great personal charm of young Bakunin and of the magnetic influence which he exercised. It is sufficient to recall the impression Rudin made on the young tutor Basistov. Even years later he remembered him with rapture. "Concerning Rudin's influence, I

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[3] A. Bauler (Mrs. Weber's maiden name and pseudonym), "M. A. Bakunin nakanune smerti" (Bakunin on the Eve of his Death), *Byloye,* July, 1907.

[4] Described in Dragomanov's well-known book on *Bakunin's Letters to Herzen and Ogarev.* Drastic details about Nechayev's plans and frustrated attempts with regard to Natalia Herzen were communicated to me in 1925 in Lausanne, in the presence of the aged Natalia Herzen, by Herzen's grandson, Nicholas, professor of law at Lausanne University. They throw a sad, though not unexpected light, not only on Nechayev but also on Bakunin.

swear that this man not only could shake you, but moved you from the spot, did not permit you to stop, turned everything within you upside down, fired you." Turgenev vividly describes the impression made on Basistov and young Natalia by Rudin's first visit in the landowner's house and his fiery eloquence. All night long Basistov did not sleep or undress; until morning he continued writing letters to a friend of his in Moscow, while Natalia, though she undressed and went to bed, could not get a wink of sleep all night. "Leaning her head on her hand she watchfully looked into the darkness; her pulse throbbed feverishly and a heavy sigh lifted her breast from time to time."

It is interesting that we have a very similar description, taken from real life, of the impression which the fifty-year old Bakunin made on the young twenty-four year old professor of Sanskrit in Florence, Count Angelo de Gubernatis. De Gubernatis met Bakunin in 1864 in Florence in the home of the Hungarian émigré, Pulszky. Bakunin exercised his ability to win over the young scholar, known for his radical convictions, to his revolutionary society. "A great snake enveloped me with its coils" – writes de Gubernatis in his autobiographic sketch. "I still somewhat resisted but eventually I declared that if an immediate social revolution were considered, I would join a secret society. I returned home at one in the morning, I tried to go to bed and fall asleep, but in vain. I rose from my bed and walked to and fro in the terrible excitement about my two rooms which had become too small for the new fury that seized me. I reproached myself for the idleness and barrenness of my life and I declared loudly and quickly to myself that I would be all the more miserable if, with my republican and even revolutionary convictions, I remained an hour longer in my official capacity." And for some time he became an ardent adherent of Bakunin.

In Paris Bakunin finally met in person the leaders of the revolutionary movement of whom he had vaguely heard in Russia and with whose theories he had been so familiar mainly from Stein's book and from his association with Weitling. When he approached the famous representatives of the protest against the contemporary social system, it was not the socio-economic aspect of their teaching that attracted him. Of that aspect he did not even have a sufficient conception as he had not studied it more closely. Later, in 1871, he admitted it himself: "At that time I had no idea about political economy and my socialism was purely instinctive." Bakunin shared this instinctive attraction with the young generation then growing up in Russia. In spite of severe oppression and police surveillance, books from Western Europe did penetrate to Russia, and among those that were most eagerly read were the ones that dealt with revolutionary subjects.

Bakunin's exclusive gravitation to the extreme left was the more

significant as he arrived in Paris from Brussels with an already awakened and vigilant "national feeling". This awakening of patriotism was not at all in contradiction with his gravitation towards the representatives of revolution. But it caused a certain characteristic attitude. As he himself frequently declared, Bakunin did not feel at home among the revolutionaries of the West. They were allies, but they were not his own people. Their aims converged in one point, but sprang from different sources and, having met in one point, they later diverged. The West and Russia. This antithesis never left Bakunin since a native and strong voice had spoken in him after his conversation with the Poles in Brussels. At the end of his life, that man, who probably in good faith but how mistakenly, wrote to Ogarev: "You are a Russian and I am an internationalist," said in a confidential conversation with the young revolutionary Mrs. Weber who reverently described his last months: "Never the East and West shall meet."

Gravitating towards the representatives of social radicalism, towards the defenders of the working class, Bakunin could not and did not try to become intimate with them in their daily organizational and propagandist activity. He stood aloof from the workers' movement, because he was interested not in the class and economic aspect of the problem, but in something completely different, that is, in the plans of world revolution of the socialist movement. Revolution, revolution as rapidly and quickly as possible, an apocalyptic expectation of the catastrophe of the old world – that was his frame of mind. At moments when the hope of that speedy upheaval weakened, Bakunin felt despondent. He only became animated when he heard that somewhere in Europe a movement had begun. The Paris *ouvriers* had little interest for him in comparison with the prospect of the destruction of the entire modern society. Simultaneously his national consciousness asserted itself, and thus, led by two forces seemingly completely different and yet moved by a common hidden spring that combined them in a united action, he could find neither peace nor work in any Paris environment, the revolutionary one not excepted. Once he felt like a Scythian to whom the whole world is foreign, and besides that as a chiliast awaiting a New Jerusalem and having some mystic presentiment that the new Messiah would appear not in the West but further away – in the East.

Gradually the Russian feeling asserted itself more and more strongly in him, and amid the din of debates and in the whirl of interminable revolutionary preparations, the result of which he did not see, he felt more and more a lonely stranger. He faithfully describes his state of mind at that time in his *Confession*. We have no reason to suspect him of insincerity when he openly confesses to Nicholas that only

Russia, but revolutionary, liberated Russia, was the object of his thoughts. "It was very hard for me to live in Paris," and this not because of poverty but because of "the cold moral atmosphere" which he felt around him away from Russia. "The longer I stayed abroad, the deeper I felt that I was a Russian and that I would never cease to be a Russian." "Condemmed by my former life, by my ideas, situation, my unsatisfied desire for action and by my decision to follow a hopeless revolutionary career, I could not detach my nature, heart and thought from Russia, and therefore I had to have faith in the Russian revolution, or rather I had to impose such a faith upon myself and others... Without connections, without means, alone with my plans among a foreign crowd, I had only one protectress — faith, and I was telling myself that faith climbs mountains, breaks obstacles, conquers invincible powers and creates impossible things... I was telling myself that by believing in the Russian revolution myself and by imposing that faith on other Europeans, especially on the Slavs, and in due course also on the Russians, I would make revolution in Russia possible and necessary."

Thus his mind is animated by a vision, hazy at first, but gradually more and more distinct: Russia, in revolt, liberated, ruled by the people, standing at the head of the Slavonic peoples, also rising in revolt and liberated, Russia, the lawgiver of a new, reformed world. Where were the foundations for such hopes to be found? The foundations lay in the mystic faith, but when Russia slept, unconscious as yet of her mission, the outbreak that would kindle a European conflagration, reach the frontiers of Russia and awaken her to a great rôle, should be prepared in the West. Amid these thoughts Bakunin was seized by a growing unrest and impatience. His relations and collaboration with the revolutionaries could not fill his life. "I saw some of them rarely, others more often, but I was not in close relations with any of them. At the very beginning of my stay in Paris I several times visited the French *ouvriers* — the organized communists and socialists." However, he soon refrained from these visits, for fear of the police, but mainly because "he did not find the slightest profit for himself in visiting these societies." He lived in constant expectation of revolution, but at times he was seized by doubts. "The world seemed to have fallen asleep so deeply that nobody, not even the most eccentric democrats, believed in its quick awakening." In view of this Bakunin sometimes fell into dejection, bordering on despair. "I sometimes felt so downhearted that in the evening I often stopped on the bridge by which I usually returned home and I asked myself whether I would not do better by throwing myself into the Seine and drowning my sad and useless life in it."

The first event by which Bakunin was snatched out of the tormenting inactivity was the attempt at a rising undertaken in 1846 by the Poles in Cracow, as well as in the Prussian and Austrian sectors of Poland. In spite of the sad ending of the attempt, Bakunin, as he himself admits "awoke, as it were, and decided to break with inactivity at any price and take an active part in the imminent events". He felt that Archimedes' point for lifting the world out of its foundations now lay in the Polish émigrés, and on November 29, 1847, he delivered his famous speech for which, at the request of the Russian Legation, he was expelled from France. He again went to Brussels, where he was enthusiastically received by the Polish émigré colony, headed by Lelewel. Other Russians close to Bakunin were surprised by his sudden interest in the Polish cause and regarded it as an ill-advised enthusiasm, bought all too dearly, for a foreign problem. They did not understand Bakunin. He was far from losing sight of his goal, the Polish cause was for him only a temporary means, whether well chosen only the future would show. He himself had the impression that he continued to follow his own road, obedient to his mission which he felt by instinct rather than reason. Suddenly ousted from Paris, unexpectedly fraternizing with Polish émigrés, amid the actually growing symptoms of an approaching outburst in the West, Bakunin felt that some mysterious force was guiding him to his destiny and was showing him the road leading to the goal, and that he himself, as if spellbound by that force, was making movements unexpected and not even comprehensible to himself.

At that time, in the last months of 1847, Bakunin was already in a state of excitement. The political seismograph of Europe seemed to predict a real quake. On September 6, 1847, he wrote from Paris to Mr. and Mrs. Herwegh: "Things go well in Italy. The Pope, apparently, is a brave man. Switzerland also moves forward, even France begins to stir. In everything and in everybody is to be seen a ferment which assumes an ever more definite shape. Higher society and the official world are in great fear... One speaks of a near and serious rising of the people... Believe me, soon matters will go well, soon life will begin for us and we shall again begin to work and live together extensively and stormily, the necessity of which we all feel... I await my, or if you like, our common heroine – the revolution, we shall only then be really happy, that is we shall become ourselves when the whole globe will be enveloped by conflagration."

A blaze over the whole globe, such is the only vision which is suggested to Bakunin by the "demon of destruction". Only when he sees the blaze, will Bakunin start to live a real life, will he become himself. As the revolutionary events approach in the West, that vision will pur-

sue him inseparably. At the same time, he feels more and more vividly a Russian, a stranger in the present-day West, unable to find life for himself within its frame. An urge which he cannot resist drives him like an eternal wanderer. As early as February, 1843, he had written from Zurich to Herwegh's fiancée; "I have no country because I abandoned mine, and like the Wandering Jew, I shall humbly follow the road indicated to me by my destiny and my faith." An instinct, which so powerfully agitates that strong, rich spirit, must have come from great historical depths. We descend to the underground where vague national instincts seethe, guarded from foreign influence and possessed of a primitive resentment to all that is foreign. And we find there reminiscences of similar visions. Sectarians, fanatics of the true genuine faith, encouraged by the Arch-priest Avvakum in the seventeenth century, scandalized by the danger of having the Russian church Hellenized, invoked anathema against the whole alien, miscreant world and dreamed of world conflagration. Only when everything burns down, will the Orthodox believers be able to inspire the new humanity with a true spirit of God. This memory reaches back to the chapels of the Starovery hidden in the forests. And here is a phenomenon of recent times, in view of which Bakunin's vision becomes indeed a prophecy. "For the ruin of all bourgeois we shall kindle the conflagration of the world", sings the poet of the Red revolution, the author of *The Twelve,* Alexander Blok. World conflagration which is to soothe the agitated mind, that was the idea with which Bakunin approached either the Western revolutionaries or the Polish émigrés. The great incendiary seeks the flame which he could fan into a universal conflagration.

Examining the development of the revolutionary spirit in Russia we find a symptom similar to the one which we observed when we followed the origins of the Slavophil nationalism. In the whole span of time from Pestel to Lenin we do not find any new revolutionary idea — which is comprehensible in view of Russia's intellectual retardment in relation to Europe. All programs are copied from the West; the programs, but not the instincts which lay dormant in the Russian soul and tend to assume material shape. Some native instinct selects from the whole riches of Western ideas those which most vividly correspond to the hidden desires and urges of the Russian soul. That which does not suit the vague desire is discarded, and that which the Russian spirit choses is imperceptibly and resourcefully moulded and adapted to the Russian character, and given a native shape. This instinct is attracted by theories most inexorable in destruction and most extremist, disregarding conservative and even progressive theories, if they bear the mark of compromise with modern reality. Bakunin was the first typical representative of that tendency on the European stage. He is con-

sumed by a mystical expectation of the moment when the masses would turn the present civilization into chaos and build on its ruins some new world. As this plan, at first only roughly suggested in fiery, lightning lines, is gradually transformed into a clear program, Bakunin in connection with the awakening of his national feeling and its penetration into the sphere of vision, advances with increasing insistence the idea of the leading rôle of the Slavonic world, or, actually of Russia with the Slavonic retinue, in this action. Since its inception, Russian revolutionary thought, from Bakunin and Herzen, is characterized by the stubborn dream of the leadership of a people's Russia in the revolutionary movement of the world, a peculiar blend of the old Muscovite messianism with the craving for a merciless upheaval, a combination of the fifteenth century *igumen* Philotheus with Pugachev, the ruler of the world.

It is an iron rule of social psychology that in countries of absolute slavery the apocalyptic vision of complete destruction of the existing system is adopted and finds passionate adherents. For the Russians under the tsarist rule, socialist theories were bound to be what opium was for the Chinese after they first received it from the Europeans and what alcohol is for savage tribes – a means of deadly intoxication. Amid oppression, suffering and revolt accumulated in the soul, the Bible becomes a revolutionary book, the Sermon on the Mount puts a knife into men's hands, while socio-economic treatises, which only cause a more animated intellectual movement in free countries and give an impulse to reforms, in countries of slavery lie at the side of bombs and are studied stealthily in the arsenals of political plots and in the laboratories of revolutionary chemistry. The preparation of programs of a better future becomes then an impatient readiness to destroy the existing culture and to erect on its ruins an uprecedented tyranny, a prophetic phenomenon so penetratingly grasped by the author of the *Demons,* Dostoyevski. "Shigalev looked upon things as if he expected the destruction of the world, not in an indefinite future, according to prophecies that might not come true, but quite definitely, some time on the day after tomorrow, at twenty-five minutes past ten a.m. sharp." To the arguments that he would be unable to stir up a movement because he had no men, Peter Verkhovenski answered: "This is idle talk, let me speak to the masses for a quarter of an hour without censorship and they will follow me at once." The "demon of destruction," that product of Russian life, tormenting Bakunin's mind to the end of his life, dictated to him, in his mature age, "philosophical reflection", starting with the assumption that the human soul has two cardinal qualities: the faculty of thinking and the faculty, the necessity, of revolt (*la faculté, le besoin de se révolter*). The historical Russian cate-

gory was thus raised to the status of a universal category of the human spirit.

Bakunin did not intend to stay long in Brussels. After Paris, he felt he had not enough scope there. He thought of going to London, when suddenly the revolution broke out in Paris. His presentiments had come true. He at once hastened to the French frontier. Three years later he described in his *Confession* the feverish impressions of those moments as follows: "Finally the February Revolution broke out. As soon as I learned that there was fighting in Paris, I, at all events, obtained a passport from a friend and went back to France. But the passport proved unnecessary. The first words that we heard at the frontier were, *'La République est proclamée à Paris'*. A chill went down my skin when I heard this news. I reached Valenciennes on foot because railway traffic was disrupted. Crowds and shouts of triumph everywhere, red flags on all streets... I arrived in Paris on February 26, on the third day after the Republic was proclaimed. On the way I felt happy and what should I say of the impression that Paris made on me! That immense city, the center of European culture, was suddenly transformed into a wild Caucasus. On every street, almost in every place, there were barricades, accumulated like mountains and reaching to the roofs, and on them, between the stones and broken furniture, like Lesghians in ravines, the workers in their picturesque shirts, blackened with powder and armed from top to toe. Fat shopkeepers and grocers, their faces stupefied with fear, looked timidly from the windows. On the streets and boulevards there was not a single carriage."

Describing in his *Confession*, destined for Nicholas I, the outbreak of the Revolution, Bakunin is most evidently enraptured by this charming recollection. Perhaps he believed that the most illustrious confessor might feel some satisfaction with this picture. The center of Western culture transformed into wild Caucasus, the proud bourgeois frightened... Bakunin does not spare vivid colors to depict for the Tsar this sight, the beginning of the conflagration in the West. It was a "month of spiritual intoxication, a banquet without beginning or end." "The whole world seemed to have turned topsy-turvy: the improbable became a common thing, the impossible — possible, while the possible and common turned into absurdity. In a word, reason was then in such a state that if somebody had come and said: *'Le bon Dieu vient d'être chassé du ciel, la République y est proclamée,'* everybody would believe it and nobody would be astonished."

However, after a few weeks of rapture and dreams, Bakunin felt that the voice of duty was calling him East, to the frontiers of Russia. The Polish émigrés were moving in that direction in the hope that the revolutionary movement that was enveloping central Europe would give the Poles a chance to rise and liberate their country. Bakunin asked the members of the French Provisional Government for the loan of 2,000 francs, to enable him to go East to cooperate with the Polish patriots. Flocon, after obtaining the opinion of the Central Committee of the Polish Democratic Society, gave Bakunin the requested sum, while the prefect of police, Caussidière, gave him even two passports, one in Bakunin's own, the other in a fictitious name. Herzen who was at that time in Paris claims that the revolutionary authorities were glad to get rid of Bakunin. "He hardly left the barracks of the Montagnards, spent the night there, ate with them, delivered speeches, propagandized everything, communism and 'égalité du salaire,' a general levelling in the name of equality, the liberation of all Slavs, the destruction of entire Austria, revolution in permanence, and war until the last enemy is killed. The prefect from the barricades, Caussidière, who was creating order out of chaos, did not know how to get rid of the dear orator and, together with Flocon, conceived the idea of sending him to the Slavs with fraternal greetings, convinced that there he would break his neck and stop making trouble. '*Quel homme!*' said Caussidière about Bakunin: 'on the first day of the revolution he is a real boon, but already on the second day one ought to shoot him!' "

In the first days of April Bakunin was already in Frankfort on the Main. After staying there a week, he continued his journey via Mainz, Mannheim and Heidelberg. From there he went to Berlin, stopping on the way in Cologne. In a letter dated April 17, written from there to Annenkov, he made his observations on the German revolution. These remarks are significant if one takes into consideration that in the last years of his stay in Paris, of all theorists of the revolution Bakunin most highly appreciated Proudhon and clearly gravitated towards anarchism. Bakunin the anarchist, passing from theory to practice, complained of the lack of strong authority in the German revolution. "The absence of any centralized power is more strongly felt now than at any other time." He characterized the state of affairs in Germany, as "anarchy without revolution." He counted, however, on a people's rising: "Alive today in Germany is the proletariat that begins to stir, and the peasants. There will be still a terrible revolution here, a real flood of outbreaks; this flood will wipe away from the surface of the earth the ruins of the old world aid then the kindhearted, talkative *Bürger* will fare very, very badly."

Bakunin counted in particular on a peasant revolution. In this

respect France, more than half a century after the Great Revolution that had abolished the remnants of feudalism, gave him little hope. There he counted rather on the cities; but already at the end of April, in his conversations with Arnold Ruge in Leipzig, he expressed himself with skepticism about a revolution in France. In Germany he was attracted by the hope of a peasant war which would be a renewal of the war of 1525. In his study published in 1873 under the title *Statehood and Anarchy,* he recalled the year 1848 and maintained that an agrarian revolution would have been possible in Germany at that time. He lamented the "deplorable victory won in 1525 over the tremendous peasant insurrection." He believed that in 1848 there was a good chance of stirring up a peasant revolt. "In Germany there was an element which does not exist any more today – he wrote in 1873 – the revolutionary peasants or, at least, peasants capable of becoming revolutionists. At that time remnants of peasant serfdom still existed in a major part of Germany." However, the German liberals and radicals frustrated this peasant movement. "In 1848, like in 1830, the German liberals and radicals feared that revolt most of all.... The determined resistance shown by the German radicals towards the attempts of a peasant insurrection at the very beginning of the 1848 revolution constituted practically the main reason for the sad outcome of that revolution."

Bakunin arrived in Berlin on April 21, but at the demand of the Russian government he was arrested, and was only released after giving assurances that he would not go to Poznania, but would proceed directly to Wrocław (Breslau). On the way he stopped in Leipzig, and went in search of his friend Arnold Ruge. Ruge was at a session at the Saxon Patriotic Union which was to elect him as a representative to the preliminary German parliament. Bakunin called him out of the hall and exclaimed to him from his coach, "Sit here, leave your Philistines and come with me, I have plenty of things to tell you."

Ruge explained that leaving the session might cost him his mandate to the *Vorparlament* and asked Bakunin to wait a few hours.

"Come, old friend" – thundered Bakunin – "let's have a bottle of champagne. Let's leave those here to choose whomever they wish. Nothing will come of it. One more society to practice oratory, and that's all."

He made Ruge go with him; through his absence at the meeting Ruge actually lost the mandate.

Bakunin's contemptuous utterance about the German parliament was a manifestation of his view, which was then being crystallized in his mind, of the parliamentary system as an antiquated and superfluous institution. In the name of what did Bakunin negate the par-

liamentary system? From some of his utterances it could be judged that he did so in the name of anarchy. In a letter to Herwegh, written in the summer of 1848, he said: "I am very little interested in the debates of parliament. The era of parliamentary life, constituent and national assemblies etc. has passed. I do not believe either in constitution or laws. The best constitution would not be able to satisfy me. We need something else: enthusiasm, life and a new world without laws and, consequently, free."

But at the same time when he proposes to define concretely how he envisages this free life without laws, Bakunin manifests a distinct tendency to introduce a new despotism. With brutal naiveté he calls this desired system a republic and, in self-deception, while in advance preparing slavery, he terms it freedom. In his attitude to parliament Bakunin characteristically meets the representatives of reaction and absolutism. "Institutions for rhetoric exercises", was the expression used by the loyal defender of Habsburg absolutism, the Croat ban Jellačić, about the parliaments of 1848. These words, almost identical with Bakunin's utterance to Herwegh about the *Vorparlament,* will be in due time quoted with appreciation by the author of *Statehood and Anarchy.*

In his *Confession* Bakunin reports in an interesting way how, during the events of 1848, he imagined a desirable form of government in the future system that was to arise on the ruins of the existing one.

"I wanted a republic" – he wrote – "but what kind of a republic? Not a parliamentary one. A representative government, a constitutional form, parliamentary aristocracy and the so-called balance of powers in the state, in which all operating forces are so cleverly placed that none can operate, in a word, the whole narrow, complicated political catechism, deprived of character, of the Western liberals, never constituted the object of my admiration, my sincere sympathy or even respect." In 1848 Bakunin began outright to despise the parliamentary system. He believed, in particular, that in case of successful revolution in Poland and in Russia, a parliament could not be envisaged for either of those countries.

"I believe that in Russia, more than anywhere else, a strong dictatorial power will be indispensable, which would solely concern itself with raising the standard and the education of the peasant masses, a power free as to its direction and spirit, but without parliamentary rights, with the printing of books expressing ideas of freedom, but without freedom of the press, surrounded by unanimous people, hallowed by their counsel (*soviet*), strengthened by their free activity, but unlimited by anything or anybody." The difference between such a dictatorship and a monarchy lies in the fact that this dictatorship is temporary, because its goal is the "freedom, independence and the

gradual maturity of the people", while the monarchy tends to permanence.

Bakunin's Soviet biographer, Steklov, rightly states that Bakunin's plan approximates the organization of the Soviet authorities. Indeed, in his plans Bakunin anticipates the spirit, nature and phraseology of the Soviet régime. Dictatorship with the label of republic, that is without a crowned monarch, exercised in collaboration with unanimous people, prescribing a *free* system which is guarded by authority unrestricted by anyone, *la liberté ou la mort,* with a censorship of thought guaranteeing unanimity — provided for by the prophet of freedom: — this, indeed, is a prophetic program. Even the difference between that republic and monarchal despotism is defined in a typical way on the model of the red Byzantinism of which Bakunin is the prototype: the dictatorship is to last until the achievement of the "freedom, independence and maturity" of the people. The Moscow diplomacy excelled in formulating agreements in such a way as to give the broadest interpretation to its pledges. Bakunin is an able disciple of that tradition in defining the duration of the dictatorship in his free republic. Bakunin was, however, mistaken if he believed that he had emphasized the real difference between his republican dictatorship and tsardom. Especially since Alexander II, tsarist statesmen at any available occasion motivated in Western Europe the existence of tsarist despotism in Russia in the same way in which Bakunin justifies the necessity of dictatorship. The reason for absolutism was supposed to lie in the immaturity of the Russian people, and the tsarist government was anxious to lift the people gradually by means of education, to greater cultural maturity.

From Leipzig Bakunin went to Wrocław (Breslau) in order to be closer to the Russian frontier, as he explained it to Ruge. He stayed in Wrocław during May. This moment coincided with the first defeat of the Parisian elements that urged further revolution under the slogan of socialism. On May 15, the *coup d'état,* directed by Blanqui and Barbès, failed. Disappointed by what he saw in Germany, and having lost faith in the French revolution, Bakunin now placed his hope in the revolutionary movement of the Slavs. After the failure of the Polish insurrectionist attempts, after the April defeat of the Cracow movement and the fall of the rising in Poznania in the first half of May, Bakunin in turn directed his attention to Bohemia. He left for Prague at the end of May because, as he says in his *Confession,* he hoped to find there the Archimedes' point for his plans. He took an active part in the Slavonic Congress opened in June by Palacky. Bakunin felt that "a Slavonic heart awoke in him". However, he soon became disappointed in the Congress, at which particularly the numeri-

cally preponderant Czechs were very cool to Bakunin's revolutionary enthusiasm. "Again I felt sad and I began to feel in Prague equally isolated as I used to be formerly in Paris and in Germany." After street riots in Prague, on June 12, the city was for two days bombarded by Windischgraetz. Bakunin left Prague and we see him again in Cologne, Wrocław and Berlin. At that time the Russian government followed Bakunin's steps with vigilant attention. At the demand of the Russian legation he was finally expelled from Berlin in September. He went to Wrocław, but the Prussian government expelled him also from there and threatened him with extradition to Russia. He tried to stay in Dresden, but also the Saxon government, in deference to the request of the Russian legation, expelled him from its territory. Bakunin settled in Cöthen, where the government of the Anhalt duchy tolerated his stay. There Bakunin developed conspiratorial activity, and established connections with German democrats who were preparing a general German rising in the spring of 1849. Nor did he lose sight of the problem of a Slavonic revolution and wrote his appeal to the Slavs. At the end of 1848 he moved to Leipzig together with a few German friends who revealed to him their revolutionary preparations. In Leipzig he published, in German, his appeal to the Slavs, established connections with Czech students, won them for the idea of stirring up a revolution in Bohemia and used them as emissaries who helped him to enter into relations with revolutionary Czech elements in Prague. Bakunin dreamed of a great peasant war and believed that in Bohemia it would still be easier than in Germany to start such a war. Speaking with the young Czech patriots about the liberation of Bohemia and of the whole Slavonic world, Bakunin did not reveal to them his ultimate aims. However, he wrote of them to Herwegh and expounded them in detail in his *Confession*. His Czech friends would have been probably dumbfounded if they had known what Bakunin's Slavonic heart, that was awakened in Prague, envisaged for Bohemia. In his *Confession* Bakunin, enraptured by the spell of his memories and his pride as a revolutionary, transmits to posterity interesting avowals of his Czech plans. He admits that he placed his hope not so much in the inhabitants of the cities as in the Czech and German peasants. In 1848 feudalism still existed in Bohemia in the full sense of the word and the situation of the peasants was extremely hard. It would have been easy to start a peasant rising which would have no doubt embraced the neighboring countries.

"In Bohemia" – writes Bakunin – "I wanted a decisive radical revolution, in a word one which, even if it were later defeated, would have managed to overthrow and turn upside-down everything, so, that after victory the Austrian government would not find anything in its

old place. Availing myself of the favorable circumstances that the whole nobility in Bohemia and, in general, the whole class of rich landowners is exclusively composed of Germans, I wanted to expel the whole nobility, the whole hostile clergy and, after confiscating without any exception all landed estates, I wanted to distribute a part of them among the landless peasants to incite them to revolution, and use a part of them as a source of extraordinary revolutionary income. I wanted to destroy all castles, to burn all files in all of Bohemia without exception, all administrative, legal and government papers and documents and proclaim as paid all mortgages as well as all other debts not surpassing a certain sum, for instance 1,000 or 2,000 guldens. In a word, the revolution, planned by me, was terrible, unprecedented, though it was directed more against things than against people. Indeed, it would overthrow everything in such a way, it would so deeply penetrate the blood and life of the people, that the Austrian government, even if it were victorious, would never be able to eradicate it, it would not know what to do, it would not be able either to gather or even to find the remnants of the old order destroyed forever, and would never be able to reach an agreement with the Czech nation. Such a revolution, not limited to one nationality, would by its example and by its red-hot propaganda attract not only Moravia and Austrian Silesia, but also Prussian Silesia, and in general all adjacent German territories, so that the German revolution which so far was a revolution of cities, townspeople, factory workers, writers and lawyers, would become a national revolution.

"But my plans did not end at that, I wanted to transform all Bohemia into a revolutionary camp, to create there a force capable not only of defending the revolution in the country itself, but also of offensive action beyond Bohemia.... In this way the revolution was to embrace a large area rich in resources, whose center would be Prague. A revolutionary government with unlimited dictatorial power should sit in Prague. The nobility and the whole recalcitrant clergy would be expelled, the Austrian administration completely crushed, all officials removed and only some of the principal, more skilful ones, would be maintained in Prague for consultation and as a library for statistical information. All clubs, newspapers, and all manifestations of talkative anarchy were to be abolished, all submitted to one dictatorial power. The youth and all fit men, divided into categories according to the character, ability and inclination of each of them, would be sent throughout the country to give it a provisional revolutionary and military organization. The peasant masses were to be divided into two parts, some armed with what is on hand, would remain at home to defend the new order and would be used for guerrilla warfare, if such

would occur. Young men, all men without property and capable of carrying arms, factory workers and unemployed artisans, as well as a considerable part of the educated bourgeois youth would create a regular army, not *Freischaren*, but an army that should be created with the help of former Polish officers and also with the help of liberated Austrian soldiers and non-commissioned officers promoted, according to ability and zeal, to various officer's ranks. The cost would be tremendous but I hoped that it would be partly covered from confiscated estates, exceptional taxes, and assignations on the model of Kossuth's."

* * *

Thus we finally perceived – the *other shore*. We could never learn from Herzen what it would look like; his imagination did not reach beyond the desired picture of the ruin of the old world. Bakunin also spoke long and most readily about the necessity of destruction, but he finally made confession to his Tsar, and we learned that the demon of destruction had a complete and positive program, thought-out and elaborated in its own way, remote from anarchy, promising on the contrary, suppression of such manifestations of "talkative anarchy", as the press, the deliberating assemblies, not to mention the parliament. If that plan had been openly published in 1848, it would have probably sounded fantastic to Bakunin's associates. But, according to Bakunin's Soviet biographer, it proved a colossal historical prophecy. Seventy years later Russia followed that plan, which was quite unknown and then still buried in the archives, and she not only carried out his extravagant ideas but far surpassed them. One cannot fail to be deeply impressed when one sees that the principal ideas of the Bolshevik revolution which seemed to Europe to be a diabolic improvisation imposed on the Russian nation, rested as a presentiment and as an ardent desire, in the powerful soul of an oustanding Russian, already three-quarters of a century ago.

Bakunin's Slavonic heart prescribed for the Slavs the role of leaders guiding humanity with fire and sword to the *other shore*. Agitating among the Czechs in favor of starting a rising, Bakunin showed them that aspect of the matter which would appeal to their national interest and ambition: getting rid of the German nobility, shattering Austria, making Red Prague the capital and the center of the revolution that would overflow the neighboring countries. He was very clever in finding the chords which should be struck in an ally to win him over for one's plans. He became acquainted with the excessive Czech ambitions at the Slavonic Congress. "The Czech Party was not content with the general domination of the Slavonic element in the

Austrian Empire," he wrote about the plans of the participants of the Congress. "It wanted to create for itself a kind of Czech hegemony and establish among the Slavs the domination of Czech politicians. They obviously met with the strong resistance of the Slovaks, Silesians and above all the Poles." "The Czechs were concerned with their own ambitious plans" — he writes about the Congress in another place. He decided to utilize these ambitions for his plan. Actually, Bakunin was as far from the idea of allotting the Czechs forever a leading rôle in the future *free* Slavonic Federation, as he was far from assigning such a rôle to Poland, when in turn, he would see the Archimedean point for a universal revolution in the brewing Polish rising of 1863. Bakunin's design was always the same in that respect. "My main object was to find in the united Slavs a point of departure for a broad revolutionary propaganda in Russia. In the Slavonic Union I saw a larger homeland in which, if only Russia would join it, the Poles and the Czechs would yield her the first place." Red Prague was only a stage to Red Moscow or, as Bakunin sometimes foresaw, to Red Tsargrad (Constantinople) as the capital of free Slavs federated under the aegis of Russia. He admits that he was thinking of one Slavonic state and in order to round it out he incorporated in it the Hungarians, Rumanians, and Greeks. "I hoped — he writes in his *Confession* — that in this way a free Eastern State would be created and that its capital would be Constantinople."

With the help of a Czech from Prague, Dr. Arnold, who came to Leipzig, Bakunin intended to establish, first in Prague and then in the whole of Bohemia, a secret revolutionary organization. It was to be composed of three groups independent of each other and having no knowledge about themselves: one for the townspeople, the other for the youth, and the third for the peasants. Each of these societies was to be adapted in its action to the character of the environment in which it was to agitate. Each was to be submitted to a "severe hierarchy and absolute discipline." These three societies were to be jointly directed by a secret central committee composed of three, and at most, of five persons. Bakunin and his right hand man for Bohemia, Arnold, were of course, to be members of that committee. In case of the success of the revolution that secret society was by no means to be liquidated, on the contrary, it was to be strengthened and expanded and place its men in the offices of the revolutionary hierarchy.

This was the Czech-Slavonic conspiracy whose watchword was to be the liberation of Bohemia and of the whole Slavonic world. But the great incendiary, while setting fire to the Slavonic fuel with his right hand, kindled a flame in another hearth with his left hand. "At the same time, without Arnold's knowledge, I ordered a certain young man, a German from Vienna, the student Ottendorf who later escaped to

America, to create according to the same plan an organization among Czech Germans, in whose central Committee I would not at first participate openly but I would be its secret leader, so that if my plan were carried out, all the branches of the movement would be concentrated in my hands and I could be sure that the revolution planned in Bohemia would not swerve from the road I allotted to it."

Bakunin's Slavonic heart must have known that the secret society of the Czech Germans, organized without the Czechs' knowledge, was not destined for the liberation of the Slavs from the German yoke. But Bakunin was animated by the feverish desire of placing the torch wherever a fire could rise. The Slavonic outbreak was only a signal and a fragment of that world conflagration whose vision loomed in the brain of the Russian revolutionist, and the revolutionary outburst of the Czech Germans could give the signal to a revolution in the whole of Germany.

Bakunin's emissaries went to Bohemia, while the instigator himself remained in Leipzig. Impatiently awaiting decisive news from Prague, Bakunin soon reached the conclusion that his friends were acting too slowly, and in the early Spring of 1849 he went to Prague himself. There he found that matters were not in an advanced stage and that the ultimate goals of the revolution should be kept a complete secret. "I seem to have frightened them with the impetuousness of some expressions which I blurted out." Bakunin saw that it would not be politically advisable to make the Prague democrats know that, for him, their movement was only one of the instruments of his great plan. "I found that by leaving a large scope for their ambitions and yielding to them all external attributes of power I would without difficulty be able to seize real power, when the revolution started."

After a short stay in Prague Bakunin returned to Germany. This time he chose Dresden as his headquarters and supervised from there the preparations in Prague. However, the outbreak did not occur there, but in Dresden. The revolutionary elements availed themselves of the fact that the King of Saxony refused to accept in his country the Constitution elaborated by the Frankfort Parliament and, supported by the democratic bourgeoisie and workers, they started to organize street demonstrations. During an anti-Government demonstration, on May 3, the troops fired at the crowd, killing four people.

This was the signal for the revolution in the city. Barricades appeared in the streets, and armed crowds of the population started fighting the troops. On the next morning the King of Saxony left Dresden for the fortress of Königstein, the cabinet following him. A provisional government was set up in Dresden, the major part of the city falling into the hands of the revolutionaries. The weak military garrison

took up positions in several buildings. However, the Government asked for assistance from Prussia. Already on May 6, Prussian and Saxon troops arrived. A battle ensued in which the Government troops, supplied with artillery, had the preponderance. May 7 was the day of the decisive defeat of the insurgents who for two more days defended themselves desperately in a few points of the city.

Bakunin took an active part in the fighting. He regarded the outbreak of the Dresden rising as the signal to the universal revolution which he so feverishly expected in the preceding months. Although, according to his plan, Prague was to be the place of the outbreak and the center of the rising, as far as a universal revolution was concerned, a geographical error in his own anticipations was of no importance to him, and he who was preparing a Slavonic revolution enthusiastically welcomed the Saxon revolution. There is a version, repeated by Herzen, according to which Bakunin suggested that the Sistine Madonna be placed on the city walls when the Prussian troops were approaching revolted Dresden, on the assumption that the Germans were *zu klassisch gebildet* (too classically educated) to shoot at Raphael. Later the Russian émigrés asked Bakunin whether he would have given the same advice, if Russian troops were approaching the city. "Oh, no" — replied Bakunin — "the Russian will shoot not only at Raphael's Madonna, but even at the Blessed Virgin, if such were his orders. Against Russian troops with Cossacks it would be a sin to resort to such a means — you would not protect the people and you would destroy Raphael." On May 7 Bakunin together with Heubner, a member of the revolutionary government, left Dresden, going first to Freiberg, and then to Chemnitz. There both were arrested during the night of May 9-10. In the evening of May 10, Bakunin was in a Dresden prison. Thus ended the first period of his revolutionary activity abroad.

* * *

The nine years spent by Bakunin abroad deserve careful study, as they are a Sibylline book of the Russian revolution. Bakunin's program develops gradually: from his innermost being rise nameless potent powers and take possession of his soul. Bakunin, like Stavrogin in Dostoyevski's *Demons* succumbs to these forces without often realizing their nature. In his letters of that period and in his *Confession* he passingly mentions these powers which emerge to the surface one after the other, and at first bring about chaos and a revision of his existing spiritual state, characterized by desire for destruction, Russian feeling, Slavonic heart, on a foundation of continuous unrest and a growing sense of strangeness and loneliness. He feels like the emissary of a

powerful force, who himself for a long time cannot decipher the hieroglyphs of his destiny. Only when revolutionary events occur, he is seized with a violent desire of participating in them with a gradually crystallizing wish of founding his own center of activity, of extending his dictatorial power over it and of bending it to his own purpose. In the heat of the revolution the instincts and urges that hitherto arose in him disconnectedly and struggled against each other, tend towards unification. Their hidden inner connection comes suddenly to light, they are welded into one peculiar idea, into one system speedily and roughly defined, but already distinct – a system full of contradictions from the European standpoint, and yet quite comprehensible, when we bear in mind that Bakunin is a son of Russia and that the native element powerfully pulsates in him.

How should this system be called? Should it be termed anarchism, as the wide-spread opinion about Bakunin wants us to believe? Indeed, from the first there is in him an anarchic trend, spontaneous hatred of existing governments, of any form of man's restraint, by law or by moral, religious, conventional and social canons. Of all revolutionaries in Paris, he appreciates most highly not the socialists and communists, but Proudhon, the theorist of anarcho-federalism. But is Bakunin's program really the state of anarchy, of social life organized from below according to the laws of natural harmony without external compulsion? Does he indeed feel instinctive deep resentment against force, compulsion and arbitrary power of man over man? We know that such is not the case, that Bakunin has despotic tendencies and is a convinced advocate of unlimited power. The program of the future system, professed by him in 1848, is composed of two stages: anarchy, or the destruction of existing states and their whole legal order; and of the next stage, already foreseen in the period of the destruction of the present system – unlimited power, dictatorship. Anarchism is here only a fragment of revolutionary activity, an introduction to it, a means of shattering the old world. However, when the dawn of a new era seems to break, Bakunin, anticipating the future, will begin to fulminate against the symptoms of anarchy. His remarks are: "In Germany anarchy prevails. Anarchy, the result of Protestantism and of Germany's entire political history, constitutes a cardinal feature of German character and German life. *Jeder darf und soll seine Meinung haben.* This is the basic precept of the German catechism, a principle by which every German without exception is guided, and consequently there was no political unity among them, and none will be possible."

In the wake of triumphant anarchy dictatorship is to enter the scene. In theory, that dictatorship is to form a temporary stage, but actually the period of its duration is not limited by anything. When

it alone constitutes the only power in the state and has the army at its disposal, who will be able to order its removal? Moreover, Bakunin's predictions do not go beyond the period of dictatorship. "What would come after dictatorship" – he says – "I did not know, and I also thought that nobody can say now." The only concrete thing that we learn from Bakunin about the post-revolutionary future is dictatorship. Arnold Ruge, who was so close to Bakunin in 1848, mentions in his memoirs that "Bakunin raved incoherently about a sort of revolutionary tsarism and Pan-slavism." We hear from Bakunin that he desired freedom of the peoples and that he thought out a system that gave the best guarantees of that freedom. However, when he starts speaking about that system, we see that we are faced with a mind organically incapable of understanding what freedom of man and citizen means. We face a man who had studied a whole collection of European books dealing with political and social problems, but for whom the spirit of the development of modern political culture remained incomprehensible. He wants freedom, absolute freedom, the like of which has not existed in history, and which will be guarded by unlimited power. It is to be a free republic – under a dictatorship. The printed word will exhale freedom but there will be no freedom of the press. Opposition and criticism will be absolutely forbidden, for such opposition could be only detrimental to the freedom of the people, because the dictatorship will be exercised with the help of unanimous men imbued with a spirit of liberty and all posts will be occupied by those men. Are not these unshakeable guarantees of freedom? Reading these reflections, which Bakunin will ten years later repeat in a very similar form in his immense Siberian letters sent to the editors of *Kolokol,* we have before our eyes another figure created by a profound expert of the Russian revolution, the figure of Shigalev of Dostoyevski's *Demons.* "Starting from unlimited freedom I reach unlimited despotism," says Shigalev, while another revolutionary summarizes the Shigalev system as follows: "One tenth obtains personal freedom and the right of unlimited power towards the remaining nine-tenths."

Himself envisaging a despotic system in the future, Bakunin cannot sincerely and consistently condemn despotism as a method of government. All depends on the aim that despotism is to serve; if that aim is the preservation of the existing system, despotism is an enemy of mankind, but when it aims at the abolition of the present system it is a blessing to mankind. There is, however, a form of government that provokes Bakunin's absolute hatred, irrespective of whether it pertains to the present or the future – constitutional parliamentary government. Beginning with his first statement abroad, until the end of his life, Bakunin had only words of condemnation for that absurd, out-

dated, compromise form of government. Anarchy as well as despotism are comprehensible to him, but limited political power that tries to combine the interest of the whole with the liberty of the citizen, is inconceivable to him. The whole long historical process of the nations most advanced in civilization that resulted in the modern constitutional parliamentary state is incomprehensible to him. In the West, the conception of the limits of the state's power developed since the early Middle Ages amid the struggle of the temporal and spiritual powers. The mediaeval social system planted the seeds of civic liberties, at first limited to the class and graded according to their hierarchy; the class representation laid the foundations for national representation. Humanism enriches the West with the political experience of the nations of antiquity and spreads the concept of nation and citizen among societies based on the mediaeval system.

The Reformation at first results in bitter struggles, but in consequence of them religious tolerance increases. English social philosophy of the seventeenth century transfers that conception of tolerance to the political sphere, and leads to the recognition of the rights of man and citizen. The enlightened absolutism of Western Europe's continental powers restrains civic liberties and the principle of representation; but, unlike the Eastern despotic system, does not crush them. The eighteenth century develops the doctrine of the division and balance of powers in the state, French philosophy prepares the Great Revolution, while in 1775 the American Revolution opens an era of freedom and unprecedented progress for the Western hemisphere. In the nineteenth century representative constitutional government gradually ousts absolutism. Centuries pass and through trials and bloody struggles, through mistakes and successes, humanity gradually ascends to the higher rungs of the political system; the difficult problem of harmonizing the general with the individual interest, of combining the strength of the state with the freedom of man, cannot be solved at one stroke. The establishment of an inner spiritual link between the individual and the state, growth of respect for the state on the part of the citizen, inseparable from respect for the citizen on the part of the state, constitute a tremendous achievement, bought at the price of centuries of struggle.

However, the foundations of the modern Western state are too complicated for Bakunin, too cunningly woven together. Following the opinion expressed by him one could reach the conclusion that the road travelled by France since Louis XI to Louis Philippe, or by England since Henry VIII to Victoria, was planned wrongly, led these countries astray, led Europe into the blind alley of parliamentary inertia and would never reach the goal of freedom. Bakunin chose a much simpler road. According to him a "determined, radical" revolution is to be start-

ed, the existing state with its entire modern legal status is to be destroyed, and the victor planting his feet on the ruins, will decree the freedom of peoples. It is a rule of existence binding for all, "based on freedom in trend and spirit," the carrying out of which is supervised by dictatorship based on armed force. To give a stronger guarantee of freedom no opinions contrary to the rule are permitted to be expressed. There is no limitation of power, no criticism, no parliament. This is freedom.

Chaadayev's *Philosophical Letter* appears before us in all its horror. Its gloomy words about the lack of historical inheritance and civilizing instincts in Russia come to our mind. There is a vacuum, a void, nothing, nihilism. The antithesis of Russia and the West stands out here still more glaringly than with the Slavophils, because here the contrast is not deliberate but unconscious. The Slavophils renounce Europe, turn away from it and one could think that by their ultra-Russian doctrinairism they stifle their European instincts. Bakunin hastens to Western Europe, abandons Russia, hates tsardom, desires the regeneration of the world through freedom, but points the way to future slavery. Probably in no other Russian is there such a powerful manifestation of the spirit being fettered with the inheritance of the past, of the soul wallowing in slavery, while all the time it believes that it embodies the love of freedom. This is Bakunin's profound tragedy: anarcho-despotism instead of absolute freedom.

This anarcho-despotism develops in Bakunin gradually. First appears the desire of destruction; for some time, in his thinking, he does not go beyond the destruction of the existing world. Only in 1848, when the prospect of a world conflagration appeared, did Bakunin realize that dictatorship was the next step of his revolutionary program. The blend of anarchism with despotic tendencies makes Bakunin an extreme representative of the attitude to the state that had developed in the broad masses of the Russian people under the influence of history: hatred of the government, the conception of the state as a superfluous organization of force and exploitation, and at the same time a vague consciousness of the necessity of external compulsion. This necessity results from the state's negation by the people, while the negation is the outcome of despotism. A vicious circle: despotism bears anarchism, anarchism bears despotism, the nation's political consciousness assumes the characteristics of anarcho-despotism. The peasants' serfdom only magnifies the psychological consequences of state despotism. Bakunin's dreams are imbued with faith in the creative force of despotic power; they smack of Arakcheyev, of the tendency to organize humanity in a barrack-like manner, of the habits, as it were, of the *pomeshchik* who looks at life somewhat in boyar and somewhat in

Tartar fashion. It is like Oblomov's dream of organizing ideal rural life. The *pomeshchik* has in his mind an ideal plan of organizing his estates and wants to make his peasants happy, but only according to his own whim; his beneficent will should not be restrained.

The foundations and sources of Bakunin's views lie in Russian life itself, in the Russian reality. The elements of those views can be discerned also in the trends seemingly placed on opposite poles. There is a certain affinity between the view of Bakunin and the ideas of the first Slavophils. Bakunin himself states in a letter to *Kolokol*, dated May 3, 1867, that Constantine Aksakov already at the end of the fourth decade outstripped the revolutionaries in his attitude towards the state. Does not the Slavophil formula of the dualism of Russian life, composed of the soil, that is of rural life, based on the industrious, good, brotherly peasants who have no wish to rule, and, on the other hand, of the state where the sole ruler, in accordance with the wish of the entire people, is the Tsar — does not this formula contain a peculiar anarcho-despotism? According to this formula, the peasants are to be stateless, living only the life of the soil, while the Tsar has full power, for the good and happiness of his people. With all the difference between the Slavophils and Bakunin's phraseology, it is impossible not to get the impression that Bakunin's people's republic with the kindly dictator is very reminiscent of the kindhearted Tsar of the Slavophils, who, endowed with full power, exercises it without any European "guarantees" for the good of his people.

This affinity between the apparent antipodes is sometimes striking. During his life Bakunin repeatedly leaned to the idea that the beneficent people's dictator of Slavdom could be the Tsar, the actual reigning Russian Tsar, Nicholas I, or later, Alexander II, or the Tsar's general, Muraviev Amurski, or Nicholas Ignatiev. The idea of turning to the Tsar seems to have first occurred to him in 1848 during the Slav Congress. Some inner voice suggested to him this idea which he himself calls strange in his *Confession*. This was the time when, having lost faith in the French and German revolutions, he was in turn losing faith that Western Slavdom would follow the road desired by him. He then "began to feel in Prague as lonely as he formerly did in Paris and in Germany." While he was suffering disappointment concerning revolutionary Europe, suddenly an inner voice directed his thoughts towards Russia, not the future, imaginary one, but towards the actual Russian Tsar Nicholas I. What was the voice that called him? From the references, parenthetical as it were, to this episode in his *Confession* it appears that it was the *demon of destruction* that suggested to him turning to the Tsar. This time the demon was disguised in a Slavonic garb.

"Tsar, if you had then unfurled the Slavonic banner, they (the

Poles) and all the Slavic speaking peoples in the possessions of Austria and Prussia would unreservedly, without pacts, blindly submitting to your will, with joy and fanaticism rush under the wide wings of the Russian eagle and would march with fury not only against the hated Germans, but also against entire Western Europe."

Let us bear in mind this flexibility of Bakunin's thought who while in Prague appearing as an enemy of tsardom, simultaneously planned a letter to the Tsar. He counted on the possibility that even the Poles, discouraged by the indifference of the revolutionary French government and embittered by the hostile attitude of the Frankfort Parliament, would stand by the Tsar. "I do not doubt it. I would lead the revolution as a Slavonic Masaniello; thanks!" Nicholas put down against that passage of Bakunin's *Confession*, scandalized by the plan of becoming the hero of the *Mute of Portici*. Incidentally, Bakunin did not then dispatch the planned and already begun letter, having reached the conclusion that it would not make any impression on the Tsar, while it could compromise Bakunin in the eyes of Western democracy. Later, during his stay in Siberia, Bakunin assigned the rôle of the revolutionary leader to Muraviev Amurski. In the pamphlet, *The Peasant Question: Romanov, Pugachev or Pestel,* published in Western Europe, he suggested to Alexander II the idea of heading an agrarian peasant movement.

In such cases there took place in Bakunin's mind a mysterious, strange to himself, agreement of various forces that had gradually emerged, under the influence of his European experiences, from the chaotic ferment of elements: the demon of destruction, the Russian feeling, the Slavonic heart, combined with revolutionary tsarism, noticed by Arnold Ruge in the mind of his Russian friend. There appeared the idea of a crusade — against Western Europe. Now we begin to understand the whole depth of Dostoyevski's strange, peculiar study, *My Paradox*. The Westerners, the negators of the Russian reality, after coming to Western Europe, join the ranks of extreme revolutionaries and in turn become the negators of the European reality. What impels them to do so? They do not know themselves. "They did not realize the loftiness of their protest." "They become revolutionaries for reasons, that we, for the time being, do not know ourselves (and those who know, hide them for themselves)." Dostoyevski, however, penetrated to the hidden sources of that protest and revealed them. The Russian negators of the West "have their profound national reason." Through them protests the "Russian consciousness, in the name of the Russian spirit, in the name of their suppressed Russian element." They protest "out of their own necessity, even, if I may say so, out of conservatism." The Russian revolutionary in the West is a "fighter for Russian truth,

Russian individuality, Russian principles." The revolutionary who escapes from Russia, and aspires to destruction in the West, does not realize that in his destructive action he is not only a good Russian, but "a Russian in the highest degree."

Let us not be misled when Bakunin's Russian feeling seems to dissolve in Slavdom. He advises the Western Slavs to unite without Russia, as the latter for the time being does not understand her mission. He thus summarizes his Prague addresses: "Union first without Russia," explaining "in anticipation of the incorporation of the brother Slavs in the Russian Empire." This prospect which he so clearly defined in his *Confession,* was presented by him in more considerate terms when he spoke with the Western Slavs, especially with the Poles.

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Arrested on the night of May 9-10, 1849, Bakunin remained until July, 1850, in the Saxon prisons of Dresden, Neustadt, and Königstein. In January, 1850, the Saxon court martial sentenced him to death. The death penalty was commuted to life imprisonment. In the meantime, in May, 1849, the Austrian government discovered the Prague conspiracy of which Bakunin was the main promoter. An investigation was started and Austria demanded from Saxony the extradition of that important conspirator, attaching much importance to his confessions. In July, 1850, the Saxon government handed Bakunin over to Austria. He was again kept in prison, first in Prague and subsequently in Olomouc (Olmütz). In May, 1851, the Austrian court martial sentenced Bakunin to death, but the sentence was again commuted to life imprisonment. During his stay in Saxon and Austrian prisons Bakunin's greatest apprehension was lest he be handed over to Russia. Indeed, that which he feared most, took place. At the first news of Bakunin's arrest, the Russian government followed the case with greatest attention and demanded his extradition first from Saxony and later from Austria. Nicholas himself showed a lively interest in the fate of the prisoner; fulfilling the Tsar's wish, Russian diplomacy bent every effort lest Bakunin escape the tsarist government. Finally in May, 1851, the Austrian authorities brought the prisoner to the Russian frontier. The Austrian shackles were taken off him and replaced by Russian, much heavier ones. Seeing the Russian soldiers Bakunin exclaimed: "At home it is even pleasant to die." "It is forbidden to talk" – was the first answer of the homeland given by the officer of the gendarmes. Bakunin was taken directly to Petersburg and imprisoned in the Alexeyevski fort.

7.

A FATAL AFFAIR

OLD CHRONICLES OF the Pecherski monastery near Kiev (Pecherskii Patierik) relate the following story:

The monks had to undergo most severe exercises and, among others, had to stand throughout the night praying. During these religious practices it happened once that the devout monk, Brother Matthew, noticed that the devil, disguised as a Pole, was strolling among the monks, and throwing flowers at them. Whenever a flower clung to any of them, the monk would get weak, and leaving the church under some pretext, went to his cell to take a nap.

Thus, since times immemorial, the Catholic Pole was represented to the Orthodox masses as an insidious enemy. Several centuries have elapsed since. The enemy has been knocked down by Russia with the assistance of Germany. Poland had been partitioned. Catherine II, an accomplice in the crime of the partitions, had died on November 10, 1796. Her son and successor, Paul I, whom his mother hated, and who fully reciprocated her feelings, after her death did everything in his power to vilify her private and political actions. Shortly after her death he visited Kosciuszko in the latter's prison cell, where he was held by the vengeful Catherine; he set him free and permitted him to leave Russia.

He adhered, however, to the Polish policies as outlined by Peter I and Catherine II. On January 26, 1797, an additional agreement between Russia and Prussia was signed in Petersburg concerning the last partition of Poland. Austria, too, joined that pact. A special clause of the agreement decreed a perpetual annulment of the very name of the Kingdom of Poland. The text of the article ran as follows:

"Inasmuch as both Imperial Courts as well as His Majesty the King of Prussia have recognized the necessity of doing away with anything that might recall the former existence of the Kingdom of Poland, and

inasmuch as that body politic has been effectively annihilated, the High Contracting Parties have agreed and accept the mutual obligation never to use the title and collective name of the Kingdom of Poland, which is being herewith abolished forever. They will, however, be permitted to employ the partial titles respectively belonging to the different provinces of said Kingdom, which have passed under their domination."[1]

It was that attempt to extinguish the very name of Poland which Byron might have had in mind in his apostrophe to Poland in the *Age of Bronze* in 1823:

> "Poland! o'er which the avenging angel passed,
> But left thee as he found thee, still a waste,
> Forgetting all thy still enduring claim,
> Thy looted people and extinguished name..."

The son and successor of Paul, Alexander I, was reputed to be a friend of Poland. During the Congress of Vienna in 1815 Russian circles guarding the traditional *raison d'état*, warned the Tsar against the reconstruction of Poland – an unwarranted apprehension. Their spokesman was the Corsican, Pozzo di Borgo, an enemy of Napoleon, who had entered Russian diplomatic service in 1804 through the influence of Prince Adam Czartoryski, then Russia's minister of foreign affairs. After the Restoration of the Bourbons Pozzo di Borgo became Russia's Ambassador to France. During the Congress of Vienna he submitted to Alexander I a report on the Polish problem.

"Almost the entire history of Russia" – he wrote – "contributed to the destruction of Poland. The system of conquests in Turkey was only a system of territorial acquisitions, which I dare call of secondary importance in comparison with what had been achieved at the Western frontiers of the State. The chief aim of the conquest of Poland was to secure to the Russian nation wider relations with the rest of Europe and to open to Russia a wider field and a nobler and better known arena on which she could develop her forces and talents, and satisfy her pride, her passions and her interests. It was for the sake of plunging Russia forever into barbarism, and of making her an exclusively Asiatic power, that Napoleon planned the reconstruction of Poland. It was also for the sake of ensuring to Russia a worthy position among the most civilized nations of Europe that the ancestors of your Imperial

[1] The signers for Russia were Count Ostermann, Count Bezborodko and Prince Kurakin; for Prussia Count Tauentzien. The act of accession of Austria to the special secret article was signed by Count Louis Cobenzl. Karol Lutostański. *Recueil des Actes diplomatiques, Traités et Documents concernant la Pologne,* Tome Premier. Librairie Payot, Lausanne. Paris. 1918, pp. 229, 230.

Majesty planned conquests which were to bring Russia closer to those nations."

The Congress of Vienna left to Russia all three parts of Poland taken by Catherine II, and pushed Russia's frontiers farther to the West by adding to her possessions new Polish territory, which, from that time on, formed the so-called Congress Kingdom of Poland. That part of Poland which had since remained under Russian domination for over one hundred years, was guaranteed by the Congress of Vienna a constitutional régime and a distinct administration. The fact irritated Russian patriots. Moreover, they were afraid that Alexander, suspected as he was of liberal and constitutional tendencies, might attempt to extend that constitutional régime more to the East, *i.e.* to Polish territories East of the Bug River. The noted historian, Karamzin, acted as the spokesman of those patriots in presenting their apprehension to the Tsar. Even before the Vienna Congress he expressed himself against the establishment of a limited monarchy in Russia, which Alexander was believed to plan. After the Vienna Congress he made a report warning the Tsar against concessions to Poland.

In 1861 there were published in Berlin two reports of Karamzin of which only excerpts had been previously known to the Russian public. They expound Karamzin's views on the historical rôle of the Russian monarchy. These reports consisted of a memorandum *On Old and Modern Russia* which he delivered to Alexander's sister, Catherine, and which was handed by her to her brother, and *The Opinion of a Russian Citizen,* on the Polish problem, which he read himself to the Tsar in Tsarskoye Selo on October 1, 1819. That second report was reprinted in 1862 in Petersburg in an edition of thus far unpublished writings of Karamzin.[2]

The first report contained a brief review of Russia's history, which was to prove that "autocracy is Russia's *palladium.*" Criticizing Alexander's reforms, as aimed at the curtailing of the monarchial power, Karamzin advanced the thesis that the Tsar had no right to limit auto-

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[2] Both reports had been published before in French (the first in excerpts only) in the first volume of Nicholas Turgenev's *La Russie et les Russes,* Brussels, 1847, pp. 327-360. Observations relating to both reports are to be found on pp. 68-70, 323-327. The report on Poland was published in Petersburg in 1868: *Neizdannyia Sochineniya i perepiska Karamzina* (Karamzin's Unpublished Writings and Correspondence), pp. 3-8. The report on new and ancient Russia was printed from a manuscript by Pypin: *Obshchestvennoye Dvizheniye v Rossii pri Aleksandre I* (The Socio- Political Movement in Russia under Alexander I). Third edition, pp. 479-534. On pp. 183-260 one finds there also an analysis of the report and of its importance. The same report was printed, with errors, in the *Russkii Arkhiv,* 1870, p. 2225 ff. In Yegor Kovalevski's book *Graf Bludov,* Petersburg, 1866, Bludov's opinion on both reports was published. It was written upon the express wish of Nicholas I, pp. 231-233. Comp.: Shilder, *Alexander I,* Vol. III, pp. 32-33; Vol. IV, p. 173. — A. Kornilov, *Kurs istorii Rossii XIX veka* (Course of XIX Century History of Russia) Part I, Moscow, 1918, pp. 168-171; Part II, p. 20.

cracy. Preservation of absolutism had been the only condition made by the nation when they called the Romanov dynasty to the throne. This is how the admirer of Rousseau interpreted *Le Contrat Social,* as applied to his own country:

"Had Alexander, inspired by a magnanimous hatred of the abuses of autocracy, started to write down for himself other laws than those of God and his own conscience, every virtuous Russian citizen would have dared to stop his hand and say: 'Emperor! you are trespassing the limits of your authority. Taught by long experience and defeats, Russia has handed to your ancestor before a sacred altar the scepter of autocracy, requesting him to rule the country with sovereign and undivided power. That testament is the foundation of your authority. You have none other. You can do anything except limiting your power legally.' "[3]

In his report of 1819 Karamzin expressed the fear that the Tsar proposed to reconstruct Poland, that he considered it his Christian duty to do good to his enemies. "Emperor, Christian faith is a mysterious union between God and the human heart; it soars high above the world, over all physical, social and national laws, but does not abolish them.[4] Does Your Majesty want to restore the former Kingdom of Poland? Would such a restoration be consistent with the law of Russia's public weal? Is it consistent with your sacred duties, with our love for Russia and with justice itself? People may say that Catherine had lawlessly partitioned Poland! But your action would be still more lawless if you would try to redeem Catherine's injustice by partitioning the very land of Russia. We have taken Poland with the power of our sword. This was our right. All countries owe their existence to it, for they emerge out of conquest. In politics there are no old titles."

Should the Tsar wish to include into Poland's territory a part of the land of the ancient Commonwealth, where would be the limit of such a restitution?

"Either all, or nothing. Until now our national principle was: Not an inch of soil to either friend or foe. Napoleon might conquer Russia but you, Emperor, though being an autocrat, you had no right to cede to him by means of an agreement even a single Russian hut. Such is our character and such the spirit of our state. Loving rightful civic liberty, will Your Majesty treat in the same way Russia as a property deprived of spirit and voice? Russia, Your Majesty, keeps silent before

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[3] Pypin, *Obshchestvennoye Dvizheniye,* p. 498.

[4] These sentences arouse the enthusiasm of Bludov: "His report on Poland, written after his conversation with Emperor Alexander, which lasted a whole night, is one of his greatest political deeds. These are perhaps the most eloquent pages he ever wrote. Particularly noteworthy is what he says of the spirit and character of the Christian faith, and of the application of its eternal commandments to political affairs." Kovalevski, *Graf Bludov,* p. 233.

you. Should, however, ancient Poland be restored – which God forbid, and produce a worthy, sincere, impartial historian, he himself would condemn your magnanimity as harmful to your true country, good and powerful Russia. Such a historian would certainly not say what the Poles are telling you today. We will forgive them, but we, Russians, would never forgive you if, to win their applause, you would drive us to despair. Glorious, great, beloved Emperor! I am ready to give my life as a guarantee that such would be the unavoidable result of a full resuscitation of Poland. I listen to Russians, I know them... In brief – and God who reads in human hearts may seal my lips with death at this very moment, if what I say is not true – the restoration of Poland would mean the downfall of Russia, or our sons would have again to shed their blood on Polish soil and again take Praga by storm.

"No, Your Majesty, the Poles will never be to us either sincere brothers, or faithful allies... If you make them stronger, they will want to become independent and their first step towards independence will be separation from Russia... The Poles, legally established as a distinct and sovereign nation, would be more dangerous to us than the Poles as subjects of Russia."

In both these reports Karamzin expressed not only his own views, but the opinion of almost all contemporary Russians. Baron Modest Korff, in his biography of Speranski, states that Karamzin's writings about ancient and modern Russia "were a skilful compilation of what he had heard from people around him." Pypin says that Karamzin expressed not only his personal views, but in many cases, the opinion of the conservative majority. Nicholas Turgenev declares that the Tsar might have felt dissatisfied with Karamzin's remarks "were it not for the fact that the latter's exhortations were founded, indeed, upon respect, love and a kind of worship for autocratic power."[5] One may therefore assert that the report on Poland expressed the opinion of all classes, from the Court on to members of secret societies, among whom rumors of Alexander's Polish projects aroused indignation and even tsaricide thoughts.

Even by this memorandum, according to Nicholas Turgenev who knew well the mentality of both Alexander and Karamzin, Alexander actually felt flattered, and Karamzin's grandiloquent civic courage should be reduced to its proper proportion.[6]

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[5] Kirpichnikov's article on Karamzin in Brockhaus' and Efron's *Encyclopedia*, Vol. XXVII, edition of 1895, p. 446; Pypin, *Obshchestvennoye Dvizheniye*, p. 215; Nicholas Turgenev, *La Russie et les Russes*, Vol. I, 1847, p. 325.

[6] "To be sure, Karamzin while believing that he defended the interests of Russia, defended in reality imperial authority; though such kind of opposition may temporarily hurt a whim of the autocrat, the author never runs the risk of causing him a lasting or serious displeasure." Nicholas Turgenev, *La Russie et les Russes*. Vol. I, pp. 69-70.

Karamzin's Polish program, the result of his study of Russian history, and consistent with the instincts of the Russian people, was triumphant after a short period of hesitation. The policies of Nicholas I concerning Poland followed the warning which Karamzin had submitted to Alexander I, as the expression of the deep-rooted feelings of the Russian nation. The personal feelings of Nicholas I were in complete agreement with that program.

A testament of Nicholas I, made in 1835, has recently been found and published. The Tsar was setting out for Kalisz to meet his father-in-law, the King of Prussia, and to attend the maneuvers of both armies. In the meantime he was receiving from France alarming warnings that Polish émigrés were preparing an attempt against his person. Under the impression of these reports he left his older son Alexander home, and wrote his last will. He recommended therein to his weak successor to follow policies of moderation, of peace with foreign countries. Only in one matter did he enjoin him to adhere to inexorable severity, in the matter of oppressing and Russifying the Polish people.

"To my son, Emperor Alexander Nikolayevich: You are aware, my dear Sasha, that I intended to have you accompany me to Kalisz, so that you could, perhaps for the last time, embrace your Grandfather, our venerable King. Indispensable cautiousness, however, deprived me of that pleasure. Anyhow I felt greatly relieved to see that you willingly made that sacrifice for the sake of duty. The same sacred duty orders me, while parting with you, to think of the future. God Almighty alone knows what is in store for me, and though trusting Him only, I am not afraid of the threats of my enemies, I must, however, take into consideration the possible realization of their evil designs."

The last will of Nicholas I, consisting of twenty articles (seventeen pertaining to domestic Russian affairs) begins with the words: "I order you..." "Remain on good terms with foreign countries... Your chief care should not be new conquest but the organization of the lands of Russia."

The eighteenth article refers to Poland: "Do not ever give any freedom to the Poles. Consolidate what I have begun, and try to conclude the hard work of Russification of that country without weakening the employed means."[7]

Princess Yuryevski relates that Alexander II, before signing any important governmental act, used to visit his father's tomb, where he

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[7] The Russian editor stresses the peaceful character of the testator's advice: "Only towards Poland should the policies of hatred and revenge be continued... Nicholas never stopped hating Poland, even at the grave hour of meditation, when the frightened autocrat was making his last will." After his safe return from Kalisz, Nicholas withdrew on October 30, 1835, his testament, but put it back in safekeeping on November 1. *Krasnyi Arkhiv*, Vol. III, p. 291.

remained for a long time in meditation, "as if conversing with the late Emperor asking for his advice and salutary inspiration."[8] In 1863 the ghost of Nicholas whispered to his son: "I order you... Do not ever give freedom to the Poles..."

In the beginning of the reign of Alexander II, Count Nesselrode, a veteran official of three Tsars, leaving the service, submitted to Alexander II, on the eve of the Paris Peace Conference, in February 1856, a memorandum in which he declared that "Russian policies should, in the true interest of Russia and her dynasty, remain, as in the past, monarchical and anti-Polish."[9]

Such was the traditional *raison d'état* of tsarism, supported by the opinion of the theorists of absolutism, imperialism and nationalism. But what were the views of the Russian revolutionaries on the Polish problem? The first generation of the revolutionaries of the nineteenth century, the so-called Decembrists, grew up during the reign of Alexander I. After the death of that Tsar, which occurred in December 1825, the Decembrists, with the assistance of a part of the army, made an unsuccessful attempt at revolution. The Poles believed in their sincere sympathy for the Polish cause and thought that a success of the December revolution would restore to Poland her independence. Was it so, indeed?

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On January 25, 1831, the united Chambers of the Polish Revolutionary Diet began to discuss the motion of Roman Sołtyk asking for the dethronement of Nicholas I, as king of Poland. After a long discussion, at 3 o'clock in the afternoon, Jan Ledóchowski, deputy from the Jędrzejów district, arose, and with a stentorian voice appealed to the Chamber to pronounce unanimously: "There is no more Nicholas". In an outburst of wild enthusiasm the Chamber repeated several times: "There is no more Nicholas!" The phrasing of the act of dethronement by Niemcewicz, and its passing by the Chamber was but a formality.

While the debate was taking place in the Chamber, the population of Warsaw crowded the streets to have a look at the unusual procession which moved from the Casimir palace towards the Castle Square. At the head of the parade a young captain of the university guard carried on a cushion, covered with black crêpe, the tricolored cockade, the emblem of European freedom. He was followed by a detachment of university students carrying the academic banner. Following them

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[8] Victor Laferté, *Alexandre II*, Paris, 1862, pp. 117, 118.

[9] "En tout état de cause notre politique doit, dans le véritable interêt de la Russie et de la dynastie, rester comme par le passé, *monarchique et anti-polonaise.*" — At the end of the memorandum he repeats once more: "Pour nous résumer, nous dirons: dans l'interêt bien entendu de la Russie, notre politique ne peut pas cesser d'être *monarchique et anti-polonaise.*" Nesselrode, *Lettres et Papiers*. Vol XI, pp. 112-116.

their comrades carried upon crossed rifles a black coffin upon which rested a laurel wreath decorated with the tricolor. On five shields appeared the names of the leaders of the Decembrist uprising hanged after its collapse: Ryleyev, Bestuzhev-Riumin, Pestel, Muraviev-Apostle, and Kakhovski. Innumerable crowds followed several more detachments of the guard. The solemn parade in honor of the Decembrists had been organized by the revolutionary Patriots Club whose members used to hold their meetings at the Casimir Palace.

The procession went to the Oriental Chapel on Podwale Street, where the Uniate clergy were to celebate funeral rites. The procession stopped at the King Sigismund column. Adam Gurowski, wearing a red cap with a white feather and a green coat imitating the uniform of Russian officers, delivered a speech from the base of the monument. He appealed to the population to take steps to save the country. From the chapel the procession marched through Leszno street to the Carmelite monastery, which had been a political prison under the Russian rule. Finally they returned through the Saxon Square to the Patriots Club. On its way the procession stopped several times to listen to speeches. The papers of those days described the tremendous impression made by those orations.

In the *Gazeta Polska* of February 7, 1831, there appeared a letter, signed with initials only, the writers of which asked the persons who had delivered speeches during the procession and quite particularly Francis Grzymała, Father Pułaski and Dorożko, to publish their speeches. The letter mentioned that after the speech of Francis Grzymała on Saxon Square the audience drew their swords and cried: "We swear to die for the cause of freedom, and for the liberty of all Slavonic peoples!"

"These speeches should be published" – argued the authors of the letter in the *Gazeta Polska* –"so that the Russians may know that the Poles have a justified aversion against the despotic Russian government, while they consider the Russians their brethren and wish to make them happy."

The celebration in honor of the "first republicans of Slavdom", as the Polish historian Mochnacki used to call the Decembrists, was meant to be a manifestation of Polish revolutionary enthusiasm, a demonstration by elements dissatisfied with political half-measures of the Diet and the Government. The homage paid to the memory of the Russian revolutionists precisely at the moment when the Diet was proclaiming the dethronement of Nicholas I in Poland, was on the part of the radicals a solemn confirmation of the memorable passage in the revolutionary manifesto of January 5, 1831:

"We have not been actuated by any national hatred of the Rus-

sians, whom we consider a great Slavonic tribe, like ourselves. On the contrary, we have tried to find, in the first days of our lost independence, some solace in the thought that, though harmful to ourselves, the union under one rule would assure the Russian nation of forty millions their participation in constitutional liberties which have become, in the whole civilized world, a necessity of the rulers as well as of the governed." It was a symbolic recognition of the watchword: "For your liberty and ours!"

Simultaneously, the public manifestation of January 25, 1831, organized by the party who insisted upon an uncompromising life and death struggle against the Russian State, could be interpreted only to mean that those, in whose honor the celebration had been arranged, had the same program as the Poles who had just started to fight: the complete liberation of ancient Polish territory from Russian domination and the annulment of the partitions, at first as regards Russia; the solution of the problem as far as the two other partitioning powers were concerned would come later. The Poles firmly believed that the Russian revolutionists were really eager to make up for the wrongs done to Poland by Russia, that they condemned the partitions and desired the reconstruction of an independent Polish nation.

Amidst the terrible fight against Russia, the thought of a revolution seething in the secret depths of Russia and anxious to atone for the sins and iniquities of tsardom, was bound to have a great attraction for the Poles. It is significant that next to Mickiewicz, Maurice Mochnacki was the writer who contributed most to the spread of the legend of the Decembrists. Not without great importance was, in this case, Mochnacki's guiding idea that the inability of the Poles to free themselves from slavery was due not to a lack of power, but to a lack of clear vision and determination on the part of the leaders of the revolutionary movement. Mochnacki charged the Poles with being responsible for the miscarriage of the negotiations between the Decembrists and the members of the Polish Patriotic Society. Mochnacki's reasoning was a glaring proof of the delusions of which the Poles were the victims as far as the Russian revolution was concerned. And yet, no Pole belonging to the generation of the November Insurrection was as alert and keen as Mochnacki in his judgment of Russia's policies. He severely reproved the article of the revolutionary manifesto which had protested against suspecting the insurrectionists of a desire to wage war against the Russian nation.

At the same time Mochnacki expressed regret that the representative of the Polish Patriotic Society, Severin Krzyżanowski, had been, in his conversation with Bestuzhev, "too cautious, too suspicious, that he did not trust Bestuzhev, who, in the name of the Russian organiza-

tion, was offering Poland her ancient independence." "The Russian conspirators had a thorough understanding of the interests of Poland as well as those of their own; they started the negotiations with candor and good faith, but, unfortunately, they did not meet with the reception they expected on the part of the Polish organization."

If such were the views of Mochnacki, it was quite comprehensible that Lelewel, who believed that kings and governments were the only sowers of discord among nations while the peoples had but fraternal feelings for each other, preserved with solemn devotion among the émigrés the legend of the Decembrists. In the appeal to the *Russian Brethren* which Lelewel issued in 1832, as president of the National Committee of Emigrés, he stated that the Poles attributed their subjugation not to the Russians but to the greedy and perverse policies of the autocrats. "A covenant has been established between nations aspiring to freedom. If you care for yours, such a covenant exists between us and yourselves. This became evident when, seven years ago, Poles and Russians brought closer to each other on the shores of the Neva River, developed the lofty idea of a federation of Slavonic peoples. The alliance between the Polish and Russian nations was revealed at that time." Lelewel mentioned the Warsaw celebration of January 25, 1831, in honor of the martyrs of freedom, the names of whom "will be remembered forever by the Russians and remain dear to Polish hearts."

Lelewel, by the way, had not been the originator of that appeal. It had been requested in the beginning of 1832 by a group of young émigrés who felt dissatisfied that the Lelewel Committee had not issued an appeal to the opposition parties of other countries. To that group belonged, among others, Janowski, Płużański and Pułaski, who were to become later the founders of the Democratic Society. "Even in Russia our oppressor has enemies —" they wrote — "for even there the language of freedom has been understood by many people. It was, therefore, the duty of the Committee to issue an appeal to noble-minded Russians..." As a result they requested that "if the Committee did not come as yet in political contact with Russian liberals, it should enter into such relations as early as possible..."[10]

While living in Brussels, Lelewel, at all national celebrations so frequent among émigrés, used to add to the homage paid to the memory of Polish heroes a similar tribute to that of the Decembrists. On February 14, 1848, at a solemn meeting arranged on the occasion of the anniversary of the execution of the famous Polish patriot Szymon Konarski, and attended by representatives of many nations, Lelewel said: "The shadows of Pestel, Bestuzhev, Ryleyev, Muraviev, Kakhovski and Konar-

[10] J. N. Janowski, *O początku demokracji polskiej* (The Origins of Polish Democracy) Paris, 1862, p. 16.

ski watch over our conscience and feel the beating of our hearts..."

We know today that the attitude of the Decembrists towards the Polish cause was entirely different from the Polish legend about it. It is known, for instance, from the depositions of Nikita Muraviev and Lt. Colonel Poggio made before the investigating commission, as well as from the memoirs of Zavalishin, and many other sources, that one of the reasons of the distrust and hatred towards Alexander I on the part of the conspiring youth was that the Tsar had granted a Constitution to the Kingdom of Poland, while Russia did not receive one. This was considered an offense to the pride and dignity of Russia. The youth were still more incensed by the rumor of an allegedly proposed incorporation of Lithuanian and Ruthenian territories into Congress Poland and their separation from the general administration of the Empire. This was regarded as an attempt against the integrity of the State. One of the conspirators, Yakushkin, having heard those rumors, declared himself ready to assassinate Alexander. Ryleyev, celebrated by the great Polish poet Mickiewicz, condemned the government's policies of separating Polish territories from Russia, and advocated a closer "moral unification of Polish lands with Russia."

"Ryleyev's noble shoulders that I clasped in brotherly embrace"... wrote Mickiewicz. What misunderstanding! These would-be heirs of tsardom were even more impatient in their annexationist tendencies. Pestel, however, the keenest political mind among them, and head of the Southern Revolutionary Society, understood that the success of a Russian revolution depended upon a simultaneous outbreak of a rising in Poland, which would result in paralyzing Grand Duke Constantine with his Russian regiments and Lithuanian corps. He also knew well what were the aspirations of the Polish patriots and that the sole aim of the insurrection was to regain the independence of Poland. It was in that spirit, though without explicit mutual obligations that in January 1824, during the Kiev annual fair, conversations took place between Lt. Col. Krzyżanowski, representative of the Warsaw Patriotic Society, and Sergey Muraviev-Apostle and Bestuzhev-Riumin, members of the secret Southern Society. The conversations were renewed in January 1825, at the Kiev annual fair between Pestel and Prince Sergey Volkonski, on one hand, and Grodecki and Prince Anthony Jabłonowski on the other.

The Northern Revolutionary Society, embracing the foremost youth of the tsarist capital, felt uneasy because of Pestel's concessions in favor of a future Poland. Nikita Muraviev strongly opposed any pacts with the Poles:

"These facts have greatly afflicted the members of the Northern Society, who believe that one should not return Russian conquest and

property, or to enter into relations with other nationalities though under common domination with us, all the more so as such concessions would be made in favor of a foreign State, in the future even hostile to Russia." Ryleyev thought that the revolutionists had no right to prejudge concessions in favor of Poland, but that this should be left to a future national Russian constituent assembly (*Sobor*). Members of the Northern Society expressed the view that renouncing of land in Russia's possession was inconsistent with the spirit and ambition of a nation which for two centuries had been accustomed to annex new territories, but not to restore them. In short, they drew a veil over the true character of Russia's Polish conquests and, treating them as an integral part of Russia, they acted as the successors of the State with all its conquests and annexations.

It is particularly instructive to look more closely into the alleged Polish restitution plans of Pestel, for which he was so bitterly reproached by the Northern patriots. Did Pestel really plan the restitution of Polish independence and sovereignty? He and his colleagues of the Southern Society did a great deal of talking about an independent Polish nation. When the time came, however, to formulate the thesis, the nationalistic spirit trained during centuries in ever new conquests, reappeared in Pestel's Russian soul, forcing upon his plans a number of decisive restrictions.

To begin with, he did not recognize Poland's right to secede from Russia, but believed that the provisional Russian government would cede to the Polish government only the provinces which it would undertake to return to the Polish state. Before this would come to pass, Polish territories would continue to be Russia's property. The future frontiers of Poland would be outlined by Russia in accordance with her own interests, while Poland would have no say whatever in that matter. Poland and Russia would be bound by a close and permanent mutual agreement, of which an indispensable condition would be the inclusion of the Polish army into the Russian armed forces in case of war. Moreover, the structure of the government, the organization of the administration and the fundamental principles of the social system would have to be in harmony with the Russian Code (*Russkaya Pravda*) and Russian principles. This would mean a Russian legislation in matters of basic importance. The organization of Poland's social structure according to Russian pattern was to prevent the arising of a Polish "aristocracy" and to guarantee a democratic one-class civil system: a significant, indeed, and prophetic guardianship over Polish democracy, which in days to come, was to be adopted by the Organizing Committee of Alexander II, and still later by the Red organizers of Russia, when they were to substitute bourgeoisie for the old aristocracy. In a word, it

was under a false label of independence, a prototype of the later autonomy, which Russian democrats in the beginning of the twentieth century were to use as a mirage. The only thing Pestel did not dare demand as yet was Poland's future frontiers that would follow the Bug River line. He foresaw a boundary drawn far more to the East. The memory of the partitions was still of too recent date and Pestel was fully aware that by establishing a Bug River boundary, Russia would not have restored to Poland anything of what she had taken in the three partitions.

It should be added that the members of the Northern Society were not alone in opposing Pestel's pacts with the Poles. A majority of the members of the Southern Society also believed that Pestel was going too far in his concessions to Poland. The negotiations of the members of the Southern Society with the representatives of the Polish Patriotic Society reveal some striking characteristics on the part of the Russians, in the first place, Russian haughtiness in treating the Poles. In conformity with Pestel's instruction, the Russians had declared that it was the Poles who were primarily interested in a successful conclusion of the agreement, because the Russians could liberate themselves from the tsarist yoke by their own means. This was, of course, a deliberate mystification, misrepresenting the power of the Russian conspiracy, of its means, and its attitude towards the Polish cause. While negotiating personally with the Poles in 1825, Pestel falsely claimed to speak not only in the name of the Southern but also of the Northern Society, and pledged his word that all secret Russian organizations were recognizing the independence of Poland. The Russian revolutionists demanded of the Poles subordination to Russian orders and expected the Poles to trust them blindly. In formulating their conditions, they successively came forward with basic restrictions, and claimed the right to extend their revolutionary guardianship over Poland, motivating it by the necessity of keeping a watch over the realization of revolutionary principles. They suspected the Poles of aristocratic and monarchical inclinations and considered themselves forced to impose upon Poland a republican, one-class system. The inveterate habit of domination reappears in a new revolutionary shape, disguising the old lust of ruling with new motives. In this connection the difference between the national characters of both peoples revealed itself, as well as the disparity of fundamental viewpoints resulting from their different histories, and their mutual distrust. The emissaries of the Southern Society demanded that the Poles assassinate Grand Duke Constantine, should the revolution break out. Severin Krzyżanowski answered them that no Pole had ever stained his hands with royal blood. The answer appeared to the Russians entirely incomprehensible, and the suspicious Pestel began to suppose that in case of a revolution in Russia, the Poles would help Con-

stantine to ascend the tsarist throne in exchange for his promise to establish an independent Poland, or that, perhaps, they would proclaim him their king.

This is a commentary on the fears of Nicholas I, who, in 1835, was scared by rumors spread by the Russian secret police that the Poles were preparing an attempt against his life. It may be worth while to quote another characteristic report written by a Polish patriot and conspirator, Rufin Piotrowski, author of well-known memoirs, who after being sentenced to hard labor in Siberia by the government of Nicholas I, succeeded in escaping after several years.

Disguised as a peasant, making a pilgrimage to the Solovyetski monastery, he succeeeded in crossing Siberia and European Russia, and arrived safely in Petersburg. As he was crossing the Neva River from Schlüsselburg to the capital at night, he began thinking whether he should not avail himself of his disguise and murder the Tsar, the tyrant oppressing the Polish nation. "I was obsessed by all kinds of thoughts and feelings. Muraviev and Brutus came to my mind. The love of my country and its enslavement made me suffer as that Roman. Poland's and my own humiliation by the Tsar conferred on me the sacred right of revenge. As a slave sentenced to hard labor, I could, nay, I should accomplish that act of revenge and stab him in that very heart which had made so many millions of hearts suffer endless hours of agony."

After a long inmost struggle, he dropped the idea of an attempt against the life of the Tsar. To be sure, his peasant disguise might have facilitated him the possibility of access to the Tsar; it was not fear for his own life, nor reverence for the person of the tyrant, called the Lord's anointed, that made him change his mind. "Why did I drop my plan?", he wrote, "For the simple and seemingly unsignificant reason, that I considered such a secret and cunning murder dishonest, and even more, that it was contrary to Polish character. Face to face, crossing swords in a duel, this would be fitting for a Pole... But stab somebody in the back, secretly, by fraud, even if he were our worst enemy as Nicholas, – this was contrary to my feelings and to my convictions.. If Nicholas had in his heart but a sparkle of noble-mindedness, he would certainly feel humiliated by such magnanimity of a convict...."[11]

The righteousness and sincerity of Rufin Piotrowski manifest in his memoirs are a guarantee of the truth of his confessions.

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When Bakunin called on Lelewel in Brussels in 1844, the latter received him as a successor of the Decembrists. On every solemn oc-

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[11] Rufin Piotrowski, *Pamiętniki* (Memoirs), Poznań, 1861, Vol. III, pp. 180, 181.

casion, Bakunin referred to the ghosts of the martyrs for Slavonic freedom. Speaking at the anniversary of the death of Szymon Konarski on February 14, 1848, Lelewel paid homage to the memory of the Decembrists and, turning to Bakunin, said:

"Do not stop your efforts, Bakunin, fulfill the work you have started... Do not forget that we have assembled in this sanctuary in which hover the spirits of the martyrs of freedom to whom we are paying tribute. Their presence augurs a happy future for us, prosperity for the Russians, Poles and all Slavs. Bakunin, my friend! Extend to us your brotherly hand and let us clasp each other in a cordial embrace!..."

Neither Bakunin nor Lelewel had an intimate knowledge of the real attitude of the Decembrists towards Poland; they embroidered the legend and did their best to consolidate it. The conversations of Bakunin and Lelewel were most significant. They were, so to say, a preface to the second chapter of the relations between Russian revolutionists and Polish patriots. In that second period the same forces and the same historical trends came to light, which were characteristic of the plans of the Decembrists regarding Poland, and which dictated to the members of the Polish Patriotic Society the attitude that was frequently incomprehensible to the uninitiated. Anniversary speeches, solemn celebrations reverberated with the legend; the real relations were moulded by overwhelming forces, originating in the radically different history of both nations and their centuries-old rivalry. The initial stages were marked with mutual rapprochement, a common cause and the striking of common chords; then came reservations, divergencies and, finally, distrust and dissension. Lelewel's dubbing of Bakunin as the successor of the Decembrists containined a touch of irony which the Polish patriot did not surmise. As a matter of fact, Bakunin and Herzen follow the path of Pestel in the question of Poland. Accused by their compatriots of being ready to harm Russia in favor of Poland, they were simultaneously aware of the growing conflict between themselves and the Poles.

Bakunin, who year after year was waiting in Paris in vain for the outbreak of a revolution and who felt depressed by the calm prevailing in the West, was suddenly awakened from his despondency by the Polish events of 1846. In spite of the abortive result of the insurrection in 1846, Bakunin was henceforward observing with growing attention the life of the Polish émigrés, and tried to draw closer to them in the hope that a call for the nearest outbreak was most liable to come from them. He published in the periodical *Constitutionnel* an article on Poland and the White Ruthenian Uniates, and went to Versailles where the Central Committee of the Polish Democratic Society had its headquarters. He initiated conversations on the subject of a common revolutionary action on Polish territories occupied by Russia. The conversations were

fruitless. The Poles appeared to him "narrow-minded, limited, exclusive." "They see nothing beyond Poland." Besides, they did not quite trust a Russian to whom they would have to reveal their connections with the homeland, to mention names etc. Moreover, they did not see how they could profit by his collaboration. But Bakunin did not get discouraged. He stayed in Paris and tried to remain in contact with the Poles.

Paul Annenkov, who assisted Bakunin in his efforts and frequently met with the Poles, reported in his *Memoirs* that Bakunin "had failed to establish sincere relations between Polish émigrés and the Russian colony, though he often arranged common meetings and wisely steered their conversations. Though almost imperceptible to outsiders, there was always a touch of insincerity in their mutual relations, of which all participants were conscious." Bakunin, however, felt uneasy and, at the same time, attracted by that group of men who were preparing plans of an insurrection, of which he knew nothing, an insurrection which was to engulf Poland. He sensed that there was an opportunity, so dear to his heart, to arouse Eastern Europe, to awaken Russia, and to place a revolted people's Russia first at the head of the Slavonic nations, and then at that of a world revolution. He was fully aware that his real aims were entirely at variance with those of the Polish exiles. The intuition of a revolutionist agitator had helped him to see through the Polish soul. He knew how to speak to those people. What mattered was that the Poles start fighting anew, that a great fire breaks out, that the peasant giant of Russia arise. Then only would a new era in the history of the world begin. When all Eastern Europe was engulfed in flames, when thrones and monarchies began to crash, then a new, real life would begin, then the reconstruction of the world would start according to the plans deeply hidden in the soul of the oppressed and chosen people of Russia. The Polish problem was but a fragment of the great task. Actually, however, a Polish insurrection appeared to Bakunin the only way leading to that goal. Therefore, though the Poles were "narrow-minded, limited and exclusive" and never stopped thinking of the reconstruction of their homeland, it was necessary to encourage them to rise to use their favorite arguments, to flame their imagination, to excite their enthusiasm and extol their sacred watchwords.

In the meantime, by the end of 1847, symptoms of an approaching European revolution began to multiply. Bakunin's watchful ear caught those distant rumblings, still incomprehensible to the dull bourgeoisie. On September 6 he wrote to the Herweghs in Paris: "Believe me, soon matters will go well, soon life will begin for us... We shall only then be really happy, that is we shall be really happy when the whole globe will be enveloped by conflagration."

In June, 1849, seeing that Louis Napoleon's policies were tending toward autocracy, the Democratic and Socialist Left of the Second Republic attempted to seize the government. The attempt having ended in a failure, repressions started at once. Ledru-Rollin escaped to England. The members of the Central Committee of the Polish Democratic Society were searched by the police, many papers confiscated, and by the end of July the leaders of the Polish democratic emigration were ordered to leave France. The Democratic Society lived through very critical hours. Its Central Committee, soon after, resumed its activities in London. Beginning with January, 1851, the periodical *Demokrata Polski* (The Polish Democrat) was published in Brussels, but by the end of that year it had to be suspended, and its publication was renewed as late as October, 1852, in London, the new headquarters of the Democratic Society's Central Committee.

In the fall of the same year Alexander Herzen came to live in London, and a closer contact between him and the Polish democratic émigrés was soon established. On May 15, 1853, the *Polish Democrat* informed its readers that it had purchased its own printing shop and thus ensured its further regular publication. The issue contained also the following interesting information:

"Next to the printing shop of the Polish Democratic Society and connected with it a free Russian Printing Shop has been established through the care and at the expense of citizen Alexander Herzen. Citizen Herzen thus opens the field of his most sacred and important duties towards his own country, Russia and towards entire subjugated Europe."

This announcement was followed by reminiscences of Herzen's predecessors, the Decembrists, and of the Polish insurrection watchword: For your freedom and ours! "Citizen Herzen realized the duty of the Russian nation. Honor to him! It is up to us to do our duty, too. It is time, high time, indeed, to show that while we will never make a pact with the government of Nicholas, we are always ready to conclude a fraternal alliance with the Russian people against their devilish government... As soon as the idea of Pestel and Krzyżanowski is carried into effect, the obstacle to the liberty of Poland, of Russia, and of entire Europe will disappear."

The idea of Pestel and Krzyżanowski! A return to a legend, to a myth! Ignorance made people speak of one idea where there were two – clearly contradicting each other. The seeds of a clash were to be found in the ill-advised juxtaposition of those two names.

The above editorial was followed by Herzen's appeal to "My Russian Brethren," in Polish translation, wherein the author appealed to his

compatriots to interrupt their silence and to supply him with material for his publication.

"Look at our Polish brethren who are more cruelly oppressed than you. Do you not realize that for the last twenty years they have been spreading all over Poland all that they wanted, and this in spite of cordons of gendarmes and nets of spies. True to their great banner, inscribed with the watchword: 'For your freedom and ours,' they hold out their hands to you, and are ready to accomplish three-fourths of the necessary effort for you. It is up to you to do the rest. The Polish Democratic Society in London as a token of a fraternal union with the free people of Russia places its means and funds at your disposal. It is your duty to join them!"

In his memoirs Herzen wrote that Worcell who, at that time, was already ailing, was the first Pole with whom he discussed the establishing of a Russian printing shop. "Having listened to what I had to say, the sick man jumped out of bed, grabbed a pencil and a piece of paper and started to calculate how much money was needed, what kind of type had to be bought etc. It was Worcell who gave the first orders. 'God Almighty!' he said, holding in his hand the first sheet of proofs, 'a free Russian printing shop in London!' How many evil reminiscences fade away when I think of that scrap of paper."

Nine years later the *Polish Democrat* published a detailed report about the assistance the Poles had given Herzen who did not know how to establish a Russian printing shop in London. Russian type was ordered from Didot in Paris, who several years earlier had cast them for the imperial academy in Petersburg. "My own and Russia's gratitude will forever belong to Poland!" — was the exclamation used at that time by Herzen.[12]

Such were the origins of Russian literature free from censorship. Polish democrats had placed at the disposal of the Russian propaganda their technical apparatus, established since many years, in order to make possible the penetration of free Russian thought into Russia. They took care of the circulation of Russian writings and forwarded them to Russia by means known only to themselves. Since then the *Polish Democrat* not only informed its readers of every publication issued from the Russian printing shop, but it even enclosed the original Russian copies in its own issues.[13]

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[12] *Demokrata Polski*, Vol. XV of May 30, 1863. "On the Necessity of an Alliance between Poland and Revolutionary Russia." — The printing shop was located at 38 Regent Square.

[13] The issue of June 13, 1855 brought the following announcement: In the free Russian printing shop there appeared an appeal to the Russian nobility. The editor encloses this first uncensored Russian publication. — Underneath the following note in Russian: The Free Russian Printing Shop connected with The Polish Demo-

Herzen inaugurated the period of his collaboration with the Polish émigrés by publishing a brilliant pamphlet entitled *The Poles Are Forgiving Us.* It is easily perceivable that the pamphlet was written under the influence of the lofty pathos of Michelet's *Legend of Kościuszko,* published in 1851, which as far as Michelet's views on Russia were concerned, evoked a sharp rejoinder on the part of Herzen. Michelet described with sublime exaltation one of Mickiewicz's Parisian lectures on Slavonic Literatures: "We were confronted by a real miracle, an unheard-of, amazing fact, the remembrance of which makes me shiver... The Collège de France witnessed an extraordinary event; through it that chair became sacred. I have in mind the day when we saw and heard the great poet of Poland, her eminent representative, by virtue of his genius and his heart, how he sacrificed in the presence of France his most legitimate hatreds and spoke brotherly words about Russia. The Russians who attended were as if thunder-struck and stared at the ground while we Frenchmen, moved to the very depth of our souls, hardly dared lift our eyes at the unfortunate Polish listeners who were seated close to us. Was there any grief, any misery lacking in that crowd? No, not one. The misfortune of the world was to be found here in all its fullness. Exiles, outlaws, doomed men, broken by age, living wrecks of bygone days and battles long ago; poor elderly women humbly clad; princesses yesterday, toilers today; everything lost, position, fortune, blood, life; their husbands and sons buried on battlefields, or in Siberian mines. The sight of them pierced the heart. What power was needed, what enormous sacrifice and what pain, to speak to them as he did, to draw forth from them oblivion and forgiveness, to tear out what was left to them, their last treasure: hatred!... This is the secret of the White Eagle which lets fall the rain of its own blood and brings salvation to the Black Eagle..."[14]

The accents of Michelet's pathos ring also in Herzen's article:

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cratic Society. London. — In 1855 Herzen began to publish periodically a series of books under the general title *Polarnaya Zvezda* (The Polar Star). The first book appeared on August I. From then on Herzen published a book every year, except in 1860. In 1869, Herzen published one more book of the serial. In 1859 and 1861 he published two volumes of the *Istoricheskii Sbornik* (Historical Collection). From 1856 to 1860 he published nine volumes entitled *Golosa iz Rossii* (Voices from Russia). — From July 1857, Herzen published for ten consecutive years the *Kolokol* (The Bell) of which altogether 245 issues appeared, 196 in London, the remainder in Geneva. In 1868 Herzen began to publish the *Kolokol* in French; 15 issues appeared and 6 Russian supplements. After Herzen's death 6 issues of the *Kolokol* appeared under the editorshop of Nechayev. As a supplement to the *Kolokol* 13 numbers entitled *Pod Sud* (Up For Trial) appeared between 1859 and 1862. From 1862 to 1864 the *Kolokol* published a second supplement for the Russian Old Believers, entitled *Obshcheye Veche* (People's Common Assembly) of which 29 issues appeared. From October 1862 until 1864 Leon Fontaine published in Brussels in French *La Cloche,* 35 issues appeared consisting mainly of reprints from the Russian edition of the *Kolokol.*

[14] Michelet, *La Pologne Martyr,* Edition of 1863, pp. 25, 26.

"Blood and tears, a desperate struggle and a frightful defeat have tied Poland and Russia together. Russia has torn Poland's living body piece by piece, rending away province after province and like an inescapable misfortune, like an ominous cloud, she drew nearer and nearer to Poland's heart. Where she could not take by force she took by cunning; she sold her for money to her own enemies, and shared the loot with them...

"Warsaw and Istanbul were the two tormenting nightmares, the two deceiving phantoms that troubled the sleep of the Tsars in their Winter Palace."

Poland rose in 1830 and succumbed to superior might.

"Crushed by force, sold out by the Western governments and by their own traitors, the Poles, fighting, yielded step by step. Having crossed the frontier, they took their homeland with them and without bowing their heads, they proudly and gloomily carried it through the world. Europe reverently made way for the triumphal march of the gallant warriors. Nations came out with a bow to meet them. Kings stepped aside to let them pass. For a moment Europe roused herself at the sound of their steps. The noble picture of the Polish exile, that crusader for freedom, stayed in the memory of nations. Living on foreign soil for over twenty years in want and poverty, working in the sweat of their brows for a miserable morsel of bread, often hunted and driven from one country to another, the Polish exiles were absorbed by a single thought: the resurrection of Poland. Their faith did not pale amid their frightful experiences; their love did not abate amidst the most terrible wrongs; their activity did not weaken, nor their strength decline from the hardships and disappointments. On the contrary, whenever a call came from the peoples, in the gruesome days of war and danger, they were the first to answer: We are here. The fair-haired sons of Poland stood in the first rank of every national insurrection, considering any fight for freedom a fight for Poland.

"But not all their homeland was abroad. At the time when one Poland marched westward, saving the homeland by leaving the country, another Poland in chains went to Siberia, saving the homeland by martyrdom. Whoever was alive and had not become mute, whoever had hope, young and old, women, priests and children: they all went into the snow-covered steppes..."

But the era of the brotherhood of both nations is dawning.

"Only one sacrifice was lacking, but now it has been accomplished. Poland is forgiving Russia. Poland calls Russia to brotherhood. We speak of a democratic, a people's, a modern Poland. After so many losses, after so many sacrifices, they sacrifice even hatred itself."

In the name of the Decembrists, Herzen appealed to the Russians:

"Hasten to accept the hand outstretched to you. It is the hand of Muraviev and Pestel."

The Polish Central Committee in an appeal published in the *Polish Democrat* of August 15, 1853, reminded its readers that during their entire martyrology the Poles had always differentiated between the Russian people and the Russian government. Polish hearts are animated with "the most sincere and the purest feelings" towards the Russians. "We are brothers and we should, therefore, love each other and trust each other." Considering Herzen's declaration as that of the Russian nation, the appeal asked the Russians to prove their noble feelings by deeds.

"Brothers! we thank you for your sympathy. Poland appreciates your noble tears. But tears are not always becoming to the successors of Bestuzhev and Pestel. It is time, high time, indeed, to substitute a manly will for manly tears! Time has come for the Russians to cease being slaves and enslaving their brothers! Do you not hear the moaning and the imprecations of the people whom you have put in irons by order of the Tsar?... Russian Brothers! Your Polish brothers come to you imploring you to stop being executioners, to cease being used as a bloody whip of the world by your own Tsar! Russian brothers! Have pity on yourselves! Cease being an object of contempt and curses because of the crimes of your Tsar!" The appeal ended with the vision of a radiant future, uniting Poles and Russians in a common fight for their liberation.

This was one side of the mutual relations between Poles and Russians, romantic and exalted, ostentatious and festive, as prepared by Lelewel's appeals and the memorable Paris speech of Bakunin. But whenever final aims were to be formulated, their divergency became ominously evident. As far back as during the honeymoon of the London collaboration, Herzen had begun to write in the *Polish Democrat* about his favorite theories: of the blessing which Russia's cultural backwardness had proved to her, and of the special and providential aptitudes of the Russian nation to reconstruct the world upon the basis of communal communism.

"Modern revolutionary thought is Socialism" — he writes in the *Polish Democrat* on the occasion of the opening of the Russian printing shop. "There are no people in Europe better prepared for the outbreak of a social revolution than all non-Germanized Slavs, from the Montenegrins and Serbs to the Russian populations in the depth of Siberia. The way of life and the common law of the Slavs represent, in their substance, the picture of a communal, *i.e.* communistic organiza-

tion and customs in a primitive, semi-savage form. Its greatest flaw is the lack of personal, individual liberty, and yet no such picture can be found anywhere among Romano-Germanic nations."

As if making a confession of his own intellectual development, he calls attention to the fact, that after the French July revolution of 1830, and after the November insurrection in Poland of the same year, Russians threw themselves with passionate enthusiasm into the study of socialistic theories and subsequently began to pay more attention to the life of the Russian masses.

"We became aware at that time that the peasants who had so carefully preserved their commune, had never undergone the influence of the Roman law, of feudal institutions, of Catholic priests, Protestant disputants, or the bourgeois code, that those peasants had suffered only material oppression which made them unhappy, but which, thanks to their commune, had been unable either to crush or to demoralize them."[15]

The meeting organized in honor of the Polish November Rising, in London in 1853, was addressed by several foreigners as Ledru-Rollin, Linton and others. Herzen also took part in the commemoration and said among others: "No one in our country stops midway. All the things that chain you to the old world do not exist for us. Russia has torn herself violently and at once from all fetters: religion, tradition, authority. She does not need to preserve anything and has nothing to love, but much to hate. Compared with the old world Russia is in the position of the proletariat. The only thing she ever knew, was poverty, enslavement, tears and shame. Thus, these two disinherited ones will have a common resurrection: social revolution."[16]

The proletariat — and Russia. But were the Poles also ready to assert that they were the pariahs of civilization, and that their goal was the destruction of European society? And where did Herzen himself place the Polish nation? With those pristine peoples who were to destroy the world, or with those who were doomed to perdition? In his writings and speeches destined for Polish readers and audiences, and advocating joint action, Herzen seems to have drawn a veil over that important problem. In his open letter to Linton, however, published in 1854, he is rather outspoken regarding Poland.

"Europe must undergo a process of transformation and decomposition to be able to enter new combinations," he states, and then discussing the Slavonic world, he says that its hour has not yet struck, but that the future unquestionably belongs to it. Slavonic peoples did not

[15] *Demokrata Polski*, May 25, 1853.
[16] *Demokrata Polski*, December 15, 1853.

play any active historical rôle in the past and fell often under foreign domination. "Poland alone remained independent and strong... This resulted from the fact that she was less Slavonic than other peoples: she was Catholic, and Catholicism is wholly inconsistent with the genius of the Slavs. The Slavs were the first to start fighting the Papacy and their struggle had at the same time a deep social character (the Taborites). Conquered and subdued by Catholicism, Bohemia broke down. Poland therefore, maintained her independence by violating tribal unity and by drawing closer to the Western nations..."

Hence, the genius of the revolution, embodied in the Slavonic race, requires that Poland should, before all, break with her ancestral faith which Herzen considers to be the stigma of an obsolete Western civilization. Should Poland fail to do that, she would not be admitted to the promised land, and would be left on the *shore*, doomed to perdition. Let us substitute the Russian Orthodox church for revolution, and we shall have George Samarin and Ivan Aksakov. The requirements are in both cases the same, the breaking of the bonds with the rotten West. Cracks soon became visible upon the walls of the weak structure of the London Russo-Polish alliance. Some unknown forces were blowing up, from within, the Arc of the Covenant.

There was, however, one field always mentioned and stressed, whenever an understanding between Poles and Russians was at stake, a domain which eventually became the scene of the worst dissensions, — the Slavonic problem. The study of Slavonic nations, the wish to draw closer to them, a search — beyond tribal unity — for a community of ideas and political solidarity — these were the symptoms of a movement which appeared in Poland after the Napoleonic wars. Staszyc, Adam Czarnocki (Dołęga Chodakowski), Surowiecki, Rakowiecki, Linde, Lelewel, Kucharski, Maciejowski — these were the names of the prominent advocates of Slavdom and the pioneers of Slavonic studies. Beside her consciousness of racial affinity there was in conquered Poland a deep sympathy for the peoples subjected like herself to a foreign yoke. Oppression and Germanization under Prussian and Austrian rule strengthened the ties between the Poles and the Western Slavs resisting with the utmost effort the German tide.

Somewhat later an interest in other Slavonic peoples became manifest in Russia. A literary and political group of Slavophils is formed. This Slavonic movement met with Russia's earlier established policy applied in her struggle against Turkey as well as with Russia's steadily growing rivalry with Austria regarding the Eastern problem. In spite of an apparent friendship uniting both imperial courts, and in spite of

the reactionary policies both governments had in common, this rivalry led to a latent chronic conflict, which grew steadily more acute during the Russo-Turkish wars, as for instance, in 1828 and 1829. It was a long established policy of extending Russian protection over peoples of the Orthodox faith living under Turkish domination. This policy afforded Russia the opportunity to interfere with Turkey's inner affairs and assume the advantageous rôle of protector of the Sultan's subjects against the Sultan himself. These policies extended, gradually and discreetly in proportion with the growing Russo-Austrian conflict, upon the Slavonic nationalities of the Habsburg monarchy, and had the same aim as in Turkey: to make the Western Slavs gravitate towards Russia as the guardian and future liberator from Austrian rule. Such policies were closely connected with the old and never abandoned Russian plan to seize the Balkan peninsula, Constantinople and the Straits, and to establish an Eastern empire with a Russian Constantinople as the capital of the Greek Orthodox church and the Greco-Slavonic world united under the sceptre of the Tsar.

These ancient Russian policies towards Slavonic peoples, guided by a *raison d'état* aiming at the conquest of South-Eastern Europe and the modern Slavonic movement revealing itself in Russian scholarship and literature, had from their very start the tendency to merge and cooperate. Indeed, already during the bureaucratic rule of Nicholas I, which eliminated Russian citizens from any participation in political life, a certain rapprochement and collaboration between the government and the ideologists of Panslavism was effected, the latter making seemingly private, not political, connections with the Slavonic world.

The Slavophil doctrine is, in substance, as follows: the Russian nation is the chief representative of one of the two worlds of which European civilization is composed: the Eastern or Greco-Slavonic, and the Western or Latino-Germanic world. Western civilization consists of three elements: the Catholic Church; the historic heritage of ancient Rome; and, finally, conquest by means of which the Western States originated.

Western, Roman, Christianity has been distorted since the separation of the Churches, which the Slavophils regarded as an apostasy of the Roman church from the Universal church. Since then true faith had died out in the former, rationalism and secular ambitions of the clergy developed, while the Papacy rose above the Church. The natural result of that deviation was Protestantism and various scientific systems which maintained a critical attitude towards the Western church, as for instance, the theories of David Strauss, a contemporary of the first Slavophils. A dry rationalism forms the basis of the whole science and literature of the West, where one system of logic follows another, re-

sulting in a complete ignorance of those living forces which are to be found beyond the realm of logic and rational analysis. Again the entire political life of the West is founded upon conquest. This primary, genetic fact is characteristic of the entire political evoluton of the Western nations. It is composed of class and party struggle, of political upheavals and continuous acts of violence.

The aspect of the Eastern, Greco-Slavonic, Orthodox world is entirely different. The Orthodox church alone has preserved Christian faith in its purity, its doctrine had been established by Oecumenical Councils. Eastern theology, after the separation of the churches, represents true Christian philosophy. It is based not upon rationalism but upon a superior light, ethical and religious. Having obtained its faith from that pure source, the Russian nation acquired with it a sure foundation for its knowledge, unspoiled by the sophistry of the West and purified by the God-inspired teachings of the Eastern church. Western knowledge surpassed that of Byzantium by outward results of its research but only the latter is imbued with the light of the living Christian truth.

Divergencies of great importance are to be found also in the state organization. The Russian State was not created by violent means, but by the voluntary invitation of rulers by the people. The fact was decisive for the further evolution of the nation. Russia has never known feudalism, or inequality of classes; the land did not belong to a feudal aristocracy, but to the peasant communities; the Orthodox Church never did seek secular power. Russia's whole inner life was one of union and harmony; the Orthodox faith was the basis of morality and knowledge; the State was one fraternal union; authority rested in the hands of the Tsar united with his people by bonds of love. The people expressed their views and wishes at *zemski sobors*, which replaced the ancient assemblies (*veche*).

Peter's reforms destroyed those blissful conditions, separated the upper classes from the masses of the people and imposed upon the former an alien and qualitatively lower civilization, exposed the masses to scorn and humiliation, degraded the Orthodox church and introduced a dry formalism into public life. One must go back to the original elements of Russian life, restore the lost harmony and dignity of national life, step down to the masses who have preserved the old tradition in their faith, in their way of life and instincts. Only then will Russia occupy a leading position in the civilization of the world as a nation that holds in its bosom the disregarded seeds of truth and of true freedom.

The Slavophil doctrine was of a theological character which brought it closer to the nationalistic theories of ancient Moscow. The chief theologist of the Slavophil creed was Alexey Khomiakov. He and

Ivan Kireyevski, who wrote a great deal on the rôle of the Orthodox church, not only believed in the superiority of the Orthodox over the Catholic church, but seriously affirmed that the Catholic world, bereft of the light of superior truth, was on the eve of total exhaustion, and would have to save itself by adopting Orthodoxy. The differences between Western and Russian knowledge are to be found not in the quantity of their achievements but in their quality. Western knowledge is inferior in its very essence. Western civilization has already passed its apogee; rationalistic analysis has destroyed all foundations of faith. The peoples of the West are aware of the fact that their life is void of inner meaning, general discontent makes itself felt. The Western world resembles the ancient Roman world in the period of its exhaustion, when it was torn by inner dissensions, too weak to absorb new elements which had been preserved by peoples who up to that time had been playing only a minor rôle in mankind's history. Similarly today the Western world is to be renewed and reborn by elements inherent in the Orthodox-Slavonic world.

Some Slavophils, as Ivan Kireyevski, recognized certain merits of the West and trusted that it would return to the path of truth. Others, as Dmitri Valuyev, were skeptical as to the ability of the West to understand Orthodox truth and left the poor West at the mercy of its own destiny, saying that it "had been doomed to accomplish its allotted cycle of life." The legend of the rotting West began to spread. It was launched for the first time by Shevyrev, editor of the periodical *Moskvitianin* in which the Slavophils published their articles. "In our relations with the West" – wrote Shevyrev in 1841 – "we are dealing with a man suffering with a malignant and contagious disease, and exhaling a deadly breath. We embrace him, we share with him the food of thought, we drink with him from the same cup of feeling – and while associating with him so freely we do not notice the concealed poison, and in the delight of the banquet, we do not perceive the future corpse of which he already smells." The characteristic traits of the West are "the licentiousness of thought and the impudence of knowledge."

The Slavophil Valuyev thinks that the Western nations are looking for glitter and comfort; they lull their spirits. wallow in moral sybaritism. Orthodox nations have done more for Christian truth by their passive and humble inactivity, than the West by its feverish activity. Russia pays for her cultural acquisitions from the West at the expense of her inner life. Ivan Kireyevski believed that Russia was the holder of the inner truth; that she always valued the substance of justice higher than the letter and the form of the law; the sacredness of tradition was dearer to her than logical argumentation, and morality more precious

than material profit. The principle of self-denial and constant sacrifice permeates the whole life of the Russians.

Similar views were spread by Samarin who wrote under the pen-name M.Z.K. The best elaboration of the politico-historical aspect of Slavophilism was given by Constantine Aksakov, the elder brother of Ivan; the latter was an ardent Slavophil, a noted nationalist and Polonophobe in the days of Alexander II and Alexander III.

Developing the thesis, common among the Slavophils, that Western States had their origins in conquests, while Russia's power was based upon the voluntary invitation of the rulers by the masses of the people, Constantine Aksakov declared that violence, hatred and slavery were the dominant traits of the West, while Russia was founded upon harmony, liberty and peace. This difference between Russia and the West runs throughout the whole of history. The West is only capable of passing from slavery to revolt which it identifies with liberty, while in Russia it sees only slavery. Russia, however, submits to authority voluntarily and spontaneously, and considers the Western rebel a slave who humbles himself before the idol of rebellion just as he did before the idol of authority. Not only did Constantine Aksakov consider the Orthodox Church the sole true Christianism, but he extolled and idealized ancient Russian paganism and asserted that Russia had deservedly obtained from God the true faith. The West, on the other hand, has deservedly obtained a distorted religion. The Russian Slavs, even while still pagans, were ready to accept the Christian faith, having a presentiment (*chayanie*) of Christianity. The paganism of the Russian Slavs merged with faith in a supreme being and possessed the ability of grasping the hidden meaning of universal events. It was still a rather misty faith, not clear enough, requiring enlightenment, awaiting a ray of truth. "The Russian people got baptized as easily as an infant, without any struggle." There was no hard varnish of error over their spirit. Their history is imbued with simplicity which a man of the West, used to theatrical effects, is unable to understand. The Russian nation is not enamoured of charming poses or of those esthetic effects in which Western life abounds. The individual does not play an excessive rôle; individualism is characterized by pride, and pride is foreign to Russian history. "Knighthood and its bloody deeds are as unknown to the history of Russia as are inhuman religious propaganda, the crusades and the constant pompous drama of the passions." Like prayer, the quiet and humble life of Russia contrasts with the boisterous life of the West. For that humility Russia was rewarded by expanding into the largest and most powerful State of the world.

The Russian nation, throughout the whole of its political history, distinguished two separate domains: the State and the land, *i.e.* the

government and the national and social life. A mutual confidence between the prince and the people has been for centuries a characteristic trait of Russia. The prince called meetings of his own volition, just as the Tsar later called the *Sobors,* and asked the assembled representatives what was their judgment in important State matters. They answered: Such is our opinion, but let it be according to the will of the monarch. There was no room for egoism or pride on either side, but an equal solicitude for the weal of the nation. The people were organized upon the principle of community life and common ownership of the soil. In such a system the people do not need any guarantee on the part of the State. Any guarantee or pledge is an evil — says Aksakov and other Slavophils, who regard a guarantee as a Constitution, and who are opposed to any legal limitation of the monarch's authority. Guarantees and pacts are of no avail when mutual relations between the ruler and the peoples are not based upon love and mutual confidence.

Constantine Aksakov and other Slavophils, while depicting Russian political conditions in bright colors, failed to notice the real relations between the despotic Tsars and their subjects; they ignored the fact that serfdom dated from the days of the Moscow tsardom; they overlooked peasant rebellions of that era as that of Stenka Razin, the inner schism in the Orthodox Church (*Raskol*), which took place before the reign of Peter I, and all those symptoms of tyranny, savagery and barbarism by which the real life of idealized Moscow was characterized.

According to the Slavophils, Orthodoxy constituted the natural and universal religion of the Slavonic world. Christianity came to the Slavs from Byzantium, and if some Slavonic nations later renounced Orthodoxy, the rebirth and the reunion of the Slavonic nations make it imperative that Catholic, Uniate as well as Protestant Slavs abandon their schism and return to the fold of Orthodoxy. To prove the approaching realization of the historical mission of the Orthodox Slavs, Dmitri Valuyev quotes among others the reunion of Lithuanian and White Ruthenian Uniates with Orthodoxy, *i.e.* the outrageous act of violence committed by Russia upon millions of Uniates in 1839. In the light of that doctrine the Poles are traitors to the Slav cause, for they adopted the Latin creed and Western forms of political life, because they paid homage to the idol of rebellion, in the days of their independent Commonwealth by limiting the authority of their monarchs and introducing a parliamentary system, and, after Poland's partitions, by rebelling against the sacred authority of the Orthodox Tsar.

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Entering the field of Slavonic community Russia met a tremendous obstacle which apparently barred her way: the Polish problem, the problem of a Slavonic nation conquered by her with the assistance of two German monarchies, partitioned with them, oppressed and denationalized by the three Powers. At the very same time when the first Russian Slavophils toured the Western Slavonic countries, the bonds between Russia, Prussia and Austria were tightened in Münchengrätz in 1833. The understanding pertained above all to the stifling at any price of any manifestations of the Polish spirit rebelling against enslavement. When in 1835, the apostle of Russian Panslavism, Michael Pogodin, made his first pilgrimage to Slavonic countries, the rulers of Russia and Prussia at a great military review near Kalisz mutually pledged brotherhood-in-arms. How could the oppressors of the Polish nation declare to the Western and Southern Slavs that the *White Tsar* was eager to liberate them? Could there be any Slavs who would take such a declaration seriously?

The dilemma facing Russia was not easy. It seemed that there were only two solutions possible: either to stop oppressing Poland and treating her as a hostile country, conquered and doomed to denationalization, or to renounce the Slavonic policy and openly proclaim a Russian *raison d'état* aiming at new conquests, even over the dead bodies of Slavonic nations. The Russian policy supported by scholars, publicists and the Slavophil party, attempted to find another way out of that dilemma, one contrary to the truth and common sense, not to mention moral considerations, and to reconcile two things: to continue the oppression of Poland and yet to appear as the protector and liberator of other Slavonic nations. The absurdity of such a combination seemed so glaring that its absolute and ignominious failure appeared unavoidable. And yet, in spite of everything, the attempt was crowned with considerable success. That success is unquestionably one of the most extraordinary phenomena of modern European politics.

What sophisms were used to achieve such an end? There were all kinds of arguments from a brazen negation of the truth, to its most crafty distortion. Thus it was openly denied that Poland under Russian rule was oppressed. On the contrary, it was argued, the largest part of the nation, the peasants, had never enjoyed such prosperity as under Russian rule. It was only the nobility and the clergy who were complaining, the two classes of the nation, which were responsible for its misfortunes. They were unable to govern the Polish State in the past and brought Poland to the verge of anarchy, and now they treat any attempt to maintain a stable order in the country as despotism and are continuously organizing conspiracies and risings. If, therefore, fratricidal wars between the two nations do occasionally occur as, for in-

stance, in 1830, the responsibility for them rests on the Poles. Particularly for the Slavs, the argument was used by Russia that she had protected a part of Poland against the pressure of Germany, saved her from Germanization and preserved her Slavonic character. When, however, the oppression and denationalization of Poland under the reign of Nicholas I became too conspicuous and when it was no longer possible to justify not only reprisals but a manifest trend to destroy the entire national Polish life, by putting all the blame on the rising of 1830, the Russians began to elaborate a new theory for the consumption of the Slavonic nations. It was argued that the denationalization of Poland, depriving her of her age-old institutions and the attempt at wiping out her historical individuality resulted from Russia's solicitude to preserve the Slavonic character of the Polish nation. Poland had, in the very first centuries of her national existence, broken faith with the other Slavonic nations by adopting the Catholic religion and distorting her Slavonic nature through the deadly influence of Latinism. The natural religion of the Slavs was the Eastern-Greek faith, Orthodoxy, which was the original religion of all Slavs. Poland had later renounced it in favor of Catholicism, distorting thereby the entire course of her culture and placing herself in discord with the majority of Slavdom. It is Russia's duty to restore to that nation, gone astray, its original character.

This seemingly inconceivable and absurd theory, made up to justify violence, was being developed by the foremost Slavophil minds, and quite particularly by the gifted publicist, George Samarin. All these arguments, when taken seriously, completely reversed the real picture of Poland's oppression by Russia, justified the conduct of the Russian government and actually indicted Poland of treason against Slavdom, and apostasy from the racial Slavonic faith. Thus when in 1839 the Russian government, availing itself of the services of the apostate, Joseph Siemaszko, made the notorious attempt against the Uniates of White Ruthenia and by force, *per nefas*, incorporated these defenseless people into the Russian Orthodox Church, this ruthless act was interpreted by the tsarist government as the liberation of the Ruthenian population from the union with Rome, which had allegedly been imposed upon them by violence centuries ago, and as a voluntary return of those people to the religion of their ancestors.

In such a fabricated doctrine, clothed in Slavonic disguise, the Poles could not help seeing a venomous and hateful weapon used to justify the crime which had been committed against Poland, a weapon all the more odious because it was poisoned with hypocrisy and aimed at tranferring the stigma of Cain from Russia upon Poland.

This doctrine began to spread in the fourth decade of the nineteenth century. It became widely popular when modern Russian na-

tionalism approached its apogee, in 1863. It was formulated by Samarin in his essay published in the *Den*, entitled "The Present Scope of the Polish Problem". As formulated by Samarin, the doctrine is a fragment of the fundamental thesis of the Slavophils concerning the antinomy between the Greco-Slav and the Romano-Germanic worlds. "Centuries long experience", says Samarin, "had demonstrated the profound difference and incompatibility of Latinism and Slavism. Having adopted Christianity from Rome, Poland had sold her Slavonic soul. Wherever Slavdom comes in contract with Latinism, it withers and decays. The Czechs owe the preservation of their nationality to Hussitism. Protestantism was a revolt against Latinism, but did not free itself from the latter radically enough. No Slavonic nation, however, has as completely submitted to Latinism as Poland, and therefore she had to perish. "Like two souls in one body, Slavism and Latinism have waged and are waging, up to the present, a fierce struggle with each other. Therein lies the deep and tragical element of Poland's history." There exists, however, a Slavonic undercurrent in Poland, but it is being throttled by Latinism. Russia cannot be an indifferent witness of that struggle, and must lend a helping hand to that fraternal trend.

In propounding such theories Samarin understood them in practical application as Russia's right and duty to impose upon Poland a Russian character as well as the Russian Orthodox religion.

During the reign of Nicholas I the practical propaganda of Panslavism among the Southern, and quite particularly the Western Slavs, could not be fully developed because the Tsar, though not refusing to support the Slavs to a certain degree, maintained an attitude of reserve towards the Slavonic movement which he suspected of revolutionary tendencies, of inciting the peoples against their legitimate governments. Especially after the detection in 1846 of the conspiracy of the secret Sts. Cyril and Methodius association in Kiev, which aimed at merging all Slavonic nations into a democratic federal union, the Russian government began to look with suspicion at the propaganda of the Slavonic idea within the tsarist empire. By order of the Tsar, Uvarov, the minister of education, explained in his circular of May 29, 1847, addressed to the chiefs of the school districts that the teachers should "kindle the patriotic spirit not from a Slavdom created by imagination, but from the Russian element."[17]

During the reign of Alexander II the Slavophils were granted a greater freedom of action, and worked in closer connection with the

[17] Rozhdestvenski, *Istoricheskii Obzor Ministerstva Narodnago Proveshchenya* (Historical Survey of the Ministry of National Education) Petersburg 1902, p. 224.

government, which was particularly stimulated by the Russo-Austrian antagonism aggravated during the Crimean War.

At the first Panslav Congress which met in Prague in 1848 there were but very few Russians. Among the 341 delegates there were 237 Czechs and Slovaks, 60 Poles, 42 Yugoslavs and 2 Russians: — Bakunin and an Old-Rite Orthodox priest from Biala Krynitsa in the Bukovina, by the name of Miloradov. Bakunin joined the northern, Polish section. The next Slavonic congress, however, which met in Moscow in 1867, was held under Russian auspices and under the protectorate of the Russian government. The elements of Russia's Slavonic policy found on that occasion their full expression. The Poles, not present at the Congress, were anathematized as renegades of the Slavonic cause. The Congress was a glaring illustration of the success which Russian policy, aided by propaganda, achieved in pursuing the goal that in 1848 appeared unachievable: to combine before the assembled Slav delegates the traits of the guardian of Slavdom, and, simultaneously, as the executioner of Poland whom she had of late knocked out in a bloody, uneven struggle.[18] Stripped after her recent insurrection of the last vestiges of her autonomy, Poland was now being reviled and exposed to fantastic accusations of having betrayed Slavdom. At a banquet in Petersburg the poet Tiutchev declared in his speech: "The panic-stricken West trembles at the sight of this meeting of the entire family of Slavonic nations... And among us, oh, brothers, what a shame! In the midst of our Slavonic family, only one has escaped the hatred of our sworn foes, only that one who has always been a traitor and odious felon to his kin. He, that Judas of ours, is the only one to be honored by their kisses..."

The mention of Judas of Slavdom made a tremendous impression. "The audience could not hold their tears" — wrote the daily *Moskovskiya Vedomosti.* Murmurs mixed with repressed sobs. This ended the mention of the absent Poles at the Petersburg banquet.

Later, during the visit of the delegates in Moscow, at a banquet offered them in Sokolniki, a series of speeches were delivered. Among the speakers was Michael Pogodin who expressed his joy over the meeting of the entire Slavonic family.

"Entire?" — he repeated — "No! I do not see here any Poles.... Where are they?.... Unfortunately, they alone among the Slavs keep aloof.... But let us not exclude them forever from our family. Let us rather express the wish that, cured of their blindness, they may recognize their errors. Oh! if they only would forget the past, renounce

[18] J. Klaczko, *Kongres Moskiewski* (The Moscow Congress), Cracow 1867. Appeared in French in the *Revue des Deux Mondes,* September 1, 1867.

their hatred, and surrender to the mercy of our most beloved monarch! The joy of the Russians and of the Slavs would then be complete...." Loud grumbling greeted the last sentence. Ivan Aksakov arose and declared: "It is Russia's mission to realize Slavonic brotherhood in liberty. Any Slavonic people that betrays this joint mission, that turns away from its brothers and renounces them, renounces its own existence and must perish! Such is the unshakable law of the history of the Slavs!..." Before going to Moscow the Czech leaders, Palacky and Rieger, had been in Paris and had promised the Poles that they would take their side at the Panslavic Congress. So now Rieger arose to keep his promise. He recalled first that in 1863, when all Western nations were siding with the Polish insurrection, he and Palacky did not hesitate to declare themselves against it. "We openly and candidly recognized the errors and the iniquities committed by the Poles and at the same time we recognized the justness of Russia's demands." He then expatiated upon Poland's historical offenses against Russia and stated that the punishment dealt out to her was well deserved. He appealed, however, to the justly offended but at present triumphant Russia, to be magnanimous. "I want to believe that the Poles will acknowledge the faults and injustices committed against you, and that they will declare themselves repentant... I know that you still feel embittered, that your wounds are still bleeding, but I trust that as soon as the Poles will have sincerely recognized Russia's rights, you too will utter words of love and forgiveness." The above speech which asked mercy for prodigal Poland in words so humiliating to her and which, disregarding truth and justice, so completely reversed the problem of guilt and wrong, was delivered by Rieger who, heretofore, had been enthusiastically received and listened to, among grumblings, interruptions, and hissings. When he finished his speech the atmosphere in the hall was rather distressing. Suddenly rose Prince Cherkasski, a Slavophil who first enumerated all the blessings bestowed by the Russian government upon the Poles in "several Vistula provinces of the Empire" and then declared that the Slav conscience need not be alarmed about Poland under Russian domination. The present attitude of Russia to Poland was a matter of necessity and could not be changed unless the Poles would sincerely renounce the thought of a separate national existence. "When the sons of Poland return under the common family roof upon their own volition, not as recalcitrant children, but as that prodigal son of the Scripture, remorseful and humbly repentant, then we shall receive them with open arms, and there will not be a calf fat enough in our herd which we would not kill for that feast of jubilation!"

For this retort to Rieger and the prospect expressed in biblical terms that Poland would renounce her independent national existence,

the assembly rewarded the Russifier of Poland with an enthusiastic ovation. There was no one else who would dare intercede in favor of Poland even in such a way as was done by Rieger, and no false chord was struck anymore to disturb the second Slavonic Congress.

Among the émigrés, after the 1830 insurrection, the idea of a common Slavonic cause played a considerable rôle.[19] Its ardent and learned pioneer was Lelewel, a student and idealizer of the Slavonic past, ever dreaming of a future federation of free Slavonic peoples. In his appeal to the Russians which he published as the president of the National Committee of the émigrés in 1832, he asked them to arm for a fight against their despotic government, oppressor of Poland and Russia, to advance the great idea of a federation of Slavonic peoples.

"Also you, Russians, are summoned to do this by the voice of Slavdom subjugated and moaning in bondage, whose subjugation was plotted by the German potentates and your own autocrat. A Slav stretches out his hand to his brother Slav. A Slav willingly assists his brother Slav in regaining freedom...."

Lelewel remained true to this ideal during his entire life. Sixteen years later, in Brussels, at the anniversary of the execution of Szymon Konarski, on February 14, 1848, Lelewel came forward with a still more urgent appeal to the Slavs to unite in a common fight for liberty and eventually to form a Slavonic federation: "Russians, Poles, Czechs, Serbs, Croats, Bosniaks, Dalmatians, Rascians, Bulgarians and Illyrians should consider themselves brothers, one large family. There should be among them no precedence and no preference. Each one of those nations should understand that fraternity is the foundation of their close alliance. Whether we shall call it a federation, a union, a confederation or united states, upon such a basis a common agreement will soon be reached."[20]

The Polish Democratic Society made the liberation of a democratic and independent Poland its national aim. Its members were confident that a liberated Poland would assist other Slavonic nations in awakening and following Poland's example. The manifesto of 1836 declared: "Only an independent and democratic Poland is able to fulfill her mission, to break the alliance of absolutism, to destroy its pernicious influence on Western civilization, to spread democratic ideas among the

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[19] Polish émigrés published many articles and essays on the Slav problem in West European periodicals. English public opinion received its information on Slavonics matters mainly from Polish pens. St. Kozmian in 1840 published in the *Dublin Review*, organ of the Catholics, an essay on Slavdom based upon the *History of Slav Legislations* by Maciejowski. He refuted the errors of Henry Hallam on that subject. A résumé of that essay may be found in *Młoda Polska* (Young Poland) of 1840, issues of June 10, 20 and 30. Paris.

[20] Joachim Lelewel, *Polska, dzieje i rzeczy jej* (Poland, her History and Affairs), Vol. XX, Poznań, 1864, pp. 544, 545.

Slavs, today serving as tools of subjugation, to unite them with that idea, and by her virtues, by her purity and strength of spirit give rise to the universal emancipation of the European peoples."

Polish democrats considered the Slavonic problem inseparable from the destruction of the absolutisms of the three East-European monarchies, from an alliance with the nations of the West, and the liberation of all conquered nations. It was in that spirit that they participated in the Prague meeting of 1848, the initiative of which was due to Andrew Moraczewski. Karol Libelt was the chief author of the *Manifesto to the Western Peoples,* published after the dispersion of the Congress by Windischgraetz. The Polish democrats believed that the Polish nation, which had been in the past the most genuine representative of liberty and in the days of the emigration most closely connected with the democratic movement of the West, should be the standard bearer of the principles of liberty among the Slavs. They did not, however, follow the example of the Russian Panslavists in laying claims to dominate other Slavonic nations.

Mochnacki considered Poland the "only true representative of the great Slavonic race, its splendor, power and refinement." Mickiewicz in his Paris lectures stressed the great moral rôle of Poland for the future of Slavdom.

"The future of Slavdom" — said Mierosławski in his speech of November 1843 — "and consequently the new period of the life of Europe was grafted upon our wounds. The thought of tomorrow shot forth upon our defeat as the harvest on the field of battle and impressed its marks on every handful of Polish ashes."

The Panslavic idea found its radical representative in Zenon Świętosławski, a member of the extreme Left of the Polish democratic émigrés. In the *Statutes of the Universal Church* he declared: "I am heart and soul in favor of one indivisible Slavonic Republic." He called all Slav nations by the cumulative name of Slavonia. "Slavonia — he said — and quite particularly the very core of the whole Slavonic family, Poland," has created the idea of the sovereignty of the people.

August Cieszkowski, the eminent Polish philosopher, justified the need of a Slavonic philosophy and foresaw for the Slavonic nations a leading rôle in the third epoch of history which was to come for mankind. Cieszkowski's Slavonic philosophy of history was moulded under the influence of the German philosophy of Hegel. Cieszkowski's idealization of the Slavonic race was an answer to the idealization of the German race by Fichte and Hegel. In the works of the eulogist of Slavdom is also visible the influence of Herder's *Ideen zur Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit* (Ideas Pertaining to the Philosophy of the History of Mankind) so highly praised by W. A. Maciejowski in his

introduction to the *History of Slav Legislations.* Herder's work contained a poetical and sympathetic characterization of the Slavs, taking into account their positive and negative traits. The well-known characterization of the Slavonic race in Cieszkowski's *Ojcze nasz* (Our Father) is reminiscent of Herder, however with a stronger tendency to apotheosis.[21]

Another outstanding Polish philosopher, Bronisław Trentowski, in his *Przedburza Polityczna* (On the Eve of the Political Storm) expressed the conception, which was later developed by Herzen who leaned towards Slavophilism, namely that in the folk-life of the Slavs were inherent the elements of the new life which the West attempted to attain by means of a bloody upheaval proclaimed in the theories of social revolutions. "Social bonds are differently understood by the Germanic and the Slavonic mind. What Fourier had written, and what in France and Germany still belongs to the realm of dreams, existed at its best, centuries ago, and must exist again among the Slavs... Diligently examine and study Slavonic antiquities, to learn how your great, though pagan, ancestors lived in community of goods, in brotherly love and in the bliss of the Kingdom of God. God has entrusted the elements of the world's salvation to the Slavs and the Poles for centuries and for the distant future. The day is approaching when they will develop fully and take the Europe of the new era under their sway."[22]

Polish émigrés of all political shades, when stressing the principles of Slavonic solidarity, did so in the belief, and under the condition, that the Slavs would lead mankind towards the ideal of the brotherhood and freedom of nations. They warned the Slavs against a reactionary and imperialistic racial egoism with which they might get infected if they followed the road of Russian Panslavism.

The great romantic poet, Zygmunt Krasiński, believed that it was Poland's chief duty towards the Slavs to save them from the pernicious influence of the Russian Panslavism, hostile to Western civilization. "The Russo-Asiatic principle aims at the ultimate destruction on this earth of all traces of Christian love and liberty. Poland has been ordered to save ten Slavic nations from that deadly influence. Thus accomplishing her Slavonic mission, Poland accomplishes at the same time another one which is universal." [23]

[21] Selections of Cieszkowski's work are available in an English translation: *The Desire of All Nations.* Prepared by William J. Rose. London. Student Christian Movement, 1919.

[22] B. F. Trentowski, *Przedburza Polityczna* (On the Eve of the Political Storm) Freiburg im Breisgau, 1848, pp. 43-46.

[23] Krasiński's letter to Montalembert on the occasion of the latter's speech on Poland, delivered on January 21, 1847. T. Pini's edition of Krasiński's works, Lwów, 1904, Vol., VI, pp. 365, 366.

Lelewel, too, though believing that the Russian people would participate in the democratic movement of the future Slavonic federation, warned the Slavs against tsarist Panslavism. "There is no lack of people of good faith, but ignorant and credulous ones, who, ensnared by the deceptive lustre of the state's greatness, run blindly into Panslavism and prostrate themselves before the Tsar" – declared Lelewel in Brussels on February 14, 1848, at the anniversary of the death of Szymon Konarski. "The idol of Panslavism, under the guise of high priest and autocrat, presides everywhere where debauchery, bribery, violence and murder establish their rule.... Be on your guard, brother Slavs! I have tried at many public meetings to explain the difference between the tsarist policy, called Panslavism, and the common interest of the Slavs..."

When in the second half of 1848 the Austrian reactionaries began to use the Slavs as a tool against democratic and nationalistic movements, and when Jellacić became the representative of those Slavs in the Habsburg monarchy, the sympathy of Polish democrats turned towards Hungary which was fighting the Habsburg army that soon was aided by the troops of Nicholas I. Some alarming controversies had occurred at the Prague meeting. "The Hungarian Serbs demanded from the Poles to eliminate any expression that could appear to menace the Russian Tsar." They considered it necessary for political reasons.[24]

The Central Committee of the Polish Democratic Society decided to revise the attitude of Polish democracy towards the Slavonic movement in the form the latter had assumed in Austria by the end of 1848. The Central Committee stressed with the greatest emphasis that Polish democracy considered loyalty to the principles concordant with the age-old national tradition and put forward by the Democratic Society as its program, more important than the principle of racial community. This was done in the appeal dated December 20, 1848.[25] The declaration stated that had Poland collaborated with the counter-revolutionary activities of the Austrian Slavs, "she would have found herself in opposition to entire democratic Europe... and would have renounced her nine-centuries-old past during which she had fought and sacrificed herself, not for the principle of race but for that of Christian civilization." "Having broken off with the family of European nations with whom she had collaborated for many centuries in the interest of humanity, spurned by them as a traitor to the sacredness of

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[24] Jędrzej Moraczewski, *Opis Pierwszego Zjazdu Słowiańskiego* (Report on the First Slavonic Congress), Poznań 1848, p. 21.

[25] *Demokrata Polski*, Vol. XII, part I, issue of January 13, 1849. The following signed the appeal: Adolf Chrystowski, Wojciech Darasz, Ludwik Mierosławski, Józef Ordęga, Stanisław Worcell.

a sworn alliance, Poland, lost in the Slavonic wilderness would cease to be the herald of freedom in the East of Europe, and becoming a tool of despotism, she would recklessly commit shameful suicide."

"Slavism, as it is being understood and developed by its partisans of today, carries within it the germ of perdition of Polish nationality, and the protracted bondage of all Slavs. Opposing that doctrine we do not, by any means, act against the Slavs. On the contrary, we may conscientiously repeat to our Slav brothers the same words which appeared on our banners during the November Insurrection: 'For your freedom and ours!'... We are fully aware how great are Poland's duties towards the Slavs. We know that it is part of her mission to liberate those peoples from the yoke of despotism. But to be able to fulfill that mission of civilization Poland must first of all exist. Only an independent Poland will be for the Slavs a lighthouse which will show them the harbor of a new life."

When the "Slovanska Lipa" (Slavonic Linden), a Czech organization, published an appeal to the Poles to turn away from the West, which leads them to ruin, the Polish democratic Central Committee answered by publishing an appeal to all Slavs. They summoned them to cease being a tool in the hands of Habsburg absolutism which was backed by the Tsar. The appeal said among others:

"You must acknowledge that the brotherhood of spirit and principles is superior to the ties of body and blood, language and race. Once the principle is victorious and your Habsburg-Moscow props will crash, Poland will no longer be in her tomb. As resurrected Christ who led the resuscitated patriarchs into heaven, Poland will be the first to call her Slavonic sisters by name and seat them next to herself at the great banquet of nations united in holy alliance. She will not be their ruler or mistress, but she will place at their disposal the accumulated fruits of her labors, of her secular sufferings, of her historical experience, nay, even of her errors.... We shall become a knot of an eternal alliance between Eastern and Western Europe...."[26]

The Central Committee of European Democracy, the members of which were Ledru-Rollin, J. Mazzini, A. Ruge, D. Bratiano, and Darasz, the latter representing the Polish Democratic Society, published in 1851 an appeal to the Poles:

"Does not Europe know that you have given the world the great idea of a federation of Slavonic peoples? This idea was first revealed at the time of Boleslav the Great. Why should you not give the watchword to the Slavonic world? Why should not Warsaw become the

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[26] Appeal of the Central Committee of the Polish Democratic Society of December 29, 1848. *Demokrata Polski*, January 27, 1849.

Rome of the North, the center of Northern races, just as Rome was the center of those of Southern and Central Europe?"....[27]

The assertion seems justified that the Polish democrats were anxious to see in Slavdom a link between the Polish national cause and the alliance of all nations. Slavonic community appeared to them a stage between Polish national aspirations and the idea of a brotherhood of nations, a junction on the path outlined by the Polish Democratic Socity: through Poland to mankind... Generalizing that principle they believed that by following that path every other Slavonic nation was progressing from its exclusive national cause towards the universal cause of humanity.

But whenever they became aware of the fact that Slavdom attempted to detach them from their union with Western nations, that the Slavs tried to create a separate Eastern world, opposed to that of the West, they spontaneously returned to their own path, prizing higher their union with European civilization than the principle of racial solidarity.

At the same time they strove to persuade the Slavonic nations that by turning their back on the West, they were swerving from the path leading to a better future, and were becoming a tool of a Russian Panslavist fanaticism, hostile to European civilization. And then they were accused by that very Panslavism of apostasy from Slavdom.

[27] *Demokrata Polski*, No. 31, August 3, 1851.

8.

WARNINGS

THE POLES GREETED with friendly feelings and hope the beginning of the new movement which seemed to herald the coming of a new Russia. However, knowing Russia better than the Western nations, and more closely connected with her destinies they grasped quicker, with more alertness and accuracy some ominous signs which had appeared in the very dawn of that revolutionary movement, as if distant lightnings, hardly perceptible, auguring a storm, not yet imminent, but inevitable.

The period discussed in the preceding chapters and embracing the years between the 1830 and 1863 insurrections marks the era of Poland's most penetrating judgment in respect of Russia. In vain would one look in the years that were to follow from the positivist era up to the revolution of 1917, for such a clear and general realization of the characteristic traits of Russian life, as well as for such a precise definition of the dangers threatening the future on the part of tsarist Russia. In that earlier period the aptitude to understand Russia seemed to be a peculiarity of all enlightened people of that generation, not only of men of the stature of Mickiewicz and Mochnacki, but even of average minds. Such an understanding of a foreign nation may be found only among people who are deeply conscious of their own national being. A consciousness of that kind was a distinctive feature of the generations to which the Polish émigrés of 1831, 1848 and even 1863, belonged. It was still possible for them to immerse in the deep current of Polish national culture, which in those days had clearly maintained its distinct individuality as well as its superiority over the younger modern Russian mentality which had begun to develop in the full sense of the word only under the reign of Alexander I.

Though men of exceptional talents had appeared in the Nicholas era, and though in the period between the Crimean war and the 1863

insurrection, Herzen, and later, Bakunin were more gifted than the Polish émigré political writers, with the possible exception of the collaborators of the Paris *Wiadomości Polskie* (Polish News), yet the Poles were superior in historical experience, political maturity and in their close and thorough familiarity with the centers of the political and social movements of Western Europe. That superiority of an older and as yet unstifled culture, so freely manifesting itself among the émigrés in the West, placed the Poles on an elevation from which they could penetrate the peculiar forms, unlike any others, of Russian life, perceive its failings and uncover its secret abysses. Therefore they easily distinguished between that which was in the Russian dreams an unrealizable utopia and ancient Russian reality, hardly concealed under the deceptive colors of freedom, execrated, yet hard to eradicate.

Later generations of Poles, living under Russian domination, and brought up in Russian schools, were generally, with few exceptions, affected by the Russian spirit, not so much in their conscious sympathies but rather in their unconscious conception of life. After the insurrection of 1863 the nation's vital energy was weakened for many years; contact with the West had become less close; native currents were more shallow; Poland had lost her superiority, while Russian influence was on the increase, for Russia unlike Poland had not yet been bled white and had not lost her best youth. Quasi-conservative or quasi-liberal and positivist thought began to correspond to a temporary and significant national opportunism of revolutionary thought, which for a long time seemed hypnotized by the growth of the Russian revolutionary movement during the reign of Alexander II. From that time on and for quite many years after, the political and social trends of the Russian populist party or of the terrorists of the People's Will party, or later still, of the Marxists, surpassed in size and the intensity of their doctrines analogous Polish movements, imposing upon them their ideologies and tactics with increasing force. As a consequence, criticism of the Russian element declined, while vigilance concerning the mysterious nature of Russia's underground ferments slackened to such an extent that the Russian outburst caused in Poland almost the same amazement as in the West. Instead of diagnosing the case, people had the illusion that they were dealing with an unexpected, artificially produced and short-lasting phenomenon.

Not without influence was the Western tendency to overlook the dark dangerous sides of Russian life, to treat its most alarming phenomena *à l'eau de rose* and, last but not least, this idealization was caused by comprehensible, yet shortsighted political considerations. It was evident that winking at the catastrophe could not prevent its in-

evitable approach. A better way was chosen by those Polish émigrés who, like Bronisław Zaleski, while not renouncing an alliance with the pioneers of a future Russia, considered it their "fraternal duty" to criticize the errors and the delusions of Bakunin.

By and by criticism of Russian life began to be generally considered a symptom of Russophobia. The level of works dealing with Russia was consciously lowered. Let us consider, for example, the first great work of Anatol Leroy-Beaulieu, *L'Empire des Tsars*, unquestionably idealizing Russia, yet containing much material, many sound judgments, and being even at the present time, after the experiences of the Revolution, of great value as a source. Let us compare that book with the same author's *Etudes russes et européennes*, written in the last years of the nineteenth century, for instance, with the essay on Alexander III. Yet even that work is far above the level of the innumerable dithyrambs in honor of Russia which, in view of the events of 1917 and 1918, have rapidly lost all their value.

Warnings to Poland, to Europe and to Russia: such could be the title of a long series of books and articles in which some French writers, especially Michelet, and numerous Polish émigré writers foresaw in Russia's life the germ of what was to appear in full gravity half a century later. These warnings, later forgotten, and today known to only a few, are worth being remembered: they attest to the keen perception of those authors, and what is more important, they throw much light upon the genesis of the Russian revolution. These elements could be observed and pointed out, not thanks to some miraculous prophetic inspiration, but solely because they existed in reality. The fact that they were overlooked could only be due to later shortsightedness.

The protoplasts of the Russian revolution put off those warnings with indulgent disdain. They were doomed to finish their days with an illusory vision of a future Russian revolution that was to liberate Russia, the Slavonic nations and Europe from oppression, superstitions and all earthly evil. In the French and Polish misgivings they saw but a lack of intelligence and of a desire to understand that bright future which the Russian revolution was to bring to the world. Harassed by the Russian reality, the elements of which they were carrying in their own souls, they were unable to free themselves from fatal delusions and ideological fallacies. Thus, they attacked obtuse Western mentality as well as the Poles infected with Western blindness. They constantly reproached the Poles with two shortcomings: first, their attachment to the past and to obsolete forms of life resulting in lack of revolutionary radicalism and in half-heartedness, and, second, with nationalistic exclusiveness and patriotic narrow-mindedness. In both these reproaches the Poles saw the characteristic psychological traits of the Russian rev-

olution. One of them was the tendency to level modern culture by means of bloody upheaval and the desire to make the contemporary world look like a *tabula rasa,* upon which the creative revolutionary Russian spirit would build up a new life. The other trait was Russian inability to recognize unreservedly Poland's rights to regain her independence and organize her own sovereign State.

Recognizing in principle as well as in their programs Poland's right to independence, the Russian revolutionists soon wove it into such an intricate net of reservations and conditions, as to make the clear picture of a free Poland look completely obscure and concealed. According to the Russian revolutionists the reconstruction of a free Poland could be effected solely by means of an upheaval which would destroy the modern world. Then Poland would be reborn as a component part of a great Slav or rather of an East-European commonwealth. Such a concept did not agree at all with the aims and aspirations of the Poles. First of all they never thought of making Poland's rights dependent upon the destruction of contemporary society. On the contrary, they believed that through such a catastrophe Poland would lose her own cultural heritage and would sink into barbarism. They demanded from their Russian allies in the fight against the oppression to which they were both subjected, the recognition, without any reservations, of Poland's rights to independent and separate existence, and the postponement of the problem of Poland's participation in a Slav federation, which should not be imposed beforehand upon a State not yet reconstructed. In the premature, obstinate emphasis on some future East-European community in which Russia was to be the leader, the Poles saw an ominous rebirth of Russia's ancient, age-old lust of conquests, under the disguise of revolutionary terms and slogans of liberty.

Having unveiled the inner secret of Russian revolutionary mentality, Polish thought paralleling that of some French writers, such as Jules Michelet, arrived at the conclusion that the revolutionary tide, eager to appear as the negation of official tsarist Russia, had in fact absorbed her principal elements. It had obviously inherited from the latter her instincts of conquest. And as to the elemental impulse of destruction, as well as the peculiar hatred for any reforms of contemporary civilized life, could one not detect in them a feature so characteristic of the old Russia?

Following that course of thought, one found in the dreams of a future Russia the heritage of ancient Russia, while in the Russia of old, despotic and reactionary, the official subduer of revolutionary movements, one perceived destructive and revolutionary tendencies towards other nations, all this resulting from some inborn instincts, as the expression of Russia's *raison d'état.* Briefly, one found in her the spiritual

cradle of the future revolution.

The very antithesis of these two Russias was, evidently, rather superficial than essential. In both of them, in the real Russia and in that other which was dreamed of, and which was slowly prepared, which was contained in the instincts, doctrines, as well as in timid attempts – there seethed restless, threatening forces, unconscious of their own nature, yet exerting a decisive mastery over the minds and guiding the nation's destinies along a seemingly new, but in fact a very old and beaten track.

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It is easily comprehensible that among the social conservatives of Poland prospects of a revolutionary movement in Russia were arousing apprehension. Though their fears, as far as the nearest future was concerned, were exaggerated, they often reached an accurate diagnosis of Russia's social condition and keenly guessed the future.

About the middle of the nineteenth century Joseph Gołuchowski published anonymously in Poznań a study of the peasant problem in Poland and Russia. In his extensive analysis on the subject, at times not without a touch of reactionary social views, he repeatedly dwelt on the problem of the ever increasing communist propaganda. He was wise enough to ascertain that propaganda of extreme principles was bound to find the most fertile ground wherever freedom of thought was most lacking, *i.e.* above all under Russian rule.

"It is here – he wrote – that the inefficiency and even the pernicious influence of censorship upon the minds becomes evident, because concealment of everything from the public does by no means prevent the diffusion of evil principles; on the contrary, it makes impossible combating them by argumentation, for it is easy to paralyze the influence of such argumentation upon the minds by simply casting the suspicion that it was paid for by the government." Young people believe that the ideal world which has been announced by theories prosecuted by the government "is a paradise, the entrance of which is guarded by a jealous angel with a blazing sword, that is, by governments and their armies, but where happiness is undoubtedly to be found."[1]

Gołuchowski was one of those Poles who, after the experiences of 1846 and 1848, feeling embittered against the German liberals and democrats as well as against Austria and disappointed by France, followed Alexander Wielopolski's example and inclined towards Russia. His program consisted in "reconciling Russia with Poland" by changing the

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[1] *Rozbiór kwestyi włościańskiej w Polsce i Rosyi w r. 1850.* (An Analysis of the Peasant Problem in Poland and Russia in 1850) Poznań, 1851 p. 500.

system of Russian policy towards the Poles. He maintained that after their sad experiences, the Poles could be easily won over.

"Fortunately for Russia, things that had been impossible in the past, have now been rendered feasible by the conduct of the Germans, Austrians as well as Prussians, and of late by that of the French... Already at this time one may to a large extent captivate the hearts of the Poles..." Therefore, according to Gołuchowski, predictions of a revolution in Russia, are not an encouragement but a threat for Poland.

"Though her government holds the strongest power in its hands, Russia carries in her bosom the germs of great danger for the future."

He foresaw that in the Russian rural system and in view of the level of Russia's agricultural development the peasant plots must be gradually reduced, while the burdens would become intolerable for the peasants. "It makes one shudder to think what may happen should any Western breeze carry the miasma of socialism and communism to Russia where so much inflammable material is amassed." According to that opinion the landowners' class in Russia "is doomed to perdition by the mere lapse of time."

Some people thought that the Russian government could avoid an agrarian revolution by sacrificing the whole class of her landowners; Gołuchowski believed that in such a case, and considering Russia's state of civilization, a tide of barbarity would flood the country.

"Can the Russian government divest itself of all that in its country represents intelligence, enlightenment, civilization and culture? In Russia the nation's most civilized portion is connected with the landowners' class. They are the intellectual power of the State and could not yet be easily replaced by any other force. Russia cannot lightheartedly get rid of them lest she be politically ruined."

According to the Slavophil creed, Russia would be saved from a bloody social revolution that threatened the West, by her organization of rural communities. Gołuchowski did not share that romantic delusion. "A strong and sound community organization" — he wrote — "will not save Russia from the menacing dangers of the future." He was not of the opinion that mere possession of community organization could automatically save Russia from social revolution. Nor did he believe that the community could act as a "talisman preventing poverty." Russia escaped agricultural proletarianization not because of the community but because of the tremendous expanse of her territory. The hatred of the peasants against the landlords will some day come to light. "If that hatred had already got the upper hand, then Russia is threatened by an underground fire which smoulders invisibly in human minds and hearts like peat-bogs that caught fire beneath the surface. But when it reaches

the powderkeg of more inflammable passions, it may at any moment cause a grave devastation in that country."[2]

Nearly a score of years later, while the revolutionary movement was already distinctly spreading in Russia, another Polish writer expressed his fear of "Asiatic socialism" invading Europe from Russia, and argued persuasively that the growth of nihilism was caused by the despotism of Nicholas I.

"In spite of the application of most severe measures, that period, and, incidentally, despotism were the cradle of the present nihilists," wrote in 1867 the outstanding Polish writer, Józef Ignacy Kraszewski, under the pen-name of Bolesławita in his *Rachunki* (Accounts). "Nicholas became involuntarily the propagator of most pernicious doctrines. Extreme utopias were just originating in the West. But there they were of a passing nature, serving, as it were, as a fertilizer for the future which was to avail itself of what would prove useful and reject the superfluous. Things took a different turn in Moscow, where abstract, most extreme ideas were smuggled in secretly and, meeting with no polemics or counterweight, expanded and were considered a final expression of progress. The more extreme they were, the more eagerly they were accepted. Evidently Moscow likes everything that is red, red morally, too. Asiatic socialism may shake hands with European socialism... and destroy Christian society. Under its blows Moscow may collapse, but her ruins will crush Europe..."[3]

As to the Polish émigrés, they were bound to treat the pioneers of the Russian revolution differently from Joseph Gołuchowski. All of them, the diplomatic-conservative camp included, demanded an immediate restoration of Poland's independence, and, consequently considered the Russian adversaries of tsarism their natural allies. The chief herald of the Russian revolutionary program, during the period of Bakunin's compulsory silence, from 1849 to 1862, was Herzen. The more amply, however, the Russian revolutionists explained their views and aims, the deeper became the breach between them and the Poles of all political shades. The deepest rift existed between the Russians and the diplomatic-conservative camp, frequently called insurrectionist-monarchical, whose leader was Prince Adam Czartoryski. The conflict was accentuated, in this case, by social and political differences as well as by the problem of Poland's independence.

So deep, indeed, were the differences between the programs of both sides that the contributors of the *Wiadomości Polskie* (Polish News), though regarding Herzen as a Russian exceptionally friendly to the Polish cause, avoided any discussion with him and his London associ-

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[2] *Analysis of the Peasant Problem*, pp. 276-288.
[3] *Rachunki* (Accounts), Yearbook II, Part I, 1867, Poznań 1868, pp. 66, 69.

ates. "We refrained from discussions with the renowned publicist." – wrote Klaczko in 1860. – "It seemed to us that the distance separating our political, social and religious ideas, was impassable. I confess that we did not consider it possible to arrive at an understanding and agreement. The Russian publicist, evidently, shared our views, for he never addressed us directly."[4]

Klaczko mentioned Herzen several times and his remarks were so interesting that one must regret that he did not devote a larger essay to the Russian writer. Shortly after the publication of Herzen's work *Du développement des idées révolutionnaires en Russie,* Klaczko, at that time in his twenties, quickly noted that trait the discovery of which was later appropriated by Dostoyevski in his *Paradox,* namely the restless and ambitious Russian aspiration hidden behind a semblance of revolutionary cosmopolitanism. In a letter written in Paris in 1851 young Klaczko calls that astonishing trait of a theoretical adherent of international revolution "a logical inconsistency which is consistent with his heart." Klaczko finds in the new study of Herzen the same features which were so characteristic of his preceding work *Vom Andern Ufer* (From the Other Shore).

"One is struck here by the same disagreeable mixture of German atheism and French socialism; that drafting of Proudhon's ideas upon those of Feuerbach; that revolutionary inclination of heart and brain. Winning, on the other hand, is that native barbarism, and above all, a certain deep feeling of Muscovite patriotism, a feeling which is in strange contrast with the atheistic and social cosmopolitanism exhibited simultaneously. Yet in spite of that, or perhaps because of that, it bears the mark of great sincerity as does any logical inconsistency, which is consistent with the heart."[5]

Several years later, when Herzen had already begun to publish in London his Russian writings, Klaczko in 1857 referred again in the *Wiadomości Polskie* to the work of the writer who represented the voice of conscience which for two centuries has been silenced in that country of shadows. "Having emplaced his smashing gun on the free rock of Great Britain, the Russian émigré fires every month, sometimes every week, fiery shells against the throne of the emperors. These shells will not shake the wall of slavery, they may not even make a breach in it, but, bright and blazing, they often light up the darkness in which the gigantic fortress of tsarism is hidden... To a student of psychology it

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[4] *Roczniki Polskie* (Polish Annals) Vol. IV. Paris 1865, an article entitled "Pan Hercen o Polsce" (Mr. Herzen on Poland), pp. 150, 151.

[5] *Goniec Polski* (Polish Messenger), Poznań, Sept. 19, 1851. Letter from Paris of Sept. 11, 1851, reprinted in Dr. B. Erzepki's *J. Klaczko, Pisma z lat 1849-1851,* (Klaczko's Writings of 1849-1851), Poznań 1919.

would be an alluring task to search in that generally remarkable intelligence for elements of German philosophy, of French socialism and the native Russian nature which have been strangely merged and welded into Corinthian metal – hard to appreciate and unassayable, yet unquestionably neither common nor insignificant."[6]

Having barely grazed in his criticism Herzen's ideas of a universal revolution, Klaczko expressed himself repeatedly and more emphatically on the attitude of Russian revolutionists towards the Polish problem. In 1860 Peter Dolgorukov published his book *La vérité sur la Russie* (Truth about Russia), in which he approved the alleged "retaking of Russian provinces" from Poland by Empress Catherine, but only censured the *complete* partition of Poland, thus justifying the three partitions as far as Russian annexations were concerned. Klaczko recalled on this occasion the expression that a Russian can be magnanimous, but he is unable to be just. Several months later, in his essay on *Muscovite Liberalism* Klaczko questioned the possibility of settling the Polish-Russian problem by means of a mutual understanding of both nations. He stressed the fact that this was rendered impossible not by the inability of the Poles to forget the wrongs inflicted upon them, but by Russia's inability to renounce Poland. The Poles might more easily forgive and forget the wrongs they had suffered than the Russians the wrongs inflicted by themselves. *Odisse quem laeseris* (You hate the one you have wronged).

"Let no one think that we are actuated in this case by a restless, though quite natural feeling, remembering the tortures we have undergone and the torrents of innocent blood we have shed. Alas. we are actuated solely by cold reflection. The obstacles do not lie in ourselves, but in our enemy... There can be no doubt that the Poles would be ready to forget everything, even that Nicholas whom the Russians themselves have called *unforgettable* (nezabvennyi)... Whoever realizes what Russia was before she grew rich upon her Polish booty, and what she would be, should she renounce her iniquitous conquest, and whoever, as we do, makes such a renouncement, such a simple fulfilment of the plainest justice, the only, but indispensable condition of an understanding, will forever lose all hope that a nation so little advanced and so rapacious would ever voluntarily make a sacrifice of which, perhaps, no nation would be capable... It is thus an inexorable, implacable, fatal fight between us. It will be decided some day by the Lord in His mercy and justice, but it cannot be concluded now by any sentimental, fraternal embrace which could only be a kiss of Lamourette, if not the kiss of Judas. This is a conviction at which every son of Poland who wants

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[6] *Roczniki Polskie* (Polish Annals), Vol. I. Paris, 1865, pp. 153-155.

to be true to himself, as well as every son of Muscovy capable of being sincere towards himself, must arrive. Pushkin in his exclamation: Who will hold out in an uneven fight? (Kto ustoit v neravnom spore?) has proved to have been a real Russian and a real seer."[7]

Michelet in his *Legend of Kosciuszko* warned Europe against the danger threatening her on the part of Russia. Doing justice to the dreamers of Russia's reform, the Decembrists, to Bakunin, Herzen, he writes: "In spite of our warm and real friendship for the great Russian patriots, why did we consider it our duty to express with such candor our views on Russia? Because, unfortunately, we could not thus far distinguish between the Russian people and their government which oppresses them. We see these prominent citizens still isolated. They are rather citizens of the world than of Russia." But even they are animated with a peculiar spirit against which Europe must be on her guard. Michelet had been deeply impressed by Herzen's book *Du développement des idées révolutionnaires en Russie.* "I read and reread it many times with amazement" he writes. "I felt as if I saw the ancient heroes of the North writing with merciless steel the doom of this miserable world. Alas! It was not only the condemnation of Russia, but also that of France and Europe."

"In the meantime we must simply consider Russia as a whole, as a barbarous force, a lawless world, a world hostile to law; one which does not advance, but retreats and reverts to ancient barbarism, a world which accepts modern civilization only in order to bring disintegration into the Western world and to kill the law itself. The world of law has its frontiers where it used to have them in the Middle Ages, on the Vistula and on the Danube. Russia takes from us only the evil. She absorbs all the poison of Europe. She returns it in an increased and more dangerous form. Accepting Russia we accept cholera, anarchy and death. The modern Russian school, so popular in our periodicals, addresses us with the sweetest voice: 'How about you, philosophers? You move away from your brethren! Where is your philosophy? Where is your love for mankind?' Such is Russian propaganda, infinitely diverse, ever adapting itself to the individual nations and countries. It told us yesterday: 'I am Christianity.' Tomorrow it will tell us: 'I am socialism.' Its tools are newpaper men, men of the world, women witty and charming. How can one refuse to accept the cup from Medea's beautiful hands?"[8]

[7] *Roczniki Polskie* (Polish Annals) Vol. IV. Articles: "La vérité sur la Russie" and "Moskiewski liberalizm wobec Polski" (Muscovite Liberalism towards Poland).
[8] J. Michelet, *La Pologne martyr.* Paris 1863, pp. 119-122.

Michelet believed that Russia, whatever her disguise, remains always the same force shaped by history, hostile to the West and its culture, destroying the nations with which she comes in contact, either by superior force, or, better still, by propaganda of decomposition. Her so much praised community bears, as a matter of fact, the mark of cultural inferiority: "Communism of indolence and sluggishness, instinctive, inborn, lazy communism which is the unchangeable condition of animal generations prior to the development of individual life and of the proper organism." Tsarist Russia came forward with liberal slogans when it was in her interest to arouse inner discord in Poland, before the partition she was planning. "She loved Poland so dearly that she could not tolerate the oppression of any Pole by somebody else. Russia the philosopher, Russia the enthusiast of tolerance, was particularly interested in religious dissenters and came to the aid of religious liberty. This was the first means of disintegration." Despotic Russia who, in the reign of Catherine II, ultimately legalized in her own country the unspeakable serfdom of the peasants, sets out to partition Poland with the sanguinary slogan of the alleged defense of the Polish peasant. "As far back as 1794, during the Kościuszko insurrection, Russia invaded Poland solely to ensure the property of the innocent peasant class. Like Spartacus she called the slaves to arms. This was the first test of the system applied by Austria in 1846 during the Galician massacre." Russia demoralized her own people by showing them a still more cruel oppression of alien population. "An odious flatterer of her people whom, without doing anything to help them, she deceived by pointing at the distress of others."[9]

The same problem of the moral danger to Western culture, emanating from Russia, was discussed by Louis Mierosławski in a French book published in 1856. Beginning with 1849 the popularity of the Polish cause was clearly decreasing in the West. "At the same time the invisible breath of Russian propaganda" made itself felt more and more strongly. The inadequate, deficient result of the Crimean war should be attributed to this factor. Mierosławski's observations, sketched against the background of tsarist Russia, evoke a peculiar feeling at the present time: "The most important symptom of Russia's ascendancy in the nineteenth century, apart from any official war or peace, is the continuous infiltration of her destructive thought into domains most opposed to her rule, and into the life of nations most alert and most resenting her intrusion. How will posterity ever explain that powerlessness, as it were, of all material efforts of France and England directed against a State which is in its technical development three times weaker than

[9] *La Pologne martyr*, pp. 36, 49-51, 123.

either of these two nations, if not by that moral disarmament, that invisible malaria which the Russian doctrines have been infiltrating for half a century into the upper social classes of the West, until they reach the deepest strata of Western society... May I not ask of what value can those Russian doctrines be to the world which is four times as old as Russia, her master in all matters, her predecessor in all fields, in the intellectual as well as in the emotional domains? These doctrines can only be negative, and this is what makes them so dangerous. The Russian idea is in its essence synonymous with the Mongolian caesarism of the old world, which means the negation, by way of absorption, of all human rights. Russia is too cunning to come boldly in the open; she is satisfied with injecting the venom of hatred and aversion into the hearts of nations for the souls of which she is reaching out. She makes atheists out of them, and that suffices for her apostolate. How many bad instincts, how many dark envies, how much spiritual renegation, and particularly, how much weakness have unknowingly passed into the pay of the seducer who simultaneously spreads slander against anybody who opposes her!"[10]

As was his custom, Mierosławski expressed as if deliberately his thoughts concerning the future Russian revolution in vague, dishevelled, confused terms and sentences. He believed that there were some enlightened and liberal men in Russia, but that they were entirely powerless and conscious that they felt "an insignificant minority in the State and nation, both joined against their vain sighs." Lacking foreign support from without, especially from a liberated Poland, these dreamers would, in case of the outbreak of a revolution in Russia, "be crushed like poor sparrows between one closed column of forty million slaves marching onward on an unknown slope and a million prison guards who order that avalanche to plunge at a place to which the supreme command decides to direct it."[11]

Thomas Potocki, a writer of a quite different mentality than Mierosławski, stated in his work on agricultural conditions in Poland, that there were in the character of the Russians some lasting traits resulting from century-long despotic rule deeply ingrained in the nation's soul, and probably more durable than the contemporary form and system of government. Oppression dating from the days of Tartar domination had distorted the nation's ideas.

"It was the oppression which instilled into the character of the Russian that attitude of indifference towards the law, and consideration for persons, that lack of the sense of legality replaced by blind

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[10] Louis Mieroslawski. *De la Nationalité Polonaise dans l'Equilibre Européen.* Paris 1856. pp. 478, 481, 485.

[11] *De la Nationalité Polonaise,* p. 143.

obedience to the will of the superior, traits which even today appear so painfully amazing to us." The reign of Peter "has still more retarded and distorted Russia's inner, native development." Peter "neglected to foster the native elements and having created, as it were, a uniform type, he imposed that type, that borrowed external form, upon his nation with all the power of his unlimited authority." The violently introduced reforms "remained a varnish, so to say, a plaster which may temporarily imitate freestone, but drops off after the slightest rain." With an inner barbarism and superficial polish, there prevails in Russia "despotism of form, the erroneous notion that uniformity and order are synonymous, a notion contrary to nature, to organization created by God Himself wherein supreme order depends upon the greatest variety, and wherein only death is uniform."

Potocki makes the profound observation that such a deeply rooted "worship of uniformity" is more durable than any social or political order. One system is replaced by another which practices the same despotism, a prophetic remark forecasting the nature of post-tsarist Russia. "In the reign of Peter the Great Anglo-Batavian industries and a centralization following the Louis XIV pattern; in the reign of Peter III Prussomania; in that of Catherine II national reaction imbued with French habits and skepticism; in that of Aleander I liberal and constitutional theories – each of these types and notions, once they are adopted by the monarch, floods the country, transforms everything or rather shapes its outer appearance." A form once imposed upon the nation is subsequently replaced by another which tries to be "equally universal, equally unique."[12]

Several years later, J. I. Kraszewski, while analyzing in his *Accounts* the attitude of the Russian revolutionists headed by Bakunin at the international congress of the League of Peace and Freedom in Bern in 1867, foresaw that their dreams would, in case of their realization, result in a new form of despotism. "It lies in the nature of men who have lived for nine centuries under an oppressing despotism, that, as soon as it ceases, they should dream of another one, in a different form, yet not less efficacious. An autocracy by the grace of God is followed by a despotism of the blind masses... in the name of freedom."[13]

Already the publication of the *Portfolio*, started in 1835 and edited by David Urquhart, had clearly demonstrated that Russia, though calling herself the chief guardian of the Holy Alliance, readily fomented

[12] *O urządzeniu stosunków rolnych w Polsce* (Agricultural Organization in Poland) by Adam Krzyżtopor (Tomasz Potocki). Second amended edition, Poznań 1859, pp. 253-257.

[13] *Rachunki z r. 1868* (Accounts for 1868) by B. Bolesławita, Poznań 1869, p. 75.

in other countries movements aimed against their governments and their territorial integrity. A fierce eradicator of any progressive, not to mention revolutionary, thought in its own country, the Russian government was always ready to incite inner dissensions and ferments in the countries of its political rivals, in order to realize its own ambitious ends with greater ease and freedom of action. Urquhart and the Polish writer Duchiński, who were considered maniacs, persevered in warning Western governments against such machinations. They often guessed them right instinctively, sometimes they followed the wrong trail while overlooking them where they were actually to be found. Now and then, and only accidentally behind the scenes, activities were unveiled glaringly inconsistent with Russia's open official policies. Such revelations were followed by denials on the part of writers remaining in the government's service. And, inasmuch as these revelations contained usually some inaccuracies, the defenders of the government made the most of them. While correcting details, they denied the accusation wholesale.

In his *On the Eve of the Political Storm* Bronisław Trentowski gave the following description of Tsar Nicholas' "supreme ideal" during the 1848 European revolution: "Let Europe rock in her foundation, get agitated as a stormy sea! Let her passions roar as a thunderstorm! Let her wade in her own blood! When the peoples of the West will completely disintegrate amid inner shocks, when all their moral and religious bonds are torn, then the world will be affected by an unbearable numbness... The Tsar alone will rise over Europe, harassed by grave sickness, as the embodiment of vigor and health... We know the Tsar's supreme ideal: Europe, her bowels torn, helpless, will call for the Tsar to heal her. She will kiss his feet and bless his knout!"[14]

Was this a feverish vision of an émigré, did Nicholas ever entertain such thoughts? One cannot help recalling the manifesto issued by Nicholas I in March, 1848, inspired with a mystic faith in Russia as the chosen people and contemptuous pity for the rest of Europe. To the West in turmoil and uproar he opposes Russia as the only rock of power and peace amid the general upheaval. Having presented tsarist Russia as the chosen land, as the Ark sailing victorious over the raging seas of an universal deluge, Nicholas appeals to his subjects to join him in exclaiming: "God is with us! Know it, ye nations, and humble yourselves, for God is with us!"

Dostoyevski, who in his day-dreams revealed the secret thoughts of

[14] *Przedburza polityczna* (On the Eve of the Political Storm), Freiburg im Breisgau, 1848, pp. 146, 147, 163.

Russian nationalism, never stopped to rave about the mirage mentioned by Trentowski: Europe, seized by a revolutionary blaze, imploring Russia to save her. In these visions Dostoyevski saw a fantastic association of three forces most hateful to him: Catholicism, France, socialism. He considered them the quintessence of Western culture, already in a state of decay. Europe will be saved from chaos by Russia who will introduce into the disarray of the West elements of her own life, namely absolutism and Eastern Orthodoxy. By and by Dostoyevski began dreaming of realizing that pacifying mission of Russia with the assistance of Germany for whom, since the Franco-Prussian war, he had great respect, bordering on admiration when he spoke of Bismarck. Many threats hang over the West. "Europe has never passed through such a chaotic period as she does today" – he writes. – "Everything is undermined, filled with powder, waiting for the first spark..." This is the same premonition of imminent catastrophe that we saw in Bakunin and Herzen, thirty years before the prophecies of Dostoyevski uttered in 1876. The greatest peril, however, threatens the world on the part of the papacy which, having lost its secular power, will apply demagogic methods and announce to the masses that God's Kingdom on earth will come if they obey the Pope's orders. The social problem will then become acute, and the Pope will prove a more dangerous revolutionist than Marx.

"But of what concern is this to us? All this is in Europe, not in Russia" – Dostoyevski asks and answers that question at once: "It is of concern to us, for Europe will knock at our door asking for our aid when the final hour of the present order of things strikes." And adding an ironic remark on Russia's Europeanism, he asserts that Europe will demand that help as its due because of Russia's two hundred years of borrowing from Europe.[15]

In the following year, during the Russo-Turkish War, Dostoyevski again pointed at the dark clouds threatening Western Europe. "This is the eve of the greatest agitating events and upheavals in Europe. One may say it without any exaggeration." He again points to the Aeolian cavern, to a "world Catholic conspiracy." Yet, Russia may feel safe. "In Europe there is Germany, and she is on our side... The only statesman in Europe whose genius sees through the events to their very depth is, unquestionably, Prince Bismarck. He has, long ago, perceived that Roman Catholicism and its monster-child, socialism, are the most terrible enemies of Germany, of her unity and her renewed future. Bismarck considers the strangling of Catholicism an absolute necessity. However, as long as France lives, Catholicism commands a powerful

[15] *Dnevnik Pisatela, 1876.* (Writer's Diary, 1876) Berlin 1922, pp. 142-146.

sword. In Prince Bismarck's eyes the destinies of France are already determined. Prince Bismarck is perfectly aware that France has outlived her existence; that she is a nation innerly torn asunder; and that she will never have again a strong government uniting all her people, possessing authority enough to act as a healthy, unifying national center... Prince Bismarck has, assuredly sealed the fate of France. The fate of France will be that of Poland and she will have no political life or – there will be no Germany."

Having settled his accounts with France, Bismarck, according to Dostoyevski, will do the same with Catholicism and socialism, "the two enemies of Germany and of mankind." As soon as France falls, Catholicism and socialism will be weakened and isolated. True, France has lost her Catholic faith, yet she continues considering Catholicism a political weapon. "Socialism, as the heritage of Catholicism and of France, is most hateful to every true German." After the fall of its chief mainstay, France, Catholicism will appeal to the most restless elements among the masses: to the socialists. It will make them believe that it will realize all the promises of socialism. Plunder of the rich will start; the world will bleed profusely; a period of cannibalism will again ensue, all this under the auspices of Catholicism.

"It goes without saying that Catholicism will derive profit from massacres, plunder, bloodshed and even cannibalism. It may hope that it will be able to fish in muddy waters, and anticipate that mankind, utterly weary with lawlessness and chaotic conditions, will throw itself into its arms. This picture is, unfortunately, not a fancy... The monster will be stopped and defeated by a united East and by the new word which it will bring mankind..."

In the presence of such apocalyptic events in the West, in the face of the flaring up of the Eastern problem and the necessity of seizing Constantinople, an alliance between Russia and Germany, not temporary, but "for ever," became a necessity. "The idea of a united Germany is great, magnificent and embraces centuries. What have the Germans to share with us? Their share is all the people of the West. They allotted Western Europe to themselves to inoculate it with their own elements, to replace the Roman and Latin ones, and to become its leader in the future, while leaving the East to Russia. Thus the two great nations are destined to change the face of the earth. These are not schemes dictated by reason or ambition, the world itself is shaping in this way. It must be recognized that the friendship between Russia and Germany is not hypocritical; that it is durable; that it will grow stronger, spreading and gradually consolidating itself in the popular consciousness of both nations... At any rate Russia should seize the opportunity. But will that European moment favorable to us last long? As long as the

present great leaders of Germany are active, this moment is most securely safeguarded to us."[16]

A social catastrophe in Western Europe, the world ablaze, while Russia emerges from that historical cataclysm more powerful, the importance of her international rôle doubled, such is the perennial thought dominating Russian minds, the thought of people living, as it were, on the antipodes. Is there anything in common between the fathers of the Russian revolution and the Occidento-phobe, nationalist Dostoyevski? They have one thing in common: their faith in the approaching ruin of the West, a faith stronger than reason, an apocalyptical expectation of the day when mankind will be saved by the Russian people, the chosen people, the Messiah-people that possesses the supreme treasure, unknown to the haughty and frail nations of the West doomed to perdition. Orthodoxy and autocracy were the treasure according to one theory; others found it in the peasant community; others still believed that it was some mystic element indefinable by reason, yet one in which the Russian soul had a blind faith.

"It seems to me" – wrote Herzen – "that there is something in Russian life, which is superior to the community and to the might of the State; it is hard to define it with words, and still harder to point out with one's finger..." He then expatiated upon a mysterious inner power resting in the nation, and guiding it through history, like Providence, towards its great destiny.

Besides that mystic faith, the two opposite currents of Russian thought find a common link in elemental hatred against Rome and Rome's European heritage and in the idea of fighting that hostile world either in union with other Slav nations, or in alliance with Germany. But above all there is the faith they all have in common, faith in their own Rome, tsarist or Red, but always dominating the world, the Third Rome of the age-old dreams of old Muscovy.

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[16] Another famous Russian writer, Ivan Turgenev, shared Dostoyevski's friendly feelings for Germany. Though he had spent many years in France, as a friend of Gustave Flaubert and other French authors, Turgenev considered Germany his second home. The German translation of his noted novel *Fathers and Children* appeared in Karlsruhe in 1869. The text was preceded by the following words of the author himself: "Ich verdanke zu viel Deutschland, um es nicht als mein zweites Vaterland zu lieben und zu verehren." (I owe Germany too much not to love and to revere her as my second fatherland).

In 1870 Turgenev wished Germany to win the war against France. The war had broken out while he was in Baden. He wrote from that city to Pietsch: "Vous savez que je suis tout à fait allemand pour cette raison déjà que la victoire de la France eut été l'anéantissement de toute liberté. (You know that I feel entirely German for the simple reason that the victory of France would mean the annihilation of all freedom). After the war he wrote to Julian Schmidt: "Que j'aime profondément l'Allemagne, aucun homme sûr ne pourra le nier." (No reliable man can deny that I love Germany deeply." *Dnevnik Pisatela, 1877.* Berlin 1922, pp. 492-499. *L'Occidentalisme d'Ivan Tourgeniev,* par Ulrich Huber Noodt, Paris, 1922, pp. 38, 40.

A survey of those Polish papers which could freely criticize the policies of the partitioning Powers, *i.e.* the émigré press, brings to light a number of articles on the Russian revolutionary movement. The most interesting of them are to be found in the *Przegląd Rzeczy Polskich* (Review of Polish Matters), published in Paris by Severin Elżanowski from 1857 until January 1863.

After Alexander II's ascension to the throne and after Russia's Crimean defeat, when rumors of an increasing Russian revolutionary movement and of proposed liberal reforms were growing louder, the *Przegląd Rzeczy Polskich* immediately warned the Poles against nursing exaggerated hopes. In 1858 it declared that the history of Russo-Polish relations suggests caution in relying upon revolutionary Russia. It mentioned the Decembrists and repeated the traditional rumor purporting that during the Polish-Russian negotiations of that period the principle of "Poland's and Russia's independence and freedom" had been accepted. Bakunin's historical speech delivered in 1847 was also mentioned.

"Yet, in both cases, following their national instinct, the Poles had applauded the proposals, but distrusted the intentions because beyond the accidental wishes of individuals stood the genii of the two nations, bearing the testimony of two opposite ideas, and decidedly vetoing any premature and accidental exaltation. The year 1825 was an isolated phenomenon having no roots in the instincts, and not originating in the national undercurrents, and died away like a beautiful hymn without any echo. The incessant murders and arson by which the Russian peasants disturb the peace of the boyars loyal to the Tsar, are perpetrated by hungry barbarians in search of bread greased with the blood of the hated. Where is the guarantee that the present so-called liberalism of Russia is anything more than a temptation, a ruse for the credulous in a state which feels, thinks and speaks by command of the Tsars?"[17]

Several months later the *Przegląd Rzeczy Polskich* discussed again the same problem and, characterizing the reign of Alexander II, analyzed the consequences which an eventual revolution in Russia could entail for Poland. "That sudden transition from the ignominious despotism of Nicholas I to the colorless banner of Alexander II; that mosaic of barbarian practices and theories bristling with freedom; that edifice of ancient tsardom pierced by the ricochet bullets of civilization; that stupendous eagerness to penetrate as quickly as possible European public opinion as an innocent, slandered lamb, besides the country's inner chaos, arbitrariness and inefficiency – all this is so abnormal that it cannot offer even the faintest guarantee of stability... The slave, while imprisoned and in chains, is patient, but as soon as he breathes a little

[17] *Przegląd Rzeczy Polskich*, No. 5, March 22, 1858, pp. 39, 40.

air of freedom, he knows neither obstacle nor limits of that liberty which he had conjured up in his dreams. Should, therefore, the enigma, as expressed by the present Tsar, be solved in Russia, Poland would find herself amidst a terrible conflagration facing the greatest catastrophe of her enemy since her partition, and even in spite of herself she would have to use her own means to save her own home."[18]

In an extensive essay entitled "Alexander Herzen and the Free Russian Printing Shop in London" warm praise was given to Herzen; simultaneously, however, significant warnings were addressed to the Russian revolutionaries. Herzen availed himself of every opportunity to emphasize the profits which Russia derived from the juniority of her civilization: "It is fortunate" – he wrote – "that Russian legislation does not need to wrestle at every step with the remnants of Roman law, with feudalism, Catholicism, Protestantism, and the supremacy of the bourgeoisie. In her revolutionary progress Russia avails herself of ready made experience and does not need to pass through that long, great epic of deliverance through which the Western nations passed, and which had so blocked their path with ruins of monuments that they hardly could make a step forward."

It was because of such passages in Herzen's writings that the *Przegląd Rzeczy Polskich* stated: "All the profits enumerated here are of a negative character and cannot create anything by themselves. If a lack of obsolete forms facilitates changes, it also favors the spread of fiercest autocracy penetrating the remotest corners of social life. For, what is a nation without settled forms of existence? A desert on which any kind of seed may germinate. The Russians, therefore, must first of all awake from their long thoughtlessness and inertia, and proceed themselves with the tilling and sowing of their political field; otherwise, even if their oppressive system would disappear by itself, it would leave them only the integrity and strength of the state, which they are not lacking, but it will not bring them the freedom which they need the most." The liberal reforms of Alexander II which Herzen is expecting must "form a middle class or the preponderance of the bourgeoisie" and accumulate those "monuments of tradition the ruins of which will some day obstruct the path of an approaching revolution."

The article pertinently pointed at the contrast between supporting liberal and democratic reforms and trying to find in a lack of culture a national blessing.

In his *Voices from Russia* Herzen had published in 1856 some observations on the last three decades of Russia's history criticizing

[18] *Przegląd Rzeczy Polskich*, No. 10, October 14, 1858, p. 7.

the method of forcible Russification of alien peoples, among them also the Poles. But what was the practical advice given by the author himself?

"Would it not prove more efficacious if, instead of applying compulsory methods of Russification of the White-Ruthenians and Lithuanians, the government would leave the transformation to time and the force of events? It was thus that the Finns and other tribes living in Russia have become Russianized. Who can discern them today? In the same way our present coerced proselytes would become Russianized in the course of time." The author uses the same argument with reference to the Poles living in Russia. "The necessity to unite Poland and Russia is an equally unavoidable evil as the necessity to subdue the Caucasus. In Poland we met with an old, manysided civilization which was deeply rooted, particularly among the upper classes. It is an absolute impossibility to overcome that rich Western civilization by force." One should act with caution: to permit the population to speak "temporarily" its own language, to profess the religion it wishes and thus win those people for Russia. Then Russification, not external at that, but internal, would take place automatically.

The *Przegląd* expressed the conviction that the above "friendly and hostile arguments, the robber's amiable deliberation of the method of the victim's murder, by physical or moral tortures," was not written by Herzen himself but that it was, after all, the voice of one of the Russian liberals, the most courageous, at that, sending their opinions to Herzen. On the other hand, the *Przegląd* had some serious misgivings as to the views of Herzen himself and called the attention of its readers to Herzen's article entitled "A New Song to an Old Tune," in which the Russian writer had expressed the opinion that "things that are young, grow," and quoted Russia's continuous territorial expansion as a symptom of her youth and vitality. According to Herzen, concludes the *Przegląd* – "the restitution of the stolen Poland would be contrary to the youthful energy of Russia's expansion."[19]

In the December 1859 and the January 1860 issues of the *Przegląd* there appeared an extensive and interesting essay entitled: "Progressive Russian Thought and the Polish Tasks," to which Herzen replied in two issues of the *Kolokol*. The author of the essay wrote with appreciation of Herzen's activities, but did not overlook alarming symptoms in the treatment of the Polish problem by representatives of Russian progressive thought which, he wrote "deserves our appreciation, sympathy, respect and hearty friendliness."

[19] *Przegląd Rzeczy Polskich*, No. 11, November 10, 1858, pp. 10-12, 14, 15, 30-33.

"They are persistently dreaming either of some absolute Slavism of Russia, or of finding the only salvation through the solution of economic problems. And they would like to transform the phantoms enticing them into reality. Now, according to our view, underlying all this is an idea in no way differing from the one that for so many centuries and so untiringly has been carried by the Tsars as an emblem and a watchword. The thought: to seize as much as possible, and to return nothing, or more clearly: on the one hand, allegedly in the name of racial fraternity to gather the dispersed Slavonic particles under Russian hegemony, supposedly on the foundation of a future democratic federation, while on the other, by raising material prosperity, to wind the branches of the old trunk on Russia's newly upshooting sprout."

Herzen was a Panslavist too. He wanted a reborn, youthful Russia to be the leader of the Slavic peoples, to become "the peaceful head of the new union (*mirnoy glavoy novago soyuza*)." "The Polish question appears in the organ of the Russian progressives only as an accessory problem, only as the result of Panslavonic and Pan-Russian questions."

The Polish author expatiated upon the neo-Panslavism, represented by the Russian progressive thought and, to explain that apparent inner inconsistency of Panslavonic revolutionism, gave a definition of the Russian spirit, which Herzen himself, in his reply regarded as excellent.

"In the main the Russian is not responsible for the fact that, accustomed from infancy to gigantic sights, forms and dimensions, he subsequently spontaneously pursues external hugeness. Indeed, everything is gigantic about him; Russia's territorial expanse; the number of her nationalities, her uniformity in everything, even in speech; unheard-of despotism and unbelievable inertia, terrible slavery and still more terrible obstinacy; barbarian ignorance and savage audacity of designs, claims and hopes! Consequently the whole disposition of his mind leans towards predilection for immensity of such forms, and rather strives for external hugeness; and because of such a psychological attitude the Russian also in his socio-humanitarian and politico-organic aspirations, perhaps quite involuntarily, is lost completely in this immensity. Thus, for instance, his future Russia must be democratic, but according to a socialist pattern. In case she be a federation, it would have to be of such a system and size as the world had never seen and before which it would tremble with wonderment and admiration, as it does today with fear. Should she be Slavonic, she would have to be the leader of all Slavonic peoples, etc. Brought up amid the hugeness of forms and dimensions, with fresh vision and claims, his mind still lacking maturity, he necessarily clothed each thought, however noble, only in them, without perhaps even realizing that there existed another, inner greatness. Russian patriotism, even of the genuine kind, was

shaped under the influence of such a general psychic disposition. Unable to understand a future Russia otherwise than of colossal stature, in the grandeur of external power, marching in the colorful cortège of all Slavonic tribes, sowing the seeds of Christian morals in the barbarian East with one hand, and showing new paths of life to the decaying West, with the other, the Russian does not comprehend that such gigantic tasks could be accomplished by means less astounding by their mere external magnitude. Therefore he would like to concentrate all these forces in all their power; still less to lose any, however small, of Russia's earlier conquests already chained together by means of accomplished facts. Hence the covetousness to dominate all Slavdom shared with their government even by progressive Russians, hence their common attempts on it; hence the unwillingness and the apprehension to part, even in a fraternal way, with Poland, Lithuania and Ruthenia."

The passion for hugeness is frequently manifested in the visions of the Russians dreaming of an Orthodox Panslavic empire, as well as in the visions of the Russians striving for a universal federation of red republics under Moscow's auspices. It is a trait which one finds at every step in Bakunin's writings. In his letter written to Herzen and Ogarev on August 1, 1863 from Stockholm, he says that a Panslavic federation is the only possible future for Russia, for it alone will satisfy the Russian inborn sense of greatness, which would undoubtedly stumble on the wrong path of tsarism.[20] A Russia still greater than in the past, larger than the present empire which repels Slavonic peoples by its despotism, this is the ideal.

Often naively and fleetingly the Russians express worship for outward hugeness. In 1839 Michael Pogodin made a tour of Rome in the company of Shevyrev who had been staying there for some time. When they reached the summit of the Capitoline Hill, Shevyrev pointed out to him all the hills of ancient Rome. Pogodin was deep in meditation, and these were his thoughts:

"Perusing Livy, one imagines an enormous theater for those deeds. Yet it was as if a quarrel of two neighbors for the possession of a diesiatin of land in some Kozelsk county. The King of the Etruscans (beyond the Tiber), had a property not larger than that of Ivan Ivanovich or Ivan Nikiforovich. History is full of such ridiculous misrepresented facts. The adventures of a village are related as the history of a world empire."[21]

The author of "Progressive Russian Thought" devoted special at-

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[20] *Pisma* M. *A. Bakunina* (M. A. Bakunin's Letters), edited by Dragomanov, Petersburg, 1892, pp. 251, 252.

[21] Barsukov, *Zhizn i trudy Pogodina* (Life and Works of Pogodin). Vol. V. pp. 251, 252.

tention to Herzen and examined his attitude towards Poland with great pertinence. He stated that Herzen gave a beautiful description of Poland's splendid past, and did not spare that of his own country, stressing the latter's emptiness, its cruel despotism and historical crimes committed against other nations. He spared no words in expressing his sympathy with the Poles, and indignation at the Russian oppressors. He spoke of the necessity of liberating Poland. Yet he manifested disquieting symptoms when about to make practical suggestions. Herzen, apparently, did not believe that Poland was strong enough to endure and cross to "the other shore" without assistance. He considered her to weak and too strongly tied to her past. He appealed to her, therefore, to remain for her own good in union with the Russia of the future. Indeed, that reluctance to recognize, even in theory, a separate, independent existence of Poland, had evidently other subconscious motives than his concern for Poland. What is actually involved here is Russia, her profound reluctance to renounce annexations achieved by force, her prevailing desire to keep her booty – under the guise of "federation".

This is where the insincerity of Russian progressives became manifest. Ever "reluctant to dissociate themselves fraternally from Poland," they never stop warning all Slavs against the "horror of those Slav-devouring vultures ever lurking for prey, which necessarily will drive all of us, like scattered chicks, to look for protection under the wings of solicitous, democratic Russia of the future." Let Russia prove her solicitude in the most simple and efficacious way: by stopping her cooperation with the Slavophobes. "We are tortured by strangers as long as Russia is guided by predatory ideas, as long as she remains in partnership with them. If we only could be free and safe from the east, we could, helping each other, without Russia's assistance push back Germandom, our second implacable foe, into its natural frontiers and paralyze for centuries its *Drang nach Osten*... We are suffering under a foreign yoke only because of Rusia's bad faith. Let only Russia cease sentimentalizing and protecting us, and we shall have no need to seek her protection."

Having quoted a series of Herzen's enunciations, the author concludes: "Based on a specific kind of Panslavism the substance of Herzen's political thought may be defined as follows: Russia can and must remain a Pan-Slavic power; she must embrace all Slavdom, and she cannot achieve this without Poland; the simple consequence of this is that, unless brought to extremity, she cannot and must not let the latter slip... Hence also the unwilling, obstinate, forced, as it were, but always looking back, refusal to admit separation, her efforts to prove that it would be fatal, and representing the ideals of hope as a near reality." Herzen does not really know Poland. "He looks at her

through a veil woven of Catholicism and the gentry tradition, which does not permit his otherwise keen eyes to penetrate to the sound, as yet unused and unworn strata and forces of Poland. Moreover, he looks at us through the veil of our enslavement and our distress... Thus, in principle estimating us very highly, in fact he appreciates us little. Evidently, he considers us not a big nation, but an insignificant tribe living on the Vistula." These progressive Russians fail to appreciate Poland's vitality and future. They treat her as a country which had a colorful past with "enough flowers to decorate her graves and adorn her fetters but lacking the force necessary for her rebirth." Realizing that the possession of Poland is for Russia an indispensable condition of uniting all Slavs under her leadership, they do not want to renounce it. "She cannot be by-passed, she must be either broken or deluded. The government was unable to break her, progressive Russian thought, otherwise with the best faith in the honesty of its desires, would like to lull her to sleep. As there is no need whatever to idealize Poland and her past, so there is no need, either, to humiliate or condemn Russia. It behoves, it is fitting and timely to be frank with each other, to come to a sincere understanding and make the final and decisive step towards separation but not towards breach, and to make it calmly, with dignity, with mutual respect and good will. Let us unshackle ourselves!"

Yes, let us unchain ourselves, then we may fraternize — this is the conclusion.

Herzen answered that argumentation in two issues of *Kolokol* expounding his known views on Russia's rôle in the world. He arrived at his favorite conclusion concerning the solidarity of the Russian people with the Western proletariat, predicted a bloody universal revolution and, finally, discussing the problem of Poland's independence, laid down the alternative that Poland must either march together with the Russians towards a bright tomorrow, or drown together with the old Western world. With some irony, and not without a little melancholy, he expressed the readiness to respect Poland's decision, even if she chose to tear herself away from Russia, and walk her own path — to perdition.

"Just imagine what is bound to happen when Russia, embracing one-sixth of the globe, with all her Turanian and Chude admixtures, with her social instincts, liberated from German chains, free of memories and traditions, will come to an understanding with the proletarian worker and the proletarian farm laborer of Western Europe, and when they will both realize that they are united by a fundamentally common cause."

Herzen believed that a terrible cataclysm would be then unavoidable. He would like to find then all Slavs on the side of Russia, instead

of seeing them on the other side, on the side of the past. "But, perhaps Poland really belongs rather to the old Western world" – he writes – "and in chivalrous fashion wants to share its final destinies, shed her blood for it, like her hero Poniatowski, and to see as Poniatowski himself in Béranger's poem, that the West will not stretch out its hand to the man drowning for its sake. Her sacred will be done!"[22]

With Russia to the other shore, or with the West down to the bottom: this was Herzen's alternative for Poland's future.

After the publication of Herzen's answer, Julian Klaczko wrote in the *Wiadomości Polskie*: "Should his voice find an echo in Russia, should his doctrine be accepted and spread there, Europe should be warned that it is threatened by a new invasion of barbarians, all the more dangerous and cruel because led by the banner inscribed with false watchwords of progress and philanthropy."[23]

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It was by the end of 1861 that Bakunin, who had escaped from Siberia, made his appearance in Western Europe. In the beginning of 1862 he published a revolutionary appeal to his "Russian, Polish and all Slav Friends." As a matter of fact, after many years of prison life and exile he was returning with the same program he had worked out in 1848 and 1849, and wherein he demanded an agrarian revolution, the destruction of government and of the propertied classes, as well as a federation of all Slavonic nations. We know from interesting passages of his *Confession*, how he imagined the organization of that free federation when he reached the stage of a practical application of his revolutionary principles. He addressed the Poles with much cordiality wishing them liberation in alliance with revolutionary Russia, and deplored their infatuation with their own past. He reproached them with looking for Poland east of the Congress Kingdom; he appealed to them to join Russia in her coming agrarian revolution; he extolled the Russian principle of community ownership and foresaw a uniform social system in all countries of the future Slav federation. He prophesied that unless Russian landowners understand that their rôle is finished, that they have to liquidate and merge with the people, order would be established by means of peasant axes.

Bakunin's appeal was published at a time when the Polish national movement, especially under Russian domination, had considerably grown in strength since the end of 1860, when the atmosphere was developing that gradually brought about the 1863 insurrection. Bakunin

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22 Herzen's answer in Nos. 65, 66, 67 of the *Kolokol* of 1860, entitled "Russia and Poland."

23 J. Klaczko, "Pan Hercen o Polsce" (Mr. Herzen about Poland), *Roczniki Polskie*, May 5, 1860, Vol. IV, p. 156.

was fully aware of the increasing ferment in Poland. He was looking at Poland with great hopes, just as he had looked at Bohemia in 1848. But what he was saying about Poland in his appeal, was in sharp contrast with the temper and aspirations of all Polish groups. Bakunin, after his return from exile, had joined the editorial staff of the *Kolokol*. The Polish periodical *Demokrata Polski* having published large excerpts from his appeal, bitterly criticized his attitude towards the Polish cause. The *Przegląd Rzeczy Polskich* devoted almost its entire issue to Bakunin's appeal.[24]

"For Bakunin" – wrote the *Przegląd* – "Poland is a member, a state, a very little state of the all-Slavonic federation, but so pitiable and humble that she could not speak with dignity on behalf of real Poland nor use her name. It would be just a chip of the Vistula country, a part of Masovia. Is that morsel of Congress Poland, after the Ruthenian population of the present Lublin province would be torn away from it, to be called Poland? Such a Poland would not be even a ghost, a shadow, a skeleton of that Poland which exists in the pains, sufferings, and martyrdom of every Pole... Does Mr. Bakunin, the revolutionist, want to create the same derisive Poland as our bitterest foe, Nicholas? He too was to give us back Poland as far as the Vistula River, and, probably would not oppose our reconquest of Poznania. This accidental, involuntary meeting of two extremes gives us much to think about, and inclines us to be cautious. It is not for the first time that we meet in the writings of Russian revolutionists this conformity of opposites. Therefore we often feel like asking distrustfully whether at the ultimate bottom of the Russian revolution is not hidden, though unknown to its authors, the same destruction of Poland as in the cabinet of the Winter Palace?"

Bakunin reproaches the Poles with their attachment to their gentry, aristocratic past, full of prejudices. "We had the honor" – continues the organ of the Polish democrats in Paris – "to meet Mr. Bakunin among us, and I do not believe that he found us encumbered with the load of the prejudices of the past centuries or fortune. Our friend, while so sure of Russia and forecasting such a brilliant future for his country, speaks very little of Poland's merits, has little faith in her progress, and strongly fears her reactionarism. Where did he acquire that certitude that we shall let Russia outstrip us on the road of education, civilization and freedom?... It would seem natural that what was joined by force, should be severed by justice, what tyranny has chained, freedom should unchain... Strange to say, that thought occurs to Mr. Bakunin several times, yet, in spite of all his generosity, he refuses to face it squarely,

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[24] No. 58, March 24, 1862.

to express categorically, for, though a man of the future, he is tied by many links with the past. He is first of all concerned with how to restore Russia's power and glory, considerably weakened by the Crimean war. On the other hand, he admires Peter the Great perhaps most of all, because he was ready to make any sacrifice for 'Russia's unity, power, and greatness.' That unity, power and greatness of Russia will, for many years, prevent even the most noble-minded Russians from understanding Poland's independence, integrity and freedom. They will exert themselves to invent new theories; to represent Russia as a paradise to tempt Poland, to lure her, to have her settle in it, and to keep her there." Declaring that the destinies of both nations are inseparable, Bakunin unconsciously repeats the first article of Alexander I's Constitutional Charter of 1815, which states that the Kingdom of Poland has been united with Russia forever.

The *Przegląd* was right in stating that Bakunin, while reproaching the Poles with clinging obstinately to the traditions of their past, is rooted by his instincts and aspirations in his own national past. Though violently attacking the past and present of his country, he rather opposed only their historical form and shape; but he remained true to the substance and, unable to part with it, he tried to pour that old substance into the molds of the future. Not less characteristic is his conception of freedom of the individual Slav states as members of the future federation: "Their social system" – he writes – "and trend will by no means differ from ours..." A strange concordance, indeed, with the basic attitude of the Decembrists. Communal collectivism, which Bakunin considers the fundamental principle of the Russian peasants' life must be imposed upon the other peoples as well.

But how can one reconcile the imposition of a legal and social system upon a nation with the principles of freedom and self-determination? Bakunin's projects concerning the future reflect his organic inability to understand what freedom is. We are familiar with his 1849 conception of a Slavonic federation. In 1862 he continues essentially the same idea. Concluding the analysis of Bakunin's appeal the *Przegląd* drew the inference that "Russian revolutionism is in its consequences for Poland similar to Russian despotism."

A thorough and interesting answer to Bakunin's appeal was written by Bronisław Zaleski, one of the most attractive figures among the Polish émigrés of that period. Deported in 1846 to Orenburg for his participation in the national movement in Lithuania, Zaleski was drafted into the Russian army and later joined his émigré compatriots in France. In 1866 he assumed the duties of secretary of the Historical and Literary Society. He was also the editor of the Society's *Annals*, and the author of interesting reminiscences about the Polish exiles in

Orenburg. These memoirs were written with great serenity and in a rare spirit of Christian love and forgiveness towards his enemies, inspired, perhaps, by the patriarch of Polish exiles in Orenburg, Thomas Zan. Zaleski's companion in exile was the famous Ukrainian patriot and writer, Taras Shevchenko, who dedicated to him his poem *Lakham* (To the Poles). During the long years of his exile Zaleski had the opportunity to get thoroughly acquainted with the Russian people, their good and bad qualities. Therefore he could easily judge what in Bakunin's dreams was Utopian, and what was the continuation of Russian State tradition.[25]

Zaleski had heard of Bakunin and his activities for a long time.

"Michael Bakunin" — he writes — "was close and dear to us. Legends were told about him, as of national prisoners and martyrs. If Bakunin could have heard them, he would not have suspected us of lack of love and trust... For the complaints against our distrust repeated today by the Russians, are an unjust reproach. Throughout our entire history our fault was, rather, excessive credulity. We trusted the promises of Catherine and her ambassadors, as well as those of Alexander I, and we believed in the good will of his nephew."

Zaleski knew from his own experience as an exile how gratefully the Poles received manifestations of sympathy on the part of the Russians.

"If we easily trusted those who sympathized with us in our personal misfortunes, how much greater was our faith in those who spoke to us of our country! For one word of such sympathy, for a shadow of hope we were shedding our blood on almost all battlefields of our century. Were we not gladly to trust the Russian patriots, the soldiers of freedom? On the contrary, they would easily find trust and confidence with us if only they would like to be sincerely just, if they would not extend their hands to us only out of hatred against their own government and only because of a feeling of shame, but always with the idea of dominating us and of profiting by the partition of Poland..."

Zaleski knew official Russia too well to feel surprised at the Russian patriots' desire for a radical change. "Bakunin, however," wrote Zaleski — "will not be satisfied with the abolition of despotism. He wants the destruction of everything that has existed thus far, briefly he wants a deluge. In the Ark which is to carry the idea that will save mankind, he will place only the Russian community, as it evolved in slavery, with its common ownership of land. All private property has to be abolished forever... Whether many ruins will be necessary to

[25] *Michał Bakunin i jego odezwa do przyjaciół rosyjskich i polskich — przez Litwina.* Paryż. W Księgarni Polskiej, 1862. — (Michael Bakunin and his Appeal to his Russian and Polish Friends, by a Lithuanian, Paris. Polish Book Store, 1862.)

prepare those spacious pastures does not concern the new reformer. People once used to say that a cannon ball is the *ultima ratio regum.* The masses of Bakunin do not need to look for it so far — the axe they use in their daily work, will suffice. *Zemla i Vola!* (Land and Liberty) is the slogan of the new era, the banner under which new Russia shall lead the Slavonic nations, and probably through them entire mankind, to a new life and a new happiness. This is a kind of Arcadia in prospect, unfortunately with everybody wearing the same uniform, and in addition with a pool of blood."

Bakunin's ideas were the result of his love for the common man and his deep consciousness of the latter's distress. "Yet, I recall the case of that Russian peasant who having learned the alphabet after more than thirty years of study, in order to write down the thoughts that worried and troubled him, composed while tending his own and his village's oxen, a catechism beginning with the following words: 'There was, is and will be no God, Christ was the greatest cheat of this world; Metropolitans, archbishops, bishops and priests have been, but there will not be any; Generals, governors and lords have been, but there will not be any. All people are absolutely equal. All of them must till the soil and live in concord and love; in the summer they should wear linen; in the winter coats and sheepskins of a certain cut,' etc. to the minutest details. He concluded this code by a concise compendium of criminal law. Here are a few excerpts: 'Whoever mentions God's name, should have his nostrils torn out and be sentenced to hard labor; whoever mentions the name of Christ should have his nostrils torn out and be sentenced to hard labor; whoever mentions the name of the Tsar or of the landlord should have his nostrils torn out and be sentenced to hard labor; whoever wears a garb different from the one prescribed should have his nostrils torn out and be sentenced to hard labor' etc., etc. The man who wrote the above was of a quiet disposition, industrious and honest. He spread his doctrine, feeling sure that though he will perish himself, his words shall live and make people happy, for the cup of injustice is overflowing."

"I have quoted the above example because it is most characteristic of the thoughts of the Russian peasants: it deserves a deeper study. May God help us and may events not confirm the fears which this case must arouse, apprehensions which would teach Europe what the tangible results of lasting lawlessness, oppression, in a word, of despotism must be. The theories of Bakunin and of that peasant, though they seem separated by a world of difference, are, in fact, identical; the difference consists only in that the one is barbarian, coarse, cynically sincere while the other has the appearance of civilization and social progress. They both result from the mendacity of the official world,

from the pharisaical hypocrisy prevailing in sacred places; from bloody tears and pain. Both are a protest against slavery. The spirit of both is the same and their practical results, should they ever materialize, would be very similar."

Zaleski has keenly uncovered the genetic affinity of the revolutionary dreams of a Russian peasant and those of an educated revolutionist. Speaking of Bakunin's delusions, who believed that he would succeed in establishing "a new, wonderful order" upon the ruins of the old, Zaleski writes:

"We have some doubts as to that. Moreover, we confess that a future Russia, imagined as establishing common ownership with an axe, appears to us most uncongenial. We believe that should all this come to pass, we would soon have the old despotism, perhaps in a slightly different form, but even worse. We are also convinced that one must not depreciate the value of experience gathered throughout centuries and paid for with toil, blood and tears; that one must not condemn the whole past; that a nation which would reject it and be conceited enough to create everything anew, would have to repeat the experiences, failures and the past vicissitudes of other peoples."

"Like Bakunin we love the common people, yet we believe that there are things greater than the common people. We are ready to fight and we do not doubt that what is dead must finally drop into the grave. But we who have been buried for years and yet remain alive, we know that *justice* alone is eternal, and that violence committed in the name of the Tsar or of the people remains always violence, and carries the germs of death... For the good of the Russian nation, for the good of those who lead it on to new paths, we must warn them that the axe, even if mentioned today only to frighten the nobility, is a dangerous weapon, and that no salvation will ever emerge from a pool of blood... Bakunin's program for Russia is dangerous because it is unjust, because, in spite of all appearances, it is impracticable, and moreover, because, flattering the passions of the masses, it gratifies only their bad instincts. As to Poland it is entirely inapplicable because it is contrary to her spirit and her different national traditions."

Basing his assertion upon the knowledge of the Russian people Zaleski affirms that Bakunin's program suits the instincts of the Russian masses. The Russian people have no settled conceptions about property, about law, about good and evil. On the other hand, in their present cultural stage, they need space, they are always land-hungry.

"We know of Russian settlements on the steppes between the Volga River and the Ural Mountains where other people would rather complain of lack of population, and where Russian settlers already complained of lack of space... The Russian people have innumerable words

expressing that love of space, of immensity. No other Slavic tribe is as nomadic as the Great-Russians."

One must know Russian life to understand "what the word *vola* really means in the mind of Russian people." "It is" – says Zaleski – "by no means identical with our conception of *freedom.* Freedom as we understand and desire it, involves the notion of law and of duty; it is limited first by moral law and then by the freedom and the right of others; the freedom and the right of all. *Vola* as understood by Bakunin, or rather by the Russians, means the immense expanse of the steppes, that limitless horizon where any neighbor and any law is considered an annoying and inconvenient obstacle... In such a frame of mind, the Russian people see in the slogan *Zemla i vola* not only a reparation for all their secular woes, but also a formulation of all their desires and passions which, in the social turmoil, may so easily fall to the level of the catechism of the Russian peasant, destroying all age-old foundations of the social order. Since the Russian people, by their very nature as well as by the secular wrongs inflicted on them, are probably the most radical-minded race on earth, and since the above slogan gratifies their worst passions, it seems advisable to use it with the greatest possible circumspection. Popular indignation suffices to overturn the existing order. This, however, is but the beginning. One must not only overturn, but construct too. One cannot set to work with the slogan *the people* alone. One must start it with ideas of law and justice if it is not to collapse at once."

"We have considered it our fraternal duty to make the above remarks about Russia."

Zaleski's essay, not large in size, was a warning addressed to Russia, more than fifty years before the catastrophe, by a man of clear mind representing an old culture, by one who saw the abyss for which official, as well as underground Russia were steering. It was a warning inspired by good will and friendship towards the Russian people, notable and valuable on the part of a convict and exile who had spent many hard years of his life in compulsory military service in Orenburg. Zaleski's friendliness was sensible and honest; his words were dictated by deep conviction, and he was fully aware that even the Russians who were most friendly to Poland, would resent his harsh criticism. When making his diagnosis and calling Russia's attention to the danger of the path chosen by the Russia of the future, Zaleski was doing his duty towards Poland, towards mankind and his *fraternal duty* towards Russia. Against a savage lust of destruction, against worshipping the ignorant masses who were to establish a new order, axe in hand, Zaleski protested in the name of the eternal values of civilization. Towards Poland he accomplished the duty of a keen patriot, warning her against

the delusive phantom of liberation to be achieved by the Russian revolution; towards mankind the duty of a man conscious of his solidarity with European civilization. In close contact with the enigmatic Russian world, he deciphered the still obscure signs of Russia's future and warned the world against errors. Towards Russia herself he fulfilled the duty of a man who, having become thoroughly acquainted with her, free from the ideological aberrations and the fatal delusions of the protoplasts of the Russian revolution, warned her against going astray, and did so with a mature judgment based upon historical experience and his humanitarian instinct.

Who was it who foresaw with greater clearness the future of Russia, and the kind of her revolution? Was it Bakunin, Herzen, or the modest Polish writer, Bronisław Zaleski?

Ridiculing the alarms which resounded in Russia on the eve of the agrarian reform, Herzen wrote with irony: "Petersburg will proclaim a republic in the barracks of the Preobrazhenski regiment, while Moscow will proclaim a democratic and social Kremlin."

The fantastic, paradoxical picture of a Red Kremlin, and of a republic proclaimed in barracks, mentioned by Herzen in order to reduce the gloomy forebodings to absurdity, was an unconscious prophecy.

9.

CROSSROADS

THE UKASE EMANCIPATING the peasants, issued in 1861, permitted Tsar Alexander II and his government to enjoy a brief period of popularity in Russia as well as in Europe. The Polish problem, however, beginning with the Warsaw manifestations which met with sharp reprisals, constituted a black spot on the reputation of the Tsar-emancipator. Alexander II and his ministers, Gorchakov, Valuyev, Golovnin were very sensitive on the point of European public opinion.

In April, 1861, Alexander was to win abroad a considerable moral success. In the very center of the revolutionist émigrés in London, in the editorial offices of the *Kolokol,* a celebration was to be held on April 10, in which prominent émigrés from many countries, Poland included, were to participate to honor the emancipation of Russia's peasants. The celebration did take place, but in an unexpectedly gloomy atmosphere. The telegraphic news services had just informed the world of the bloody slaughter of Warsaw's Polish population by Russian authorities on April 8. The news filled all Europe with a feeling of horror. Herzen decided not to give a toast to Tsar Alexander II, and on April 15 he published in the *Kolokol* some sharp remarks addressed to the Tsar:

"Our celebration was gloomy. The news of the emancipation of the peasants had, as it were, rejuvenated us. Everything had been forgotten and we were anticipating the celebration with great emotion. For the first time in our life, in the presence of our Russian and Polish friends, in the presence of such men as Mazzini and Louis Blanc, at the strain of the Marseillaise we wanted to raise the cup and to give a toast unheard-of in such surroundings, to Alexander II, the emancipator of the peasants!... But our hands dropped in the presence of the new blood shed in Warsaw. The crime was too recent, the wounds were still gaping, the corpses still warm, the Tsar's name froze on our lips...

Alexander Nikolayevich, why did you deprive us of our holiday? Why did you brutally slam the door to our hearts when they were beginning to open to the feelings of concord and happiness? Sire, pas de rêveries! Pas de rêveries! You have lost Poland. You have lost the living Poland. Slaughtered, she will perhaps remain a trophy of your Majesty's victorious armies..."

"Poland, thou Mater Dolorosa!" – wrote Herzen in the May 1 issue of his *Kolokol* – "with arms crossed over our breast we implore thee from the heights to which thou hast risen through thy new martyrdom, do not reproach us with the humiliation that was inflicted upon us by thy hangmen, our compatriots! Forget that thou wert right! Do not avail thyself of our infamy! We shall understand and appreciate thy sad silence – and the words of curse and condemnation we shall utter, will be darker than all thy words."

This was written in the days when Herzen's voice resounded throughout Russia. But harsher still to the Russian government was the open letter to Herzen, caused by the Warsaw events, and published in *Il Diritto* by Giuseppe Garibaldi who was then enjoying great popularity in Western countries as well as in all enlightened Russian circles. Excerpts of the letter appeared in the London *Daily News* and were reprinted in a Russian translation in Herzen's *Kolokol.*

"My dear Herzen," – wrote Garibaldi – "the recent emancipation of the Russian peasants was received with applause and admiration by all Europe. The monarch who had initiated that great act, placed himself by that fact alone among the greatest benefactors of mankind. At present – and I say it with grief – the good cause has been befouled with the blood of innocent people, and it is the duty of those who had applauded the good deed, to curse those guilty of the most abominable crime."[1]

For a number of years the Russian government watched Herzen's propaganda helplessly. No better evidence of that helplessness could have been furnished than the desperate plans hatched in the brains of secret service agents and would-be agents, such as destroying Herzen's printing shop, kidnapping or killing him...

Katkov set himself a different aim: to kill Herzen's spiritual influence in Russia. He succeeded beyond all hopes. Herzen's star began to fade, that of Katkov to rise, the government was beginning to feel better, more at ease. The man who entered the arena knew thoroughly the ideology and the way of thinking of the opposition camp, for he had come himself from its ranks. In his youth he had belonged to the Stankevich circle; he had been a member of the group of the young

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[1] Herzen's *Works,* Vol. XV, pp. 67, 68, 82, 85, 86.

Moscow Hegelians; he had been a companion of Herzen and Belinski. When after the Crimean war the so-called *Spring* set in, Katkov did not join the young generation of radicals, but he also kept away from the reactionaries. In December 1861, a few months before inaugurating his campaign, Katkov was still eagerly appealing to his readers to study and imitate the English institutions. Yet, behind the mask of the sedate liberal doctrinaire was hiding a man of unquestionable ambition which was soon to make him renounce the ideals of freedom.

The son of a petty official and brought up by his widowed mother, Katkov suffered humiliations and poverty from childhood. The impressions gathered in his youth, from his early years moulded his mind, bursting with ambition, and gradually formed the future Katkov, ruthless in making a career, in acquiring power and fame, cold and haughty, trampling on weaker individuals not only heartlessly, but by predilection. Belinski, his youth's companion, who praised his aptitudes, made the following remarks regarding Katkov, in his letters to Botkin: "He will push ahead further than any of us has or ever will... The characteristic trait of his writings is the preponderance of reason — their defect is his lack of heartfelt warmth." And shortly after he added with greater precision: "There is in him an abyss of ambition and egoism... This man never really became one of ours, he just joined us... His worst enemy is his ambitiousness which may carry him the devil only knows where. His self-conceit places him in situations where his safety or ruin will depend upon an accident, according to where he turns..."[2]

In 1862 Katkov — fully aware that the middle road hitherto pursued by his *Russkii Vestnik*, oscillating between revolution and reaction, was a thankless path, disregarded by both contending parties — turned to reaction. His perfect, intuitive knowledge of his own people constituted his strength. He knew that the opposition of the enlightened classes in the sixties did not represent a program, but a mood, not a desire to accomplish changes, but their expectancy; the popularity of the leaders of the opposition was not based upon faith in them and in their watchwords, but upon hope or apprehension that they might establish a new order. Katkov felt that there was already taking place a spontaneous recession of the revolutionary tide, that his action would be received by an enormous majority of the people as liberation and relief. He knew that the Russian public, brought up in servitude, deprived during a long period of freedom of speech, and accustomed to general secret grumbling, was naively susceptible of keen and incisive utterances; that Russia was the promised land of libelers, and that it had

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[2] E. Soloviev, *Ocherki iz istorii russkoy literatury* (Sketches from the History of Russian Literature), pp. 261, 262.

been by such means that the radicals had achieved their conquest of public opinion. He availed himself, therefore, of that weapon sharpened by his adversaries, but turned it in the opposite direction. An agile juggler, he reversed and directed against the radicals their own polemical method, — always popular in a country of political bondage and of spiritual rebels, who in actual life were terrorized subjects, — the method of stripping any authority of its prestige. At first he applied that method to Herzen. He reviled, insulted, libeled and pulled the fetish from its pedestal, dragged it in the mud while extolling with a false pathos his own action as the salvation of the country.

The reading public should have had enough moral sense and critical judgment to be on guard against such a savior of his country. Katkov started his fight with weapons borrowed from the radicals, but he dipped their edges in poison. His polemics at once became libels and, as a result of the prevailing political conditions, denunciations. He availed himself of his dangerous prerogative, and abused it with utter wickedness.

When in the beginning of 1862, Chicherin in the *Nashe Vremia* (Our Times) had attacked revolutionary propaganda, a secret circular to all censorship offices prohibited attacks in print against him. A still more solicitous protection was granted to Katkov.[3] Inaugurating his campaign, Katkov played upon all weaknesses and defects resulting from a centuries long slavery. He wrote imperiously; he berated, threatened, branded his adversaries, arousing the awe of the very same people who, heretofore, had been deeply impressed by the stern philippics, the verve and impetus of the radicals. He was perfectly aware of the distrust and suspiciousness of the masses born in bondage, lacking civic development, towards men against whom their fanaticism had been aroused, and their childish credulity towards those who had gained their confidence by sheer demagogy. Therefore he alarmed and frightened the people with impending dangers, stifling their criticism and their sense of justice. It was all the easier for him because his own mind was ever suspicious, his thought paradoxical, his soul ever ready to absorb the negative side of fanaticism — hatred. The methods were those typical of demagogical polemics. Having the support of the whole power of the government and of the socially most influential classes, Katkov spoke as if he were fighting against superior forces. He abused

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[3] Top secret decree of Golovnin of January 1 (old style) 1862, concerning Chicherin. Lemke, *Epokha tsenzurnykh reform* (The Period of Censorship Reforms), p. 95. Golovnin's decree of July 30, (old style) 1862 ordered that any reply to Katkov's article against Herzen should be approved by the president of the censorship committee. Herzen's *Works*, Vol. XV, p. 445. "Krayevski was reprimanded for his article against Katkov and ordered to see the minister (Valuyev)," was noted on July 25 (old style) 1863 by Nikitenko, *Zapiski i Dnevnik*, Vol. II. Second edition. p. 138.

and insulted the defeated adversaries, posing as a David fighting Goliath. Through easy successes he pursued his career with an air of a self-sacrificing champion. For many years connected with the Westerners, he possessed a theoretical knowledge of Western Europe's political structure and modern political currents. He knew by experience how an independent citizen-author should speak, and having joined the apostles of oppression, he always maintained the appearance of a writer true only to the voice of his conviction, a fanatic of good faith. But as soon as he felt that he stood on firm ground, he started to criticize the activities of cabinet ministers from his new viewpoint, whenever the latter were suspected by him of liberal tendencies or of a friendly attitude towards Poland. Then he quickly proclaimed his loyalty to the throne with the restriction, however, that he did not consider himself a loyal subject of the Tsar's servants. Having once decided to attack some state dignitaries, he cautiously calculated the chances of his success, and knew that he was taking no risk, but, on the contrary, was gaining importance and authority in the eyes of public opinion. And, indeed, Katkov soon became a power; he was not a subservient writer of the Nicholas' era whom the dignitaries treated as a minor official used in press matters. He was not a Bulharin whom Alexey Orlov ordered to stand for punishment in the corner of his office. The *Strastnyi Bulvar* where the *Moskovskiya Vedomosti* was located, was destined to become famous. It was the Olympus of chauvinism, recognizing no superior authority in Russia and exerting control over the whole country.

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A campaign conducted under conservative slogans had to have a program. Let us see what were the values imperiled by the reform movement, that the conservatives wished to save. Was it the authority of the law? Did the conservatives act as defenders of legality threatened by a subversive propaganda? He who is familiar with Katkov's writings, beginning with his début of May 1862, and is acquainted with the further development of the so-called conservative movement, knows that the pathos of that strange conservatism did not consist in its defence of the majesty of the law. It was Chicherin and Nikitenko who in 1862 attempted to proclaim slogans of legality and respect for the law, in press organs subsidized by Valuyev. That evolutionary legalism, however, as opposed to subversive propaganda and to reaction, found no vivid echo in public opinion, it did not create any new political trend, nor bring about a change in public opinion. In an era of the fullest expansion of reaction, when Katkov was the chief publicist, while Michael Muraviev, before whom Katkov prostrated himself, was the acting force, the slogan of legality was completely drowned in the surg-

ing tide of Polonophobia. When Muraviev was still minister of State domains, his closest collaborator, Valuyev, had declared that contempt for law was the most characteristic trait of that minister who bowed only to orders of a superior authority. "A Khan, a bey, a mirza, pasha or mandarin — all this rather but not a minister."[4]

As soon as he became the governor-general of Lithuania in 1863, Muraviev, and his collaborators, treated the problem of legality with contempt and even with suspicion. They deliberately violated laws which had not been repealed as yet. Any attempts on the part of the population to refer to the law were treated in Muraviev's correspondence as helpless but insolent attacks against the fullness of authority to which the suppressors of rebellion were entitled. "The so-called legality propagated by the Poles" he considered a maneuvre of Polish intrigue.[5] After the outbreak of the 1863 insurrection in Poland, the official *Journal de St. Petersbourg* repeated with conviction the French aphorism *la légalité nous tue.* (Legality is killing us).

Neither was concern for saving civilization, which could be destroyed in a general upheaval, the backbone of conservative trends. Amid the conservatives themselves glaring divergencies prevailed as far as their attitude towards civilization was concerned. One could have met in that camp representatives of two old trends: the Westerners and the Slavophils, with the latter in the majority. At that time Katkov had not renounced as yet his Western views. He opposed the Slavophil antithesis between Russia and Europe. Though flattering his compatriots, he praised England and English institutions. Though aware of the flaws of Russian civilization, he actually called Russia the politically most mature nation, and considered the creation of a large State her greatest achievement.[6] As to the Slavophils, their conservatism

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4 Valuyev, "Dnevnik" (Diary), *Russkaya Starina.* October 1891, p. 148.

5 Rachinski, the commentator of Muraviev's memoirs, tried to justify the author's aversion for legality by saying that legality, as defended by the Poles, was but "a superficial solicitude for the letter of the law, due to the influence of the Roman law and all other foreign laws." He opposed to it the Russian legal sense based on truth. *Russkaya Starina,* Vol. XXXVII, p. 297. — While Rachinski tried to draw a line between legality and justness, other patriots were more candid. Lubimov in his letter to Pogodin of November 29, 1863, expressed regret that there was in Warsaw "no man with brains like Muraviev." In another letter he voiced his dissatisfaction with Berg's administration in Congress Poland: "It was a great mistake on the part of many of our gentlemen, even those considered wise, that they were crazy about matters of legality." Barsukov, *Life of Pogodin,* Vol. XX, pp. 280, 282. Even a satrap like Berg was considered by the Moscow patriots a doctrinaire of legality.

6 "If there is any nation deserving to be called politically mature, that nation is Russia." An article in *Moskovskiya Vedomosti* No. 27-A, 1864, reprinted in M. N. Katkov's book *O samoderzhavii i konstitutsii* (On Autocracy and Constitution) 1905, p. 23. "So far almost everything of value for our nation has been offered to one great cause, that of gathering Russian territory in one entity, that of building this great body politic." Katkov, *1863 god. Sobranye statiey po polskomu voprosu* (The Year 1863, Collection of Articles on the Polish Question), Vol. I. Moscow 1887, p. 33.

strangely merged with their dislike of civilization; they considered the whole Petersburg era, the period of the introduction of Western civilization into Russia, an unfortunate deviation from the genuinely national Russo-Slavonic path. Believing that their ideology represented the very substance of Russian conservatism they nevertheless viewed the period of Russia's Europeanization in a revolutionary, destructive, nihilist manner. The only difference between their conception and that of the revolutionists of Slavophil hue like Herzen consisted in the fact that according to them the model for a future Russia should be sought exclusively in the past. To them, revolution and Polonism were branches of Western civilization penetrating Russia, entering her like a wedge to split holy Russia and to destroy the third Rome — Moscow. This was the thesis proclaimed in 1863 by Samarin.

Theodore Dostoyevski, Strakhov and Apollo Grigoryev, with their party organ *Vremia* (Time), formed a separate nationalist faction called *pochvennik*. They did not deem it feasible to ignore the entire Petersburg era and to go back to Muscovy, yet they emphasized still more the distinctness of Russian life which, beginning with 1861, should be based exclusively upon principles derived from the native soil (*pochva*). Like Strakhov in 1863, in his notable article "The Fatal Affair" (Rokovoy Vopros), they admitted quite readily that Russia's civilization was inferior to that of Poland, for they believed that that inferiority was profitable to Russia. Some of them, as Grigoryev, stressed the simplicity and mildness of Russian life, and agreed with the Slavophil poet, Tiutchev, who contrasted Russia's humble nakedness with the haughtiness of the West.[7] The mission of defending civilization against the danger threatening it on the part of the heralds of upheaval was not inherent in Russian conservatism, nor was it the slogan of any of its factions.

A very important factor in the counter-revolutionary movement of 1862 was the instinct of self-preservation as well as a concern, awakened by subversive literature, for personal safety and property. But these were elementary impulses which could not be considered synonymous with civic defense of acquired rights, for these rights had never been deeply rooted in Russia's past. Even the landowning nobility based their rights of ownership on a tsarist ukase issued a century earlier. It would be impossible to regard the struggle for the preservation of the régime based upon the principle of private property as a

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[7] "Ne poymiot i ne otsenit — Gordyi um inoplemennyi, — Chto skvozit i tayno svetit — V nagote tvoyev smirennoy." — Concerning the *pochvennik* movement, E. Soloviev, *Ocherki*, p. 275 ff. Lemke, *Epokha tsenzurnykh reform* (The Period of Censorship Reforms), p. 282 ff., regarding the periodical *Vremia* and Dostoyevski's basic article of 1861.

fight for the basic foundation of social life, because Slavophil theory, which since 1862 had inspired patriotic and conservative ideologies, considered private property an expression of individualism which forms the base of Latino-German culture. To that ownership Slavophil theory opposed the principle of collectivity as the basic foundation of Russian life (*obshchinnost', sobornost'*) which found its expression in community ownership of land as well as in community rule allegedly preserved in Russia's rural mode of life since times immemorial. It was a continuous apotheosis of Russo-Slavonic culture, of the Russian spirit which had created Russia, of its incomparable beauty, of the principles and foundations of Russian life (*nachala, ustoi*). According to them "the entire frail edifice of our enlightenment should be subject to criticism," wrote Khomiakov in the *Russkaya Beseda* in 1857. Briefly, there was a great deal of talk about a marvellous past and a radiant future, but very little about the preservation of existing cultural achievements.

It was a rather strange conservatism which in the reign of Alexander II appeared for the first time in Russia's history as a social mass movement, raising its voice in the affairs of state, exerting its influence on the destinies of the nation. In order to understand the downfall of tsarism and the ruin of the social classes who had linked their fate with its existence, one must study not only the nature and the development of the revolutionary movement but those of the movement called conservative as well. The representatives of the latter imagined that they were saving Russia from going astray, from weakness and territorial losses; that they were keeping her on the road assigned to her by history, while with the inexorable consistency of blinded people they were pushing Russia to catastrophe.

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It suffices to peruse the first articles of Katkov in which he attacked Herzen to see where the source of his conservative tendencies was to be found. Katkov branded Herzen's writings as an attack upon his own country, as a lighthearted undermining of its sacred foundations, and as a slander before the world's public opinion. It was in this field of apprehensive patriotism that Katkov's cold and artificial pathos found its thundering expression. How did anybody dare attack Russia to please her enemies, while staying himself safe in faraway England, under the protection of a British policeman! While the Tsar-reformer aroused Russia to a new life, while Russia began to tread a new path, an émigré slandered his own country, the monarchy, and the loyal servants of the emperor! Arise, ye Russians, from the hypnotic trance in which you were put by an insolent fellow who blinded you with verbal pyrotechnics, befogged your mind and depraved your hearts while working hand in hand with Russia's enemies!

The Russian people listened to such glaringly theatrical talk and found therein something that appealed to them, that was very Russian, something they instinctively expected: a moral sanction for their own feelings. During the *Spring* that followed the Crimean war a motto was formulated that Russia, for the sake of her own happiness, should be thoroughly transformed. It was a motto which surrounded Herzen and other advocates of Russian reforms with the halo of patriotism. Katkov's words brought to the reactionaries relief from such a nightmare. With the agility of a magician he tore down the halo from Herzen's head and crowned with the nimbus of patriotism the head of the victor, his own head. From now on the reactionary activities, heretofore timid and concealed, could come out into the open with self-conceit, pride and boldness.

In the meantime the unrest in Poland was on the increase. Herzen became of lesser importance. The Polish problem came to the fore and was from now on the center of anxiety of the Russian patriots. Russian conservatism was crystallizing and achieving self-knowledge. An imitative weak civilization, which thus far penetrated only the upper classes of the nation, did not constitute the *palladium* in the defence of which all enlightened Russians could rally. What was to act as a cement holding together all conservative Russian elements was not so much the concern for the achievements of generations within Russia as rather the fear of losing territories which Russian arms and Russian diplomacy had conquered during centuries. Centuries of gathering of Russian lands had gradually created an instinct in the Russian masses, which, as soon as they were aroused, acted as a categorical imperative with elemental force.

In 1887, the year of Katkov's death, his articles on the Polish problem in 1863 were published in two large volumes. Throughout that series of articles of the former liberal there runs a monotonous thread of dialectic of hatred, a hatred which gradually engulfed his soul, submerged other feelings, and beclouded his thoughts. One finds there two alternative motifs quite contradictory and of a striking logical dissonance, yet supplementing each other in the savage dance of hatred of the Moscow dervish, as Shchedrin used to call Katkov. Katkov sounded an alarm because of the Polish danger, describing the Polish movement as a demoniacal force from which all evil befalling Russia originates. Simultaneously he abased and derided the Polish problem as fictitious, artificially inflated, but actually almost non-existent. On one hand he summoned the Russians to a death struggle against Poland, while on the other he would like to submit the Poles to the scorn and contempt of the world. He inflicted wounds upon the foe, reviling and insulting him at the same time. He called him a corpse, and yet ex-

horted the Rusians to continue to hit him ceaselessly.

"The problem of Poland" – he wrote in the first issue of the *Russkii Vestnik* of 1863 – "was always the problem of Russia. Between these two nations of the same race, history has long ago placed the fatal question of life and death. Both States were not mere rivals but enemies, who could not live side by side, enemies to the very last. The issue to be decided between them was no more who was to lead or to be more powerful, but who was to exist. An independent Poland could not exist side by side with an independent Russia. A compromise was impossible: one of them had to renounce political independence... It was Poland, not Russia, which first felt the impact of this fatal problem." Having lost his state the Pole did not renounce his aspirations. The Pole fighting for his liberty desires not only the restoration of Polish independence, but also the annihilation of Russia. "It is not enough for him to be a Pole: he also wants the Russian to become a Pole or to migrate beyond the Ural Mountains. Our struggle against Poland is a fight of two nations. Yielding to the claims of Polish patriotism would be synonymous with signing the death warrant against the Russian nation."[8]

What tremendous inherent power must be that of the Polish nation if one part alone of the partitioned country, defeated and disarmed thirty years before, was such a dangerous adversary of the gigantic Russian empire! What inner coherence, what civic solidarity, what patriotism must there be among all classes of that nation, if the Russian empire, commanding a huge administrative apparatus and an enormous army, felt mortally threatened by the insurrection of just one part of that nation which had no regular army whatever and not even a single cannon. Let us see how the power of the Polish nation is described by the writer who warned Russia of the mortal danger threatening her. The defenders of the Polish cause "forget that in reality there is no Polish nation, that there is but the Polish nobility." The Polish peasant is a "debased, starving human being, deprived of energy and of any national spirit."

Katkov had no ill-will towards poor Poland, he sympathized with her: Poland has fallen like ancient Rome, though much more powerful than she, and she cannot be any more restored to life. "Rome fell because her upper classes decayed; she fell because the majority of her population, consisting of slaves and foreigners, had no patriotism. All these symptoms of state inability are evident in Poland for any impartial observer... The Polish State is a matter of the Polish nobility and not of the Polish peasants. The peasants do not know anything about it."

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[8] M. N. Katkov, *1863 god* (The Year 1863), Vol. I, pp. 23, 24, 28, 29.

And how about Polish civilization? "People used to praise Polish courage displayed on battlefields and that's all. There is not a single name, not a single reminiscence, not a single monument of Polish civilization which would be of world importance."

And how about Polish economic life? "Industry in the Kingdom of Poland first reached a certain degree of development only under Russian domination." The enlightened class in Poland constituted a small caste and the "peasants were even more alien to it than the racially different peasants of our Baltic provinces are to the upper German class which is predominant there."[9]

Could a nation so irrevocably buried, a nation wherein a tremendous majority did not know the conception of motherland, be of any danger to Russia, especially in view of the fact that according to Katkov, the Poles are greatly mistaken thinking that "the Russian peasant, like the Polish peasant, has no country of his own."[10] An abyss of inconsistency exists between the two theses propounded by the author at the same time, between the legend of the demoniacal power of the Polish insurrection and the myth of the helplessness of the Polish nation.[11] This, however, disconcerted neither Katkov nor the Russian public who had faith in him. With a magician-like agility he threw over the abyss a bridge with the mysterious inscription *intrigue*. This vague term was to be used for years as a kind of conjuration which was to transform an allegedly decaying and declining nation into an infernal power threatening to throw Russia out of Europe beyond the Ural Mountains. The magic word *intrigue* makes any rational argumentation superfluous; it can be substituted for logical proofs. It was thus possible to speak simultaneously of the nothingness or of the non-existence of the Polish nation, and of the powerful Polish intrigue, to which, to make the

[9] M. N. Katkov, *The Year 1863*, Vol. I, pp. 64, 121, 163, 164, 225, 226.

[10] *The Year 1863*, Vol. I, p. 166.

[11] This is not the only inconsistency of Katkov. In his letter to Valuyev, of May 12, 1863, he writes: "Russia is a pre-eminently anti-revolutionary country. No revolutionary symbol has had or ever will have any success with us; as to that we may rest entirely assured." If so, why the alarm? "If one cannot make a real revolution, one may, nevertheless, try to provoke a false revolution, which may result in very serious disturbances." *Russkii Istoricheskii Arkhiv*, Sbornik I, Prague, 1929, p. 287. What is the difference between a real and false revolution resulting in very serious disturbances? It follows from these logical somersaults that the helpless Polish nation, a non-existing nation, could provoke serious revolutionary disturbances in an anti-revolutionary country. Katkov used copious arguments to prove the thesis that Poland is a corpse, and then in a loud voice he warned Russia against the ominous power of that corpse. He exalted the Russians above all other nations as the sanest, healthiest and most conservative people, and yet warned Russia against a revolution which may be provoked by the powerless Poles... The Russian in 1863 did not notice, or perhaps, did not want to notice those inconsistencies. Russia, an anti-revolutionary country: indeed a thorough knowledge of his own country and a keen prognosis...

argument stronger, a Roman-Catholic, Jesuitic intrigue was added.

"The Polish insurrection" – according to Katkov – "was no national insurrection: it was not the nation that had risen, but the nobility and the clergy." It was "a gentry-Jesuit intrigue."

Katkov inaugurated his campaign in 1862 by attacking Russian revolutionists in general and Herzen in particular. Now his swiftly developing political daltonism attributed the origins of the Russian revolutionary movement to Polish and Jesuitic intrigues. "An intrigue is evident everywhere, a perverse Jesuitic intrigue, Jesuitic in its origin and in its character. Long before the outbreak of the armed Polish insurrection that intrigue began to operate. All that was impure, rotten, insane in our nation that intrigue succeeded in getting hold of and in organizing for its own purposes. Our absurd materialism, atheism and all kinds of ridiculous and revolting emancipations – were actively supported by that intrigue. It gladly patronized all that license and propagated it by all possible means. Many a liberal-minded teacher, making propaganda for cosmopolitanism or atheism, was indirectly a tool of the intrigue hatched by the Jesuits and by a well-known nation which in darkness undermined all the roots of Russian life." Even the budding Ukrainian separatist movement was the work of that intrigue. The Poles pretended to be stanch Ukrainophils. They even feigned to be Ukrainians themselves, imitating Konrad Wallenrod, for the sole purpose to create unrest in Russia. "In the (Polish) insurrection there was no sign of any inner force of a rising nation; there was but a desecration of the corpse of a dead nation; the whole insurrection was but a monstrous bluff, an intrigue, nothing else; it commenced with an intrigue, it fed on intrigue, it generated intrigue, it availed itself of any intrigue that it encountered on its way."[12]

A Polish and Roman-Catholic intrigue. But where was the real focus of evil, in Rome or in Poland? In that respect there was a divergence of views between Katkov and the Slavophils. The Slavophils believed that the plot had originated in Rome, and considered Poland the unfortunate tool of Catholic Rome and her agents, the Jesuits. According to them only a Poland cleansed from Catholicism and Western civilization, could live in peace with Russia. Katkov, on the other hand, maintained that Poland herself was the original evil, the arch-foe of Russia, and that Catholicism and Western civilization did not, in that case, play a decisive rôle. In 1863 Katkov even attacked the Slavophils, reproaching them with giving Poland too much credit by representing her as a pioneer of Western civilization.

[12] M. N. Katkov, *The Year 1863*, Vol. I, pp. 255, 273, 274, 277, 283.

The periodical *Vremia,* published by the *pochvenniks* headed by Dostoyevski, printed in its April, 1863 issue an article entitled "The Fatal Affair" (Rokovoy Vopros), signed by the pseudonym *A Russian* (*Russkii*). The author of that article, Strakhov, touched the Polish problem and asserted that one of the main reasons of the hatred with which the Poles bore the Russian rule was their conviction that they were a nation belonging to Western Europe by its civilization, while the Russians were only a semi-civilized, nay, a barbarian nation. In his subsequent reasoning Strakhov did not deny that Russia, from the viewpoint of Western civilization, was inferior to Poland. He did it with all the more ease and safety because, permeated with Slavophil ideas, he saw in the penetration of Western civilization into Poland inferiority rather than superiority.[13]

Strakhov's article met with the same indignation on the part of Russian public opinion as the memorable article of Chaadayev many years before. That indignation found its expression in an article published in Katkov's magazine. It was written by Peterson who called the author of "The Fatal Affair" a bandit, his views a lie and a blasphemy deserving the contempt of every true Russian. In vain did Strakhov write letters to Katkov and Ivan Aksakov, reminiscent of Chaadayev's declaration made in his own defense. He told Katkov that "if he had sinned, it was only by excess of patriotism." "I tried to show" — he wrote — "that condemning the Poles, if we want to do it thoroughly, we should extend our condemnation much further than is usually done, we should extend it to the things most sacred to them, to the civilization they borrowed from the West, to the Catholicism they received from Rome."

None of the articles defending Strakhov would be released by the censor. The matter finally reached the Tsar himself. The *Vremia* was suspended. Only a few weeks later Katkov discussed the affair in his *Russkii Vestnik* explaining that Strakhov had made a mistake not in bad faith, but because he had been misled by Slavophil doctrines. The fantastic Slavophil cosmology saw two worlds, Russia and Europe, and regarded Poland as belonging to the latter. Under the influence of that doctrine Strakhov used arguments which must have appeared a "brutal treason" to any sane mind, for he seemed to identify the cause of Russia's enemies with that of civilization. Western newspapers siding with Poland were not defending civilization, but were simply "hired by the

[13] "As far as imitative civilization is concerned" — he wrote — "we are inferior to the Poles, but we are eager to believe that in national, original, sound civilization we are superior to them."

Polish party" and bought by "shameless bribes." "Russia is one of the fundamental forces of Europe."[14]

As the Slavophils saw in Poland the vanguard of Rome, they were eager to separate Poland from the West and, above all, to make her renounce Catholicism. Katkov believed that Catholic activities were harmful to Russia for, under the influence of Polish priests, Catholicism defended the Polish cause. In the view of the Slavophils Poland was a tool of Catholicism, while, according to Katkov, Catholicism was a tool of Poland.

There was a time in 1863, when Katkov entertained the idea of Russifying Catholicism within the borders of Russia by inviting clergymen from other Catholic Slav countries and teaching them the Russian language. He went further: he wanted to recall to Russia those Russians who, having been converted to Catholicism, were living abroad, as for instance, the Jesuit Vladimir Pechoryn who was staying in Ireland. "It is now absolutely necessary" – he wrote – "to separate these two elements: Polish nationalism and Catholic religion." Having mentioned the participation of Catholic priests in the Polish national movement, he continued: "But where could we get other Catholic hierarchs and priests? There are entire Slavonic peoples which profess the Catholic faith to mention only the Czechs, the Croats and Slovenes, who could easily and quickly learn the Russian language...." He also mentioned Father Pechoryn who was said to long for his old country and ought to be called back to Russia. "Why should a priest like Mackiewicz who commanded gangs of rebels, have more right to live and exercise his spiritual functions in Russia than, for instance, Father Pechoryn? Is it absolutely necessary that the chaplains of our Catholic soldiers should be Poles, who spoke no other language but Polish? Must our Catholic fellow-citizens in the western provinces be prevented from speaking Russian, be taught their catechism in Polish?"

This time it was Katkov himself who nearly met with the fate of Strakhov. Michael Pogodin, who in 1863 worked hand in hand with Katkov, reprimanded him in a friendly way for his excessive tolerance and his readiness to admit apostates to Russia. Pogodin knew Pechoryn when the latter taught Greek literature in Moscow, attracting a large

[14] Katkov, *The Year 1863*, Vol. I, pp. 485-507. M. Lemke, *The Period of Censorship Reforms*, pp. 284, 285. Ivan Aksakov was not less indignant at Strakhov's article. Samarin asserted that it "had aroused an unheard-of indignation among the masses." The chief of the gendarmerie, Prince Vasili Dolgorukov, explained to Pogodin that the paper had to be suspended because "the article had aroused general indignation." Barsukov, *Life of Pogodin*, Vol. XX, pp. 310-322. Valuyev deemed that Strakhov's article "defied all patriotic feelings and statements called forth by the present circumstances, as well as all actions of the government connected with them..." The Tsar ordered to suspend the paper. Article in *Kolokol* entitled "Rossiada." Herzen's *Works*, Vol. XVI, p. 393.

number of young people to Greek studies. "At no price should I ever admit Pechoryn to Russia, thus letting him live here and exercise his spiritual functions, for he would surely attract more proselytes than he did when he was teaching Greek.... Show the least bit of weakness in this respect and half of our upper class, especially the ladies, will throw themselves into the arms of attractive French abbés! With what frenzy would I have pulled a Princess Vorontsov or Buturlin by their hair if I had met them in Rome on the Piazza di Spagna with a prayer-book in their hand. I still remember the bitter moment of my life, when calling in Dresden on a woman most cherished and dear to me, I was told by the doorman that she had gone to a Catholic church.[15] The Orthodox clergy is no rival to Catholic priests. They are all intelligent, pleasant, refined, delicate in comparison with the Russian-Orthodox parish-priests who, as Empress Catherine used to say, belch radish."

Outdone, Katkov replied softly and respectfully, explaining that he had come forward with an idea to provoke a discussion on this important matter, but that he would bear no grudge if his project, after its practical consequences had been consciously weighed, should be rejected.[16]

Hatred of Poland stifled all other of Katkov's aversions. Though hating Catholicism, he was ready to become its ally in order to exploit it to the detriment of Poland.[17] On the day following the publication of his project, Katkov in the *Moskovskiya Vedomosti* of August 3 expatiated on the nullity of that nation which constituted an accursed exception among the nations of the world: "The Greek, Bosnian or Bulgarian peasants want independence; the Polish peasants do not want it; they prefer to be dependent upon any other nation, Slavonic or Germanic, rather than to go together with their masters.... Polish patriot-

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[15] Pogodin had here in mind Princess Alexandra Meshcherski, née Princess Trubetskoy.

[16] M. N. Katkov, *The Year 1863* Vol. I, pp. 391-397, 404-412. Also Barsukov, *The Life of Pogodin*, Vol. XXI, pp. 223-228.

[17] Similar plans are to be found in the confession made several years later by the repenting revolutionist Kelsyev: "We cannot permit Poland to slip out of our hands; it would be a pity to Germanize her; it is impossible to Russify her; to leave her as she was is out of the question. One thing remains: to make her truly Slavonic; to persuade her enlightened classes to merge with us in one all-Slavonic state. As asserted by the government, such an action would meet with obstacles on the part of the Catholic clergy. But why should we recruit that clergy exclusively from among the Poles? Could not vacancies be filled by Croats, Slovaks and Czechs who are all Panslavists? Joseph II used that means very successfully in Germanizing Austria. We could do the same, to Slavonicize Poland. As far as the diocese of Chelm and other western provinces are concerned, the government may without further ado transform all Roman Catholic churches into Uniate ones... Let the government separate Poland from our western provinces and start to Slavonicize Poland. This would render any insurrection impossible: the tiny Mazovian district will not be able to fight against the entire Slavonic world and will look for the opportunity to get submerged in Slavdom..." *Arkhiv Russkoy Revolutsii*, Vol. XI. "Ispoved Kelsyeva," pp. 252, 253.

ism is a ghost rising from its tomb, having nothing in common with real life, ready to drink the blood of the living... The entire power of the present Polish insurrection is nothing but sentimentality and reminiscences.... Women will cry, young men will be killed, while priests will encourage both. Yet, history will not change its path, even should such a shocking spectacle be many times repeated. A State cannot exist if the people refuse to die for it by their own impulse, without any prompting..."

And this is the reason why Katkov, out of sheer humaneness and friendly feelings for Poland, appealed to his government to stifle even moderate and reasonable Polish national aspirations, for this was a nation doomed to perdition.

"The forces which had unified the Polish nation, have disappeared..."

* * *

In 1863 Katkov undoubtedly enjoyed the wholehearted support of the Russian public. "It is an error to believe" — wrote one of his contemporaries, Panteleyev — "that the then prevailing political atmosphere was created by Katkov. It was deeply rooted in the ideas and feelings of the people. Katkov was only their gifted spokesman."[18]

Katkov received numerous expressions of gratitude from assemblies of the nobility. The Old-Believers of Moscow asked him to draw up an address of patriotism and loyalty to the Tsar in connection with the Polish insurrection. In June, 1863, a dinner was offered to Katkov in the English Club in Moscow, and tribute was paid him in the speeches delivered on that occasion. Vasili Botkin, formerly a friend of Granovski, Belinski and Herzen, wrote to the poet Fet (Shenshin): "A dinner is being offered to Katkov in the English Club, indeed, the foremost patriotic newspaperman, such as never yet existed in Russia. Katkov's name has passed into the history of our national development."[19] "Katkov did not spare his capable pen to arouse the nation's distrust towards any attempt of reconciliation with the Poles. Very intelligent people, as Samarin, Prince Bagration, Batiushkov, approved of Katkov's activities..." wrote Golovin, himself a reactionary and unfriendly to Poland.[20] Shcherbinin reported in 1863 the following: "A lady of the highest Moscow society told me that she would consider herself happy if she could shine the shoes of Katkov, who had succeeded in electrifying the nation and arousing in it the feelings of loftiest patriotism."[21]

18 *Iz vospominanii proshlago* (Some Reminiscences of the Past) Vol. I, p. 303.
19 Barsukov, *The Life of Pogodin*, Vol. XX, p. 310.
20 Golovin, *Moi Vospominaniya*, (My Reminiscences), p. 176.
21 Herzen's *Works*, Vol. XVI, p. 247.

Valuyev, in his report to the Tsar, emphasized Katkov's moderation.[22]

After Katkov's death in 1887 Alexander III wired to his widow: "Together with all true Russians (istinno russkimi lud'mi) I express to you my deepest sympathy in your bereavement which is also ours. The strong voice of the deceased, inspired by ardent love of his country, aroused Russian feelings and consolidated sound views in days of disturbance. Russia will never forget his services. We are all joining you in your prayers for the repose of his soul."[23]

During the Polish insurrection, it was Katkov who set the tone of the Russian press. Askochenski and Skariatin accompanied him with lesser éclat.[24] A new school of conservative and patriotic novelists emerged, who condemned the Russian revolutionary movement and represented the subversive activities as mainly a product of Polish intrigue. *Marev* (Mirage) by Klushnikov, *Nekuda* (Nowhere) by Leskov, *Vzbalamuchennoye More* (Turbulent Sea) by Pisemski, and *Panurgovo Stado* (Panurgus' Herd) by Krestovski, were the better known novels of that copious patriotic literature.[25]

Strakhov's article was answered by Katkov who spoke as a Polonophobe and, at the same time, a Westerner. He expressed the views of many people who believed that the agrarian reforms of 1861 and those that were to follow, were bringing Russia closer to the West.

[22] "The trend, which has its most outstanding representatives in the *Russkii Vestnik* and *Moskovskiya Vedomosti*, is generally characterized by lack of extremism." Reports for the years 1861-1863. Herzen's *Works*, Vol. XVI, p. 554.

[23] Barsukov, *The Life of Pogodin*, Vol. XX, p. 310.

[24] Askochenski, a bigot and former atheist, clumsily reechoed Katkov's views in his periodical *Domashniaya Beseda*. He too tried to bring Herzen into ridicule: "What is he doing on the other shore, that foreign clown of ours?" — he wrote in October, 1863. Herzen. Vol. XVI, p. 559. Skariatin had been a liberal, like Katkov in the *spring* following the Crimean War, worked in newspapers published by Krayevski. He then became one of the editors of the *Russkii Listok* (Russian Leaflet) which, in 1863, changed its name to *Vest'* (News). "Skariatin's collaboration did not contribute much to the popularity of the *Russkii Listok* — wrote Panteleyev — nor would the change of its name have saved it from an early death, were it not for the outbreak of the Polish insurrection. Skariatin's attitude towards the insurrection was the same as that of Katkov. He welcomed with enthusiasm the appointment of Muraviev as Governor of Wilno. His writings were brought to the attention of certain circles. Skariatin was honored by an invitation to a reception at Prince Gorchakov's home. He thus succeeded in penetrating into society..." *Minuvshiye Gody* (Bygone Years), December 1908, pp. 82, 83. The *Russkii Listok* was subsidized by the government. In the beginning of 1863 the editors appealed to Prince Dolgorukov, chief of the secret police, for financial aid. Valuyev reported the matter to the Tsar, with whose consent the paper was given 2,000 roubles. Herzen's *Works*, Vol. XVI, p. 406.

[25] The plot of those patriotic novels had usually as a background the struggle against the evil which consumed Russia. "This evil assumed a twofold shape: 1) that of perverse Polish intrigue, or, 2) of the many-headed hydra of nihilism." The nihilists acted usually "under the influence of Polish intrigue." A. M. Skabichevski, *Istoria noveyshey russkoy literatury* (History of Modern Russian Literature), Fourth edition, Petersburg 1900, p. 330. Eugene Soloviev wrote extensively about this patriotic and conservative literature in his *Ocherki iz istorii russkoy literatury* (Sketches from the History of Russian Literature), p 445 ff.

Katkov's arguments were opposed by Samarin in the newspaper *Den* in September, 1863.[26]

According to Samarin, the diplomatic conflict between Russia and Europe, which came into view in 1863, could not be explained by the ardent propaganda of the Poles and the bribing by them of the European press. It was a deep, organic conflict which resulted from Poland's historical rôle as Rome's vanguard in Eastern Europe. Samarin wrote with particular hatred about the Roman Catholic clergy. Already in May, 1863, he had said in the *Den*:

"From a thick forest there hurries to the village a band of insurrectionists. They are all headed by a priest. Perhaps an hour ago he was offering the bloodless sacrifice at the altar. In one of his hands there remained a cross, and in the other – what do you think? Is it Peter's sword, the symbol of spiritual authority? Oh, no. That sword, the sway of which once extended over the entire globe, has long ago fallen from his senile hand. It has been placed in an armory, and instead of the sword the servant of the Latin church now grasps a six-shot gun in his hand. Wherever his word does not reach, his bullet will. It will pierce the skull of any man or woman impervious to persuasion. Indeed, all are equal before the tribunal of the church."

It was Samarin's conviction that after the suppression of the Polish insurrection the influence of the enlightened class, both lay and clerical, should be eliminated in Poland and the remaining Polish institutions abolished. It was that program that he was soon destined to realize as an assistant of Milutin.[27]

Katkov's candid *vae victis!* was undoubtedly preferable to these Slavophil friendly feelings for a brotherly Slav nation that had been seduced by Rome. Their hearts overfilled with Slavonic love, they went to Poland to strangle her for her own good. This hypocrisy mixed with vulgar grotesqueness is to be found in Pogodin. Sergey Soloviev used to call Pogodin "a Bolotnikov in the uniform of an Education Department official" and asserted that his proper vocation was "street agitation (*ploshchadnaya deyatelnost*)."[28]

In an open letter to the editors of the *Moskovskiya Vedomosti*, pub-

[26] Pypin devotes chapter III of his well-known book *Polskii vopros v russkoy literature* (The Polish Question in Russian Literature) to Samarin's attitude towards the Polish problem. This subject is also treated in the book of B. Nolde, *Yurii Samarin i yego vremia* (Samarin and his Times), Paris, 1926, p. 146. The thesis that the Polish-Russian struggle was a fight of two worlds was developed by Samarin in his article "Sovremennyi obyom polskago voprosa" (The Present Extent of the Polish Question) published in the newspaper *Den* of September 21 (old style), 1863.

[27] George Samarin was "the man who inspired the policies of Milutin's mission." B. Nolde, *Samarin*, p. 155.

[28] *Op. cit.* p. 13. Bolotnikov was during the *Time of Troubles* in the beginning of the seventeenth century a leader of revolted serfs and vagrants in the south of the Muscovy tsardom.

lished on May 18, 1863, Pogodin accused the Poles of committing acts of arson in Kostroma, Kazan, Moscow and Petersburg, as well as of unparalleled atrocities. Therefore, in the name of his Slavonic brotherhood and the affection he felt for the Poles, he appealed to them to come to their senses. "I render full justice to Polish patriotism... The ardor of Polish feelings has frequently aroused even my envy. The Poles' readiness to sustain all kinds of hardships, and sacrifices, wounds and death evokes my admiration... The Poles should see that I know how to appreciate their good qualities. If only your aims were not absurd and impracticable; if your projects were not mad and criminal, if your behavior were not mean... You want to create disturbances in our country, to harm us, to set fire to our homes. How is it that you have not convinced yourselves as yet of the total uselessness of conflagrations in Russia for your national and political aims? It is a vile way of acting: to attack unawares, to lie, to slander, to cheat. Can nationhood be restored by such conduct? What value do you represent to Europe and history, you, a nation composed of Konrad Wallenrods? Come to your senses, brothers! An evil spirit has beclouded your eyes and stirred up your souls to rebellion. Calm yourselves, brothers, and we shall receive you with open arms!"

The above appeal was published at a time when Muraviev had already opened his fraternal embrace to the Poles in Wilno. Herzen, in an excellent parody, ridiculed and branded the hypocrisy of the Moscow Polonophil who was accusing the Poles of the worst crimes and stirring up hatred against them, while simultaneously wiping with his treacherous hand the allegedly bitter tears of a disappointed brother.[29]

Kelsyev couched his desertion in a strange tone of lyrical pathos when, in his confession to the secret political police, he made a cross over Poland's future and dropped a Slavonic tear on the tomb of Kościuszko. Having lost his faith in a further fight against tsardom, disappointed with his life in the West and his alliance with the Poles, Kelsyev was planning in 1866 to make an appeal for mercy to the Tsar and to begin a new, loyal period in his tempestuous life. "For the second time in my life I had to be reborn." But he had some doubts. He felt as if the Polish problem were an obstacle in his plea for mercy.

Thus he decided to go to Austrian Poland to find out whether the Polish cause was to be regarded as buried once and forever. "I still had some doubts" – he wrote – "when I arrived in Cracow. I spent

[29] Pogodin's article in his book *Polskii vopros. Sobraniie razsuzhdenii, zapisok i zamechanii.* (The Polish Question. A Collection of Reflections, Notes and Observations), Moscow 1867, p. 116-120. Herzen's article "Starika Viodrina krepkoye do polskikh bratii slovtso" (Old Viodrin's (i. e. Pogodin's) Strong Word to the Polisl Brothers) Herzen's *Works*, Vol. XVI, pp. 383, 484.

there one day. I wanted to see the city, I went to visit its ancient churches. I spent two hours in the Cathedral where the Polish kings were crowned. The shadows of Poland's past were filing by before me. Dmitri the Usurper and Marina, Skarga and Pociej, Batory and Poniatowski used to come here. Did Poland die indeed? A solemn feeling penetrated my soul. Imperceptibly reverence for that once brilliant civilization began to creep into my soul. It was a shame to think that it had fallen like Egypt, Assyria and Rome... I was leaving the Cathedral when I heard the watchman ask me: 'Won't you see the vault?' — 'Show it to me' — I answered mechanically, completely lost in meditation.[30] He lighted a candle and raised the trap door. We went down. Near the wall was a sarcophagus and on it in big letters was engraved one word — Kościuszko. My knees trembled. A chill ran down my spine: I did not expect that. I sank down on my knees before the sarcophagus and began to sob like a woman. Kościuszko, Kościuszko! What if you too were wrong as I was in the past? What if you exposed yourself and others to unnecessary risks? If you believed in the feasibility of things impossible? I will have to turn against your people if during my stay here, I shall arrive at the conviction that they are wrong and that the ideals for which they are shedding their best blood are unrealizable! You were an honest man. You will understand me and you will bless me in my honest cause. Leaving the Cathedral I felt my heart delivered from a great burden."[31]

Of all the accents of false pathos in the confession of that renegade, the story of his receiving in the vault of the Wawel Cathedral the blessing from the shades of Kościuszko for his pilgrimage to the office of the Russian political police, is certainly most superb.

The two chief ideologists of the fight against Poland in 1863, Katkov and Samarin, started from different theoretical assumptions. According to Samarin, Poland is the vanguard of the civilization of a decaying West; in view of the penetration of the Western pestilence to Russia through Poland, it is Russia's sacred duty to defend her native elements from which her radiant future would develop. Katkov opposed that conception. He denied that Poland was the vanguard of Western civilization. Whoever repeats such a fairy tale, becomes involuntarily an ally of Russia's enemies who assert that a battle royal between Western civilization and Eastern barbarism is waged on the shores of the Vistula. Russia is an indispensable, integral, powerful, constituent part of Europe, much more important than the Cinderella of Western civilization, Poland. Poland wants to separate Russia from Eu-

[30] This short dialogue is quoted by Kelsyev in Polish.
[31] *Archiv Russkoy Revolutsii*, Vol. XI, pp. 297, 298.

rope, which in the reign of Alexander II began to strengthen her bonds of solidarity with the West, established even before Peter the Great.

Two different conceptions, yet the same conclusion. Poland must be destroyed as a tool of the pernicious Roman and Germanic influences, says the Slavophil. She must be destroyed as a rival, trying to separate Russia from Europe and push her back beyond the Ural Mountains, says Katkov who in 1863 was still a Westerner. Poland must be destroyed once for all because she is a bridge over which destructive western influences penetrate into Russia; or she must be crushed as a jealous, fatal wall rising between Russia and Europe and separating them from each other. Poland is a vassal of Europe, injecting western poison into Russia, exclaims the Slavophil. Poland is a braggart endeavoring to reduce Russia to the rôle and size of Muscovy, proclaims the Westerner. For Katkov the Polish problem may be reduced to Polish intrigue. For Samarin, to Roman intrigue.

The divergence of doctrines and the convergence of the final conclusions, two different modes of argumentation leading harmoniously to the common aim *poydiom Polshu pokoriat'* (We shall go to conquer Poland) as the ultimate watchword of all schools, is a significant symptom of deep-rooted, elemental trends, of inherited instincts, more powerfully established than changing theories and states of mind or passing political combinations.

* * *

We have quoted the publicists who set the tone of the utterances of the press concerning the Polish problem in 1863. Let us now see what was the attitude of the writers who considered themselves liberals and were regarded as such by others. They could not openly defend the Polish cause, on account of the censorship. Let us, however, examine the written evidence of liberals, not subject to censorship, their notes and diaries of 1863 which were published later, their private correspondence, and works which they published abroad in order to avoid Russian censorship. The diary of Nikitenko deserves in this case special attention as a highly important contribution to the history of the reign of Alexander II. Nikitenko considered himself always a moderate liberal, and, indeed, with regard to Russian matters, being a determined opponent of the revolutionary movement, he at the same time opposed integral absolutism and advocated liberal reforms. In addition he was on the whole an educated man, a humanitarian, and no fanatic of nationalism. In his confidential diary no trace of sympathy for Poland, the Polish cause and the Polish movement is to be found in 1863 or in subsequent years. We find there a categorical denial of Poland's rights to independence, and a characteristic, chauvinistic attitude of sympathy for endangered and wronged Russia.

"The Polish insurrection is unquestionably a symptom of a universal revolutionary socialist movement" – he wrote on February 21, 1863. "I sleep badly at night, I am harassed by alarming, anxious thoughts about Russia" – he noted on March 18. – "A fatal crisis has come for her, almost 'to be or not to be,' perhaps of greater importance than the year 1812." "Our enemies are ready to attack us from all sides like beasts, that is to say like dogs, not like lions, for lions are said to be noble and magnanimous animals" – he wrote on March 19 – "and right next to us are still worse enemies, our ultra-liberals, who are ready to replace Russia with Poland on the map." This is a significant posing of the problem, reminiscent of Katkov's thesis: some one has to perish from the world, either Russia or Poland. On April 10, he wrote: "For that matter, I believe that for mankind Russia is more essential than Poland. Only the nations who have not yet spent the entire capital of their moral forces, may be of service to mankind. Poland seems to have spent them, while Russia has a future before her." "Everybody understands," he stated on April 15, "that we are facing here the question: 'to be or not to be'."

Nikitenko, the moderate liberal, believed that the Russian authorities were acting with too much leniency in Warsaw and referred to the prevailing Russian opinion in this matter. "A general indignation prevails here at the weakness of our government in Warsaw" – he wrote on April 25. – "The police is composed of Poles. The Russian element is completely suppressed." On November 17 he put down the following critical remark: "Is the independence of Poland really worth it that Poland herself should pay so dearly for it?"[32]

The attitude of the great novelist Ivan Turgenev, who lived abroad during the Polish insurrection, did not deviate from that of the moderate liberals. Having learned of the outbreak of the insurrection on January 25, he wrote to Annenkov: "The news from Poland has found here a painful echo. Again blood, again atrocities... When will all that end? When shall we finally establish regular and normal relations with Poland?! It is most desirable, for Russia as well as for Poland, to have that mad insurrection crushed as soon as possible."[33]

Turgenev's views on the Polish insurrection meant his parting

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[32] Nikitenko, *Zapiski i dnevnik* (Notes and Diary), Vol. II, second edition, pp. 119, 121, 123-126, 149. The fundamental unanimity of Nikitenko and Katkov regarding the Polish problem in 1863 is the more significant as Nikitenko disliked Katkov, detested his tone, and was surely not under his influence. On August 1, 1863, he wrote bitterly about the intolerable dictatorial tone of the *Moskovskiya Vedomosti*. On January 9, 1864, he wrote: "In some circumstances the Government needs watch-dogs (M. N. Katkov). It releases them from their chain and is later at a loss how to curb them."

[33] *Letters of Kavelin and Turgenev to Herzen*. Dragomanov's edition, Geneva, 1892, p. 186.

with the editorial policies of the *Kolokol*. True, in the first days of the insurrection, he was still writing to Herzen in Paris: "Your appeal to Russian soldiers in the last issue of the *Kolokol* has made me cry." That appeal, however, had been written before the outbreak of the insurrection, when Herzen had learned of the notorious draft. In that appeal, dated January 20, Herzen asked Russian officers and soldiers to prepare a cordial welcome to the Polish soldiers who would be drafted into the army. The insurrection, however, broke out before the *Kolokol* of February 1, 1863, had appeared in print.

Herzen saluted the outbreak of the insurrection with an enthusiastic leading editorial entitled "Resurrexit" in the *Kolokol* of February 1.[34]

Turgenev passed over in silence the above editorial as well as the outbreak of the insurrection, but instead he wrote about his tears caused by the appeal which had lost all its timeliness because of the insurrection, and could not but sound like a sentimental anachronism.

In 1863 the *Den* of Ivan Aksakov, organ of the Slavophil Polonophobes, published an anonymous letter from Paris reporting that Turgenev, in order to ridicule Western press reports on Russian atrocities in Poland, had written an ironic short story in which he described a dispute between a Cossack colonel and his sergeant because the latter was eating fried Polish children with French mustard instead of using English mustard. Herzen printed in the *Kolokol* some remarks concerning that correspondence. He entitled them "We Do Not Believe It," and stated that Turgenev could not have written such a story. "He is no politician but has enough human feelings and realized how immoral it would be to make fun of the Poles at a moment when such pleasant jokers as Muraviev and his executioners were deriding them." Turgenev answered Herzen from Heidelberg on July 22, expressing his thanks for disbelieving the absurd Paris correspondence. "I did not utter a single insulting or mocking word about the Poles for the simple reason that I did not lose my sense of the tragical."

Those who knew the fine literary taste of Turgenev were bound to be sceptical as to his authorship of the tale of eating Polish children with mustard. Besides, Turgenev was at that time living in the West and was too susceptible to European public opinion to write any facetiousness likely to arouse indignation and disgust. However, on that occasion Turgenev wrote a most characteristic letter to Ivan Aksakov, asking him to publish a denial of the report, at the same time explaining his political credo. Protesting against ridiculing the Poles, he expressed his solidarity with Aksakov, whose attitude towards Polish aspirations and the Polish insurrection was decidedly hostile. "I fully share your views

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[34] *Op cit.*, p. 179. Also Herzen's *Works*, Vol. XVI, pp. 25-27, 32, 33.

on the Polish problem" — he wrote in his letter published in the *Den* — "but I greatly resent having been presented to your readers as a fool and a jester in such a sad, grave and terrible period... It was quite particularly painful to me to see it printed in a paper which I respect and which I would like to see more often. I believe that we should fight the Poles without offending or ridiculing them."[35]

These were the limits of Turgenev's sympathies for the Poles in 1863. He thought that the Polish movement should be crushed with all strength, but that this should be done without offending good taste and without ridiculing the victim.

Turgenev was next to Tolstoy one of the great Russian writers who kept aloof from militant nationalism. Free from it was also Nicholas Berg, a writer of much lesser stature, a student of Polish insurrections, especially of that of 1863, and gifted translator of Mickiewicz's epic *Pan Tadeusz*. His book on Polish conspiracies and insurrections was printed beyond the reach of the Russian censor, in Poznań. Przyborowski, a Polish historian of the period, called it "a very valuable work, written with a degree of impartiality possible for a Russian." His portrayal of Muraviev, which appeared in the *Russkaya Starina*, provoked numerous replies of indignant patriots and even joint protests of the admirer of the Wilno hangman. In the concluding chapter of his voluminous work Berg related that after the defeat of the January 1863 insurrection some Poles had expressed friendly feelings towards Russia, and that even voices of repentance on their part were heard. He warned Russia against trusting them because similar utterances had been made after the preceding insurrections. The Poles were incurable, and Russia could not acquiesce in their demands. "Regardless of how the new Russia would be rebuilt, she will be for the Poles the same as the old, present Russia, a fierce enemy." The Poles will never reconcile themselves to their subjugation, while Poland's independence would mean Russia's ruin. "In short, it means that either we or they must be the masters of the enormous territories which are the core of the Russian empire between Western Europe and the Ural Mountains, between the Baltic and the Black Seas. *There can be no other solution.*" This is the author's concluding sentence, italicized by himself, in his book on the Polish insurrections.[36] And inasmuch as he considered it impossible to meet the Polish demands without granting Poland's independence, there seemed to be no solution of the dilemna except perhaps the total destruction of the Polish nation.

During long periods when the Polish problem was remaining in

[35] Herzen's *Works*, Vol. XVI, p. 398, 399. *Letters of Kavelin and Turgenev to Herzen*, p. 179, 180.

suspense, seemingly considerable divergencies of views were arising in Russia between the nationalists and the liberals. The nationalists went on demanding reprisals against the Poles and limitation of their rights; they never ceased to distrust and hate the Poles, their obvious goal being the destruction of Polish nationality. The liberals, on the other hand, attempted to mitigate the outbreaks of chauvinism, advocated some peaceful *modus vivendi*, and suggested some concessions. The former were clearly Poland's enemies, the latter were supposedly her friends. Yet, whenever the situation became acute, and the Polish problem appeared in all its seriousness, gravity and tragedy, it was without exception the clamor of the nationalists, which resounded all over Russia. They proclaimed their unalterable principles and called for the most severe reprisals. The liberals, in the meantime, contented themselves with timid complaints, expressing regret over the loosening of passions and the shedding of blood. But whenever they had to make a statement of the principles themselves and the main subject of the struggle, they joined the nationalists, recommending only the avoidance of extremes and too provocative accents and expressing the wish that the period of inhumane fighting be brought to a speedy end. Consequently, as far as the treatment of the Polish-Russian problem from the standpoint of an inexorable, tragic, historical conflict is concerned, Russian literature of a liberal trend is scanty. The book of Alexander Pypin, a liberal writer, printed in 1880 and discussing the Polish problem in Russian literature, devoted only one small chapter, out of seven, to the voices of liberal opinion. And even so, the author was able to mention only one liberal writer, the old Decembrist and émigré, Nicholas Turgenev, who treated the Polish problem more extensively. In vain would anyone search Russian publications for a confession of a liberal, which would explain by what ratiocination Russian liberalism had in 1863 adopted in its main essence, the nationalistic program represented most distinctly by Katkov. The present writer came across an interesting document pertaining to that question, a document which, as far as he knows has never been published. It is a manuscript which was preserved in the Rapperswil Archives, as a part of the voluminous correspondence of the Countess Elisabeth Sailhas de Tournemire. The letter was written to the Countess by Eugene Feoktistov and refers to the Polish 1863 insurrection. The Countess Sailhas, née Sukhovo-Kobylin, a gifted writer using the pseudonym Eugenia Tur, stayed in 1863 abroad in Paris, maintained relations with the Russian émigrés in London, being linked by an old friendship with Ogarev, the friend of

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[36] N. W. Berg, *Zapiski o polskikh zagovorakh i vozstanyakh* (Notes on the Polish Conspiracies and Risings), Vol. III, 1884, pp. 514, 515.

Herzen. During the insurrection of 1863 she shared the *Kolokol's* views on the Polish problem. Then and later she was in close relations with the Polish émigrés in Paris.[37] Feoktistov, who, in the reign of Alexander III, was to become a reactionary chief of the censor's office, was like Delanov, the minister of education, and many other high officials of that period in his youth, during the sixties, a liberal. In 1861 he edited in Moscow with Countess Sailhas a fortnightly of moderately liberal tendencies, the *Russkaya Rech.* In 1862 he was transferred to Petersburg where he served in a confidential capacity as an aide to the education minister, Golovnin, who was considered one of the liberal-minded members of the cabinet. As far as Russia was concerned, Feoktistov was in 1863 a progressive, a constitutionalist and a determined foe of despotic rule. Made a member of the Committee which drafted a new press law, he opposed the principle of administrative penalties.[38] In 1865 Feoktistov wrote a monograph on Magnitski, a well-known obscurantist of the Alexander I period, severely criticizing his activity. His treatise-like letter on the Polish insurrection was forwarded to the Countess Sailhas by the then liberal-minded Count Nicholas Orlov, who was Russian minister to Belgium, and who, while in London, did not hesitate to call on Herzen. Feoktistov stated that in his answer to the Countess' letter so warmly defending the cause of the Polish insurrectionists, he expressed views which were the result of long meditations and represented his deep conviction. The Countess was wrong when she reproached him with having changed his opinion. He did not change it, but within the last few years conditions in Russia had gradually altered. In the days of Nicholas I neither Russian society nor public opinion existed in Russia. When at a banquet in honor of the actor Shchepkin, Ivan Aksakov gave a toast to "public opinion," the guests were scared to death, and the censor forbade the toast to be mentioned in the press. When during the Crimean campaign the public began to show a great interest in the war, Nicholas was displeased and remarked: "Of what concern is the war to them?" Under such cir-

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[37] The daughter of Countess Sailhas, Marie Andreyevna, married Joseph Hurko who was to become later the governor general of Warsaw. Countess Elizabeth Sailhas died in Warsaw in 1892 in the home of her daughter. Stephen Wielowieyski relates in his memoirs (*Dzień Polski*, May 2, 1925) the following incident: Ildephonse Kossiłowski, an émigré who had been very close to Elizabeth Sailhas, stated in the presence of the Petersburg lawyer, Zaborowski, that the countess had been very generous towards the Polish refugees. Zaborowski declared that the countess had been an agent of the Russian secret police, and that the financial aid which she gave to the émigrés, came from special funds, which, as an agent, she had at her disposal. M. Sokolnicki, *Polska w pamiętnikach wielkiej wojny* (Poland in the Memoirs of the World War), 1925 p. 642. The letters of Feoktistov were preserved among the papers of Countess Elizabeth Sailhas in the Rapperswil Archives, in the portfolios of Ildephonse Kossiłowski.

[38] Lemke, *Epokha tsenzurnykh reform* (The Period of Censorship Reforms), Petersburg, 1904, pp. 318, 320-324.

cumstances the more enlightened classes used to take, in all current matters, an attitude diametrically opposed to the views of the government. However, that state of affairs had undergone a change, public opinion undoubtedly existed, and the government was frightened. It did not trust its own power, and it was an anachronism to treat it in the old fashion. "I am, for instance, strongly convinced, that Alexander II will be compelled to give us a Constitution in the nearest future. It even seems to me that this is a matter not of years but of days. Should, for instance, a war break out, you may rest assured, that Russia will become a constitutional State within six or seven weeks." The attitude of the masses towards public affairs is one of indifference. Leaning on them, the government could for many more years go on oppressing the people, but it is unable to do it. "The enlightened class which is absolutely unable to stir the masses to a rising, should try to scare the government, exert a growing pressure upon it and thus compel it to grant a Constitution."[39]

Public opinion was hourly increasing in power, and its influence was felt in the Polish problem. Feoktistov wished the Poles "all the success possible, as well as the fullest political and civic liberty." The Poles, however, wanted independence, which was but natural. On the other hand, the attitude of the entire enlightened Russian public was without exception hostile to the Polish movement. The author admits that he did not sympathize with the Polish movement. Herzen was wrong when he stated that the Poles were fighting the Russian government, but not the Russian people. "If by some miracle an upheaval occurred tomorrow in Petersburg, thanks to which, instead of Alexander Nikolayevich, Bakunin would ascend the throne, the Poles would even then continue to be our worst enemies. This is comprehensible, and I do not at all blame the Poles for it. They act in their own interest, and defend their own cause. They do not want a union with Russia..." The Countess de Sailhas had stated in her letter, that if the Eastern Polish provinces were detached from Russia, "her core would be stronger, healthier, more homogeneous, and she would be living a freer life." Feoktistov on the contrary, believes that if this ever happened "it would be a pity to look at Russia." For should Poland detach herself from Russia, taking away her lands, why should not Courland, Livonia and Finland do the same? Why should not the Ukraine secede? Russia would be cut off from the seas, and from Europe, and thus the prophecy of Michelet who advised Russia to concern herself with the East, would be fulfilled. In such case, however, the Kazan and Astrakhan tsardoms, not to mention Siberia, might also secede.

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[39] This was in effect, the program of the underground revolutionary publication *Velikorus* (The Great Russian) of 1861, the program of Chernyshevski.

So fatal would be the consequences of the severance of Poland. "Next to us a State will arise, not friendly to us, but our worst foe. That nation has its historical tradition which it will try to revive at the expense of Russia. It will become a permanent obstruction between ourselves and Europe. Do not forget that this State will be established not so much by its own forces, as with the assistance of Europe, and will therefore always gravitate towards Europe and serve in her hand as a tool against us. Should Russia ever arouse the apprehensions of France or England, they will always have that enemy of ours at their disposal."

The Countess de Sailhas believes that Poland in 1863 had against her the Russian government rather than the Russian people. "This is one of the most glaring, terrible mistakes which results from your absence from Russia, and your ignorance of what is going on here." Feoktistov makes some interesting remarks on the attitude of the Russian people towards their own government in connection with the Polish problem in 1863. He expresses his firm conviction that "were it not for the people's strong opposition against Polish claims, the government would have long ago made important concessions to Poland." "If the government was concerned about anything it was to establish in Europe a favorable opinion about itself as a liberal and humane government." In this respect the present government reminds one of Alexander I.

"Entertaining such ideas, the government is quite ready not only to grant Poland a Constitution (with a simultaneous pulling of the reins within Russia proper) but also to recognize the independence of Poland, not merely of the Congress Kingdom at that, but possibly with Lithuania included. I positively know that in the council of ministers, many, and particularly Valuyev, advocated such a solution. If the government now does not consider that idea it is solely because the protest on the part of the public had grown very strong." He then quoted Ivan Aksakov who had written in the twentieth issue of *Den*: "At this time, any concessions or negotiations with Europe regarding the Polish problem are unthinkable. The government is aware that it would be both absurd and dangerous." It would inevitably cause symptoms of dissatisfaction and opposition among the entire Russian people. The *Den* hardly escaped being suspended because of that statement.

Feoktistov affirmed that he had remained true to liberal principles, for he wished the Poles well and saw the solution in a liberal Constitution for the whole empire. He wanted for Poland "full religious tolerance, and an unhampered development in all domains of civic life. My heart beats strongly for all liberal ideas."

Yet he vigorously opposed the granting of independence to Po

land. He defended Katkov's views on Poland, and referred to his article "What Should We Do With Poland?" He did not agree, however, with what Katkov said there on the future system of Russia. "As far as Poland is concerned, Katkov says only what *à peu près* all Russian people think. Among writers, among enlightened people there is positively not a single man of any importance who would not be afraid of Poland's claims..."[40]

He categorically asserted that in formulating his views on Poland, he entirely disregarded the government's attitude, and followed only "his own sincere, heartfelt and strong conviction." That conviction resulted from long and deep meditations.

The clarification of the real attitude of the Russian liberals towards Poland is all the more necessary as contrary views can be found not only in Russian, but even in Polish literature. Vladimir Spasowicz in his reminiscences of Josephat Ohryzko wrote of the "solidarity of Polish aspirations and interests with those of the liberal, moderate and legal party in the structure of the Russian people." He mentioned Professor Constantine Kavelin as the representative of that liberal party. "Our relationship with Kavelin" – he wrote of Ohryzko and himself – "had a tremendous influence on his and my own life and our way of thinking, that is the establishment of the first really friendly and openly frank Polish-Russian relations."[41]

It appears odd that Spasowicz should have written the above after the experiences of the 1863 insurrection, and especially that he should have done so in his reminiscences of Ohryzko. For while Ohryzko had, as an agent of the Polish national government, been imprisoned, sent into exile, and died in Siberia, Kavelin did not hesitate to sign his name on the well-known act of obeisance, proposed by the notorious Polonophobe, Pompey Batiushkov, and submitted to Muraviev in Wilno on November 8, old style, 1863.[42] By no stretch of the imagination could one detect a solidarity between the Polish aspirations for which Ohryzko had been sentenced to hard labor and those of Kavelin. One could, at

[40] Actually there was in 1863 no fundamental divergency between Feoktistov and Katkov also on Russian matters. Katkov's heart beats too for liberal ideas. In the same article "What Should We Do With Poland?" he advocated the convocation of a national Russian Assembly. He discussed the matter in his letter to Valuyev of September 16, 1863: "A representative Assembly is absolutely and immediately necessary. Not some false Charter, issued for effect's sake only, but, indeed, a real, sound representation. I have been informed that the article in the *Russkii Vestnik*, 'What Should We Do With Poland?' has attracted attention *en haut lieu* and was liked. Thus the views expressed are *dans la direction des idées*... This being the case, it seems indispensable to expatiate this view partly in print, partly in a separate note," *Russkii Istoricheskii Arkhiv*, Vol. I, Prague, 1929, p. 292.

[41] Spasowicz, *Pisma* (Writings) 1908, Vol. IX, p. 34.

[42] Herzen's *Works*, Vol. XVI, p. 563.

best, speak of a solidarity between Kavelin and the liberals of his type and the Polish program which was approved by Feoktistov, that is a program of vague civic liberties under Russian domination. Kavelin, however, did not go so far as Feoktistov, for he considered the granting of a Constitution to Russia altogether premature. One could not even call Kavelin's pre-1863 attitude towards the Polish problem frank and sincere. When the Poles openly asked him about his views on Poland's independence and her future frontiers, Kavelin at once shifted the subject into the realm of sentiments and spoke, instead, of the necessity of establishing a spiritual brotherhood, while avoiding a clear statement on concrete problems. These were his tactics whenever, in 1862, he met Polish émigrés in Paris. It was then that he wrote sneeringly to Spasowicz that the Poles were trying to initiate conversations on the future Polish State and its frontiers, while the main thing was "to exchange views on the mutual wrongs, and after banishing from our souls malice, enmity and distrust, to establish a harmony of thoughts and aspirations. The rest would then be settled with much greater ease than we expect."[43] The tone of these declarations is reminiscent of the grotesque hypocrisy of Pogodin who, in an article full of hatred against the Poles, did not hesitate to state that all matters would be quickly settled as soon as the Poles remove from their hearts their hatred of the Russians.

In his treatment of the Polish problem Kavelin has still another trait in common with the Slavophils: instead of admitting openly that, from his Russian viewpoint, he opposes the granting of independence to Poland, he imitates the Slavophils by saying that Poland should, in her own interest, hold fast to Russian rule in order to preserve her Slavonic character. In his letter of June 19, 1862, written from Paris to Herzen, Kavelin maintained that, should even the Russian government give up Polish territories, the Poles would themselves endeavor to be united with Russia, for "back of the Polish problem there is a much more important Slavonic problem which cannot be settled without cooperation with Russia." Symbiosis with Russia cures Poland from "non-Slavonic juices." "A durable reconciliation will result from a mutual transformation, from a sense of unity in the presence of a deep and essential difference between them and the European synthesis."[44] Out of such confessions, in spite of their Slavophil vagueness, there emerges distinctly a hostile attitude towards Poland's independence, sealed by the appeal of 1863, which Prince Suvorov refused to sign. It is strange, indeed, to find in Spasowicz's essay on Kavelin such a phrase as that between

[43] Spasowicz, *Pisma*, Vol. VII, p. 312.
[44] *Kavelin's Letters to Herzen*, pp. 78, 79.

him and Kavelin there existed "unanimity on the Polish problem."[45]

Leaving aside the liberals, let us now consider the attitude of the extreme left, of the revolutionists.

In the chorus of the liberation watchwords which were growing louder in the post-Crimean war *Spring,* the note of a Russo-Polish alliance which was to overturn tsarist despotism and bring freedom to both nations, was sounded steadily and distinctly. The slogan "For your freedom and ours" re-echoed, more powerful, after thirty years and rang forth as a reveille to the great fight expected in the nearest future. The émigré paper *Demokrata Polski,* the guardian of the tradition of the fight against Russia for independence, published in January 1862 an anonymous poem, in doggerel verse, but enthusiastically saluting the awakening of young Russia.[46]

Liberal writers, orators and professors spoke of freedom and liberty for the Poles, From the viewpoint of practical demands, it meant a Constitution for Russia, and, within her frontiers, national and civic rights as well as religious tolerance for the Poles. The revolutionary programs went further: they demanded separate state existence for Poland. The publication *Velikorus* demanded the convocation of a Polish National Assembly in Warsaw. Nicholas Serno-Solovyevich spoke of a vice-roy in Warsaw. Both the *Velikorus* and Serno-Solovyevich's constitution represented programs of compromise, the aim of which was the placing of a Romanov at the head of a reconstructed Russia. The enunciations of uncompromising revolutionists, the appeal of Zaychnevski, Herzen's articles in the *Kolokol,* Bakunin's utterances openly advocated the reconstruction of an independent Poland. Here, then, there seemed to be an appropriate ground and conditions for a full Polish-Russian understanding. Was it so indeed.?

The noted revolutionary writer, Bervi-Flerovski, who had spent many years in exile, relates the story of a social Russo-Polish gathering which had taken place in Petersburg on the eve of the Polish January 1863 insurrection. The meeting had been arranged for the purpose of getting closer together before a common action. The dinner was approaching its end, when suddenly Chernyshevski's voice rang amidst

[45] Spasowicz, *Pisma,* Vol. VII, p. 317.

[46] *Demokrata Polski,* Vol. XV, pp. 87, 88, January 25, 1862. This is the literal translation of the poem: "Great joy, great glory — Rejoice, ye Polish hearts! — Freedom shone forth in Moscow — The murderer trembled on his throne. — The youth of the North have been reborn — Revealing their lofty aspirations — No one wants to act as a hangman — The tool of depraved murderers; — Polish tears, Polish blood and Polish endeavors — The fire burning in the hearts of the Poles — Have melted ice and snow — And resuscitated the brotherhood of nations — Onward, onward, ye Russians! Raise the banner of freedom! — Destroy tsarist rule — Let love reign on the shores of the Neva — Bards are writing their songs — Girls are wreathing garlands — For the noble saviors of the Neva!"

the din of the cordial conversation: "Do not trust us! We shall cheat you!"[47]

The germ of the conflict rested, indeed, from the beginning in the very nature of the alliance of the Russian revolutionists and the Polish insurrectionists. Let us see, how revolutionary Russian youth understood Poland's reconstruction. Kelsyev in his reminiscences relates that among the young people of Russia federalistic theories were widely discussed. The tenor of these discusions was that Russia should establish a federal State wherein national and historical distinctness would obtain full recognition. The theory of the rights of nationalities, sympathies with the Italian liberation movement and worship of Garibaldi greatly influenced those views. Of course, the problem of a separate organization for the Polish territories occupied the foreground. These plans were significantly combined with projects for destroying Austria and Turkey, and of establishing upon their ruins a federation of nations.

"The theory was so enticing" – wrote Kelsyev – "that many people, myself included, adopted it heart and soul. For should Russia organize such a federation and destroy Austria and Turkey, all European States would disappear at once, and the whole of Europe would become one federation of natural groups". Russian youth were proud of their country who was to give the world the pattern of such a harmonious symbiosis of nations without diminishing the power and influence of her own, on the contrary, enormously increasing them at the same time. The idea was highly gratifying to the instincts, fancies and patriotism of the Russian youth. It would have given Russia a place of lofty moral eminence among nations, while in view of the collapse of Austria and Turkey and the expected adhesion to the Federation by all Slavonic nations, Russia, the natural initiator and protector of the Federation, would immensely grow in power. The plan suited the traditional inclinations of Russian youth to take up immediately the newest Western

[47] *Tri politicheskiya sistemy: Nikolay I, Aleksander II, Aleksander III*, 1897, p. 277. Vasily Bervi (pseudonym: Flerovski) born in 1829, was the author of the *ABC of the Social Sciences* published in 1871. When, in February 1862 the nobility of Tver submitted to the Tsar an address requesting the convocation of a representative assembly, and when thirteen of their leaders were arrested, Bervi sent a petition to the Tsar and a circular letter to the nobility chiefs asking them to defend the rights of the nobles. Bervi was arrested and treated as insane, like previously, Chaadayev. He was placed in an insane asylum and later deported to Astrakhan. He lived many years abroad as an exile. He died in 1918. *Tri politicheskiya sistemy*, p. 159. Bazilevski, *Materialy dla istorii revolutsionnago dvizhenia*, (Materials to the History of the Revolutionary Movement), Paris 1905, p. 74-76. Bazilevski, *Gosudarstvenniya prestupleniya v Rossii XIX veke* (Crimes Against the State in Russia of the XIX Century), Vol. I, pp. 111, 115, 116. B. Glinski, *Revolutsionnyi Period*, (The Revolutionary Period) Vol. I, pp. 147-149. *Byloye*, September 1906, pp. 195-197. Barsukov, *Zhizn Pogodina*, Vol. XIX, pp. 31-35. Nikitenko, *Zapiski*, Vol. II, pp. 69, 70. Shelgunov, *Vospominaniya*, p 41. Burtsev, *Borba za Svobodnuyu Rossiyu* (Struggle for a Free Russia), 1924, pp. 111, 112.

theories. Moreover, it agreed with their inborn trend to Russia's own expansion under the disguise of a federation of nations.[48]

In those days the idea was widely spread in Russia, not only among young revolutionists, but also on the opposite pole, the higher bureaucracy, that the nationalist movement, which Napoleon III had recently utilized in his war against Austria, was a power that was inescapably advancing against Russia. If Russia does not get hold of it and make of it a tool of her own power, it would turn against her, and might contribute to her disintegration. The view prevailed that the restless nationality movement would invade Russia through Poland, and that the Polish movement, as recently the Italian *Risorgimento*, would be supported by the West, particularly by Napoleon III. The subject was broached in a letter, dated from Wilno November 21, old style, 1862, of Prince Bariatinski, the former viceroy of the Caucasus, to Alexander II. He referred to the fact that he had written to the Tsar as early as in July, on the reconstruction of Poland and the necessity of having Russia act as the leader of all Slavonic nations. Bariatinski warned the Tsar that a further advance of the nationality movement might fatally affect the destinies of Russia unless she took the initiative herself. "The tide of the elements striving for the rebuilding of nationalities, changing the present forms of government and even dynasties, has embraced Italy, the Slavonic countries and Greece; the fall of the Bourbons in Naples, the insurrection in Montenegro and the Serbian developments could not fail to have repercussions in Poland, in our Western provinces, and, perhaps even all over Russia." The Tsar ordered a series of reforms in the administration of Congress Poland; Grand Duke Constantine was appointed the emperor's Lieutenant in Warsaw, but all this would not satisfy the Poles. "The problem of national restoration has been distorted to such an extent that an autonomy for Congress Poland has become unthinkable without Lithuania, Volhynia, Kiev and, perhaps, Smolensk, Little Russia, and even Odessa."

Bariatinski advised the Tsar to stress the Slavonic, ancient character of the Russian State and transfer the capital from Petersburg to Kiev. "An event which could paralyze the excessive claims of the Poles would be the transfer of your Imperial Majesty's residence to Kiev, which, according to the appropriate expression used by Zhukovski, is the forbear of Russian cities." This very fact would defy Polish claims to Kiev. "The Russian Emperor will again become the closest neighbor of Slavonic peoples and may easily restore the now fading hopes which the

[48] "We felt very happy that the idea had originated in Russia, that Russia would show how to apply it, and introduce it to Europe which considers Russia a barbarian country; our patriotism was deeply stirred." *Arkhiv Russkoy Revolutsii*, Vol. XI, p. 248.

Slavs place in Russia." The Slavonic peoples will gravitate toward Russia. There will be no more denying that Lithuania, Volhynia and Pedolia belong to Russia, and Poland will voluntarily surrender to the Tsar's protection.[49]

Bariatinski, on one side, and Herzen, Bakunin, Kelsyev, on the other, were diametrically opposed to one another politically and socially. Yet as far as the nationalities' problem, the Ukrainian, White Ruthenian, Polish, and Slavonic in general, was concerned, they stood close to each other. Kelsyev expressed the certitude that, having been granted the right of self-determination, the White Ruthenians and Ukrainians would join Russia. The greatest danger inherent in the nationality principle, the restoration of an independent Poland united with White Ruthenia and the Ukraine, would be removed.

"It is evident that such a theory would solve the Polish problem automatically. Poland should also form one natural group, and whether the White Ruthenians and the Little Russians would join her or us, was to depend on themselves. It appeared to us that they would stay with us because they do not like the Poles, and because our aims and our institutions certainly are superior to those of the Poles."[50]

What was to be the fate of Russian dominated Poland, shrunk to the terrritory of the Congress Kingdom?

Herzen, the most eloquent defender of Poland's rights among the Russian revolutionists, recognized, like Bakunin, Poland's rights to self-determination. The Russian émigrés in London adopted, however, the following method of argumentation. It is easily comprehensible that the Poles want to separate themselves from the present, tsarist, despotic, centralist Russia, which is hated by honest Russians themselves. Should Russia, however, break the yoke of her own enslavement, the Poles would have a good reason to remain in a voluntary union with such a reborn Russia.[51]

"Poland, like Italy and Hungary, has an inalienable, full right to state existence independent from Russia" — writes Herzen. "Whether we want a free Poland to detach herself from a free Russia, is a different question. No, we do not want it.... It appears to us that Poland and Russia can march hand in hand towards a new free social life."[52]

This is where the germ of the conflict was to be found from the

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[49] Barsukov, *The Life of Pogodin*, Vol. XIX, pp. 251-255.

[50] *Arkhiv Russkoy Revolutsii*, Vol. XI, p. 298.

[51] Dragomanov in a thorough study has made it perfectly clear that Herzen's ideological solidarity with the Polish patriots was from the beginning of a very frail nature. Dragomanov, *Istoricheskaya Polsha i Velikorusskaya demokratiya* (Historical Poland and Great-Russian Democracy), Geneva 1881, p. 71ff. "Herzen — he says — was properly speaking a Muscovite Slavophil, or rather *Great-Russia-phil.*"

[52] Herzen's *Works*, Vol. IX, p. 463: his second article of the series "Russia and Poland."

very beginning. The Poles interpreted the nationality principle in conformity with its true meaning, the spirit of their unextinguished aspirations, and the example already given by the Italian people, as the justification of Poland's rights to independence. The Poles believed that they would raise in Eastern Europe the banner of their own liberation and of that of the subjugated peoples, that the peoples throwing off their yoke would make common cause with Poland, and that the Ruthenian territories of the old Polish Commonwealth would voluntarily join reborn Poland. Thus, under the disguise of an openly proclaimed alliance of the two nations, based upon the principle of nationality mutually and simultaneously advanced, a war was being waged between two nations, two worlds, two missions. The fundamental divergency of the political conclusions drawn from one and the same principle was temporarily concealed, while the principle itself, as a theoretical basis for a Russo-Polish understanding, was emphasized the more strongly. Had the whole problem continued to remain in the realm of theory, the political harmony which found its expression in mutual demonstrations against tsardom, might have existed for a long time. The Polish insurrection, however, was bound to dispel at once all doubts and bare the frailty of the understanding.

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The political problem was at the root of the future conflict. But it constituted only the most important fragment of the serious rift which, from the very start, had appeared in the mutual relations of the men of both nations. The elements of that spiritual breach have been grasped and described rather concordantly by both the Polish and Russian participants and witnesses of that attempt at a mutual understanding. Divergencies appeared only when a comparative valuation of the traits of both nations was made: what is regarded by the Russians as their superiority, appears as something precisely opposite in the Polish estimation.

Bervi-Flerovski, a contemporary of Chernyshevski, belonging to a generation which had been exceptionally friendly towards Poland, drew a comparison between the revolutionary capabilities of both nations. According to his views, the French and the Russians were the nations who knew how to organize revolutions. The Poles were too prone to spare the upper strata: the educated and the propertied classes; they lacked the spirit of levelling which is the motive power of any revolution. "The Poles" – he wrote – "have never been capable of organizing such a unanimous movement: they are a nation too much permeated with class prejudices. We, Russians, on the other hand, are a nation entirely different in this respect; all of us share the same contempt for the upper classes: for the nobility, the officials, the clergy, the bourgeoisie and the imperial family." Russian progressive and revo-

lutionary movements were always based upon the worship of the common people. "All other classes, the imperial family not excepted, were not only despised by us, but they had and have a deep contempt for themselves. I have never met a Russian who had faith in the good qualities of any of these classes, not one who would believe the stories told about the imperial family, except scandalous anecdotes. Die-hard conservatives do not at all differ in this respect from extreme radicals." In Poland, on the other hand, the enlightened classes have a sense of leadership, even in revolutionary movements. "The Russians implored the masses not to spurn them and admit them to their brotherhood; the Poles proudly appealed to the masses to follow them."

These, according to Bervi, were the marks of the superiority of the Russian intelligentsia over the Poles. Discussing in turn the weak points of the Russians, as he had the opportunity to observe them during the Poles' desperate struggle for independence, he wrote:

"On the other hand, instead of the ardor which was turning the Poles heroes, with us political apathy prevailed. Only by that passivity the absolute monarchy endures. The results would be quite different, if the Polish enthusiasm joined our democratic spirit. The Poles would incite us to demonstrations and to fighting while we would teach them how to animate the whole nation with enthusiasm and how to turn a civil war into a revolution." Bervi would have liked to see the Poles and the Russians join in the future in a common revolutionary struggle. "The rebirth of the Polish and of the Russian nations," he wrote, "can only be simultaneous... A free Polish nation has no ground to separate itself from us, but has reason to remain together with us to fight Austria."[53]

Russian passivity, Russian incapability to pass from words to deeds, the result of centuries of despotism, appeared most conspicuously in the reign of Alexander II. Plans of reforms and projects of changes were conceived, criticism of the system became more bitter, the imagination was fired, but the masses continued to be kept in a state of compulsory inertia. "The liberal public and the writers were completely excluded from action, consequently there was no adumbration of the seriousness among them which would have prevailed if they had recognized the problem of reforms as their own concern." Utopias were again revived such as Fourierism, developed in Chernyshevski's novel *What Shall We Do?*. In comparison with such utopias, the reforms appeared insignificant. "How happy are the Poles, I thought. With

[53] Bervi, *Tri politicheskiya sistemy*, pp. 220-222. The author lived to see the events of 1918, a period during which the contempt for enlightened classes, which he had himself considered a valuable national trait, reached its apogee in Russia. His dream of a joint struggle for the liberation of the Poles and the Russians who were to learn revolutionary radicalism from their allies, did not materialize.

them words and action can go hand in hand. Our press proclaimed that action should follow words, but what could this action be? The people were removed from any action. There could be only one action – revolutionary propaganda."

Under such circumstances there greatly increased the number of people indulging in liberal verbiage, always ready to renounce their principles and even denounce others to the authorities, for the sake of their own career. "The duplicity prevailing in that period, in which honest men as well as good for nothing careerists equally proclaimed progressive ideas and were equally suspected of treason, made of the average man a spy and weathercock, and not an honest individual. Russia has thus missed the opportunity to become a great nation.... The whole country protested against the radical prattling that was on the lips of every grafter and careerist and which every one of them was ready to recant at any time to become a spy."[54]

Such was the comparative appraisal of the nations from the viewpoint of a Russian revolutionist.

The different attitude of Poland and Russia towards democracy was most trenchantly formulated by General Henryk Dembiński, a veteran of the Napoleonic wars and of the Polish insurrection of 1830. The aged general met in Paris a young Russian radical by the name of Shelgunov. "Do you know what is the difference between us Poles and you Russians?" said Dembiński. "We Poles want to make every peasant a gentleman, while you want to make every gentleman a peasant." "This was the truth" – wrote Shelgunov – "which I could not fully understand then, but I understood it later, when, in the seventies, an attempt was made to transform the intelligentsia into peasants."[55]

Kelsyev's remarks agree with Bervi's observations. The Russian youth were immensely superior to young Poles in the radicalism of their slogans and programs, and in that respect exerted a marked influence upon the Poles. Polish youth, however, far outdistanced the Russians in their readiness to pass from words to action. Kelsyev spoke slightingly and disdainfully of the ability of the Russian young people. The Russians designed their programs upon the basis of the theory of nationalities. "While we were building up that theory" – he wrote – "and discussing it at our meetings, the Poles decided to put it into effect immediately. First they began to trust the sincerity of our liberalism proved by deportations and hard labor sentences. Then they felt encouraged by the boldness of our press and our proclamations. Finally, they became strongly infected with our spirit of opposition. The Polish youth followed our example, and suddenly turned into statesmen, di-

[54] *Tri politicheskiya sistemy*, pp. 131-138.
[55] Shelgunov, *Vospominaniya*, 1923, pp. 110, 111.

plomats, fathers of their country, and leaders of their nation. However, our young people did not exceed the modest limits of fomenting revolution in words, and risings in dreams. They were not capable of any undertaking because of their unrestraint, and, even cowardice. The Poles, on the other hand, grew up in the traditions of manifestations, battles and conspiracies; there is scarcely any one who would not have in his family a deportee or an émigré. We trained to be philosophers; they trained to be doers. We were talkative like children, while every Pole knew how to hold his tongue. A bold phrase or a little new theory are the greatest pleasure for us, and we care for nothing more if we only can show off, while the whole mind of the Pole is concentrated upon the reconstruction of Poland within her boundaries of 1772: this is the testament of his fathers."[56]

This is how Pushkin's antithesis of the boastful Pole and the faithful Russian appeared in 1863 to a man who was hostile to the Poles, and had for them on the whole, only words of bitter criticism.

Panteleyev was another Russian who was in constant touch with the Poles, as a university student, as a member of the *Zemla i Vola* organization, during his political trial, and his Siberian exile.

"Neither in Wilno nor in Petersburg" – he wrote – "had I any opportunity to meet the outstanding leaders of the Polish insurrection. I came, however, in contact with very numerous average men.... Therefore it was the more interesting to me to observe the differences between the Russian and the Polish people of that time. From a simple country squire who tilled the soil with his own hands to a comparatively well-to-do landowner, or a man of a liberal profession, all were united by one idea, even though differently conceived, an idea based upon ardent love of their own country and of their nationality. Even in people of a very modest education there was evident a rather thorough knowledge of their national history and of their literature. And what was particularly striking was their faith in the future. No reprisals could shake it. They all carried it in their souls, as a dogma: Poland is not yet lost!"[57]

The difference of character of the two nations finds an eloquent

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[56] *Arkhiv Russkoy Revolutsii*, Vol. XI, p. 249.

[57] *Iz vospominanii proshlago* (From Reminiscences of the Past), Vol. II, pp. 90, 91. Panteleyev refuted and called naive the opinion current among the Russians, that the Polish landowners of the borderlands had joined the 1863 insurrection because they opposed the agrarian reform enacted by the Russian government. "They were doubtlessly aware that in case of a victorious insurrection, the past would not return again. Moreover, they knew that the insurrection could have been successful only with the extensive participation of the peasant masses, and victorious masses, led by so-called reds, were apt to come forward with demands even more radical than those enacted by the Russian government. The part taken in the insurrection by people such as Węcławowicz made it evident that the national feeling was in 1863 the chief incentive, overshadowing any

illustration in Herzen's appraisal of the famous *Memoirs* of Rufin Piotrowski. Herzen's article was published in his *Kolokol* in May, 1863. Herzen did justice to Piotrowski's heroism, iron perseverance and humaneness, and praised his friendly attitude towards the Russian common people. There is however, one feature, that struck him as unpleasant in the *Memoirs.*

"It is most significant" – he wrote – "that notwithstanding his friendly attitude towards the peasants, Piotrowski remains spiritually a complete Pole, a Catholic mystic, a man belonging to an old, moulded, finished civilization, a civilization aristocratic even in this democratic revolutionist...."

As a proof of his assertion Herzen quotes Piotrowski's attitude towards his fellow-prisoners, criminals, convicted of murder. Let us examine the appropriate passages from the *Memoirs.*

Sentenced to hard labor in Siberia, Piotrowski was ordered first to clean out wood-shavings and garbage around the government establishments. He worked with shovel and broom all day. His fellow worker was a young man from Podolia who had been sentenced to hard labor for life for the murder of the estate owner. "I felt chills running down my spine" – wrote Piotrowski – "when I discovered what he had done. You have probably killed him by accident, involuntarily? Yes, he replied – involuntarily. I happened to have my axe stuck in my belt, so I pulled it out, and smashed his head...." He then explained that the squire had been a bad man, that he mistreated his peasants; so he did not regret that he had killed him. "If the just quoted reasons for the murder were fictitious, my comrade was a true criminal – argues Piotrowski. If however, they were true, I admit that I would not dare to condemn him. The situation in which I found myself and which was only the result of the oppression and injustice of force had revealed to me the nature of force and injustice and made me indulgent to crimes of such kind."

It would seem that Piotrowski had treated his comrade's crime rather forbearingly, but Herzen was shocked that Piotrowski had a

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class interests." (*Iz Vospominanii,* Vol. II, p. 116) The readiness to action and to sacrificing their lives characterizing the Polish generation of the period fascinated the Russian youth, who in this respect felt inferior. The noted revolutionist Ashenbrenner, later a member of the *Narodnaya Volia,* a military man, while billeting in the Moscow region, before the outbreak of the Polish insurrection of 1863, made the acquaintance of a Polish officer, Louis Zwierzdowski. "We met a captain of the General Staff Zwierzdowski... Even though young and inexperienced, I was aware of the inflexible iron strength of character of that man, as well as of his straightforwardness. Doubts were alien to him. His sense of duty made him break everything that prevented him from achieving his goal. Not less evident was his practical sense, his knowledge, his unconscious, probably inherited, dexterity. I was struck by the combination of these traits probably because we Russians were in this respect inferior to the Poles...." *Byloye,* April 1907, p. 11.

reflex of disgust when he found out that this comrade was a murderer. "Piotrowski had to make a considerable effort to surmount his aversion to his new comrades sentenced to hard labor just as he had been, but for common crimes. To him a Russian criminal court is, after all, a court.... And Piotrowski did not extend his hand to the heroic peasant, he did not find for him a single word of sympathy, on the contrary, he tried to trouble his conscience!"

Piotrowski was a man of great moral and intellectual culture. Compelled to spend day in and day out in the company of criminals, of ignorant, sometimes savage people, he bore his lot with great serenity, gained the good will of his companions, and treated them with great kindness.

"In those men marked with the stigma of some great crime I could not see criminals. I wanted to regard them as unfortunate though morally depraved men.... In the greatest hard labor convict I respected the misfortune and dignity of man, though debased and debasing himself. All those hard labor convicts, my comrades, called me Mr. Piotrowski. Did these unfortunate men instinctively feel my superiority, or comparing their crimes with mine, did they want to give the lie to the law which had placed me among criminals?"

Herzen, however, believes that Piotrowski's way of thinking was a symptom indicating the distortion of his mind by the prejudices of a senescent Europe. For how could he otherwise believe that people who had been sentenced for murder by Russian courts were morally inferior to a man sentenced for his patriotic activities? Were not Russian criminal courts identical with that machinery of oppression — the secret political police?....

"This is not Piotrowski's personal opinion," he writes. "In his conduct he is far above it.... No, this is an opinion resulting from the entire European mentality. The humaneness of a Western European does not reach further. He may be lenient, forbearing towards criminals, but he cannot forget that a man, branded as a criminal, is a criminal... The Western European has recognized the existing state system with its courts of law, and their sentences... But where shall we get that sense of shame, that pride, that moral sensitiveness? Our legal morality is in the future, we have not recognized anything. Here we have only a snow-covered plain, and instead of a black cross, a Petersburg striped turnpike."[58]

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[58] Rufin Piotrowski, *Pamiętniki*, (Memoirs), Vol. II, Poznań, 1861, pp. 204, 209, 231. Also Herzen's *Works*, Vol. XV, pp. 187-192. The mention of a black cross refers certainly to the fact reported by Piotrowski that the Polish exiles had erected in the steppe beyond Omsk a black cross on the spot where in 1837 Father Sierociński and five of his comrades were whipped to death. Piotrowski, *Memoirs*, Vol. III, p. 32.

Herzen was shocked that Piotrowski felt in the hard labor camp morally superior to men whom Russian courts had sentenced for murder; he saw in it a mark of Western aristocracy. If Herzen read Piotrowski's *Memoirs* to the end, he could have noticed that life in the hard labor camp was gradually beginning to free Piotrowski's mind from Western prejudices. Living far from civilization, under dreadful physical and moral conditions, amid humiliations and scenes of atrocious torturing of the convicts for the least offence, Piotrowski's soul was gradually seized by the Russian moods, and he admitted himself that had he not escaped from forced labor, he might have induced his comrades to commit an act in keeping with their instincts. Perusing these avowals of a man gentle by nature, humane and educated, we better understand the *Lust der Zerstörung* (the lust of destruction) of Bakunin, the nihilists, Nechayev, and the terrorists. The hard labor camp, an abode of condensed slavery, was a hothouse where the poisonous fruit of hatred, cultivated in the Russian life permeated by slavery for centuries, ripened within a matter of months.

"I became more taciturn, gloomy, savage and solitary; my soul was agitated by the most terrible feelings: blood, murder and arson were the most favorite subject of my thoughts and the only sentiments of my heart.... I pondered over a plan of winning over my fellow prisoners, and by means known to myself, having disarmed the garrison, to burn, destroy, suffuse with blood all the government establishments such as the distillery, the depots, warehouses etc., so that no trace should remain of the place where free people were treated by the despot as the meanest slaves. God be my witness that I would have done it... I had come to understand why every slave, if he had a sense of dignity and understood his noble destiny, is vindictive and cruel, and even vile and mean, for he had been forbidden to be nobleminded, magnanimous, candid and sincere; he had been transformed into a beast and brute and therefore he resorts to beastly and cruel means to recover the rights due him as a man..."

He was already entering the path of doom... But he made a great effort and decided to flee from the place of torture where the seeds of crime were beginning to take root in his soul. And he saved his soul.[59]

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A great many Polish students who were soon to fight in the insurrection, came at the universities of the Empire in contact with Russian youth. When from 1863, upon Katkov's instigation, the Russian authorities scented everywhere a Polish intrigue, it became general to interpret the entire revolutionary movement of the sixties as a result of

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[59] R. Piotrowski, *Pamiętniki*, Vol. III, pp. 41, 45, 46.

subversive Polish agitation and to see in all anti-government demonstrations of the Russian students the secret hand of the young Poles. But evidence furnished by the Russians who had themselves taken part in the radical youth movement of that period definitely contradicts such an assertion. They maintain tauntingly, that the Polish students kept entirely aloof and did not participate in the activities of their Russian colleagues.

"When I entered the university the Polish students, particularly those from Congress Poland, kept wholly apart from the Russians, there were no close relations whatsoever," writes Panteleyev. "All that was admissible was a courteous salute when meeting at the lectures. The Polish students did not take any active part in our meetings, nor in the elections of student delegates and editors and they never applied for any assistance from the Russian student's fund."[60]

Closer relations between the Russians and Poles began only after the February 1861 demonstrations in Warsaw. On the occasion of the funeral rites for the victims of the Warsaw clashes the Russians appealed to the Poles to fight tsarism shoulder to shoulder with them. The Polish students took in this case an attitude which had certainly nothing in common with perversity, pretense or intrigue. Not only did they not conceal their distinct national aims, but, on the contrary, they stressed them far more vigorously than tactical considerations might require. Disregarding political calculation, they expressly underlined the difference between the Polish and Russian aspirations. On March 29, 1861, a requiem mass for the Warsaw victims was celebrated in the French Catholic Church in Moscow. When the Polish students were leaving the church after the services, a Russian student, Peter Zaychnevski who was later to publish an appeal to *Young Russia,* made an address in which he called on the Poles to join the Russian youth in their fight against tsarism "under the red banner of socialism" or "the black banner of the proletariat."

The Polish students answered that speech with a manifesto in which they declared that the hitherto undertaken Russian attempts to come to an understanding had not been sufficiently clear to the Poles. A mere appeal to unite with the Russians was not sufficient for even the Russian government had for a long time proclaimed the same slogan. And although obviously the Russian students did not represent the viewpoint of an absolutist government, the example of Prussia had proved that liberalism may go hand in hand with national aggressiveness. Misfortunes had taught the Poles to be on their guard. They were now called upon to join the Russians under the red banner of so-

[60] Panteleyev, *Iz Vospominanii,* Vol. I, pp. 65, 66.

cialism or the black banner of the proletariat. The time for socialism, however, had not yet come, for neither the Russians nor the Poles had any proletariat which could constitute an intelligent basis for socialism. For the Russians socialism was a luxury, whereas the chief aim of the Poles was their national liberation. The Poles and the Russians could not be brought together either by the theory of socialism or by racial affinity. There was only one basis for an understanding – the freedom and independence of Poland. What was the attitude of liberal Russia towards Poland? So far the Poles knew nothing definite about it. The Poles were ready to extend their hand to the Russians to fight the common foe, tsarist despotism, but the Russian attitude towards it was different from that of the Poles. Tsarism "has suppressed your freedom, but has given you external greatness, broadened the boundaries of the preponderance of your nation. For us it is entirely alien, and has robbed us of everything. In case of concessions on its part, you may effect a reconciliation with it. But Russian rule in Poland is an anomaly... Let yourselves not be misled by the fact that our compatriots in that sector which the Congress of Vienna had permitted to call itself Poland, demand constitutional guarantees. They cannot stop at that. They do not demand more for the simple reason that they do not feel strong enough. But before long, the time may come for us to state our demands openly and clearly. We know the answer of your government, but we would like to know what your people will say then? What will their better representatives do? Make that clear to us. We ask you to be the intermediaries between us and your people. Explain to them our aspirations and our demands. Arouse in them the sense of an impartial justice, and the strength to abide by it without restrictions... We shall then be convinced of the sincerity of your sympathy with our cause... The Russians and the Poles will then again be brothers, as in prehistoric times."

The authors concluded their reply with expressing their conviction that the Russians would agree with them. If they had any doubts, they should propound them and the Poles would answer them.[61]

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[61] "The hand extended by Zaychnevski remained suspended in midair, unaccepted by those to whom it had been extended with confidence. The author of the reply was ready to collaborate with Russian revolutionists not in the name of socialism or of the proletariat, but in the name of Poland's freedom and independence." Such is a contemporary Soviet author's comment on that episode. Tsentrarkhiv, Gosudarstvennoye Izdatelstvo, *Politicheskiye protsessy shestidesiatikh godov*, (Central Archives. State Publishing Office. Political Trials of the Sixties) edited by Kozmin. Vol, I, 1923, pp. 142-145. If the demand of independence for their country on the part of the Polish students was treated by the Soviet author as an unfriendly act towards Russia, as a rejection of the Russian offer, even after Poland had regained her independence, it may be more easily understood that between the aspirations of the Polish patriots and those of Russian revolutionists there always existed a chasm which was frankly and courageously revealed by the Polish youth in 1861.

Though the Poles who were in touch with Russian opposition circles did not ignore the divergency of the Polish striving for liberation and the Russian revolutionary aspirations, they viewed the development of the Russian revolutionary movement with hope and confidence. The expected liberation struggle of Russia against tsarism greatly enhanced the chances of a Polish insurrection, and in the opinion of many prominent Polish politicians was an indispensable condition of its success.[62] The Poles relied upon the outbreak of a revolution in Russia, and warm and encouraging assurances to that effect were obtained from Russian revolutionary circles, both at home and abroad. The expectation in which Russia lived communicated itself to the Poles with the force of an overpowering suggestion; young Russia felt herself on the eve of liberation. Milowicz declares that the organizers of the insurrection counted on the revolutionary movement in Russia. "At that time people counted on such a movement because young Polish officers in the Russian service, and belonging to the organization, kept sending to Warsaw such optimistic reports on the progress of revolutionary propaganda in Russia, and so positively asserted that the support of the Russian revolutionary party may be counted upon, that it was difficult not to

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Zaychnevski, when later imprisoned and examined by the secret political police concerning the Polish appeal, declared: "I do not know who was the author of that reply. I got it at the University from a Polish student whom I did not know." Herzen's *Works*, Vol. XI, p. 184. The Polish alumni of Russian universities and later participants of the January 1863 insurrection, make in their memoirs observations based on experience confirming the pertinence of the Polish students' reply of 1861, and at the same time corroborating the views of Herzen, Bervi and Kelsyev regarding the deep spiritual differences separating the temporary allies. Milowicz writes: "The sole aim of every Pole is the independence of his country, a revolution only a means to that end, whereas a Russian who begins to think and ceases to be a blind tool of despotism, strives for revolution as an aim, without even realizing its consequences, for he is satisfied with the mere fact that it will change the present conditions which he considers a debasement of human dignity.... Once a Russian ceases to be a passive slave, he surpasses in his revolutionary and destructive aspirations any Marat or Robespierre.... The Pole is a conservative striving for reestablishment of the State organism which is his ideal, while the Russian wants chaos and the destruction of any social organization replacing it by phantoms in which he does not believe himself.... The chasm which separates them is the reason that, even between their revolutionary parties, there can be no durable alliance, only a temporary, very brief truce." — Thomas Burzyński, also an alumnus of Kiev University and a participant in the insurrection, stressed the fatal influence of the age-old Russian system upon the nation's character. "The ease with which people pass from one to another quite opposite party, is the misfortune of present-day Russia. In building the foundations of their throne, the Moscow Tsars did not spare the blood and brains of their subjects instead of common mortar. Hence the absence of independent thought, and the non-existence of a Muscovite nation... The Lord was willing to spare Sodom and Gomorrah for one just man, but a handful of people of good faith, even hundreds of men like Rylеyev and Zhelabov, will not redeem a nation debased for centuries." *Wydawnictwo Materyałów do r. 1863* (Materials Pertaining to the Rising of 1863). Vol. IV, pp. 36, 222.

62 W. Milowicz wrote on February 10, 1863 from Wrocław (Breslau) to Witold Marczewski, that he would like to get full powers to work in Russia: "The success of our cause may depend upon risings in Russia." *Krasnyi Arkhiv*, Vol. VIII, p. 111 (a Russian translation of Milowicz's letter).

give faith to their assurances. Likewise, the reports which came from the Paris committee of the Youth Association who were in direct contact with Herzen, also permitted us to count on a Russian revolution... Our Committee established a special section for the maintenance of relations with Russia, particularly with the Russian army, and placed at its head Jarosław Dąbrowski who after his arrest was replaced by Zygmunt Padlewski, summoned to Warsaw from Geneva for that particular purpose. The section appointed its agents in the various Russian divisions and regiments and established in Petersburg a special committee consisting of Josephat Ohryzko, Z. Sierakowski and Opocki. At the decisive moment, however, the entire Moscow agitation proved to have been a mere farce: only very few Russian enthusiasts deemed it their duty to demonstrate by action the truth of the pledge which they had previously most solemnly undertaken..."[63]

Was all that but a dream of the over-enthusiastic Poles, in vain cold-shouldered by the chieftains of the Russian movement? Let us see what information reached the Poles from the highest level of the Russian revolutionary activities, from London. Kelsyev wrote on the subject what follows:

"The Polish émigrés began to probe for a rapprochement with us. The first to call was Colonel Zygmunt Jordan. He was followed by others: Branicki and Chojecki, Padlewski and finally, Władysław Czartoryski. They were most interested in the question whether we were prepared for revolution, whether our party was strong, and what was our attitude towards the Polish cause. We did not conceal anything, for there was nothing to be concealed. The news that reached us from Russia was, in the main, grave. The peasants refused to sign the agreements ordered by the *ukase,* they expected full freedom and looked for the *Golden Gramota* (Charter). A state of ferment existed in the army. The officers were in communication with the soldiers and with the peasants, and from everywhere news came that the whole county would follow a certain person, and the whole city another. No one praised *Young Russia,* but many people were in agreement with that proclamation. It was reproached only with having blabbed things that should have been kept secret. The demonstrations in Poland aroused at first great sympathy. The Russians felt ashamed that they lacked the courage and the influence of the Poles, that they were unable to arouse the masses. The opinion, however, prevailed that if there were an outbreak in Poland and if the expected Polish insurrection reached the boundaries of our Great-Russian provinces, we would rise too... Herzen and Ogarev were deep in thoughts. Bakunin

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[63] *Wydawnictwo Materyałów,* Vol. IV, pp. 54, 55.

could not contain himself, and went to Paris to get acquainted with the Poles. The Poles told him that they were afraid of an outbreak, and that their only hope rested with our army officers and soldiers in Congress Poland who were sympathizing with them, and who had already organized a committee which was in contact with their 'Central Committee.' Three members of that committee (one of them was Fenin) previously escaped to Paris and declared that our troops awaited only a rising..."[64]

The founder and moving spirit of the Russian officers' conspiracy in Warsaw was Potebnia. He made trips abroad, conferred with Polish and Russian émigrés and corresponded with Herzen from Warsaw. On June 7, 1862, he wrote him:

"In your appeal to the Russian troops in Poland in 1854 you declared: we shall tell you what is to be done, when the hour strikes. According to our deep conviction, that hour has struck; whatever could be done, was done... We have been drawn nearer to the Polish patriots to such an extent that at any rate, we shall take part directly in the impending Polish insurrection. The troops stationed in Warsaw are now so disposed that they are ready to fight their own people, if the latter should intend to go against the Poles."[65]

During his stay abroad in the summer of 1862, Potebnia visited London.

"I saw him only once" – wrote Kelsyev. "He arrived in London, and while I was at Bakunin's I heard his report on what was going on in Poland. He told us that the situation of the Russian Committee was most difficult, for they hardly could restrain our troops from rising. He said that the discontent with our government was exceeding anything one could imagine. Their own conscience did not permit our soldiers to disperse the crowds led by priests, carrying crosses and candles and chanting religious songs. The government keeps the army continuously on the alert. This exasperates the soldiers, while inconsi-

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[64] *Arkhiv Russkoy Revolutsii,* Vol. XI, pp. 249, 250. At the beginning of May 1862 a conspiracy was discovered in Warsaw among the army. On June 28, the officers Arnoldt, Sliwicki and the non-commissioned officer, Rostkowski were executed in the Modlin fortress. An army order referring to it is to be found in Bogucharski's *Gosudarstvenniya Prestupleniya* (Crimes Against the State), Vol. I, pp. 114, 115. Przyborowski, *Historya dwóch lat* (History of Two Years), Vol. IV, pp. 308-313. Limanowski, *Historya Powstania 1863 i 1864 r.* (History of the Rising of 1863-64), pp. 109-114. Agaton Giller admits that it was a mistake to believe that the soldiers who had revolutionary papers read to them, had been won to the cause of the insurrection. *Historya Powstania,* Vol. II, pp. 93, 94. Berg treated the affair lightheartedly and humorously. *Zapiski* (Notes), Vol. II, p. 269ff. The revolutionist Ashenbrenner considered the conspiracy a rather serious affair, basing his view on the reports of Russian officers. *Byloye,* April 1907, pp. 17-19. Also Herzen's article in *Kolokol,* Herzen's *Works* Vol. XV, p. 360ff.

[65] Herzen's *Works,* Vol. XV, p. 363. Przyborowski, *Historya dwóch lat,* Vol. IV, p. 265.

derate and rash officers tell them that were it not for the whims of the government which keeps the Poles enslaved by force, the soldiers would be much happier, and less men would be drafted into the army... Potebnia's report confirmed Herzen and all of us in the belief that the situation was by no means a joking matter."[66]

It seemed that the menace dreaded by Nicholas I and Paskevich when, after the crushing of the 1831 insurrection, a part of the Russian army was again permanently left in Congress Poland, was about to materialize.[67]

Potebnia merged the Warsaw officers' committee with the *Land and Liberty* association, the headquarters of which was in Petersburg. *Land and Liberty* was a peculiar organization in the history of the Russian revolutionary movement. Various, outright contradictory versions of its power and importance were in circulation. As long as it existed, it was shrouded in mystery; after it passed out of existence it was soon forgotten. The government did not detect it. Its founders and prominent members soon died as the Serno-Solovyevich brothers, or imperceptibly passed to legal activities and thus had every practical reason to obliterate the vestiges of the association and to deliver it to oblivion. In this they succeeded to such an extent that, when in 1876 a revolutionary society was organized under the same name, its members knew nothing definite about their predecessors, some of whom, as Alexander Sleptsov or the brothers Obruchev, already held important official positions.

In the era of the January insurrection, however, the organization enjoyed a great prestige. The *Kolokol* had for it words of praise and hope, while Katkov wrote of it with indignation. Polish patriots repeated with confidence those two mysterious words *Zemla i Vola*, which were to arouse Russia to a fight for her freedom. The association's

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[66] *Arkhiv Russkoy Revolutsii*, Vol. XI, pp. 250, 251.

[67] After the 1831 campaign Paskevich foresaw in a secret circular to military commanders that Russian officers "could be drawn into close relations with the Poles, and such close relations might have a harmful influence upon the spirit of the officers". He ordered the establishment of secret surveillance, and demanded that a list be furnished him of the officers who were suspected of maintaining too close relations with the Poles. In 1836 Paskevich reminded the commander of the Fourth Infantry Corps that the Poles had remained hostile to Russia. "Their striving for imaginary independence has been and is always seeking for various ways of revolt. Secret plots and societies, and their plans camouflaged by outward courtesy, have often resulted in winning for them the good will of the troops stationed in Poland." Paskevich even extended the police duties of the military commanders beyond their subordinates. He enjoined the regimental commanders to report immediately to the authorities any persons hostile to the government within the area of their cantonments. He stressed the necessity of keeping all such police methods in the utmost secrecy. In 1846 Paskevich corresponded with the Governor General of Kiev, Bibikov, regarding the secret supervision of army men of Polish origin. *Minuvshiye Gody* (Bygone Years), December, 1908, pp. 132-134. *Okhraneniye russkikh ofitserov ot polskogo dukha.* (Preservation of Russian Officers from the Polish Spirit). Edited by P. N. Miller in Moscow from materials in the Shchukin Museum.

proclamations, bearing its letterhead and seal, were read with interest.

Mystification seems to have been at the bottom of the whole thing; people were told strange things about the enormous power of the association; new recruits as well as old members, allied London revolutionists as well as adversaries and conservatives, were deceived, mystification being used either to lure or to scare them. In all cases it was a grotesque, monstrous bluff. Pantelyev's remarks regarding Sleptsov were entirely to the point.[68]

In January, 1863, Sleptsov went abroad to make contacts with the émigrés. He called at the *Kolokol* office as the plenipotentiary of the *Zemla i Vola* organization and addressed the editors very haughtily. "The plenipotentiary was filled with the importance of his mission", wrote Herzen, "and bade us to become agents for the *Zemla i Vola* association. I refused, to the great amazement not only of Bakunin, but also Ogarev. 'How many are you?' — I asked. 'This is not easy to say' — he answered — 'several hundred in Petersburg and three thousand in the provinces.' 'Do you believe it?' I asked Bakunin. 'Of course he exaggerated; but if they are not as numerous today, they will be tomorrow,' and he laughed. 'This is necessary to uphold the weak beginnings. If they were strong, they would not need us,' added Ogarev, in such cases always dissatisfied with my skepticism."[69]

Could Bakunin and Ogarev have any illusions as to the strength of the Russian organization?

Simultaneously with Sleptsov, Andrew Potebnia was also in London which he left to join the Polish insurrection. Potebnia had been several times in London, he had no delusions regarding the strength of the *Zemla i Vola*, and did not make a secret of it in his conversations with the London émigrés. Several years later, in January 1870, Bakunin, in an appeal to Russian army officers, said that while Potebnia was in London in the fall of 1862, the émigrés of the editorial staff of the *Kolokol* asked him to go to Russia and to get in touch with the revolutionary committee which had been allegedly formed there. Potebnia agreed and went to Petersburg where he succeeded in finding a group of people who called themselves members of the committee of the *Zemla i Vola*. A conversation with a handful of those people convinced Potebnia that the whole committee was a bluff. He returned to London a month later and reported what follows: "There is nothing serious in it,

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[68] "The late A. M. Unkovski told me the following: — In 1862 the gentleman with the pince-nez (Sleptsov) having met prince T. told him such nonsense about the power of the *Zemla i Vola* association that the latter at first believed everything. When, however, the whole story proved to be a myth, he was not only seized with the greatest indignation at this falsehood, but also made a decided turn in the opposite direction." Pantelevev, *Vospominaniya*, Vol. I., p. 299.

[69] Herzen's *Works*, Vol. XIV, p. 440.

not even the nucleus of anything serious. Most of its members are coxcombs of conspiracy and revolution, children showing off in front of each other and playing with thundering but empty phrases; they are children not only in age, but in intelligence, ability and complete lack of will power, experience and real knowledge. There are among them a few sincere people desirous but incapable of action, and in the whole committee there is not even a shadow of the knowledge of Russia. Finally, the committee lacks organization and has no contacts or relations with the provinces... Between ourselves, the whole committee is a bluff on which we cannot rely and from which we cannot expect any guidance or any assistance."

Potebnia, who was well acquainted with the work of the Central Polish National Committee, with its organization method and readiness to act, looked with disdain at the ridiculous revolutionary organization in Petersburg. But did he advise the émigrés to treat it according to its merits? No, Potebnia gave them an advice which appeared very convincing to Bakunin and Ogarev. He told them: "In spite of everything, we should recognize the committee and act, independently of course, but in its name, because there is no other committee and no other organization in Russia, and it is indispensable for us to have public opinion believe that such a committee and such an organization do exist. Finally, some serious people may later join the alleged committee and make of it a real committee." "We followed the advice of our friend, Potebnia."[70]

Bakunin did not need Potebnia's encouragement and tried on his own initiative to convince the Western revolutionists and the Poles of the existence of a powerful revolutionary movement in Russia. On that point there was full accord among the conspirators in Russia and the émigrés, civilians and the military, Potebnia and Sleptsov, Bakunin and Ogarev. Bakunin practiced such tactics for years, as early as his first stay abroad, and now he met the younger generation which had instinctively chosen the same path. They all practiced mystification consciously, for they considered it their duty and believed that they were not permitted to reveal their own weakness. Conspiracy served them not only to conceal the organization's strength from the lurking foe, but also to conceal its weakness, particularly from new candidates. The conspirators of both generations believed that fictitious reports might create a real power, that people lured by a semblance of strength would join the organization and make it really potent. With such a tacit agreement, people, to some extent deluding themselves, deliberately deceived others. Although some mystification is inseparable

[70] J. Steklov, M. *A. Bakunin*, Vol. II, 1927, pp. 94, 95.

form conspiratory activities in any country, in Russia it assumed extraordinary proportions. Evidently, local conditions were especially favorable for the use of such methods. Ultimately any despotism stands by the fear of its subjects. He who succeeded in arousing fear among the masses, becomes powerful in a country where all elements and springs of public power are carefully hidden from the eyes of millions. In a country where official secrecy prevails, where the policies of the government towards foreign countries as well as towards its own subjects are based upon bluffing, fiction is bound to become a power and by means of suggestion, rendered more efficacious by secrecy, to impose its will upon the masses and even upon the State.

The *Zemla i Vola* of the sixties, composed of people who counted more upon the capitulation of the government before the mere threat of rebellion, than upon a life or death struggle against that government, soon collapsed. Yet sixteen years later the *Narodnaya Vola* was to prove that a group of people forming a well organized conspiracy, and ruthless in their struggle, may scare the highest State authorities. Mystification was matured by the *genius loci.* Inherent in it was an understanding of the conditions prevailing in their country and of the psychology of the nation.

The editors of the *Kolokol* supported the myth of the *Zemla i Vola.* Only their private correspondence reveals what they thought. On February 15, 1863, Herzen wrote to Ogarev:

"Let them give us a proof that they are a force... Standing alone on the foundations built by ourselves, we shall not be involved in a *fiasco* or an absurd situation, until we receive proofs that their foundations are stronger... They do not know how to write." But on March 1 in an article entitled "Zemla i Vola" Herzen in enthusiastic words informed the readers of the *Kolokol* that a society of that name had been organized. "In the name of that watchword they shall be victorious." Soon afterwards he warmly greeted the proclamation of the society.[71] On April 27 he again wrote to Ogarev: "I cannot recognize a handful of people of very small ability as an embryo... (their representative has disowned them).... I do not yet believe that the embryo is ready, that we may start a rising."

Nevertheless Ogarev declared at that time in an appeal to the Russian youth: "Join the organization; do not ask whether it is strong or weak, but join it to make it tremendously strong."

And again on May 1 Herzen wrote to Ogarev: "We must continue to support the myth of the *Zemla i Vola,* if only for the purpose of

[71] This was the *Svoboda* (Freedom), No. 1. Herzen's *Works,* Vol. XVI, pp. 68, 69, 107, 108, 150, 151.

arousing their faith in themselves. It is, however, clear that so far no *Zemla i Vola* exists."[72]

The most conspicuous manifestation of the systematic support given to the myth of *Zemla i Vola,* and this despite trustworthy reports about the coxcombs of conspiracy and revolution, was the speech which Bakunin delivered at a banquet in Stockholm, on May 28, 1863. In that speech, delivered in French, and which found widespread publicity throughout Europe, Bakunin declared that the Russian government was on the verge of ruin. "Surrounded by profound and general dissatisfaction, brought to the extreme by the terrible Polish insurrection which, advancing from the West like a storm, threatens to engulf with its flame the whole empire, imperiled at home by a still more dreadful people's revolution, despised in Europe, despising itself, its spirit falters, it suffers dizzy spells, it staggers on its feet like a sick man about to die."

This government suffering the pangs of death is opposed by the powerful force of the *Zemla i Vola* organization. "A great patriotic society has been recently formed in Russia, at once conservative, liberal and democratic, under the name of *Zemla i Vola.* Its headquarters are in Petersburg and its branches spread throughout all the lands of Great Russia. All well-meaning Russians, regardless of their fortune or position, generals and officers, civil officials of all ranks, landowners, clergymen and peasants participate in it."

"Organized upon a solid basis, the society aims at establishing, as it were, a State within the State. They have their own finances, their own administration and police, and they will have soon, I hope, their own army. They have formed an alliance with the Central Warsaw Committee which is now called the national government, an alliance based upon broad and just foundations... Under the same conditions, an agreement was concluded with the Ukrainian patriots, and as soon as the Finns declare their willingness, we shall offer them the same guarantees..."

Bakunin's tale of the tremendous power of the secret Russian organization would have been still more impressive if Herzen's son, who was in Stockholm at that time, had not insisted upon toning down the contents of the address.

Several months later, on March 4, 1864, Bakunin wrote from Florence to Herzen and Ogarev on the subject of forwarding foreign publications to Russia via Odessa:

"We must ask the *Zemla i Vola* to find for us a reliable man in Odessa, if the *Zemla i Vola* is a reality and not a phantom... I want

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[72] Herzen's *Works,* Vol. XVI, pp. 233, 234, 241.

to ask you again, Ogarev, whether you still believe in the *Zemla i Vola* as a reality. If it exists, the time has come, indeed, that it be hatched. Did you obtain at last any new proofs of the existence and reality of the society? If it is active, what does it do, and what is its aim?"[73]

It suffices to compare the Stockholm speech of Bakunin with what he had been told by Potebnia on the worthlessness of the organization, and with the doubts he expressed himself in a confidential letter, to get an idea of the glaring contradiction between the opinion which the Russian London émigrés were spreading about the *Zemla i Vola* society, and that which they really had about it.

That duplicity and lack of sincerity also found their expression in the fact that the émigrés formally recognized the authority of the organization though informed by Potebnia of its utter insignificance. Ogarev, with the assistance of Herzen, had started to work on a project according to which the organization's council was to be located in London, and its committee in Russia.[74]

In his letter to the delegate of the *Zemla i Vola* in Switzerland dated July, 1863, Herzen declared that he gladly submitted to the authority of the Central Committee.

At the end of September, 1862, the delegates of the Central Committee, Padlewski, Giller and Milowicz, appeared in the editorial offices of the *Kolokol* in London to negotiate in the name of the imminent Polish insurrection an alliance with the expected Russian revolution. They brought a letter from the Polish National Central Committee dated September 20. The purpose of the letter was to dissipate the Russian revolutionists' distrust of the Polish insurrection, and to convince them that the aim of the insurrection was not the reconstruction of the Poland of the gentry within her old historical boundaries. "The basic idea with which Poland rises today is the full recognition of the right of the peasants to the soil tilled by them, and the granting to each nation the fullest right to determine its own fate." The Committee argued that while the Russians prepare their liberation by means of the agrarian movement in the belief that political liberty in their country will follow a social upheaval, in Poland restoration of independence must precede social reorganization. They expressed the hope that the

[73] Dragomanov, *Pisma Bakunina*, p. 258.

[74] That project, in the handwriting of Ogarev, and amended by Herzen, contained the following characteristic sentence regarding the local branches of the organization in Russia: "The number of members of those local branches should be known to the council and to us without any lie or exaggeration." Herzen considered the reservation "without exaggeration" sufficient. Herzen's *Works*, Vol. XVI, pp. 93-95. The above stipulation was doubtlessly a reaction to Sleptsov's bluff.

Russian revolutionists would act hand in hand with the Poles. Pursuing the beaten track of all Polish appeals to the Russians, they referred to the Decembrists and their attitude towards the Polish cause, unaware of the fact that their aims were separated from the aspirations of the Decembrists by a veritable abyss. They declared that they wanted to reconstruct Poland within her ancient frontiers and to spread the insurrection throughout the whole territory of the pre-Partition Polish Commonwealth, but that they would grant the Lithuanians and Ruthenians the right to remain united with Poland or to determine their fate, and they did not recognize the hegemony of any nationality in the future Polish State.

The Polish Central Committee resolved to find out on the spot, in Russia, how much truth there was in the vague assurances and words of encouragement so generously given to the delegates in London by Ogarev, and particularly by Bakunin. At the beginning of December, 1862, Zygmunt Padlewski was sent to Petersburg. He succeeded in coming in contact with the central committee of the *Zemla i Vola* which delegated Sleptsov and Utin to confer with him. Both were visibly dismayed by the determination of the Polish delegate who had not come for a debate or a competition of radical slogans, but to get a plain declaration whether the Polish insurrectionists could rely upon active Russian aid. They told him that the outbreak of a revolution in Russia could not be expected before May, 1863, and advised to postpone until then the outbreak in Poland. In case such a postponement would not prove feasible, they promised to mould Russian public opinion in favor of Poland, and to attempt to provoke revolutionary movements in the South-Eastern part of European Russia, the traditional cradle of people's revolutions.

Padlewski's meeting with Sleptsov and Utin was, indeed, significant. Padlewski, though not free from misgivings, joined the fight and died a heroic death. At the time when he had been already arrested and in prison wrote notes worthy of his heroic soul, Sleptsov was in Switzerland confessing to young Herzen his disappointment with the revolution and was out of his senses from fear of spies. While Padlewski was spending the last moments of his life in the Płock prison before his execution, Utin, unable to stand the contiuous fear of arrest, escaped abroad, and wrote secretly to Suvorov denying that he ever had any contact with the Polish insurrectionist movement.[75] The above facts are an eloquent illustration of the characterization of Polish and Russian youth of that time given by Bervi, Kelsyev and

[75] Padlewski was executed on May 15, 1863. Utin began his flight on May 14, 1863. Herzen's *Works*, Vol. XVI, p. 437.

Ashenbrenner, who contrasted the rift between phraseology and action that existed among the Russians with the Polish readiness to act. It makes one understand the bitter irony of Dobrolubov and Chernyshevski with regard to the contemporary Russian generation, as well as Chernyshevski's words of passing appreciation addressed to the Poles.

"When will 'today' come?" was the sarcastic query of Dobrolubov, weary of his compatriots who always, without end, felt "on the eve."

In his *Prologue to a Prologue* Chernyshevski, having in mind the Russian liberals and Zygmunt Sierakowski, wrote: "Sokołowski is the only man to the point, and not a goodness knows what."

In connection with the December meeting of the delegates of the two national committees in Petersburg, Chernyshevski's *A Russian at a Rendez-Vous,* caused by Turgenev's *Asya,* comes to mind with particular vividness. Chernyshevski stressed that the heroes of Russian novels usually evinced irresolution and cowardice in decisive moments as, for instance, Beltov and Rudin. They love to invent and proclaim bold and extreme ideas in their dreams, but lose courage when the moment for action arrives.

"As long as deeds are not required" – he wrote – "and the question *is only how to kill empty time, and fill an empty head or an empty heart* with conversations or dreams, the hero is very plucky... But when it occurs to someone to say: this is what you want, we are very glad of it, start to act and we shall support you, half of the bravest heroes faint, while the others declare that it would be best not to undertake any task because everything is connected with difficulties and obstacles and at present no good results could be expected." A prophetic image of the Petersburg meeting in December, 1862: Alexander Sleptsov – a Russian at a rendez-vous.

The several thousand Polish young people studying at Russian universities were listening to reports of an approaching Russian revolution. Appeals and proclamations were announcing that it was unavoidable. It was stressed simultaneously that the Poles and the Russians should fight tsardom shoulder to shoulder. Rumors of a secret society, of a secret governing committee, of the strength of the organization embracing all Russian classes, were spread on purpose. Polish hotheads, as Jarosław Dąbrowski, propagated the legend of the Russian revolution in Poland, and the Russians at home, like Potebnia, as well as the Russian émigrés eagerly supported the legend. And they seemed to believe that such noisy advertising of the revolutionary movement would suffice to have the scared tsardom abdicate. They announced noisily that Russia was on the eve of important events, but when a man of action suddenly emerged and urged them to transform their words into deeds, they answered him that they were not yet ready,

but that they might be ready soon, and that it was advisable to wait... They were amazed that anybody could take so literally what had been said and would continue to be said about the revolution. They believed that they had done their duty warning the people, and they made improvident people responsible for everything.

And the mystification continued. The Russians who had represented themselves to the Poles as initiated into the Russian underground movement continued to encourage them. Only from time to time they whispered some warning regarding the results of the approaching insurrection.[76] What mattered with the Poles, however, was not what the Russians thought of the strength of the Polish movement, but what they said about the strength of the Russian movement. And the Russians were assuring them that the Russian underground was like a boiling pot. In view of these assurances the poor result of the negotiations with the Petersburg committee, and the certainly poor impression the delegates had made upon them, could only convince the Poles that the Petersburg committee did not hold the reins of the revolution and that it would pass over their heads. In his letter to Ildephonse Kossiłowski, dated December 28, 1862, Bakunin described the spreading of the revolutionary movement in the ranks of the Russian army; in Congress Poland alone four hundred men had joined it. He then communicated to him a sure and confidential piece of information, asking him not to spread it and to bring it only to the knowledge of a small circle of trusted friends. "A month ago the Petersburg Central Committee *Zemskaya Duma* sent its delegates to Warsaw and invited the delegates of the Polish Central Committee as well as the delegates of the Russian military committee to Petersburg to a joint conference in order to conclude a defensive and offensive alliance in the name of entire Russia, on whose behalf the Committee was entitled to speak. Thus the pact we made with the Poles was also ratified in Russia upon the basis of the same principles. Our alliance is now no more a dream, but a reality threatening tsardom, and salutary for both nations, a reality which, I trust, will soon materialize in the solidarity of solemn victorious actions."

On January 5, 1863, he wrote again about the Central Polish Committee: "Its union with the Russian revolutionary party, sanctioned and ratified in Petersburg, has ceased to be a *pia* (!) *desiderium*, but has become a reality."[77]

[76] In his letter of November 10, 1862, to Ildephonse Kossiłowski, Bakunin wrote: "We look at Poland with anxiety in our hearts. What is going to happen? We are afraid the insurrection will be a failure." Rapperswil Archives, Portfolio No. 432.

[77] Rapperswil Archives, Portfolio No. 432.

Ogarev and Bakunin kept beguiling the Poles to the very end with promises of the support which the insurrection was allegedly to receive from the Russian army. There exist numerous proofs of it, above all the testimony of the closest witness, Herzen.

"I want you to remember, Ogarev," wrote Herzen to Ogarev on April 29, 1863, "that I have warned you from the very beginning against spreading the rumor that Russian army officers and soldiers would come to the succor of Poland. You persisted in answering me that you were taking the responsibility for it on yourself, as if one could speak of any responsibility between us two. Whether you or that dearest ninny Bakunin were responsible, the fact remains that it was harmful to us..."[78]

The Polish Central Committee and its agents treated the Russian organization seriously and continued to rely upon it. According to Bronisław Szwarce "the committee and the organization adhered loyally to the outlined program." The second paragraph of that program was "joint action with the Petersburg committee of the *Zemla i Vola*."[79]

* * *

Up to the outbreak of the Polish insurrection in January, 1863, one might have believed, judging by the appeals and pamphlets published in Russia, by the articles of Herzen's *Kolokol*, by discussions in secret societies, that the outbreak of the two revolutions, in Poland and in Russia, would occur simultaneously. Russian revolutionary dreamers had fixed the date and the place of the outbreak of the revolution ever since the proclamation of the emancipation *ukase* in 1861 and the first clashes of the peasants with the army in the spring of that year. The outbreak was to occur in the spring of 1863 in the South-Eastern part of European Russia, where previous people's revolts used to start. The

[78] Herzen's *Works*, Vol. XVI, p. 233. Sodomtsev, a former officer of the Russian army who during his four months stay in London had called on the émigrés, was imprisoned in Russia in the spring of 1864. He confessed during the examination that he had once met Klaczko and several other Poles at Herzen's. Herzen reproached them with having started the insurrection before the secret Russian organization could reach sufficient strength. Klaczko replied that Bakunin had assured the Poles of the power of the Russian organization. When the Poles had left, Herzen said: "That man Bakunin is always lying. He said that the organization was big, that it included twenty generals and fifteen bishops. There was an organization composed of young healthy men, but it has gone to pieces. Some of the members fled out of cowardice, others because of their obtuseness." Herzen's *Works*, Vol. XVIII, pp. 18, 19.

[79] *Wydawnictwo materyałów do historyi powstania 1863-64*, Vol. IV, with comments by B. Szwarce, Lwów, 1894, p. 36. (This is a pamphlet written by Szwarce in reply to the *Memoirs* of Milowicz, Burzyński and Dubiecki contained in Vol. IV of the *Materials*.).

most notorious and bloody clash of the peasants with the troops occurred in the village of Bezdna, county of Spask, province of Kazan. Like other clashes it was ruthlessly crushed. But people believed that the blood shed after the promulgation of the Tsar's *ukase*, drowned out and stifled any feelings of gratitude for the Tsar, and had prepared the ground for an imminent revolt.

Poles like Sierakowski, Padlewski, Dąbrowski, Zwierzdowski, Ohryzko, Kieniewicz, Giller and Milowicz, who were soon to take an active part in the insurrection, and who in Russia as well as abroad, were in close contact with the Russian conspirators, kept hearing about this mysterious revolutionary seething somewhere on the banks of the Volga and Don Rivers, at the slopes of the Ural Mountains, which only awaited a signal, a password, an order to burst out in flames.

It was Padlewski who went to meet the delegates of the *Zemla i Vola* in order to get reliable information regarding that brewing unrest. The delegates were unpleasantly taken aback when they learned that the Poles were not contented with declarations and oratory to which the Russians had limited their activities, and that they were really ready to act. But even they, those Russians at the rendez-vous, continued to speak of an unrest prevailing among the masses, of an outbreak that would not occur earlier than the following spring, and pointed significantly at the South-Eastern provinces of Russia. The Poles left with the impression that revolutionary elements did exist in Russia, but that the Russian organization deprived of its stoutest leaders like Chernyshevski and the Serno-Solovyevich brothers, was guided by men of a mediocre intelligence and mediocre character, incapable of bold action. How could a man like Zygmunt Sierakowski, of whom Chernyshevski had thought so highly and whom he praised as superior to the contemporary Russian liberals and radicals, he who had been for a long time taken into the confidence of the Russian revolutionists, take seriously such men as Sleptsov and Utin?

Zygmunt Padlewski had also returned with a disdain for those people and the organization they represented. The opinion he had formed during his Petersburg visit on the *Zemla i Vola* was surely in full accord with what Potebnia had said of it while in London. Potebnia then asserted that the bluffing Petersburg conspirators had no idea of what was going on in Russia, and had no influence whatever in the provinces.

What conclusion was to be drawn from this? The organizers of the Polish insurrection had always taken into consideration the Russian revolutionary movement, because of the assurances they had received from the Russians. They had based upon it their tactical calculations. But inasmuch as the Russian organization, regarded as the leading

element of the revolution, had no power and showed no willingness to arouse such a movement – this had to be done outside it.

Among the various plans and ideas which were to take hold of the minds of the leaders of the insurrection after its outbreak in January, 1863 was also the scheme which resulted in the tragic execution of a group of heroic Poles in the city of Kazan.

The Polish-Russian attempt to realize the aims of the *Zemla i Vola* within Russia proper, had for the Poles a tragic end. From the outbreak of the Polish insurrection one fiction crumbled after another: the fiction of the solidarity of the Russian army stationed in Poland; the fiction of Russia's being undermined by a revolutionary movement; the fiction of the power of the secret Russian organization; and the fiction of the Russian public sympathizing with the Polish cause. For the gradually gained experience the Russians paid with disappointment with revolutionary movements, the Poles with torrents of blood. The Polish liberation movement, even among the young Russian generation which was the main object of the *Zemla i Vola* propaganda, became so unpopular that the committee soon completely eliminated the Polish problem from its activities.

Bakunin was then berating Herzen for his belated regrets and his tardy repentance. He did not deny, however, that the alleged Russo-Polish understanding ended in complete misunderstanding. He explained the cause of it in 1870, in an appeal he addressed to Russian army officers, by the fact that the Poles demanded an independent Polish State and the maintenance of their old principles of social order, above all the principle of private property. He condemned such an attitude as that of the gentry eager to keep their estates *(shlakhetskaya sobstvennost)*. The Russian revolutionists, on the other hand, demanded the "complete destruction of the so-called bourgeois and state civilization which was based precisely upon that property." The revolutionists advised the Poles to organize a social revolution, and to tell the peasants: "Take the whole land. It is yours, and drive out all parasites from it!" The Poles were heroes, but, in their inmost souls, they never ceased to be noblemen. And he continued: "The initiators and chieftains of the Polish revolutionary organization belonged to the same class. All the revolutionary youth, the Warsaw bourgeois and artisans included, were imbued with the same political State and gentry spirit." Bakunin asserted that the Poles were afraid of a peasant revolution in Russia, for it could have shifted to Poland, and they did not want help in stirring up such a revolution. As a result – Bakunin con-

cluded – the Polish as well as the Russian causes were lost.[80]

While Katkov and a legion of his followers represented the Poles as destroyers of social order, and their alleged attempts to stir up social unrest in Russia as the most ominous symptom of Polish intrigue, Bakunin decribed them to Russian and European revolutionists as people deaf to social problems, to the interests of the masses.

Yet both Russias, that of the government, and the revolutionary one, drew strangely close to each other when the organization of Poland after 1863 on new foundations was concerned. The official Russianizers branded the Poles as a reactionary nation of noblemen, thus repeating the same accusations that were made against them by the London revolutionary émigrés. The appreciation voiced by Herzen for the Petersburg satraps who were parcelling Polish land among the peasants, was characteristic of that strange solidarity. The fact was commented upon by Dragomanov, a writer by no means friendly to Poland.

"Whoever followed the Petersburg and Moscow papers of 1864-1868 could not help noticing the fact that enlightened organs of tsarist democracy, which gradually became spokesmen of an all-Russianizing bureaucracy, repeated almost literally Herzen's ideas about 'the old world and Russia', of saving Poland which had lost her Slavonic character, by means of the purely Slavonic elements preserved in Great Russia etc... The activities of G. Samarin, Cherkasski, and N. Milutin in Congress Poland were inspired by the same ideas..." Herzen himself was free "from all the turpitudes of pan-Russian messianism." His doctrine, however, was not free from them. Herzen's theories on the one hand made him support Poland's historical aspirations, which Dragomanov considered largely unjustified – and on the other "they served as the basis for such a policy which later resulted on the part of the Russians in measures directed against Poland's national individuality."[81]

At the time when the Russian émigrés clearly saw the defeat of the Polish insurrection, the worthlessness of the Russian revolutionary organization and the Polish-Russian rift, the fiction of a powerful Russian conspiracy supporting Poland fighting for her freedom, continued to be spread for the benefit of the foreign émigrés who were ardent sympathizers of the Polish cause.

The Russian émigrés in London maintained relations with Mazzini

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[80] Steklov, *Bakunin*, Vol. II, pp. 166-172. In his letter to the Countess Elizabeth Sailhas, dated Florence, March 18, 1864, Bakunin wrote: "Should there be no war this summer nor a general insurrection of Polish, Lithuanian and Ukrainian peasants, a social, a peasant Poland might not have perished, but what is now called the Polish cause will be lost. A new Polish cause might then arise from which the cause of Russian peasants will perhaps emerge..." Rapperswil Archives, Ildephonse Kossiłowski Portfolio.

[81] M. Dragomanov, *Istoricheskaya Polsha i velikorusskaya demokratiia* (Historical Poland and Great-Russian Democracy), Geneva 1881, pp. 86-89.

and with the Italian émigrés gathering around him. In April, 1864, Garibaldi visited England. Both he and Mazzini dined with Herzen on April 17. On that occasion Mazzini delivered a toast "to the freedom of all nations, to an alliance of peoples, to the man who is the embodiment of all these great ideals, Joseph Garibaldi, to unfortunate, sacred, heroic Poland whose sons have been fighting in silence for more than a year and dying for freedom. To young Russia which, under the banner of *Zemla i Vola* will soon extend to Poland her brotherly hand, grant her equality and independence, and wipe out the memory of tsarist Russia."

Garibaldi said in his toast: "Mazzini has said a few words about unfortunate Poland with which I am in full accord. To Poland, the country of martyrs, to Poland suffering death for freedom and giving a great example to other nations. And now let us drink to young Russia which suffers and fights as we do, and which will be victorious as we shall be, to that new nation which having won freedom and defeated tsarist Russia, is obviously destined to play a great rôle in the destinies of Europe..."[82]

In the meantime the demarcation line between the two Russias fighting each other on their own territory was obliterated when social policies in Poland were at stake. And from behind those social policies loomed very clearly the tendency which Dragomanov euphemistically called Great-Russian messianism.

82 Herzen's *Works*, Vol. XVII, pp. 160, 161. On May 22, 1864 Herzen wrote to Malvina von Meysenbug: "*Unsere Lage wird klarer. Mit Polen is es aus. Da liegt der Heros der modernen Tragödie abgeschlachtet und halb todt.*" (Our situation becomes clearer. It is all over with Poland. Here lies the hero of modern tragedy massacred and half-dead.) Herzen's *Works*, Vol. XVII, p. 174.

10.

TARTAR GRACCHUS

KATKOV GAVE VIGOROUS EXPRESSION to the state of mind of a large majority, it could be said without exaggeration, of the entire Russian people who believed that Russia was passing through an era of great importance and of great danger. "The Polish nation does not seek freedom, but ascendancy and domination," wrote Katkov and compared the year 1863 with the dates of 1612 and 1812. "Let us recall the year 1612, and what happened two hundred years later, in 1812. We mentioned the year 1612... The Poles were masters in the Moscow Kremlin, in the very life center of the Russian land. Their armies were burning and looting, raiding its entire territory and penetrating far to the North... Two hundred years later the conqueror before whom all Europe fell, turned his whole power against us. Poland opened for him the road into the interior of our country, fought under his eagles against us and was present together with him in Moscow while the city was aflame."[1]

Panteleyev and Feoktistov asserted that this was the state of mind in all Russia. We know from Nikitenko that the public complained that the government was weak and incapable of decision. Feoktistov stated that people were restless, and distrusted several cabinet ministers who were suspected of being ready to yield and give concessions to Poland. The same Feoktistov, however, hesitated to write openly in a letter sent in care of the Russian envoy in Brussels, Count Nicholas Orlov, that the distrust of the public was also directed against the highest personages, Grand Duke Constantine and the Tsar himself who sent his brother as his Lieutenant to Poland. The parallel which he drew between the period of Alexander I and the reign of his nephew is, nevertheless. quite clear.

[1] Katkov, *1863 god* (The Year 1863), Vol. I, pp. 64, 65, 108, 109.

Russia was expecting the coming of a strong, inexorable man who could not be suspected of weakness or sympathy with the Poles. Michael Muraviev appeared in the nick of time. The meaning of his appointment was never a mystery. Summoned by the Tsar, he feigned hesitation. Actually his appointment to Wilno meant a return to a region he knew well, and an unexpected opportunity of putting into effect the plans which he had cherished thirty years before.

In the period of the Polish November 1830 insurrection and the succeeding years Muraviev ruled in the Polish territory east of the Congress Kingdom. Among the satraps of Nicholas I, who were charged with repressing the national movement in Poland's Eastern provinces, Muraviev distinguished himself by his hatred of the Poles and his cruelty. It was in that post-insurrection period that he earned the epithet "the Hangman." In 1828 he was appointed civil governor of Mohilev; in 1831 governor of Grodno; in 1832 military governor of Minsk. As early as 1830, he proposed the abolition of the Lithuanian Statute, and the introduction of the Russian language in courts and government offices. In 1831 he insisted upon closing Wilno University. Describing his visit with Tsar Nicholas I, in 1835, in Kursk where Muraviev was at that time governor, Benckendorf wrote of him: "A very active man, extremely vigorous and hated by everybody for his cruelty and brutal character."[2]

This is what the chief of the III Department, *i.e.* of the secret police, thought of Muraviev. Cruel and deceitful, a tyrant by predilection, humble and servile when necessary, a seemingly stern bureaucrat, but venal and getting rich in his posts — such is Muraviev as presented by his antagonists and his adherents. The latter spoke of his monstrous faults with complete forbearance, as if of small flaws on a great soul. It might seem that Muraviev's cynicism and savagery communicated themselves to his apologists. They spoke of his crimes with the same admiration with which Karamzin described the bloody and guileful deeds of Ivan III. They devoutly recorded his cynical, bloodshot aphorisms and utterances. They described him as a Russian hero of olden times who had suddenly appeared among the wavering people of the period of the weak Alexander II, saved holy Russia and retreated into shadow, pushed aside by jealous pigmies. Bloody Muraviev strongly impressed the imagination and the feelings of his compatriots. For posterity not so much this loathsome figure with a bulldog's face and a hyena's soul is of interest as rather the extraordinary popularity he enjoyed in his lifetime in Russia.[3]

[2] Shilder, *Nikolay I*, Vol. II, p. 724.

[3] Alexey Orlov often wrote of Muraviev in his letters to Golovnin, calling him a criminal: *"Un homme de sac et de corde"* (a downright villain). Baron A. I. Delvig,

When Muraviev arrived at his new post in Lithuania the first encouragement he received was a letter from the Metropolitan of Moscow, Filaret. The Metropolitan sent him his blessing and an icon of Archangel Michael, and praised Muraviev for having accepted such onerous duties for the good of his country. "The loyal sons of the Tsar and of the homeland received this news with joy and hope; your very appointment means the defeat of our country's enemies; your name spells victory. May the God of power accomplish through you the work of truth and peace. May He send you your patron saint, the holy Archangel! May he precede you with his fiery sword and protect you with his heavenly buckler!"... In his grateful acknowledgement Muraviev declared that he had been called "to discipline the perjurers by means of execution and blood" and commended his bloody task to the Metropolitan's prayers.[4]

Moi Vospominaniya (My Reminiscences), Vol. III, 1913, p. 435. Baron Andrew Delvig, a noted civil engineer, for many years chief inspector of Russian State Railroads, for a brief period acting minister of communications, in his memoirs written in a spirit typical of the Nicholas era, mentions with great forbearance the faults of Muraviev whom he, nevertheless, highly esteemed and with whom he was on intimate terms. He says that Muraviev who was anything but wealthy, having attained high official positions, lived on a very extravagant scale, which attracted general attention. "Obviously, in order not to lose the advantages derived from his official positions, he maintained a servile attitude towards influential people. Thus for instance he never missed an opportunity to be of service to Count Kleinmichel, the favorite of Nicholas I, and this in spite of many affronts he had suffered from him." Having been appointed by Alexander II minister of State domains, he enriched himself with the assistance of persons most influential at that time. "Inasmuch as it was within the competence of the minister of State domains to allot government lands and tenures presented by the Emperor, Muraviev assigned to Count Adlerberg, the son of the minister of the imperial court, the most fertile land, and when the minister of the imperial court obtained from the Tsar a considerable amount of desiatins for Muraviev as a reward for his service, the latter as minister of imperial domains, did not miss the opportunity to pick up the very best land." Baron A. I. Delvig, *Moi Vospominaniya*, Vol. III, 1913, p. 237.

Valuyev described Muraviev as a thoroughly deceitful man. On May 10 1859 he made the following note in his diary: "At the minister's (Muraviev) I met M. P. Pozen. The minister seemed very glad of his coming: 'Il donnera' — he told me later — 'un coup de poignard à Rostovtsev'. (He will stab Rostovtsev in the back) Yet the opposite came to pass and Rostovtsev soon became very powerful. Muraviev said then to Zelonoy: "May God preserve Jacob Ivanovich (Rostovtsev) for many years for the good of Russia." *Russkaya Starina*, August 1891, p. 278; October 1891, p. 149. Concerning Muraviev's servility towards the chief of the secret police Prince Dolgorukov: *Russkaya Starina*, November 1891, p. 416. Nicholas Berg gives the following characterization of Muraviev, close to the truth, though, in view of the admiration Muraviev enjoyed in Russia rather circumspect: "There were many dark spots and mud on his past... Take a photograph of Yermolov and cover up his uniform — a lion will emerge. Do the same thing with Muraviev's picture — a bulldog will result." Berg, *Zapiski* (Notes), Vol. III, pp. 168, 169. On many contemporary European newspaper cartoons the *Comte de Vilenie* is represented with a bulldog's face.

[4] *Russkaya Starina*, Vol. XXXVI, 1882, p. 405. At the time when he stood on the threshold of a brilliant official career, Muraviev, the cynic, displayed his religious feelings before people influential at court who, however, knew what to think of this. During the coronation festivities in Moscow in 1856 Muraviev called on Bludov and assuming a sad expression told him that a great misfortune had happened. "What

Muraviev's appointment was dated May 1 (old style), 1863. Nikitenko made on May 5 the following entry in his diary: "The public expects a great deal from Muraviev who had been appointed to succeed Nazimov." "I dined today at Delanov's; Pogodin, Pavlov, and Koyalovich were among the guests," he recorded on May 29. "Our conversation, obviously kept turning around one subject — the Polish problem. Koyalovich was recently in Wilno and tells amazing things about Nazimov's rule... It is evident that by our weakness we have greatly contributed to the spread of the insurrection in Poland..." Muraviev had already started his bloody proceedings, and Nikitenko, the moderate liberal, wrote on May 26: "The Poles are committing unheard-of atrocities," and on May 30: "Muraviev acts forcefully. Three priests have been shot in Wilno. Count Plater was shot in Duneburg, Mohl in Kovno." On June 7 he added the following note of appreciation: "Muraviev's methods begin to bear fruits."[5]

The Russians greeted with enthusiasm the first symptoms of a change from the more humane tactics of Nazimov to the stern methods of Muraviev. While Muraviev, recently appointed to his new post, was still in Petersburg, Dmitri Milutin, the war minister, sent to him an officer with a note of Nazimov he had recently received. This is what the officer reported: "Nazimov had signed a very strange document: he pointed out the necessity of a very circumspect attitude towards the local Roman-Catholic clergy because they are very influential with the peasants. Therefore, according to Nazimov, one should in particular not dispose and excite the priests against the government. I went to see Muraviev. He read the document attentively, reread it and became lost in thought. I was rather astonished that Michael Nikolayevich was giving so much thought to such an outright absurd document practically suggesting that we should seek to win the clergy hostile to Russia, our worst enemies. 'Yes,' said Muraviev, this is a serious matter worthy of consideration.' And after a moment of silence, he added: 'You know, it is always the start that is the most

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is it?" asked Bludov. "Yesterday, by some awful oversight, a Turk was permitted to enter the Uspenski cathedral, and look at the church without any hindrance." — "What of it?" "The church must be reconsecrated at once!" Bludov reassured Muraviev, and when the latter left, he said to the person who reported that conversation: "Here you have the true Muraviev. I have always known that he had *ni foi ni loi* (neither law nor gospel) and now he has become such an orthodox." *Russkaya Starina*, Vol. XXXVII, 1883, pp. 135, 136. Berg relates on the basis of the statement of Muraviev's chief of staff, that when the Orthodox bishop Semashko interceded in favor of Father Iszora who had been sentenced to death, Muraviev angrily raised his voice. Semashko is said to have answered that he feared only "God who is up there." "I have lived more than sixty years," answered Muraviev, "but I have never seen the one who is up there. Did you see him?" *Russkaya Starina*, Vol. XXXVIII, 1883, p. 227-228.

[5] Nikitenko, *Zapiski i Dnevnik*, (Notes and Diary), Vol. II, Second edition, pp. 128, 131, 133, 149.

difficult. This note of Nazimov came in the nick of time. It gives me complete freedom of action. Now I know what I have to do, and the first thing I am going to do as soon as I arrive in Wilno will be to have one of those priests shot,' concluded Michael Nikolayevich in his usual tender voice."[6]

Muraviev kept his promise conscientiously. When he arrived in Wilno a court martial sentence was submitted for his approval. It dated from the time of Nazimov's rule and decreed ten years of hard labor for Father Stanisław Iszora for having read from the pulpit the manifesto of the Polish National Government. Muraviev changed the verdict to death by shooting. The priest was executed in the Łukiszki prison in Wilno on June 3. Two days later Father Ziemacki died before a firing squad.

This was the start. The hanging of Zygmunt Sierakowski filled with joy the heart of Koshelev, one of the leading Slavophils, and the editor of the Slavophil organ *Russkaya Beseda.* After Sierakowski's execution Koshelev wrote to Pogodin: "Muraviev is a smart fellow. He has them shot or hanged. May God give him good health."[7]

Mosolov, a witness of and participant in Muraviev's activities in Lithuania, writes of the tremendous popularity Muraviev enjoyed among the Russians: "He was receiving congratulations and addresses from all over Russia. All Russians idolized him." It was, indeed, a poor figure that Potapov cut in comparison with him, a bureaucrat who avoided any daring means (*biurokraticheskaya lichnost*). "There was in Muraviev," Mosolov wrote, "with all his severity some kindheartedness and wisdom that acted as an attractive force." Mosolov spoke with melancholy of Muraviev's retirement: "It was deeply moving to see that old man who quickly retired from animated and powerful activity to private life." Yet, *non omnis moriar.* His guiding idea survived him. "It may be positively stated that it was only after his retirement that his ideas which, whatever one may say, contained a great deal of fairness and truth, were finally triumphant in the life of the country as well in the government's policies."[8]

It was that Muraviev idea which guided the Russians who had been sent to Congress Poland to quell the rebellion and to organize the country. The imperial Lieutenant, Berg, was their official chief, but

[6] *Russkaya Starina,* Vol. XXXIX, 1883, p. 653. The author of the reminiscences about Nazimov tried to represent Muraviev as humane but did it in terms of involuntary humor. "In Michael Nikolayevich's nature were elements of truth and humaneness, but he concealed them so carefully that many people doubted their existence." *Russkaya Starina,* February 1885, p. 399.

[7] Barsukov, *Pogodin's Life,* Vol. XX, p. 186.

[8] "Vilenskiye ocherki. Vospominaniya ochevidtsa" (Wilno Sketches. Reminiscences of an Eyewitness), *Russkaya Starina,* January 1884, pp. 17, 23-25, 33, 45, 46.

their spiritual leader was the Wilno demon of revenge with the bulldog face. General Kartsov, a noted military writer, who as commander of a grenadiers regiment had taken an active part in the crushing of the 1863 insurrection and was very close to Berg, related his visit in Wilno where he had gone with Berg during the Tsar's stay there, and had the opportunity to compare on that occasion both satraps. As an eyewitness, Kartsov had taken careful notes of their conversation in which Muraviev distinctly, though with a semblance of kindheartedness, had questioned Berg and, to the delight of the officers present, scoffed at Berg's lenient treatment of the Poles. Berg having expressed his apprehension that the adding of the Augustow province to Congress Poland would cause him more work, Muraviev said: "You won't have much trouble there. I have removed the landlords, no more than five or six of them are left." "And how about the clergy?" – Berg asked. "The clergy are also keeping quiet. I have extirpated the younger ones who liked to deliver political sermons; only the older ones are left, but you mustn't trust them, either. There is one knave left in the Augustow province, the bishop of Seyny..." The bishop wanted to come to Wilno to express his loyalty to the Tsar. Muraviev wrote on the bishop's letter: "Stay in Seyny, as long as you are safe."[9]

Berg related that in a Catholic monastery in the Kalisz province a political offender, hiding there, was apprehended and delivered to the judicial authorities. "As the case drags," interrupted Muraviev, "interpellations and appeals for mercy will begin. I believe that when a man deserves the gallows he should be hanged as soon as possible. This takes less time and is a good lesson for others. And how about the monastery?" "The monastery?" replied Berg haltingly – "well, I have imposed upon it a large fine." "Quite unnecessary" – said Muraviev – "I would have burned it and razed the ruins to the ground." He spoke all the time very politely and cordially, going as far as embracing Berg.

Muraviev was, indeed, a living pattern which innumerable Russians, in Poland's Eastern provinces, as well as in the Congress Kingdom, were imitating, always ready to apply his methods in spite of the fact that the insurrection had been completely crushed. Expressing the feelings of those people, general Kartsov asserted with regret that dictatorial methods were gradually abating in Congress Poland:

"The Lieutenant's energy manifested in prosecuting the criminals and restoring the Russian influence, was not of long duration. As early as the middle of 1866 there could be noticed a weakening of the extremist

9 The bishop was Count Constantine Irenaeus Łubieński. He made confidential attempts to have the Augustow province reincorporated into the administration of the Congress Poland. *Constantine Irenaeus Count Łubieński, Bishop of Seyny*, Cracow 1898, pp. 248, 249.

methods and favoring of the Poles." Berg started with persuading Polish society people to attend functions at the Royal Castle. The Russians saw in it a befriending of the Poles. They felt bitter about it, and the Russian *deiateli* (zealots) began to leave Warsaw. "Such a system of government was the more striking as in neighboring Lithuania there was not even a shadow of relief."[10]

Prince Cherkasski, a Slavophil, nationalist and Polonophobe, called on Muraviev in Wilno in 1864. The dictator of Lithuania spoke to him about his activities "with some kindheartedness." Here is a sample of those kindhearted effusions. Having crossed his hands over his big belly, he expatiated upon his methods of dealing with the rebellious Polish gentry in Lithuania. "I frequently imprison them without the slightest guilt, without even any suspicion. In such cases I always decide as follows: let him stay locked up as long as possible, and perhaps something may be found against him. What do you think? I have been so lucky that I have always succeeded in finding something against my prisoners. And then they were handed over to me!"... "Muraviev said this in a low, soft voice, with the kindest smile and an evident spiritual satisfaction..."[11]

Muraviev's chief of staff told Nicholas Berg that whenever he made his report and proposed leniency in a case of which he was submitting the decree for signature, Muraviev used to snatch the paper from his hand and sign quickly. "Such words as 'hang him,' 'shoot him' were always written more distinctly as if with particular pleasure."[12]

The suggestions and advice which Muraviev gave Berg in the presence and to the great satisfaction of Russian army officers, were based upon experience. Let us take one incident of that bloody epic, one of those numerous orders which he issued in a kind, soft voice, and let us see how the subordinates who adored their chief, carried them out.

The three Senderacki brothers from the village of Jaworówka, county Białystok, who had joined the insurrection, having later returned home became justly suspected of being Russian spies, and suddenly

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[10] P. P. Kartsov, "Graf F. E. Berg," *Russkaya Starina*, Vol. XXXVII, 1883, pp. 305-322. Kartsov quotes an incident testifying to the alleged favoring of the Poles by Berg and the indignation of Russian patriots. At a gala dinner in the Royal Castle in Warsaw on the occasion of the Tsar's nameday, a Pole having no official standing was seated higher than general Patkul. The latter called the aide-de-camp in charge of seating arrangements, and said to him: "How could you on the Tsar's nameday give one of his generals a lower seat than to that Polish monkey!"

[11] *Russkaya Starina*, Vol. XXXVI, pp. 638, 639. Michael Semiovski, the editor of the *Russkaya Starina*, attached to the report the following personal note: "It was, indeed, a typical, original personality."

[12] *Russkaya Starina*, Vol. XXXVIII, p. 225.

disappeared without leaving a trace. Muraviev ordered the village to be burned. This is how this was done according to Russian sources:

"On August 5, 1863, Colonel Nicholas Zöge von Manteuffel received at his quarters in Białystok the following telegram from Muraviev: 'Upon receipt of this order you will burn down the village of Jaworówka, twelve versts from Białystok; the site of the village is to be ploughed over, and its inhabitants are to be brought to Białystok where they shall stay until further orders.' On August 6, Colonel Manteuffel, at the head of three companies of the New Ingermanland infantry regiment, and two hundred Cossacks, proceeded to Jaworówka where they arrived on August 7 at dawn. The sleeping village was immediately surrounded by the troops. The inhabitants soon heard unusual noise, and the clatter of arms. They began leaving their homes and asked panic-stricken what was to happen to them. The order of the Governor General was announced to them and they were told to carry all their belongings out of their homes. They started crying and screaming. There were several sick persons in the village, among them several women who had recently gone through or were expecting childbirth. The order was given to place them at once on carts and give them as much attention as possible. The commander having been informed that there was no one in the houses, ordered the Cossacks to set fire to the village from several sides simultaneously. The flames quickly engulfed the whole village and the soldiers started on their return march to Białystok. No orders were issued as to ploughing over the site, there being no facilities to do it. The inhabitants of the village were placed on a public square in Białystok and then deported to Siberia, and settled near the frontier of Turkestan."[13]

The destruction and burning of Polish villages in Poland's Eastern

[13] *Russkaya Starina*, Vol. XXXVIII, 1887, p. 227. The following villages were burned in the same way: Szczuki, Ibiany, Dzikie, Sztukiny, Łukawica, Wiśniany, Prużanka, Granopol, Bohdaniance, Lenkowszczyzna, Ożytany, Antuszki, Sianożatki, Cierteż and others. Przyborowski, *Dzieje 1863 roku* (History of the Rising of 1863), Vol. V, edited by H. Mościcki, Cracow, 1919, pp. 288-297. Krzemiński, *Dwadzieścia pięć lat Rosyi w Polsce* (Twenty-five years of Russian Rule in Poland), Lwów, 1892, pp. 47, 48. Dr. W. Czaplicki, *Moskiewskie na Litwie rządy* (Muscovite Rule in Lithuania), a book based upon the memoirs of the chief of the nobility of Bielsk county, Bilgorayski (*Pod berłem carów*) p. 263. In chapter IX of Czaplicki's book shocking details of the burning of the village of Łukawica. The burning of the village of Szczuki, inhabited by a clan of small gentry of the name of Szczuka is described with odd humor by the editor of Muraviev's *Memoirs*, in an annex. *Russkaya Starina* 1883, Vol. XXXVII, p. 623: — "All these Matthews, Ignaces, Thaddeuses, Bolesławs and other members of the Szczuka family numbering 73 persons were deported in August 1863 with their wives and children to Siberia." About the burning of Jaworówka, *Ephemerides Polonaises*, Vol. III, July, August, September 1863, Paris, pp. 158, 159. In the same volume of the *Ephemerides* one finds the description of the burning of the village of Szczuki, p. 146, of Dzikie — pp. 168, 169, and of Sztukiny, pp. 177, 178. In his *Memoirs*, Muraviev considers the burning of villages a punishment "exceeding usual norms."

provinces, the deportation of peasants to Siberia and settling in their place peasants from Russia, were in glaring contradiction with the fictitious reports which the Russian government was spreading abroad, namely that the north-western provinces of Poland were inhabited by Russian peasants, and that only the gentry, the clergy and a part of the city intelligentsia were Poles. The fiction that the population of those territories was Russian, was stubbornly maintained.

"I was frightened" — wrote the Minister of Interior Valuyev to Troynitski during the insurrection — "when I read that you considered the majority of the rural population in the four north-western provinces racially Polish. What would happen to us should the expression which had escaped your pen, reach the press! We cannot recognize as racially Polish any one but the gentry and a part of the bourgeoisie in that region."[14]

The reprisals which followed the insurrection were to change that fiction into reality.

As a sample of the attitude of Muraviev's administration towards the Catholic clergy, one may quote a circular of Moller, the chief of the Wilno military district, of August 24, 1863: "On account of the repeated murders and robberies I have decided to make public in the district the following: I attribute all these disturbances to the confirmed disposition of the Catholic clergy to commit acts of robbery and rebellion, a disposition common to the entire clergy from the Holy Father Pius IX and his Cardinals in Rome down to the meanest parson of the poorest church in Lithuania.

"Now and therefore I order:

"1) Whenever the bandits approach a village, the clergy should be promptly reminded of their duty which consists in meeting them with the cross and the gospel and not with bread and salt as they have been doing. They have to resort to persuasion, use all their eloquence to deter those wretches from committing a crime; finally the rebels shall not be permitted to raid a village otherwise than by passing over the priests' dead bodies.

"If the priests act thus, I shall at once inform the bishop of Wilno and Pope Pius IX in Rome of their deeds, so that those priests-martyrs will not have to wait too long for their canonization.

"Priests who will not strictly abide by my orders, will be imprisoned, and protocols of their behavior having been drawn within twenty-four hours, they will be tried by court martial as active members of the insurrection.

"2) Priests will be held responsible for any homicides committed

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[14] Barsukov, *Pogodin's Life*, Vol. XX, p. 285.

in their parishes, and will be answerable with their lives and property for any crime committed or to be committed."[15]

Muraviev suspected almost the entire Petersburg bureaucracy of favoring the Poles. Reading his *Memoirs* one could think that nearly all members of the Russian government sided with the Poles in 1863. He alone, Muraviev, as an Archangel Michael, was guarding the historical principle according to which Poland should be treated as an age-old foe. That suspiciousness might seem a kind of individual mental aberration, a morbid persecution mania, of which the bloody Wilno dictator was the victim. It is, however, a fact that Russian patriotic exaltation found in 1863 its expression, among others, in suspecting the government and members of the dynasty of favoring Poland to the detriment of Russia. Not only Katkov but also Ivan Aksakov were sowing the seeds of that suspiciousness; the liberal Feoktistov seriously believed that the government would have given up Poland and Lithuania were it not afraid of the patriotic Russian public opinion. Muraviev was in this case only the extreme and radical exponent of the mood of the Russian public.

About the most important Westerner among the members of the Cabinet, Valuyev, Muraviev wrote in a way almost literally reminiscent of Feoktistov's opinion. "Valuyev is undoubtedly a gifted man, but he is a cosmopolite, devoted to one thought and desire, to win fame and applause of Europe even if this should harm Russia."

Muraviev stresses in his memoirs that the Poles have tremendous influence: "In all ministries, especially in the treasury and in the post office department, very important and influential positions were occupied by the Poles... Most of the highest officials were infected with Polonism." The Minister of Finance, Reutern, "most clearly supported all Polish tendencies and permitted the spreading of Polish propaganda throughout the empire by appointing Poles to all influential positions.." "The military Governor-General of Petersburg, Prince Suvorov, was so forbearing towards Polish revolutionists that he almost acted as mad... He constantly harmed the Russian cause by his mendacious loquacity among all classes of the people and even at court they were listening with leniency to his naive babbling." Ivan Tolstoy, Minister of Posts, "did harm to the Russian cause by trying in his confidential conversations with the Tsar to support a system favoring the Poles...." Even the chief of the secret police, Prince Dolgorukov "was imbued with cosmopolitan ideas and after the quelling of the insurrection he favored leniency to the Poles."

[15] K. Lutostański, *Recueil des Actes Diplomatiques, Traités et Documents concernant la Pologne*. Librairie Payot et C-ie. Lausanne, Paris 1918, pp. 649, 650.

The president of the committee of ministers, Prince Paul Gagarin, had acted as a good Russian during the 1863 insurrection but as early as 1865 as "a two-faced and unreliable man... he completely submitted to the opposite party." Alexander Gorchakov, whom Muraviev praised for his patriotic attitude in 1863, gradually succumbed to fatal weakness: "A prattler, though desirous and aspiring to be a Russian". Even the noted and reactionary bureaucrat of the Nicholas era, Victor Panin, was "wavering in his opinions", "rather an adherent of European trends and of the German party, for his wife was a German." According to Muraviev, "the Polish party joined the Germans who also had in Petersburg strong agents and partisans." Grand Duke Constantine, "an extremely arrogant creature", wanted to become King of Poland. Alexander Potapov, who had been appointed Muraviev's assistant in 1864, was an "individual deserving no consideration because of his mean character and his anti-Russian and pro-Polish tendencies." He tried "to win the sympathy of the Poles by rendering them various favors... While acting for some time as the deputy Governor General, he humiliated and persecuted everything Russian, trying to win the friendship of the Poles by all kinds of acts of forbearance and leniency for Polish and Roman-Catholic tendencies."[16]

Because of the unlimited powers of the dictator of Lithuania as well as of the Imperial Lieutenant in Congress Poland, and because of the widely spread discretional power of the military commanders, the number of persons deported into the interior of Russia, and particularly to Siberia, reached enormous figures. A Cossack accidentally shot on a road, a spy killed in a forest, were sufficient reasons for sending scores of people from the immediate neighborhood into exile, without any trial, to terrorize the people and to wreak vengeance on them. The peace, the property and the life of persons whose innocence was known to the government, were sacrificed for the purpose of terrorizing the country by means of barbarous mass reprisals. After the crushing of the insurrection the keeping in exile of thousands of human beings whose guilt was the same as that of those who had remained in Poland, was from any point of view an anomaly. This was the opinion of Valuyev who tried to divide the exiles into several categories, to differentiate between people who had been sentenced by court martial and those deported by administrative decree and, among the latter, those who had been politically compromised, and those deported by accident, due to mass reprisals. Muraviev opposed that viewpoint. According to him all people deported during the insurrection should remain in exile

[16] *Russkaya Starina*, Vol. XXXVI, p. 397, Vol. XXXVII, p. 131, 135, 142-152, 163, 299.

to their very deaths. "I have asked the Emperor" – he said to Baklanov – "that the exiles should in no case be returned to their country, but should die in exile."[17]

A memorable correspondence between Muraviev and Valuyev resulted from that divergency. Muraviev's suspiciousness, stimulated by hatred, followed the Poles in distant Siberia. The more leisure he had, since the quelling of the rising, from crushing the Poles in their own country, the more frequently he thought of those he had deported: perhaps even there they were finding partisans, perhaps even there they were spreading the contagion of Polonism. To that political suspiciousness pure hatred was added: revenge for revenge's sake. What are they doing over there? Do they, at least, suffer enough? Does not some unfortunate humaneness of the authorities and of the population make their existence easier? For the sake of his own peace of mind and satisfaction he would like to know for sure that the exiles were kept from any contact with people, with life; that buried in the arctic snows, they were dying away in gloomy solitude. The thought that Valuyev, a cosmopolite, having no love for Russia, was not fully sharing his patriotic feelings, obviously irritated him. Reading his letters to Valuyev, one could assume that these were letters written to the director of some philanthropic association taking care of the Poles, but not to the Minister of the Interior who, by virtue of his office, was ruthlessly suppressing any manifestations of freedom in Russia and still more so in Poland.

On December 3, (old style), 1863, Muraviev wrote to Valuyev about the deportees. He advised him not to settle exiles of the Polish upper classes in county towns where they would surely continue their political agitation. The deportees should be made to live in a few most distant places of the empire, far away from any human habitations. He indicated as such the Pecherski district in the Vologda province, the northern parts of the provinces of Arkhangelsk and Tobolsk, the Turukhan and the Yakutsk districts. Muraviev had, indeed, picked out the most deserted and deadly spots. To deport a man to those places was synonymous with burying him alive in eternal snows. The excited imagination of Muraviev notices a demoniacal joy on the faces of the Poles deported to Russia. "The Poles who are departing feel glad of the opportunity we are giving the to develop their plans inside Russia." He appealed to Valuyev to inform the Tsar about this and to "undertake the necessary means against Polish propaganda in Russia." In his letter of December 11, he again warned Valuyev against the agitation of Polish exiles, the more so because they consisted, in their

[17] *Russkaya Starina*, Vol. IV, 1871, p. 160.

majority, of "tenant farmers, estate managers, land stewards, employees, small landowners, priests and similar rabble."

In his answer dated December 17, Valuyev, in his usual circuitous style assured Muraviev that their divergency of opinions did not concern the substance of the matter, but the means of its execution. The number of deportees from Poland reached enormous figures. The deportations were executed "with some haste". Under such circumstances one could not consider every one of them as an exile for life. The sites indicated by Muraviev were not all fit to receive a larger number of deportees, "not to mention the general requirements of humaneness." Agriculture in those regions was impossible, and maintainance of the deportees would result in a heavy financial burden to the government. Valuyev proposed other sites beyond the Ural Mountains.

In his letter dated December 30 Muraviev refuted the Minister's arguments. The upkeep of the deportees would not be high if compared with the damage that would be avoided. "The deportees gladly go to Russia, intending to do her still more harm, for they know that thanks to our humaneness they will be placed in the best provinces of the Empire." With Hottentot juridical logic he declared that Valuyev's project to treat the deportees according to the degree of their guilt was impracticable because "where there were no sufficient legal proofs for trial, it was impossible to define precisely the spiritual political tendencies of the deportees, except their general, well known hatred of Russia and their desire to overturn our rule in the western provinces." The difference between legality based upon the Roman law despised by Muraviev, according to the comments of the editor of his memoirs, and what the latter calls Russian legal sense, is clearly brought out in this case. The Roman law said *In dubiis mitius* (In doubtful cases act more leniently), while according to Muraviev, whenever the degree of guilt could not be established, all accused should suffer the highest penalty. "According to my opinion, all deportees who are politically suspect are, in fact, more harmful and more dangerous than those who have been sentenced for their open participation in the rebellion... Therefore I did and still do believe that the deportees belonging to the privileged classes should not be settled in agricultural colonies on the slopes of the Ural Mountains, but that they should be sent to distant and deserted Russian provinces where they would not be able to do so much harm..."

Valuyev submitted the matter to the Western Committee which was composed of cabinet ministers under the chairmanship of Prince Paul Gagarin. The Committee rendered a decision following the trend of Muraviev's argumentation. It admitted that the methods of deportation had heretofore been a violation of elementary principles of justice, and recommended to the governors of Congress Poland as well as of

the Polish provinces incorporated into Russia, to determine the degree of the deportees' guilt. Simultaneously, however, it decreed that, for political reasons, the deportees should remain in exile for life. The Committee further came forward with the postulate that deportations especially of peasants, be limited in the future. This, however, was a platonic postulate inasmuch as the right of deportation by administrative decree remained a prerogative of the individual governors and depended entirely upon their whims and fancies.

The Committee accepted the selection of deportation places in accordance with Muraviev's recommendations, namely the Yakutsk and Turukhan districts as well as the northern parts of the provinces of Archangelsk and Tobolsk.[18]

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Thus it was Muraviev who indicated the path that was to be followed by the whole crowd of the suppressors of the Polish insurrection. "Among them were people" – wrote Nicholas Berg – "who developed cruelty to proportions and forms unknown in Europe. A prominent place among them was due to generals Maniukin and Baklanov."[19] Let us have a closer look at Baklanov.

Baklanov, a Don Cossack by origin, a man without any education or polish, fought as a young man in the Turkish campaign, and then practiced for many years the art of suppressing rebellions in the Caucasus. There he gained the reputation of a savage man of extreme cruelty. "Baklanov's typical appearance, strongly resembling a wild boar, contributed to his fame," say the editors of *Russkaya Starina* in a favorable biographical note.[20] Indeed, Baklanov's face with its monstrously protruding, almost horizontally extended, immense, thick nose reminded one of a wild boar. Those two individuals, Muraviev and Baklanov, embody a typical illustration of the kind of men entrusted with the mission of stamping out the January insurrection. "A Cossack

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[18] This is how the Committee reasoned: "The chief aim of all deportations is to destroy the revolutionary element and to consolidate social peace. This goal, however, can be reached only by a permanent elimination of all persons whose exile... has been or will be recognized as necessary. The Committee arrived at that decision as a result of its full conviction that all political offenders are incorrigible and that their punishment... always results in their increased exasperation against the government. Therefore, having accepted as an unalterable principle that the deportees should never return to their country, the Committee wishes to stress... that deportations, especially of peasants, should take place in as far as possible limited numbers." *Russkaya Starina*, Vol. IV, 1871, p. 160, Vol. XXXVIII, 1883, pp. 193-204, 460-463. Przyborowski erroneously asserts that "Muraviev's proposals were positively rejected," and quotes as proof Valuyev's letter to Muraviev of the end of December, 1863. *Ostatnie chwile powstania styczniowego* (The Last Moments of the January Rising), Vol. IV, 1888, p. 28. Evidently Przyborowski did not know the text of the decisions of the Western Committee, approved by Alexander II on March 5 (old style), 1864, and forwarded to Valuyev for execution by the President of the Western Committee, on March 9 (old style), 1864.

[19] Nicholas Berg, *Zapiski*, Vol. III, p. 179.

General with a striking face" – wrote Nikitenko, who viewed Muraviev's system with forbearance and who met Baklanov in May, 1867. "The program written on it was such that if he had executed even a fourth part of it, he himself should be hanged ten times. And yet, strangely enough, that face betrayed simultaneously some kindheartedness."[21] The admirers of Muraviev noticed the same kindhearted, candid bloodthirstiness of a savage beast on the face of the Wilno Governor General.

The program which seemed to be written on the face of Baklanov, was carried out by him with great zeal. Appointed military commander of the Augustow province by Muraviev, he delivered to the persons who had come to greet him the following short speech: "All of you are sick. You must be cured. This is why I was sent here. Our chief physician is General Muraviev, as you all know. I am only his assistant surgeon. But I want to tell you right now that whatever medicine he will prescribe for you, I shall make you take its full measure, be sure of that. Goodbye."[22]

The full powers of Muraviev's assistant surgeon were very far-reaching. He had the right "to try rebels, to sentence the guilty ones to death, to send them to hard labor or to deport them to Siberia and to have his sentences carried out without waiting for confirmation."[23]

In his memoirs Baklanov speaks of his humaneness, and this self-apology characterizes him sufficiently. He says that he always acted according to humanitarian principles, quickly crushing any revolt and shortening its duration by means of terror. Wishing to assure a regular postal service between the towns of Suwałki and Łomża, he notified the landowners that they would pay with their lives and property if anything should happen to the mail-carriers on their territories. His humanitarian methods of shortening the duration of any revolt by means of terror were so well known that wherever Baklanov appeared, mothers hid their children for, as confirmed by Baklanov himself with great satisfaction, rumors were current that he ordered children to be murdered to terrorize the population. Baklanov's aide-de-camp, seeing the wife of a tenant farmer hiding her child, and herself deathly pale, assured her that the General was not a murderer of children. Baklanov himself sternly forbade the contradiction of such rumors; on the contrary, he ordered confirmation of them because "it created a state of mind very favorable to the pacification of the country."[24]

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[20] *Russkaya Starina*, Vol. XXXVII, 1883, p. 717.
[21] Nikitenko, *Zapiski i Dnevnik*, Vol. II, Second edition, p. 335.
[22] Barsukov, *Pogodin's Life*, Vol. XX, p. 258.
[23] E. P. Baklanov, "Zapiski. Moya Boyevaya Zhizn" (My Warrior's Life), *Russkaya Starina*, Vol. IV, 1871, p. 154.
[24] Baklanov, "Zapiski," *Russkaya Starina*, Vol. IV, p. 158.

No wonder that the relations between Muraviev and Baklanov were most harmonious. Even after the severance of their official relations, both men continued to exchange friendly letters. Recalling the recent past, Muraviev praised "the indefatigable and wise activity" of the military governor of the Augustow province.[25]

The arbitrariness, savagery and depravity of the military commanders on the territories of the insurrection knew no limits. All crimes went unpunished; complaints on the part of the inhabitants received no hearing; on the contrary, they resulted in reprisals against the complainants or decent Russian officers who investigated the grievances. The degree of abuses and impunity is exemplified by the case of the military commander in the town of Tykocin, Captain Dmitriev, and his subordinate, Lieutenant Kabalevski, both of whom had committed innumerable crimes, atrocities, robberies, among others the rape of scores of women. The behavior of those two men is best illustrated by the following fact: when a certain John Świętorzecki, having been submitted to atrocious tortures during his examination, fainted and the tribunal had some doubts whether he was still alive, Dmitriev, drunk as usual, grabbed a corkscrew and screwed it into the left arm of the unconscious man. Finally both Dmitriev and Kabalevski were court-martialled and found guilty of a series of crimes. Muraviev's successor, however, Governor General Kaufman, having taken into consideration "the conditions prevailing in the country in a state of rebellion", as well as the "energetic and efficient activities of Captain Dmitriev and Lieutenant Kabalevski" in quelling the rebellion, decided that their incarceration during their examination had been a sufficient punishment, and ordered their immediate release, and all complaints of the inhabitants went into the waste basket. In addition Kaufman expressed his dissatisfaction with, and censure of, Major Furst, the chairman of the investigation commission, "for accepting pleas and complaints from the inhabitants, for improperly making them the subject of investigation, and in general for searching for facts condemning the accused persons."[26]

Any responsibility of the military commanders for robberies and lawlessness was entirely out of the question. The Petersburg government was perfectly aware of the fact that those who committed such abuses were following the example given them by Muraviev himself. Had his guilt consisted solely in squeezing too much money out of the

[25] *Russkaya Starina*, Vol. XXXVII, p. 716.

[26] A detailed description of this case based on official Russian documents may be found in *Dokumenta urzędowe do historyi gospodarstwa moskiewskiego w Polsce* (Official Documents Pertaining to the Muscovite Rule in Poland), Cracow, 1870, pp. 41-113.

population and forwarding it to the Treasury, it would have been considered a patriotic service on his part. Muraviev, however, and his assistants, committed from the government's point of view a much more grievous offense: most of the money looted from the Poles disappeared in the pockets of the suppressors of the insurrection. It goes without saying that such acts, apt to compromise national heroes, could not be revealed. The abuses of the military authorities in Congress Poland were covered up by the Petersburg government by the same patriotic amnesty.[27]

Having built up his reputation as a savior of Russia upon a foundation of crimes, Muraviev was anxious to immortalize his deeds on paper. He started to write his memoirs and appointed several subordinate officials as historians. This was the origin of a large Muraviev literature, including the memoirs of the "Hangman" himself, the *Reports on the Polish Rebellion* and *The Polish Emigration* by Ratch, Gogel's essay on Josephat Ohryzko and Tsylov's book on Zygmunt Sierakowski... The poorly written pamphlets of Muraviev's officers delegated to act as historians, constitute interesting documents pertaining to the history of the period, but not in the meaning attributed to them by their authors and their protector. Those men who had lost all human feelings in accomplishing their ruthless task, insulted their victims and sneered at their adversaries led to their deaths. They made fun of the Poles, maliciously imitating Polish expressions and using on almost

[27] Nicholas Berg who knew those affairs from official documents as well as from reports of Russian officials, raised, to some extent, the veil which covered Russian administration in Poland during the January insurrection. Tremendous financial contributions were imposed upon Congress Poland and Lithuania. Thus, for instance, a fine of 60,000 roubles was imposed upon the estate of Countess Augustus Potocki in Wilanow for the killing of a Russian gendarme on her estate. What happened to all that money? When, after the crushing of the Polish insurrection, the newly appointed chairman of the government's Auditing Chamber went over the books of his department, he found enormous amounts entered as paid out for purposes known to the Imperial Lieutenant, *i.e.* Count Theodore Berg. He was at a loss how to explain those expenses to the Imperial Auditing Chamber in Petersburg. The secretary of the military court, Sinitsin, told him that Governor Muraviev in Wilno had not made any financial reports to Petersburg for the insurrection period. Count Theodore Berg immediately sent Sinitsin to Wilno for information. It transpired that Muraviev, unable to account for four million roubles of contributions imposed upon the insurrectionists, had written to the Tsar that in such a critical period it was much more important to think of the restoration of peace than of entering such small revenue figures. He therefore asked the Tsar not to demand from him any reports for the insurrection period. According to what Sinitsin learned, the Tsar replied that Muraviev was worth to him more than four million roubles, and ordered the Auditing Chamber not to ask him for any financial reports until 1865. Count Berg wrote to the Tsar an identical letter, and obtained an identical reply. For his good advice Sinitsin received a bonus of 6000 roubles. N. Berg, *Zapiski*, Vol. III, pp. 495-497. The author of the biography of Count Constantine I. Łubieński, Bishop of Seyny (Cracow, 1898, pp. 243-245) writes that Count Rajnold Tyzenhaus paid Muraviev 100,000 roubles as an advance payment of the fines that might have been imposed upon his employees for political offenses. Muraviev accepted the money and gave half of it as a subsidy to Katkov.

every page such words as: *pany, shlakhta, ksendzy, khlopy, polskaya intriga.* While striving to give a loathsome description of the Polish insurrection, they unconsciously painted a faithful picture of the Muraviev system. Their books make one understand what those people were capable of. Reading those pages dictated by hatred, one sees the live figures of Muraviev with his small blood-shot eyes, the savage Baklanov, the bandit Dmitriev; one hears the crying of women and children, the savage howling of the Russian soldiery in the midst of blazing Lithuanian villages; the drunken shouts of army officers celebrating orgies around the scaffolds of their Polish victims. One of those writers, Gogel, a close collaborator of Muraviev in political inquests, frequently used to visit Panteleyev while the latter was imprisoned in Wilno, and unbosomed his soul before him.

"While working with the inquest commission" – he wrote – "I arrived at the conclusion that in political trials the applying of tortures is unavoidable. Had the man who was executed in Symbirsk within 24 hours been in my hands I would not have let him off so easily; I would sear him on a slow fire, blood would drip from under his nails, and I would force him to confess the whole truth." "Muraviev had a high regard for that young man," wrote Panteleyev, "and made him his collaborator in the Karakozov inquest in 1866."[28]

Muraviev's program regarding Russia's western provinces was in full accord with the aims of the Russian patriots. The Poles in those provinces should emigrate from there, for their presence constituted a historical anomaly, dangerous to Russia – this was the viewpoint of the Russian people in 1863. "The Poles should be ejected at any price from Russia's western provinces; they should be smoked out, expelled, deported with all their money and Russian bonds, with their priests, with all their belongings and grief, with their movable properties. That soil is ours, it is native Russian soil – not an inch of it should belong to Poland". The above words were written by Michael Pogodin in October, 1863.[29]

The above political prescription of the friend of Slavdom was more radical than the means used by Muraviev. The apotheosis of Muraviev had its origin in Moscow. "A cannibals' dinner took place in Moscow"– wrote Herzen in July, 1863. – "The Muscovites offered in the English Club a dinner to Katkov, the editor of the *Moskovskiya Vedomosti.* At

[28] Panteleyev, Iz *Vospominanii,* (Some Reminiscences) Vol. II, pp. 30-31. The Symbirsk trial mentioned by Gogel referred to cases of arson. The Russian press, headed by Katkov, asserted that the fires in various Russian localities were the work of Polish incendiaries. By such means the Russian press deliberately incited the population against Poland.

[29] *Polskii Vopros, 1831-67* (The Polish Question), Moscow, 1867, p. 159.

that dinner they drank a toast in honor of Muraviev, the Hangman, and a telegram about this tribute was sent him to Wilno."[30]

On his nameday, August 30 (old style), Alexander II sent Muraviev the Order of St. Andrew with a gracious rescript. On November 8, the nameday of Muraviev, the Wilno Governor General received from Petersburg an address of homage, signed by seventy-nine prominent personalities, headed by the aged Bludov, the President of the State Council, and an icon of St. Michael, his patron saint.[31] There was a rumor that the Governor General of Petersburg, Count Alexander Suvorov, a grandson of the noted Field-Marshal, had refused to sign the address saying that he was not used to pay homage to cannibals. Thereupon the Slavophil poet Tiutchev, one of the signers of the address, published a poem in which he ironically offered his apologies to the "humanitarian grandson of a warlike forbear" for having without his permission, honored a hero who, by his self-sacrificing action, had saved the integrity of the Russian empire. Tiutchev concluded his poem, full of admiration for Muraviev, by expressing the certitude that the great forbear of the Governor General would have surely signed the address. Suvorov replied that his grandfather would not have signed the address. Prince Vyazemski — a former friend of the Polish poet, Adam Mickiewicz, who had acted as his host in Paris considering him one of his Russian friends — wrote a cannibalistic poem ending with bloodthirsty stanzas praising Suvorov's slaughter of the inhabitants of Warsaw's suburb of Praga in 1794, and asserting that whoever blames Muraviev is unworthy to be called a Russian. He recalled how the great Suvorov, calling on his soldiers to slaughter the people of Praga, exclaimed in a thunderous voice: "Massacre them without mercy, and massacre their children! Remember that you won't use your bayonets in vain! You will thus save the lives of your own children. — This is what your grandfather had said. Is there any one among you, who did not hear of those words. — He was a Russian and has a Russian soul. — Whoever is Muraviev's enemy and blames him — is not a son of Russia. — He is a man alien to the Russians." [32]

[30] "Rossiada", Herzen's *Works*, Vol. XVI, p. 396.

[31] Nikitenko recorded in his diary under the date of November 16 (old style), 1863, the following: "A list of the people who contributed to the sending of a picture to Muraviev on his nameday, was recently published. It contains only aristocratic names beginning with Count Bludov and ending with the name of Pompey Batiushkov." *Zapiski*, Vol II, p. 149. Pompey Batiushkov, brother of Constantine, the poet, was the real instigator of the Muraviev ovation. "On November 8, 1863, when the insurrection of the gentry in the north-western provinces was at its peak, it came to my mind to invite the highlife of Petersburg to send Muraviev a picture of Archangel Michael, and to send him an address of homage which, within three days, was signed by some one hundred people." *Russkaya Starina*, Vol. XXXVIII, p. 208. Among those who signed the address was Constantine Kavelin. Herzen's *Works*, Vol. XVI, p. 563.

[32] *Russkaya Starina*, Vol. XXXVIII, pp. 209, 210.

Branded by Muraviev as a cosmopolite, Valuyev nevertheless felt that "the first months of Muraviev's administration may be regarded not only as just and successful, but even brilliant."[33]

But Valuyev as well as a number of Petersburg dignitaries, felt soon irritated to the quick by the dictatorial tone of the Wilno satrap who, surrounded by a halo of popularity and considering himself the savior of Russia, acted as a stern and never satisfied censor of patriotism even towards the cabinet ministers of Alexander II, since 1863 eager to surpass each other in their chauvinistic zeal. Outwardly preserving his loyalty, Muraviev actually assumed a censorious attitude even towards the dynasty, particularly towards Grand Duke Constantine. Even Alexander II felt irritated by the hysterical ovations in honor of Muraviev who was extolled as the father of his country. Amidst those ostentatious tokens of admiration his downfall was being slowly prepared. This was, however, done very cautiously inasmuch as the public was siding with Muraviev. When, after the first period of his administration, Muraviev came to Petersburg from Wilno on May 7, 1864, he was welcomed at the railroad station by an enormous crowd: cabinet ministers, senators, generals, ladies from the highest society, Muraviev was a good showman and a demagogue. Suddenly he had a spell of weakness and had to be carried out of his railroad car on an easy-chair which Countess Antoinette Bludov, a recent admirer of the Polish Marquis Wielopolski, had quickly decorated with wreaths of flowers. He was greeted with deafening cheers. Countess Bludov offered him bread and salt on a silver tray.

In his report for the period 1861-1863 submitted to the Tsar, the Minister of the Interior, Valuyev, emphasized the patriotic feelings exhibited by Russia's population during the Polish insurrection. Over four thousand addresses of loyalty had been sent to the government, among them 115 from the gentry, 7 from the clergy, 11 from dissenters, 348 from cities, 3,347 from peasants, 75 from the Raskolniki sect, 46 from merchants and townsmen, 269 from Tartars, Bulgarians, colonists and others.[34]

In the Tsar's rescript of April 29 releasing Muraviev from his post the sincerely grateful Alexander II enumerated the great merits of the Hangman. "You have fully justified my expectations... Thanks to the means undertaken by you with the indefatigable energy, skill, knowledge of political conditions and inflexible firmness peculiar to you, the rebellion was quelled and social peace established and assured. Your actions have been fully appreciated by us, and they have

[33] Barsukov, *Pogodin's Life*, Vol. XX, p. 171.
[34] Herzen's *Works*, Vol. XVI, p. 444

won for you that general good will of which you have received so many expressions from all over the country."[35]

Muraviev himself felt very much satisfied with his own work and its result for Russia, and considered the outbreak of the 1863 insurrection a fact favorable in its after-effects. "The year 1863 was decidedly one of the happiest for Russia not only because of the moral transformation it brought about in the excessive liberal tendencies by which the Russian public was seized but also, particularly, because the Poles disclosed their long hatched plans."[36] According to the writer who, upon Muraviev's orders described in the spirit of the latter's ideas the bloody Polish-Russian struggle of 1863 and the preparations for it, the Russian military operations against the insurrectionists "completely turned into a battue of wild beasts."[37]

According to the scheme of which Bakunin was the most famous advocate and propagator, two Russias were facing each other, ready to wage a life and death struggle. On one side stood the Russia of the underground and of the émigrés, anti-tsarist, and of the people, the Russia of a social and agrarian revolution, the Russia of the *Zemla i Vola*. On the other side was the Russia of the dynasty, of the bureaucracy, of the landowners, reactionary and counter-revolutionary Russia. The salvation of Poland depended upon the victory of the first. Consequently when some Pole, like Demontowicz, expressed certain doubts as to whether the triumph of a red revolution in Russia would restore Poland's independence, Bakunin called him an ignorant squire, and an enemy of Russia. Herzen, disappointed with the Polish cause, seconded his views.

The question arises whether, with regard to the Polish problem, there really existed two diametrically opposed Russian camps, and whether as far as Russia was concerned, a clear line of demarcation could be drawn between a conservative and a revolutionary Russia. In 1875 there appeared in Berlin George Samarin's book entitled *Revolutionary Conservatism*. It was an answer to the work of Rostislav Fadeyev, *The Russian Society of Today and Tomorrow*. Fadeyev was in favor of establishing in Russia a constitutional system without, however, on account of the censorship, calling it by name, and suggested that the constitutional system should be based upon Russia's upper, cultural classes. Samarin regarded Fadeyev's book as conservative, but

[35] *Russkaya Starina*, January 1884, pp. 47-48.
[36] *Russkaya Starina*, Vol. XXXVII, pp. 297, 298.
[37] Ratch, *Polskaya Emigratsia do i vo vremia posledniago miatezha* (The Polish Emigration Before and During the Last Rebellion), Wilno, 1865, p. 380.

the means mentioned by the author as revolutionary, and explained the substance of revolution.

"Obviously, neither you nor I" — he wrote addressing himself to Fadeyev — "consider a broken-up pavement, ragamuffins in overalls, disheveled women and red banners the essential characteristics of every revolution. We do not identify it with a street riot, not even with a broader conception of an illegal, violent coup against the existing state of affairs.

"A revolution may, without ceasing to be what it is in its essence, come from above or from below and, in the first case, remain within the limits of formal legality.

"In my view, revolution is but rational action, that is a formally correct syllogism transformed into a battering-ram against the freedom of life. The first premise is always an absolute dogma inferred by aprioristic reasoning from general principles, or, vice-versa, arrived at by a generalization of historical phenomena of a given category. The second premise is based upon comprising in that dogma a given reality and includes the sentence pronounced against the latter exclusively from the viewpoint of that dogma: reality does not agree with the dogma and is, therefore, doomed.

"The inference is given the form of an order, supreme or lowest, issued from a fashionable apartment, or from a social basement, and in case of resistance it is put into effect by means of rifles and cannons, or of pitchforks and axes, — which does not alter the very substance of the operation performed upon the people."[38]

Thus revolution is the breaking of reality in the name of an arbitrary rational construction, regardless of whether it takes place by peaceful means, through the struggle of revolting masses, or by a government issuing laws. Samarin assuredly deduced such a far-reaching conception of a revolution from his observation of Russian life. A despotic government, because of its arbitrary or, according to Samarin, rationalistic attitude to life, resembles a revolutionary government, is ready to bend reality to its own conceptions, and break it in the name of its dogma. Considered from such a point of view the historical evolution of tsardom is a chronic revolution. This revolutionary character of tsardom is most glaringly manifested in the treatment of the subjugated peoples by the Russian State. In this domain "rationalism of action" used as "a battering ram against the freedom of life" was the method which, with rare exceptions, had been steadily applied. The most glaring example of this method is the treatment of the Polish nation by

[38] *Revolutsionnyi konservatizm*, (Revolutionary Conservatism), Berlin, 1875, pp. 9, 10.

Russia after 1863. The method of preserving the Russian empire by destroying the forms and stopping the sources of the life of the peoples incorporated into Russia by force is a sample of revolutionary conservatism. Of this Samarin was not aware. It escaped his attention that even he himself, not only in theory but also in practice, used his Slavophil dogma as a battering ram to destroy the life of Poland.[39]

The chief historical task of Russian conservatism was the preservation and consolidation of the conquered territories. With regard to the culturally superior Polish territories, this was done by destroying Poland's distinctive culture and the Polish spirit, and the means towards that end was the weakening and, if possible, the destruction of Poland's enlightened upper class, which, because of the social order prevailing in the ancient Commonwealth, was the element preserving the tradition and the ideals of the nation. This is where the conservatists met with the revolutionists who, influenced by their faith in the special revolutionary mission of Russia, as well as by their subconscious aggressive instincts also wanted to keep the conquered countries attached to Russia in order to extend to them the blessings of the future revolution. The conservatism of the government as well as of the conservatists themselves, using means of destruction, revolutionary by their nature, converged with the red imperialism of the revolutionists, who gathered the nations subjugated by Russia under the banner of the *Zemla i Vola.* The aggressive Russian conservatism labored under the fatal delusion that the methods applied by it to conquered nations and on a particularly large scale to the Polish nation, would not penetrate the Russian soul or produce, sooner or later, ominous results in Russia herself. The Russians did not realize that methods of political terror and of social agitation directed against the enlightened class, that inciting of the masses could not be territorially limited to the Polish provinces, but that they would produce a new school and become a powerful element in Russia's public life. Nothing explains better the causes of the downfall of tsardom than that destructive character of the alleged government and social conservatism, more significant and more ominous

[39] The profound inner falsehood resulting from the doctrine professed by Samarin, in conjunction with his keen mind, was the reason that he frequently arrived at accurate generalizations based upon the observation of the reality surrounding him, and that he unexpectedly ascribed the observed characteristics to a reality foreign and unpleasant to him. He deplored the pernicious effects of the Latin influence which had allegedly brought about in Poland "a breach between the authority and the subjects, between the upper and lower strata of society, a quick progress of civilization which did not reach the masses as well as a gradual increase of ignorance in the lowest population strata." It was Pypin who had observed that Samarin, while pointing out those defects, had actually indicated the characteristic, dark aspects of Russian life... "Let us beat our breast. Do not the same phenomena occur in our own country?..." M. Pypin *Kwestja polska w literaturze rosyjskiej* (The Polish Question in Russian Literature), Warsaw, 1881, (Polish translation) p. 63.

for the system than a clearly revolutionary movement.

A radical by the name of Shelgunov, who served under Muraviev while the latter was Minister of Public Domains, left interesting cursory observations on the Wilno dictator. "Muraviev was neither an administrator nor a reformer – he was a destroyer and knew perfectly how to break.[40] He was by nature a revolutionist. Having decided to purge the ministry from some officials, he purged it from ideas too... Muraviev is interesting as a type and as a character. Only Russia could produce such men. Though he received a French education, he was a 'patriot'; he considered himself a Russian in the full meaning of the term, and at the same time he was capable of destroying the whole Russian life if he were permitted to do so..."[41]

Zemla i Vola was to be a watchword of liberation not only for Russia but also for Poland. Bakunin considered Demontowicz an enemy of Russia because the latter had no faith in the salutary effect of that watchword for Poland. The Poles, especially those living in the eastern provinces, as Demontowicz, might have had some reason for cautiousness in appraising the effects of that watchword. Nicholas Pirogov, a noted surgeon and for many years superintendent of schools of the Kiev district and in that post by no means friendly to the Poles, described the methods applied in Eastern Poland after the 1861 *ukase*:

"The posts of arbitrators, of employees of the new department for peasant affairs, particularly in the western provinces, the appointment of persons of Polish origin having been prohibited, subsequently the posts of examining magistrates, of justices of the peace, officials in the Governors' offices etc. were entrusted to men partly imported from the interior of Russia, and partly of local origin, who were systematically trained in hostility towards big landowners, inequality of classes, etc." "Whoever lived in Russia's western provinces in the sixties, could tell a great deal about the activities of those people. Thus, for instance, on one estate the peace arbitrator stepped on a bridge, pointed out to a crowd of peasants the manor of the landowner and said 'All this is yours, all this should be yours'... Another arbitrator... having become intoxicated at a dinner, declared that the best solution would be to slaughter all gentlemen." When the authorities were informed of that utterance, the official was merely transferred to another district.

Pigorov related that people who mercilessly skinned the peasants on their own estates in Russia, became ardent *demophils* when they were transferred to Russia's Polish provinces. One of them, having

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[40] Bazarov in Turgenev's novel says of himself: "We want to break other people...." His echo, Arcadius Kirsanov, declares: "We break because we are a force..."

[41] Shelgunov, *Vospominaniya* (Reminiscences), pp. 97, 98.

obtained advance information of the proposed emancipation of the peasants, enfranchised them himself one year ahead of time, taking from each of them 150 roubles. Having made a fortune on that fraudulent transaction, "he moved to Russia's south-western provinces, where he became a benefactor of the peasants at the expense of others."

A high official, chairman of the peace arbitrators convention, having been suddenly discharged, appealed to the governor general referring to his great merits: "I took away from the landowners of the Winnica county over 15,000 *desiatins* to be distributed among the peasants, and in spite of that I did not satisfy the Reds in Kiev."

The Russian officials who were sent to the Polish provinces annexed by Russia to settle agrarian problems, were openly declaring that the landowners should be expropriated and their estates given to them. "This almost happened in Russia's western border lands: estates were confiscated, the landowners deported by administrative decree, and the land was given to the officials and governors".[42]

Constantine Golovin who certainly was not friendly to the Poles, said the same about the north-western provinces since Muraviev's administration:

"In his ardor for reprisals, Muraviev brought to the western provinces agents who considered Russia's interests identical with those of the revolution. We somehow imagined that the Russian cause could be strengthened in the western provinces when we artificially incited the peasants against the landlords there. For that purpose we regarded as suitable there such men whom we could not have tolerated in official posts in Russia."[43]

Thus Muraviev's henchmen spoke the language of the members of the *Zemla i Vola* association. Gogel, who tried to convince Pante-

[42] N. I. Pirogov, "Posmertnyia zapiski," (Posthumous Notes), *Russkaya Starina*, January 1887, pp. 141-142. The pro-peasant revolutionist, Dobogorvi Mokriyevich, described the acts of arbitrariness and cruelty committed by the Ruthenian peasants in understanding with the Russian authorities against the Polish landowners, or rather against all Poles suspected of favoring the insurrection. As an enemy of the government he viewed in 1863 the alliance between the peasants and tsarism critically. Later, however, reviewing retrospectively the episodes of the peasant Jacquerie in the Ukraine in 1863 he recalled them favorably, seeing in them the dawn of a future people's revolution. "My attitude towards the activities of the Russian police in crushing the insurrection being hostile and sympathetic to the Poles, I obviously could not look with favor on the 'watchmen' or, in plain language, our peasants who supported the government. As a matter of fact, for a long time I recalled with some bitterness that alliance of the peasants with the police. But, as time went by, those feelings began to fade and change, and finally – though it may seem strange – they underwent a total transformation, for these reminiscences of the hatred of the peasants against the landowners in the sixties proved to me beyond any doubt, during my wanderings among the peasants, that the peasant masses were truly revolutionary. It is true that their revolutionism was of a somewhat suspicious character, as it were, by permission of the authorities, but at that time I did not attach any importance to that circumstance..." *Vospominaniya*, Petersburg, 1906, pp. 16-17.

leyev that the applying of tortures was in the interest of the State, and Yugan, another worthy confidant of Muraviev, included social democratism in their official mission.

"I once asked Gogel "– wrote Panteleyev – "what was the latest news. 'Annenkov,' he replied, 'has been replaced in Kiev by Bezak. You know, he is a democrat and will put an end to the policy of ingratiation with aristocrats and landowners. He will be very strict with them.' Yugan spoke at the same time with great eloquence on the subject of their struggle against aristocracy and clericalism in the western provinces. He said that the chief aim of Muraviev was to raise the material and spiritual level of the hitherto oppressed peasants."[44]

In the minds of those tsarist henchmen and democrats was rooted the view, peculiar to primitive despotism, that the ruler owned all the land in the State, and that his subjects were only usufructuaries by the Tsar's grace, which he could revoke at any time: tsarist communism as a spiritual school for revolutionary communism. *Grab' nagrablennoye* (rob what had been robbed), this later formula, would correspond with the mentality of the suppressors of the insurrection. The notorious Boreysha, military commander of the Bielsk county in the Grodno province having read to the inhabitants of Łukawica the order to have their villages razed to the ground, and themselves deported to Siberia, addressed them with the following legal interpretation: "The entire land in the whole of Russia is the indisputable property of the Tsar. The Tsar graciously permits the people to use it and to dwell on it, but at any rate he has the indisputable right to take it away and give it to whomever he pleases."[45]

This legal conception, as expressed by one of Muraviev's military chiefs, was a reflection not of an ancient but of a recent Russian past. Up to the time of the *ukase* of Peter III of 1762, the landowner (*pomeshchik*) possessed his land (*pomestiye*) as an equivalent for the services he had rendered the Tsar; and for the good of the service, the Moscow Tsars used to take those estates away from some people and give them to others.

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The tendency to split the population of the Polish provinces into two opposite camps by bringing the peasants over to the side of the government and destroying their Polish patriotism, had manifested it-

[44] Panteleyev, *Iz vospominanii*, Vol. II, p. 31.
[45] *Moskiewskie na Litwie rządy* (Muscovite Rule in Lithuania), Kraków, 1869, p. 53.

self from time to time long ago. After the January 1863 insurrection that tendency became a method, the corner-stone of the Polish policy of the Russian government. The Poles, though aware of the real motives of such an unexpected democratism of the government, attached too much importance to the activities of individual government representatives and often overlooked the system which was dictated from above and was not the work of the local representatives. They took its executors for its creators. In Congress Poland, Paul Mukhanov was considered the instigator of the peasant disturbances. Even in Polish historical studies he is represented as the evil spirit of Russian policies in Poland, who thwarted the allegedly more friendly policies of the Tsar's Lieutenant and of the Petersburg government.

On March 18, 1861, Mukhanov, acting as director of the commission for internal affairs, issued a secret circular to the civil governors, instructing them to increase their vigilance with regard to politically suspected persons. Paragraph four of the circular recommended that they should "persuade the peasants that, in its particular solicitude for their welfare, the government expected them not only to present a deaf ear to instigators to riots, but also to maintain public order and to arrest and deliver to the nearest authorities any agitators who would appear among them." The circular recommended further to ask unknown persons for passports and identification papers, to hold such persons and deliver them to the nearest police authority. The circular did not state precisely who was to hold those unknown persons. It resulted, however, from its wording that the people themselves were entrusted with that function. The date of the issue of that circular was significant: it was dated March 6|18, while the *ukase* promulgating the enfranchisement of the peasants was published in Russia on March 5|17. It is well known that the government expected the promulgation of that *ukase* to result in serious peasant riots and far-reaching police measures had been taken in Petersburg. The enlightened classes in Poland attributed the issuance of the circular to the hated Mukhanov. This is, in fact, the version to be found in the works of such authors as Agaton Giller and Przyborowski. The official reports of the Tsar's Lieutenant, Michael Gorchakov, to the Tsar, published by Shilder, make it evident, however, that the initiative of the circular came from Petersburg. The Tsar gave the order to Gorchakov, and Gorchakov in turn to Mukhanov. The circular, having aroused great indignation in the country, and the government's policy showing at that time a tendency to make concessions to the Poles, Gorchakov decided to discharge Mukhanov. It is understandable that Mukhanov was astonished when he was dismissed for having fulfilled the order of the superior authorities. Incidentally, the circular in question was a repetition of an order

given for the first time in 1846. The Galician massacre was regarded by Nicholas I as a very favorable event from the Russian viewpoint. The fact that the peasants in Congress Poland were not vigorously encouraged to imitate the example of those in Galicia, can be attributed to the fear lest the peasant riots expand into Russia.[46]

That Mukhanov was not isolated, that high army officers and Russian officials in Congress Poland considered the proposed reforms and concessions a mistake, especially in a period of renaissance of the Polish national movement; that they believed that the government, instead of trying to win the enlightened classes, should have appealed to the masses and availed itself of their little-developed national consciousness, all this is clearly borne out by the interesting reminiscences of Kartsov's sojourn in Warsaw in 1860 and 1861. Kartsov felt indignant that the authorities did not make the peasants understand clearly that they may expect an improvement of their living conditions solely from the Russian emperor, and that the government, disposing of four millions of

[46] Having been informed by Paskevich in 1846 that the peasants in Congress Poland were seizing political agitators, Nicholas I wrote to his Lieutenant: "The behavior of our peasants makes me feel very happy. Reward them generously and give medals to the most zealous.... It seems to me that the peasants over there (in Galicia) have an understanding of communism of their own, that is, to murder the landowners whenever a legal pretext presents itself. It's good over there, but it would be dangerous to let the movement spread here." Shcherbatov, *Kniaz Paskevich*, Vol. V, Documents p. 556. — In his report to Alexander II, dated March 22 (old style), 1861, Michael Gorchakov wrote: "In paragraph 9 of the letter which Your Imperial Majesty graciously sent me on February 25, I found the following order: 'Undertake immediately all police and military measures in the city of Warsaw as well as throughout Congress Poland, which in the tempestuous days of 1846, 1848 and 1849 so successfully preserved us from riots.' Besides other orders which I have issued to carry out the wishes of my Monarch, I commanded the former chief director Mukhanov to instruct the civil governors that following the example of the years 1846, 1848, 1849, and besides other precautionary measures, they should demand that..." Here followed the text of paragraph 4 of the circular. "Privy Councillor Mukhanov in his circular letter to civil governors has accurately repeated all my instructions in the above matter..." *Russkaya Starina*, October 1899, pp. 128-129. Paragraph 4 of Mukhanov's circular is quoted in a literal translation from the Russian text in Gorchakov's report... Polish sources quote the text of the circular in a slightly different wording. Z. Lisicki, *Al. Wielopolski*, Vol. II, 1878, pp. 63-64. *Przegląd Rzeczy Polskich* (Review of Polish Affairs), No. 46, pp. 27, 28. A. Giller wrote: "Simultaneously with the national movement of 1861 the Moscow government began to prepare a mass counter-revolution aimed at the crushing of the insurrection. Mukhanov's circular of March 18, 1861, clearly explains those policies. *Historya Powstania* (History of the Rising of 1863), Vol. II p. 364. A. Giller, "Dzieje Delegacji Warszawskiej z r. 1861" (History of the Warsaw Delegation of 1861), *Wydawnictwo Materjałów do Historji Powstania 1863-64* (Publication of Materials Pertaining to the History of the Rising of 1863-64), Vol. I, p. 234. Przyborowski, *Historja Dwóch Lat* (History of Two Years), Vol. II, pp. 217ff. — Przyborowski was acquainted only with Gorchakov's telegrams which had been published in the *Russkaya Starina* in 1882. Gorchakov's reports have been published later than *Historja Dwóch Lat*. J. Grabiec, *Rok 1863* (The Year 1863), p. 76 ff. and the same author's: *Ostatni Szlachcic* (The Last Nobleman), Vol. I, p. 215 ff. Berg, *Zapiski*, Poznań, 1883, Vol. I, p. 522 ff.

loyal, according to Kartsov, peasants in the country, was making concessions to the Polish patriots.[47]

The inciting of the White Ruthenian and Lithuanian peasants in the eastern provinces of the former Polish State against the Poles began immediately after the promulgation of the ukase of 1861. Zygmunt Sierakowski discussed this matter in a memorandum submitted to the War Minister, Dmitri Milutin, at the end of 1862. He stated that the upper and middle classes in that part of the country were composed of Poles, or rather of former White Ruthenians and Lithuanians who had adopted Polish civilization. The Polish element could be eradicated there only by mass extermination.

"In order to eradicate the Polish element and Polish civilization in the western provinces, one has to try out still another means: to provoke a massacre, a jacquerie, to see whether it would not be possible to incite the peasants who had become independent from the landowners, against the upper and the middle classes." It would have been difficult to carry such a plan into execution, apart from humanitarian considerations. A massacre on a small scale would miss its purpose. A slaughter on a large scale, on the other hand, would be dangerous for it could spread throughout the empire. The killing of the landowners would not suffice. It would be necessary to murder a million other people of various social strata who constitute the Polish element in Russia's western provinces, and this would be impossible. Sierakowski analyzed the Russian government's social policy in the western provinces. "The Manifesto of February 19, 1861, defined the principles of the enfranchisement of the peasants. All higher administration officials in the Western provinces spared no efforts to convince the peasants that the agrarian reform had been enacted against the wishes of the landowners. They did it in order to bring them over to their side and to sow discord between them and the upper classes... It must be stressed that by fanning hatred between the classes in the Western provinces terrible disasters may be brought on the whole empire." Sierakowski stated that

[47] P. P. Kartsov, "Vospominaniya" (Reminiscences), *Russkaya Starina*, 1882, Vol. XXXVI, p. 545 ff. Unmistakable evidence exists that Russian officials organized in those years an apparatus of provocation in order to instigate peasant riots. A large number of shady figures were active in Congress Poland, to mention only a certain Jablonski, a discharged soldier of the Muromski infantry regiment who was arrested in Płońsk county, and who had said at an inn that "the emperor is paying 25 roubles to each peasant who will kill or stab a nobleman." Giller "Dzieje Delegacji Warszawskiej," (History of the Warsaw Delegation), *Wydawnictwo Materjałów*, Vol. I, p. 232. Przyborowski, *Historja Dwóch Lat* (History of Two Years), Vol. II, p. 216.

the heads of the administration despised the upper and middle classes of those provinces.[48]

Muraviev's methods of inciting the peasants against the insurrectionists were well received by the Russian bureaucracy in the western provinces. After the outbreak of the January 1863 insurrection, Nazimov, who was considered a Polonophil by Russian politicians, was the first to enter the path trodden later by Muraviev. A week after the outbreak in Warsaw Nazimov published an appeal to the population and turned with particular confidence "to the peasants, so well aware of the benefits granted them by our great Monarch". In his appeal of February 20, he called upon "the peasants of Wilno, Kowno, Grodno and Minsk to seize the agitators and deliver them to the authorities."[49]

On June 2 (old style), 1863, Muraviev addressed an appeal to the peasants asking them to fight the rebellion: "Peasants, loyal to your duty and your oath! Your enfranchisement is a proof of the emperor's solicitude for you!" The appeal then contrasted the peasants with "the landowners of Polish origin." He entrusted the bailiffs and police posts composed of villagers with guarding the country and admonished them to pay special attention to priests and to the Polish gentry. "People of evil designs, men of suspicious character, whatever their class and standing, whether they be priests, landowners, noblemen or others, should be immediately seized and delivered to military units. Defend your Orthodox and Catholic churches from profanation by their rebellious appeals and illegal oaths." He asked the peasants

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48. The memorandum was published as an appendix to Mosolov's essay "Vilenskiye Ocherki" (Wilno Sketches) in the *Russkaya Starina* of January 1884, pp. 48-60 Struś (Stella Sawicki) in his book *Ludzie i Wypadki,* (Men and Events) published a translation of the memorandum (part I, Lwów, 1894, pp. 147-160). According to Struś the memorandum was submitted to Dmitri Milutin after Sierakowski's return from an official mission abroad in 1862. Sierakowski left Paris for Petersburg on December 22, 1862. Przyborowski *Historja Dwóch Lat,* Vol. V, p. 420. According to data obtained from the data obtained from the archives of Department III the matter had a different aspect. During his examination, Sierakowski declared that he had written a memorandum on the Polish problem and that its rough-copy was in the hands of Włodzimierz Spasowicz. The latter, however, declared that the memorandum was probably in the hands of Sierakowski's sister. The memorandum was submitted by her to the authorities, and placed in the files of Department III. Herzen's *Works,* Vol. XVI, pp. 418, 419. Sierakowski had been brought up among Russians. He participated in discussions of radical circles, and their endless academic proposals of reforms. While in prison, not unlike Chernyshevski, he tried the weapon of political dialectics. In the presence of General Viatkin, military commander of Wilno, he expatiated upon the program of ruling Russias's western provinces, on the very day of his execution. The discussion was interrupted by the Cossack General Shamshev who demanded that Sierakowski be led to the place of his execution. Shamshev stated that Sierakowski, in November 1862, had declared to the Russians: "I believe that to pacify this country one must completely eradicate the Polish element." "Razskazi starego leibkazaka," (Tales of an Old Cossack Bodyguard), *Russkaya Starina,* 1878, Vol. XXI, pp. 535-537. If this account was accurate, Sierakowski expressed the ideas to be found in his later memorandum and gave thus a vivid *reductio ad absurdum* of the government's tendency to destroy the Poles in the Russian western provinces.

49 Przyborowski, *Dzieje 1863 r.* (History of 1863) Vol. III, pp. 14-15.

to "prosecute and destroy all rebellious attempts".[50] In the order he had issued to the governors on June 11 (old style), Muraviev stated that among the rebels there were many members of the petty gentry. Those people should have "their properties and manors immediately confiscated" and given to the peasants, priority being granted to those who had rendered important services "in prosecuting and destroying the rebels." The peasants should take part in the fight against rebellion: "Anyone proved guilty or suspected of contact with the rebels should be arrested and delivered to the nearest army post."[51]

This was obvious temptation and material encouragement of the peasants entailing the hope of grabbing the property of the noblemen accused of taking part in the insurrection. Any defense of the accused was out of question not only because of Muraviev's penal law procedure, but also because of the clear tendency to expropriate the Poles *per fas et nefas*. The decree of July 7, (old style), issued to the governors and military commanders, stated that the peasants as well as the brave Russian troops had distinguished themselves by pursuing the rebels. "To encourage them to continued action", the decree set as a reward for the catching of a rebel 3 roubles, and for the catching of an armed rebel, 5 roubles. These rewards were to be paid out of a special fund based upon contributions imposed upon the landowners: 10% of the estate's income.[52]

The peasants were ordered to watch the manors and the estates of the gentry to prevent the hiding of arms and ammunition. For every weapon found and delivered to the authorities the peasants were promised a reward of 3 roubles.[53]

Muraviev did not conceal his opinion that the insurrection was an

[50] *Sbornik rasporiazhenii grafa M. N. Muravieva, 1863-1864* (Collection of the Orders of Count M. N. Muraviev), Wilno, 1866, pp. 228-231. The orders refer exclusively to the seizing of the Poles.

[51] *Sbornik*, pp. 111, 112.

[52] The contribution proposed by Muraviev, was approved by the Tsar on June 8 (old style) by a circular of June 13, old style. A circular of July 6 decreed that Russian and German landowners were to pay a 5% contribution with the exception of those who had married Polish women or were related to Poles and favored the insurrection openly or secretly. A circular dated July 17, explained that the payments made by the Russians and Germans did not have the character of a contribution, but were aimed at assisting the authorities financially and were justified by the fact that the crushing of the insurrection was identical with defending the peace of the Russians and of the Germans. Simultaneously the contribution imposed upon the Russians and the Germans was reduced to two and a half percent, and in case the estate brought a small income, to one and a half percent. The contribution imposed upon the Poles was of a general nature, affecting the guilty as well as the innocent ones, and based solely on their nationality. A still higher contribution could be imposed upon persons "who favored the insurrection more than others." A Polish landowner could have his contribution reduced below the 10% norm only in case he had proved his loyalty. *Sbornik*, pp. 294-300.

[53] Instructions for Governors of October 3 (old style). *Sbornik*, pp. 137, 138, 238-242.

excellent pretext for eradicating the Polish element in Russia's western provinces. In Petersburg, however, Muraviev's ardor met with one reservation: it was feared that Lithuanian and White Ruthenian riots might result in a pan-Russian Pugachev-like revolt, which was exactly what Sierakowski had forecast in his memorandum. The chief of the secret police, Prince Dolgorukov, called Muraviev's attention to that danger, but Muraviev considered it a trifle: "Orthodox Russia" – he wrote to Dolgorukov in a letter dated March 7 (old style), 1864 – "and especially the peasants have enough common sense to understand that the measures decreed in our western provinces are and will be emergency measures for those provinces... When I discussed with you the peasant problem, it was not the rebellious provinces that we had in mind, but Orthodox Russia, loyal to her monarch. Therefore, aware of the great usefulness and the necessity of emancipating the peasants, we also considered it indispensable to loosen as little as possible the ties linking the two classes upon which the unshaken power of the State was based. In this case, however, the problem we are dealing with is different, the rural population constitutes here the sole force upon which the government can rely. Therefore it is necessary, for the benefit of the State, to effect a breach between the rural population and other classes hostile to the government, particularly the landowners of Polish origin. We should unhesitatingly follow this policy disregarding any protests and promote the Russian nationality by means of a total suppression of the Polish element."[54]

Official circles in Petersburg, however, did not share that viewpoint. Neither Dolgorukov nor Valuyev had much confidence in the Russian peasant masses. The official report on the conditions prevailing in the Western Provinces in 1861-1862 compiled by the Ministry of the Interior, analyzed the problem of provoking a massacre of the landowners in those provinces, and arrived at a negative decision, chiefly because of the possibility of spreading the peasant riots into Russia. "Obviously the peasants may be incited against the gentry. The well-known Galician events would compel the majority of the noblemen to flee. Can one, however, decide upon such a measure? Moreover, having applied it, will it be possible to stop the movement at an ideal boundary line, separating the counties from each other."[55]

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Herzen, in his London office, branded "the Pugachev-like revolt organized by the government". In March, 1863, referring to the crimes

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[54] H. Mościcki, *Pod berłem carów* (Under the Sceptre of the Tsars), pp. 182-186.
[55] B. Limanowski, *Historja Powstania 1863 i 1864 r.* (History of the Rising of 1863-64), Lwów, 1899, p. 172.

and robberies committed by the Russian troops in Congress Poland he wrote: "Behold the incendiaries and bandits who do not recognize property rights, behold the communists of his Imperial Majesty! Alexander Nikolayevich has resolved to become a peasant Tsar, a Tsar and a Stenka Razin simultaneously! A peasant rebellion enjoying supreme approval! A slaughter of landowners and the plundering of their homes organized by the police and the general staff! Well done, soldiers! You have well merited of your country while serving in Poland! Do not forget when you come home, how joyously you set fire to the landlords' manors, how you drank the wine in their cellars, how you smashed the coffers containing their treasures... Not only of Poles alone, but graciously remember, also of your people, the Russians... If you want to become a Stenka Razin, then be a real Stenka Razin and do not play the part of a German general and that of the first nobleman! Let your beard grow, take your belt and axe and ask for land and liberty *(Zemla i Vola)* for the Russian people... This will have at least some sense... Don't you see how right we were when we told you that they have no moral principles".[56]

Lord Ellenborough, speaking of the Polish insurrection on July 24, 1863, called Alexander II the chief revolutionist in Europe and the leader of an agrarian revolution.[57] Referring to that speech, Herzen, in an article called "And Matters Follow Their Course", wrote that an agrarian revolution is unavoidably approaching in Russia, and that the Tsar himself uses it for political purposes. "What can be more opposed to the crushing of the insurrection than a revolution? Yet, Ellenborough is quite right: Muraviev's methods of crushing a political and national insurrection mean nothing else but an agrarian, communistic, Pugachev-like revolution, organized by the government itself... The empire of Peter means dictatorship deprived of any moral principles. Out of the cap of Monomach it may manufacture anything from a stupid Prussian helmet to a Phrygian cap. The only goal is the maintenance of his rule and of his dynasty. Emperor Spartacus does not astonish us any more than the Empress who fomented peasant revolts."[58]

In another article entitled "Gallows and Newspapers," published in August, 1863, Herzen wrote: "Political brutalization has brought up to the surface everything that smelled of the Tartar, of soldiery, of serfdom, that fermented within ourselves, dormant and half forgotten:

[56] Herzen's *Works*, Vol. XVI, p. 123.

[57] "The emperor of Russia is himself at this moment the first revolutionist in Europe... It is a popular insurrection against property, and the emperor is at the head of it."

[58] Herzen's *Works*, Vol. XVI, pp. 429-430.

now we know how much of Arakcheyev we have in our blood, and how much of Nicholas in our brains".[59]

In the same issue of the *Kolokol,* Herzen published an interesting analysis of Muraviev's social policy. He prophetically foresaw that the means used by the *Tartar Gracchus* against the Poles in Lithuania would be applied some day in Russia by a future Pugachev. Muraviev created the model for a future revolution. A savage despotism, having no respect for human life or property, constituted a good training for the future system which was to be based upon Communist slogans.

"When homicide is raised to the level of virtue, and the killing of an adversary to the level of love of country, why wonder that the right of property should fade away just as the right to live. The relation between confiscation and robbery is the same as between wholesale and retail trade... The novelty of the spoliation of the Polish gentry does not consist in depriving the noblemen of their estates under stupid pretexts, or their expropriation, but in installing the peasants in the possession of their estates. The plan of the government is clear. It wants to evict at any price the Polish population out of the western provinces and attach to Russia the Orthodox Ruthenian people... The government had not enough courage to apply the Asiatic method of a general banishment and compulsory deportation; this would have been cruel, unjust but strong. The vile means of private accusation based on denunciations, that is on the demoralization of the peasants, seemed more agreeable. One must not think that the Petersburg government had any scruple regarding the use of such radical means. Considering itself, according to eastern conceptions, the owner of the land and of the population, it did not stop before anything... The gentry and the bourgeoisie in the western provinces... loudly demanded freedom for their homeland. It would have been somewhat awkward to rob them openly... What was to be done? And the underground demons whispered like in *Faust*: give back the illegally possessed property to the peasants; give the land to the peasants! You see that the chief Polish committee, and our refugees abroad and those who remained in the country dream only of giving back the land to the peasants... Give it back yourself!"

Herzen quoted Muraviev's circular of June 11|23, and made the remark that Muraviev's orders should be published as manuals of spoliation. "Should a coming Pugachev prefer such thievish and impure means to open action, he will have only to translate Muraviev's decrees into his own language, and no Russian landowner will escape and none will save more than his shirt and perhaps his pipe."

[59] Herzen's *Works,* pp. 441, 442.

All those practices reflected a viewpoint worthy of "the Persian Cyrus and Biblical Nimrod." "What would you say to have property rights recognized as a reward for good behavior, as an act of grace on the part of the Tsar."

"Gracchus Babeuf went rather far, but neither he nor the Convention of 1794, not even the communists, dared rise as high as our own Tartar Gracchus. Here one sees the results of a direct search for wisdom in the sources of the East."

"Should the government actually extend these Spartacus-like means to the whole of Russia, and find such zealous executors, then the people who proclaimed the right of the peasants to the land, will have to send an address to Alexander Nikolayevich, and thank him for having graciously taken upon himself the whole sad, violent and repulsive aspect of the future land revolution".[60]

One may infer from those violent philippics of Herzen that he condemned not only Muraviev's bloody methods, but also his social policy in Lithuania; that he blamed not only the Hangman, but also the Tsar who had appointed him, and all the dignitaries who approved of the activities of the Tartar Gracchus. Was it really so? One must keep in mind that already in the middle of 1863 Herzen experienced an inner split with regard to the Polish problem. His articles in the *Kolokol* continued to express his sympathies with the insurrection, and were consistent with the standpoint assumed from the beginning. In his letters, however, and in confidential discussions he expressed the conviction that the Russian revolutionists were separated from the Polish insurrectionsts by social principles, and that, as far as those principles were concerned, the Russian revolutionists were probably closer to the Petersburg satraps who were dividing the landlords' land among the peasants. He asserted that it was impossible to go hand-in-hand with the Hangman, but also that it was advisable to remain from the beginning neutral. Ironically comparing Alexander II with Stenka Razin, Herzen branded the Tsar's hypocrisy, because the figure of the Tsar as the leader of an agrarian revolution in Russia did not arouse in Herzen apprehension and aversion, but hope. As early as the spring of 1862, when asking who would lead Russia to a better future, Herzen exlaimed: "Will the Emperor who renounces the policies of Peter the Great, combine in one person the Tsar and Stenka Razin?" Such a Tsar he was ready to welcome with the traditional offering of bread and salt. Muraviev's Lithuanian mission was one part of the government's program concerning Poland; its second part, more far-reaching and more broadly conceived but analogous, being the mission of Nicholas Milutin, Cher-

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[60] Herzen's *Works*, Vol. XVI, pp. 459-462.

kasski and Samarin in the Congress Kingdom. Already Dragomanov had stated that the social and political ideology with which these tsarist agents went to Poland, was a reflection of Herzen's Slavophil-populist messianism. The agrarian revolution, the land revolution, was according to Herzen the corner-stone of the program of the London Russian émigrés for Poland as well as for Russia. It was Herzen's peculiarity that forming plans of revolution, he turned away from its practical consequences and preferred not to have anything in common with the "sad, violent, repulsive aspect of the future land revolution." He therefore refused to endorse the policy of the Tartar Gracchus in Lithuania. But his attitude towards the most prominent of the Petersburg satraps who were distributing the land to the peasants, Nicholas Milutin, was entirely different. Bakunin, who in the course of time became an adept of doctrinaire anarchism, did not share the admiration of his two London friends for Milutin, for he believed that even a just program, if enacted by the State, was an evil, because the State as such was the source of all injustice. "As far as Milutin is concerned" – he wrote on June 14, 1869, to Herzen and Ogarev – "I cannot agree with you. According to my deepest conviction, his policies were fatal, because he wanted to unite the cause of the peasants with the interests of the State, and serve the former by governmental, that is, red-bureaucratic means".[61] Did Milutin and the associates of his Polish mission differ much from the Tartar Gracchus, the Hangman?

On August 31 (old style), 1863, Nicholas Milutin had a two hours audience with the Tsar in Tsarskoye Selo. Grand Duke Constantine had been recalled from Warsaw, a new course had been determined, a Russification policy was to begin on a heretofore unknown scale. Milutin had been in disgrace for more than two years. In April, 1861, he was forced to resign from his post of Vice-Minister of the Interior under the pressure of the conservatives who hated him as a Red, an advocate of a radical agrarian reform and of the complete spoliation of the nobility. The characteristics which made him unacceptable in a high official position in Russia, now made him a suitable choice for Poland. During the audience the government policy for Congress Poland was outlined, identical with the one that Muraviev had been pursuing for several months in Lithuania: to look for support among the peasants; to win them for the government and to paralyze the influence of the enlightened classes; a ruthless Russification and the uni-

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[61] *Bakunin's Letters*, Dragomanov's edition, Petersburg, 1906, p. 325. Bakunin described the new type of a Milutin bureaucrat in the person of Prince Obolenski. "Prince Obolenski, he wrote on July 19, 1866, is a fanatic, they say, an honest fanatic, of the neo-orthodox, democratic-governmental and Polonophobe trend. He prays to God and the saints; he kisses the hands of the orthodox priests, and idolizes the Tsar." *Bakunin's Letters*, p. 277.

fication of Congress Poland with the empire. Milutin emphasized that the clergy were even more hostile to the government than the Polish landowners. He quickly selected a group of advisers and closest collaborators. A triumvirate was formed consisting of Milutin, Cherkasski and Samarin. Samarin lent the whole action a Slavophil character. According to him war should be declared on the upper classes which were infected with Latinism and western influences, while Poland should be brought back to the Slavonic fold, more frankly, denationalized. These men went to Poland as if on a crusade against revolution and the gentry, against Polonism and Latinism.[62]

At the beginning of October Milutin and his associates left for Warsaw, stopping on the way in Wilno. There a man ruled whom Milutin had met while working on the agrarian reform. They had parted as adversaries, or rather as personal enemies. Now Milutin felt the need of coming to an understanding with his recent foe and used as a mediator the Minister of State Domains, Zelenoy. Muraviev did not remain deaf to Milutin's advances. On September 25, he wrote him from Wilno, emphasizing the identity of the missions entrusted to them.[63]

The two men, antagonistic to each other in Russia, reached in Wilno complete agreement concerning Polish affairs. Their conferences were of a cordial character. Milutin in his confidential utterances not only did not condemn Muraviev's methods, but, on the contrary, stated

[62] This mission was described in detail and with a strong pro-Milutin bias by Anatole Leroy-Beaulieu in his *Un homme d'état russe*, Paris, 1884. "Les tendances radicales que la cour reprochait à Milutine, les instincts niveleurs que lui attribuaient ses ennemis, et qui pour lui avaient été un motif d'exclusion en Russie, devenaient un titre de recommandation en Pologne." p. 170 ("The radical tendencies with which the Court reproached Milutin, the levelling instincts ascribed to him by his enemies and which were the cause of his exclusion in Russia, were for him a recommendation in Poland.") A. Leroy Beaulieu thought that Milutin did not want to bind his destinies with the living corpse of Poland. "Il fit un dernier effort pour se dérober aux offres, ou mieux aux ordres qui allaient jusqu'à la fin de ses jours l'enchainer à ce cadavre vivant de la Pologne." p. 185. ("He made a last effort to escape these offers or rather orders which were to attach him to the end of his life to the living corpse of Poland.") And yet, he quite easily accepted the mission which was to make out of a living corpse a dead one. "Ce qui était en jeu c'était toujours la cause slave, non moins menacée aux bords de la Vistule par les traditions latines et occidentales de la Pologne que, sur les versants du Balkan, par la lourde et stérile domination ottomane." p. 197. ("It was the Slav problem which was at stake, not less threatened on the shores of the Vistula by the Latin and Western traditions of Poland, than on the slopes of the Balkans under the heavy and sterile Ottoman domination.") "Il semblait que la vieille Russie s'apprêtat à marcher sous sa direction à une sorte de croisade contre le polonisme et le latinisme, contre l'aristocracie et la révolution liguées ensemble contre la sainte Russie." p. 198. ("It appeared as if old Russia was getting ready to march under his orders on a crusade against Polonism and Latinism, against aristocracy and revolution both allied in a league against holy Russia").

[63] "I ardently desire that the important task of settling the peasant problem in the western provinces and in the Congress Kingdom enable us to consolidate fully for the future our rule in that country... We should act hand in hand in that important matter. As to myself, I sincerely offer you my collaboration. We desire only one thing: the benefit of Russia." Anatole Leroy Beaulieu, *Un homme d'état russe*, pp. 202, 203.

that any disapproval of the latter was unjust, and that the terror applied by Muraviev was entirely justified. He mentioned with sympathy the tint of melancholy which he had noticed in the Hangman.[64]

Samarin's impressions of the Wilno meeting were also of the best. Military dictatorship, appealing to the masses against the enlightened classes, the inexorable fight against the Roman Catholic Church, the destruction of the Polish element in the Lithuanian and White Ruthenian provinces, briefly, all the aims Muraviev tried to attain inspired by an instinctive hatred, agreed entirely with Samarin's political program. The Tartar Gracchus, having recourse to revolutionary means, was in accord with the Slavophil who considered himself an old-time Russian conservatist. In a letter which Samarin wrote in the spring of 1863, he made the following observations regarding the Polish insurrection: "Our government is in such a position that it may easily adopt the whole mechanism of revolutionary propaganda without losing one bit, one hair's breadth of its power."[65]

A dictatorship appealing to the social instincts of the ignorant masses was the program of both the leader of the Slavophils and the Hangman. Having adopted such a program, Samarin with a hypocrisy which was an unavoidable characteristic of a Polonophobe Slavophil, went to Poland to eradicate revolutionism among the enlightened classes and even among the clergy. A memorandum submitted by Milutin to the Tsar on December 21, (old style), 1863, drawn up in understanding with Samarin and Cherkasski, contains the following remarks: "The whole social life in Congress Poland has suffered a shock... The young generation infected with most destructive and irrealizable theories, dominates public opinion... The Latin Church has entered into close association with the extreme revolutionists..."[66]

After the pleasant Wilno impressions, Milutin met in Warsaw with disappointment: the Imperial Lieutenant Berg was a weak man; di-

[64] From Wilno Milutin wrote on October 21 to his wife: "Our meeting and the explanations which we exchanged were of an utmost cordiality. We arrived at an understanding even in discussing the past. Besides a clear understanding of people and things surrounding him, he possesses outstanding abilities as an administrator. He does not lack energy. I was, however struck by an air of sadness which I did not see in him before... He told me himself that within the last six months he had 48 people executed. If one takes into consideration that such stern measures have saved the life of hundreds, and perhaps thousands, of innocent victims, the attacks of the European press must appear strange... It is true that there is much arbitrariness, but that arbitrariness restrains another, a more brutal revolutionary or clerical arbitrariness." A few days later he again wrote to his wife: "Muraviev and I parted as cordially as we had greeted each other." A. Leroy Beaulieu, *Un homme d'état russe,* pp. 208, 209.

[65] Baron B. E. Nolde, *Yurii Samarin,* Paris, 1926, p. 148.

[66] Nolde, *Samarin,* p. 167. Sergey Strogonov calls the Slavophil currents in the beginning of the reign of Alexander II, that is, at a time when it was influenced chiefly by Samarin and Ivan Aksakov, an orthodox ("pravoslavnyi") socialism. Barsukov, *Pogodin's Life,* Vol. XVI, p. 75.

scipline and a clearly defined system, so evident in Wilno, were lacking.

"The difference between Wilno and Warsaw is enormous", he wrote to his wife. "In Wilno the government is firmly established, it has faith in itself and inspires faith..." Muraviev "raises the peasants and drains the financial sources of the insurrection"... "The clearness of his views made me really happy..." Even the German Berg, a former soldier of Nicholas I, was in comparison with Milutin and Cherkasski a defender of the remnants of the autonomy of Congress Poland.[67]

In a long pamphlet published in French for propaganda purposes in Western Europe and written by Alexander Moller, is to be found a translation of Samarin's memoranda summarizing the results and observations of the first tour of Congress Poland made by Milutin and his associates. The apostles of Russification personally set an example how an agitation in favor of the Russian government should be conducted among the rural population. The work was later continued by government-appointed so-called peasant commissars.[68]

Milutin confided his methods and the real aims of his democratic activity in letters to his collaborator, Jacob Soloviev, He expressed the opinion that the Poles should not be admitted to the work of peasant emancipation, so that the entire merit could be ascribed to the Russians.

"I have here in mind not my own, but my nation's self-respect, for it is our task to restore Russian authority and its prestige in Poland. This reminds me of an idea which I have been anxious to express for a long time: it is necessary to do our utmost to increase our small civilian army in Warsaw. This is the best means to bring the Poles to reason and to restrain the gang of intriguers who are multiplying and will continue to multiply around Count Berg..."[69]

[67] "Le défenseur des débris de l'autonomie polonaise." Anatole Leroy Beaulieu, *Un homme d'état russe*, pp. 212-214.

[68] Alexandre Moller, *Situation de la Pologne au I-er janvier 1865*, Paris, 1865. "En les quittant nous les assurions que le Tsar ne les avait point oubliés... Il nous paraissait qu'ils trouvaient dans nos paroles l'expression de leurs espérances obscures." ("Leaving them we assured the peasants that the Tsar had not forgotten them... It seemed to us that they found in our words an expression of their secret hopes"). The author of the memorandum asked significantly: "Qui aura le dernier mot avec la population rurale de Pologne? De la solution de cette question dépend l'issue de la lutte actuelle..." ("Who is going to have the last word regarding the problem of Poland's rural population? The result of the present fight depends upon the solution of that question"). Documents, p. 71. Moller's pamphlet was written in understanding with Nicholas Milutin, and was paid for by the Russian government. Concerning financial matters, Moller communicated with the secret police. Its chief, Prince Dolgorukov, wrote to Valuyev on May 6, 1865: "I am sending you herewith, my dear Peter Alexandrovich, a pamphlet which has just been published in Paris by Moller, a retired colonel, together with a package of letters referring to it. These letters will explain to you what Moller is asking for, but before anything is done, the Emperor wants you to get in touch with Nicholas Milutin... Moller asks for an immediate reply. He demands first a sum of money which he has to pay, besides what he has already received from Milutin..." From the Dashkov Archives, Herzen's *Works*, Vol. XVIII, p. 210.

[69] *Russkaya Starina*, June 1884, p. 587. Milutin's letter dated September 22 (old style), 1864.

According to Milutin, the Russian officials working in Poland were Polonized, and they should be replaced by new men. Milutin, not unlike Muraviev, suffered from a persecution mania concerning Polonophilism among the Russians and suspected of this crime the Russian officials from the Imperial Lieutenant's offices who were, in fact, as innocent of Polonophilism as their chief, Count Theodore Berg.[70]

Milutin trained his staff inculcating in them the principle that in Poland legal considerations must be subordinated to political ones.

"What we need most are at least three politically sure, practical jurists, all Russians. We need men thoroughly trained in law and simultaneously capable of subordinating themselves to political ideas, which must be considered superior to ideal legal principles".[71]

Also in this respect Milutin closely resembled Muraviev. He further believed that the real aims of the government's activities should be considered secret and entrusted only to initiated officials, and that they should by no means be revealed to the Polish public and to the world in general.[72]

Thus a new type of official who would be a political worker, a fighter for the Russian and Orthodox causes in the rebellious Polish country, was trained in the school of Milutin. Paul Mukhanov was the prototype of such a missionary. During the Lieutenancy of Paskevich that type did not exist, for the despotic ruler did not like overzealous men propagating their own program, laying claims to a control over the government. Shipov who tried to play such a rôle did not last long. The typical bureaucrat of the Nicholas era was supposed blindly to carry out orders, and not indulge in any reasoning and ideologies. Now there was an influx of political workers, of Slavophil patriots, of democrats and populists, mostly renegades from the liberal and revolutionary camp, who were anxious to make a career in Poland. Typical of them was Gromeka, until recently a radical and a correspondent of

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70 After his arrival in Warsaw, Milutin said to the director of the Lieutenant's Chancellery, Chestilin, who wanted to inform him about the conditions prevailing in the country: "You are one of those in whom I trust the least. You have become Polonized and you are not aware of it. What we need is a judge who would be a Russian without any admixture." Chestilin deeply resented that suspicion and Milutin apologized for his rash reproach. Nicholas Berg, *Zapiski*, Vol. III, pp. 467, 468.

71 *Russkaya Starina*, June 1884, p. 587. Milutin believed that in due course it would be possible to find in Poland some people upon whom the government could rely. *Russkaya Starina*, Vol. XXVII, 1880, p. 390. Milutin's letter to Soloviev, dated March 23, 1864.

72 In a letter dated October 20 (old style), 1864, Milutin wrote to Soloviev from Petersburg: "We shall prepare with Gromeka our report on our six months' activities regarding the rural problem... I have to confess that it would not be proper to publish our weekly notes... It is impossible to combine in one document two aims: 1) to enable the government to follow our activities, and, 2) to inform the public about it... The better the document achieves the first aim, the less it suits the other... One must be very cautious and excessive candor would be a naiveté, to say the least..." *Russkaya Starina*, June 1884, p. 589.

Herzen, now a collaborator of Milutin, who as the governor of Siedlce was soon to become a representative of militant and aggressive Orthodoxy, and the executioner of the Uniates of the Podlasie province.[73] Russian political workers who occupied official positions in Poland or came there as inspectors, exerted a control over the loyalty of the local Russian officials, and demanded from them an integral Polonophobia. The Lieutenant himself was spied upon by those patriots.[74]

Muraviev greatly prized the activities of Milutin who was always careful to maintain close and friendly relations with the Wilno dictator. Going from Warsaw to Petersburg in December, 1863, Milutin stopped in Wilno for a conference with Muraviev on the subject of the proposals which he was carrying to the capital. He also stopped in Wilno while returning to Warsaw in March, 1864. After that last visit of Milutin, Muraviev wrote to Zelenoy, Minister of State Domains:

"At the present time I am concerned with the organization of the peasants in the Augustow province. The orders issued in this matter are simply excellent. Honor and glory to Milutin! He was here the day before yesterday and left for Warsaw. The peasant problem will be settled there better than here, for no one will interfere — neither Dolgorukov nor Valuyev, and the clamor of the Poles in Congress Poland will not be so graciously received in Petersburg".[75]

The red Milutin, the populist and democrat, and Muraviev, the Hangman, reached a perfectly harmonious understanding on the Polish problem.

After the outbreak of the January insurrection people in Russia began to compare the dates of the two Polish uprisings: 1831 and 1863. On March 1, 1863, Herzen published in his *Kolokol* an article entitled "Zemla i Vola" in which he wrote: "While the Petersburg eagle

[73] O. Yelenski writes about this era in his memoirs: "Herzen's influence did not last long. It was quickly paralyzed and then it was sufficient for the government to entice these vain liberals to occupy lucrative positions in Poland, Lithuania and the south-western provinces to replace the exiled and deported Poles and the sympathies did not only fade but changed into persecutions." *Russkaya Starina,* October 1906, p. 237.

[74] Michael Pogodin arrived in Warsaw in 1865 to enjoy the sight of a subdued country and the successes of the Slavophil activities of Milutin. Count Berg was extremely courteous to the noted patriotic worker and historian. Pogodin relates how he had been invited to dinner to the royal castle and was awaiting with the other guests the entrance of the Lieutenant: "At this very place fifteen or seventeen years ago I was waiting with several friends for the entrance of Paskevich. He entered in his shirt-sleeves, wearing blue silk suspenders which he buttoned to his trousers while approaching us. He nodded to us while buttoning the suspenders and said: 'Ah! the scholars! I am very pleased. I like all scholars. Thank you for remembering me!' Then he turned away and left by the same door he had entered. Now it was different: Berg appeared in his uniform, greeted all of us and invited us to dinner." Nicholas Berg, *Zapiski,* Vol. III, pp. 503-504.

[75] H. Mościcki, *Pod berłem carów* (Under the Sceptre of the Tsars), pp. 181, 182.

lowered one of its heads and tears open the breast of unfortunate Poland piece by piece, other domestic clouds gather around its second head... 1863 is not 1831. Europe may have remained unchanged, Russia is no longer the same."[76]

Some time later, in an article entitled "1831 – 1863" he discussed the same antithesis:

"Yet who would have thought the old man to have had so much blood in him?" – with these words of Lady Macbeth Herzen began his article. "The Polish insurrection has drawn a deep boundary line. In future textbooks it will terminate one of the chapters of Russia's history and begin another. Here is the turning point... The same life on this side of the frontier will be morally different. Russia will remember that there was a great deal of blood in the veins of the old man, that blood was trickling down her hands and that she did not do anything to wash it off."

"Was there less blood in Poland in 1831? No – but there was less conscience, that is less consciousness in Russia. History does not punish crimes that have been committed in a state of semi-consciousness, offences committed in a half-slumber. In such cases history delivers an English verdict: temporary insanity. The whole problem is reduced to the question of whether the Russia of 1863 has as much right to that verdict as the Russia of 1831. We deny it categorically."

In 1831 the Russian public did not understand the meaning of the Polish problem: "Prominent people, people who were deported to forced labor for having attempted to bridle tsarist autocracy, had a mistaken understanding of the problem, and without noticing it, they adopted Karamzin's viewpoint, which was nationally and politically narrow-minded. It suffices to recall the fact related by Yakushkin, the indignation of Michael Orlov, the article of Lunin, etc. They were, to some extent, jealous of Poland. They believed that Alexander preferred the Poles to the Russians, and respected them more... This was the state of mind of the people in 1830. The masses did not count at that time: they were a sleeping lake..." In the course of thirty years the Russian people gradually matured. A new generation grew up, whose representatives when standing before a tsarist court and facing hard labor or death preserved an indomitable spiritual strength. That strength of character did not permit them to hesitate when they had to choose not only "between the Tsar and Poland, but between silence and speech".

"Do not delay speaking up! Hasten to detach your boat in time from the tsarist ship and hoist your, not the government's, banner...

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[76] Herzen's *Works*, Vol. XVI, p. 107.

We are waiting for you! Follow the example of the *Zemla i Volal*"[77]

It was the spring of 1863, a period of bright hopes with which Herzen for the time being silenced his own doubts. His successful rival in the struggle for popularity among the Russian people, Katkov, in June, 1863, also compared the two dates. In his *Moskovskiya Vedomosti* he pointed at the then quite obvious fact that the Russian public in 1863 assumed apart from the government, a very clear attitude, decidedly hostile towards the Polish insurrection, while its attitude in 1831 was comparatively dull and passive. "The Polish-Jesuit intrigue plans the final ruin of the Russian State, of the Russian nation and of the Russian Orthodox Church. The intrigue was so clever that it was able to mislead our watchfulness for some time. Our usual apathy, however, was followed by an outbreak of Russian national feeling, which grew in strength in proportion with the depth of our apathy... Russia remembers the year 1831 when her army also had to crush a Polish insurrection. Was Russia at that time as agitated as she is now throughout her entire territory, from her peaks to her unfathomable depths? Was there anything in those days to be compared with the present outburst of the Russian patriotic feelings?"[78]

Katkov explained that favorable symptom by a higher degree of maturity of the people and the intervention of the western powers in 1863. Both writers agreed as to the greater maturity of the Russian public in 1863, but each of them expected entirely different results from that maturity. Herzen soon realized that his adversary was right.

Herzen maintained that the narrow-minded national and patriotic attitude of Karamzin, which was the same as that of the Decembrists, was a thing of the past. This was a great delusion. After the outbreak of the January insurrection Karamzin's name had again reappeared before the public. He was the great teacher to whom Katkov and Pogodin, Aksakov and Koyalovich were referring. Moreover, the young generation of the fifties was, in fact, just as much imbued with Karamzin's national ideology as the generation of the Decembrists. From the time he had written his *History* and taken a critical attitude towards the temporary constitutional and Polonophil tendencies of Alexander I, Karamzin became the standard bearer of the movement which Uvarov who considered himself his disciple, was to formulate in the following three words: "autocracy, orthodoxy, nationalism."

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Compared with the period preceding it, the year 1863 was one of unexpected, as it were, strange phenomena in Russia. Savage figures

[77] Herzen's *Works*, Vol. XVI, pp. 179-193.
[78] M. N. Katkov, *1863 god* (The Year 1863), Vol. I, p. 258.

such as Muraviev, Baklanov, Ganetski, Dmitriev and their like, appeared on the public stage. Practices begun which, if compared with the post-Crimean War *Spring*, seem to be the ideas of some morbid, sadistic minds which a monstrous whim of events had pushed to the fore. Still more significant was the popularity of those men, a worship of the individual unknown in Russia since the days of Suvorov: the hero-worship of Muraviev, the Hangman; the success, importance and influence of the publicist Katkov, heretofore unheard-of in enlightened Russia. It would be childish to assume that such a powerful and permanent state of mind could have been the result of accidental circumstances. On the contrary, it was the voice of history roused from a lethargy of many years. After a short deviation to the by-ways of the *Spring*, to the by-ways of vague dreams, of restless, obscure expectations, Russia was returning to her old historical path. She was reverting to her traditional mission of gathering Russian land, Atavistic instincts were leading her back to the old secular methods of which the Moscow Tsar, Ivan III, glorified by a prominent Russian historian, was the master. These are striking analogies throughout the span of centuries. The same destruction, planned in advance, of the neighbor, the same method of accusing him of intrigues, treason, bad faith; the same habit of denouncing the adversaries' patriotic feelings. which are regarded sacred at home; the same maneuver of protecting the oppressed common people of the country about to be annexed; the same tendency to eradicate in that country education, traditional civic freedom, under the pretext of defending the lower classes and even of a solicitude for the weal of the conquered nation; the same executions and expropriations, deportations of recalcitrant elements, the same settling of colonists from inside Russia. The same Tartar Gracchus trying to win the favor of the ignorant masses and to incorporate them, entirely Russianized, into the mother country. The methods of the Petersburg satraps, who were distributing land to the peasants to the applause of the apostle of the revolution, Proudhon, and the Polonophil Herzen, were reverting to the traditions of Ivan III. In the nineteenth century, Muraviev's methods differed more glaringly from the life of civilized nations than in the fifteenth century, but it was assumed, and rightly so, that foreign nations would limit themselves to a clamor of indignation, and would soon revert to the routine of everyday life. Thus the end would be attained. Had not all traces of the original distinctness of Novgorod disappeared within one hundred years after the city's conquest? Out of innumerable lands conquered by force or ruse a great empire had been created, crime had become greatness. Was it worth while to speak of Muraviev's acts of violence in the face of his great aims? The echo of crimes would wane, while Russia would expand. The majority of the Russian public felt and

thought that way. Just as Karamzin praised Ivan III for his force and cunning, for his violence and hypocrisy, for his terror and the calumnies he spread against Novgorod, because that was Russia's road to greatness, so the Russia of Alexander II eulogized Muraviev and offered him icons of Archangel Michael. There remained the corpse, the soul had vanished: this is what had happened with the great city of Novgorod. This is what was bound to happen with the western provinces and later with the provinces along the Vistula.

The fiction was maintained that only the western provinces were at stake, that Russia was ready to grant the Poles in Congress Poland full liberty. But how did the situation really shape up when efforts were made to translate theory into practice? An answer to the above question may be found in the writings of Pogodin. He represented the viewpoint, quoted above, that the Poles should be ousted by all possible means from the western provinces. About Congress Poland he had the following to say: "As far as Poland is concerned, I wish her within her linguistic boundaries, all the success and all the freedom she needs, only without the possibility of harming Russia. This is a *conditio sine qua non.*" This meant, in other words, that Russian domination should continue in Congress Poland forever to assure Russia's safety. In 1863 all Russia shared Karamzin's opinion that an independent Poland, even if reduced to the smallest size, would represent a danger to Russia.

On the tomb in which living Poland was buried, Russian radicals and liberals dreamed of some Polish-Russian understanding. Lazarus arose from his tomb and interrupted the dream. He was pressed back into his coffin, but the dream vanished. Let us examine the Russian writers, beginning with 1863, men of European education and enjoying the reputation of being Europeans as well as liberals. They understood the threat of despotism for Russia; they thought that it might bring about the ruin of the country or result in a bloody chaos; they judged the men and events soberly as far as Russia was concerned, however, their tone changed as soon as they touched the Polish problem. Nikitenko wrote some eloquent remarks about the arbitrariness of the administration, about local self-government, about the necessity to establish an independent judiciary. But coming across Poland he suddenly declared that, having crushed the insurrection, the government was following a wrong policy by disregarding the political testament of Muraviev, the Hangman.

Michael Semyovski in an essay on the Minister of Education Golovnin praised his liberal activity, but stated that Golovnin had been suspected of favorng the Polish cause, and energetically protested against such vicious attempts to slander the good name of a Russian patriot. Ivan Aksakov defended freedom of speech with great eloquence and

simultaneously conducted a bitter campaign against the Poles. Katkov was the leader of a savage anti-Polish crusade, but at the same time he advocated judiciary reforms, and opposed Valuyev, branding the arbitrariness of the Russian administration. Similar examples could be quoted endlessly.[79]

The patriotic Polonophobe mission acted as a narcotic. It lulled the Russians' sensitiveness to their own political slavery, and even more, exalted that slavery as a sacrifice made for the sake of Russia's greatness. The unbridled chauvinism served as a means to discredit, to disgrace the Russian liberation movement which was accused of conspiring with the Poles, of betraying Russia. The liberation movement of the sixties was distorted and frustrated, thrown out of the channel which was to lead to the limitation of despotism and directed into a channel leading to the consolidation of slavery.

The Russian Circe, who wanted to transform the Poles into tamed domestic animals by touching them with her sceptre, was herself becoming a cruel animal. Out of all poisons with which the Russian government and public opinion supporting it, infected Russia's soul, Polonophobia was the most virulent. Its sting, pointed at Poland, was filtering poison into the veins of Russia's own organism. Abiding by its historical tradition and holding Poland in fetters, the Russian nation put Deianeira's poisonous garment upon its own freedom. The Polish problem was becoming the "dead sea" of the Russian soul.

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Even over the small circle of the Russian émigrés in London, who in 1863 were accused of betraying Russia for the sake of Poland, there seemed to hover the shadows of former generations and exhort them to obey the voice of history. Even when planning the future of Russia and announcing the granting of freedom to Poland, doubt arose in their minds and instinctively they altered their plans. Even in their idealistic dreams they favored the keeping of Poland for Russia. To justify this they found many pretexts. A powerful instinct bedimmed their clear judgment. They seemed to believe seriously that it was

[79] Having sobered in 1863 from their theoretical Polonophilism, the liberals continued to search for, and brand some mythical Polonophils. Vasili Botkin, a former friend of Belinski, Granovski and Herzen, one of a group of noted writers in the forties, wrote during the Polish insurrection to the poet Fet: "I fully sympathize with your project to re-enlist into the army because of the outbreak of the Polish insurrection. Our harebrained progressives, however, do not understand this. It seems that the sense of nationalism and love of country has entirely evaporated from those thoughtless heads." According to Botkin, a resuscitated Poland would always harm Russia with the assistance of Europe. "This would be identical with creating for us in the West another Caucasus... Twenty years of unrest and efforts will weaken and ruin us. This is how I understand the restitution of Poland. Russia's security requires that Poland be held in the greatest dependence." Barsukov, *The Life of Pogodin*, Vol. XX, pp. 364, 365.

necessary to keep Poland in irons for her own good. They did not have the courage to admit that just as Katkov and Pogodin, whom they fought bitterly, they were instinctively averse to the reducing of the size of the territory upon which the Russia they dreamt of was to realize her social mission. The granting of independence to Poland they considered a dangerous turning-point in the history of Russia, apt to result in Russia's shrinking to the size of the ancient Muscovite principality.

Nicholas Turgenev, in a moment of lucidity which was not to last long, foresaw that only events of European importance could liberate Poland from Russian domination, and Russia from holding Poland in subjection which was fatal to herself. Russia would never be willing or strong enough to break the chains binding Poland to her, and which were the fetters of her own freedom. "It has been heretofore our national principle: not an inch of our land to friend or foe," this was the secular principle which Karamzin found in the Russian soul, and which he formulated. The year 1863 was a bloody confirmation of that principle. Out of the gloomy darkness of the tragedy emerged the clear truth that Poland could be liberated from Russian domination only against the will of the tsarist government, of the liberals, radicals and Russian revolutionists, through a world hurricane and her own strength.

And the hurricane did come.

What was the reaction of the heirs of the ideology of the generation of the sixties when that historical storm was crushing Russian domination in Poland? In the spring of 1915 a book entitled *What Does Russia Expect From the War* was published in Russia. It contained the contributions of several writers, among them Kareyev, Tuhan-Baranovski, Miliukov, Shingarev, Zinaida Gippius. The book was a great success. Its second edition appeared in August, when the Russian armies were already retreating eastward... The nationalities problem was discussed in an article entitled "Natsionalnyi vopros". Its guiding thought was that the great war had brought out a fact of great importance to the future of Russia. The national census of 1897 had shown that the population of Russia spoke one hundred languages. The number of national languages in the full sense of the word, that is of languages of peoples who had their own culture and literature, amounted to about twenty. All those nationalities had declared their "loyal, even ultra-loyal attitude towards their *common country*." Though not subject to any compulsion from without, they had declared their love and attachement to the Russian State *(berezhno-lubovnoye otnosheniye)*. It was like a plebiscite of all nationalities voting for their pan-Russian motherland. There were three nationalities which for many years had remained beyond the reach of Russian culture and Russian political

influences: the Finns, the Poles and the Baltic Germans. It seems that the gap separating them from the Russians was unbridgeable. Yet strong and lasting bridges had been already built over that gap. Especially the Poles declared their loyalty to the common Russian motherland. "We have our Ireland, Poland, which has spontaneously developed a so-called pro-Russian orientation even before our appeal reached her."

These were facts of great importance which attested that the period of a mechanical gathering of provinces and nationalities within the Russian empire had been concluded and a new era of an organic union between the peoples of the empire had begun: the process of creating from all nationalities one Russian nation (*protsess sozdaniya russkoy natsii*). The whole population of the empire represented a nation in the making (*tvorimaya natsiia*). In this respect Russia was more successful than Germany who had never succeeded in forming one nation out of her various alien nationalities. The mechanical unification of the individual provinces of the Russian empire was the result of conquest, but the organic unification of the individual nationalities into one nation was the work of the Russian intelligentsia. The character of that intelligentsia was democratic. It constituted a great laboratory where lofty ideals were founded. "Those ideals, formed by the intelligentsia of the principal nationality of the State, were adopted by the intelligentsia of all other nationalities of the Empire." Thus the Russian intelligentsia had accomplished the great task of uniting innumerable peoples, even those who thus far had kept their own character as the Poles, the Germans and the Finns, into one nation.[80]

The Russians, even those who had nothing in common with the re-

[80] *Chego zhdiot Rossiya ot voyny* (What Does Russia Expect from the War). Second edition, M. Y. Slavinski's article "Voyna i natsionalnyi vopros." On July 16, 1915, because of the defeat on the western front and the rapid evacuation of the Polish provinces by the Russian armies, the following declaration was presented at a cabinet meeting, a declaration which Prime Minister Goremykin was to read before the Duma on July 17. The paragraph pertaining to Poland provoked an animated debate. Having expressed his sympathy with the "chivalrous, noble and fraternally loyal Polish nation" exposed to the terrible vicissitudes of the war, the Prime Minister continued as follows: "His Majesty the Emperor has condescended to authorize me to inform the members of the Duma that his Imperial Majesty had ordered the Council of Ministers to prepare projects of laws regarding the granting to Poland, after the end of the war, the right to organize freely her national, cultural and economic life, upon the basis of a local autonomy under the rule of the Russian monarch, and under the condition of preserving state unity." During the debate the word "local" was eliminated as superfluous. The motion of Sazonov to have the Tsar announce the granting of autonomy to Poland by a special manifesto, was unanimously rejected. Sazonov, the only one who voted for his motion, vainly tried to explain that "thanks to such an act, we shall, abandoning the capital of Poland, leave behind thousands of people who are friendly to us, and we shall create an atmosphere quite unfavorable to the Germans." *Arkhiv Russkoy Revolutsii*, Vol. XVIII, p. 22.

actionary camp, believed, on the eve of the downfall of the Russian domination in Poland, that the Poles of Congress Poland had reached the point at which, according to Karamzin, the inhabitants of Veliki Novgorod had arrived in less time as a result of the policies of Ivan III: the corpse remained, the soul of Poland had flown away and became a part of the soul of greater Russia.

In 1920 a war was waged between reconstructed Poland and Red Russia. On May 5, 1920, the Pan-Russian Central Executive Committee of the Moscow Council of Workers' and Peasants' Delegates met in Moscow. Polish military operations were then called by Kamenev "the offensive of the Polish gentry". It was allegedly the gentry that was fighting Russia while the Polish masses were friendly to her. The noblemen cheated those masses and led them into battle. "The armies of the Polish noblemen have reached Kiev." "The Polish workers and peasants are aware of the fact that we are fighting on the western front for their own freedom and for their own liberation from the yoke of the Polish lords." The Russian workers and peasants had ordered the Red Army "to defend the revolutionary achievements of the Russian people against the attacks of the Polish lords".

This kind of language was by no means new. It was, some changes of phraseology excepted, the language of the tsarist henchmen of 1863. "Shliakhta, pany", these were the same expressions used at that time to mimic the Polish language. The Poles took up arms to consolidate the slavery of the Polish masses and to crush the freedom, newly acquired by the Russian people. The Russians took up arms in self-defence. They are bringing the Polish masses true liberty...

Muraviev of Wilno could have taken part in that struggle. In 1863 he had carried to Lithuania the slogan *Zemla i Vola*, which he himself considered hateful in Russia. Now he would have made a pact with the Reds for the good of the Russian cause.

Why should this appear improbable? Did not Trotsky ascend the rostrum and declare with satisfaction that the former tsarist commanding general Brusilov had offered his services to the Red Army? "The former general and commander of the tsarist armies openly, honestly and courageously declares that he wants to help the Russian working classes in their fight against the Polish noblemen!" The Red meeting welcomed this anouncement with applause. Trotsky then declared that at a time when the Polish bourgeoisie wants to "cut the throat" of a workers' and peasants' Russia, it was the duty of every citizen to come to the aid of the Soviets.

An alliance of all classes, a national war, just as in 1863. "This is a national war" — declared Radek — "this should be openly admitted. The Russian workers' class has the right to be patriotic..."

The resolution calling for a national war contained the exlamation: "Down with the Polish lords!"

The Tartar Gracchus of 1920, marching on to liberate the Polish masses, was the same Gracchus who in 1863 went to Poland and Lithuania with the program of the *Zemla i Vola,* the same who in the fifteenth century marched against Veliki Novgorod as a tribune of the people to defend them from the oppression of their overlords.

The corpse remained. The soul has vanished. This is, as it has always been, the unalterable, ever cherished goal of the wars of liberation, from Ivan III to 1920 and after.

11.

HARBINGERS

After his arrival in London at the end of 1861, Bakunin held in the presence of Kelsyev the following conversation with Herzen: "In Poland there are only demonstrations" – said Herzen. – "A cloud gathers, but one should desire that it disperse." – "And in Italy?" – "Quiet." – "And in Austria?" – "Quiet" – "And in Turkey?" – "Quiet." – "Quiet everywhere and there is nothing in the offing." – What then should be done?" – said Bakunin gloomily. – "Nothing remains but to go to Persia or India and start work there. Otherwise I'll go crazy. I cannot sit idle."[1]

Setting, after more than twelve years of imprisonment and exile, his foot on Western European soil, Bakunin returned to his plans of 1848 and 1849. The destruction of Austria, of the Turkish empire and of Russian tsardom, and the creation of a Slavonic federation, were the immediate political tasks; the destruction, in the entire area of that chosen land of the future, of the existing social system, a radical social revolution in the Slavonic world, were the immediate social tasks. Spreading the revolution beyond the Slavonic countries, abolition of the existing European frontiers and the destruction of the prevailing social order in all countries, the creation of a *free* federation of peoples liberated by an immense international revolution – this was the next stage of the great plan.

England was a convenient place for Herzen, the publicist. There he could freely write in his *Kolokol* (Bell), there the revengeful hand of the Third Department did not reach him. But what could Bakunin do there? He did not escape from Siberia at the risk of his life to look for an asylum in the West. He came to take up the thread of his revo-

[1] *Arkhiv Russkoy Revolutsii* (Archive of the Russian Revolution), Vol. XI, p. 200.

lutionary activity interrupted in 1849. He felt that there was no work for him in England. With the instinct of a bird of tempest he looked for such a country and he directed his thought towards Italy. He revolved in his mind an as yet indistinct plan of calling forth risings among the peoples of Austria and Turkey and linking them with the Italian émigrés in London, Mazzini and Saffi. It would be best if he would go to Italy to start his action.

On June 14, 1862, he wrote from London to his wife who was still in Siberia: "As soon as you join me, we shall go together to Italy. It is cheaper and merrier there and there will be much work." And on June 16, 1862, he wrote to his sister-in-law: "As soon as my wife arrives, I shall go to Italy where I shall start uniting the Italians with the Slavs. Concerning this matter I am already in friendly correspondence with Garibaldi... I may decide to visit in winter also the Turkish possessions. My special passion is the destruction of Austria. Perhaps it will be satisfied one way or another."[2]

The main document of that correspondence, Bakunin's letter to Garibaldi of May 10, 1862, appealing to him for common action, did not reach the addressee, but instead, thanks to the cooperation of the Austrian police, a copy of it was placed in the hands of the Russian government. "Through her situation, her interests, her comparative youth, Italy is a true friend of the Slavs. The Slavs' hatred of the Germans closely corresponds with Italy's hatred of Austria. Let us begin by forming ties between Italy and the Slavs." Bakunin called on Garibaldi for cooperation in the liberation of the Slavs and of the Italians. "This is a great but not impossible thing. There are moments when only trifling and moderate things are impracticable." In case of a war of Austria against Italy or France, legions could be formed from Austrian Slavonic deserters.

Bakunin expounded his plans at greater length in his letter to the Czech Frić. Here he expressed himself in favor of a revolutionary pan-Slavism, in other words he reverted to his attitude of 1848 and 1849. In Bakunin's mind the Slavonic world was linked in a special way with the idea of revolution; in the Slavonic peoples rested the impulse to abolish the existing political and social forms and civilization; in its purest form that impulse was manifested in the Russian people, least touched by Western civilization. Consequently the signal for renewing the world would come from Russia. The attitude of the European nations to that upheaval would be varying and the degree of Bakunin's sympathy or antipathy for the various European nations would de-

[2] M. Lemke, *Ocherki osvoboditelnago dvizheniia shestidesiatikh godov* (Outlines of the Liberation Movement of the Sixties), Petersburg, 1908, pp. 120, 125.

pend on that supposed attitude. The letter is Bakunin's further international-revolutionary itinerary: he would endeavor to work among those nations in which he places his revolutionary confidence.

"Russia is on the eve of so radical and immense a revolution as the world has never witnessed. What will happen after the revolution has been carried out? Much of this remains a secret, but much can be truthfully predicted." Centralized state authority would be destroyed. Russia would become a federal state composed of provinces; the provinces would be composed of autonomous districts; a district would be a federation of townships; a township a federation of communes. True Slavonic freedom would be reborn. "This I call Panslavism. Panslavism is faith in the fact that the union of all Slavonic peoples, composed of 85 millions, will bring a new civilization, a new living, true freedom to the world. The Slavs have few friends and few allies. The Germans are our natural enemy, while the Austrian Empire is an abominable product of German life. He who is a friend of the Austrians is our enemy. England is also hostile to the Slavs. England is of Germanic origin, has an instinctive dislike of the Slavs and is friendly with Germany. France is neither a friend nor an enemy of the Slavs. The French have for a long time been a selfish, self-loving nation that did not feel, understand or see anything beyond it... Italy, though old, is much younger than the rest of the Western nations, she has within her the seeds of a living future that attract her towards the Slavonic nations... Italy is our only friend in Europe, we should extend our hand to her."

"We, the Great-Russians, shall preserve the ancient community land tenure. Land with us, like water, as well as the forests and wild life in the forests, should not belong to anyone individually, but to all jointly. This is our right and we hold to it fast. But with you, like in Poland and Little Russia, that right changed completely under German influence, and you have privately owned landed estates." Bakunin circumspectly assured the Czechs that they could preserve this right as long as they wished. All Slavdom should be covered with a system of secret societies, and when a rising would break out in Italy, in Poland and in Russia, the other Slavs would also stir.

This letter proclaiming the mission of Slavdom was written by Bakunin to a Czech émigré in German.[3] Bakunin succeeded in convincing the Italian émigrés in London that his Slavonic action could be of service to the Italian cause. Nichiporenko, sent as an emissary to Garibaldi in Italy, carried with him letters to Aurelius Saffi, a former mem-

[3] This letter fell into the hands of the Austrian police and was communicated to the Russian government. *Byloye*, August 1906, pp. 255-264. Steklov, *Bakunin*, Vol. II, p. 34.

ber of the old Rome triumvirate of 1849, and a confidant of Mazzini.[4]

For the time being Bakunin himself was kept from going to Italy by the distinct symptoms of the approaching Polish rising. In Bakunin's mind that rising was to be the signal for a political and social revolution, the flame of which would soon envelop the neighboring countries. Bakunin's hopes connected with the Polish risings failed. So did the hope that the Polish patriots, in case their cause were successful, would be able to kindle a people's revolution. Therefore already during his stay in Sweden, where he went because of Łapiński's expedition connected with the Polish national movement, Bakunin began thinking of transferring his headquarters to Italy.[5] At the end of 1863 he went there via France and Switzerland, with letters of recommendation from Mazzini and Saffi. He arrived in Italy at the beginning of 1864, visited Garibaldi on Caprera and went for a longer stay to Florence. There he studied the situation, tried to find his bearings and founded a center

[4] In a letter of May 11, 1862, to Garibaldi's secretary, Saffi warmly recommended Nichiporenko who "can render important services". "After a short Italian tour he will proceed to the Slavonic countries along the Danube, then to European Turkey and to Greece." In a letter to Garibaldi himself Saffi wrote that Nichiporenko could "render very important services to the cause of the liberation of peoples." Lemke, *Ocherki osvoboditelnago dvizheniia*, pp. 91, 92. All these letters were taken during Nichiporenko's personal search in Peschiera.

[5] During his stay in Sweden Bakunin published in a newspaper an article in which he said: "In my past life there is no act for which I ought to blush." This was a reply to an article inspired by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Count Manderstroem, who acted in cooperation with the Russian Envoy Dashkov. At that time the Third Department conceived the idea of publishing a pamphlet containing excerpts from Bakunin's *Confession* and from his letters written from prison and Siberia to the Tsar, dignitaries and family, full of expressions of admiration for the Tsar and the generals, words of contrition for the past and promises of improvement, supported by countlessly repeated oaths and words of honor. Passing to Bakunin's escape from Siberia and his arrival in England, the pamphlet said: "The libels that Bakunin started to publish as soon as he arrived in London, are too base to be mentioned. Their only interesting aspect was that they were written by the same hand which so recently made the signature 'contrite sinner, imploring criminal', and which so lavishly used the word honor and oath." Another strong impression must have been created by the following quotations from Bakunin's letter to his brother Alexander, containing practical advice as to how to deal with the peasants: "Though I am not a great advocate of corporal punishment, I believe that unfortunately it is still indispensable. Therefore, dear friend, order the peasants to be beaten, but never flog them personally." The pamphlet was written, Minister Gorchakov commended the idea of the publication, and the Tsar gave his approval. For unknown reasons it was not published. Bakunin's biographer, Polonski, states that the pamphlet makes a shocking impression. In 1870 when Bakunin's and Nechayev's foreign publications appeared, the idea of issuing the pamphlet was revived in the Third Department and was again abandoned. The Russian government may have thought that by discrediting Bakunin, it would expose itself to ridicule by revealing how naively it had believed his oaths and pledges. *Krasnyi Arkhiv*, Vol. XVII, 1926, "M. A. Bakunin", p. 144 ff the text of the pamphlet without the quoted passages of Bakunin. The latter may be found in the book *Materials for a Biography of M. A. Bakunin*, edited by Polonski. Gosudarstvennoye Izdatelstvo, 1923. G. Steklov, *M. Bakunin*, Vol. II, p. 256ff. — Polonski, *Bakunin*, Vol. I, 1922, pp. 391, 392. Manderstroem's strange cooperation with the Russian government in 1863 is demonstrated in the reports of the Russian Minister to Stockholm, Dashkov, to Gorchakov. *Krasnyi Arkhiv*, Vol. VII, 1924, "M. Bakunin and the Expedition on the Ship Ward Jackson", p. 115 ff.

of revolutionary propaganda.

Mazzini, Saffi and Garibaldi did not for the time being realize Bakunin's real aims. They regarded him as a friend of the Italian cause, and an advocate of the destruction of hated Austria which still dominated Venice, as a man who had connections and influence in the Slavonic countries, and who could be useful in case of a new struggle against Austria. As a matter of fact, however, there existed between the revolutionary Italian patriots and Bakunin a deep conflict, probably deeper than between Bakunin and the organizers of the Polish insurrection. In itself the Italian cause appealed to Bakunin less than the Polish cause. In the Italian cause Bakunin's tactics, – the intention of using a national movement as a means of kindling an international social revolution – appeared still more ruthlessly.

On what were Bakunin's Italian hopes based?

Italy had just been triumphantly united; the war of 1859 had added Lombardy to Sardinia. In 1860 Parma, Modena, Romania, Toscana, Sicily and Naples spontaneously joined Piedmont. The patriots' dream was in the main fulfilled. But then the difficult period of organizing began. The months of intoxication had passed, enthusiasm yielded to everyday routine, relaxation set in. The tasks with which the young state was faced appeared in their portentous seriousness. The deep wounds inflicted through the long years of arbitrary and inefficient rule became evident. It was necessary to unite the territories internally, to introduce a uniform administration, to eliminate separatist tendencies, to raise the economic and cultural standards, to place finances on a level corresponding to the needs of a great state. However, in that critical period when Italy was only adopting the stable forms of a modern state, there was unrest in the whole country. The nation had not yet recovered from the feverish period of tragic struggles and sudden changes, the ardor of 1860 was still felt in the atmosphere. To this unrest of yesterday was added the anxiety about tomorrow. Italy's unification was not complete. Rome was outside the state, while Venice continued to be under Austrian rule. A sense of temporariness prevailed. Italy again felt herself on the eve of the final act of unification.

Mazzini, still an émigré, exhorted his countrymen to finish the task. Garibaldi on Caprera was preparing for further action. Bakunin felt instinctively that in Italy he would find something to do. The atmosphere was still hot with the enthusiasm of yesterday, while in the underground preparations were going on for a new struggle. It was a far cry from the quiet bourgeois system of other Western countries, detestable for Bakunin, from England with her petrified life, from the France of Napoleon III, and even from Switzerland. Bakunin left London, spent a short time in Paris and Geneva, and hastily proceeded to the promised land.

Bakunin hoped that in Italy he would feel more at home. He mentioned in a letter that Italy was a country with a rural rather than urban population, similar in this respect to the Slavonic countries. Indeed, the number of the rural population in the Italy of the time, without Rome and Venice, three times exceeded the number of the urban population. The level of education was also reminiscent of the contemporary Slavonic countries. In 1861, out of 100 inhabitants of the Kingdom of Italy only 21.8 could read or write. Out of a population of more than 21 million 700 thousand, this constituted 4 million 700 thousand literate persons. The proportion of illiterates was 68.1% among men, 81.3 among women, the percentage growing further south. In 1861 the percentage in Sicily was 86 for men, 95 for women.[6] Southern Italy soon became Bakunin's headquarters. He moved from Florence to Naples and from there developed his activity in Italy. Considerations of Naples' beauty did not play any rôle in the choice of the place; seized with revolutionary proselytism he did not pay attention to nature.[7] Italy of the time was a country of the proletariat, of poverty and ignorance, in which Bakunin placed his greatest hopes.[8] The low level of the population at the time of Italy's partition and oppression filled the Italian patriots with dismay. *La nazione dormiente* — said Rosmini; *vivo sepolcro e un popolo di morti* — complained Joseph Giusti. This sounded like Chaadayev's words about the Russia of Nicholas I, like Ivan Turgenev's poems in *Virgin Soil* about Russia, the whole of which, from the North Pole to the Caucasus, is plunged in profound sleep.

That very state filled Bakunin with hope. He counted on the possibility that among this population, too ignorant to be able to comprehend the idea of Italy's unification, there would rise a dislike of the newly established Italian state which in the first period was obliged to demand great material sacrifices from the people. Taxation was tremendous. After the unification, the financial conditions deteriorated considerably. The army, kept on a high level, ready for war, and the newly established navy, required expenditures that were immense when compared with the economic state of the country.[9] Starting his activity in Italy, Bakunin caught with an avid and vigilant ear any symptoms

[6] N. Rosselli, *Mazzini e Bakounine*, Torino, 1927, pp. 10, 21, 22.

[7] Vyrubov, who used to see Bakunin in Naples, writes: "He lived at the outskirts of the city, on a hill. The view from the windows of his large room was enchanting: one could see the whole of Naples which under various names encompassed the bay with an uninterrupted narrow ribbon; in the background rose, conic-shaped, the magnificent Vesuvius. However, though he seldom left the house, he did not look out of the window; the charms of nature were inaccessible to him, nor had he time for them; he would instruct someone all day long or write long letters to all corners of the globe." Steklov, *Bakunin*, Vol. II, p. 317.

[8] "Il proletariato italiano era allora senza alcun dubbio fra i piu arretrati in Europa. All'altissimo livello del analfabetismo bisogna aggiungere quello bassissimo dei salari." Rosselli, p. 23.

of political discontent and social unrest. The still vivid traditions of the Italian city republics, the provincial and communal particularism raising its head after Italy's unification, reaction against the centralized organization of the administration, against the Piedmont-Sardinian militarism – all the infantile ailments of the young state were to be diligently exploited for the purpose of revolution. The tradition, deeply rooted in the time of enslavement, of creating secret societies was in harmony with the conspiratorial traditions that were bound to arise in Russia. The *Carbonari* and *Free Masons* as liberal associations, the Neapolitan *Calderai* and the Roman *Sanfedisti* as counter-revolutionary associations, made it possible for social elements to organize outside the framework of the state. Finally, the Neapolitan *Camorra* and the Sicilian *Maffia* were associations with robbers participating, denying state authority, and corresponding to Bakunin's constant idea of utilizing the brigands for revolution, in accordance with the Russian tradition of the brigand-revolutionary, Stenka Razin. *Mafiosi, giovani d'onore* are characters akin to the one that Bakunin and Nechayev later presented as a model revolutionary, deliberately breaking all principles of law and morality of present society. The young Italian state had to combat these associations or even, through its organs, enter into negotiations with the *Maffia* and *Camorra*. At any rate these associations were one more factor of the state's weakness. Already Machiavelli said in his *Discorsi*, in the chapter on conspiracies, *Congiure*, that conspiracies most often do not succeed, but even in that case they exposed the ruler to danger. They force him to severity and that causes dislike of him.[10]

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[9] A comparison of the budgets of the individual Italian states for 1859 and the budget of the United Kingdom of Italy for 1863 shows that the budget deficit amounted in 1859 to 50 million francs. while in 1863 it was 350 million. The state debt increased in that period from 2 to 4 billions, taking into consideration the separate states in 1859 and the united states in 1863. Seignobos, *Histoire politique de l'Europe contemporaine*, 1914, p. 340. Kareyev, *Istoria Zapadnoy Evropy* (History of Western Europe), Vol. VI, 1909, p. 338.

[10] In his revolutionary theory and practice Bakunin applied Machiavellism carried to the extreme. Just as Machiavelli believed that all means are admissible when Italy's liberation from the barbarians was concerned, Bakunin felt that all means should be used to liberate the world from dynasties, governments and the bourgeoisie. In his practical activity he was the Machiavellian prince, *simulatore e dissimulatore*, lion and fox, in a deliberate and planned way. In that respect he was in agreement with the contemporary young generation of Russian revolutionaries. Drawing a picture of the man of the future, Peter Tkachev modelled it on Machiavelli's counsels. Tkachev wrote in 1868: "Machiavelli, having once put before him a definite aim, namely the achievement of such a state of affairs in which the old principle *salus populi suprema lex esto* would find recognition and application, did not despise any means leading directly or indirectly to that aim... Machiavelli thus understood the essence of law and in that respect he could be called a true realist." At that time, following the example of Pisarev, a sensible realist was considered the highest type of man. A member of Zaychnevski's circle, the young poet Golz-Miller wrote that in his library among his most favorite books was to be found "the great Machiavelli who causes fear among blockheads." B. Kozmin. *P. N. Tkachev*, Moscow, 1922, pp. 88, 90, 94.

After arriving in Italy, Bakunin succumbed to the overpowering illusion that invariably seized him whenever he started his revolutionary activity in any land. His imagination had an irresistible tendency to paint the picture of imminent revolution. On March 4, 1864, he wrote from Florence to Herzen and Ogarev: "The party of movement undoubtedly makes preparations by order of London and Caprera (*i.e.* Mazzini and Garibaldi), now acting in complete agreement and jointly with each other. It seems certain that at the end of March, or at the beginning of April, a rising will be attempted in the province of Venice, that as soon as it breaks out an agitation will develop in the whole of Italy and that Garibaldi will summon the Italians... Electricity continues to accumulate and fills the atmosphere. There is sure to be a storm..."[11]

What Bakunin expected from the insurrection in Italy is evident from his letter of March 18th, 1864, to Countess Elizabeth Sailhas: "I do not know" – he wrote – "how you view the general situation in Paris, but from our point of view here, it is abominable. Whatever you touch is rotten, everything breaks. Civilization rots, barbarism has not yet become a force, and we sit *entre deux chaises* – very stiffly. If we only lived long enough to see the great day of Nemesis, the terrible judgment that the loathsome European society will not escape. Let my friends build, I want only to destroy, because I am convinced that building from decaying materials amid carrion is a lost labor and that only out of a great destruction there can arise new living materials and with them also new organisms... Other poetry, except the grim poetry of destruction, I do not foresee for a long time to come and we may be happy if we shall see destruction. It would be worse if, instead of destruction, there is peaceful putrefaction. Our century, transitional in every respect, is an unhappy century, and we, detached from the past and not yet connected with the new world, are unhappy people. Therefore we shall bear our misfortune with dignity. Complaints will not help us and we shall destroy as much as we can. Here you have reflections *ins Blaue hinein.*"[12]

Foreseeing that in the immediate future Italy would become engaged in a struggle to conclude the task of unification, Bakunin conceived the idea of founding a secret revolutionary society which at the time of the struggle would direct the enthusiasm of the popular masses into the channel of political and social revolution. He sought people for that society, and appeared everywhere with the name of Mazzini, from whom he had a recommendation, and of Garibaldi whom he had visited on Caprera, on his lips. He entered into relations with Mazzinists

[11] Dragomanov, *Bakunin's Letters*, pp. 260, 261.
[12] Rapperswil Archives. From the papers of Ildephonse Kossiłowski.

of all social classes. Among them were Count Alberto Mario, Angelo de Gubernatis, Joseph Dolfi, by profession a baker, leader of the Florentine democrats, and Joseph Mazzoni. Dolfi was Grand Master of the Masonic Lodge in Florence, and through him Bakunin got in touch with the Masons and joined them himself.[13] This was probably his first attempt at a practice that he continued to apply from then on: to join a secret or open organization with the hidden intention of utilizing it for his own aims of world revolution. Bakunin's manuscript of that period, a sort of Masonic catechism arranged by him, has been preserved. Its main postulate is atheism.[14] This attempt to revolutionize the Masons failed and later Bakunin himself treated Masonry as a revolutionary factor rather lightly. On March 23, 1866, he wrote from Naples to Herzen and Ogarev: "I ask you, my friends, stop thinking that I was ever seriously engaged in Masonry. This might perhaps be useful as a mask or as a passport, but to look for work in Masonry is the same, or perhaps worse, than to look for consolation in drinking."[15]

In the autumn of 1864 Bakunin set out for a few months' travel to the North. He visited Stockholm in September, while in October he arrived in England. At the beginning of November he met with Karl Marx in London. The autumn of 1864 was an important period in the international social movement, the foundation of the First International. Its beginnings were in a significant way linked with the Polish cause. The meeting in honor of the Polish Rising, arranged in London on July 22, 1863, was attended by a group of French workers; common action in favor of the Polish Rising and the creation of an international workers' association were discussed. The English workers had at first a practical aim in view, as in their struggle for the raising of wages and the shortening of working hours they met on the part of the capitalists with the threat of bringing in French, Belgian and German labor. Consequently the English workers were anxious to reach an agreement with the workers of other countries, in order not to permit the latter to be used, as an instrument, in the struggle of capitalism against labor. As a result of the London meeting a committee was formed, headed by the

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[13] In his two-volume work *La Massoneria e il Risorgimento Italiano* Luzio states that Bakunin belonged to the Florentine lodge: "Bakounine figurava tra primi massoni di Loggie fiorentine." Rosselli. *Mazzini e Bakounine*", p. 165.

[14] Nettlau, in his preface to the French edition of Bakunin's works, quoted a passage of that *Catechisme de la Franc-Maçonnerie moderne*: "Dieu est, donc l'homme est esclave. L'homme est libre donc il n'y a point de Dieu. Je défie qui que soit de sortir de ce cercle, et maintenant choisissons." M. Bakounine, *Oeuvres*. Second edition, Paris, 1895, p. XXV.

[15] Dragomanov. *Bakunin's Letters*, Petersburg, 1906, p. 271. Recruiting de Gubernatis in Florence to his secret circle, Bakunin asked him whether he belonged to the Masons. When Gubernatis answered that he did not belong and did not want to become a member, Bakunin declared that this was right because he himself did not attach great importance to Masonry, but treated it only as "a means for preparing something else." Steklov, *Bakunin*, Vol. II, p. 294.

Englishman Odger. That committee issued an appeal to the Paris workers thanking them for their participation in the intended action in favor of the Polish Rising, and expressing the hope that an international fraternization of workers would ensue. In September, 1864, the French workers sent to London a delegation with a reply to the committee's appeal, and in their honor a meeting was held on September 28, 1864, in St. Martin's Hall. At that meeting a committee of persons of various nationalities was elected, charged with setting up the program and statutes of the future international association. One of the members of the provisional committee was Marx. Its Italian members included, among others, Wolff, Mazzini's confidant and right-hand man; he also became member of the subcommittee charged with preparing the statutes.

Through the Italian delegates, and particularly through Wolff, the International that was being formed, was penetrated by the spirit of Mazzini, who did not participate personally in the work but who indirectly guided the action of his adherents. Three figures, three spirits, three programs stood at the cradle of the international worker's movement — Mazzini, Marx, Bakunin. At first Bakunin played a modest and silent rôle, he did not reveal himself as an open adversary in the face of his two future rivals; he secretly supported Marx in his struggle against Mazzini, but took from the latter letters of recommendation to the Italians. For the time being he still needed both. The antagonism between Marx and Mazzini appeared decidedly at the birth of the International. Two diametrically differing temperaments, two tremendous ambitions met, a conflict was unavoidable. They were united by basic assumptions — the idea of an international unification of the working classes and the general idea of socialism.[16] However, even their theoretical view of the evolution of mankind, of human society, was diametrically different. For Marx, the materialist, the only decisive factor was the economic factor. In his opinion the spontaneous progress of the productive forces paves the way for mankind, intellectual and political life forms only a reflex of economic life, religion is considered a characteristic, a function of the existing, doomed world, and is to disappear, as a phenomenon of group life, with the triumph of social revolution. Marx's socialism is based on the principle of the inexorable struggle of the social classes; by historical process, the proletariat and the bourgeoisie are doomed to a mortal struggle against each other. This struggle is not waged in the name of the ideal of justice, but in the name of the historical law that condemned the bourgeoisie to ruin. The rule

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[16] In 1848 Mazzini expressed the following view: "The individualistic world had already its epoch; the socialist world begins." K. Diehl, *Ueber Sozialismus, Kommunismus und Anarchismus.* Fourth edition, Jena, 1922, p. 193.

of that class will fall, not because it is unjust, but because it is antiquated, outdated, and does not correspond to the economic conditions which with spontaneous force will bring the proletariat to the fore of mankind.

Mazzini's assumptions are of an entirely different, idealistic, nature. He believes in raising the moral and intellectual standard of the working class, in social progress to be achieved by all classes. Mazzini harmoniously links the social question and national problems, he dreams of the regeneration of mankind on the foundations of social justice and of abolishing national injustices. Already when founding *Young Italy,* he was against the cosmopolitanism of the *Carbonari.* Twenty years later, Mazzini, a leading figure in the London Central Committee of European Democracy, combined the principle of nationality with the principle of the brotherhood of nations and defined the boundary between the principle of nationality and nationalism.[17]

Mazzini is against materialism; mankind is to be reborn through the moral-religious idea. First of all man is to be ennobled through implanting in him a sense of duty towards society. Nations should organize themselves into nationally unified republics. There remains the social question within the nation, the relation of capital and labor. That problem is not to be solved by abolishing property, but by making it accessible to the greatest possible number of people by the organization of workers into productive cooperatives. The means for founding these societies should come from the fees of the artisans and workers themselves and from the state treasury. The democratic state should introduce as the only tax the income tax, found a workers' credit bank, and open a national fund to support the economic and intellectual progress of the whole country. A new organization of labor should be created, and together with it the moral and cultural progress of the workers should proceed.[18]

Thus in basic questions, such as property, the relation of labor to capital, class war, nationality and its attitude to internationalism, Mazzini's stand was directly opposite to that of Marx. Their view of reli-

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[17] The Committee's appeal of October 20, 1850, signed by Ledru-Rollin, Mazzini, A. Darasz and A. Ruge, defines the aim of the organization as follows: "As the state must be a harmonious representation of individual and group, so each democratic organization should represent and harmonize with each other nationality and federation. homeland and mankind... There were men who, frightened by the mutual struggles of nations, confusing the narrow nationalism of royal families with the nationality of free and equal peoples, tried to obliterate the national idea in some hazy cosmopolitism. Consequently they placed the single, weak, isolated individual in the presence of a task embracing all mankind... The originating idea of nationality is the organizing of mankind into homogeneous groups, consequently universal progress and the development for the good of all forces given to the human species... The division into various nations is among mankind the same thing, as the division of labor in production." *Demokrata Polski,* Vol. XII, January 19, 1851.

[18] Rosselli, pp. 5-9.

gion was different. Mazzini's point of departure was a mystic, trans-denominational deism, a belief in a direct relationship of the people to God, theo-democracy, a belief in the providentialism of the nation's fate. His slogan was *Dio e popolo.* Mazzini's spirituality was imbued with exaltation, his way of influencing people consisted rather of stirring enthusiasm than of convincing by logical arguments. In this respect he was a complete antithesis of Marx.[19]

Mazzini's point of departure for the regeneration of mankind is the regeneration of the Italian people. The road to *Umanità collettiva* leads through the *Risorgimento* of Italy. Mazzini's entire political and social theory is imbued with national Italian Messianism, a mystic belief in the redemption of the world through the suffering of Italy, ending with her resurrection. He went to *Young Europe* by way of *Young Italy.* This Messianic idea is an old idea of Machiavelli who in his *Prince,* after a series of reflections trampling on all moral principles, suddenly passes to a discussion of Italy's Messianic mission in history. In the concluding invocation, for which Alfieri called him divine, Machiavelli wrote: "In order that the power of the Italian spirit be revealed, Italy had to fall into her present sad situation. It was necessary that she be beaten, robbed, torn, laid waste, that she should experience all kind of destruction." In the period of the *Risorgimento* Italian Messianism arose with new force. In his Brussels exile, Gioberti wrote about the primacy of the Italian nation among the nations of the world as a supernatural nation — *nazione sovrannaturale.* At that time Gioberti wanted to unite Italy under the authority of the Pope. The former Roman triumvir of 1849, Mazzini, was remote from that idea, he envisaged an Italian Messianism of a revolutionary hue, but his banner was not the red international flag, but, as for Alexander Manzoni, the national standard, *santa vittrice bandiera.*

The moment the question arose whether Marx or Mazzini was to place his imprint on the international workers' organization, it became clear that a struggle between two conceptions, mutually self-excluding, was at stake. Marx spoke about Mazzini with irony, did not spare him humorous epithets, called him simple Joseph, St. Peter the Hermit, and even a perennial old donkey. Mazzini, later criticizing the International, pointed out Marx's weak sides: "He is a man of penetrating, but

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[19] Quanto era delicata la sensibilità dell'uno, tanto era pesante sorda la sensibilità dell'altro, priva di quel senso accorato d'umanità, di quella larga simpatia umana... Rovesciamo Mazzini e si avra qualcosa di molto simile a Marx: freddo, preciso, logicamente impeccabile, concreto; cervello assai piu acuto che non sensibile cuore. Dall'uno non poteva venire che una predicazione di amore: il sogno della solidarietà fra le classi sociali, una dottrina di educazione a di elevazione morale. L'altro dalia secolare esperienza dell'umanità deveva trarre una ferrea legge economica, prima regolatrice d'ogni vicenda: legge, che non nega, ma innegabilmente attenua l'influenza de valori morali." Rosselli, p. 146, 147.

like Proudhon, destructive mind, of a character craving for power, jealous of anybody's influence, without strong philosophical and religious beliefs, and, I am afraid, with a larger amount of anger, even if it were just, than of love in his heart."[20]

Already at the time when the Central Committee of European Democracy was organized in London under the leadership of Mazzini, Ledru-Rollin and Worcell, a rift became evident between their democratic radicalism, with an admixture of Utopian socialism, and the class socialism of Marx and Engels.[21] Bakunin was then already imprisoned, cut off from the world. There is no doubt that also then he felt closer than to Mazzini, to the young émigré Déjacque, who in London declared war on the kings of exile among whom were Ledru-Rollin, Victor Hugo and Mazzini. Déjacque with his revolutionary program may be regarded as the theoretical predecessor of Bakunin and Nechayev.[22] The Italian Messianism of Mazzini crossed with the revolutionary Russian Messianism of Bakunin which was blindly tending towards its fatal goal.

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Wolff, Mazzini's representative, submitted in the London subcommittee charged with drafting the constitution of the International, as a model of a program, the Act of Brotherhood (*L'Atto di fratellanza*), worked out by a committee appointed at the tenth congress of Italian workers' societies in Parma in January, 1864, and to be voted upon at the eleventh congress called to Naples for October 25, 1864. At the suggestion of Wolff, who acted in accordance with Mazzini's instructions, a declaration was adopted; the aim of the International was to be "supporting the moral, intellectual and economic progress of the European working class by means of an agreement between various workers' societies in the whole of Europe in order to attain unity of aspirations and unity of action." The general committee having expressed approval for Wolff's proposal, the projects returned to the subcommittee; it seemed that the basic rules of the International would be drafted in the spirit of Mazzini. Marx, warned about the danger, came to the

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[20] Rosselli, p. 145. Weill, *Histoire du mouvement social en France*, Second edition, 1911, p. 152.

[21] In the *Revue* published by Marx and Engels in London, and which was to be a continuation of the *New Rhenish Gazette*, the first manifesto of the Central Committee of European Democracy of July 22, 1850, was severely criticized. — Mehring, *Geschichte der deutschen Social-demokratie*. Vol. II, Third edition, 1906, pp. 193, 194, Bolesław Limanowski, *Stanisław Worcell*, p. 255.

[22] G. Weill. *Histoire du mouvement social en France*, p. 34. In 1854 Déjacque published in New York a pamphlet: *La Question Revolutionaire*. "Il veut abolir la religion, la proprieté, la famille; en attendant, on doit, par groupes de trois ou de quatre, égorger, voler, incendier, emprisonner." (Weill). In 1860 Déjacque expressed in the periodical *Libertaire* a sentence, repeated later almost literally by Bakunin: "If God existed, he should be annihilated." Steklov, *Bakunin*. Vol. III, pp. 135-9. M. Nettlau, Introduction to the French edition of Bakunin's *Oeuvres*. Second edition, Paris, 1895, p. XXIII.

subcommittee meeting on October 19, 1864. In the absence of Wolff, who had gone to Naples to attend the Italian workers' congress, Marx carried through his own version of the inaugural manifesto and of the statutes, making certain phraseological concessions in favor of the style rather than the program of Mazzini. Later he wrote with irony to Engels that he included in the motives of the International's statutes a few sentences about rights and duties, truth, morality and justice, but these sentences were added to the text in such a way that "they cannot do any harm". The manifesto and the statutes with the motives were imbued with the spirit and phraseology of Marx. At the session of November 1, 1864, the general committee adopted the drafts in the version proposed by Marx. The struggle between Marx and Mazzini ended in Mazzini's defeat.

At that time Bakunin was in London. He suspected Marx of having participated in the calumnies directed against him during his imprisonment. On November 3, 1864, Marx visited Bakunin, assured him that he had not participated in the slander campaign, and handed him the manifesto and the statutes of the International. Bakunin received Marx's assurances with distrust, but seemingly made up with him and promised cooperation. Marx claimed later that at that time Bakunin was received into the International. The temporary and apparent reconciliation was a result of Marx's antagonism against Mazzini in the International and was connected with the unavoidable conflict of Bakunin and Mazzini in Italy. Bakunin was returning to Italy, having promised Marx that he would there act against Mazzini, in the spirit of the International. It was true that Bakunin was returning to Italy planning to undermine Mazzini's influence, however, not in favor of Marx, but in favor of his own revolutionary idea. Having during his stay in London joined the International, Bakunin simultaneously recruited members to his own secret society, the idea of which he had already formed. Having allied himself with Marx against Mazzini, he visited Mazzini in London and obviously spoke in his spirit, since the latter gave him letters of recommendation to his friends in Italy.

After his return to Italy, Bakunin went to Genoa where he found access to the workers' circles, thanks to a letter in which Mazzini recommended him to Frederic Campanella.[23] Back in Florence he started to organize his secret revolutionary society. It is evident from a later

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[23] Letter of recommendation dated February 12, 1864: "Bakounine si serve dunque di Mazzini per iniziare i suoi contatti con l'elemento operaio, quando gia a Londra ha concordato con Marx l'azione antimazziniana!" Rosselli, pp. 173, 174. In Genoa where Bakunin went with Mazzini's recommendation there existed a center of the society *Falange Sacra* founded in 1863 by Mazzini's adherents to foster the secret concentration of the republican forces mainly for the incorporation into the Italian state of Rome and Venice. In 1868 *Falange Sacra* was absorbed by Mazzini's Republican Alliance, *Alleanza Republicana*. Rosselli, pp. 174, 175.

utterance of Bakunin himself what from the beginning was the attitude of his organization to the action of Mazzini whose letters of recommendation were opening him the way to Italian circles. In a survey of the past, Bakunin wrote himself: "In 1864 during his stay in Italy Bakunin together with a few friends founded a secret society, mainly as a counterbalance of the Republican society, founded a little earlier by Mazzini, which had a theological trend and exclusively political aims. This first socialist society in Italy assumed the name of Union of Social Democracy... Having originated as an affirmation of Socialism against the religious-political dogmatism of Mazzini, the Union placed in its program atheism, a complete negation of any authority and power, the abolition of legal regulations, negation of the civil system that replaces free humanity in the state, collective ownership; it proclaimed work as the basis of social organization, which in his program appeared in the form of a free federation from bottom to top."[24]

The men whom Bakunin had recruited in Florence as brothers to his secret society, in vain waited for some positive work. Angelo de Gubernatis at first enthusiastically offered his services for the good of mankind for which Bakunin had eloquently summoned him, but there was no such work. Bakunin placed his photograph in an album beside the photographs of Mazzini and Garibaldi, but Gubernatis demanded ideological work. "The brothers did by no means share my enthusiasm" – he wrote later – "and the chief was completely absorbed by collecting contributions for the poor Poles, as he said, but in reality for himself and for the more needy brothers."[25]

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[24] Bakunin's article "Internatsionalnii Soyuz Sotsyalnikh Revolutsyonerov" (The International Union of the Social Revolutionaries), published outside Russia in the book *Istoricheskoye Razvitye Internatsyonala* (The Historical Growth of the International), Part I, 1873, from p. 301. This book formed vol. II of the publication of the Social Revolutionary Party. Vol. I. was Bakunin's *Gosudarstvennost i Anarkhia.* – Bakunin who at that time appeared before the Italians as a man in Garibaldi's confidence, as early as 1864 saw the chasm that separated them. On April 24, 1864 he wrote from Florence to Tchórzewski an account of Garibaldi's journey to England. "Here by no means all are satisfied with Garibaldi's speech at Crystal Palace in which he explains the unusual orderliness of the crowd of people without police interference by the uncommon love of the English nation for their *cara regina.* To many, to me among others, this appears as what the French call niaiserie, and in Garibaldi's situation a bold, and at the same time damaging niaiserie." Dragomanov, *Bakunin's Letters,* p. 264.

[25] Bakunin always practised this practical communism. The Russian painter Nicholas Ge describes Bakunin's life in Florence as follows: "He did not know or forgot that property existed. He would take from a Swede an imperial for the Polish émigrés, and still in the donor's presence he would send to have it changed and buy tobacco; but he did the same with his own money." Steklov, *Bakunin,* Vol. II, p. 299. – In the reminiscences of his youth, Baron Wrangel describes his meeting with Bakunin in Switzerland. Bakunin invited Russian émigrés and students to a restaurant and after declaring that he would foot the bill, he ordered a sumptuous dinner. Then he announced humorously that the state treasury was empty and launched "an obligatory internal loan." The poor men placed their last pennies on the table and paid for the feast by starving during the next few days. Baron N. Wrangel, "Vospominaniya," 1924, *Slovo,* Berlin, pp. 62, 63.

Gubernatis soon parted with Bakunin and demanded from him the dissolution of the secret society.[26] The Florence affair gave a meager result. In 1865 Bakunin moved to the south of Italy. After a short stay at Sorrento he went in the autumn to Naples, where he spent almost two years.

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In Naples Bakunin for the first time formulated in a synthetic way the program which from then on formed, in substance, the basis of his revolutionary activity to the end of his life. This program is contained in two documents, *Revolutionary Catechism* and *Organization*, both written in the spring of 1866. The *International Revolutionary Society* planned by Bakunin was to be composed of an international family and of national families subordinated to the leadership of the international family.[27] The international family was to be composed of international, active, and honorary brothers. An active member should possess the qualities of a serious revolutionary, and in particular assimilate in heart, will and mind the principles of the revolutionary catechism. He should first of all be an atheist and recognize that morality should be independent from any theology or metaphysics. He should be an enemy of the principle of authority (*du principe d'autorité*) in all its manifestations and consequences. He should "desire the destruction of all states, as well as of all religious, political and social institutions, such as official churches, standing armies, etc."[28] It is necessary that he should recognize that "the world would be infallibly divided into two camps, the camp of new life and the camp of old privileges, and that between these two camps created, like during the religious wars, not by national ties, but by common ideas and interests, a murderous war, without quarter and without respite, must break out."

An active member should realize that "the elements of social revolution are already densely spread in almost all countries of Europe, and that in order to develop an active power from them they only

[26] Gubernatis' eyes were finally opened by a young Tuscan worker, a Garibaldist and participant in the fighting in Sicily and Aspromente. When Gubernatis tried to make him join the secret society, he said: "Look at this rifle. It has served my country twice. On the day when you will reveal your batteries and will more clearly explain to me what you intend to do for our poor people, I shall again take my rifle and stand in the first line of our fighters. But be patient: I am unable to follow others without knowing where to!" Dragomanov, *Bakunin's Letters*, pp. 93, 94.

[27] "La société internationale révolutionnaire se constituera en deux organisations différentes, la Famille Internationale proprement dite et les Familles nationales." Nettlau, *Bakunin*, Vol. I, p. 209 ff. The summary of the rules of the society is based on Nettlau's source material.

[28] The revolutionary's attitude to the the principle of nationality is formulated as follows: "Il faut qu'il réduise le soi-disant principe de nationalité, principe ambigu, plein d'hypocrisie et de pièges." ("He should reduce the so-called principle of nationality, ambiguous, full of hypocrisy and traps.") Nettlau, *Bakunin*, Vol. I, p. 210.

should be harmonized and concentrated." The revolutionaries should form open societies to prepare the simultaneous rising of almost all countries, by means of a secret agreement of the most intelligent revolutionaries of those countries.

A member of the society should be animated with revolutionary enthusiasm and devote to the revolutionary cause his peace, prosperity, his pride and personal ambition and often also his particular interests. "He should understand that a society with a revolutionary aim should decidedly form a secret society; in the interest of the cause which he serves and of the effectiveness of action, as well as in the interest of the security of each of its members, he should be subject to strong discipline." A member must show "scrupulous and absolute obedience (*l'obéissance scrupuleuse et absolue*) towards his immediate chiefs."

An international brother should utilize his position for the cause of the society, should not change or leave it without previously communicating with the international Council. "He shall not be permitted to accept any post in the magistrature, church, government, or in bureaucracy, both military and civil, and shall not be allowed to join any secret society without the formal consent of the directorate of the international Council to which he will belong."[29]

Beside the active brothers a great rôle was to be played by the honorary members of the organization. They should be men of outstanding intelligence, great influence or great fortune who, though sharing the principles of the society, would not actively participate in it, owing to advanced age, considerations of health, pressure of business, a contemplative mind or "excessive cautiousness of temper." Those members are called for consultations in important matters. The active and honorary brothers take an oath. Leaving the society they must swear to keep the secret, otherwise the "inexorable vengeance" of the whole society follows them. The aim of the society is the destruction of all existing states, with the exception of Switzerland, the radical destruction of all institutions, the abolition of religion, and the confiscation of movable and immovable church property in favor of provinces and communes. While ardently opposing the state and any authority in pre-

[29] Bakunin appears here as a predecessor of the communist method of forming cells in various organizations. In the *Main Tasks* of international Communism presented at the second congress of the communist International in 1920 Lenin declared: "In all organizations without exception, unions, societies, above all of the proletarian, and in addition of the non-proletarian... mass (in political, trade, military, cooperative, educational, sport etc. unions) groups, or cells, of Communists, mainly open, but also secret should be formed... so that these cells, closely linked with each other and with the central authority of the party, should exchange their experiences, carry out agitation, propaganda, organization, and through that many-sided work should systematically educate themselves as well as the party, class and the masses." *Die Kommunistische Internationale,* No. 12, Petrograd — Moskau, 1920, p. 46.

sent society, Bakunin insists on the centralization of authority in the association. The revolutionary association will be "centralized through the secret organization which will unite not only all parts of the country, but also many, if not all, countries in one plan of action; it will be moreover centralized through the simultaneousness of the revolutionary movements."

The revolution that will be the crown of the society's activity will be bloody, but it will be directed in the main against things rather than people. "Therefore it will start with abolishing all institutions and establishments, churches, parliaments, tribunals, administrative offices, armies, banks, universities... The state must be completely destroyed.. Simultaneously in the communes and towns everything that belonged to the state as well as the estates of reactionaries will be confiscated; all records pertaining to trials, property or debts will be burned, all civil, criminal, court or administrative scribblings (*toute la paperasse*) that will not be destroyed will be burned."[30] To carry out his revolution "a conspiracy and a strong secret society converging in an international center are indispensable."

Both in the program and in the organization of the revolutionary society founded by Bakunin in Naples it is easy to discern European influences and elements. In the very plan of the revolution is to be found a reflection of the conspiracy of Babeuf and of the later conspiracies of Blanqui; in the organization there are elements of the Carbonari societies, the newly created International of Marx, called the Workers' International, and, also, of the Neapolitan *Camorra*, which Bakunin's revolutionary plans of the somewhat later period of his cooperation with Nechayev so closely resemble. However, under that cover, woven from various materials, there rests a truly Bakuninian and very Russian thought. It can be easily seen that Bakunin returned to his aspirations and plans of 1848, which he had confessed to Nicholas I. At that time he formed the plan of destroying Europe by means of a revolution started in Bohemia. Now he transferred the center of his activity to Italy, and deepened and extended his plan of action. From then on, the Naples draft formed the basis of Bakunin's activity in the *League of Peace and Freedom*, in France of 1870 torn by war and internal dissension, in the International Workers' Association, in revolution-torn Spain, or again in Italy. It is clearly evident from a study of the Naples draft that the grim revolutionary's catechism, written during Bakunin's cooperation with Nechayev, was the work of Bakunin.

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[30] This detailed program of destroying the state and the legal order has much in common with the program of L. A. Blanqui presented in his *Capital et Travail*, published in 1870. Weill, *Histoire du mouvement social*, p. 118. K. Diehl, *Ueber Sozialismus, Kommunismus und Anarchismus*, Fourth edition, p. 367.

The Naples organization has all the typical hallmarks of Bakunin's revolutionary attempts. The cornerstone of his revolutionary program is always atheism, and the abolition of religion is the cardinal act of the destruction of the old world. The struggle against the old world should be undertaken by an international organization, the old order should be undermined simultaneously in many, if not in all, countries. That organization should have at least two levels, not counting the preparatory stages: one level is to be public, if the political circumstances permit, and conduct an open activity by popularizing the revolutionary idea; the other secret, underground, forming the real core of the organization, composed of people devoted to the cause with body and soul.

The Naples plan is typical of the apparent inner contradiction which accompanies Bakunin's whole activity: hatred of government, and of authority in any form, hatred of canons imposed from above, particularly hatred of state centralization, and simultaneously organizing the revolution on the basis of most severe discipline, strictest centralization and complete sacrificing of individuals for the revolutionary cause. One should shatter the old world, destroy states, all authority, all faith, and plant anarchy; but the organization which fulfills this task must have an ardent revolutionary faith of its own, its own absolutely centralized government which is the preparation and prototype of revolutionary dictatorship, in case of the outbreak of revolution. This cardinal characteristic of Bakunin so far has escaped the attention of those writers who see in him only an anarchist, almost the father of anarchism. For Bakunin, anarchism is a tactical means, the critical side of his theory, while the organic side is revolutionary despotism and the desire to create a secret international *Camorra*, ruling its members by terror and trying to break the old world by its fury, as well as by the concentrated force of its attack, which is to be prepared and preceded by the action of disorganizing and demoralizing the old world, as if by poison gas. The alleged anarchist is an enemy of the existing authority and aspires to a despotism of his own. In spite of his superficial anarchism, Bakunin is a true harbinger of modern Russian Communism, covering itself with the name of his rival Marx.[31]

The cradle of the expected European revolution was to be Italy. The Italian revolution was prepared simultaneously with the formation of the organization of international brothers. A *Program of the Italian*

[31] Bakunin's Soviet biographer, Steklov, says in connection with the Naples plan that Bakunin's program, in spite of an anarchist tinge, in general "does not present any special objections," that it is a program of "a true people's revolution, directed against the economic and political domination of the exploiting classes." Steklov, *Bakunin*, Vol. II, p. 350.

Social Democrat Revolution and *Rules of the Legionaries of the Italian Social Revolution* were drafted. Bakunin felt encouraged. On March 23, 1866, he wrote from Naples to Herzen and Ogarev: "United Italy disintegrates. In all Italian provinces the opposition against the government continues to grow stronger. Deficit, the fear of more taxes, the decrease of assets, bureaucratic corruption, oppression and a lull in all business and enterprises finally hurt the whole population, even the most indifferent and apathetic people, and no other way out, except war is anticipated. The same seems to be true of France. Again attempts of misleading the Italian people with patriotic trash will start."

Bakunin's fears were coming true. The Prusso-Austrian war broke out. Italy was allied with Prussia. The hopes for the annexation of Venice and even of the Tyrol to Italy increased. On June 24, 1866, the battle of Custozza was fought, which proved unfavorable for Italy. Four days later Bakunin wrote to Herzen anticipating his arrival in Italy: "You will not like any city in Northern Italy now, they all stink with patriotic falsehood."[32]

He complained of "strong military diversion", but in spite of this he did not lose hope. On July 19, 1866, he wrote to Herzen and Ogarev: "You accused me of inactivity at a time when I was more active than ever; I refer to the last three years. The only object of my activity was to form and organize a secret international revolutionary socialist society." He admitted that in the program and organization of the society there were defects; but he wrote this "among Italians to whom, unfortunately, social ideas were almost completely unknown." "I had to fight especially against the so-called national passions and ideas, against the most abominable patriotic and bourgeois rhetoric fanned very strongly by Mazzini and Garibaldi. After three years of hard work I achieved positive results... In southern Italy the major part of the Mazzinist organization, the Falanga sacra, passaed into our hands." Mazzini warned his friends in Naples and in Sicily of Bakunin's action, and as a considerable number of government agents participated in the Falanga organization this could have directed the government's suspicion against Bakunin. "Luckily the government does not yet understand the social movement and therefore is not afraid of it, thus giving proof of its considerable stupidity." The popular masses in southern Italy spontaneously gravitated toward revolution. "After the complete disintegration of all other parties, ideas and motives, only one living possible force remained in Italy: social revolution."[33]

However, the "patriotic falsehood" was infecting Bakunin's closest

[33] Dragomanov, *Bakunin's Letters*, pp. 278, 279.
[32] Dragomanov, *Bakunin's Letters*, pp. 272, 273.

Italian associates. The brothers hastened to join Garibaldi's colors in Tyrol. This was to be expected. Bakunin had reached them with recommendations from Garibaldi and Mazzini. His close collaborators, Fanelli, Gambuzzi and Mileti, abandoned the work in Bakunin's society and followed Garibaldi. The same was repeated in 1867 during Garibaldi's autumn expedition on Rome. Bakunin became more and more discouraged. In a letter to an unknown person, dated January 6, 1867, he wrote: "Let us now pass to the Italians. You are displeased with them and you are a thousand times right. It should only be stated which of the Italian parties deserve your criticism. According to me... they are all advocates of the greatness of Italy, all state patriots, in a word people from the party of action, above all Garibaldi and Mazzini, who were the inspirers and chiefs of the action and who are at present, in my eyes, if not the only ones, then at least the most guilty ones and most deserving condemnation from the point of view of revolution, in spite of all their personal and national greatness which no doubt will place them among the heroes of history." He further stated that the position of a patriot rarely in history agrees with the position of a revolutionary. A rare exception is France of 1793.[34]

In the autumn of 1869 Bakunin summarized his impressions and the results of his four-year stay in Italy in a letter to the editor of *Le Réveil.* He witnessed the initial development "of the aspirations, interests, and socialist ideas" in Italy. "Having emerged from the national revolution victorious, rejuvenated, triumphant, having moreover the rare fortune of possessing one hero and one great man, Garibaldi and Mazzini, Italy, it would seem, should have outstripped all nations in prosperity and greatness. She outstripped them all in misery."

"Less than five years of independence sufficed to ruin the finances, to push the whole country into a hopeless economic situation, to kill its industry and trade and, moreover, to destroy in the bourgeois youth the spirit of heroic sacrifice which for more than thirty years was a powerful element of support for Mazzini."

"The triumph of the national cause instead of revitalizing everything, crushed everything." Bakunin speaks of ignorance, backwardness, and corruption. "The Mazzinists and Garibaldists were mistaken in at-

[34] Nettlau, *Bakunin,* Vol. I, p. 175. In a letter to Herzen and Ogarev of May 7, 1867, Bakunin wrote about Mazzini and Garibaldi as of "two outstanding, but at present for Italy, truly fateful Italians." On May 23, 1867, he wrote to Herzen: "You unnecessarily admonished me that I should spare the two Josephs. The feeling of historical reverence was always strong in me, provided that history and old merits did not thwart the cause of the present and the future. Then, forgive me, but with all due respect it is necessary to push the obstructionists off the road." Dragomanov, *Bakunin's Letters,* pp. 302, 312.

tributing all the misery and disgrace exclusively to the influence, unquestionably pernicious, of the monarchy."

"Garibaldi, enraptured by the great Italian unity, by the power and fame of the Italian state, a loyal servant of the monarchy, is not, strictly speaking, a revolutionary."

"Mazzini's ideas are well known: God and the people... Mazzini's people is an abstraction like his God, a kind of voluntary footstool of the power, greatness and fame of his state. It is a people of monks and religious fanatics who, renouncing all material pleasure and finding supreme happiness in sacrifice, condemn themselves forever to death, to give life to the great Italian republic and to feed with their bodies that fiction of collective political freedom which I cannot imagine otherwise than an immense cemetery where all personal freedoms inevitably find their grave."[35]

In 1867 Bakunin left Italy and took up permanent residence in Switzerland where Herzen and Ogarev stayed at that time. He had been planning for some time to leave the country which proved so disappointing to him.[36]

One circumstance ultimately impelled Bakunin to move to Switzerland. In September, 1867, a Peace Congress with the participation of famous European democrats, was to be held in Geneva. After an interval of several years again an attempt was made of a solemn collective protest against wars.[37]

In the spring of 1867 a Prusso-French war was in the offing. The triumph of Prussia over Austria in the war of 1866 caused unrest. Napoleon III, surprised and humiliated by Prussia's lightning success, sought compensation and entered into negotiations with the King of

[35] Nettlau, *Bakunin*, Vol. I, pp. 176, 179.

[36] Bakunin's letters of October 8, 1865 and March 23, 1866. Dragomanov, pp. 267, 270, 271. Herzen was at that time at odds with the young Russian émigrés in Switzerland. In a letter of May 23, 1867, Bakunin asked him for a characterization of all Russians in Geneva. On May 30, 1867, Herzen sent him a biting, offensive evaluation of the young émigrés ("these rascals who by their son of a bitch conduct (*sukinsynizm*) justified the measures of the Government"). In a letter of June 23, 1867, Bakunin defended the young émigrés against Herzen. Later he showed to the members of the emigration a copy of Herzen's letter and of his reply. Dragomanov, *Bakunin's Letters*, pp. 314, 323. This is an illustration of Bakunin's methods raised, incidentally, to the importance of a principle in the catechism of a revolutionary.

[37] In 1848 the first congress of pacifists was held in Brussels on the initiative of the "English Society of the Friends of Peace." Its chief organizer was the American philanthropist, Burritt. The peace movement in England then found an influential and ardent advocate in Richard Cobden, who participated personally in the Peace Congress held in 1849 in Paris under the leadership of Victor Hugo and in the annual meetings of the following years. In 1850 the congress of peace was held in Frankfort on the Main; in 1851, in London; in 1852, in Manchester; and in 1858, in Edinburgh. The Crimean War put an end to further manifestations of pacifism.

the Netherlands concerning the annexation of Luxembourg to France. The threatening attitude of the Parliament of the Northern German Confederation, skillfully prepared by Bismarck, broke the negotiations. The tone of the French and German press was militant; war seemed imminent. Amid such circumstances the idea originated of calling a Peace Congress. This initiative was most actively supported by French democrats who were conducting a campaign against the Second Empire.

In what frame of mind did Bakunin approach the Congress? Italy had become too narrow, too chauvinistic. An international tribune from which revolutionary slogans might be proclaimed, an international society from which he could draw members to his own secret organization, this was an attractive prospect for Bakunin. The first congress of the International in Geneva in 1866 was evidence that the international revolutionary elements were building a tribune from which to address the world. However, in the International, Marx, his rival, was the leader. Moreover, as far as outstanding names were concerned, the Congress of the League was much superior to the Congress of the International. Bakunin must have realized that a tremendous difference existed between his attitude and the views of the majority of the Congress participants. Garibaldi, the standard bearer of the Congress, had been for Bakunin for several years an obstacle in his revolutionary activity. However, Bakunin knew from experience that in the bourgeois West he would not find a meeting unanimous with him. Consequently he joined groups that were moderate in comparison with him, with a view to occupying in them the extreme wing and using them as a springboard for his destructive activity.

Bakunin's appearance in Geneva in 1867 marked his solemn return to the international arena after a long interval, as his recent activity in the Polish and Italian cause did not have any wide echo in Europe.

A participant of the League's Geneva congress, the young positivist philosopher Vyrubov, left a description of Bakunin's activities at the congress of 1867. "Among the assembled international democracy he found himself in his proper element: he arranged consultations, made speeches, wrote projects, programs and proclamations. I well remember his extremely effective appearance at the first session of the Congress. When he heavily and clumsily walked up the steps leading to the dais where the presidium sat, shouts of 'Bakunin' were heard. Garibaldi who was in the chair, rose, made a few steps and fell into his arms. This ceremonial meeting of the two old experienced revolutionary fighters made an unusual impression. Though in the big hall there were quite a few opponents, everybody rose and there was no end of enthusiastic applause. On the next day Bakunin made a brilliant speech which, as always, met with great success... His imposing figure, ener-

getic gestures, the tone of sincere conviction, his short sentences, as if cut with an axe – all this created a strong impression."[38]

Bakunin made his speech on the second day of the congress. He began with the same tactical expression with which he started his address in 1847 on the anniversary of the Polish November 1830 rising: with condemning Russian tsardom. Separating himself thus from the Russian state, he could then more easily attack all European states. "I have openly and decidedly protested and still protest" – he said – "against the very existence of the Russian Empire. I wish that Empire all humiliations, all defeats, in the conviction that its successes, its fame, were and always will be directly contrary to the happiness and freedom of the Russian and non-Russian peoples, its present victims and slaves.. Recognizing the Russian Army as the basis of the Tsar's power, I openly express the wish that in any war that the empire would start it should suffer only defeats. This is required by the interest of Russia herself and our desire is completely patriotic, in the real sense of the word."

Russian defeatism is an introduction to European defeatism. "That which according to me is proper in relation to Russia, should also be proper in relation to Europe. The essence of religious, bureaucratic and military centralization is the same everywhere. It is cynically brutal in Russia, while in the centralized countries of the West it is covered with a constitutional, more or less mendacious, mask, but its principle is always the same – force... Woe, woe, to the nations whose leaders will return victorious from the battlefields! Laurels and halos will turn into chains and shackles for the nations that will imagine that they are victorious." Before the United States of Europe can be created according to the program of the League, the whole political mechanism of the European countries must be destroyed and they must be rebuilt from the bottom upward, on the basis of communes and provinces.[39] Bakunin joined the committee of the League created at the Congress, and as he says himself, conducted there a struggle against its moderate fraction. "Throughout the year a struggle went on in the committee between the bourgeois liberalism and radicalism of the majority and the socio-revolutionary ideas of the minority to which Bakunin belonged."

Bakunin submitted to the committee a study entitled *Federalism,*

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[38] Steklov, *Bakunin,* Vol. II, pp. 376, 378.

[39] *Istoricheskoye razvitiye Internatsionala.* 1873, pp. 302-307. After the first Congress of the Peace League the periodical *United States of Europe* was set up in Geneva as the organ of the League. "Un journal, les Etats Unis d'Europe, paraissant le Jeudi à Genève, appliquant à l'appreciation des faits politiques et sociaux les principes de la Ligue, et donc la doctrine générale se résume dans cette maxime: faire passer le juste avant l'utile, subordonner la politique à la morale." Quoted from the League's publication *La Paix et la Liberté* of 1875, Part I. The pamphlet says that at the Congress of the League in 1867 there were 6,000 participants. The pamphlet of Charles Lemonnier of 1881 speaks about 4,000 members.

Socialism and Anti-Theologism. He devoted most space to anti-theologism. According to Bakunin socialism is by its nature atheistic. Once socialism is established on earth, the reason for the existence of religion disappears automatically. "Religion – it has been said – is the first awakening of reason: yes, but under the form of unreason." All states are based on robbery and treachery whether they be monarchies or republics.[40] These opinions were in glaring contradiction to the liberal democratic convictions of the majority of the League. The League did not envisage the destruction of religion and state. Concerning socialism, some of the League's members, like Victor Hugo, did not want to abandon that term, understanding it as the humanitarian aspiration to improve the lot of the lower class. At the third Congress of the League, held in Lausanne in September, 1869, Victor Hugo as the chairman of the Congress praised the union of the republic with socialism. That socialism of the author of *Les Misérables* was entirely different from the class socialism represented by the International.[41] Bakunin was preparing to leave the League. In the summer of 1868 he was accepted into the Geneva section of the International. Above all, he recruited brothers to his secret society, which had by no means disbanded after leaving Italy. Already during the Geneva Congress in 1867 he received Alfred Naquet and Aristide Rey as members. In the meantime an open break between the League and the International, between democratic pacifism and class socialism, was imminent.

The second Congress of the League was held in Bern in September, 1868.

Bakunin delivered at the Bern Congress three great speeches. In

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40 "Le socialisme, par son objet même qui est la réalisation du bien-être et de toutes les destinées humaines ici-bas, en dehors de toute compensation céleste, n'est-il point l'accomplissement et par conséquent la négation de toute religion, qui, du moment que ses aspirations se trouveront réalisées, n'aura plus aucune raison d'être." (Socialism, by its very object is the realization of the welfare of all human destinies here below, outside of all celestial compensation. It is the accomplishment and consequently the negation of all religion which from the moment its aspirations are realized will have no longer any reason of existence). The original sin is for Bakunin the symbol of liberation. "La défense de goûter du fruit de l'arbre de la science était de la part du Bon Dieu un acte d'affreux despotisme, et si nos premiers parents avaient obéi, toute la race humaine resterait plongée dans le plus humiliant esclavage. Leur désobéissance, au contraire, nous a émancipés et sauvés." (The prohibition to taste the fruit of the tree of knowledge was on the part of God an act of dreadful despotism, and if our first parents had obeyed it, the entire human race would remain plunged in the most humiliating slavery. Their disobedience, on the contrary, has emancipated and saved us.) "Le monde de la politique a toujours été et continue d'être encore le théatre de la haute coquinerie et du sublime brigandage... Que l'Etat s'appelle monarchie ou république, le crime, pour sa conservation et pour son triomphe sera toujours nécessaire." (The world of politics has always and still continues to be the theatre of high knavishness and outstanding robbery... Whether the state is called monarchy or republic, crime will be always necessary for its preservation and its triumph.) M. Bakounine, *Oeuvres I*, Second edition, Paris, 1895, pp. 89, 99, 144, 152, 154.

41 Weill. *Histoire du mouvement social en France*, pp. 130, 131.

two of them he advocated the economic and social equality of classes and individuals. In the third speech he opposed religion. "One speaker announced from this rostrum that Christianity is the only basis of all morality" – said Bakunin. – "We have taken cognizance of this; but permit us also to express freely from this rostrum our profound conviction that not only Christianity but religion in general is incompatible with human morality. It is not from a light-hearted whim that we intend to fight religion; we do so in the name of morality and justice, in the name of the very humanity whose triumph on earth will be impossible as long as the earth continues to be infested, terrorized and ruled by religious spectres." To fight religion, it is not enough to use peaceful aims, education; a social revolution is necessary, because religion is an inseparable characteristic of a society based on injustice. "Religion is not only an error of the mind; besides this and above all, it is a passionate, constant protest of the fullness of human nature against the narrowness and misery of real life... In order to destroy religion, to disperse and scatter all those divine hallucinations that make of us uncouth and unhappy slaves, mere intellectual propaganda is not sufficient. Social revolution is indispensable."[42]

Bakunin explained his departure from the League in a way characteristic for his revolutionary tactics. The hope that he would succeed in using the League as an instrument for international revolutionary activity failed. "The instrument was tried; it proved unsatisfactory and it had to be abandoned. It was necessary to find another. As such naturally appeared the International Workers' Association, whose member Bakunin had been since June of that year (1868)."[43]

Bakunin left the League of Peace and Freedom. He now turned towards the International Workers' Association. In the summer of 1869 he published in the Geneva organ of the International, *Egalité*, a series of articles entitled "Sleep Inducers." He began with an attack on the League: it had issued a circular appealing to its adherents for a more vivid financial support. Bakunin makes fun of this weakness; so many outstanding men, so many minds, and they cannot collect a few thousand francs. Why? For this is the bourgeoisie doomed to perdition which has no faith in itself; the League's circular is "the voice of the dying attempting to awaken the dead." Only the working class is the hope of mankind. Not the whole bourgeois class is lost for the cause of revolution. One could count on the young people, unfortunately they are dis-

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[42] *Istoricheskoye razvitiye Internatsionala*, 1873, Part I, pp. 317-365.
[43] *Op. cit.*, p. 311.

torted by the present educational system. Bakunin condemns the entire bourgeois scholarship and education.

"Unfortunately at the present time teaching and learning in the vast majority of European schools and universities are in a state of systematic and deliberate falsification. One might think that learning is purposely organized with a view to poisoning the bourgeois youth morally and intellectually... The universities and schools are made into privileged shops where falsehood is sold wholesale and retail.

"We shall not point to theology, the science of divine falsity, to jurisprudence, the science of human falsity, to metaphysics and idealistic philosophy, the science of all half-falsity; we shall point to such branches of learning as history, political economy, philosophy, not based on a real knowledge of nature, but on the same principles on which theology, jurisprudence and metaphysics are built. It may be said without exaggeration that every young man, leaving the university and imbued with these studies, or rather with those different varieties of systematic falsity, is intellectually completely lost... His professors, these modern priests of patented political and social charlatanism, poisoned him with such insidious poison that miracles of medical art are necessary to cure him. Not so with the department of the pure and the natural sciences. These are true sciences!... Whereas the ideological sciences are based on authority and are aristocratic, the natural sciences are democratic and broadly liberal... The young men who studied the ideological sciences become in life exploiters and reactionary doctrinaires; however, those who study the natural sciences become revolutionaries, while many become revolutionary socialists. We place our hope in that group of young men..."

In the International Workers' Association that group of young people may be of use. "Their cooperation will have great value if only they understand that the mission of education is not to dominate, but to serve labor, that it much more behoves them to learn from the workers than to be their teachers. They are representatives of the young bourgeoisie, while the workers are the representatives of future mankind, in whom its whole future is contained. Thus in the future historical events the leading rôle will belong to the workers, while the students from the ranks of the bourgeoisie will turn out to be their pupils."

Bakunin further opposes the domination of society by educated people. "Of all the aristocracies that have oppressed human society, the so-called aristocracy of the mind is the most disgraceful, contemptuous, haughty and overpowering." The aristocracy of birth tells a man: you are not a nobleman; the aristocracy of money says: you are penniless. Both these things can be put up with. "But aristocracy of the mind tells you: you do not know anything, you do not understand anything, you

are a donkey, while I am an intelligent man. This is unbearable..."

"The modern European universities, forming a kind of a republic of scholars, render the bourgeoisie the same services which the Catholic Church rendered in the past to the nobility, and as Catholicism had sanctioned the nobility's oppression with regard to the people, so the university, the shrine of bourgeois learning, explains and justifies the present exploitation of that same people by the capital of the bourgeoisie."

It is true that progress of learning and art takes place: "It is indeed a tremendous progress, but the more it increases the more it becomes the cause of intellectual and consequently material slavery, the cause of the people's misery and intellectual backwardness, gradually widening the gap separating the intellectual level of the people from that of the privileged classes.

"From the point of view of natural ability the people's mind is at the present time less obtuse, less corrupted, injured and distorted by the necessity of defending unjust interests and thus, naturally, possesses greater power than the bourgeois mind; but the latter is equipped with education and that weapon is terrible...

"What force supports the privileged classes?... The force of the state. And what constitutes today the main strength of the state? Knowledge...

"...We summarize. In the present organization of society the progress of knowledge was the cause of the relative ignorance of the proletariat, as the progress of industry and trade was the cause of its relative poverty. Consequently, the intellectual and material progress equally contributed to the increase of the proletariat's enslavement...

"Teachers, professors, parents – all members of that society, all are more or less demoralized by it. How can they give to the pupils what they do not have themselves. Morality can be implanted well only by example, and as socialist morality is in direct contradiction with contemporary morality, the teachers, being more or less under the sway of the latter, would by their example demonstrate to their pupils something entirely different from what they would proclaim in the schools. Consequently socialist education is as impossible in the schools, as it is impossible in the modern family.

"At present the main problem is not education for the masses. The primary problem for the people is economic liberation that will infallibly and directly bring with it its political liberation followed by intellectual and moral emancipation."[44]

[44] M. Bakunin, *Izbranniya sochineniya* (Selected Works), Vol. IV, Petersburg, Moscow, 1920, pp. 25, 31, 32, 38, 45, 47, 48, 62.

In those articles Bakunin appears as the harbinger of the attitude of the future Russian revolution to education and learning. He implants distrust and dislike of the educated class, contempt for modern education and learning; he digs a gap between science which he calls bourgeois, and the future revolutionary science; he furnishes, as it were, a reasoned comment and apologia of the future dictatorship extended over the sphere of knowledge and education.[45]

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After leaving the League of Peace and Freedom, Bakunin began to organize with his adherents who had left the League an international revolutionary society, the idea and nucleus of which had existed since the end of 1864. It was called the Alliance of Socialist Democracy; sometimes the name Alliance of Social Revolutionaries was used. The leading principle of the Alliance's program was atheism and the desire or replacing faith by science, and divine justice by human justice.

The fight against religion occupies a leading place in Bakunin's programs and writings. Militant atheism radically distinguishes him from the representatives of so-called Utopian, pre-Marxist, socialism, who were almost all deists or even believers in Christianity.[46] Marxism, based on philosophical materialism and on a materialistic conception of

[45] The decree of the Commission for the revision of teaching methods in the higher schools, dated December 8, 1920, states: "In a society composed of classes, there is no, and there cannot be, freedom and neutrality of learning. The scientific, artistic and philosophical thought reflects the conception of life of the fighting classes. Russia, having abolished the bourgeoisie, experiences a transitional period, characterized by a struggle against the remnants of the past and requiring the greatest possible intensification of all the forces of the nation. Under such conditions the Soviet Government would commit suicide if it proclaimed freedom of teaching and scientific research." "In the present stage of its material and spiritual development the Soviet authorities cannot grant the persons, who wish to do so, the right to teach the subjects that they would like to teach. On the contrary, the Soviet authorities, after proclaiming the dictatorship of the proletariat in the political and economic spheres, must also openly proclaim that same dictatorship extends also over learning." F. A. Shcherbina, *Zakony evolutsii i russkii bolshevism* (The Laws of Evolution and Russian Bolshevism), Belgrade, 1921, pp. 104, 105. The apostle of absolute freedom is also in this respect the precursor of the methods of the Red Revolution.

[46] Charles Fourier recognizes the necessity of religious faith. Atheism is for him "une opinion batarde." "L'athéisme est une opinion fort commode pour l'ignorance politique et morale." – Saint Simon considers religion necessary for the masses. "Je crois à la nécessité d'une religion pour le maintien de l'ordre social... Je crois que la force des choses veut qu'il y ait deux doctrines distinctes: le Physicisme pour les gens instruits et le Déisme pour la classe ignorante." The leading Saint Simonists are religious. Enfantin says: "Le monde nouveau sort des entrailles de Christ." Bazard declares: "L'humanité a un avenir religieux." Louis Blanc writes: "Que'est ce que le Socialisme? C'est l'Evangile en action." Etienne Cabet, author of the *Journey to Icaria* is a deist like Fourier. Only Robert Owen maintains that religions are based on ignorance. Werner Sombart. *Der proletarische Sozialismus.* Tenth edition. Vol. I, Jena 1924, pp. 117, 118. Karl Diehl, *Ueber Sozialismus, Kommunismus und Anarchismus.* Fourth edition. Jena 1922, p. 119.

history, is by its nature atheistic. In his criticism of religion Marx based himself on Feuerbach who regarded God and religion as a product of the human mind.[47] In his polemical work against Dühring as well as in a number of other studies, Engels, following Feuerbach and Marx, developed a view of religion that became a part of the Marxist doctrine. Engels maintained that man has since the earliest days worshipped the powerful forces that rule human life. Religion is a "fantastic reflection in the minds of the people of those external powers that rule their daily lives, a reflection in which earthly powers assume supernatural forms." Consequently, when man lived in the state of nature, dependent in his life almost exclusively on the forces of nature, there originated the religion of nature. The power of the sun, its influence on man's life and economy were the reason that man worshipped the sun, prayed and made offerings to it. As the human society was developing and states were formed governed by powerful rulers, men in turn began to worship the social, human power that makes itself felt over the masses, and developed the concept of God the ruler to whom they ascribed supernatural existence and qualities. At first this was a tribal, national God. Later in the Roman world empire an international religion, Christianity, appeared. The development of denominations is again explained by socio-economic considerations: Catholicism is the adaptation of Christianity to feudalism, while the Reformation expresses the revolt of the rising bourgeoisie against the economic power of the Church. Having developed the concept of the supernatural world, the human masses, oppressed and exploited, seek fallacious consolation in visions of a life beyond the grave in which the injustices and wrongs of this world will be made good. The ruling and privileged classes eagerly avail themselves of this and with the help of the clergy maintain the masses in these fallacious dreams of life beyond the grave, of reward and punishment in a supernatural existence. Thus religion becomes the support of the ruling and exploiting class, *i.e.* in the period of capitalism and bourgeois domination, an ally of the bourgeoisie.

After the victorious social revolution religion would die a natural death; the conditions of its origin and development would disappear and it would lose its raison d'être. The class war and the exploitation of man by man would disappear, there would be no predominating social power weighing upon the masses, the existence of which impels man's imagination to create concepts of a supreme all-powerful Being, and of a compensation beyond the grave of earthly social wrongs. Earthly hap-

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[47] In his youth, Marx wrote in the *Deutsch-Französische Jahrbrücher*: "For Germany the criticism of religion is, in its essence, concluded. The basis of that criticism is: man creates religion, religion does not create man." Werner Sombart, *Der proletarische Sozialismus*, Vol. I., p. 127.

piness would replace for the masses the fallacious dream of heaven.[48]

Thus, though Marxism is by nature atheistic, it does not place the fight against religion among its foremost tasks. First of all, in accordance with the materialistic and deterministic character of Marx's theory, religion is to die a natural death after the social revolution, but as long as the bourgeois system prevails religion constitutes a spiritual necessity for the masses; this being so, one should await a socio-economic revolution, and the rest will come as its result. The fight against religion does not occupy a leading place among the tasks of the Marxists who regard the economic factor as decisive in the evolution of mankind, while considering religion a part of the social superstructure, a secondary factor that, like a satellite, follows economic changes, adapting itself to them. The center of gravity in the struggle is shifted to the socio-economic sphere. The extreme logical consequences of Marxism would be to leave religion to its own fate. It is, however, a well-known fact that in this as well as in other similar cases a logical contradiction exists between theory and practice, and Marxists often struck a militant note with regard to religion, particularly at the time when they had not yet started an effective practical politico-social activity within the framework of the existing legal order.[49] With the moment, however, when social democracy, postponing the realization of socialism's ultimate aims to the future, became in practical life the party of radical reforms within the limits of the existing order, when a

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[48] The nucleus of these views was propounded by young Marx in the *German-French Annals*: "Religion is opium for the people... To abolish religion as the people's fallacious happiness is to demand real happiness. To demand that illusions concerning the state of the people be eliminated is to demand the elimination of a state that requires illusions. The criticism of religion contains therefore in a nucleus the criticism of the valley of tears of which religion is the halo (die Kritik des Jammertals, dessen Heiligenschein die Religion ist)." The *Communist Manifesto* says: "Law, morality, religion are for the proletarian bourgeois prejudices behind which are hidden bourgeois interests." Engels writes: "When society, through the seizure of planned management of all means of production, will liberate itself and all its members from the slavery in which it is held at present... only then will vanish the last foreign power that continues to be reflected in religion, and at the same time the religious reflections (Widerspiegelung) itself will disappear, for the simple reason that then there will no more be anything that could be reflected." Diehl, pp. 119-121. Sombart, Vol. I., p. 135.

[49] In his youth Engels wrote in the *German-French Annals*: "We want to eliminate everything that appears supernatural and superhuman. Therefore, we have once for all declared war on religion and religious conceptions and we care little whether we are called atheists or otherwise." Wilhelm Liebknecht wrote in 1875 in the Leipzig paper *Volksstaat*: "It is the duty of us, Socialists, to carry out with enthusiasm and devotion the extermination (Ausrottung) of the belief in God, and only he is worthy of the name of Socialist who is an atheist himself and who devotes, with complete zeal, his endeavors to the spreading of atheism." Sombart, Vol. I, p. 127; Diehl, p. 119. In the older German revolutionary poetry anti-religious feelings were expressed by Bakunin's friend, Herwegh: "Reisst die Kreuze aus der Erden! Alle sollen Schwerter werden, — Gott im Himmel wird's verzeihen!" "Keine Steuern, keine Zolle, — Des Gedankens Freiverkehr; — Keinen Teufel in der Hölle, — Keinen Gott im Himmel mehr!"

minimalist program appeared besides the maximalist one, this bifurcation was reflected in the attitude to religion. The maximalist program, calculated for the future, envisaged the disappearance of religion, while the minimalist program, calculated for the present, proclaimed that religion was a private matter. This principle was proclaimed in the 1891 Erfurt program of German Social Democracy in its part that propounded a minimalist program, *i.e.* paragraph 6. This was caused by opportunistic considerations. "Social Democracy" – says Diehl – "would lose a great number of its membership if it demanded an atheistic credo". The long time leader of German Social Democracy, August Bebel, advocates in his programmatic book *Woman and Socialism*, tactical evolution, and calls stupid the accusations directed against the socialists that they allegedly intended to abolish religion and apply measures of coercion and reprisals with regard to the believers.[50] "Social Democracy leaves such absurdities to the bourgeois ideologists who tried such measures during the French Revolution and naturally suffered a terrible defeat. Without any violent attacks, without any oppression of convictions, whatever they may be, religion will gradually disappear." Bebel repeats after Marx that religion is the people's aspiration to illusory happiness; it will disappear when the masses will begin to realize their happiness in temporary life. But even then, if it should still exist, religion will not be persecuted. "If somebody will still have religious needs, he will be able to satisfy them with his like. Society will not be alarmed by this. The priest will have to work in order to live, and if, in addition, he will study, even for him a time will come when he will perceive that the supreme task is to be a human being."[51]

With Bakunin, the struggle against religion occupies a foremost place. Though he theoretically often advocated historical materialism and claimed that the socio-economic problem was the most important, nevertheless in his estimate of the chances of revolution it was not economic considerations that played a rôle, but regard for the consciousness, will and feelings of the popular masses and of the professional revolutionaries. According to him revolution is everywhere and always possible, necessary, indispensable, because in all countries the minority

[50] "Diese (i.e. religion) wird nicht 'abgeschafft,' man wird 'Gott nicht absetzen', nicht 'den Leuten die Religion aus dem Herzen reissen', und wie sonst die albernen Redensarten lauten, womit man die atheistisch gesinnten Sozialdemokraten anklagt." A. Bebel, *Die Frau und der Sozialismus*, 29th edition, Stuttgart, 1898, pp. 398, 399.

[51] Bebel, *Die Frau und der Sozialismus*, pp. 399, 400. German Social Democracy had for some time among its members the clergyman Paul Göhre. However, Karl Diehl justly writes: "Each member of the party who stands on the basis of Christianity, eo ipso renounces the fundamental ideas of the party, because the materialistic conception of history cannot be harmonized with the basic ideas of Christianity." *Ueber Sozialismus, Kommunismus und Anarchismus*, p. 121.

oppresses and exploits the majority. It is only necessary to awaken the will, stimulate the consciousness of the masses, overcome their obtuseness, fear and passivity, to call forth a revolt of souls. According to Bakunin, religion is the main force suppressing revolt, fettering the will and obscuring the consciousness of the masses. Consequently he places the struggle against religion at the head of the revolutionary tasks. "L'Eglise et l'Etat sont mes deux bêtes noires." He always puts atheism as the first condition of membership in his secret revolutionary societies. The struggle against religion plays in his writings a primary rôle. In the memorandum submitted to the League of Peace and Freedom he devoted most space to anti-theologism. During his lifetime he published only a part of his main study *L'Empire knouto-germanique et la révolution sociale*. When after Bakunin's death his followers, Cafiero, Elisee Reclus and Max Nettlau, published the two not yet printed parts of his work, they entitled them both *Dieu et l'Etat* (God and State), because each was primarily devoted to the struggle against religion and subsequently against the State.

The inexorable character of the immediate struggle against religion is increased in Bakunin also by the fact that he rejects any idea of a minimalist, temporary program, put into effect within the framework of existing states and societies. Bakunin is characterized by revolutionary impatience, the preparations for revolution should be short-range, according to him. And when he says that religion will only be abolished by social revolution, he has in mind the immediate period and the near future. In the same way as he regarded it as a mistake on the part of the Socialists to enter into compromise, be it only temporary, with the existing states, to participate in elections, parliaments and political life, because this weakened the inexorable attitude to the State, he did not recognize any compromise with regard to religion.

In the study published by Charles Cafiero and Elisée Réclus under the title *God and State*, Bakunin treats with irony the biblical story of the beginning of man and, this time following Proudhon, stresses the rôle of the biblical satan. "There appears Satan, the eternal rebel, the first free thinker and liberator of the worlds. He made man feel ashamed at his ignorance and animal humility, he freed him and imprinted on his forehead the mark of freedom and humanity, prompting him to disobedience and to tasting the fruit of knowledge."

Bakunin derides the faith in the kindness of God and the mystery of redemption. "I am seized with anger whenever I think about the vile and criminal means that are used to keep nations in perpetual bondage." He grows indignant at the "triumphant stupidity of faith". The masses live in hopelessly hard circumstances and seek a way out of their misery. "They had before them three means, two supposed ones, one real. The

two first are the tavern and the Church, license of body and license of soul. The third one is social revolution. Hence I infer that only the latter will be able to obliterate the last vestiges of religious beliefs and the licentious habits of the masses. The social revolution alone, replacing these illusory, and at the same time vulgar pleasures of that physical and spiritual debauchery with the subtle and real joys of humanity realized fully, in every one and in all, will possess sufficient force to shut down simultaneously all taverns and all churches. Until that time the nation, taken as a whole, will continue to believe."

In what lies the main reason of the existence of religion? "Not so much mystic inclinations, as profound discontent of the heart causes this aberration of the mind. For that ailment there is only one remedy: social revolution." In the meantime "religious hallucinations" continue "in man's consciousness." And, in acordance with Feuerbach's idea, Bakunin says: "The religious heaven is but a mirage in which man, brought to exaltation by ignorance and faith, finds his own image, magnified and reversed, that is deified."

"Christianity is the most authentic, the most typical religion because it represents and fully expresses the nature, the real essence of every religious system, representing the humiliation, subjugation and destruction of humanity in favor of the deity. If God is everything, the material world and man are nothing. If God is truth, justice, power and life, man is lie, injustice, evil... If God is the master, man is the slave." Religion needs priests, the priests give religious sanction to the temporal power. "The slaves of God, men, should be the slaves of the Church and of the State, provided the latter is sanctioned by the Church."

"The idea of God entails the renunciation of human reason and justice, it constitutes the most decisive negation of human freedom and unavoidably leads to man's slavery in theory and in practice... Is it necessary to recall how and to what extent religions separate and demoralize nations? They kill their reason and lead them to idiocy, the main condition of their slavery. They deprive man's work of respectability and make it a mark and source of bondage. They kill the concept and sense of human justice, always dipping the scale in favor of triumphant good-for-nothings, the privileged objects of divine grace. They kill man's pride and self-respect, supporting cringing and humble ones. They suppress in the nations' hearts any knowledge of human brotherhood, filling them with divine cruelty.

"All religions are cruel, all are bloody, because all of them rest mainly on the idea of sacrifice, that is on eternally sacrificing humanity to the unsatiable revengefulness of the deity. In that bloody mystery man is always the victim, while the priest is also a man, but a man privileged by divine grace – an executioner of God. This explains why

the priests of all religions, of the best, most humanitarian, mildest ones, have almost always at the bottom of their hearts, and when not of their hearts then of their imagination, reason – something cruel, bloodthirsty.

"Voltaire said: if God did not exist, he should be created. I reverse Voltaire's aphorism and say: if God really existed he should be annihilated." Christianity turned to those who suffered and therein lay the secret of its triumph. "A profound dissatisfaction with life, a great desire of the heart and an almost absolute poverty of mind were necessary to make people accept the Christian absurdity, the boldest and most monstrous of all religious absurdities."

Religion is a means salutary for the ruling and possessing class, but pernicious for the people. "It is an eternal mirage, impelling the masses to seek divine treasure, while the ruling class, much more modest in its desires, contents itself with distributing among its members the meagre goods of the earth and the human rights of the nation, by which I understand political and social freedom."

Bakunin declares mockingly that God somehow does not make himself visible to any of the mortals. "Jehova only once showed his back to some prophet, I do not remember which, and caused such an aberration of his mind that the poor prophet wandered around the villages for the rest of his life.

"The God of the theologians is an ominous being, an enemy of mankind... As long as we shall have a master in heaven, we shall be slaves on earth."[52]

Bakunin doggedly develops the same subject in the fragment published after his death by Max Nettlau under the same title of *God and State.*

"Is not the basis of the Christian religion and the first condition of salvation the renunciation of human dignity and contempt for that dignity in comparison with the greatness of God? Consequently a Christian is not a man, in the sense that he has no sense of humanity, and, not respecting human dignity in himself he cannot respect it in his neighbor... The Christian has no right to call himself man, because man only becomes such when he respects and loves mankind and the freedom of the whole world."

Revolt of the human individual against divine and human authority is an inalienable characteristic of human freedom. "It is above all revolt against the tyranny of the highest religious illusion, against God. It is

[52] M. Bakunin, *Izbranniya sochineniya* (Selected Works), Vol. II, 1919. Golos Truda. Petersburg-Moscow, pp. 144, 146, 151, 152, 158, 160, 163, 211, 214, 219, 224, 234, 267. Bakunin, who in general was considerably under the influence of Proudhon, draws many ideas from the latter's work *De la Justice dans la Révolution et dans l'Eglise,* published in 1858. In that work Proudhon contrasts justice with the religious idea.

obvious that as long as we shall have a master in heaven, we shall be slaves on earth.

"Consequently God, or rather the fiction of God, is the sanction and intellectual and moral cause of all slavery on earth, and the freedom of people will only be complete when it will utterly destroy the unfortunate fiction of the heavenly master...

"God does not at all need people's love, he cannot love them, and what is called his love for people is nothing but absolute crushing, similar to, and naturally still more dreadful than that which the powerful Emperor of Germany applies today to all his subjects. People's love for God is also very similar to the Germans' love for their monarch..."

The Alliance of Socialist Democracy began to organize its sections in Switzerland, France, Italy and Spain, which were visited by a member of the Alliance, the Italian Fanelli. The Central Office was established in Geneva. Bakunin was one of its seven members, but he *de facto* directed the affairs of the whole organization.

Bakunin realized that a weak, small society in which he was the only outstanding personality, had no chances of creating an adequate international organization. His society, if constituted separately, would at once appear as a rival of the International Workers' Association which already enjoyed high prestige among the workers of various countries and possessed a considerable number of members and adherents. He conceived a different plan to join, with his revolutionary society, the International, to seize gradual control of it from within and to direct its activity towards his own aims. It was a strategy tried by Bakunin for several years. He had endeavored to seize control over Masonry in Florence, over Mazzini's group and over the entire Italian revolutionary-patriotic movement, and had entered the League of Peace in order to revolutionize it. Now the chances of success seemed greater. The International, as an international, revolutionary and socialist society, seemed more receptive to agitation than Masonic, pacifist or national-insurrectionist organizations.

In December, 1868, an old German émigré, Johann Philip Becker, a member of the Alliance's Central Office, approached on behalf of the organization the General Council of the International with the suggestion that the Alliance be received into the International. The whole internal organization of the Alliance was to remain intact. Besides the General Council of the International was to function the Central Committee of the Alliance with headquarters in Geneva, and besides the local groups of the International in various countries the local groups of the Alliance were to be maintained. These groups could ask to be

accepted as sections of the International through the Central Office of the Alliance. During the annual congresses of the International the delegation of the Alliance was to hold its public sessions in a separate hall.

In its resolution of December, 1868 the General Council of the International gave a negative reply. "The existence of another international organization, functioning within and outside the International Workers' Association" – said the resolution – "would be the surest means of its disorganization." In a letter of the same date, December 22, 1868, Bakunin wrote to Marx: "I am your pupil and I am proud of it." He avoided appearing in this action in the foreground, he acted through others. However, Marx and Engels knew that Bakunin was the instigator of the action. In a letter to Marx, Engels called the Geneva project "a stupid Russian trap" and praised the answer given "the Russian and his suite".

At the end of February, 1869, the Geneva Central Office of the Alliance submitted to the General Council a new proposal through Charles Perron, behind whom there again stood Bakunin. The organization of the Alliance, its Central and local offices were to be abolished. The sections of the Alliance would accept the constitution and rules of the International, joining it as its sections, but maintaining, in addition, the theoretical program of the Alliance which, according to Bakunin, was not contradictory to the program of the International. This time the chiefs of the International considered it proper to accept the suggestion of the Alliance, making only a small correction in its theoretical program.[53] The Geneva section, now changed into a section of the International, preserved the name of the Alliance of Socialist Democrats.

On the surface it appeared that Bakunin and his associates had capitulated, dissolved their society and submitted to Marx's orders. But he who knew Bakunin and his methods could be certain that the capitulation was only apparent.

In reality, only the open organization of the International Alliance was abolished; the open Alliance, however, was only the cover for a secret society that Bakunin reorganized and was developing at that time. Under the cover of the public Alliance was hidden a secret organization on several levels which was the continuation of the secret society started by Bakunin in Italy.

Once Bakunin entered the International, he began to fight Marx, at first secretly but soon openly. According to Marx, social revolution was to take place after the capitalist evolution had reached its culmination. In accordance with this Marx expected social revolution above

[53] Instead of the expression "levelling of classes" the term "abolition of classes" was introduced.

all in countries with a highly developed trade and industry. He counted mainly on the comparatively well educated and cultured proletariat of the countries leading in capitalist development, England, the United States, subsequently Germany and to a certain extent France.

Bakunin, on the contrary, claimed that in countries with a high degree of capitalist development social revolution is rendered more difficult through the powerful development of the bourgeoisie and through the weakening of the revolutionary instinct and of revolutionary impatience in the educated and comparatively well-to-do working class. Bakunin's aim was not the culmination of capitalism but the interruption of its development by a revolution carried out in time. He counted rather on countries with a low standard of education and economic development, on agricultural countries, on the peasants, on the poor proletariat, on Italy, Spain and the Slavonic countries. Marx's theses about the dependence of social revolution on high capitalist development, concentration of capital, centralization of industrial, business and agricultural enterprises, seemed to him the academic reasoning of a doctrinaire who did not possess a true revolutionary nerve and instinct, who had no devil in him, according to his favorite expression. He believed that after an energetic, short preparation a revolution could be called forth, if use were made of national unrest as in Italy, or of political seething as in Spain, and that subsequently the revolution could be extended to other countries. Bakunin divided the countries of Europe into those of a revolutionary workers' movement, and those of the gradual development of the working class. In the first group he counted France, Italy, Spain and even Switzerland, in the second one England, Germany, the United States and Belgium.

This internal struggle had a tactical, ostensible aspect skilfully carried out by Bakunin, and a hidden, real one, little known even today. On the tactical level Bakunin waged war for political principles and organizational foundations. He opposed centralization and despotism within the International Association, and the arbitrary power of the General Council and, in particular, of Marx. The International was organized as a federation, in the various countries there existed sections, united in national federations headed by federal councils. The organization's supreme authority was the Congress of delegates meeting annually, while the General Council was the body in charge of official business. In the General Council the leading spirit of which was Marx, there existed a steady tendency to strengthen the cohesion and discipline of the association by increasing the Council's competency and power. In spite of the gradual centralization and extension of the Council's prerogatives, in spite of Marx's indisputable tendency to absolutist rule in the party, the first International remained to the end

of its existence a loose organization. Bakunin, however, claimed that the authoritarian principle, the principles of power prevailing in the International, made its organization similar to a state with centralized authority, and fulminated against suppressing freedom in a society that was fighting for the freedom of the masses. The second characteristic of Bakunin's program was the principle that the members of the International should refrain from participation in the political life in the respective countries, boycott the parliaments, and leave the political arena to the bourgeois parties, while organizing the workers into trade unions and preparing an early revolution with the immediate aim of destroying the state together with the whole social order.[54]

Both tactical postulates, the attitude to political life and the organizational position in the International, had a common foundation: an absolutely hostile attitude to the state and to the very principle of authority issuing orders. Thus the standpoint of Bakunin and the members of the Alliance had an anarchist character. They applied this anarchist tendency not only to the state, but also to the International. They advocated the complete autonomy of the local sections and depriving the General Council and even the Congress of ruling power. The General Council was to be an office in charge of correspondence and statistics, technically holding together the activity of the whole organization but not issuing binding directives, and deprived of any sanctions in relation to the sections and the associated members. They accused the General Council and its defenders of absolutism, authoritarianism and centralization.

[54] In his revolutionary tactics Bakunin was closer to Blanqui than to Marx. Engels wrote about Blanqui: "In his political activity he was essentially a man of action, a man who believed that a small, well organized minority trying to call forth a rising at an oportune moment, can by its initial successes attract the popular mass and thus carry out a revolution." (Quoted according to Plekhanov's *God na rodine* (A Year in the Homeland), Vol. II, Paris 1921, p. 32. Like Bakunin, Blanqui attributed to social outcasts a great rôle in the revolution: "Ces déclassés, arme invisible du progrès, sont aujourd'hui le ferment secret qui gonfle sourdement la masse et l'empêche de s'affaiser dans le marasme. Demain ils seront la réserve de la Révolution." (These *déclassés*, the invisible arm of progress, are today the secret ferment which imperceptibly swells the mass and prevents it from sinking into marasmus. Tomorrow they will be the reserve of the Revolution.) George Weill, *Histoire du movement social en France*. Second edition, Paris 1911, p. 118. Also Blanqui's slogan "Ni Dieu, ni maitre", and his tactics of uniting different elements dissatisfied with the existing state of affairs – Union de tous les mécontents – suited Bakunin. Also the exlamation of Tridon, a pupil of Blanqui "O force, reine des barricades" appealed to him. In his revolutionary tactics Bakunin is to a large extent a precursor of the Syndicalists, Lagardelle, Berth, Sorel, with their belief in direct action (l'action directe), in the creative will of the revolutionary classes, in the organization of revolt (l'organisation de la révolte), with their contempt for democracy, the parliamentary system, republicanism, participation of the Socialists in political life, with their disregard of intellectuals (des marchands des phrases, des domestiques de plume, des parasites). The tactics of the Bakuninists who proclaimed a general strike during the Spanish revolution of 1873, anticipated the method of the Syndicalists. George Sorel's "le mythe de la grève générale."

What did this propaganda of extremist freedom within the International, conducted by Bakunin, really mean? Bakunin propagated the preparation of international revolution by means of a radical disorganization of state, society, law, religion and morality, by unleashing "the so-called bad instincts" in the masses. This is the anarchistic aspect of his revolutionary activity. The second aspect consisted in organizing the revolutionary forces, and in creating a secret society in which the greatest discipline would prevail. This double tactics was used by Bakunin also in the International. He applied to it the same method of disorganization that he practised with regard to the existing political and social order. On the one hand he endeavored to weaken its cohesion, while on the other he tried to create within it his own society that was rightly called in a pamphlet by Engels and Lafargue, a "despotic and hierarchical secret organization."

"Sympathy for the International" — wrote Herman Lopatin — "did not permit any reasonable man to side with Bakunin whose whole activity in that case openly threatened the International with disintegration and ruin. How could any moral man sympathize with and help people who publicly fulminated against the centralization, despotism, leadership and arbitrariness of the Central Council, while they were clandestinely creating a secret alliance (l'Alliance) which aimed at directing the activity of the International secretly, without the knowledge of its rank and file."[55]

In his confidential correspondence with the brothers belonging to the Alliance in Spain, Bakunin wrote rather frankly about his attitude to the International. "To betray the Alliance means to betray the revolution" — he wrote in the spring of 1872 — "because the Alliance has only one aim, to serve the revolution. We do not create a theoretical or exclusively economic institution. The Alliance is neither an academy nor a workshop, it is exclusively a fighting society, with the object of organizing the power of the popular masses, in order to destroy all states and all institutions, religious, political, judiciary, economic and social that now exist, with the intention of completely liberating the subjugated and exploited toilers of the whole world."

Bakunin admits that the International is a very useful institution which developed a sense of solidarity, unity and strength among the workers of the whole world and did much for the future revolution. "But it is not an institution sufficient to organize the revolution and direct it." It boasts of the number of its membership, but it admits to its organization monarchists and even Catholics. If the International would make the acceptance of the Alliance's principles concerning re-

55 *Istoriko-Revolutsionnaya Biblioteka* (Historical-Revolutionary Library), G. A. Lopatin. Petrograd, Gosudarstvennoye Izdatelstvo, 1922, p. 172.

ligion a condition of admittance, it would have scarcely a few thousand adherents. "In order to organize a force it is not sufficient to combine the interests, feelings and thoughts, it is necessary to unite the will and character. While our enemies organize their forces through the power of money and the authority of the state, we can organize ours only through conviction and enthusiasm." It is necessary that the cooperation of the leaders of the masses should be assured and that an understanding should be created among us and a society organized. "This understanding and society should only be formed in secrecy. This means that a conspiracy, a true secret society, must be formed. Such then is the idea and aim of the Alliance. It is a great society formed within the International itself, to lend it a revolutionary organization, to transform it and the popular masses remaining outside it into a properly organized power, in order to destroy the politico-clerical-bourgeois reaction, to abolish all economic, legal, religious and political institutions of the states." [56]

In a letter to a Spanish member of the Alliance, Morago, Bakunin wrote in May, 1872: "The International and the Alliance are by no means enemies, as the truly Marxist London synagogue would like to make the world believe. On the contrary, the Alliance is an indispensable complement of the International... The International and the Alliance, while endeavoring to achieve the same ultimate goal, aspire at the same time to different goals. The mission of the former is to unite the working masses, millions of workers, across various nations and countries, across the frontiers of all states, into one immense, compact body. The Alliance aims at giving these masses a truly revolutionary direction. The programs of both, while by no means contradictory, differ by the very degree of their mutual development. The program of the International, if only taken seriously, contains in nucleus, but only in nucleus, the whole program of the Alliance. The program of the Alliance is the final development of the program of the International." [57]

It is obvious that anarchism, propagated by Bakunin within the International, is a tactical method aiming at disorganizing an institution regarded by him as a too slow, too inefficient instrument of revolution; simultaneously with this disorganizing activity Bakunin makes arrangements for his own revolutionary society, based on secrecy, absolutism and centralization. Bakunin's anarchism may be characterized as "*divide, dissolve et impera.*" Bakunin disintegrates the Marxist organization by proclaiming in it the absolute freedom of the autonomous sections and complete abolition of authority and discipline. He bases his own organization on principles that exclude freedom; arbitrariness

[56] Nettlau, M. *Bakounine*, Vol. II, pp. 287, 291.
[57] Nettlau, M. *Bakounine*, Vol. II, p. 286.

of the secret ruling group, despotism, centralization and blind obedience are the foundations of that organization. That Marx was an advocate of a centralized system and of absolutism in the direction of the International, is true. That Bakunin was an opponent of absolutism and centralism, that he was an advocate of extreme freedom, a sincere federalist, and even an anarchist — is a legend tenaciously upheld in literature to the present time.[58]

Bakunin's methods of organizing a society of his own and disorganizing hostile or competing ones anticipate the later Bolshevik methods. Viewed from this standpoint, Bakunin's dispute with Marx is the dispute of the spirit of the Third International which had a precursor in Bakunin, with the spirit of the First and Second International. The Third International, identifying itself with Marx, could more correctly speak in the name of Bakunin. Bakunin's Soviet biographer Steklov, who officially and formally takes Marx's side in his historic struggle against Bakunin, is forced to admit that as far as the conception of the organization of an international revolutionary society and tactical methods are concerned, Bakunin is to a larger extent than Marx a precursor of the Communists of today.[59]

The perpetuation of the erroneous view of Bakunin's rôle in the First International was made easier by the fact that the Belgians and Romansh Swiss, stirred up by him, and to a certain extent the Italians and Spaniards, took seriously his phraseology about the struggle against any absolutism, and sincerely fought for the preservation of the autonomy of the local and national sections, and for observing the federalist

[58] The myth of Bakunin as a sincere advocate of extreme freedom is propagated by his followers James Guillaume, Max Nettlau and Cherkezov. It is repeated in the most recent literature and in the new editions of older works, such as *Der proletarische Sozcialismus* by Werner Sombart, *Ueber Sozialismus, Kommunismus und Anarchismus* by Karl Diehl, and *Marx* by Otto Rühle, not to mention popular books like Seignobos' *Histoire*, which repeats a stereotyped characterization of Bakunin.

[59] According to Steklov, Bakunin's organizational plan was "definitely a tremendous step forward in comparison with the embryonic state of party structure by which the period of the First International was characterized... The First International remained to the end a loose organization." "The idea that for the preparations and triumph of social revolution a disciplined organization is necessary, imbued with unity in theory and practical activity, an idea underlying Bakunin's organizational plan, indisputably has many positive aspects and constitutes considerable progress in comparison with the existing organizational chaos. For that epoch the plan was premature... The basic idea was sound and is being realized only in the period of the Third International." Bakunin counted on Spain and Italy. "They were preeminently agrarian countries, with a weak bourgeoisie and a mass of proletarianized peasants, i,e, countries in which, it seemed, social revolution, a rising of the exploited masses could not meet serious and long opposition. Consequently, (particularly in the light of recent events) Bakunin's calculations were not so groundless and ridiculous as Marx and Engels imagined whose attention was absorbed by countries with developed capitalism." Marx laughed at Bakunin's division of Europe into countries with a slow and revolutionary workers movement. "And yet in that division there was a part of truth which was partly proved by the events of those times, partly by the Russian Revolution of 1905-1917, and may yet be proved by future events." Steklov, Vol. III, pp. 119-121.

principle in the first nucleus of the international Socialist republic. In that struggle Bakunin furnished them abundantly with arguments, and they sincerely regarded him as an apostle of perfect freedom. With great skill Bakunin played on the sensitive chords of the souls of the doctrinaires and Utopians of extreme freedom and the enemies of any power and authority imposed from above. Bakunin, who regarded the patriotism of the Western nations as a fatal obstacle to the fulfillment of his own revolutionary plans, can adroitly play off the note of patriotism when this enters his calculations: From the insurrectionist-national Czech, Polish and Italian movements, he tries to kindle the flame of social revolution, incites the members of the Romance International against the London General Council, pointing out that it is ruled by non-Romance Teutonic elements. As a patron of any ferment in the West, an advocate of any revolt, an avenger of any injustice, Bakunin, in the isolation of a forerunner who is ahead of his time, instinctively plays the rôle of a protector of freedom everywhere that later will be developed in an organized and systematic way by the Red rulers of Moscow as the method of the Third International.

* * *

In 1869 there came to Switzerland the young, already well-known revolutionary from Russia, Nechayev, and got in touch with Bakunin. Thus their revolutionary cooperation was started. Bakunin intended to appoint Nechayev delegate for Russia who would create there a branch of the revolutionary international Alliance. Bakunin still entertained hopes that the formation of the Russian branch would contribute to the outbreak of revolution in Russia. Directives for the participants of the revolutionary action were contained in the *Revolutionary's Catechism.* For a long time its authorship was attributed to Nechayev. Today the question of authorship may be considered solved: the author of the *Catechism* was undoubtedly Bakunin.[60]

60 The text of the *Catechism,* with numerous mistakes, was reprinted in Bogucharski-Bazilevski's publication *Gosudarstvenniya Prestupleniya* (Crimes against the State), Vol. I, Petersburg, 1906, pp. 183-186. The correct text was reprinted according to the original by Shilov in the publication *Borba Klassov* (Class Struggle), Leningrad, 1924, No. 1-2, pp. 262-273. The question of Bakunin's authorship was examined in detail by B. Kozmin, *Tkachev,* pp. 179-205. C. Steklov, *Bakunin,* Vol. III, p. 466 ff. Besides other proofs Bakunin's authorship is confirmed by the reminiscences of Sazhin who saw a text written in Bakunin's hand. In Sazhin's reminiscences it is mentioned that among Nechayev's papers there was found "Bakunin's revolutionary catechism". "In a separate package was to be found the well-known revolutionary catechism entirely written in Bakunin's hand." Further it is said that Sazhin notified Bakunin that the "catechism written in his hand and found among Nechayev's papers was burned." M. P. Sazhin, *Vospominaniya,* Moscow 1925, pp. 70, 74. Spasowicz, in his defense of Kuznetsov at the trial of Nechayev's followers in 1871, claimed on the basis of a correct analysis and possibly also of confidential information obtained from the defendants that the catechism was not a work of Nechayev and alluded to Bakunin's authorship. W. Spasowicz, *Za mnogo let* (From many years), Petersburg, 1872, pp. 426, 427.

For anyone who knows Bakunin's previous activity, his programs and the rules of the revolutionary societies, written in Italy and Switzerland, his treatises and letters – the *Catechism*, as a product of Bakunin's pen, contains nothing unexpected. In concise form and with complete ruthlessness Bakunin expounds his views about the tasks of the revolutionary. The principles of the revolutionary's attitude to himself are as follows:

1) The revolutionary is a man offered as a sacrifice. He has no interests, concerns, feelings, desires, nor even a name of his own. He is completely absorbed by one sole interest, one idea, one passion – revolution.

2) In his innermost self he has broken all connection with the legal order and the whole civilized world, with all the laws, and social principles, with the generally accepted customs and the morality of the present-day world. He is a merciless foe of that world and if he continues to live in it, he does so only to destroy it the more certainly.

3) The revolutionary despises all doctrinairism and renounces peaceful learning, leaving it to future generations. He knows only the science of destruction. For that purpose and for that purpose alone, he now studies mechanics, physics, chemistry and maybe, medicine. For that purpose he conducts day and night a living study of the people, characters, situations, and all conditions of the present social system, in all its possible strata. There is only one aim – the quickest destruction of that vile system.

4) The revolutionary regards public opinion with contempt. He detests present public morality and hates it in all its motives and symptoms. Whatsoever favors the triumph of revolution – is moral for him; whatever is an obstacle to it – is immoral and criminal.

5) The revolutionary is a man offered as a sacrifice. Merciless to the state and in general to the whole educated class-society, he should not expect from them any mercy for himself. Between them and him there exists a secret or open, but an uninterrupted and inexorable life and death struggle. He should be ready to die at any moment. He should learn to endure torture.

6) Severe for himself, he should also be severe for others. All tender and sentimental feelings of kinship, friendship, love, gratitude, and even honor itself should be suppressed in him by the sole cold passion for the revolutionary cause. Only one pleasure, consolation, reward, and satisfaction exists for him – merciless destruction. Aspiring in cold blood and indefatigably to that aim, he should be ready for his own undoing and to destroy with his own hands all that impedes its achievement.

7) The nature of a true revolutionary bars any romanticism, any sentimentality, enthusiasm and rapture. It bars even personal hatred

and revenge. The revolutionary passion once changed into an everyday feeling which does not stop even for a moment, should be combined with cold calculation. The revolutionary should always and everywhere be promoted not by personal impulses but by the general interest of the revolution.

We have quoted the text literally. A summary could expose the author in the eyes of people who do not know the text to the accusation of distorting the original. The principles of the attitude of the revolutionary to himself are followed by the rules concerning his attitude to his colleagues. All human sentiments should be suppressed in favor of one sole aim, the revolution. Paragraph 10 says: Each comrade should have around him a certain number of revolutionaries of the second and third order, that is not initiated into everything. He should regard them as a part of the total revolutionary capital placed at his disposal. He should spend his part of the capital economically, trying always to derive the greatest possible profit from it.

In harmony with paragraph 10, the subsequent paragraph determines the revolutionary's conduct in case some of his comrades is arrested. In that case "the revolutionary determining the question whether to save him or not should not be guided by any personal feelings but only by the advantage of the revolutionary cause."

The further regulations concerning the revolutionary's attitude to the people stress the duty of hostility still more. All members of the present society should constitute for him in an equal degree the object of hatred. He is not a revolutionary if he has pity for anyone; no considerations of kinship, friendship, love can stop him from killing a man, belonging to the present world. One means of action should be deception and ruse. Paragraph 14. declares: In order to destroy mercilessly, the revolutionary can, and frequently even should, live in society pretending to be something entirely different from what he is in reality. The revolutionary should penetrate everywhere, to all classes, upper and middle, to the merchant's store, to the church, to the gentleman's home, to the bureaucratic and military spheres, to literature, to the Third Department, even to the Winter Palace.

The *Catechism* subsequently gives detailed rules of conduct towards various categories of persons.

15) This whole vile society should be divided into several categories. The first category consists of people condemned to death immediately. The association should prepare a list of such condemned persons according to the order of their comparative harmfulness for the success of the revolutionary cause in such a way that the preceding numbers be eliminated earlier than the subsequent ones.

16) In preparing such a list and in arranging the above mentioned

series one should not at all be guided by a man's personal criminal record, nor even by the hatred which he evokes in the association or among the people. This criminal record and that hatred may be even to a certain extent useful by contributing to the outbreak of a people's revolt. One should be guided by the measure of advantage which should be derived from his death for the revolutionary cause. Consequently above all people particularly harmful for the revolutionary organization should be killed and those whose violent and forcible death can most frighten the government and thus by depriving it of intelligent and energetic leaders, undermine its strength.

17) The second category should be composed of persons to whom one shows mercy only temporarily, so that by a number of bestial actions they might provoke the people to inevitable revolt.

18) To the third category belong many highly placed beasts, that is personalities who are not distinguished either by particular intelligence or energy but who, owing to their position, enjoy wealth, connections, influence and strength. They should be exploited by all possible means and ways. They should be involved, misled and then, after gaining every possible control over them by means of their dirty secrets, they should be made into slaves. Their power, influence, connections, wealth and strength will in this way become an inexhaustible treasure and a tremendous help for various revolutionary enterprises.

19) The fourth category is composed of ambitious politicians and liberals of various shades. One may conspire with them in accordance with their programs, pretending that they are blindly followed, but in the meantime one ought to take control over them, seize all their secrets and compromise them to the extreme so as to make their withdrawal impossible, and through them to cause trouble in the state.

20) The fifth category is composed of doctrinaires, conspirators, and revolutionaries in groups engaged in idle talk and in writing. They should be constantly pushed and involved in neck-breaking practical actions, a consequence of which will be the complete ruin of the majority and the true revolutionary maturity of a few.

The sixth category was formed by women who were also divided into sub-categories.

Then the *Catechism* expounds the principles of the revolutionary's attitude toward the masses. The aim of the association is the happiness of the masses, that is of those who work physically. The principle — the worse, the better, — should be applied and disasters brought on the country.

22) The society shall with all its strength and means contribute to the development and spreading of those disasters and misfortunes

which eventually should make the masses lose their patience and provoke them to a general rising.

The *Catechism* further explains that what is meant is not a rising on the model of western revolutions which do not attack "so-called civilization and morality" but a revolution which will completely uproot the present state and the upper classes. The association does not present a program of the future order leaving this to future generations. "Our business" – says paragraph 24 – "is passionate, complete, general and merciless destruction."

"Therefore, in approaching the masses" – says paragraph 25 – "we should first of all unite with those elements of the people who since the foundation of the Muscovite state have not ceased to protest by word and deed against everything that is directly or indirectly connected with the state: against the nobility, officials, priests, guild merchants and *kulaks* (well-to-do peasants), exploiters of the people. Let us unite with the robust brigand world, the true and only revolutionary in Russia."

To unite this world into one invincible, all-destroying force says paragraph 26, the last one – is our entire organization, conspiracy and task.

The leading principle developed in the *Catechism* in detail is the idea that the crushing of moral and legal principles and the trampling on human sentiments form the lever of the revolution. The author of the *Catechism*, aware of the fact that the Russian revolutionary movement was still weak, that there existed dispersed elements of it which should be combined and organized, regards as the spiritual cement of that action the crushing of all norms created by civilization, of all obstacles and barriers created by law, morality, religion, and by the development of humanitarian sentiments. Liberation from the fetters of these norms was to unleash and strengthen the forces of revolt. The Nechayev-Bakunin team wanted to compensate the weakness of the revolutionary forces by practical cynicism. Nechayev's further activity will not only admit crime as an ultimate means when others fail but it will proclaim crime as a program, as a normal method of action.

The myth of Bakunin aspiring to universal freedom was connected with the myth of revolutionary Russia supposedly aspiring to absolute freedom. The revolution of 1917 dispersed, it seemed, this myth, but the legend based on faith and imagination does not so easily yield to the pressure of facts and arguments.

Bakunin died in Switzerland in 1876.

On Bakunin's tombstone in the Bern cemetery the Vogt family,

respected Swiss democrats, had the following insciption engraved: *Rappelez vous de celui qui sacrifia tout pour la liberté de son pays* (Remember him who sacrificed all for the freedom of his country). Today when we know the meaning of the freedom which Bakunin subconsciously pursued, his gravestone could be inscribed with a quotation from Dante: *Per me si va nella città dolente.* (Through me is the way into the woeful city).

Soon after Bakunin's death the Russo-Turkish war broke out. It tremendously increased the opposition sentiment of educated Russia. The revolutionary movement flared up, the terrorrist organization, People's Will *(Narodnaya Vola)*, headed by its executive committee, started a campaign against the Russian government.

The inefficient government of a nation of almost a hundred millions, unable to cope quickly with tottering Turkey, afraid of England and Austria, kotowing before the German Empire, proves resolute, bold and threatening only in suppressing the defenseless Russian youth feverishly seeking a better future for their country. The shortcomings of a military Russian administration, allegedly removed during the twenty years since Sevastopol, were bared again and appeared before the eyes of Russia in their old horror. Russian blood was again wasted owing to the stupidity of the leaders, there were again thefts and abuses, the epic of official extortion and the tragi-comedy of indolence. Those guilty of the defeats, the knights of robbery, return home unpunished, nay, decorated with St. George's crosses and enriched while the poor young idealists, who went among the people to open their eyes to the misery of their homeland, rot in prisons. Such was the background of thoughts and conversations in wide circles at the time when the government was severely squaring its accounts with the populist propagandists. How much more strongly these reflections were bound to inflame the atmosphere among the revolutionary elements.

The wars waged by Russia always intensified the opposition and the critical attitude of the population to the government for one more reason. Russia, waging aggressive wars, camouflaged her aims with liberation slogans. Annexing the major part of Poland, she claimed to do so to liberate the Polish peasants from under the yoke of the Polish nobility, and the entire population from the misfortune of anarchy, and later, when Pan-slavism developed, she justified her rule in Poland by the mission of saving the Polish nation from Germanization. Striving to extend her rule over the other Slavonic nations she desired to liberate them from the Austrian and Turkish yokes. During the Turkish war the Russian papers wrote at length about the tyranny, arbitrariness, national and religious oppression in Turkey, and the right of the Balkan peoples to freedom. But the Russian patriot, recovering from his indignation at

the Turkish iniquities, easily perceived that the same, and often worse, iniquities surrounded him in his own country. As complaints against the government became general, comparisons and analogies between the Turkish and Russian governments were endlessly repeated by the whole people, from conversations among high bureaucrats to letters written by revolutionaries from prison cells. The whole thing was touched off by the émigré Michael Dragomanov, who at the close of 1876 published abroad, as an open letter to the editor of *Novoye Vremia* (New Times), a pamphlet entitled "Turks, Domestic and Foreign." In his biting pamphlet Dragomanov develops the thesis that Russia, before fulfilling the mission of expelling the Turks from Europe, should do away with the Turkish system in her own state, and should curb her domestic Turks. Otherwise the contradiction should be justly pointed out between her own system and that which she represents as her mission in the Balkan East.

"Recently, amid the hubbub of the Turkish question, a law was issued about the strengthening of the power of administrators, authorizing the Governors-General, Governors and Prefects of cities to issue decrees explaining and supplementing laws, a law that turned the Russian Empire into a kind of decentralized Pompadouria.

"Are not these and many other things symptoms of a Turkish system in Russia? Obviously, in many respects the system in Turkey is more severe – she is after all Turkey. But on the other hand, there exists in Turkey the freedom of changing from one giaour denomination to another, and moreover even Katkov recently counted in Turkey more primary schools than in Russia, while you have yourselves admitted that the retail selling of newspapers in Constantinople is done more freely than in Petersburg... A state in which arbitrariness of officials exists under the label of autocracy, in which even in the taxation system there still exist class privileges, in which forcible Russification of all non-Great Russian peoples prevails, in which police protecton of the established church exists and where there is not even the most elementary personal immunity..., such a state cannot zealously serve the cause of freedom and autonomy of the Slavonic and non-Slavonic peoples even if they are under Turkish domination."

In connection with the appointment of Prince Cherkasski to Bulgaria to organize the agrarian system there, Dragomanov poses the question: "Will the persecution of any allusion to democracy and socialism continue in Russia, while Prince Cherkasski will apply beyond the Danube Muscovite-Slavophil half-socialism?" The activity of "semi-official Gracchi beyond the Danube" is in glaring contradiction to the rule of reaction in Russia herself.

Dragomanov makes the interesting remark that tsardom's striving

for expansion westward requires the application of revolutionary methods to the subjugated countries. A reactionary tsardom cannot fully develop these revolutionary methods, for it is impeded by the habits and encumbrances of its internal system.

"The quoted facts demonstrate the whole immobility and inability of the Russian political system not only for the nation to live within its framework, but also for the interests of the state... What ability of fulfilling its emancipatory, even revolutionary tasks does a state possess that has preserved the whole amorphous, mediaeval, half-Asiatic system of autocratic-clerical boyar tsardom and had borrowed from its European connections only the fetters of German friendship, sophisticated French-Brandenburg bureaucracy and the conception of the national principle in the form of forcible Russification?"[61]

Consequently, only after carrying out revolution at home can Russia more vigorously advance the cause of gathering *Russian* lands, and execute more briskly the testament of Ivan Kalita. It is an indication that aggressive imperialism would be renewed in the future post-revolutionary Russia.

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Dragomanov, a former professor of Kiev University, of Ukrainian descent, deprived of his chair together with the economist Ziber in 1875 "on the basis of point three," that is, for lack of political reliability, was then the most outstanding member of the Russian emigration in Switzerland. With regard to his social program Dragomanov considered himself a socialist, and though the contemporary Russian revolutionary parties denied him the name of socialist, he was probably closer to Western European socialism than they. Dragomanov opposed Russian terrorism which strove for the socialist system by means of political attempts and assassinations, he opposed the *buntars* (rebels) who followed Bakunin and believed in a people's rising, a Russian Jacquerie; he opposed Tkachev who advocated seizure of political power and the creation of a centralized revolutionary dictatorship by the revolutionists. In a word, he opposed anarchist propaganda by deeds, a new Pugachev system, Jacobinism and revolutionary Blanquism which believed in a coup d'état and the dictatorial rule of an organized revolutionary minority. Dragomanov opposed the whole ideology of the Russian revolutionary populists who scorned the rôle of the educated class and even strove to plebeianize and dissolve it in the common people (*oproshchenye*), and who scorned a reform of the state system in a constitutional manner. He opposed regarding the constitution as a dangerous re-

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61 *Turki Vnutrenniye i Vneshniye. Pismo k izdatelu Novago Vremeni M. Dragomanova.* Genève-Bale-Lyon, 1876, pp. 9-11, 28, 29.

placement of the tsarist-bureaucratic rule by the fresh, more vital rule of the rising and more powerful bourgeoisie, even more harmful to the people. He opposed the dream of an immediate transition from tsardom to a communal, stateless, socialist-anarchist system allegedly more in harmony with the instincts of the Russian people.

Dragomanov, on the other hand, believed that the first condition of a reform of Russia's social order was the introduction of a constitutional and federal system, the abolition of absolutism and state centralization, while the attainment of socialism should be effected by organizing the workers. Dragomanov was a convinced opponent of a despotic, bureaucratic and centralized tsardom and of its inveterate methods. At the same time, during his stay abroad he reached the conclusion that the Russian revolutionaries were, unconsciously or deliberately, imitating the peculiarities and methods of tsardom, despotism, belief in force, intolerance, and ruthlessness, bordering on cynicism, in applying the means leading to the political goal they had set for themselves. Especially on this point he later fell into complete disagreement with almost the entire revolutionary emigration. Eventually he left Switzerland for Bulgaria and became professor at the University of Sofia where he died.[62]

In April, 1882, he published in the *Volnoye Slovo* (Free Word), issued in Geneva, an article entitled "The Attractiveness of Energy." He frankly hurled at the Russian revolutionaries a number of accusations and warnings, not devoid of a prophetic character. He pointed out that in their activities the revolutionaries were disregarding principles, were following the method that the aim justified the means and that in their conduct they were coming closer to that of the tsardom which they opposed.

"As a consequence of such a lighthearted attitude to principles there appears, among others, a lack of clarity in political convictions in the revolutionary circles themselves, followed by an unavoidable lowering of requirements as far as the revolutionary leaders are concerned.

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62 Akselrod wrote about Dragomanov: "Dragomanov considered himself a socialist, while his opponents did not recognize him as one. Without any polemics I would say that he was an honest and consistent liberal democrat with sympathies for socialism." *Perezhitoye i Peredumannoye* (Experiences and Meditations), 1927, pp. 184-185. Nicholas Rusanov writes about Dragomanov as follows: "In the first period after his departure for abroad he kept going left and in the second half of the 1870's he became from a straight liberal, if one may say so, a social liberal... Besides Ukrainian patriotism he tried to proclaim the ideas of moderate, today one would say, reformist socialism." N. S. Rusanov, *V Emigratsii*. Moscow 1929, p. 41. In a letter to Vladimir Grünberg who was leaving for Russia from abroad, Dragomanov advises him to take up true socialism. "Concerning revenge, terror etc., all this may be comprehensible and perhaps even useful, but all this is not socialism. It is necessary that somebody should take up socialism. One should start organizing the workers in Russia. Without this there will be no socialism, there will be only politicizing." Letter of December 10, 1880, Rapperswil Archives.

This explains the presence, besides persons of high, chiefly practical energy, of a comparatively considerable percentage of traitors in all Russian political trials of recent times... And many examples could be quoted of intolerance, quarrels about trifles between the revolutionary circles, intrigues, mutual deceits, calumnies, destruction and deliberate hiding of publications not issued by our members etc. What would we see if one of the present Russian revolutionary factions actually obtained access to power? The Executive Committee constituted only a remote likeness of power, but even now we see in certain circles symptoms of a kind of court customs, for instance the fear to contest the Committee in anything, or even to point out to it, for its own benefit, its open mistakes, silence and agreeing to its state centralism on the part of the federalists and anarchists of yesterday, a tendency to anoint themselves with their glory etc. These usages lower still more the ideological character of the Russian revolutionary movement, and in addition they bring the revolutionary milieu closer to the official circles, and consequently they bring the political system, to the founding of which the Russian revolutionaries can contribute, if not found it themselves, closer to the system that exists, as this took place in Jacobinic France."[63]

This article caused indignation among the revolutionary circles of the emigration. Akselrod tendered his resignation from the *Free Word.* Only Stepniak-Kravchinski, who the longer he remained in Western Europe the more he shook off the atmosphere and sectarianism of the Russian revolutionary circles, congratulated Dragomanov on his article, and wrote Akselrod a letter criticizing his attitude to the article: "Reading it, did you not feel how much burning, inexorable truth it contains! Did you not feel that it was not dictated by personal irritation or by the desire of humiliating anyone, but by the ardent love for certain ideas that we recognize ourselves, by wishing good to the same party that he attacks? Is not that which he says about centralism true?.. The defense of the freedom of thought is only possible by actually practicising it..." Stepniak also accuses Akselrod of servility toward the Executive Committee. "One may admire them and even bow one's head before their actions, and I do so from the bottom of my heart. But to demand that no one dare to think, or if not to think, not to speak badly of them, this certainly is not the admiration of colleagues, but servility, a depravity of thought, something odious to the highest degree, when it is transferred to the realm of revolution."[64]

[63] Iz *Arkhiva* P. B. *Akselroda,* Berlin, 1929, p. 70.
[64] Iz *Arkhiva* P. B. *Akselroda,* pp. 67-69.

12.

DEMOCRACY

THE PRINCIPAL PIONEER of Russian Marxism was George Plekhanov. His was not a creative mind, nor did he seek his own road as did Pestel, Herzen, Bakunin or even Tkachev. He increased the doctrinal vassalage of Russian Socialism, believed in Marx's theory as in a revelation, defended its assumptions with great dialectical skill, considerable amount of sophistry, vehemence and dogmatism, and founded the militant church of Russian Marxism. A passionate controversialist and polemicist, boisterous Chanteclair of Marxist orthodoxy, alumnus of a military school, he laboriously filled the gaps of his cadet education.

The populists were doctrinaires, but they at least tried to find directives in the real circumstances of Russian life, in the nature of the people, though they subconsciously imputed to the people their own conception. Plekhanov came with a theory born on foreign ground and, according to his own statement, he made from it a Procrustean bed for the Russian reality. The materialist-economic Marxist conception of history was for him a "strict scientific fact" that could not provoke any doubts. Like a true sectarian he directed the edge of his polemics above all against competing revolutionary trends. Having hardly accepted Marxism, he attacked, with a neophyte's zeal, Proudhon, his recent master, and denounced Tikhomirov, the populists and, in fact, everybody who proceeded to destroy tsarism according to a revolutionary ritual different from his. He denounced all deflections from Marxist orthodoxy as anarchism, Blanquism, petty bourgeoisie. After the appearance of revisionism he ardently opposed its main representative, Bernstein. He branded all this as heresy: anathema, anathema.

Until then the revolutionaries of various fractions felt themselves bound by a certain solidarity. Plekhanov broke those ties. His attitude was reminiscent of the sarcastic stand expressed in the Communist Manifesto towards the Socialists of other hues. The condensed hatred and

intolerance, characteristic of the theory of class socialism, when transferred to Russia, was carried to the extreme and was not only directed against the State and the capitalists, but also against the liberal intelligentsia, and particularly against revolutionaries who had different ideas. Under the impression of Tikhomirov's betrayal, Akselrod, on behalf of the *Liberation of Labor* party, approached Lavrov in August, 1888, suggesting the formation of a common front. Lavrov did not accept the suggestion, motivating his refusal mainly by the fact that the members of the *Liberation of Labor* were attacking other factions of the revolutionaries more vehemently than the enemies. Lavrov was directly pointing to Plekhanov. He rightly indicated that among the émigrés mutual bitterness increased, that at home practical activity brought people closer to each other, while here academic theorizing brought each doctrine to its extreme consequences.[1]

In his mental make-up, Plekhanov was a typical member of the Russian intelligentsia, while in his aspirations he was a revolutionary imperialist who wished to preserve for revolutionary Russia all the conquests of tsardom. "He saw in Russia a great socialist country of the future" — Tikhomirov writes about him. — "He literally hated any separatism. He treated Ukrainophilism with contempt and hostility. The Russian unifier and leveler was deeply rooted in him. As a revolutionary and émigré, Plekhanov could not openly oppose the Poles who also were a revolutionary force, but he did not like the Poles and did not respect or trust them. He stated this openly in friendly conversations. With Dragomanov he was in openly hostile relations... He treated Shevchenko and the Ukrainophils with decidedly greater hatred than even, for instance, Katkov."[2]

In Russia Plekhanov is the initiator of applying Marxism as a method of studying the universe and in particular the history of mankind.

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[1] Lavrov wrote to Akselrod on September 17, 1888: "I will not join any socialist combination that offends and irritates other revolutionary socialists, and least of all one that opposes comrades of other opinions more sharply than it does people belonging to a camp that is hostile to socialism in general." The literary men among socialists, are the most vehement. "A socialist writer grows indignant and irritated... The pictures of the worker, peasant, capitalist, the Tsar pale for him in the presence of the picture of his colleague, a socialist writer of another group, who makes him indignant by a lack of understanding of his arguments and of opposition to his favorite theses. The tactical task of the struggle against capitalism in the government is too frequently pushed into the background in view of the polemic tendency to bite and suppress the adversary... It seems to me that one of the members of your group, in accordance with the literary terms of his mind, is probably unable to use other methods in his polemics." It was plain whom Lavrov had in mind. — *Iz Arkhiva P. B. Akselroda*, Berlin, 1924, pp. 36-40.

[2] L. Tikhomirov, *Vospominaniya* (Reminiscences), 1927, 90-92. — N. S. Rusanov, *V Emigratsii*, Moscow, 1929, pp. 36, 37. — W. Sombart, *Der proletarische Sozialismus*, Vol. I., p. 75. A characterization of Plekhanov by F. Dan (Gurvich) appeared in *Sotsialistischeskii Vestnik*, (Socialist Courier), published in Berlin, No. 11, June 9, 1928.

He was the first Russian to explain systematically the whole ideological superstructure of the life of mankind, religion, science, poetry and the plastic arts, by means of the materialist-economic conception of history and of the theory of class struggle as the decisive factor in the history of mankind. He first reduced the study of the history of culture to discovering in it feudal, petty bourgeois, capitalist, and proletarian influences. In no other European country did Marxism reach such doctrinaire numbness, such sophistic casuistry and tiresome ritualistic phraseology. The words of Turgenev from his letter to Herzen come to one's mind: "Of all European nations it is the Russian that least of all feels the necessity of freedom. A Russian, left to himself, infallibly becomes an Old-Believer: something pushes and prompts him there.."[3]

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As a Marxist, Plekhanov believed that a revolution taking place spontaneously would lead Russia to a crisis. This was in conformity with that aspect of Marxism according to which a new evolutionary stage of mankind matures like an embryo, within the preceding stage, while man plays only the rôle of midwife mitigating the birth pangs. Plekhanov's Soviet biographer declares that Plekhanov was an excessive optimist, overestimating "the objective moment in the revolution."[4] It would appear from this that Plekhanov underestimated the subjective moment, that is, the creative rôle of the purposefully acting human will. But such a charge is too categorical for one could rather speak of a dualism, of an inner contradiction in Plekhanov's directives inherited from his master, Marx. It could be inferred from Plekhanov's philippics against Tikhomirov, that Plekhanov rejected terror as a method of revolutionary activity, that he regarded it as a powerless attempt at an artificial acceleration of the historical process, an attempt resulting from the ignorance of the laws governing history. And yet Plekhanov was by no means a categorical opponent of terrorism. We know from Rusanov's reminiscences that Plekhanov, already after having undergone his mental evolution towards Marxism, declared himself in favor of terrorist action against Alexander III, when the translation of the Communist Manifesto was being prepared for the press. "What will you do with this hard-headed *Mitrofanushka* (greenhorn), if he does not understand the human language" – said Plekhanov to Rusanov. "This Neanderthal skull has to be trepanned with a bomb to press into it an idea of the political demands of modern Russia."[5] It was an old mannerism of Plekhanov the orator, as if to flabbergast the Philistines, to pronounce

[3] Letter of December 13|25, 1867 from Baden-Baden. *Pisma Kavelina i Turgeneva k Gertsenu*. Dragomanov's edition. Geneva, 1892, p. 198.
[4] V. Vaganian, *G. V. Plekhanov*, Moscow, 1924, p. 378.
[5] N. S. Rusanov, *V Emigratsii*, Moscow, 1929, p. 39.

terroristic principles and warnings accompanied by quotations, aphorisms and witticisms.

In the revised project of the Social-Democratic party's program issued in 1888, Plekhanov declares that when the moment of the attack comes, terror would not be excluded as a means in the struggle. In contemporary discussion of terrorism two types were distinguished: individual terror, as practised by the Russian *People's Will*, and mass terror, as practised during the French Revolution by the Jacobins. In abbreviation these two varieties were called *March 1, i.e.* the date of the assassination of Alexander II in 1881, and the *Year 93, i.e.* 1793, the time of the Jacobin Terror. Plekhanov opposed terrorism of the first type, but favored the Jacobin type.

The epigones of the *People's Will* who remained in Russia and among whom was Olga Florovskaya, née Figner, sister of Vera, started to publish in Geneva in 1887 a periodical under the direction of Degoboryi-Mokryevich, entitled *Samoupravleniye* (Self-Government). The program of the paper combined the legal struggle for the constitution with terror. It was a combination of liberalism with terrorism, ironically characterized by Social Democrats as liberalism plus bomb. In the leading article of the first issue of *Self-Government* we read: "We do not believe that it would be economical and timely to use up our strength for a palace or a city revolution; such a method of action, not to mention its difficulties, may lead to undesirable results; we do not want to exchange one despotism for another. The way of legal agitation in the press, in the *zemstvos* etc., the organization of legal social protests and of legal pressure on the government have many aspects which speak in favor of it and we heartily recommend it. However by itself it will probably not lead to a considerable success. Consequently we consider it necessary to include among the methods of the struggle against absolutism the way already chosen by the people of *March 1.* We are convinced that, if not a single terrorist fact, a series of such facts, a system of them, with a certain support on the part of society would force monarchism, which maintains itself only by lack of unity among the people and the tradition of enslavement, to lay down its arms."[6]

This statement called forth a reply on the part of Plekhanov who wrote: "What will happen if the government will not be intimidated by our 'facts' and, in answer to our terrorism will continue to practise its own terror?... We believe that we should 'use our strength for a

[6] G. A. Kuklin, *Itogi revolutsionnago dvizheniya v Rossi za sorok let* (1862-1902) (Summaries of the Revolutionary Movement in Russia for Forty Years). Geneva 1903, Supplements: pp. 60, 61. About the periodical *Samoupravleniye*: V. Burtsev, *Borba za svobodnuyu Rossiyu* (Struggle for a Free Russia), pp. 58, 59.

city revolution' and by means of the people of 93 reach the goal that we shall not reach by merely following the path of the people of March 1. Dynamite is a rather good means against Russian despotism, but the guillotine is still better."

Two years after this controversy came the centenary of the French Revolution of 1789. The press of the Western European countries stressed the significance of 1789, condemning the events of 1793; it spoke favorably about the Girondists, berating the Jacobins for their terrorism and dictatorial rule. Plekhanov warmly defended the Jacobins.

"The Montagnards resorted to requisitions, confiscations, compulsory loans, compulsory rate of assignats, in a word, they forced the intimidated propertied classes to help save the country by monetary contributions... The struggle of the proletariat of that time against the propertied class was bound to change from a fatal, inevitable necessity into terrorism. In the situation as it then existed the proletariat could defend its rule only by terror."

Besides, Plekhanov believes that the social revolution of the future will not be so cruel. "The triumph of the workers' cause is to such an extent assured by history itself that it will not need terrorism." But should the bourgeoisie try to resist, like the monarchists during the first revolution, then: *à la guerre comme à la guerre!*

After the terrorist conspiracy of Ulyanov and his associates against Alexander III was uncovered, Plekhanov paid tribute to the conspirators' courage, but felt that it was the courage of despair. He believed that the public accepted indifferently both the attempts and executions of the conspirators. He felt that the terror of the Russian revolutionaries did not have support in the masses, while the Jacobin terror did have it.[7]

Plekhanov seemed to have overlooked the main difference of these two varieties of terrorism. The terror of the *People's Will* was a struggle against a still existing powerful government, while the Jacobin terror flared up after the collapse of the old government in France, as terrorism of revenge. While dynamite was placed under an as yet unshaken throne, the guillotine beheaded a king who was a prisoner of the revolution. The already victorious Jacobin terror had the backing of the masses; the Russian masses were waiting for the result of the struggle, so that they might triumphantly acclaim the avenging terrorism.

At the beginning of the twentieth century there started a new period of terrorism, the era of the revolutionary socialists. Soon the first victims fell: Bogolepov, Sipiagin. At that time Plekhanov at one of the émigré meetings again developed his view of terrorism and advocated

[7] V. Vaganian, *G. V. Plekhanov*, Moscow, 1924, pp. 376-378. Plekhanov, *Sochineniya*, Gosud. Izdatelstvo. Vol. III, p. 257.

terrorism that should be applied after the triumph of the revolution. One of the participants of the meeting described Plekhanov's statement as follows:

"Once, polemizing with the anarchists on the subject of terrorism, Plekhanov declared verbatim the following: We by no means renounce terror for ever. When power will be in our hands we shall consider it our first duty to erect a gallows in Kazan Square and it will be necessary to acquaint Nicholas II with it."

Another participant of that meeting writes:

"Plekhanov speaks with studious gesticulation, his delivery is colorful, and rather ostentatious: there are abundant jokes, quotations from Krilov, citations of utterances of Gogol's and Shchedrin's characters... The light, jocular form all the more emphasizes the ominous ruthlessness of the contents. While attacking the terror of the revolutionary socialists, he commended the terror of the great French Revolution, the terror of Robespierre. We shall not, after the model of the revolutionary socialists fire now at the Tsar and his servants, but after victory we shall erect for them a guillotine in Kazan Square."

Silence fell after these words and then one of those present said: "How disgraceful! (*Kakaya gadost*)".

Then the crowd of Plekhanov's adherents, men and women, reacted to his words with thundering applause, while shouts of "Out, out with him" were directed at the opponent. That one opponent was the revolutionary Nadezhdin.

During the first Russian revolution, starting from 1904, Plekhanov again reminded the Russian revolutionaries of the famous Jacobin terror: "History does not know terrorism more dreadful than the terrorism of the great French Revolution which placed on the scene real Titans and swept over France as if God's hurricane, mercilessly destroying the remnants of the old government."[8]

The Jacobin undercurrent, so vivid in the pre-Marxist Russian revolutionary movement, to mention only Zaychnevski, Tkachev, Maria Olovennikov-Oshaninova, was also apparent in the doctrine of the Social Democrats. Lenin once said approvingly of Plekhanov that a true Jacobin lived in him.[9] This was, it would seem, in contradiction with Marxist revolutionarism which regarded crises in human society as the result of a historical process that was determined not by a force of human will and energy but by force of the laws of nature. However, we know that a different note, closely related to Jacobinism, is constantly heard in Marx. It was he who wrote that the tactics of the French Convention was a lighthouse towards which, during revolution

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[8] Vaganian, *Plekhanov*, pp. 383, 385, 387.
[9] Vaganian, p. 391.

storms, the eyes of the revolutionaries of all times and nations should be directed.[10]

The Marxists who admitted terrorism could always refer to the texts of the master. Though Marx taught that a revolution matures like an embryo in the bosom of the preceding period and man plays only the auxiliary and beneficent rôle of midwife, it was evident from numerous passages in his works that this midwife would spill much blood and spill it gladly.

Young Marx declared in the *German-French Annals* that material preponderance can only be overthrown by material preponderance. He wrote in his *Misery of Philosophy* that only when class struggle will end, social evolutions will cease to be political revolutions. Until then, on the eve of each general social upheaval, the last word of social science would always be: struggle or death, bloody struggle or annihilation.

After the fall of the revolution in Paris and Vienna Marx wrote in the *New Rhenish Gazette* of November 6, 1848: "Once the victory of the Red Republic in Paris has been established, the armies from inside the countries will be pushed to the frontiers and beyond the frontiers and the real strength of the fighting parties will be manifested. Then also we shall exclaim: *Vae victis*... The cannibalism of the counter-revolution will convince the peoples that there is only one means in order to shorten, simplify, concentrate the murderous death pangs of the old society, the bloody birth pangs of the new society, only one means – revolutionary terrorism."

Because of the anti-revolutionary attitude of the Austrian Slavs, Marx recommends an inexorable fight and ruthless terrorism against them. In January, 1849, he praises Kossuth for applying truly revolutionary means: "For the first time in the revolutionary movement of 1848, for the first time since 1793, a nation surrounded by preponderant forces of the counter-revolution, dares to oppose Red terror to White terror. For the first time in a long span we find a truly revolutionary character of a man who dares to take up the gauntlet of desperate struggle in the name of his nation, a man who is for his nation in one person Danton and Carnot – Louis Kossuth."

In the farewell article of the *New Rhenish Gazette* of 1849, when the hopes for the immediate success of the revolution had already collapsed Marx wrote: "We are ruthless, we do not ask for any consideration from you. When our turn comes we shall not disguise terrorism."[11]

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[10] Quoted in Plekhanov's *My i Oni* (We and They). Addresses at the London Congress of 1907. Geneva 1907, p. 14.

[11] *Aus dem literarischen Nachlass von Marx, Engels und Lassalle*, Vol. III, Stuttgart 1902, pp. 199, 233, 264, 267, 268.

When a revolutionary movement develops during a long despotic rule and social reaction, there appear in it, as is demonstrated by the example of the French Revolution of the eighteenth century, two currents. On the one hand there arises the sincere tendency not only to abolish that which exists but also to put into effect, on its ruins, the ideals cherished for a long time as an antithesis of the existing system. The rule of the despotic monarch and his officials is replaced by the principles of the rule of the nation, democracy. Instead of a system in which the subjects have no rights, a whole system of guarantees of the inequality of classes, the abolition of privileges, civic equality is desiged. One group of the revolutionaries faithfully guards, even after the triumph of revolution, these ideals and strives not only for a change of the system and of the rulers, but above all for a radical change of the methods of the old governments. Their sincere doctrinal hatred of arbitrary rule makes of them convinced enemies of absolutism incapable of applying it in practice and of practicing ruthless dictatorship in critical moments of the revolution. These are the Girondists.

But besides that type there rises another. Until the collapse of the old regime, both groups may go even hand in hand during the struggle. However, as soon as the old regime has fallen, a struggle between the two groups is unavoidable. The second type develops psychologically by the combined operation of hatred of the existing system and the spontaneous imitation of its character. That group fiercely hates the existing government, adopts and zealously proclaims revolutionary slogans, promises the abolition of all violence and injustice, but deeply rooted in it is a striving for despotism, for privilege reversed against the present masters, and for revenge on them by means of the same methods that were used by them, only infinitely more severe. This is the Jacobin type. This type intuitively takes over from the old regime the elements of its strength, the instinct of power and organization, and creates an energetic and ruthless group, capable of seizing and practicing dictatorship after the collapse of the old regime. Then it is faced by the vanquished remnants of the overthrown regime, revolutionary camps of the Girondist type and the popular masses nurtured in bondage. Against the first ones it applies severe reprisals. The Girondists will be in opposition to it, basing themselves on democratic and liberal principles they will wait until the nation decides its own fate through a constituent assembly. Sincerely abhorring usurpation and violence, they will fight the Jacobins by moral means, constantly appealing to the will of the nation. The popular masses will be a susceptible material to fall under the control of the most ruthless group, the extreme demagogues. The long-standing grudge of the masses against the ruling and powerful classes made them susceptible to the slogans of hatred and revenge,

while their enslavement, passivity and ignorance will easily make them slaves of the new power.

Under these circumstances the camp of the Jacobin type has all chances of seizing power. It will base it on the will of the people as imagined by itself, or on its own understanding of the good of that people, on the program of its own party. It will call it the sovereignty of the people, but at the first manifestation of a conflict between the collective will of the representatives of the people or the proletariat and the program of its own party, it will unhesitatingly decide the matter in favor of the party and lean on the dictatorship of the minority. The duration of that dictatorship, the date of 9 Thermidor, will depend on the objective and subjective conditions, on the economic situation and on the psychology of the educated class and of the masses.

In the Russian revolutionary movement, both these currents had existed for a long time. At the critical moment, after the collapse of tsardom, they were bound to clash, with an easily predictable result. In 1903 the Russian Social Democrats divided into two fractions, Bolsheviks and Mensheviks, that is the majority and minority groups, because the former had the majority at the London congress where the rift occurred. Plekhanov joined the Bolsheviks. In the spring of 1906 he became a Menshevik. The Bolsheviks were led by Lenin. In a pamphlet published in 1904, he represents the Mensheviks as Girondists and the Bolsheviks as Jacobins. He calls the Menshevik Akselrod a Girondist and accuses him of repeating the "played-out Bernstein melody," calling the Bolsheviks Jacobins and Blanquists. "To utter the dreadful words: Jacobinism, etc., means nothing but opportunism. The Jacobin, insolubly linked with the organization of the proletarat conscious of its class interests, is the true revolutionary Social Democrat. The Girondist, afraid of the dictatorship of the proletariat and longing for the absolute value of democratic postulates, is the opportunist.[12] In Lenin's conception, the revolutionary Social Democrat is the Bolshevik.

Contrary to Lenin's opinion about him, Plekhanov was not a consistent Jacobin. He was, to use his own expression applied to a large group of revolutionaries after the fall of tsardom, a half-Leninist, while Lenin was an ultra-Jacobin. The Russian mind had been prepared for Jacobinism by the long years of the old régime; deeply rooted in it was the fanatical desire of transforming, in accordance with its own revolutionary program, both its own country and entire mankind, a desire combined with a genuine disregard of man as a living being: a doctrinaire philanthropy disregarding real humanitarianism.

[12] N. Lenin, *Shag vperiod, dva shaga nazad* (One Step Forward, Two Steps Back), Geneva, 1904, p. 140, Partizdat edition, 1938, p. 170.

Consequently, the revolutionary Social Democrat, that is the type of the revolutionary who extended his power over Russia after the collapse of tsardom, was a Jacobin. Let us quote the opinions of Taine about the type and the rule of the Jacobin, voiced in his great work.

"In the absence of a great mass which steps aside, a small group is on duty and seizes power. Due to the abdication of the majority, the minority becomes the sovereign, and the public cause, abandoned by the undecided, passive, absent masses, falls into the hands of the decided, active, present group which finds the time and which has the will to undertake this task...

"However great may be the slogans freedom, equality, fraternity, with which the revolution adorns itself, it is first of all a transfer of ownership *(une translation de la propriété)*. In that lies its secret support, its constant strength, its first prop and its historical significance.

"From then on, there rules a reversed aristocracy *(à rebours)*, contrary to law and still more contrary to nature. Because on the ladder of civilization and culture now, by a sudden reversal, the lower rungs are at the top and the upper ones at the bottom. Inequality, applied by the constitution, was restored in a reverse sense. The rural and urban proletariat imposes taxes, imprisons, robs or kills more arbitrarily, more brutally, more unjustly than the former feudal barons, while it has its former masters for peasants and slaves.[13]

"With regard to building or destroying" – says Taine about the Jacobin – "his straightforward action is the quickest and most energetic. For if long considerations are necessary to find out what is appropriate for twenty-six million living French people, a glance is sufficient to learn what abstract men of theory desire. Indeed, theory has cut them all to one measure and has left them only an elementary will; by force of decision, the philosophical automat wants freedom, equality, sovereignty of the people, rights of man... That suffices: from then on the will of the people is known and is known beforehand; therefore, one may proceed without consulting the citizens; one is not obliged to wait for the vote. At any rate, approval on their part is certain; if by any chance it should not come, this would be ignorance, a mistake or malice on their part, and consequently their reply would deserve to be recognized as invalid."[14]

"This is a new crew, sectarians blinded by their dogma, assassins, obdurate thanks to their trade, climbers clinging to their positions. In relation to human life and property these people have no scruples whatsoever, for they have prepared a theory for their own benefit and re-

[13] H. Taine, *Les origines de la France contemporaine*, twenty fourth edition, Vol. IV, Paris 1904, pp. 35, 36, 172, 173, 206.
[14] Vol. V, p. 27.

duced the sovereignty of the people to their own sovereignty. According to the Jacobin, the public cause belongs to him, and in his eyes the public cause contains in itself all private matters, bodies, and properties, minds and consciences. Thus everything belongs to him: by the mere fact that he is a Jacobin, he considers himself legally both Tsar and Pope. He is little interested in the real will of the French people. His authorization is not derived from voting, its origin is higher, it is given him by Truth, Reason, and Virtue. He alone is enlightened, he alone is a patriot, and consequently he alone is worthy to rule, while his conceit of power makes him believe that any resistance is a crime. When the majority protests, it does so because it is stupid or depraved; for these two reasons it deserves to be made powerless and it shall be made powerless... By instinct he always behaved like a ruler. He was one even when he was a common private man and club member; he does not cease to be one now when he has the legal power, all the more so, because when he weakens he feels lost and, in order to save himself from the scaffold, he has no other escape except dictatorship. Such a man will not allow himself to be expelled like his predecessors. On the contrary he will exact obedience for himself at any price, he will unhesitatingly restore a central government and executive power, he will rebuild the old mechanism of coercion and will use it in a manner more severe, more despotic, with greater contempt for human rights and public liberties, than Louis XIV and Napoleon.

"However, he must bring his future actions in line with his recent words. At first sight the operation seems difficult, because the words proclaimed by him, a priori condemn his intended actions. Yesterday he excessively extolled the rights of the governed, up to the abolition of the rights of the rulers, tomorrow he will excessively extol the rights of the rulers, up to the abolition of the rights of the governed. According to his words the people is the only authority, but he will treat the people as slaves. According to his words the government is only a servant but he will give the government the prerogatives of a Sultan. Only recently he condemned the smallest act of the public authority as a crime; now he will punish as a crime the smallest opposition to the public authority. What should he do to justify such an about-face and with what excuse will he renounce the principles on which he had based his own usurpation? He is careful not to renounce them; on the contrary, he proclaims them as loud as possible. Thanks to this manoeuvre the ignorant mass, seeing that the same flask continues to be given to it, imagines that the same potion is handed to it and it is made to drink tyranny under the label of freedom. During six months he will spread charlatan emblems, slogans, tirades and lies to camouflage the nature of his product; if in time the public will find it bitter, so much

the worse for the public. Sooner or later it will swallow it voluntarily or under coercion, because in the meantime instruments will have been prepared that will force it down its throat."[15]

The Jacobins proclaim the slogan of the sovereignty of the people, but an appeal to all the people of France is regarded by them as a betrayal of the revolution. They establish the dictatorship of Paris over France. The Jacobin Paris policy is opposed to the departmental policy of the Girondists. In reality the Jacobins are not concerned with the whole population of Paris, but only with the poor city proletariat. In fact, there rules a handful of Jacobins, *les exclusifs,* as they will be called, after their collapse, by their opponents. This handful of leaders demagogically flatters the proletariat, representing it as a chosen class. Robespierre explains to the enchanted masses that the rich cannot be virtuous, that virtue is only possible in modest life; he speaks as the chief of a sect, combining the social question with the moral one.[16]

As a result, on the ruins of royal absolutism and of the privileges of the ruling classes there rises the dictatorship of the revolutionary party, based on the lower urban classes as well as the privileged position of these classes, motivated by their moral superiority over other classes. Robespierre clothes the postulate of dictatorship in the phraseology of the Great Revolution: "The revolutionary government is the despotism of freedom with regard to tyranny." "The essence of the republic is to destroy everything that opposes it."

Carrier, an advocate of the Jacobin dictatorship, says: "We shall make a cemetery out of France rather than fail to regenerate her in our way."

The nucleus of dictatorship based on the lower classes and their privileged position, is to be found already in the levellers, the extremist group of the English revolutionaries of the seventeenth century. One of them, Lilburne, establishes in his *Legal Fundamental Liberties of the People of England* of 1649 the principle that only the "well affected" can have voting rights; this is the principle of the rule of a chosen minority composed of representatives of the lowest classes.[17]

In 1796 Babeuf's Communist conspiracy was discovered in Paris. Like all Utopians of social upheaval, Babeuf believes that the rising prepared by him should be the last one and that it would finally give happiness to the people. In the manifesto prepared by him we read: "The insurrection committee of public safety shall continue uninterrupt-

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15 Vol. VII, pp. 6-8, Cf. A. A. Goldenweiser, *Yakobintsi i Bolsheviki* (The Jacobins and the Bolsheviks), Berlin 1922, pp. 9, 17, 23-25, 38.

16 F. Aulard, *Histoire politique de la Révolution Française,* Third edition, 1905 pp. 422, 423, 426, 427.

17 Sombart, *Der proletarische Sozialismus,* Vol. I, p. 407.

edly until the complete achievement of the insurrection." In other words, a revolutionary dictatorship. Babeuf rejects the idea of a constituent assembly and uses arguments similar to those that will later be used by the Russian revolutionary Communists. Babeuf's argument is as follows:

"The people whose opinions were formed under a government of inequality and despotism, is little able, at the beginning of a regenerating revolution, to designate through elections men destined to direct and carry it out. This task can only be entrusted to recognized and courageous citizens, imbued with love of country and humanity, who have long been familiar with public matters, and have freed themselves from prejudices and common failings. In the initial stages of a political revolution, even out of respect for the true sovereignty of the people, one should be less concerned with ordering a national election than with entrusting supreme power, with as little arbitrariness as possible, to intelligent and strongly revolutionary hands."

After expounding the plan of the insurgent people's dictatorship, Babeuf said: "In order to carry out these and other, equally happy changes the transfer of power to the hands of true, pure and determined democrats must be assured."

Consequently, in order to respect the true sovereignty of the people, the application of democratic principles should be restricted, according to Babeuf, and an oligarchy of revolutionaries introduced, supported by the ochlocracy of the *Sansculottes.*

Babeuf intended to bring about depopulation by the mass killing of the nobility and of the royalists.[18]

Buonarroti, a comrade of Babeuf, who was saved from the collapse of the conspiracy and preserved for posterity the principles and history of the conspiracy in a two volume work, and who implanted the spirit of Babeuf in the French revolutionists of the period of the Orleans monarchy, considered it necessary that, after the seizure of power by the Communists, France should be separated from other countries by an impenetrable barrier, to protect the masses from bad influences. He demanded that no printed work appear in France without the permission of the Communist government.

In other words the revolutionary dictatorship was directed against the revolutionary class as well. Even that class had to be curbed and protected from undesirable influences.

From Babeuf the idea of dictatorial socialism passed, through the intermediary of Buonarroti, to the French Communist sects under the July monarchy. At the entrance examination to the Society of the

[18] Sombart, *Der proletarische Sozialismus,* Vol. I, p. 408, Wilhelm Mautner, *Der Bolschewismus,* 1920, p. 257.

Seasons in 1836 the following question was asked: "Will the people be able to govern itself immediately after the revolution?" The answer was: "As the people suffers from cancer, it needs unusual means to be restored to health. The people will need a revolutionary authority for some time."

Blanqui called this authority the Paris dictatorship and, following Babeuf, he justified it as follows: "To demand elections from this subjugated population would mean to demand them from our masters."

In the Blanqui-Barbès trial of 1839 there figured, as a document, a Communist catechism in which the problem of dictatorship was discussed: "It is indisputable that after a revolution, carried out in the spirit of our ideas, it will be necessary to create a dictatorial authority to direct the revolutionary movement. It will obviously derive its right and its strength from the consent of the armed masses which, acting for the common good, will express the enlightened will of the considerable majority of the nation. To be strong, to be capable of quick action, dictatorial power should be concentrated in the hands of the smallest possible number of people."

Etienne Cabet, author of the *Journey to Icaria*, wrote that in a socialist society there could be in each city only one, obviously an official newspaper. The people should be protected from the temptation of seeking truth in the clash of contraditcory opinions.

Wilhelm Weitling's Communism assumes a moral-religious charac ter. The organization founded by him was called League of the Just. The Communists striving for common ownership and the abolition of wealth are the just, wealth leads to iniquity. He wants to introduce that Communism, which constantly uses quotations from the New Testament, in a sanguinary way. "Your hope lies in your sword." "It is a sad experience that truth must clear its path through blood." In the *Guarantees of Harmony and Freedom*, Weitling writes: "I see a new Messiah coming with a sword to fulfil the teaching of the first one. By his courage he will be placed at the head of the revolutionary army, crushing with its help the rotten structure of the old social order, diverting rivers of tears to the sea of oblivion, and turning the earth into paradise."

Weitling distrusts democracy and would not entrust the Communist reconstruction of society to a national assembly. "All Socialists, except the Fourierists, are agreed" – he writes – "that the form of government called democracy is quite unsuitable, and even detrimental to the principle of social organization that is in the process of being put into effect."[19]

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[19] J. O. Martov, *Mirovoy Bolshevizm* (World Bolshevism), 1923, pp. 51 52. Dr. Fritz Gerlich, *Der Kommunismus als Lehre vom tausend-jährigen Reich*, Munich, 1929, pp. 207, 208.

Marx predicted that the dictatorship of the proletariat would be despotic, and once he even uses the expression terroristic. In 1848 Engels prophesied in figurative language that red streams of lava would flood the present order while the bourgeoisie "would be thrown by the proletariat into the crater as an unlamented expiatory sacrifice."[20]

The prophets of the revolution show alternatively in their utterances its two countenances: the one radiant, magnanimous, denouncing force and inequality; the other vengeful, bloody, ruling by terror and introducing a new inequality.

The first aspect is presented poetically by Lassalle in the conclusion of his speech about the workers' program, delivered in Berlin on April 12, 1862:

"The dawn of a new day can be seen earlier from the high summits of knowledge than down below in the bustle of life.

"Gentlemen, did you ever observe sunrise from a high mountain? A scarlet ring colors the edge of the horizon with a red and bloody hue, heralding new light; the mists and clouds rise, gather and go to meet the morning star, for a moment screening its rays, but no earthly power can check the steady majestic rising of the sun, one more hour and lo! it is already in the sky, visible to the entire world, emitting bright light and warmth.

"What one hour is in the daily phenomenon of nature, one and two decades are in the much more imposing phenomenon of universal sunrise."

Lassalle shows an entirely different aspect of revolution in the conclusion of his speech of November 17, 1862, about the constitutional system: "You have at present sufficient experience to see what the old absolutism is like. Therefore no compromise with it but put the thumb into the eye and the knee in the chest (den Daumen auf's Auge und das Knie auf die Brust.)"[21]

Which aspect is more sincere, which is a more faithful mirror of the future? A man who as an active leader and writer experienced the transition of Communism from science to action, writes about Lassalle: "In order to spread his propaganda in spite of the persecution of the era of the Bismarck reaction, he tried to lend to Communism as innocent a character as possible. The young lion whose paws were as yet unable to manage his foes, had to be led into the meadow as a lamb. Lassalle tried to present Communism as a movement that can achieve its aim by peaceful means."[22]

[20] Sombart, I., p. 410.

[21] Ferdinand Lassalle's *Reden und Schriften*, Vol. I. Berlin 1892, p. 535, Vol. II, Berlin 1893, pp. 49, 50.

[22] Karl Radek, *Die Entwicklung des Sozialismus von der Wissenschaft zur That*, Berlin, 1919, p. 5.

Russian Marxism was faced above all with the task of overthrowing tsardom and only subsequently with that of abolishing private property. Of considerable help to it was the revolt against political enslavement. It took up the inheritance of the Decembrists and terrorists, was preparing the constitution, and dreamed of a guillotine in Kazan Square. This revolt against the despotism, established for centuries, in addition to the class struggle embedded in the minds of the people, lent to Russian Marxism from the beginning a mark of particular stringency. It was driven to the extremes of the doctrine, and even beyond them, by the Cossack whip, lashing at the striking workers; the whizz of that whip will reverberate with a vengeful echo in revolutionary Communism. Russian Marxism, developing in 1883 directly after the period of Jewish pogroms, at the beginning of a sharp anti-Semitic trend of the Government, is powerfully strengthened by newcomers from the ghetto who, consciously or unconsciously, seek defense against the blows falling on Russian Jewry. At that time socialism in Russia does not find vent for its energy in open activity, such as was practised, for instance, by the German Social Democracy thus developing in it an essentially reformist trend, engaged in executing a minimalist program and transferring the maximalist program to the sphere of traditional ritualistic declarations and visions of a distant future. Under the impact of all these, exclusively Russian conditions, there develops a revengeful, sharply anti-Government and anti-class socialism.

The revolution following the fall of tsardom was bound to give power to the Jacobins and bring destruction to the Girondists. It will be characterized by revolutionary dictatorship of the most extreme type. It was the same historical law that in France had put the Jacobins to the fore, only in Russia the destructive apparatus and sentiment had been long and thoroughly prepared under the old régime, while the conservative elements, which in France had brought about the speedy collapse of Jacobinism, were much weaker. Moreover, the despotic character of the revolutionary régime in Russia was bound to increase owing to the fact that after the collapse of tsardom the revolution soon assumed a communist character. By its very nature communism was obliged to pave its way by means of coercion and emergency laws. At least, since the times of Babeuf the Utopians of communism had predicted Draconian means that did not recoil before the physical mass extermination of class enemies. The heralds and theorists of communism had beforehand expressed apprehension of the foreign influence of bourgeois systems on the rising communist state. Hence, early the striving was expressed to communize the neighbors and to separate the communist citizens form the rest of the world by a Chinese wall.

A strange thing indeed. They introduce a new system, assure the

world of its immense superiority over the old one, of its immeasurable advantages for the working masses which constitute the vast majority of the nation. It would seem that the protective means, the fear manifested by Babeuf, Buonarroti, Blanqui, are unjustified, as the truth and advantage of the new system should be evident at home and abroad. Yet the doomed bourgeois, pushed by the communists into the abyss, again emerges from it as an alluring Faust, ready to seduce the youthful Margaret of communism. The overthrown and vilified petty bourgeoisie and capitalism, deprived of material strength, must possess some fatalistic attractive power: Draconian prohibitions are always the result of fear.

That power, that attachment to private property and individual ownership, are explained by the communists by the wrong education of generations grown up in the bourgeois system. But whence stems the system itself? According to the Marxists' conception taken by Engels from Morgan, and proclaimed earlier by J. J. Rousseau, originally communism prevailed among mankind in property and family life. How did later individualism arise? Rousseau explained private property as the fall of primitive man, as the social original sin. Is it so easy to eradicate the original sin, is it not deeply rooted in man's instincts?

To win be it only a temporary victory, the communists must attract the poor masses by expropriating the propertied classes. However, the expropriator is a zealous communist until the moment of expropriation. Subsequently the instinct of possession and preservation operates in his mind, the bourgeois awakens in him. Exhorting the people to participate in expropriation, the communists appealed to their desire of increasing their possessions. They feel that they are opposed by the powerful instinct of individualism, personal freedom and private ownership, they do not fear so much the bourgeois whom they had overthrown and expropriated, as the bourgeois rooted in the souls of the expropriators. As Hobbes pessimistically deduced the necessity of absolutist power from man's evil inclinations that, uncurbed, cause the war of all against all, the despotism of the communists, indicated beforehand by the theorists, essentially has its source in the knowledge of the strength of the anti-communist tendencies of human nature. The eternal threat of communism is the *eppure si muove* of the human personality, of eternal man, while its ideal is man the automat, de la Mettrie's *l'homme machine,* deprived of will and freedom, a wheel in the great social mechanism.

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The Marxists, basing themselves on the works of their masters, believed that a social revolution was already developing in the highly industrialized countries as a result of the spontaneous evolution of the

economic process. They were told that the concentration of production in large capitalist enterprises, and the disappearance of medium and small businesses in industry, trade, agriculture, would proceed rapidly. Parallel with this development there would take place the concentration of wealth in the hands of a gradually decreasing number of rich people, the disappearance of medium and small holders, and general proletarianization. The proletariat would form the vast majority of the population of the respective countries, the inner contradictions of the bourgeois system would reach their culmination, after which a social revolution would be bound to break out.

However, years and decades passed and the masters' prophecies did not come true. The development of nations in the direction foreseen by the Marxists not only did not proceed so fast as was expected, but in many respects took an entirely different, sometimes outright opposite, direction. Finally, at the end of the nineteenth century, a critical attitude toward these prophecies and expectations arose among the Social Democrats of Western Europe. A revision of the assumptions began in Germany, conducted mainly in the columns of *Neue Zeit*. The most famous document of revisionism was the study published in 1899 by Edward Bernstein under the title *The Assumptions of Socialism and the Tasks of Social Democracy*. A bitter struggle between revisionism and orthodox Marxism ensued. Plekhanov hastened to the assistance of the orthodox adherents of Marxism and even suggested the exclusion of Bernstein from the German Social-Democratic party, to which, however, the German comrades did not consent.

Bernstein collected abundant statistical data and adduced a series of arguments to demonstrate that the thesis that the bourgeois societies were spontaneously headed towards catastrophe, had proved a paradox in the light of facts.

Bernstein was against opposing social democracy to political democracy, and believed that democratic systems mitigated the acuteness of class struggle. According to Bernstein, class struggle does not constitute the only substance of history, besides it there develops the cooperation of classes. History tends towards the socialization of social systems, but not by means of cataclysm. Socialism becomes the democratic socialist party of reform.[23]

Bernstein reached these conclusions through a critique of the assumptions of Marxism. However, the establishment of the fact that the socio-economic progress itself would not speedily bring about a social revolution, that Marx was mistaken in his predictions, led other revolutionaries to a conclusion entirely different from that of Bernstein. They

[23] Eduard Bernstein, *Die Voraussetzungen des Sozialismus und die Aufgaben der Sozialdemokratie*. Stuttgart 1899, pp. 47-67 and passim.

had no intention of renouncing social revolution which remained a dogma for them. As the road indicated by the Marxists proved uncertain and rather long, a shorter road should be found. As the road of spontaneous evolution failed, the intensity of the revolutionary will and revolutionary enthusiasm should be increased and the outbreak of revolution should be brought about by force. Such is the reasoning of the theorist of revolutionary syndicalism, George Sorel, whose works were diligently studied by Lenin and Trotzky, and who concludes the post-war edition of his *Reflections on Violence* with an apologia of Lenin and his work.

Sorel complains that the struggle between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat is not so bitter as was predicted by Marx, that both classes are inclined to compromise and that this was dangerous for the cause of social revolution. Proletarian force should enter the scene, purify the atmosphere from the miasmata of humanitarianism, intensify the class struggle and bring about an inexorable revolution.

"The bourgeoisie which Marx knew in England was still in a vast majority animated by a conquering, unsatiated and inexorable spirit, which characterized at the beginning of the modern era the creators of the new industry."

Those creators were the captains of industry, that type of capitalist was related to the type of military leader. Sorel complains that this type had disappeared. "If, on the contrary, the bourgeois, confounded by the bluff of the preachers of morality or sociology, returned to the ideal of conservative mediocrity, tried to correct the abuses of economy and wanted to break with the barbarity of their predecessors, then a part of the forces that should have created the tendency of capitalism is used to check it, then chance enters the scene and the future of the world is completely undefined. This undefined character is still increased when the proletariat is converted to social peace simultaneously with its masters."

Compromise in settling conflicts between employers and workers is, according to Sorel, "the proper means of avoiding a Marxist revolution." The people who advocate such a compromise count on "the simultaneous decline of the capitalist spirit and of the revolutionary spirit.

"This twofold movement of degeneration takes the bourgeoisie and the proletariat far away from the roads assigned to them by the theory of Marx.

"...And here the rôle of violence seems to us particularly great in history."

Thus the bloodthirsty bourgeois of Marx, the hireling of big industry, who does not recoil from any crime, and pictured by him melo-

dramatically as a vampire sucking the worker's blood, has failed. From a savage beast he has changed into a domestic animal, and something similar happens to the proletarian. As early as 1851 Marx recognized that by its conduct the bourgeoisie was molding the proletarian: like master, like man. Let us recall Bernstein's statement that democratic systems mitigate class war. This fills Sorel with wrath. His complaints are, as it were, a development of Lassalle's words: Accursed contentment...

"Marx supposed that it was not necessary to incite the bourgeoisie to use force. We face a new and entirely unforseen fact – a bourgeoisie that tries to weaken its strength. Should one believe that the Marxist conception has died? Not at all, because proletarian violence appears on the scene at the moment when social peace attempts to appease conflicts."

Only force can bring revolution and restore energy to "the European nations, degraded by humanitarianism."

According to Sorel, his reasoning is in keeping with the essence of Marx's theory which was later distorted by the interpreters, who were people "of outstanding vulgarity."

In reality, however, Sorel's reasoning that some social classes or other can by their conduct not only check but even frustrate the evolutionary tendencies of society and that only the revolutionaries restore the operation of these tendencies by their "creative will," is inconsistent with Marx's materialistic conception of history. Sorel's ultra-revolutionary attitude strikes at orthodox Marxism as well as at Bernstein's revisionism.

According to the Marxist doctrine, there were to develop gradually already under the capitalist rule, firstly, the objective, socio-economic conditions of a socialist revolution, and secondly, the subjective, psychological conditions, "the boiling of the proletarian in the factory pot," his education in the revolutionary socialist spirit. The first assumption was put in doubt by revisionism, the second one by syndicalism.

A movement that proclaims violence as the principle of social action, must have a hostile attitude to democracy. The syndicalists do not only reject the democratic principle of majority in case of the whole nation, taking into account only the proletariat, but they do not recognize democracy in the workers' organizations, placing the will of an active minority above the will of the majority that had "degenerated" and become infected with the "miasmata of humanitarianism."

The syndicalist Emil Pouget writes:

"If the democratic principle were applied in the workers' organizations, the indolence of the inexperienced and unorganized majority would paralyze the whole work. But the minority is by no means in-

clined to renounce its claims under the pressure of the passive mass that has not yet been awakened and animated by the spirit of protest. Therefore the conscious minority should act without reckoning with the motionless mass... Though large and concentrated, a formless mass has no right to resentment. It is the first to derive profit from the activity of the minority.

"Who has the right to condemn the minority for its disinterested initiative? This is the tremendous difference in the methods of democratism and syndicalism; by means of universal suffrage the former gives the rule into the hands of inexperienced and undecided elements and suppresses the minority which carries the future in itself. The method of syndicalism gives completely different results: the impulse for action comes from conscious and revolted people and all who wish to do so may participate in it."[24]

This, indeed, is the road already instinctively followed by the Jacobins, Babeufists and Blanquists: an upheaval accomplished by violence by an utra-revolutionary minority.

* * *

Social democracy made rapid progress in Russia. In March, 1898, it organized the first secret party congress in Minsk. In July, 1903, there took place the second congress in London. The London congress was fraught with consequences, as a division of the party into Bolsheviks and Mensheviks occurred there. At that congress a significant and important discussion took place concerning the political part of the program, the future constitution and civic rights. After a lengthy exchange of views the Social Democrat Posadovski spoke as follows:

"The statements made here do not seem to be just a dispute on account of details, but a serious difference of opinions. There is no doubt that we do not agree on the following fundamental issue: should our future policy be subordinated to some kind of basic democratic principles, or should all democratic principles be subordinated exclusively to the advantages of our party. I decidedly advocate the latter. There is nothing among the democratic principles that we should not subordinate to the advantages of our party. (Shouts: And the inviolability of the individual as well?). Yes, also the inviolability of the individual. As a revolutionary party striving for its ultimate aim — social revolution, we should consider the democratic principles exclusively from the standpoint of the advantage of our party. If some postulate or other will be disadvantageous for us, we shall not introduce it."

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[24] Goerges Sorel, *Réflexions sur la violence*. Sixth edition, Paris 1925, pp. 114-120. G. Sorel, *Les illusions du progrès*. Paris, 1911, p. 331. Martov, *Mirovoy Bolshevizm*, pp. 53, 54.

Subsequently Plekhanov addressed the meeting:

"I fully agree with comrade Posadovski's remarks. Every respective democratic principle should not be considered by itself, in its abstraction, but in relation to the principle that may be called the cardinal principle of democracy, that is the principle: *salus populi suprema lex.* Translated into revolutionary language it means that the success of the revolution is the supreme law. If for the sake of the success of the revolution the validity of some democratic principle should be temporarily restricted, it would be a crime to recoil from such a restriction. Moreover, I declare as my own personal opinion that even the principle of universal suffrage should be viewed from the standpoint of the cardinal principle of democracy mentioned by me. Hypothetically a case may be imagined when we, social democrats, would express ourselves against universal suffrage. The bourgeoisie of the Italian republics deprived in the old days persons belonging to the nobility of political rights. The revolutionary proletariat could limit the political rights of the upper classes just as the upper classes had once limited its political rights. The suitability of that means could only be judged from the viewpoint of the principle: *salus revolutiae* (!) *suprema lex.*[25] We should have maintained this standpoint also in the matter of the duration of parliamentary legislature. If in an impulse of revolutionary enthusiasm the nation would choose a very good parliament, a kind of unfindable chamber (*chambre introuvable*), we should try to make a long parliament of it; if however, the elections would prove unfavorable, we should try to disband it not in two years but, if possible, in two weeks."

At this juncture applause was heard, but from some benches came hissing. Exclamations "you should not hiss" rang forth. Plekhanov: "Why not? The comrades should feel free to do as they please!" Yegorov rises and says: "Since such speeches cause applause, I consider it my duty to hiss." "Comrade Plekhanov did not take into consideration" — continued Yegorov — "that the laws of war are different from the laws of the constitution."[26]

Yegorov did not foresee that the authors of the future social revolution in Rusia would search for tactical directives in the famous work *On War* of the Prussian General Clausewitz.

What Russian revolution did Plekhanov have in mind? A political revolution that was to constitute the next stage, or a social one which was to follow the former? According to contemporary Marxist opinion social revolution was to break out only in case the proletariat formed a

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25 A grammatical mistake: it should not be *revolutiae* but *revolutionis.*

26 *Vtoroy Ocherednoy Syezd Rossiiskoy Sotsial.-Demokraticheskoy Rabochey Partii. Polnii tekst protokolov* (Second Successive Congress of the Social Democratic Workers' Party. Full Text of the Minutes). Geneva, pp. 167-170.

preponderant majority of a nation. It would seem that then the Social Democrats should not be afraid of general suffrage. Plekhanov had in mind rather the nearest revolution that was to give Russia a constitution. The aim of that revolution was to establish a democratic state in Russia, but Plekhanov declared in advance that after victory the revolutionists were ready to violate the principles of democracy. A strange way to democracy. Gustaf Steffen, author of the well-known treatise on democracy, writes: "I believe that democracy must win only through democracy. I do not believe in the possibility of a transitional stage which in one way or another would be equivalent to the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat or the domination of the working class in society."[27]

Plekhanov foresees the restriction of the political rights of the upper classes and proposes retaliation: *talio esto!* Moreover, he proposes increased retaliation, considerably exceeding the wrongs suffered by the revolutionary class. The bourgeoisie in Western Europe gave voting rights to the proletariat. In order to justify the future restriction of the rights of the bourgeoisie, Plekhanov must go back to the Italian republics of the thirteenth century. Consequently it is not talion, not eye for eye, tooth for tooth, but for one tooth all teeth, not political progress but atavism, going back six centuries.

As a criterion Plekhanov establishes the Roman principle: the welfare of the nation is the supreme law. But he immediately replaces it with another principle: the success of the revolution is the supreme law. The revolution is concretely represented by the revolutionary party, therefore in practice he reaches the principle: the advantage of the revolutionary party is the supreme law. Posadovski openly established this criterion, and Plekhanov approved his position. In practice difficulties will arise here. At the same congress at which the leader of social democracy expressed this principle a rift of that democracy into two parties, Bolsheviks and Mensheviks, took place. Each of these parties will consider its own advantage the supreme criterion. Outside these two parties there still were the social revolutionaries and smaller factions. Each of these parties is convinced that it best serves the work of the revolution. In case of revolution the matter is bound to be reduced to the fact that the victorious party will establish its own advantage as the supreme criterion. The future standpoint of the victorious Bolsheviks is justified in advance.

Social democracy a priori gave up democracy. In 1903 Plekhanov was in line with the Bolsheviks. The Menshevik, Martov-Cederbaum, giving at one of the meetings an account of Plekhanov's speech, said:

[27] Gustaf F. Steffen, *Das Problem der Demokratie.* Jena 1917, p. 113.

"These words caused the indignation of a part of the delegates, which could have been easily avoided if comrade Plekhanov had added that, of course, it is impossible to imagine such a tragic situation in which the proletariat, in order to consolidate its victory, would have to trample on such political rights as the freedom of the press." To this Plekhanov at once exclaimed ironically: "Merci."[28]

In 1906 Plekhanov joined hands with the Mensheviks and became their leader. His attitude towards democracy, however, remained unchanged. He continued to believe that the proletariat is entitled to impose its will upon the entire nation, because it is the chosen class, destined to fulfil a great historical mission. In one of his speeches, delivered at the convention of Russian socialists in London, in 1907, Plekhanov voiced the following principle:

"Hegel says in his *Philosophy of History* that a nation that embodies a great historical idea may treat all other nations as a tool for achieving its great aim. It can trample them underfoot and use them as means. We do not represent a national but a class viewpoint. But also we believe that the proletariat that carries in it a great idea can trample underfoot everything that is obsolete, and utilize for its great aim everything that exists."[29]

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The Bolshevik revolution is in full swing, with Plekhanov in sharp opposition to it. In January, 1918, the Bolsheviks disperse the Constituent Assembly. The press quoted Plekhanov's speech of 1903 and his statement that there are no inviolable democratic principles, that the good of the revolution is the supreme law and that in the name of that good an inconvenient parliament may be dispersed. While the Bolshevik press cited this speech with approval, the opposition press condemned it, as the pointing out of a wrong road. Plekhanov himself wrote on January 11 and 13 a long article in *Nashe Yedinstvo* (Our Unity), maintaining in its entirety his thesis of 1903. He demonstrated at length that the idea of the relativity of principles was derived from Hegel and constituted one of the greatest achievements of the philosophical thought of the nineteenth century; purposefulness was the only criterion of politics and tactics. Some regarded this as the height of immorality. Plekhanov, however, was of different opinion: "When social leaders who judge their political and tactical methods from the standpoint of purposefulness, aim at the oppression of the people, I am inclined to regard them as immoral; but when a leader, having adopted the principle of purposefulness, is guided by the welfare of the people as the supreme law, I definitely do not see what immorality

[28] Vaganian, *Plekhanov*. p. 368.
[29] *We and They*, Plekhanov's Addresses at the London Congress of 1907, p. 20.

there can be in his striving to observe such principles that would lead more quickly to his noble aim?"

Some maintain that in his address of 1903 he justified beforehand the disbandment of the consituent assembly. This charge he answers as follows:

"Also in my attitude to the constituent assembly there is nothing absolute. Here also everything depends on the circumstances ot time and place.

"If the Paris proletariat, having quickly recovered after the crushing defeat inflicted on it by Cavaignac to the great joy of the French constituent assembly of 1848-49, had put a violent end to the activity of that organ of reaction, I do not know who of us would be inclined to condemn such an action. The French constituent assembly of those years was hostile to the proletariat. On the other hand, the assembly that was recently disbanded by the People's commissars, wholeheartedly defended the interests of Russia's working population. The People's commissars disbanding it did not fight against the enemies of the people but against the enemies of the dictatorship of the Smolnyi Institute... He who does not understand it, is quite incapable of appreciating the problem of the workers' party."[30]

This is a very naive reasoning. Was there in modern times a government that would deliberately oppress the people, even in tsarist Russia herself. Nicholas I, too, was deeply convinced that he was striving for the welfare of the people and he actually tried to improve the lot of the peasants, not to mention Alexander II, the emancipator of the peasants. In keeping with Plekhanov's reasoning one should justify their autocracy. In that case, the political methods of the Bolsheviks are also justified. According to Plekhanov the Constituent Assembly represented the interests of the working class, but according to the Bolsheviks it had counter-revolutionary tendencies. If we abolish the inviolability of the principle itself, each victorious party will disband an inconvenient constituent assembly with clear conscience and will be able to refer to Plekhanov's slogan: The success of the revolution is the supreme law.

No wonder that Plekhanov's Soviet biographer quotes with great approval the arguments of this article directed against the Bolsheviks. "All these brilliant arguments presented by Plekhanov before his death possess the highest value," writes Vaganian and adds that Plekhanov's error lies only in the fact that he did not apply his brilliant arguments in favor of disbanding an inconvenient national assembly – the Russian constituent assembly.

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[30] G. V. Plekhanov, *God na Rodine,* (A Year in the Homeland), Vol. II, Paris

"For the Russian proletariat it was necessary to disperse this as yet unorganized nest of the counter-revolution... Once the Soviets were created and organized from top to bottom, the rôle of the constituent assembly became objectively counter-revolutionary, which Plekhanov did not understand."[31]

Plekhanov died on May 30, 1918, in a sanatorium near Teryoki. "Raving before his death, suffocating, he several times made a threatening gesture with his hand" — writes Arzayev. "This undoubtedly was meant for *them*."[32]

If that was so, the dying Plekhanov threatened those who had taken so much from his spiritual inheritance.

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In the period when the *People's Will* was active, Marx and Engels looked hopefully towards Russia, expecting from there the signal for a European revolution. At the beginning of the twentieth century when an active revolutionary movement was once more stirring in Russia, the Marxists of Western Europe again looked at Russia as the vanguard of revolution.

In an article published in 1902 in the Russian periodical *Iskra* (Spark), issued abroad, Kautsky stated that the center of revolution in Europe was moving from the West to the East. In the first half of the nineteenth century the revolutionary movement was headed by France and to a certain extent by England, in 1848 Germany joined the group of revolutionary nations, while in the twentieth century the revolutionary center was shifting to Russia, which, having absorbed so much revolutionary initiative from the West, may now become for it a source of revolutionary energy.[33]

As far as the character of the future Russian revolution was concerned, the Marxists obviously believed that in the economically backward Russia, a socialist revolution was as yet out of question. Only the revolutions which, at the signal given by a Russian upheaval, may break out in the industrialized countries of Western Europe, will have a socialist character.

The Russian Marxists, included their extreme left wing, *i.e.* the Bolsheviks, did not dream at that time about a socialist revolution in Russia. The leader of the Bolsheviks, Ulyanov-Lenin, sharply polemized with the ideological heirs of the populists, the social revolutionaries, who believed that a transition from tsardom directly to a socialist system was possible.

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[31] Vaganian, *Plekhanov*. p. 370.
[32] G. V. Plekhanov, *God na Rodine*, Vol. I, p. XLV.
[33] *Dokumenty Oktiabria*. Moscow 1932, pp. 161, 162.

"The Marxists are strongly convinced" — the future leader of the Bolshevik revolution wrote in 1905 — "that the Russian revolution will have a bourgeois character." The reforms introduced by it "will properly prepare the ground for an extensive, speedy, European, not Asiatic, development of capitalism and will make possible the rule of the bourgeoisie as a class."

This upheaval will be advantageous for the proletariat. "The idea of seeking help for the working class in anything except the further development of capitalism is reactionary. In such countries as Russia the working class does not suffer so much because of capitalism as because of the lack of development of capitalism... Therefore, a bourgeois revolution is to the highest degree advantageous for the proletariat.

"We cannot jump out of the bourgeois democratic frame of the Russian revolution, but we can extend this frame on a tremendous scale."

At the same time Lenin maintains that a victory over tsardom cannot be won by the great bourgeoisie, but only by the people, that is the proletariat and the peasants. These classes will deal with tsardom in a plebeian manner.[34]

Since the future revolution in Russia was to have, as far as its results were concerned, a bourgeois character, the logical conclusion was that the proletariat, after achieving the revolution and introducing the democratic system, should place the government in the hands of bourgeois elements.

Trotsky proved more foreseeing about the future. In his history of the revolution of 1905-1906, published in 1907, Trotsky, surveying the future Russian revolution, foresees that the political power in that revolution would fall to the industrial proletariat, that this proletariat will not hand over that power without desperate resistance and that it will immediately proceed with the gradual introduction of socialism.

Trotsky believes that although the proletariat grows with the development of capitalism, it nevertheless may be in power in an economically backward country earlier than in a country with developed capitalism. In 1871 the proletariat seized power in Paris for some time, while in the countries where capitalism is much more developed, in England and in the United States, it was unable to seize it even for an hour. The orthodox Marxists, opposing the idea of a workers' government in Russia, referred to the fact that Marx, discussing the fate of the revolutionary movement in Germany in the period of 1848-1850, wrote that the working class of Germany was in its social and political progress so far behind the working classes of France or England, as

[34] N. Lenin, *Dve taktiki sotsialdemokratii v demokraticheskoy revolutsii*, (Two Tactics of Social Democracy in a Democratic Revolution), Geneva 1905. pp. 25-36.

the German bourgeoisie was behind the bourgeoisie of those countries. "Like master, like man," wrote Marx and claimed that the movement of the working class did not assume an exclusively proletarian character until the middle class, especially the industrialists, achieve political power and transform the state in accordance with their needs.

Without directly attacking this thesis of Marx, Trotsky breaks with it in practice and maintains that between the political strength of the proletariat and the level of capitalist development there is no direct interdependence. He refers to Kautsky who in a pamphlet published in 1906 drew attention to the fact that in the United States it is the capitalist class that is predominant, while in Russia, it is the proletariat that has grown out of proportion to the progress of capitalism. Trotsky declared that in 1900 the industrial production of the United States was ten times higher than the production of Russia, and yet the political rôle of the Russian proletariat is much greater than of the American one. The low level of Russia's capitalist development, the insignificance of the bourgeoisie and the strength of the proletarat will make the industrial proletarians in Russia the decisive factor in the revolution.

The Russian peasants will follow the industrial proletariat. In Western Europe, in the great French Revolution and in the revolutionary movement of 1848, the power passed from absolutism into the hands of the moderate bourgeois elements. These emancipated the peasants, who, satisfied, abandoned the revolution, leaving the power in the hands of the reaction. In Russia the proletariat will seize power, and will satisfy the demands of the peasants and they will follow it. It is true that the peasants form the largest class, but in Russia they are incapable of an independent political rôle. Even in the West, the peasants were unable to overthrow feudalism themselves. The city created the revolution that emancipated the peasants. In Russia the industrial proletariat will have hegemony over the peasants.

Trotsky believes that the proletariat, after seizing power, will keep it in its hands for good. The supposition that social democracy will seize power in the revolution, carry out democratic reforms, basing itself on the organized working class, and later will yield its place to the bourgeois parties is a "Utopia of the worst kind." The division of the socialist program into a maximalist and minimalist one has sense only when the bourgeosie is in power. The workers' government will adopt collectivism as the immediate, current program. This will be for it the only way of consolidating its rule based on the proletariat. Will, however, a socialist system be possible in Russia after the seizure of power by the proletariat? Trotsky replies to this that a proletarian government cannot work miracles, but it will facilitate and shorten the road of economic progress in the direction of socialism. The socializ-

ation of production will begin with those branches which present the least difficulty; in the first period socialized production will constitute oases linked with private enterprises by the laws of goods traffic.

The political rule of the proletariat cannot be harmonized with its economic enslavement. It will inevitably decrease the opposition of capital which always requires the services and cooperation of the state authority, and will sharpen the economic struggle between the representatives of labor and capital. The workers will demand from the state support for the strikers, and the government, leaning on the proletariat will be forced to support them. The workers will become masters not only in the political but also in the economic sphere, because the private ownership of the means of production will become a fiction.[35]

It resulted from these logically inferred conclusions that the rule of the proletariat will lead directly to the gradual consolidation of the socialist order. However, the Russian Marxists of both fractions, not only the Mensheviks but also the Bolsheviks, even after the fall of tsardom in 1917, represented the view that Russia was at the eve not of a socialist but of a bourgeois democratic revolution.

On behalf of the members of the Russian social democratic party leaving for Russia at the beginning of April, 1917, Lenin addressed on April 8, a farewell letter to the Swiss workers. "To the Russian proletariat" – he wrote – "fell the great task of starting a series of revolutions which were created with objective necessity by the imperialist war. The idea of regarding the Russian proletariat as a chosen member of the international proletarian family is entirely foreign to us. We know very well that the Russian proletariat is more weakly organized and less spiritually prepared that the working class of other countries. Not particular qualities, but special historical circumstances, have made the Russian proletariat, for a time as short as possible, the leading champion of the revolutionary proletariat of the entire world. Russia is an agricultural country, one of the most backward of all European countries. However, the peasant character of the country with the big feudal land ownership, can give in Russia a tremendous impulse to a bourgeois-democratic revolution, make of it a prelude to a socialist world revolution and an introduction to it.

"In Russia socialism cannot be victorious at once. However, the peasant mass can lead the inevitable and already mature agrarian upheaval to the confiscation of the immense feúdal property... Such an upheaval in itself would be by no means a socialist one. But it would give a powerful stimulus to the international workers' movement... This upheaval would give to the city proletariat, based on the poor

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[35] M. Smolenski, *Trotsky*, Berlin, 1921, pp. 8-31.

peasants, the possibility of creating such revolutionary organizations as councils of workers' delegates, and of replacing with them the old organs of state oppression such as the military, police, bureaucracy, and of undertaking a number of revolutionary measures aiming at the control of production and consumption."[36]

A bourgeois democratic revolution... that is a revolution decreeing a system in which the bourgeoisie has a great rôle to play. How can these statements be harmonized with the real attitude of Russian socialism, particularly of its extreme left wing, to the bourgeoisie? Zinoviev writes about Lenin of the World War period: "His attitude to the bourgeoisie was never friendly. But since the beginning of the war there arose in him a concentrated, sharp hatred of the bourgeoisie like a whetted dagger. The expression of his face even seemed to have changed... Comrade Lenin was compared with Marat. Yes, Marat who bound himself with a proletariat embracing many millions — that is Lenin."[37]

Not only the Bolsheviks but also the leftist parties that fought them, and advanced the postulate of a bourgeois revolution, did not dare to state frankly that the bourgeoisie had an important rôle to play in Russia. Of interest are the remarks of Plekhanov who wrote at the end of 1917:

"The Leninists are convinced that our working class can already now reject all demands of the capitalists... This means that Russia is already prepared to enter the period of socialist revolution."

Until recently the social revolutionaries believed that Russia could by-pass the capitalist state. But now they became afraid of the tactics of the Leninists and came closer to the Mensheviks.

"The speakers who rejected Lenin's tactics maintained that the hour of socialist revolution in Russia has not yet struck. Adherence to this view is tantamount to a statement that the capitalist period is not yet finished in Russia. He who maintains that it is not finished, has no logical right to treat the bourgeoisie as a social class which has completely outlived itself and is only capable of harming the cause of progress. However, the speakers who rejected Lenin's tactics too often expressed themselves in a way as if they wished that Russia would finish the capitalist period of her development without any participation of the bourgeoisie in it. In other words, listening to them one could have thought that they wanted capitalism without capitalists. This glaring logical absurdity manifested itself in a number of contradictions... It would be very well if the Congress had clearly declared that it was time to finish with that wild absurdity. Unfortunately

[36] Lenin und Trotzky, *Krieg und Revolution*. Zurich. 1918, pp. 157, 158.
[37] G. Zinoviev, *N. Lenin, V. I. Ulyanov*, Petrograd 1918, pp. 50, 59.

the Congress did not strike upon this idea. And even if it had struck upon it the question remains whether it had sufficient courage to express its thought openly. Its leaders might have been apprehensive of their popularity."[38]

Plekhanov did not realize that he himself was one of the main inspirers of this inconsistency.

In his letters to Lunacharski, Vladimir Korolenko criticized the Red revolution from the Marxist standpoint: "Historic destiny has played a magic and very unfair trick upon Russia. From blind worship of autocracy... our people have passed directly to communism, at least to a communist government. The old customs as well as the old life have remained... The very facility with which you succeeded in making the popular masses follow you, does not prove our preparation for a socialist order, but on the contrary the immaturity of our nation. Mechanics distinguishes a useful and harmful resistance... without a useful resistance a mechanism will turn in a vacuum... It is not the complete lack of the habits of a bourgeois society that means the preparation for socialism.

"You have convinced the people, that has risen and is agitated, that the so-called bourgeoisie is only a class of parasites and robbers cashing in coupons, and nothing more. Is that true? Can you sincerely say this! Especially you — Marxists?"

He recalls that the Marxists, while polemizing with the populists, kept declaring that it was necessary for Russia to pass through the capitalist stage. "What did you then understand by this beneficent stage? Was it only the life of parasites and the cashing in of coupons? Of course, you understand something else. The capitalist class appeared to you as a class which, well or badly, organized production. In spite of all its defects you believe in complete harmony with Marx's teaching that such an organization is beneficent for industrially backward countries such as Rumania, Hungary, and... Russia."

"Why has the foreign word 'bourgeois,' the whole tremendously complex conception, been transformed with your light-handed help, in the eyes of our ignorant people, into the simplified conception of the bourgeois as a parasite, robber, who does not do anything but detach coupons?

"Each nation deserves the kind of government that it has. In this sense it may be said that Russia has deserved you. You are only the true expression of her past, with a slave's humility towards autocracy."[39]

Korolenko touched here upon an important matter, more important

[38] G. V. Plekhanov, *God na Rodine*. Vol. I. Paris 1921, pp. 231-234.
[39] Vl. Korolenko, *Pisma k Lunacharskomu*. Paris. 1922, pp. 26-35, 61.

than the attitude of revolutionary tactics to Marxism: the course and result of the revolution was bound to be the expression of historically produced conditions and of the peculiarities of the nation. The Russian bourgeoisie, a shadow of the Western European bourgeoisie, is weak, isolated, intimidated. Nobody dares to say a word in its defense, nobody dares to oppose openly the standpoint of the party which makes of the destruction and extermination of the bourgeoisie a program. Under these circumstances not the half-Leninists, as they are called by Plekhanov, but the consistent Leninists must be victorious. They are victorious contrary to their own expectations of a few months ago.

"The most astonishing thing in this whole business is that no one has yet put us out," said Lenin to Maxim Gorky. On another occasion Lenin, recalling the struggles and successes of the autumn of 1917, quotes the words of Napoleon: "On s'engage et puis... on voit."[40]

The great, reckless experiment succeeded. The nation, drilled for centuries in obedience, accepted it humbly.

"I think even today, that for Lenin Russia constitutes only the material for an experiment on a world, planetary scale," writes Maxim Gorky in 1920. "Formerly this idea, obscured by my sympathy for the Russian people, made me indignant. But when I perceived how the course of the events of the Russian revolution, spreading in width and depth, more and more animates and organizes the forces which are able to abolish the foundations of the capitalist system, I now find that if Russia is to serve as an object of experiment, it would be unjust to place the responsibility for this on one man.

"Everybody gets what he deserves. This is just. A nation, rotting in the stench of the monarchy, incapable of action, and deprived of willpower and faith in itself, not sufficiently 'bourgeois' to be strong in resistance and not sufficiently strong to kill in itself the striving for bourgeois prosperity, that nation must, in conformity with the logic of its inept history, pass openly through all the dramas and tragedies, destined for a passive being which in addition lives in an age of class struggle, reaching the state of bestiality."

Lenin has the faith of a fanatic. "It seems to me" – continues Gorky – "that what is individually human hardly ever interests him, he only thinks of parties, masses, states, and here he posseses the gift of clairvoyance.

"In these lines we spoke of a man who had the intrepid courage of starting an all-European social revolution in a country where a considerable part of the peasants wanted only to be well-fed bourgeois and nothing more. This intrepid courage is thought by many to be mere

[40] M. A. Landau-Aldanov, *Lenin*. Paris. Fourth edition, p. 72 English translation, New York, E. P. Dutton, 1922, p. 90. *Dokumenty Oktiabria*. 1932, p. 175.

folly... There was a time when my natural sympathy for the Russian people impelled me to regard that folly almost as a crime. But now, when I see that this nation knows much better how to suffer patiently than to work conscientiously and honestly, I again praise the holy folly of the brave. Among them Vladimir Lenin is the first and the maddest."[41]

The future leaders of the Red Revolution went to Russia from Western Europe still as Social Democrats. In the struggle that soon flared up in Russia democracy vanished completely. In the programmatic resolutions of the second congress of the Third International held in July and August, 1920, at first in Petersburg and then in Moscow, the break with democracy and the parliamentary system was clearly formulated. In his inaugural address in Petersburg, Zinoviev said: "Comrades, the idea of democracy fades in our eyes... and at present approaches the end of its days." In the theses of Bukharin adopted by a preponderant majority the parliamentary system was denounced. "Parliamentarianism is a defined form of state organization. Therefore it cannot in any degree be the form of a Communistic society which has neither classes, nor class war, nor any state authority. Nor can the parliamentary system be the form of the state rule of the proletariat in the transitional period from the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie to the dictatorship of the proletariat. When the class war, becoming a civil war, is exacerbated, it is inevitable that the proletariat should create its own state organization, in the form of a fighting organization, to which representatives of the former ruling classes would not be admitted: in that stage any fiction of national will is outright harmful for the proletariat... The task of the proletariat consists in blowing up the state machinery of the bourgeoisie, in destroying it together with the parliamentary institutions, whether republican or constitutional-monarchic. Consequently Communism rejects the parliamentary system, as the form of future society, it rejects it as the form of the class dictatorship of the proletariat, it rejects the possibility of a protracted conquest of parliaments, it has for its object the destruction of parliamentarianism..."

Establishing the principle of non-admission to the Communist state organization of the former ruling classes, the leaders of the Third International regard it as a natural postulate that in the bourgeois countries the Communists should be admitted to participation in political life, and declare that the Communists, taking there an active part in the election and in parliamentary life, should not be concerned with legislative cooperation, but with undermining and destroying the social

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[41] *Die Kommunistische Internationale.* No. 12, 1920. pp. 2-9.

and political system of the country that grants them these active political rights. "There can only be the question of utilizing the bourgeois state institutions for their destruction... In that collective struggle which develops into civil war, the leading part of the proletariat must keep in its possession all legal positions and make of them auxiliary points of support for its revolutionary activity. One of these auxiliary points of support is the rostrum of the bourgeois parliament... The Communist party does not participate in that institution, in order to conduct organic work there, but in order to help the masses from inside the parliament to blow up the state mechanism of the bourgeoisie and the parliament itself from within... This activity of the parliaments is primarily reduced to revolutionary agitation from the parliamentary rostrum..."[42]

In his *Class Struggle in France* Marx writes: "The bourgeoisie, rejecting universal suffrage in which it has been draping itself, from which it has been deriving its power, admits openly: our dictatorship has existed by the will of the people, now it must be consolidated in spite of the will of the people." Now the Russian revolutionists, calling themselves Marxists, openly reject universal suffrage, and replace the principle of democracy by the class principle.

"The Communist party" – says Bukharin – "does not demand any liberties for the bourgeois enemies of the people. On the contrary, it demands that there should always be the possibility to suspend the bourgeois press, to disband societies... As far as the press is concerned, we ask first of all what kind of press, bourgeois or workers' press, what kind of meetings – of the workers or counter-revolutionaries. In considering the question of strikes, it is of primary importance for us whether it is a workers' strike against capitalists or a sabotage of the bourgeoisie or bourgeois intelligentsia against the proletariat..."

The Communists do not only eliminate democracy in the state dominated by them, but they declare with a frankness, not achieved by the Jacobins, that they never were democrats by conviction, and if they had previously supported democracy, they did so only because this was advantageous for their class interests and because they did not have sufficient strength to deprive the bourgeoisie of its rights.

"One more question may be asked from us" – writes Bukharin. "Why did not the Bolsheviks speak formerly about the abolition of freedom for the bourgeoisie? Why did they themselves advocate a bourgeois democratic republic? Why were they themselves in favor of a constituent assembly?... In a word: why did they change their

[42] *Vtoroy Kongress Kommunisticheskago Internatsyonala. Stenograficheskii Ot*· Petrograd 1921, pp. 12, 587-589.

program in these questions? This is very simple. Formerly the working class had no strength to start an attack on the fortress of the bourgeoisie. It needed preparation, concentration of forces, education of the masses, organization... Therefore the working class as well as our party was saying: Long live the freedom of the press (of the entire, also bourgeois press), or we had no strength, and consequently our party was saying: we demand freedom of association (in general, not only of the workers). Now the times have changed,... we live in the period after the attack, after the first great victory over the bourgeoisie..."

Another writer, Radek, says the same: "In the age of social evolution, when the class is still preparing for the struggle, it rejects the means of force because it is too weak to use force. As it was to the advantage of a weak proletariat to vote freely, to concentrate its forces, we recognized democracy as a means to Socialism."[43]

Social Democracy worked on the assumption that a socialist revolution was possible in a country only when, thanks to the high development of capitalism, the proletariat would form the majority of the population; in this way the Social Democrats linked socialism with the democratic principle of the rule of the majority. The Russian Communists treated this thesis with contempt. In 1919 Radek called all those who considered Russia as yet incapable of a socialist system pseudo-socialists and eunuchs of Marxism. "In Russia the proletariat obviously constitutes the minority of the population... The experience of Russian revolution teaches us that a socialist revolution does by no means start where capitalism is most highly developed... The socialist revolution first starts in the capitalist countries in which the capitalist organization is weaker... Nowhere, in no country will a revolution begin as the action of the majority of the population. Capitalism never means only the physical control of the means of production, it everywhere means simultaneously the spiritual control over the masses, also in the countries where capitalism is most highly developed. It is absurd to suppose that the popular masses' lack of confidence in their own strength may be overcome in a peaceful way, by mere agitation..."[44]

The Communists maintain that in the bourgeois countries democracy constitutes a screen for the dictatorship of the capitalists. "Democracy" – says Lenin – "is the hypocrisy of formally equal rights."[45] "Democracy, considered concretely" – says Radek – "is the rule of capital which is so strong, so established in the conceptions of the masses that it can afford the luxury of assuring them the freedom to speak

[43] Wilhelm Mautner, *Der Bolschewismus*. 1920, pp. 243, 267-270.
[44] Karl Radek, *Die Entwicklung des Sozialismus von der Wissenschaft zur That*. Berlin 1919, pp. 12, 13, 15, 17, 19, 21.
[45] Wilhelm Mautner, *Der Bolschewismus*, p. 240.

of matters of state..." Therefore only dictatorship – of the bourgeoisie or of the proletariat – is possible. Any reveries about something else are the "reactionary wailings of the petty bourgeois" according to Lenin or the "great Utopia of little Utopians" as expressed by Radek.[46]

"The party nowhere and never has pledged itself" – says Trotsky – "to lead the masses to Socialism by any other means but through the gate of democracy."

Indeed, the party had made an attempt to introduce its rule by means of a constituent assembly; when, however, that body was not submissive, it was disbanded. "Our party did not shun opening the way to the dictatorship of the proletariat through the gate of democracy because it was clearly aware of certain propagandistic and political advantages of such legalized transition to a new régime. Hence arose our attempt of convoking the constituent assembly. That attempt failed... The constituent assembly placed itself athwart the road of the revolutionary movement and was swept aside."[47]

The outstanding Soviet historian, Pokrovski, saw in the disbandment of the constituent assembly and in the ease with which this was achieved, a proof of the superiority of the Russian over the French Revolution, of Lenin over Robespierre.

"At the critical moment Robespierre did not take the decision of disbanding the convention, whereas Lenin disbanded the constituent assembly in an extremely simple manner, without encountering practically any resistance. That greatest fetish, the constituent assembly, advanced by Western Europe, was overcome by our revolution in an unusually easy and quick way, without any opposition or struggle..."

Russia does not know a formal attitude to the revolution. The Russian people do not attach weight to legal and political formalities. Pokrovski gives examples. When in 1917 he explained at workers' meetings the meaning of the constituent assembly "he encountered a kind of wall." "The proletariat did not need to seek an artificial expression of the people's will in some more or less artificial form."

The workers accepted the elections to the constituent assembly quite indifferently. Was this due to the indifference of the Russians? No. "People were ashamed to go and vote, as I was ashamed to go to church for the Tsar's gala services, when I was at school: why, for what purpose was it necessary? The social revolutionaries themselves who advocated the Constituent Assembly admitted that its slogan did not attract anyone... No soldier could be brought into the street from the barracks by that slogan, no Petersburg worker could be brought out."

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[46] Karl Radek, *Die Entwicklung des Sozialismus*, p. 20. Karl Radek, *Die Entwicklung der Weltrevolution*, pp. 11, 12.

[47] L. Trotsky, *Terrorismus und Kommunismus*, 1921, pp. 27-29.

Pokrovski calls this symptom realism.[48] In his book on *Socialism and Government* James Ramsay MacDonald writes: "A people who greet the praises of political freedom with a yawn, are already offering their wrists for the shackles of servitude. The practical consequences of this disregard for political liberty and independence are immediate. It is seen in a lowering of democratic institutions in the public estimation."[49]

Thus the watchwords of democracy are rejected and in its stead the dictatorship of the proletariat is established. Did the proletariat really become the ruling class that through its class organizations rules the state? At the beginning of the Red Revolution Lenin wrote: "We are told that the proletariat is incapable of setting the state machinery in motion. After the revolution of 1905 Russia was ruled by 130,000 landowners; they ruled by means of incredible acts of violence over 150 million people... And allegedly 240,000 members of the Bolshevik party should be incapable of ruling Russia in the interest of the poor against the rich?"[50]

Here it is no more the rule of the proletariat that constitutes the minority of the nation, but the rule of the party constituting the minority of the proletariat.

At the second congress of the Communist International the principle of the Communist party's supremacy over the working class was established and developed in detail. In case the majority of the proletariat should not share the program of the Communist party, it is the latter's duty to use all means to impose its will on the proletariat. "At the beginning of the imperialist war of 1914, the parties of Socialist traitors of all countries, that supported the bourgeoisie of their nations, unalterably referred to the fact that such was the will of their working class. They forgot that even if it were so, it would be the task of a proletarian party in such a situation to oppose the sentiment of the majority of the workers and to defend the historic interests of the proletariat, regardless of everything."

Even the councils or soviets, the nominal organs of the proletariat's dictatorship, should submit to the will of the Communist party, the vanguard of the proletariat. "The formation of the councils (soviets), as the main, historically given form of dictatorship, does not at all decrease the leading rôle of the Communist party in the proletarian revolution... In the history of the Russian revolution we have seen a whole period when the councils opposed the proletarian party and supported

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[48] M. N. Pokrovski, "Nachalo proletarskoy revolutsii v Rossii." (The Beginning of the Proletarian Revolution in Russia), *Krasnii Arkhiv*, Vol. XI-XII, 1925, pp. VI-XV

[49] James Ramsay McDonald, *Socialism and Government*. London 1909, pp. XXIV-XXV.

[50] *Dokumenty Oktiabria*. 1932, p. 33.

the policy of the agents of the bourgeoisie. To enable the councils to fulfil their historical mission it is necessary that there should exist a Communist party strong enough to be able not only to adapt itself to the councils but to influence their policies in a decisive manner, force them to desist from adapting themselves to the bourgeoisie and white Social Democracy.

Thus one could rather speak of a party dictatorship. But here we find new reservations. "The Communist party should be built on the basis of iron proletarian centralism... The Communist party must create in its ranks iron military order. The main principle of democratic centralism is the existence of a ruling party center." The party's authorities are elective, but even that requirement is not absolute. "A number of Communist parties of Europe and America, in view of the stage of siege established by the bourgeoisie against the Communists, are obliged to exist illegally. It should be borne in mind that under such circumstances one sometimes must refrain from the strict application of the principle of electiveness and give the ruling party organs the rights of co-optation."[51]

Consequently, in practice the dictatorship of the proletariat is reduced to the dictatorship of the group ruling the Communist party. The proletariat is not a collective ruler in the new order but a privileged class. It is the old method of ruling: absolutist government based on the privileged class, with a reversal of the privilege from the upper to the lower class. The crushed, powerless bourgeoisie constitutes a class of pariahs, a source of class satisfaction for the privileged ones.

The ancient Communists, led by instinct, tried at times of their temporary success to give their adherents not only bread, *panem*, but also entertainment, *circenses*, satisfying the sentiments of class revenge. After his victory over the Roman generals Lentulus and Gellius, Spartacus arranged celebrations in honor of his fallen comrade-in-arms Crixius. The highlight of that celebration was a demagogically conceived spectacle. The three hundred Roman citizens taken prisoner were forced to fight other gladiators in the face of spectators who were fugitive slaves and former gladiators, gloating over the revenge.[52]

The despotism lasting many centuries produced the dream of a Red despotism which also comprises the realm of the spirit, it developed a readiness to submission to the absolute domination of the revolutionary doctrine. The mentality of the later Russian communists is an indisputable variety of the old nihilism imbued with dogmatism and the negation of everything that does not agree with the doctrine.

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[51] *Second Congress of the Communist International*, Petrograd, 1921, pp. 570, 574, 576, 577.

[52] Gerard Walter, *Les Origines du Communisme*. Paris, 1931, pp. 594-595.

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