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# **OUTLINES OF RUSSIAN CULTURE**



PUBLISHER'S NOTICE

*OUTLINES OF RUSSIAN CULTURE* was published originally in three separate volumes:

Religion and the Church

Literature

Architecture, Painting, and Music

*Because of the continued interest in this subject, and in order to make the work available at lower cost, the three parts have been bound as one volume, without change of text or of pagination.*

OUTLINES OF  
RUSSIAN  
CULTURE

By  
PAUL MILIUKOV



Edited by  
MICHAEL KARPOVICH

Translated by  
VALENTINE UGHET and ELEANOR DAVIS

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Philadelphia  
UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA PRESS  
1948

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UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA PRESS

*Manufactured in the United States of America*

Second Printing, July 1943

Third Printing (Bound as One Volume), January 1948

London

Geoffrey Cumberlege

Oxford University Press

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## AUTHOR'S PREFACE

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SOME five and thirty years ago in the first book of mine to be published in the United States,<sup>1</sup> I tried to give American readers a clearer understanding of Russia and of Russian problems through an analysis of the long evolution that had produced them. In the present book my method remains the same, but how profoundly have things changed in Russia since 1905!

The crisis that I then foretold has really come, and with it real revolution. The avowed aim of the victors in the revolution was the obliteration of all of Russia's "bourgeois" past and the founding of a Russia that would be a fatherland for the toiling masses of the whole world. I was not alone in believing that the habitual course of such attempts would be followed again, and that the high ideals and early successes would be greatly modified by the conditions that Russia's past had brought forth. Indeed, in my second American book, published in 1928 as the new régime reached the end of its first decade, I presented the trend in that light. The "today" of 1928 was far from the "tomorrow" predicted in 1918. Actuality had forced such substantial concessions that the result held few extraordinary revelations.

But there was no admitted surrender. There were further exertions, and the sacrifice of more millions of lives. Another dozen years has elapsed, and where are we now?

The revolutionary cycle has apparently reached its predestined end. Under the new name of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Russia is still there—a Russia even more centralized and ruled more severely than ever under the *ancien régime*, but still Russia. The new Union is heir to all the evils of the old bureaucracy, evils that have been exaggerated while its few virtues have been eliminated. Far from "international," Russian communism

<sup>1</sup> *Russia and Its Crisis* (1905).

has been restricted within its national borders and has followed a pattern that, whatever else it may be, is certainly not socialistic. The only description, good or bad, that can be applied to Russian foreign policy is nationalistic imperialism. It was quite consistent with this policy when the rulers of Russia issued orders that the communist manuals of history were to be rewritten to include the traditional structure of Russian history with the saints and heroes of the olden days. The link with the past was officially recognized.

But it was only with the remote past, and between that past and the communist present there lay a period still unacceptable to the present rulers of Russia—the intermediate period of Russian “bourgeois” civilization. For the educated class that had made that civilization and had nurtured its growth in the last two or three centuries had been mercilessly destroyed in the storm, and as yet no other had taken its place. So the ascending spirals of evolution suffered a break, and the wit and wisdom of the old literature was not carried forward. The result was a lowering of the standards of culture. As in a geological cataclysm, lower strata were forced up to displace the higher.

I do not believe that this is the inevitable law of all revolutions, but our revolution was an elemental one ruled by elemental law. The law that Lucretius has called the *Natura rerum*:

. . . *Natura nec ullam  
Rem gigni patitur, nisi morte adjuta aliena.*<sup>2</sup>

There is a sort of consolation in this Epicurean sentence. The “alien” element of higher cultural achievement is hopelessly gone in Russia, but new elements have appeared. *Quality* has gone, but *quantity* has succeeded—the larger extension of the social base whence cultural seeds may be borrowed. In this very book the reader can discern, here and there, tendrils of new life pushing their way through the ruins of the old.

In 1905 I ventured to draw a comparison between the “young peoples” of our two lands, Russia and the United States. Today, when the term has become a political slogan and “old” has come to be identified with “decaying,” I would make an exception.

<sup>2</sup> “Nature does not suffer one thing to be born, unless aided by another’s death.”

"Young" can mean many things. A people may be very old in its material existence, yet young in civilization. That is the case with Russia. Or a "young" people, materially, may be the bearers of a very old civilization, as America is. My comparison still holds so far as the material bases of the two peoples is concerned, for they are both the result of a great migratory process carried through in rich and undeveloped lands peopled by primitive races. The process resulted for each in a unification into a great nation conscious of its historical mission. But here the comparison must stop. For the American settlers brought from their old homes the principles and habits of political liberty and social order, and what has recently happened to Russia could therefore never happen to them. Russian pioneers, on the other hand, began their process when they first emerged into history. That is why "young" America's torch of liberty illumines the world while today's "young" Russia hesitates in a stage equally distant from the modern order and medieval violence unbridled by law.

But happily this "young Russia" is not *all* of Russia. Russia as a whole needs no rehabilitation. This book will show the reader what Russia has achieved in the long chain of her generations. A few decades cannot utterly destroy the fruit of these centuries. My book was not written to prove this, but if proof is needed, it is here.

That is why I am particularly glad that this part of my larger work on Russian civilization has now found its way to the nation whose development I witnessed for a third of a century, and which in studying I came to admire and love. I am extremely obliged to Mrs. Ughet and to my learned friend, Professor Michael Karpovich of Harvard University, for the excellent form they have given the English translation of my Russian text. I feel that this third book to appear under my name in America deserves it especially, for it renders accessible a part of my life-work.

PAUL MILIUKOV

*Montpellier, France*  
*Noël, 1940.*



## EDITOR'S FOREWORD

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THE author of this work scarcely needs introduction to English-speaking readers. Eminent scholar and statesman, he has long been known far outside the boundaries of his native land. The dean of Russian historians, he has to his credit a number of scholarly works of primary importance. And he himself belongs to history as the recognized leader of the constitutional opposition during the last years of the Imperial régime, and the Minister of Foreign Affairs in the first democratic government Russia ever had. An exile from his country since the establishment of the Communist dictatorship, today, at the age of eighty-two, he lives in Unoccupied France, maintaining both his interest in historical problems and his faith in the ultimate triumph of liberty and justice.

The present version of the *Outlines of Russian Culture* is only a part of the Russian original. It is, however, its central part and the only one that so far has been completed. Volume One of the last revised Russian edition,<sup>1</sup> dealing with the material foundations of Russian culture, is not complete, and as yet only the first section of it has been published. Volume Three of the original, devoted to the history of political ideas in Russia, in its present form does not go beyond the eighteenth century. From Volume Two of the *Outlines* we have selected for translation sections dealing with culture in the proper sense of the word—religion, literature, art. We have omitted the section on education, partly because there are some competent books on the subject available in English, but mostly because of considerations of space.

In addition, the sections that we are offering in our translation have been abridged because it was felt that such a detailed account was not necessary in a book addressed to non-Russian readers.

<sup>1</sup> *Ocherki Po Istorii Russkoi Kultury* (Paris, 1930-37), Vols. I-III.



The task of making the deletions was at once the most difficult and the most responsible part of my work as editor. In performing it I was guided by the desire to retain intact all the essential material and all the shades of the author's thought. The manuscript has been carefully gone over by Mr. Miliukov, and it has been a source of great satisfaction to me that it has met with his unqualified approval. The present book, therefore, is more than a mere translation. It is an authorized abridged version of the original, specially prepared for the American edition.

In writing this work for his compatriots, the author naturally presupposed a certain knowledge of facts on the part of his Russian public to a degree which we have no right to expect from our non-Russian readers. This has necessitated occasional explanatory notes which I have tried to provide without intruding too often between the author and the reader. I have tried also to summarize in brief postscripts the development in the fields of religion, literature, and art, respectively, during the years which have elapsed since the publication of the last Russian edition of Mr. Miliukov's work. Finally, I have thought it useful to attach to each part a small selected bibliography in Western languages for the use of those who would like to explore the subject further.

I am convinced that the publication of the American edition of the *Outline* answers an acutely felt need on the part of both students of Russian history and general readers. As a comprehensive survey of Russian culture, from its origins to the present, this is the only work of its kind. While containing a wealth of factual information, it is primarily a synthesis and an interpretation, and as such it is inevitably of a somewhat controversial nature. Undoubtedly there will be some, for instance, who will not agree with Mr. Miliukov's reading of Russia's religious history, and in particular with his critical attitude towards the part played by the Orthodox church in the modern period. There will be others who probably will find that he underestimates the achievements of Soviet literature and art. Still others, and among them many representatives of my generation, will be inclined to put a greater emphasis on the element of originality both in the Russian icon painting of the later Middle Ages and the neo-classical architecture of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. To

the members of the same group the Symbolist period of the early twentieth century would appear as a period of cultural renaissance rather than decadence. The number of such probable controversial points could be increased. Quite obviously, these and similar problems are problems of interpretation, and with regard to them there never can be, and perhaps there should not be, a complete unanimity of opinion.

But even those who will tend to disagree with Mr. Miliukov must acknowledge the impressive extent of his erudition, the breadth and unity of his conception, and above all that degree of detachment which is truly remarkable in a man who all his life has been not only a scholar but also a fighter, and an active participant in historical events.

My editorial work has been greatly facilitated by encouragement and advice I have received from many friends and colleagues. Thanks are due Professor B. A. Bakhmeteff, Mr. S. Bolan, Professor S. H. Cross, Dr. F. Epstein, Mr. D. Fedotoff White, Dr. H. T. Levin, Mr. P. A. Pertzoff, Professor E. J. Simmons, Mrs. Manya Gordon, Mr. V. Terentiev, Professor N. S. Timasheff, and Professor G. Vernadsky. I am particularly indebted to my friend Mr. Roger Dow and to Mrs. Olga Oushakoff for their help in the final preparation of the manuscript.

MICHAEL KARPOVICH

*Cambridge, Mass.*  
*October, 1941*



**Part I**

**RELIGION AND THE CHURCH**



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## THE BEGINNINGS OF CHRISTIANITY IN RUSSIA

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**T**HE cultural influence of the church and religion absolutely predominated in the earlier periods of Russian history, as it usually does with all peoples in an identical stage of development. Nevertheless there was, and still exists, a widespread opinion that the prevailing influence of the church was specifically the national peculiarity of the Russian people. There were two divergent views regarding this peculiarity. The forebears of Slavophilism ascribed to it all the virtues of Russian life. They believed that devotion to the will of God, humility, the love of neighbor, and spiritual contemplation, constituting the very substance of Christian ethics, were eminently natural to the Russian character. In the complete accord of the Christian and national virtues they saw the assurance of a great future to the Russian people. The intellectuals of the eighteen-nineties also attempted to revive this idea, and gained an unexpected influence over the émigré youth of the twentieth century who were reared under the impressions of war and revolution.

The other view ascribed to this peculiarity all the shortcomings of Russian life. It found its most vivid expression in the writings of Chaadaev.<sup>1</sup> If Russia lags behind Europe, if its past is sad and its future dark, if it runs the risk of remaining for ages frozen in its Chinese immobility, it is due to corrupted Byzantium. From this poisoned source Russia adopted the great Christian conception, whose vital force was severed at its root by Byzantine for-

<sup>1</sup> Russian religious thinker of the early nineteenth century.—Ed.



malism. Actually the influence of the Byzantine church on Russian culture was great, but it was a destructive influence.

These two conflicting views agree on one point: the recognition of the great cultural importance of a definite religious form. We shall not analyze this point of view in its essence. Regardless of our opinion, the fact is obvious that, to exert its greatest influence on life, the most lofty, the most perfect religious principle must be assimilated more or less fully and consciously. Yet even the Slavophiles admitted, through Khomiakov, their most outstanding representative and theological authority, that it was a great idealization of its past to describe ancient Russia as truly Christian. According to Khomiakov's sound opinion, ancient Russia had assimilated only the external form—the ritual, not the spirit and substance of Christian faith. Consequently, religion could not exert either as beneficent or as deterring an influence on the development of Russian nationality as the Slavophiles and Chaadaev supposed. Since then the views of Khomiakov have been generally adopted and are to be found in the textbooks on the history of the church.

Thus to accept without further examination the Russian nationality as truly Christian would greatly exaggerate the extent of true Christianity the Russians were able to assimilate. An equal exaggeration of the influence of religion would be to charge it with Russia's backwardness. This backwardness had other purely organic reasons, the effect of which extended to religion itself. The new religion was not only unable to build up the Russian mentality, but on the contrary it suffered from the primitiveness of this mentality. While holding different views on the Byzantine form of religious faith assumed by Russia, it is impossible to deny the fact that in its essence this faith surpassed anything which the Russian people of those days could have assimilated.

The substance of Byzantine Orthodoxy,<sup>2</sup> as first adopted, can be judged from a very instructive and valuable document. The religion introduced by St. Vladimir about 990 found many ardent spirits who rushed passionately towards the new "spiritual alim-ent" eager to partake of the viands of the Byzantine holy feast.

<sup>2</sup> The term "Orthodoxy" is used throughout this study in its specific sense, to designate Eastern Christianity as distinguished from Roman Catholicism.—Ed.

In the still pagan Russia there were established pure types of oriental monasticism, hermitical life, reclusion, imitation of Simeon Stylites,<sup>3</sup> and many other varieties of corporal self-torture. In the wake of the first pioneers of the new religion came their followers, ever increasing in numbers though not always perhaps as ardent and devoted to asceticism. As usual the fervent inspiration that swayed the ranks of "Christian Warriors" produced an intensive creative power. The last representatives of a generation which had witnessed Russia's conversion had scarcely died when a reverent legend about their lives began to pass from mouth to mouth and later was written down for the instruction of posterity. These writings have preserved to the present time the pregnant memory of the first spiritual upheaval in Russia, when the most pious members of the community joined the founders of Russian asceticism at the Pechersky Monastery, near Kiev, for a united effort. Somewhat later these records were collected in a volume, and form the famous *Paterikon* (Lives of the Pechersky Fathers), which for a long time was the most popular and favorite book with the masses. The extent of this upheaval in Russia, where paganism had recently been abandoned, can be judged from the traditions in the *Paterikon*.

It must not be forgotten that the ascetic of today was but yesterday one of the community, though ranking among its best members. Having shed the old Adam, he could not with one stroke destroy the old pagan and barbarian within himself. Like Abbot Theodosius, with his powerful, physically strong constitution, the monks were accustomed to endure the discomforts of an uncultured existence, and physical labor was habitual to them. Cutting wood and dragging it to the monastery, carrying water, working as carpenters, grinding meal, or helping in the kitchen meant to the brethren only a continuation behind the monastery walls of the same occupations to which they had been applying themselves in the outside world. The real test came with the deprivation of food and sleep, therefore the struggle against natural desires—the fasting and vigils—was considered the greatest spiritual achievement and was attained only by a chosen few who were held in general

<sup>3</sup> The famous Syrian ascetic of the fifth century who was reputed to have spent many years on top of a pillar.—ED.

esteem. For the majority of the brethren the Abbot, though very strict, had to introduce a day-rest instead of a night-rest. At noon the gates of the monastery were closed and the brethren sank into sleep. In spite of this not many could endure the "stalwart standing" in church at night. According to the *Paterikon*, during one of these "standings" Brother Matthew, famed for clairvoyance, saw the devil dressed as a Pole walking in church and throwing flowers at the brethren. The one to whom a flower clung stood for awhile and then, weakening in spirit, would walk out of the church and into his cell to sleep. Brother Matthew always stood stalwartly to the end of the matins though even for him it was not easy, but once on leaving the church after the matins he was unable to reach his cell and sitting down under the wooden gong used for calling the brethren to church, he fell asleep.

The struggle was great for an ascetic resolved to overcome the temptations, for, only yesterday a pagan, he could not at once free himself of the old beliefs, and in his imagination the natural desires became snares laid for him by the evil force. The demons were to him ancient pagan deities, provoked at the young generation and resolved to avenge themselves for the betrayal of the old religion. In the words of one of the writers of the *Paterikon*, "the demons, worshiped and venerated by the pagans of old, intolerant of the insult, cried: 'O wicked enemies, we shall not be placated, we shall fight you unto death!'" Then the great struggle began. Night was the most favorable time for diabolic temptations, because the monk at this time was particularly weak, while the foe—in league with the desires of the flesh and the terrors of the night—was particularly strong. The ascetic, worn out with fatigue but resisting the desire to lie down "on the ribs," would occasionally sit and indulge in a nap. The demons, in the form of fierce dragons familiar to folklore, breathing fire and sparks, would appear before the ascetic, threatening to demolish the walls of his cell and pervading his solitude with shouts, roars of driving chariots, and the strains of diabolical music. Even to the fearless and sober Abbot Theodosius, during the early days of his monastic life, the devil appeared in the shape of a black dog that stood stubbornly before him preventing him from genuflecting until the holy one had courage to strike it, when the apparition vanished. From per-

sonal experience the Abbot was convinced that the best means of struggling against the night apparitions was the resistance to the terrors they inspired, and this advice he gave to the brethren. When Brother Hilarion, being pursued at night by the demons, came to Theodosius entreating that he be transferred to another cell, the Abbot administered him a severe reprimand, and the following night Hilarion "lay down in his cell and slept soundly." However, the struggle did not always end so easily. Thus Brother Isaac lost his mind after seeing one of these apparitions.

It required great effort to overcome the diabolic temptations and desires of the flesh, and on this struggle the most fervent of the ascetics spent their force. This initial step of spiritual effort had but a preparatory significance in the scale of Christian ascetic exercises, yet the most perfect of the Pechersky ascetics could not rise above it. The Kiev ascetics had no clear conception of the higher forms of active and contemplative asceticism, and that which should have been only the method—the liberation of the spirit from earthly aspirations and thoughts—by necessity became to the brethren of the Pechersky Monastery the sole object. Their undisciplined natures did not subject themselves easily to insistent and conscientious efforts. Men with the will power and common sense of the Pechersky Abbot succeeded, indeed, in attaining a sound spiritual balance, but in its establishment too great and important a part was assigned to the external discipline of the mind and will. Because of this discipline Russian ascetics became outstanding administrators, most needed at that time, rather than great torch bearers of Christian sentiment and thought.

Thought was assigned a very humble place at the Pechersky Monastery. We find in the monastic records that when either Brother Hilarion or Brother Nikon was employed in transcribing books, the Abbot sat beside him "spinning fleece" or preparing the thread for bookbinding. Diligent work on books was frowned upon by the brethren, for spiritual pride could easily result from knowledge. In one of the Pechersky legends the love of reading was represented characteristically as a means of diabolical temptation. To one of the brethren, Nikita the Anchorite, the devil appeared in the form of an angel and said: "Thou must not pray but read books; through them thou shalt hold communion with the Lord

so that thou canst give a helpful word to them who come to thee, while I shall pray continually for thy salvation." Thus tempted, the monk, trusting in the prayers of the alleged angel, ceased praying and applied himself only to study and reading. To those who came to him he spoke of the grace of the spirit and prophesied. Noticing that the learned brother knew the books of the Old Testament by heart, but did not want either to see the Gospel and the Epistles or listen to them, the brethren understood it as a sign that Nikita had been tempted by the devil. Then the ascetics gathered together, and after a general council drove away the devil from Nikita by such powerful means that all knowledge left him at once. Naturally, under the circumstances, there could be little scholarship or knowledge of the Scriptures among the Pechersky brethren.

The *Paterikon* says that only one man spoke Hebrew, Latin, and Greek, the languages so indispensable to a serious study of theology, but even he was possessed of an evil spirit and lost all learning when the devil was expelled from him.

There were limitations in the growth of piety at the Pechersky Monastery, and frequently it sank far below the level of asceticism. The habits and vices of the surrounding life broke through the monastic enclosure and the strict Studite rule,<sup>4</sup> which should have served as the norm of monastic life, became an ideal difficult of attainment. The mere observance of it appeared to the writers of the *Paterikon* as the highest degree of piety and asceticism. The carrying of wood and water, the baking of bread, and other similar tasks evoked special approbation in the *Paterikon*, whereas by the Studite rule all these were the regular duties of the Abbot and brethren.

One of the monks knew the Psalter by heart and thereby aroused the general admiration of the brethren, who forgot that the rule required this knowledge of each one of them. Far more significant, however, was the fact that the essential part of the rule, forbidding the monks to possess personal property, was not observed, and Theodosius had to enter their cells without warning and burn the superfluous clothes, foodstuffs and other property they were hiding there. After the death of Abbot Theodosius the personal prop-

<sup>4</sup> The rule was adopted from the Studium Monastery in Constantinople.

erty of the monks was openly recognized and they were even allowed to earn money outside, thus creating rich and poor, generous and avaricious monks. It became difficult for a poor man to be admitted to the monastery because without a monetary assignment he would not be accepted. From a statement in the *Paterikon* one learns that the brethren did not want even to bury a poor monk from whom no legacy was received. Thus the Greek rule proved an unbearable yoke to the outstanding Russian monastery even at the height of its existence. Unable to endure the rigid rules of monastic life, the monks escaped from the enclosure at night and only returned to the monastery after a thorough carousal, which sometimes lasted for many days. Theodosius had an extensive problem to face in striving against these absences; he had to shut his eyes to them and admit his prodigal children back into the monastery.

In the meantime, what was taking place in the world outside the monastic enclosure? Only a few confused records have reached us, but nevertheless they prove that among the laity it was a rare exception to find a conscious attitude towards the questions of ethics and religion. Men like Vladimir Monomakh,<sup>5</sup> who brought into harmony the claims of worldly morality and Christian ethics, were met with only at the top of Russian society, while the masses, contrary to Khomiakov's opinion, had not even assimilated the ritual, that is, the external manifestation of Christian life. We agree with Prof. E. E. Golubinsky that the mass of the population in ancient Russia of the pre-Mongol period had not the time to assimilate anything—either the external form, or the inner meaning of the Christian faith. The people, as before, remained pagan, and the proper exercise of Christian rites—church-going, the discharge of church ceremonies, and the partaking of the Holy Sacrament—were still questions for the future. It required almost the entire length of Russian history for the people to attain this stage. The Russian nature was so averse to the observance of the ritual that at the attempt to increase the days of fasting two Bishops, Nestor and Leon, in succession, lost their diocese in Rostov. They were expelled by Prince Andrew Bogoliubsky and their parishioners in 1162 for opposing the resolution of the Russian party which

<sup>5</sup> Prince of Kiev, 1113-25.—ED.

abolished fasting on Wednesday and Friday when it coincided with a holiday.

Under the circumstances the immediate influence of the torch bearers of piety in the Pechersky Monastery upon the surrounding world was considerably smaller than that which the pious Kiev legend proved to have on posterity. Only upon the upper classes of their contemporary society could the monastic ascetics exert any influence but even there the monks resolutely observed the commandment, "Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's," and welcomed a prince "as befits a prince" and a boiarin "as befits a boiarin." When Abbot Theodosius interfered in the conflict between the princes and tried to persuade Prince Sviatoslav to give back to his elder brother the throne which he had illegally usurped, and in return the Prince threatened to banish him, the brethren entreated their superior to cease his pastoral admonitions. Sometimes the Prince would come to the monastery and listen to the edifying discourses, but if he ever was guided by the monastic advice in his private life his conscience alone could tell. The upper classes, however, did not turn to the monastery even for enlightenment, all they required of an Orthodox priest or monk was what they formerly received from the pagan magi.

The *Paterikon* recounts that one day the people from a village belonging to the monastery came and begged the Abbot to expel the house demon from the stall where he was wasting away the cattle. Pagan deities did not cease to exist for a Christian of those days; they were merely transformed into demons and the struggle against them became his immediate duty. So the Pechersky Abbot answered the villagers' call, went to the village, and mindful of the word of the Lord: "Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting," spent the night in the stall in prayer until the break of day, and from that time on all the mischiefs of the house demon ceased.

Such was the condition of religious faith in Russia soon after the conversion, and having familiarized ourselves with the humble beginnings of Russian piety we must now turn to its further development.

## II

# NATIONALIZATION OF FAITH AND CHURCH

---

**I**N the early period after the conversion Russian society was divided into two very unequal parts. A small group of people strove eagerly to reproduce in Russia the subtleties of Eastern religion, but the mass of the population, while Christian in name, remained pagan. For a long time two circumstances prevented them both from drawing closer and understanding each other. First, the new faith descended upon Russia with the traits of asceticism, and the Christian ideal it advanced was specifically monastic. This ascetic ideal was foreign and too exalted for the world, whereas the world was too unrighteous and fraught with peril for the ascetic ideal. The only means of safeguarding the purity of that ideal was to escape from the world, therefore monasticism became an indispensable requisite to Christian perfection and every true Christian yearned to retire from the worldly surroundings, which were contrary to his ideal. Second, notwithstanding a most sincere mutual desire to enlighten and be enlightened, it was a difficult task to accomplish. All this led to the dissociation of the laity and clergy. From the early days the Russians could have acquired knowledge of faith from the kindred Slavonic (Bulgarian) source, but until the period of the Mongol domination most of their metropolitans and bishops were Greeks sent from Constantinople and ignorant of the Russian language. Little by little this difficulty was overcome and the learned Greeks were replaced by Russian bishops competent to talk to the parishioners without interpreters, and able to expose their shortcomings in a style comprehensible to



all and not based on the principles of Byzantine rhetorics. Yet here a new difficulty presented itself: the Russian priests were little qualified to be teachers. Under these conditions centuries passed, but the spiritual education of the people gained ground very slowly, because the decline in the standard of the priests was more rapid than the rise in that of the masses. The decline in the cultural level and the lessening of piety in the upper clergy is a fact as generally acknowledged by the Russian historians of the church as it is easily explained. Turning away gradually from Byzantium and being deprived of the constant influx of the Greek spiritual force, Russia had not yet the educational means sufficient to replace the Greek priests with equally well-trained ones of her own. To a certain degree the zeal of native hierarchs towards the religious enlightenment of the masses could have replaced the lack of qualifications, but even zealous priests were scarce as the necessity for them increased. The difficulty in filling the high ecclesiastical offices was great, but the problem was far more acute as regards the lower clergy. As an example we shall quote the classic complaints of Genadius, the Novgorod Archbishop of the fifteenth century:

They bring me a peasant to be ordained as a priest or deacon. I bid him read the Epistles, and he does not know how to begin. I bid him read the Psalter, he cannot take the first step. . . . I order him to be taught at least the liturgical prayers, but he is unable even to repeat the words one gives him. When told to read from the alphabet, after a short lesson he begs to leave, does not want to learn. And if I refuse to ordain him, I am told: such is the world, your Holiness, we cannot find anyone versed in knowledge.

The same thing was confirmed a half-century later by the Council of a Hundred Chapters. "Unless the illiterates are ordained," say the statutes of the Council held in Moscow in 1551, "the churches will remain without chant and the Christians will die unrepentant."

The decline in the level of education among the clergy was a far more striking and noticeable phenomenon than the gradual advancement of the religious standard of the masses. This progress must be recognized as an indisputable fact, and to question it would be both an injustice and a grave error of judgment. Drawing closer to each other the priests and the parishioners of ancient

Russia arrived finally at a fairly analogous religious understanding—equally remote from both initial points: the ascetic fervor of the hermits and the pagan creed of the masses. The priests grew more and more accustomed to identifying the substance of religion with its outer forms, whereas the masses, having primarily not even assimilated the forms of religion, gradually grew to value them. By force of habit they attributed to the rites the same mysterious and magic significance found in earlier days in the rites of the ancient folk cult. It was the magic significance of the rite which became the cause and condition of its popularity. Therefore the rite served also as a middle course upon which met the upper and lower strata of Russian faith: the former gradually losing the true conception of the contents, the latter gradually gaining an approximate understanding of the form.

Some historians of the church have described the period from the ninth to the sixteenth century as one of continuous decline, when in fact it had been one of constant progress. During these six centuries pagan Russia was being transformed, little by little, into "Holy Russia," the country of innumerable churches, incessant chiming of bells, long night services, strict fastings, and zealous genuflections, as pictured by foreign visitors of the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries. It is interesting to note that the expression "Holy Russia" appeared for the first time in 1579 in the letters of Prince Kurbsky.

During that time, the alien product having become acclimatized in Russia, the faith acquired a national character. Of what did these national characteristics acquired by Christianity in Russia consist?

It would be futile to expect any explanation of the elements of these national traits from the Russian observers of those days, for they were as yet unable to recognize the difference between their faith and other creeds. As regards the foreign observers of that time the fact that the Russians addressed each other as "Christians" and "Orthodox," and called their church "Eastern" did not seem to them as being characteristic of Russian piety. They have recorded original traits in the Russian piety, but of course these observations vary in accordance with their own creed. Those coming from the West, particularly the Protestants, tried to find in the forms of Russian piety a corresponding inner meaning and, to

their complete bewilderment, often failed. Accustomed to regard the knowledge of the Gospel as an indispensable condition of faith, and the oral instruction as one of the principal duties of the pastors, they were dismayed to find that preaching did not exist in Russia, and that scarcely one out of ten inhabitants knew the Lord's Prayer, to say nothing of the Creed and the Ten Commandments. A foreigner once asked a Russian why the peasants did not know either the Lord's Prayer or the Ave Maria, and was told that "this very superior science was suitable only to Tsars, Patriarchs, clergy, and gentlefolk, and not to the plain people." In 1620 at the Upsal Academy John Botvid, a learned Swede, discussed a thesis on the subject "Are Muscovites Christians?" Though by means of various scientific conjectures and analogies he at last succeeded in answering the question affirmatively, the very fact that such a thesis could be debated is extremely characteristic.

At first sight the impressions produced by Russian piety upon visitors from the East, the land of ancient faith, seem quite different, as we find them recorded in the diary of Archdeacon Paul, who in the days of Patriarch Nikon came to Moscow with Macarius the Patriarch of Antioch. Notwithstanding their readiness to admire and be moved by everything, the eight-hour standing in church and the long fastings drove the unfortunate Syrians to despair. "We grew quite weak during Lent," writes Deacon Paul, "and felt the agonies of torture." "In their endurance and steadfastness may the peace of God rest with the Russian people, its men, women, and children," Paul exclaims in another place, and then remarks half jokingly that "without question all the Russians will take their place with the saints, for their piety surpasses that of the hermits."

Although the Eastern Patriarch destined Russians to sainthood, and the Swedish theologian applied all the resources of his science to prove that they were not pagan, one must admit that fundamentally both opinions were based on fairly analogous observations. Indeed, Russian piety acquired a quality differing as much from the West as from the East, and in its substance the Russian faith became characteristically national. At the same time that the nationalization of Russian religion was achieved, the Russian

church also became national in its form. We shall now see how this was accomplished.

In a book published in 1913, M. D. Priselkov endeavored to prove that the first steps towards nationalization coincided with the conversion of the Russian people. In his opinion, Vladimir had received baptism not from the Greeks but the Bulgarians, and had subordinated his new diocese to the Patriarch of Ochride. However, this theory is based upon a number of conjectures, very clever, but extremely hypothetical. True, a struggle between the Russians and Greeks had taken place at an early date, but it had terminated in a Greek victory half a century following the conversion. The chronicles written under Greek influence point out that in 1030-37 "Russia was christened anew," and that the Greeks had succeeded in making "her people uphold the Christian faith and forget paganism." The Greeks did not believe in Boris, Gleb, and Vladimir, the first Russian saints of princely origin, and confronted the Russians with their own martyrs and saints. From the time of Iaroslav <sup>1</sup> the Russian church was definitely subordinated to the Patriarch of Constantinople and became one of his dioceses. Up to the Mongol invasion in the early part of the thirteenth century the highest ecclesiastical personage in Russia, the Metropolitan of Kiev, was appointed from Constantinople, and twice only, in 1051 and 1147, at the councils of Russian bishops in Kiev, did the Russians venture to consecrate their own metropolitans—Hilarion and Klim. In both instances Constantinople refused to sanction the nomination. "It is not within the statutes," argued the Greek bishops, "for the bishops to consecrate a metropolitan. The Patriarch must consecrate a metropolitan." Finally the Russians were forced to recognize the power of the Patriarch, which lasted until the time of the Mongol invasion, when the relations began to change. Simultaneously with the influx of the Mongols from Asia, Byzantium fell into the hands of the crusaders of the Fourth Crusade. In the midst of this confusion, both in Russia and on the Balkan peninsula, Russian metropolitans were more frequently consecrated at home and went to Constantinople only for confirmation. Thus it continued for two hundred years, up to the middle of the fifteenth century, when

<sup>1</sup> Prince of Kiev, 1019-54.—Ed.

alarming news came from Constantinople. In 1437 Metropolitan Isidorus, a Greek and staunch supporter of the union of churches, was sent to Moscow as a successor to Photius, also a Greek. For the first time the misgivings of the Muscovites were aroused when Isidorus announced to the Grand Duke his intention of going to Italy for the Latin Ecclesiastical Council in Florence. The Russians had been earlier taught by Byzantium to hate the Western church. According to the instructions of the Eastern church one could neither eat nor drink from the same vessel as the Latins. Therefore it was quite natural that the intention of Metropolitan Isidorus to go to Italy seemed to the people of Moscow "new, and strange, and unpleasant." Notwithstanding the Grand Duke's attempts to dissuade him, Isidorus went to the Council and returned from Florence with a Latin cross and a prayer for the Pope instead of one for the Patriarch—in short, the union of the Eastern and the Western church. This the Russians could not tolerate, and so the humanist Metropolitan was declared a "maleficent, crafty, and mercenary man," arrested and condemned by the council of Russian ecclesiastics, but succeeded in escaping to Rome. In his place the same council elected its own Metropolitan—Jonah, a Russian, long a candidate of the Grand Duke Vasily. They also wrote an explanatory letter to Byzantium, in which the Grand Duke requested permission to consecrate the metropolitans in Russia.

This request was explained as due to the length of the journey, the unserviceable roads to Byzantium, and the Turkish invasion, but between the lines could be read quite plainly its principal reason—the newborn dissension in the heart of the Eastern church. The Moscow government was so greatly troubled by the acceptance of the Union in Constantinople that it dared not appeal to the Patriarch, and so under the ambiguous pretext that Russia did not know whether the most holy Patriarch was still in the capital the letter was addressed to Emperor Constantine Paleologus. In a letter sent to Kiev not later than the end of January 1451 Jonah already connected the "dissensions" of the Emperors and the Patriarch with the subjugation of Constantinople by the Turks and Latins.

Constantine Paleologus had no opportunity to answer the Grand Duke's letter, for on May 29, 1453, he was killed on the ramparts of Constantinople. In less than fifteen years following the "great

crime" committed by the Greek church—the acceptance of the Union—Moscow received even more terrifying news. "Ye children of mine," Metropolitan Jonah wrote in his circular message a year after the Turkish conquest of Constantinople, "a man, a Christian Orthodox, by name of Demetrius the Greek, came to us from the great Orthodoxy, from the great ruling city of Constantine and told us that, by the will of God and in punishment for our sins, the city of Constantine, for so many years impregnable and defended by God, had been taken by the godless Turks—its holy churches and monasteries ruined and the sacred relics burned. The hermits, the monks, and the nuns, together with the entire Greek race, were destroyed—the aged by fire and sword, the young and the infants taken into captivity." The Russians saw in this a punishment from God which had suddenly struck the Greeks for their backsliding to Latinism. "You well know, my children, the many ills that befell the ruling city of Constantine during the seven years the Bulgarians and Persians held it as in a net; yet it did not suffer as long as the Greeks observed their faith," ran another message in which five years later Jonah again revealed his ideas.

Once more the inference was clear: the Russians had to take care of their souls. "At the time when Isidorus returned from the Council," the Grand Duke wrote to the Emperor just prior to the fateful event, "we began to attach importance to our Orthodoxy, our immortal souls, the hour of our death, and our appearance at the great Day of Judgment before the Judge of all our innermost thoughts." Thus a tremendous responsibility fell upon the representatives of the Russian church, for the fate of Orthodoxy throughout the world depended on them, since at the center of Orthodoxy in the ruling city "the sun of piety was eclipsed." This idea led to the unfolding of the famous theory of the part played by the state of Moscow in universal history—"Moscow, the Third Rome." Already at the end of the fifteenth century we find this theory fully developed in the letters of Philotheus, the Abbot of a Pskov monastery. "The church of ancient Rome fell because of Apollinarian heresy," he wrote to Ivan III; "as to the second Rome—the church of Constantinople—it has been hewn by the axes of Ishmaelites, but this third new Rome—the Holy Apostolic church, under thy mighty rule, shines throughout the entire world more

brightly than the sun. All the Orthodox Christian realms have converged in thine own. Thou art the sole Autocrat of the universe, the only Tsar of the Christians. . . . Observe and hearken, O pious Tsar," Philotheus continued in his letter, "two Romes have fallen, but the third stands, and no fourth can ever be. Thy Christian Empire shall fall to no one's lot." Thus the Russian Tsar had to uphold the sole remaining fragment of true Orthodoxy inviolate until the second advent of Christ.

This theory was to prove a valuable means in the attainment of the early aspirations of the Russian church—its national independence.

One hundred years later the Moscow authorities finally obtained for the North Russian church its formal independence from Byzantium and its own Patriarch (1589), while the theory of Moscow's world importance at that time had already been officially adopted. In the charter confirming the new Moscow Patriarchate the theory of "Moscow, the Third Rome" was once more proclaimed. In fact, even before the establishment of the Patriarchate the Russian church was no longer a dependent of the church of Constantinople; yet to prove the claims to its complete independence another theory had to be introduced. During the pre-Mongol and the Appanage periods <sup>2</sup> the Russian church was satisfied with its Greek origin and even prided itself on it, but to the national church it seemed necessary to trace Russian Christianity in a direct line from the Apostles. As the Russian Grand Duke had his origin directly from Pruss, "the brother of Emperor Augustus," so the Russian faith should proceed directly from Andrew, "brother of the Apostle Peter." Thus, when the Papal Legate Possevin tried to persuade Ivan the Terrible to embrace the Florentine Union, the Tsar answered:

Why do you point out the Greeks to us, Greeks are no Gospel to us, we believe not in the Greeks but in Christ. We received the Christian faith at the birth of the Christian church when Andrew, brother of the Apostle Peter, came to these parts on his way to Rome. Thus we in Moscow embraced the true faith at the same time that you did in Italy, and have kept it inviolate from then to the present day.

<sup>2</sup> The term "Appanage period" has been commonly applied by Russian historians to the period from the middle of the thirteenth to the middle of the fifteenth century, during which Russia remained divided into a large number of small independent principalities ("appanages").—Ed.

It was through the assistance of the state working in the interest of the Grand Duke of Moscow during the century before the establishment of the Patriarchate that the Russian church became morally and spiritually emancipated from Byzantium, for its national elevation was as much a political as a spiritual matter, in fact more political than spiritual. By means of the Moscow theory, in which the "one Orthodox Tsar of the Universe" was exalted above all others, the Moscow sovereign obtained a religious consecration strengthening thereby the growth of his power. Naturally the princes of Moscow promptly availed themselves of this new weapon to fight their adversaries and to establish definitely the autocracy.

In return for its protection by the state, the national Russian church rendered equivalent services. By recognizing the supremacy of the state and gaining a place within the system of Moscow state institutions, it became not only a national but a state church as well. We shall now examine carefully this new trait which played such an important part in the history of the Russian church.

It was Byzantium that had paved the way for one of the most characteristic traits of Russian church history, the close relation of state and church. According to the Fathers of the Quinisext Ecumenical Council the Lord entrusted the church to the Emperor, and Balsamon, the canonist of the twelfth century, acknowledged his power as being greater than that of the Patriarch. The Emperor of Byzantium, the "Prelate for External Affairs," as Constantine the Great called himself, actually possessed tremendous power over the church. "Saint" and "Lord of the Christian World" were introduced into the title of the emperor. He could enter the sanctuary, bless the people, and participate in divine service. True that at times the emperors' claims met with resistance, and the Eastern as well as the Western theory held that "Prelacy was above the State," or in other words, the ecclesiastical power was above the secular power. However, this did not prevent the Byzantine emperors, as official representatives and defenders of its interests, from constant and actual interference in the matters of the church. They extended their power over the Eastern church to its Russian dioceses, redistributing them, taking part in the appointment of Russian metropolitans and the prosecution of guilty hierarchs, etc. More-



over, they claimed a supremacy in Russia's secular affairs, and regarded the Russian princes as vassals.

At the end of the fourteenth century the Grand Duke of Moscow, realizing his power, followed the example of the South Slavonic sovereigns and protested against subordination to the Emperor of Byzantium by stating to the Patriarch: "We have a church, but we have no tsar, and do not wish one." Then he forbade mentioning the Emperor's name in prayer, which provoked a severe reprimand from the Patriarch of Constantinople.

It is inconceivable for a Christian [the Patriarch wrote to Vasily I in 1393] to have a church and not have a tsar; for the state and the church are closely united, and it would be impossible to separate them one from the other. . . . The Holy Tsar occupies a high position in the church; the Emperor of Byzantium is not like other local princes and sovereigns. From the very beginning the Tsars have strengthened and sanctioned the piety of the whole world. The Tsars have convoked Ecumenical Councils, they have, in their statutes, enjoined the observation of holy dogmas and the principles of Christian life, and fought against all heresies. . . . All of which entitles them to great honor and a high position in the church. . . . Listen to what the Apostle Peter said: "Fear the Lord, revere the Tsar." The Apostle did not say "Tsars," for this might have suggested *the so-called Tsars* of the various nations<sup>3</sup> but "Tsar," indicating *one* Tsar in the world. . . . All the others have by force appropriated to themselves the name of Tsar.

The grandson and great-grandson of Prince Vasily I profited fully by the lesson of the Byzantine Patriarch. Indeed, it was necessary to recognize the authority of "*one* Tsar in the world" over the Christian church, and after the fall of Constantinople and the Balkan states the sovereign of Moscow became this Tsar.

Through his marriage to Sophia Paleologus, Ivan III became the heir to "Caesaropapism" of the Byzantine Emperors. Thus simultaneously the Russian church declared its independence from the Patriarch of Constantinople, and the Russian Tsars<sup>4</sup> became its

<sup>3</sup> The Patriarch referred to the Serbs and Bulgarians.

<sup>4</sup> The word "Tsar," a contraction of Caesar, was used in the ninth century by the Southern Slavs and came from there to Russia. During the thirteenth century the Khans, the Shahs, and the Sultans were called "Tsars" in Russia and only in the fifteenth century did the South Slavonic sovereigns assume this title. It was

representatives and heads—although their claims were not as far-reaching as those of the Byzantine Emperors.

The power of the Tsar and the abstract theory upon which it was established were not sufficient to realize the new conception of the national Russian church. For this an active cooperation of the church itself was required, and it was offered to the government of Moscow by three eminent hierarchs of the sixteenth century, Joseph Sanin, the Abbot of Volokolamsk Monastery, and the two Metropolitans, Daniel and Macarius, all three imbued with a nationally religious spirit. The representatives of three generations, they flourished between the end of the fifteenth and the middle of the sixteenth centuries, and in their work they championed the idea which had originated at the beginning of this period and was realized at the end of it—the idea of a national state church.

Joseph, Daniel, and Macarius, with their ardent devotion to form, letter, and ritual, represented a trend which was intolerant of a critical attitude towards tradition, and they were typical of the Russian culture and piety of the sixteenth century. "The origin of all passions is in *opinion*; opinion is the second fall of man." Thus did one of his disciples formulate Joseph's views. This dread of the "accursed" opinion, this fear of expressing an individual thought, permeated the literary activities of Joseph, Daniel, and Macarius, the eminent writers of the sixteenth century. As everything a writer stated had to be quoted "from the books" literary work became a collection of extracts from "Holy Scriptures." In Joseph's works there usually is a central idea, and he employs dialectic skill in interspersing the extracts with his own reasonings. Daniel in his sermons and letters contributed only some introductory remarks and a conclusive moral, often having no relation to the principal subject. "The bulk of his work," says a modern student of Daniel's writing, "consists of a confused mass of extracts, in comparison to which the personal work of the author is only that of a copyist." As

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in the seventies and eighties of the fifteenth century that the word "Tsar" was associated with the title of the Prince of Moscow, first in his relations with the Livonian Order and the cities of Narva, Reval, and Lubeck, and then, in 1504-14-17, with the Germanic Emperor. The religious sanction "By the Grace of God," also of Byzantine origin, antedates the adoption of this title. It occasionally appeared on the coins of Vasily I (1389-1425) and on all those of Vasily II. These words also appeared on the seals after 1497.

for Macarius, he planned and achieved the task of compiling his famous *Menologion*, a complete encyclopedia of ancient Russian literature: "All the holy books which can be found in Russia."

Because of the lack of original thought in these works it was necessary to possess a colossal memory and to be a man of erudition in order to have "on the tip of the tongue," as one of Joseph's biographers expressed it, the greatest possible number of scriptural texts upon every subject. In the absence of a proper scientific training and critical methods this erudition degenerated in Russia into a mere knowledge of texts. Even to Joseph and Daniel there existed no difference in the books they read. The Gospel, the Lives of the Saints, the Bible, the Apostles, and the statutes of the Byzantine Emperors were all under one rubric and were considered "Holy Scriptures." However, in none of this did the Russian hierarchs of the sixteenth century recognize the core of Christianity. The "Scriptures" served only as a means of regulating life, and to this practical purpose all their cares were directed. Although poor men of letters, they revealed themselves as skilfully practical and expert in their knowledge of worldly wisdom.

With this aim Joseph, the founder of the movement, built the famous Volokolamsk Monastery, which for a century was a "nursery" of bishops. The monastic rule subjugated the monks' tempers, effaced their individual traits, trained them to be docile and complaisant. The brethren were rigidly taught formal discipline and formal piety; they pledged themselves to have no personal possessions and were under complete obedience to the rule, the Abbot, and to each other. All this produced men ready to support and propagate the ideas of the founder. Wherever fate took them the graduates of the Volokolamsk Monastery did not sever their connection with their alma mater, but supported each other and brought men of their trend to the highest positions in the ecclesiastical hierarchy, thus preserving the tradition from generation to generation. Daniel succeeded Joseph as Abbot and later attained the Metropolitan See, while Macarius, whom he promoted, subsequently became his successor. More than half a century after the death of Joseph the term "Josephites" still held a definite meaning, commanding the veneration of friends and the hatred of enemies.

The chief purpose of Joseph and his followers, the Josephites, was

to establish a close union between church and state, and they strove to support the state authority, hoping to obtain in return its protection. Joseph was prepared to regard the triumph of the state authority at Moscow as that of the church, and in every possible way contributed to it. Metropolitan Daniel continued to uphold the Josephite policy, which can be seen from the part he took in the arrest, at Moscow, of one of the last appanage princes, and in the solution of the question of divorce between Vasily III and the childless Salome Saburov. By his authority the Metropolitan pardoned, in the first case, the violation of the oath and, in the second case, the breach of church rules, thus exercising that "Godly wise and God-inspired cunning" which, as a principle of the highest worldly wisdom, Joseph had bequeathed to his followers.

Of course, in return for this the church expected equivalent services from the government. By raising no objections to the Prince's interference with church matters, but even allowing it ample scope, Joseph procured the support of the state in what was to him and the church the most pressing question of the day: the question of monastic property. He regarded the monastery as a state institution whose aim it was to prepare hierarchs for the state church.

With this in view Joseph was very discriminating in his choice of those to be admitted into his monastery and preferred to have rich and illustrious men able to make generous assignments of money and land. His reasons were entirely practical: the monastery had to be rich to attract people of prominence, and it was necessary to have prominent men in order to prepare worthy successors for the highest stations in the administration of the church. There was a moment when the monastic estates were in great peril of secularization, but Joseph's party offered to make concessions to the state on the question of church independence, which proved effective. The government met them halfway, and the secularization of monastic estates was postponed for several centuries, whereas the Josephites applied every effort to make the church a state and national one. Theoretically Joseph placed the Russian prince in the same position which the Emperor of Byzantium had occupied in the Eastern church. Daniel practically subordinated the church and its representatives to the will of the secular power. Finally, Macarius applied the theory and practice of secular intervention to the revision

of the spiritual heritage of the national church, and in this sense completed the task begun by the first Abbot of Volokolamsk. The peak of Josephite policy was reached in the ecclesiastical councils during the first years of the independent reign of Ivan the Terrible. We shall now examine the period of national self-determination and exaltation of the Russian church.

Foreign observers have recorded the interesting information that every pious Russian of the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries liked to say his prayers in church before his own icon, and that if he was temporarily excluded from communion, his icon was also removed from church. That custom spread from individuals to entire districts, the dwellers of which enjoyed the possession of their own relics, their own icons, and their own patron saints. When the relics of St. Leontius, the first saint of that region, were discovered in Rostov, Prince Andrew Bogoliubsky, unable to disguise his gratification and joy, exclaimed: "Now I no longer stand humiliated in the eyes of other countries." The local saints were revered only within the boundaries of their own land, while other districts either ignored them or regarded them with enmity.

At the time of Russia's unification it was necessary to change this particularistic point of view on local relics. In annexing the appanages the Princes of Moscow<sup>5</sup> transferred the most sacred of these relics to the newly established capital. Thus the icon of the Saviour from Novgorod, the icon of the Annunciation from Ustiug, the icon of Our Lady Odigitria from Smolensk, and the Pechersky icon from Pskov found their way to the Cathedral of the Assumption in Moscow. On becoming the head of the national church, the sovereign of Moscow began to collect systematically all the national relics. The idea was not to deprive the conquered districts of their patron saints, but in accordance with the wish of the national church to obtain for local relics a general renown and to add them to the common depository of national piety. "It was necessary," stated a writer of one of the lives of the saints, "to prove that the Russian church, though it appeared at the eleventh hour,

<sup>5</sup> In the course of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries most of central and northern Russia gradually became united under the political authority of the Prince of Moscow, who became first the Grand Duke of Moscow, elevated over all appanage princes, and ultimately the Tsar of Russia.—Ed.

had accomplished as much as the laborers in the vineyard of the Lord who had toiled from the first hour, and that its seeds did not fall on thorns and rocks but on good, fertile ground bringing forth the harvest a hundredfold." Such were the motives that prompted Metropolitan Macarius to compile the lives of the saints who had existed prior to his time. But the *Menologion* was only a prologue to a more important task, "the equal of which," according to a modern student of Russian hagiography, "cannot be found either in the Russian church or in the Eastern and Western churches." The object of this work was to make known to the people all the local saints and to have them recognized and venerated as all-Russian saints.

In 1547, the first year of the independent reign of Ivan the Terrible, an ecclesiastical council was convoked in Moscow for the purpose of canonizing twenty-two local saints, about whom Macarius had collected the necessary information. However, he did not limit himself to this, but requested all the bishops to inquire further of the local clergy and pious people where and what saints had been glorified by signs and miracles. The results of their inquiries were written down and, in the form of the "Lives of New Saints," were presented in 1549 at the Second Ecclesiastical Council, adding seventeen saints to the former communion. Thus "in two or three years," to quote V. Vasiliev, "they canonized more saints than in all the preceding five centuries, from the foundation of the Russian church to the time of the councils."

The national pride was now quite satisfied. One of the transcribers of the "Lives" rightfully said that "from the time of the Councils on the New Saints, convoked in Moscow, the churches of the Lord in Russia were not bereft of the holy relics, and Russia truly radiated piety like the Second Rome, the ruling city (i. e., Constantinople)." These words show the close relation existing between the canonization of the saints and the establishment of the theory "Moscow, the Third Rome." The writer concluded by connecting the old to the new argument: "There the Orthodox faith was corrupted by the Moslem heresy of the godless Turks, whereas on Russian soil it began to glow with the teachings of *our* Holy Fathers." In using for the first part of his antithesis the fall of Constantinople and for the second the resolutions of the Moscow

Councils, the author of the quotation deliberately combined into a single whole both the beginning and the end of the process which we have been examining.

If in the beginning the Moscow churchmen felt somewhat appalled by the magnitude of the task which had fallen to their lot, now, after the work of the Councils, this task no longer appeared beyond their strength and they became confident of success. Having been eclipsed in Constantinople, "the sun of Orthodoxy radiated" with a new force in the new Russian capital, and fear for the destiny of the true faith had no foundation. In every essential the work of the Josephites was accomplished. The Council of a Hundred Chapters (1551), which concluded a series of ecclesiastical conventions for the revision and elevation of the spiritual substance in the national church, was their last and final victory.

It could not be said that the victory was attained without any opposition. On the contrary, there developed a strong center of opposition in the upper Transvolga region, not far from the Cyril-Belozersky Monastery. This party supplied a worthy opponent to each of the three main representatives of Josephism.

The holy Nilus, about the same age as Joseph of Volokolamsk, was the founder of the Sorsk Hermitage in the Transvolga region. It was from there that his followers—Bassianus the Squint-eyed, the opponent of Daniel, and Arthemius, with whom Macarius had to contend—came to continue his work. During the first half of the century, as long as any hope existed of overcoming the predominating influence of the Josephites, the voices of the Transvolga "Elders" and their disciples rose incessantly in opposition, and were silenced only after the final victory of the national religious party in the middle of the sixteenth century.

The views of Nilus of Sorsk and his followers were altogether contrary to those of the Abbot of Volokolamsk. In contradiction to the pedantic erudition of the Josephites, they declared in the Transvolga region that not every written scrap of paper was Holy Scripture—that "much was written, but not everything was holy: some of it was the Lord's commandment, some, a tradition of the Fathers, and some, human custom." The Scriptures, in their opinion, should be "scrutinized," referred to critically, and only the Gospel and the Epistles should be accepted unconditionally. In opposition to the

union of the church and state, the Transvolga Elders demanded their complete separation and mutual independence. It was of no avail for the Prince to seek counsel of the monks, those "ghosts" dead to the world, but neither should the church "stand in awe of the authority"; it was pledged to uphold the truth, for "prelacy was above any state," and a secular sovereign could not judge of spiritual questions. They were those of individual conscience, therefore a secular power could not punish for the holding of religious beliefs. In contrast to the Josephites, who invoked the Holy Inquisition and insisted upon the execution of heretics, Nilus asserted that "to judge either the just or the culpable and to banish or incarcerate them was no concern of the church; it should only try to influence with persuasion and prayer."

The ethical teachings of the Transvolga Elders were also imbued with the spirit of inner Christianity. Neither the magnificence of the church, nor the priceless sacerdotal vestments and icons, nor the harmony of the chant form the substance of religion, but the inner regulation of the soul, "work of the spirit." The Christian ascetics must not live at the expense of other people, but have to subsist by their own labor. Therefore the monasteries cannot own property, the monks must be "non-covetous," and their possessions, in accordance with the commandment in the Gospel, should be distributed among the poor. Neither did the Transvolga Elders believe in the "new saints" canonized by the ecclesiastical councils of 1547-49.

For Russia of the sixteenth century all these views, even in their most temperate form, were too premature. The ideas of criticism, tolerance, and inner spiritual Christianity were beyond the understanding of its people. This alone was enough to doom the movement of the "Non-covetous" to failure, but what still further weakened their position and decided their fate was the compromising relation with heretics of the rationalist trend and a close association with the political opponents of the government. Nilus of Sorsk did not live to see the outcome of the struggle and died in peace. But Bassianus, notwithstanding his noble descent from the family of the Princes Patrikeiev and his relationship with the grand ducal house, was condemned by the ecclesiastical council under the chairmanship of Daniel as a heretic, delivered into the



hands of his bitter enemies the Josephites, and placed in their monastery for incarceration. Finally, soon after the Council of a Hundred Chapters, Arthemius, together with several others, was also condemned for heresy and banished to Solovetsk, whence he escaped into Lithuania, and having moderated his latitudinarianism became an ardent defender of Orthodoxy against Protestantism and Catholicism.

In 1553 and 1554, the Ecclesiastical Councils against the Heretics completed the work initiated by the Council of a Hundred Chapters and the Councils on New Saints. The last two Councils defined what the faith of the Russian national church should be, while the Councils against the Heretics decided what it ought not to be.

Positively, as well as negatively, the substance of the national Russian church was now conclusively determined and officially sanctioned.

### III

## THE ORIGIN OF THE SCHISM

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**T**OWARDS the end of the sixteenth century the Russian church became national in substance as well as in form. Russian piety was recognized as the purest in the world, and the subordination of the Russian church to the Patriarch of Constantinople ceased with the establishment of an independent Russian Patriarchate. The church attained both these results by forming a close union with the state. The state authorities recognized the inviolability of the spiritual substance in the Russian church and took upon themselves to safeguard it, while the representatives of the clergy gave religious sanction to the power of the Moscow sovereign and, in theory, acknowledged for the state its right and duty of guardianship over the church. The middle of the sixteenth century was a solemn moment of national exaltation for the state and the church, for their harmony seemed complete, and their union an everlasting one. While putting their program into practice, Tsar Ivan IV and Metropolitan Macarius could not foresee that the time would soon come when both state and church would find this union too close and inconvenient. In sanctioning the old ritual of the Russian church, the state did not anticipate that, in less than a century, it would be called to contend against a tradition it had itself strengthened in the conscience of the people. Neither did it ever occur to Joseph of Volokolamsk and his followers that their theory of state protection for the church would lead eventually to the complete abolition of secular privileges of the church and its incorporation into the framework of governmental institutions. Nevertheless, both results were the natural outcome of the fundamental cause—the low standard of religious thought in ancient

Russia. The recognition of this standard as immutable and infallible must necessarily have led to schism. It was likewise inevitable that because of the weakness in the spiritual life the state's protection of the church would gradually develop into a state control over the church.

The formalism of the old Russian religion was the cardinal trait characterizing both the Schism and the national church of the sixteenth century. The total absence of an indispensable preparatory knowledge prevented the Russians from discerning the substance of faith. What "Elder" Arsenius, a reviser of church books, said about his opponents in the beginning of the seventeenth century could be applied to the great majority of Russian churchmen of the fifteenth and the sixteenth centuries: they were

scarcely qualified in the alphabet, and were not certain which letter was a vowel and which a consonant; and as to the parts of speech—the voice, the genders, singular and plural, tense, and person—these did not even enter their minds. Having had no training these people always dwell on one line, or even one word, and declare: it is written here thus. Then it proves to be something quite different. One must not concentrate alone on the letter, but on the meaning intended by the author as well. In fact, they have no knowledge of Orthodoxy, and in the Holy Scripture they see only the writing without trying to grasp the idea.

Under such conditions a single letter or a dot could prove an "obstacle" to the entire theology of an ancient Russian. Religion became to him a set form of prayer formulas, possessing a magic meaning, and the slightest detail, eliminated or changed, deprived the formula of that mysterious force in which he believed without questioning its origin. Long before the Schism this attitude was perfectly characterized by an ingenuous Novgorod chronicler of the fifteenth century. Under the year 1476 he recorded the following important event: "In the year 6984 some philosophers began to chant: 'O God! have mercy upon us'; while the rest of the people chanted: 'God, have mercy upon us.'" Evidently the "philosophers" knew of the Greek vocative case and thought with its assistance to improve the Russian form. The complete substance of the coming Schism can be seen in this conflict of the two vocative cases. In comparing the Greek correction introduced by the "philosophers"

to the established form, the Novgorod chronicler was undecided which one to uphold, and yet at the time he was recording his doubts, the Russian churchmen had already obtained a criterion which gave preference to the Russian practice over the Greek theory.

The Greeks digressed from pure Orthodoxy, while the Russians from the early days of the Fathers observed it sacredly; therefore in the presence of differences in church forms and rites, the preference should be given the national Russian forms, as being truly Orthodox. Moreover, since there arose a doubt about the purity of the Greek faith, these differences acquired a special significance, for they proved definitely that Greek Orthodoxy was corrupt, and that of Russia sound. The greatest and most important task of Russian piety was now to safeguard carefully everything which did not resemble that of the Greeks.

Taking all this in consideration we shall be able to understand why the differences in church practice, trifling though they may be, became the object of special attention. The grandfathers and great-grandfathers, while noticing these peculiarities, tried to justify them by saying, "So it is done in the Greek Church," but the grandchildren and great-grandchildren, on the contrary, saw the best proof of the righteousness of their national religious peculiarities in that the latinized and moslemized Greek Church "no longer does it." They now tried zealously to discover and reveal in the distinction of form a distinction of spirit. If the Greeks did not hold two fingers in making the sign of the cross, or did thrice the hallelujah, then it showed that they had no true belief in the dogma of the Holy Trinity and understood erroneously the relation between the divine and human substance of Christ. If in ecclesiastical processions they walked against the sun, then obviously they refused to follow in the footsteps of Christ, thus treading on hell, the world of eternal gloom.

What was the attitude of the secular and clerical authorities of the sixteenth century towards these Russian ideas, which a hundred years later were to be condemned as schismatic? It is now generally established that the authorities treated the preservation of these ancient peculiarities of the national church with sympathy and encouragement, thereby hallowing them in the eyes of the

masses. In one of his sermons Metropolitan Daniel taught the people to hold two fingers in making the sign of the cross, and in another he took up arms against the shaving of the beard as an "outrage to the image of God." In the *Nomocanon*, compiled with the assistance of Daniel, there was inserted for that purpose an imaginary rule of the holy Apostles: "If one who shaved his beard died, he should not be given burial . . . but placed among the infidels." The Council of a Hundred Chapters, which crowned the triumph of the Josephite party, solemnly avowed these ideas and raised them to the degree of dogmas. "He who did not hold two fingers in making the sign of the cross—be he damned," proclaimed the Council, adding, "It was thus decreed by the Holy Fathers." Likewise, to do thrice the hallelujah and to shave the beards, the Council decided, "was not traditionally Orthodox, but Latin heresy."

However, the entire substance of the Josephite teachings, and in particular their ideas on the impeccability of Russian piety, met with some opposition. In 1518 Maximus, a learned Greek educated in Italy, came to Moscow. Being a Greek, he considered as illegal the independence of the Russian church from the Patriarch of Constantinople. As a man of culture and a scholar, he could not fail to notice the many deficiencies existing in Russian piety. "You embrace holy baptism and abide by the Orthodox faith—upright and sacred—but it bears no salutary fruit," courageously Maximus told the Council assembled for his trial. Naturally, in the struggle of the various parties in Moscow, Maximus could not be in favor of the Russian nationalists of those days. He soon gained friends among the followers of Nilus of Sorsk, straining thereby his relations with the Josephites and incurring the personal anger of Metropolitan Daniel. Then, in undertaking, by the order of the Grand Duke, the work of correcting the Russian theological books, he touched the sorest spot in the national piety. His closest collaborators felt a "great tremor" when Maximus bade them cross out a word or a whole paragraph of an ancient prayer formula. Not only his enemies but his followers as well were unable to understand that it was the form alone he was changing. For them the form contained the force and efficacy of the rite. His enemies considered the use of a newly corrected form a blasphemy, and his supporters en-

deavored to persuade him that the force of the old Russian rite was corroborated by facts; by means of it the ancient Russian saints had attained salvation! In contradiction to this, Bassianus, a follower of Nilus of Sorsk, affirmed with conviction that the ancient, uncorrected books "were written by the devil and not by the Holy Ghost." "Before Maximus," he said, "we were blaspheming God with these books instead of glorifying Him. But now, through Maximus, we perceive God." Ascribing to the learned Greek the exaggerated view expressed by his disciples, his opponents became indignant. "Thou, man, dost vex us when thou opposest the saints with thy reforms. They pleased the Lord with these books, lived according to their tenets, shed glory on our land, and after death became renowned for their miracles." In vain did Maximus argue that it was possible to worship the Russian saints without regarding them as learned philologists; that to judge his reforms it was necessary to know "the book wisdom" of the Greek teaching; that the "Hellenic language was most intricate," and that it was only possible to master it "by spending many years with learned teachers"; that even a native Greek could not know the language perfectly without having studied it at school. These arguments could not affect the views of the people, to whom any wisdom inaccessible to them was a witchery, and the temptation of the devil. Metropolitan Daniel accused Maximus of having attempted to bewitch the Grand Duke by extending over him his hands, on the palms of which were written Hellenic magical signs. "Thou braggest of Hellenic and Judaic sapience," the accusers responded to the explanations of Maximus, "of magic artifices and necromantic sorcery, all of which is contrary to Christian life and faith, and no Christian should penetrate their depths."

There was a great distinction between the conception of the world as understood by a pupil of cultured Europe, and those who represented semi-pagan Russia. When brought together by chance, these people of different worlds had no common language, and could not possibly understand each other. Finally, feeling himself a stranger in the community, Maximus asked permission to return to the Holy Mountain, but was held in Moscow. "We are in fear," a friend explained to him the cause of his detention; "thou a man of learning, comest to us and hast seen here of our best and worst,

and when thou goest hence thou wilt tell of everything." Notwithstanding Maximus' protestations that he was not subordinate to the Russian but only to the Greek authorities, he could not return to his native land. He was twice brought to trial, and though he fought to convince the judges by presenting arguments within their understanding, he was twice condemned under charges as absurd as those heretofore mentioned. After the second trial, like Bassianus he was handed over to his enemies in the Volokolamsk Monastery and subsequently transferred to the Otroch Monastery in Tver for incarceration. He lived to learn of the victory of his enemies at the Council of a Hundred Chapters.

This victory, however, was destined not to be a final one. In order to understand the historical change which transformed the Josephites of the sixteenth century into the Schismatics of the seventeenth, we must transpose the history of book revision by Maximus the Greek a century later, and interchange the parts. Let Maximus the accused be the accuser, and the accuser Daniel, together with the half-read and wholly illiterate masses of which he was so typical a representative, be the prisoner at the bar. Then replace Maximus by Nikon, far better suited to be the accuser, and the triumphant Daniel by the imprisoned Archpriest Avvakum of Iuriev infinitely more adapted to the part of a martyr to conviction. The accused and the accusers have changed places.

But what was happening in the interim? Was the vast majority of adherents to the national church, which defended the basic principles of the Josephites, converted into a minority forced to retreat before the followers of Maximus? No, it still remained a majority. The masses were not conscious of the changes which had been achieved during the century, and therefore were taken aback by the results. An ecclesiastical school where it was possible to study classical languages and grammar was opened in far-away Kiev. Several graduates of this school went to Moscow and were admitted to the only state printing house of those days as editors of sacred books. In their official capacity they compared the manuscripts with the printed texts of published works, and found the latter unsatisfactory, and the former abounding in variants and contradictions. The only means for establishing a correct and uniform text was to compare these works to the original Greek manuscripts,

therefore they sent for Greeks and their manuscripts. In collating the Greek and the Russian texts they found in the Russian books, besides the errors in translation and transcription, many original interpolations conforming to the national ritualistic peculiarities which in the sixteenth century were acknowledged as being from time immemorial the attributes of ancient Orthodoxy. But when compared to the Greek texts, these interpolations proved of recent date, and it was decided to delete them from the text. It was a simple and natural conclusion, but acutely contrary to the current national theory, and the first to come to it became victims of a controversy. In fact, what significance could the voices of a few specialists from Kiev have as against the voice of the entire church? The South Russian church, it was said in Moscow, had, like the Greek church, accepted the Union, and in the Kiev Theological Academy, long suspected of Latinism, they taught from Latin books. The ecclesiastical authorities interdicted the Kievan ecclesiastics from having any communion with the Orthodox without submitting themselves to a preliminary "purification," and under the threat of civil penalty and the anathema of the church it was forbidden in Moscow to buy books printed in Kiev. Because of the Russian opinion of the Greeks, the authority of the Greek manuscripts was considered insufficient for the reform of Russian books. Moreover, it was known in Russia that after the fall of Constantinople, Greek books were printed in Catholic countries, and consequently were imbued with the same Latin heresy as the Greek religion. In the prevailing national opinion the arguments in favor of correcting the books in accordance with the Greek texts lacked force, because they revealed that the reformers had strayed from the true faith. From the point of view of the nationalists, antiquity appertained to the Russian texts.

The party of "Zealots of Faith" was sufficiently strong to vanquish the first two men—Dionysius and Arsenius—who corrected the books by means of Greek manuscripts. But others, far more enlightened, appeared in the footsteps of the defeated specialists and, notwithstanding many obstacles, the Kievan and the Greek influences penetrated all walks of life. Kievans were in the printing house, and adapted for the Russian readers the products of Kievan theological literature which, in opposition to the national theory, demonstrated



that Greeks were not heretics, and that the Russian Patriarch should be in close communion with the four Eastern Patriarchs. Nikon's personal example proved that the systematic propaganda of these views served its purpose.

In the early days Nikon had belonged to the circle of the Zealots of Faith assembled around Tsar Alexis (1645-76), and numbering among its members many gifted and energetic workers. One of them, Stephen Vonifatiev, was the Tsar's confessor. Another, Ivan Neronov, a friend of Vonifatiev from Nizhny Novgorod, preached at the Kazan Cathedral with such success that the edifice could not accommodate the crowd, and people stood on the porch and climbed to window sills. The congregation frequently wept, and the preacher himself was scarcely able to speak for sobbing. Shortly after Neronov's arrival in Moscow several of his countrymen also came there from Nizhny Novgorod. With the intention of raising the dignity of the church, reforming the church service from a tedious, incomprehensible ritual into one appealing to the mind and heart of the people, and establishing a union between the parishioners and the priests through the spoken word, the circle soon appointed them as preachers to various towns. Avvakum was sent to Iuriev, Longinus to Murom, Daniel to Kostroma, and Lazarus to Romanov. The aspirations of the circle, though moderate, were nevertheless an innovation, and the activities of the preachers caused great irritation among the rank and file of the Moscow clergy. Accustomed to the mechanical administration of pastoral duties, on meeting their adversaries these clerics would complain: "Bigots that you are, you are introducing a new heresy. You chant in unison, and you teach the people in church, while we never did that but taught them in private. The devil possesses all of you, hypocrites."

Nikon, before he became Patriarch, shared the ambitions of the circle, but having accepted the office he suddenly changed his attitude towards it, which was never forgiven by his friends. Neronov and Avvakum complained bitterly that Nikon previously "held counsel with Archpriest Stephen (Vonifatiev), often came to him to discuss various matters in a friendly manner," but that now "he even refused his friend admittance to the Patriarchal Palace."

"Hitherto thou wast to us a friend, but now thou risest in revolt against us," said Neronov.

The circle of Zealots of Faith became divided for no apparent personal reason, but on more important ideological grounds. Nikon had forsaken the theory of national piety, and with all the ardor of his temperament had succumbed to the influence of new ideas. "Thou praisest the laws of the foreigners and approvest their customs," complained Ivan Neronov to Nikon, "yet heretofore we heard thee say that the Greeks and Little Russians had lost the steadfastness of their faith and their uprightness. But now they are to thee saints and teachers of religion."

The reason for Nikon's sudden change of attitude was the correction of the books. Shortly after his nomination to the Patriarchal See, he decided to form his own opinion on the state of the matter and went to the Patriarchal Library, compared the books printed in Moscow with those of Greece, became convinced that differences existed, and gave his support to the Greek authorities. "Deciding to alter the Russian church books according to those of the Greeks," writes N. F. Kapterev, "deciding to bring the Russian rites and ceremonies into perfect conformity with those of the contemporary Greeks, Nikon does not stop there, but goes even further. He brings us the Greek ambos, the Greek bishop's crosier, Greek cowls, mantles, and the Greek chant. He employs Greek painters and silversmiths, surrounds himself with Greeks, lends them his ear, follows their advice, and in every way advances the Greek authority to the first place, giving it a marked preference over Russian antiquity and the Russian authorities hitherto generally recognized." At the Council of 1656 Nikon forcefully declared: "Although I am a Russian, and the son of a Russian, my faith and convictions are Greek."

With his natural ardor and candor Nikon did not limit himself to the essentials, but went to extremes. Instead of correcting the old texts, he often made an entirely new translation from the Greek. In comparing this translation with the old one, the Russian zealots of antiquity were perplexed to find that Nikon had "printed it in the same language while using different expressions: 'church' for 'temple,' and 'temple' for 'church,' 'infants' for 'children,' and 'chil-

dren' for 'infants'; instead of 'cross,' 'tree'; instead of 'chanters,' 'psalmists.' Is this an improvement?" asked the zealots of antiquity. "Where is the heresy in the old books, and what is in contradiction to the Holy Scriptures?" From their point of view, they saw in these corrections only a blind hatred of everything old. They parodied Nikon's principles as follows: "Arsenius, print the books in any way so long it is not the old way." To complete their resentment, the Schismatics knew, what only in the course of time became known to historical science, that the fundamental principles of book revision had not been complied with, that the books were not compared with the ancient Greek originals. According to the calculation of a modern scholar, out of five hundred manuscripts brought over from the East, only seven were of use in correcting the service books, and the original by which the Russian missal had been corrected, was a Greek prayer book printed in Venice in 1602.

Rightly or wrongly, the work had been done. The time for academic debates had passed; they had to proceed from words to deeds. Those who were indifferent could, for a time, remain neutral towards the belligerent parties, but those who were interested in the argument, materially or spiritually, were forced to make a definite choice. On the one side stood Nikon, armed with the authority of the Eastern Patriarchs and the "rope," strongly reminding one of the famous "cudgel" of Peter the Great, which he confessed to using, at times, in church to "humble gently" his subordinates. On the other side stood the great mass of zealots of Russian piety taught by the authority of the Church to believe in the infallibility of their faith and in Russia's universal mission to hold that faith intact until the second advent of Christ. All they could do was to apply to the Russian official church the same theory which it had applied to the churches of Rome, Greece, and Little Russia. In the famous *Book of Faith*, published in 1648, this was already foreseen in the following paragraph: "The Roman church had renounced the true faith in 1000 and the Little Russian in 1595; the turn of the Great Russian church is to come in 1666." It was in the year 1666 that the Council condemned the opponents of Nikon, and in the following year the decree was confirmed by an anathema pronounced on the Schismatics by the Eastern Patriarchs. Thus the prophecy of the *Book of Faith* was realized. Nikon "abolished the ancient faith of the

fathers and established the impious heterodoxy of Rome," and the Tsar supported the Patriarch in his apostasy of Orthodox faith. Until the Council of 1667, when the anathema was pronounced, the supporters of the national religion still hoped that their opinion would prevail. This hope was also sustained by Nikon's disagreement with the Tsar and the eight years of the Interpatriarchate. But with every succeeding year it became more apparent that it was impossible to convert the Tsar to the reestablishment of the old faith, and in the meantime the mood of the Zealots of Faith also changed. All those who had been moderate and wavering, seeing the absolute hopelessness of the situation, disappeared from the ranks, some openly surrendering themselves, others becoming silent. The principal share in the struggle fell to men such as the Iuriev Archpriest Avvakum. But even Avvakum was reluctant to abandon hope for a peaceful solution. He wrote to the Tsar in one of his optimistic moments:

Take heart as of old, as in the days of Stephen [Vonifatiev], and speak in the Russian tongue, saying: Jesus Christ have mercy on us! Forget the "Kyrie eleison" of the Hellenes—and defy them! Thou art the son of Michael, a Russian, and not a Greek. Speak thy native tongue; do not debase it either in church, at home, or in speech. . . . The Lord has the same love for us, as He has for the Greeks; He gave us, through Cyril and Methodius, the reading and writing in our tongue. What could we have better than this, unless it be the tongue of the Angels? But that we shall not have until the general resurrection.

In his bitter moments, when held as a close prisoner in the Pustozersk dungeon, Avvakum wrote quite differently to the Tsar.

This is the last sorrowful entreaty I send thee from the dungeon, as from the grave. . . . Take mercy on thine own soul, and make the first step towards piety. . . . Here on earth thou hast not given us a just trial against dissenters, therefore on the Day of Judgment thou shalt answer to us all. . . . Thou shalt feel qualms, but too late. . . . We grieve for thy soul, Tsar, but can give thee no help. Thou dost not seek thy salvation. . . . By thy decree we are not to be buried next the church, and in our lives thou hast deprived us of the Holy Communion; thou hast devised all this well with thine advisers. . . . The holy martyrs, as thou hearest daily in church, were denied a burial on

the sacred ground . . . then why should we be given it? The more thou dost humble and torment us, and dost make us pine, the more we love thee, Tsar, and pray to the Lord for thee, even unto thine end. God keep ye all and convert ye to the truth! But should ye not be converted, then ye will go not to temporal, but to eternal perdition. . . . Nay, Tsar, enough tears have been shed for thee; there is no health in thee! By God's mercy forgive me and farewell until we meet in the beyond. Thou didst send this message to me: "Archpriest, the righteous Judge Jesus Christ will pass judgment upon thee and me." May it be as thou wilt, Tsar, thy will is my will. Thou shalt rule for many more years, and I for many years have suffered tortures; thus, when God wills, we shall both go to our eternal home. Dost thou not see, Tsar, living at liberty thou rulest only over the Russian land, while in my imprisonment the Son of God hath subjected heaven and earth to me. Thou upon leaving thy Tsardom for the heavenly home shalt have only the coffin and the shroud. I, by thy decree, am not thought worthy of a shroud and coffin; my bare bones shall be torn asunder and dragged upon the ground by dogs and the birds of the air. But it will be good and pleasant to lie on the ground clothed in light and covered by the sky. . . . Even though, Tsar, thou didst order me thrown to the dogs, with my last benediction I bless thee once again.

This final reckoning with the Tsar was permeated with gloomy pathos and with a hidden intention of affecting his meek spirit, but the last bequest of the famous leader of the dissenters to his followers was of a very different character. It was a courageous, inspiring call to an unceasing struggle for the righteous cause.

Come, Orthodox people, call upon the name of Christ, stand in the midst of Moscow, make the sign of the cross of Christ our Saviour holding two fingers as we learned it from our Holy Fathers. The Kingdom of God is born in this land. God bless ye. Suffer tortures for the two-finger sign of the cross. Do not falter. I, together with ye, am ready to die for Christ. Although I have not much understanding—I am not a learned man—yet I know that the church, which we have received from our Holy Fathers, is pure and sacred. As it came to me so shall I uphold my faith until the end. It was established long before our time, and thus may it remain for evermore.

So, with an open heart, and ready to avow its creed in the midst of Moscow, the piety of the Russian people separated itself from that of the mother church. The breach between the intellectuals

and the masses, for which the Slavophiles have blamed Peter the Great, actually occurred half a century before his time. By joining forces with the political and social protests, the religious protest was increasing its strength tenfold, but this did not in any way alter the fact that the principal cause of the breach was that of conscience. In the middle of the seventeenth century the Russians were made to revile that which for ages they had been taught to hold sacred. But to the newly awakened conscience this change was too abrupt. Therefore the masses refused to follow their leaders, and left to themselves they began to struggle in the dark.

## IV

# DISSENT AMONG THE SCHISMATICS AND THE HISTORY OF THE PRIESTISTS

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**I**N 1645 Tsar Alexis, through Patriarch Nikon, addressed a series of questions to Paisius, the Patriarch of Constantinople, concerning the dissension over the missals and rituals in the Russian church. Paisius, speaking for himself and the council of the Greek clergy, answered as follows:

Your Holiness complains vehemently of the differences in some rituals noticeable in some churches and believes that they are corrupting our faith. The idea is praiseworthy, since one who dreads small errors protects himself against greater ones, but the intent should be corrected, since the heretics whom the Apostle by first and second precept commands us to renounce are one thing, and the schismatics quite another. It was not at the inception that the church acquired the present ritual but gradually and in every church at a different period. Prior to St. Damascenus and Cosmus, we did not have *troparia*, nor hymns to glorify our Saviour, the Virgin Mary, and the Saints, nor did we have church canons. However, so long as the same religion was immutably observed none of this aroused dissension in the churches, and there were neither heretics nor schismatics. Nothing has changed since those days and one must not think the Orthodox faith corrupted because some observe differently the unessential rites, i. e., those unrelated to the articles and dogmas of faith.

This view of the Greek Patriarch, expressed on the eve of the Schism, subsequently was not supported either by him personally or by any other authoritative member of the Eastern church. Speaking through the two Patriarchs of Antioch and Alexandria,

the church at the decisive moment of the Schism pronounced upon the Schismatics the anathema of 1667, and thus the local Russian opinion on the domestic conflict remained triumphant. In the heat of the controversy neither side was able to maintain a tolerant point of view towards the ritual as suggested to Nikon and Tsar Alexis by Patriarch Paisius. To both sides it appeared that the ritual was indissolubly connected with the dogma. The adherents of "national antiquity" regarded the peculiarities in the Greek church as heresy and dogmatic errors, while the followers of the Greek authority held the same view towards the practices of the ancient Russian church. Almost two centuries were needed to dispel this mutual misunderstanding, and to recognize that any deviation in the rituals did not alter the dogma. When it became evident that the substance of the Sacrament remained intact, the change in the sign of the cross ceased to be of importance or the subject of strict judgment to the representatives of the official church. On its part the majority of Old Ritualists acknowledged in the "circular message" of 1862 that

the established Russian church as well as the Greek church believes not in God, but in the same God as we do; therefore though we pronounce and write the name of the Saviour "Esus," we dare not find fault when it is written and pronounced "Jesus." . . . Likewise with the four-pointed cross: its form from Apostolic days to the present time has been the same, and was accepted by the Orthodox Greek-Catholic church; therefore we shall neither dishonor nor condemn this cross.

In the middle of the seventeenth century the leaders of the two conflicting parties were far from such a conciliatory point of view, and the question became extremely acute at the Councils of 1666-67. In the anathema of these councils the Old Ritualists did not hear the voice of the church, but that of their temporarily triumphant and victorious enemies. True, the Councils' verdict was ratified by the Patriarchs, but in the opinion of the Old Ritualists they had served, in this case, as unconscious tools of the Nikonians. The Old Ritualists regarded the Greek monk Dionysius as the leader of the Nikonians. Dionysius "ten years previous to the arrival of the Patriarchs had come to Moscow from Mt. Athos, and been taught the Russian language and customs. . . . The



Patriarchs having arrived but recently knew only what he told them, which they believed." It was he who "corrupted the spirit of the Patriarchs by saying to them: Holy Fathers, you are foreigners here; if you express your own opinions neither the Tsar nor the authorities will bestow any great honor upon you; instead, like Maximus of the Holy Mount, you will be banished to a monastery, and should you oppose them they will prevent your returning home. . . . Let them do as they please. The Patriarchs followed his advice and obeyed: they never questioned anything, and always appeared to agree." A report written by Dionysius containing information on the Schism, a subject entirely unknown to the Patriarchs, was recently discovered and published. It is interesting to notice that its contents was actually embodied in the decree of the Council of 1667.

Finding that the pillars of the Eastern church were guided at the Council by the opinion of Russian hierarchs, who then were in power, the Zealots of Faith refused to accept the decree of the Council as a decision of the whole church. To them the part played there by the Patriarchs appeared only as another proof of the old Russian opinion on the corruptness of the Eastern church. The Russian people were accustomed to consider the preservation of piety in its pure, original state as the special mission of the Russian church. It was not they who separated themselves from the church, but the church that separated itself from them, thereby ceasing to be the true church, which they had vowed to safeguard until the end of the world.

Should the end of the world actually come, the true faith on earth would cease completely, and the loss of ancient Orthodoxy would not be accidental, but fatal and predestined. This was another side of the schismatic dilemma which, even more clearly than the idea of their protracted mission, presented itself to the imagination of the Old Ritualists at the time they broke with the established church. The solution of the dilemma—whether to live or prepare for the Last Judgment—depended on the course of events, and in the current events the zealots of ancient faith sought with apprehension for signs of the approaching end of the world.

The prophecy of the *Book of Faith*, threatening great peril in 1666 to the Russian church, had already been compared, intention-

ally, with the apocalyptic prophecies on the advent of Antichrist. According to the Apocalypse the power of Antichrist was to continue on earth for two and a half years, i. e., from 1666 to 1669, when the end of the world would begin: the sun would be eclipsed, the stars fall from the sky, the earth be burned up, and on the Day of Judgment the last trumpet blown by the Archangel would summon together the righteous and the unrighteous. In anticipation of these calamities there appeared many phenomena, of which we have only the information concerning the region of Nizhny Novgorod. In the autumn of 1668 the fields were neglected, no one ploughed or sowed, and at the beginning of the fateful year 1669 the huts too were abandoned. Assembling in crowds people prayed, fasted, confessed their sins to each other, partook of the Holy Sacrament, and being prepared awaited with awe the Archangel's trumpet call. According to an ancient superstition the end of the world was to come at midnight; and so at nightfall the zealots of ancient piety, arraying themselves in white shirts and shrouds, lay down in coffins hollowed from the trunks of trees, and awaited the trumpet call.

However, night after night went by and a long, terrible year elapsed with its horrors and fears proving vain, for the world remained unchanged and Nikonianism was forever triumphant.

As the last moment approached the rumors among the Old Ritualists about Antichrist became increasingly more varied and stirring. Some advanced the idea that having already come "spiritually" a "sensuous" Antichrist was not to be expected, but Deacon Fedor, Schism's most learned leader, had no difficulty in proving that the Scriptures spoke exactly of a "sensuous" Antichrist. While these debates were in progress, the year 1669 came to an end. Among the optimists the recently banished Avvakum felt renewed hope in the victory for the righteous cause, the reestablishment of true faith in the true church, while the pessimists, like Brother Abraham, again revised the books and prophecies and discovered a mistake in the old chronology. Abraham pointed out that the *Book of Faith* counted the years from the nativity of Jesus Christ, but that Satan was enchained for a thousand years on the day of Christ's resurrection, and from this moment and not that of the Saviour's birth should the day of the world's end be calculated. Accordingly the

coming of Antichrist was not to take place in 1666, as stated in the *Book of Faith*, but in 1699.<sup>1</sup> "Do not be lured by the end of the world and the advent of Antichrist," wrote Avvakum, "the last devil has not yet appeared. Like demons his close friends, the Boiars of the Palace, rest not paving the way for him and banishing the name of Christ. When all is purged, then will come Elijah and Enoch, and later Antichrist, in his time." Temporarily the tense awaiting of the Archangel's trumpet subsided, and while some expected Elijah and Enoch, others with redoubled ardor threw themselves into the struggle for the reestablishment of the rule of ancient piety in Russia.

There was no lack of Elijahs and Enochs, and numerous were the open conflicts between the Schism and the established church, but all attempts at an active struggle ended in defeat. Tsarevna <sup>2</sup> Sophia's government instituted a formal persecution of the Old Ritualists, therefore these defenders of the old faith, who in the days of Tsar Alexis had escaped from Moscow into far-away borderlands, now continued their way across the frontier of the state and into the southern steppes. The Schismatics became disheartened, and with the approach of 1699 they once more devoted themselves to awaiting the end of the world.

This time the expectations were not in vain, for on August 25, 1698, i. e., five days before the dreaded New Year,<sup>3</sup> during which Antichrist was to manifest himself, Peter returned from abroad. The Streltsy <sup>4</sup> had planned to bar his entrance into Moscow, and to destroy him and all the foreigners who accompanied him, but the plot failed and Peter came to the capital. To everyone's amazement, according to a foreign observer, Peter did not stop at the

<sup>1</sup> In the Old Ritualist chronology the year 1666 (7166 since the creation) expired eight years earlier, i. e., in 1658; and 1699 (7199) corresponded to 1691 in modern chronology. By the end of the century the Old Ritualist chronology and Abraham's calculations became more popular. In 1691, as will be seen, there was a terrific paroxysm of anticipation of the end of the world. After a repeated failure, the Old Ritualist Council of Novgorod in 1694 decided to consider the advent of Antichrist as having taken place, but only "spiritually." But the anxiety of the masses continued until the appearance of Antichrist—Peter.

<sup>2</sup> The title "tsarevna" was used for the unmarried daughters of a Tsar. "Tsarina" means the Tsar's wife.—Ed.

<sup>3</sup> The New Year before Peter's time began in September.

<sup>4</sup> Soldiers of the infantry regiments of the Moscow Garrison, among whom there were many Old Ritualists.—Ed.

Kremlin to worship the Iversky Virgin and the holy relics, but went directly to the German suburb to see Anna Mons. He then spent part of the night feasting with Lefort, and what remained he passed not in his royal palace, but in the barracks of the Guards at Preobrazhenskoe. The following morning amazement changed into terror when, receiving the greetings of welcome, the Tsar with his own hands cut off the beards of several boiars. Only a short time before this Patriarch Adrian had again strongly condemned and anathematized the shaving of the beard as a mortal sin leading to excommunication and the denial of the privilege to partake of the Holy Sacrament and of the right to a Christian burial. "Where will the beardless stand at the Day of Judgment—with the righteous adorned with beards, or with the heretics who shaved their beards—think for yourselves"—thus did the Patriarch end his message. A graphic answer to this question was to be found in the Old Ritualist engravings of the Day of Judgment.

The New Year came five days later, but the Tsar, instead of following the ancient custom and appearing in the Kremlin to receive at a solemn ceremony the Patriarch's benediction and the greetings of the people, spent the whole day in feasting with Shein. To the great joy of the assemblage and amidst uproars of laughter, his court jesters cut off every beard, while the victims of these jokes felt sick at heart. After that rough justice was dispensed to the Streltsy, in which the Tsar took part. Executions alternated with feasts.

All this was sufficient to sustain the belief that the Tsar was Antichrist, and made it clear that he intentionally did everything to prevent his being recognized. Peter did not go to the sanctuaries in Moscow because he knew that the power of the Almighty would prevent him, the ungodly, from approaching the holy places. He had no wish to bow before the ashes of his ancestors, and avoided seeing his relatives because they were strangers to him and might expose his identity. For the same reason he failed to appear before the people on New Year's Day, and because the time of his coming had been predicted he changed the chronology, ordering the year to be counted not from the Creation, but from the birth of Jesus Christ. Moreover, he "stole from the Lord" an entire eight years, reckoning the time from the creation to the nativity of Christ as

5508 years instead of 5500 years, as the Old Ritualists had done. Thus the year 7208 became in transposition 1700, while it should have been 1708, and to complicate the calculation even further, the Tsar decreed the New Year to be in January instead of September. He quite forgot that the world could not have been created in January, when apples had not ripened, for the serpent would have nothing with which to tempt Eve! Finally he had used cunning even in assuming the sign of Antichrist, for he gave himself the title of Emperor, thus concealing his identity under the letter M. If one omits this M and makes the remaining letters correspond in Slavonic figures with numerals the total would equal 666—the number of the apocalyptic beast.

Undoubtedly this time it was the Antichrist. He appeared in accordance with the prophecy in 1699, consequently the end of the world was to be expected in 1702, and so the scenes of 1669 were repeated. The "Liers in Coffins" once more spent their nights in hollowed tree trunks, singing mournful hymns.

But the years followed each other, the sun still shone, the stars remained in the sky, and there were no signs of the end of the world. Not only that, but the religious persecutions, particularly vigorous under Tsarevna Sophia, diminished during the reign of Peter. The government, which was sorely in need of funds, saw in the Schism a source of revenue and for the first time granted to it the legal right of existence.

The zealots of antiquity were greatly disconcerted by the course of events, since none of their conjectures had materialized. Because of their conception of the world the Old Ritualists were able to envisage but two possibilities: either Orthodoxy was still preserved amongst them and must finally triumph, or it was totally lost and Antichrist was ruling the world, whose end was imminent. In both instances the situation was but a temporary one, and in anticipation of a prompt solution it was necessary either to strive for the complete victory of faith, or to prepare for the Day of Judgment. Up to that time all the thoughts of the Old Ritualists were concentrated on these issues, but now the situation quite unexpectedly became more complicated. The end of the world did not come, and with every year there was less hope of a victory over the Nikonians. Finally even the most tenacious had to acknowledge that their

thoughts should dwell not on the life beyond the grave, but on the continuation of an earthly existence—not as a victorious and ruling church, but as a separate religious community requiring careful organization. As long as the problem of the zealots of antiquity was confined to the negative side—the struggle against the Nikonians—the Schism, notwithstanding that from the very beginning there existed two contrary opinions on the outcome of this struggle, remained in complete solidarity. But when none of the opinions was justified, and there arose the question of further existence and of inner organization of the Old Ritualist community, the discord became paramount. In accordance with the outcome desired by each party the organization and even the tenets of the community had to be reconstructed in a different manner. If, notwithstanding the fact that the end of the world had not taken place, Antichrist ruled on earth and Orthodoxy was definitely lost, then there could no longer be any true church or sacraments, and the only means of communion between the people and the Lord were prayer and such religious practices as were accessible to all believers without the mediation of the church. This course was followed by those among the Schismatics, who were named the “Priestless,” but to the pusillanimous masses it seemed too extreme and awe-inspiring. People who were prepared to die for the sake of “a single letter” were reluctant to endure the rest of their lives without confession and the sacraments of the Eucharist, marriage, etc. Naturally the majority preferred to disregard the idea of Antichrist and to think that the true church was still alive, the more so as according to the Holy Scripture the church could never entirely cease to exist. “Have no fear, ye people; even under Antichrist it will not be destroyed. If the devil is not able to abolish the divine Sacraments, how could Antichrist and his children do it?” Thus did Avvakum formulate the canonical tenets of the church. In the beginning the church required no proof of its uninterrupted existence, since the Old Ritualists had accepted themselves as the true church, but soon a serious complication developed, for confident of the imminent victory of the ancient faith they failed, in the heat of the struggle, to prepare themselves for the life of a separate religious community. In order that the continuation of church tradition should be preserved, it was necessary to have three ranks of

church hierarchy: bishopric, priesthood, and deaconry. Only then could the Old Ritualist church depend upon the continuation of the Apostolic succession, for this secured the regular ordination of priests, and thereby the celebration of all sacraments could be observed. But at the most critical moment several bishops who had been in sympathy with the Old Ritualism at its inception recanted to Nikonianism, while others, like Paul Kolomensky, died before the Schism had time to become a separate body. With the disappearance of bishops hostile to Nikonianism the bonds of Orthodox prelacy were forever torn asunder, though the grave significance of this fact was not realized at once by the zealots of the old faith. In the early days, when they hoped for the victory of ancient Orthodoxy, the absence of bishops in the Schism did not excite any special apprehension, because there still were many priests who had been ordained prior to the time of Nikon, and it was easy to comply with the demands of strict Old Ritualist canonists, like Deacon Theodore, that priests ordained according to the new books should not be accepted. Avvakum held a more moderate view on theological details, and even at that time preached that priests of the "new order," if sincere in their convictions and ready to suffer for their faith, could be admitted to the celebration of the sacraments. "How can the world exist without priests?" he asked. "Anything may happen through necessity . . . these are unruly times." As the priests ordained before Nikon's time grew old and died and it became more difficult for the laity to partake of the sacraments, this point of view assumed a great importance. The Solovetsk Monastery supplied the Old Ritualists with a reserve of the Holy Eucharist until the death of Tsar Alexis, but under Theodore the monks deserted the monastery and going to out-of-the-way places began to celebrate the Mass, attracting there many "zealots of ancient faith from distant lands." Finally, during the persecutions in the reign of Tsarevna Sophia, the priests of the pre-Nikonian order acquired especial importance, and wherever they went the hierarchical center of the Schism was transferred. Avvakum's concession was put into practice, and a priest baptized before Nikon's time, notwithstanding his ordination by the Nikonians, was admitted into the "old faith." By this expedient the formidable problem was successfully postponed for several decades. But when the genera-

tion baptized before Nikon's time died the situation became ominous. If the true priesthood no longer existed and was replaced by a "self-appointed assemblage," there could be no true church. Thus the last gleam of light from the apostolic succession went out with the death of the priests born before the Moscow anathemas of 1667.

This thought was too alarming to the pious flock. No, the true church of ancient piety did exist. It must exist, for the chain of apostolic succession could not be broken until the end of the world. "Sooner shall the sun stand still than the church of Our Lord should remain without priests," decided the more moderate adherents of the Schism, and they began a search for "Old Orthodox bishops" who had not adopted the "Nikonian practice." Though the Old Ritualists had no idea where to find these bishops, their imagination, supported by ancient folklore, became active. The true church was somewhere in the East, in Japan, in the "Oponian realm" situated on the seven islands of the ocean-sea. Marco, the monk from the Topozersk Monastery, had been there and found one hundred seventy-nine churches of the "Assyrian tongue" and forty Russian churches built by the fugitive monks from the Solovetsk Monastery. Here the Schism established its religious utopia. But this was not sufficient, something more real was necessary, and in spite of the distrust of the Greeks, there was formed the idea that in more accessible Antioch ancient Orthodoxy remained intact. From Antioch, notwithstanding the well-known view of the Old Ritualists on the subject, the base of Orthodoxy was transferred to Constantinople. In the first years of the eighteenth century an envoy from the Old Ritualist body went to the Greeks to learn what actually was their creed, but the result proved unsatisfactory.

It was obviously impossible to adhere strictly to the principle. Concessions were unavoidable, and Avvakum's maxim that "in need even the law can be changed" had to be adopted. Therefore, if it was impossible to find priests outside the established church, it remained only to apply for them to the Nikonians.

Actually this had already been done. While time was being spent in the futile quest of Old Orthodox bishops, the schismatic community could not remain without clergy, so the sacraments were administered by the priests baptized according to the new



form and ordained by Nikonian bishops. To justify this act it was recalled that the rule of the Holy Fathers authorized the acceptance of priests from some of the heretic churches, without divesting them of their rank.

A large majority of the Priestists realized that the question of hierarchy was the weakest point in the Schism, and approached its solution by a different way. In the thirties of the eighteenth century they concentrated on finding their own bishops, yet they did not seek them in the established church. In spite of many disappointing failures, the Old Ritualists would never have diminished their ardor or tightened their purses in order to achieve success, had not the situation changed radically with the accession to the throne of Empress Catherine II (1762). This reign inaugurated for the Schismatics a period of tolerance, which continued under the Emperors Paul and Alexander I. The Priestists, who had gone abroad to escape persecution, could once again establish their center within the boundaries of Russia. In the second year of her reign, Empress Catherine II officially invited them to return to the motherland, and allocated to them grounds in the Saratov district of Transvolga. Through the government's leniency, the Schismatics had by this time many fugitive priests, but they selected only those whose lives had been blameless. The right to choose and train priests for the Old Ritualist divine service was formally conferred by the Priestists upon Irgiz (the Schismatic center in the province of Saratov), and the Schismatic Council of 1783 decreed to accept no others. In order to make the Schismatics absolutely dependent upon the Irgiz Monasteries for their priests and canonists no chrism or reserve Eucharist were distributed into private hands, but only to the priests who had been "corrected," i. e., reanointed in Irgiz. But these priests had a plentiful supply of both and were always at the service of their flock. Thus the fugitive priests became the most profitable source of revenue to the Irgiz Monasteries, that served as a foundation for their prosperity, and at the same time the need for priests in the community was satisfied through the medium of a regular organization. Often the Schismatics were even better supplied than the neighboring Orthodox parishes, and the quest for bishops ceased for half a century, the period of Irgiz activity.

The situation underwent another radical change with the accession to the throne of Emperor Nicholas I (1825), when it was thought that the reluctance of the Old Ritualists to return to the bosom of the Orthodox church was due to the lenient treatment of the fugitive priests and the tolerant attitude towards the observance of old rites. Accordingly their independent religious existence was limited, the privileges extended by Catherine II and Alexander I were gradually abolished, and a strict surveillance was instituted over the fugitive priests, while the Irgiz Monasteries were prohibited from accepting new priests or assigning old ones to any place in Russia. "By means of bribery," says a modern student of Irgiz, Prince Golitsyn annexed the Lower Monastery in 1829; in 1837, Stepanov "by military force" withdrew the central monasteries from the Schism; in 1841 Fadeiev in a "wolf's night attack upon a sheepfold" seized the upper monasteries. The great "Babylonian captivity" was achieved; on the 28th of May 1841 "the sun of Orthodoxy set in Irgiz."

But dark days did not come alone to Irgiz, for in the Rogozhsky Churchyard, the preëminent center of the Priestists in Moscow, there remained in the course of time only two priests. They were forced to marry half a score of couples at a time and receive the confession of hundreds read aloud by one of the church staff from a list of sins, while the funeral service for thousands and tens of thousands had to be performed six months or a year after the burial. Though the influx of fugitive priests was completely exhausted and the Schismatic priesthood everywhere extremely impoverished, yet the reckoning which prompted the government to adopt compulsory measures proved mistaken. "Under unbearable pressure from the police," says the same writer, "at the expense of terrible moral oppression and torture of tens of thousands of people Orthodoxy added to its fold only a pitiable two per cent from the suffering people in the province of Saratov." Some went over to the Priestless, but the majority endured these conditions, considering them to be only temporary. They concentrated on obtaining a bishop of their own and on establishing a complete hierarchy. In the last of the Irgiz Monasteries to be abolished the ancient illusion of the Priestists was revived. But this time the illusion became a fact, for in less than five years after the closure

of the Upper Monastery the unremitting quest of the Schismatics, brought to the point of despair, was crowned with success. "The sun of Orthodoxy," eclipsed in Irgiz, rose with new luster across the Austrian border.

At the Rogozhsky Council of 1832 the majority of the Priestists accepted the idea of procuring a bishop. There was no dearth either of benefactors, such as the outstanding Old Ritualists S. Gromov and F. Rakhmanov, or of enthusiasts, like Paul Velikodvorsky, all prepared to sacrifice their fortunes and labor to the cause. It was the ideal of the Priestists to find a true Old Orthodox bishop, who kept the ancient faith sacred and intact; yet had they been practical, they would have understood the hopelessness of such a quest. To appease their consciences the leader of this movement, Paul Velikodvorsky, went to the Orthodox East, but before he ended his travels he realized that the neighboring Turkish and Austrian provinces would be far more suitable places for action and search than Persia, Egypt, Palestine, and Syria. Just across the Austrian frontier, in Bukowina, he found several small Schismatic settlements that had obtained from the Austrian Emperor in 1783 (the time of their emigration) the right of full religious freedom. Upon this "patent" of Joseph II, Paul Velikodvorsky based his plan to apply for an official permit which would allow the inhabitants of Bela Krynitsa, one of these settlements, to have their own bishop. Notwithstanding the innumerable difficulties presented by the local authorities and population, Paul finally attained his end in submitting the problem to the highest authorities and to the Emperor. Having been granted permission to establish a bishopric in Bela Krynitsa, he sought someone willing to become founder of the Schismatic hierarchy. But, while he was wandering through Syria, Palestine, and Egypt, the emigrants in Constantinople were considering several possible candidates among the bishops who had no bishoprics. One of them, Ambrose, who at the request of the Turkish government had been excluded by the Patriarch from his diocese in Bosnia for supporting a popular movement against the local pasha, accepted the Schismatics' offer. In 1846 he was established in Bela Krynitsa, and in accordance with the previously concluded agreement ordained his successor from the ranks of the local Schismatics. This was timely, for in less than a year, upon

the demand of the Russian government, Ambrose was sent into exile. His place was filled by Cyril, his candidate for holy orders, a man totally unprepared for the important, very difficult, and responsible part that fell to his lot.

For the first time since its inception the Schism had now a complete and regular hierarchy, and this momentous fact thoroughly aroused the Schismatic minds.

The Old Ritualists became so accustomed to the abnormal state which had existed for centuries that the appearance of a Schismatic bishop in their midst was regarded by many as an unjustifiable innovation and a digression from the traditions of the fathers. For this reason some members of the Priestists did not accept the Austrian hierarchy entirely, but preferred to retain the fugitive priests. Even to those who had regarded the office of the primate as an indispensable sign of the true church and had with joy accepted the Metropolitan of Bela Krynitsa, the change in the organization of the church suggested new ideas and doubts. Three subjects pre-eminently excited the Schismatic world. First, there was the attitude of laymen towards the new administration of the church; second, the relation of the Russian bishops to the foreign Metropolitan, and third, the position of the newly organized church of the Priestists towards the Orthodox church. Over each one of these questions there arose divergent opinions and conflicting interests because, with the advent of a supreme church power, the influential lay Schismatics were made to renounce the management of church affairs. Of course, to forswear their customary power was not so pleasant for them, but the majority of Schismatics were willing and ready to submit to the highest authority of the church. The upper and lower strata of the Schismatic community differed in opinion both on the new hierarchy and on the power of the foreign Metropolitan over the national church. The greater number of Russian Schismatic bishops strove to be independent of the foreign Metropolitan, and in this respect the eminent Moscow Schismatics were ready to help them. An "ecclesiastical council" of bishops, similar to a synod, representing the highest power of the Schismatic church, was formed in Moscow, and through its medium the Schismatic "aristocracy" eliminated the authority of the Bela Krynitsa Metropolitan and pre-

served to itself the influence in church affairs. The interests of the rank and file of Schismatics, in this case, did not agree with those of the influential minority, as the masses wanted the Metropolitan alone to have the supreme voice in religious matters. In acquiring bishops the Schismatic church was involuntarily brought closer to the Orthodox church. With many people this approach provoked strong reaction, while others attempted to find for it a theoretical justification. The extremist party found support from the masses and with noteworthy persistence revived the popular doctrine that nowhere is there nor could there ever be a true church, since the Antichrist ruled the world. The intellectual minority, on the contrary, was inclined to introduce a new spirit of tolerance into the Schism and, in refuting the teachings of the Priestless on Antichrist, pointed out the fact that the acceptance of fugitive priests from the Nikonians and of bishops from the Greeks included the assumption that, aside from the Old Ritualist, there existed remnants of the true church in the world.

Hilarion Egorov-Ksenov, a layman, interpreted this mood in his famous "Circular Message" where he particularly emphasized the proximity of the Priestists to the established church. The intellectual Schismatics and, consequently, the "Ecclesiastical Council" in Moscow openly subscribed to the "Circular Message," thus flinging out a challenge to the Schismatic masses. This epistle was like a spark igniting the combustibles of the Priestists gathered since the days of the establishment of the Bela Krynitsa Metropolitan See. The duty of the Metropolitan was clear. In order to counteract the autonomous tendencies of the Moscow "Council" he had to repudiate the "Circular Message" which had been adopted by it, and to appeal directly to the masses with a protest against the conciliatory tendencies of the leading Schismatics. But Cyril was too weak and ignorant to act, and during the stress of the struggle he became, in turn, a tool in the hands of one or the other party and came to various conclusions in the short period between 1863 and 1870. He first condemned the "Circular Message" and all the activities of the "Council," then he either approved them unconditionally or resorted to compromises so that finally he became useless and innocuous to both parties. The pitiable part played by

Cyril contributed to a prompt and decisive victory for the Schismatic minority with its conciliatory and autonomous tendencies. After Cyril's death in 1873, his successor was forced to recognize officially the independence of the Russian Schismatic church, among whose triumphant adherents there developed the moderate opinion of the "Circularists." Of the nineteen pre-revolutionary Schismatic bishoprics existing in Russia, thirteen were controlled by the "Circularists," while only three belonged to their opponents, the "Dissenters."

The brief history of the Priestists shows that this religious trend shared the fate of all moderate courses of action. It could have developed only along the lines of one of the extremes which it tried to reconcile. Being a compromise between Orthodoxy and the Priestless, the Priestists could draw closer either to the established church, or the more consistent party within the Schism. The agreement with the established church was impeded, however, by the attitude of the ecclesiastic and secular powers towards the Schism. Because a reconciliation under existing circumstances could not take place on terms satisfactory to both sides, it could not be sincere, and, in the unanimous opinion of both parties, any such serious attempt would prove a complete failure. An accord with the Priestless was acceptable only to the most daring. Thus, vacillating between two extremes and fearing to make a decision, the Priestists were doomed to move in the vicious circle of old ideas. No inner development could produce any significant change, because the results of this development directly overstepped the boundaries of the intermediate position. Therefore, to trace the tendency, by which the advanced religious evolution of the Russian masses was accomplished, it is necessary to study the history of other trends, both more radical and consistent.

## V

# THE HISTORY OF THE PRIESTLESS AND THE DISCORD IN THEIR RANKS

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FOR the moment we must revert to that initial period in the history of the Schism when events raised, but could not yet solve the problem whether the true faith would ultimately triumph or the end of the world ensue. Even in those days there was a definite tendency towards one or the other solution among the supporters of the old faith and there were signs of a division into two hostile camps. The majority, alarmed at the possibility of being deprived of the church and sacraments, were averse to any radical decision. The moderates endeavored to preserve a connection with church life and a part of the belief in the continued existence of the true church by an increasing number of concessions and by artful interpretations. A break in this endless chain, which linked the church with the apostolic days, was too awful for those accustomed to believe implicitly in that which was "established before our time." To live by their own intellect and convictions, beginning their religious life anew, and creating new forms of faith, portended a revolution compared to which all Nikon's reforms would pale into insignificance. In those days not even the adherents to radical principles considered creating any new religious forms, and they renounced the old ones only because of a steadfast belief in the imminent end of the world. "Now is not the time to purify the faith," the monk Abraham said, in view of the inevitable advent of Antichrist. Under the influence of this idea, the people did not stop to reason how they could live without the church, but how they could die with dignity. In exultant natures the fervent

anticipation of the second advent produced an epidemic of religious ecstasy, when the most zealous, not content with passively awaiting the Archangel's trumpet call, lost patience and strove to expedite the end. As the Kingdom of God was not coming to them they would hasten to meet it, and having settled all accounts with the world they decided to be free of it through suicide, should they not succeed in attaining the same end by martyrdom. "To die an unnatural death for the true creed is all one can desire," Avvakum stated. "What could there be nobler? To be with the martyrs, in the ranks of Apostles, with the saints, and as for the fire on earth the suffering is short. . . . Art thou afraid of the furnace? Be bold, defy it, have no fear! While confronting the furnace there is terror, but when thou enterest all is forgotten." Avvakum's advice found proselytes who, not satisfied with their own salvation, propagated the salvation of the entire world. "I wish," said one of these maximalists of the seventeenth century, "that all Romanov [his native town], every man, wife, and child, would come to the banks of the Volga, throw themselves into the waters, and sink to the bottom so that the temptations of the world should not attract them. And what is even better: that I might set fire to and burn down the entire city; what joy if it were to burn from end to end destroying all the aged and infants, so that none could receive the stamp of Antichrist." Romanov and Belev would be followed by "all Russia"; and, perhaps, after Russia the "entire world" would be destroyed by fire. Full of these hopes, the propagandists of self-immolation journeyed into the world and spared no words in convincing the simple-minded listeners:

O brothers and sisters, cease your wanderings and the paying of tributes to priests. As ye are righteous, ye must long for salvation and with your wives and children seek the Kingdom of God. Be zealous and do not weaken; the great martyr Avvakum blesses ye and chants the "eternal memory." Flow, flow, like a stream into the fire. Draw nearer, old man, with thy white locks; stoop down, O maiden, in thy virginal beauty. Look into this sacred book; are we disquieting or deceiving ye? Note the style of the words and remember the handwriting. The great Avvakum, the glorious martyr, in every respect like the Apostle Paul, has written these lines. I reverence these words, for a holy hand has traced them.



"And seeing it the aged shed tears, the maiden is crushed; the advocate of self-immolation gradually becomes excited and does not spare his words," writes an antagonist of self-immolation, who has recorded these scenes. In their arguments the rustic propagandists assigned first place to the end of the world, which was to come soon, very soon.

There is no need to wait for Elijah and Enoch; the end of the world<sup>1</sup> will take place in 1689, because "Titin" is already ruling in Moscow. To await this end in worldly surroundings is impossible, for these are evil days: if not burned alive, how could one be rescued from the "dragon"; how observe the rules of food and drink when living among Nikonians? But when reduced to ashes—that is the end of everything. Otherwise one must undergo a penance for ten years at least; fasting, genuflecting, and praying. In the fire you will find the direct way to paradise, for fire purges all sins. And there is no chance of escaping it, for with the end of the world a river of flames will flow engulfing everything. Even the Apostles must pass through that ordeal; but those burning themselves alive will be spared a second ordeal.

Examples of saints who had committed suicide were cited, and many were the visions seen. A peasant from the White Sea littoral, while delirious, saw those burned alive in a radiant place, their heads surrounded with haloes, and in another place "those weak in spirit who served Antichrist" were being tortured on the rack. A drop fell from the rack upon the lip of the peasant, who regained his senses, but his lip was putrified.

There were sufficient persuasions and evidences to inspire frightened listeners and to convince the more zealous amongst them. Around the "teacher" there assembled a group of people willing to die by "fire or water," and even the children said: "Let us go into the flames, for in the other world our shirts will be of gold, our boots of red leather, and there will be plenty of honey, nuts, and apples. It is better to burn alive than serve Antichrist." But the first ardent impulse was not equal to the act of self-immolation. The preacher, who risked being burned with his followers, tried to assemble as great a number of them as possible, hoping that in the meantime their zeal might cool down. As the moment of decision

<sup>1</sup> This was said in 1687. Others expected Antichrist as predicted by Abraham, in 1691.

drew nearer the apprehension arose, and again and again the venture was postponed and sometimes definitely abandoned. "Broken down with grief," the people dispersed or went home, but their consciences having once been awakened they could not rest in peace, and "having rested from grief" the adherents of self-immolation "began to blame themselves for their mode of life, the food they ate, and what they drank." Therefore, after two or three unsuccessful attempts their purpose was at last fulfilled, but largely under pressure of persecution by the government. By defying the "oppressors" even the faltering ones felt confident of obtaining a martyr's crown. In fact, after Tsarevna Sophia's decree in 1684 had threatened every impenitent follower of the old faith with the stake, there remained no choice. Persecutions proved the words of rustic propagandists that there existed no way of escaping Antichrist but by fire and water, and so the chief problem of the teachers and their followers was to incite persecutions. "Thou teachest us," said the people, "that it is good for us to be burned alive; what shall we do, for thou knowest that there are no persecutions?" "Ye children, I shall arrange the persecution," answered the teacher, and taught the people to commit a sacrilege. "Then local authorities will write about us to the capital, whence an agent will be sent for our persecution. But we shall immolate ourselves in the fire, and shall thus escape him." The program was strictly carried out, and when a military detachment arrived the people shut themselves in a house or stronghold, and seeing that they could not "outstay" the soldiers, set fire to the place, taking every precaution against anyone's escaping, while the rest of the community believed that "all these martyrs died joyfully in the flames, having entered them as though attending a feast."

Under the double stress of governmental persecutions and the expected end of the world, self-immolation assumed huge proportions. It supported the hope of the propagandists to "burn down" the whole of Russia by an all-Russian conflagration, and thus solve the religious problem. A modern student figures that from the beginning of the Schism up to the nineties of the seventeenth century no less than twenty thousand people had committed suicide.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Of this number only 3,800 cases had been accounted for prior to the Tsarevna Sophia's decree of 1684.

This acute paroxysm of self-immolation having started in the second part of the sixteen eighties could not continue for long, and it began to abate in the first part of the nineties when the persecutions, provoked by Sophia's decree, ceased under the young sovereign, who occupied himself with very different affairs. The dread of both executions and the second advent were succeeded by a sharp reversal in the temper of the Schismatics. The solitary voices of the moderates became audible, and their protest against the horrors of self-immolation attracted to their side many followers from every part of Russia. In the general opinion of some two hundred monks from the Don, Kama, Volga, and the White Sea littoral, as well as many "lay brothers from elsewhere"—voluntary death by suicide, unprovoked by tyranny, was condemned as contrary to the teachings of Christ, the Apostles, and the Holy Fathers. To refute the arguments of the propagandists of self-immolation the Elder Euphrosynus in 1691 composed a vigorous "Epistle of Repudiation." The most radical opponents of Nikonianism ceased now to believe that for them no other issue existed but "fire and water." The faction of the Schism called the Priestless definitely accepted the basic principle that nowhere in the world did there exist any church or sacraments except those accessible to the entire laity.<sup>3</sup> However, this did not imply that physical existence on earth was of necessity to be terminated. It was essential to shun the world and follow the advice of our Saviour: "But when they persecute you in this city flee ye into another: for verily I say unto you ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel, till the Son of Man be come." The important principle in the life of the Priestless was as follows: "For the persecuted, to flee; for the captured, to endure; not to invite martyrdom, yet never evade it if fate should deliver you into the hands of the oppressors." With this guiding principle, those who denied the church and sacraments proceeded on their historical way.

There existed in Russia a vast region which seemed especially well adapted for the realization of this régime. There it was easy

<sup>3</sup> As such the Priestless considered baptism (which they repeated for those who joined them) and penance "as connecting man with God even without ordained priests," to use the expression of the more modern Shore-Dweller teacher, Skachkov (1818).

to live hidden from the authorities, and it was customary there to dispense with church and sacraments. A break with the world and the church appeared less fearful and more natural there than in other parts of Russia. The region was that of the North Russian woodlands, the vast territories of ancient Novgorod, the White Sea littoral, and the whole of Siberia, where the relation of the population to the church had always been the same as that in which the zealots of ancient faith found themselves after refusing to believe in the church's further existence. While the Old Ritualists now had no priests and were forced to dispense with the sacraments, the dwellers of Northern Russia never had enjoyed regular administration to their religious needs. In these uninhabited regions, where villages often stood many miles apart, where roads ran through dense forests and muddy swamps, and rivers were the only practical means of communication, the people for many years had had to forego any help from the priest. Frequently half a score or even a score of villages had but one church, therefore its parish covered hundreds of square miles, while it also happened that for a long time the church "stood without chant." Even when a priest was present the local population often hesitated to approach him because his services were too costly. So the northern villagers undertook to depend upon themselves for their spiritual needs, and the church was replaced by numerous chapels where, instead of the mass, the population heard only vespers, matins, and the breviary, chanted by literate members of the community.

Naturally it was easier here than elsewhere to become reconciled to the necessity of doing without priests, and so the doctrine of the Priestless spread to an extraordinary degree, while the followers of the Priestists went into the southwestern borderlands of Russia. The people in the north became quite accustomed to confess their sins to each other and laymen officiated at baptisms, but they could not bear to be deprived forever of the Holy Sacrament. Consequently every charlatan who assured them that he possessed the reserve Eucharist consecrated before Nikon's time, could gain the confidence of the masses and profit thereby. When no Eucharist was to be had the Priestless resorted to a symbolic rite, the partaking of the Holy Communion in the form of raisins. The villagers did not object to omitting the sacrament of marriage because civil

marriage had frequently taken place before this, but the laity was embarrassed when sometimes the strict Old Ritualist monks repudiated both the sacrament of marriage and family life. "The married to be separated, the unmarried not to marry," was their command, but the requirements of life powerfully opposed such theoretical exactions.

As soon as "Nikonian innovations" were put into practice the zealots of ancient piety made their appearance in the northern woods, and simultaneously there was born the propagation of the Schism. A rupture with the world could not be considered the only means of salvation as long as there was hope of overpowering the Nikonians and reëstablishing the old faith. But with the vigorous decree of 1684 and the failure of the Streltsy revolt the situation changed, and to true Schismatics there remained only the choice of an open struggle or flight. Self-immolation was another way of evading tortures. "Infirm and feeble are we, therefore we dread to face the tortures; accept, O Lord, this sacrifice by fire as a martyrdom, in atonement for our infirmities." These reflections and prayers are ascribed to the self-immolators by Ivan Filippov, a historian of the Priestless. Although both the tendency to suicide and the ardent impulse of religious fervor soon subsided, there remained another more powerful way—the break with the world. "Among the adherents of the old faith those who could not endure the tortures and would not submit to death by fire fled to the impassable wastelands," says the same historian. In the nineties of the seventeenth century, when the sentiment against self-immolation increased, the escapes became more frequent.

The northern wastelands were soon populated. The first pioneers of the solitary life were the Solovetsk monks who, not having the courage to resist the siege of their monastery by governmental forces, left the island before it began and wandered along the sea coast, bringing with them the hatred of "Nikonian innovations" and the devotion to ancient Orthodoxy. They chose the most remote corners in which to hide from the authorities, and on the shore of a lake in a dense forest cut off from the rest of the world by impassable swamps, with only a wood fire as protection from the northern winters, a hermit would commence his "cruel existence." Gradually he would grow accustomed to his new abode, build him-

self a cell, and clear the ground with a mattock. "Because of the necessities of life" or "for preaching and the teaching of piety" he would sometimes leave the woods for the neighboring villages. "Skis were his coursers and sleighs served as a cart." Soon the hermit's fame spread and he acquired patrons from the parishes and villages—"those loving Christ"—who were ready to hide him from the authorities if necessary. Also there were followers eager to emulate him, and a community gradually formed around the solitary cell. In a common effort the settlers burned entire sections of the forest, tilled the soil and reaped good harvest from the "ashes." The "cruel" and "needy" life of seclusion became "decorous and plentiful," but even so there was no security in such a settlement, for a harvest destroyed by frost or poor crops could scatter the brethren, while the strict hermit who regretted the lost silence would penetrate still further into the dense woods and face new privations. Finally, news about the established community, the peasants who had gone there, and the deliberate preaching by the Elders who had not renounced the world, against attending church and partaking of the "new Holy Sacrament," would reach the authorities, and detachments from the local center would be sent to the hermitage for a thorough investigation. Usually the settlers fled, abandoning and sacrificing both their homes and their supplies to the enemy, for otherwise they would have to burn themselves alive. They were afraid to surrender, thinking that by means of tortures they could be forced to renounce the old faith.

The change in the situation during the last decade of the seventeenth century bore an immediate influence on the life of the "Shore-Dwellers"<sup>4</sup> hermitages. One of the hermit settlements, which up to that time had been constantly moving, so grew in strength and members that it became the center of the Russian Priestless and thanks to its convenient location on the river Vyg was able to survive the "evil times." The legal existence of the Schism was made possible by the attitude towards it of Peter's government, while the personal virtues of the founders secured for this community an outstanding position among the Priestless. In the persons of Daniel Vikulin and Andrew Denisov there were combined the moral authority of an ascetic and strict hermit with

<sup>4</sup> People from the White Sea littoral.

that of an enthusiastic youth gifted with worldly shrewdness and a talent for organization. From the beginning Andrew Denisov's talent manifested itself in his wise regulation of the brethren's life within the hermitage, and in the methodical administration of their domestic economy. He also proved his sagacity by forming business connections with the Schismatics in other parts of the country, thus establishing the first example of a wide commercial and industrial association based on absolute mutual confidence and common ethical discipline—an example successfully followed by the Schismatics at the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth centuries. But this did not end the services rendered by Andrew Denisov to the Vygovsk community. Not only the "leveled mountains," the "cleared forests," the numerous buildings of the monastery, the "decorous life" of the brethren, the influential connections which extended from court to remote towns of Russia bore evidence of his labors, but also the intellectual horizon of the monks which he extended. Prior to his time, literacy was so rare among them that the historian of the Vygovsk Hermitage constantly pointed it out as the special achievement of a monk. Being a brilliant dialectician and an expert in old Russian literature, Denisov realized fully that it was insufficient to be an ordinary "bookman" and that it was indispensable even for an Old Ritualist to acquire a systematic schooling. So, having put his monastery in order, he went to Kiev in the guise of a trader, and for a year devoted himself to the study of theology, rhetoric, logic, and homiletics at the Kiev Academy, probably under the guidance of Theophanes Prokopovich. This step taken by the author of the *Shore-Dwellers' Replies* shows how much broader were his views than those of the majority of his adherents. In the thick of the struggle to go over to the enemy's camp and the very core of heresy, even as preparatory to future conflict with the enemy, was out of the question for a Schismatic of the old school.

That which was a manifestation of Denisov's unusual mind, in later days became a matter of practical necessity to his community. It was due to Andrew's efforts that the Vygovsk brethren had forgotten the time when they communicated with the outside world by skis and pack-sleigh, and when the rumor about the building of a temporary road, fifty miles distant from their monastery, for Peter

to travel by, made the hermits think of flight or self-immolation. Instead of this two roads now passed in front of the monastery, and a "guest house" was an important station for travelers. On the neighboring shore of Lake Onega there was a wharf, which belonged to the monastery, and boats for transporting its own and foreign goods, while in the adjoining Kargopolsk district vast expanses of arable land were bought or taken on lease, and both on the sea and lakes the brethren had extensive fisheries. The fishermen and hunters went as far as Nova Zembla and Spitzbergen from the monastery, while the "Elders" traded in grain with Southern Russia on a large scale. When the monastery was rebuilt, a remarkable library and a number of schools were founded for scribes, chanters, icon painters, and workers in the various handicrafts. Around the monastery there appeared many settlements forming a connecting link between the monks and the outside world, but as the Vygovsk hermits could not easily supervise the affairs of the settlers, the settlements were governed by their own elected authorities. All this fundamentally changed the views of the monks. While wandering through the woods alone it was easy to preach hatred towards the outside world, but for such an extensive and wealthy community as the Vygovsk Hermitage it was necessary to establish with it definite and friendly relations. The financial power and sympathy of the surrounding population towards the Schism were of great help, although it was not possible to dispense entirely with compromise. The Vygovsk Monastery put into practice the moderate views which in 1691 were preached by Euphrosynus quoting the Apostle Paul: "Bidden by infidels to partake of viands, to the glory of God, go and partake of everything offered to you; likewise buy anything that is sold at the mart, without scruples." On the Vyg the relations with the heretic Nikonians had full scope; all the victuals bought in the market were considered pure, and the followers of Denisov ceased to regard the partaking of food and drink out of vessels already touched by the Nikonians as desecration, while communication between the brethren and the authorities led to still further corruption. The certainty that Antichrist ruled the world did not prevent the "Elders" from making such concessions to the authorities as would guarantee them the free practice of their faith. At first these concessions were limited to gifts and donations,



then they consented to the payment of a double poll tax, but this did not suffice. In 1739, nine years after the death of Denisov, a committee of investigation headed by Samarin arrived at Vyg to verify on the spot information given by former dwellers of the Hermitage regarding the concealment of fugitives and the omission of the Tsar's name from their prayers by the brethren. After much delay the first problem was solved by the decree of August 31, 1774. Complying with that decree the monks agreed to register the fugitives voluntarily in the next census and to pay their poll tax for them. But the question of praying for the Tsar had to be settled at once, and it was here that the inner discord in the Vygovsk community became obvious. The ignorant workmen and servants in the monastery were stubborn, resolved to resist as they had before and to crown the brilliant history of Vygovsk Hermitage by an act of self-immolation. But the senior brethren headed by Simeon, brother of Andrew Denisov, decided to yield and, arguing that the ancient church had prayed for the pagan kings, wrote the Tsar's name in the missals of the Priestless.

This measure was the natural outcome of the concessions made, prior to the arrival of Samarin's committee, to the community and the authorities by the Vygovsk brotherhood. Nevertheless, to the majority this recognition of "praying" was the last drop that filled the cup to overflowing. Though most of the dwellers in Vygovsk were dissuaded from self-immolation, it could not prevent dissension among the Priestless.

In fact, the dissension had existed in their midst even before the investigation. Independently from the Denisovs, Theodosius, a sexton from a village church, was teaching the Priestless in the southwestern part of the Novgorod region and across the Polish frontier. In interpreting the principal regulations of the Priestless as he understood them, he disagreed with the Denisovs on some points, without knowing it. When he learned of the existence of the Vygovsk Hermitage he went there repeatedly, trying to elucidate these points and to come to a mutual understanding. The discussions centered around the details of the ritual, but the question of the attitude of the Priestless towards the rest of the world was also brought up by Theodosius. Finally the debates resulted in a further estrangement and mutual embitterment.

The resolution adopted by the senior members of the Vygovsk brotherhood to include the Tsar's name in their prayers created a fundamental moral issue and divided the Priestless into two antagonistic sects. The discord was based on a reaction against the policy of conciliation as accepted by the Vygovsk Monastery, but there was yet another problem which prompted some of the Priestless to seek a compromise, and it soon became the subject of heated arguments between the Theodosians and the Shore-Dwellers. While acknowledging the two sacraments, baptism and penance, the Priestless denied the sacrament of marriage, and therefore preached celibacy. Of course even the strictest adherents of piety must have realized the impossibility of abolishing the contact between "hay" and "fire." Not knowing how to solve this dilemma, they formally insisted on the observance of the ascetic exigencies, but actually they were constrained to overlook their constant violation. Theodosius decided to recognize as legal the marriages blessed by the heretical Nikonian church, though by doing so he was thoroughly inconsistent and disregarded his customary attitude of severity towards the Nikonians, whereas Andrew Denisov, contrary to his usual tolerance, was firm on this point and to the end of his days was inexorable in exacting absolute continence. Yet even he could not abolish family life, and had to be content with moving the families outside the monastery walls.

The followers of Theodosius and Andrew Denisov succeeded in bringing their respective attitudes towards marriage into harmony with the general spirit of their trends. The Theodosians began treating family life with intolerance, while the Shore-Dwellers became more tolerant towards it. However, neither approached a solution of the problem, and the moral conflict between the theory, which repudiated even a legal marriage, and life, which made the existence of a family indispensable, remained in full force. It was necessary to consider seriously some means to reconcile theory with practice, and for the first time the Schismatics faced the problem which could not be solved by mere reference to "what their fathers and grandfathers had thought about it," and sought solution through their own original interpretation of theological literature. This task was brilliantly accomplished by a Theodosian, Ivan Alekseiev, who disclosed a knowledge, gift, and breadth of mind equal to those of

Denisov. In 1762, thirty-four years after he first discussed the question with Denisov, his voluminous research on the *Sacrament of Marriage* finally appeared. During this time Alekseiev never ceased collecting the material on which he based the theory he propagated, and he established the fact that the sacrament of marriage was not performed a second time by the ancient Christian church for married people converted from other creeds. "Hence the ancient Church did acknowledge as legal marriages blessed by other creeds, and so it should be," stated Alekseiev, turning from the Scriptures to his own conclusions. As opposed to other sacraments the bestowal of grace in marriage has no particular connection with the ritual. According to the words of the Great Catechism, "marriage is a sacrament by which the bride and bridegroom, from pure love in their hearts, vow to remain true one to the other." The real "celebrant" performing the rite is the Lord Himself, who invested the nature of man with the desire to procreate and multiply. By the will of God this desire, combined with the troth-plight of the couple, comprises the substance of the sacrament; the rest is mere convention. The priest is only the community's witness to the union, and the church ceremony is simply a popular custom lending to marriage a general assent and confirming its validity and civil stability. In order to preserve the stability, marriage should not dispense with the ceremony. Marriage existed in the "natural law" long before the church ceremony, which is only a formality, appeared in the "written law." Therefore the Priestless church had to follow in the footsteps of the ancient Christian church and acknowledge the marriages blessed by the Nikonians. This benediction bore only public witness to the marriage, while the sacrament itself was achieved by the Lord and the mutual understanding of the bride and bridegroom.

This argument was absolutely new to the Schism, and Alekseiev had to defend his right to formulate new theological theories. To justify himself he pointed out the radical changes in life which surrounded them.

Until the people sensed the lack of marriage it never occurred to them to speak of it; then followed the desire, and a research was instituted. Because the Fathers did not marry is no reason for us to hesitate or shrink from it. One must remember that the Fathers dwelt far from

the world and passed through hermitic and monastic life. They abstained from married life not because they scorned it, but they did not wish to convert the hermitage into a community. Their lives cannot be a precedent to us, for we live in the community and are surrounded by every worldly temptation.

In these words the marriage question is set forth explicitly. The changed conditions in the Schismatic world originally provoked Alekseiev's theoretical arguments, which were a new, substantial advance towards the reconciliation of the Priestless doctrines with the requisites of life. Those of the Old Ritualists who did not want a reconciliation had to protest this advance, and so the marriage question became to the Priestless what the problem of accepting fugitive priests was to the Priestists. Around these two questions centered the struggle between the moderate and radical parties of the two trends of Old Ritualism. The difference was that the moderate party of the Priestists involuntarily allied itself with the tenets of the established church, while the Priestless of the moderate trend, denying the very basis of a positive religion, became more estranged from it, and were able to enter upon a free religious life. Consequently the victory of the moderate views on the "reanointment" of fugitive priests only brought the Priestists to a limited recognition of the Nikonian church, and the victory of the moderate Priestless on the marriage question led the Schismatics away from the Orthodox tradition and to the idea of a "natural religious law" as opposed to the "written law" of Christian revelation. In both instances the struggle for the central position was bitter and unyielding. It continued throughout the entire length of their history, bringing no unanimous solution, but instead increasing the discord.

The inner development of the various tendencies among the Priestless subsequently followed a widely separated course. There remained only one alternative for the people interested in the further unfolding of the religious doctrine and the coördination of their lives with the ideal: either a complete restoration of the Old Ritualist antiquity or a definite rupture with the church tradition, which would lead to dependence upon individual reasoning. The masses of the Priestless were unable to accept either way, for as ever they were far behind the ardent and intelligent minority. Govern-

mental persecutions and worldly associations alike gradually forced the masses to lean towards the moderate views on marriage. They were not prepared to accept the radical principles of the doctrine, for their mentality remained the same as it was at the beginning of the Schism. Modern writers, who cannot understand how the Schism of the seventeenth century could have originated in a dispute over some trifling points of ritual, should refer to the debates held by the Priestless in the nineteenth century.

In 1817 there arose, in the Saratov community of Theodosians, a question which before long agitated the followers of Theodosius all over Russia. When making the sign of the cross in repeating the prayer "Our Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on us," an Old Ritualist brings his hand to the left shoulder at the words "Son of God." Yet it is a known fact that the devil always sits on the left shoulder of man and whispers many temptations into his ear. Therefore, is not the name of God delivered over to the outrages of the evil one? Both in Saratov and at the Churchyard of the Transfiguration of Our Lord in Moscow, they were unable to solve the problem. At last Gnusin, a Theodosian preceptor, decided that at the word "Christ" one should place the hand on the bosom, and only after having repeated the prayer bring the hand to the left shoulder. "And because of the ignorance of the Christians who formerly made the sign of the cross differently," he added, "their sin shall be forgiven and I take upon myself to entreat the Lord's mercy." A similar state of mind existed among the rank and file of the Shore-Dwellers. At the end of the twenties of the nineteenth century two preceptors from the Chapel of the Intercession of the Holy Virgin quarreled because one had introduced the ancient chant of the Shore-Dwellers and the other, to spite him, restored the recitative chant approved by Avvakum. "The faint-hearted Christians have forgotten the rules by which the Angels sing, in adopting the soul-destroying recitative chant," complained the adherents of the Chapel of the Intercession, while their opponents established a special prayer house and successfully enlisted followers from among the provincial Shore-Dwellers.

In the presence of such a mood among the masses of the Priestless, the new religious movements could not gain ground. They had to begin by attracting the more zealous and those best prepared by

life and reasoning power, therefore the results of these movements could find no place within the boundaries of the existing Schismatic communities. New trends of religious thought had to find new forms of expression. But before passing to these we must examine still another form which with all its seeming innovation was a final effort to induce the Priestless to return to the ideal of the late seventeenth century.

The tolerance of Catherine's government had created a most favorable basis for bringing even radical parties of the Schism nearer to the surrounding community. But the easier the reconciliation and the more tempting the compromise, the more dangerous did it appear to the truly radical members of the Priestless. The tolerance of the government towards the Schism was regarded by them as a new temptation, intended to deliver the people into the power of the "son of evil." Were the Schismatics to continue living in the community, they must comply perforce with the conditions of communal life which from the strict point of view appeared to be the handiwork of Antichrist. The inconsistency between word and deed disturbed those possessing a high-strung nature. Their souls demanded atonement for the sin of associating with the world; and they, being tormented by doubts, either sought death by starvation in the dense forests or amazed the community by their vociferous protests aimed at provoking persecutions. Many conscientious men found personal satisfaction in such an outlet until one of them, endowed with a strong mind, will power, and erudition, assembled a small group of people, similarly minded, and formed a religious society where they could find the expression of their individual ideas in a harmonious theoretical system.

This was done by Euphemius, a "tramp" peasant and an army deserter, who from his 'teens had been absorbed in the Schism, and who later became the founder of the sect of "Wanderers." For a long time he had sought moral comfort in the teachings of the Priestless, when finally he decided to break with them and found his own doctrine. Euphemius went from sect to sect, but nowhere did the theory agree with practice, which convinced him that everywhere a hidden compromise existed. His artless attempts to uncover it only provoked indignant rebuffs, and having found no support, Euphemius lost faith in the leaders of Old Ritualism. He

set forth to wander through the world in search of truth, and when he met at last a zealous "wanderer" like himself his conception of the world became definitely strengthened, and he began an active propaganda.

In a book entitled *The Flower Garden*, Euphemius revealed that he did not credit his doctrine with any new and original ideas. He simply wanted to reproduce what he had heard and read about the lives of the "survivors of ancient faith." These "formerly existing Christians" whom he wanted to imitate were not the early Christians, as some modern scholars have supposed, but the hermits of the end of the seventeenth and the beginning of the eighteenth centuries, who were so vividly described by the historian of the Vygovsk Monastery. The followers of Euphemius were right in testifying at an investigation that the sect of Wanderers originated at the time of the Solovetsk Monastery's destruction, for Euphemius and his disciples had modeled themselves on the hermit life of the "martyrs of faith" of the first Schismatic generation. However, the theories by which they endeavored to prove the necessity of re-establishing such a life possessed more modernism than Euphemius realized. The cardinal point of his reasoning was a protest against reconciliation with the world, so the entire doctrine was resolved into a systematic refutation of the existing order, the origin of which he sought for only in the historical records of the Schism. Everything was well in Russia up to the days of Nikon and Peter. Nikon corrupted the faith, while Peter "separated the people into various classes," introducing private property and social inequality, from which resulted the struggle between the rich and the poor, the pursuit of profit, lawsuits, etc.; it was Peter also who forced the people to enter various forms of state service and who imposed upon them unbearable taxations. The principal cause of all these changes were the poll tax and delimitation of the land, while the census served as a means of calculating the soldiery of Antichrist, and passports made it possible to give all enemies of Christ the stamp of Antichrist. The land was allotted "to some in plenty, to others sparingly, and to many none at all," thus creating a struggle for possession of property. Yet, the word "mine," according to St. John Chrysostom, proceeded from the devil, "for God created equally everything that is essential to all of us," and *my* world, *my*

sun, *my* water, *my* forest, and so forth, cannot be said. Since the time of Peter, the devil rules on the Russian throne and the entire world is infected by his breath; therefore to avoid communion with the evil one, there remains but to reject all public duties and connections, renounce family and personal property, and flee from the political and civil community. The Lord indicated this means when He commanded the Prophets to leave Babel (i. e., the world), for "he who is a friend of the world becomes an enemy to the Lord." The Wanderers quoted from the ancient hermits that St. Cyril of Jerusalem also advised joining the open fight against Satan or else fleeing from him. A compromise was useless, because "it is impossible to look at the sky with one eye and at the ground with the other," or serve two masters at the same time. "Have no city, no village, no home"; this is the only means possible of avoiding the nets of Antichrist and preparing properly for the Day of Judgment. A wanderer's life is the only existence acceptable to a true Christian.

This radical doctrine preached by Euphemius pleased the people of the northeast, where the habits of the nomads still survived, and the social aspect of the teaching justified the masses in protesting against the state and its interference with the life of the people. Sopolky, a large village some fifteen miles away from Iaroslavl, became the center of the "Union of the Wanderers," and in the first quarter of the nineteenth century the preaching of their doctrine spread from there down the entire course of the Volga to Saratov and Astrakhan, and up to the province of Tver. It found its way also to Archangel in the far north and developed on a large scale in the wastelands of Siberia. All the branches recognized the hierarchic authority of Sopolky, where in important cases the representatives of the various centers of the Wanderers assembled to debate controversial questions and pronounce their decisions. By the middle of the nineteenth century the Wanderers already possessed a considerable literature. However, their propagation led to consequences similar to those we have seen among the Shore-Dwellers on the Vyg and the Theodosians at the Churchyard of the Transfiguration. It was becoming increasingly difficult to preserve intact among the Priestless the exalted ideal of 1669 or 1702. Immediately after the death of Euphemius in 1792 his followers modi-



fied his ascetic idea of wandering and agreed to meet the world halfway, for some Wanderers felt the need for places of rest and refuge, while many of the Priestless, though sharing these views, were not staunch enough to put them into practice. Such people remained in the community, occupying themselves with agriculture and trade, and formed among the sectarians a special class called the "Faithful" or "friends of Wanderers." In their houses were built secret passages and subterranean places where the true Wanderers or "Christ's People" could hide from the authorities. All this required changes in the tenets, because the Faithful were allowed association with the world and, except for the last Sacrament, communion with the established church, which was contrary to the theory of the Wanderers. Every Faithful before death had to return to the ranks of true Wanderers, but even this soon became a mere formality. When dying, a Faithful would request that he be taken into a nearby forest, garden, or yard, so as not to die in his own house, thereby fulfilling the order of the sect. Nor did even the true Wanderers follow the rules of Euphemius, for gradually they inclined towards the recognition of private property, giving it at first into the custody of the Faithful and later managing it themselves. Marriage was also recognized, first as merely a conjugal relationship, and then as a union blessed by the sect or the church. These concessions became particularly notable when the strict régime of Nicholas I, during which the Wanderers greatly increased in number, was followed by the days of tolerance under Alexander II. Modern scholars have noted that some adherents of the sect were quite willing to renounce their teaching on Antichrist and replace it with rationalistic explanations.

The appearance of a new sect, the "Prayerless," in the last part of the nineteenth century proved that the more radical trends among the Priestless were favorable ground for the growth of rationalistic views. The founder of this sect was Gabriel Zimin, a Don Cossack, who in his childhood had been a member of the Priestists, later joined the Priestless, and finally, with the help of books, had developed his own doctrine. The cardinal point of this teaching was that at the end of the "seventh millennium" A. D., i. e., after 1666, began the reign of the "Spirit," and from that time on everything had to be taken "spiritually." As a matter of principle the doctrine

did not imply any denial of the cult. On the contrary, it recognized that up to 1666 the cult and religion in their entirety were correct and legitimate, but from that time "truth was extinct" and at present the Holy Scriptures, as well as the very advent of Christ, had to be interpreted in a spiritual sense. Under the reign of the Holy Ghost all exterior rites lost their power. Therefore the Prayerless, like the Priestless, repudiated the priesthood, the sacraments and divine service, ceased the worshiping of icons, celebrating the order of marriage, the baptism of children, and the burial of the dead according to church rituals. The Day of Judgment had taken place at the end of the seventh millennium, and another advent of Christ was not to be expected. Nothing was known of the future life since all statements in the Holy Scriptures related only to the earthly existence. From this came the deduction that Paradise also would be on earth. War, taxation, and every law and oath were disowned, and the existence of the state and authorities was acknowledged only conditionally and from necessity.

In some respects this approached the Wanderers, with whom the Prayerless were closely connected, while in others it suggested the doctrine of Spiritual Christians,<sup>5</sup> to the confusion of missionaries and authorities.

Thus by the time of the revolution of 1917 the cycle of progress in the doctrines of both the Priestless and the Priestists seemed to have been completed. Their theoretical possibilities were exhausted, while in practice they reached results which denied their fundamental principles. There had been a struggle between two principal trends—the radical and the moderate in the history of the Priestists and the Priestless. In contradiction to the tenor of the Priestists, that of the radical Priestless came nearer the traditional tenets of the church. Their history consisted of a series of efforts made to preserve their doctrine on its original basis. This could not be realized because the more they advanced into the modern period, the more difficult it became to reproduce the historical circumstances and to support the standard of religious conception which had helped to create the doctrine of Antichrist. The moderate trend of the Priestless chose a different path, one that was more appropriate to the general march of historical progress. From the early days,

<sup>5</sup> See below, Chapter VI.—Ed.

being disheartened by the impossibility of compressing life into the confines of a dying theory, it chose to adapt that theory to the exigencies of life and was gradually forced to abandon church tradition and ritualistic formalism. "The church does not exist in its walls, but in its rules; when attending church, do not go to the edifice, but to the light; *the church is not in the walls and roofs, but in the faith and life.*" This quotation from St. John Chrysostom was frequently cited by the Priestless theologians in their religious debates. But before there was time for the moderate members of this sect to draw logical conclusions from their premises, it had already been done by the radical trends, the Wanderers and others, who denied on principle the existing order of church and state. They rejected in the name of the Holy Ghost—whose dominion commenced with the fall of the old religion and the ancient method of salvation, at the beginning of the "eighth millennium" of the Christian chronology—the Nikonian and all other churches, all the sacraments, and all the books. There is but a very small difference between this point of view and that of Spiritual Christianity, so that frequently the local authorities believed the teaching of the Prayerless to be that of the Molokans.<sup>6</sup> However, even for the most radical of zealots of the old faith the transition from an abstract denial to the establishment of new positive doctrines proved to be extremely difficult. The Sarapul Prayerless, disappointed in their negative faith, admitted that "it was not a religion." In fact, all those trends that had developed among the Priestless—the conditional denial of the church only because Nikon and Peter corrupted the faith, the readiness to renounce the cult and be satisfied with silent "spiritual prayer," and the unrealizable decision to reject the existing order—all led to an impasse. The only outcome was in a complete revision of the principles of religion without regard to historical precedents and emancipated from the pedantry of the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries. It was this new path that was chosen by the Russian Sectarrians.

<sup>6</sup> See below, Chapter VI.—Ed.

## VI

# THE DEVELOPMENT OF RUSSIAN SECTARIANISM

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**F**ROM the Schism we must proceed to Sectarianism: from the guardians of the ancient church to the teachers of the new religious views. Students in whose opinion the inclination of ancient Russia towards the ritual was a characteristic and inalienable trait of the national piety, for a long time were puzzled by the ascendancy of these new ideas in Russia. A true Russian, they thought, could never be a Sectarian, therefore Sectarianism must be an extraneous growth of foreign origin, artificially and fortuitously grafted on the national faith. Efforts were made to prove that it came either from the West or the East, to trace it back to the Bogumils or to the heresies of the early Christian era; in a word, its origin was sought for everywhere except in the inner, psychological development of the people. Subsequently a sounder point of view predominated which acknowledged Sectarianism to be an independent and national product like the ritualistic piety which it replaced, and its rise ceased to be regarded as a sudden and exceptional historical phenomenon. The new conception of faith gradually developed from the ancient one, and this evolution proceeded through the same natural succession of religious forms as in the history of Western Christianity.

Everywhere religious thought and feeling progressed in a more or less uniform manner; this uniformity can only be stated empirically, pending the time when psychologists will explain it scientifically. In Orthodoxy, as in Christianity in general and all other monotheistic religions, the process of development con-

sisted in the gradual spiritualization of faith. Depending on the difference in personal or national temperament, this process of spiritualization followed either an emotional or an intellectual trend. In the first case, the heart required a closer, more spontaneous relationship with the Deity than the ritualistic religion would allow. In casting off the bonds of the ritual and the formula of prayer, emotional natures surrendered themselves to ecstasy and hoped through mystical exercises to enter into communion with God. In the second case, reason demanded a more critical attitude towards the traditional religious doctrine and tried to reconcile this doctrine with the laws of the human mind and the achievements of science. These mental requirements brought inquiring natures to rationalism—a critical appraisal of the contents of revealed religion, gradually leading them to a refutation of tradition, and subsequently of the revelation itself. Both trends—the mystical and the rationalistic, either advanced independently, now and then engaging in a mutual struggle, or formed an alliance and sometimes were even merged. Each showed itself a natural enemy of ritualistic piety and strove to eliminate all externals and intermediaries between God and man.

The forms assumed by religious evolution in Germanic Europe were those which bore the closest relation to Russia. It was there that the movement against religious formalism passed through two important stages. During the first of them the church tradition was repudiated, and it was considered possible to base the faith on the direct instructions of its Founder as expressed in the Gospel. This stage of protest corresponded to the Evangelical Christianity of the Germanic world. During the second stage even the Gospel was regarded as a superfluous intermediary between the Lord and His people. It was conceived that direct communion with the Deity could be arranged: worshipping God "in the Spirit" and finding His reflection in one's own soul. The abode of the Holy Ghost was admitted to be in the heart of every true Christian. At this stage religion had broken all the bonds of tradition and the Holy Scriptures, and had departed from the field of the positive revealed religion, transforming itself into Spiritual Christianity.

The great religious movement of Germanic Europe left its mark even on Russian life. The doctrines of the Evangelical and some of Spiritual Christianity had appeared in very definite form in Russia

at the time of the Reformation. To the masses, recently converted to ritualistic piety from paganism, the new radical doctrines passed quite unnoticed. Only such districts as Novgorod and Pskov, being nearest the western frontiers, have felt their influence, while in other parts of Russia the new ideas found response in but a few sympathetic souls. Thus in Moscow a Calvinist or Lutheran surgeon from Lithuania so confused Matthew Bashkin, a Russian soldier, with his ideas that the latter's "perplexing arguments" bewildered his confessor.

There was neither flesh nor blood in the Eucharist, only plain bread and wine. The church was not an edifice, but a reunion of the faithful. The icons were "damned idols." One did not attain salvation by penitence, but by ceasing to sin. One must worship "one" God—the Father. The traditions of the Holy Fathers were just fables, and the pronouncements of the Ecumenical Councils arbitrary. One should believe only in the Gospel and the Epistles.

Similar ideas acquired from German pastors were brought back from his native Pskov by Arthemius, the Abbot of the Monastery of the Holy Trinity; but after visiting the Transvolga region he was carried away by far more radical theories. In the Belozersk communities of the Transvolga region there were preserved, even in those days, remnants of the rationalistic heresy, which had penetrated through some obscure channels—probably the Balkan Peninsula—to Novgorod, and which later became part of the Orthodox mystical movement, introduced directly from Mt. Athos by Nilus of Sorsk. Repressed by executions, the heretical movement abandoned its radicalism and in a large measure approached the ideas of Evangelical Christianity. The fugitive serf, Theodosius the Squint-eyed, was an earnest promulgator of this trend and the most consistent and radical of the Russian "heretics" of the middle of the sixteenth century.

These people were quite out of place in the Russia of those days. They were condemned to imprisonment by the Councils of 1553-54, and later Arthemius and Theodosius moved to Lithuania, which was nearer the seat of the new doctrines. The effect of this unusual atmosphere of religious freedom produced in them very different results. Arthemius was awed by it, and contrary to the radicalism

of Theodosius the Squint-eyed, his literary opponent, he became a supporter of moderate orthodoxy. Theodosius became intimate with the Lithuanian-Polish Anti-Trinitarians and developed his doctrine into a complete system, with many characteristics, which placed it in close relationship to Spiritual Christianity. He was not satisfied with the usual evangelical criticism, the condemnation of icons and relics, the general protest against the church ritual, but accepted these views only as a starting point and went much further in the direction of Spiritual Christianity. Theodosius openly declared that his followers, having embraced the "spiritual wisdom," were "sons of God" and the only ones to whom "truth was revealed," while all others were "curs and outsiders" who, "although they might lead a virtuous life, could not attain salvation if they do not embrace spiritual wisdom." Yet Theodosius the Squint-eyed found "true children of God" among all creeds: "All people are equal before the Lord, be they Tatars or Germans." The Apostle Peter had said: "In every nation the godly and righteous are agreeable to the Lord. . . . One who possesses wisdom is to us a spiritual brother." No baptism was needed, and the partaking of Holy Communion was unnecessary, for "Christ gave us the Word, and not His flesh and blood." Prayer could be dispensed with, because the Gospel decrees "to bow in spirit and truth, and not fall prostrate on the ground." Desist from falsehood—therein lies the prayer. There shall be no churches, for nothing is written about them either in the Gospel or the Epistles; the Apostles entered a chamber, not a church. According to St. John Chrysostom, "the church is not in the walls, but in the reunion of the faithful." Abstinence from food and matrimony is superfluous, for "everything is pure to the pure." There shall be no preceptors in the community of the faithful, since there is but one preceptor—Jesus Christ. All who have embraced "spiritual wisdom" are equals as "spiritual brothers and children." The parents shall not be honored, for the Holy Scripture says: "Do not choose an earthly father; there is but one Father—the Lord." Property must be bestowed on the community in the manner of the early Christians. There can be no superiors or wars among the true followers of Christ. It is not becoming that they should be in awe of the authorities or pay them tribute.

These ideas, which were part of the Evangelical and Spiritual Christianity, were to be found in Russia long before the sixteenth century, but it is questionable that they could have been preserved until the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries by word of mouth. It is doubtful whether the few Russians who had shared these views during the Reformation period left any successors. At least their doctrines have descended to us only from the polemical writings of their opponents, who tried to disprove them. These polemicists involuntarily rendered a great service to the cause of the Reform, as their works continued to be copied and read long after the views they confuted ceased to exist. When in the seventeenth century some similar ideas appeared, it was only necessary to adapt to them the writings of the old polemicists, and in that form they were introduced into the new popular collection of polemical works. The polemics of Joseph of Volokolamsk against the Judaizers, and those of Zenobius of Oten against the doctrine of Theodosius the Squint-eyed were applied to a new purpose. Thanks to these alterations and reprintings the reformist views of the "heretics" of the fifteenth and the sixteenth centuries survived until the time when they could be understood and when the occasion arose to profit by them.

In the sixteenth century there was only an insignificant group of people able to understand and apply these theories to practice. Even the Church Council that had been analyzing and condemning the views of the "heretics" was not aware either of their origin or of their real meaning. The Evangelical teachings of Bashkin and Arthemius were regarded as "Latin heresy," for officially the Russian church until 1639 made no distinction between Protestant and Catholic churches. The rumors about "Luther's heresy" had reached the "Terrible" Tsar, and it was under this designation that he included all the reformist dogmas. Notwithstanding that there were Lutherans and Calvinists living in Moscow, and that the Tsar held conversations with them regarding their faith, Russian ideas on the Reformation continued to be very confused. This was not because the foreigners were secretive about their faith, but because the Russians did not know how to formulate their questions. They were more interested in the unessential rather than the essential part of foreign creeds, the substance of which they could not grasp. Tsar Ivan the Terrible bade Pastor Martin Nandelstedt of Kukei-



nos write fully as to "how they conducted their divine service, how the priests entered the church to officiate, and how they vested themselves . . . and did they ring the bells every single day or only on holidays?" These questions were asked by the Tsar some years after he had held a solemn theological debate with Brother Ian Rakita of Bohemia, whom Ivan the Terrible believed to be Lutheran, and who therefore was constrained to restrict his arguments to the rudiments of Protestantism. This was a cruel disappointment to Ian Rakita, who came to Russia with the hope of converting its people to the true faith. But Tsar Ivan wanted to annihilate Rakita, and at parting handed him a lengthy list of objections. "It is futile talking to a cur and casting pearls before swine," wrote the Tsar in the introduction. To prove to Rakita that he knew and understood the venom of "Luther's heresy," he verbosely refuted the Bohemian's explanations and even touched upon the question of salvation through faith. However, it is obvious that he remained completely ignorant of the Protestant teachings on the sacraments. All the Tsar and his people knew of the contemporary religious movements in the West was that Luther had forsaken the ancient church, arrogated to himself the rights of a Church Father, and had married a nun. They were not interested in the contents of his teachings and sought no further information.

The situation changed during the seventeenth century when the Moscow government, through the family interests of the Tsar, came to have a better knowledge of Protestantism. Tsar Michael sought the niece of Christian VI of Denmark in marriage, and later proposed marrying his daughter to the King's son. The first plan was immediately dropped when it was learned that the prospective bride would not agree to being rebaptized as decreed by the Russian Church Council of 1620 for all "Latins" wishing to embrace Orthodoxy. The second plan progressed somewhat further, since Prince Woldemar came to Moscow, where the Russian government kept him for two years, hoping to win him over, by means of lengthy religious debates, to being rebaptized. Ivan Nasedka, verger of the Cathedral of the Assumption, who in 1662 had accompanied the Tsar's envoys to Denmark, and thus had had the opportunity of studying the Lutheran church service, led these

debates for Russia. With the help of Simon Budny's Calvinistic catechism, which Nasedka believed to be Lutheran, he studied the theory of Protestantism. Printed in 1562 in Lithuania, "for the plain people of the Russian tongue," this catechism was translated at the beginning of the seventeenth century from Western Russian into the Church Slavonic language and existed in Russia in manuscript form. On his return to Russia, Nasedka compiled the so-called *Exposition of the Lutheran Faith*, a voluminous work the great part of which was taken by him from the South Russian polemical literature. The author's own contribution was characterized by a sharp, chiding tone, indiscriminate citation of "sacred scripts" (including the apocrypha), a clumsy distribution of material, and a purely formal approach to theological questions. Even so the *Exposition of the Lutheran Faith* familiarized the Russians with the Protestant dogma, and they no longer confused it with "Latinism." In 1639 there appeared a new edition of the missal in which a complex ceremony for recanting "Luther's heresy" was introduced and wherein the principal tenets of Protestantism were formulated in thirty-five paragraphs borrowed from the *Exposition of the Lutheran Faith*. Of course these anathemas against Protestant teachers and their doctrines helped considerably in making them better known in Russia. During the forties of the seventeenth century, besides the missal, the printing house in Moscow also published a series of works intended to disprove Lutheranism and Calvinism. The debates and their unsuccessful results attracted the attention of the Muscovites and gave rise to many varied discussions.

In addition to this there was a direct Protestant propaganda which originated on the Southern Finnish coast, annexed by Sweden in 1617, where the new authorities tried to convert the population to Lutheranism. As early as 1614 there was printed in Narva "for the Russian priests, the entire community of Ivangorod, and all the people of the same faith" a "concise statement and explanation of the Christian faith and its worship in Sweden," written by chaplains to the King of Sweden. "Here are briefly disclosed and disproved the most flagrant fallacies existing in the Russian religion," was the sub-title of the book. In 1625 there was established in Stockholm a Slavonic printing house, which in 1628

published a Russian translation of Luther's catechism. Precautions against this propaganda were taken by the Russians, and the governor of Novgorod was forbidden to admit even people of the true faith from across the frontier into the Cathedral of St. Sophia, while those who favored or had embraced Lutheranism were prohibited from entering any Orthodox church. However, such measures were powerless in preventing the spread of propaganda. Many Russians shared the views which Olearius discovered in 1634 in a Russian trader, living in Narva, who when showing his guests the Slavonic Bible said: "Here I seek for the will of God and act accordingly"; and speaking of fasts he stated: "What is the benefit of abstaining from meat, if instead I eat good fish and drink wine and mead?" He did not worship the icons but kept them only "in memory of the saints." "I could easily rub off the paint and burn the wooden plank," continued the trader, adding: "How could there be salvation in that?"

It was equally difficult to prevent the population of the capital from coming in touch with foreigners. In the sixteenth century such association did not endanger the Russian religion, but the situation changed at the beginning of the seventeenth century when the interest of the masses in Protestantism increased, and the government had to be more cautious. Foreigners were moved to the outskirts of Moscow; their churches were destroyed, their intercourse with the rest of the population was made more and more difficult, and finally they were prohibited from having Orthodox servants. Nevertheless, with the Stockholm translation of Luther's catechism the Evangelist influence penetrated to Moscow. The channels by which the evangelical views reached the capital and the means by which they were spread can be found in the history of a circle formed in Moscow at the end of the seventeenth and the beginning of the eighteenth centuries. Thomas Ivanov, a barber, who through his profession had a slight knowledge of foreign medical science, in the year 1693 ceased going to confession or partaking of the Holy Sacrament, declaring that icons were idols and the Eucharist nothing but plain bread and wine. About this time his cousin, Dmitry Tveritinov, became an apprentice in a dispensary of foreign surgeons, and there acquired similar views. Being "naturally clever," Tveritinov not only made his life conform

to his new faith, as his cousin Thomas did, but diligently applied himself to working out a new religious theory, and then to its propagation. Having provided himself with an edition of Luther's and a manuscript copy of Budny's catechism, as well as with the Ostrozhsk and Moscow editions of the Bible, he compiled an extensive extract of biblical quotations, arranging them systematically according to the principal tenets of the Protestant faith. Before long Tveritinov found an extremely helpful ally in Ivan Maksimov, who having learned some of the Protestant arguments from the Swedish pastors in Narva and Moscow, felt qualms and misgivings regarding his former religious faith. He entered the Slavonic-Greco-Latin Academy, recently founded in Moscow, and after six years reached the class in philosophy, yet his doubts did not cease with academic science, but grew more profound under the influence of his Muscovite friends. Maksimov came to know Thomas Ivanov and his cousin Tveritinov, who at once took advantage of this friendship to enlarge his scientific knowledge. Maksimov visited Tveritinov in order to teach him Latin, and "in scholarly fashion" they held debates on the worshiping of icons, the validity of relics, the prayers for the dead, the Sacrament of Transfiguration, etc., in both Latin and Russian, thereby attracting many inquisitive and interested people to Dmitry's home. Some of the listeners became Tveritinov's disciples, and soon a fraternity rallied around him, about which one of his brothers-in-law remarked: "His disciples live in extreme comfort, for they supply each other with everything; were I to join them I too should become prosperous." But outside the circle of his intimate friends also Tveritinov was diligently spreading his propaganda, holding religious discussions either in the homes of the princes and boiars, where he appeared in his capacity of surgeon, or in the barber shop of his cousin Thomas on the All Saints Bridge, and even before the merchants in the city mart. From mouth to mouth the circle was enlarged and its propaganda became bolder and more outspoken. The friends of Tveritinov "raised their heretical voices as daringly as any of the foreigners," while Dmitry openly said: "Thank God, in Moscow of our day everyone is free to chose and profess his creed." Subsequent events have proved the partial justice of his words. Tveritinov had powerful patronage, and it was not until 1714 that with

great effort the ecclesiastical authorities succeeded in having him and his adherents condemned by a church council. Finally most of the followers of the new faith, against their conscience, had to repudiate their views. In the Cathedral of the Assumption Tveritinov solemnly anathematized his doctrine. But Thomas Ivanov proved to be irreconcilable. He revoked his renunciation and on being arrested in the Monastery of the Holy Miracle destroyed the icon of Metropolitan Alexis. For this he was burned at the stake in the Red Square.

In what did the teachings of Tveritinov actually consist? He had called himself and his disciples "Evangelists," i. e., "the Followers of the Gospel," and also "non-accepters of man-made traditions," and yet the more learned among his listeners found that at times his preachings "were contrary to the doctrine of the Lutherans," that they were "more iconoclastic than those of the Lutherans and Calvinists, and also showed signs of a new heresy." Had their knowledge been more extensive, they would have recognized the ancient origin of Tveritinov's ideas when he disagreed with Lutheranism and Calvinism. He affirmed that flesh, having turned to ashes after death, could never be resuscitated, and that the saints asleep in their graves could not hear prayers addressed to them. This had been said by the Russian heretics of the sixteenth century. Likewise, the abhorrence of the cross as the means of the Saviour's ignominious crucifixion had been discovered by Arthemius among the Lithuanian heretics of the same period. The teachings were not new, but the enthusiasm that caused their revival was genuine, and in this sense Tveritinov's listeners were correct when they called his doctrine a "new heresy." They justly emphasized the unusual zeal with which he turned from mere denial of the disclaimed dogmas to derision and censure. With the skill of an expert propagandist Tveritinov infuriated his Orthodox audience, leading it from indignation against his artifices to doubts, from doubts to questionings, and from questionings to a firm belief in the new ideas. Not many of his listeners went through all these stages, but the seed of doubt nevertheless fell on soil more fertile than that of a century and a half before. Although Tveritinov became a renegade, the effect of his teaching was not destroyed.

Evangelical Christianity continued to exist in Russia, having assumed the same forms and following the same trends which for the first time were noticed in the sixteenth century. Because of its national modification, the "new heresy" could not be considered strictly "Calvinistic," so that when it became necessary to name its followers, the ecclesiastical authorities generally used the term "Judaizers," borrowing it from the polemical literature of the seventeenth century. In this garb of pseudo-Judaism, Tveritinov's Evangelical teachings were preserved until another outburst of religious propaganda at the end of the eighteenth century gave them a new form.

But before studying the subsequent fate of Evangelical Christianity we must dwell upon the birth of Spiritual Christianity. The first Russian Evangelists leaned towards Spiritual Christianity, but before they had time to develop it from the doctrine that man is a living church, it evolved in Russia quite independently from a purely national source. Even during the time of the Council of a Hundred Chapters, there appeared in Russia pseudo-prophets and prophetesses, who would fall on the ground in convulsions, and then would recount their visions and foretell the future. In early days these prophecies were ascribed to the devil or pagan gods, but at the end of the seventeenth century, under the influence of the religious unrest agitating the masses, the prophets began to be regarded as "inspired by the Holy Ghost." One of them, the peasant Simeon, was described by Euphrosynus at a meeting of self-immolators in the eighties of the seventeenth century thus: "When he feels the call, the Spirit smites him, and lying on the ground in ecstasy he receives a communication and recovering from the affliction says: my Spirit is prophesying . . ." "Brethren, this is a Prophet and the Holy Ghost speaks through him," announced the followers of Simeon. The idea of the Lord dwelling in man's soul was equally familiar to ancient Russian literature. From the fifteenth to the seventeenth centuries the belief persisted that if one repeated the "Prayer to Jesus" unceasingly, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost would always dwell in one's heart. For the incarnation of the Son of God in a man, Radaev, a Sectarian of the nineteenth century, advised the same ancient expedient—

the constant repetition of the "Prayer to Jesus." But the belief that God dwelt in man acquired its special sectarian meaning only after Spiritual Christianity had appeared in Russia.

All signs indicate that the unbroken tradition of Spiritual Christianity goes back to the period when Evangelical Christianity began to develop in Russia, i. e., to the end of the seventeenth century. It was believed that the initiative to form this new sect proceeded from a foreigner, Quirinus Kuhlmann, who came to Russia in 1689 to prophesy on his mystical visions. The artless German in his enthusiasm was misled into thinking that with the help of Moscow it would be possible to establish one church on earth in which there should be no authorities and no property. In the German suburb of Moscow he discovered some thirty adherents who like him shared the mystical belief of Jacob Boehme, but within six months Kuhlmann was burned at the stake, and after his execution the Moscow Boehmists again became silent. In fact Russian Spiritual Christianity did not emanate from these foreign sources, for its creation was taking place far from the capital, and its original contents were hardly in accord with the views of those who believed in the "Millennium of the Kingdom of Christ." The imminent end of the world was looked for by both groups, but while Kuhlmann expected the millennium in two and a half centuries, in Russia it was awaited daily.

Spiritual Christianity originated in the same surroundings as those in which the Priestless had their beginning. Even the birthplace of the new sect was not far from the districts of Romanov and Poshekhonie, where the most fervid propaganda of self-immolation was centered. The monk Kapiton, the initiator of the doctrine of self-immolation, already was preaching a mysterious faith. He surrounded himself with "Elders" who did not enter the Lord's church, dug "burrows" in the ground in which to live, and tried to escape governmental persecution by constantly moving from one province to another. The disciples of Kapiton dwelt in the Viazniky woods until 1691, "evading divine service, the sacraments, and old faith." From the dark corners of the Viazniky and Kerzhensk woods the Elders now emerged, being roused from their burrows by the general religious exaltation. They adhered to the ideas taught them by Kapiton: the denial of the existence of the grace of

God and the sacraments on earth, and the exaltation of the ascetic "chainbearers." Yet when they had to face the world, to expose their ideas, and to provide an outlet for the feelings of the masses, they immediately disagreed and separated themselves into various sects. Thus simultaneously there appeared the theories of the Priestless and the self-immolators.

From these surroundings there issued also the theory of "Christianism," the first Russian sect of Spiritual Christians or the "Lord's People." In 1691, in characterizing one of the new sects into which the Old Ritualists had split, Euphrosynus made some vague remarks that could have been applied appropriately to the more modern doctrine of the "Khlysty." "The followers of Cosmus Medvedsky," he said, "evade the priests while their men share priesthood with maidens and women." There was in this a germ of a positive cult based on recognizing in the lay members of the community, regardless of sex, that mysterious power essential for officiating at divine service. These ministers of cult were "Prophets" through whom the "Spirit spoke"; the forerunners of the "Prophets," the "Apostles," the "Christs," and the "Mothers of God" of the future Khlysty.

The legend of the Khlysty traces the historical origin of the sect to the propaganda of Kapiton's disciples in the central Transvolga region during the eighties and the nineties of the seventeenth century, but does not present any accurate records of its early days except to tell of the moral state in which the faithful people of Russia found themselves at the time the sect was founded. According to this legend, the Christian religion had disappeared three hundred years before, because Antichrist had been born among the monks and had definitely destroyed faith on earth. The people quarreled over books, as to which could bring them salvation—the "old" or the "new" ones. In the province of Kostroma there lived in those days a holy man called Daniel, who owned a large collection of "old" books, and who put an end to all futile arguments by making the discovery that neither "old" nor "new" books were needed to attain salvation. Only one book was essential, "the golden book, the book of life, the book of the Dove—the Holy Ghost," whereupon he placed all his books in a sack and threw them into the Volga. The Lord's People then assembled and re-



solved that wise ones of their number should be selected and sent to summon the Lord to descend to earth. They went to a holy place and began imploring the Lord with sobs and prayers, which worked a great miracle. In the parish of St. George, on Mt. Gorodina in the district of Starodub, "in a chariot of fire there descended from the clouds the Lord God of Sabaoth and entered the saintly body of Daniel." When Patriarch Nikon, learning of this, imprisoned the "Supreme God" Daniel, a mist covered the entire earth and remained until he had been set free to return home to Kostroma, where he then gave his twelve commandments to the people.

This legend shows how closely interwoven were the Schismatic ideas with those of Spiritual Christianity. Daniel, who had thrown the ancient books into the river and begun preaching on the "living Spirit," was symbolic of the sect which served as a stepping-stone from the Priestless to the purer Spiritual Christianity of later days. Russian Evangelical Christianity came from the people who "in a scholarly fashion" knew how to sustain in Latin the Lutheran and Calvinistic arguments, and therefore the development of its doctrine was systematical from the beginning, while Spiritual Christianity emerged from the masses and in its initial period preserved the characteristics of the popular conception of the world, which had prevailed in the old Schismatic sects. Daniel's twelve commandments resembled principally the doctrines accepted by the Priestless on the river Vyg about the year 1700. Such decrees as "celibates shall not marry, the married shall unmarry; no wine or beer shall be drunk; no stealing or quarreling shall take place"—commandments constantly repeated at the vigils of the Khlysty—had been accepted word for word by the followers of Andrew Denisov. At the same time the Prophets and vigils of the Khlysty, though not directly descended from the magi and festivals of the pagans, recalled the double faith of ancient days. The Prophets and Prophetesses of the Khlysty applied themselves to forecasting the weather, the crops, or the amount of fish to be caught, while their vigils frequently ended in an orgy. All this was familiar to the masses from olden days.

As a result of the popular origin of the Khlysty the ritualistic outer form was the first to be developed, and only in the nineteenth century was the doctrine of Spiritual Christianity unfolded

in detail. The hierarchical differences which existed from the beginning among the Khlysty must be attributed specifically to the incompleteness of their theoretical development.

A peasant, calling himself Christ and allowing the people to worship him, wandered through the villages followed by a "fair maiden whom he called the Mother of God." "This pseudo-Christ also had twelve disciples," wrote Dmitry, the Metropolitan of Rostov, at the beginning of the eighteenth century in his *Inquiry* about the Khlysty. The peasant "Christ" was Ivan Suslov, the adopted son of "God of Sabaoth," Daniel. After Suslov's death the rôle of Christ was assumed by Procopius Lupin, a Strelets, who had been discharged from military service "because of epilepsy." Next after the "Christ" and the "Mother of God" came the "Prophets" and "Prophetesses," titles anyone could assume who had learned to "walk in the circle" during the vigils and had so proved that the Spirit dwelt within him. The rest of the community, awaiting the visitation of the Spirit, submitted unconditionally to all orders given by the Spirit to the "Helmsman" of the Khlysty "Ship." During vigils they formed a chorus which sang the songs of the Khlysty; every vigil was required to begin with a song known as the "Prayer to the Lord," summoning the Spirit to the gathering. Other songs, slow and doleful at the start, gradually growing into a spirited *allegro* and boisterous *presto*, accompanied the rhythmic, whirling movements, which continued until the participants were completely exhausted and were seized with hysterical spasms, the Spirit "rolled on" the entire Ship, and the Prophet began to prophesy, first as to the fate of the Ship and then as to that of every individual member.

The settings of the cult link the Khlysty very closely to their past. The white shirts and burning candles of the vigilants recall the Schismatics' expectation of the end of the world, while the older songs, in their form and contents, approach the folklore and serve as a guide to the popular views on the Day of Judgment, Paradise, etc. The holding of two fingers in making the sign of the cross also reminds one of the Schismatic origin of the sect.

The interest aroused by the cult soon attracted a great following to the Khlysty. During the first thirty years of their existence, under Suslov and Lupin, the Khlysty settled in Moscow and founded

there several Ships. An action was brought against them in 1733 and over fifty adherents of the sect were placed on trial. This was followed by a second suit in 1745-52 at which the accused already numbered 416, and there were in addition to these about 167 Khlysty in hiding from the authorities. Over and above the four, and subsequently eight, Ships in Moscow, there existed a number of communities in the provinces, especially in the Transvolga region where the Khlysty had originated. The persecution dealt the sect a strong blow, but did not altogether put it out of existence. It served as a lesson to the Khlysty, and they profited thereby. The destruction of their Ships they accepted as divine punishment for their having strayed from the narrow path leading to salvation and for dissension among their Prophets. In fact, having first preached abstinence and asceticism, the Sectarians subsequently followed quite different precepts. The ideas of the Priestless on marriage were combined with those of the Spiritual Christians on free love: matrimony was lust; free love a "love in Christ." In the further development of the doctrine there appeared an antinomian justification for those views. Once the Spirit guided the will, man was no longer responsible for his actions and was free to disobey the external dictates of law and ethics; more than that, to yield to the desires of the flesh was one of the ways, and perhaps the shortest one, towards its mortification.

However, some of the Khlysty in the name of strict asceticism protested against the dissoluteness. Like the ancient Russian scribes, the protesting members decided that any harm or obstacle in the path of the soul's salvation was due to women, for feminine beauty "corroded the world and hindered the progress of the people towards God." By the middle of the eighteenth century Conrad Selivanov, who founded a new sect, the "Skoptsy" (the Castrated), preached that the only way to avoid temptation was to make it impossible for the people to sin. At first he met with opposition from the Khlysty Prophets, but afterwards Anna Romanova, the famous Prophetess of the Ship of Akulina, the Khlysty Mother of God, acknowledged him to be God, and he succeeded in recruiting many followers from among the Khlysty of the provinces of Orel, Kaluga, Tula, and Moscow. When beginning his preaching Selivanov did not intend to sever his relations with the Khlysty, he

only thought to perfect their doctrine with his new baptism, but it happened that first the Skoptsy formed an independent order among the Khlysty, and then separated definitely from them. Being less numerous than the Khlysty, the Skoptsy gathered around their "God" on his return from banishment in Siberia (1775-96), and until his death in 1832 he directed all his Russian adherents. Thus the sect gained strength as an organization, and being more centralized than that of the Khlysty conformed rigidly to its religious dogmas. Selivanov's famous message to the Brethren is based on the idea which had inspired the foundation of the sect, that beauty was a danger. In addition to the name of God he assumed that of Tsar, called himself Peter III, and promised his followers to establish his terrestrial kingdom at St. Petersburg, introducing thereby in his doctrine a new political element, while leaving its spiritual side as undeveloped as at its inception.

The Ships of the Khlysty were better adapted to an inner development of their tenets; each was under the independent guidance of its Helmsman and its pseudo-prophets, while the Helmsmen of the Skoptsy were appointed by Selivanov, or at least had to be confirmed by him. With more freedom the Ships of the Khlysty had a correspondingly greater variety of theories and cults than those of the Skoptsy.

Through the growth of public interest in Spiritual Christianity and the influence from abroad in the early part of the nineteenth century, the development of the doctrines in both sects made further progress. But before this had taken place Spiritual Christianity had time in which to find a new religious expression. Simultaneously with the Skoptsy there appeared another sect—the "Dukhobors" ("Wrestlers by the Spirit")—which represented the dogmas of Spiritual Christianity in a purer form, free of Schismatic traditions, and yet somewhat dependent on the Khlysty.

The origin of the Dukhobors still remains obscure. It is known that in 1740-50 there wandered through the province of Kharkov a Prussian corporal, who exerted a strong influence on the local population while spreading the doctrine which ancient commentators called "Quakerism," and that shortly after this the tenets of the Dukhobors found their way to the south and then to the north of what was believed to be the seat of the Dukhobor propaganda

—the provinces of Ekaterinoslav and Tambov—in each place showing characteristic local peculiarities. In Tambov, a Dukhobor preacher named Hilarion Pobirokhin appeared as the Son of God, surrounded by twelve “Archangels,” come to judge the world. These traits reveal the influence of the Khlysty, and we feel justified in surmising that both Spiritual Christianity in Tambov and the first followers of the Skoptsy emanated from the same source—the Khlysty. In the south, on the contrary, the Ekaterinoslav Dukhobors from the very beginning showed greater spiritual understanding of the new doctrines, and Silvanus Kolesnikov, their Patriarch, was a learned man who probably had some knowledge of the teachings of the Western mystics. It is significant that the ardent and popular preaching of the famous Ukrainian mystic and philosopher, Gregory Skovoroda, dates from that same period (between the sixties and nineties of the eighteenth century) in which the sect of the Dukhobors was founded. Gregory Skovoroda, while not a member of any sect, was a Sectarian in spirit, for except the doctrine on reincarnation, his views were identical with those of the Dukhobors, and he frankly called himself an “Abrahamite”<sup>1</sup> in his letters to friends. “Let everyone else do as he pleases,” he wrote, “I have devoted myself wholly to seeking the divine wisdom. We were born to that end, and I live by it, think of it day and night, and by it I shall die.” In all Skovoroda’s works, so highly prized by Russian Sectarials, Spiritual Christianity is ardently propagated.

Many are those who seek Christ in the sovereignty of Augustus and Tiberius, or who follow the trail through Jerusalem, Jordan, and Bethlehem; there is Christ, they say to one another. I know, the Angel cries out to them, ye are looking for the crucified Christ. He is not there! So they search for Him in the ranks of the mighty, in magnificent houses, at sumptuous feasts . . . staring at the blue firmament, the sun, the moon they try to find Him among the worlds of Copernicus. . . . No, He is not there! Then where is He? They seek Him through long prayers, in fastings, in the rituals . . . not there! Then where is He? Surely He must be there where they preach so eloquently, and study the secrets of the Prophets. . . . No, neither is He there. The ill-fated scribes, reading the Prophets, sought for man but fell on a

<sup>1</sup> A Bohemian sect similar to the Dukhobors.

corpse, and perished with it. . . . No, Christ is not among the dead. If ye have not found Him hitherto within yourselves, it is needless to search elsewhere.

Always "throughout the ages and in all people" His voice resounded ceaselessly from every heart in which the divine spark had not been extinguished by carnal passions. Satan had sown "the seed of evil" in the hearts of man, kindling them with sinful desires. In craving for satisfaction of these desires, we were subordinated to the flesh, and thereby extinguished the divine flame, whereas by mortifying the flesh, "the spirit shall be freed from bodily servitude and shall ascend towards its supreme nature, its eternity." Having purified itself, the soul "is freed of the bodily world and the worldly body" and "from the narrow material confines it soars beyond spiritual freedom." Only the inner spirit really exists. Everything on the surface and subject to emotions is but a passing shadow, an ever changing torrent of water. Our earthly existence is but a pilgrimage, "the Exodus of Israelites to the Promised Land." The "tribe of Israel"—descendants of Abraham, who was the first to see truth through the carnal veil, were those who knew the inner spirit or, in other words, knew themselves. Such people were more difficult to find than a white raven: one had to search for them with the lantern of Diogenes. They were those who had seen truth, regardless of nationality and creed, and Skovoroda was among them. He compared his inner voice to the "genius" of Socrates and submitted willingly to all the "Spirit dictated," and his intimate friends were prepared to accept the dictates of his Spirit as prophecies. Skovoroda possessed that mystic feeling of spiritual fire, familiar to all Spiritual Christians, which supported their belief that the Holy Ghost dwelt within them. Thus, following a trance, he was sustained in the choice of his vocation. His attitude towards the external forms of Christianity was a negative one, but in order to appease the "fainthearted" he decided to comply with the Christian rituals before death. Skovoroda interpreted the Scriptures "spiritually, seeking the essence beyond words." In his opinion, the Bible was composed entirely of "pictures" and "figures," which had to be accepted spiritually and interpreted allegorically.

The official confession, written by the Ekaterinoslav Dukhobors

and presented to the governor during their imprisonment in 1791, bears close similarity to the ideas of Skovoroda, though a direct influence is impossible to prove. The most probable inference is that when the confession was written the same ideas had been more or less adopted by all Ukrainian Spiritual Christians. "We are still unlearned in our tongue, nor have we mastered it on paper," so ends this remarkable document;

scribes are expensive, and being prisoners it is not easy for us to find them, so we beg most humbly that leniency will be shown us, illiterates, for the disorderly presentation of our thoughts, the vagueness and incompleteness of the explanations, the lack of fluency, and the misuse of words. If we in some instances have cloaked the eternal truth coarsely and thereby blemished the face of it, we beg that for this reason truth, which in itself is forever beautiful, should not be scorned.

From this confession, however, it is evident that the writers were possessed of natural eloquence and dexterity of literary expression. In spite of the defects in the exposition, the ideas disclosed make up a harmonious and complete system, possessing a philosophical basis like that of ancient Gnosticism. According to the doctrine of the Dukhobors, before the birth of people, human souls were created after God's image, i. e., the Holy Trinity. The three elements of the soul—Reason, Memory, and Will—are united in one substance, which constitutes the image of God within the soul and makes it a participant of the Holy Trinity. Even before the Creation some of the souls had sinned and forsaken the Lord, and so were cast out upon the material world, "deprived of power to remember their previous existence," and led into temptations of evil. Therefore the body, human flesh, is but a temporary prison, "a Cherubim barring the way to the Tree of Life." The sojourn in this prison must have but one aim: the restoration of God's image in man, thereby breaking the material bonds. The flesh covering the soul is but thin water. Earthly life is the boiling of water in a cauldron, and the aim of life is its "distillation into pure alcohol of eternity." So "every worldly weakness sows evil in the flesh" and sends the soul deeper into the world—the material substance. The first people on earth, notwithstanding their fall, had no need for "any rituals and institutions except the spiritual reason in their

souls." The Holy Ghost enlightened them; they were the true "people of God," the tribe of Abel. Yet from the beginning the "sons of perdition," descendants of Cain, oppressed and betrayed the tribe of Abel, which was "dispersed throughout the world among creeds of various denominations." In a moral sense the struggle between Cain and Abel signified a struggle between matter and the spirit. In the course of time people became "corrupted and loathsome" through the triumph of flesh, and it was then that they began to feel a need for external forms. The craving for the pleasures of life, in place of the former love, produced discord among them. "The wise ones, seeing this and knowing that the members of such a community could never stand by themselves, established powers which restrained their profligacy," but "the laws of the kings could not destroy the sins of the evil ones, they could only prevent the smallest part" of their sins from open expression. With no laws "the people would have fought each other like dogs, and the strongest would have strangled the weak."

The decline in the spiritual life exacted the establishment of a church law parallel with the civil law. What should have been pure spirit and inner belief now materialized into outward formula, the Scriptures and the ritual, and because of this, many divisions took place and various churches were constituted. Finally, spiritual wisdom—love and mercy—which formerly permeated the "nature of the world," was incarnated in the earthly form of the Son of God, Jesus Christ. But Christ "by the tidings of Gabriel enters into every one of God's People" and "is conceived by them spiritually, as He was by the Virgin Mary." The entire life of Jesus on earth was the symbol of a gradual spiritual regeneration taking place within every one of us and tending towards our transformation into the "pure and perfect new Jesus, the Man." For those who attained such regeneration, any observance of the civil or church laws became superfluous. "In the heart, where the sun of eternal truth in its noonday brilliance had risen, the moon and stars would cease to shine, and the children of God verily would have no need for kings, or authorities, or human laws. Jesus Christ had freed them of all laws; for the righteous no law is required." The People of God were above any church forms and denominational differences; they were members of an invisible, universal Church. "Jesus al-



lowed them to enter the temples of the Pope, the Greeks, of Luther, or of Calvin." They were living temples in themselves, according to the words of Apostle Paul. "Each of us," was written in the confession, "can cleanse himself in the abode of his spirit without seeking the far-off font at Jerusalem." The Scriptures and the ritual were only signs and "symbolic images," and to obey them without possessing the inner inspiration, i. e., the love of God and of fellow creatures, meant "hypocrisy," whereas with an inspired, heartfelt love all outward manifestations became superfluous. "Compared to faith the ceremonies are as husk to the grain or compliments to true kindness," thus did Skovoroda explain the idea. It was Kolesnikov who had in his time accustomed the Dukhobors to the allegorical interpretation of the Bible. "Any time that could be spared from work, we love to devote to reading, to listening, and to narrating in picturesque stories, and with God's help, even intelligently, the words of Our Lord," wrote the authors of the confession.

The Dukhobors' views on the world in general and on their own state prior to the acceptance of the sectarian doctrine, in particular, were described as follows:

We were born; over each of us was performed the outward Christian ritual. We grew to maturity and old age. All during our lives we went to church. And then? We must confess that like everyone else we stood there completely bored, unable to understand the pedantic, unintelligible style and the rapid and confused pronunciation. Thus are many million souls led to God. Standing in church did not increase our knowledge of ourselves, the Lord, or His divine will, and so, like other children of this world, we remained blind and unrepentant of our sins. But when we began attending our own meetings, hearing the Word of God explained to us and slowly understanding it, then with inexpressible astonishment we saw the Lord and His divine will, and with full consciousness prayed God to help us forget our sinful desires and follow Him. . . . After that, we understood more than we had previously in church, and realized too that the lessons were not boring to those who had been taught to understand them at home. . . . Oh, how much better it would have been if the people had spent a few hundreds on enlightening us about ourselves, the world, and the Lord's Holy Word, instead of wasting thousands on the building of great, magnificently adorned stone temples!

The mystical doctrine of the Ukrainian Dukhobors was decidedly in advance of its time. Spiritual Christianity stated its ideal in the Ekaterinoslav confession, but its realization belonged to the future. The contrast between the ideal and actuality was still so great that it was impossible to preserve the ideal intact, and it had to be brought down to the average level prevailing at that time among the Sectarians. Compared to the high standard of the Ekaterinoslav confession, the compromises that followed were undoubtedly retrogressive, and yet in comparison to the former views of the Sectarians, they still were to be considered a progress.

The first changes were introduced into the doctrine of the Dukhobors when its followers in Tambov acquired traits peculiar to the Khlysty. In 1802, during the examination of two Tambov Dukhobors, Metropolitan Eugene found that they were familiar with the Ekaterinoslav confession. Thus, to his question, "Had distinct authority been entrusted by Christ to anyone in His Church?" they replied, "With us all are equals." In fact, they had a "Christ" of their own—Pobirokhin, and one of his successors, the famous Kapustin, formulated a theory of "Christhood," according to which God dwelt in the hearts of all true Christians, but Christ was incarnate only in the man of His choice. For did He not say, "I shall be with you till the end of the world." In fulfillment of this promise, He is reincarnated in one man from generation to generation. During the first eras of Christianity everyone knew and recognized the one in whom Christ dwelt, acknowledging him as their head and calling him Pope. Soon there appeared pseudo-popes, whom the world continued to worship, while Christ, in compliance with His words, gathered only a few of the faithful around Him. "For many are called, but few are chosen." The chosen were the Dukhobors, in one of whom Christ was still incarnate. To this Kapustin added the belief that at his death the Spirit of Christ dwelling within him would transmigrate to his son—the chosen vessel. Thus he established a dynasty of "Christs," which existed until 1886 and proved to be a source of countless misfortunes to the Dukhobors. Kapustin surrounded himself with a council of thirty, which after his death developed into an inquisitional tribunal, and under his weak grandson, Hilarion Kalmykov, it tyrannized over the entire community of the Dukhobors. Judging by the reports of the local

government officials, the despotism of the council was equaled only by the complete corruption in the life of the community. "In their ways and customs," an observer remarked in 1827, "one can see that their morals are greatly defiled." In 1835-39 these circumstances led to a governmental investigation, which in 1841-45 ended in the banishment of the Dukhobors to the Caucasus from Molochnyia Vody, where they had been living since the time of Alexander I.

Parallel with the decline in the inner life of the Dukhobor community the doctrine also degenerated. In 1827, when comparing their past with the present, the same observer stated: "Those who, although deluded, still possess a general idea of divinity are scarce in these days; the majority show great ignorance in discussing religious worship." Actually this decline of the intellectual standards in the Dukhobor doctrine was reflected in an excess of symbolism and the uncritical acceptance of dogmas, the clue to the understanding of which had been lost. At least we get such an impression from the old Dukhobor Catechism.

Thus the compromises between the ideal and actuality which the Dukhobors attempted resulted in a deterioration of both their religious life and their doctrine. At the same time the compromise with the old Sectarianism led to the formation of new sects of a more moderate character along the lines of Evangelical Christianity.

This development started among the less intellectual Sectarians of the Tambov province. One of their members, Simon Uklein, the son-in-law of Pobirokhin, began to doubt the validity of the Dukhobor doctrine. The Holy Scriptures were of secondary importance to Spiritual Christians, since the inner revelation came first, for the former was a dead and the latter a living word. "There is much in the Holy Scriptures that may suit one and much that suits another, so we have accepted what is appropriate to us," the Dukhobors said at an investigation. The pious Uklein, who had studied the Bible, did not approve of this liberal attitude towards the Scriptures, and when Pobirokhin declared his intention of pronouncing judgment on the universe, he entirely lost faith in his father-in-law and severed all relations with him. From then on the Bible was for him the indispensable and only foundation of religion. So he passed from Spiritual to Evangelical Christianity

and found among the adherents of Tveritinov a considerable number of followers, who came from all parts of Russia. Here was good material for Uklein's new sect. This sect could never be described as pure Evangelical Christianity, for Uklein had reached his convictions through his own reasoning and he modeled his theory upon the sources that were immediately available. Treading in the footsteps of his predecessors, the Khlysty and Tambov Dukhobors, he elected seventy "Apostles" and accompanied by them made a solemn entry into Tambov. For preaching as he did, Uklein was put into prison, but upon feigning to have embraced Orthodoxy he was soon set free. After that he began to propagate his creed on a much larger scale, visiting the people of evangelical leanings in the neighboring provinces of Voronezh and Saratov. In the latter his preaching was so particularly successful that he made it the center of his further activities. Having traveled from the district of Balashov to Kamyshin on the Volga, he went down the river and on the way established several centers of his sect.

Uklein realized the possibilities of a bountiful existence in the steppes of Astrakhan, free and remote from priests and authorities. He led his followers there, and soon they had a colony on the Akhtuba similar to that of the Dukhobors in Molochnyia Vody, and another on the Irgiz. At the same time the doctrine began to spread rapidly too on the right bank of the Volga in the provinces of Simbirsk, Penza, Orel, and Riazan. Wherever Uklein and his disciples appeared, they presented a written confession of their creed, and the children were made to learn by rote the "Ritual of the Spiritual Christians." Thus in a few places the doctrine was preserved unchanged for a whole century.

For the most part the contents of the Ritual, regarding the renunciation of the churches, icons, divine service, fasts, the spiritual conception of the sacraments, and the idea of resurrection "in a new body," were borrowed from the tenets of the Dukhobors. Yet the followers of Uklein dared not interpret allegorically the principal Christian dogma, and left the Orthodox meaning to the conception of the Holy Trinity. Each thesis in the Ritual was followed by an extract taken from the most significant parts of the Bible, and in this manner the doctrine was placed under the protection of the Holy Scriptures on which it had been based.

The Orthodox had named Uklein's sect the "Molokans" (Milk Drinkers), because its members drank milk on fast days. The rapidity of its growth showed that this doctrine was far more intelligible to the Russian people than that of the Dukhobors.

With the accession of Emperor Alexander I to the throne (1801), Spiritual Christianity grew in strength and progress. The persecutions, from which the Sectarians had suffered more than the Schismatics, ceased completely. Prisoners were released from prison and the banished recalled from exile. The Sectarians were allowed to leave the interior of Russia, where they had suffered from the persecution of local authorities and hostility of the population, and retire to the borderland provinces of Taurida, Astrakhan, and Samara, where they could lead a comparatively uncontrolled life. The priests were forbidden to interfere with the Sectarians, and the officials were ordered to prosecute only for "open insubordination to authority," propaganda, and "public demonstration of schism."

After 1812, when the Emperor became conversant with the Bible and fell under the influence of pietism, the government became frankly sympathetic to Evangelical and Spiritual Christianity. In 1813, on the initiative of the Bible Society of London, a Russian Bible Society was opened under the immediate patronage of Alexander I, while Prince Golitsyn, the Minister of Public Education and Ecclesiastical Affairs and a devoted pietist and mystic, was appointed its president. The uniting of the orthodox and heterodox creeds into a single department—and all of them with public education—illustrated the chief idea of those in power. According to this idea, the spirit of true Christianity was compatible with denominational differences, and public education should be based on Spiritual Christianity. In an article published in the *Zion Messenger*, edited by Labzin, a mystic and member of the Bible Society, it was written: "Christ never preached dogma or Sacraments, but only practical axioms that taught what should be done and what should be avoided." The Bible Society intended that these "practical axioms" of the Gospel, having become the foundation of public education, should be accessible to everyone. To this end the activities of the society were given wide publicity, and the provincial authorities were invited to join it and open local branches. The invita-

tion was taken as a governmental order, and "at once everyone began to show great enthusiasm for the word of God and a desire to enlighten those sitting in the shadow of death." The governors delivered speeches which sounded like sermons; provosts and mayors, captains and officers of the district police successfully spread the Holy Scriptures and reported on their progress to the authorities in writing pious letters, which abounded with religious quotations. The Sectarrians were under the impression that the government was converted to their views. The Molokans hastened to join the Bible Society and to buy the newly published Bible, while Labzin's *Zion Messenger* became a favorite with the sectarian readers. Simultaneously there also appeared new translations of the works of the Western mystics, Eckartshausen and Jung-Stilling.

Likewise an interest in Russian Evangelical and Spiritual Christianity was being shown by the upper circles of society. The Molokans and Dukhobors lived far from the capital, and only those who had an especial motive, like the English and American Quakers, who in 1817 after an audience with Emperor Alexander I went immediately to Molochnyia Vody, acquired knowledge of their doctrines. But the Skoptsy and Khlysty were nearer the center, and as the dark side of their teachings were unknown to the public, they were regarded as true representatives of Spiritual Christianity. Following Conrad Selivanov's release from prison there was always an unbroken line of carriages in front of his house. People of high rank and the merchant class came to see the leader of the Skoptsy, and even the Emperor himself, before leaving for the battle of Austerlitz, visited him. Later it was said in St. Petersburg that Selivanov had foretold the defeat of the Russian army. Soon there appeared some imitators of the Russian Sectarrians among the aristocracy. Thus Colonel Tatarinov's widow, who was personally known to the Emperor, became a frequenter at Selivanov's until she discovered that he called himself the "Redeemer." After that a select group of people, who were seeking "to arrive at a consciousness of Truth, and to find the Kingdom of God and his Verity," met at Mme Tatarinov's home for spiritual discussions and readings. Among these were Prince Golitsyn and Labzin, several generals with their wives, colonels, old and young princesses, and many who had left Selivanov to join her. The meetings soon

bored these people, who missed the vigils, and Mme Tatarinov allowed them to introduce the vigils in her home. At first the popular songs, the whirling and mumbling of the Prophets shocked the nobility, but in a short time they "scornfully set aside all wisdom and discretion," decided "to become fools for the sake of God," and joined in the mad whirl. To their own astonishment they discovered that it was both pleasant and beneficial. Even the most unconcerned had to agree that "this type of exercise produced much perspiration, after which one always felt more ethereal and re-animating," while the faithful ones experienced "a rare calm, immunity from desire, and the peace of silent prayer." As to the more exultant, they felt a complete bliss and were "so carried away they forgot themselves, played, sang, broke out into jumping, whirling, and clapping their hands." Some even manifested the gift of prophecy. So Mme Tatarinov was unanimously proclaimed a Prophetess. Being thus introduced into the fashionable world, the Khlysty's ritual lost its peasant character. New songs were composed, and theoretical justification for the vigils was provided for. One of the members found in the *Conversations-Lexicon* a reference to a book *On the Sacred Dances of the Early Christians*, while others remembered that modern dances had ritualistic origin. They also read in the Holy Scriptures that when the Holy Ghost descended on the Apostles, the uninitiated thought they were intoxicated, and that Apostle Paul had advised the faithful to hide from the unbelievers their gift of tongues, so that they could not be accused of folly. In this manner the intellectuals gave to the old Russian sectarian ritual a new theoretical basis.

In fact, the accord between the Sectarians and the intellectuals was not limited to the rehabilitation of the ritual, but with the help of the new mystical literature it contributed to the development of the doctrine itself. The results of this labor became in time the common inheritance of Russian Spiritual Christianity.

The further progress among the Dukhobors consisted in the advance of the masses towards the high level of the founders and leaders of the sect. The old catechism, which we have mentioned as an example of the backwardness of the rank and file of the Dukhobors, ceased to satisfy the demands of the community, and in more recent times was replaced by one that was considerably

altered. All the far-fetched allegories of the old version now were excluded, and in their stead the social side of the doctrine was advanced. Possibly the influence of Tolstoy had prompted the formulation of these parts of the catechism. However, the rejection of authorities, taxes, oaths of allegiance, and recruiting, was nothing new in the history of the sect. A Dukhobor from Kharkov had stated even as far back as 1793 that "the Lord created all men to be equals and no one to be superior," and that when the doctrine of the Dukhobors shall have spread over the whole world there will be no taxation. In 1801 the Dukhobors of that same province confirmed their intention of obeying no one but God, and declared that they would pay no taxes, and in case of foreign aggression would not defend the fatherland. Thus the influence of Tolstoy only revived the original views of the Dukhobors and helped to spread them among the masses. We shall see how these new or renewed tenets were put into practice.

Because of its moderate character the doctrine of the Molokans survived unchanged throughout the nineteenth century, and they were able therefore to propagate their creed among the people, who were not so strict in their religious requirements. Nevertheless, with time the intensity of religious interest within the sect naturally abated.

To replace the Molokans—though quite independent of them—there appeared a new doctrine, somewhat similar, but strong in its novelty, its readiness for struggle, and zeal for propaganda—Stundism.

Early in the eighteenth century the German Evangelical and Reformed Societies, the members of which were dissatisfied with the regular church service, held meetings called the "Stunde" at which the Holy Scriptures were read and hymns were sung. A strong religious unrest among the German colonists in Bessarabia and the province of Ekaterinoslav preceded the spread of Stundism, which had been introduced by them into Russia. In the forties and fifties of the nineteenth century two new sects were founded in these regions—the "Nazarenes" and the "Huepfer"—which proceeded with their vigils as a protest against the weakening of religious fervor among their brethren, the Mennonites. The religious fanaticism of the new sects became contagious and ex-



tended to the neighboring Russian population. The most propitious years for idealistic propaganda were the eighteen-sixties. "When freedom, life, and activities were discussed everywhere," says the Rev. A. Rozhdestvensky, a student of Stundism, "when the influence of the spirit of liberty had reached the people; when with the general enthusiasm and self-assertion the interest in religious questions that were closest to their mentality had increased among the masses; when in place of the German propagandists of Protestant creeds there appeared German fanatics of various shades of Sectarianism, the mind of the populace, having received no support from the local, still uncultured, clergy, could no longer withstand the influence of sectarian ideas."

Stundism multiplied rapidly in the provinces of Kherson and Kiev, but in the seventies it came again under the foreign influence of the Baptist preachers from Bessarabia and Transcaucasia. Quite a number of Stundists decided to adopt the new baptism, and at the same time they were systematically organized under the guidance of "Presbyters." Stundo-Baptism was successfully growing and, according to the data of the Missionary Convention, by 1891 it spread into more than thirty provinces. Its propagation was particularly strong among the kindred Molokans, who in the development of Stundism played a part similar to that which the Judaizers had played towards the Molokans a hundred years earlier.

From its inception the doctrine of Stundism had a dual character. "This religion was taken from the Holy Scriptures, from Spiritual Revelation, from the words of Jesus Christ, and from the Spirit of Prophecy," said one of its early teachers. That is, it bore at once the traits of both Evangelical and Spiritual Christianity. At first the Stundists were careful not to assume a hostile attitude towards Orthodoxy, but in the sixties they stressed the spiritual side. "We are not concerned about outward forms, for religion must be in the heart; the Saviour is the Shepherd of my soul, and no one else can be," they said in 1867, when the idea of "God's dwelling within us" was most vigorously expressed. "It is not I who work—it is God," said the peasant Onishchenko, a patriarch of Stundism, and another member of the sect demonstrated the advantages of his creed to an Orthodox thus: "Thou hast never seen thy God, but I, when I close my eyes, do see Him." The Stundists were also

inclined to believe that "once the Spirit had entered the soul, man could sin no more." However, the Evangelical point of view prevailed, through the influence of the Baptists.

It was after 1869, when Unger, a German colonist, baptized Euphemius Tsimbala, a peasant from Karlovka, a village in the district of Kherson, that the Baptists became known in South Russia. Tsimbala, in his turn, baptized I. Riaboshapka, leader of the South Russian Stundists, who then baptized M. Ratushny, another leader, and they rapidly spread the Evangelical doctrine among the moderate members of Stundism. The Stundists, who previously had repudiated all "outer forms of religion" and renounced all "shepherds of souls" except Christ, now were baptized in the river and were forced to accept the presbyters. The accord of the Stunde and Baptism acquired a practical importance, when by the decree of 1894 the Stunde was acknowledged to be a "particularly pernicious" sect, and its members were prohibited from holding prayer meetings, while the Baptists were allowed to have their preceptors and were "free to profess their creed." Their wide connections, regular organization, and considerable financial means actuated the adoption of their doctrine by the Stundists, in whose midst there appeared an increasing number of missionaries and presbyters, who had acquired a regular theological education at the Baptist Seminary in Hamburg. However, under the influence of Pobedonostsev, a cruel persecution of the Baptists was started in the nineties, and by 1900 people of Russian origin were prohibited from calling themselves Baptists.

At the end of the nineteenth century, as a result of these persecutions, a section of the Stundists, renouncing the Evangelical principle, developed a new trend. It was not in the name of the "religion of the heart" or that of the "inner inspiration" that Evangelism was repudiated, but because of the "immutable and eternal laws of nature," in the light of which every positive religion was "the creation of man." This formulation of ideas shows the unmistakable influence exerted upon the Sectarians by the intelligentsia. Having grown indifferent towards the "word of God," the "Neo-Stundists" became interested in lay literature; newspapers, magazines, and various books were brought into their meetings, and their criticism was directed, this time, specifically against the existing social and

political régime. Governmental officials were "live idols" or even "devils." There was no need for authorities, punishments, or prisons; on earth there could be but one power—the Lord's. With the establishment of the new order, the land was to be confiscated from the landowners by the peasantry, and all the stores opened for the general and gratuitous use of the people. Everyone would have to live in fraternities, work would be communal, and commerce would be replaced by bartering in commodities. The influence of the intelligentsia was again very apparent in the social side of the doctrine.

The fluctuations of the South Russian Stundists between the "inner inspiration" and the Holy Scriptures had a curious parallel in those of the kindred Sectarians in northern and central Russia, where the latest movement had started with a distinctly Evangelical expression. It emanated from the drawing-rooms in St. Petersburg, which in 1874 had been inspired by the preachings of Lord Redstock. Two years later there was established a Society for the Encouragement of Spiritual and Ethical Reading, which continued until 1894, and published in addition to a Russian translation of the Bible several hundred diverse pamphlets, each printed in thousands of copies and sometimes reaching as many as twelve editions. In 1880, V. A. Pashkov, the principal organizer of the movement, having difficulties in arranging his meetings in St. Petersburg, decided to transfer his teaching from the capital to the central provinces of Russia. In 1884 he went abroad, but until his death in Paris in 1902 he kept in touch with the many fraternities of his followers, the "Pashkovists," which were established in various parts of Russia. The Reformed Church's doctrine on salvation through faith was taken as a basis for their propaganda in St. Petersburg, but as was formerly the case with Tveritinov, the principal dogma of Protestantism was somewhat obliterated by the unskilled theologians from among the workmen and artisans who were introducing Pashkov's ideas to their villages. With them the ethical part of the doctrine and the repudiation of the Orthodox ritual came to the forefront, while the doctrine of salvation through faith assumed the form of a belief, according to which "those redeemed" by Christ, being "bearers of grace," were "holy and impeccable" and had within themselves the "Holy Spirit." Here we find the

same phenomenon which occurs repeatedly in the history of Russian Sectarianism. The intellectuals endeavored to keep the movement within the bounds of Evangelical Christianity, but as soon as the doctrine was preached by the propagandists from among the people, it became at once either rationalistic or mystical and so approached nearer to Spiritual Christianity.

By the end of the nineteenth century this transformation of the Evangelical dogma on popular grounds met with obstacles in the more serious religious education of the Sectarrians and in the desires of the intellectual leaders of the movement to organize and merge the various trends of modern Russian Evangelism into a single community. The South Russian Stundo-Baptists and the Pashkovists of Great Russia attempted to arrive at a mutual understanding, and upon the initiative of V. A. Pashkov a convention of the representatives of both these trends and of the Molokans assembled in St. Petersburg in 1884. In the name of "Evangelical truth" illiterate Great Russian peasants, Ukrainians from Kiev, American missionaries, and Baptist presbyters met in the drawing-rooms of Princess L. and Count K. Because of the controversy over the question of the Baptist christening the proposed union was not realized, and subsequently the members of the convention were banished from St. Petersburg by the police. Nevertheless the Sectarrians did not give up the idea of a union, and in time the Baptists became its most active propagandists.

In speaking of Russian Sectarianism, it is impossible not to mention its most specifically mystical trend—the expectation of the Second Advent—which flared up periodically and was accompanied by high religious exultation. In its essence such intensity of mystical feeling could only be local and temporary, and was not characteristic of the general development of sectarian doctrines. Far more significant was the increasingly prominent part which the social element, due again to the influence of the intellectuals, played in latter-day Sectarianism. Not only did the social element play a prominent part in the theories of the Spiritual Christians, but both Kapustin's colony of the Dukhobors in the Molochnyia Vody and that of his successors in the Caucasus actually attempted to organize their life on communal principles. Subsequently a section of the Caucasian Molokans

worked for the immediate realization of the ideal of communal property. Popov, the founder of this sect of "Communals," having been exiled from the province of Samara to the Caucasus, and thence to Eastern Siberia, organized collective farming for his followers. The social element was also strongly felt in the doctrine of the Stundists. "In repudiating the existing order of Russian social and political life," wrote Rev. A. Rozhdestvensky, "they hoped to establish a completely new form of social existence." All people were equal, therefore "worldly possessions, such as wealth and land, had to be divided equally." The life of the people must be communal, they must subsist by their own labor and satisfy their needs by exchanging their products without the help of money. Whether or not to submit to the authorities, against the dictates of conscience, was a question which had been answered in many different ways. For some time the Dukhobors tried to solve the problem with the help of Tolstoy's doctrine, which, according to the *Missionary Review*, was very popular among them. At the end of the nineteenth century the Dukhobors attempted to realize the social ideal of Tolstoism by establishing in Canada a Christian society, whose members were to be united by purely ethical ties, free of any legal element both in their mutual relations and in their relations to the state. This was caused by the following events. When in 1886 Lukeria Kalmykov, the "Mother of God" and last representative of the Kapustin dynasty, died, she left young Peter Verigin as guardian of the community. But her legal heirs, with the assistance of the local authorities, tried to take possession of the collective property which had been under their unrestricted management. The Dukhobors contested this claim, but the authorities, being previously bribed, sided with Lukeria Kalmykov's heirs, and the struggle ended in a series of cruel floggings administered by the Cossacks. The position of the Dukhobors was further complicated by the moral change that took place among them at the time of the confiscation of their property. "Many brethren becoming rich forsook the original doctrine: drank wine, smoked tobacco, acquired personal property, and lending money claimed repayment," reads the testimony of a member of the sect. Presently they decided to relinquish the property in question, assembled, and divided all their money equally; live stock and clothing were also distributed; in

common they cultivated the land and everyone reaped from the harvest "as much as he needed," while the remainder was sold and the profit spent on communal requirements. In returning to a "better life," they also "agreed among themselves, in case of war not to kill anyone but fire in the air or absolutely to refuse military service." This latter decision was carried into practice, and it was that especially which provoked governmental persecution. Since they could expect no justice from the government, the Dukhobors became completely disillusioned and resolved "not to be the slaves of mortals" and never to obey the authorities. Thus a mood developed among them which was very favorable to the propagation of non-resistance, the doctrine which Peter Verigin met with at the beginning of the nineties. Verigin's party decided to "forsake the grounds of evil and coercion" and "to return to those of a life of freedom and conscience." In 1895 the most uncompromising of these followers of Tolstoy changed the old name, "given by the Russian authorities to their ancestors," for a new one, and instead of Dukhobors, they began calling themselves "Allbrethren," which "indicates that we are sincerely striving to be brothers to all men and are casting aside anything that might divide us."

As the result of the conflict between the state and the Sectarians many of the Dukhobors were banished that year (1895) to the districts of Transcaucasia, and in 1898-99, 7,400 of them, with the assistance of the Tolstoists, emigrated to Canada, where they chose the desolate regions with rough climate and fallow soil, so as to be isolated from the world and its influences. Yet even there they could not escape the claims made upon them by the state. They were liberated from military service, as there was no conscription, but Canadian laws did not admit the repudiation of property and actually refused to acknowledge communal ownership of the land.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, the Dukhobors had to face such problems as the payment of taxes, registration of births, marriages, and deaths. In despair the Allbrethren decided to petition the Canadian government to free them from submission to the general laws, and to support their pleas they developed a new social-religious theory,

<sup>2</sup> Everyone had to sign personally the act of concession of his lot, which after three years of possession was to become private property, while at the same time they all had to swear their allegiance to the King and to become British subjects.

resembling closely the Wanderers' doctrine of Euphemius. Not wishing to accept land as personal property, they stated openly that "ownership of land is a breach of divine law; the desire to possess land is the principal cause of wars and strifes, and its possession is not necessary to the people, but to those who rule them; not to the working class, but to the gentlefolk who want to have servants and laborers." Concerning marriages and registrations in governmental books, the members of the "Universal Brotherhood" declared:

We do not like to subject our matrimonial affairs to the laws of man, which are incapable of discerning their true legality, but we wish to keep them exclusively within the province of the Lord and human conscience; we do not wish to give information regarding our newborn and our dead, that would subject us to man-made laws in our matrimonial, proprietary, and other worldly relations, but desire to preserve in our life the simplicity and strength of conscience which were bequeathed to us by our forebears.

The Allbrethren formulated their attitude towards the state and its requirements as follows:

Subjection to rules and laws which are based on compulsion and which interfere with the arranging of one's life according to a free conscience is detrimental to man, therefore we reject all civil rights and duties established by state legislation and intend to be guided in life solely by the promptings of our moral sense.

In replying to this theory of Christian anarchism, the Canadian government pointed out that the Allbrethren lived in Canadian territory on equal terms with other members of society, and that on becoming in three years citizens of the country, they could try to attain their aim through active participation in state legislation. But they should not count on being released from the general laws in operation or expect that special laws would be promulgated for them, as the government had no authority to grant such concessions. The Allbrethren insisted that the method indicated by the government for the achievement of their desire was to them equal to "renunciation of that very desire." In February 1901 they issued a proclamation "To our fellow-men in all the countries," in which they exposed their negotiations with the Canadian government and also inquired: "Does there exist anywhere a community in

which we would be tolerated and could settle and subsist," while upholding the principle of Christian anarchism? In the meantime they requested permission of the Canadian government to stay in Canada "until they found another country in which to settle or until convinced that for people who intended basing their lives on Christian principles there was no place on earth." Thus in the natural course of events the Dukhobors were confronted with the chief inconsistency in the very conception of Christian anarchism. The theorists of non-resistance on principle repudiated the law and the state, yet their social utopia could be attained only with the support of the state and under the protection of the law. L. N. Tolstoy wrote to the Canadian Dukhobors, encouraging them to remain loyal to the repudiation of property, emphasizing that once having acknowledged property it would be impossible to avoid the necessity of its organized protection by the government, i. e., of organized coercion.

Without violence or murder no one would be able to hold property. If we retain property without committing violence, this is only because it is actually protected by a threat of coercion . . . held over the people surrounding us. . . . Therefore if you have accepted the property that is maintained only by military and police service, you must not refuse military and police service. Those who perform military and police duties while possessing property behave better than those who will not accept these duties and yet want to profit by property; such people want to evade service, while availing themselves of the service of others.

However, the grim necessity of struggling for existence in a foreign country had prevented the Sectarians from following Tolstoy's advice; they simply would not "regard the results of their labor as not their own, nor would they share them with those who did not work." A year after their emigration to Canada, out of the thirty-four communities there were only two or three where collective farming and property were still preserved. We find in the *Missionary Review* that during 1901 about fifteen hundred well-to-do Dukhobors were ready to appropriate the allocated plots as individual property and also to register marriages, whereas the poorer elements held to their principles and would sometimes amaze the Canadians by their efforts to break with the state and



community. In order to bring the Dukhobors to their senses, the Canadian government brought over their old leader, Peter Verigin, who in 1903 had returned from his exile in Obdorsk. When in 1924 Verigin was killed by a bomb which exploded on a train near Diamond, British Columbia, his son openly declared that this was done at the instigation of the Bolsheviks, who were displeased with Verigin for persuading the Dukhobors not to return to Russia. However, some hundred families did return to Russia, but in 1928 were back again in Canada. During 1920, almost fifteen thousand Dukhobors, who had remained in Russia, together with the Molokans, were transferred from the Caucasus to Salsk, a district which had belonged previously to the Cossacks.

An example of the philosophical trend among modern Sectarrians can be cited in the doctrine of Kozin, a former Khlyst, whose followers, the so-called Neo-Khlysty, accepted human reason as the only source of their tenets. In their opinion, God is the prime mover of the animal world only, for in the inorganic world there is no God. "Dwelling in all that moves," God does not exist apart from the world. In unequal parts He permeates all branches of the animal world, but as God He knows Himself only in man, and more specifically only in that high manifestation of human reason which is represented by the Neo-Khlysty.

It remains to ascertain the number of the followers of the Schism and Sectarianism in Russia. The masses were inclined to join either one or the other of these trends. The chief obstacles were, on the one hand, the low cultural standard of the people and, on the other, the rigorous protection given the established church by the government. Burning at the stake, which was practised during the reigns of Tsar Alexis and Tsarevna Sophia was gradually done away with and was replaced by Peter with official registration, high taxation, and the deliberate social degradation of the Schismatics. The Emperesses who succeeded Peter renewed the persecutions, but beginning with Peter III and up to the time of the death of Alexander I, there ensued for the Old Ritualists and Sectarrians a period of comparative calm and progress. In 1783-85 all restrictions against the Schismatics were abolished, but nevertheless the government was slow in granting legal sanction to their priests, divine services,

churches, chapels, and cemeteries. The registration of Schismatics as a separate class was abolished, and the unsuccessful attempts to obtain statistical data on them were abandoned under Catherine II and the still more tolerant Alexander I. A new change came with Nicholas I, when the name of Schismatics appeared once more in official documents, and the concessions were again canceled. Marriages without the church ceremony were banned, and children were ordered to be baptized. Another and stricter census was ordered, and the burden of collecting this information was placed upon the police, who incidentally discovered in it a fresh source of income. As the persecutions abated the dissenters grew in number, but it was impossible to obtain definite data regarding their growth. Not until the liberal years of Alexander II was a new attempt made to revise legislation on the Schism and to determine the number of its followers. A special commission, headed by Melnikov, the greatest expert on Schism, was sent to the provinces and quickly discovered that the official figures were ridiculously inaccurate. For example, in the province of Nizhny Novgorod, according to local reports, there were 20,246 Schismatics and Sectarians, whereas the commission accounted for 172,600. In the province of Kostroma the official figure was 19,870, while the commission found 106,572, and in that of Iaroslavl the official total was 7,454, but the correct number was 278,417. Thus instead of the official figure for all of Russia—910,000—there were found to be ten million. Undoubtedly even the figures obtained by the commission were too low, for the Bishop of Nizhny Novgorod gave the figure for his province as 233,323 instead of 172,600. I. Aksakov, a member of the commission, even found that "in the province of Iaroslavl the Orthodox formed a fourth part of the population," thus bringing the number of Schismatics and Sectarians to 672,687 instead of 278,417. The discrepancy between the official and actual figures resulted from the mutual interest of the police and the clergy in concealing the real number of Schismatics. Both found in it a source of revenue, but the clergy, aside from this, feared to divulge the actual figures, since it could bring a reprimand from the higher authorities for inadequate vigilance. They generally presented the figures for the previous year, decreasing them somewhat to prove their zeal. However, it soon became useless to conceal the true

number of the dissenters, and in 1863 the Ministry of the Interior accepted the total of 8,220,000, which figure it distributed among the different sects as follows:

Priestists .....	5,000,000
Shore-Dwellers .....	2,000,000
Theodosians .....	1,000,000
Molokans and Dukhobors .....	110,000
Khlysty and Skoptsy .....	110,000

Students of the Schism had no difficulty in proving that these figures too were incomplete, especially the last ones. The Ministry of the Interior itself estimated that there were in the single province of Tambov 200,000 Molokans alone, and Melnikov asserted that the sect of the Saviour's Union, with a creed something between the Priestless and the Priestists, supplied an additional 700,000. The Khlysty and Skoptsy had special reasons for seeking refuge with the Orthodox, since their sects were considered "particularly pernicious." To sum up, the total number of Schismatics and Sectarians towards the beginning of the eighties amounted to no less than ten million, while during the eighties there was an exceptional increase in the adherents to both old and new sects. Therefore, in 1880, Iuzov raised the figures to between thirteen and fourteen million, which he distributed among various groups as follows:

Priestists .....	3,640,000
Priestless .....	7,150,000
Khlysty .....	65,000
Spiritual Christians .....	1,000,000
Unassigned .....	1,145,000
Total	<u>13,000,000</u>

While these figures are not exact, one can detect in the period between 1860 and 1880 a mass transition towards the more radical trends of Sectarianism, from the Priestists to the Priestless, as well as a progress of the Spiritual Christians. After this the statistics again become more complicated, because of the hostile attitude towards the dissenters during the twenty years of K. P. Pobedonostsev's control of the Synod. On May 3, 1883, Alexander III issued a decree in which civil rights and freedom of divine service were granted the Schismatics so long as there were no outward mani-

festations of schism, but it was never put into practice because of the policy of the Procurator of the Holy Synod. Persecution was particularly cruel for those who lured the Orthodox away from their faith to schism, while the missionaries and clergy were generously rewarded for converting Schismatics and Sectarrians to Orthodoxy. No wonder that in the census of 1897 the total number of Sectarrians and Schismatics registered 2,135,738 persons of both sexes, when in fact by 1900 it must have reached 20,000,000 and by 1907, 25,000,000, considering the increase in population. In this calculation the influence of propaganda has not been reckoned with, although after the downfall of Pobedonostsev, early in 1903, it must have grown considerably. On February 26, 1903, Emperor Nicholas II proclaimed freedom of conscience, and in the decree of December 12, 1904, under the pressure of public opinion, promised a revision of legislation on the Schism. The Old Ritualists insisted that this name should be substituted for the official designation of Schismatics, that their parishes and places of worship should be permitted to exist openly, and that those who, against their will, had been registered in the official documents as Orthodox could register their children as Old Ritualists. (Actually they evaded registration: thus in 1889-1903, out of 29,431 Old Ritualist marriages only 1,840 were registered, and of 131,730 births only 552 were entered in the books.) They fought for the right to conduct their own primary schools, and protested against receiving religious instruction from priests of the established church at secondary schools. They also asked that their priests be exempted from military service and that civil and military positions be open to their laymen. With the decree of April 4, 1905, the Old Ritualists were given the right to this name and their position made equal to that of the Catholics and Lutherans, whereas the Sectarrians and especially the "particularly pernicious" sects obtained no privileges.

After the establishment of the Duma in 1906 the question of religious toleration was subjected in this form to its jurisdiction. The government intended to postpone the realization of religious toleration, and it was obvious that the governmental committee, in charge of this question, was inclined to curtail the practical application of the principle. An unsatisfactory bill was presented by the government for the consideration of the Third Duma, but here

it met with liberal views on the subject, which were shared not only by the opposition but also by the parties of the majority. As a result, the bill on religious toleration was passed by the Duma in a greatly improved and expanded form. Nevertheless, the majority of the Duma hesitated to legalize the extra-confessional status and in general did not want to overstep the line that divided a confessional state from a state accepting the principle of separation of church and state. The February Revolution of 1917, having proclaimed complete freedom of conscience, had no time to introduce necessary legislation, and yet under the Provisional Government the Sectarrians actually enjoyed absolute freedom.

When the Bolsheviks replaced the Provisional Government and proclaimed every religion harmful to the people, this freedom again became questionable. The Sectarrians too were threatened by this point of view. However, in struggling with the established church, which it regarded as the most reactionary, the Soviet government needed allies from the ranks of the faithful. At first it attempted to find them inside the Orthodox church, but it soon became clear that, even with their assistance, it was impossible to attain a complete reform of the church. As compared with any liberal elements in the Orthodox church, Sectarianism possessed for the Soviet government unquestionable advantages, because of the radicalism of its doctrine and its social views, which sometimes resembled those of the Communists. The Thirteenth All-Union Communist Congress decided to assume the following attitude towards Sectarianism:

We must pay the greatest attention to the Sectarrians, who under the Tsarist régime suffered persecutions and some of whom are very active. By assuming a reasonable attitude towards them, we must win over their most energetic and cultured elements to serve our purpose. Considering the great number of Sectarrians, this is a matter of the utmost importance. The problem must be solved according to local conditions.

By special legislation the Sectarrians, who objected to military service, were permitted instead to serve in hospitals, preferably those for contagious diseases. The People's Court was instructed to decide upon every individual case after a most careful examination. Only those sects which had objected to military service during

the Tsarist days and in consequence suffered persecution were granted exemption. In the course of time these cases became less and less frequent, and by the end of the nineteen-twenties religious persecutions extended even to the Sectarrians.

While it still was in force, the Baptists in particular benefited from the privileged status granted the Sectarrians. The Molokans, the Stundists, and the Pashkovists, all closely related to Evangelism, had succeeded in forming a union, which they had previously attempted. The Baptist church in Soviet Russia is officially separated from the Union of Evangelical Christians, which is guided by Prokhanov, but the doctrines of the two bodies are very similar. Some members of the Molokans have joined the Methodists.

As to the numerical growth of Sectarrians under the Soviet régime, that question remains unanswered. Hypothetically, at the time of the revolution the total number of Schismatics and Sectarrians was assumed to be 25,000,000, whereas actually the Sectarrians alone, according to their own reckoning, numbered 6,000,000.

In summing up, we must emphasize respectively the fundamental differences in the character of the Schism and of Sectarrianism. Being the guardian of tradition, the Russian Schism appealed exclusively to such social groups as the peasantry and the merchants, while Sectarrianism, as an expression of unsatisfied religious needs, was common to the intellectuals and the masses. From beginning to end of sectarian history there has been a constant exchange of ideas between the upper and lower strata of society. Contrary to a widely accepted theory, the chief source of this mutual intercourse lay not in the similarity of social conceptions, but in the identity of religious and philosophical ideas and in the common sentiments and views concerning the nature of faith. The similarity of social ideas was rather the result of this identity of religious psychology.

An equally significant difference can be observed in the historical development of both the Schism and Sectarrianism. Upon the subject of "hierarchy established by God" the Russian Priestists throughout all their history have moved in a vicious circle. Having reëstablished such a hierarchy in accordance with their beliefs, they returned to the initial point, i. e., the immobility in which the official church was entrenched. The Priestless, on the contrary, had once and for all broken with the church hierarchy and the sacra-

ments in order to attain the same purpose—to preserve immutable the tenets of ancient faith. Thus having repudiated the form, while still holding strictly to the content, which was connected indissolubly with that form, the Priestless found themselves faced by an internal contradiction. As a temporary phase this situation could be explained, but it became unbearable when it proved to be permanent. In spite of reality, the Priestless were forced to uphold at any cost the ancient theory on the transitory character of their doctrine. Eventually this proved to be impossible, and the only alternative was to accept a new rationalistic foundation in place of the old traditional denial of the hierarchy and the sacraments. But in choosing this path the Priestless inevitably approached the point of view of the Sectarrians.

Sectarianism had never been in any manner handicapped by ancient theories or dogmas, therefore its religious teaching did not remain as immobile as that of the Priestists, neither was it such a departure from the initial point of view as that of the Priestless. Quite the contrary, it continued to progress with frequent renewals of religious forms and gradual deepening of the doctrine. Up to the present the development of religious ideas among the Sectarrians has followed two separate paths: that of the Evangelical and that of Spiritual Christianity.<sup>3</sup> Evangelical Christianity was introduced into Russia by such intellectuals as Tveritinov, and when later it reached the masses, assuming in some instances the form of Judaism, it was refreshed by contact with the Dukhobors in the second part of the eighteenth century. The result of this contact was the sect of Molokans, who profited by the prepared ground for the propagation of their doctrine. In the second half of the nineteenth century the ideas of Evangelical Christianity were again revived by the Mennonite and Baptist preachers, under whose influence Russian Evangelism assumed a new form—Stundo-Baptism. In the more auspicious conditions of the twentieth century it became in this form a favorable ground for the successful propaganda of both the Baptists and the Methodists.

However, during the entire period of its existence Russian

<sup>3</sup> This division seems more natural than the more frequent one into rationalistic and mystical sects, for rationalism and mysticism are parallel in the progress of Russian sectarianism and often are combined in the same sect.

Evangelical Christianity has shown a tendency to approximate Spiritual Christianity, the origin of which must be traced to native and popular sources. Having emanated in the last part of the seventeenth century from the religious agitation which also created the Priestless, Spiritual Christianity in its early days kept close to the Schism. In repudiating church forms it introduced others adopted from old national customs, and in the first part of the eighteenth century it took on an intermediate form represented by the Khlysty. Conforming to popular understanding, the cult played a prominent part in this sect, while the presence of the Spirit was confined to the elect, the Christs and the Prophets, and was imparted to the others only during the vigils. The singular conversion of the strictest Khlysty into Skoptsy, which took place late in the eighteenth century, had no great influence on the development of Spiritual Christianity. Far more important was the simultaneous appearance of another, more purely spiritual sect—the Dukhobors—which took a definite shape at the end of the century. At its inception, the doctrine of the Dukhobors was strongly spiritualized by its intellectual and learned leaders, and therefore could not be instantly assimilated by the masses in that pure form. That is why, having first revived the evangelical doctrine, it then degenerated, for a time, into a new symbolism. Only gradually, towards the end of the nineteenth century, under the influence of Tolstoy, did the Dukhobor doctrine in its purer form become the property of the masses.



## VII

# THE DESTINY OF THE ESTABLISHED CHURCH

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**T**HE entire process of development of the Russian popular faith, which we have studied thus far, took place outside the established church. Compared to the small group of outstanding members of the church, the Schism appeared retrogressive, but it was a great step forward in the religious consciousness of the masses, who until that time had been quite indifferent to the problems of faith. The Schism emphasized only the outward ritual, but it taught the masses to observe it in the spirit of an active religious ardor, which was foreign to them in earlier days and which aroused them from their secular apathy. Notwithstanding the bigotry of its leaders, the Schism for the first time awoke new emotions and reasoning powers in the people, and in fact this very bigotry made it easier for the Schism to become a popular creed. It was a very primitive faith, but that which remained outside of its sphere of influence was even more primitive.

In holding this point of view, we cannot accept the historical explanation, which ascribes the origin of the Schism to a popular protest against the restrictions introduced into the independent spiritual life of the parishes by the government. In those days the government had no reason for restraining the religious ardor of the parishioners. It is true that in the course of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the practice of electing parish priests gradually had been replaced by appointment from the diocese, but this change cannot be ascribed to systematic governmental suppression. It was due to the lack of interest on the part of the parishioners, which be-

came even more apparent when those less indifferent abandoned the established church and joined the Schism. Thus religious indifference, while it was not the cause of the Schism, grew stronger inside of the church as a result of the secession.

Even at the time when it was still customary for the parishioners to elect their clergy, it was impossible that any spiritual bonds between the shepherd and his flock should ever be formed. The motives that influenced the elections were far more commonplace. To the people the priest was there merely to perform church ceremonies, and he was not required to possess either knowledge or talent for preaching, as it was only important "that the Lord's Church should not remain chantless and that Christian souls should not die without having first partaken of the Holy Sacrament." Usually the parishioners profited by their rights to elect a priest who was willing to accept a lower salary than all the others. Because of the apathy towards religious issues involved and the low standard of the ancient clergy, the office of the priest became a trade, while the social conditions prevailing in the Muscovite state tended to make it hereditary. At the beginning of the eighteenth century a typical priest of the day was questioned by St. Dmitry of Rostov:

Was it the desire for salvation that prompted thee to enter the priesthood? Not so, but the need to support thy wife, children, and kin. . . . Thou, hallowed one, examine thyself carefully when contemplating the priesthood. Dost thou seek salvation or sustenance for the body? Thou soughtest Jesus not for His sake but for that of a loaf of bread!

It was natural that in such circumstances the principle of parish election should weaken. But this did not imply that it should be immediately replaced by the principle of diocesan appointment. Church authorities were not anxious to assume the duty relinquished by the parishioners, and both sides let matters take their natural course. The result was the gradual establishment of a system under which ecclesiastical offices became hereditary, with one dynasty of clergymen ruling over the same parish for one or two hundred years.

This development led to the clergy being formed into a separate and secluded estate, in accordance with the general trend of Rus-

sian social life of that period. Free admission to the ecclesiastical ranks disappeared automatically when there developed a system of state service obligatory to all classes of Muscovite society. Although officially it was impossible to regard the care of souls as a state service, yet actually it became a state duty of one of the estates of the Muscovite state. This duty was not considered to be of great importance. In fact, the clergy found itself at the very bottom of the social ladder, and remained handicapped by this inferior social position throughout the whole of Russian history. No ecclesiastic or member of his family was admitted into any other class, while at the same time the government made every effort to reduce the number of clergy to a strictly indispensable minimum. The policy resulted, on the one hand, in a periodical increase of clergy, and on the other, in a purging of the ecclesiastical class of superfluous members, who were enrolled as privates and had to pay the poll tax. Only under Emperor Alexander II did the clergy cease to fear the eternal peril of "sorting" which had threatened their families from the days of Peter I to those of Nicholas I. Finally the decree of 1869 released the children of clergymen and church servants from the obligation of pursuing their fathers' calling.

However, the change could bring no instantaneous improvement to the social position of the class. In the days when a career in the church was open to everyone, men of the lower classes, subject to the poll tax, chose it by preference. In 1738, under Empress Elizabeth, the clergy were freed from the liability of the poll tax, but the other symbol of social inferiority—corporal punishment—threatened the priests until the time of Emperor Paul (1796), their wives until that of Alexander I (1808), and their children until the reign of Nicholas I (1835-39), while the church servants and their families were not exempt until the reform of 1863. The clergy were considered "a mean type of person" and were treated with disdain by the nobility, while among the peasantry they brought upon themselves the reputation of being extortioners. In turn they were exploited by the bishops, who in early days had treated them as serfs. Therefore it was impossible for the clergy to gain the respect of their parishioners as befitted their rank, and pecuniary conditions obliged them to remain the "ploughmen in cassocks," as they were

in the days of Pososhkov.<sup>1</sup> As early as the eighteenth century the government contemplated establishing for the rural clergymen fixed salaries and rates for the celebration of church rites, but up to the time of the Revolution of 1917 the problem remained unsolved.

Educational qualifications afforded no dividing line between the shepherd and his flock, since the parishioners, who elected the candidate, guaranteed in a signed petition only his ability to read and write. The candidate had to be examined in "religion and Christian law" before his ordination, at the Bishop's See. In Pososhkov's testimony we find that sometimes the examination consisted of only a few psalms recited by rote, so that the prelates were unable to verify even the literacy of the future priest. In the middle of the eighteenth century there began to penetrate into the serried ranks of the hereditary ecclesiastics a new element, the "learned" priests, "philosophers," and "theologians," all graduates of the seminaries. At first the invasion of these seminarians spread alarm among the aspirants of the old type, who according to law had to give way to them, but soon the difficulties were adjusted and the clergy adapted themselves to the new order. The ecclesiastical school did not abolish the hereditary character of the calling, established since the olden days, but on the contrary became a new, additional basis for the seclusion of the clergy. A theological education for the ecclesiastics was made compulsory by the decrees of 1808 and 1814, while to the people of other classes the access to the theological schools became more and more difficult. Thus the educational qualification ceased to be a privilege of the individual members of the class, and at the same time the equilibrium, which originally had been disturbed by the influx of a small learned force, was restored. But with education at the seminaries available to the entire ecclesiastical class, a still sharper line was drawn between the children of the clergymen, who were graduates of that school, and the laymen.

The clergy's educational qualification was raised above their material and moral standards, in which there had been no change since the time described by Pososhkov. "Had we been able to disclose all the abnormal phenomena in the existence of the clergy

<sup>1</sup> A Russian writer of the early eighteenth century.—Ed.

during the eighteenth century," says I. Znamensky, "undoubtedly many of our contemporaries would have believed the realistic exposure to be a libel on the clergy of that time and would never have credited it."

The same distressing remarks can be repeated about the moral standard of that class during the nineteenth century. When in the eighteen-sixties the government deemed it necessary to ascertain the cause of the spread of the Schism and Sectarianism and brought this question to the attention of the governors of the provinces, it received many very discouraging accounts regarding the morals of the provincial clergy. For instance, Prince S. P. Gagarin, the Governor of Astrakhan, replied:

Our clergy are uncultured, uncouth, and needy, yet because of their origin and mode of life they stand quite apart from the people and exert no influence over them. The performance of priestly duties is marked by a constricted formalism. The priest officiates mechanically at the Mass, the matins, the Te Deum, the Requiem, and other church rituals, and there his pastoral duties end. The Orthodox clergy never deliver sermons, never give instruction on faith or enlightenment on the first principles of true worship, therefore, the people remain ignorant of religion.

Struve, the Governor of Perm, wrote:

The Schism derives its power from the fact that the Orthodox clergymen exercise no moral influence over the people, that they are prejudiced, dull, and too strictly scholastic in their attitude. Their sermons are compiled from articles printed by ecclesiastical authorities instead of being object lessons in the social ethics of everyday life. In private life the motives of the clergy are mercenary and selfish, of which the masses are well aware, whereas in the Schism the success of the leaders depends largely on the high standard of their life and character.

To a large degree the weakness in the inner, spiritual life of the clergy and their congregations was due to the political part played by the established Russian church. Before the time of the political unification of Russia, the central ecclesiastical power possessed great importance and authority, and the church, headed at first by the Metropolitan of Kiev and then by that of Vladimir, was the visible symbol of Russian unity. The church ceased to play this important

part when the political unification of Russia became an accomplished fact and national representation passed from the highest ecclesiastical authority to the newly established secular power. Notwithstanding this, the church remained independent because the secular authority found its sanction necessary, and in return secured for it the ancient rights of its own jurisdiction and administration. The most significant result of the alliance between state and church was an exaltation of both by means of a religious-political theory, which sanctioned the national Russian power and placed it under the protection of a national religion. The state derived every benefit from this alliance, and at the same time preserved full freedom of action towards its ally.

Soon the state was forced to attack some of the national peculiarities of the Russian church to which in earlier days it had given its special protection. In the sixteenth century the consciousness of its national distinctiveness was the Russian church's chief source of strength, and from it emanated the proud belief in the world mission of Russian Orthodoxy, while in the seventeenth century this sense of distinctiveness was admitted to be a deviation from the right path. Efforts were made to prove that the supposed antiquity of the Russian church was, in fact, of recent origin, and what was regarded by the zealots of the national faith as an unforgivable innovation was in reality the ancient tradition. The representatives of the Russian church, who honestly believed that they had been preserving tradition, found themselves suspected of practising religious improvisation, the results of which were condemned. The Russian church was forced to disprove that which it had considered the most significant part of the national faith, and this abrupt separation from the old belief proved to be fatal to the official church. Within its fold there remained the small minority who had outgrown the old faith, and all those indifferent to religion, while the rest remained true to the old faith, so that the church's victory was followed by the loss of many members. The withdrawal of the zealots of antiquity had weakened the religious fervor of those remaining in the fold of the church just at a time when its former ally, the state, had reached the highest development of its power.

The results were soon obvious. With internal dissension, de-

prived of its traditional spiritual contents, having incited the most ardent members of its former congregation against itself, and being forced to rely on the coöperation of the secular authorities in this struggle, the Russian church surrendered itself completely to the government. Even if there had been no Schism in the seventeenth century, the church probably could not have retained the remnants of its ancient privileges in the face of the omnipotent Moscow power, but the advent of the Schism greatly accelerated its ultimate subordination to the state.

But in the early part of the seventeenth century one could not foresee such an outcome. Under Patriarch Filaret, the father of Tsar Michael, the Russian church appeared to be stronger than ever. The edicts of the sixteenth century, which restricted the church's property rights, had not been enforced. The Patriarch, through his authority, not only destroyed the secular influence in the church but actually gained control over the government. In the administration of its internal affairs the church became literally a state within a state, having patterned its organization on state institutions. From the time of Patriarch Filaret, church administration, church courts, finances, and the Patriarch's household were placed under the control of several departments like those of the state. Only a theory which would furnish a legal basis for these conditions was lacking, and this Patriarch Nikon attempted to supply.

The Lord Almighty, when He created Heaven and Earth, bade two great lights, the Sun and the Moon, to shine upon the World, and through them showed us the authority of the Prelate and the Tsar. That of the Prelate shines by day; it has power over the souls. That of the Tsar is of the world: his sword must be kept in readiness against the enemies of the Orthodox faith; the bishops and other clergy demand protection from injustice and violence, and this is the duty of the laymen. The laity need the clergy for spiritual salvation, while the clergy need the laity for protection against oppression. Neither spiritual nor secular authority is above the other, but both come from God.

Nikon's last non-committal conclusion contradicts his previous parallel of the respective authorities of the sun and the moon. In fact, he passes immediately from the moderate point of view to a purely ultramontane position: "It has been proved repeatedly that Prelacy is above Kingdom: Prelacy is not bestowed by the Tsars, but

the Tsars are anointed by the Prelates." The Patriarch made no effort to conceal the Catholic origin of his theory. "Why not acknowledge good in the Pope?" he asked one of his judges.

Time and circumstances were not favorable to the realization of the Papist theory in Russia. In the days of Filaret the exalted position of the church was due to particular conditions: the relationship of the Patriarch to the Tsar, the weak personality of Michael, and the temporary impotence of the state power. When this situation changed the state resumed its struggle against the old church privileges, and Nikon had to advance his ambitious theory in defense of the church against the claims of the state.

The problems that caused the strife between the church and the state were the same as in the sixteenth century. In spite of all prohibitions, the church continued to increase its landed property to the detriment of the state's interests, and retained its jurisdiction over the clergy in all matters until the government of Tsar Alexis took upon itself to limit both its economic and legal privileges. The further transfer of land to the church was strictly prohibited, and it was forced to return the estates which previously had been taxable land. Jurisdiction over the clergy in all civil cases was placed in a governmental institution, especially established for the purpose—the Department of Monasteries—and so, in Nikon's words, "the Lord's property and the Lord's tribunal were transferred in the name of the Tsar."

People still remembered the fearful anathemas with which the ecclesiastical authorities had threatened the spoliators of church property ever since the days of Joseph Volotsky, when similar threats were made by Nikon against the enemies of the Prelate's Court. The moral sentiment of the age was opposed to secularization, and the government had to bide its time before it could realize its plan. To the direct question submitted by the government—what was the Tsar's authority and should everybody, particularly the local bishops and the Patriarch, obey the reigning sovereign as their only superior?—the Ecumenical Patriarchs, who had condemned Nikon, gave a very guarded answer: "The Tsar is lord only of political affairs; the Patriarch must obey him in all political decisions." The state yielded, and the jurisdiction over the clergy in civil and even criminal cases was restored to the ecclesiastical



authority by the Council of 1667, while that of 1675 abolished the recently established Department of Monasteries.

But this triumph of the church was short-lived, because under Peter the Great, who was an outstanding champion of the state idea, the struggle came to a definite end. The old organization of the church symbolized for the sovereign all that in Russia was hostile to his reform, and he assumed towards it a determined attitude. The entire ecclesiastical policy of Peter can be summarized as a consistent development of two ideas: the elimination of the Patriarch, who could become a Russian Pope—"a second sovereign, possessing power equal or above that of the autocrat"—and the subordination of the church to the reigning monarch.

Who could possibly have opposed Peter's ambition? Those who on principle resisted secularization were mostly Schismatics, i. e., people fighting under a banner unfurled in frank opposition to the state. Among the clergy Peter replenished the ranks deserted by the resolute defenders of the ancient faith with new people, who had nothing in common with the former hierarchs, had no ancient church tradition, and no dreams of world mission assigned to Russian Orthodoxy. Thus, at the time when Peter launched his attack on the main position, the front-line defenses already had been captured. With the change of mood in the congregation and the replacement of the old priests by new ones, it was not difficult to introduce the idea of state supremacy into the organization of the church. The reformer, through his ally and intermediary Theophanes, strove persistently to impress upon the Russian mind the fact that the ecclesiastical order "was not a separate state," and that with all the others it must subordinate itself to state administration. "The governmental institution, by means of which the management of the church was incorporated into the body of the state administration," to quote Professor Znamensky, was the Holy Synod, a collegiate body which replaced the Holy Patriarch and was recognized by the other Eastern Patriarchs as a Brother. The chief motive which guided Peter in his reform, was candidly stated in the Church Regulation.

The fatherland need not fear from the synodical administration the same mutiny and disorder as occur under a single ecclesiastical ruler. For the common people, not knowing the difference between the spir-

itual and autocratic power, and being impressed by the greatness and fame of the supreme pastor, think him a second sovereign, possessing a power equal or even above that of the autocrat, and believe the church to be another and higher state. And if the people continue to think this, then what will occur when the sermons of the ambitious clergymen add fuel to the flame? Those of simple heart will be so perverted by this idea that they will respect the supreme pastor more than the autocrat, and if there is discord between the two, more sympathy will be shown the spiritual ruler than the secular. They will venture to fight or mutiny for his sake, and deceive themselves into believing that they are fighting for God Himself and that their hands are not stained but blessed by the blood they may shed. Such popular beliefs are of profit to those who are hostile to the sovereign, and they incite the people to unlawfulness under the guise of religious fervor. And what if the pastor himself through self-pride grasped the opportunity?

The Regulation recalls historical incidents resulting from such events in other countries as well as in Russia. "But when the people understand that the synodical administration is established by monarchical decree and the decision of the Senate, they will be discouraged and will give up hope of winning the support of the church dignitaries by their riots."

In order to prevent the supreme ecclesiastical power from becoming the organ of anti-governmental tendencies, the Tsar found it necessary to convert it into a state institution, "established by monarchical decree and the decision of the Senate." It did not occur to Peter's practical mind that these actions could arouse canonical controversy. As Iury Samarin has it, "In the church Peter saw two different yet indissoluble elements: the doctrine, about which he was unconcerned, and the clergy, whom he regarded as a special class of state functionaries entrusted by the government with the moral education of the people." This was also his conception of the Synod. Established by governmental decree and consisting of men appointed in each case by a special order of the sovereign, for a specified time, the Synod could act only as a superior administrative organ for ecclesiastical affairs. To emphasize its character as one of the central governmental departments, Peter appointed a man of his own choice as Chief Procurator of the Holy Synod to represent state interests. "Initially, the function of the Chief Procurator was practically one of observation," wrote Dobroklonsky, an historian

of the Russian church, "but in the course of time the sphere of his activities was extended, while his influence over the administration of the church also increased. In 1824 his position was made equal to that of the Ministers. . . . In 1836 he was invited to the State Council and the Committee of Ministers. . . . At the present time [1890], the Chief Procurator is something like a Minister of Church Affairs, a keeper of law and order in church administration, and the representative of its central body to deal with the supreme power and the central institutions of other governmental departments."

The important change introduced by Peter into the administration of the Russian church had not been accomplished without opposition on the part of church representatives. In 1718, the very year in which Theophanes had begun compiling the Church Regulation, the Paris theologians invited the Russians to discuss the question of church unification, and Stephen Iavorsky, the Keeper of the Patriarchal See and an opponent of Theophanes, in his reply to the invitation did not hesitate to express his doubts:

Had we been willing to rectify the evil [i. e., the division], the Apostolic canon, which does not allow a bishop to act independently of his senior, particularly in such a serious undertaking, would stand in our way. As it is, the Russian Patriarchal See is vacant; and for the bishops to ponder over any question in the absence of the Patriarch is similar to the limbs of a headless body wanting to move or the stars following their course without an initial impetus. These extreme circumstances are depriving us of both speech and action.

We can see in this statement a wary objection to Peter and his planned reform.

The Tsar could have answered Iavorsky by pointing out that the character of the Eastern church made such a reform possible without infringing upon the church's rights. In fact, the Greek church needed no supreme organ of church legislation, because the creative period of its history had come to an end long before. Due to this the Eastern church was not faced with the question which caused so much trouble in the Western church: how to deal with the problems not provided for or sufficiently developed in the writings of the Fathers of the Church and the resolutions of the Ecumenical Councils. No such problems could ever originate within the Ortho-

dox church, for to its representatives the spiritual wealth of the church was amply sufficient, and it was necessary only to protect it from plunder and destruction. It was in this sense that Metropolitan Seraphim of St. Petersburg, in his conversation with the English theologian Palmer, referred to the Eastern church as "having no development," and it was in this sense also that Iury Samarin asserted that "the Orthodox church had no system and must never have one." Compared to this fundamental immobility of the Eastern church, both Catholicism and Protestantism, as Khomiakov correctly pointed out, erred on the side of rationalism. For them church organization was really a vital problem, because behind it lay an even more important one: whose was the supreme authority in the further development of the dogma. But if such a development was not the church's aim, if its duty consisted merely in preserving intact the original tenets of faith, then its task and the problem of its organization were considerably simplified. Since it no longer occupied itself with religious creative work, the Eastern church was not in need of a legislative organ for that purpose or a supreme central authority such as the Western church required, because even failing a single power, as that of the Pope, it could rest assured that the unity of its doctrine would remain intact. Only current, purely executive work had to be done, and that could be attended to by any type of church institution.

That is why the Western church had to struggle over the problem of church organization, while the Eastern church had no such difficulties. It matters not where a Catholic lives, he always recognizes the supreme authority of the Pope; in his heart he remains forever an ultramontane, for his soul, bound by religion, must abide in Rome. How was one to reconcile religious duty with patriotism, and the obligations towards the Pope with those towards one's fatherland? In a word, how could the universal power of the church be reconciled with its national organization? Throughout the centuries a Christian of the Western ritual remained confronted with this dilemma, while to the Eastern Christian it did not exist. To an Orthodox the universal element in the church consisted in its spiritual contents, the tenets of the seven Councils, whereas the church authority, as the provisional guardian of these contents, could assume the form of any national, local, or temporary or-

ganization. A national authority could never conflict with the universal doctrine of the Eastern church, because the national churches had no power to introduce changes into the universal doctrine, and the universal doctrine had not been invested with power. Therefore the churches of the Eastern ritual could succeed easily where those of the Western ritual labored vigorously to attain a national independence in religious matters. In the West the introduction of such a national organization sometimes signified a complete change of religion, as actually happened in the Protestant countries. As to the Catholic countries, strenuous efforts had to be made before the local churches could be organized along national lines, and such efforts always were frowned upon by the true Roman Catholics. Nothing similar was to be found in the East, where creating new national churches had been a matter of policy. In the second part of the sixteenth century Russia was first to set an example which was followed later on by all the Orthodox states, as soon as they had established themselves politically. Greece, Serbia, Roumania, and Bulgaria now possess autonomous churches, which does not prevent their being members of the one Eastern church.

Thus, the nationalization of church organization—"Phyletism"—although at one time condemned by the Patriarch of Constantinople as a heresy, was the natural result of the conservative character of the Eastern church. From its negative attitude towards the development of the dogma, there ensued the purely executive type of its organization. By restricting themselves to the administrative function these organizations, without injuring the church, could join other moral-educational institutions of the state and, except in extraordinary cases, they were still able to satisfy the requirements of everyday church practice. In this manner, without obvious infringement on church rights, the reformer could transform its supreme institution into that of the state, and thereby subordinate the church administration to state control.

In consequence of this the fate of ancient church privileges was also settled. The state objected to leaving legal and administrative rights in the hands of the ecclesiastical authority, but it did not hesitate to surrender them to a governmental institution bearing the characteristic name of the "Synodal Body." Before long the clergy

were aware that their rights assumed the quality of rather burdensome duties. The revenues from church lands lost much of their value with the necessity for rendering strict accounts and the responsibility for punctual payment of assessments. "It was natural," remarked Dobroklonsky, "that the Synod should feel the great burden of its administrative authority and responsibility." As Empress Elizabeth justly observed, in 1757, "The monasteries, having no power to make other disbursements except those authorized by the state, took unnecessary trouble in managing their estates."

Under these conditions it was only a question of time before the secularization of church property should be complete, and when it was accomplished, in 1764, it meant only a slight administrative change. Simultaneously, a new church budget was established which assigned the sum of 450,000 rubles for the support of the clergy. The total revenue from the church estates reached three times this amount, and twenty years after the secularization it grew to eight times the sum assigned for the support of all the Russian clergy. So two-thirds, and subsequently as much as seven-eighths, of the church revenue was confiscated and given over to the state. The only voice of protest coming from the Russian hierarchs was that of Arsenius Matseievich, which being solitary and belated only caused him to be punished as an example to others. The days of Nikon and Joseph of Volotsk were long since gone, but Arsenius wrote an epitaph for them, inscribing it in charcoal on the wall of his prison cell: "Blessed be Thou, for Thou hast brought me to humility."

The humility of the upper and leading stratum of the clergy, as displayed before the supreme power and its representative, the Chief Procurator of the Holy Synod, remained a characteristic of the Russian régime up to the Revolution of 1917. Thus the Russian church organization was brought into harmony with the spiritual and ethical standards of the clergy and their congregations, and it remains to be ascertained only to what extent these standards corresponded to the church doctrine.

Here, as in the field of church organization, we face a situation arising from the general course of Russian history, as well as from the basic principles of the Eastern religious doctrine. While theological systems might be in error, the church had to be impeccable.

Therefore Iury Samarin came to the conclusion that the church should have no system, it should sanction no doctrine aiming at demonstrating logically the truth of revealed religion. "In proving its own cause, the church oversteps its sphere and forfeits the possibility of presenting a correct definition. In the existence of the church lies its justification, and human reason with its questionings, doubts, and arguments should have no place in it. . . . It is quite superfluous for those members of the church who recognize its divine authority to prove the dogmas." But the church had always acknowledged rationalism as being in no way contrary to its spirit, if it be used as an instrument of negation and defense against the enemies of the church. In accordance with this principle, Orthodox theology remained predominantly polemical and negative.

Such was the theology of ancient Russia. In dealing with matters of faith, the old ecclesiastical writers avoided an opinion as strenuously as in later days the Slavophiles shunned rationalism. Orthodox doctrines would be justified and strengthened by argumentation only when it was necessary to oppose and disprove the unorthodox theories. Consequently, in the sixteenth century it was considered sufficient to cite an appropriate text from the Scriptures and the writings of the Fathers without any further dialectical efforts or attempts at logical deduction. Such were the ancient Russian polemical works, which attacked the Latins, or the *Enlightener* of Joseph of Volokolamsk, or the sermons of Metropolitan Daniel. It was during the controversy over the christening of Prince Wolde-mar that Russian theology realized for the first time how inadequately it was armed against the more advanced Western theology, and that it had to seek new weapons of defense. Ivan Nasedka, the "home-bred" polemist, was totally incapable of following the thread of his opponents' skilful arguments, and he became utterly disconcerted by their philological proofs. "Do not try to outwit us, Christ's flock, with your sophistry; we have no time to listen to your philosophies," was Father Ivan's final reply. To disprove the arguments of German theology, it was necessary to find more competent polemists, and the Muscovite government made a hasty choice in a Kievan monk, Isaiah. Although this choice proved to be an unsatisfactory one, the government was convinced that from the Kiev theology, which had been borrowed from the Catholic West,

it would gain practical benefit. From that moment a new, Catholic element penetrated the Moscow theology and gradually grew in strength. It is significant that the representatives of the new school appeared in public precisely at a time when the sentiments of the masses were more and more drawn towards the struggle for the old faith. The more indifferent the congregation grew towards their theological opinions, the more freely did the Russian hierarchs express them. Simeon Polotsky, the first outstanding theologian of the Kiev school, showed considerable restraint, while Sylvester Medvedev, his devoted and ardent disciple, was far more daring. Medvedev thought that his teacher was concentrating too much on the first, preparatory stages of a preacher's career, "reading and meditating on the Holy Scriptures," and that he was dilatory in producing the fruits of these studies: "to teach the people what he had learned from the Lord." So he decided that his teacher's words "should be put into action," and soon after the death of Simeon Polotsky (1680), he began his propaganda, which both in its content and its ultimate result was characteristic of those days. In Russian theology the Catholic theory first appeared as applied to the question of ritual, and with its help it became necessary to defend the church practice already established in Moscow. A dispute arose at the beginning of the seventeenth century as to what moment in the Mass the transubstantiation took place: at the words of Christ: "Take, eat, this is My Body," or when the priest said: ". . . and make this bread into the Holy Body of Christ." The answer to these questions should have interested everyone, since on it depended the exact moment for beginning and ending of ringing the bells, at which all the Orthodox people, wherever they might be, would worship the transubstantiation of bread. Sylvester Medvedev spoke passionately in support of worshiping and ringing the bells at the words of Christ, as established in Moscow and accepted, through St. Thomas Aquinas, by the Kievans, of whom his late teacher was one, while his opponents were trying to restore the Greek doctrine. These debates provoked great excitement even among the Old Believers, for the Greek doctrine, as in the days of the correction of books, appeared again as an innovation. Once more the masses sided with antiquity, but this time it was characteristically defended by the arguments borrowed from Western theology. This was



perhaps the first attempt at an independent theological discussion of a purely Russian religious problem. No wonder that "not only men, but women and children," everywhere and upon all occasions, "at feasts, in the market-place, at all times" discussed the "Holy Sacrament . . . at what words and moment do the bread and wine transubstantiate." It remained, however, the first and only attempt, because the Old Orthodox party of Moscow, headed by Patriarch Joachim, agreed with the Greek view and summoned all its strength to overcome the "heresy of bread worship." The strictly Orthodox and deeply religious Medvedev was implicated by the Patriarch in the political agitation of Tsarevna Sophia's adherents, and perished on the scaffold. The moment was not opportune for free religious discussions.

In the following generation circumstances had already changed. The "heresy of bread worship" was the last subject to provoke equally both upper and lower strata of Russian society. The ulterior fate of theological science in Russia demonstrated clearly how quickly their spiritual interests became divided.

At the beginning of the new century the consequences and portents of this separation already were quite apparent, for the sporadic discussions of questions of ritual were replaced by complete theological systems, too abstract and involved to interest the masses. Problems were put in a broader, more daring way, and the indifference of the congregation provided the priests with greater freedom of expression. Russian theology of the eighteenth century arrayed itself in the garb of medieval scholasticism and began speaking Latin, thus ceasing to be the property of the people and becoming that of the scholars.

Stephen Iavorsky was representative of the Catholic trend in Russian theology, and his *Rock of Faith*, written in refutation of the Protestant theories of Tveritinov and his circle, was adopted by the Catholic theologians. It was used by the Jesuit propagandists, and Ribera, the Dominican, defended it against the attacks of the Protestant scholars. In refutation of the *Rock of Faith*, Theophanes Prokopovich wrote a series of theological works, opposing to the Catholic authorities cited by Iavorsky—Bellarmine, Becanus, and others—the Protestant theologians—Gerhard, Mosheim, and Chemnitz. These works were written in Latin and acquired fame

in the Protestant world, while his *Catechism* was translated into English and incidentally became instrumental in converting an English priest to Orthodoxy. From its inception the Scylla and Charybdis of Russian scholastic theology became apparent. Stephen Iavorsky was guided by the Catholic assertion that faith could be based only on tradition and that the Scriptures, being incomplete and in parts obscure in meaning, could be confirmed and explained only by church tradition, while Theophanes Prokopovich confronted this view with the Protestant doctrine that the Holy Writ, perfect both in completeness and lucidity, was the only source of faith, in itself proving its divine origin and authority. Iavorsky followed in the footsteps of the leading Catholic theologians and taught that, before the Fall of Man, human nature had not been without sin, nor was it entirely corrupted after Adam, therefore its downfall was its own, though excusable, sin, and its rise was its own free achievement. In opposition to this Prokopovich exposed the Protestant theory, according to which human nature was immaculate in the beginning and was perverted to its roots by the Fall of Man. In the Old Testament redemption was unattainable for the sinful man, because its prerequisite was a strict observance of the divine law, and only became possible when Christ conferred grace upon mankind. Accordingly redemption, which Iavorsky represented as a reward for good deeds, was to Prokopovich merely the result of faith bestowed by grace.

To the Russian theologians the systems of Iavorsky and Prokopovich were for a long time the milestones marking the field of their own discussions. They availed themselves freely of the intellectual treasures of Western theology to refute the fallacy of the Catholics with Protestant arguments, and vice versa. Their chief concern was to retain a balance between the two tendencies and to refrain from any independent attempts at theologizing.

It must be admitted that Russian theology did not easily attain the art of neutrality, and the leanings towards Catholicism acquired at school and imbued with scholastic rhetorical and dialectical methods continued for some time to dominate the theological education in Russia. Theophilactus Lopatinsky, a Kievan, brought this tendency from his city to the Academy of Moscow, and until the forties of the eighteenth century theology was taught there in a

strict scholastic manner by the method of St. Thomas Aquinas. But, in the opinion of the government, the doctrine of Theophanes had always prevailed, for the clever hierarch knew how to reconcile freedom of thought with the subjection of the church, and demonstrated to the authorities the practical advantages of his Protestant theories over the stubborn clericalism of Stephen Iavorsky and his followers. This contributed to the subsequent domination of the Protestant trend not only during the German reign of Empress Anna, when all Orthodox clergy were considered unreliable, but even under the "philosophically minded" Catherine II and the mystical Alexander I. At the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth centuries, the two famous hierarchs, Metropolitan Platon Levshin and Filaret Drozdov, Bishop of Moscow, were very outspoken in their Protestant sympathies. Filaret, in his youth, ardently supported the Bible Society and saw in its activities the approaching advent of the Kingdom of Heaven. This was when the people closest to the Tsar, like Speransky and Golitsyn, held views very similar to those of Spiritual Christianity, and the English Methodists, who coöperated in the establishment of the Bible Society, publicly expressed the hope that "in accordance with the wishes of the Tsar the Bible Society would reveal to the Greek church its errors, revive its faith, and thus begin reformation in Russia." Such enthusiasm naturally provoked strong resistance, and never before did the conservative character of the Eastern church stand out so clearly as it did during the reign of Emperor Nicholas I, who immediately upon his accession to the throne ordered the Bible Society closed.

For the purposes of instruction, in the four Theological Academies of Moscow, St. Petersburg, Kiev, and Kazan, which prepared the priests and teachers for seminaries, it was necessary to teach dogmatic theology without being restricted to polemical subjects. In fact, the entire theological literature of later days, that met with the approval of the official church, consisted wholly of manuals prepared for the purposes of instruction, or of dissertations presented for obtaining academic degrees.

Obviously such a situation could not satisfy the religious-minded intellectuals unhampered by officially established restrictions. In the middle of the nineteenth century there appeared in Russia a group

of lay theologians whose works were far more characteristic of Russian religious thought than those of the ecclesiastical writers. Contrary to the prevailing tendency of the Russian intelligentsia, inclined to repudiate positive religion, the lay theologians strove to remain within the bounds of revealed faith and of Orthodoxy in particular. Nevertheless, these "Seekers after God" introduced into their theological reasoning a new strain that did not harmonize with the traditional faith and therefore was regarded with suspicion by the church.

Characteristically, the impulse for the establishment of a lay theology in Russia came from abroad. The history of the Russian "Seekers after God" closely corresponds to that of the two important periods of Western romanticism, which exerted a strong influence over two different generations of Russian intellectuals. In the first of these periods the Western protest against the rationalism of the eighteenth century contributed to the formation in Russia of the original doctrine of Slavophilism, in which the Orthodox religion became an integral part of a general quest for the fundamental attributes of the Russian soul, and thus took on a strong national hue. In the thirties of the nineteenth century, the Russian romantics of that generation formed their views under the influence of Schelling and Baader and developed their doctrine in the fifties, when struggling against Hegelianism. In the eighteen nineties, the generation of the "Neo-Romanticists" was brought up on the ideas of the *fin de siècle*, and particularly on Nietzsche. Its return to religion was a protest against the naturalism and empiricism of the preceding generation, while the attitude of the younger members of this generation of the nineteenth century was greatly influenced by the revolutionary failures of 1905 and 1917. The same protest and influences will be observed in the history of Russian art.

The Slavophil A. S. Khomiakov (1804-60) is rightly regarded as the father of lay theology in Russia. The initial point of his doctrine was the statement made in 1848 by the Eastern Patriarchs in their reply to Pope Pius IX on the question of papal infallibility. "The infallibility rests solely in the universality of the church united by mutual love. Both the immutability of the dogma and the purity of the ritual are entrusted to the guardianship not solely of the hierarchy, but to that of all church members, who are the Body of

Christ." Instead of love, which was the basis of "conciliarity,"<sup>3</sup> the West revealed the pride of individual intellect. Thereby Catholicism created Protestantism, which in turn led the way to modern anarchy in religious thought, while the Eastern church embodied the principle of "conciliarity" in love. The "conciliar body" of the church, its living organism, alone preserved the roots of religious life and possessed the integral truth, unrestricted by Western rationalism and abstract philosophy. There was neither truth nor salvation outside the church, but only ignorance and sin, whereas in the church reigned the Holy Ghost, inaccessible to reason alone, but revealed to "human spirit in its entirety." The sacraments and the Bible were an outer, visible cover; in its essence "every text which the church, guided by the Holy Ghost, accepted as its own was a Holy Scripture," and the debates held by the Protestants on the Apostles' authorship of the Gospel and the Epistles did not alter the church's attitude towards them. If today the Epistles of Apostle Paul were repudiated, then tomorrow the church could say, "they are mine," and the Epistles would preserve their authority. Even the Ecumenical Council was not above the "conciliar conscience" of the church; the "church people" could repudiate its authority. Apparently this "conciliar conscience" of the church could not be expressed in any legal formula. The "human spirit in its entirety" was a mystical conception. Since its nature was universal, it had to be propagated throughout the world, and therein lay Russia's mission. The national religion thereby reassumed its cosmopolitan character.

Constantine Leontiev (1831-91), the staunch guardian of ancient Byzantine principles, strongly opposed Khomiakov's Orthodoxy, for he recognized in it a Protestant tone, which to him was incompatible with strict submission to church tradition. He repudiated likewise the ethically humanitarian side of Dostoevsky's and Tolstoy's "pink Christianity." Not love, but fear of God was the foundation of religion to Leontiev, who himself lived in dread of eternal damnation. To escape this dread he became a monk, and

<sup>3</sup> This is an attempt to translate the Russian term *sobornost*, derived from *sobor*, which means "council." In Khomiakov's opinion, the "conciliar" spirit distinguished the Orthodox church both from Roman Catholicism with its authoritarian organization and from Protestantism with its extremes of individualism.—Ed.

entrusted his salvation to the church, not in Khomiakov's, but in the ordinary sense of the word. Instead of freedom in spirit, he preached absolute subordination to the church hierarchy, and as opposed to the illusion of love and brotherhood's ultimate victory on earth, he quoted the Apocalypse, which predicted the weakening of love precisely at the time when "the Gospel would be preached in all parts of the world." Leontiev found no call for missionary work among the Russians, and he strove to safeguard the inviolability of the Byzantine church tradition against the interference by "church people." In his conception nationality was not permeated with any strong religious spirit, and all he desired was to preserve it intact in its original state. Leontiev's views corresponded with the trend of the official church in the days of Pobedonostsev, and so he became the herald of the most consistent reactionary policy.

The revival of the idea of Orthodoxy's universal importance and the firm belief in the future destiny of the Russian people fell to the lot of Vladimir Soloviev (1853-1900), in direct opposition to Danilevsky (1822-85) and Leontiev, the two nationalistic exponents of Slavophilism. In his youth this brilliant thinker studied natural sciences and had been influenced by Comte and Spencer. Turning from unbelief to religion, he displayed greater freedom in treating religious problems than the first Slavophiles ever possessed. Before attempting to study the Fathers of the Church and the medieval mystics, he became a close student of Kant's school of philosophical criticism. He admitted that Schopenhauer and Hartman, too, had greatly influenced him, and recognized that his task lay in achieving a higher synthesis of science, philosophy, and religion. In this attempted synthesis, however, religion prevailed and he frankly declared that his aim was to "restore the faith of the fathers." As Soloviev lived and worked during a period when religious inquiries were not in vogue, he had to pave the way for his religious conception by criticizing adverse views in science and philosophy. In his initial work he analyzed the scientific conception of the world in so far as it was expressed in positivism and empiricism. From this he passed to criticism of modern philosophy which, in his belief, exhausted itself in the "abstract principles" of Hegel and his successors in contrast with the vitality and integrity of the Christian doctrine. In Soloviev's opinion both science and philosophy would

have led inevitably to scepticism and pure illusionism, for to concede the reality of the external world it was necessary to admit the existence of an absolute and all-embracing principle. Only towards the end of his active life did Soloviev abandon criticism and apply himself to the unfolding of the positive principles of his Christian doctrine, the "justification of the trinity of the Good, the Beautiful, and the True." He did not succeed in finishing this work, but in the part he wrote he presented more clearly than Khomiakov the specific traits of the Russian lay theologians: (1) the tendency to "conciliarity" coupled with the conception of Russia's "universal mission," which in Soloviev's personal case was expressed by conversion to Catholicism; (2) the desire to explain "concretely" everything that was unintelligible in religion in terms of the "inner experience," i. e., mystically; (3) the wish to unite the divine and the abstract with human life, which for Soloviev meant seeking for a mediation between God and the world, a middle course between dualism and pantheism, the transcendental and the immanent, resulting in the development of his theory of "God-Man and Divine Humanity."

Soloviev lived and died in solitude, but during the final years of his life there had appeared a number of neo-romantic writers, who protested against the positivist and empiricist tendencies of the preceding generation. In its first stage the neo-romantic protest against positivism assumed the shape of "idealism," which was understood both as a philosophical system and a vindication of ethical and esthetic norms, which, the restorers thought, had been displaced by the previous generation. The young preachers expressed their views through the newly established philosophical and psychological societies, the universities, and the periodical press. In 1902 the group published a kind of manifesto in the form of a symposium entitled *The Problems of Idealism*. Here, encouraged by the example of Soloviev, the neo-romanticists began their transition from idealistic philosophy to religion. From this group came the followers of Soloviev, the most outstanding being the two brothers, the Princes Serge and Eugene Trubetskoy, both his personal friends. The fact that their connection with the church was much stronger than that of Soloviev largely explains the changes they introduced in his doctrine with the apparent intention of bringing it closer to the Ortho-

dox tradition. But they were even less successful than Soloviev in working out an integral system of religious philosophy.

The approach of revolutionary events was diverting the attention of the wider circles of the intelligentsia from religious problems, and under the same influence various tendencies began to develop among those of the intellectuals who still remained religiously minded. A small group acquired a definitely conservative political aspect, while another group came nearer to joining the political struggle and so assumed a more daring attitude in the field of religious and philosophic theories. This trend found its most vivid expression in St. Petersburg, where upon the initiative of the Merezhkovskys there was established in 1902 a Religious Philosophical Society, which during the next two years attracted the attention of the intellectuals. Both these trends had their predecessors in the nineteenth century. The two great Russian writers, Dostoevsky and Tolstoy, were self-taught in theology, and therefore could scarcely be considered as belonging to the Russian school of lay theologians, but both helped materially in reviving and spreading an interest in religion among the intellectuals and the general public. The influence of Dostoevsky, who had shown a leaning towards the traditional church, was felt principally after his death, while that of Tolstoy, who had strayed far from Orthodoxy and so incurred his excommunication by the Holy Synod, had been widespread during his lifetime. It was not limited to the strict followers of Tolstoism, but reached also Russian Sectarrians and those circles outside of Russia which were attracted by his democratic and rationalistic ethics. In time this influence was forced to subside, primarily because Tolstoy's doctrine was too individual and then because in its premises—the negation of the divine nature of Christ, the immortality of the soul, the sacraments, and the church—it overstepped the limits of what was acceptable to the Seekers after God, whose theory remained true to revealed religion. In a religious sense it was inadequate, while from the point of view of philosophical rationalism it contained too much religion.

As to the conservative trend of Russian theology in the twentieth century, it became identified with the Orthodox doctrine of the church and thus lost its lay character. P. Florensky and S. Bulgakov, its two most outstanding representatives, both became priests.



Father Florensky's writings on the "Orthodox theodicy" were based on an extensive and serious study of the works of the Holy Fathers and on general philosophical literature as well. His principal work, *The Pillar and Confirmation of Truth*, exercised a strong influence upon the subsequent development of this trend of thought in Russia. It is doubtful whether one can use the word "thought" here in its proper sense, as "Truth," which forms the subject of the book, is transposed by the author from the domain of knowledge into that of mysticism. Reason is not capable of accepting the conceptions that are indispensable to the understanding of truth. It can only reach its own "ideal limit" and then accept as a "regulative principle" the possibility of a "transcendental structure, belonging to the world beyond." Florensky expressed his attitude towards the inscrutable and unattainable in a formula borrowed from Tertullian and Pascal: *Credo quia absurdum*—I believe, because it is absurd, "I believe despite the groans of my reason, I want to be unreasonable." Becoming confirmed in his faith and avowing that "faith is the source of supreme understanding," the Seeker after God turns to the formula of Anselm of Canterbury: *Credo, ut intelligam*—I believe in order to understand. Thus, nine centuries after the days of Anselm, the author is convinced that he "not only believes, but also understands," and he calls out in rapture: "*Intelligo, ut credam*—I understand in order to believe."

From the point of view of the official church, Florensky's book reached the extreme limit of the admissible, and it was only after much deliberation that it was accepted by the ecclesiastical authorities as an academic thesis. It outlined the potentialities of Orthodox theology and in this sense became a guide for other theologians of the same trend. His successor, the Rev. Sergius Bulgakov, far less emotional by nature, does not permit himself that degree of freedom which we find in Florensky. With him theology is further divested of philosophical theories, and that which Florensky left unexplained he expounds in a spirit of submission to the church tradition.

This compromise with official theology did not satisfy N. Berdiaev, formerly an ardent Nietzschean, for he found that "there was no answer in the catechism and teachings of the Elders to the sufferings and questionings of Nietzsche. . . . The human soul

underwent a change, and those who had known the definite spiritual freedom and in that freedom had returned to the Christian faith, never could eradicate or efface from their hearts that experience." These people "carry with them into Christianity a special spirit of freedom." The Christian conscience of our day cannot say that since the time of Ecumenical Councils and the disputes among the teachers of the church nothing has changed, for "human nature has changed radically, and today man is suffering from new sins. . . . Mankind has known Hamlet and Faust, Nietzsche and Dostoevsky, has experienced humanism, romanticism, the revolutionary spirit, and the science of modern times, and these experiences cannot be obliterated." "At present the creative genius must be applied to continuing the work begun by the ancient teachers of the church, and not to repeating their answers to old problems." And Berdiaev proudly calls his theology "the philosophy of the liberated spirit."

We shall complete this outline with statistical data, which show to what extent in modern history the religious needs of the Russian people were satisfied by the church. The table that follows demonstrates the number of churches, monasteries, monastic and secular clergy in 1738, 1840, and 1890 respectively.

	<i>Actual figures</i>			<i>As per 100,000 inhabitants of Orthodox faith</i>		
	<i>1738</i>	<i>1840</i>	<i>1890</i>	<i>1738</i>	<i>1840</i>	<i>1890</i>
Churches . . . .	16,901	31,333	40,205	106	71	56
Secular clergy	124,923	116,728	96,892	781	265	137
Monasteries						
and convents	948	547	724	6	1.2	1
Monks, nuns, and novices	14,282	15,251	40,286	89	56	34

The chief interest is not in the actual figures, which attest the increase in churches and those leading the monastic life, with a corresponding decline of the secular clergy, but in the relation of these figures to the mass of the population. The increase in the actual figures can be explained by the natural growth of the Russian Orthodox population, although this growth was far more rapid than the increase of the figures. In 1738 there were in Russia not

more than sixteen million Orthodox people, in 1840 they amounted to forty-four million, and in 1890 to seventy-two million. In comparison to these figures the number of religious institutions and clergy shows a continuous and rapid decline. So at the end of the nineteenth century for every Orthodox inhabitant of the Empire there were half the number of churches, two and a half times fewer monks, almost six times fewer secular clergy and monasteries than a century and a half previously. The decline in the number of secular clergy was due to the rigorous "sorting" and the law of 1869. Unfortunately there are no figures relating to earlier days.

Equally interesting are the figures which characterize the assimilative power of the church. During the fifty years preceding the revolution official documents registered over a million, or to be exact 1,172,000 conversions. Half of these, i. e., 580,000, were Catholics, Protestants, and Greek Uniates. But Preobrazhensky considers that of the last figure only 110,000 (75,000 Catholics and 35,000 Protestants) could be regarded as an "obvious result of missionary preaching, the fruits of labor and the efforts of the shepherds of the church and other zealots of Orthodoxy." The conversion of the remaining 470,000 he rightly ascribes to national and political causes rather than religious ones. So in the forties of the nineteenth century over 100,000 Letts and Esthonians were converted from Protestantism, and an equal number of Catholics after the suppression of the Polish revolt in 1863, while 250,000 Uniates were added to these in 1895 (1,674,478 of Uniates had been already converted in 1836-39). The second category consisted of those converted from Old Ritualism. According to official figures, there were 311,279 conversions, out of which only 195,926 could be considered as absolute. The average annual number of conversions in this category was 18,000 during the thirties, 10,800 in the forties, 9,000 in the fifties, 2,800 during the sixties and seventies, and 5,500 in the eighties of the nineteenth century. As pointed out by Preobrazhensky, the distribution of figures by decades shows clearly that the missionary success depended entirely on the degree of strictness exerted towards the Schism by the government; in other words, those who joined Orthodoxy were not, even in that case, impelled solely by religious considerations. Unfortunately there is no possibility of tracing the defection of the Orthodox to the Schism or

Sectarianism, and we possess no reliable data on the conversion of the Sectarrians to Orthodoxy. The Russian "inner mission" found itself in a difficult and ambiguous position, in which it was placed by the general course of Russian religious history. Neither the state nor the church had foreseen that it was possible to choose a religion according to one's personal conviction. Faith was regarded as something innate, inseparable from nationality, a second nature, so to speak. Consequently, up to the revolution, freedom of conscience and religious toleration were understood as the right of other nationalities within the Empire to profess their own creed. Not so long ago the Russian missionaries insisted that Baptism be regarded as a "German faith" and refused to recognize as Baptists the Russians who supported this doctrine. A native Orthodox Russian, notwithstanding his religious convictions, could not legally cease to be Orthodox. The existence of the Schism could not be denied, but the official tendency of the law was to ignore every new case of "perversion" and to accept as Schismatics only those who were born in the Schism. The law recognized only the defection to "particularly pernicious" sects, while in other cases the "perverted" one was subject only to being restored to the bosom of the church, and in his stead the authorities punished his "perverter." In these circumstances it was natural for those leaving the church to conceal the fact of their defection, and especially its exact time. A direct result of this abnormal condition was a distortion of the aim of the "inner mission," a situation which was deplored by the missionaries themselves, for it changed the duties of the clergy from religious ones to those of inquisition and police.

The natural outcome of compulsory or self-interested conversion to Orthodoxy was a marked decline in the inner life of the Orthodox. In 1859 the ecclesiastical authorities investigated the religious life among the 51,474,200 Orthodox in Russia, and found that only 35,087,097 of them partook of the Holy Communion or went to confession. "From mere neglect" 3,417,231 adults and 9,232,234 children never observed the rites. Some 819,951 of them made excuses, which were accepted as satisfactory, but 726,982 avoided confession "because of their tendency towards the Schism, and in this category perhaps should be included the 2,196,714 who went to confession but did not partake of the Holy Communion. So we have three

million dissimulating Schismatics to whom should be added a certain percentage of other categories, and we must bear in mind that the members of the "particularly pernicious" sects, like the Khlysty, also observed all church rituals most zealously.

It remains for us to examine the third sphere of missionary activity in the Russian church—the conversion of non-Christians and pagans. In this field, where the church could have performed work of great spiritual importance, the results were even more disappointing. For a period of fifty years the average number of non-Christians joining Orthodoxy was 2,251 annually and that of pagans 3,104. In pointing out the insignificance of the last figure as compared to the abundant results of missionary work in the principal Western countries, Preobrazhensky explained it by the lack of financial means at the disposal of Russian missions. While undoubtedly true, this fact does not explain the situation. Why were these means so scanty and why was public opinion so indifferent to their being increased? Why were the available means distributed so unequally among the various spheres of church activity, and why was it that the performance of duties imposed upon it by the state took precedence over the purely religious and cultural function? Why was the missionary body so deficient in outstanding workers? The explanation lies in the general character of the pre-revolutionary church in Russia, the natural result of which was the failure of its missionary work.

## VIII

# THE CHURCH DURING THE REVOLUTION

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**T**HE revolution took the Russian church unawares. This, of course, was quite natural in view of its previous history. The immobility of its dogma, the prevalence of administrative activities over the spiritual, the ritualism of the masses and their indifference towards the spiritual contents of religion, placed the Russian church in a totally different relation to revolutionary ideas from that which existed in seventeenth-century England, where the revolution of religious ideas preceded and was closely connected with the political revolution.

Moreover, traditionally the Russian church had been a tool of the state and was made to follow a definite policy, which in itself rendered the church a natural and inevitable opponent of the revolution. With the passive attitude of society and the masses towards church affairs, the part played by the church was never questioned and was accepted as a fact. But by degrees, as Russia entered the revolutionary period of her history, and the state increased its efforts to suppress the opposition, the conservative rôle of the church became more and more apparent. Immediately before the revolution, during the most intense moment of the struggle, the state applied to the church, seeking its spiritual support and justification as a substantiation of its own material force. Thus, to its misfortune, the Russian church entered the revolutionary field in a militant rôle.

The monastic clergy and, through them, the secular priests, were under the complete control of the Chief Procurator of the Synod.

In the days of Pobedonostsev and Sabler the influence of the state and its conservative ideology penetrated the church to its core and paralyzed all manifestations of a free religious life. The church was made to educate the masses at the parish schools in the spirit of official Orthodoxy, and its supreme organ was composed of those willing to serve the government and ready to comply with the demands of the Chief Procurator. With the establishment of the Duma and the formation of political parties, the church was officially assigned to the service of the Union of the Russian People and the Nationalists, i. e., the parties that were leading the fight for the restoration of autocracy. During the elections to the Third Duma, the clergy fulfilled their political duty by sending to the Duma about fifty "cassocked" deputies, who supported the bills restricting toleration and the freedom of teaching in the theological schools, which had been introduced by the ecclesiastical authorities. Even the moderate majority of the Duma was so provoked by this policy that it voted down the budget estimates presented by the Holy Synod. In 1912, at the elections to the Fourth Duma, the Synod and the Ministry for Home Affairs had created from the clergy such a powerful electoral machine that it threatened the Duma with an ecclesiastical invasion (about one hundred fifty deputies). The government was forced to retreat and to limit the clerical deputies to their original number of fifty. Finally, in its last pre-revolutionary stage the church descended to the level of Rasputinism.

Within the church, however, attempts were made to meet the spirit of the times and, while remaining strictly on Orthodox ground, to introduce liberal amendments into the established ecclesiastical order. At this period there appeared in the theological academies a spirit of liberalism, which the Synod in 1908 applied rigorous measures to suppress. During the first revolution of 1905 there was formed among the professors of the theological academies a group of thirty-two in support of the "renovation" of the church. Their aspirations were extremely modest, but their activities nevertheless provoked an antagonistic campaign in the press and a persecution by the authorities. As a result the movement subsided, but only temporarily, for it appeared again under a different aspect in the First and the Second Dumas among the rural clergy who, to

the astonishment of those in power, joined the parties "more radical than the Constitutional Democrats" and strove to protect the interests of the masses. These "sympathizers with the people" suffered for their weakness, but the temper which existed among the democratic members of the clergy could not be extirpated.

Such was the situation at the time of the February Revolution. The Provisional Government showed great caution in handling church problems and decided to postpone radical reforms until the convocation of the Constituent Assembly. It could not, however, avoid the establishment of some general rules, along the lines indicated in the decree of April 17, 1905, which dealt with freedom of conscience and religious toleration. Not until June 1917 did the Provisional Government abolish the office of the Chief Procurator of the Holy Synod and institute in its stead a Ministry of Religion, with a special Department for the Heterodox. Although this beginning was very modest, the general spirit in which the unavoidable religious reform had to be approached was clearly defined. Even before the revolution the opposition in the Duma supported the idea of separation of church and state, the separation of schools from the church, and absolute freedom of conscience, including the legal recognition of an extra-denominational status, totally unknown to the old confessional state. The law passed on July 17, 1917, recognized religious freedom, but the clergy retained the right to register births and sanction marriages. Another law on July 20, 1917, transferred the parish schools to the Ministry for Public Education, a measure which met with the approval of even the parish school teachers.

Moderate as they were, these measures did not fail to incite the representatives of the church against the "godless" Provisional Government and consequently caused an open conflict. In June 1917, a convention of some 1,200 clergy and laymen assembled in Moscow, and formulated a program, which was subsequently developed at length in the decisions of the Pre-Council Committee of July 13, 1917. The Orthodox church claimed for itself precedence over all other religions; complete independence from the state and the recognition of all church acts not in conflict with the law; the preservation of its legal rights in connection with marriage and divorce; the acknowledgment of church holidays by the state; the



participation by the church in state ceremonies; the right to open primary, secondary, and higher schools for professional as well as general education, enjoying state privileges; the compulsory teaching of religion in secular schools; the recognition of legal rights for church institutions; and, finally, the maintenance of the church and its schools to be provided for by the state budget. The realization of this program would mean not only the preservation, but considerable expansion of the church's old privileges. Naturally the Provisional Government could not consent to these demands, so the church spokesmen referred to it as "anti-Christian." It was in this state of mind that the elections to the Local Church Council took place, its convocation having been announced by the Holy Synod in a proclamation on April 29, 1917.

The convocation of the Council realized an old desire of both progressive and conservative members of the church. Among the concessions granted by Emperor Nicholas II in 1905 was also the promise of this convocation, and a preliminary session of the Pre-Council Committee began its work in January 1906, continuing throughout the year. As the liberals were in the minority, the program worked out by the Committee was a strictly conservative one. With the dissolution of the First Duma the session of the Committee also came to an end. The promise to convoke the Council for the celebration of the tercentenary of the House of Romanov in 1913 was not fulfilled. It was brought into effect by the first revolutionary government. The Chief Procurator of the Holy Synod in the Provisional Government, Vladimir Lvov, a former member of the Duma, profiting by his power, dismissed the old reactionary members of the Synod and replaced them with others, who were considered more or less liberal. In the proclamation of April 29, 1917, the Holy Synod, in referring to "the widespread revival of the church, inspired by liberal principles," stated that "with the change of régime the established church could not preserve the old order which had outlived its time." Another announcement, on July 5, concerning the Council, also mentioned the renovation of the church and the intention to attract to the Council all its "living forces." Professors with liberal tendencies were invited to join the Pre-Council Committee. On August 12, 1917, the Committee presented a memorandum to the Synod in which it spoke of "reforms

in the organization and life of the church, in accordance with the pressing needs of the hour" and the "replacing of antiquated norms by new ones corresponding to modern standards."

Of the 564 delegates elected to the Council from 66 dioceses (including 278 laymen) the majority was more conservative than the new Synod which had convoked the Council. To oppose the "dangerous" tendencies of the liberals, this majority formed a solid body under the leadership of Bishop Theodore, while the progressive professors and priests formed a separate group. In fact, the decisions of the Council could become valid only after their approval by the Council of Bishops.

From the very opening of the Council, on August 15, 1917, a political note was sounded simultaneously with the expression of hope for the "growth of religious faith among the people" and "a complete renovation of the church life." "The Council is expected to assist in the organization of the state," said Metropolitan Tikhon of Moscow, referring in this connection to requests made by General Kornilov and his officers in the name of the army. Shein, the secretary of the Council, proposed to appeal to the people of Russia "to refrain from enmity and strife," while other members suggested that they "support the upright and expose the wicked." The Council in a message actually designated September 14 as a day "of national repentance and general prayers for the salvation of the Russian state." Here was expressed the thought which afterwards dominated the minds of people belonging to certain political groups: that the true cause of Russia's misfortunes lay in "our spiritual depravity" and that the nation was "led astray" by "anti-Christian teachings." A group consisting of fifty-two members of the Council supported the idea that the representatives of the church should take an active part in the elections to the Constituent Assembly and advise the people "not to vote on a list of men unknown to them, but only on the one approved by the Diocesan Council."

The long-awaited proposal made by Bishop Anthony Khrapovitsky, the leader of the conservatives, for the reestablishment of the Patriarchate was also tinged with politics. This motion was passed by the Committee of the Council by fifty-six votes against a strong minority of thirty-two, and occasioned vehement debates in the

plenary session of the Council. The proponents of the scheme for the reestablishment of the Patriarchate emphasized the fact that "the state desired to be non-confessional, openly severing its alliance with the church," and consequently the church "must become militant and have its own spiritual leader." "We are entering a period of persecutions," declared Prince E. N. Trubetskoy, while the Council reached the same conclusion after a deputation, which protested against the secularization of parish schools, had an unsuccessful interview with Kerensky. Somehow the thought of a Patriarch became associated with that of a Tsar, while those opposed to the reestablishment of the Patriarchate brought forward democratic and republican arguments.

The problem was solved by the upheaval of October 25, 1917, when, frightened by the Bolshevik victory and anticipating a forcible end to its work, the Council, desirous to leave behind it "a strong power able to resist and influence the state authority," expedited its activities. The endless debates ceased, and on October 30, to the accompaniment of shots fired in the streets, the Council with an incomplete quorum passed the resolution on the reestablishment of the Patriarchate by 141 votes to 112, twelve abstaining from voting. The majority constituted exactly a fourth of the entire body. Yet on November 4 it was declared that supreme authority over the church was not invested in the Patriarch, but rested with the Council, periodically convoked; that the Patriarch was only *primus inter pares* and, like the administrative organs, was responsible to the Council.

Following the precedent of 1634, it was decided to draw lots for the three nominated candidates. At the nomination Anthony Khrapovitsky, an energetic leader of the conservatives, obtained the majority, while Tikhon had the smallest vote, but on November 5, at the solemn gathering in the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour, the nonagenarian anchorite Alexis drew Tikhon's name. On November 21, 1917, the "enthronement" of the Patriarch took place at the Cathedral of the Assumption, and on November 26 there was a solemn procession with cross and banners in the Red Square. According to the statements of both his friends and enemies, the eleventh Patriarch of the Russian church was gentle and yielded easily to outside influences. His enemies added that

he was uneducated and lacking in will power, while his friends emphasized his outstanding sense of duty and the consciousness of the importance of his position. The fact is that Tikhon's actions were restrained by two institutions: the Holy Synod and the Supreme Administration of the church, the latter comprising the lower clergy and some laymen, such as Kartashev, Bulgakov, and the Princes Trubetskoy. After the members of these institutions were elected, the first session of the Council came to an end.

The recess lasted from December 10, 1917, to January 20, 1918. The members returned home in a different mood from that in which they arrived. In referring to it on November 21, 1917, at the house of the Patriarch, Anthony Khrapovitsky said:

With a feeling of unrest and somewhat dejected in spirit the church members arrived here in August. . . . At the summit and in the heart of church life voices foreign and frequently quite hostile to the spirit of the church were audible . . . but even at the first sitting the religious spirit, requiring obedience to the rules of the church, predominated. . . . The council with increasing unanimity, daring, and directness began to avow its resolution against modifying and distorting the Christian faith.

The left wing described the same events quite differently. On October 2, 1917, after a sharp conflict, Prof. B. V. Titlinov resigned from the Council and, having been dismissed as the editor of the *Church and Social Herald*, wrote in the last issue that appeared under his editorship: "We are entering the period of reaction . . . which is already gaining ground in church life. . . . Nevertheless, a free church of a free people will find a new tribune for the expression of its ideas."

In the interval between the two sessions of the Council, civil war started on the Don and some of those who had determined the policy of the Council joined the anti-Bolshevik side. Under such conditions it was not surprising that between the White Army of the South and the high representatives of the church there was established a mutual understanding and a bond which was not strictly confined to the spiritual. The church now became a leader in the ranks of spiritual fighters against the Bolshevik régime, and on it were placed the greatest hopes. Later (June 15,

1923), in his declaration to the Bolsheviks, the Patriarch confessed that "having been brought up in a monarchical society," he was "under the influence of anti-Soviet people," who continually encouraged him "as the head of the Orthodox church to act against the Soviet government."

It is true that the Bolsheviks, by their activities in regard to the internal life of the church, supplied valid excuses for such an attitude. In December 1917 they proceeded determinedly and sternly to eliminate the very essence of the old confessional state. On December 4, land owned by the churches and monasteries, together with other land in the country, was nationalized, while on the eleventh of the same month a new decree, far more drastic than that of the Provisional Government, transferred the control of the parish schools, seminaries, and theological academies to the Commissariat for the People's Education. On December 18 the church was deprived of its right to register births and marriages, and on the twentieth it was proclaimed that only civil marriages possessed legal force. The decree of January 20, 1918, abolished all financial support by the state to church institutions, and continued the salaries of the priests for only a month.

All of this was in direct opposition to the demands of the church as formulated by the Council on December 2, 1917. So on January 19, 1918, on the eve of the opening of the new session of the Council, the Patriarch delivered a threatening message in which he sternly attacked the "satanic work" of "the monsters of the human race," "for which they should be condemned to the eternal fire of Gehenna." He anathematized those of the Bolsheviks who "still bore a Christian name" and invoked the faithful children of the church not to have any intercourse with them. The Patriarch enumerated the decrees of the Soviet government as manifestations of "unruly self-will and acts of violence against the holy church"; he summoned all the faithful "to resist them by means of an overwhelming national protest, which . . . would prove to them that they were not entitled to call themselves advocates of the people's welfare or builders of a new life in accordance with the popular will." Tikhon called upon the clergy to "found spiritual unions" and to organize "the ranks of spiritual

fighters to defend the trampled rights of the church by the force of their sacred inspiration."

The Council assembled on January 20, 1918, and subscribed whole-heartedly to the Patriarch's protest. "At last," said Count D. A. Olsufiev, "we hear the voice of a living conscience instead of reading an official document," while Prince E. N. Trubetskoy added: "The days of unworthy compromise are over. We must act energetically . . . and arouse the entire Orthodox people in defense of the church." However, some doubts were also voiced. Was it possible to refuse to deal with the authorities when "life brought one in contact with the transgressors?" To what extent should the estates of the church and its sacred relics be actively defended? Was it possible to rely upon the people? "We must not overestimate the influence of the Patriarch's message on the working class. Bolshevism is not dead, it still retains a strong hold over the masses," warned D. I. Bogoliubov. Dean Stanislavsky, another member of the Council, testified that in the provinces the soldiers had threatened to destroy all priests as "enemies of the people," and as they have torn up previous appeals of the church so "neither will this one achieve its end." The question also arose how the priests were to act when threatened with death—should they remain in their parishes or should they leave? The general conclusion was that after the publication of the Patriarch's message, the Council faced the path of "Christian martyrdom" and that the only remedy against the contagion of Bolshevism was in appealing to the people "to do penance for their sins from the ambo," and in closing the churches in places where "no true repentance was to be found." In order to impress the Moscow population directly, it was decided to organize, on January 28, religious processions from all the churches to the Red Square, following the example of the procession held in Petersburg on January 21, which had attracted several hundred thousand devotees who successfully protected the Alexander Nevsky Abbey from sequestration. The religious demonstration at Moscow was also extremely successful. "Never before or since have I seen such a solid mass of people," testified one of the eyewitnesses.

As yet the Bolsheviks were unable to deal with the situation in

a radical way, and their reaction to it was the issuance of a decree on January 23, 1918, on "the freedom of conscience and the religious societies," which has subsequently been called "the separation of the church from the state and of schools from the church." The decree reduced to a system the principles which on July 6, 1918, were incorporated in Article Thirteen of the Soviet Constitution. In later years further additions were made to church legislation, but up to 1928 the fundamental principles remained unchanged in the Russian Soviet Republic as well as in the other Soviet Republics. This period of Bolshevik legislation on church matters ended with the decree of April 8, 1927, which codified all previous instructions and interpretations issued since the inception of the Soviet government in Russia. Article Thirteen of the Constitution of the Russian Soviet Republic adopted on July 6, 1918, reads as follows: "In order to secure for the toiling masses a real freedom of conscience, the church is being separated from the state, the schools from the church, and freedom of religious or anti-religious propaganda is recognized for all citizens." However, in putting this principle into practice the Bolsheviks went far beyond the meaning attached to these terms in the legislation of other countries, where the same principles had been adopted. Although in principle the decree on the separation of the church from the state was applied to all creeds alike, nevertheless it became clear that the chief attack was directed at the established church, for in no circumstances did they wish to deal with the representatives of the Orthodox hierarchy. Having transferred the entire church property to "the people and the state," they subsequently lent, for temporary use only, the articles of the cult to parishioners, or more specifically to a "group of the faithful" in each parish. This group was to comprise not less than twenty people, who would consent to draw up an agreement with the local Soviet organization by which they would have possession of the church building and other property connected with the cult, provided they maintained the church building in good repair and paid the taxes. Independently of anyone the group could procure a priest, but he had to comply with all the duties of an ordinary citizen. All other church units, while not officially abolished, were simply ignored by the new authorities, and remained a matter of

personal, private, and voluntary agreement among the faithful. The central administration of the church—synodal, diocesan, and sub-diocesan—thus was considered abolished. Moreover, the individual “groups of the faithful,” who had assumed the management of the churches, did not acquire the rights of juridical persons, and so were deprived of the possibility of concluding legal transactions, except the most ordinary ones, such as purchasing articles of the cult or leasing property. Church organizations were debarred from philanthropic, educational, and economic activities; only the individual persons, on their own responsibility and on the basis of the general law, could attend to these matters.

In addition to the “groups of the faithful,” authority was granted for forming “religious societies” with no less than fifty members. On April 11, 1924, it was explained that this form of organization was intended chiefly for the “Living Church” and the Sectarians, whereas the Orthodox church had to be satisfied with forming “groups.” Being duly registered, the religious societies could spread their activities over several provinces and, with special permission, could form all-Russian conventions and publish periodicals, subject to governmental censorship. Unlike other private societies, however, they had no right of property and were not recognized as juridical persons (the law of August 3, 1922, and instruction of April 27, 1923).

Another characteristic feature of the new legislation was the treatment of religious teaching. The theological schools of every creed were abolished, while in the private and public schools of general education teaching of religion was prohibited under the threat of a year or more at hard labor. Only those over eighteen years of age could be instructed in religion at home or even take special theological courses in preparation for the priesthood. In replying to the many petitions for exception, the authorities explained that “the education of children rested with the Soviet government,” therefore it was its “right and duty to prevent the children’s heads from being filled with prejudices, such as the clergy were trying to instill through religious teaching.”

In Soviet Russia the separation of the church from the state did not mean that the state wanted to remain neutral towards the church. On the contrary, the Communist state openly sided with



the antagonists of religion and pledged itself to an active campaign against faith, in fulfillment of the demands of the Communist Party, with which it was completely identified. According to paragraph thirteen of the party program, "the party strives for the complete destruction of any union between the exploiting classes and religious organizations, and works towards the liberation of the laboring masses from religious prejudices by means of a widespread scientific instruction and anti-religious propaganda." The obligations of the party became those of the state. When the Swedish Communist, Höglund, expressed his opinion that "the Communist Party should not require every member to have a Marxian conception of the world," that "Socialism in itself was not antagonistic to the Christian faith," and that to proclaim atheism as a prerequisite to the membership in the Communist Party would be like "degrading it to the level of a sect," he met with strong opposition on the part of his Russian comrades. The slogan "Religion is a private affair" was reserved for the parties of the Second International. The attitude of the Russian Communists was formulated as a substantially different one by I. Stepanov, in his pamphlet on *The Problems and Methods of Anti-Religious Propaganda*:

In our decrees, as in the Erfurt program, it was clearly stated that the church was the private affair of individual citizens. But the opportunists endow this formula with the meaning that the state should assume the policy of "folded arms" towards religion, and revolutionary Marxism considers it the state's duty to wage a most unrelenting and extensive fight against religion, by means of an ideological influence over the laboring masses. To hold debates with priests on an equal footing . . . proves an opportunist tendency towards liberalism. We give no liberty to the obscurants and we shall never acknowledge their right to dim the conscience of the masses. Debates for debates' sake is a foreign, democratic formula.

In 1923 the *Red Gazette* asked the question: "Can we stop [at the separation of the church from the state]," and replied:

No we cannot! Our aim is to fight religion! In schools, at the clubs, and in society—everywhere we are confronting mysticism and devilry with scientific materialism. . . . We must introduce a political element into the struggle. To us religion and the church are connected with the

bourgeoisie; the working classes, having revolted against the bourgeoisie, must actively and energetically struggle against the implements of their enslavement.

Thus the party of the Third International declared war on religion and anti-Christian propaganda to be "not a private, but an all-party, all-proletarian task," employing the usual methods of class struggle against the bourgeoisie. These views had not been clearly defined by the time of the second session of the Orthodox Council, and even the very stability of the Bolshevik régime still seemed doubtful. But the decree on the separation of church and schools stated the question of war on religion quite pointedly. An immediate reaction to it was all-important, and considering the mood of the Council the character of this reaction could be easily anticipated.

At a sitting on January 25, 1918, Prince E. Trubetskoy in making a report on the decree described it as "an act of open persecution of the Orthodox church. . . . Those in power are threatening the very essence of the church, and have issued the decree in pursuance of this satanic design." They "are endeavoring to destroy the church, its institutions, and the clergy, with the aim of abolishing every opportunity for worship and divine service."

Something had to be done, but the Council possessed only the old methods: the "punishment of the sinners by penance or excommunication" and an "appeal to the people to rally round the churches and monasteries for the defense of the sanctuaries against the transgressors." "So God help them," said the chairman when the resolutions were passed. Unwilling to tolerate the present situation and anticipating further persecutions, the Council also promptly accepted another resolution, which empowered the Patriarch to appoint several candidates for the post of *Locum Tenens*, in case of his absence. These candidates were to be known only to the Patriarch and would be supplied by him with credentials, so that if necessary the power could pass automatically from one of them to another and "the church would never be without a supreme central authority, invested with the full rights of the Patriarch."

Thus the challenge was accepted and the open struggle began. A proclamation, approved by the Council, referred to "the people

who were in power and were calling themselves the People's Commissars" as being

. . . atheists, non-Russian, and non-Orthodox. . . Even the Tatars had more respect for our holy creed than our present law-givers. . . Had what they planned been achieved, Holy Orthodox Russia would have become the land of Antichrist. . . It is better to shed one's blood and win a martyr's crown, than to abandon the Orthodox faith to be abused by the enemy. Take heart, Holy Russia. Go to thy Calvary!

On February 28 the Patriarch and the Synod issued another proclamation in which they invited the laity to organize parish unions, which, however, should not be called church or religious unions. In case of emergency these unions could declare themselves owners of church property. The teachers at church schools "must form a close union with the parents of the pupils and endeavor to uphold unchanged the order of the establishment, until special regulations are issued by the church authorities." It was recommended that the sacred vessels be hidden from the "robbers," "not handed over voluntarily," but preserved with the rest of the church property. In case of "assault," "call the church people by tocsin, messengers, etc., to protect the church." In a word, the proclamation ignored the decree on the separation of church and schools, and called for a revolutionary method of action.

Following this proclamation, there were numerous church demonstrations and instances of open resistance which led to arrests and other reprisals. In Samara the clergy were summoned before a revolutionary tribunal; in Voronezh the crowd attacked a commissar, who had been sent to a local monastery, and slew him; religious processions were shot at in both Orel and Kharkov, while in Tula eleven people were killed, and in the district of Peshekhonie about one hundred arrests were made and some of those arrested were shot. At an earlier date Metropolitan Vladimir was murdered in Kiev.

On April 20, towards the end of its session, the Council adopted the "statutes on Orthodox parishes," which also disregarded the Soviet decree, and which subsequently served as a basis for the organization of the open struggle against the enemies of the church. Two days previously, in view of numerous casualties, it

was resolved to introduce a special prayer into the service "for the persecuted faithful and the martyrs"; and on January 25 of each year to celebrate mass in commemoration of "all those who perished during that fateful year"; to have religious processions visit their graves; to send special messages from the Patriarch to "those suffering for the sacred cause," and the blessing of the Holy Council for all the "upholders of the Faith." Moreover, on April 19 "those who either disobeyed or opposed the church authority and appealed to civil power" were condemned as apostates, and threatened with interdiction, unfrocking, and excommunication.

The directions of the Council were carried out, and the new parish unions intended for organizing resistance were formed speedily. On April 13 the *Petrograd Messenger* openly called for the establishment of parish coöperative stores, schools, and even parish tribunals. According to church antagonists, "the general opinion was that the Bolsheviks would break their neck on the church." The measures taken by the Council actually proved that its members had no conception of the hold which the Bolsheviks would shortly have on the church.

Because of the sudden break of the Bolsheviks with tradition, the leaders of the church counted on an upheaval of religiousness in the masses, and to a certain extent these expectations were justified. The following is a testimony written by A. Vvedensky, an opponent of the Patriarchal church:

Religiousness is increasing in the life of the church; the newly converted masses flood the houses of the Lord, and sometimes there flares up a genuine religious spirit. The anxiety for moral improvement and the regeneration of the soul is evident. . . . The new church intellectuals are at work organizing church power . . . they penetrate into the parish committees, which at present are the basic points for promoting the Tikhonian policy. . . . It appears as if the church were completely absorbed in the fulfillment of its direct, purely religious task. Many truly religious people might have (and I myself really had) the illusion that by the powerful sway of events the church had been forced to follow this only course. Undoubtedly alongside the deeply hidden current of counter-revolution, in 1919 and 1920 there was within the church the rustle of spring waters of genuine piety.

This admission is the more valuable, as it comes from a partisan fighter to whom the struggle for the preservation of church tradition means "counter-revolution" and who considers it very different from "genuine piety." In reality both trends merged into one, which the Rev. A. Vvedensky himself soon had to realize.

The third session of the Council took place "under the sword of Damocles." The Soviet press repeated over and over again that "the Council was the home of anti-revolutionary activities." The uprising of the Social Revolutionaries of the left, the attempts on the lives of Volodarsky, Uritsky, and Lenin led to the strengthening of reprisals against the counter-revolution on the part of the government. In the meantime there were more victims to the cause of the church, victims of the red terror: Bishops Andronik, Hermogenes, Ephraim, Rev. Kudriavtsev, and several laymen. But while the body of the church was "being buried deep in the earth," its head, the Patriarch, maintained his stand of irreconcilability. On October 26, 1918, he addressed another message to the Council of People's Commissars, still more passionate than the previous ones, in which the political element prevailed over the religious one, and which undoubtedly was not of his own composition. "All those who take up the sword shall perish by the sword," such was the text chosen for the message. Summing up the achievements of Bolshevism on its first anniversary, the Patriarch spoke of the "shameful peace" with Germany, the terms of which the Bolsheviks "dared not publish at full length," and of the mother country

. . . conquered, disparaged, and dismembered by them. . . . You have replaced the fatherland with the soulless International and driven the people to fratricide unprecedented in its cruelty. . . . No one feels safe . . . the defenseless are seized by hundreds, kept festering for months in prison, and often put to death without investigation or trial. . . . Bishops, priests, and monks, though entirely innocent, without discrimination, are executed under some vague charge of counter-revolution. You have incited the people to most shameful depredations . . . you have shrouded their conscience. . . . Particularly painful and cruel is the interference with the freedom of religion. . . . You have scoffed at the servants of the altar, forced the bishops to dig trenches [Hermogenes] and sent the priests to do foul work. You have laid hold

of church property accumulated by generations of the faithful . . . you have destroyed the original form of church community—the parish . . . dispersed diocesan assemblies, interfered with the internal administration of the church, deprived the children of spiritual food indispensable to an Orthodox education. . . . I shall not speak of the downfall of the once great and mighty Russia. . . . We know that our accusations only provoke your wrath and supply grounds for incriminating us with antagonism towards the authority; but the higher the pillar of your wrath rises, the more will it confirm the justice of our accusations.

Why did not the Soviet government at once accept this challenge? This can be explained in part by its inability to cope with the religious feelings within its own ranks, which had forced it to act cautiously. The Central Committee of the Communist Party, in a special circular of March 19, 1921, accused some party members of strengthening the religious prejudices by publicly performing the most absurd religious rituals, having no power to resist the demands of the backward masses to whom they were connected by economic and family ties, instead of waging the anti-religious war prescribed by paragraph thirteen of the program. A great sensation was produced by the Committee of the Communist Party in Kaluga, which reprimanded one of its members for playing the accordion at his home during the celebration of the midnight church service on Easter. According to a report, made in September 1921 to the Central Committee, "the question began to acquire an acute character with the numerical growth of the party and the admission into it of the backward element from the working class and the declassed petty bourgeois of the cities." In view of this situation, the Central Committee dared not take drastic measures, and only prohibited admission to the party of any clergymen and those of the "intellectuals" who did not subscribe entirely to paragraph thirteen. The observance of church rituals was still permitted to the peasants and workmen, and it was generally decided "not to project this question" and to put a damper on anti-religious disputes, so as not to give cause to "our enemies to say that we are persecuting the people for their faith."

Two facts transformed this cautious mood into an openly aggressive one: the appearance of a trend within the Orthodox church,

which met the Bolsheviks halfway, and the famine of 1921-22, which provided a convenient pretext for the confiscation of church valuables. Both put an end to the period of uncertainty in the relations between the government and the church. Instead of the sporadic struggle, restrained by the decrees on the freedom of conscience, there followed systematic persecutions, which while assuming various forms, always pursued one object—the abolishment of religion.

The first phase of this aggressive policy, which still showed the comparative weakness of the Soviet government, was an attempt to oppose the established church by other religious trends of a more progressive nature, willing to come to an agreement with the authorities.

During the very first days of the February Revolution (March 7, 1917) some priests from the group of "Thirty-two" (see page 152), deacons, and laymen organized an All-Russian Union of Democratic Orthodox Clergy and Laymen, under the chairmanship of the Rev. D. Popov, with Dean A. Vvedensky as secretary. The Union expressed itself in favor of a republican government in Russia and accepted the principle of a struggle against capitalism. Of course such a radical program could not unite all the progressive clergy. It had no success in Moscow, and at the Pre-Council Convention its proposals were voted down. But in St. Petersburg it took possession of *The Church and Social Messenger*, and one of its members, Prof. Titlinov, was elected to the Church Council, where he remained until a sharp conflict with the majority of the Council forced him to resign. When the conservative tendency of the majority of the Council became obvious, the Union began to lean towards the decision "to manage the church affairs independent of the ruling hierarchy." The group was averse to the reestablishment of the Patriarchate, and when Tikhon was elected the oppositionists resolved, at the instigation of Archpriest G. Shavelsky, "to break with the official church in Moscow." "In accordance with the plan," said Vvedensky, "the separation from Tikhon should have taken effect simultaneously in Petrograd, Kiev, and Odessa." But in Moscow it was considered that "the time was not yet ripe, and our proposal did not meet with general approval."

The time for the triumph of the opposition arrived later, when

the church majority came into open conflict with the Soviet government, and was declared by the latter to be guilty of counter-revolution. By the end of 1921 a pretext was found to accuse the church leaders of direct contact with the émigrés. From November 21 to December 3, a convention of bishops, priests, and laymen, who had emigrated from Russia—"The Convention of the Russian Church outside of Russia"—was held in Sremski Karlovtsy (Yugoslavia), under the chairmanship of Anthony Khrapovitsky, formerly the first candidate for the patriarchal see, whose political convictions are characterized by the fact that before the revolution he had been a member of the reactionary Union of the Russian People. In addition to the religious task, consisting in the election of an independent Synod of Bishops, acting in the capacity of a Supreme Church Administration, which later endeavored to appropriate the "rights and functions of the all-Russian church power," the convention also assumed the political task of formulating a demand for the restoration of a monarchy in Russia, and two-thirds of the participants declared themselves in favor of the Romanov dynasty. N. Markov, one of the most notorious monarchist politicians of the old régime, made a public statement to the effect that the majority of the convention deemed it their duty to state openly what "the church, which remained in Russia, was unable to say," for the "Holy Patriarch was threatened with danger." This statement greatly facilitated the task of those who wanted to accuse Tikhon of connection with the Karlovtsy Convention. It must be added that the convention also published an appeal to the army of General Wrangel, and that in January 1922 Anthony pleaded to the Genoa Conference for intervention in Russia. "People of Europe and the entire world," he wrote, "have pity on this people and supply its sons with ammunition."

Soon after that Krasikov, a member of the Soviet Commissariat for Justice, directly accused the Patriarch of secret coöperation with the Karlovtsy Convention and demanded that Tikhon should excommunicate those of its members who were his subordinates, for "conspiracy and treason." The Patriarch replied that he could not excommunicate anyone who was not within his territorial jurisdiction. Later, on April 22, 1922, he issued a decree abolishing the Supreme Church Administration outside of Russia. Nevertheless



the accusation against the Patriarch still remained, and evidently was the chief reason for his subsequent persecution. His enemies insisted that there was a direct connection between the intensification in the activities of the church and the Genoa Conference, "about which a rumor was circulated in church circles that it would cause the downfall of the Soviet government."

To prove this point Tikhon's opponents, the "Renovators," cited in particular the Patriarch's decree published in the autumn of 1921, which prohibited any innovations in the church under threats of extreme penalty. In their opinion "this decree, being the apogee of Tikhon's conservatism, was at the same time the breaking point in the history of Tikhonism." In fact, it was at that time that the Renovators, reduced to despair by the "psychologically unacceptable" decree, undertook their decisive offensive. An opportune reason for attacking the Patriarch was provided by the controversy over the question of donating church valuables to help those stricken by famine. As early as September 1921, A. Vvedensky sent an appeal to the *Red Gazette* begging church people "to share the valuables of their churches with the famished." This appeal was never published. On February 19, 1922, the Patriarch himself requested the clergy to donate the "unconsecrated" articles of value to the famine sufferers, and on the following day there appeared in the *Petersburg Pravda* another letter of Vvedensky, in which he emphasized the inadequacy of Tikhon's proposal. This letter served as a prelude to the governmental edict of February 23 on the confiscation, within a month, of all the articles of value not immediately required for religious purposes, which previously had been assigned to the groups of the faithful, to be used for relief in the famine-stricken districts. On February 28 the Patriarch replied with the famous proclamation which actually caused the breaking point in the relations between the Soviet government and "Tikhon's church."

This proclamation declared the act of the Soviet government to be sacrilegious. The Patriarch disapproved the voluntary surrender of consecrated articles, as being prohibited by the canons, and regarded it as a sacrilege for which laymen should be excommunicated and priests unfrocked. Distributed throughout Russia, the proclamation provoked a new outburst of resistance against the execution of the Soviet decree of February 23. The official statistics

record as many as 1,414 bloody conflicts, which led to a series of trials in Moscow, Petrograd, Smolensk, etc. The strongest impression was produced by an action brought on June 10 against Benjamin, the Metropolitan of Petrograd, and his execution on July 6. The trial of the Metropolitan, whom even his antagonist, Boiarsky, described as a saint, disclosed, among other things, that a complete agreement had been reached between the leaders of the anti-Tikhon movement in the church and the Soviet authorities. The decision to summon Benjamin to trial, which was taken only after several months of procrastination, was due to the fact that he had dared to interdict Vvedensky until this hierarch should repent. During the trial both Vvedensky and another Renovator, Vladimir Krasnitsky, a former member of a reactionary organization and an anti-Semite, acted as chief prosecutors.

By this time active measures had been taken by the opposition against the Patriarch. On March 25 there appeared in the *Izvestia* a letter of twelve priests, known as the Vvedensky's group, quoting the declarations of Archbishops Eudoxius, Seraphinus, and Metrophanes in favor of the surrender of church valuables for the relief of the famine sufferers. The letter severely censored all those who "had no wish to help," accusing them of formalism and lack of Christian love, and appealed to the faithful to donate even the consecrated vessels in view of the alleged willingness of the lay authorities to let the church itself feed the famished directly.

There is sufficient evidence to prove that the choice of the moment for a decisive campaign against Tikhon's church and the forming of an alliance for this purpose with the "Living Church" was deliberately made by the Soviet power in the spring of 1922. As Krasnitsky stated in August of that same year, "The state authorities suggested in the spring that the church change its policy. . . . This met with complete agreement on our part." The same was confirmed by Titlinov: "External conditions made our move possible, for precisely at that time the revolutionary authorities were ready to support a new movement <sup>1</sup> within the church, even

<sup>1</sup> According to the Bolsheviks, the suggestion came from the Renovators. E. Iaroslaysky, in his articles published in 1923-24, repeatedly asserted that "frequently priests called on the Committees of the Party requesting to enlist them as party members, and sometimes they even wanted to organize special groups of communist

though it remained foreign to them. Thus the church innovators crossed their Rubicon."

At the meeting of the Council of People's Commissars, in the month of April 1922, following the motion by Trotsky, it was decided that the policy towards the church should assume an aggressive character, while as explained by an article in the *Pravda*, the confiscation of valuables "should serve to sunder the crumbling body of the former state church." "We shall profit by the discord existing among the clergy," Stepanov stated, "with the sole purpose of drawing the people away from all and every religion." Thus each of the temporary allies was pursuing a different object, and only the stronger could win.

The circumstances were particularly profitable for dealing a decisive blow at the Patriarchal church. The legal proceedings in Moscow against certain anti-Bolshevik groups implicated patriarch Tikhon, who even before that was suspected of connections with the émigrés, and it was decided to bring him to trial. This moment was seized by the opposition group, evidently with the consent of the authorities, to send a delegation to the Patriarch. On May 12, the delegates called on Tikhon and told him that he was held morally responsible for the execution of the thirteen people condemned to die the following day in Moscow. Then Krasnitsky enumerated the accusations brought by the Soviet government against the Patriarch; apart from his proclamations, Tikhon was charged with sending consecrated bread to Emperor Nicholas II, when the Tsar was held prisoner in Ekaterinburg, with transforming the church into a political organization, and with ordaining avowed supporters of the monarchical régime. Finally, the delegates demanded the immediate convocation of

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priests. But we tried to avoid such helpers and allies. . . . Our ways were far apart. . . ."

This information was confirmed on June 9, 1923, by a correspondent of the *London Times*, who had the original of the petition submitted by the priests in the spring of 1922 to the All-Union Central Executive Committee in which they asked permission to organize communist groups, and expressed their intention of opening them in every center of the Orthodox church, and so establish a spy system over the Patriarch's functionaries and force the church to assist the government in the realization of its communist plans. The same correspondent was also told by one of the hierarchs in support of this information that "unfortunately we are bound down by secret agents who are using us as political tools."

another Church Council and the complete withdrawal of the Patriarch from church administration, until the time when the Council could make decisions. All this was repeated in an address to the faithful, printed in the *Izvestia* on May 14. It was clear that the demands of the opposition were supported by the government.

The Patriarch yielded to the force of circumstances and wrote to Bishop Agathangel, proposing that the latter should take his place. This was followed by Tikhon's arrest at the Trinity Monastery. Agathangel was also arrested, with the obvious aim of creating an opportunity for the Renovators to assume the administration of the church. On May 18 Vvedensky and his colleagues sent a letter to Tikhon in which they told him of having asked the authorities for permission to open his chancery and, in a "filial" way, entreated his blessing that they might assume the administration of church affairs. After another long conversation with the members of the group, the Patriarch gave his consent and wrote his resolution on their letter, assigning synodal affairs to the care of the Renovators, for subsequent transfer to Agathangel, and those of the Moscow diocese to the keeping of Bishop Leonidas, pending the arrival of Bishop Innocent. But Innocent was not admitted to Moscow, and Leonidas, because of his advanced age, refused to undertake the responsibility of diocesan affairs, and so finally the group applied to Bishop Antoninus, who under the autocracy had suffered for refusing to name the Tsar as Autocrat in his prayers after the October Manifesto of 1905. In the meantime the Patriarch had been transferred to the Don Monastery, and without his authorization the Renovators organized a Provisional Supreme Church Administration, which included the entire group under the leadership of Antoninus.

On the same day, May 18, the group now in power published an appeal to the people, in the *Izvestia* and *Pravda*, which stated that by the "will of God" Russia had a Workmen's and Peasants' Government, whose aim it was to save the country from the ghastly after-effects of the war, and that the church was assisting it in its struggle for justice and the welfare of humanity. It accused the higher hierarchs of having gone over to the enemies of the people and to have become engaged in counter-revolutionary activities. They had refused help to those stricken by famine and they strove

to bring about the downfall of the Soviet state. The authors of the appeal, as "representatives of the wide church circles," condemned these hierarchs and deemed it necessary to convoke a Local Council to solve the problem of church administration and to establish "normal relations between the church and the Soviet government." In this way the victors did their duty towards the Bolsheviks, at the same time attempting to justify themselves before the masses and to win their support.

It very soon became evident that church affairs were controlled not only by the Commissariat for Justice, in charge of church legislation, but by still another factor having no regard for law. Entering upon a systematic and active struggle against the church, the Communist Party resorted to its secret police force, and later on, when the "All-Union State Political Department" (i. e., the GPU) had been organized, the management of church affairs was entrusted to a special "Third Department of the Office of Secret Operations," at the head of which was the notorious E. A. Tuchkov, familiarly known as "the new Chief Procurator of the Russian Church." The commissioners of the Third Department were to be found in every local office of the GPU, and from that moment in all the efforts at "legalization" made by various church groups, which had accepted the conditions of living under the Soviet government, the iron fist of Tuchkov and his subordinates was felt. The very term "legalization" reminded one of the attitude of the old régime towards the political parties, and was absolutely contrary to the idea of freedom of conscience, as promised to all creeds.

The time came for the victorious group to profit by the agreement with the Soviet government and to establish its "self-determination." A foundation was laid by assuming the name of "Living Church" and by starting the publication of a periodical on May 5, 1922, under the same title. The new periodical demanded a radical change in the personnel of the church hierarchy, preached cessation of civil strife between the church and the Soviet state, advocated the principle of separation of church and state, and announced, in a somewhat vague form, a general transition of the church from its traditional inertia to the "dynamic, vital, and creative progress from one attainment to another." Moreover, the Living Church demanded the abolition of "soulless formalism" in the perform-

ance of the divine service, and combated the despotism of the bishops; it insisted upon the secular (i. e., married) clergy being admitted to the episcopate. On these grounds it was decided to form a party of the Living Church, and so on May 29, 1922, a convention of 146 delegates met in Moscow. However, only thirty-six of those present joined the new organization. In view of the character of the platform, this result is not astonishing. It contained an unconventional treatment of the traditional Christian dogmas supplemented with a program of Christian socialism. The justice of social revolution and the idea of the universal union of workmen for protection against exploitation were recognized. The necessity to free the liturgical forms from superstition and survivals of paganism, the elimination of antiquated canonical rules, extensive participation in parish life by the laity, and the right to elect married priests to bishoprics, representation of the lower clergy in the higher church administration—such were the other planks in the Living Church program.

Not until the end of June did the final organization of the party on these principles take place, and even then under protest from the assembled public, especially the women. Archpriest Vladimir Krasnitsky was placed at the head of the presiding council. This was followed by an All-Russian Conference of the Living Church at the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour, at which twenty-four dioceses were represented by 169 delegates. It lasted from August 6 to 16, and was rife with discord. The more moderate elements were satisfied to bring the church out of the impasse to which it had been led by Tikhon and the Council's struggle against the Soviet state, but the majority went further in its demands and, under the leadership of Krasnitsky, aimed at a decisive victory for the secular over the regular clergy, i. e., over the bishops and monks. The antagonists of the Living Church saw in this the central idea of the movement. Thus in the opinion of Prof. Troitsky, for instance,

The Living Church was nothing else but a revolt of priests, or, to use the canonical language, a presbyterian schism, created by the pride of the metropolitan clergy. Since olden days the Petrograd "Fathers," chosen from among the most gifted students of the theological academies, had occupied privileged positions in the church and had far-reaching connections in various groups of society, beginning with the Imperial

Court and the higher bureaucracy and ending with labor leaders, the future rulers of Russia.

Such was the social background of the Living Church movement. This did not exclude the elements of sincere Presbyterianism though of course they were very unlike those of the Reformation period. The Living Church did not demand the abolition of the episcopate, but wanted to limit its power in the church and insisted upon the admission of the secular clergy into its ranks, thus sanctioning matrimony for bishops. Previous to the August conference, in accordance with this view, several consecrations had already taken place, but at the conference itself serious differences of opinion developed on this subject even among the majority members. Bishop Antoninus and his followers did not agree that married priests should be consecrated bishops, and, in contradiction to the Living Church, they also considered that if a monk left the monastery, he thereby forfeited his priesthood and monkhood. During the vote on the question of the episcopate, the Living Church had thirty-seven episcopal votes, but thirty-six were against it, and twenty-four abstained from voting and assumed a neutral attitude.

The conference's chief purpose was, however, not to introduce reforms but to organize for struggle. It was necessary to make preparations for a new Church Council and to fulfill the political obligations towards the Bolsheviks. So the first resolution passed by the conference was that Patriarch Tikhon, being guilty of producing church discord, had to be unfrocked, and that all bishops opposed or merely passive towards the policy of the Living Church had to be deprived of their rights, and have a penance imposed on them. The parish councils that were antagonistic to the local progressive priests had to be dismissed. Before closing, the conference issued a proclamation to the people in which the whole history of the church struggle was interpreted in terms of social revolution, and the old church was violently denounced for its alleged cooperation with such enemies of the people as Kolchak, Denikin, and the fugitive bishops of the Karlovtsy Council. The bishops, the Tsarist government, and the "capitalists" were charged with having persecuted the secular clergy and the laity, all the "suffering

and the oppressed." Prompted by the Karlovtsy Council, the "princes of the church" under the Patriarch's leadership had attempted to start another civil war by pretending to protect the church valuables from confiscation. This "filled the cup of endurance to overflowing, and the faithful sons of the Orthodox church felt compelled to take revolutionary measures for the renovation of the church, on the grounds of biblical principles and apostolic traditions."

However, not all the Renovators were willing to accept the politician Krasnitsky's program and methods, and on August 20, 1922, the majority, headed by Antoninus, decided to leave the new party and form a separate organization under the name of "Regeneration of the Church." Like the Living Church it insisted upon the return to the democracy of apostolic days and on the liberation of religion and cult from medieval superstitions. But while agreeing to a free election of priests by the parishioners, the group of Antoninus did not entirely repudiate monasticism, and differed from the Living Church on the above indicated points; moreover, it directed its appeal to the popular masses rather than the lower church strata. Being comparatively moderate, the group of Antoninus had great initial success, attracting to its ranks thousands of Moscow priests and laity, and many followers of the Living Church from Petersburg.

The secession of Dean Alexander Vvedensky from the Living Church bore a more personal character. The gifted preacher and outstanding promoter of the renovation movement, disagreeing on many points in its program and not finding in it what he wished, formed his own group, known as the "Ancient Apostolic Church."

In carrying out their plan of action, the leaders of the Living Church applied themselves to a preliminary purging of the church, in order to have the majority at the election to the Council. This preparation caused postponement of the convocation of the Council: first, to February 2 and then until April 29, 1923. The purge was given unexpected support by Vladimir Lvov, the man who, in his capacity as Chief Procurator, was responsible for the first purge in the pre-revolutionary Synod and who now was a member of the new Supreme Church Administration. In the *Izvestia* of August 2, 1922, he ascribed the grievous results of the Council of 1917-18 to



the reactionary majority of the hierarchs of those days, and demanded that the church be purified of every reactionary element, as only then could the new Council carry out the desired reforms. Notwithstanding the separation of church and state, the government, in Lvov's opinion, was obliged to take an active part in the purge, since the church and more particularly the parish councils served as a last refuge for its reactionary antagonists. Thus did Lvov anticipate the procedure later decided upon by the Congress of August 6, 1922.

It was obvious that the Living Church, in alliance with the government, was bent upon the complete destruction of the Tikhonian Orthodox church. In order to strike at the very root of the church organization, the newly created Supreme Church Administration sent fifty-six delegates to the dioceses, investing them with unlimited power and promising full support from the Soviet authorities, including the GPU. They were to "select in all dioceses from the mass of the Orthodox church people the adherents to their ideas, to organize them, and then entrust to them the charge of local church administration." Organizations that were not registered were proclaimed closed by the decree of August 10, 1922. This suddenly severed all connection between local religious groups and the central church administration, which had been deprived of legal existence. At first, when the emissaries of the Supreme Church Administration arrived at their destination, they declared themselves agents of the Patriarch, winning over thereby several bishops and a large number of the clergy; but soon the deceit was discovered. Metropolitan Agathangel strove to preserve the existence of the dioceses by acknowledging them "autocephalous" and proposing to organize meetings of the faithful. "Notwithstanding the extreme vigilance of the GPU," as the *Izvestia* admitted on August 28, 1922, "a series of secret meetings of the faithful were held in Vladimir, Kursk, Riazan, Perm, and other cities, and everywhere it was resolved to disavow the Supreme Church Administration and support Patriarch Tikhon."

After this the Living Church resorted to compulsory measures. The Petrograd Diocesan Executive Committee decreed that all clergymen who had repudiated the Supreme Church Administration should be dismissed. On December 13, 1922, seventy-four

active members of the church were sentenced to imprisonment in Moscow, as happened also in Kiev, Odessa, Minsk, Ekaterinoslav, and other diocesan cities, and by the end of 1923 sixty-six bishops had been banished. In the meantime the Supreme Church Administration waged war on the lower levels of church organization—the parish councils which had been formed in accordance with the regulations of the Council of 1917–18. In 1922, during the August Conference of the Living Church, it was decided “to dismiss at once those of the parish councils that were opposed to the renovation movement, and to constitute new ones composed of persons recommended, on his responsibility, by the archpriest of each parish.” In another resolution it was clearly stated that only those who adhered to the principles of the Living Church could be regarded as qualified lay members of a parish. A special deputation from the conference petitioned Kalinin, then the chairman of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee, to cancel the agreements made by the Provisional Executive Committee with the Orthodox parish councils and to sequester their churches. In many localities (White Russia and Kiev) the parishes were actually registered anew. After six months of systematic purging, the bishops of the Patriarchal church were almost entirely debarred from taking part in the elections; some already had been shut up in prisons or sent into exile, others had taken refuge abroad, while among those who remained, some boycotted the elections because they regarded the very convocation of the Council as non-canonical. Small wonder that out of 430 members of the Council there were only forty-five belonging to the Patriarchal party. The electoral procedure was the same as in the case of the First Council, but the purging of the parish councils and the support of the government had their results. Two hundred and fifty delegates, i. e., the absolute majority, belonged to the party of the Living Church, while the remaining 135 were distributed between the two other trends: 110 belonged to the Ancient Apostolic Church of Vvedensky, and 25, of a more moderate reformatory tinge, joined Antoninus in the “Regeneration of the Church.” Thus the lower strata of the church, following in the footsteps of the upper, sincerely or insincerely, turned to radicalism, and so the Council of 1923 was destined to represent the extreme radical tendency in the church. Signifi-

cantly and in distinction from the procedure of 1917-18, the supreme authority of the Council of Bishops over the decisions of the Council had been abolished.

Once more the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour was to witness the solemn act of opening the Council, this time under the chairmanship of Antoninus. At the second sitting, on May 2, upon a motion by Vvedensky, there was unanimously passed a resolution praising the Soviet government. The Second Council thanked the authorities for allowing them to assemble, and emphasized the identity of the "great principles of the October Revolution" with those of Christianity. The next day, in his absence, the question of Tikhon's deposal was raised and, following the hearing of his indictment supported by fifty-four out of the sixty-six hierarchs present and an impassioned speech delivered by Vvedensky, it was promptly solved. The Council then adopted a resolution, read by the chairman, with one voting against and five abstaining from voting. In it the Council "testified that the world was divided into two camps—the exploiting capitalists and the proletariat"—and that the Soviet government was the only government in the world to originate a struggle against the social evil. It also proclaimed capitalism a "deadly sin, and the struggle against it a sacred duty for every Christian." The Council appealed to "every honest Christian citizen of Russia to join in a united front under the leadership of the Soviet government in the war against the universal social evil." The First Council and the Patriarch were accused of counter-revolutionary activities; the church ban imposed upon the Soviet government was declared invalid; Tikhon was called a traitor to the church, was divested of his priestly and monastic rank and was to become again a mere layman resuming his own name, Basil Belavin. The Soviet government was not to be regarded as that of Antichrist; on the contrary, it alone could realize the ideals of God's Kingdom on earth. The Council proclaimed the reestablishment of the Patriarchate a counter-revolutionary measure, and decided to restore in the church the conciliar system of government. On the same evening it sanctioned the election of married priests to bishoprics, while on the following day the right to conclude a second marriage was granted the priests but not the bishops. In addition to this the Council condemned the practice of falsifying the

relics of the saints, basing its action on an investigation made at an earlier date by the Soviet authorities, and it also decided to close the monasteries, replacing them with communistic fraternities. Simultaneously the Council adopted the Gregorian calendar. The counter-revolutionary hierarchs and priests who had escaped abroad were excluded from the church; Vvedensky was consecrated Metropolitan, and a new Supreme Church Council was elected. Of this body ten members belonged to the Living Church, six to the Ancient Apostolic Church, and two to the Regeneration of the Church; out of the eighteen members twelve were priests, one a laymen, and only five were bishops. Evidently the direct object of all these decisions was consideration for the interests of the secular clergy, while the laity was treated with distrust. From the political point of view, the orders of the GPU were carefully complied with.

It appeared that the Living Church had obtained from its alliance with the government all that it desired, but the dangers of this alliance and the spuriousness of the victory achieved immediately became evident. The Orthodox masses showed a stern disapproval of the undertaking, as one of its promoters, Prof. Titlinov, was forced to admit in 1923.

A huge majority of the clergy and church communities refused to recognize the new church administration, and the names of the leaders became odious; Dean A. Vvedensky had a stone thrown at his head, while others were threatened with stoning, but were protected by the militia. Bishops and priests of the Living Church could not officiate without being disturbed, neither could they show themselves in the churches nor on the street without being publicly insulted. Among the illiterate masses rumors were circulated on the advent of Antichrist, and they asserted in Petrograd that Dean Vvedensky drove in a car having on it the stamp of Antichrist, only turned upside down (999). At public meetings of the Living Church the antagonistic attitude of many people was quite striking.

From different sources we know that the mood of the masses was expressed in numerous acts of violence directed against the members of the Living Church. For instance, at the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour, V. D. Krasnitsky was beaten until he lost consciousness; Evdokimov, a priest of the Living Church, was murdered in

Iaroslavl; another representative of that church, Serebriakov, was cruelly beaten in Tsaritsyn, while the same fate befell Bishop Theodosius in Poltava, and another bishop in Odessa was ejected from the church by the crowd.

Naturally, the Bolsheviks could not be satisfied with such a result of their alliance with the Living Church. Their hope of splitting the Orthodox church proved to be an illusion, and it became evident that the triumph of the Renovators was not a real victory over the established church. Since it seemed advisable to resort to other means in order to disarm the church, why not try for a direct settlement with the Tikhonians? The Bolsheviks, of course, must have known that their object would never be attained by making a martyr of Tikhon. In his turn, the Patriarch also realized that with the end of the civil war it would be useless for him or the church he still represented to persist in the old irreconcilable attitude. Tikhon was facing a trial, and admission cards for the occasion were already being distributed in Moscow when, according to his own testimony, the authorities gave him to understand that if he agreed to issue a specific statement he would be released from prison. To the surprise of the public the facsimile of a statement written by Tikhon on the eve of his trial, June 15, 1923, was published in the *Izvestia* on the first of July. In this statement the Patriarch admitted that he "actually had been antagonistic towards the Soviet government, and that occasionally his passive enmity had become intensely active." He agreed that his actions, "with but a few inaccuracies, had been correctly stated in the report of the Church Tribunal," and he recognized the validity of his indictment, in accordance with the articles of the criminal code, for the anti-Soviet activities. "I repent of these offenses against the Soviet régime," wrote Tikhon, "and I beg the Supreme Court . . . to free me from arrest, upon which I vow that from now on I shall never be an enemy to the Soviet government. I will draw a definite and strict line between myself and all monarchist and White Guards counter-revolutionaries, both within and outside the boundaries of Russia."

As was to be expected, the exiled monarchists preferred to see in Tikhon's declaration either a forgery or an admission forcibly extorted from the Patriarch. But Tikhon knew what he was doing: he was restoring to his Tikhonian church the possibility of a legal

existence in Soviet Russia, as well as the opportunity of organizing a defense against the aggressive attempts of the Renovators. The Soviet government, for its part, now entered upon a new stage in the religious struggle, and, as a direct attack on the Orthodox church from the outside proved unsuccessful, it was decided to try to control it from within.

The Patriarch profited by his return to the Don Monastery to issue a statement, on July 15, in which he censured the activities of the Living Church. He reviewed the circumstances in which the members of the Living Church had appropriated his chancery, instead of transferring it to Agathangel (see page 173), and he repudiated their statement that they had obtained power from him, pointing out that it was impossible to bestow the authority of a bishop on secular clergymen, and reminding his opponents that an arbitrary seizure of a diocese was punishable by unfrocking (Article 16 of the Antioch Council). The usurpers had further aggravated their position by consecrating new bishops for the dioceses sequestered by them, and had placed themselves without the church. Therefore all their actions during the Patriarch's absence were void. Reassuming the authority, which had been delegated to Agathangel, Tikhon summoned the faithful bishops to assist him in conciliating the church, and invited those who had been seduced to repent. Among the latter was Sergius, the future *Locum Tenens* of the Patriarchal See, who performed his penance in the garb of a simple monk. The churches in Moscow immediately rallied around the Patriarch and the masses followed their example, so that the faithful again crowded the Patriarchal churches, while those of the Renovators were deserted.

The Living Church had compromised itself in the opinion of the people by its relations with the Bolsheviki and the radicalism of the new ideas it introduced into religion. In this last respect, however, it tried to act with caution. All radical plans resulting from its program of reform, both in the field of doctrine and cult, were relegated by the Council to a special committee for further discussions, in which the entire body of the church had to participate. But there were some external circumstances which produced such an unfavorable impression on the masses that the victors themselves were forced to make concessions. In the first place, the Renovators saw

the danger of being divided into three groups, for it alienated them from the traditional forms of church organization and led the masses to mistake them for sects. The retirement of Bishop Antoninus on June 29, 1923, as chairman, had discredited them still further. The Patriarchal church was headed by a Holy Synod, which included some of the eldest bishops, so the Renovated Church also started to seek for an "elder" to take the place of Antoninus, and they found him in Eudoximus of Odessa. Eudoximus laid down the following conditions: that all groups of Renovators should dissolve their organizations and renounce their titles; that the Supreme Church Administration should be renamed the Holy Synod, and that at the consecration of bishops preference should be extended to monks. Evidently these three conditions were aimed at pacifying the masses, and the truth is that early in August 1923, at the plenary meeting of the members of the Council of 1923, it was resolved to organize a single party based on "Synodal Democracy" in opposition to the "Patriarchal Autocracy." After several days of heated arguments the plenum voted to support Eudoximus' motion, declaring for the dissolution of the groups; transforming the Administration into the Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church, under the chairmanship of Eudoximus, and deciding to include in the synodal body several of the eldest bishops who had not yet joined Tikhon. Vvedensky agreed to bring into the new party his entire group of the Apostolic Church, and although Krasnitsky refused to join with his Living Church, a majority of his followers abandoned him for the new church organization. Antoninus with his Union of Church Regeneration, which likewise refused to join, also lost the greater part of his adherents.

The New Church, which called itself Synodal, advanced the principle of conciliarity. It professed submission to the Councils of 1917 and 1923, but demanded the same submission from the Patriarch, who regarded the Council of 1923 as non-canonical. In its proclamation to the Orthodox Christians, published in the *Izvestia* on August 12, 1923, the new Synod announced the change that had taken place and emphasized the fact that the New Church was preserving "Holy Orthodoxy in brotherly accord with the Holy Ecumenical Patriarchs," who had sent formal greetings to its chair-

man, but none to the Patriarch. In fact, although the Patriarchs had severely condemned Tikhon's deposition by the Second Council, only the Patriarch of Antioch continued to hold this opinion, while Gregory VII of Constantinople, being in need of the Bolsheviks' political help, instructed his delegates to support the party loyal to the Soviet government, and on May 6, 1924, he demanded that for the sake of peace in the church Tikhon should surrender the administration of the church, as an act of self-sacrifice. The Synod in Constantinople supported this idea and proposed to abolish "though temporarily" the Patriarchate and to establish a supreme administration, based on the principle of a synodal council. Tikhon protested against this non-canonical interference by the Patriarch of Constantinople, but it did not prevent the latter's delegates from expressing themselves in favor of the Synodal Church, nor Gregory VII from sending a representative to the Synod of the New Church. This example was followed by the Patriarch of Alexandria and then, on July 9, 1926, after some slight hesitation, they were joined by the Patriarch of Jerusalem. The New Church also enjoyed the sympathy and financial support of the American Methodist Episcopal Church, in the name of which Bishop Edgar Blake participated in the Council of 1923. All this served to strengthen the position of the Synodal Church among the masses, the more so as it continued its evolution towards moderation. Thus it postponed the passing of resolutions on the two questions so vexatious to the faithful—that of married bishops and the right of the priests to remarry—and decided to refer these questions to the Eighth Ecumenical Council. The adoption of the Gregorian calendar, which affected the celebration of Orthodox holidays, was left to the free choice of each parish. In February 1925 Eudoximus was replaced by Benjamin, one of the oldest of the pre-revolutionary hierarchs. The party agreed upon the idea of an All-Russian Church Administration formed on a federal basis, and so established independent church administrations in the Ukraine, White Russia, Siberia, and the Far East, as well as in the United States of America and in Western Europe. While Tikhon's stronghold was in Moscow and North Russia, the Synodal Church retained its influence over the Russian South. Having won support on all its resolutions at the Moscow Convention of June 10-18, 1924, at



which there were present 466 delegates, 83 of whom were bishops, the Synodal Church began its preparations for the Council of 1925.

In those days Patriarch Tikhon realized that, in view of the energetic activities and successes of his adversaries, he could not remain idle, but in order to start activities on his part he had to obtain the government's authorization. He asked the Bolsheviki to authorize him to convoke a Council and to organize that part of the Church which had remained loyal to him, whereupon he was made to understand clearly that none of this would be granted to him if he continued his relations with the counter-revolutionary elements or surrounded himself with people whom the government could not trust. As a practical solution, the Patriarch was advised to form a union with the remnants of the Living Church and to introduce Krasnitsky as vice-chairman of the Church Administration, to which Tikhon consented. In a petition written by Krasnitsky he asked the Patriarch to admit him "and his brethren, who might wish to follow his example," to work "on the reestablishment of peace within the Church and the arrangements for the next Local Council" in the Church Administration organized by Tikhon. The Patriarch replied to this petition on the same day, May 19, 1924, by giving his consent to Krasnitsky's being included among the members of the Supreme Church Administration. Subsequently there was formed a provisional bureau for preparation of the convocation of the Council, consisting of twelve members, of whom five were appointed by the Patriarch and the others, headed by Krasnitsky, belonged to the Living Church, while the supreme power rested with the Synod of Bishops presided over by the Patriarch.

All these schemes aroused intense opposition on the part of Tikhon's own followers, and ultimately he was forced to declare the attempt at a coalition with the Living Church a failure. Krasnitsky and his adherents resigned and simultaneously the government refused its support.

The Synodal Church was much pleased with the failure of the Living Church, and it tried to profit by the distressing situation in which the Patriarch found himself to win him over to its side. In May 1924 several members of the Pre-Council Conference at-

tempted to approach Tikhon, but they failed because the Patriarch realized that the Synodal Church was far more dangerous to him than the Living Church. The Conference then passed a resolution "To continue the irreconcilable fight against the Tikhonians and to regard any compromise with them equally damaging from either the political or the church point of view."

Ill health put an end to Tikhon's further activities. His final views on church policy were formed during his fatal illness and found expression in his "Testament," which proved again that he strove to master the lessons taught by life and to find for his followers a more favorable ground in their struggle against the chief menace, the possible success of the Synodal Church. The ground lay in absolute loyalty towards the government, for only then could the struggle be conducted on an equal footing.

However, in writing his appeal the Patriarch never thought it would be his last testament, for he believed fully in his recovery and even dated the document from the Don Monastery, to which he expected to return on leaving the hospital. But he died on that same day, April 7, 1925. On December 25, 1924 (January 7, 1925) he had written an order by which the patriarchal rights were to descend to Metropolitan Cyril or Agathangel, and, should they be unable to accept the legacy, to Metropolitan Peter Krutitsky until the constitutional election of a new Patriarch. It was Metropolitan Peter who became *Locum Tenens*, and a week after Patriarch Tikhon's death, Peter published in the *Izvestia* the late Patriarch's "Testament," in which it was stated that the Soviet power was at the head of the Russian state "by the will of God," that by its decree of January 1918 it had "secured . . . for our Orthodox church the right to exist and to conduct its religious affairs according to the requirements of faith, so long as it did not violate the order and the rights of other citizens," and that therefore he, the Patriarch, accepted the new order of things and wholeheartedly welcomed the authority of workmen and peasants. "Opposed to any compromise in the realm of religion, in our attitude towards civil affairs we must be loyal to the Soviet government . . . condemning any association with its enemies and the spreading of either open or secret propaganda against it." The Patriarch especially blamed the "archpriests and priests who had deserted their

country and started activities abroad harmful to the church." He asserted definitely that he had no connection with them, and once more confirmed the condemnation of the so-called Karlovtsy Council, threatening that "any further attempts of that kind would force us to take radical measures, such as to interdict the priests and bring the Council to trial." He appealed to the émigré clergy to cease their political activities and have the courage to return home, while within Russia he addressed especially the church parish societies, begging them "to prevent . . . anti-government activities and not to cherish the hope for a restoration of the monarchy," for "the Soviet government is the true popular power of the workmen and peasants, and so it will be lasting and stable." The object of all his advice was to "direct the activities of the Orthodox societies away from politics and towards the strengthening of the Orthodox faith, because the enemies of Holy Orthodoxy—Sectarians, Catholics, Protestants, Renovators, Atheists, and all such people—were trying to use every moment in the life of the Orthodox church to its detriment."

In his appeal the Patriarch advised the Patriarchal Church to employ the same methods as those of the Synodal Church, and in this way brought them rather closer to each other. Soon after his death, the Synod of the New Church made an offer of conciliation to Peter, the *Locum Tenens*. The meeting of the All-Russian Council was scheduled for the next autumn, and the Holy Synod, anxious to insure its success, appealed to all the clergy in the Moscow diocese "to put an end to the present discord; to forget our mutual wrongs and misunderstandings in the name of the Resurrected Christ and unite in preparatory work. . . . The Holy Synod deems it is time to forget the words 'Tikhonians' and 'New Church' and to remember only that we are all the children of one mother—the Orthodox church." As this offer remained unanswered, the Synod made another attempt by announcing on June 13 that the clergy and laymen, not acknowledging the Council of 1923, were invited to participate in preparations for the Council of 1925 and in the elections, on equal terms with the others. It added, however, that should the bishops and the clergy refuse to come to an agreement, the diocesan administration would appeal directly to the faithful "to terminate at this Council the dissension

within the church, which had been provoked by the higher hierarchs of the old church." In a private conversation held at that time Peter said that he could give no answer to the proposal, because he was only a *Locum Tenens* and must first convoke all the bishops, a great number of whom were abroad or in prison, and that he requested the New Church to use its good offices for their liberation. The representatives of the New Church replied that this was a political question which they were not prepared to discuss, and the negotiations came to an end. Subsequently Peter published a message in which he took a definitely uncompromising stand. "At present," he wrote, "the so-called 'New Church' discusses more and more frequently a reunion with us. Meetings are held in towns and villages at which the Orthodox clergy and laymen are invited to debate this question and the preparations for their pseudo-Council." But the canonical regulations "prohibit any participation in such assemblies and particularly in the elections," for, in accordance with the twentieth rule of the Antioch Council, "no one is allowed to convoke a Council without the consent of the bishops, who are at the head of the Metropolitan Sees," and no legal act could be executed "without our approbation in collaboration with all the members of the established Orthodox hierarchy." Peter also reminded the New Church of its resolutions at the illegal Council of 1923, and finished by stating that the "reunion was possible only in the event that every one of them should confess his errors and submit to public penitence for his apostasy." The New Church answered this by three proclamations calling the masses of the Patriarch's adherents to take the matter into their hands, and then requested all the diocesan authorities to join its party. Here again the Soviet government tried to be of assistance by arresting and banishing those who were obdurate and by exercising pressure upon the irresolute, but even with this help the efforts of the New Church remained without success.

In accordance with tradition the Third Council met on October 1, 1926, at the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour in Moscow. The delegates, numbering 345, were elected from 17,000 parishes; there were 100 bishops, 120 priests, and 125 laymen; 314 delegates were from Great Russia, 7 from White Russia, and 13 from the Ukraine. Also, there were present the representatives of the Patriarchs of

Constantinople and Alexandria, and as an observer the French Jesuit d'Herbigny, while the autocephalous churches sent greetings. Out of the entire body of the Council only forty-two members were in favor of a peace with the Tikhonians, the others supported the New Church platform, although the majority had come with mandates for reunion. The address, expressing loyalty to the government, the sending of which had become obligatory, was less affected and flattering than that of the Council of 1923. The group of forty-two made a motion that Peter, the *Locum Tenens*, be invited to participate in the discussions on the mutual relations of the Old and New Churches, but it was discovered that a private delegation of lay Muscovites had already called on him on October 1 and received a sharp refusal, based on the non-canonical activities of the dissenting church and its "pseudo-Councils." As a preliminary condition of forgiveness and reunion the Metropolitan demanded public penitence from the Renovators, to which the members of the New Church replied by repeating their former arguments: they were not impeccable; mistakes had been committed on both sides; it was for the Council to divide the innocent from the guilty; they were willing to submit the dispute to the Ecumenical Council for final decision. At the same time, however, the Council interpreted Peter's objections as a subterfuge to conceal the actual relations of the Tikhonian church with the monarchist movement abroad, of which, it claimed, there existed documentary evidence. It was decided to postpone further negotiations until the Tikhonian hierarchy should renounce its political activities. But the Council continued to invite the collaboration of those adherents of the Old Church who did not share the politics of their leaders.

The Council confirmed the validity of all the acts of the Renovators and of their Council of 1923. But the Synodal Church declared that it

. . . definitely separated itself from such irresponsible groups as those of Dean Krasnitsky or Bishop Antoninus, for the former had long since abandoned the main channel of the church and the latter for a long time had had no connection with the Holy Synod. The Synod was not responsible either for their declarations and acts or for the dishonor they brought upon the dignity of the ecclesiastical order.

This denoted a further development in the moderate tendencies. The Council sanctioned the decisions on the consecration of married bishops and the right of widowed priests to remarry, but reiterated its willingness to submit these questions to the judgment of the Ecumenical Council. Finally, having adopted the idea of church federalism, the Council sanctioned the autocephalous Ukrainian Church, as proclaimed by the Ukrainian Council on May 8, 1925.<sup>2</sup>

The accusation brought by the Council against Peter that he was persisting in his political activities was bound to provoke the civil authorities to action. The Bolsheviks repeated the experiment they had applied to Tikhon. They charged Peter with recognizing Grand Duke Cyril as Emperor, thereby making him liable to prosecution. Using this threat to influence the Metropolitan, Tuckov, in the name of the government, offered to "legalize" the Orthodox church administration provided Peter agreed to publish a declaration of a certain nature, to remove from the church all émigré bishops, and to keep in contact with the government. On December 23, 1925, after Peter had rejected the offer, he was arrested together with a group of Moscow hierarchs, who were his intimate friends. In compliance with the arrangements previously made by the ecclesiastical authorities, the administration of the church had to be assumed by Metropolitan Sergius of Novgorod, the Suffragan Locum Tenens. An offer of a compromise was made to Sergius by the government, which demanded that he ascertain the views of the Old Church. In a formal statement Sergius replied that the church he represented was not active in politics and was "absolutely loyal in its recognition of the government." But he reminded the authorities that the Soviet constitution guaranteed the freedom of religious propaganda, and he asked that this principle be applied to the Old Church, thus giving it the opportunity for normal activities. In regard to the émigré clergy, he declared that they formed an independent body outside his jurisdiction.

<sup>2</sup> In White Russia there was also an autonomous church, which had been proclaimed in May 1921, and had the right to send delegates to the Synodal Church Council. The Georgian church, which had announced its independence in 1917, had no canonical connection with the Russian church.

In the summer of 1926 the bishops who had been banished to the Solovetsk Islands, having perhaps heard of these negotiations, also submitted to the government a memorandum, "in the name of the leading organization of the Orthodox church and the church itself," in which all the difficulties standing in the way of mutual friendly relations between church and state and the means by which they could be eliminated were stated with complete frankness. This remarkable document excelled in the candor and lucidity of exposition, and in the logical strength of argumentation. The Solovetsk prisoners, continuing the traditions of Tikhon and his successors, strove to clarify the atmosphere of mistrust which enshrouded the church, although they did not deny that in the past political activities had taken place within the church. They explained, and actually exonerated them, by two reasons. First, that in those days "there existed no power, in the sense of an organized government, but only impostors with criminal records, calling themselves governmental agents, while all social forces were in a state of struggle," and second that at that critical time the church, imbued with state and national traditions inherited from past centuries, could not refrain from "protecting the old order, deeming that it was its duty towards the people." Subsequently, when a definite civil power had been formed, Patriarch Tikhon declared the loyalty of the church towards it and firmly refused to exercise his influence in the political life of the country. The Orthodox church could accommodate itself to any form of state organization, "from the eastern despotism of ancient Turkey to the republic of the United States of America." The law on the separation of church and state, forming a part of the Soviet constitution, "under the new political system could, to a certain extent, meet the needs of both parties. The church had no religious grounds for refusing to accept it," but it required a "strict and steadfast conformity to law," while facts proved that there was none, for "the government did not remain neutral," but was "definitely partial to atheism." This was the actual cause of discord between the Orthodox church and the state. In a series of impressive comparisons the memorandum illustrated the inconsistency in the face of which "there could be no harmony or reconciliation."

It is true [the Solovetsk prisoners wrote] that an attempt was made by the Renovators at reconciliation with the authorities. They maintained that religion within the confines of the Soviet Union was not subject to restriction. They made pitiful attempts to instill into the consciences of the faithful the idea that Christianity in its essence did not differ from Communism and that the communistic state was striving to attain the same aims as the Gospel. They tried too to revise the Christian dogmatics. As a result, this schism became a state church to which the Soviet government regardless of the laws it had enacted, and to the detriment of the Orthodox church, gave its support even to the extent of supplying the Renovators with free transportation to the Council of 1923. The Orthodox church was unable either to repeat the ignominious lie about religious freedom in the Soviet Union or to disavow the religious tenets enshrouded with the sanctity of past ages. No compromises or concessions, no partial modifications of the religious doctrine or interpretations of it in the communistic sense could bring the church to an agreement with the government, and therefore it is suffering great restrictions in its activities and religious life. It could not obtain the authority to open regular agencies of the central and diocesan administration or to transfer its activities to its historical center—Moscow; its bishops are either refused admittance to their dioceses or having gained it are forced to renounce their most essential duties, such as preaching, visiting parishes, and ordaining priests. The *Locum Tenens* himself and almost half of the Orthodox bishops are languishing in prison, wasting away either from banishment or forced labor. In its administrative capacity the government applied every means to suppress religion: it profited by every opportunity to close the churches<sup>3</sup> and to transform them into places for public shows, to abolish monasteries, notwithstanding that the labor principle had been introduced there, and to submit the clergy to as many restrictions in their everyday life as possible.

In view of the irreconcilable ideological differences, the conflict between the state and church could only cease with the steadfast adherence in practice to the law on the separation of church and state. The church is not aiming to overthrow the existing order . . . it did not

<sup>3</sup> According to Soviet statistics, in 29 out of 87 provinces, by Oct. 1925 there were sequestered 1,003 Orthodox churches, 29 mosques, 27 Old Ritualist churches, and 29 belonging to other creeds. One hundred and fourteen of the Orthodox churches were transformed into schools, 195 into clubs, 280 were used for educational purposes, 79 for dwellings and other exigencies, 298 remained vacant, and 6 were wrecked.



call the people to arms or to political struggle, but submitted itself to every civil law and decree. It took no part in politics and was not connected either openly or secretly with the political activities of the émigré bishops. But there is a limit, and by transgressing it the church might find itself in the position of a state church to which the schism of renovators had reduced itself by becoming the servant of the state. If censuring the acts of government is prohibited, then praising them should equally be prohibited, for that too is interfering in politics. The Church could not assume the obligation to the government of watching over the loyalty of its co-religionists and regarded detective work and political information as incompatible with the dignity of a priest. It exerted no influence on the individual, for every faithful one has his own reasoning power and conscience, nor could it bring either the clergy or laity to the church tribunal under a charge of political crime; on that basis Tikhon had refused the repeated demands of a representative of the GPU . . . that he prove his loyalty by condemning the Russian bishops who were acting abroad against the Soviet government.

While condemning the conduct of the émigré bishops, the authors of the memorandum "found it hard . . . to express their disapproval by any legal action," because, had they even decided on that, the Orthodox hierarchy would have been unable to convoke a Council for the trial or to verify the incriminating evidence collected by governmental institutions.

Pledging itself "not to conduct any political propaganda in churches, church institutions, or gatherings," the leading agency of the Orthodox church "trusted that the state would also fulfill conscientiously the obligations" undertaken by it under the law. The authors of the memorandum hoped for the revision of laws relating to the education of children and the depriving of religious societies of their right of juridical person, for the restitution of holy relics from the museums to the churches, for a permission to organize a diocesan administration and to convoke a Council for the election of the Patriarch and members of the Holy Synod, without any influence being exercised by the church upon the election or free discussion, and for the right of appointing bishops to dioceses and the Synod, with no interference on the part of governmental functionaries. "Should the petition of the church be declined,

it was ready to suffer with calm and fortitude the material privations to which it was exposed."

Sergius, on his part, requested the People's Commissar for Home Affairs to register the hierarchy of the Patriarchal church with him as *Locum Tenens*, and his chancery, temporarily in Nizhny Novgorod, but with the possibility of moving to Moscow. He also asked for the registration of diocesan and suffragan bishops and their chanceries, a permission to take necessary steps towards the convocation of a Council and the election of the Patriarch, a Synod, and a Supreme Church Administration, as well as for an authorization to assemble from five to fifteen bishops at conferences prior to the Council. Moreover, he asked to be allowed the publication of the *Herald of the Moscow Patriarchate* and the establishment of secondary and higher ecclesiastical schools for persons over eighteen years of age, as granted to the New Church. In his appeal to the Orthodox people, dated May 28, 1926, Sergius stated that "he had taken upon himself to assure the Soviet government of their sincere willingness to become law-abiding citizens resolved to keep aloof from political parties and activities." But "wishing to be completely frank," he inserted into his appeal two extracts from the Solovetsk bishops' memorandum: on the irreconcilable conflict between religion and atheism; and on the refusal of the church to supervise and judge the political attitude of its individual members. At the same time he pointed out, however, that it was the Christian religion that taught to forswear property, to devote life to the common cause, and to set an example of temperance, honesty, and steadfast execution of civil duties.

Some of Sergius' wishes were gratified, and on May 18, 1927, with the consent of the authorities, he established a temporary Patriarchal Holy Synod. On July 29, 1928, he wrote in a message:

Our petition that the Synod be authorized to start activities connected with the administration of the All-Russian Orthodox church has been granted. At present our Orthodox church in the Soviet Union has a central, diocesan, district, and other administrations, in accordance with the canon and civil laws.

The success attained by Sergius, at a time when other bishops continued to be arrested and banished, gave rise to doubts among

some of the hierarchs, and they decided that he must have accepted all the terms for "legalization" and "capitulated."

However, it is only fair to admit that the Soviet government also made concessions. Its motives are obvious. The government and the GPU, even with the help of the Renovators, had not succeeded in abolishing the Patriarchal church. The Bolsheviks had to recognize the accuracy of the Solovetsk bishops' statement that practically all the cathedrals sequestered from the Orthodox and given to the Renovators were deserted and that the majority of Orthodox bishops imprisoned and exiled was thus punished "because of their successful struggle against the Renovators' schism." The manifest rise of religious sentiment among the masses, spurred by the conflict of church tradition with the atheist government and its servant, the New Church, such phenomena as the vast crowds of people gathered at Tikhon's funeral, the large attendance in the Patriarchal churches, and the widespread popular belief in the miraculous brightening of church domes and icons, all these revealed to the Bolsheviks the uselessness of supporting one church and persecuting another. In fact, the "Living Church was also dead," for "the object of atheists was to fight every religion." In a sense, "the protective color" adopted by the Living Church could become the most dangerous one. "Quite a different matter has importance for us. Whatever it may be, let the church define its attitude towards the Soviet state and not conceal a stone in its bosom to throw at us," wrote Iaroslavsky in the *Atheist* in 1923. In a word, it was advantageous at the moment for the government to believe in the sincerity of the Patriarchal Church, when it promised to repudiate all political activities. But the repudiation and submission to the Soviet government had to be more explicitly and vigorously expressed than they were in the memorandum of the Solovetsk bishops, while all their daring reservations had to be eliminated. This explained the appearance of another message written by Sergius on July 29, 1927, in which the *Locum Tenens* emphasized the fact that the Patriarchal church had not deviated from the path formerly chosen by Tikhon. He tried to strengthen his own position by quoting Tikhon's intention "just before his death—to place our Orthodox church on proper terms with the Soviet government and thus secure for it a legal and peaceful exist-

ence." Sergius admitted frankly that "various circumstances and particularly the activities of the émigré enemies of the Soviet state, among whom were not ordinary churchmen, but even some of their leaders (i. e., bishops), aroused in the government a natural distrust of all church workers, thus impeding the task of His Holiness." "Up to the present," he continued, "the activities of the outside enemies of the Soviet government have not ceased; murder, arson, raids, explosions, and similar manifestations of an underground fight occur before our very eyes. . . . It is the more necessary . . . the more obligatory for us to prove that we, the church workers, are not with the enemies of the Soviet state and the insane agents of their intrigues, but with our people and our government." He also appealed to his flock "to express publicly our gratitude to the Soviet government for the consideration shown towards our spiritual needs," and "assure it that we will not abuse its trust." In addressing the adherents of the old order, Sergius said:

To the people, who declined to perceive the signs of the times, it might appear that the break with the former régime and even with the monarchy was impossible without breaking with Orthodoxy, and such beliefs among certain ecclesiastical circles . . . had hindered the Holy Patriarch's efforts to establish peaceful relations between the church and the Soviet government. Only impractical dreamers could think that such an immense and organized society as our Orthodox church might exist peacefully in the state while refusing to have any contact with the authorities. . . . These people must bring themselves to work with us or else retire temporarily and not interfere with our task.

Finally, Sergius emphasized the fact that the question of the émigré clergy had acquired a "special poignancy," and repeated that "the open anti-Soviet activities [of this clergy] . . . had forced the late Patriarch to abolish their Synod," which "nevertheless continued to exist without changing its political attitude." "To put an end to this, we have ordered the émigré clergy to give a written promise of their absolute loyalty to the Soviet government. . . . Those who refuse to give the promise or those who break it after having given it, shall be excluded from the body of the clergy belonging to the jurisdiction of the Moscow Patriarchate." On this point Sergius went much further than the Solovetsk bishops were

prepared to go. In conclusion he explained what his purpose was in doing it: all this was necessary in order to obtain the right to "prepare for the convocation of our Second Local Council, which should elect not a provisional but a permanent central church administration" and also pass judgment on all the "usurpers of church authority." Evidently Tuchkov had made to Sergius corresponding promises.

Having obtained these useful statements, the Bolsheviks once again acted in their customary manner, for they were slow "to pay the piper." Sergius' achievements were evident; but they were far from being complete, and the persecution of the church did not cease after the conclusion of the unwritten concordat. The concessions made by Sergius were in contradiction to the paramount task of the Communist Party: the complete abolition of religion. In 1929-30 the Soviet state undertook a general offensive against all as yet "unconquered positions," and a prominent place in this offensive was assigned to a decisive struggle with the church. As explained in the *Izvestia* (April 24, 1929), this struggle stood in close relation to other tasks of the Communist Party:

Religious ideology is one of the chief obstacles in the path of the socialist reconstruction of the country. Religion and Socialism are incompatible. . . . To be an atheist "for one's own sake," leaving others to their own ideas, does not coincide with the proletarian bolshevist methods of Marxism-Leninism. This is a purely reformist view, which sees in religion a private and individual issue. Such a passive attitude is distinctly not admissible either in the ranks of the party, the Young Communist League, among working men and women, in the Red Army, or in general among the advanced elements of the proletarian Soviet public.

With this cry for intensive activity in the fight against the church, we enter upon the third stage of the relations between the Soviet government and religion. Following the earlier attempts to corrupt and discredit the Orthodox church by extending privileges to its adversaries (the first stage), and the subsequent attempts at reconciliation by means of "legalization" based on conditions dictated to it (second stage), we witness a direct and open struggle in which all methods were used, from that of an indirect

pressure upon the conscience of the faithful to acts of overt violence, emanating from a powerful governmental machine.

First, it was necessary to remove from the path an obstacle which, though long since a fictitious one, provided the adversaries with a pretext for defending their rights: the Soviet legislation on the freedom of conscience. This was accomplished by amending Article Thirteen of the Constitution on May 22, 1929, and by passing the law of April 8, 1929, on religious societies. Originally, Article Thirteen of the Constitution acknowledged "the right of free religious and anti-religious propaganda" to all citizens, whereas in the amendment the text ran: "The freedom of professing a religion and of anti-religious propaganda is acknowledged to all citizens." We know that the freedom of religious propaganda had been limited to divine service within the church and to the private teaching of religion to people over eighteen years of age. Now every oral or printed advocacy of religion could be declared a violation of the Constitution. The previous legislation had restricted to its utmost the work of religious organizations, but the law of April 8, 1929, went much further in the same direction. Any social, cultural, or educational work became impossible; even the holding of divine service was limited to "the place of residence of the members of the said religious society and the location of their prayer-house," while the actual application of the law surrounded worship with such difficulties that its very existence became almost impossible.

It is important to notice that the new communist attack resulted from the realization that all their efforts up to 1928-29 had failed. On this point there are a number of statements made by the Bolsheviks themselves, proving that the official preaching of atheism instead of producing the desired effect upon the masses had, on the contrary, only incited religious feelings and helped to strengthen the opposition against the atheistic propaganda of the government. The best organized propaganda was to be found in the schools, but even there the results were not so marked as the Bolsheviks wished. Here are the statistics expressing the religious mood in six "seven-year" schools (former gymnasias) at Sokolniki, a suburb of Moscow inhabited by workmen, i. e., in the very center of power and in a social stratum closest to those in authority during 1927.

## RUSSIAN CULTURE: RELIGION

	<i>Boys</i>	<i>Girls</i>
Atheists .....	183 (77.9%)	175 (46.1%)
Believers .....	52 (22.1%)	205 (53.9%)
Praying .....	40 (17% )	169 (44.5%)
Church-goers .....	40 (17% )	154 (40.5%)

This was the maximum of achievement. Among the masses far from the authorities things were different. "The clergy and Sectarians," the *Pravda* complained, "are developing a frenzied propaganda, and we should be deceiving ourselves if we asserted that only old men and women go to church. Hundreds, nay, thousands of young working girls can be found in churches and sectarian chapels. In the province of Ivanov-Voznesensk there are 600 religious societies with 174,300 members, of whom 2,000 are priests and Sectarian 'Fathers,' while there are only 13 anti-religious circles having 200 members." On April 13, 1928, the *Pravda* estimated that there were 123,000 members of atheist organizations throughout the Soviet Union, as against 2,000,000 religious "activists," and during the same year the *Atheist* complained of the influence exerted by the monasteries, under the disguise of "collective farms." "This is not an individual case, but a general rule. In various districts the Communists and members of the Young Communist League were married in church and baptized their children. As to the non-party masses, they were totally under the influence of the obscurants and ready at all times to do their bidding." <sup>4</sup> "The religious tide," wrote atheist teachers, "started overflowing in the families of the peasants, workmen, and employees, and from there entered the schools." For instance, "a teacher, a militant activist, was ardently preaching against priests and the Church, yet at the end of school the class sang: 'Tomorrow we go to church, tomorrow we go to church!'" "Many of those who were graduated from atheist schools flocked to Sunday mass, took pleasure in carrying icons in the religious processions through the village, or attended the priests during the church service."

The atheists were inclined to ascribe their inefficacy to inadequate strength and lack of proper organization. On the eve of an

<sup>4</sup> According to a statement made by Iaroslavsky at a regional conference of the Atheist Union in October 1929, an investigation made in Moscow disclosed that 42% of the working people continued to celebrate church rituals.

anti-religious campaign conducted in Petrograd during Easter of 1928, the *Red Gazette* published the following figures: "155 churches, plus 41 sectarian chapels, plus 13 Jewish prayer societies—totaling 209 religious Agitprops [Agitation and Propaganda Department]. Is this not too much for Leningrad, which has only 82 Workmen's Clubs, 16 theatres, and 47 cinemas?" Churches were closed upon any pretext, but others sprang up. Another review, the *Anti-Religionist*, pointed out that "the clergy, particularly those of the Old Church [Patriarchal], showed marked activity: during the previous five years five churches had been erected in the district. Frequently the clergy were able to nullify the work done in the village reading-rooms."

The higher authorities, however, were inclined to ascribe the failure of the atheist propaganda to more fundamental causes. At the Congress of Soviets in 1928, Rykov was forced to admit that "in the domain of religious struggle, administrative measures did more harm than good, for they might hurt the peasants and workmen who not having renounced their faith were, at the same time, supporting the Soviet government, and a conflict with this social group was not at all to the government's advantage." There we find the chief motive that prevented the Soviet government from directly attacking religion in villages and factories. Lunacharsky supplied another explanation of a more psychological nature. "Our policy of intolerance drove the disease inward: in striking the church on the dome, we actually drove it deeper like a nail, whereas our efforts should be directed towards drawing it out. We should apply more subtle methods and beware of using force. . . . A premature victory over the church would only increase the zeal of the faithful." The failure of the previous attempts apparently bore results; the more reasonable among the Bolsheviks—up to Stalin's subsequent change in policy—were willing to give back to the church some of its former freedom.

Great changes took place during 1929-30. The government made every effort to increase the "army," which had been assigned to attack the church, and to draw from it a "Shock Brigade." From June 10 to 19, 1929, there assembled the Second Universal Congress of Atheists, among whose members were 264 workmen, 479 employees, 109 peasants, 72 Red Army men, 52 women, and 24 school



delegates. Comrade Oleshchuk complained that out of 600,000 members of the Union of Atheists only 200 or 250 came from the villages, i. e., of every 600 peasants only one was an atheist, and he asked how it was possible in such circumstances to conduct an anti-religious movement in the villages. The Congress decided to lower the age limit of members to fourteen years, and to add a preparatory group of Pioneer-Atheists, embracing children from six to fourteen years of age. Six months later, on February 17, 1930, the *Izvestia* stated that, by including children, the number of members in the Union had reached 2,500,000. The government in its turn took care to draw the peasants, workmen, teachers, and students into the struggle. From that time on the anti-religious proceedings took place officially not as acts of governmental persecutions, but in the form of unwilling concessions to the masses, which demanded these persecutions of the government. Bells were removed from belfries, churches were closed and demolished, the clergy dismissed—all “in compliance with the wishes of the working masses,” “at the request of the workmen,” by the decision of the “plenary meeting of peasants,” or the “resolution of the town council.” At times there were real epidemics of such resolutions. On February 5, 1930, in the province of Kaluga a series of petitions favoring the removal of bells was presented collectively, and the local railroadmen demanded that the District Executive Committee comply with these requests immediately. The city of Samara, having passed a similar ordinance, on November 7 persuaded the city of Nezhin to join it, and that same day the Nezhin town council resolved that the church bells be removed and given over to the industrialization fund. On that same day, a crowd assembled in the theatre at Ulianinsk and voiced an identical demand, while both Voronezh and Sverdlovsk followed suit. A similar resolution was adopted at a meeting of 10,000 workmen in Alaty, and the local soviet of Iaroslavl “was forced” to issue a decree abolishing the ringing of bells, in accordance with the wishes of 80,000 people! The method of passing all such summary decisions and the difficulty of opposing them by vote are well known. The situation became more involved when the question arose of burning the icons and both closing and demolishing the churches. In these cases sometimes the masses dared to show re-

sistance, which invariably led to fatal results. Still, officially it would be stated that this was done "in compliance with the people's wish." For the benefit of the Russian workmen and peasants the newspapers made an example of the case of Gorlov miners, who in December 1929 had burned 4,000 icons "in the presence of 15,000 workmen." But to rival this the Kramatorsk workmen burned 20,000 icons in January 1930, and then all joined the Atheist Union. Events moved slowly in Tver up to the time that the "Shock Brigade" put the direct question: "Will you prove your atheism by handing over your icons?" After this "hundreds of workmen's families cleared their homes" of icons and burned them. The Moscow Soviet was particularly active in closing and demolishing churches; it excelled in destroying many rare monuments of art; officially "at the request of the workmen" the churches and various buildings of the historical Simon Monastery were blown up. In September 1929, the *Anti-Religionist* counted the churches closed during the previous six months as follows: 243 town and 180 village churches, a total of 423, of which 156 were transformed into theatres, cinemas, and museums, 38 into coöperative stores, 10 into veterinary stations, 29 were demolished, 171 left vacant. Besides these there were 154 town and 163 village churches, a total of 317, destined to be demolished. In making the comparison with preceding years, the *Anti-Religionist* was able to register a notable progress: the figures for the six months of 1929 exceeded twice those of the twelve months of 1927 and equaled those of the whole year 1928.

With the abolition of churches, as abodes of "cult," the legalized religious societies found themselves in desperate conditions. The situation is best described in the "Memorandum on the Needs of the Orthodox Patriarchal Church," submitted by Metropolitan Sergius to Smidovich, the Superintendent of Church Affairs in the central government, on February 19, 1930. The memorandum stated that churches were heavily taxed and that the priests were restricted in their civil rights. The churches were considered to be revenue-bearing concerns and therefore had to carry high insurance. They were taxed on their farm produce and were burdened by many obligatory contributions—for tractorization, industrialization, and the purchasing of government bonds; all these pay-

ments had to be met by the members of religious communities, who in case of default answered with their property, their personal immunity, and besides were identified with *kulaks* and had to pay additional taxes. Applications for the registration of religious societies were no longer accepted by the local authorities (although the term for registration expired only on May 1, 1930), and the prosecuting attorneys refused to protect their rights. The churches were closed at the request of atheists; the priests were subjected to taxation far beyond their means, and for non-payment were deprived of all their property; they were prohibited from living in the neighborhood of the church or within the confines of their parish, and anyone giving them living quarters was heavily taxed. Children of the clergy were expelled from schools, church choristers were excluded from professional unions, while the church had to pay their insurance and the royalties to the composers of church music. This was but an incomplete list of the burdens laid upon the church, with the direct object of ruining the cult societies and forcing the members and clergy to abandon their functions. In a number of cases this purpose was achieved, for, aside from direct persecutions, the churches, parishes, and clergy grew poorer and fewer even when, so to speak, they stood on legal grounds. The government, by eliminating the means for the training of a new generation of clergymen, frankly relied upon the extinction of the remaining clergy, who were not in exile or prison or had not abandoned their vocation. The Cult Department of the Commissariat for Home Affairs based its expectations on the following statistics: 50% of the clergymen were over 50 years old; 25% 40-50 years old; 20% 30-40, and only 5% were less than 30 years old. Consequently, in twenty years there would be no more than half the present number, and since no theological schools and books were available, no new influx could be expected.

Wishing to save the church from its grievous position, Metropolitan Sergius was forced to make further concessions as demanded by the government, arousing thereby a new outburst of indignation on the part of the opposition. In view of the campaign being conducted abroad in protest against religious persecutions in Russia, the authorities demanded that he refute these indubitable facts. Sergius yielded to force, but profited by the

opportunity to obtain some redress in the legal situation of the church. It must be observed that for all the cruelty of these persecutions, for all the restrictions of the law and abuses in its application, there was still some legal ground for further existence of the church. Sergius pointed out this fact to the government when, four days before the presentation of his memorandum, he was compelled to state to the representatives of the Soviet press that "in the Soviet Union there were not and never had been any religious persecutions," for due to the decree on the separation of church and state "the professing of any creed was free,"<sup>5</sup> and the decision of the All-Union Central Executive Committee of April 8, 1929 "emphatically excluded all possibility of religious persecutions." Officially, he could rightfully say that the closing of churches was done "not by the initiative of the state, but in compliance with the wish of the people," and that the clergy were persecuted "not for their religious convictions, but under the general statutes." Also, he was correct in pointing out that "in the past the church had been too closely connected with the monarchy" and that "even up to the present time some of us cannot see that the past is gone forever." At another conference, held with representatives of the American press, Metropolitan Sergius was able to state that the Patriarchal church had been reestablished in part. "There are 30,000 parishes, subject to our Patriarchal church," he declared, "each of them with a priest. The number of clergy, naturally, exceeds that of the parishes, because in every parish there are from one to three priests and sometimes even more than that. All these parishes are under the spiritual guidance of 163 bishops, who stand in canonical subordination to the Patriarch. I am not counting the bishops who have retired and are keeping only a spiritual communion with the Patriarch. We can testify that the total number of Orthodox parishioners amounts to several tens of millions. . . . At present the situation of the church has grown worse, but we are hoping that even under the new conditions of material existence faith will survive. . . . Of course we feel anxious about the rapid progress of atheism, yet being true believers, we

<sup>5</sup> This declaration was in perfect accord with the amendment to the Constitution of May 22, 1929, which in excluding the right of "religious propaganda" did not abolish the freedom of "professing a religion."

are convinced that the divine light can never be extinguished and that in the course of time it will be resurrected in the heart of man."

The importance of this confidence and these achievements can be judged by remembering that, notwithstanding the strong support of the authorities, the Living Church in October 1925, at the peak of its glory, had under its jurisdiction only 12,593 parishes with 16,540 clergymen, and 192 bishops in 108 dioceses, while by January 1, 1927, these figures had decreased to 6,245 parishes with 10,815 clergymen and 140 bishops in 84 dioceses. The Living Church then declared that the former figures had been exaggerated.

A comparison of the number of parishioners and clergy of the Patriarchal Church and that of the New Church demonstrates again which of them enjoyed greater popularity with the masses. It proves also how little the church and its leaders profited by the tremendous mental and moral impetus, which the revolution might have given to the religious conscience of the masses. Prior to the revolution some of the intellectuals had connected the revolutionary idea with an opportunity for church reform, but the actual development of events proved quite the contrary. In every creed, as observed by eyewitnesses, there were some individual attempts at modernization, but in general during the days of distress the intellectuals drew closer to church tradition.

We have seen how, helped by favorable circumstances, the more serious movement towards church reform had led to the establishment of a separate "new" church. Indeed, many of its adherents sincerely believed in the possibility of a reformed Orthodoxy. At first they worked on a comparatively large scale (see the program of the Living Church), but having overcome many external obstacles at the price of subjecting themselves to the Bolsheviks, they were suddenly stopped by a far more serious internal one—the simple faith of the people. Even the most moderate attempts at reformation met with opposition from the masses. Their joining of the New Church proved to be but temporary and superficial. Thus in all probability, the Russian Orthodox church will survive the revolution without undergoing any changes, finding in this very changelessness its chief weapon of defense against the teach-

ings of atheism. In this field the conservatism of the church leaders was merged with that of the populace. The Tikhonian church found its power in its unity with the masses and in their support.

This does not mean, however, that the revolution and atheistic propaganda will leave no mark on the spirit of the people. Too much was done to awaken and strengthen the religious conscience of the faithful to permit the reaction to remain in the negative phase, that of a mere protest against atheism. Some positive results are bound to come, but it is more probable that new developments will take place outside the Orthodox church. Again, as during the last part of the seventeenth century, the popular faith will separate itself from that of the church. One can see a sign of this in the growth of Sectarianism since the revolution.

Generally speaking, here as in other fields of life, the broken chain of historical development is being welded anew. We notice, after a very strong attack on the pre-revolutionary state of things, a gradual return to the past, yet with a new fund of experience and a new impulse towards internal evolution. It is premature to say who will profit most by this impulse, but one thing is certain: each of the present trends of Russian religious faith can only assimilate from the revolution that for which it was prepared by its preceding history.



## EDITOR'S POSTSCRIPT

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**T**HE situation as described in the last chapter remained virtually unchanged until 1934-35. None of the more essential desiderata of Metropolitan Sergius were satisfied by the government, which continued to regard the church with distrust and hostility. Nor was there any noticeable let-down in the anti-religious activities of governmental and party agencies. The church, on its part, apparently adhered to that policy of political loyalty to the Soviet régime which had been enunciated by Metropolitan Sergius. Simultaneously, it tried to strengthen its position in the purely religious field as far as that was possible under the circumstances of its still precarious existence. It seems that it succeeded not only in holding its own but even in making some progress at the expense of the New Church which, according to all available information, continued to decline until it lost all importance in the religious life of the country.

The years that preceded the new change in governmental policy were marked by increased tension in the international relations of the Soviet Union. The Japanese occupation of Northern Manchuria in 1932 and Hitler's advent to power in Germany the following year created a situation in which Russia had to face the possibility of a simultaneous attack from east and west. More than before, problems of national defense began to loom large in the minds of Soviet leaders, and in a broader sense these problems included that of national morale and of the degree of popular support the government could rely upon in case of a crisis. Undoubtedly coupled with that concern was a growing realization that, in spite of all the efforts of previous years, religious sentiment had survived persecutions, and that in particular the Orthodox church still maintained its hold over a considerable part of the population. No reliable statistics are available, but even Iaroslavsky, the head of



the Union of Atheists, stated on several occasions that the believers constituted about half of the population. The census of January 1937 included a question on religious beliefs. The results of this census, which according to official explanation had been falsified by the Trotskyites, were never made public, and significantly in the new census of January 1939 no question on religion was included. There had been rumors that in the first census forty per cent of those questioned declared themselves to be religious. Information published in the Soviet press suggested that religious sentiment was widely distributed among many groups of the population. Not only old people but school children and youth as well, not only the intellectuals but also workers and collectivized peasants, in some cases even members of communist organizations, seemed to be affected. From the same source one could learn of various ways in which the believers tried to satisfy their religious needs under the trying conditions of discrimination and persecution: travels to distant churches from localities in which places of worship had been closed, rites by proxy, itinerant priests, non-registered religious groups, and secret monasteries. Apparently the excesses of the anti-religious drive were defeating its purpose.

It is in the light of this evidence, as well as of the dangers presented by the international situation, that we must approach the new governmental practice in religious matters which became manifest in 1934-35. There was no outspoken change in the government's general attitude towards religion nor were any radical or far-reaching concessions made to the church, but there was a certain soft-pedaling of anti-religious propaganda, and a number of minor measures were passed which obviously were intended to placate the believers. Anti-Easter and anti-Christmas demonstrations were discontinued, while at the same time sale of special products needed for the traditional Easter celebration was resumed in the market and in state stores, and lighting of Christmas trees was again permitted. Of a more substantial nature was the decree of December 29, 1935, which allowed the children of the clergy to enroll in any school—a privilege that previously had been denied them. This was followed by the abolition of the disfranchisement of priests in the new constitution of December 5, 1936. Otherwise the so-called "Stalin constitution," widely heralded as an embodi-

ment of Soviet democracy, did not introduce any change in the relations of church and state in the Soviet Union. As before, religious rights were limited to the exercise of the cult within church buildings, and freedom of faith, without any right to proselytize or engage in missionary activities, was paired with unconditional freedom of anti-religious propaganda.

The relatively conciliatory attitude towards religion, first shown by the Soviet government in 1934-35, proved to be of short duration. In the autumn of 1937 there came a sudden reversal which the authorities themselves subsequently connected with the first elections to the Supreme Soviet of the Union held on the basis of the new constitution. The idea was to eliminate the possibility of supposedly counter-revolutionary churchmen influencing the elections. A considerable number of bishops and priests were arrested and tried for alleged acts of espionage and sabotage in the interests of foreign powers or for planning to overthrow the Soviet régime. Simultaneously many churches were closed and, according to some calculations, their number even exceeded that of the previous large-scale closure of 1929-30. It was significant, however, that governmental spokesmen took pains to draw a distinction between the leaders of the church, many of whom were suspected to be irreconcilable enemies of the régime, and the rank and file of the believers whose loyalty was not doubted. Neither were the previously granted minor concessions withdrawn during this outburst of the old hostility towards the church.

Apparently the same underlying reasons that had prompted the conciliatory measures of 1934-35 continued to be in force, and were even more pressing than before, as since January 1939 a new phase of development set in which has been described as the "new religious policy" of the Soviet government.<sup>1</sup> This time special instructions were issued to stop attempts at liquidating religion with one stroke or to combat it by administrative measures, such as the closing of churches. It was officially admitted that in the preceding period anti-religious propaganda had been overdone, and governmental and party agencies were cautioned not to offend the religious sentiment of the believers. Moreover, the new change in

<sup>1</sup> Cf. N. S. Timasheff, "Religion in Soviet Russia," *Thought*, vol. XV, No. 56, March 1940. This is the best brief discussion of the subject in English.

policy was given a theoretical justification. Wholesale and indiscriminate condemnation of Christianity was declared to be a mistake and a vulgarization of Marxism. A real Marxist should understand that at certain historical periods, and under certain conditions, Christianity could be a progressive force. Such was its function in the early centuries of its existence when it had a definitely democratic and even revolutionary character. Likewise, Russia's conversion to Christianity back in the tenth century should be regarded as a historical event of positive importance inasmuch as it introduced into the life of the Russian people elements of culture higher than they had known before. The last point is of particular interest: the reevaluation of the part played by the Christian church in Russian history was in line with the general tendency to restore to a position of honor certain events and figures of Russia's historical past in order to strengthen patriotism and a sense of national unity.<sup>2</sup>

It would be premature to speak of a reconciliation between church and state in Soviet Russia. As yet the official materialist philosophy of the Communist régime has not been repudiated, and real religious freedom has not been granted. But for the time being the government has found it necessary to modify its former uncompromising position, and to allow religious sentiment a somewhat broader scope of expression.

How the fate of religion in Russia will be affected by the momentous crisis through which the country is passing today no one can predict with certainty.

MICHAEL KARPOVICH

*Cambridge, Mass.*

*October 1941*

<sup>2</sup> It must be said that this tendency began to be noticed several years before 1939. For instance, in December 1936, the comic opera *Bogatyri* (Titans) was taken from the boards because of its satirical treatment of Russia's conversion.

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**Part II**  
**LITERATURE**



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SECULARIZATION OF LITERATURE

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**I**N the peasant huts of any remote district in Russia even until the Revolution there could be found in the corner under the icons, together with the Psalter and the Acatistus<sup>1</sup> of the Holy Virgin, a much-thumbed copy-book, scribbled in an awkward but modern hand. It begins with the story of the Archangel Gabriel leading the Holy Virgin through the infernal regions. In Hades a river of flames flows from east to west, and in it stand the sinners; these are the people who did not respect their parents and spiritual fathers, sinned against the Seventh Commandment, and for fun taught their children the use of profane language. From another dark river a great wail is heard: there those who crucified Christ are suffering torments. A persistent worm is eating those who did not fast or who failed to go to confession and partake of the Holy Sacrament. Vicious serpents are biting the faces and hearts of those who spoke, laughed, or whispered in church instead of listening to the divine chant and worshipping the holy icons. There is also a place for the shepherds of souls, who having seen the light preferred the darkness: they did not teach the people, did not read the holy books, and prevented the Christians from entering the Kingdom of Heaven. With them too are the unjust judges, who condemned the righteous and exculpated the wicked, and the tsars, princes, and boiars who mercilessly tortured their slaves. Following this "Pilgrimage of the Holy Virgin through the Infernal Regions," which enumerated the ecclesiastical, moral, and social ailments of ancient Russia, the

<sup>1</sup> A special form of prayer used in the Orthodox church to glorify Jesus Christ, the Virgin or any particular saint.—ED.



copy-book contained another story—the “Narrative of Clement, Pope of Rome, on the Twelve Fridays.” One who observed the fast on one of them would be immune from ague, enemies, sword wounds, evil forces, drowning, and sudden death. Finally, a third story lent to the copy-book the character of an amulet. It was “A Dream of the Holy Virgin,” and one who copied this “dream” and read it once a week obtained absolution of his sins, though they were as abundant as the leaves on a tree, or the sand at the bottom of the sea, or the stars in the firmament, and in the beyond he would enter the Kingdom of Heaven, and on earth be safe from perils and sickness. The dream was simple in content. While sleeping in the holy city of Bethlehem, the Mother of God dreamed of the agony that awaited Christ in the future; on awaking she related it to the Saviour, who verified its truth and promised to send the dream forth to the people, endowing it with great power.

The much-thumbed little copy-book must not be viewed with scorn, because although its contents are meager, the legend and exorcism introduced in it are so typical of the ancient popular conception of the world that they constitute a remnant of the stately structure of medieval Christian literature, the cornerstone of which was laid in the early centuries of the present era. Through the entire Christian East, in Egypt, Syria, and the Balkan peninsula, the pious imagination labored intensely under the fresh impression made by the newly acquired faith, and this period of increased creative power produced a number of Christian images and legends which during a whole millennium sustained Western art.

The new faith supplied religious poetry with abundant material because from the time when the New Testament was first written the pious imagination had an unlimited field for producing a literature of its own, parallel to the canonical books of Holy Scripture. What connection was there between the New and the Old Testaments, between Christ and Adam? What did Adam do after his banishment from Eden? How did he plough? How did he bury Abel, having no previous knowledge of death or burial? How did the Mother of God live during her childhood? What were the details of the Agony and Crucifixion of the Saviour? The canonical books gave no definite answers to these questions. In

the official history there was a blank after each question, which was at once filled in by the religious legend. Christ had atoned for the sin of Adam: this principal formula of the Christian theological system was immediately embodied in realistic forms, by the artists and poets. Satan deceived Adam and forced him to sign a pact, according to which Adam surrendered himself to the commands of the evil one. This agreement was traced upon a stone, which Satan hid in the river Jordan, with four hundred devils keeping watch, but when Christ was baptized he stepped upon the stone and crushed it: thus was Adam's bondage destroyed. There is another version of this legend. Taking the bough of a tree in Paradise, Adam made for himself a crown in which he was buried. From the crown there grew a huge tree entwining its roots around Adam's coffin. This tree was brought to Solomon for the building of his temple, but it was not used, and together with the coffin was planted on Golgotha. The cross of Christ was made therefrom, and the blood of the Saviour trickling through the soil dropped upon Adam's head, thereby absolving him and redeeming him from sin (this was the origin of the skull at the foot of the Crucifix). By way of these graphic representations the abstract Christian doctrines were made clearer to the understanding of the masses. Such was the mission of Christian poetry.

The Christian Legend, either created independently in the East, or adopted from the ancient Hebraic sources, was closely interwoven with the many interesting episodes and outstanding characters of the Old and New Testaments. Adam, Cain, Abel, Enoch, Lamech, Noah, Melchizedek, Abraham, Joseph, Moses, Solomon, Pilate, Nicodemus, Joseph of Arimathaea—all were assigned a part in the Legend, and eventually it transformed the biblical story into a novel, in which it was difficult to separate reality from fiction.

Thus satisfying the aesthetic demands of the faithful, these treasures of Christian poetry soon became the property of the entire Christian world. It is impossible to follow the many paths by which they penetrated from the East to the West. One of them, however, attracted the special attention of the scholars as the stage in which the Christian Legend received its final treatment before reaching the West—it was in Bulgaria of the tenth century, agitated by the dualistic heresy known as "Bogumilism." Under its influ-

ence a new subject was introduced into the Christian Legend—the struggle between the principles of good and evil, of God against the devil, Satanael. The arena for this struggle, which resulted in the victory of evil, was the creation of the world. "Falsehood" remained on earth while "Truth" soared to Heaven. In the West this heresy revived interest in the Legend, and from the tenth to the thirteenth centuries in different parts of Europe—Italy, Germany, France, the Netherlands, and even in England—there were similar sects under different names.

The influence of the Christian Legend was very strong in the West, and its result was important. The Christian themes captured the people's imagination, and the old epic tales and songs were gradually replaced by new Christian poetry. But while supplanting the ancient folklore, Christianity did not succeed in destroying the sources of popular imagination. The people soon assimilated this new material, and on the basis of the Eastern legend independent works of medieval Christian literature and art were created. Some of these works far surpassed those of the East that had inspired them. Thus Dante made use of the "Pilgrimage of the Holy Virgin through the Infernal Regions" for his *Divine Comedy*. Yet as the centuries passed the absolute dominance of Christian thought and Christian civilization in Europe came to an end. Having taken from this civilization all it had to give, the West made further progress, secularizing its literature. The medieval legend, which had obliterated in the memory of the people the ancient epic, in its turn lost its power and retired into oblivion under the dominance of numerous new influences. To understand that period a scholar must search the now forgotten records of the eleventh to the fifteenth centuries, for the people cannot supply him with any data of that bygone epoch.

In order to obtain a clear idea of the great difference existing in this respect between Russia and the West, one must remember that in Russia folklore still serves as a living source for the study of both the pre-Christian and the medieval Christian world outlook of the masses. This is enough to demonstrate clearly that the Christian idea could not have exerted in Russia as deep an influence as it did over the spirit of the European nations. As for the subsequent views which had replaced the medieval one in the West,

they reached the Russian masses too late and therefore could play no part in the formation of popular ideas.

The early historians of literature usually characterized the ancient period in Russian letters as an epoch in which Byzantine ascetic ideas predominated exclusively. This view may be true concerning the educated minority which depended entirely on the religious literature adopted from Byzantium and the Balkans, but the influence this literature exerted over popular poetry during the ancient period was insignificant and gained ground only in later days.

The masses were slow in assimilating even formal Christianity, and equally slow in revealing any influence of the Christian Legend in their folklore. The ancient source of popular art had not been exhausted, and Russian folklore spouted forth continuously up to the time when scientists were prepared to record its creations. The recording of the national epos, which had already been undertaken in Western Europe under Charlemagne, did not begin in Russia in a systematic fashion until the middle of the nineteenth century, but since then has continued up to recent days.

At present all the students of the Russian epos agree that it was not created in the earlier period and preserved intact until our day, as was previously believed, but that it remained alive and subject to change during the entire length of Russian history. In fact, not only the development of old subjects, but the creation of new ones as well continued even recently. This was the task of the "merry guild of jesters" which, notwithstanding severe persecution during the reign of the pious Tsar Alexis, discharged it successfully until the time of Peter the Great.

From the earliest days the church never ceased condemning popular art and its representatives. But it had no moral means sufficient to teach the people a new conception of the world or to direct the activities of their imagination into a different channel. Any imaginative work was outside its sphere and was regarded by it with distrust. From this point of view the Christian Legend and pagan folklore were equally censured by the church. The Russian church inherited this attitude from the same source that was responsible for the Bogumilist variations of the Christian Legend. From the earliest days of Christianity the censors prohibited the

use of the apocryphal books in church. There existed in Bulgaria a complete list of these forbidden books, which at the end of the fourteenth century was accepted by the Russian theological literature. The greater part of the books on this list had been brought previously to Russia in Serbian and Bulgarian translations. At a later period these books began to exercise considerable influence over the minds of the people, in spite of the ban imposed by the church. But in the fourteenth century the masses were still not sufficiently prepared to interest themselves in the Christian Legend. The inadequate dissemination of Christian ideas was a much more powerful protection against the influence of Christian poetry than an unyielding interdiction. The masses enjoyed listening to jesters, abandoned themselves to "diabolic" pagan amusements, and remained deaf both to preaching in church and to the Christian Legend. "When it is time to attend church," says a preacher in one of the records written about 1400, "we yawn, and stretch, and scratch ourselves, take a nap, then say: It is cold, or it rains. . . . But when the dancers, or musicians, or other players invite us to play or join the assembly of idolaters, we rush joyfully . . . and stand there gaping throughout the day, though there be no roof or shelter from rain and storm. We bear all this gladly, while destroying the soul by the spectacle. The church has a roof and is protected from the wind—and yet from sheer laziness no one wants to attend and be taught."

Because of these conditions the Christian Legend could not, during the early period of Russian literature, become the subject of independent poetical adaptation. But gradually and slowly circumstances changed, and there appeared in Russia if not readers then at least attentive listeners to the Christian Legend. Apparently, in many cases the clergy themselves were responsible for its propagation, and the ecclesiastical authorities severely blamed the ignorant village priests who in their simple-heartedness provided the people with the interdicted books instead of the Holy Scriptures. But the masses were able to learn the contents of the Legend without the assistance of the rural clergy, for it was told them in simple language by the people of their own class. There is an English story relating to a preacher who, unable to make the people listen to his sermons, disguised himself as a minstrel and

sang at the crossroads. The people, hearing the familiar tunes, came in crowds and unwittingly listened to sacred songs cloaked in popular garb. Something like this also happened in Russia, only the minstrels were not priests in disguise, but pious pilgrims sprung from the people.

From early days in Russia pilgrimage was a profession for those in need of public charity. Being under the special protection of the church, mendicant pilgrims were the natural intermediaries between the church and the people. Knowing and sharing the taste of the masses, they were able to adapt to this taste all the suitable religious material. Thus during the second phase in the development of popular literature—the transition from epic poetry and pagan song to the Christian Legend—the pilgrims played the part which previously had been performed by the jesters. Sacred verse began to compete with the “songs of olden days,” while the ancient apocrypha, prohibited by the church, supplied it with an inexhaustible source of material. Because of illiteracy and the absence of books, rhythmic verse was the sole possible means of transmitting and fixing anything in the minds of the people, and only after having been put into verse did the Legend become the property of the masses.

When did the Russian people assimilate the poetical themes of the medieval Christian Legend? All signs indicate that it took place rather late and that the process of this assimilation went hand in hand with the growth of religious formalism and the gradual nationalization of the faith. The first period during which sacred verse flourished corresponded to that of the exaltation in national piety, and subsequently it shared the fate of Russian ritualism.<sup>2</sup>

The Bulgarian and Serbian translations of the Christian Legend imported into Russia in book form remained untouched on the bookshelves of the monastic libraries, up to the end of the fifteenth century. They were known to but a few people, chiefly from among the hierarchs of the church. A movement headed by the clergy themselves brought these treasures of Christian poetry to the knowledge of the masses during the sixteenth century, but from the beginning the authorities and some of the best educated people of the time had serious misgivings about the interest they evoked.

<sup>2</sup> For the course of Russia's religious development, see Part I.—Ed.

Prince Kurbsky<sup>3</sup> complained that the "self-styled teachers of the present age" exercised themselves in reading "Bulgarian fables," and praised them and preferred them to the great teachers of the church. In recalling the accusations of Maximus and the apprehension expressed in *The Hundred Chapters*,<sup>4</sup> we can see clearly the general setting of tottering ancient customs in which the Christian apocrypha gained its first victory. The very fact that new and special precautions had to be taken against this danger proves that it was increasing. The Bulgarian list of forbidden books of the fourteenth century was rewritten in Russian in the form of a tract *On True and False Books*, and was widely distributed during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. "A great number of copies," remarks Prof. A. N. Pypin, "serves to show that at that time the books forbidden by the tract had a wide circulation. Indeed, the largest number of the 'false' books is known to us in manuscripts belonging to that period."

The fate of Christian poetry in Russia was determined by its belated assimilation, and because of this it could not render the same service to Russian literature that it did to that of medieval Europe. At the time when it first spread to the masses, the more educated representatives of church and society assumed a negative and critical attitude towards it, and thus it could never become an inspiration to the artistic genius of cultured people, whose spiritual interests were shortly to be directed into a different channel. Consequently the medieval Legend became the exclusive property of those who had preserved the religious ideals of the sixteenth century and were hostile to new literary influences. In other words, the sacred verse was adopted only by the lower classes and did not inspire any outstanding talents or produce any great works of art. Its further development took place chiefly among the Schismatics, because its favorite subjects were in harmony with the prevailing mood of the Old Ritualists. The Last Judgment and eternal agony, renunciation of the world, poverty, and pilgrimage in the name of

<sup>3</sup> Russian statesman and writer of the sixteenth century, a contemporary of Ivan the Terrible.—Ed.

<sup>4</sup> Maximus was a Greek theologian of the sixteenth century who accused Russian churchmen of deviation from correct Orthodox practices. *The Hundred Chapters* was a series of regulations passed by a Russian church council convoked in 1551 for the purpose of reforming the church. See Part I, chapters 1 and 3.—Ed.

Christ, received now a new treatment in accordance with the ideas of the radical Schismatic trends. From the Schism the sacred verse was transmitted to the kindred Sectarians—the Khlysty and the Skoptsy. The Evangelical and Spiritual Christians of the later period (i. e., the middle of the eighteenth century) on the contrary, remained alien to the ancient sacred verse; their songs possessed a modern, Protestant character, and in most cases were either translated or adapted from the German. As for the people who remained outside of the Schism and Sectarianism, they continued to preserve the heritage of ancient literature in the form it had acquired during the seventeenth century up to the time when this tradition was replaced by other religious and cultural influences.<sup>5</sup>

Thus, with the exception of the Schismatics and some Sectarians, the acceptance of the Christian Legend had no lasting effect on the imagination of the people. Even at its height sacred poetry was not sufficiently forceful to replace entirely in their minds the former epical and pagan traditions. The masses liked to listen to the mendicant pilgrims, but they still enjoyed the “jolly lads”—the jesters. Both these arts drew closer together when the pilgrims, having lost the support of the church, and the jesters, having ceased to be the minstrels at the court feasts, became equally dependent on public charity. To satisfy the demands of the people the epic songs of the jesters and the sacred verse of the pilgrims had to exist side by side. When the government finally suppressed the jesters, the pilgrims, or “Elders,” became their heirs. On occasion they donned the jesters’ garb and sang at wedding feasts. From the close proximity of the pilgrims’ Christian repertory with the pagan one of the jesters there resulted a mutual influence. That is why the popular hero Ilia of Murom became a saint and the sponsor of the pilgrims, while the wise King Solomon was transformed into a hero of the *byliny*.<sup>6</sup> For the same reason Vasily Buslaev, a favorite hero with the jesters, began his career by performing valiant deeds in the epic style, then, becoming a pilgrim, went to the Holy Land to atone for his sins, but finally, unable to stand the test, ended his life in a jester’s prank. The medieval Legend had imbued the national epos with Christian poetic ideas, but some-

<sup>5</sup> For details on Russian Schismatics and Sectarians, see Part I, chapters 3–6.—Ed.

<sup>6</sup> *Bylina* is the Russian name for an epic folk song.—Ed.



times the Legend in its turn acquired a popular form. Their peaceful coexistence gives the best illustration of the belated and incomplete influence which Christian literature exerted over the thought of the people.

This type of influence facilitated the reaction against it. The clergy were unable to instill the principles of Christian asceticism into the minds of the masses, whose penitent mood soon changed into one of mirth, and moralizing parables were easily transformed into parodies. During the same centuries in which Russian folklore mastered the themes of the Christian Legend, it also became conversant with the famous story of the reveler so contrary to the principal axioms of Christian ethics.

There was no subject on which both the Legend and the old didactic literature were more outspoken than the condemnation of the drunkard. According to the Legend, wine was derived from an infernal root sown in the Garden of Eden by the devil. Adam and Eve partook of the grape of the vine, transgressing the Lord's commandment. In the homilies intoxication was cited as the origin of all other sins, and the intemperate were threatened with eternal punishment. It was in support of this view that the famous Russian epic of "Woe-Misfortune" was written, in which all the misfortunes of the hero arose from his disobeying the parental admonitions and "taking to intoxicating drinks." After many wanderings the hero found refuge from grief in a monastery—where the ancient Russian reader sought it himself. Such was the Byzantine strain that gradually penetrated even the world outlook of the masses. Now we shall compare it to the humorous Western story, which gained favor with the Russian people and which in Russia acquired a particularly pointed character. In France its hero was a peasant, in Germany a miller, while the Russian version made him a drunkard, thus substituting an element of moral bravado for that of social protest. "Once upon a time there was a reveler," so ran the Russian version, "who during all his life drank copiously, praising God at every drink." After his death the reveler appeared at the gate of Paradise and started arguing with the saints. St. Peter was the first to ask who was knocking at the gate. "I am a sinner, a reveler," answered the hero; "I want to dwell with you in Paradise." "No revelers are admitted here," said the Apostle. "And who

art thou?" inquired the reveler, and on learning that it was St. Peter he continued: "And dost thou remember, Peter, how thou didst deny Christ? Why art thou living in Paradise?" Peter retired in humiliation. The same fate befell the Apostle Paul, Kings David and Solomon, and St. Nicholas, while to John the Evangelist the reveler said: "Thou with Luke didst write in the Gospel, Love each other; yet thou hatest the newcomer. John the Evangelist, either thou must cut off thy arm or disavow thy words." Whereupon John replied: "Reveler, thou art our man," and led him into Paradise. There the reveler unceremoniously occupied the best quarters and provoked the insulted saints: "Holy Fathers, you do not know even how to talk to a reveler, what would you do with a sober man?" This story was so widely read that in the seventeenth century its title was included in the list of forbidden books.

Lusty laughter and jokes found their way readily into the folklore. Though only slightly touched with culture, it bore the germ of truthfulness and realism characteristic of Russian art in its developed state. Among the intellectuals of those days the cultural influence of religion was rather stronger. Russian art had to pass through a series of conventional phases before it acquired the right to draw its material directly from life. During the earliest phase, that inspired by Byzantium, laughter and jokes had no place. "Laughter is not creative, neither is it preservative," said an ancient Russian moralist, "but devastating and subversive to creation; it grieves instead of pleasing the Holy Ghost, and destroys the body; it turns away virtue, for it does not consider death and eternal punishment. O Lord, deprive me of laughter and grant me lamentation and tears." Thus the ancient moralist saw no educational value in mirth, but regarded it as a deplorable temptation.

The history of ancient Russian fiction gives us the best account of the manner in which the intellectuals emerged from this phase, and what was adopted in its stead. The belles-lettres of this epoch are mostly translations, but in the selection of the originals and the gradual replacing of favorite subjects we have nevertheless a fair indication of the change in the readers' taste and the trend of their intellectual demands.

The material for the secular or "entertaining" books was again supplied by the more cultured countries. The South Slavonic

manuscripts, imported into Russia from Bulgaria and Serbia in the thirteenth and fifteenth centuries, awaited the Russian reader. They brought to that remote country the fruits of the lively literary intercourse which existed between the East and the West during the time of the Crusades. The ancient tales of India, the life of Buddha, the Trojan War, the campaigns of Alexander of Macedon, the valiant deeds of Digenis, the Byzantine knight, all these subjects previously developed by Byzantine literature now, with the assistance of Latin translations, became the property of Western nations. Somewhat later, having been translated into South Slavonic, they reached Russia, but here their fate, like that of the Christian Legend, was different from what it had been in Western Europe. The West mastered the new narrative material in active fashion, the Byzantine texts served as a starting point for numerous adaptations and gave birth to independent poetic creations. The sequels to the Byzantine tales in the West were the chivalrous novels and Italian *novelle*. What part did these narratives play in Russia?

Of course there existed also in ancient Russia an interest in profane or entertaining reading material, and it leaned, as in Europe, towards the fabulous, the fantastic, and the fairy-like—that which was “wondrous to listen to.” But it was only under the guise of moralizing works that the Russian reader could obtain such material. The literature imported from the Slavonic South satisfied both these requirements. In its literary forms it reproduced the types which had created the novel and the *novella* in the West. Either they were short stories, occasionally frivolous, but having always in conclusion a Christian moral, and usually connected one to another by some purely artificial device or very simple plot—such for the most part were the ancient dialogues, in which interlocutors vied in story-telling, or entertained each other with riddles and parables—or they were tales of wonderful lands and people, connected with a recital of valiant deeds of some legendary or semi-legendary hero. In Russia the story could not be liberated from its moral task and so was accepted only in the form of a moralizing parable, while the tales of heroic deeds were obliged to omit the romantic element and assume a Christian character. Thus Alexander of Macedon—a knight, according to the Western tradi-

tion—in the Slavonic version of the fifteenth century began to grieve over the futility of all worldly matters, while later, in the Serbian account of *Alexandria*, he definitely acquired the character of a Christian hero, worshiping one true God and destroying the pagan temples. Under the Slavonic influence a like transformation befell Digenis, the hero of the Byzantine epic. All these adaptations changed the Byzantine original in quite an opposite direction from its development in the West. Instead of the lyric and romantic elements gathering strength, even any hints at sentiment that still existed in the Greek prototype were eliminated from the Slavonic manuscripts before they reached Russia. The Russian people themselves never attempted to make any changes.

In fact even the small number of secular works were for a long time contraband in the country. The ascetic Byzantine influence was preserved among the outstanding members of Russian society up to the end of the seventeenth century. In 1676, at the direct "wish and command" of Tsar Alexis, a translation was made of *The Great Mirror*, a voluminous work composed by the Jesuits from material of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries which met with the approval of both antagonistic parties of Russian intellectuals—the old Orthodox and the new "Polish-Latin." This symposium contained stories intended to serve as illustrations for preachers, but instead became a favorite work with the general public. Notwithstanding its great bulk, many manuscript copies were circulated, and in the course of the same century it was ready for the printing press. Patriarch Adrian adopted some of the *Mirror* when compiling his book of prayers for the dead (*sinodik*), while during the eighteenth century a number of its stories became the property of the masses, and frequently served to revive in the minds of the people the contents of the earlier Russian narrative literature—that of the Christian Legend.

The tales in *The Great Mirror* resembled these earlier works, for in them worldly pleasures, wine and song, dances and finery, were also strongly condemned, and thoughts were concentrated on salvation. But this new symposium pictured the torments of the sinners with new, awe-inspiring details, coloring them vividly in order to impress the imagination of the faithful. A slanderer continually chewed and spat out his tongue, as red-hot as molten iron,

which hung to the floor and perpetually grew again. A woman full of sin sat on a fierce dragon; on either side two demons were beating her with chains of fire, while scorpions and lizards, dogs and mice were gnawing and biting her ears and brain, arms and legs. Toads jumped out of the mouth of anyone who confessed his sins, but reëntered it if a single sin was hidden. In a word, threats abounded. The church alone could save a sinner from inevitable perdition. A year of its prayers counted for a thousand years of torments, while thirty successive masses could save a sinner from hell. Thus purely Catholic ideas, adorned by the fruitful imagination of Loyola's *Exercises*, reached the conscience of the Russian faithful.

The fate of *The Great Mirror* was similar to that of the Christian apocrypha. In the eighteenth century it likewise became the exclusive property of the Schism, exerting its influence chiefly in the popular form of sacred verse. The *Mirror* never was printed, because soon after its first appearance in manuscript the mood of the intellectuals underwent a change. This change came at the end of the seventeenth century.

The new mood of those who could read became apparent even in the titles employed by the translators or transcribers to advertise the contents of their works. "This narrative is very beneficial to the salvation of the soul," was the usual recommendation for the ancient texts, but now in addition to them there appeared works of a quite different type, which gradually took their place. The readers were bored by moralizing literature and sought entertaining books.

The time was then ripe for the secularization of literature, and again the West provided the material. Having missed the opportunity of developing an independent novel and story, the Russian readers acquired both in their completed forms from European works; again not directly but translated into a language more familiar to them. The part of intermediary, which in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries had been played by the Balkans for the Byzantine narrative, was now assumed, for the Western chivalrous novel and story, by Poland. Due to this new source, the style of the entertaining books in Russia was radically changed during the last part of the seventeenth century. The profane element of

the narrative appeared without moral covering, and the story was now no longer a mere canvas for the free weaving of adventures and parables. Presently there arose a direct interest in the plot, and the former dialogues were replaced by long tales with complicated subject matter and artful intrigues. One after another there emerged upon the stage the "pleasant" and "amiable" stories of glorious kings, valiant knights, and beautiful princesses. At first the reader was interested mostly in the hero's valiant deeds, but little by little the romantic side attracted his attention, and love, which formerly had passed unnoticed, scarcely finding a way into the Russian version, began coming to the fore, and eventually was the chief interest of the story. Thus the erotic element appeared in Russian narrative literature.

The introduction of this love element was momentous, for it denoted the admission of realism into literature and of idealism into life, both of which helped to ennoble human relations. Contrary to the usual judgment, it can be asserted that it was exactly at this time that Russian literature began to be sentimental. The radical change, which in the West had been foreshadowed by Dante and achieved by Petrarch, took place in Russia under Peter the Great.

It was at that time that Russian literature finally started upon its independent development. The same source which stimulated a lively interest on the part of the readers also supplied the author with inspiration. Original Russian fiction and poetry were at last born.

The favorite hero of the original Russian stories in Peter's time was typical of sentimental literature. Usually it was a Russian sent abroad to study. There the hero, a sailor or a valiant cavalier, fell in love with some beautiful damsel or princess, pined for love and even wrote love poems. At the end, after a series of obstacles, he was either happily united with the object of his passion or met a tragic death. Thus the tales of Peter's time show both the source from which many a Russian reader acquired his sentiments and the means by which these sentiments were circulated. The source was supplied by impressions gained from traveling abroad, and original or translated fiction was the means for their propagation. Having familiarized himself with feelings that were new to him

in the world of fiction, the reader endeavored to apply them to practice. The imaginary sufferings of the heart, combined with actual experience, resulted in an increased sensitiveness, and thus the Russians acquired a taste for subtle emotions of which their fathers and grandfathers had been quite unaware. Through the medium of sentimental stories and love lyrics, idealism found a place in their heart.

The secularization of literature was one of the outward manifestations indicating the appearance in Russian society of a new group, standing outside the old social classes—the intelligentsia. Before long the pick of this intelligentsia, the first in Russian history, received a regular school education and began to advance rapidly along the newly opened path. They possessed a knowledge of languages, particularly French, so all the treasures of foreign literature were accessible to them. By the end of the eighteenth century, in St. Petersburg, French was the familiar language in the households of the nobility, who by preference read foreign books. Their children were educated at home by foreign tutors, whereas the schools were filled by the children of the middle class. Russian books were written or translations made chiefly by the people of the latter class, but they were read by the provincial nobility, the city middle class, the office clerks, the clergy, the literate among the soldiery, the peasantry, and the domestic servants. These new categories of readers, whose growth was greatly stimulated by Peter's reform,<sup>7</sup> required a special literature, for which purveyors were soon found. The result was that in Russia there appeared two cultural strata—the educated and the merely literate. At the beginning of the century they still were very close together, but by the end of it they had grown far apart. The upper stratum, which obtained the books from abroad, pursued every new literary trend of the West. Presently we shall examine the type of these trends, and we shall discover why the vast circle of merely literate people did not adopt the new literary style, but first we must study the literature intended for popular or, as it was called, the "bourgeois" or "mean" taste. Subsequently the simplicity of this taste exerted a great influence in the transformation of the artificial style of "bookmen" and the court circles into a more natural one. Without this transi-

<sup>7</sup> The reference here is to Peter the Great's attempt at Russia's westernization.—Ed.

tion, literature could never have reached the top of the national creative power or have become a real social force. Only through the close relation of these two strata, temporarily divided because of a too rapid tempo in the development of the adopted culture, could the author find his reader and the reader the author, and together, through the medium of a more frequent interaction, create the modern literary language.

Upon what did the semi-educated and the wholly uneducated Russian readers thrive until the time of the reunion, i. e., approximately until the twenties of the nineteenth century? Of course at first they assimilated the legacy of the culture in existence before Peter's time, but they were not willing to accept it passively or mechanically, without contributing of their own to every type of ancient literature. The average reader of the eighteenth century continued to enjoy religious books, but at the same time he demanded of them a certain emotion as well as benefit to his soul. This is why the *Life of Alexis, Man of God* became one of the favorite books, and was widely circulated. Sacred verse also assumed a new form, that of the psalms and chants using the syllabic verse imported into Russia from Poland by way of Kiev. All these were, however, mere survivals of the seventeenth century, while the predominating books in the eighteenth century were of a profane type. Here we meet primarily with various attempts to use the ancient folklore. Fairy tales, *byliny*, and particularly the folk songs, which up to this time were only oral, were now put into manuscript form and later were printed. The process was the reverse of that which had taken place in ancient Russia. The texts of the books were circulated then by word of mouth in the form of verse, while at this later time, on the contrary, oral literature, with the help of the written word and the printing press, was recorded for the benefit of the new readers. Again the old material suffered a change under the influence of the new literary style, and, what was even more significant, it was now supplemented by independent original works. It was precisely at this time that the dividing line between the real folk songs and those recently composed was obliterated, and in the song books of the latter part of the eighteenth century folk songs were mixed in with the "most modern sentimental" ones. But the translated love lyrics and novels



enjoyed the greatest success among the burghers. Up to the end of the eighteenth century old stories of adventure and chivalry were being diligently copied in Russia. So great was the sale of these novels at the end of the century that they were printed in several editions which, however, did not prevent their being copied by hand. The extraordinary commercial success of this literature and the durability of its popularity, which extended far into the nineteenth century, demonstrate the slowness of the progress made by the intellectuals in their efforts to raise the reading masses to the upper level of culture.

To a considerable extent this slowness can be explained by the very type of literary creations in Russia, which prevailed during the eighteenth and the first quarter of the nineteenth centuries. It was a period when letters were dominated by an artificial standard borrowed from abroad, and when an equally artificial language far removed from the spoken Russian was used. Much time had to elapse before literature could adopt the method of describing what one sees and of writing as one speaks. Throughout the entire eighteenth century the conventional contents and artificial form remained the outstanding characteristics of Russian literature, which explains why its real classical period was still far in the future.

Of course pseudo-classicism and the undeveloped literary language were only the symptoms, not the causes that arrested progress in literature. The actual reasons lay deeper and were due to the social conditions existing in those days. In Russia, as in the West, pseudo-classicism satisfied the demands of a small social stratum, and prevailed only until the time when the reading public of a different class and having different interests and demands began to show an active interest in literature. In the West the theory of pseudo-classicism was formed during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries under the immediate influence of the court and nobility, and was designed to create a literature for the "well-bred" people, who despised *la racaille, la vile multitude*. Therefore it was quite natural that at the beginning of the eighteenth century in Russia likewise the pseudo-classical theory was best suited to satisfy the demands of a literature which, according to Tredia-

kovsky,<sup>8</sup> had to use "the language of the courtiers and illustrious noblemen." But at court, during the first half of the century, literature was tolerated rather as an indispensable attribute of courtly magnificence than appreciated for its content. It was this specific requirement that was best satisfied by the conventional forms of the classical tragedies and odes.

Already at this early period literature in its subject matter was predominantly sentimental, and this element was emphasized during the second part of the century, when there appeared readers and an audience from the small nobility and the bourgeois class. By that time the demand for what was natural and a greater concern for *la simple humanité souffrante* were much spoken of in French literature. The Russians, who championed "bourgeois tastes," could again take up the banner that had been passed to them from the West. But they did not proceed very far either in their social or their literary protest, and limited themselves to a mere criticism of the extremes in Russian pseudo-classicism. After some concessions had been made to the new tastes, the latter continued to exist peacefully along with the ever increasing sentimental trend.

Another sign of limited influence exerted by intellectual literature over life during the eighteenth century was the undeveloped state of the literary language. This the contemporaries regarded as the cause of the weakness in literature, and they hastened to remedy the situation by publishing grammars, dictionaries, and their own samples of literary works. Actually, however, the undeveloped state of the literary language can be explained by the subordinate part that literature was playing in life. Literary language is not created altogether by the authors, but by the readers as well, through their mutual efforts. Only a constant and resolute demand for literary works and an equally abundant supply can produce that silent understanding between the public and the authors, that *usus* which establishes for the general public a lexical and grammatical structure of the language. This was attained in the eighteenth century by the "bourgeois" literature, and it resulted

<sup>8</sup> Russian writer of the eighteenth century (1703-69) who devoted much attention to problems of literary theory and language.—Ed.

in the gradual development of a popular literary language, while the serious writers were still groping for their public and inventing fictitious rules for literary style. Here a gradual change took place as the type of readers and their tastes became clear. The reading public was unsophisticated and its prevailing mood sentimental, so the literary style had to develop in the same directions.

This new literary language, of course, was not the first one to appear in Russia. Long before that, ancient Russia had established a language of its own, which was used in church literature. In the course of centuries the Church Slavonic succeeded to a certain extent in adapting itself to the national Russian speech, and therefore was already quite remote from its Slavonic prototype of the days of Cyril and Methodius.<sup>9</sup> Nevertheless it remained very conventional and pedantic in form, and in time the gulf between it and colloquial Russian speech widened, rendering this language unintelligible not only to the masses alone. But through long habit people became reconciled to it, and in its very obscurity a quality was found conforming to the dignity and importance of the subjects on which it was deemed permissible to write in this language.

During the Moscow period,<sup>10</sup> due to the state's requirements, there was gradually modeled a simple and comprehensible style for writing official documents and, as was to be expected, it penetrated into other branches of letters outside the church's sphere. Already in the early part of the sixteenth century the tendency of common speech and official language to influence the Church Slavonic used in the books was noticed and condemned by some contemporary scholars. This influence undoubtedly continued to grow in the course of the seventeenth century until further development in that direction was interrupted by Peter's reform. One of the effects of that reform was to deprive the language used by the educated Russians of any firmly established foundation.

Along with new impressions acquired from abroad, foreign forms of expression and foreign terminology were accepted without discrimination. There followed a long period during which the cultured Russians, and in particular the writers, had recourse

<sup>9</sup> Greek missionaries of the ninth century, the inventors of the Slavonic alphabet.—Ed.

<sup>10</sup> From the middle of the fifteenth to the end of the seventeenth centuries.—Ed.

preferably to foreign languages in order to find more precise and subtle expression for their ideas. The sedate and pompous style of the Moscow period was now replaced by spasmodic efforts to express in words the outpourings of new emotions and thoughts. The veil of monotony, spread by the conventional style over literature of the seventeenth century, disappeared as if by magic. Every writer left to his own devices acquired individual characteristics, and many attempts were made—some serious and some ineffectual or even comic—to create a new Russian tongue.

While this crisis was taking place in the language of educated society, two elements of the Russian tongue remained unaffected by it and unchanged: the ancient Church Slavonic and the everyday speech of the people. The Russian theorists devoted much time to conjecturing which of the two extremes the new literary language would most resemble. The deep-rooted prejudice on the part of the intellectuals, the social origin of the majority of the none too numerous readers, and the conventional theory of pseudo-classicism, all stood in favor of the style antedating Peter. This is why Russian literary theory continued for a century to defend the rights of the Church Slavonic and to cling to its last remnants in Russian speech, in order to create a "lofty style" in literature.

Thus the Church Slavonic continued to be used in expressing lofty thoughts and treating the solemn subjects of the pseudo-classical tragedies, poems, and odes. But by the end of the eighteenth century all the elements required for reforming the literary language were already in existence, and it remained only to sanction the reform. Soon "Slavism" was definitely eliminated from the literary language and replaced by "the pleasant style which the French called *élégant*," while pedantry and scholasticism survived only at the universities and among the few old-fashioned writers.

The triumph of the new literary language at the end of the eighteenth century was due chiefly to the activity of Karamzin,<sup>11</sup> but we must not forget that its victory was the result of a long

<sup>11</sup> N. Karamzin (1766–1826), famous novelist, journalist, and historian, one of the outstanding representatives of pre-Romantic Sentimentalism in Russian literature.—Ed.

chain of events. Izmailov realized this when, in 1804, he described the importance of Karamzin's reform as follows:

Conditions during the epoch in which Karamzin appeared had led Moscow and St. Petersburg society to have more refined ideas on art and life. Only the language was lacking that would correspond to the usual figure of speech in society, that could express the new ideas of the century, and would be in harmony with the new courtliness of manners. Such a language, refined and agreeable, could overcome the unforgivable prejudice held against the Russian tongue by people in society, and women in particular, by assimilating the qualities of the best European languages.

This new literary language, definitely sanctioned by Karamzin, was equally remote both from the ancient Church Slavonic and the plain popular speech. It approached the living colloquial language not of the people but that of the reading public. Without the influence of the public there could be no established literary language, and the author, even with a great talent, having nothing upon which to rely, could not prevent his literary style from rapidly becoming antiquated. Only with the successful stabilization of speech could there appear in Russia a permanent literary tradition. At the same time Russian literature acquired a basis on which it could continue to adapt itself to life.

During the eighteenth century the influence of literature on life was broadened not so much in quality as in quantity. The outstanding writers scorned "bourgeois" and "shabby" prose, and the writing of verse was considered to be the only road to immortality. For a long time the Russian authors followed the advice of Sumarokov<sup>12</sup> in his "Instruction to Those Wishing to Become Writers":

Throw away the quill you might  
Or learn to write verses day and night.

Due to this attitude towards prose the production of novels remained in the hands of half-educated compilers or, at best, of undergraduates. The readers' favorite subject continued to be

<sup>12</sup> A. Sumarokov (1717-77), the best known exponent of the pseudo-classical tragedy in eighteenth-century Russia.—Ed.

love. In 1760 Kheraskov (1733-1807) <sup>13</sup> affirmed that "novels are read to learn the art of loving," and that the reader "often marks the tenderest passages in red," and in 1802 Karamzin explained the wide circulation of novels in the same manner. But besides the love plot the interest of the public was equally attracted by the general setting in which it was presented. The reader was as ever entranced by fabulous complexities and numerous episodes which had no direct connection with the main theme of the story, and liked to have the action removed to some distant and unknown land. This taste was satisfied with the very popular type of novels of adventure and the so-called "Eastern tales," but towards the end of the century a new element was developed in the novel—moralizing, which incidentally had nothing in common with that of the ancient Russian literature. Having acquired a sentimental tinge, it soon branched out into a special type of "emotional" narrative.

At the end of the eighteenth century the demands of the bourgeois for emotional literature finally met with response from the pseudo-classical school predominant at that time. The ode gradually yielded to tragedy, the tragedy to bourgeois drama and high comedy, and the latter to emotional and light comedies. In turn each of them changed from its prototype. The old lyric poets were derided, and Derzhavin <sup>14</sup> in his works was free in his treatment of the old rules. Sumarokov's tragedy, with its strict adherence to the style of Racine, was succeeded by that of Kniazhinin (1742-91), in which more space was devoted to adventure, emotional scenes, and theatrical effects. Sumarokov himself eventually abandoned tragedy for comedy, thus passing from verse to prose and introducing on the stage real Russian characters, thereby foreshadowing Fonvizin <sup>15</sup> who, in his comedies, offered the first examples of a truly artistic treatment of contemporary Russian life. Kheraskov's emotional plays, which stirred both players and audience to the profuse shedding of tears, were frequently acted in the Russian theaters and received great acclaim. Comic opera

<sup>13</sup> Another eighteenth-century Russian playwright.—Ed.

<sup>14</sup> G. Derzhavin (1743-1816), the greatest Russian poet before Pushkin.—Ed.

<sup>15</sup> D. Fonvizin (1745-92), the most outstanding Russian playwright before Griboedov and Gogol.—Ed.

caused a sensation. The light comedy tended to develop into the farcical plays, vaudevilles, which enjoyed a tremendous success. But it was the fable which eventually rose to the heights of a true national type.

## II

# THE CLASSICAL PERIOD

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At the beginning of the nineteenth century pseudo-classicism still preserved its authority in the textbooks of poetry, but absolutely lost its former power of inspiring the court and metropolitan literature, and was openly replaced by Sentimentalism, whose triumph was a step, though not a conclusive one, towards a reconciliation between literature and life. Its influence over the public was only in the sphere of fanciful emotions, for a Chinese wall still separated it from the world of reality. The emotions raised by the reading of novels were only in rare cases apparent in real life, and even the leaders of emotionalism agreed that the fantastic and the real worlds were as far apart as the poles. In the first they could be dreamers and poets, while in the second they continued to be officials and advocates of serfdom. At the formal inauguration of the Sentimental period, in 1796, Karamzin expressed this idea as follows:

Only that which does not exist in reality is beautiful, said Jean Jacques Rousseau. What does it matter? If the beautiful, like a light shadow, perpetually escapes us, we must at least retain it in our imagination, and follow it into the world of dreams, while deceiving ourselves and those worthy to be deceived. A poet has two lives, two worlds. If he is bored and dissatisfied with reality, he departs to the land of imagination and lives there in Paradise, according to his desires and his heart's content, like a pious Mohammedan with his seven hours.

Thirteen years later, at the close of the Sentimental period (1810), the same remarks were repeated by Zhukovsky.<sup>1</sup> "What does the

<sup>1</sup> V. Zhukovsky (1783-1852), one of the greatest Russian poets of the early nineteenth century, particularly known for his translations from Western European pre-romantic and romantic poetry.—Ed.



poet, whose influence is solely over the imagination, care if reason discovers that that which is tangible is quite different from that presented by illusion?"

The young generation, shedding tears over *Poor Liza* and *Marie's Holt*,<sup>2</sup> were no longer satisfied with these arguments. Having lived through worse times, the old leaders knew well that life and fiction were not the same. They were accustomed to the humble position assigned to the influence of books in the eighteenth century. But the youth of the time of Alexander I grew up in more favorable surroundings. They took the sweet dreams of sentimental poets for granted, and Sentimentalism was transformed from a pleasant recreation for adults into an elementary school of conventional idealism for youth.

With maturity they needed variety in their reading, and the more gifted among the young generation undertook to provide this new literature. The old popular books were rapidly passed down to the lower levels of society. Sumarokov, who derided *Bova* and *Peter of the Golden Keys*<sup>3</sup> as books for clerks, was in turn ridiculed by Karamzin, whose *Poor Liza* subsequently also became the subject of derision. For the contemporaries, some of the most popular novels of the eighteenth century now became only reminiscences of a childhood spent in the remote provinces. According to the records of 1806-08, "more novels are read and create a greater impression in the provinces than in the cities." It was in 1814 that the first feeble effort was made at writing an original, realistic novel—*The Russian Gil Blas*, by Basil Narezhny (1780-1825), a predecessor of Gogol. But as the old prejudice still existed, and the time was not yet ripe for writing in prose, literary realism at first appeared in the more familiar form of poetry.

The protest against conventional emotions and literary style assumed a rather unusual form in Russia, yet one that made it particularly accessible to the reading public. Instead of the "gentle sadness" and "pleasant melancholy feelings" favored by the older men of letters, the field of literature was suddenly invaded by an uproarious, indomitable, and youthful gaiety, which was irresponsible, but at the same time very contagious. A small group of

<sup>2</sup> Sentimental stories by Karamzin and Zhukovsky, respectively.—ED.

<sup>3</sup> Two popular tales of the eighteenth century.—ED.

students from the Lyceum in Tsarskoe Selo, among whom was Pushkin (1799-1837), chose intimate feasts and revels, secrets of the heart, and love adventures as themes for their poetry. This daring innovation was introduced from the classroom to society, and soon mess songs and the cult of Bacchus and Venus won places of importance in literature. The new subjects, fresh, young, and mirthful, were accepted with delight by the public and gained many new adepts for literature. The protest, which at first was instinctive, rapidly changed into one based on principle, and drew to itself new elements. As yet the fact of this new poetry was not supported by any theory, but its general meaning was clear: life took possession of literature at a time when its estrangement from reality was particularly apparent. It was in this sense that, in 1835, Belinsky <sup>4</sup> interpreted the significance of Pushkin's poetry: "The true poetry of our day is a realistic poetry, a poetry of life, a poetry of actualities." A year before, he had emphasized that "nationality is the Alpha and Omega of the new period," adding that "our nationality consists of reproducing true pictures of Russian life." Much has been written since about Pushkin, but in the estimation of the poet and of the period he had inaugurated, these definitions remain true and fundamental. The two outstanding characteristics of the great man and his time were artistic realism and the development of national art. In this sense Pushkin was the founder of what could rightfully be called the classical era of Russian literature, while everything which preceded it was but a period of preparation.

But what could be said in reply to the opinion that Pushkin in his development passed through a temporary phase of subjection to the influence of Romanticism?

Of course Romanticism was a step nearer to the reconciliation of literature and life, but with regard to Pushkin, who stood outside and above the various literary and social trends of his time, the term should be used with great caution. Pushkin did not share the current ideas on the subject. On May 25, 1825, he wrote to Viazemsky: "I have noticed here that everybody, even you, has only the haziest conception of Romanticism." In a letter to Bestuzhev, on November 30 of the same year, he again wrote: "All I

<sup>4</sup> V. Belinsky (1811-48), famous critic.—Ed.

read about Romanticism is wrong." When at last he thought he had found "true Romanticism" in Shakespeare, it was not Romanticism, but artistic realism.

True Romanticism, not as imagined by Pushkin, but as found in the history of letters, has many forms and differs with every nationality. In Russia it resembled mostly that of the Germans. French Romanticism was introduced to the Russians at a later date. As to English Romanticism, which in Russia was called Byronism and which for a time exerted a rather superficial influence on Pushkin, it had very little in common with those romantic tendencies that did not take root in the country until the middle of the eighteen-twenties, that is, only after Pushkin's art had definitely assumed its final form. The interval between the death of Sentimentalism and the birth of Romanticism was replete with emotions, more political than literary, resulting chiefly from the Napoleonic wars. Under the impact of these political impressions Russian society was divided into two groups tending towards official patriotism and revolutionism, respectively. Pushkin, though a "bard of the Decembrists,"<sup>5</sup> grew up during the years of this interregnum in literature, but to its benefit remained a stranger to both political groups. Because of this he could easily defend pure art against those who, like Ryleiev,<sup>6</sup> looked in vain for a definite idea in his poetry. When finally Romanticism became entrenched in Russian literature, it attempted to interpret Pushkin's poetry in terms of its own theory, but such an interpretation could not do full justice to Pushkin's significance in Russian letters. This is why Prince Viazemsky was right when in his introduction to Pushkin's *The Fountain of Bakhchisarai* (1823) he refused to place the poet's works under the category of Romanticism, which at that time had not yet acquired a definite tendency worthy of the title. "And what is a romantic style," he inquired, "and what is its relation to and difference from that of the classics? . . . Romantic literature has not yet succeeded in defining its attributes. . . . It has not yet been dissected. . . . Give it time, and the hour will strike."

<sup>5</sup> Members of a secret political society which attempted an abortive revolution in December, 1825.—Ed.

<sup>6</sup> K. Ryleiev (1797-1826), a Decembrist and one of the earlier civic poets in Russian literature.—Ed.

When the hour did strike it happened independently of Pushkin's poetry. Russian Romanticism exerted a strong influence over both the poet's younger contemporaries and the following generation; but it bore a philosophical-religious and social rather than literary character. It appeared on the social horizon as spontaneously as Pushkin's poetry, but in entirely different surroundings. From St. Petersburg the scene of action was transferred to Moscow, from the Guards regiments to the university, from Decembrists to students, from gilded youth to the gentry and the middle classes.

A study crowded with books, endless conversations on abstract subjects, ideal love, a passionate attachment to Schubert's music, Schelling's philosophy, and the fantastic works of Hoffmann, all these were characteristic of the new milieu, where art was highly valued because in it was seen the revelation of life's mystery. The poet's art, like nature, was an incarnation of the divine idea. A real poet was a sublime being, an instrument of God or of nature's creative power and, according to Friedrich Schlegel (a theorist of the Romantic school) his aim was to combine life and the ideal in a higher synthesis: "To render poetry vital and social, and to endow life and society with a poetic character." In the light of this new theory the earlier views of Sentimentalism on the difference between the two worlds, the exalted and the real, appeared totally erroneous; the very idea of restricting the realm of the ideal by conventions seemed outrageous. There existed in fact but one world—the ideal—while reality did not exist, and was only a sad phantom.

To understand the first moments in the life of the philosophical-romantic school of literature one must consult the *Mnemosyne*, a magazine published at Moscow in 1824-25, and now long since forgotten. Its editors were categorically opposed to Batteux and La Harpe, the old lawmakers in the matter of style. Also they never ceased to deride the melancholy of Zhukovsky, with his eternal "mist and moonlight," or the voluptuousness of the young officers' poetry, where it was impossible to "find a thought amongst the words." An admiration for the poems of Pushkin, whom even some of his closest friends did not understand; the echoes of French and English Romanticism along with the dominating

German influence; a cult of Homer, Shakespeare, and Goethe, coupled with a reserved attitude towards Schiller and Byron, both of whom were viewed as "one-sided" poets; a propaganda of the *Naturphilosophie*; the assertion that "actually only the ideal existed, while the material world was accidental," and that a poet was a man who lived in the ideal, even if he wrote no verse—all these traits indicated a significant crisis, which took place in Russian literature on the eve of the new reign (1825).

The general public did not like these abstruse philosophical reasonings of the new school, whose Moscow periodicals, notwithstanding Pushkin's support, shortly lost their subscribers. But the practical applications of these complex theories were intelligible to all. Polevoy<sup>7</sup> quickly mastered them, and for a number of years he held the interest of the reading public. His *Telegraph* remained the leading magazine until the eighteen-thirties, when the representatives of a new generation, Stankevich<sup>8</sup> and, following in his footsteps, Belinsky, finally emerged from the labyrinth of German metaphysics. Belinsky introduced the results of intimate discussions among his friends to the general public, and undertook the propaganda of his circle's ideas in periodicals. The "stormy Bissarion" proved to be the right man for this new task, and in his inspired interpretation the philosophical and aesthetic theories of the school attracted public attention.

Soon the journalistic struggle demonstrated to the critic, however, that the learned inventions of his friends were very far from the actual requirements of life. Having spent several years on abstractions, Belinsky "shouted for joy" on discovering around him that reality which he was seeking in the empyrean. "Reality" became his watchword, and it was easy thereafter to differentiate between its various phenomena, to approach it in a practical spirit, and to choose as a second watchword "Sociality." In this manner philosophical and historical criticism, which interested only a few, was replaced, for a long period, by social and political criticism which Russian society urgently needed, because of the absence of a free press and open political discussions. From the old concep-

<sup>7</sup> N. Polevoy (1796-1846), journalist and historian.—Ed.

<sup>8</sup> N. Stankevich (1813-40), one of the outstanding Russian intellectuals of the eighteen-thirties.—Ed.

tion only one dogma was retained in its entirety, that of the great importance of literature as a means of inspiring life with an ideal principle. Then, as it was no longer an abstract philosophical idea, but a concrete social ideal that literature was expected to propagate, the attitude towards art also changed. Once more Pushkin's pure art provoked the same opposition as that of Ryleiev. Goethe again had to surrender his place to Schiller, and French social ideas replaced German philosophy.

From this moment literary criticism became frankly social-minded, and having acknowledged the rights of realism in art, it shortly began denying art in the name of reality. The truth was that Russian critics did not want to discuss social life under the pretext of estimating the value of literary compositions, but desired to deal directly with life and be openly recognized as publicists. Forced by political considerations to confine themselves to art, they retaliated by persistently asking the question: Which is superior, art or reality? It was thus that Chernyshevsky<sup>9</sup> posed the question in his dissertation *The Aesthetic Relation of Art to Reality*. Bent upon the study of reality, this type of critic had neither time nor inclination to establish a philosophic basis for aesthetic values, but instead applied himself to ascertaining the social importance of Russian works of art, which was precisely what Russian society needed most at the time.

It remains to trace, in a broad outline, the fate of the secularization of Russian literature after it had reached the acme of its development in Pushkin's time. We have called this period "classical," but not in the same sense in which the word was used during the era of pseudo-classicism. In the history of every literature the term "classical" might be applied to those periods when the national creative genius attains independence and complete development. In Russia it started with Pushkin at the beginning of the twenties and lasted until the eighties and nineties of the nineteenth century, when the masters of Russian literature had either disappeared from the stage or were singing their swan songs. Although during these sixty or seventy years Russian classical litera-

<sup>9</sup> N. Chernyshevsky (1828-89), journalist, writer on social and economic problems, extremely popular with the radical youth of the eighteen-sixties and eighteen-seventies, one of the spiritual fathers of Populism.—ED.

ture maintained some unity, yet in the course of this period there was a break in its progress, and the classical epoch was thus divided into two almost equal parts. The year 1855, when the reign of Nicholas I came to an end and that of Alexander II began, marks the moment of this break. The great political and social change which took place at that time inevitably exerted a strong influence over literature. In what did the change consist?

In 1855, eighteen years after the death of Pushkin, there appeared in the *Contemporary* articles written by N. G. Chernyshevsky. Still under the guise of literary discussion, these articles amounted to a protest, in the name of the new realistic conception, against the aestheticism of the forties, the protest of "the children against the fathers." At first the full social and political import of the movement was not apparent. But from the very beginning it was evident that the controversy extended far beyond literature and pure art, and that back of the theoretical arguments, expressed of necessity in the "language of Aesop,"<sup>10</sup> there struggled two psychological types representing two different generations, and two sociological formations corresponding to two periods in history. The "commoners" contested the predominance of the "bards of the manor" in literature, and in this struggle they were supported by youth and the reading public of the urban centers. It was not an entirely new phenomenon, for the commoners had long since occupied prominent places in literature: such outstanding men of letters as N. A. Polevoy, the son of a merchant, N. I. Nadezhdin (1804-56),<sup>11</sup> a seminary graduate, and even Belinsky belonged to this class. But in those earlier days the commoners, having no firm base of their own in the reading public, became assimilated with the literary élite, which in its majority still belonged to the only cultured class, the nobility. Pushkin wrote to Ryleiev: "Our writers come from high society, and in them aristocratic pride is mingled with the ambitions of an author; we do not like to be patronized by equals; . . . the Russian poet . . . claims esteem as a noble whose ancestry dates back six hundred years." Such a feeling was quite natural when a genealogical record could save one from the

<sup>10</sup> This was an expression commonly used in pre-revolutionary Russia to describe the peculiar euphemistic and parabolical language to which the opposition writers had to resort in order to allay the suspicions of the censor.—Ed.

<sup>11</sup> Editor and journalist.—Ed.

necessity of being subservient to a Maecenas. This is why Pushkin emphasized his own right to a high position in society. But towards the end of his life the situation began to change, and on another occasion (1834) he said: "Even now our writers who do not belong to the nobility are very scarce. Notwithstanding this their work dominates every branch of literature in our country. It is an important sign, which will bear significant results."

Pushkin was correct, and he too experienced the results of the transformation which had been taking place. The chief point of this change was that Russian literature was definitely leaving the sphere of the court and high society, while still lacking a sufficiently large public from which it could derive its support. Up to that time the writer had remained an amateur, but now the question of writing as a profession was raised. Pushkin lived during this extremely difficult period of transition, and was the last martyr to royal and court patronage. At last he thought of becoming a professional writer, and he returned repeatedly to this idea during the thirties. So in 1831 he wrote: "Ten years ago we only had a few amateurs devoting themselves to literary work. They saw in it a pleasant, honorable pastime and not as yet a branch of industry." Five years later (1836) he wrote again: "During the last twenty years Russian literature has developed into an important branch of industry. Previously it was regarded only as a polite and aristocratic occupation. In 1811, Madame de Staël said: 'In Russia a few noblemen only devote themselves to literary work.'"

Karamzin had already tried to remedy the situation by creating a new literary language that would appeal to a broader circle of readers, and he attempted to reach his public by various methods such as the publication of magazines, almanacs, and translations. But in 1798 he was forced to confess his failure: "Russian literature is like a mendicant begging for bread: there is small profit in it." True that at the beginning of the nineteenth century this situation had somewhat improved; yet he ended by abandoning the "altar of the Muses" and becoming an official historiographer, receiving his support from the state. The position of Pushkin, who completed Karamzin's reform of the language, seemed to be a more favorable one. His royalties were growing: *The Caucasian Prisoner* (1822) brought in five hundred roubles and *The Foun-*



*tain of Bakhchisarai* (1824) three thousand, the latter being such an unheard-of royalty that it stirred the entire literary world. But simultaneously there appeared on the scene a new type—the “commercial” writers, such as Thaddeus Bulgarin with his *Northern Bee* (1825) and Senkovsky with his *Library for Reading*. A keen competition arose between these commercial writers and the literary aristocracy, and for Pushkin the struggle proved to be an uneven one. In 1829 his *Poltava* was received coolly, while Bulgarin’s *Ivan Vyzhigin*, a novel of adventure written in the eighteenth-century style, ran into a second edition within a week’s time. Subsequently Pushkin, in his controversy with Bulgarin, was led to defend the old system of royal and court patronage, though stating at the same time that “lately literature in Russia has become a profitable business, and the public could afford to spend more money than His Highness So-and-so, or His Excellency So-and-so.” In an effort to win over this public, Pushkin had recourse to the methods of his opponents: he began writing prose and tried publishing magazines instead of almanacs. But the aristocratic laziness of his Moscow friends ruined the *Moscow Observer*, a periodical which was under his patronage but depended solely on the talent of Pogodin,<sup>12</sup> the son of a serf, while Pushkin’s own magazine, the *Contemporary*, was also a commercial failure. As a result Pushkin became an historiographer supported by the state.

The aristocratic writers found themselves in the same rôle as their déclassé heroes—Chatsky, Onegin, and Pechorin.<sup>13</sup> They felt out of place among their own aristocratic circles, and yet they were not familiar with the ways of broader social circles, the very existence of which was to them problematical. Consequently, the heroes of aristocratic literature relieved their feelings by taking their money and ennui abroad, where they amazed the foreigners “with the versatility of the Russian mind,” or else by retiring to their country seats where they deteriorated and gradually became idlers and “sloths,” like Tentetnikov and Oblomov.<sup>14</sup> They were brought up by foreign tutors, studied in foreign universities,

<sup>12</sup> M. Pogodin (1800–73), a well-known historian.—Ed.

<sup>13</sup> Heroes of Griboedov’s *The Misfortune of Being Clever*, Pushkin’s *Eugene Onegin*, and Lermontov’s *A Hero of Our Time*, respectively.—Ed.

<sup>14</sup> Tentetnikov, one of the characters in Gogol’s *Dead Souls*. Oblomov, the hero of Goncharov’s famous novel of the same name.—Ed.

were semi-denationalized, and even their patriotic enthusiasm and their agronomic experiments remained alien to their native country, to the welfare of which they were ready to devote their lives.

All that has been said above renders it easier to understand why the life of the nobility was the first subject to be described in Russian realistic literature, and why the aristocratic writers, while repudiating their social milieu, nevertheless continued to write for it. The first attempts to portray the life of the whole contemporary Russia, which the aristocratic authors heretofore had used only as a background for depicting the nobility, created a great impression. Gogol (1809-52), a writer who had neither aristocratic schooling nor refinement, made this attempt in his masterpiece, *Dead Souls* (1842). He became the victim of conflicting opinions on this work. The Slavophiles pronounced it the "apotheosis of Russia," their opponents called it "Russia's anathema," while Herzen,<sup>15</sup> in trying to learn the author's conception, wrote in his diary:

It is ridiculous to see in it the apotheosis, and to call it anathema is unfair. In this work there are words of reconciliation presaging hope for the future abundant and triumphant, but this does not obviate the reflection of the present in all its hideous reality.

Gogol himself, not interested in abstract debates on social ideals, watched with amazement and inner dread the impression produced by his work, and so unlike his own conception. He attempted to correct the "hideous reality" of the first part of his narrative by introducing "positive" types into the second part, but he did not succeed in making them convincing. Feeling depressed by his failure, Gogol abandoned all his friends, tried to forsake Russia, but could not escape from himself, and because of this inner conflict he paid the penalty of a tragic death. It was against his will that he was described in the history of Russian literature as the founder of the "natural school," which during this same period produced such artistic realists as Grigorovich (1822-99), Goncharov (1812-91), Turgenev, and the early Dostoevsky.

We now approach the crisis heralded by this literary progress.

<sup>15</sup> A. Herzen (1812-70), one of the earlier Russian socialists, a brilliant writer most of whose works were published in Western Europe, where he lived as a political émigré.—ED.

It coincided with the beginning of a new reign, that of Alexander II, when at one and the same time the accumulated reserves of Russian artistic genius and a desire for social activity, heretofore suppressed, found an outlet. But here the members of the old generation met with competition from the representatives of a new social type and new ideas. In 1857, in a letter to Tolstoy, Botkin gave a very vivid and characteristic description of these literary newcomers, from the point of view of the "fathers."

Our coarse, hideous, practical life intruded upon the serene and intimate contemplations of some few people. . . . Saltykov says that they will no longer read Goethe. . . . People who before this had never held a book in their hands are now beginning to read. Inner conflicts of the soul, poetry, and an artistic element were accessible to a small minority only. To the majority of readers these things were incomprehensible. Now, when there appears a literature that is simple and accessible to every member of this majority, it is evident that they will rush at it. Our literature was caught unawares: it anticipated nothing like it.

Naturally the people accustomed to the "intimate contemplations" felt ill at ease; they were quite disconcerted by the cool and straightforward ways of the young men of a different social origin and breeding who had nothing in common with their intimate literary circles, and who, aside from their distinct political opinions, shocked them by their tastes and manners. In addition to this there was a feeling of personal resentment; the younger generation not only "showed them no respect, as they had in their youth shown the luminaries of those days," but "quite frankly ignored them, even expressing no desire to be introduced," and publicly treated them with no consideration. Of course the conflicting principles became more and more defined, when such new critics of the *Contemporary* as Chernyshevsky and Dobroliubov<sup>16</sup> began to unfold and sharpen their ultra-realistic views. In the controversy that followed, the substance of these new ideas was understood in a very crude sense and was stigmatized as "Nihilism," a word popularized by Turgenev. In reality the enthusiasm aroused by

<sup>16</sup> N. Dobroliubov (1836-61), literary critic and Chernyshevsky's closest collaborator.—Ed.

the new preaching, particularly among the younger generation, was created not by its negative attitude, but by the positive content of the doctrine. In the domain of literature, omitting the polemical exaggerations, this controversy still was based on the old argument: pure art as opposed to its utilitarian value, the worship of beauty against the ideal of social service, and the philosophical as opposed to a realistic approach to art.

Therefore, although the difference between the two generations—that of the forties and that of the sixties—was great it did not destroy the continuity in the development of Russian classical literature. On the contrary, the change enriched it with new content and widened its outlook. In fact, some of the best works of the “classics,” who began to write in the preceding period, appeared after the crisis. Artistic realism remained the fundamental trait of Russian literature. Already in Pushkin’s time it had passed from poetry to “humble” prose, endowing the literary language with the finest nuances for depicting nature and the human soul, while now it applied all this wealth to the artistic reproduction of Russian reality in its various manifestations. Throughout this period, beginning with *Eugene Onegin*, the social and psychological novel dominated Russian literature. As to the content, the so-called Byronic type, characteristic of the pre-reform days,<sup>17</sup> gradually disappeared from this literature. The mysterious and demoniacal heroes, irritated by the futility of their surroundings, lost their charm. Taken down from their pedestals and subjected to ridicule, they yielded to the new heroes, in many cases still fictitious, yet having a closer bond with the new Russian reality. These new heroes, unlike the old ones, did not shun or despise the trivialities of everyday life; they accepted life as it was, striving to share in it and to comply with its requirements.

True, these “positive” literary types were somewhat colorless, for reality had no time in which to provide them with the necessary colors. They could not develop their strivings in the existing political surroundings, and had to limit their activities to “petty work,” and because of this they were subsequently accused of being mere

<sup>17</sup> In speaking of the nineteenth century, Russian historians usually refer to the decades before the abolition of serfdom (1861) as the pre-reform period, and to those after the Emancipation as the post-reform period.—ED.

"philistines." The authors themselves admitted their heroes' limitations by deliberately placing at their side women with idealistic aspirations: Olga and Stolz in Goncharov's *Oblomov*, Nadine and Molotov in Pomialovsky's<sup>18</sup> *Molotov*, Marina and Solomin in Turgenev's *Virgin Soil*. Underneath this silent acknowledgment of the impossibility of idealizing unattractive reality, there lay the claim of realism. While searching, as Gogol did, for bright phases in life, the realists were forced, also like Gogol, to portray oftener the darker influences and the negative types.

Apart from artistic realism, the writers of the eighteen-sixties and seventies found common ground in that trend of thought which became known under the name of "Populism." In this case, however, Populism had not the special significance of a social and political doctrine which it acquired shortly after. The intellectual nobility of the sixties entered the movement as a new type, cleverly nicknamed by Mikhailovsky<sup>19</sup> the "penitent nobles." The moral incentive of the nobility played a large part in the emancipation of the serfs and in the work preparatory thereto. But what they did for the peasants prior to the Emancipation could still be looked upon as mere philanthropy. Mikhailovsky attacked this philanthropic point of view towards the "little brother," demonstrating by a number of examples that philanthropy provoked in the latter only a feeling of resentment and wounded pride.

The first sincere effort of the intellectual nobility of the sixties towards the "little brother," whom heretofore they had known well only in the person of a "commoner," was the struggle to secure for every individual the right of self-determination. To render such a self-determination possible a radical change in the mode of life and established customs was necessary, and to this cause Pisarev,<sup>20</sup> a man of noble birth, devoted himself whole-heartedly. He perceived in the self-perfection of the individual the fulfillment of the intellectuals' duty towards the people, and this formed the essence of his propaganda. In the seventies, however, the question took on a different aspect. If an individual, impelled by a sense of social

<sup>18</sup> N. Pomialovsky (1835-63), one of the realistic novelists of the period.—ED.

<sup>19</sup> N. Mikhailovsky (1842-1904), journalist and critic, one of the intellectual leaders of the Populist movement.—ED.

<sup>20</sup> D. Pisarev (1841-68), journalist and critic, the chief exponent of the Nihilism of the eighteen-sixties.—ED.

responsibility, had to serve the people's interest instead of his own, then his aim must be an immediate and direct connection, even a merging, with the people. Youth found itself at the crossroads of two conflicting decisions, either the development of a "critically-minded individual" according to Pisarev, or "communion with the people." The tremendous success, among the youth of the seventies, of Lavrov's<sup>21</sup> and Mikhailovsky's theories was due to their showing a way out of the dilemma, by proposing a synthesis of the two ideals, the development of the individual and the service to the people. In Lavrov's opinion, "The interests of an individual when clearly defined require that he should strive for the realization of common interests," while, on the other hand, "social aims could be attained only through individuals." Thus the "true social theory does not necessitate the subordination of the social element to the individual, or the absorption of the individual by society, but a merging of social and personal interests." Mikhailovsky supplemented this doctrine with ideas which brought the abstract theory of progress closer to the concrete problem of rendering service to the Russian people, the peasants in particular. He too placed the individual in the forefront. But it was in the Russian village commune that he found the conditions most favorable to the harmonious and many-sided development of the individual. In this he recognized a peculiarity of Russian progress. It remained only to raise the highest Russian type of development, now on the primitive level of social life, to a higher level, that of collectivist society. The effort to attain this desirable end, according to Lavrov and Mikhailovsky, was the chief task of the Russian intellectuals.

Of all the writers of the older generation it was Nekrasov<sup>22</sup> who best represented the synthesis of both types, that of the penitent nobleman with a wounded conscience, and that of the commoner with an aroused pride. Son of a poor nobleman, Nekrasov, having been repudiated by his father, shared the fate of the "commoner" writers and (1839-41) sank to the depth of St. Petersburg life. Although he succeeded later in gaining a leading position among the élite of the cultural and social circles at the capital, these earlier

<sup>21</sup> P. Lavrov (1823-1900), another of the intellectual leaders of Populism, who as a political émigré conducted socialist propaganda from Western Europe.—Ed.

<sup>22</sup> N. Nekrasov (1821-77), the most famous civic poet of the period.—Ed.

experiences left on him a mark of dual personality which was regarded by his contemporaries as a sign of hypocrisy, but which is explained by a modern critic as the inevitable result of the transitional period in which the poet was born. "He was, so to speak, a paradox in history," says Chukovsky, a student and admirer of Nekrasov's poetry, "for he belonged simultaneously to two contrasting social strata, the nobility and the commoners." Nekrasov, however, made his own choice at an early stage in his literary development. In 1848 he wrote his poem "The Fatherland" in which he described familiar sites where his forebears had spent their lives "in feasts, in senseless vanity, and in petty tyranny," and where he "was taught to suffer and to hate." He delighted in the early evidences of the noblemen's impending ruin: "The felling of trees in the park . . . the scorched fields . . . and the destruction of the deserted manor . . . where formerly the feasts were accompanied by moans of hidden suffering."

Nevertheless Nekrasov could not be called a real Populist. In his famous poem "Meditations at the Front Door" there is at the end a note of apprehension. He tries to explain the significance of the mournful folk songs, and reflects upon the fate awaiting the Russian peasants: whether their power is exhausted and they will remain forever dormant, or whether they will arise one day with new vigor to accomplish great deeds. Nekrasov sympathized with those who were fighting for the people, yet he had no belief in the immediate success of their struggle. The hope aroused by the Emancipation induced him to say (1864): "Have no fear for our dear fatherland . . . the people can endure whatever comes . . . and by their own strength they will clear a wide road for themselves." But he grieved that he was not destined to live during that wonderful time. Before his death the "bard of vengeance and sorrow" summed up his life in two sentences: "To our noble family my muse has brought no fame. I am dying as much a stranger to the people as on the day when my life began."

Turgenev (1818-83), had a much stronger bond with the "nests of nobility." Although older than Nekrasov he too was disgusted with the landowning class, personified for him in his willful and erratic mother, and so "casting off everybody and everything" he went to the West, from which he "emerged a Westerner." "No

doubt I lacked will power and the proper endurance," he wrote, "for remaining in the neighborhood." It was from "faraway" Europe that he attacked his chief enemy—serfdom—and dealt it a severe blow in his *Notes of a Sportsman* (1847-52), for which he suffered the penalty of a short exile to his country seat. From 1855 on, Turgenev definitely attached himself to the family of Viardot-Garcia, and the generations of the sixties and seventies were justified in considering him as enticed away from Russia. Turgenev was the dividing line between the "penitent noblemen" of the pre-Emancipation and those of the post-Emancipation days. The people of the sixties and particularly those of the seventies did not regard him as one of themselves, and denied that he had the right to speak for their generation. His *Bazarov* (*Fathers and Sons*, 1861) was received with protests. *Virgin Soil* (1876), which attempted to describe impartially the average type of the Populists, was considered an ignorant slander on intellectual youth. Turgenev did not succeed in establishing a "reconciliation with youth and the general public" by coming to Russia in February 1879. Succeeding generations have had a better appreciation of his artistic and truthful chronicles in which he described the vagaries of contemporary intellectuals during a transition period in Russian history.

Tolstoy's (1828-1910) attitude was highly original. He disagreed with the generation of the sixties, and having cursed the city and its culture as an accumulation of evil, he shook its dust off his feet and went to live in the country, in his "inaccessible literary stronghold," Iasnaia Poliana. Even before that he had repeatedly compared the vanity and corruption of town life with the simplicity and integrity of an existence undisturbed by civilization. "The coarser the people, the fewer the signs of civilization," the more free Olenin, the hero of *The Cossacks* (1852), felt on leaving the contamination of Moscow. But in the country, too, Tolstoy could not escape approaching the Populist problem from a somewhat different angle—by comparing the peasants' mode of life with that of the landowners. His *Childhood* and *Boyhood* portray the irregular, inadequate bringing up of the nobility, with its ideal of *comme il faut* and its neglect of moral principles. *The Morning of a Country Squire* demonstrates how this education affected in-



tercourse with the peasants. The attempt to heap benefits on them ends in Prince Nekhliudov's statement: "Have I seen success in my undertaking, have I seen gratitude? . . . No, I see vice, distrust, helplessness, and a wrong routine. I am wasting away the best years of my life." Olenin, because of the same failure, was prompted "to begin a new and simple life, a natural one in the open, among nature's children, spontaneous, naïve, and uncorrupted by civilization," in other words, to go to the Caucasus and join the army, as Tolstoy himself did in 1851. It was there that the Cossack Eroshka inspired the hero to a new version of Populism. "How should one live to be happy, and why was I unhappy before?" asks Olenin; and the answer is: "For myself I need nothing, so why not live for others?"

Thus already during the fifties Tolstoy had developed a psychology which later led him to attempts at simplicity of life. Having come in this mood to St. Petersburg, he, according to his *Confession*, became "doubtful of the literary faith . . . and came to the conclusion that the majority of its ministers, the writers, were immoral, evil people of no character . . . yet arrogant and conceited." In 1864 he drew a contrast between the representatives of the "idle classes" who "believed in progress," that is, the "educated nobility, merchants, and bureaucrats," and the "enemies of progress . . . the people employed in manual labor, the artisans, factory workers, peasants, agriculturists, and industrialists," and this decided Tolstoy's attitude towards literature. "I became convinced that for a Russian of common origin to acquire a taste for reading Pushkin's *Boris Godunov*, it is necessary that he cease being what he is—a man of independence indulging all his human desires. . . . Our literature has never found, and never will find followers among the masses; this means that the people have not profited by the publication of books." The question whether the masses should be raised to a cultural level, or whether, on the contrary, the intellectuals should descend to their level, was solved by Tolstoy in a crudely Populist sense. In fact, he never faced the problem, for he started from the belief that the human level of the masses was higher than that of the idle classes. In accordance with this idea the repentant nobleman Tolstoy strove to imitate the plain people in order to attain spiritual self-perfection.

Dostoevsky (1821-81), another outstanding writer of the sixties and seventies, also addressed his readers from afar, though at first not like Turgenev from abroad, or like Tolstoy from the country, but from Siberia in penal servitude, which left a deep scar on his genius. His thoughts also revolved around the same fundamental problems of the period. Like Tolstoy, he found the issue in religion, by which his immediate influence was extended throughout the eighties and nineties. Being out of sympathy with the prevailing trend of the sixties, he too went abroad. Both Dostoevsky and Tolstoy, like Belinsky and Herzen at an earlier date, acquired during their sojourns abroad a sceptical attitude towards European culture and a conviction of the superiority of the Russian people. But Dostoevsky, a city "commoner," could not get away from the usual habits of his set. Like the other "commoner" writers of the time, he always was in need of money (a need accentuated by his passion for gambling), and even after his marriage he remained true to the bohemian life. So it was natural that his heroes were chosen chiefly from the petty bourgeois class. Knowing little about country life, he could more easily idealize it than could Tolstoy. He entirely agreed with the Populist thesis in its simplest form. "Love the people and instead of trying to raise them to your level humble yourselves before them." After some student disturbances, Dostoevsky addressed the following reproof to youth: "Instead of leading the life of the people the young men, lacking all knowledge of it and even despising its principles, as for instance religion, go to the people not to study, but to teach them, to teach in a haughty and contemptuous manner—which is but an aristocratic whim." Dostoevsky endowed the masses with every fine quality and assigned to them the mission of giving the world a "new word," thereby solving "many of the most grievous and fatal contradictions of the West European civilization." True, when it was necessary to define more precisely the meaning of the "new word," Dostoevsky, in his famous speech on Pushkin, referred to the "pan-humanity" of the Russian people, which could be interpreted as the lack of national definitiveness. This was completed by the religious principle of Greek Orthodoxy: "The very substance of the Russian people is in Orthodoxy and its idea," and "those who do not understand it do not understand the people." At the same

time Dostoevsky insisted that his attitude towards Orthodoxy was not of a primitive character. The critics, who "accused him of an uncultured and backward belief in God, could never dream of the strength of negation through which he had passed." Dostoevsky, however, did not attempt to devise his own religion, based on ethics as Tolstoy's was; he was satisfied with Orthodoxy in its traditional form, which did not prevent him from calling himself a realist. In his *Note Book* he gave a formula of his faith, in which nationalism, based on religion, and realism were merged into one. He wanted "in a spirit of absolute realism to find man within man. This is a specifically Russian trait, and in this respect, I am, indeed, of the people (for my trend is born in the depths of popular Christianity) and though unknown to them today, I shall be known to them in the future. I am called a psychologist, which is not true; I am but a realist in the highest sense of the word, i. e., I portray the depths of the human soul." The reasoning here is very complex and involved: the depths of the soul contain religion; religion is of the people, and the analysis of the "depths" is realistic in the "highest sense." Yet it helped Dostoevsky depart from the confines of the Populist doctrine and, while choosing his material from contemporary everyday life, to invest it with elements common to all mankind.

Saltykov and Gleb Uspensky, two outstanding figures in the literature of the sixties and seventies, were far more closely associated with contemporary life. That is why they were so quickly and undeservedly forgotten, while the ethical teachings of Tolstoy and Dostoevsky and the more cosmopolitan types described by them obtained wide popularity. In contrast to these latter authors, Saltykov, a nobleman and high dignitary, and Uspensky, of the middle class, were closely affiliated with the intellectual movement of the sixties and seventies. Both were under the influence of Mikhailovsky but did not, however, sacrifice their realistic art to any theory.

Saltykov (1826-89) was a contemporary of Turgenev, Dostoevsky, and Tolstoy. He was brought up on the last works of Belinsky and experienced the strong influence of the French utopian socialists of the forties, but subsequently became a punctilious official

under several governors and thereby acquired worldly wisdom. The close observation of provincial society gave him ample material for the famous *Provincial Sketches* (1857), which at once placed him in the ranks of the outstanding realistic writers grouped around the *Contemporary*. It was in the *Contemporary* that during the sixties Saltykov published the articles in which he severely criticized Turgenev for introducing the word "Nihilist," and Goncharov for creating such a type as Volokhov in the *Precipice*, thus breaking his connection with the humanists of the forties, who had assumed a critical attitude towards the new generation. From 1868 until 1884 Saltykov, who had retired from service, was first a co-editor with Nekrasov and then (1876) became the editor of the *National Annals*, which placed him in the very center of the literary and political movements of those years. However, in his attitude towards Populism he always remained independent. There was a short period in his life during which Saltykov was inclined to be sentimental towards "our wonderful people" and "felt strongly drawn towards the Slavophiles," but he soon came to the conclusion that "when speaking of the peasants it was unnecessary to show either emotion, or humility, or melancholy." Instead of idealization, which helps to indulge in dreams, there should be knowledge of facts. With such knowledge "there would be no embraces, no all-forgiving love, yet neither would there be slaps in the face nor corporal punishment. There would be justice, and that is all that is needed at the present time." Thus Saltykov, protected by his thorough knowledge of Russian reality and his worldly scepticism, remained impervious to the Populist doctrine in its strict sense, which, however, did not prevent him from serving the people. When, in 1871, Suvorin reproved him for his "arrogant disdain of the people" Saltykov replied:

My critic does not distinguish the difference existing between the people as we know it in actual history, and the people as the depository of the idea of democracy. The former is appreciated and entitled to our sympathy in proportion to the efforts made by it to attain consciousness . . . while it is impossible not to sympathize with the latter, because it comprises the beginning and the end of every individual activity.

Here Saltykov shared the ideas of Mikhailovsky. Later his accusations were almost entirely directed at the governing class, between which and the people he drew a sharp line. The attacks against bureaucracy and serfdom prior to the Reforms were replaced afterwards in his works by tracing the selfish tendencies of the decadent class in various branches of Russian life. Simultaneously, Saltykov pointed out the appearance of a new force antagonistic to the people: the unscrupulous men of business who now replaced the ruined landowners as the exploiters of the peasants. At the end of his career Saltykov again turned his attention to the country life of the nobility which he knew so well, and produced a truly artistic chronicle of the disintegration of that class. These works of his, *The Golovlev Family* and *Old Days of Poshekhonie*, rise above the current topics of the day, and are among the lasting and substantial achievements of Russian realistic literature.

Gleb Uspensky's (1840-1902) personality brings us back to the familiar group of "commoner" writers with their poignant biographies and wealth of painful personal experiences. Uspensky had an extremely high-strung nature, and from the lowly surroundings in which he had spent his youth he emerged with an acute sense of humility.

The first recollection I have of myself was a feeling of guilt . . . always weighing down on me. . . . In church I felt guilty towards all the saints and icons. . . . In school I felt guilty towards everybody including the attendants. . . . In a word, the atmosphere in which I grew up was one filled with terrors.

This same feeling remained with him when he entered the domain of literature. Friendless, unconnected with the outstanding writers, and a stranger to all the literary circles of the time, he was thrown into "a society that had entered upon an entirely new period in its life, and was demanding from literature a complex and thoughtful work." Possessed of this sense of guilt, which later became one of responsibility, Uspensky treated his vocation in a truly ascetic spirit. He applied himself to his work devotedly and wholeheartedly, and he was justified in saying: "After my old

biography has been forgotten, the new one will be in my books as written day by day. There is nothing else in my personal life."

Uspensky was a great and real artist, but one who avoided fiction. He spoke only of what he knew and what he had personally experienced. He began by describing the very surroundings which he so wanted to forget, and portrayed the world of the petty bourgeoisie, the clerks, the small shopkeepers, and the artisans among whom his childhood and youth had been spent. *The Customs of Rasteriaev Street* (1866) brought fame to Uspensky, and through this work he was introduced into the inner circle of the journalistic world. But this was in the years (1863-68) when everything was crumbling, when the *Contemporary* had grown dull, the *Russian Word* was no longer published, and the literary workers of more or less importance had temporarily retired. "To live in the uncomfortable and confused society of writers, the majority of whom were full of affectation, seemed absolutely out of the question; therefore I went abroad," wrote Uspensky in his reminiscences. About this time Dostoevsky too left for Europe, where Turgenev had settled, and where Tolstoy had visited before retiring to the country. It was at this period that Uspensky contrived to become an orthodox Populist in the spirit of Mikhailovsky. On his return to Russia in 1877, the "real truth of life led him to the source, i. e., the peasant." But while being a "seeker after truth," he was also a realistic artist, and in him the artistic element prevailed over the preconceived ideas of the seeker. In the country he hoped at last to find human existence in an unimpaired, virginal form possessing the high qualities which Populism had ascribed to the Russian peasant. What he found was quite contrary to his expectations, and with his natural frankness Uspensky revealed the truth. He depicted the decline of the peasant commune, which also had been affected by money, since "capital, the corrupter," had found its way even there. The commune was divided between the pauperized peasants unable to maintain their economic independence and doomed to become a rural proletariat, and the village kulaks. Thus the average peasant representing the sound element in the village was threatened by pressure from both sides, and Uspensky feared that he would be unable to withstand this

pressure. Under such conditions, instead of struggling for the lofty ideal of a better future, all one could do was to attempt to preserve the dying past. In other words, Populism was losing its progressive character.

Simultaneously with the failure of the old Populism the twilight of the classical period in literature approached. But, before passing to the new phase of development, we must sum up the epoch of artistic realism that has left an immortal legacy in a number of highly original and truly national works, which have gradually become the common property of world literature. The aesthetic quality of these classical works cannot be discussed in this brief outline. It is more important for the history of Russian culture to follow the growth of their influence over the ever increasing circles of readers as a result of a more intimate connection between literature and life. In this respect the second part of the classical period, that of the eighteen-sixties and seventies, successfully realized the promises and hopes given in the forties and fifties by the "naturalistic school" of Gogol. Towards the eighties there remained no sphere of Russian life which had not been described artistically by the outstanding realistic writers who followed in the footsteps of Pushkin and Gogol. The apogee of the noblemen's culture, the poetical charm of the "nests of nobility," and the psychological types which had grown up in this hot-house atmosphere continued to be the subjects of Turgenev and Tolstoy, to whom we must now add Shenshin-Fet (1820-92), a landowner, poet, and member of the same intimate circle. But Reshetnikov (1841-71), Levitov (1835-78), and Pomialovsky, the "commoner" writers, brought into the limelight the hitherto unknown types and surroundings of the social classes most familiar to them. Curiously enough the Populist epoch acquired its knowledge of the people through the world of the petty bourgeoisie, as in the earlier works of Uspensky, who gave a truly epical description of the urban evolution after the reform.

In the immortal dramas of Ostrovsky (1823-86), a "commoner" poet and satirist, the pre- and post-reform life of the Moscow merchants is pictured and exposed. A daring innovator, he introduced unadorned realism to the stage, thereby establishing a new era in the history of the Russian theater.

To the works of Saltykov, dealing with the disintegration of the nobility after the Emancipation, must be added those of Terpigorev (1841-97), who wrote under the name of S. Atava and who in his *Impoverishment* (1880) gave a remarkable analysis of the same phenomenon of decay. Finally, the realistic writers even endeavored to portray the peasants, but were unable to master the subject fully, for they could not penetrate the "organic" and unfamiliar life of the village. Although their portrayal was exact and at times even photographic, it remained superficial. In the wake of the "commoner" writers there had to appear sooner or later those born of the people; but their hour had not yet come. The moment was not yet ripe for the appearance of a wide circle of readers among the masses. This required extensive work on the part of the village schools, which were still in a formative stage and had to face many serious obstacles on the difficult path ahead of them.



### III

## FROM CHEKHOV TO THE REVOLUTION

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**T**HE decade that followed the seventies represented a transitional period in the social and literary history of Russia. Here again a line of demarcation was drawn by the beginning of a new reign or, to be more exact, the defeat of the political Populist movement as a result of the murder of Emperor Alexander II in 1881. But while in 1855 a tempestuous new life replaced an epoch of stagnation, this time, on the contrary, the apogee of national creative activity was succeeded by the twilight of literature. Korolenko,<sup>1</sup> the last of the champions of Populism, who sustained the sensitive conscience and the steadfast civic spirit of the seventies through these years of confusion, was a brilliant exception. Yet even his genius was tinted with the soft shades of sunset. In his works the moral asceticism of the seventies became purely humanitarian, free from illusions and dogmatic fanaticism. Generally speaking, the "masters of thought" of the seventies lost their influence over the minds of youth during the eighties while no new theories had time to replace the existing ones disproved by life. The contemporaries of this transitional period enjoyed their emancipation from any commonly accepted doctrine. The old literary masters one by one disappeared from the stage. Dostoevsky died in January 1881, Turgenev in August 1883, Saltykov was stricken in 1884 with a serious illness, and Gleb Uspensky ended his days a lunatic. Tolstoy drew the last logical conclusion from his denial of culture, science, and art, and this time his negation was

<sup>1</sup> V. Korolenko (1853-1921), novelist, editor, and journalist.—Ed.

in harmony with the minor key of the eighties. By formulating the doctrine of self-perfection and non-resistance to evil, Tolstoy facilitated the transition from the active self-sacrifice of the old Populists to the new ways of cultural recluses with their agricultural communes of intellectuals and other practices in which the faithful disciples strove to imitate their great master. The absolutism of the social ideal was transformed into that of an individual morality, including abstention from meat, wine, tobacco, and procreation. At the same time, the emancipation from the former rigorous principles of Populism produced a parallel teaching, that of intellectual and moral Epicureanism. It was among the representatives of this school that the longing for refined spiritual experiences eventually led to a revival of the interest in aesthetics, poetry, philosophy, and religion.

Notwithstanding the unmistakable decline of the civic spirit during the eighties, there is no justification for characterizing that period as a triumph of Philistinism. Such catchwords as "reconciliation with reality," or "the way of small deeds" provoked sneers and rebuffs from some of the intellectual leaders of public opinion. But if one remembers that under the cloak of these theories, which in the past served as a political disguise, there developed the activities of the *Zemstvos*,<sup>2</sup> that simultaneously the village schools were gaining ground and a considerable scientific progress was being achieved in the universities, one feels inclined to treat this period with more fairness and consideration.

Chekhov (1860-1904) was a typical representative of the positive traits of the eighties, and his great talent was developed in the cultural surroundings created by those years. During the seventies he would have suffocated. When his fellow writers spoke to him of solidarity, he said:

How do you know with whom I sympathize? You in St. Petersburg do like oppressiveness! Can it be that you do not all feel suffocated by such words as solidarity, union of young writers, community of interests, etc? . . . You may write where and what you like, a thousand times changing your convictions, yet my human relations with you will not be affected.

<sup>2</sup> Institutions of local self-government established in 1864 during the reforms of Alexander II.—Ed.

When Chekhov was accused of lacking principles, he again answered candidly:

I fear those who read between the lines trying to find a definite trend of thought, and who insist on considering me either a liberal or a conservative. I am neither liberal nor conservative, nor gradualist, nor ascetic, nor indifferentist. I should like to be an independent artist—and that is all. . . . Any trade mark or label to me means a prejudice. Sacrosanct to me are the human body, health, reason, talent, inspiration, love, and absolute freedom.

Chekhov was a physician and a naturalist by education, and in his autobiography he admitted that "the study of medicine had had a strong influence over his literary work," while "knowledge of natural science and scientific methods kept him on his guard against the writers who denied science and those who attained everything by means of their own reasoning." He censured Tolstoy for commenting on diseases and the foundling hospitals when "he never took the trouble to read any of the books written by specialists." Chekhov affirmed that "in electricity and steam there was more real humanity than in chastity and abstention from meat." A sound mind under the control of common sense made Chekhov immune to the utopianism and illusions of the seventies as well as those of the nineties. Regarding the philosophical and religious tendencies of Merezhkovsky, Minsky,<sup>3</sup> and others he said:

I lost my faith long ago and now I only watch with bewilderment the religious-minded intellectuals. . . . Religion stands apart from all modern culture. . . . Modern culture is the beginning of the work to be performed in the name of the great future, while the religious movement is a survival, almost the end, of that which is either dead or dying.

In Chekhov's *Boring Story* (1889), the old professor, also a learned physician and naturalist, was "poisoned by new ideas" at the end of his life. He regretted that he was "not a philosopher or

<sup>3</sup> D. Merezhkovsky (b. 1865), novelist, poet, literary critic, and writer on religious subjects. N. Minsky (1855-1937), one of the earlier Symbolist poets in Russia.—Ed.

theologian," and that "his soul cared nothing for such problems as the existence of the life beyond and the purpose of creation"; he confessed that "in none of his views . . . could even the most skillful analyst find what is called a general idea, or the God of a living man." But he admitted that while holding these ideas he considered them "worthy only of a slave and barbarian," and he ascribed their origin to his "generally run-down physical and moral condition." The critics were correct in supposing that all the ideas of the Professor were those of Chekhov himself. Being anxious, however, to attach to him one of the labels he so despised, they either accused him of "glorifying the Philistine," or, on the contrary, exonerated and praised him as the bitterest enemy and most powerful satirist of the very same Philistine. In fact, it would have been better to revise the conception of the Philistine rather than to apply it in its present meaning to Chekhov's works so free of tendentiousness. It was precisely this complete independence that made Chekhov a great realistic artist, and led him to international recognition.

The ideological interregnum of the eighties was the atmosphere in which the generation of the next decade grew up. This generation also enjoyed the privilege of absolute freedom in the choice of a trend of thought, but, hoping to attain final emancipation from depressing Russian actuality, it only enslaved itself to new foreign influences. Chukovsky, a literary critic and himself a typical Impressionist, has presented a clear picture of the freedom of choice which the epoch of confusion secured to this generation.

Gone is the old pathos, former fanaticism has disappeared [he complained]; shortsightedness reigns—there is none of that authority, will, force, or that mode of life which could unite and bind all together by an unbroken chain. Community of conceptions and criterions, definite hopes, demands, estimations, and superstitions are all created by a firmly established mode of life. At the present time literature has nothing to rely upon. When the mode of life was destroyed, we too collapsed.

Of course the old mode of life did not disappear at once, but it is true that by the end of the century a new stage in its destruction

became apparent. The same critic has observed correctly that at this period literature grew urban and consequently became imbued with the impressionism of ephemeral sensations. Undoubtedly the old mode of life had lost its power, thereby giving to the modern writers the courage to say: "I cast away the old bonds and sing new hymns" (Minsky) or "For the sake of new beauty we are breaking all the laws" (Merezhkovsky).

Merezhkovsky himself admitted, however, that victory was not so easily gained by the bards of the "new beauty." "Our speeches sound daring, but death dooms the untimely harbingers of a much-belated spring." Indeed, the first voices that heralded the neo-Romantic movement in Russian literature sounded uncertain and weak: they were soon suppressed by the inertia of old achievements and old ideology.

Merezhkovsky's own appearance came at a somewhat more opportune moment. His sensational pamphlet: *On the Cause of the Decline, and on the New Trends in Russian Literature* (1892) was a genuine manifesto of the new school. While lacking any real passion, it at least had fanaticism. Strange as it may appear, this passion and fanaticism had origin in a trend which contained neither of them—the European *fin de siècle*, commonly known as Decadence. It was Mikhailovsky who pointed out the direct source in Europe from which the Russians had imitated Decadence. This source was a group of young Frenchmen: Jean Moréas, Laurent Tailhade, Charles Morice, and other bohemians, who from the end of 1883 met at a cabaret in the Latin Quarter and who regarded Paul Verlaine and Stéphane Mallarmé as their masters. Rozanov,<sup>4</sup> one of those who renounced the inheritance of the seventies, compared Merezhkovsky, very cleverly, with a foreigner who had lost his way in the streets of St. Petersburg. As though in confirmation of this simile Merezhkovsky began his pamphlet by saying: "On returning from Paris to Russia I felt with aggrieved bitterness . . . the old and familiar boredom, already described by Pushkin, . . . the stamp of an ugly semi-barbaric civilization." What was the trouble? It appeared that although Russia had "original and profound talents—there was no Russian literature," for

<sup>4</sup> V. Rozanov (1856–1919), writer on philosophical and religious subjects.—Ed.

"the Russian writers had never attained perfect accord; up to the present each lives and dies in complete isolation. But in France one feels that there is life. There they had a period of Romanticism followed by reaction . . . which brought literature to the absurd extremes of coarse . . . Naturalism now growing numb. We are already witnessing at the present time the first vague efforts of the national genius to find new methods of expression. Indeed, Russia also passed through the same two stages: Romanticism and Naturalism.

Merezhkovsky intended to introduce a new, third stage, and illustrated his task by comparing Zola with Verlaine. Zola had protested against French youth:

By whom do they suppose they can replace us? Do they intend to confront the great positivist work of a decade with the vague notion of "Symbolism," under which worthless poetry takes cover? As a culmination to this great century and as a formula for the general agony of doubt, the anxiety of mind, and craving for the authentic, we are offered an enigmatical babble, absurd verses worth only a few cents and composed by a group of people who spend their lives in taverns.

Merezhkovsky took up the challenge. "Yes, Verlaine always sat in his favorite, rather poor café on the Boulevard St. Michel." But "What care I that he is almost a beggar having spent half his life in prison and in hospitals and that Zola is a ruler in literature, who, in a day or two, will be a member of the Academy?" In returning from Paris Merezhkovsky hoped to present Verlaine to Russia but found there a lack of interest in lofty ideas, a literature trading in vulgarity, and an absence of taste among critics, and he wondered: "Are we not standing over a chasm [a favorite word of Merezhkovsky]?"

No, Merezhkovsky reassured the readers, there exists in Russia . . . a new creative force, a new literary trend which reflects the vague longing of an entire generation, arising from the depths of the modern European and Russian spirit. . . . We are witnessing the great and significant struggle between two views of life, two diametrically opposite conceptions of the world. In its ultimate demands religious feeling clashes with the latest deductions of experi-

mental science, and modern art is characterized by three principal elements: mystical content, symbols, and the development of artistic susceptibility—which the French critics have rather cleverly called Impressionism. This avidity for that which has never before been experienced, the pursuit of elusive shades, of the obscure and unconscious in our sensibility, is a characteristic feature of the ideal poetry of the future.

While waiting, in the midst of the surrounding "desert," for this poetry to appear, Merezhkovsky turned to the past for allies. Turgenyev was considered a realist only by mistake, there was deep mysticism in Tolstoy, and Lermontov, Koltsov,<sup>5</sup> even Nekrasov also were mystics. In a word, "all literary temperaments, all trends, and all schools were consumed by the same impulse, by the wave of a powerful, deep current, an anticipation of the divine idealism, an indignation against the soulless positivist method, and an unquenchable longing for a new religious and philosophical reconciliation with the Incognizable."

Before long Merezhkovsky's desire was almost fully realized. In the first place, there was a notable revival of poetry, and Russian literature returned to the form of verse which since the end of the thirties had been thrust into the background. The reputation of poets, temporarily forgotten or unnoticed, was reëstablished; many beginners appeared, and above all this wealth there rose the word "Symbolism," under the banner of which were enlisted the most powerful and gifted of the modernists. The gloomy Sologub (1863-1928), the sunny Balmont (b. 1867), and the sober Briusov (1873-1924) paid their tribute to the requirements of the times. Balmont, the poet of "fleeting moments," adapted his inspiration to a new creed of "Revelation." Sologub, a decadent by nature, as opposed to Merezhkovsky and Minsky, the decadents in ideas, according to his confession was "burdened by life among other people" and "in wild inspiration found ecstatic words." Briusov, the son of a merchant, in his early days became familiar with night life, chose his friends from among the revelers, and at seventeen (1890) read the works of the French Decadents—Mallarmé, Rim-

<sup>5</sup> M. Lermontov (1814-41), famous poet, the chief representative of the romantic trend in Russian literature. A. Koltsov (1808-42), one of the earlier poets of peasant life in Russia.—Ed.

baud, Verlaine, and others. He translated some fragments of their works which were published in 1894-95 in the two issues of the *Russian Symbolist*.

As the actual creator of the decadent style Briusov, no less than Merezhkovsky, had the right to the title of head of the school. The transition from Decadence to Symbolism can best be traced in his works. For the transformation into Symbolism, Decadence lacked a conception of the world by virtue of which the symbol became the means for intercourse with the beyond. In 1904 Briusov joined the ranks of Symbolists and took the oath of allegiance to the school's chief dogma.

Art is what in other spheres we call revelation. Works of art are a half-open door to eternity. . . . The ecstatic moments of supersensitive intuition lend a different understanding to worldly phenomena in penetrating more deeply their outer cover. . . . Those to whom everything in the world is simple, comprehensible, and attainable could never be artists. Art is present only where there exists daring and the impulse to penetrate beyond the perceivable.

Of course those who possessed such daring were of the highest "aristocratic" type, endowed with a special aristocratic morality. "There are not two paths, good and evil—there are two paths of good," said Minsky, and he illustrated this idea with an example of two men, one going to the east, the other to the west, who having walked round the world would meet at the same point. Merezhkovsky expressed the same idea in the following terms: "Evil and good—both paths lead but to one end, regardless of where one goes." These two paths are his favorite "chasms": "A chasm above and a chasm below—Christ and Antichrist." While Briusov echoed: "Love and sin are but one."

This theme reminds us of another source of the new literary school, besides French Decadence and Symbolism. The end of the nineteenth century was marked in Europe, and in Russia as well, by the strong influence of two "master thinkers," between whom, notwithstanding the difference in their personalities and spheres of action, we can draw an interesting parallel—Nietzsche and Marx. Both were sons of the reëstablished German Empire; both were preachers of the new catechism of action, relying on force, and



both professed a class principle on which they built the new ethics. Marx's bearer of the power and ethics of the new class was the "conscious vanguard" of workers, while that of Nietzsche was the old aristocratic type restored in the form of an improved superman. The aristocratic race was a "splendid fair-haired animal craving for prey and victory"—*die blonde Bestie*—that conquered the "weak, cowardly, dark-skinned, and dark-haired race," all of which reproduces exactly the German racialists' anthropological doctrine on the prehistoric part played by the noble Northern race. This race, like the superman, did not know the difference between good and evil. Good—"everything that increases the will for power and the power itself"—was the morality of the masters. To them all was conceded that served their own interests. Evil—"everything that originates from weakness"—was the morality of the slaves, who were guilty of clinging to the status of the oppressed. Good was the voluntaristic morality of the Old Testament with its stern avenging God. Evil was the philanthropic, weak morality of the New Testament, that of the evangelic Beatitudes addressed to the poor and the feeble—the morality of all who are humbled and oppressed. Power lay in the unconscious and free action of the instincts. The weakness and degeneration of the race began when reason prevailed over instinct and "illusions." Socrates, in this sense, was a fatal figure, for he caused the decline of Greek culture. It was not science or excessive knowledge that were needed but culture, i. e., the unity of artistic style, for the instinct of the people finds its expression in art and creative genius. The artist, "son and servant of the muses," was the real man of culture, while his antagonists were mere "Philistines of culture," whose sphere was the "rational" and the "real."

Nietzsche became known to the general public in Russia only in 1892-93, when a series of articles on his works was published in the *Problems of Psychology and Philosophy*. Thereafter his ideas presented in popular form spread rapidly, for they corresponded to the then prevailing mood. It was from this source that the Russian Symbolists borrowed their subtle conceptions of a "beyond" transcending good and evil.

Nietzscheism strengthened the Decadents' characteristic contempt of Philistinism. They could now call "Philistines of culture"

all those who did not belong to the intimate circle of servants of the muses, endowed with the gift of envisioning the "Incognizable."

The new morality of the strong supermen and demi-gods, to whom "all was conceded," and who from their exalted position heaped insults upon the Philistines, rapidly won the attention of those beyond the confines of the intimate circle. Lack of restraint in form and thought sanctioned unrestrained behavior. But there was also a tragic side to Nietzsche's hurried "revaluation of values" (*Umwertung der Werthe*), and in Russia this was reflected in the works of Leonid Andreiev (1871-1919). Tolstoy once said of Andreiev: "He wants to inspire fear, but I am not afraid." Andreiev's despair, however, was not a pose, at least not in the beginning, for the pessimism of his earlier and best works resulted naturally from his nervous condition, which led him to repeated attempts at suicide. The chief theme of these works was the loneliness of man. In *Grand Slam* and *Silence* he showed the tragedy of spiritual solitude, the isolation of the individual among the everyday surroundings of normal human relations. But when the ideology of the new morality made its appearance the attitude of loneliness changed into one of superiority. Andreiev's hero assumed the part of superman and spoke in the forced, rhetorical language of abstract symbols. Sasha, Andreiev's thirteen-year-old schoolboy hero, "endowed with a restless and bold spirit," while lacking understanding, "cannot accept evil calmly and so takes his revenge on life."

According to Schopenhauer life was an insidious delusion of nature and had to be revenged—as Kirilov, one of Dostoevsky's heroes did—by manifesting the supreme will power of man in suicide. Andreiev was not a philosopher, but the influence exerted upon him by the negative, pessimistic theories of Schopenhauer's and Nietzsche's applied philosophy was confirmed by his own statements as well as by the critical studies of his works. The influences of Pszibyszewski, Hamsun, and Maeterlinck upon Andreiev should also be mentioned.

Later on, with maturity, Andreiev's hero began to ask "fateful questions" and attempted to solve the problems of the universe. "Speak!" he addressed Heaven. But Heaven proved an empty

space, and the gaping, silent void reflected an increasing sense of terrific loneliness in the individual's consciousness. As ever before, there was no escape except in a loud but futile protest—or in death, which now found its justification in the maxims of Zarathustra. In death was the triumph of freedom, the victory of all that was "immaculate and beautiful in the world—the bold, free, immortal Ego of man." Andreiev in his *Thought* obliterated the line which divided reality from insanity, in *Judas Iscariot* that between truth and falsehood, love and treason, and in the *Life of Vasily Fiveisky* that between faith and atheism. He protested passionately against the "cold silence" of nature. Nature trifled wickedly with the highest emotions of Man (Man with capital M), without discriminating between young and old, the happy and the unhappy, mocking at the will of man, transforming life into an absurdity, and depriving man of individuality. With the growth of this pessimistic tendency, Symbolism and conventionality of style progressed, while Andreiev's former realism vanished. This culminated in *Anathema* in which he summarized his dismal negation of human reason, love, and faith.

The genius of Andreiev, with his deranged psychology bordering on insanity and suicide, characterized the end of the transitional period, at the beginning of which had stood Chekhov, the realist and poet of common sense. Notwithstanding the vast difference in their views, moods, and artistic images, they possessed one trait in common which showed that they belonged to the same historical period. The one avoided formulation of any "conception of the world," while the other, having tried to formulate the problem, found no solution for it. Thus both met on a common ground which can be best described by the title of Sienkiewicz's novel: *Without Dogma*. But at the time Andreiev was writing, a new dogma had already been in existence in the form of Symbolism, the accepted creed of the aesthetes, the followers of the European Decadents, and their antagonist, Nietzsche. During the nineties there also appeared another school opposed to the aesthetes which, though not yet very clearly defined, soon opened war on them, and in the following decade succeeded in gaining considerable public attention and support. At first there were many threads connecting the two trends, some of which re-

mained until later days. In fact, they were united in a denial of the past and a refutation of Philistinism. Moreover, they both had developed in the same social surroundings—those of the city—though each was supported by different urban strata. The Symbolist movement was connected with the old intelligentsia of the liberal professions, that cultured urban stratum consisting of impoverished noblemen and the upper and middle classes; it was patronized by the younger members of the wealthy merchants' families, imbued with modern European refinement and decadent tendencies. This set, to which belonged Merezhkovsky, Briusov, Balmont, and their younger followers, repudiated Philistinism—the former "dark kingdom" of Ostrovsky—from above, while the other group repudiated Philistinism from below, and found its themes and part of its readers among the proletarians, at the bottom of the urban society, where needy students met tramps, villagers who had come to town in search of work, the unemployed, and the outcasts of every social group. Due to the conditions in which they lived, these homeless, unemployed people had acquired complete freedom and independence from the established social canons, and when taught to fight for a yet unknown but better future, and to overthrow the wealthy classes and the existing social order, they yielded easily to that propaganda. The appearance in literature of a gifted writer who sprang from these very people created a great impression, and he, little by little, became their champion and interpreter of their hopes.

We allude, of course, to Maxim Gorky (1868–1936). Under this pen name A. M. Peshkov entered the literary field and immediately achieved fame as the bard of the proletariat. Chekhov at once saw in Gorky's tendencies a return to the materialistic movement so fashionable in the sixties, and while at the time this diagnosis was rather premature, Gorky's subsequent development actually followed a course along these lines and was contrary to that of the aesthetes, mystics, and Symbolists. Gorky himself did not realize at first that in repudiating the old dying Populism he was following Marxism, the new, increasingly fashionable doctrine. It was his cheerful optimism and firm belief in his heroes, who by their muscular strength towered above the peasants, that linked Gorky to the Marxists. "It is not true that life is gloomy,

that it consists of nothing but plague, groans, sorrow, and tears," said Shebuev, his hero (in *Muzhik*). . . . "Life is beautiful; life is a sublime, indomitable progress towards universal happiness and joy. . . . I cannot doubt it. . . . I have followed a difficult course; . . . none of you, not even all of you together, have ever known as much grief, suffering, and humiliation as I have! . . . But—life is beautiful!"

Gorky's biography is fantastic. Cruel treatment by his grandfather in the oppressive surroundings of a petty bourgeois family, then the drab existence of a boy forcibly apprenticed to a cobbler, a draftsman, and a cook on a steamer; at night, taking refuge in an attic, he read furtively everything that came to his hands; later, a life in Kazan among longshoremen, tramps, and criminals; his first associations with university students whom he met in a grocery store, and his realization of the error in the abstract conception of the people by the intellectuals, the first connection with the revolutionists and propaganda among his fellow bakers; then work at a fishery on the Caspian Sea; as a night watchman at a railway station in the province of Tambov; and finally a long tramp to Nizhny Novgorod where his acquaintance with V. G. Korolenko led Gorky into the literary field, but did not end his wanderings. In search of new adventures he went in 1891 to the Don, to Novorossia, and to Tiflis, where, in 1892, his first story was published. Following all these picturesque experiences and the strenuous struggle for existence, peaceful city life seemed to him pale and empty. "It is necessary to have been born in cultured society," he said in *Konovalev*, "in order to spend one's whole life in its midst without once wishing to leave its world of burdensome conventions, traditional habits, petty venomous falsehoods, unhealthy ambitions, intellectual sectarianism, and hypocrisy—in a word, all this vanity of vanities, which chills the emotions and perverts the mind." Like Tolstoy in his earlier days—and for analogous reasons—Gorky was ready always to retire from the vanities of the world. But Tolstoy went into the country and from the manor sought his way to the peasant hut, while Gorky found his sphere among the frank, free, cheerful, and unconventional knight-hood of vagabonds, whom he thought superior to the peasantry.

Gorky, the literary godson of Korolenko, that true champion of humanitarianism in Russia, soon became an "ugly duckling" with strong spreading wings. He was replete with hatred for the "cultured" circles above him and joined in the fashionable repudiation of them for being bourgeois and Philistine. "The strong are a law unto themselves," said his fellow traveler "Prince" Shakro Ptadze. "By what laws should I feel constrained?" declared the hero of *The Scoundrel* (1898). "There are no laws, except perhaps my own." In *The Error* Gorky wrote and subsequently erased: "Is it moral or immoral? In any case it is preëminently strong, and therefore moral and good."

The term "Philistine," used by the aesthetes in a derisive sense, was daringly applied by Gorky to the intelligentsia itself—the "barbarians of higher culture"—a phrase which reminds one of Nietzsche's "Philistines of culture." Nor did Russian peasantry escape Gorky's censure. In his reminiscences he said that when the Populists in the students' circles spoke of the people, "With astonishment and reluctant to believe it myself, I felt that I could not approach the subject in the same light as these men. To them the people embodied wisdom, spiritual beauty, and kind-heartedness, and were a depository for the principles of the Good, the Beautiful, and the Sublime. I never knew such a people." In one of Gorky's stories Chelkash, an "old hunted wolf," smuggler, and thief, is far superior to a peasant. He looks down with disdain upon Gabriel, a peasant fellow-thief, who with the stolen money had hoped to better his household. Chelkash "never could be so covetous and mean"; he would rather spend the loot in drinking and debauch. We see here already that aimless "recklessness of the brave," which Gorky opposed to the psychology of the wretched "creeping reptiles" whose motto was: "A creature of the soil—by soil I thrive." The Siskin, in Gorky's allegorical tale, urged the birds, "feeding on worms," to "fly onward to where it was so wonderful" and reproved the weak and sickly falcons for being "deaf to the voice of honor and reason" and "crawling into ravines instead of soaring to the sky." Gorky's suspicion and fear of the unenlightened masses of peasants remained an obsession with him throughout his life. However, during the pre-revolutionary period

he could not have been called the poet of the working class. Even at the time when the fortieth anniversary of his literary activities was celebrated, the Soviet critics debated at great length in the Communist Academy on the propriety of bestowing upon him the title of "proletarian writer." But Gorky's sudden popularity proved that the public had accepted him as an interpreter of the new tendency which had emanated from Marx. The circles of urban aesthetes, which at the beginning he seemed to have joined in repeating the ideas of Nietzsche and Stirner, could never have provided him with such a large public as that which in a few months of 1903 had bought up five editions of his complete works in six volumes, and in the same year absorbed another fourteen editions of his play *At the Bottom*. This showed the proportional strength of the two literary currents, the subsequent fate of which was to be so dissimilar.

In the pre-revolutionary years of the twentieth century this difference became more and more apparent. Under the pressure of the growing revolutionary tendencies demanding a return to life, to reality, the mist of the nineties was soon dispelled. In these circumstances the renunciation of life, spiritual aristocracy and exclusiveness, and the disdain shown the bourgeois surroundings, had rendered little service to the aesthetes of the nineties. Instead of an enthusiastic audience the artistic literary circles found themselves in an ever widening empty space. Now, when Balmont was writing like everybody else and everybody wrote like Balmont, in order to attract the attention of the public it was necessary either to carry the literary revolution to an extreme, thus continuing and completing the destruction of the old literary forms, or else to associate literature with the revolution in the political and social sense. But the literary extravagances produced merely a temporary impression on the bourgeois, for they were too artificial, and comprehensible only to a few, while the revolutionary songs of the aesthetes, who had but taken on new moods as the next theme for their "momentary" inspiration, sounded mostly out of tune. This outward union between literature and revolution could not long continue; the first revolution of 1905 put an end to it.

Yet Decadence and Symbolism did not surrender at once to the new trends. The progress of their decay, in the first place, led to

the appearance of new moods within Symbolism and to new varieties in its development. The younger generation naturally was more conscious of the new tendencies, and it strove to introduce fresh material into the doctrine and practices of Symbolism. We shall now familiarize ourselves with the results of this process.

Two belated Symbolists of the younger generation, both endowed with great talent, were victims, rather than creators, of the new mood prevailing in the literary movement of the early twentieth century: A. A. Blok (1880-1921), who imbued his poetry with the torments of his soul, and Andrey Bely (Boris Bugaev, 1880-1934), whose prose abounded in mannerisms. Like their predecessors they were both the products of city life. They both memorized easily the three commandments of their teacher Briusov:

Accept the first: do not live in the present:  
Only the future is the world of a poet.  
Remember the second: sympathize with no man,  
But love yourself boundlessly.  
Keep the third: worship art,  
Art alone—wholly and aimlessly.

The adherence to these commandments was perhaps more characteristic of Blok than of any other poet in his circle. Quite simply and even unconsciously, by his very nature, he complied with them. "Do not live in the present": the only feeling which unusual contemporary events aroused in Blok was that of repulsion mingled with contempt and disdain. His mood (1901) was "abstract and contrary to all mob passions." In 1905 he wrote to his father:

My attitude towards the liberation movement has been expressed almost exclusively in liberal conversations and only for a time was I in sympathy with the Social Democrats. Now I am retiring more and more. . . . My spirit does not adapt itself to any of this. I shall never be a revolutionary or a "builder of life" . . . either by nature, quality, or the theme of my spiritual feelings.

Before taking a trip to Italy he wrote to his mother (1909): "Either one should never live in Russia, or else isolate one's self from the humiliation of partisan politics and social activities." The trip to Western Europe only led him to apply these views to all contemporary civilizations.



More than ever I realize that to my dying day I shall never be able to adapt myself to modern life or be conquered by it. Its shameful state inspires me with disgust. Nothing could change it now—not even a revolution. With the exception of a few, humanity will rot. All that I love is art, children, and death.

The first part of the second commandment, "Sympathize with no man," was also strictly kept by Blok. Brought up at home among women and from childhood spoiled by the attention of those about him, Blok became unsociable. He was reluctant to abandon his intimate circle and was always glad to return to it.

"Worship art . . . aimlessly." That, of course, was the easiest for Blok to achieve since it was his natural sphere. According to his own statement (1904) he began by writing verse on "the eternal and the absolute which sooner or later all must accept." During that same year, however, he came under the strong influence of Briusov and Balmont. Up to that time he had not read a single line of modern poetry. The new influence led him to abuse things previously held sacred, to deride his earlier apocalyptic expectations, and to become a man about town and a frequenter of night cabarets. As early as 1905 Blok declared that Decadence with its magic and "Black Mass" was at an end. By 1908 he came to the conclusion that as a child of culture and not of nature, he stood aloof from the people and his intellectual poetry was incomprehensible to them. Therefore he felt the need of withdrawing from the vicious circle of the Russian writers, who became odious to him, and finally, in 1911-12, he openly revolted against "the so-called Symbolism." "We passed through an epoch which lacked character. . . . Now the epoch is over and, consequently, we again need the human soul in its entirety, all that is of the world, and a complete man . . ." (a letter to Andrey Bely, October 1911). In his diary, under the date of January 2, 1912, we find the following ironical confession:

When people live too long in seclusion, as for instance the Decadents of the nineties who concerned themselves only with subjects incomprehensible to the masses, and then, later on, resume their life in the world, they are lost, become helpless, and (many of them) frequently sink below the level of the masses. It has happened thus

to most of us. . . . I write as one newly born. The more accustomed one is to niceties, the more disconnected become one's meditations on life. . . . Until a real connecting link is found between the transient and the everlasting, not only can one not become an intelligible writer, but one can be of no use whatsoever.

Thus with a feeling of tragedy Blok forsook mysticism, so dear to his "spiritual ego," and the commandments of the Symbolists and the aesthetes which dominated his soul, for the living reality. Andrey Bely had a very different nature. Blok was home-loving while Bely was a wanderer. The former was the product of his family, to which in spite of many hardships he was attached up to the day of his death. The latter began by denying his family and subsequently derided them, thus nursing his malicious irony. Bely was more erudite and "scientific" than Blok, but he did not possess Blok's ever present earnestness or his inner tragedy. Blok was lazy and loved secluded contemplation; he suffered from self-analysis, from the tortures of a disturbed conscience, and unreciprocated sentiments. Bely was also unhappy at times, but he treated lightly the problems and emotions which caused Blok's heart to bleed. He was subjected to various influences, from that of Vladimir Soloviev to that of Rudolph Steiner;<sup>6</sup> he was versatile, like his style, restless and sociable, less deep but more balanced than Blok, who was all instinct and passion; Bely was more artificial than natural. Notwithstanding all his apparent etherealism he was more able to adapt himself to life than Blok. Bely's chief achievement in literature did not consist in the development of complex problems but in his skilful introduction of exaggerated modernism in its outer form. A decadent by nature, an admirer of modernism in art, particularly in music, Bely applied it to writing, and in his works reality was interwoven with the unreal, the conscious with the subconscious. While Blok, in anguish, severed the shackles of the doctrine, Bely with his apparent independence and inclination to compromise, remained within its boundaries.

Blok was not the only one seeking a path which would lead away from the abstract in Symbolism to the actuality of life. During the winter season of 1912-13 a manifesto was issued by two

<sup>6</sup> On Soloviev, the Russian religious thinker, see Part I, ch. 7. Rudolph Steiner (1861-1925), German philosopher, the founder of Anthroposophy.—Ed.

new apostates: Serge Gorodetsky (b. 1884), a pupil of Balmont, and Gumilev (1885-1921), a pupil of Briusov. The new group, which was destined to be a short-lived one, called itself Acmeism (Greek *akme* = summit) or Adamism (after the new Adam who had to give new names to all things). The Acmeists revolted against all "mists, shadowy forms, and vague outlines" and undertook the performance of a "new heroic deed: to sing the praise of the living world." For them "the rose by its petals, fragrance, and coloring was again beautiful in itself and not because of its spiritual similarity to mystical love or to anything else" (Gorodetsky). To Anna Akhmatova (b. 1895), who joined the Acmeists, religion was a steadfast and simple belief in its historically established forms, rituals, etc., and not a mystical intuition. The Acmeists did not approve of the passion for musical sound in words. From the music of poetry they passed to its "plastic" side, and they tried to make words more material and more substantial by endowing them with a concrete meaning.

Almost simultaneously with Acmeism (1912) a "more earthly and spirited" (according to Blok) opposition to Symbolism appeared in the form of Futurism. Officially Futurism was founded in 1909 upon the publication in Italy of the first manifestoes of Marinetti. But it was not until 1911 that the Russian Futurists were noticed by the public, when at St. Petersburg Igor Severianin (b. 1887), announcing himself an "Ego-Futurist," sang his brilliant verses at the "poeso-concerts," and when as a protest against him Cubo-Futurism was created in Moscow. The "parlor mannerism" of Igor Severianin was opposed by the Cubo-Futurists with a return to "primitive coarseness," and Maiakovsky (1894-1930) became the most outstanding representative of that group.

What did the Futurists contribute? The French Decadents had already taken from verse both the rhyme and a coherent logical meaning. Marinetti explicitly sanctioned this formless style, insisting that the modern era of big towns, telephones, cinemas, aeroplanes, subways, and skyscrapers needed a special "wireless imagination" or an "absolute freedom of form without any wires, such as syntax and punctuation," in other words, a telegraphic style, by which the effect of the word is accentuated and strengthened. An "egocentric" isolated word was considered of sufficient value in

itself, and many experiments were made with it. In the writings of Maiakovsky and his associates destructive prevailed over any constructive tendencies, and a prominent place was assigned to the derision of tradition. The manifesto published in 1912 by the Futurists, and intended to be a "slap in the face of the public taste," read: "Throw Pushkin, Dostoevsky, Tolstoy, etc., etc., overboard from the steamer of modernity," while Maiakovsky announced: "I shall reveal to you—with words—as plain as mooing—our new souls" (dashes are used for strophes). In 1915, this poet having been repudiated by his contemporaries prophesied: "I—who have been derided by the people of today—as a tedious—obscene jest—see crossing the ranges of time—what no one has yet seen— . . . in a revolutionary crown of thorns—is advancing the year sixteen."

However, the Futurists were not suited to be the poets of the revolution. Notwithstanding all Maiakovsky's efforts, this poetry remained incomprehensible to the people. Pasternak (b. 1890) was the last in the line of the pre-revolutionary Futurist poets, and with him this "poetry for the poets" attained the peak of its expression.

In passing to another type of literature more closely connected with the real life of the times, it is necessary to leave the restricted ground of Symbolism and all the other "isms" which appeared under its patronage or in opposition to it. Gorky was the central figure in this sphere. At the dawn of the new century he had sung the "spring song" of the "Stormy Petrel." ("Storm! Soon will burst the storm! the daring stormy petrel is soaring proudly among lightnings high above the roaring, angry sea; the call is of the prophet of victory. Let the storm increase.")

According to Gorky's own acknowledgment, from 1901 to 1917 he was in charge of hundreds of thousands of roubles donated for the support of the Social Democratic party; persecuted by the police, after January 9, 1905, he was imprisoned in the fortress of SS. Peter and Paul, and upon his release chose to continue his work abroad. But before his exile Gorky had founded (in 1904) the periodical *Znanie* (Knowledge) which appeared until 1913, and the best contemporary writers—realist and radical—contributed to it. The title suggested the enthusiasm with which Gorky, with his recent experience of self-education, regarded science. Among the blind and cruel forces of nature "the only true, sacred, and great

one is the uninterruptedly progressing man, and in him his continuously growing reason, which being founded on knowledge can tame nature and make its forces serve the purpose of man." In a revolution the principle of reason must organize the popular element. But in Gorky's understanding the principle of reason was represented in Russia by a weak and timid intelligentsia, while the popular element was uncivilized and even barbarian, and at times he vacillated between the two, finally nevertheless showing preference for the popular element. To bridge the gap between these two forces and to prevent a conflict between them was the principal aim of that school on the island of Capri to which Gorky gave his personal and financial support. In this work his closest collaborator was the Social Democrat Bolshevik, Bogdanov, who unfolded a complete theory of forming a new science and art, which would have the proletariat as its bearer. This class should be given an "integral education forcefully shaping their will and mentality." In opposition to the bourgeois individualism, the new proletarian culture had to be built up on the principle of coöperation, having as its ultimate aim a complete reconstruction of the life of all humanity. This aim could be reached with the help of a new "universal science of organization." As a tool for the organization of the masses, art was deemed to be even more powerful than science, because the language of images had a stronger appeal and could be more easily understood.

Another important manifestation, quite new to the history of Russian literature and closely associated with Gorky's activities, was the appearance of a host of writers springing from the peasant and working classes. Of course there were precedents for this when Pushkin and Belinsky condescendingly acclaimed the poetry of Slepushkin, a peasant, and Belinsky admired the genius of Koltsov. Spiridon Drozhzhin, the patriarch of a later generation of peasant poets, was born in 1848 and remained to the end true to his class. The jubilee of his literary activities was celebrated in 1923. I. Z. Surikov (1841-80), another pioneer of peasant poetry, was less successful in his work, though a group of writers springing from the people assembled around him and after his death organized a society bearing his name. But absorption by the lower urban bourgeoisie, through which they lost connection with their own ele-

ment, was the common fate of the majority of the earlier writers who sprang from the people. At the same time it was rather difficult for them to enter the literary set, though in their biographies L. Tolstoy, Korolenko, Gorky, and others constantly figure as sympathetic sponsors. Gorky in particular was besieged by the new converts to literature—the self-taught men. As literacy and reading matter increased towards the beginning of the twentieth century the number of these writers grew enormously. In 1911 Gorky presented very interesting data on this literature which emerged into the world from many distant parts of Russia. "During the years 1906-10," he wrote, "I read over four hundred manuscripts, the authors of which were of the people. Many of these works were illiterate, and will never be published, but they bore the stamp of a human soul and in them echoed the spontaneous voice of the masses." Out of 348 authors 179 dwelt in the city, while 169 lived in factory settlements, railway stations, and villages. It was possible to establish the professions of only 237 authors: almost half of them (114) belonged to the working class, sixty-seven to the peasantry, and fifty-six were city artisans, small traders, or employees. Only eleven of them had ever before had their works published. On another occasion Gorky wrote:

The number of clumsy verses and unskilful prose is ever increasing, while higher and sprightlier sound the voices of these writers; one feels in the lower strata of life that within the man there grows the longing for a bigger, broader life, and a thirst for freedom; that he passionately wants to communicate his young thoughts, encourage weary fellow man, and show his affection to the mournful country.

Finally, in an introduction to the first issue of the magazine *Proletarian Writer*, in 1914, Gorky addressed the workmen as follows: "This book is a new and very important phenomenon in our hard life. . . . Possibly in the future this little book will be referred to as one of the Russian proletariat's first steps towards creating its own artistic literature." However, he was compelled to admit that progress was small because of an insufficient aptitude with the pen, unfamiliarity with the technique of work, and, especially, because of the inability "to choose from a dozen words the one that is simple, strong, and beautiful."

Nevertheless, among the host of unsuccessful people, or those successful yet lacking originality, there gradually emerged some striking figures endowed with distinct personality. From writing verse they passed on to the more difficult but more gratifying prose. Little by little two distinct groups, which at first had been merged, began to be discernible—the urban writers (mostly factory hands) and those from the villages. Conforming to this distinction the content of both the verse and the prose became more varied, while in addition to this the country writers introduced an unlimited variety of colors, forms, impressions, and dialects from different districts of Russia.

It is impossible in this study to enumerate all the writers springing from the people, whose number steadily continued to increase. Their austere lives and struggle for achievement remind us of the sorrowful biographies of the “commoner” writers of the sixties, although they possessed some characteristic peculiarities. Those who did not forsake all connection with the countryside could at least find a limited support in their villages, though peasant life appeared to them dark and cruel after they had had a taste of civilization. Nevertheless the poetry of agricultural work in the bosom of nature, the free vastness of the steppes, the wide expanse of the “Mother Volga” and “Kama the Beautiful,” supplied ample material for their inspiration. Those who worked in factories, or spent their lives among the dregs of the city living on niggardly earnings from day labor, were much worse off. It was here in particular that ire and hatred were concentrated towards the wealth and luxury of the upper classes, both so near and yet so unattainable, towards the exploiters of labor and the entire order of things responsible for these social inequalities. Here were bred the revolutionary fighters, who remanned the ranks of underground revolutionary organizations, with the inevitable results—imprisonment and banishment. Many of these writers of the people were deprived of those educational opportunities which the “commoner” writers of the sixties could have profited by, but often chose to ignore. With quite extraordinary persistence and determination, under the most unfavorable conditions, such as in attics lit by a tallow candle, or in dark corners and cellars, or during the few moments of leisure at a desk, they strove to supply the lack of

formal education by reading everything that fell into their hands until they became blind and dizzy.

It remains only to mention the exceptional cases when by their efforts these writers achieved a more or less equal recognition with other members of the upper literary circles. Klychkov (b. 1887), Kliuev (b. 1887), and the youngest and best known of the three, Serge Esenin (1895-1925), were those among the members of the "neo-peasant" group of poets who during the pre-revolutionary period attained success. All three were subject to the influence of Koltsov, as well as to that of the modern Symbolists, Balmont, Blok, and Bely. Klychkov, because of his melodious songs of a purely lyrical nature, was unanimously proclaimed the "peasant Fet,"<sup>7</sup> while Kliuev, though imbued with revolutionary feelings, understood how to harmonize them with the rhythm of folk songs.

Serge Esenin does not appear to have been such a rare phenomenon among his contemporaries as is customarily thought. With his youthful spontaneity and breeziness, the "curly-headed, jolly lad" was only closer to the soil which had bred him and more lavish in scattering the wealth of the animistic folklore and the primitive peasant piety. Esenin's images were famous for their daring and exaggeration, and therefore became exceptionally popular during the reign of Symbolism. With the same spontaneity with which he exposed the treasures of his rustic imagination, Esenin submitted himself to the influences of the Symbolist poetry and of the socialist doctrine, but both were blended with folk songs and peasant ideology. We shall see in the next chapter where all this confusion led him, together with the further development in the history of the workman-peasant literature.

<sup>7</sup> The reference here is to the famous lyrical poet of the second half of the nineteenth century. See above, Ch. II.—Ed.



## IV

# LITERATURE UNDER THE SOVIET REGIME

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**T**HE attitude of the October Revolution <sup>1</sup> towards literature and art was necessarily very different and far more complicated than that towards the church and religion. It is true that attempts were made to deny art and to approach literature from a strictly utilitarian, technological point of view. In the opinion of one revolutionary writer, "Art like religion was an opiate for the people," while a proletarian poet predicted that art (like the state and social classes) would disappear under the future socialist régime. But this attitude had not been shared either by the government or the majority of the writers. Therefore, if in the early days after the Bolshevik victory literature seemed to have disappeared, while church and religion, on the contrary, felt no effects of the revolution, the fact can be attributed to the difference in the social strata on which they were respectively based. To use the official Marxian terms, pre-revolutionary Russian literature lost both the "consumption" and the "production" basis of its existence. In other words, the cultured class, which furnished the "consumers," i. e., the readers, had been ruined and almost entirely annihilated. The bourgeois readers vanished—or had no time for literature—while new ones had not yet appeared. Moreover, the civil war that followed had created an atmosphere in which it was impossible for the "producers," i. e., the writers, to publish their works. There were no publishers, and the literary circles were compelled to

<sup>1</sup> I. e., the revolution that overthrew the Provisional Government and established the Soviet régime.—Ed.

produce literature for private use and the entertainment of the authors, as was done in the days of Elizabeth and Catherine II and in the salons of the eighteen-forties. Literary works were read aloud to an intimate circle of friends or sold in bookshops as "autographs." The cabaret was another, less intimate medium for the display of creative activity. But this oral or stage literature required a special "shock" style, beyond the reach of the old writers.

Such were the conditions during the early years of the Soviet dictatorship, and in themselves they explain why the authors of the preceding epoch, regardless even of their attitude towards political events, have abandoned their work. In many other respects life became extremely difficult for the men of letters. Every effort had to be concentrated on obtaining rations, which were reduced for the intellectuals, by standing in line, or on procuring additional clothes and nourishment at the secret market. Besides starvation, undernourishment, and unaccustomed physical efforts there was no light or heat in the winter, and even more than hunger the cold and "life in fur coats" paralyzed the creative power. With the exception of a few fortunate ones who were in close coöperation with the authorities, these conditions of life were more or less the same for everybody. However, life was even more unbearable for those who were unable, or unwilling on principle, to conceal their disapproval of the new masters. This position was held by the representatives of the old literature, the belated followers of the classical period and Populist ideology. The Romanticists of the late nineteenth and the early twentieth centuries were connected by many personal and spiritual links to their contemporaries of the victorious camp. Only a short time before, their works had been published in the same magazines or in the issues of *Znanie* and *Shipovnik* (Eglantine), so there was no immediate differentiation in this group between those accepting and not accepting the new régime. The majority hesitated before making the choice, but at the same time when the rule of martial law—"Whoever is not with us, is against us"—was introduced on both sides of the barricade, few succeeded in remaining neutral.

The first to retire, and the majority to emigrate abroad, were the mature writers connected with the old social classes and unwilling to accept the new order. I. A. Bunin (b. 1870), the last bard of the

manor and later the Nobel laureate; A. I. Kuprin (1870-1938), the true artist of past days, who when fatally ill returned to Russia to die; Leonid Andreiev, the rebel against life's new grimaces, who soon died in Finland; and I. S. Shmelev (b. 1875), the victim of the revolution against which he revenged himself with all the force of his passion and hatred, were the most outstanding of the group. D. S. Merezhkovsky, Z. N. Hippus (b. 1869), N. M. Minsky, Igor Severianin, A. M. Remizov (b. 1877), and Marina Tsvetaeva (b. 1892), mostly leaders of the neo-romantic period and senior Symbolists, disturbed in their meditations and verse writing by crude reality, also retired or emigrated. Balmont, the poet of "fleeting moments"—who in 1905 had proclaimed himself a revolutionary, in 1918 asked the question: "Am I a revolutionary?" and in 1922 published the "Song of a Working Mallet"—finally realized that there was discord between his lyrics and the songs of the moment, and reverted to his original stand: "The agony of my people is strange to me; strange to me is the entire world in its struggle." Sick and discouraged, he also emigrated. A. N. Tolstoy (b. 1882), and Andrey Bely were the two younger writers who, prompted by practical rather than ideological considerations, went temporarily abroad (the former from 1919 to 1923, the latter from the autumn of 1921 to that of 1923); both subsequently returned to Russia, relying on the New Economic Policy (NEP). Tolstoy was the only one to succeed in winning popularity and large royalties in the USSR.

The writers of this last generation and this type marked the dividing line between those who remained and those who went abroad.<sup>2</sup> A. S. Serafimovich (b. 1863), was the only one of the old generation to have decisively, from its first days, joined the October movement; because of this, his fellow writers formally excluded him from their friendly Wednesday Circle in Moscow. V. V. Veresaev's (Smidovich, b. 1867), recantation was not a change, for in fact he had long since joined the Marxists and "was on intimate terms with the workmen and revolutionary youth." Although Valery Briusov had already begun in 1910 his return

<sup>2</sup>I. V. Vladislavlev counted thirty-eight émigré writers and classified them as follows: twenty-two of the landed nobility, six of the merchant class, seven of the middle class, and three whose descent could not be ascertained.

"from the desert to the people" (*Tertia Vigilia*), and become an urbanist, he found the transition more difficult. "I prefer large houses built of steel and glass," he wrote at the time when he abandoned Verlaine for Verhaeren. So after October the naturally flexible and calculating Briusov had only to make a final effort. In 1919 he joined the Bolshevik Party and held several posts—director of the Art Department in the Glavprofobr (Central Board of Professional Education), member of the State Scientific Council, dean of the Institute of Literary Art, etc. He attended to his new duties with a "definite good will," but nevertheless was unable to adapt himself to his new colleagues. Although in his last poems (1922-24) Briusov eulogized Lenin, in his heart he could not conceal from himself the tragedy of his "transfiguration." Death put an end to this spiritual tragedy.

In view of Blok's previous evolution it was natural for him to accept the revolution, and then to join the Bolsheviks. His "transition from the abstract to life" had taken place at an earlier time. In 1908 he wrote: "The venom of Decadence lies in its lack of richness, brilliancy, vitality, and picturesqueness. . . . But life abounds in vital substance which the artist should embody." Of course there was much that was bad, "fetid" in reality. Yet Blok, having discarded the symbols, sought the real "face of humanity" although it be a sad one. This mood developed and was strengthened after he had worked during the war at the front and during the February Revolution<sup>8</sup> on the committee to investigate the illegal activities of the former ministers. In June 1917 he wrote in his diary: "No one seems to realize the fact that never before has there been in Russia such an exemplary order, and that this order is maintained with dignity and calm by the revolutionary masses. What right have we, the brains of the country, to insult by our worthless bourgeois incredulity the clever, quiet, and wise revolutionary masses?" and he added: "I should not wonder if we are killed in the name of order."

All this explains also Blok's outburst of national feelings in opposition to Russia's former allies, the "Aryans," against whom "we will open wide the gates to the Orient" and "simulate Asi-

<sup>8</sup> I. e., the revolution that overthrew the monarchy and established the Provisional Government.—Ed.

atics." In 1918 he wrote the poem "Scythians" in which, under the influence of his nationalistic wrath, he surrendered too hastily the right of the Russians to be ranked among the European people, even from the anthropological point of view. ("Yes, we are Scythians, yes, we are Asiatics, with our slanting and avid eyes.") The same mood explains the appearance of his famous poem "The Twelve," which so astonished his old friends. Its wonderful artistic complexity and its inexorable realism were unfairly interpreted by both parties concerned in the struggle as a political ambiguity and blasphemy. "The Twelve," Blok's swan song, was followed not by repentance or loss of hope in the future, but by disappointment and death in 1921.

Even before the revolution Gorky had assumed a special attitude towards the Bolsheviks. He rendered them many services of a material character, particularly by establishing his school at Capri. The author of the *Stormy Petrel*, even though his views on the October Revolution were at first negative and then rather equivocal, was favored by Lenin and therefore had to be treated with consideration. It was during the revolutionary years that Gorky wrote his most artistic works, in which however, not without intention, he entered into reminiscences of his past. Even Voronsky, the most sympathetic of the Soviet critics, admitted that in Gorky's recent works there was much that was untimely, and though he "wrote even better than before, yet . . . for the contemporary reader, particularly the young one, these works sounded duller . . . they were not blatant." When back in 1907 Gorky wrote *Mother*, his first socialistic novel, and attempted to apply his romanticism to the workmen's movement, the critics found that this was the end, for he had outwritten himself. Naturally, as he became an objective, realistic artist they understood him still less, and more and more frequently he was asked: "What is your belief?" Gorky replied with generalities which could be interpreted as a condemnation of the Bolsheviks, if so desired, and his visits to Russia were confined to triumphal processions and listening to official panegyrics.

Gorky was not "blatant," but Maiakovsky and his army of Futurists instead made twice the noise. Maiakovsky shouted louder

than anyone else trying to outdo the others, and the "roars and growls" of his poetry answered the requirements of clubs and cabarets. In fact, how could he avoid identifying himself with the revolution? Even before it he was the most radical of radicals, the most zealous destroyer of literary tradition, in a word, a revolutionary. He now proclaimed loudly: "Only the proletariat will create new things, and we, the Futurists, are the only ones to follow in the footsteps of the proletariat. . . . Futurism—is the ideology of the proletariat. . . . Futurism—is proletarian art." Hence the deduction: "There is not, and cannot be any other artistic power, but that of the minority, and in order to instill extreme radical art into the masses it was essential that a dictatorship of the Futurist minority should be established." This claim took literature unawares. While others remained noncommittal and hesitated to follow the new régime, the Futurists demonstratively stretched out their hands and offered the authorities their coöperation in exchange for the dictatorship in art. "As the authorities required organizers and leaders during the first, destructive period of their work, this rôle was assigned to Futurism. From their bohemian life in the cellars the Russian Futurists were transferred to the magnificent halls of the Academies" (Viacheslav Polonsky).

But theirs was not a lasting victory, for having seized the power they failed to profit by it. Their poetry had little in common with Marxism, and when it came to defining the positive aim of the new art of the future, the Futurists declared:

The bourgeois artists copied the trees, the sun, the mountains, etc. Why? All this exists . . . and is a thousand times more beautiful than when daubed on canvas or hewn out of sugary blocks of marble. . . . If you are artists . . . then create your own, human objects. . . . Factories, mills, and workshops are waiting for artists to appear and supply them with new models of objects never seen before.

Everything old must be wiped out.

The authorities, however, soon grasped the situation. When faced with these manifestations of "artistic hypocrisy" and "imitation of the West," Lenin, being a realist, had the courage to declare

himself a "barbarian." "I understand Pushkin and appreciate both him and Nekrasov," he said, "but as to Maiakovsky, I am sorry, I do not understand him." In 1921 another group, the Proletcult,<sup>4</sup> advanced its claim to represent "proletarian art," and passed the following resolution: "As we consider Futurism an ideological trend of the last period of imperialistic, bourgeois culture, we proclaim it antagonistic to the proletariat as a class." Futurism in its capacity of an officially approved school was taken from its pedestal, but it did not at once capitulate. In the Moscow cafés Vladimir Shershenevich and Marienhof, two gifted offspring of Futurism, were "astounding" the public with their songs. They were propagating the new variation of Futurism—Imaginism, or the predominance of the image in poetry as opposed to the symbol, which (for the Symbolists) was a method of thinking or a conception of the world, while the image was but a literary means for intensifying the visual impression. At the lowest ebb of his career Serge Esenin also temporarily joined the Imaginists, thinking thereby to become a part of the revolution. Later he regained the peak of his creative genius through the bitter disappointment of being torn away from the soil. ("Why the devil did I shout so loudly of being on friendly terms with the people; my poetry is no longer needed here.") This feeling eventually led him to suicide. Maiakovsky, left alone, soon followed Esenin's example.

After the fall of the Futurists the Proletcult presented its claim to power. This movement was associated with the name of Gorky's collaborator, the philosopher A. Bogdanov, who tried to reconcile materialism with critical philosophy. There was more foundation in his claim to represent the embryonic proletarian literature than in that of the Futurists. Bogdanov believed that the proletariat's mission in the world was to establish a "harmonious and complete organization of the entire life of humanity." The accomplishment of this mission necessitated independent cultural efforts from the proletariat "beyond the reach of any decrees," i. e., not relying on state patronage, but on free and spontaneous activity. The Futurists were willing to serve the proletarian state as one of its subsidiary organs, but the Proletcult went further than this by de-

<sup>4</sup> Abbreviation for "proletarian culture."—Ed.

manding complete "separation" from the state machine, so as to work out immediately the purely "socialistic" forms of thought, feelings, and life, independent of the coördination and combination of various social forces, which at that time the Soviet power was still bound to consider.

The Proletcult wanted to control unrestrictedly the management of all the branches of proletarian art—literature, pictorial and plastic arts, music, the theater, as well as every cultural and educational work, the education of Communist youth, etc. State institutions were only to "render every possible assistance to the new movement," which was to have an independent position along with the political and economic movements (Resolution of 1918). The All-Russian Council of the Proletcult, with its studios and laboratories for the production of proletarian literature, was to be the center of this independent organization, and it had to assume the form of an "All-Russian Union of Workmen Writers," bound to "unite all the writers of the laboring class who upheld the proletarian stand." The aim of the union was "to create a proletarian socialistic literature, both artistic and scientific, answering to the ideals of the revolutionary communistic proletariat."

Although the "theoretical" claims of the Proletcult were somewhat moderated by Bogdanov's successors, P. I. Lebedev-Poliansky and V. Pletnev, its inclusive demands nevertheless continued to be excessive and could not depend upon the sympathy and support of the centralized Soviet power. In addition to the fact that this power could tolerate no authority but its own in the management of proletarian culture, there arose a series of objections of a practical and theoretical nature. In the first place the Proletcult could never have mastered the entire sphere to which it made claim. Later, when the unions of proletarian writers were formed, they made it their task to organize proletarian literature independently of the central group of the Proletcult. All that was left for the "central arena" of the Proletcult were the workmen's theater—a very modest enterprise—and a few theatrical and literary studios. Further than this, from their very inception Bogdanov's views provoked theoretical objections from his constant opponent, Lenin, who frankly derided the idea of creating a proletarian culture by laboratory methods.



Practically all the phrases about proletarian culture are only a blind for the struggle against Marxism. . . . To enable art to reach the people, and the people to approach art, we must first raise the general level of education and culture. . . . Of course, we are waging war against illiteracy and sending itinerant exhibitions and educational trains throughout the country [Lenin said to Clara Zetkin] but what can this bring to a population of many millions deficient in the most elementary knowledge and rudiments of culture? For at the very time when here in Moscow a few tens of thousands of people are enjoying a brilliant theatrical performance, throughout the country millions of people are still striving to learn arithmetic and how to spell their names, and have to be told that the earth is not flat but round and that the world is governed by the laws of nature instead of by witches and sorcerers jointly with the Heavenly Father.

All this was obviously far removed from the establishment of a proletarian culture, and, moreover, was it possible to deny the old art? We have seen that when it came to a choice between Pushkin and Maiakovsky Lenin favored Pushkin. "Art is the property of the people. Its deepest roots must spread into the thick of the vast mass of working people. It must be understood by these masses and only by them. The people can understand Pushkin and Tolstoy, but how could they understand the affectations of a Futurist? Why should one admire the new only because it is new?" Lenin again said to Clara Zetkin. "Nonsense, sheer nonsense. . . . We are good revolutionaries, but I do not know why we should feel obliged to prove that we are on a level with modern culture. I have the courage, rather, to declare myself a barbarian." "It is too soon for us to dispose of what we have inherited from the bourgeois," he said in the winter of 1919, when voting against the closing of the Grand Theatre in Moscow.

None of this could assure success either to the Proletcult or Futurism, when competing for domination in literature and art. Moreover, there appeared now a third rival prepared to quote an actual fact in support of its claim. It was too late to doubt the existence of a proletarian literature or only to prepare for its establishment. The proletarian literature existed. Wanting to prove it by deeds, the poets of the working class formed their own soci-

ety which became known under the picturesque name of the Forge.

In May of 1920 the Forge published the first issue of its magazine, and the Proletcult assembled an All-Russian Congress of Proletarian Writers, at which twenty-five cities were represented by 150 authors, of whom forty joined the Forge. The majority of these writers belonged to the urban working and artisan classes, though many had been born and spent their childhood in villages. Many took part in the political struggle and experienced the hardships of the underground revolutionary work, of prison, and exile. Even before the revolution the leaders of the Forge had begun to write and publish their works, and by 1923 had gained recognition. Notwithstanding the pronounced individual character of each poet, the members of the Forge met on a common ground—the enthusiasm aroused by the triumphal progress of their party. The members first proclaimed themselves the advanced guards of the proletariat, and then, in the flowery declaration of 1923, “the only union adhering wholly to the program of the revolutionary vanguard of the working class and the Workmen’s and Peasants’ Party—the shock brigade in the first line of the ideological front.” In this capacity they felt called upon to eulogize the city and the factory as bearers of the great proletarian future.

During the years of war and of victory it was natural for the representatives of the leading revolutionary class to have this frame of mind. But Voronsky, the critic, soon pointed out to the Forge that their poetical posters were too abstract, that in their verses neither the concrete Russian factory nor the individual Russian workman was represented true to life. As to the life or destiny of the Communist Party—there was no mention of it. Yet a correct explanation for this was supplied by Voronsky: the poets of the Forge belonged to the generation born in the latter part of the eighteen-eighties; they had developed outside the party circles and under extraneous ideological influences originating with the peasant and intellectual writers. They had not entirely broken with the village life, and while loudly, exaggeratedly eulogizing the factory, its benches, machines, and driving belts, they continued to look back with regret and longing to the countryside. These people were bored with factory life during the pre-revolutionary

days, and if in the whirlpool of the revolutionary struggle they ever succeeded in forgetting their longing it was for a short time only.

The frame of mind and poetry of the Forge came to an abrupt end when War Communism was replaced by the NEP. In 1921 and 1922 there was a serious crisis in the history of Soviet literature. The whole situation was suddenly complicated, for, profiting by the régime of comparative freedom, the groups which till then had sought refuge from the storms of life, reëntered the literary field, and the struggle for supremacy was resumed in a new setting and by new methods. We must stress the point that while grandiloquent lyrics corresponded to the period of struggle, the period of truce was marked by the return to humble prose. The change in form led to a change in the contents. Prose, by reason of its very nature and its ability to embrace a wider range of artistic subjects, had to assert its claim to emancipation from politics or at least from direct allegiance to it and its immediate interference with literature—which was precisely the aim set by the Forge.

The elder men of letters, who had been silent during the hungry and cold winters of 1918-19, were the most insistent upon preserving independence from politics. In 1919 "Alkonost" published the *Memoirs of Dreamers* (8 vols.) edited by Andrey Bely, and in 1921 *The House of Art* (2 vols.) under the editorship of Maxim Gorky, Dobuzhinsky, Zamiatin, and Chukovsky. The *Literary Herald*, a weekly magazine, was also published in 1919-22 and was replaced first by the *Annals of the House of Writers* and later by *Literary Notes*. Though these publications were in a minor key and obliged to use a muted language, the general attitude of the group towards contemporary reality was quite clear: it could only be a negative one. "Everything in our life is at a crisis," wrote Viacheslav Ivanov (b. 1866)<sup>5</sup> in the first issue of the *Memoirs of Dreamers*. "Where is the accustomed face of things? We cannot hear the familiar voice. Humanism is dying." "I fear that we shall never have a genuine literature," said Zamiatin<sup>6</sup> in *The House of Art*. "Contemporary reality has greatly tried us, the long-suffering members of the Russian intelligentsia," wrote the anonymous

<sup>5</sup> One of the leading poets and theoreticians of the Symbolist school.—Ed.

<sup>6</sup> E. Zamiatin (1884-1937), a well-known novelist.—Ed.

author of an article in *Literary Notes* (1921). "Pecuniary privation and physical pain are as nothing compared with spiritual agony. . . . With what joy did the intellectuals greet the revolution, how ardently did they believe that it would put an end to their estrangement from the people. How bitterly mistaken they were. . . . Three years of civil war . . . forced the intelligentsia to alter its opinion of the masses." The disillusionment in the people gradually became general and was followed by the intellectuals' disappointment in themselves. "Since we have been so cruelly mistaken . . . we are not worthy to be the builders of a new edifice and the explorers of new paths. . . . It only remains for us to fold our arms and surrender ourselves and our fatherland to the course of events."

In this funereal mood any constructive work in the creation of new forms of life was impossible. But not all the representatives of the old intelligentsia, and especially not all their young followers, dwelt in this mood. The state of complete confusion prevailing in this group, and the "cosmic" enthusiasm of the Forge represented two extreme positions. We shall subsequently see that both were gradually modified and in converging the two extreme points of view created a number of intermediate positions—of an equally transitional nature. This, of course, does not quite apply to the émigré writers, because they did not have to face the principal incentive of this internal evolution—the immediate presence of the Soviet government. Nevertheless, in Russia as well as abroad, the general trend of the literary development was the same. In both cases alike the older generation of prose writers succeeded in sustaining the artistic realism of the classical period, notwithstanding the great difference in the political tendencies of Bunin and Kuprin, on the one side, and of Veresaev and Serafimovich on the other. It is true that for a long time the poetry of the émigrés retained both decadent form and decadent mood, but this was not characteristic of the general trend in literature, which showed an increasing inclination towards realism.

The first sign of this tendency, in Soviet Russia, was the appearance of a group of young writers, who called themselves Serapion Brothers. The name was taken from the title of a volume of fantastic stories written by E. T. A. Hoffmann, the German

Romanticist of the early nineteenth century, who gave this name to his work to commemorate the circle of his intimate friends who met at his house on St. Serapion the Anchorite's day. But essentially these Russian writers had little in common with the Romanticists. They were brought together at the lectures in the House of Art, and then they decided to meet at the house of M. Slonimsky (b. 1897), a man of culture, and read their works to one another. However, the real guiding spirit of the circle was L. N. Lunz (b. 1901), a youth also of a high degree of culture and a lecturer on Western European literature at the St. Petersburg University. Upon his premature death (1924) the Serapions dispersed, but Lunz's spirit and motto, "To the West," were preserved by the individual members of the circle.

In adopting the name of Serapion Brothers the members considered themselves in an oasis of culture surrounded by a desert, and therefore they placed themselves under their anchorite patron for protection against the realities of life. Lunz thus described the founding and the aim of the circle:

In February of 1921, a period of the strictest regulation, registration, and organization, when all were subordinated to an exhausting iron rule, we decided to meet without rules, chairmen, votes, or elections. We became friends during revolutionary days, the days of the severest political tension. In both right and left wings it was said: "Whoever is not with us, is against us. With whom are you? With the Communists or against the Communists? With the revolution or against the revolution?" We are with Serapion the Anchorite, was our answer. Each of us has his own ideology and his own political views, each paints his hut in his own color. So it is with our stories, novels, and dramas, but there is one thing that is demanded of all of us: that the voice should ring true, that we should believe in the reality of the production irrespective of its color. And now when the fanatical politicians and the short-sighted critics of the right or the left wing attempt to sow discord among us, emphasizing our divergent ideologies and cry out: "Let every one follow his own party"—we only ignore them. For while one brother worships God and another the devil, they still are brothers.

Therefore the basic principle of the Serapion aesthetics required that the "work should be original, realistic, and have a peculiar

life of its own." "Art is as realistic as life, and like life it has no aim or reason: existing simply because it must exist."

Evidently this was the best and easiest method for protecting the position of artistic realism against the exigencies of contemporary politics. Here the theoretical stand against political slogans in literary criticism was connected with the practical task of protection against the critical attack of the Marxists. This attitude was expressed very vividly by N. Nikitin (b. 1897), a member of the circle, in the symposium published under the title of *Writers' Views on Art and on Themselves* in 1924. He wanted to be "one of the working class, and at the same time a heretic, otherwise it is impossible to conceive art as one of the absolutes of freedom." He did not want to be "dragged about by the scruff of the neck" and was dissatisfied because the Russian critics—both modern and old—applied a social "ammeter to every line an author wrote." Art has its "own ear" and plays its "own game," and the artist must not be a "public seismograph." This statement, however, was mitigated by another: "No one must ever worry, the artist will always be loyal to everything that is progressive in his time, he never was and never will be mercenary."

Nikitin and Zoshchenko (b. 1895), were among the original members of the Serapion circle, but soon there appeared new ones: V. Kaverin (b. 1902), a graduate of the University and historian of literature, who from "fantastic tales" passed to "realistic material"; Vsevolod Ivanov (b. 1895), acrobat, clown, and faker in a circus, who became a typesetter, and later was initiated by Gorky into literature; K. Fedin (b. 1892), a peasant acclimated to city life, who was educated at the Commercial School in Moscow, spent the years from 1914 to 1918 as a war prisoner in Germany, where he applied himself as a musician, chorister, and actor, and, on his return to Russia, through Gorky and the Serapions, became a man of letters; and the last to join the circle—N. Tikhonov (b. 1896).

Thus in the Brotherhood of the Serapions two currents were merged—one from above and another from below—with correspondingly different levels of education and divergent political views: on the one side were Lunz, Slonimsky, Zoshchenko, Kaverin, and Nikitin, and on the other V. Ivanov, Fedin, and Tik-

honov. But even Lebedev-Poliansky, their opponent, rendered them full justice: "They are neither proletarians nor peasants—they are working intelligentsia; they did not flee, like their fathers, from the rumblings of the proletarian revolution, but faced the storm." Nevertheless, they were realistic writers, who cherished their artistic independence. Michael Zoshchenko, son of a painter of noble birth, the graduate of a classical school and university, and a true intellectual, was the most popular of them all. His humorous works were to be found on every newsstand, they were read in alehouses, in street cars, in third-class railway-carriages, and his stories were repeated on the stage and over the air. He profited by the advent of readers from the uneducated and semi-educated masses, and his style became a mixture of popular dialects and distorted literary language.

The Brotherhood of Serapions was soon compelled to yield its place to a new group which, however, was forced to renounce absolute neutrality and to make an advance towards the new "tutors." Following in the footsteps of the Serapions there came the so-called "Fellow Travelers," consisting partly of the same people. But their name was not of their own choice, it was given them by Trotsky in his critical review of revolutionary literature, where he likewise gave a characterization of the group from the point of view of a Soviet leader:

They are neither selfish literary opportunists, attempting to picture the revolution, nor are they political converts, for in their case no break with the past and no radical change of front is required. Their literary and spiritual outlook was shaped by the revolution. At the same time they are sharply differentiated from the Communists. . . . They are not the artists of the proletarian revolution, but only its artistic fellow travelers."

The Fellow Travelers lacked even the degree of unity that was present in the Serapion Brothers. In this new group the former Serapions, V. Ivanov, Fedin, Kaverin, and Tikhonov, were associated with such individual writers as Pilniak (b. 1894), Babel (b. 1894), Seifulina (b. 1889), Leonov (b. 1899), A. Malyshkin (b. 1890), S. Semenov (b. 1893), and Budantsev (b. 1896). Later they were joined by A. Tolstoy (b. 1882), I. Ehrenburg (b. 1891),

V. Veresaev (b. 1867), M. Prishvin (b. 1873), and V. Lidin (b. 1894), all authors whose works had been known prior to the revolution. Eventually, to be a member of a group in a measure recognized by the authorities, partially guaranteed their safety. The list of the Fellow Travelers included the names of the most eminent writers who had given the literature of the Soviet period not only a national but also a European reputation. What talent there was in this literature during the years 1922-25 came from the Fellow Travelers. We shall return to some of these writers, but in the meantime it must be pointed out that their advent and their literary work aroused approbation and support along with an acute animosity from the opposite camp of proletarian writers. This struggle was conducted like a literary debate until the authorities finally interfered, and it ended in a compromise, the terms of which were dictated by the resolution of the conference called in May 1924 by the Press Department, and the subsequent decisions of the Thirteenth Congress and the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Party.

Simultaneously an evolution was taking place in the opposite literary camp of proletarian writers. Of the three unsuccessful claimants to power in literature, the Futurists who led the way were the first to be defeated. They were reluctant to leave the stage without establishing an original literature or at least a literary school. But there already existed a school very like the Futurists—the Formalists, who back in 1916 had formed a Society for the Study of Poetical Language, with the object of directing the new “literary science” towards an exclusive study of literary forms while practically ignoring the content. A literary work was to be approached as a technical production, and every explanation founded on the biography of the author, his social surroundings, the public spirit of his time, etc., was to be eliminated. Perhaps the passion for this manifestly one-sided view could also be regarded as a shield against the intrusion of contemporary reality into the realm of artistic activity, or as a veiled defense of “pure” art. But Professor Pereverzev, the leader of the school, who successfully gathered together a group of disciples, attempted to link this stand for the autonomy of art with a simplified Marxist interpretation. Accepting the principle that thought is conditioned by exist-



ence, he argued that by directly studying the form of a literary work it was possible to base one's conclusion as to the social group in which the author belonged, and what economic interest he represented.

The Futurists however, were not satisfied with the complex teachings of the Formalist school, and founded the so-called LEF (Left Wing) through which they bequeathed to posterity a more specific and concise adaptation of the formal method that particularly emphasized Constructivism, a doctrine reducing literature to the creation of objects of immediate need. Art was a craft which the artist must adapt directly to the needs of industrial production, thus, in a quasi-Marxist way, connecting art with the technical-economic base. In this conception literature was confined, strictly speaking, to newspapers, to the publishing of facts, because the Leftists, on principle, repudiated fiction in literature. "To learn from the classics" meant writing on reactionary subjects and indulging in psychology and romanticism, every trace of which had to be eliminated. Of course, in the opinion of the Leftists, the Fellow Traveler writers were guilty of all these sins.

Under the NEP, Proletcult, the second contender in the struggle for power, also faded away. In 1922 its studios rapidly declined in number, yet in dying the Proletcult left an offspring—and a most quarrelsome one at that. It was a group which in 1923 first published a magazine under the characteristic name of *On Guard*. The young element in this circle was composed of "Komsomols" (Communist Youth), who according to Trotsky were "our own, October's—to the very last fiber." The poets A. Bezymensky (b. 1898), K. Doronin (b. 1900), and S. Malakhov (b. 1902), Libedinsky (b. 1898), a gifted prose writer, and Lelevich, a talented critic, were the founders of *On Guard*, and their peculiar psychology and political features were ably described by the critic Voronsky:

During October and afterwards during the period of the civil war, a great many partisan youths, forming a heterogeneous lot, joined our party. There were several workmen, but the offspring of peasants, petty bourgeois, and the democratic class of the intelligentsia (clerical workers, etc.) prevailed. They had passed through the cruel training of civil war and had acquired wide knowledge from the rank and file of the Communist Party, but they had no solid

bond with the life of the workmen. They had had no experience in the old school of underground revolutionary work. While the war was being waged they had no time to study Marxism seriously, but they are doing it now. This generation . . . had borne arms, and from its midst came the "politruks" (political instructors) and regimental commanders; . . . it fought the battles of Petersburg, Orel, and Rostov, . . . it led a camp and nomadic life . . . but now instead of carrying a heavy rifle these youths handle the pen and paper. They are strong, hardy, . . . eager, mirthful, conceited, and resolutely self-reliant. They are accustomed to taking everything by storm: so give them Europe, give them schools, science, and art. They abound in youthful enthusiasm, and they are reluctant either to estimate their own strength soberly or to set themselves any limits. . . . Rather unmannerly, they step on your feet, they spit, and they talk arrogant nonsense.

On the return of this generation from the war it noticed that something was wrong with literature, and so decided to deal in its own way with those disturbing the Communist order.

As to the fate of the Forge, the third claimant to power, its "cosmic enthusiasm" met with the disapproval of the new proletarian writers. In 1923 Bezymensky wrote to the poets of the Forge: "Enough of heaven and wisdom's matter.—Give us plain nails, aplenty of the latter.—Overthrow heaven. Fling wisdom aside.—Give us earth—and living men beside." In other words, one must be able to discover revolution in the midst of everyday drudgery. But the poets of the Forge in their exalted mood failed to do it. They thought the NEP a fraud, almost a treason on the part of the government.

These poets were all workmen, but none of them members of the party. The Communist Youth back from the front, on the contrary, were all party men, yet had no connection with the workmen. The appearance of this generation replaced the Forge, which was extremely opportune for the authorities. Thus the third claimant to the literary power of the pre-NEP period lapsed into the past.

What did the young generation of the Communist Youth and the Red Army men contribute to literary life? It not only renewed the claims of Bogdanov and the Proletcult to dictatorship, but also enlarged upon the subject. It repudiated even those modest con-

cessions which Bogdanov was prepared to make to old literature, and instead of insisting upon the right of an independent literary organization, it demanded that the dictatorship over literature should be surrendered directly to the party. In order to unite for struggle the young people formed two separate groups: "October" and "Young Guards." The October group subsequently organized the VAPP (All-Union Association of Proletarian Writers), for which it demanded the delegation of dictatorial power. The ultra-radical stand of the Communist Youth was outlined in the planks of their platform and in the resolution of the First All-Union Conference of the VAPP. A formula was developed which became quite current: "That literature is proletarian which organizes the psychology and consciousness of the working class and the vast toiling masses towards meeting the final aims of the Proletcult, as the reorganizer of the world and founder of the communist society." A mere recognition of proletarian literature no longer was sufficient; it was obligatory to accept the principle of its hegemony and to struggle for "the absorption by it of every form and shade of bourgeois and petty-bourgeois literature." The domination of the proletariat was incompatible with that of non-proletarian ideology and of non-proletarian literature, therefore all talk of a peaceful collaboration between the two was a reactionary utopia. On the contrary, in the field of literature an "irreconcilable class struggle was taking place"; this was "the way by which the proletariat could seize power in the domain of art." From this point of view the entire literary past was declared counter-revolutionary, and the Fellow Travelers were the foremost counter-revolutionaries who, being imbued with the spirit of nationalism, imperialism, and mysticism, not only misrepresented, but often defamed the revolution.

This extreme attitude assumed by the On Guardists, the October, and the Young Guards provoked opposition even within the party circles. A. Voronsky, who in 1921 had been relieved of his military duties and had become the publisher of a periodical—*Red Virgin Soil*—assumed the leadership in this opposition. His aim was to reconcile all the literary talent to the revolution and to assemble it in his magazine. While blaming the writers of the

right wing for retiring, and accusing Bely and Zamiatin of their reactionary tendencies, Voronsky found, nevertheless, that to condemn all the "old men" without exception was unwise and wrong, for "their voices will still be heard, and they will yet have their say." He feared a break in the cultural continuity and he wanted the new writers to wage war "in the name of the glorious legacy of the past." Of course he soon realized that in the left camp there was more talk than artistic achievement, and that the majority of talent was to be found among the Fellow Travelers. Thus the *Red Virgin Soil* offered them refuge and printed many of their works. Voronsky's literary views came from Belinsky and Plekhanov,<sup>7</sup> but to him art like science was "knowledge of life" through feeling, imagination, and synthesis rather than by reason, abstraction, and analysis. Therefore artistic knowledge had to be objective and accurate. When the objective truth was disadvantageous to a given social class, some authors would misrepresent reality in accordance with their own tendencies, which resulted in pseudo-art and pseudo-science. The real artist, however, must possess, besides class ideology and class psychology, the elements of objective truth. Moreover, when a social class was at the height of its development, its ideology could be identical with the objective truth. Consequently, it was impossible to reject indiscriminately even bourgeois art. Placing stress on knowledge in art, as opposed to the organizational point of view of the On Guardists, Voronsky acquired a basis for supporting the Fellow Travelers as genuine artists. "In reproducing real life, in helping to acquire knowledge of it," he said, "they are able thereby to organize the psychology of the readers in the direction required by Communism." Thus Voronsky's basic criterion from a political gradually changed into an artistic one.

It was natural that with the advent of the young generation the controversy should grow extremely acute. Voronsky, though he patronized these youths, did not hesitate to censure their clannishness, their arrogant self-advertisement, and their "Communist

<sup>7</sup> On Belinsky, see above, Ch. II. G. Plekhanov (1857-1918), one of the founders of the Russian Social Democratic Party and the leading Marxist theoretician in Russia.—Ed.

bragging," and to place small value on their initial achievements. During the struggle he was forced to defend himself and to assume the offensive, and his position became even more definitely expressed:

There is no proletarian art in Russia . . . at best, there is only an art which is connected with the old. . . . Of course the proletarian, the bourgeois, and the petty-bourgeois apply art to varied and often contrary purposes, but this does not necessarily lead to the division of art, science, and culture into three categories—bourgeois, proletarian, and petty-bourgeois, because in fact until this moment only the culture, science, and art of the olden times exist. Man of the future social order will create his own art, culture, and science by founding them on the new material base. For the time being, during the present transitory period, especially in Russia the existing bourgeois culture is sufficient.

Voronsky was strong in his position not only because it was true in its essence, but also because he voiced the opinions of such influential party leaders as Trotsky, Bukharin, and Lunacharsky. Trotsky went much further than Lenin in his repudiation of a special proletarian culture. In his book *Literature and Revolution* he evolved the idea that the present was the moment for military struggle and not for the construction of culture, and that during this short transitory epoch of twenty or thirty or fifty years, which the proletarian world revolution would cover, "the proletariat will have no time to create its own culture." As to the cultural structure of the future, when the dictatorship is abolished, it will no longer have any class character, because all classes will be swept away. The construction of the bourgeois culture required no less than five centuries, so the proletariat, until it ceases to be a proletariat, must follow the one possible path—that of apprenticeship—of concrete cultural work aiming at the growth of literacy and education. The advanced members of the class could not by laboratory methods build up the new culture by themselves "behind the back of the masses."

Thus, in spite of his utopian starting point, Trotsky arrived at a conclusion which was in harmony with common sense. Among the workmen there could be individual poets, but that did not signify a class poetry. It was impossible to create a proletarian

literature by laboratory methods, as the On Guardists believed. In practice it meant also that "the field of art was not a domain where the party was called to give orders. And, of course, never could or would the party consider supporting the views of one literary circle . . . in competition with others." Bukharin also came to approximately the same conclusion, finding that the regulation of proletarian literature by state authority would mean its ultimate destruction, because it would be deprived of the opportunity to learn the lessons of life's struggle.

Lunacharsky, being more familiar with Western literature, came even closer to Voronsky's idea. "A talent, in our opinion, must always find justification no matter how it is applied," he said. Lunacharsky's indisputable merit lay in his endeavor to preserve the old art as the source of new creative activity. His chief principle was: "Everything of value produced by various nations in the course of many centuries constitutes the inalienable cultural treasure common to all mankind." During the revolutionary storm, and while the proletarian culture still was comparatively poor, one had to struggle "for the preservation of everything of value that was left us from the past after its terrible collapse, and for the clearing of paths to the future." From this standpoint Lunacharsky protested against the adherents of the Proletcult whose ambitions overreached their mental capacity, and against the On Guardists, who did not take into consideration the specific requirements of art. He likewise deplored the alienation from the party of the non-proletarian artists, who in most cases came from the intelligentsia.

The controversy became so acute and the claims of the On Guardists so arrogant that the government had to interfere. On May 9, 1924, the Press Department of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party called a conference at which Voronsky's views triumphed because they represented those of the government. At that meeting Averbach, the critic of the left, challenged Voronsky, saying: "In 1921 Voronsky was entrusted with a special task . . . the disintegration of the bourgeois writers, which he carried out in a short-sighted, most unsatisfactory manner . . . because he first disintegrated the proletarian writers." "We are talking of the stand taken not by me, but by our leading

organs of government," was Voronsky's bold reply, "for every few months I verify my methods and take counsel with the comrades, while the On Guardists behave foolishly and not only drive away the Fellow Travelers but the proletarian writers as well." In order to weaken the opposition, however, the writers of the Voronsky group addressed a collective statement to the conference, offering new concessions to the Communists. In the first place, they acknowledged that the way which contemporary Russian literature had to follow was that of the Soviet post-October Russia. While defending the artistic rights of individual writers to perceive and reflect reality in their own light, they emphasized that a great number of Communist writers and critics shared this view. Moreover, they welcomed the new writers, workmen and peasants, who were entering the literary field, and they denied the idea that they regarded these newcomers either as adversaries or antagonists. Admitting their own possible mistakes, they protested against the indiscriminate attacks of the On Guardists who dared to present their opinion as that of the entire Communist Party.

Obviously it was under the influence of these statements that the conference passed a resolution which, in principle, was a compromise, but in practice tended to favor the stand taken by Voronsky's group against the claims of the On Guardists. This same attitude of compromise was assumed by the Thirteenth Congress of the Communist Party, while the decision of the Central Committee of the Party (end of June 1925) developed it into a treatise on the policy of the party in the realm of artistic literature, where it was acknowledged that "we have entered the zone of cultural revolution" and that "the conquest of positions in the field of artistic literature sooner or later will become an accomplished fact." But this victory was assigned to an indefinite future. At the present time "it must be remembered that this problem is a far more complicated one than others presented to the proletariat for solution. . . . It must also be admitted that the class origin of art in general, and of literature in particular, is expressed in forms infinitely more varied than it is, for instance, in politics." As a result of this complexity a section of the old and new intelligentsia was attracted to the new bourgeoisie, while "the class which had been culturally repressed was not able as yet to work out its own

artistic form, its own style." Hence the practical deduction that it was necessary not to agitate class strife but to mitigate it. In order to live in harmony with the peasants and to permit partial co-operation with the bourgeoisie, the former must be "gradually remodeled," the latter "gradually replaced," and the intelligentsia "won over from the bourgeoisie."

The fact that the Fellow Travelers were "differentiated" and hesitant furnished the basis for hope of this conquest. It was only necessary to hew away the anti-proletarian and anti-revolutionary elements, to fight against the neo-bourgeois ideology among a section of the Fellow Travelers, and to show tolerance towards others—depending, however, upon their prompt adoption of the Communist ideology. Such a tactical and cautious attitude promised no future happiness for the Fellow Travelers, but the immediate and heaviest of all blows was dealt the On Guardists. In referring to them it was said that there was no hegemony of proletarian authors as yet, and that in order to earn for themselves the historical right to such hegemony they needed the assistance of the party. In the publishing business legalized monopoly was as inadmissible as the party's adherence to any particular literary trend. All efforts to create a "hot-house proletarian literature," in the stifling atmosphere of a single guild, were censured. The peasant writers were protected from the tutelage of the proletariat, and it was recommended that "the artistic literary images of the peasant writers should not be erased from their works." Finally, the attack against that Marxist criticism which assumed the tone of command in literature and was guilty of "pretentious, semi-literate and arrogant Communist bragging," was actually directed at the On Guardists. The latter were advised to study and to "check everything in their own midst which was uncultured and amateurish." This admonition was fortified by the statement that "the creation of a literature calculated to arouse the interest of the mass reader, i. e., the workmen and peasants," was a task for the future, and that "in order to work out a form which would be suitable and accessible to the millions, it was necessary to profit by all the technical achievements of the old craft."



## V

### THE LATEST PHASE

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**T**HE period of the New Economic Policy came to an end in 1927. Literature and Soviet policy entered upon the third phase of its existence at the same time, following those of War Communism and of the NEP. It corresponded to the new phase in Stalin's policy, which required a greater emphasis on revolutionary enthusiasm, socialistic competition, and the direct collaboration of the writers in the struggle for the Five Year Plan. In the light of this policy all literary trends less radical than the VAPP (All-Union Association of Proletarian Writers) were liable to be accused of being politically suspect. Attention was centered now upon the RAPP (Russian Association of Proletarian Writers) to which was assigned the task of "tearing away the masks" from the enemies of the proletariat. Prof. Pereverzev was the first victim to suffer from this command. All the rival proletarian critics united in a body to fight him. The pretext was found in *Literary Science*, a volume of articles written by his pupils and published in 1928 under his editorship. It was proved that under the guise of an orthodox Marxist, Pereverzev was protecting art for art's sake and that he repudiated the ideological and political functions of literature at the very moment when the proletariat throughout the world was engaged in a deadly struggle.

Having finished with Pereverzev, the accusers sought the enemies of the proletariat within their own ranks. This was not a difficult task, for among the members of the Russian Association of Proletarian Writers there were people of diverse views. It was headed by the Libedinsky group, which had the support of the majority, and was based upon the compromise accepted by the

party in the resolution of June 1925. However, the group was inclined to interpret the party resolution from a moderate point of view and developed its own theory on the autonomy of art. Its first thesis was a demand for the replacement of the "stamp" (i. e., stereotype) in literature by an attempt to picture the social revolution in its everyday concreteness as revealed in the activities of living men. Hence, as an inevitable conclusion, there followed the second thesis: the necessity of disposing of the naturalistic tendency limited to a mere description of reality in its outward manifestations, and introducing instead a more profound psychological exposition of man's life. But in order to escape the dangers of psychology for psychology's sake, characteristic of some trends of bourgeois literature, it was stipulated that the proletarian writers were not to base their psychological analysis on the egocentric development of the individual, but on the exposition of man's inner nature as formed and developed under the influence of his social surroundings. The third thesis defended by the Libedinsky group was the necessity of learning from the classics, especially from Tolstoy.

These statements served the more radical minority as a target for subsequent attacks. In their opinion the "living man" of the On Guardists overshadowed the "class man." Psychology led to probing into the problems of family life, and thus diverted the people from fighting at various political fronts, while learning from the classics was actually reduced to Tolstoism. The opposition demanded that the offensive novels in which the living man was depicted against the background of a non-class family life be replaced by literary reports from different sections of the Communist front.

We shall now pass from the history of the various trends into which the Soviet writers were divided to the actual contents of Soviet literature. Here we again find a process of evolution closely following upon that of the Soviet policy. The period of poetic enthusiasm, heroic realism, and dreams of planetary dimensions corresponded to War Communism. The NEP was marked by a return to representations of everyday life and psychology, with the assiduous participation of the Fellow Travelers and writers alien to the Soviet spirit. Finally, Stalin's socialistic

construction coincided with the struggle among proletarian authors for and against artistic realism—a struggle which ultimately led to the literature being given a new and purely partisan command.

The subjects related to the World War and civil war were the most typical of the first period. These themes, so to speak, exhausted the prose literature of those days. Many of the authors had personally experienced the war, and their impressions were so recent and vivid that they could scarcely think or write of any other subject. All shades of literary views were set forth in these accounts of the war, since the authorities had had no time to impose any restrictions, and the various trends of thought had not yet been differentiated as they were later. Every stratum of society introduced the imprint of its own experience into the artistic description of the war epoch. Alexis Tolstoy, who during his emigration had unfolded the wide canvas of his *Wandering through Hell*, upon his return to Soviet Russia continued his epic under the title of *The Year Eighteen*. This shows that the author had assumed an artistic and objective attitude, yet the subject of his work continued to be the experiences of a "White" family and from the "White" side came also his knowledge of events. *The White Guard*, a novel by M. Bulgakov, who for a while had also been an émigré, was written in the same spirit and achieved great success with the public, which at that time still consisted largely of members of the set described in the novel. When it was adapted for the stage, under the name *The Days of the Turbins*, it enjoyed the same popularity chiefly because the author had introduced into his objective exposition a note of heartfelt sympathy for the victims of the upheaval. Sholokhov's (b. 1900) *And Quiet Flows the Don*, another wide canvas of war years, was unfolded much later and this time from a proletarian point of view. Nevertheless Sholokhov's objectivity, when describing the Cossacks' life of pre-war and pre-revolutionary days, his evident sympathy with these common people, who could not be inoculated with the Communist doctrine, aroused suspicion during the Stalin period, which increased as the author, in developing his plot, advanced further into the Communist revolution.

In his novel *The Impasse*, Veresaev followed an intermediate course between the vanquished and the conquerors of the civil war. His hero, Ivan Sartanov, a country physician and a Marxist (Menshevik),<sup>1</sup> like the author himself, occupied in the great struggle the same place as the departed souls of Dante's Purgatory, whom "Heaven rejected and sulphuric Hell did not accept." According to his daughter Katia, who also vacillated between Heaven and Hell, Sartanov was an honest, noble, steadfast, blameless man. He could not be reconciled to the October Revolution, which had "destroyed the sacred principles of democracy." In this novel Veresaev drew a most objective picture of the Crimea passing from the Whites to the Reds and from the Reds back to the Whites. This objectivity so confused the Soviet critics that they gave most contradictory interpretations of *The Impasse*.

Those who remained—and in part even fought—on the Bolshevik side of the barricade, naturally introduced a style of their own into war literature. Of this group Pilniak (b. 1894) was the offspring of the Russian intelligentsia—the younger generation of Symbolists. He was slightly mystical and aesthetic, a romanticist lost in the midst of reviving realism, and it was with dread that he accepted the revolution into the thick of which fate had led him. It was evident that at the first purge Pilniak, who had had no time for self-determination, would be mercilessly rejected. Even a moderate Marxist critic (V. Polonsky) was to pass a severe judgment upon him: "He has deceived everybody in pretending to be a revolutionary artist. . . . Not knowing the revolution he painted it in dark colors."

In contrast to Pilniak and rather unexpectedly, Serafimovich (b. 1863), the oldest of the writers to join the revolution, in his flexibility far surpassed his much younger contemporaries. He wrote the first large work of the civil war period—*The Iron Torrent*—a novel which the critics at once styled a pearl of creation. Later on they realized that Serafimovich had never written anything of importance before or since. But his description of the "unbridled torrent in which thousands of ragged soldiers, carts,

<sup>1</sup> Member of the relatively moderate wing of the Russian Social Democratic Party, opposed to the more radical Bolsheviks.—Ed.

peasant women, horses, and human passions were fused into a gigantic whole" was proclaimed "the best work written about the revolution" (Lvov-Rogachevsky).

We must now pass to another group of writers of a more proletarian type, the members of which most enthusiastically took an active part in the civil war. Vsevolod Ivanov was a nomad who had tramped the length and breadth of Siberia, tried his hand at many professions, and ended by becoming the first poet of the guerilla warfare. Like Serafimovich, he had no rivals during those early years (1921-23) and so gained fame quite easily. The success of his *Partisans*,<sup>2</sup> *Armored Train*, *Colored Winds*, and *Azure Sands*, however, was due as much to the accurate knowledge of Siberian life which he described as to his identification with his simple heroes. The communist "faith" did not and never could touch those peasants who believed that the "Tsar had sent the Bolsheviks to make life easier for the people," and who subjected themselves fatalistically to the leadership of party propagandists. But like animals, they fought bravely and blindly, and the author shared their rustic perception of the world. Being one of them, Ivanov did not embellish or belittle his heroes, but portrayed them as they were.

Artem Vesely (b. 1900) did not even possess the limited education enjoyed by Ivanov. His works were devoid of the latter's flowery, semi-decadent style. Instead we find a rich, racy vocabulary and syntax affording in its very crudeness ideal material for philologists and students of folklore. In *Russia Bathed in Blood* and other narratives his portrayal of the partisans was as elemental and as concrete and picturesque as his language. He himself was part of the events he described, and, notwithstanding the brutality of the war's atrocities pictured in his works, he disarmed the reader by the childish ingenuousness and placidity of his narrative. In *The Womb* Vesely described the disorganization in the army, the acts of violence and coercion committed by the deserting soldiers, and finally, the instinct of the peasant-householder which is aroused in the bestial soldier. In his works there was never a trace of intellectuality, idealization, or fiction, only life's realities. Artem

<sup>2</sup> "Partisans" is the name commonly given in Russia to members of guerilla bands.—Ed.

Vesely's colorful design is persuasive and triumphs in its originality.

Babel, the author of *The Red Cavalry*, was a romanticist of refinement who depicted himself at the front as a mere observer. He looked at the war from a purely intellectual standpoint, and it was not until 1924 that he began to write of it, and then in an ironical manner reminiscent of Heine. Quasi-objectively and with an affected calm he presented, in a kaleidoscope of horrifying war scenes, the sharp contrast between the reflecting intellect and the brutal passions of man. In Babel's description Budenny<sup>3</sup> refused to recognize his cavalry, and resented the libel. One of the critics, N. Stepanov, remarked that Babel's romanticism was to a degree "a self-defense against the austere self-assurance and manliness of the proletarian revolution." Indeed the mask of romanticism and the imaginistic style disguised the true attitude of Babel's bespectacled, puny hero towards war. We feel genius in every line of this wonderful picture of life as drawn by a truly rare artist.

Fadeiev (b. 1901) wrote his famous novel *The Rout* in 1925-26, at a time when the old enthusiasm had disappeared and psychological analysis had become the order of the day. In his work Fadeiev portrayed the psychology of a collective hero, a band of civil war partisans, in its various manifestations: the simple and loyal sacrifice of the primitive men of the people, the organizing mind of an intellectual, and the pusillanimity and involuntary treachery of a dreamer. The primitive element was represented by the local peasants and miners, who joined the partisans in the hills of the Ussuri region. Their psychology was similar to that of the heroes of Ivanov and Vesely, but Fadeiev treated them much more individually, giving each one his own characteristics. The part of the instructor and the leader the author assigned to Levinson, a small, delicate Jew, the only one to realize what should be done and what was to be expected, who cleverly concealed his moments of doubt and weakness behind the mask of will power and heroism. By the side of this intellectual leader Fadeiev placed Mechik, a schoolboy and young dreamer, seeking heroic adventures in the guerilla band and finding instead the hardships of a

<sup>3</sup> A Red Cavalry commander during the civil war, at present one of the marshals of the Soviet Union.—Ed.

half-savage life in the Siberian forest. This "representative of the corrupt intelligentsia," being alien to partisan psychology, at the tragic moment when the Whites surrounded the partisans deserted the outpost, which led to the destruction of the detachment. *The Rout* was acclaimed by the critics and the public as a model work of proletarian literature.

There remained one more method for the treatment of the rather outmoded war subjects, which was to approach them as authentic history. This method, which was partly adopted by Sholokhov in his novel *And Quiet Flows the Don*, was definitely accepted by Furmanov (b. 1891). The war had caught Furmanov at the time of his graduation from Moscow University; from 1915 to 1921 he spent all his time at the different fronts, first of the World War and subsequently of the civil war. In the meantime he changed from an anarchist to a member of the Bolshevik Party (1918) and became a commissar representing the Political Administration on the southeastern front. He died in 1926, an enthusiastic propagandist and firm believer in the final success of the red struggle. This did not, however, prevent him from being impartial in his description of the fighting masses and their leaders, and to remain scrupulously true to his notes and personal reminiscences of the war years. As a result Furmanov was able to give an historically authentic picture of the events in which he had participated. He revealed them in his two novels: *Chapaev* and *The Revolt*, which enjoyed popular success, but perplexed the critics, who were at a loss to classify them. As an example of Furmanov's objectivity we can cite his treatment of his hero, Chapaev, the famous partisan to whom he acted as nearest adviser:

Such a Chapaev could exist only in those days—he could not have lived at any other time: he was brought into the world by that mass, at that moment, and in that peculiar state. In him were accumulated and reflected, as in a mirror, the fundamental qualities of the semi-partisan army of the time—with its unbounded bravery, resolution, and endurance, as well as its inevitable cruelty and its grim customs.

Another type of objectivity—that of an artist—was represented by Leonov (b. 1899), a young writer of the Fellow Travelers group,

who chose as a plot for his novel *The Badgers* an episode from the history of the civil war waged, not at the front, but between two villages in the center of Russia. Leonov, son of a self-educated peasant and grandson of a small Moscow shopkeeper, was equally familiar with both city and rural surroundings. In his novel two brothers, of the Moscow merchant class, come into a primitive village, where one of them assumes the rôle of champion of the peasants in their struggle against the Soviet government, while the other becomes a Bolshevik workman. The collecting of the tax in kind, which is most vividly described, leads to a village riot and the slaying of the collector. The peasants join the deserters, the Red Army men also go over to them, and they all take refuge in the forest, living in badgers' burrows, until the arrival of a punitive expedition. Meanwhile demoralization sets in among the "Greens"<sup>4</sup> which leads to their ultimate defeat. On this canvas Leonov succeeded in painting a picture true to village life without being accused of showing partiality to the enemies of the Soviet government, although his sympathy is fairly evident from the very objectivity of his description.

Granting that both Fadeiev and Leonov already belonged to the second period of Soviet literature, with its realistic and psychological novels, it is F. Gladkov who, in all fairness, must be acknowledged its true representative. His novel *Cement* was singled out for having ushered in a new era. The precise novelty was that with Gladkov literature abandoned the civil war subjects and turned to the new acute problems of the day, and that this transition was accomplished by a proletarian writer. Gladkov definitely separated the individual from the collective and, as a follower of Dostoevsky, he applied himself to analyzing the inner feelings and spiritual conflicts of the individual in his new surroundings, and the part played by him in socialist construction. Later on the critics found the contents of *Cement* too romantic and its style decadent. In both respects Gladkov (b. 1883) was a true child of his generation. He was a homeless proletarian, who after his graduation from a public school was exiled to Siberia for being an active revolutionary. There he continued his self-education, and from the cruel

<sup>4</sup> The name of the "Greens" was given to the peasant guerilla bands who during the civil war fought against both the Reds and the Whites.—ED.



lessons taught him by life he acquired a hatred for the rich and the tyrants as well as compassion for the oppressed. With the support of Gorky and Korolenko he began writing at an early age, but only in 1922 was his work noticed. His novel *Cement*, written in 1926, brought him renown as an outstanding proletarian author, and some publicity abroad. It contained the following double theme: the social heroism of Gleb Chumalov, a workman who on his return from the front finds the mill dilapidated and at a standstill and by his own efforts puts it into working condition; and the family drama—he finds his house quite neglected and Dasha, his wife, transformed from an assiduous housewife into a social worker. In his attempt to restore the mill, Gleb meets all kinds of obstacles: déclassé workmen, the sabotage of specialists, bureaucracy in the higher economic organs, and finally, the evils of the NEP and the bungling party purge. Because of his energy and the assistance of the chief engineer, who is devoted to the mill, Gleb overcomes all these obstacles. But he does not succeed in reestablishing his family life. Dasha insists on independence and absolute freedom in her relations with his friend Badin. She takes her little daughter Niurka to the Children's Home, where the child dies of undernourishment and lack of care. Gleb is so elated over the restoration of the mill that he becomes reconciled to all these facts—but not so the readers. One of them wrote: "Gladkov did not solve the family problem of the Soviet state; but that is not his fault, since life itself has not yet solved it."

The sex question was one of those which excited the greatest interest of the reading public in Soviet Russia. How could the theory of free love be reconciled with normal human relations? This problem gave rise to an extensive literature some of which encouraged the basest desires and instincts. S. Malashkin's (b. 1890) *The Moon on the Right Hand Side*, Gumilevsky's *Dogs' Alley*, and P. Romanov's (b. 1889) *Without Cherry Blossoms* were the three most sensational works of this type. The heroine of Malashkin's novel, Tania, the daughter of a *kulak*, is a member of the Communist Youth, a propagandist among the workmen, and a student. Unable to withstand the reproaches that to refuse love is bourgeois, she yields and in the atmosphere of wantonness surrounding her "soon reaches her twenty-second husband."

Finally nature and a pure love save her from suicide. Gumilevsky justified sexual license on physical grounds. The love in Romanov's story *Without Cherry Blossoms* was equally divested of all its romantic aura. A girl student tells her friend of the disgusting relations among men and women students, and to prove it cites her own experiences. Although these stories did not rise above the level of common pornographic literature, they provoked endless arguments among the young people. To protect the youth from such "slander" a questionnaire was submitted to the students of the Sverdlovsk and the Moscow State Universities, the results of which were published and showed that 86 percent of the men and 74 percent of the women students in the first institution, and 72 percent of the men and 82 percent of the women in the second were for a "lasting love" as against the adherents of casual sexual intercourse.

Of course the sex problem was not confined within the limits of student life, where conditions though abnormal were merely temporary. It was necessary to solve that more general question of family life under new conditions, and to this end Soviet literature presented a number of stories and novels treating of family tragedies which resulted from the new ideas on matrimony. The difficulties began just when the young people, and particularly the Communist youth, entered upon an independent life. Here for example is a drama of pure love destroyed by the harsh interference of new ideas. Two members of the Communist Youth, Alexander and Niurochka (in Semenov's *Natalie Tarpov*), love each other and wish to marry. But in Alexander's presence his fiancée becomes the chance victim of his friend. The fiancé had no right to interfere, because she is a free woman. For a month Niurochka is in despair and then she secretly goes to an ignorant midwife and dies following an unskilfully performed operation. Alexander is heartbroken, yet in response to Niurochka's pleas for forgiveness at her deathbed he mutters: "But you are innocent, don't you remember that I said: 'You are free, you are a free individual. I had no right to interfere, had I?'" In this case the author obviously holds the corrupter subject to moral censure, but according to the new ideas the latter should have triumphed and felt himself justified. So it is in Karpov's novel *The Fifth Love*.

Serge Medvedev, a Communist and Red commander, returns to his village. He is a loyal partisan, believes in the revolution, and establishes in his village a school, a coöperative store, a Communist Youth Club, and a theater. But he is a philanderer and debauchee. Under the influence of liquor and at the instigation of a kulak he kills the village reporter, who is working on a Communist newspaper, and is brought to trial. Of course, the counsel for the defense enumerates his many merits as a member of the party, while the prosecuting attorney introduces his love affairs and declares that in living with several women and persuading them to be unfaithful to their husbands Medvedev was ruining family life. To this the counsel for the defense replies: "He may live with ten women as long as he pays alimony in compliance with the Soviet law, As to the destruction of the family, it is actually the peasant family that forms the principal obstacle to the collectivization of the villages. . . . What would have happened if Serge instead of disrupting the family had become a model family man and a believer in God? Then everything would have remained as it was, while now, being a partisan and member of the Communist Youth he introduces into the village the new ideas on matrimony—and thus helps to destroy the old principles." Lydia Seifullina in her novel *Manure* made Safron, a drunken veteran of the World War, play the same part in his village. From a beggar he becomes a local political leader, enlists all the peasants in the Bolshevik Party, organizes a commune, and then ravishes a school teacher and kills a doctor. An absolute ignoramus in Communist doctrine, he nevertheless brings "new ideas" to the village. True, the author condemned Safron to a horrible death at the hands of the Cosacks.

It was far easier than in the sore question of marriage, to draw a boundary line between the old and the new in the characterization of the people of the past and those of the present. In the works of the Soviet writers the "superfluous" people, consisting chiefly of the old intelligentsia, played an important part. The writers showed no mercy to those people—the "Hamlets," quite unfitted for the new conditions of life. In Ognev's (b. 1890) *Diary of Kostia Riabtsev* Shakhov, an intellectual poet, writes to his Communist friend: "You are a creature without angles, as round and oily as

a croquet ball, and so can pass through every wicket, . . . while I am a triangle. One of my angles is in the past, another in the present, and the third in the future. I cannot rid myself of the past . . . I cannot be absorbed in the present . . . and the future to me is senseless. . . ." Finally he commits suicide. But there were others who knew how to adapt themselves to the new conditions. In the same *Diary Ozerov*, a teacher, says: "They have become so hardened that for the sake of money they are ready to jump at each others' throats, lead intrigues, grovel on all fours before the mighty, plunder everything within the reach of their hands, and having served a term in prison are prepared to start all over again." However, not all the old intelligentsia perished or groveled, nor did all of them emigrate. Without the specialists such as officers of the army and navy, physicians, teachers, financiers, economists, and agronomists, the Bolsheviks could not have organized either their national economy or their political régime. Consequently the Soviet writers had to make exceptions of some of the intelligentsia, though these exceptions were rare. Usually when describing the intellectuals, even those willing to coöperate, they represented them as unskilful, weak, or treacherous. Fedin made a more serious attempt to deal with the "superfluous" people in his books *Cities and Years* and *Brothers*, the main subject of which was the attitude of the intellectuals towards the revolution. Some of Fedin's heroes accepted the revolution gradually, others were suddenly converted, while still others remained on this side of the barricade, and this type aroused the author's greatest interest. Some of these perished, like Andrew Startsev in *Cities and Years*, who fell victim to his own spiritual faltering. In *Brothers*, however, we see intellectuals who are capable of taking a definite stand. One of the Karev brothers is a composer, the other becomes a Bolshevik. Rodion, the Bolshevik, works for the revolution, while Nikita, the composer, creates a marvelous symphony which promises to bring him world renown. He says to his brother: "Let each of us follow his own path. I cannot, nor do I want to occupy myself with anything but my work. I am unable to renounce it; otherwise my earlier life would have been utter folly, while now it seems to me to be full of meaning." In the same novel Professor Bach, in talking with Rodion, emphasizes the fact that the peculiar sense of beauty which

his generation was able to enjoy could never be regained, and that the members of this generation would probably prove to be the last individuals of a dying species. Nevertheless, he refuses to acknowledge defeat. "We bear in our hearts feelings against which you are fighting, not because they are harmful, but because you yourselves do not possess them." He does not believe in the final destruction of beauty. "We have the right," he says, "to safeguard our emotions and to transmit them to you."

For all that, life passed by these exclusive natures. Nikita's symphony is a tremendous success, but he has so "impressed it with everything great brought about by the revolution" that "in his soul there is no strength for life," and Irene, who had worshiped him, leaves him for Rodion, the Communist.

It is important to observe that the "superfluous" people of the Soviet period were not confined solely to the old intelligentsia. The persecutions of the faltering people, those who became disillusioned with the Soviet ideals, the "tearing off of masks," and the party purges, created a new type of "superfluous" people from among the working class.

Both the left and the right wing of the Russian Association of Proletarian Writers were forced to acknowledge that of all the subjects in proletarian literature that of a workman, the "builder of life" and creator of socialism, was presented in the most ineffectual manner. Even the hero of Gladkov's *Cement* was found unsatisfactory, and the author was accused of indulging in abstractions, decadence, and romanticism. Of highest importance were a picture of a living man and a literary portrayal of a workmen's collective; but for some reason neither could be obtained. The critics of the left, like Gorbachev, explained the failure by many deviations in the ranks of the proletarian writers. All these literary deviations obliterated the strictly proletarian line, and at the same time the ability to depict an ideal workman was lost. Indeed it appeared impossible to accomplish the task.

Some of the Soviet critics singled out Chumandrin as "an artist of the industrial life, a poet of the bench-workers, and a portrayer of that stratum of the working class which is the very support of the Communist Party and the revolution." It is true that in Chumandrin's novels, *The Mill* and *Ex-Hero*, written in compliance

with the party command, a workmen's collective is depicted against the background of factory life. Significantly, however, the interest is centered not on the positive types, but on exposing the "unmagnetized" characters gradually retiring from factory life, in other words on the new "superfluous" people. The most curious is that the "disintegrated" Communist Fedor Gorbachev (the ex-hero) is victor in a party dispute, while those representing the positive element are forced to leave the factory.

Still more difficult and delicate proved to be the task of picturing the Communist Party itself, and therefore this subject was carefully avoided in the works of the proletarian writers. Of course no criticism was allowed here; it was necessary to indulge in eulogies. Consequently a special interest was excited by Libedinsky's attempt to portray party members in accordance with his own theory, which, as we know, rejected all "stamps" and insisted on introducing living men into literature. True, by adopting the dialectical method he secured for himself the right to describe party members both in their positive and negative aspects. Libedinsky availed himself of this opportunity freely. We are not speaking of his first story, *The Week*, which brought fame to him and in which he, rather coarsely, divided the party members into sheep and goats, but of his far more ambitious work, *The Commissars*. Here the author assembled at a recapitulatory school course several Red commissars, who had lately gained fame by their military victories, but who showed their ignorance and inability to submit to discipline. With such a theme it was possible for the author to combine in a single temporary collective some most heterogeneous types. Libedinsky depicted them with great realism and talent, complying at the same time with the chief demands of proletarian literature. The characters were divided into three categories in accordance with their social origin: commanders and teachers from the working class, the peasants, and the intelligentsia. While the workmen were the "gold reserve" of the Soviet revolution, the intelligentsia represented a mere "paper currency issued against the gold reserve." They were either decadents or at best people who could not divest themselves of old seignorial habits. The peasants were treated no better. They were unreliable and likely to desert the party. Within the limits of his story

Libedinsky succeeded in saying much that was true and to show actually "living men" instead of manikins. But the critics, notwithstanding their respect for the proletarian writer, attacked him for the irreverent attitude he assumed towards the heroes of the civil war.

We must now pass to the peasant writers as a separate group. Their position, generally speaking, was a very difficult one. Lenin had proclaimed that nothing intermediate existed between the proletarian and the petty-bourgeois ideology. Contrary to this dictum the peasant writers claimed for themselves a special place on a level with the proletarians, and as time went on they wanted less and less to be associated with the bourgeois. One of the practical ways out of the difficulty for the individual peasant writers who had gained some renown was to join either the All-Union or the Russian Association of Proletarian Writers. Likewise the peasant youths who entered higher educational institutions were gradually assimilated into proletarian surroundings. Those of the peasant writers who lived in large cultural centers became urbanized in their subject-matter, literary forms, and ideology. In this manner, to quote a Soviet author, the "reservoir of the peasant writers was something like a transitory stage." No wonder that under such conditions the peasant literature, in itself, was generally considered non-existent. Chumandrin, at the Leningrad Conference of Peasant Writers, delivered the following greeting: "Comrades, I am welcoming you and greeting you, but there is no peasant literature, never has been, and never will be any."

Yet, as early as 1921, a separate Union of Peasant Writers was organized, originating in the Surikov Circle.<sup>5</sup> At first the Union was far from willing to recognize the proletarian dictatorship, and it was not until May 1928 that it finally adopted the Bolshevik ideology. The new central committee of the organization established its own periodical, *Land of the Soviets*, which during the first four months of its existence received about two thousand manuscripts submitted by literary beginners. The number of members of the Union from forty in January 1924 grew to 472 in 1927, 783 in 1928, and 1035 by June 1929. Among them, however, only 50 percent were peasants, the rest being workmen (30 percent),

<sup>5</sup> See above, Ch. III.—Ed.

and employees, teachers, etc. (20 percent). The membership included 35 percent of Communist Youth party men. With such a body it was already possible to begin creating, for the first time, an "authentic peasant literature" in the spirit of Stalin's program. Only the proletarian peasant writers were acknowledged "authentic peasant writers." Klychkov and Kliuev were called reactionary and feudal kulaks, while Esenin had long since been condemned as a pornographic writer. The Fellow Travelers were also repudiated as enemies of social reconstruction, and only the poorer peasants "capable of accepting fully the proletarian point of view," were regarded as possible allies.

On October 4, 1930, the *Pravda* published an article by B. Kushner which summed up the situation we have been discussing on the preceding pages. In this article, devoted to the inefficiency of the Soviet writers, the author described quite unintentionally the truly tragic situation in which literature was placed by the demands addressed to it from the outside in complete disregard of its proper artistic functions. Kushner was forced to admit that the second year of the Five Year Plan, like the first one, had passed without any active participation of proletarian literature in the work of socialistic construction. As heretofore, in spite of an express governmental command, this literature virtually continued to neglect such subjects as the struggle for the general party line, the establishment of a new industrial base in the country, collectivization of villages, liquidation of the kulaks as a class, and such forms of workmen's participation in the socialistic construction as competition, "shock work," etc. Neither the government nor the reading public could be held responsible for the silence preserved by literature on these burning problems.

The opportunity to see and make observations, to study and collect material is offered to our writers, particularly those of the proletariat, with such lavishness that at times it almost verges on extravagance. Regardless of distance and unmindful of cost our writers are sent to old and new concerns, to construction works, to collective and state farms, on long cruises, polar expeditions, and record flights. In all fairness it must be admitted that our writers love to travel, but in an overwhelming majority of cases the application of these experiences to literature is either absent or extremely unsatisfactory.



And yet the period of socialist reconstruction was accompanied by a large increase in the popular demand for books. But still the writers did not want to write. . . . What was the reason? Kushner found it in the "antagonistic and alien influences of literary traditions and established practices." Here, of course, the artistic doctrine of the Russian Association of Proletarian Writers was to be severely blamed. In the first place, "the clumsy form of the novel had estranged literary creative genius from the revolutionary tempo of our days." Why should they now ponder over an artistic work? It was a "false principle" not necessary to the proletarian authors, because "the party solved all complex problems" for them. Why follow the "foolish theory of the reincarnation" of the artist in his characters? It could scarcely help to sharpen the author's class vigilance and acuteness. The slogan "living man" was also completely erroneous, because from being a remedy against schematism and standardization it gradually was transformed into the "bourgeois-idealistic" conception of a "harmonious human being" leading to a pernicious form of "psychological realism," which taught "to seek good in evil and to detect pangs of conscience even in a renegade." The doctrine in this way made a proletarian writer an "unprejudiced observer and impartial judge," while such qualities only "weakened his orientation towards the class struggle and the uprooting of capitalism."

According to Kushner's testimony the method of psychological realism "holds a large part of our proletarian writers prisoners, by replacing the problem of creating a new man with an analysis of psychological experiences. . . . The socialist construction . . . is reduced, after all, to a subordinate part of the background, against which is unfolded the personal drama of the characters, while mass psychology is ignored." Kushner advised the Marxist men of letters to "fell and root up all this overgrowth of harmful literary traditions and false theories." In other words, after having made all possible sacrifices the writers were asked to cease being artists and to become merely propagandists of Stalin's policy.

As a result of this situation some writers, unable to follow the dictates of their artistic conscience, felt that there was no longer any place for them in literature, and they simply ceased to write. But there was another interesting phenomenon which was noted

by the Soviet critic Ermilov. It appeared that under the pressure of unrealizable demands a differentiation set in among the literary circles. Simultaneously with the strengthening of the extreme left flank, the other extreme tendency, the bourgeois, also became more strongly pronounced. Those of the Fellow Travelers of the right, who up to that time had cherished the hope of finding a way to reconciliation with the authorities, now despaired of the possibility of adapting themselves to the existing conditions, and so resumed a more independent attitude. Ermilov supported his observation by referring to the evident increase during the preceding two or three years in the interest for the heroes and the psychology of Lermontov. "In Pilniak's latest works," the critic remarked, "we notice the romantic idealization of a strong, adventurous personality, which in an individualistic-anarchistic way is opposing itself to the social surroundings. During recent years the emotional *dominanta* of Vsevolod Ivanov's works has also been tending towards individualism, anarchism, and primitivism." There was formed around Pilniak a literary school of young people, who were working out identical motifs. Thus, in collaboration with Pavlenko, Pilniak wrote a story which had Byron for its hero, while Andrey Novikov, another young follower of Pilniak, wrote *The Origin of Fogginess*, a satirical novel in which, to cite Ermilov's statement, "socialist construction is pictured as a bacchanal of bureaucratic mania for organization, and the chief part is assigned to a petty-bourgeois intellectual with anarchistic tendencies." Likewise in Olesha's (b. 1899) *Envy* the critics pointed out that the individualist Kavalero (one of the principal characters) was too generously endowed by the author with such positive traits as tact, artistic sense, and love of beauty.

It is obvious, however, that under the conditions which prevailed in Russia during Stalin's "socialist offensive" no oppositional moods could have full and free expression. Naturally the right sector of the Soviet literature was dealt the heaviest blow. Vsevolod Ivanov and Babel's last works were not allowed to be published. Pilniak had to make changes in his latest works, and was prohibited from republishing his older ones. M. Bulgakov and many others were reduced to complete silence. In Moscow there was a distinct feeling that Maiakovsky committed suicide

not only because of his disillusionment in the success of Communism, but also because his two plays, *Bathhouse* and *Bedbug*, were banned by the authorities, who detected in them, not without reason, a satire on the Soviet government. Even the proletarian group of writers, to which belonged Libedinsky and his followers, was looked upon with suspicion. Next in turn to enjoy the confidence of those in power was Bezymensky, who for a while became the poet laureate of the Soviet régime.

Under the political conditions existing in Russia a further general decline in the creative activity of Soviet writers seems inevitable. The danger is aggravated by the fact that a new generation brought up in the period after the October Revolution is bound to enter the literary field. This generation has absolutely no connections with the past and has been educated under peculiar conditions.

Our review of the Soviet literature ends rather abruptly. But we can see that the process of its development is far from being completed. Here again we are faced with a situation full of strain and uncertainty. Yet it must be admitted that, under extremely difficult circumstances, Russian literature has not lost its vitality and inner power of resistance.

## EDITOR'S POSTSCRIPT

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**A**s has been shown in the last chapter, the transition from the NEP to the new socialist offensive was marked, in the field of literature, by increased governmental pressure and by vigorous activity on the part of the proletarian elements among the Russian writers. Simultaneously, a heated discussion was going on in literary circles with regard to the proper scope and character of Soviet literature, its subject matter as well as the best literary methods to be used.

In 1932 a new chapter opened in the history of Soviet literature with the publication of new governmental instructions embodied in a resolution passed by the Central Committee of the Communist Party. The organizations of the proletarian writers were abolished on the ground that the success of socialist construction had made their existence superfluous, and in their place there was established a single Association of Soviet Writers, proletarian and non-proletarian alike. In the period that followed there was less direct official interference with literature; variety of styles and forms was proclaimed desirable, and the low technical level of much of the existing literary production was frankly recognized, with an advice to the writers to "learn from the classics."

These and other features of the new policy, in the formulation of which one can suspect the influence of Gorky, looked relatively liberal if compared with the situation under the first Five Year Plan. And yet it would be a mistake to think that they signified the establishment of complete artistic freedom in the Soviet Union. While theoretically the writers were free to join or not to join the officially approved Association, in practice those who belonged to it enjoyed such advantages over the non-members that abstention might lead to disastrous results. As for the requirements for membership they included the obligation to adhere to the political

platform of the Soviet government, and to support the work of socialist construction. In a sense, even more significant was the request that the members subscribe to the theory of "Socialist Realism." Thus an attempt was made to secure not only the political loyalty of the writers but also their adherence to a definite literary school.

The slogan of Socialist Realism was advanced with official approbation in order to put an end to the heated controversy which had agitated literary circles during the preceding period. Like the "general party line" in politics, it was a device to insure unity of outlook among the writers by eliminating undesirable deviations towards the extremes. As such it was directed, on the one hand, against "formalism" with its tendency to degenerate into mere aesthetic preoccupation with literary forms and a worship of art for art's sake, and, on the other hand, against a "vulgarized sociological approach" tending to neglect problems of literary technique and to forget about the proper function of literature as art. The writers were expected to be both good craftsmen and good citizens of the socialist state.

In spite of many pronouncements on the subject no completely satisfactory definition of Socialist Realism is available. Perhaps the reason for the lack of such definition lies in the contradictory nature of the term itself. If "realism" means an attempt on the part of the writer to describe life as it is or as he sees it, then no adjective seems to be necessary. A socialist reality would naturally produce a socialist art. By adding the adjective the sponsors of Socialist Realism are virtually telling the writer in what light he *must* see life if he wants to be recognized as a realistic author. But the injection of this "must" element is hardly compatible with "realism" as such—at least, in its more generally accepted meaning.

What it really amounted to was a request for a definite political and social tendency in literature. And both official pronouncements and statements made by the writers themselves, as for instance at the All-Union Literary Congress held in Moscow in August 1934, frankly recognized the ancillary character of Soviet literature as an unavoidable and even a desirable fact. The writers were expected not only "to express in images the new aspect of the country, the changing mode of life, the new thoughts, feelings and as-

pirations of the people" but also to contribute, in a more active fashion, to the growth of this new mode of life and these new thoughts and feelings. In the words of a resolution passed by the Association of Soviet Writers, their works had to be "saturated with the heroic struggle of the international proletariat, with exultation over the victory of socialism, and reflect the great wisdom and heroism of the Communist Party." It was only within those definite ideological boundaries that freedom of artistic expression and variety of individual styles were recognized as legitimate.

One of the more specific demands addressed to literature was that it picture "Bolshevik heroism" as expressing the new "Soviet humanism" which, unlike the bourgeois humanism of the past, aimed not at cultivating the passive sentiment of pity for human misfortune, but at inspiring the readers with an active desire to combat injustice, oppression and inequality. This demand necessitated a search for the "Bolshevik hero" and constant attempts to reproduce him in fiction. It was indicated that his character should be "monolithic" and "sharply defined," without any trace of doubt or ambiguity. In practice it turned out to be a rather difficult task to perform, and Soviet critics continued to complain that convincing and adequate portrayals of "Bolshevik heroes" were rare in Soviet literature. Relatively few works were singled out for praise. A. N. Tolstoy's *Bread* (1937) was hailed as an outstanding achievement because of its treatment of Stalin's and Voroshilov's exploits during the civil war, with Trotsky playing the part of an unredeemed villain. N. Ostrovsky (1904-36), a hitherto unknown author, became a celebrity overnight with the publication of his two novels *How the Steel Was Tempered* and *Born of the Storm*, both extolling the heroism of rank and file Communists during the same period of civil war. Another young writer, N. Virta, dealt with the civil war in his *Solitude* (1936) while his second novel *Inevitability* (1938) depicted the successful struggle of the loyal party men against the Trotskyite wreckers. To the same category of officially approved works belonged V. Kataev's (b. 1897) *Time, Forward!* with its picture of Bolshevik activities on the industrial front under the Five Year Plan. It must be said, however, that a few writers managed to comply with the demands of Socialist Realism in a somewhat less obvious fashion. Thus Iury Herman

(b. 1910) in *Our Acquaintances* (1936) gave the life story of a young Russian girl, with emphasis on her personal vagaries and a good deal of psychological analysis, reminiscent both of the classical Russian tradition and of the manner of the Serapion Brothers, although in the end he safely brought his heroine into the haven of Bolshevik loyalty and a happy marriage with a responsible party worker. A great deal of artistic independence was displayed also by Sholokhov, the first parts of whose *Upturned Soil* (1935) were nevertheless accepted as a successful application of Socialist Realism. The concluding part of his *Quiet Don*, however, published in 1940, produced considerable disappointment because of the failure on the part of the principal hero to become a good Bolshevik.

If, in spite of this, Sholokhov still remained a favorite Soviet author and even one of the official laureates, the fate of some other well-known writers was very different. Iury Olesha, the author of *Envy*, one of the most remarkable novels in Soviet literature, was condemned for his inability to identify himself with the spirit of the time, while both Pilniak and Babel were virtually silenced.

In accordance with the general trend of governmental policy during recent years, another demand addressed to Soviet writers was that they produce "defense literature" with the purpose of stimulating Soviet patriotism and readiness to protect the country from a possible foreign attack. The fulfillment of this request in most cases took the form of writing appropriate historical novels. To be sure, the growth of the historical novel in Soviet Russia antedated this last official command. But in the earlier period it served different aims. For some authors it apparently was a welcome avenue of escape into the neutral-field of a literary and artistic past (witness the considerable number of fictionalized biographies of famous writers and artists published in Soviet Russia), while others used the historical novel for the purpose of reconstructing Russian revolutionary tradition. Some of the novels of the latter category were published during the period under consideration, as, for example, Kataev's *The Lone White Sail* (1936) dealing with the experiences of a group of boys in the revolution of 1905, or Chapygin's (b. 1870) story of the Streltsy revolt in the late seventeenth century (1938). But more typical of the new

trend were historical novels of a different nature—those rehabilitating certain events and figures of Russia's historical past from a patriotic point of view. Here, as in literature in general, the novel had to serve a political purpose, and history was called upon to teach a useful lesson in connection with burning contemporary problems. Such was the obvious purpose of A. N. Tolstoy's *Peter I* (1934), one of the most effective works of this gifted writer, in which the sympathetic treatment of the reforming tsar tended to make of him a remote forerunner of Bolshevism. Other novels as well as historical dramas were dedicated either to the military exploits of such individual heroes as Dmitry Donskoy, Minin and Pozharsky, Suvorov, Kutuzov and Admiral Makarov, or else extolled the heroism of the plain Russian soldier as in Sergeiev-Tsensky's (b. 1876) story of the defense of Sevastopol during the Crimean War (published in three volumes in 1939-40). In this connection one should mention also the huge success of P. Pavlenko's *In the East* (1937). This is not a historical novel, but it belongs to "defense literature" dealing as it does with an imaginary war between the Soviet Union and Japan. In this work, as in many of the recent historical novels, we can plainly see the reflection of a new and significant phenomenon—that of nascent Soviet nationalism.

MICHAEL KARPOVICH

*Cambridge, Mass.*

*October, 1941*





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**Part III**

**ARCHITECTURE, PAINTING, AND MUSIC**



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# I

## ARCHITECTURE

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**T**HOSE who have visited some of the great Gothic cathedrals in Europe during the celebration of high mass know from experience the artistic charm with which the Western church meets and surrounds the religious needs of the faithful. Rows of massive pillars, which appear bound together by clusters of slender columns, raise their graceful lines to the vaulted ceiling where they spread and interweave like the branches of gigantic palms. The entire space is submerged in a mysterious semi-darkness, which emphasizes the intricate pattern of the tall stained-glass windows. From somewhere the deep chords of an organ fill the air with solemn sounds; suddenly the sharper, more definite melody of a stringed orchestra strikes through these vibrant tones, then, after a moment of silence, the voice of a soloist is heard. One came here to look at famous monuments of art but, seeing in the pews the forms of fervent worshipers, and listening to the distant intoning of the priest accompanied by the rapid ringing of a bell, for a time one forgets that the surrounding walls are crowded with beautifully carved tombs and that in the niches of the numerous chancels are holy pictures, each representing a memorable event in the history of Christian painting. One forgets the purpose of the visit and involuntarily surrenders oneself to the pervading mood.

But the purpose of the student-tourist will not suffer from this spell, because it has brought him into the very focus of the medieval conception of the world, which fundamentally created Western art. The church was the laboratory in which art was fostered and where, even to a larger degree than literature, it

reached its full development. Being anxious to retain within its fold the creations of the new period in art and, through their medium, to maintain its power over the soul of modern man, the church was willing to make broader concessions to new ideas in the field of art than to those in science and philosophy. Therefore only slowly and by degrees did the secular element in art replace the sacred.

Cimabue and Giotto, acclaimed by their contemporaries, departed from the symbolism and conventionality of the Byzantine style, although they both continued to adhere to religious themes. After them came the immediate precursors of Raphael and Raphael himself, who still avoided breaking away from religious subjects while instilling into them a purely secular feeling. The transition from sacred to the secular was equally gradual in music. Palestrina was the first to reform the traditional style of church music, after which new ideas were introduced by Bach, Handel, Haydn, and Mozart. Western religion yielded to the demands of a strong secular feeling, but it also retained for a long period the power of arousing the artist's inspiration and of supplying the substance for more and more great works of art. For a vital and organic development of religious art in the East no such conditions existed.

Nevertheless, Eastern and Western art had a common source; they had both been developed from the Hellenic art of the early Christian centuries which, with the help of technical means and methods inherited from the art of the classical world, was the first to solve the artistic problems of the new religion. Classical art was breathing its last and its end was quickened when early Christianity exacted from it the new and unusual task of replacing realism with mystical symbolism. Christianity had no need for the naturalism of classical art and could just as readily dispense with its technique, for Christians wanted their most abstract ideas represented by conventional signs of a more or less primitive nature. The chief task of early Christian art was the creation of a cycle of symbolic figures to represent these abstract ideas graphically without revealing their meaning to the uninitiated.

In the face of such a trend, realism in artistic representation

was soon replaced by conventionality. Both the art of painting and of sculpture sank rapidly from the heights they had attained during the classical period, and only in the field of architecture did Christian art make steady progress. From its very inception architecture had had to solve independently the very difficult problem of creating a spacious Christian temple, a new form of building not as yet foreseen in the classical period. Christian art solved the problem brilliantly in a series of variations, each exceeding its predecessor in perfection. It first created a Christian basilica, well proportioned and covered with a roof supported on wooden beams; next a Byzantine church with a hemispherical dome; then the ogee-vaults and massive walls of a Romanesque church; and finally the very incarnation of architectural lightness and elegance—the Gothic cathedral with sharp, pointed arches and vaults, massive pillars, and walls of stone lace-work pierced with stained-glass windows, which lent to the edifice an ethereal appearance.

Architecture, having definitely established itself, was able to lend its support to sculpture. At first, for architectural purposes, the mere decoration of walls, and then for independent purposes as well, the artist began to imitate ancient sculptors and sought to attain their mastership in the modeling of human figures. This required a knowledge of natural science and the study of the human body; sculpture thus led Christian art towards direct representation, the path followed by classical but abandoned by medieval art. Having trained his eyes and hands to work upon tangible, rounded figures, the artist could not avoid introducing life-like forms into painting. Just as progress in architecture had led to the development of sculpture, so did sculpture lead the art of drawing away from its medieval primitiveness. In accepting the imitation of life and reality as their aim, both the figurative arts gradually overstepped their original boundaries. If at the beginning direct representation was only the means of producing a religious impression, subsequently to be true to nature became an aim in itself, while art ceased to pursue any religious design and became secular. Unhampered by outside interference, Western art very gradually and unwittingly effected the complete transition from a religious inspiration to the admiration of



nature and life. Therefore there was no forced interruption between Christian and profane, ecclesiastic and secularized art; one naturally was conceived by the other.

But in Russia and the Orthodox East the fate of Christian art was quite different. In Russia, as in the West, it was introduced with the conversion, yet we must not forget that in each case the event coincided with an absolutely different moment in the history of early Christian art. Germanic Europe was converted in the sixth and seventh centuries A. D., when early Christian art was passing through its first brilliant era. The preparatory period (IV-VI centuries) had just ended, and the artist had scarcely had time to master the themes provided by the new religion. These new subjects were represented by forms adopted from classical art, so that Christian art of the early days appeared to be only its sequel. While the artist never considered repudiating the artistic types and methods of classical technique, he retained the independence he acquired during the first efforts necessary to represent Christian subjects. In those days the various methods for the solution of identical artistic problems had not as yet been coördinated. The fact that Christian art had no established types provided a free and wide scope to the imagination and individual taste of the artist. Thus, abounding in vitality, Christian art passed from the East into the hands of Western artists, and it was only the victory of Germanic barbarism over ancient civilization that brought it for several centuries to a dormant state. During the twelfth century this temporary inertia, however, came to an end, and life and movement once again pervaded the Christian art of Western Europe.

Conditions were different in Russia. When, towards the end of the tenth century, the new faith was accepted by the Russians, early Christian art was already definitely Byzantine. Its period of free creative activity was terminated; all themes had been developed and all types permanently established. In observance of the Commandment "Thou shalt not worship false gods and idols" and also to avoid the censure of the iconoclasts, the Seventh Ecumenical Council (787) forbade the worshiping of graven images. Moreover, Epiphanius, one of its members, expressed the opinion that in painting icons artists should not have unlimited

freedom, because "it is not the invention of the painter that creates the picture but an inviolable law and tradition of the Orthodox church. It is not the painter but the holy fathers who have to invent and dictate. To them manifestly belongs the composition, to the painter only the execution." True, the Council in its decisions did not include this opinion, but it characterizes nevertheless the spirit of Byzantine art. Towards the end of the ninth and the beginning of the tenth centuries the decoration of cruciform churches assumed an almost canonical significance; the Pantocrator was placed in the dome, the Holy Virgin in the apse, icons commemorating holidays in the central part of the church, and the Last Judgment on the wall facing the sanctuary. All icons were painted in a strictly established form. "Divine Grace should be ever present in imagery as in Scriptures," Simeon of Thessalonica wrote in his *Dialogue against Heretics*.

This, however, does not mean that during its entire length of history Byzantine art manifested no inner stir or progress. Early opinion as to the complete immobility of Byzantine art has been definitely disproved in the brilliant research works of Millet, Diehl, and Dalton, and their Russian colleagues, N. P. Kondakov, Muratov, and others. Following upon its first flourishing period Byzantine art, on the contrary, had two other "golden ages," one during the era of the Comneni (IX-X centuries) and the other during that of the Paleologi (XIII-XIV centuries).

Russia was the last to enter the Orthodox world, and it accepted the influence of the various periods of Byzantine art more or less passively. For a long time all its artistic works were done by the artists of the Orthodox East. The most ancient stone churches and cathedrals in Kiev, Novgorod, and Suzdal were erected by Greek architects, while Greek painters or their conscientious Russian pupils, frequently under the masters' personal supervision, adorned these churches with frescoes, mosaics, and icons. But even in the early days some distinctly Russian traits were gradually added to the style adopted from the East. At first these innovations were introduced just as unconsciously as were the changes in the Russian church practice. Nevertheless, in these local peculiarities lay the germ of national Russian art, and so now we must study their fate.

In Russia, as everywhere else, architecture being the most material of all the branches of art and the most closely connected with everyday life, was more apt to develop independently. Of course, in any country it always depends largely upon local conditions such as climate, soil, and available building material as well as upon the customs and needs of the people. In adapting the arrangement of his rural home to local conditions the peasant did not realize that he was creating thereby a distinctive national type of building, and yet this rural home is considered by some students the prototype of the national Russian architecture. In a country so rich in forests it was natural for the original architectural style to be developed along the lines of wooden construction, while building in stone remained for a long time under foreign influence. Little is known about the constructions in stone of Kievan Russia,<sup>1</sup> but modern scholars presume that besides the Byzantine there was also Armenian, Georgian, and even Scandinavian influence. In fact, the South Russian cathedrals were built by foreign artisans and no national Russian influence can be traced there.

The question of Novgorod and Pskov architecture is another matter. A foreign influence existed there too which, coming from the West, brought with it the aftermath of the Romanesque style. But low and stockily built Novgorod churches, with their intersected double-sloped roofs, forming a gable on each side of the four sides of the cube, which replaced the pedimental covering of the southern churches, already bore evidence of the effect of the local climate and the influence of wooden architecture. Thus the original traits acquired by ecclesiastical architecture in Russia became apparent in this style. By passing to the Vladimir-Suzdal style of architecture we find ourselves on more solid ground, for there the Romanesque, and specifically the Italian influence, is very pronounced. The peculiar characteristics of the Vladimir-Suzdal church, as compared to that of Novgorod, are its grace, its tendency to greater height, and the ever

<sup>1</sup> Here and below the geographical terms imply also a chronological difference between various periods. Thus "Kievan Russia" means Russia of the eleventh and twelfth centuries. The "Vladimir-Suzdal style" did not reach its full development until the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, while "Moscow architecture" refers to the architecture of the fifteenth-seventeenth centuries.—Ed.

increasing ornamentation on the walls, which in Novgorod are plain. The Vladimir-Suzdal church has a Romanesque portal, and at the level of the second story a row of small arches and columns; at times it is also decorated with sculptured ornament, as, for instance, the Church of the Intercession and the Cathedrals of St. Dmitry and of St. George. Indeed, the peculiarities of the Suzdal style did not emanate from the national architecture, and even the most zealous defenders of native originality in the Russian art of building, in order not to acknowledge a Western influence, could only try to prove that they were of Asiatic origin. It is quite possible, however, that they were merely a product of new Russian adoptions from Byzantium, which by that time had established new forms of ornament and architecture. In Byzantium these new forms assimilated the Eastern and Western (Italian) influences, and also served as the intermediary link in the influence of the East on the West, while in Suzdal Russia the new peculiarities were but more or less successful copies of foreign patterns. However, whether it was the Romanesque, Indian, or any other style, whether it had come to Russia through Novgorod, Byzantium, or perhaps the southern steppes, it was not the indigenous style, the characteristics of which we want to trace in Russian architecture.

In its early stage Moscow architecture was merely an imitation of that of Suzdal. When Ivan III invited famous Italian architects to erect churches in the Kremlin, he bade them adhere strictly to the ancient Russian types of stone construction. Thus the Cathedral of the Assumption in Moscow, built in 1475-79 by Rodolfo Fioravanti (surnamed Aristotle), in its outer form varies only slightly from the Suzdal style.

But during this same period (1490) another cathedral, that of the Annunciation, was constructed in the Kremlin by some Russian artisans from Pskov. In this instance for the first time a new element, which did not originate either in the East or West but in the forms of local wooden style, penetrated into the Moscow stone architecture. Towards the middle of the sixteenth century Russian artisans frequently copied the wooden forms in stone. The most remarkable monument of this new national style is the Cathedral of St. Basil the Blessed (Vasily Blazhenny).

In order to explain how new Russian forms were introduced into the old Byzantine style, we must dwell on one of the most striking instances, the history of roof construction in the Russian churches.

In architecture the question of vaulting and roof covering was always one of the most important problems, upon the solution of which depended the style of the building. During the flourishing epoch (VI-VII centuries) of Byzantine art, the vaulting of the church roof was in the form of a hemisphere, resting directly on the "shoulders" of the church (figure I, the dome of St. Sophia in Constantinople). At the time of the second flourishing period (IX-X centuries), the introduction of a "neck" or "drum" upon which the hemispherical dome could rest made the roof appear less heavy and better proportioned (figure II, the dome of the Church of Theotocos in Constantinople). During the third brilliant period (XIII-XV centuries)—that of the local Greek-Slavonic national styles—the "drum" acquired a slenderer, still better proportion. These last two forms of Byzantine domes had been adopted in Russia. It is true that but a few roofs of the ancient churches of Kievan Russia have been preserved, and are only being hypothetically reconstructed after the sketch in figure II. But the Suzdal style of architecture adhered to the old flat type of roof (figure III, St. Dmitry's Cathedral in Vladimir). However, even in the ancient Russian manuscripts of the twelfth and fourteenth centuries there are drawings of a different form of cupola, one that is popular to the present day (figure IV, a drawing from a manuscript of the year 1100). The Byzantine dome was transformed into the Russian "bulb" by inflating the sides of the hemisphere so as to overhang the drum, while the upper part of the cupola was brought together into a point (figure V). Of course, similar forms existed in Eastern art as well, and are to be found in the Moslem and at times even in Western architecture, but there is also a parallel to it in the local wooden structures of ancient Russia, where wooden buildings with an oblong plan were roofed by a "cask," or ridged roof in sections like an ogee or a horseshoe. Sometimes there were two intersecting casks (figure VI) or the four edges of a cask-roof were joined together directly over the square space and

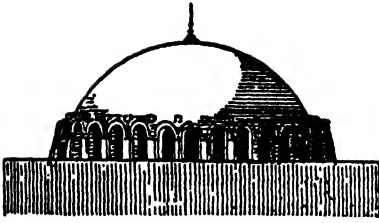


Fig. I

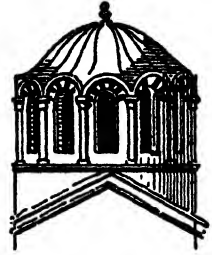


Fig. II

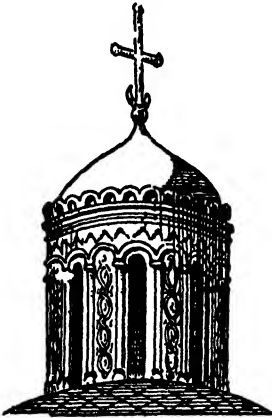


Fig. III

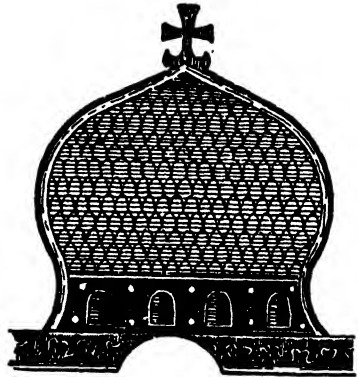


Fig. IV



Fig. V



Fig. VI



Fig. VII

following the profile of the edge assumed the shape of a cube. This form of roof greatly resembled the bulb-shaped dome (figure VII) and even more so when the roof was not joined over a square but over a polygonal "drum." In this case the roof acquired a polygonal form, although preserving the characteristics of both the cask and the cube (figure VIII).

There have been many disputes among scholars whether this method of roof construction on wooden churches had produced the Russian bulb-shaped dome or whether its appearance was due to some other influence. However, the further penetration of wooden forms into stone structures can be traced quite easily. It was precisely this process that gave distinctive character to Moscow architecture of the sixteenth century.

The cask was an ornamental type of roof, but far more frequent, of course, were the plain gabled roofs differing only from the modern ones in that their slope was steeper and the entire roof rose higher. The steep slope and relative height of the roof caused the moisture to fall more rapidly and easily, thus preserving the roof from decay. The flat cornice that edged it was also adapted to climatic conditions and usually was broad and overlapped far over the walls in order to protect them from the heavy drip of water. The high, steep Russian roof with its cornice was placed over the rectangle and acquired the form of a pyramid resting upon a broad base (figure IX, a wooden church in the province of Olonetsk). This was the customary construction in old Russian churches, and was called the "tent." Sometimes the tent and cask were combined and formed a new and very beautiful roof (figure X, the belfry of a wooden church at the Hermitage of Gethsemane).

During the sixteenth century this form of design, the plain tent and cask, began to be copied in stone. In this material the cask was also used for vaulting purposes. Over the space to be covered there were erected rows and rows of small arches resting one upon the other, gradually narrowing the space until finally it was possible to place on the top a tent or the neck of a cupola (figure XI, the church of the Intercession in Moscow). Looking at it from the outside the rows of superimposed arches (*koko-shniks*), sometimes perfectly rounded, sometimes pointed at the

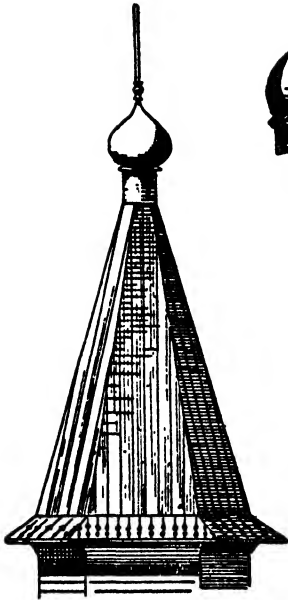


Fig. IX

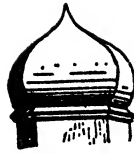


Fig. VIII



Fig. XI

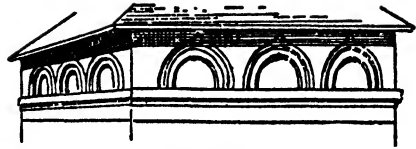


Fig. XII

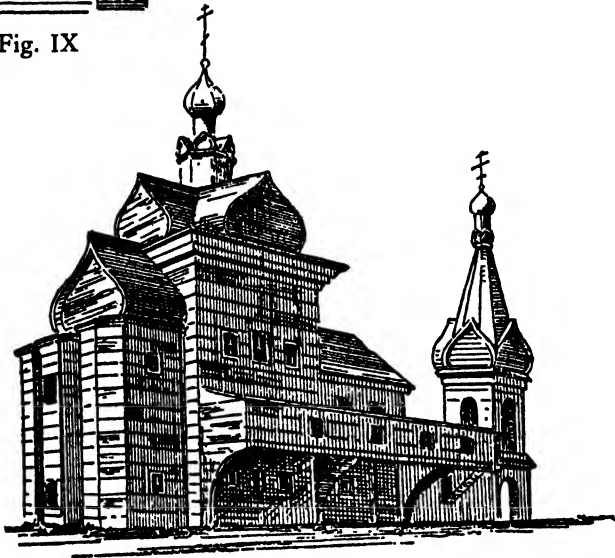


Fig. X



top, or so inflated on the sides that they resembled a wooden cask, produced a most picturesque effect.

We have said that the end of the fifteenth century was the time when purely Russian forms of roof construction were introduced into the Moscow style. In building the Cathedral of the Annunciation the artisans from Pskov for the first time copied the cask-shaped roof with superimposed arch effect in stone, but used Italian motifs in the ornamentation of portals and windows. That was the period when successive Russian embassies (1484, 1488, 1493, 1499-1504, 1527) imported architects from Northern Italy to work on the Kremlin walls and cathedrals. Alevisio Nuovi, a Milanese, built the Archangel's Cathedral (1505-09) and the lower story of the "Terem" Palace (1508).<sup>2</sup> Antonio Solario, his fellow countryman, in collaboration with Marco Ruffo, built the Granovitaia Palata in the Kremlin, modeling it upon Palazzo Bevilacqua in Bologna, and the walls and lower stories of the towers of the Kremlin, which they copied from the Castello Sforzesco in Milan.

However, immediately upon the completion of the "Italian Kremlin," Russian artisans, who in the meantime had mastered the foreign technique and now wanted to show their skill, began without hesitation to adapt the national wooden forms to stone construction. From the twenties of the sixteenth century these adaptations met with increasing popularity. Over the superimposed arches was erected a high stone tent, lending the appearance of a well-proportioned tower to the church (figure XIII, the church in the village of Kolomenskoe near Moscow, 1520). Then the central tower was surrounded by small towers of the same type, and the superimposed arches and drums were given a more fanciful form (figure XIV, the church in the village of Diakovo, 1529). Thus the ground was prepared for the most original creation of Russian architecture, the Cathedral of St.

<sup>2</sup> The old Russian word "terem" had several meanings. In some cases it was used to designate the upper parts of a dwelling or more specifically the living quarters occupied by the womenfolk. In other cases, as in this one, it was used in a wider sense, being applied to the whole mansion. According to recent investigations, Alevisio Nuovi was responsible only for the Archangel's Cathedral, while the Terem Palace was built by another Alevisio who came to Russia about the same time.—ED.

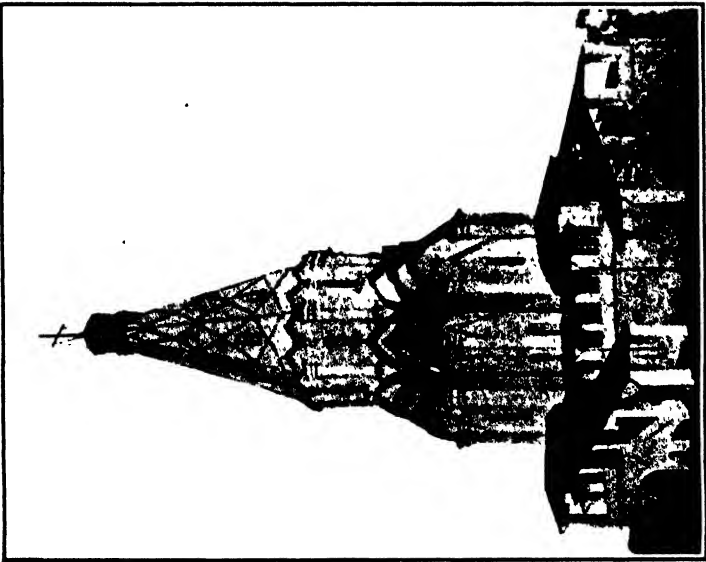


Fig. XIII

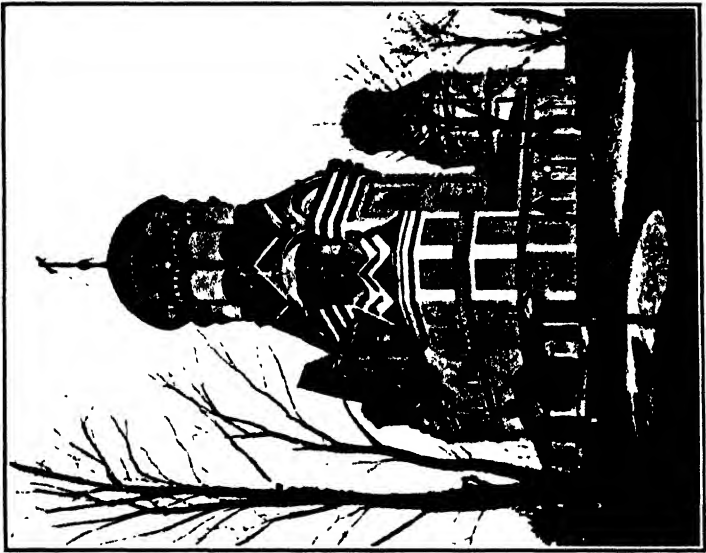


Fig. XIV



Basil the Blessed (1555), which was built by Postnik and Barma, two Russian artisans who, in the words of the contemporary chronicles, were "wise and facile in such wondrous work." It is clear that neither the West nor India gave birth to this peculiar style, but that its characteristics descended directly from the motifs of Russian wooden architecture.

Thus, towards the middle of the sixteenth century, the principal elements of an original Russian architectural style were definitely established. In relation to the traditional Byzantine style the introduction of these elements was an unforgivable innovation not to be tolerated by the church. Anything was wrong that exceeded the limits of the long-established Byzantine patterns, and in order to be faithful to them Tsar Ivan III had Aristotle Fioravanti copy those of Suzdal. With the same effects in view the government of the seventeenth century repeatedly decreed that the style of the Cathedral of the Assumption, erected under Ivan III, should be copied, but

. . . not transformed to suit the artist's own ideas. . . . In observance of the rules of the Holy Apostles and the Fathers the Lord's church should have five cupolas and not resemble a tent. . . . It should be built conforming to regulative and statutory law as prescribed by the rules and statutes of the church, and should be a one, or three, or five-domed, but never a tent-shaped church . . . neither should the cupola have the shape of a tent.

As we may observe, the national traits in ecclesiastical architecture shared the same fate as the national traits in the practices of the Russian church. During the sixteenth century both flourished and played a prominent part, but in the seventeenth century they were condemned as treasonable to Byzantine tradition.<sup>3</sup> The national life, which was already lacking in spiritual content, became even sadder when all that was national was condemned as being wrong.

Some opposition to the Moscow decrees was manifested in the upper Volga region. During the second part of the seventeenth century Iaroslavl became a prosperous city because of its loca-

<sup>3</sup> For the parallel development in the field of religion, see Part I, chs. 2 and 3.—Ed.

tion at the crossroads, where the waterway of the Volga met the busy commercial road connecting Moscow with the only seaport at Archangel. Rich Iaroslavl merchants, wanting to immortalize their names, erected spacious churches, and although they did not dare dispense with the prescribed five-dome type, they compensated for it by building around the central quadrangle of the church gorgeous galleries, portals, and tent-shaped bell towers, and decorating the outside walls with ornaments in brick and tile, and the interior with frescoes. The Iaroslavl style was also adopted in Rostov, Borisoglebsk, and Uglich. Altogether these patterns of northern architecture form a separate chapter in the history of Russian art.

The instinct for national architecture, however, was not sufficiently strong to resist official pressure. Therefore the tent-shaped roof was built only on bell towers, and the superimposed arches, so popular with the Russian architects, gradually lost their former structural importance and as mere ornaments found shelter under the church's roof (figure XII, the church of the Annunciation in the village of Taininskoe, near Moscow). Thus, at the time when the West began to exercise a particularly strong influence over Russian architecture the latter had already lost much of its national content. It is difficult to say what would have been the result of Western influence had the Russian architects retained enough originality with which to oppose it. As it was it led to the copying of foreign designs, while the national traits were relegated to oblivion.

Since the time of Peter I a new influx of foreign influences—German, French, Italian, and English—entered the field of Russian architecture as it did the other spheres of Russian cultural life. The traces of these influences were more marked in architecture, because the new capital offered a wide scope for construction in modern styles. The inexhaustible means possessed by the court at St. Petersburg,<sup>4</sup> the most extravagant among contemporary European courts, made it possible to invite the best masters from abroad for the realization of great projects. The dignitaries and favorites of the moment followed the example of

<sup>4</sup> St. Petersburg became the capital of Russia in the early eighteenth century during the reign of Peter the Great.—Ed.

the court and commissioned the artists to build palaces in town and on their large country estates, modeling them on the architectural forms accepted at the capital.

Indeed this art, even more than that of other epochs, was beyond the comprehension or requirements of the masses, and therefore it is impossible to allude to it as national. But, after the studies of Igor Grabar and A. Benois, it is equally impossible to regard it as purely imitative and unworthy of attention. The Western styles of architecture changed constantly, and Russian patrons and architects, though somewhat belatedly, followed the newest European fashion. In Europe, during the early part of the eighteenth century, the Baroque was replaced by the Palladian, and in its second half a purer classical style was introduced, which at the beginning of the nineteenth century developed into Empire, the strictly Hellenic style. Russia too passed through all these stages and, as shall be seen, the architectural problems connected with each style were not always solved there by foreign masters but often in collaboration with Russians, who had studied art abroad and brought back to their native country not only the knowledge they had acquired, but also their own talents, which in many instances equaled those of the foreigners. Thus the art of building did not die in Russia even during the imitative period of the eighteenth century; quite the contrary, it gave to posterity new achievements, never seen before. Like all the culture of Russia in the eighteenth and the first quarter of the nineteenth centuries, both branches of stone architecture, the ecclesiastical and secular, the latter of which was almost novel in the history of Russia, were developed under the standard of cosmopolitanism. But they developed on local ground and in them, naturally, were reflected all local peculiarities.

For more than a century St. Petersburg was the chief center of architectural experiments. From the days of Peter the Great to those of Nicholas I (1825-55) the northern capital remained the "city of palaces surrounded by wastelands" that Diderot found in 1773. State authorities exercised the same unlimited control over metropolitan construction at the time when the Architectural Committee of Alexander I sanctioned or rejected plans and drawings for the facades of buildings and regulated the layout

of streets and squares according to the Emperor's command, as they did in the days of Peter the Great, when the Chancery for Construction (1719) decreed that the citizens were "not to fail to use stone or at least to imitate bricks when painting" the "model" houses which had to be built according to plans drawn especially "for the mean, the wealthy, and the most noble" by the Italian architect Trezzini. Moreover, it must be remembered that Peter the Great, Catherine II, and Alexander I each had a true mania for building. In fact, Peter was most anxious to build St. Petersburg, and finding that "stone construction here is much too slow" forbade "the building of stone houses throughout the Empire, under the threat of confiscation of all property and banishment." He wished to have his capital equal the residences of foreign sovereigns. In 1779 Catherine II, writing to Grimm, thus described the passion for construction: "At this moment there is raging here a fury for building worse than at any other time, and I doubt that earthquakes could ever have demolished as many structures as we are erecting. . . . It is clearly a disease, somewhat like tipping." Alexander I too shared this passion, and even took the plans and sketches with him on his wanderings through Europe. "He intended making St. Petersburg more beautiful than all the capitals he visited in Europe," wrote Vigel.

Indeed, in St. Petersburg with its "wastelands" the foreign and Russian architects found far greater opportunity than at any other capital for developing many most extravagant projects. Consequently, in one hundred years it was transformed from a "city of wastelands" into one of monumental edifices adapted for state and social requirements but not for private dwelling. It is true that Custine, in his well-known work *La Russie en 1839* stated that all these buildings, with their colonnades and horizontal lines transplanted from cloudless Italy and Hellas to the marshy land of misty and rainy St. Petersburg, disturbed the harmony of the landscape. Nevertheless this architecture characterized most vividly the epoch of enlightened absolutism, which had broken the bonds of tradition and which, not having as yet found its own national ground, was living surrounded by gallantry and luxury in the atmosphere of foreign culture.

The transition from the epoch of national architecture prior to Peter I to the imitative period of his reign is marked by the peculiar adaptation in Moscow of the late Renaissance or Baroque style, so popular in Europe during the seventeenth century. The characteristics of this style manifest a decline from the artistic simplicity of the Renaissance and the predominance of the decorative over the structural motifs. In it the straight line is replaced by a curve, the pediments are broken in the center and take the form of a curved line, or are replaced by "shields" independent of the roof, while the walls, capitals, and window frames are encumbered more and more with elaborate cast ornaments. The Baroque style, in spite of its derogatory name meaning "curved, odd, irregular," had its merits and provided unlimited possibilities for the new and original creations. It was brought to Muscovite Russia during the last part of the seventeenth century from Poland by way of the Ukraine. Baroque had a period of development in the Ukraine and left many remarkable monuments which testify that the local architecture, which at first had acquired some traits of this style, in turn exerted an influence upon it. The best periods in the Ukrainian Baroque are associated with the names of Peter Mogila, in the middle, and Hetman Mazepa at the end of the seventeenth century. It is interesting to notice that during the latter part of the century the Ukraine first sent to Moscow her architects, expert in this style.

Peter the Great, having repudiated the old Moscow style, could not escape entirely the influence of the new one that had equally been adopted from the West. Yet he did not build in the Baroque style already introduced into Russia from the Ukraine, but in the one brought directly from its source or, to be precise, from several sources. It is therefore impossible to call the style of Peter's time a special Russian variation of Baroque. Under Peter, North German and Dutch traits were prevalent in Russian architecture not only because the Emperor was more familiar with them, but also because his chief architect Domenico Trezzini, of Swiss-Italian origin, had acquired during his many years of service at the court of the King of Denmark a preference for Northern Baroque. Trezzini was responsible for the first monumental buildings—the Cathedral and Fortress of SS. Peter and



Paul, the house of the Twelve Colleges (subsequently the St. Petersburg University), and a part of the Alexander Nevsky Abbey—and the famous steeples of St. Petersburg. Peter had succeeded also in retaining for Russia the services of Schlueter, the famous architect of the Royal Palace at Berlin, but Schlueter died the year following his arrival (1714). Leblond, a French architect, who also came at Peter's invitation, lived only three years in St. Petersburg, and died in 1719. After failing in his fantastic scheme to transform the wastelands of St. Petersburg into the semblance of a French garden with Venetian canals instead of thoroughfares, Leblond drew plans for the Summer Garden and the gardens of Peterhof and Strelna, but all his works are preserved only in drawings. The German architect Schedel was more fortunate, because some of his works still exist as, for instance, the two palaces he built for Menshikov, one on Basil Island in St. Petersburg (subsequently the military school) and the other in Oranienbaum.

The general impression which the new capital created remained unchanged until Empress Elizabeth acceded to the throne (1741). In 1739 Algarotti, an Italian, said: "There prevails a mixed type of architecture in this capital, suggesting those of Italy, France, and Holland, with the Dutch predominating." Elizabeth, with her love of luxury and grandeur, supplied the incentive to the further architectural development of St. Petersburg. It was during her reign that Baroque acquired some new traits, known as "Rococo" (style of the Regency and Louis XV), which in Russia is associated with the name of the famous Rastrelli, who took his ideas both from France, where he had studied, and from Southern Germany, where the Rococo style was particularly overlaid with decorative elements. Rastrelli's architectural works are exceedingly numerous; he worked for the Empress and those immediately surrounding her, and there were but a few wealthy landowners who could not boast of having copied Rastrelli's style in their country estates. The most famous among his works are the palaces in Peterhof and Tsarskoe Selo, which he reconstructed, the first in 1747 and the second in 1749, the Winter Palace which he designed and built in 1754-62, the Cathedral at the Smolny Convent, part of the grandiose plan

that was never carried out, and the graceful Cathedral of St. Andrew at Kiev, beautifully situated on the slope of a mountain above the Podol. Then there are the palaces built by him for the dignitaries, such as the Anichkov Palace, originally Razumovsky's, Count M. I. Vorontsov's (subsequently the Corps des Pages), and Count S. G. Stroganov's—the last two remarkable for their noble proportions and their façades artistically divided by pilasters and projecting bays.

Until the reign of Catherine II (1762–96) the part played by Russian architects, as compared to that of the foreign masters, was most insignificant. The first Russian to gain renown in this field was Michael Zemtsov, who as a boy was brought from Moscow to the newly founded St. Petersburg, where he was taught Italian in order to serve as interpreter to the foreign artists. Having studied architecture under Trezzini, Zemtsov worked as assistant architect with Leblond's successor Michetti, and only after the latter had left Russia (1728) was the young Russian promoted to the rank of chief architect. Peter the Great had also commissioned about a dozen young men to study art abroad, but of them all only Eropkin subsequently attained fame. Zemtsov left two works to posterity, the church of St. Simeon and St. Anna on Mokhovaia Street—an imitation of Trezzini's Cathedral of SS. Peter and Paul—and the graceful memorial building erected to house the yawl of Peter the Great.<sup>5</sup> He died in 1743 and Rastrelli replaced him in the work of palace construction.

The Academy of Arts, founded in 1758 by Empress Elizabeth, became the veritable nursery of Russian artists. It was permanently organized under Catherine II, when Betskoy in 1774 drew up its statutes, copying almost exactly those of the Paris Academy. The professors of architecture, sculpture, and painting were Frenchmen, and therefore their methods of instruction were, naturally, purely French. The graduates of the Academy were sent to finish their studies abroad—mostly in Paris. In spite of this, upon their return the young Russian artists played only a secondary part, for Catherine still continued to invite the out-

<sup>5</sup> The famous small boat the acquaintance with which stimulated young Peter's interest in shipbuilding and navigation. It was preserved as a historical relic.—Ed.

standing foreign masters to Russia. These invitations resulted in all the styles that were succeeding each other in Europe, especially in France, being reproduced in Russia more rapidly during the latter half of the eighteenth century than in former days.

The transition from the ornate Rococo to the classical style of Palladio shows the personal taste of Catherine II, who preferred simplicity and comfort to the ostentatious luxury that Elizabeth had favored. During the early period of her reign Empress Catherine II profited by the presence in St. Petersburg of Vallin de la Mothe, a professor at the Paris Academy, to have some buildings erected in her favorite style. Vallin de la Mothe was a follower of the famous Gabriel, architect of the *École Militaire* and the buildings on the *Place de la Concorde*; he remained in St. Petersburg until 1775 and with the assistance of Kokorinov, a Russian architect, built the Academy of Arts and the "Old Hermitage" (the part adjacent to the Winter Palace). But there is still another work of his which has been preserved, the rounded corner of the *Gostiny Dvor* (Merchants' Row), facing *Nevsky Prospekt* and *Sadovaia Street*.

In 1752 Antonio Rinaldi was brought from Rome by Hetman Razumovsky and was appointed by Empress Elizabeth as court architect to the heir apparent, Grand Duke Peter. He was entrusted with building the miniature palaces at Oranienbaum, one of which, the "Chinese," with particularly gorgeous decorations, is still well preserved. This was followed with other far more important tasks, for during the year 1766 Rinaldi completed the *Gatchina Palace* and in 1768 the *Marble Palace*, both of which were Empress Catherine's gifts to Gregory Orlov.

In the interim, between the period when Russia was infatuated with everything that was foreign and the one that followed, three Russians, pupils of foreign celebrities, were commissioned by Catherine II to execute some work. They were Veldten, a Russianized German, the son of Peter's chief kitchen steward, and Bazhenov and Starov, two pupils of de la Mothe and the first graduates of the Academy to be sent to Paris with a scholarship. Veldten, who had finished his studies in Germany and obtained his architect's diploma in 1760, was commissioned to face the left bank of the *Neva* "from the Summer House to the

Galerny Palace," with granite. It took him over twenty years to accomplish this task, but he did it with outstanding talent and contributed to St. Petersburg one of its greatest adornments. The famous decorative fence of the Summer Garden, in which classic simplicity is combined with impressive dignity, lent a finishing touch to this work. Among Veldten's other works are the "Second Hermitage," built in line with de la Mothe's, though more simple, and seven of the St. Petersburg churches having colonnades and rotundas. In 1765 Bazhenov, who had studied under de Wailly and was member of three Italian academies, returned to St. Petersburg and immediately was entrusted with the important task of erecting the Kamenny Ostrov Palace. This building is constructed in subdued classical style without any Parisian innovations, on the same lines as the "Old Arsenal," which in 1769 he had built by Orlov's order. But Bazhenov met with cruel disappointment when his great scheme of covering huge areas with classical edifices in the style of the new French school (Peyre, Ledoux, Gondouin), failed to be realized. He drew up two vast plans which were never used, one for the Smolny Institute in St. Petersburg and the other for the huge Kremlin Palace in Moscow, which was to gird the entire hill and surround all the buildings of the Kremlin. Due to this failure the historic face of the fifteenth-seventeenth century Kremlin has been preserved. In St. Petersburg Bazhenov only collaborated with Brenna in the erection of Michael Castle (subsequently the Engineers' College) in which Emperor Paul I was slain. Although Starov stayed in Paris a shorter period than Bazhenov, his time there was spent with more profit, and upon his return to Russia in 1768 he was destined to achieve more lasting fame. He built the Cathedral of the Holy Trinity at the Alexander Nevsky Abbey in the form of a basilica, but it is his masterpiece, the Taurida Palace, that has preserved his name for posterity. It was built in 1788 by the Empress' command for Potemkin,<sup>6</sup> and in its time served as a model for many a nobleman's manor, because everyone was anxious to copy the palace of the great Prince of Taurida, with its classic portal, its colonnade on the central

<sup>6</sup> One of the outstanding statesmen of the period and for a while a favorite of Catherine II.—ED.

façade, its domed roof, its two wings, a theatre, and a church. The only change that was usually introduced in the country manors was a second colonnade at the rear facing the garden, with stairs that had to lead to water, whether it was a river or an artificial lake.

Starov was in advance of his time working as he did in the pure Hellenic style, which Catherine was anxious to introduce but which was only definitely established under Alexander I. In 1779 Catherine II wrote to Grimm "the French build bad houses, because they know too much." The jest meant that the Empress was tired of the old style and wanted to pass from imitation of classics to the original source. She anxiously awaited the arrival of two Italians whom she had commissioned Grimm to send. One of these two, Giacomo Quarenghi, a Roman, came to Russia in 1780 and during the reign of Catherine played the same part that Rastrelli had played in the days of Rococo, under Empress Elizabeth.

But before she fell under the sway of Quarenghi, Catherine had another period of artistic enthusiasm. In 1779 Charles Cameron, a Scotsman, arrived in St. Petersburg and absolutely fascinated the Empress with his knowledge of the classical Roman monuments. She prized him as the editor of Palladio's book on Roman baths, and always associated him with Clerisseau, the famous expert on Pompeian interior decoration, in whose books Cameron had found his inspiration. "This sparkling mind," Catherine wrote to Grimm in 1780, "is a great admirer of Clerisseau, whose sketches help Cameron in decorating my new apartments." Having put Cameron to the test by commissioning him to build the "classical pavilion" in the park, the Empress entrusted him (1780-85) with the reconstruction of her private apartments in the cold, formal palace built at Tsarskoe Selo by Empress Elizabeth, and then (1782-85) with the erection of a palace in Pavlovsk for Grand Duke Paul and Grand Duchess Marie, who under the name of Count and Countess du Nord were at that time traveling abroad. Both tasks were most brilliantly executed by Cameron. The hanging garden at Tsarskoe Selo, whose "agate rooms" situated above the bath house were sumptuously decorated, the long glass gallery, a colonnade built on the same

level over a high stereobate for the Sovereign's daily walks, and the tremendous slope which the aged Empress could ascend and descend in a bath chair—everything was especially designed for her personal comfort. The palace at Pavlovsk, in the building of which Cameron was assisted by Brenna, had semicircular galleries resembling those of the Palladian villas in Northern Italy, and became a very popular model for houses in Moscow and for country homes of wealthy landowners. In contrast to the classical exterior, Cameron decorated the interior in the refined Baroque style of the eighteenth century.

Quarenghi, the Italian, having studied the original classical monuments, came nearer to true classicism and soon dimmed Cameron's fame. In this pure classical style he built in 1781-89 the English Palace in Peterhof, and in 1783-87 the Academy of Science in St. Petersburg. The façade of the third and last part of the Hermitage, that of the theatre, facing the Palace Quay, built by him in 1782-85, is less pure though more picturesque. The State Bank building (1783-88) is also imposing, but Quarenghi attained his greatest and most artistic effect in the harmony of pure lines and noble proportions of the Alexander Palace at Tsarskoe Selo (1792-96).

Quarenghi continued to work under Paul and Alexander I, adapting his art to the tastes of each sovereign while preserving always his own individuality. For Paul I he built the Horse Guards' Riding Hall and the church of the Order of Malta; for Alexander I the Smolny and Catherine Institutes. The classical colonnades at the barracks, banks, and schools were always beautiful but not characteristic of the special purpose to which the buildings were assigned. Classicism prevailed everywhere, thus emphasizing that the work was done by official commission.

During the reign of Alexander I the Louis XVI style gave place to that of the Empire, which was the last step in the development of classical form. The enthusiasm for Rome was replaced with an ardent admiration for Hellas. While the Pantheon still preserved its fascination, the ruins of the Doric temple in Paestum became the architects' ideal. The tendency towards extreme simplicity of line was combined with the passion for colossal dimensions. The names of Piranesi and Ledoux were

characteristic of this style and of the period of its origin in France, from which, after a delay of thirty years, it reached Russia in the days of Alexander I. In Western Europe the very grandeur of the best projects, even under Napoleon, impeded their realization. But Russia, with its imperial commissions, particularly in St. Petersburg, proved to be the most suitable ground for the development of the new trend.

The Kazan Cathedral, the first monumental edifice erected under Alexander I (1801-11), did not as yet mark the coming of the new era. It was built by Voronikhin, a Russian architect, who as a serf of Count Stroganov was sent by him to study architecture in Paris. While it is quite evident that Voronikhin in building the Kazan Cathedral copied Bernini's colonnade of St. Peter's in Rome and that he availed himself of the sketches of Peyre senior, the architect of the Odeon, one must nevertheless admire his work. Far more original and interesting is the Doric colonnade of the Institute of Mining, which Voronikhin built in 1806-11.

Thomas de Thomon, a French émigré who was responsible for the Grand Theatre (1802-05) and the St. Petersburg Stock Exchange (the lines and rostral columns of the latter were adopted from the project of Pierre Bernard for which he received a prize in 1792), was a true representative of the new Russian style. The Stock Exchange, which stands on the point of an island amid the open waters of the Neva, completes the panorama of St. Petersburg and produces a powerful and monumental effect. Thomon had a rival in Zakharov, a Russian follower of Ledoux and Chalgrin, who during the years 1806-15 built the Admiralty in St. Petersburg. We must also mention Stasov's barracks of the Pavlovsk regiment (1817-18), the imperial stables (1817-23), the Cathedrals of the Transfiguration (1826-28) and of the Holy Trinity (1827-35), and the arch at the Moscow Gate (1833-38).

But Carlo Rossi was the man who crowned the Alexander style and the entire St. Petersburg period in architecture. Rossi was the illegitimate son of an Italian dancer of the days of Empress Catherine II; he studied in Florence, but upon the death

of the three foreign architects mentioned above (1811-14) he returned to Russia and gained fame. He profited by the dictatorship of the Committee for Building, which controlled all construction in St. Petersburg, to carry out Ledoux's great projects, and gave its final contemporary appearance to the monumental St. Petersburg. Rossi did not limit his work to buildings, but also planned streets and squares. The Michael Palace with its great square (1819-23), the semicircle of buildings with the famous arch in the center, facing the Winter Palace (1819-29), the square and surrounding streets at the Alexandrine Theatre, and the two connected buildings—the Senate and Synod—are the four most important examples of his ability to plan. There are some who disagree about the merits of that stately building, the Michael Palace, but no one can deny that the buildings of the General Staff, the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and of Finance with the Gate of Victory, dividing the semicircle, form a most beautiful ensemble.

The Cathedral of St. Isaac, which also belongs to the same grand style, was built by Montferrand, a French "draftsman" who had studied at the French school of Perier and Fontaine. It took forty years to build (1817-57) and when completed the Cathedral looked far more massive than on the plan. In the wealth of mosaics and marble and the colossal size of its pillars the St. Petersburg copy had attempted to outshine its prototypes, St. Paul's Cathedral in London and the Paris Pantheon, but *materia superavit opus*: cumbersome material overpowered the creative genius. Another work of Montferrand, the Alexander Column, the highest that was ever made in monolith, was intended by Emperor Nicholas I to surpass the Vendôme Column in Paris, but likewise failed to attain the purpose. With Rossi and the gigantic St. Isaac Cathedral the magnificent architectural pageant that had been unfolded in St. Petersburg came to an end. Under Nicholas I absolutism ceased to be enlightened and grew cold to refinements in art, while the requirements of everyday life, hitherto ignored by the monumental style, became too urgent to be neglected. St. Petersburg was no longer a "wasteland."



Architecture ceased to pursue the pompous, spacious, grand style in building; there was an increased demand for comfortably planned apartments, good lighting conditions, etc., which were incompatible with the adopted type of classical temple, with its colonnade, portico, and great wall space. To comply with the practical requirements of life, the façades were now divided into stories, more and higher windows were pierced leaving less wall space, while the number of pediments and cornices increased; in a word, there was a general degeneration which, as usual, was accompanied by the development of detail. Finally, throughout Europe there arose a national movement, which made the new architecture seek for motifs in national art. (Fomin)

In the Russia of the days of Emperor Nicholas I this mood was expressed by a new imperial "command." There were published official albums of "façades for buildings in the cities of the Russian Empire approved and sanctioned by His Majesty." The new "social command" was not to outdo the foreigners by imitating them but, with His Majesty's sanction, to create a new national Russian style.

During the thirties of the nineteenth century the government officially exacted this style of the artists. The command was executed by Thon, who added to Russian architecture a great many colorless and uninspired imitations of the ancient Moscow style. The five-domed quasi-Byzantine church, which during the seventeenth century had superseded the national Russian type, now became the prototype of a national form.

True, the matter did not end with Thon's official patterns. In studying the ancient architectural works the artists became familiar with the elements of the genuine national style, and the architectural art in the middle of the nineteenth century strove to adapt it to modern requirements. The chronicle of these efforts is written in stone on the streets of Moscow. There one sees simple copies of ancient Russian forms alongside entirely foreign ones (the Historical Museum), a reflection of the learned theory on the Russian style originating from the East (the Polytechnical Museum), a rather unsuccessful attempt at adapting the ancient Russian forms to the requirements of a modern public (the Town Hall), and quite close by a far more successful and free solution of

the problems of combining the national style with the contemporary demands for comfort and good taste (the Merchants' Row).

Thus for a short time in returning to the traditions of the sixteenth century Russian architecture found its way to independent development. But this effort had to yield its place rapidly to greater tasks. Viollet-le-Duc was the first to predict the advance of steel architecture, but actually it developed into steel and concrete. This time both the style and building material were international, but we shall study this subject later on. Thus the experiment of re-creating the national style came to an end, and in Russian art its elements retained exclusively a decorative value.

## II

# PAINTING: TO THE MIDDLE OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

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**T**HE other branches of art in Russia were in a different position for they did not have such palpable, objective, and original forms at their disposal as had architecture. Only the ornament, being in a somewhat similar state, shared its fate. Besides the purely architectural ornaments of wooden and more modern brick construction, there were many to be found in ancient Russian manuscripts and to be adopted by the national industry. As early as the fourteenth century there appeared in Russia a peculiar ornament of intricate design with forms of animals, which can also be found both in the Western "monster" and the Eastern styles. During the fifteenth century this was replaced by a geometrical one, at times very complicated, which by repeating the motif could, like the arabesque, be used to cover large surfaces. In the sixteenth century still another type of ornament was introduced, a solid and somewhat heavy design executed in gilt and many colors, in which foliage appeared along with the geometrical forms, while towards the end of the sixteenth and the beginning of the seventeenth centuries this foliage was outlined and shaded in the manner of foreign prints.

In no other branch of Russian art except architecture can a similar perfection and vitality of ancient forms be found. We know the circumstances which even in Byzantium arrested the progress of Christian sculpture. In pagan Russia the fear that statues might be taken for idols was, of course, more natural than in Byzantium, which was accustomed to classical forms of art. Carved works,

not only as objects of worship in church, but even as simple adornments in private houses caused great disturbance and strong disapproval. The Muscovites were very indignant when Pseudo-Dmitry<sup>1</sup> erected a statue of Hades in front of his palace. "It is not fitting for an Orthodox Christian to place fantastic beasts, dragons, or any valiant infidel knight above the gates of the house," reads the illuminated church calendar of the seventeenth century. "Orthodox Christians should place above the house gates either holy icons or crosses." With such an attitude towards sculpture this branch of figurative art was almost non-existent in ancient Russia except in the Ukraine, where sculpture had been introduced from Poland, and in the far north, where up to recent times the natives worshiped as idols their gods carved in wood.

It was not until the first quarter of the twentieth century that it became possible to study the most ancient period (XII-XV centuries) of Russian religious art—the frescoes, icons, and mosaics; only since 1904 has scientific study begun to replace the hypothetical knowledge of the former icon collectors. The principle of this study was to restore the ancient monuments to their original state by removing the layers of paint, drawings, and stucco that had been superimposed. The work of restoration progressed particularly successfully when expert scholars were allowed free access to church relics. After 1918 the workers of the State Central Restoration Work Rooms—in most cases the same men who had inaugurated these studies before the revolution—extended their research to a number of churches and icons, where they could expect to find the most ancient examples of Byzantine and Russian art. Indeed, it proved possible to restore to their original state, to date and compare with each other many invaluable works of art which had been inaccessible to the scholars of the earlier days. Therefore the entire history of that period must now be rewritten.

The most important achievement of this modern research is the establishment of the fact that the nationalization of the Eastern type of religious painting had taken place much earlier than was formerly believed. Among the invaluable, purely Byzantine fres-

<sup>1</sup> The mysterious pretender of the early seventeenth century who, claiming that he was a son of Ivan the Terrible, succeeded in establishing himself for a short time as Tsar in Moscow.—Ed.

coes of the eleventh and twelfth centuries, painted by Greek masters in Kiev and Vladimir, and among icons brought to Russia during that period, A. I. Anisimov has discovered some new traits, which in the course of the thirteenth century were particularly clearly defined. While still adhering to the Byzantine type, the Russian pupils of the Greek masters nevertheless permitted some changes both in modeling and in the use of colors. The immediate result was a certain simplification. In Anisimov's opinion, subsequently disputed, the faces on the two icons of the Virgin of Tolgsk, both works of a Russian icon painter, "not only lack the inexhaustibly deep psychology of the Vladimir icon,<sup>2</sup> but even the refinement and outer nobility which distinguish the two icons of the Virgin in the New York collections. Instead they possess a sincere and spontaneous quality from which there emanates a feeling of intimacy that endows the Russian icons with a rare character of inner warmth." Simplification of the face led to simplification of the figure. The folds of the garments, which in the Byzantine images fell in undulating lines following the curves of the body, were replaced with straight lines producing the effect of a flat drawing. With the disappearance of the relief, what remained of the perspective also disappeared. It must be pointed out that, according to Anisimov, these peculiarities are first seen in the Novgorod school of icon painting, which "decidedly Russianized the faces and abandoned the Byzantine canonical prototype earlier and more definitely than did the Rostov and Suzdal schools." The Novgorod school also "showed preference for vivid and pure colors" against the dark shades and semi-tones of the Byzantine images, while the Suzdal school "even in tonality adhered more faithfully to the very ancient traditions."

Anisimov's observations are new and clever, but his deductions are, at times, hastily made. At least Schweinfurth, the most recent German student of the problem, in his conscientious summary of Russian discoveries expressed the opinion that of the eight icons of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries analyzed by Anisimov, only

<sup>2</sup> This remarkable Byzantine icon of the twelfth century, which in 1395 was taken from Vladimir to the Cathedral of the Assumption in Moscow, has only recently been valued at its real worth. Unquestionably it does differ from the other contemporary works of Byzantine art in the intensity of sorrow expressed in the Virgin's face.

the one representing St. John, St. George, and St. Blaise was unquestionably of Russian workmanship. In accordance with his views on the ancient period of the Byzantine Italian relations, Schweinfurth believes that the first Tolgsk Virgin was a Tuscan work of the Pisan school in the *Maniera Greca*, as were the two icons now in the New York collections. It must be added, however, that Anisimov showed more caution in his English articles<sup>8</sup> in which he admitted that

. . . the twelfth-century icons are so characteristically Byzantine that it is an open question whether they actually were painted in Russia and by Russians. In those of the thirteenth century it is comparatively easy to distinguish national traits of a formal nature: a somewhat stronger dynamics, a tendency towards a straight line in connection with the intensification of flatness in representation, and finally, an increasing inclination towards the use of pure and vivid color. Yet until the beginning of the fourteenth century all these characteristics found no definite expression. Their establishment marks the coming of a new period in the history of style. We think that the national character of icons was definitely formed in the middle of the fourteenth century.

This new era in icon painting followed upon the interval which coincided with the establishment of the Latin Empire in Constantinople (1204-61) by the Crusaders of the Fourth Crusade, and the Tatar invasion of Kievan Russia (1223-40). During that interval ecclesiastical architecture and the art of icon painting temporarily declined, only to revive later with renewed brilliance. Modern Russian scholars regard the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries as the period of highest development in the national religious art of Russia. This is rather an exaggerated point of view which cannot be accepted without reservations. In the first place, the flourishing period in Russian art found its direct source in the brilliant era in Byzantine art of the same centuries, called by the French scholars the third Renaissance of the Paleologi epoch. The famous mosaics at Kahrié Djami in Constantinople and the frescoes of the Mistra churches in Morea are wonderful examples of this revival. But here we come to the disputed point as to the extent of the revived art's independence in Constantinople, the source from which the

<sup>8</sup> See *Masterpieces of Russian Painting*, edited by Michael Farbman.

Russians had adopted it. Rovinsky was first in drawing attention to the similarity between the Russian icons of this period and the works of Cimabue, Duccio, and Giotto, the Italian masters of the end of the thirteenth and the beginning of the fourteenth centuries. The crusade that was led against Constantinople, instead of Palestine, was followed by the Venetian dominion expanding over the Ionian Isles and Crete, which remained under its power from 1204 to 1669. The prosperity of Kaffa, the Genoese colony in the Crimea, which replaced the Byzantine Chersonese, is also connected with this same epoch (1266-1475). During the fourteenth and the fifteenth centuries the influence of Venice was extended as far as the Dalmatian shores, Serbia, and Moldavia-Wallachia. Nor must we forget the flourishing period of religious art in Tirnovno, "the Second Rome" of the Bulgarian dynasty of the Asens, from which, towards the end of the fifteenth century, together with literature, ecclesiastics, and the idea of Russia's Slavonic mission, the new methods of icon painting could have penetrated to Moscow. Such were the channels through which the new revival in art might slowly have reached Russia. According to Muratov, as early as the end of the fourteenth century the famous master, Theophanes the Greek, had reproduced in Russia the methods of the Macedonian artists of the twelfth and the thirteenth centuries. It was Kondakov in particular who developed the idea of the influence of the Italian-Cretan school upon Russian icon painting, basing his theory on the fact that various types of the Virgin, such as the "Sorrowful," the "Adoring," and the "Nursing," which undoubtedly were of Italian origin, appeared in Russia during the fourteenth century.

The French scholars and Muratov raised serious objections to this point of view. They argued that the "adoration" type of the Virgin was not foreign to the Byzantine Renaissance of the Paleologi period, and that it was adopted by the Italians from Byzantium. Likewise, all the motifs and characteristics of the style which Kondakov had pointed out were to be found either in Byzantine art itself or in the classical Hellenic art from which the Paleologi Renaissance had so freely borrowed. Therefore, in the opinion of these scholars, even in the fourteenth and the fifteenth centuries Byzantium had been the only source of Russian iconography.

It seems that the solution of the problem is offered by a recent theory which represents a compromise between the two extreme points of view. In the works of Ainalov and Schweinfurth the time and character of Italian influence have been definitely established, and thereby some claims of the Byzantinists have been reconciled with facts. Indeed, since very early days, aside from Constantinople there existed another center where the East came in contact with the West. This center was Venice, where as early as the first half of the thirteenth century there was a marked Romanesque influence, which during the second half of the century was replaced by that of the early Gothic. This was that *Maniera Greca*, which had been so popular throughout Italy but was abandoned with the appearance of the fourteenth-century Italian Renaissance. Venice alone retained the taste for Byzantine icons and continued to work "in the old manner" both for its local patrons and for export to Orthodox countries. It was from this source that in the sixteenth century some of the traits of medieval Western art penetrated into Russia. During the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries the Venetian colony of Crete also began producing Byzantine icons, showing more decided traces of the Renaissance influence. This particular Italian-Cretan school, as Kondakov has pointed out, exerted a more important influence upon Russian icon painting of the Moscow period (XV-XVII centuries).

The revival of icon painting during that time is reflected in a marked increase of available historical evidence. In Russia the name of Theophanes the Greek is associated with a series of new frescoes in the cathedrals and churches of Moscow which he, with the assistance of his Russian colleagues, had painted in the years 1395-1405. True, these frescoes have perished, but on the walls of some of the Novgorod churches Theophanes' work is still preserved. It is most characteristic of the new style of the late Byzantine Renaissance with its "illusionism" (an approach towards realism), its angular movements, sharp graphics, and non-Byzantine type of faces. Indeed, we have already reached here the limits of simplification and emancipation beyond which lies the possibility for the creation of a national style.

In fact, the comparative isolation of Russia during the period between the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries contributed to



the development of a national Russian style on the basis of the previously adopted Byzantine tradition. The Greco-Russian frescoes of the thirteenth and fifteenth centuries shared the fate of the gorgeous Byzantine mosaics of the eleventh century and gradually disappeared. They were replaced in the wooden churches of Northern Russia by a rapidly increasing number of icons painted on wooden panels. When there was no longer any space for the holy images in the dome, drums, wings, or on the pillars and walls of the churches, they were placed according to traditional order and "rank" upon a high iconostasis, a structure separating the body of the church from the sanctuary, which was introduced by North Russian wooden architecture and later built also in the stone churches. On either side of the "Deësis" (an icon of Christ, the Holy Virgin, and St. John the Baptist), which was placed above the "Holy Gate," were the images of Archangels and Apostles; above this "Apostolic row" were icons commemorating church holidays; in the third row, icons representing the Prophets; in the fourth row, the images of the Patriarchs; and above the entire iconostasis, the God Sabaoth. On each side of the Holy Gate were placed the local icons that were held in the highest esteem. Because of conditions in Russia, about which we already know,<sup>4</sup> the icon became an object of special veneration in the same superstitious sense that provoked iconoclasm in Byzantium. Everyone was anxious to possess an icon, and particularly of those saints who cured diseases, protected cattle and horses, etc. The demand for icons was so great that it resulted in a mechanical reproduction of the established types, and led to further simplification of drawing and coloring, and a still greater conventionalization of style. The pictorial style of Byzantine icon painting yielded more and more to the graphic manner, with its straight lines and sharp contours in drawing, and acquired a flat character.

Of course such sacred figures as Christ, the Virgin, and the Apostles retained their traditional outlines. Yet the artist was free to choose his colors, and these began to change before the faces on the icons were nationalized. Consequently the local schools of icon painting can be best identified through the combination of

<sup>4</sup> See Part I, ch. 2.—ED.

colors. In painting the images of secondary saints and figures and in the composition and treatment of complex icons the artists were allowed even greater freedom. It was exactly in this field that the inner development of icon painting was achieved, although in Russia not as rapidly as in the Orthodox South.

Up to the present it is not quite clear what part was played in this development by Novgorod and Suzdal (Vladimir-Moscow), the two great political and cultural centers in the Russia of the period following upon the Tatar invasion (XIV-XV centuries). It was natural that at the beginning of this period Novgorod should become the principal center of both religious art and icon production. It was there that the largest number of churches was built, and Greek masters were continually being invited to paint them in fresco. It was there too that for the first time the works of the Greeks were supplemented or replaced by those done by masters of Russian origin, but with Greek training. Novgorod treated the Byzantine patterns with the greatest independence, and as early as the thirteenth century its art showed unmistakable signs of nationalization. This is why up to recent times everything original in the religious art of that period was ascribed to the "Novgorod School." Only during the last years have the peculiar characteristics of Suzdal icon painting begun to emerge from obscurity. It should have been realized sooner that this ancient seat of Russian culture, though remaining true to the original Byzantine tradition, could not have existed for several centuries without developing special traits of its own. We have, in fact, visible proof of that in such historical monuments as the Cathedrals of the Assumption and of St. Dmitry in Vladimir, and the church of the Intercession on the Nerl. Igor Grabar, the historian of Russian art, in comparing the Suzdal monuments to the "solid, stockily built monuments of Novgorod the Great," describes them as "simple, strong, devoid of excessive ornamentation, and astounding in their perfect proportions, refinement, and grace." In speaking of the Suzdal icons as opposed to "the monumental, rectilinear, and angular" ones of Novgorod, Grabar says that though "not of very superior craftsmanship they nevertheless possess a feeling of greater intimacy, more rounded forms, and more rhythmic char-

acter." While golden-yellow ochre predominates in Novgorod, the Suzdal icon excels in "a gamut of silvery-blue" colors, far colder but more refined than the Novgorodian "glowing tone."

The end of the fourteenth and the beginning of the fifteenth centuries was the first flourishing period of the Suzdal school and was marked by the activity of the famous artist Andrew Rublev, a monk of the Spaso-Andronikov Monastery (b. *circa* 1360-70, d. *circa* 1420-30). Igor Grabar has succeeded very recently in collecting reliable material for the study of the works of this outstanding icon painter. The most characteristic and finished of them is the icon of the Holy Trinity which he painted for the Sergievo-Troitsky Abbey, and which is famed for its harmony of color and composition. It must be pointed out that at an early stage both Rublev and his friend Daniel Cherny collaborated with Theophanes the Greek, who in 1405 had come from Novgorod at the invitation of the Muscovites to paint in fresco the Cathedral of the Annunciation at the Kremlin. Grabar also ascribes to Rublev that portion of frescoes in the Cathedral of the Assumption at Vladimir (1408), which in contrast to the antiquated pictorial brush work of his older friend Daniel Cherny is done in a conventionalized, graphic manner.

Indeed, Rublev's icon of the Holy Trinity was the first great achievement of the national art, as independent of outside influences as the works of Giotto and Duccio di Buoninsegna were of the Romanesque and neo-Hellenic schools of their day. But we must draw attention to the difference existing between the Russian and Italian achievements. While Andrew Rublev still adhered to the tradition of icon painting, Giotto and Duccio broke away from ancient methods.

The frescoes at the Cyril Therapontus Monastery in the region of Novgorod, painted by Dionysius in 1500-01, and those in the Cathedral of the Annunciation at Moscow, prove that after the time of Daniel Cherny and Andrew Rublev the development, if any, in the art of icon painting was only a further conventionalization of design.

The Annunciation frescoes, however, were destined to bring this tradition to an abrupt end, and to introduce a new note into the history of Russian icon painting. While restoring the fres-

coes on the porch of this Cathedral in 1882, Fartusov, the architect in charge of the work, discovered in them such striking "Italiana" that the committee for the restoration, headed by the historian Zabelin, accused Fartusov of fraud and positively forbade him to continue the work. The restoration was then entrusted to Safonov, a professional icon painter, who destroyed for all time the ancient frescoes, and nothing remains but the photographs taken of them by Fartusov. It was these photographs that enabled Kondakov to describe the frescoes as "quasi-Italian," and Grishchenko to compare the characteristic faces and gestures represented on them with the works of the Italian Quattrocento. The landscape, the facial expression, the headdress, and the manner of wearing the garments, were absolutely contrary to the tradition of Dionysius.

This breach of tradition was not confined to a single case alone. After the great fire at Moscow, in 1547, it was necessary to paint new icons for the Cathedral of the Annunciation and to redecorate the palace with frescoes. Artists were brought from Pskov to do the work, and in a short time new icons, some painted in Moscow and others at Pskov, replaced the old ones. But the Muscovites were disturbed by these images and Viskovaty, Ivan IV's state secretary and one of the best-educated men of the day, indignantly expressed to the Tsar his doubts as to the merits of the new trend in icon painting. He resented the artists' painting "according to their own understanding and not according to sacred tradition: the same subject was treated in various ways, so that although the subjects of several icons might be identical each was painted differently; they no longer abode by the ancient custom of putting an inscription on the icon, and introduced into the painting besides sacred subjects some profane images." One of the icons that aroused Viskovaty's indignation has been preserved up to the present day. It is a complex icon, painted on four panels and representing didactic subjects, which indeed were new in the Russia of that period, although for a long time well known in the Orthodox South and East. As early as the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries we see abstract themes illustrating prayers, dogmas, the liturgy, etc., being treated symbolically and even mystically, but in Moscow they were introduced only during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Their origin can be traced back to the art of the Greek

monasteries, which sought its material in theological treatises and Latin scholasticism.

Viskovaty's doubts, however, were not of a radical nature, for like Tsar Ivan he dwelt only on superficial details, and his criticism was chiefly aimed at annoying Sylvester, the Tsar's favorite and priest of the Cathedral of the Annunciation. In 1554 an ecclesiastical council succeeded in proving to Viskovaty that his misgivings were groundless, and caused him to repent having written his "disparaging lines." Of course the council had reasons for asserting that the new forms in iconography were not in any way contrary to tradition. But Viskovaty was right too when, with the trained eye of a Muscovite, he immediately detected the unusual forms on the Pskovian icons. God the Father represented in the image of an elder, and Jesus Christ in the midst of cherubs' wings, which had annoyed Viskovaty, showed once again the Italian-Greek influence. Moreover, according to Rovinsky, a detail on one of the new icons painted by two Pskovians for the Cathedral of the Annunciation was copied from a drawing by Cimabue, while another icon was an exact reproduction of a drawing by Perugino. The allegorical frescoes upon the walls of the palace were likewise quite a distinct innovation, but the figure of a "wench dancing with abandon," intended to represent "Lust," and which particularly displeased Viskovaty, was in fact the likeness of the dancing Salome seen in the works of the Italian-Greek school as early as the fourteenth century.

Indeed, these tendencies towards innovation are no more characteristic of the popular art of icon painting in Russia at the beginning of the sixteenth century than the Italian Kremlin of Fioravanti, Solario, and Alevio is of its national architecture. Innovations were introduced into Moscow by icon painters from Novgorod and Pskov. In 1547 Metropolitan Macarius ordered all icon painters to be forcibly brought from these two cities to the Tsar's capital. That was the time when Moscow, to its own glorification, was collecting Russian Orthodox relics from every part of the country.<sup>5</sup> This, to a certain extent, especially in the early days, inevitably led to eclecticism, and mixed styles appeared in Moscow art. Yet Moscow had its own Suzdal tradition, which was far more

<sup>5</sup> See Part I, ch. 2.—Ed.

conservative than that of Novgorod, and it naturally wanted to subordinate the new artists to the old tradition. In 1551, at the Council of Hundred Chapters, the Moscow authorities undertook a number of measures in order to secure Orthodoxy both in art and in ritual. In the forty-third chapter of the Hundred Chapters icon painters were formed into something like a guild subordinate to the ecclesiastical authorities; the prelates of every district were instructed to "insist relentlessly that the expert icon painters and their pupils should copy ancient patterns and not make use of their own ideas and imagination in painting the Divinity: *for we only have the description of Christ our Lord in the flesh, not in His divinity.*" The words italicized have a special interest for us since evidently they are an answer to one of the chief arguments in favor of greater artistic freedom for the icon painters. Apparently, as early as the sixteenth century the followers of the new trend in icon painting were advancing the opinion that they had the right to try and represent the ideal, or spiritual and celestial images of the saints rather than copy their supposed earthly likenesses. But, in the direction of idealization of types, the most they were allowed was to copy Rublev's manner, which in this way was perpetuated throughout the sixteenth century. Any who disregarded the rules were threatened with the Tsar's anger and even with persecution.

The regulations of the Hundred Chapters did not cover all the measures against the new artists' "own ideas," for in the second part of the sixteenth century there appeared the so-called "Illuminated Original," a manual of copies of the established patterns from which the icon painters were obliged to work. To this collection of outline drawings there was added a concise characterization of the types of saints for each day of the year, and a detailed enumeration of the colors necessary for their likeness. The manual was composed for the purpose of establishing types for obligatory use in icon painting, thereby putting an end to the artists' individual inventiveness. However, it failed in attaining this object, for during the seventeenth century the icon painters developed their own ideas to an unprecedented degree. One of the reasons which prevented the "Original" from entirely restricting the independence of the artists was that at the time the manual was composed there no longer existed any uniform types in iconography. The "Orig-

inal" itself provided many variants, the number of which increased with time. Thus the artist was permitted a relative freedom as he could choose between different variants. But a still greater scope for independent work was offered by the complex icons of the Moscow period.

This type of icon was naturally very popular with the faithful. In Russia, more than in medieval Europe, the icon had to replace books; in its conventional, hieratic images it had to relate graphically episodes from the Holy Scriptures, the lives of the saints, the meaning of holidays; in fact, all that might interest the pious people in the domain of religion. Thus the icon became the Bible for the poor. Those who ordered an icon to be painted demanded the image of a saint "with the story of his life"; the image of Jesus Christ "with the holidays," and that of the Holy Virgin "with pictures illustrating all the twenty-four verses in Her acathistus."<sup>6</sup> All these pictures were painted in miniature, framing the central figure. Of course this type of icon allowed of more or less originality in the composition. The artist still could make no changes in the established types, but he was permitted a mechanical adjustment of the objects. For this work the Russian icon painters, like those of all other Orthodox countries, found a wealth of material in the miniatures of ancient illuminated manuscripts. Obviously, with this material at their disposal, the artists had wider scope for their imagination than when merely copying the old compositions. They were able to introduce new details learned from the Scriptures, sacred songs, or even the Apocrypha, or they could lend to the mechanical adjustment of parts of the icon a greater spiritual unity, or at least could group them more artistically on the panel. This type of icon was the first product of original painting in Russia to achieve wide popularity.

Moscow icon painting of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries forms the last chapter in the history of painting prior to Peter's time. Modern students regard it as a period of stagnation and decline. While it is impossible to accept this opinion without reservations, it must be admitted that seventeenth-century Moscow was no longer satisfied to carry on the tradition of the preceding cen-

<sup>6</sup> A special form of prayer used in the Orthodox church to glorify Jesus Christ, the Virgin, or any particular saint.—Ed.

turies, and that it found itself in an impasse, the only way out of which was to break with the past. In regard to the past Moscow had played the part of a centralizing power. It subordinated to its authority both artists and the artistic styles of Novgorod and Pskov. From Novgorod the art of icon painting spread throughout the Novgorodian territories in Northwestern Russia, and presumably was brought from there to the estates of the eminent Stroganov family, in Ustiug, Solvychegodsk, and Perm, where during the latter part of the sixteenth and the early seventeenth centuries their artisans developed it into a style of their own. The Stroganov icons achieved great renown for the gorgeousness of their design, the brilliance of color, and the treatment of detail on their miniatures. The earliest of these artisans, Stephan Arefiev, is known through the icon he painted in 1596 for Nikita Stroganov. Even the art of the Stroganov's masters was appropriated by Moscow. Thus Nicephorus Savin worked simultaneously for the Stroganovs and Tsar Michael. Procopius Chirin, an even better known artist, left the Stroganovs and entered the service of the Tsar. In this way the Stroganov style was absorbed by that of Moscow, and yet Moscow was not satisfied. When the extensive works of restoring the frescoes in the Cathedral of the Assumption and that of the Archangel were undertaken (1653, 1657, 1660), the Tsar issued a strict decree ordering the artists who still remained in the Northwest to be sent to Moscow, threatening them with severe punishment in case of disobedience. Those who failed to escape were brought to Moscow from Kostroma, Ustiug, Vologda, Ostashkov, Rostov, and other places, in a state of complete destitution. They petitioned the authorities to establish regular relays and not to summon them too often to Moscow, where a common artisan received the low wage of from four to seven kopecks a day.<sup>7</sup> Skilled artisans, however, received steady work and yearly salaries of from ten to twelve roubles, and became the accredited icon and picture painters of the Tsar. After the Time of Troubles<sup>8</sup> they were subordinated to the *Oruzheinaia Palata* (Armory

<sup>7</sup> The monetary value in those days exceeded seventeen times that of the pre-war period [i. e., of the period immediately before 1914 when the value of a rouble was about fifty cents, and that of a kopeck about half a cent.]—Ed.

<sup>8</sup> A period of political and social upheaval in Russia, in the early seventeenth century.—Ed.



Board), which had control of everything relative to the Tsar's household. A number of young people were apprenticed to these artists, and thus towards the second half of the seventeenth century the Moscow school of the "Tsar's isographers"<sup>9</sup> was born.

In depriving the provincial forms of icon painting of their individuality and in subjecting them all to the same influence, the Moscow school helped to establish a uniform eclectic style. The practice of bringing the provincial artisans to work in Moscow and of sending the Muscovite workers to the provinces facilitated this unification.

The real value of the Moscow school, however, was neither in this process of unification nor in the development of ancient motifs, but in its effort to meet the demands of the moment. The achievements to be attained through copying of patterns, including those of Rublev, were exhausted, but new ideas came to Moscow from Byzantium, the Italian-Greek schools, and, in a far more developed form, directly from the West. Foreign artists were attached even to the Tsar's school, not for religious, it is true, but for secular painting. The importance and value bestowed upon them can be seen in the fact that their salaries far exceeded those of the best Russian masters. Thus, after thirty years of service the famous Simon Ushakov received sixty-seven roubles a year while Antz Detters, a foreigner, was paid two hundred and fifty. The palaces of Tsar Alexis in Moscow and Kolomenskoe abounded in foreign works, but supervision over their decoration and repairs was nevertheless entrusted to Simon Ushakov. The introduction of foreign engravings also helped to extend the influence of Western art, which became known under the collective name of *Friaz*.<sup>10</sup> During the sixteenth century it was chiefly German, but towards the middle of the seventeenth century Netherland-Flemish influence also reached the country. Having easily conquered both decorative art and portraiture, *Friaz* soon spread to icon painting as well. In his day Patriarch Nikon, who patronized Greek innovations, had already noticed the Latin influence in some of the icons, and became very

<sup>9</sup> According to Kondakov, the term "isographer" was used to designate a "real creative painter," and not a mere "skilled practitioner." In some cases, however, it seems to have been synonymous with "iconographer."—Ed.

<sup>10</sup> Apparently a modification of "Frankish."—Ed.

indignant. With a characteristic display of temperament he threw these icons on the stone floor of the church, pierced the eyes of the saints, and disregarding the pleas of the Tsar ordered them burned, while he called out the names of their owners. To justify his iconoclasm Nikon afterwards told the people of Moscow that the style of the destroyed icons was "imported by Germans from the German land." It is clear that Nikon was attacking what to him was a new and dangerous departure in icon painting. The same position was taken by his opponent Avvakum<sup>11</sup> who, in one of his epistles, expressed himself as follows:

With the Lord's sufferance, the number of painters using an unseemly manner of icon painting has increased in our land. They paint the image of the Saviour Emmanuel with bloated face, red lips, swollen fingers, and large, fat legs and thighs, His whole figure that of a German, fat-bellied and corpulent, only omitting to paint a sword at His side. It was the fiend Nikon's idea that paintings should be true to life; he contrived that everything should be in the *Friaz*, or German manner.

This charge against Nikon was indeed unjust, for in addition to burning the icons he solemnly denounced the new trend in painting from the pulpit and, in the presence of the Eastern Patriarch, pronounced anathema upon its followers. The Church Council of 1667 likewise condemned the adaptation of Western methods in iconography. But none of these denunciations or interdictions bore any practical results. All the church was able to achieve was that ancient methods, prescribed by the old "Original," were used in painting icons for its official needs. This did not prevent the pictorial manner from gaining power in the field of religious painting, for even the most renowned masters, such as Simon Ushakov, began to work in both manners simultaneously, depending on the taste of their patrons. We have already seen that from the time of Tsar Michael there appeared at the court of Moscow some foreign artists, Poles and Germans, who entered the Tsar's service and were commissioned to paint both pictures and portraits. After the forties of the seventeenth century there was a continuous influx of them into Russia where they had many Russian pupils. It

<sup>11</sup> On Nikon and Avvakum, see Part I, ch. 3.—Ed.

was but natural that, having received an adequate training and being encouraged by commissions from the Tsar, the Muscovite artists of the Tsar's school resolutely introduced *Friaz* methods into the art of icon painting, and even assumed an offensive instead of the former defensive attitude.

One day Joseph Vladimirov, an isographer, was sitting in the workroom of his friend Simon Ushakov discussing art, when John Pleshkovich, a Serbian archdeacon, entered and joined in their conversation. On seeing a picture of Mary Magdalen, Pleshkovich spat and said that images like that were not acceptable. In the form of an epistle to Ushakov, Joseph wrote a vigorous retort: "Canst thou possibly say," he questioned his opponent Pleshkovich,

that only Russians are capable of painting icons, that only icons of Russian painting should be worshiped, and that those of other lands should neither be accepted nor honored? Ask thy father or the elders, and they will tell thee that in all our Christian-Russian churches the church plate, chasubles, omophoria, altar cloths and palls, ornamental and gold cloths, precious stones and pearls—all these thou receivest from the foreigners and bringest them into church to adorn the altar and icons with no thought of their being good or bad. . . . Thou demandest that in our days the painter paint lugubrious and ungainly images and thus teachest us that we should be false to the ancient Scriptures. . . . Where and who found the instruction about painting the faces of the saints in dark, swarthy shades? Was the countenance of all mankind created alike? Were all the saints dark and gaunt? Even had they mortified their flesh here on earth, in heaven their souls and bodies would appear revived and radiant. What devil, being envious of the truth, plotted against the radiant persons of the saints? Who among reasonable people would not laugh at the folly that prefers darkness and gloom to light? No, this is not the idea of a wise artist. He outlines in forms and faces what he sees or hears, and in accordance with his seeing and hearing he pictures them. And as in the Old Testament so in the New have many saints, both male and female, appeared comely.

The idea that pictorial icons could lead to temptation aroused the pious artist's indignation. "Art thou then, unworthy one," he exclaims, "not afraid to look at the blissful faces with temptation in thy heart? A true and pious Christian should not be tempted even

though he look at harlots, so how could he be inflamed by a beautiful painting. To think that one can be tempted by an icon is impiety and brazenness. Only those ruled by flesh and not by spirit could in their foolishness conceive such an idea; they are blinded by wickedness."

Thus the realistic artists of the late seventeenth century retained the same fundamental premises as the idealistic icon painters of the fifteenth. They shared the exalted Christian ideas of their predecessors, and were unable to conceive that naturalism in painting could overstep the limits permitted by religion.

This exalted mood of the Russian artists of the period supplies the key to a proper understanding of some new and interesting phenomena in the iconography of the late seventeenth century. This time the matter reached beyond the mere addition of details to old compositions or the mechanical readjustment of old motifs in order to represent new subjects. The change was now introduced into the conception of composition itself, and every Christian artist strove to lift it up to the level of his own religious emotions. Thus the ancient composition of the Annunciation, representing the Holy Virgin sitting by a well or house and spinning, no longer satisfied the Russian artist, and he pictured her reading the Holy Scriptures. Dmitry of Rostov, a Russian prelate, has given us a clear explanation of this change. "The Archangel had to find the Holy Virgin," he says, "not outside the house, not in the midst of everyday duties, but absorbed in prayer, meditation, and reading." The artist was equally provoked at the reclining position given the Holy Virgin on the Byzantine icons of the Nativity, seeing in it a suggestion of human weakness, so he painted her seated, thus unwittingly restoring the position she was given in early Christian art. This time it is the artist himself who gives us his reason for the change by saying that "only crude and ignorant icon painters could represent the Divine Mother in the image of an earthly woman, lying down and attended by a midwife: unaided She gave birth to the Child, wrapped Him in swaddling clothes, reverently embraced and kissed Him, and gave Him the breast. There was no pain, no weakness in childbirth, only joy." Following the promptings of the same religious feeling the manger where Christ was born was replaced by a grotto.

A peculiarity characteristic of the increasing Western influence in icon and fresco painting during the seventeenth century was that the artist mastered the subject of the "interior," that is to say the inside of the house, and began to paint it instead of a monochrome background as on the old icons. Although at first the rooms had no connection with the figures and were painted in one plane, like a stage setting, the fact of their introduction was a sign of progress in the history of religious painting. At the end of the seventeenth century the Russian artists first brought forward the side walls of the chamber to surround the figure, and then opened the façade presenting a vista of rooms. Thus flat drawing was replaced by a plane of three dimensions, giving the picture a more realistic character. Yet it must be said that almost the entire process of conquering the interior took place without the artist's knowledge of the cardinal rules of perspective. In the West the problem was successfully solved by Giotto and his contemporaries as early as the end of the thirteenth and the beginning of the fourteenth centuries, and at that with knowledge of perspective. In Russia, however, the final victory of the new school was attained only during the last quarter of the seventeenth century, and then perspective was still ignored, for even in the "Siisk Illuminated Original," completed in 1666-76, no such achievement is to be seen. But we have evidence to show that immediately thereafter a new and strong foreign influence manifested itself in Russia. It emanated from a well-known source, the so-called "Bible of Piscator,"<sup>12</sup> and was recorded by the frescoes in the churches of Iaroslavl, Kostroma, Rostov, Vologda, and other towns of Northern Russia. One much-thumbed copy of the Bible of Piscator was even found in Vologda, while we know that another copy (probably the Amsterdam edition either of 1650 or 1674) had been acquired in 1677 by Bezmin, one of the Tsar's artists, for the personal use of Tsar Theodore. When it reached Russia the Bible of Piscator was one hundred years behind the times, for it reproduced chiefly the works of the sixteenth-century masters. Through this medium the Italian influence came to Russia as reflected in the

<sup>12</sup> Johannes Piscator (Johann Fischer) published a German version of the Bible in the early seventeenth century. Here the reference is to the illustrated editions of this work.—Ed.

prism of the Netherlands Gothic Baroque. But this art was already quite familiar with the rules of linear and aerial perspective.

The new school of icon painting revised all the iconographic material, compared all the established types with the text of the Scriptures, and, where possible, introduced spontaneous feeling and vitality instead of the dry Byzantine formalism. This resulted in the appearance of the so-called "Critical Original," which supplied the artists with themes taken directly from church literature, thus liberating them from routine icon painting. Moreover, in destroying the old tradition, the adherents of the new trend endeavored to create another one, and to this end collected the best modern and most outstanding old patterns as well as some entirely independent compositions to serve as a manual for future icon painters (Siisk Illuminated Original). It is important to mention that the favorite subjects for new religious paintings were actually the same as those of the book most popular with the pious people of that period. In the last quarter of the seventeenth century there appeared the illustrated *Passions of the Lord*, which received such a wide circulation that the subject was immediately chosen for the frescoes in the Tsar's chambers. Apparently it was also at that time that a detailed treatment of the infernal torments was added to the traditional representation of the Last Judgment.

It seems that Russian art, living in the atmosphere of general religious exaltation, stood at that moment on the threshold of another revival of Christian painting, similar to the one experienced in the West during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Had it been left to its own devices, Russian art perhaps could have followed the same path as that of Western art, and three or four centuries later would have attained its classical epoch. But because of the religious conditions in Russia at the beginning of the eighteenth century such development was made impossible. The majority of the faithful in the Russia of those days firmly upheld church antiquity and had no wish to support iconographic innovations, while those who advocated church reforms were not concerned with the problems of art. As to the rest of the people, they were soon totally unable to grasp the spirit that guided the Christian artist. Thus the cause of the modest movement, begun in the workrooms of the Tsar's icon painters in Moscow, was lost before

it had had time to develop its new tendencies. The inspiration of these artists could not appeal to anyone, and their work was no longer wanted. In a few decades the influential groups of Russian society had skipped over centuries of Western progress and now were anxious to keep up with its very latest phase. But, as we know, by that time Western art had long since outlived its period of youthful and naïve inspiration. Having mastered all the secrets of the technique and having achieved classical perfection, it became satiated and thus succumbed to mannerism. In trying to imitate the contemporary Western patterns, Russian art interrupted the course of its original development, abandoned the difficult, faltering attempts to feel its own way, and meekly surrendered itself as apprentice to Western masters.

The social system, which the Russian artist was made to serve, also led him along the same path of mechanical imitation. In the great majority of cases the Russian artists of the period were hirelings or even serfs, who were never asked what God they really worshiped in their hearts. At an early age, when their individual leanings had not yet been formed, they were usually sent to study with some good master, who was paid well for their instruction. Thereafter they were required to work absolutely in the same manner and as well, if not better, than the master, or their work was not accepted. The art of painting, like architecture, was subordinated to the demands of the rich, and for a long time in both fields the state, as chief patron, not only laid down the law of taste, but also directed the instruction in art at the Academy, which had been entrusted to foreigners.

Under these conditions, as we know, the taste for Baroque, Rococo, and both Roman and Greek forms of classicism that prevailed in Western Europe in turn triumphed in Russian architecture. In its essence the art of painting is closer to that of letters than to architecture, and here we are at once surrounded by the atmosphere familiar to us through the history of literature. The Academy introduced into painting the same pseudo-classicism mingled with sentimentalism that prevailed in the literature of that time.<sup>18</sup> Painters too developed their own "exalted" and "common" styles, for fashion demanded that they, like the writers, should express

<sup>18</sup> For the parallel development in literature, see Part II, ch. 1.—Ed.

themselves in the conventional language of "ideal" art. The exalted style was represented by religious and historical subjects painted in a conventional, "purified" manner, with its set types, attitudes, gestures, and drapery, its disdain for landscape, great preference for nude, and a complete system of restrictions, which excluded painting true to life. Those aspiring to receive a degree from the Academy or orders from noble patrons had to choose their themes from the Old and the New Testament, or from Greek and Roman mythology and history, and only the most daring ventured to paint episodes from ancient Russian history or battle scenes of the more recent period depicting the heroic deeds of the national sovereigns. The common style of painting representing everyday life was the genre, but this was never taken very seriously, and was only tolerated on the condition that the artist comply with the conventional rules. Immortality and fame were as unattainable to the genre painters as in literature they were to the prose writer, and only those who practised exalted art were considered to possess true artistic talent.

Some branches of painting, however, and precisely those not patronized by the state and the Academy, were so closely related to life that in them the exigencies of realistic representation were soon to break through the defense of academic conventionality. In these cases the subjects chosen were familiar to everybody, and even the rich patrons demanded a likeness of the model and consequently a realistic treatment. The earliest efforts at original work, more or less independent of Western influence, were manifested in landscape and portrait painting. These early creative efforts modified the general opinion on the imitative period in Russian art. One must agree with Buslaev that

. . . no matter how artificially the cultured society of Russia had molded itself, nor in what haphazard way the academic school of painting had been created, no one could possibly deny the merits of young Russian art, which had so quickly mastered foreign technique and thus had learned to render the various shades of unfamiliar emotions and thoughts that drifted into Russia from Western culture.

It is true that the distinguished patrons for a long time did not appreciate landscape for its own sake, but they were naturally



interested in recording on canvas the magnificent buildings and French "perspective" gardens which they had erected and planned. Thus the first task of a landscape painter was a purely topographical one, for he had either to represent accurately in "perspective painting," as Peter the Great had called it, panoramas of streets, palaces, and country manors, or record the designs made for the elaborate transparencies used for the display of fireworks on solemn occasions. The art of engraving was of great assistance in the performance of this task.

By its very nature an engraving was always more within the reach of the masses than a painting. In Russia it had been popular from early times in the form of a primitive woodcut (*lubok*). Even during the late part of the seventeenth century the *Friaz* plates, that is, foreign engravings, could be bought in Moscow at a very low price. Peter the Great learned to engrave "with a style and aquatint under the guidance of Adrian Schoonebeck of Amsterdam," reads the inscription on an etching done by him and dated 1698. Since his time the art of engraving has prospered in St. Petersburg. "Illuminated News about Monsters," "Illuminated Announcement of Military Campaigns," and the like, replaced newspapers for the masses, while numerous etchings, sold at popular prices, reproduced all the favorite themes of Russian folklore. The art of engraving was used also to popularize the new architecture. Several young Russians studied engraving with Schoonebeck, and one of them, Zubov, made etchings of buildings erected by Peter I in St. Petersburg. It was during the reign of this monarch that Wortmann came to Russia and taught the engraving of portraits until 1745, when he ceded his place to his best pupil Ivan Sokolov, the "master of portrait etching," who had made the illustrations for the *Description of the Coronation of the Empress Elizabeth*. Makhaev, the "master of maps and perspective painting," was the most outstanding of Sokolov's pupils, and is known through series of views he engraved of St. Petersburg. Schmidt, the third foreign engraver, headed that art in Russia during the second half of the eighteenth century, and when he left the country his tradition was upheld by Chemesov, who was considered most gifted among his pupils. It was due no doubt to the

popularity of etchings that both landscape and portrait painting gradually became emancipated from academic rules.

Of the two, the portrait painting of the eighteenth century occupies, of course, the foremost position. Peter the Great not only invited the foreign portrait painters Tannauer and Caravaque to come to Russia, but also sent some of his young artists to study this particular branch of art abroad. Andrew Matveiev and I. Nikitin, two of the students, were rather successful. Caravaque found that Matveiev was abler in the use of colors than in drawing, and this proved to be prophetic of the great part color was to play in Russian painting. It was Matveiev who drew the sketches for the murals in the SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral, while Nikitin, having finished his studies in Italy and France, was appointed "master of personal art" and taught the engravers to work from life models.

The art of painting, like that of architecture, was given a new and final impetus by the establishment of the Academy and the arrival of new artists from abroad. We see the outstanding masters, such as Count Rotari, Torelli, de Wailly, Tocqué, Le Lorrain, and Lagrenée, whom Empress Elizabeth had invited to work on the murals in the palaces and who also painted portraits, being joined in the reign of Catherine II by another score of artists, mostly German, of whom Christineck and Ritt were the most outstanding, and somewhat later by Lampi, Roslin, Ericsson, and Mme Vigée-Lebrun. Many of these artists exerted either a direct or indirect influence over their Russian pupils. Towards the end of the eighteenth century Russia already had artists of her own who were equal to their foreign masters. Among the older generation there were Antropov, the son of a soldier, who imitated Rotari's famous pictures of feminine heads, the Argunov brothers, who were Count Sheremetev's serfs, and Rokotov, a follower of Le Lorrain, Rotari, and Tocqué, whose success was so great that he scarcely had time to execute all the portraits ordered. In the ranks of the younger generation, taught already by Russian masters, there appeared such famous names as Levitsky, a pupil of Antropov; Losenko, a pupil of Ivan Argunov; and Borovikovsky, who had studied under Losenko and Lampi.

The most famous of these, Levitsky and Borovikovsky, created

a school of their own, thereby establishing a Russian tradition. In the field of exalted art, when painting historical or emblematic subjects, these artists had to remain under the sway of the Academy, but in common art, which included portrait, landscape, and especially genre painting, they succeeded in emancipating themselves from the influence of the Academy's plaster and model classes, and by drawing nearer to the life model they created many remarkable works. Levitsky, a Ukrainian (1735-1822), painted coquettish noblewomen and portrayed society in a light-hearted spirit. The experts liken him to Gainsborough, though of course the famous Englishman had greater depth of feeling. There was more monotony in Borovikovsky's (1757-1825) dreamy, languid, and pale feminine types, but he was a greater master of color. Losenko was distinguished for the precision of his drawing. Kiprensky (1783-1836), whose activity belongs to the reign of Alexander I, was known for his turbulent nature and great susceptibility to feminine beauty. In his works we find amply reflected the strains of sensibility and romanticism. The latter, however, was only a passing influence, but tribute was paid to sensibility even in the days of Catherine II by abandoning the straight lines of French gardens and replacing them with the "curves, soft slopes, and ponds" of the English. That was also the period when, under the influence of Rousseau, there appeared in the parks of the noblemen's estates a profusion of "hermitages," pavilions of "friendship" and "seclusion," rustic farms, and cottages fashioned after those of the Trianon. The critics unanimously agree that Kiprensky ruined his talent by spending the last twenty years of his life in Rome, where he was infected with the germ of academism which he had escaped in St. Petersburg. The trend of emotionalism, though without Kiprensky's turbulent romanticism, was sustained in Moscow by Tropinin (1786-1857), also born a serf. Tropinin's "Seamstress" and "Lacemaker," notwithstanding their mannered sweetness, foreshadowed the future victory of the realistic genre.

At the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth centuries realism also found its way into the field of landscape painting. Both Michael Ivanov, a pupil of Le Prince, and Theodore Alekseev, a pupil of Belotto (surnamed Caneletto), ventured to

overstep the confines of strict "perspectivism." They were followed by Galaktionov and Martynov, two "poets of St. Petersburg," and Vorobiev, the dreamy artist of St. Petersburg's sunrise, sunset, and moonlight. At an early age Vorobiev left Russia to seek beauty abroad and was joined there by Sylvester Shchedrin, the most gifted landscape painter of that time, who fell in love with Sorrento and remained there until his last days.

More significant, however, was the development in the field of genre which being the most "common" form of art, naturally tended towards the greatest deviation from the academic style. Indeed, to paint life as it could be observed every day seemed a strange notion not worthy of art. Reality had to pass through the prism of academic training and emerge from it ennobled. Characteristically, the first representative of genre and caricature was A. O. Orlovsky (1777-1832), a Russianized Pole and son of a common innkeeper, who made his way into high society. Orlovsky was an eccentric, he worked not only with the brush, but with the point of a match, a candle wick, or with his fingers and his nose dipped in ink. With these devices he drew caricatures, costumes for fancy dress balls, and comic scenes of popular life. He was very prolific and left to posterity a great number of sketches drawn in pen, pastels, charcoal, and pencil, some of them absurd and some extremely lifelike and clever. About that time (1815), a new method for reproducing drawings by lithography had just been invented, and thus copies of Orlovsky's works were circulated in great number. They represented a variety of subjects including peasants and merchants, cadets and generals, Kalmucks and Tatars, thoroughbred horses and work horses.

Apart from this striking example of deviation from accepted artistic standards, one could mention a few other names of artists who tried to imitate Le Prince in genre painting. Even at the Academy there was a special class in which pupils had to paint such subjects as "a bourgeois having a slight seizure and preparing to take medicine," but this type of work was never considered important. A picture bearing the signature of Losenko and dated 1757, in which an artist was represented in his studio painting the portrait of a child, was so unusual for those days that it aroused suspicion as to its authenticity and date (its true author, in fact,

was Ivan Fedorov). Half a century elapsed before a Muscovite, Alexis Venetsianov (1780-1847), the true father of genre in Russia, appeared in St. Petersburg. Venetsianov had great admiration for the Dutch school and had repeatedly attempted to paint from life, but it was a picture by Granet, exhibited in 1820 at the Hermitage, that determined for him his vocation. "This picture," he said, "helped us greatly to understand the art of painting. We began to see in art quite a new quality which up to that time had never been noticed. We saw objects painted not only with likeness and accuracy but full of life; not just a painting from life but life itself on a canvas." Venetsianov further explained why the picture produced such an impression.

It was said that its fascination was created by the focus of light . . . that with full light it is quite impossible to paint objects with such forceful vitality. But I decided to overcome the impossible, went to the country and set to work. In order to succeed I departed from all the rules and methods learned by me during the twelve years of copying at the Hermitage, and then in the most natural way Granet's methods were revealed to me. The idea was that nothing should be represented except as it appears in nature: to follow its dictates and not to mix with it the methods of any painter, that is not to paint *à la* Rembrandt or *à la* Rubens, but simply, so to speak, *à la nature*.

As we see it, the task was defined with a precision quite extraordinary for those days. Not only was Venetsianov in advance of the Russian realists of the eighteen sixties and seventies, but even of such French *pleinairists* as Monet and others. No less remarkable was the systematic manner in which he set about to realize his plans. Venetsianov resigned his position as geodesist, bought a small place in the country, and after spending three years there in complete seclusion finally in 1824 presented the Emperor with his picture "The Barn." In order to have full light in a dark place, he removed the entire front wall and thus lighted the foreground of the deep shed where he painted peasants threshing grain. This radical method of obtaining full light, that is, to paint in the open instead of a studio, was also employed by other Russian artists. Krylov, a pupil of Venetsianov, in painting a winter landscape

worked in a hut which he built in the middle of a field. F. Tolstoy, Reutern, and Zelenko followed in Venetsianov's footsteps and mastered the subject of lighted interiors, vistas of rooms, studios, etc. Yet the conventionalities of the time were reflected in the works of the master and his pupils. Venetsianov's figures are not natural, they pose in frozen attitudes, and his peasants remind one of the rustics on the stage of those days. The artist seems ashamed to present them to the public unwashed and uncombed, and so first teaches them good manners and attires them in Sunday clothes. And yet for his time Venetsianov was an astounding realist, and the prematureness of his art was emphasized by the fact that while he remained in the background occupied with the solution of new problems in genre, academism gained in strength and celebrated its victories boisterously in the works of Bruellow and Bruni.

The opinionated and vainglorious Karl Bruellow (1799-1852), who from early youth had always aspired to become a great artist, upheld the honor of the Academy and infused its style with artificial life. After a protracted training in Rome and eleven months of assiduous work, Bruellow exhibited his canvas "The Last Day of Pompeii," which had the pretense of genius and was widely advertised. The rumors about Bruellow's triumph abroad had preceded the appearance of his work in St. Petersburg, where it was finally placed on view, first at the Winter Palace, and then at the Academy of Arts. Purely academic in treatment, it was introduced to the public under the banner of Romanticism, and for the first time in Russia the success of a painting became a social event. "The Last Day of Pompeii" was abundant with life as compared with the "gentle boredom and icy immobility" that reigned in the works of the Russians who imitated Mengs and David. People fleeing, falling buildings, all under the bright glow of eruption and conflagration, the lavishness of color, the movement of figures, the effects of light and the expression of terror and despair in Bruellow's picture produced as deep an impression upon the Russian public as fifteen years previously the French people felt when they saw "The Raft of the Frigate Medusa," that famous work of Géricault, the herald of Romanticism in the art of painting. The impression in Russia was even more profound, because it was the

first experienced, and while it may not have been justified, the fact that it actually had a lasting effect cannot be denied. One should remember that during the middle thirties of the nineteenth century Romanticism was a passion with the Russian intelligentsia.

Thus the first strong impression produced by a work of art upon the Russian public was at the same time the first victory over the conventionalities of academic classicism. Of course such victory could be only of a temporary nature. That which, compared to the preceding period of stagnation in art, had for a moment appeared true to life presently proved to be ostentatious and rhetorical. In their separate rôles the characters in "The Last Day of Pompeii" were too frankly posing before the audience, and the whole scene suggested too vividly the premeditated and studied effects of a stage performance. Clearly Bruellow's position in the history of Russian art was only an intermediate and passing one. He was the Derzhavin of Russian painting,<sup>14</sup> and like that poet he strove only to instill life into the antiquated classical forms without changing them, and by adhering to this cause he soon became as obsolete as the forms themselves. He intended with his second large canvas, "The Siege of Pskov," to lay the foundation for a national art; but this labored and artificial production made very little impression, and Bruellow retained his renown only because of his remarkable portraits. However, the incentive he gave to artists and the public was not in vain, although in each instance the interest aroused was soon directed in an absolutely different channel.

In the same year that Bruellow's "The Last Day of Pompeii" was achieving enormous success in St. Petersburg, Alexander Ivanov (b. 1806) started a canvas<sup>15</sup> in Rome hoping that it would create the revolution in Russian art which Bruellow's work had failed to produce. Ivanov deliberately set out to abolish the old academic trend and introduce both truth and life into painting, but this attempt also failed and now it only has an historical interest. He had worked on his canvas for such a long time that when it was finished, it proved to be behind the needs of the moment. In fact, its fate gives us the best proof of the rapid progress achieved both

<sup>14</sup> The comparison is with the famous poet of the eighteenth century. See Part II, ch. 1.—Ed.

<sup>15</sup> "Christ Appears to the People."—Ed.

by the Russian artists and the public during this period. In the twenties of the nineteenth century, when the painting was first conceived, seeking for truth and local color was a great novelty. These ambitions were still unusual even twelve years later when Ivanov actually started to work on his canvas (1836). But when after another twelve years (1848) his work was finished, the artist was to discover that in the meantime his surroundings had completely altered. Indeed, Ivanov himself underwent a change, for he lost his religious idealism and came to the definite conclusion that he had wasted his life on work that was worthless to Russian society, which required something quite different. With his characteristic honesty he then zealously sought that "something different," but up to the last he never succeeded either in escaping the vicious circle of the academic desert or in obtaining even a distant glimpse of the promised land of national art. As he died only a few weeks after his return to Russia from Italy (1858), Ivanov was not able to learn that the principle of national art which he sought so long and never attained was there within his reach, ripening and forcing its way into the world, though not in the form of religious painting.

In the meantime genre, the prose of painting, its social novel and story, had long since taken roots in Russia, and towards the middle of the century its first shoots were visible. Venetsianov was the Karamzin of Russian painting<sup>16</sup> because like that writer he also knew how to adorn the real life of Russia with proper forms, very much polished and sweetened, in order to make the subject acceptable to contemporary art. No one could be shocked by the good peasants and virtuous landowners of Venetsianov's genre, and even the Academy deigned to extend its patronage to this "agreeable type of painting." But in 1848 the indecent behavior of the genre introduced violent discord in the peaceful cohabitation of the two styles and forever spoiled their relationship. At the Academy's annual exhibition Fedotov (1815-52) showed his famous canvas entitled "The Morning of a Bureaucrat upon Receiving His First Decoration," which for the sake of precaution was unassumingly listed in the catalogue as "The Result of a

<sup>16</sup> On Karamzin, the greatest representative of Sentimentalism in Russian literature, see Part II, chs. 1 and 2.—Ed.



Carousal." The precaution was wise because when it came to reproducing the picture in lithograph it was necessary to take even further measures and remove the decoration from the dressing gown of the newly created knight. The reason for these precautionary measures was clear to all: Russian painting for the first time had dared to portray reality as honestly and unadorned as it was described in literature by Gogol. In 1849 Fedotov exhibited another great work, "The Major's Courting," which he treated in the spirit of the dramatist Ostrovsky, then rising to fame.<sup>17</sup> Russian art could now celebrate its majority.

The public acclaimed Fedotov, but the world of art, where, until the end of the reign of Nicholas I, Bruellow continued to rule, met his achievements with contempt and criticism. Fedotov had never had the slightest premonition that his works were to be the forerunners of a great movement which began with the accession to the throne of Alexander II and led to the establishment of an independent Russian school of painting.

Art had now finally overtaken literature, and in its further development from this time on it relied on the latter. The yearning of Russian artists for truth and reality merely duplicated the mood then current in literature, and artists and writers joined in the struggle against the common enemy—the hated old tradition. In the world of art, as everywhere else, the old authorities had to be definitely overthrown. V. V. Stasov, the critic, who in 1852-56 still believed in Bruellow's genius, became thoroughly disillusioned by 1861 and began to criticize severely the artist's methods. The same work which in its wealth of artistic imagination he had recently regarded as almost immortal, Stasov now considered as insulting to the dignity of man. Under such conditions it was quite natural that Ivanov's painting, which had stood in the studio for ten years after it was finished and was condemned by the artist himself, failed to receive recognition when exhibited in 1858. By that time the young artists were anxious to break all bonds with the past, the Academy, and exalted art.

<sup>17</sup> On Gogol and Ostrovsky, see Part II, ch. 2.—Ed.

### III

## PAINTING: SINCE THE MIDDLE OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

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**T**HE critical moment in both art and literature coincided with the beginning of Alexander II's reign (1855). Both experienced the influence of that general spirit of liberty which at the time was animating Russian society. It manifested itself negatively in the protest against all officially approved standards, and positively in the acceptance by the artists of the idea of serving the people. The principles of realism established during the preceding epoch now gained in strength and growth. But in harmony with the general mood which prevailed during the first decade of the new reign, realism in art was made to serve a utilitarian task—that of exposing the evils of the existing order. By this it disclosed both its newly acquired strength and its temporary weakness, inasmuch as the utilitarian approach was inconsistent with art's proper function—artistic realism.

The crisis which took place in the field of painting was due to two specific circumstances. First, during the eighteen-forties the Academy of Arts ceased to be a boarding school as it had been previously, so that the students were turned out into the streets from the Academy "greenhouses." This change brought rapid results. The well-mannered, respectful academic youths, who were taught to obey the authorities and to strive to please the taste of socially prominent patrons, soon became artistic bohemians. New trends of art could more easily find their way into that emancipated set because now it had a distinct sense of independence which made it receptive to innovations. The other circumstance that

weakened the influence of the Academy was the establishment in Moscow of a rival institution, the School of Painting, Sculpture, and Architecture.

Moscow art had always aspired to be independent of St. Petersburg. The Moscow school, though officially patronized by the Academy, was too remote to be really influenced by the latter, and consequently there developed a much greater freedom in its methods of teaching. In the late eighteen-fifties there appeared in Moscow a new trend among the artists who even dreamed of inculcating the spirit of liberty into the Academy itself. It should be mentioned also that precisely at this time there lived in Moscow the cultured Maecenas, S. M. Tretiakov, who by his generous purchases, which formed the nucleus for the famous Tretiakov Art Gallery, provided the material basis for the activity of the young artists.

In 1863 the mood of the young generation of artists found characteristic expression when thirteen talented pupils of the Academy refused to accept "Odin in Valhalla" as the official theme in the contest for the gold medal. They decided that academic training and scholarship abroad were no longer necessary, avoided with horror imitating the great works of the old masters, and sought their inspiration directly in nature and life, preferably of their native land. Having forsaken the Academy the youths formed their own guild (*artel*), which subsequently became the nucleus of the Fellowship of Itinerant Exhibitions. For a group that was averse to hypocrisy and learned pedantry, that declared war on conventionality and wanted to be universally understood, the most natural issue was an appeal to the public. Soon the atmosphere of the academic exhibitions became too confined for the members of the new group and in 1871 they opened their first Itinerant Exhibition, which at once won the interest of the public.

This movement of the eighteen-sixties developed into a growing success. Perov (1832-82), who may be called the Nekrasov of Russian painting,<sup>1</sup> was followed by a host of talented artists who transferred to canvas all the actuality of Russian life. Town and country, capital cities and remote provincial corners; all classes

<sup>1</sup> On Nekrasov, the greatest civic poet of the period, see Part II, ch. 2.—Ed.

of society—peasants, commoners, landowners, clergy; people of every profession—officials, traders, doctors, lawyers, university students; every condition of life—work, political exile, crime, heroic deeds, and peaceful family relations; the entire gamut of emotions, from a trivial joke to a tragedy of horror; in a word, all the manifold aspects of everyday life immediately became the subjects for painting, and genre, which lately had occupied a secondary position, now monopolized public attention. Religious subjects were no longer able to inspire the artists, and they seldom succeeded in creating good historical pictures, but when they could stand on the firm ground of reality, where their art had to be true to life, they usually achieved brilliant success. Like the literature of the period, the new art was accused of being biased, of having a tendency to expose the social evils, and of having developed realism to the point of exaggeration and caricature. The facts that provoked these accusations cannot be denied nor need we exonerate them, for in this instance art merely expressed the actual mood of contemporary society. Indeed the principle of realism was far broader and more deeply rooted in the evolution of Russian art than was at first apparent. Withdrawn as it was from tradition and schooling during the initial stage of its development, the new Russian art was bound to be spontaneous and antagonistic to everything that was artificial. When the eagerness for exposing social evils subsided, art ceased to be sententious but retained its instructive and realistic character.

Thus Perov was followed by Repin (1844-1930) who, without any sentimentality or animosity, gave to Russian art a far greater power of expression than did all Perov's youthful invectives. In order to arouse in the public a critical attitude towards the village priest it was not necessary for Repin to represent him at the moment of utter abasement. On the contrary, he could paint a religious procession, typical of the official church in all its glory, and produce thereby a far deeper and more lasting impression. In his "Burlaky" (the Volga boatmen), out of the ragged crowd of men Repin created an artistic symbol of Russian people who for centuries had carried the heavy burden of obligations imposed upon them by the state. And, of course, this genre will become no less an historical painting than his "Zaporozhtsy" (seventeenth-cen-

tury Ukrainian Cossacks), which represents a group of tramps, who finding no room within the limits of the organized statehood, formed themselves into a devil-may-care Cossack "Knighthood." As we see, everything was within the power of Repin's realism, even the broadest historical conceptions, and only in the field of religious subjects did he prove impotent, for his "St. Nicholas" was just another historical canvas. But this was because neither the epoch nor the prevailing mood was propitious to religious painting. Had the national school of painting been founded in Russia during the end of the seventeenth century, it would have developed along the lines of religious art of the pre-Raphael period; in the second half of the nineteenth century it could only achieve its progress on the basis of social struggle and everyday life.

However, the period in the history of Russian art which we have just described was not destined to be the final one. Corresponding to the classical period of Russian literature,<sup>2</sup> it shared the latter's fate. Realism in art, as represented by the Itinerants, made its appearance considerably later than in literature, yet both ended almost simultaneously, in the eighteen-eighties and nineties, and under the same pressure from the new generation. The new break with tradition and the revolt of youth during the nineties were, in a sense, a replica of that of the Itinerants against the Academists. But while the earlier revolt had aimed at the creation of a national Russian school of art, the new one took up the banner of cosmopolitanism. Even more vividly than in literature, though with the same delay, every modern Western tendency was reflected in the new school of painting. In both cases Western influence led Russian genius away from realism, and thus to the loss of power over the masses which can be exercised only by realistic art.

The new generation of artists and art critics rallied around the *World of Art*, a periodical published between 1898 and 1902. Perhaps the best way of studying the positive views of this group is through analyzing its repudiations. The *World of Art* denied first of all academism, in which it saw nothing but conventionality and insincerity, "traits characteristic of academism of every period," but intensified in Russia by the academicians' neglect of modern

<sup>2</sup> See Part II, ch. 2.—Ed.

Western art. Yet the group was equally vigorous in repudiating the tendentious art of the Itinerants, and in general all the realistic and positivist ideas which had been so popular with the preceding generation. In the opinion of the new school, the simplest way to cause a revolution in Russian art was to bring it into closer contact with that of the West. According to Benois, one of the leaders of the World of Art group,

. . . in the seventies and even in the eighties there was no connection between us [the Russian painters] and the truly creative art in the West. . . . We . . . knew only the official artists, such boring academicians as Bouguereau, Cabanel, Gérôme, and Piloty, or the "sugary" salon artists, like Makart, Zihel, Lefebvre, and a few amusing raconteurs. It was only about eight years ago that the English pre-Raphaelites were first mentioned here; Boecklin, Menzel, Whistler, and Leibl were quite unknown, while Millet, Corot, and the Impressionists were regarded as charlatans raised to high rank by the art dealers of Paris. But during the last ten years conditions have changed very rapidly. Thanks to frequent exhibitions of the works of Western artists in St. Petersburg and Moscow, the greater accessibility of foreign travel, and wide circulation of illustrated art publications, we were brought nearer to the West. [As a result] we saw our own art from a different point of view. Our requirements for the art of painting became much more exacting. We realized that the artistic standard of our painting was low. [This was written in 1902].

Consequently the tendency was to allow the purely pictorial element to dominate the content of an artistic creation, as was also the case in music, where it was required that in a composition the pure tonal mode should dominate the descriptive side. But the World of Art was not satisfied with this. As in literature, the matter was not confined solely to preoccupation with form, and attacks were directed not just at the "poor brush work" of the Itinerants, but more particularly at their subject-matter, which reflected a positivist conception of the world. Therefore the new school undertook the task of replacing this content with an opposite one. As the Itinerants were concerned with the vital issues of the day, it became the aim of the new trend to shun these topics.

Actually its founders—A. Benois (b. 1870), Somov (b. 1869), and Lanceray (b. 1875)—did not escape very far from the present. They focused their study on the St. Petersburg art of the Empire period, and through it they passed to the artistic restoration of its original source, eighteenth-century French art. From Tsarskoe Selo to Versailles, from the Russian *petit-maitres* to the French marquis, such was the circle of their themes. Igor Grabar (b. 1871), another member of the group, departed further from modernity in an exhaustive study of the origins of Russia's national art. Of course the World of Art acquainted the public also with modern Western masters, chiefly through foreign articles translated into Russian, but it omitted the very newest trends, of which we shall speak later in connection with the still younger generation. It was this comparative conservatism of the founders of the World of Art that permitted some artists of different trends to join the group. Even Repin for a while was a member, although he soon broke this connection as a result of a sharp dispute concerning the merits of some well-known painters and of the Academy, of which he was the dean.

If the members of the World of Art had no clear idea of the future before them, they were determined at least to break away from the past. But the past was linked to the present by many threads which, running parallel to what they had undertaken, and without actually breaking with the Russian tradition of artistic realism, introduced into it new motifs that had remained alien to the Itinerants. The general tendency of the representatives of the new intermediate trend in painting was the same as that of the "World Artists." It was a longing either to withdraw from reality or to find in it something mysterious and super-sensuous that escaped uninitiated eyes. But these aspirations were directed by them along different lines from those of the founders of the World of Art.

The World of Art itself had already indicated one of these lines: the way back to the past. Apart from the archaeological restoration of the past, as undertaken by Grabar, there was yet the task of its artistic reproduction, which was the more interesting because traditionally these themes were in the exclusive possession of the Academy. In this field there was a predecessor of whom the World

Artists made an exception in their general condemnation of academic historical painting. This predecessor was Schwartz, an amateur artist, whose works had been exhibited during the fifties and who died when still young. "Thanks to him we were able to see past events in their true light without the tawdry brilliance so conspicuous in Bruellow's 'Siege of Pskov.'" But above all it was Surikov's (1848-1916) works that the members of the new school singled out for exceptional praise. They made it clear, however, that what they valued in his "Streltsy" and "Boiarynia Morozova" was not so much the artist's historical conception as the purely pictorial side of his creation. To support this point of view they placed great emphasis on Surikov's own admission that his inspiration for the "Streltsy" came from accidentally noticing the reflection of a burning candle on a white shirt, and for his "Boiarynia Morozova" from seeing a black crow with one outspread wing resting on the snow. Attention was also drawn to broad technique, the "rhythm" in composition, and the "orchestration" of color in his works. But of course it was not these artistic merits alone that made Surikov's paintings true epics equal to those of Repin.

The two other fields in which new tendencies began to develop even before the appearance of the World of Art were those of landscape and portrait painting. Here again the World Artists, so severe in their condemnation of the Itinerants, made an exception of two members of the group, the landscape painters Klodt (1832-1902) and Shishkin (1831-98). Both were acknowledged to be "the forerunners of our marvelous poets of native landscape." Not in the tonality, of course, but the drawing. It was a different matter with Kuindzhi (1840-1910), who had seen the works of the French Impressionists in Paris and had brought thence his bright colors, "the equal of which could not be found in the Russian art of the period." But while praise was awarded Kuindzhi for being "so daringly true to nature," he was blamed for "leaning towards cheap effects, theatrical tricks, and a desire to please the crude taste of the crowd." According to the World Artists, the new era in the history of Russian landscape painting began with Savrasov's picture "The Rooks Have Come" (1871), in which they saw revealed the "divine gift of hearing the mysterious voices of nature." It was Levitan (1861-1900) who possessed this divine gift



to the highest degree, and yet even his works were criticized. It was emphasized that the very name of his picture called "A Haven of Rest" suggested the artist's intention of transmitting a mood—and not by means of color at that, for color had no scope in the "peaceful and unassumingly charming Russian landscape."

Levitan had to experience a great inner struggle before he could break away from the past, and this definitely undermined his delicate health. But Constantine Korovin (b. 1861) had a different nature. He foresook the past with no struggle whatsoever and became the "first real Russian Impressionist." After a visit to Paris he at once appropriated all the devices of the impressionist technique, and his pictures became "fountains of color" and "feasts for the eye." The limited size of an easel painting was too small for Korovin's wide sweep of the brush. He was the first of the World Artists to paint scenery, but soon his example was followed by Golovin, Bakst, Benois, Bilibin, and Sudeikin, and thus artistic painting was introduced to the stage. It was due to Diaghilev's untiring efforts that Europe came to know this particular type of Russian art.

N. Roerich occupies a special place in the field of landscape painting. An archaeologist by profession, he was not content with present day or historical subjects, but sought his themes in prehistoric legends. In this sphere he could freely unfold his particular talent of a colorist. A disregard of line for the sake of color, and the painting of large surfaces with solid color were the two impressionist methods broadly applied by Roerich. Moreover, in his pictures he always emphasized the element of mystery, and in the course of time it became the dominating trait. A prolific artist, Roerich was equally well known for his easel painting and his stylized stage settings. Stylization, which had made some progress in the works of other members of the group, with Roerich became a fundamental principle of art. Human beings assumed the likeness of inanimate objects, and clouds and stones that of people. In his choice of themes he passed from the weird cliffs and lakes of Finland, painted in a color scheme suggesting either the creation of the end of the world, to the mysteries of the cities of India, and finally to the divine secrets of the Himalayas and Tibet. Exoticism led Roerich away from Russia to American skyscrapers, where his

canvases found permanent shelter. This fact shows once again how cosmopolitan was that particular type of Russian art.

When approaching the new achievements in Russian portrait painting it is well to remember that realism had always prevailed in this field. The romantic classicist Bruellow, though artificial in his historical and allegorical compositions, was a perfect realist in portrait painting, and created works which outlived his school. To some extent the same is true of Gay (1831-94), Kramskoy (1837-87), Repin, and a number of other artists. The period of protest against the Itinerants also produced a remarkable portrait painter, Valentine Serov (1865-1911), a pupil of Repin, whose earlier pictures had been shown at the Itinerant Exhibitions. By introducing into his art some of the World Artists' tendencies, he gained the recognition of the new school and became associated with it. At the same time Serov remained true to realism even when trying to "spiritualize" it by other than purely pictorial means. To understand the psychology of his model was one of Serov's chief preoccupations, resulting in "not only wonderful pieces of painting, but also very clever, very subtle, and very convincing characterizations" (Benois). Serov's achievements, as is known, cost him great and painstaking efforts. Not satisfied with the mastery of color, he assiduously sought the "line," the true stroke that would at once supply the characteristic trait. But in all these pursuits he never verged on stylization and retained his realism. This type of realism necessitated the introduction of a new term—"neo-realism."

The new spiritual currents which had difficulty in breaking through the inherent realism of landscape and portrait painting sought for themselves, and found, a wider sphere in the fairy world of Russian folklore and in religious painting, where stylization and color could be developed to any desired extent. But even in this field the movement began rather unassumingly, and at first avoided overstepping too pointedly the confines of realism. Its initiator, Victor Vasnetsov (b. 1848), belonged to the generation of the Itinerants and was never fully recognized by the younger artists. His "Alenushka," "The Knights at the Crossroad," "Ivan Tsarevich," and "The Three Tsarevnas of the Subterranean Kingdom," all painted during the eighteen-eighties, were efforts to penetrate into the realm of fairy tale and *bylina* (epic folklore),

but were judged unsatisfactory by the new school because in them Vasnetsov still adhered too much to realism. They were not "visions" but actual, living people in the midst of real nature, although compared with Polenov's (b. 1844) frankly realistic works they undoubtedly represented an approach to idealism. Vasnetsov's ideas were a novelty in Russia and as such could not fail to arouse intense feeling and argument among both artists and the public. His transition from the subjects of fairy tale to the painting of frescoes at the Cathedral of the Assumption in Kiev (1886) was accompanied by rumors that there would be created something "great and holy, a new revelation." Vasnetsov obviously aspired to the crown of laurels Ivanov had failed to attain. When ten years later the work was finished, those who saw it were amazed at the unusual blending of Byzantine tradition with modern technique. His Madonna, with her enormous eyes and coquettish posture, brought Vasnetsov great popularity. But this time the young artists were right when they refused to acknowledge him as the one to revive national religious art. They compared Vasnetsov's work with the recently rediscovered ancient Russian icon, and the comparison was to his detriment. The young generation showed a preference for their contemporary Nesterov (b. 1862), though in their opinion his collaboration with Vasnetsov on the frescoes of the Cathedral in Kiev had rather corrupted him. Nesterov's icons were considered to be "as sugary and manneristic as Vasnetsov's artificial creations," but he received recognition for "the poetry of his prayerful moods, the gentle ecstasies, the wonderful visions and revelations," harmonizing so perfectly with his landscape. Scenes from monastic life and visions of the ascetics were unfolded by him against the austere background of the Russian North, where many of the Russian saints had lived, and many of the hagiographic legends had originated.

The younger artists, Roerich (b. 1874), Bilibin (b. 1876), and the solitary Vrubel (1856-1910), naturally moved forward more daringly in this sphere of legend and folklore. Vrubel in particular should be singled out for the grandiosity of conceptions, the intense, incessant quest of new forms of beauty, and the acute and morbid feeling that his accomplishments could never equal his aspirations. His mastery of tonality, which attained perfection in

his "Pearl" and "The Demon," his attempts at a creative reincarnation of nature, and his near approach to the mood of a true religious artist—all these were but fragments of that to which he aspired. Insanity and death put an end to the struggle with his own ideal, the realization of which proved to be beyond his strength.

In separating the original group of the World Artists from those who came from the outside to follow their banner, we may now ask ourselves what innovations were introduced into the history of art, and into art itself by the enthusiastic founders of this group. This point can be elucidated by a reference to their own declaration, which bears the signature of Serge Diaghilev (1872-1929). "It is always easy to *repudiate*," it says, "and with our usual, cherished scepticism we have attained perfection in this matter. But what ought we to *proclaim* instead, how should we discriminate in our choice from the unclassified and chaotic property left to us by our fathers, when nothing but the revaluation of the countless treasures we have inherited would occupy the life time of our generation?" "How can we, who seek only individuality and believe only in ourselves, possibly take for granted the convictions and arguments of our fathers and forefathers?" is Diaghilev's next question. The first half of this sentence is somewhat qualified by the following reservation: "We are more broad-minded than anyone has ever been. We admire *everything*, but we see it from our own point of view, and in this and only in this sense do we admire ourselves." At first glance, this suggests a renunciation of originality and acceptance of eclecticism, so abhorred by the new school. Yet eclecticism remained alien to the new group, which possessed, on the contrary, extreme self-assertion, almost verging on obsession. But has this self-assertion any positive content? Again Diaghilev says: "We then emerged with new demands, confirming by our very appearance the validity of the general law of historical development. True, we differed somewhat from the established artistic standards, and we took a few timid and innocent steps turning aside from the great highway, and because of this we were called the children of decadence." Is that accusation fair? Yes and no. "We represent another sad epoch," continues Diaghilev, "when art, having attained the zenith of its maturity, sheds the last slanting rays of the setting sun over an aging civilization. It is not the new

generation that is decadent, but all the three principal trends of art that have replaced one another during the nineteenth century—classicism, romanticism, and realism. As to ourselves, we remain sceptical observers refuting and accepting in an equal manner every effort made prior to our time.”

Diagilev is willing to recognize that “children frequently have a truly childish desire to do everything their fathers have not done, and to pride themselves on their excesses.” But he professes surprise at “the shortsightedness of the fathers who rise to the bait of the children’s provocation. Why . . . do they not understand that every new epoch is always crowded . . . with many extremes, which . . . should be rejected . . . as one does the superfluous shell that covers the true kernel?” Moreover Diagilev insists—and not without foundation—that in the case of the World Artists the “children” were not guilty of real excesses. “It is ridiculous and foolish to judge our epoch by the paintings of Van Gogh and La Rochefoucauld or the literary works of Mallarmé and Lewis. These are ludicrous and unconvincing examples. Epochs should only be judged by the serious elements that express them and not by the few casual celebrities.”

These statements deserve further consideration. It should be admitted that the World of Art actually stood apart from those extremes which the “children” of the next generation were to regard as the true norm of art. The World Artists turned to the past—and a far distant one at that—for their models instead of looking for them in the present, and they deserve credit for reviving the memory of that past. Their sole indisputable authority on modern art was Whistler, and among the Impressionists they studied in detail only the works of Degas. While struggling with the national Russian school and trying to show the benefits of a new alliance with the West, they nevertheless treated the question of national element in art most cautiously. If, on the one hand, “nothing could be more ruinous for a creative artist than a studious attempt to *become* national,” then, on the other hand, “the very nature of the artist must be national, and it must involuntarily, or even at times against his will, reflect the true national spirit.” From this point of view the World Artists condemned the efforts of the conscientious seekers after nationality in art and their superficial use of the

supposedly typical national traits as a fatal mistake. And yet, when it came to exporting the new Russian art, Diaghilev himself did not hesitate to choose deliberately these very "superficial traits" as the ones most likely to attract public interest abroad. In fact, it was this exotic combination of lines, movement, melody, and harmony that accounted for the tremendous success of the Russian ballet, operatic music, and scenery in Europe. But did this mean the creation of a true national style? It would have been a great achievement, but we dare not attribute it to the World Artists. Undoubtedly they deserve credit for their efforts to create a Russian style in furniture, ornaments, embroideries, and the like, but even here the national style was too crowded with elements of the *style moderne* and the unassimilated recollections of ancient Russian art, to produce any impression of final achievement.

Thus the World of Art activities definitely left room for the following generation to discover new ways of artistic progress. In their attempts the newcomers first repudiated much of all that had been accepted by the World Artists, and then as a point of departure they chose exactly what Benois and Diaghilev had regarded as "excess" and "shell." The World of Art group had come to modernity by the way of history, and had endeavored throughout to maintain a certain historical objectivity. The new "children," frankly ignorant of history, had no desire to be objective even in the Diaghilev sense of the word.

This discord between the new generation and the World Artists became apparent rather soon. As early as 1906, we find in *Golden Fleece*, an article by Benois on the "Artistic Heresies," with a sharp formulation of the issues over which he differed with the young artists. "The generation now maturing and which will replace us," wrote Benois, "is carried away by individualism, and despises canons, schools, and tradition." In his opinion this individualism is heresy, because it repudiates all "fellowship." "True art is only alive in schools where the artists center around a definite dogma." "An individual ego detached from everything outside of its sphere can scarcely possess intrinsic value." "But what do the artists do? They seek their own corners, find pleasure in self-adulation . . . striving only to be themselves. Such strictly imposed individualism is absurd and leads a human being to the primitive state. At the

present time, the position created for art," Benois concludes, "is unprecedented. . . . It resembles mostly the epoch of the downfall of ancient Rome, or Byzantinism."

In publishing Benois' article the editors of the periodical found it necessary to state that his point of view differed from theirs. Moreover, on the pages of the same magazine there subsequently appeared serious objections coming from Shervashidze, Milioti, Voloshin, and others.<sup>3</sup> Shervashidze wrote: "The barbaric invasion is a fresh vigor of life. It is beyond our power to restrain it. Life is ever creating new forms, and the new forms of life demand new art. . . . How it will materialize we do not know, but we believe firmly in the inexhaustible power of life." Milioti made a bitter attack on the World of Art, accusing it of a "drawing-room spirit" and the World Artists of having banished from art "all the drama of spiritual emotions and reduced to insignificance the fundamental function of art by their refined aestheticism." "All religious feeling was forgotten," Milioti wrote in another article; "Christ and His Apostles . . . were replaced by cupids and manneristic ladies and gentlemen. . . . The soul degenerated, grew thin, and assumed a form too fragile and ethereal." His decided opinion was that "Russian art faced a fateful question: either to retire into itself, expand the range of refined emotions, and serve as entertainment to a sympathetic but restricted group, or else to broaden and deepen . . . our inner emotions, be unafraid of the imperious demands of objective life, and thus become really indispensable." Voloshin likewise emphasized the social motive, combining it with a formula the full significance of which we shall see later on.

The task of art is not that it should reflect life like a mirror, but that it should transform, uplift, and fashion every moment of existing nature. Art is the justification of life. That is why painting must reach beyond the confines of a framed picture, which is absolutely alien to the interior decoration and architecture of modern dwellings. The creation of objects surrounding man has actually passed into factory hands; artists have lost the opportunity to participate immediately in the re-creation of life.

<sup>3</sup> See *Golden Fleece*, 1906, II, V, VI; 1907, V; 1909, IV.

The art of painting had to advance a long way from the stand taken by the World Artists in order to arrive at this conclusion. In the West a similar evolution had required about half a century for its completion. Russian art had missed the initial stage of this newest development, but subsequently it went through the process at an accelerated pace, skipping over several stages and thus being able to overtake the latest Western achievements in some twenty or twenty-five years. Throughout this period Paris remained the chief source of influence and inspiration.

The new period in the history of modern art in Western Europe had been ushered in by Impressionism, but at first Russian art remained impervious to the influence of that school. There was no need for it to adopt from the Impressionists such features as their protest against academism, their idea of painting nature and life unadorned, or their democratic bohemianism with its preference for subjects taken from country life or scenes observed in city taverns. Even the Impressionist technique, particularly the *pleinairism*, as we know, was not entirely new to Russia. In fact, Russian artists found their own national way to sincerity and simplicity exactly at the time when in Paris a parallel movement led Corot, Courbet, and Millet to Realism, and the disciples of Eduard Manet to Impressionism. Moreover, the Itinerants temporarily interrupted the heretofore continued dependence of Russian art on that of the West. When, at the end of the nineteenth century, the connection was reestablished, the Russians were facing a completed cycle of Western progress, from which they could take whatever material they chose. But they did not become blind imitators. The Russian artists of the new generation had their own way of protesting against the literary character of the Itinerants' works, as expressed in the predominance of subject over manner in painting, and this drew them closer to Impressionism, in which they also found this very quality advanced by the Impressionists as a peculiarity of the school: *la bonne peinture* expressed in a new manner of using color, often to the detriment of form and drawing. The tendency towards vivid coloring was traditional in Russia, and here the discoveries of the Impressionists fell on fertile ground. The first Russian propagandist of this particular Impressionist achievement was Kuindzhi,



who as early as the eighteen-eighties brought the innovation from Paris, and subsequently transmitted the art of color to his pupils, Roerich and Constantine Bogaevsky.

The first real Impressionist of Russia, Constantine Korovin, had also studied in Paris, yet, notwithstanding the Impressionist technique, he remained true to his native Russian originality. In his work of decorating the Russian pavilion at the Paris Exhibition of 1900 the French people saw for the first time the fruits of Russian art's alliance with modern painting. At the same exhibition the Russian colorist Maliavin (b. 1869) absolutely astounded the public with the vast sea of red color in the dashing parade of his "Babas" (Peasant Women). In this connection we must mention another outstanding Russian colorist, Golovin (b. 1863), a pupil of the Itinerants, who collaborated with Korovin both at the exhibition and again in later days, but who acquired his mastery of color only after repeated visits (1905-07) to Italy and Spain.

The final years of the nineteenth century were those during which the outstanding Russian artists came into closer contact with the newest trends of foreign painting. It was significant that the group which raised the banner of cosmopolitanism in art called itself the "World of Art." This world was as though rediscovered in Russia, and not only the youth, but even the mature artists helped themselves from its treasure chest. Naturally they preferred what was most modern, and the enthusiasm of the moment was for the Post-Impressionists—Cézanne, Van Gogh, and Gauguin—while both the founders of Impressionism and the Neo-Impressionists were relegated to the past. This process of intimate acquaintance with the recent trends in Western art was greatly assisted by the Russian artists' frequent visits abroad and, even on a wider scale, by exhibitions, which shortly acquired a cosmopolitan character. In 1898 Diagilev began his artistic career by holding an exhibition of Russian art, in 1899 he organized an international one, which in 1900 was followed by the first of the World of Art, while the works of Russian artists appeared also that same year at the Paris Exhibition. Under Diagilev's management the Exhibition of Russian Art was held in 1906 at the Paris Autumn Salon, and almost simultaneously the famous seasons of Ballet Russe were inaugurated.

But what was the result of this closer union between Russian art and Western Europe? The foreigners saw instantly that the Russians were not slavishly imitating their art, but were showing something original and unknown to them, which was accepted as being exotic—even barbaric, perhaps—but nevertheless unusual and worthy of recognition.

In order to understand what was peculiarly Russian in this art we must pause at the transient figure of Borisov-Musatov (1870-1905), a gifted artist who died prematurely.

Musatov endowed French technique with his sensitive and tender Russian soul, and to him more than to anybody else we can apply P. Muratov's remark that in spite of all the influx of Western influences, new Russian art succeeded in preserving its intimate and profound character, its religious longing, and its pure lyricism. One must point out, however, that this Russian painter's mood was neither accidental nor unusual, but coincided with that period in the development of contemporary art in Western Europe which ordinarily is referred to as Expressionism. This "art of inner emotions" found its home not so much in the clear and cold atmosphere of France as in that of the misty and sentimentally romantic North. While it would be useless to seek the direct sources of influence upon Musatov in France, it is rather easy to find parallels for his art in northern Europe. In France the term Expressionism signified merely an antithesis to Impressionism, whereas in Germany it developed into *Weltanschauung*, and to be an Expressionist was to portray the soul (*Seele malen*). The only Post-Impressionist in France who aspired to portray the soul was Van Gogh, a Dutchman. Another artist whose mood was like Musatov's was Munch, a Norwegian with a dreamy northern soul and a tendency towards melancholy, who brought the French Expressionist technique from Paris to Germany. Although in some respects Musatov resembled these Western artists, he was typically Russian in replacing urbanism with a poetical representation of a country manor. His favorite theme was young women, pale and delicate, in old-fashioned and rather provincial costumes, passing like shadows in the evening twilight against the background of autumnal foliage..

Musatov was neither a chance phenomenon in the history of

Russian painting nor an exception. A group of artists, among whom were some of his intimate friends, first exhibited their Expressionist works with the World of Art and then, in 1907, at their own exhibition called "The Blue Rose," which, as S. Makovsky promptly pointed out, was a definite protest against the tendency of the World Artists.

It is important to note that some members of "The Blue Rose" already went beyond Expressionism. Yet, generally speaking, various trends of contemporary Western art were adopted in Russia with such haste that the evolution of Russian painting during that period was not able to follow any strict order of logical consecutiveness. Before the recently introduced and still largely unfamiliar Expressionism had time to assert itself, new and more radical tendencies began to clamor for recognition. At that stage, as Makovsky expressed it, "the last link between painting and the material side of the world which it pretended to picture was definitely lost." The two outstanding representatives of the trend in question—M. Larionov and Natalie Goncharova—were born in the same year (1881). They studied together at the School of Painting, Sculpture, and Architecture in Moscow, and subsequently continued to work in close association. They both experienced the same foreign influences, and both sought inspiration at the popular Russian sources of primitivism. The art critics have established the following three periods in the succession of various foreign influences in the works of both Larionov and Goncharova:

1900–1905, Impressionism and Secessionism;

1906–1911, Cubism and Primitivism;

from 1912, Futurism and Radialism.

The chronology of this scheme is significant. We see from it that the Russian innovators had overtaken the West at the second stage, and even attempted to outdistance it at the third, illustrating thereby the general law of accelerated development characteristic of Russian art of the period. The influence of Impressionism was amply recorded in a series of Larionov's works, painted from 1903 to 1905, after the latest manner of Claude Monet and representing "Rose Bushes" and "Corners of a Barn" under various effects of light at different hours of the day and night.

As indicated above, the critics found in the art of Larionov and

Goncharova, besides Impressionism, another foreign influence—Secessionism. The reference here is to the German "Secession," particularly the Munich group, which arose in 1912 under the name of "The Blue Horseman" (*Der Blaue Reiter*): Franz Marc, Basil Kandinsky, and others. Both Larionov and Goncharova were invited to participate in "The Blue Horseman" exhibition, where they were to meet with the most extreme examples of the breach between art and nature. But, as we shall see, they were already fully prepared for that. The tempo in the shift of art's latest ideas had by that time become positively feverish, and the Moscow artists, followed by their St. Petersburg colleagues, did everything in their power not to lag behind Europe.

In December 1910 and January 1911 Larionov organized an exhibition in Moscow under the name of "The Knave of Diamonds." At that time Larionov and Goncharova were considering themselves Cubists, a reasonable claim because of their simplified drawing. A series of exhibitions followed and all were filled with the works of these prolific artists.

It was natural that so much ado and energy should lead to imitation, the more so because the primitive manner, the simplified drawing, and particularly the geometric structures detached from any subject, were easy to copy and did not require special training. The "Union of Youth," with David Burliuk as its most prominent member, was formed at that time in St. Petersburg. During the winter seasons of 1911-13 a vociferous propaganda of Futurism was started, and both in St. Petersburg and Moscow there were numerous and highly animated debates on modern art. Confusion increased when the original Moscow innovators decided to dissociate themselves from many of their followers and imitators, whom they accused of having vulgarized their ideas beyond recognition. This they did in a rather pretentious declaration issued by Larionov and Goncharova, jointly with nine other artists, in an introduction to the catalogue of their exhibition of 1912-13. Besides criticizing all other schools, including the Cubist and Futurist, the declaration attempted also to formulate the positive aims of the group. "Art for life or rather life for art. . . . Genius pervades the style of our time—our trousers, coats, shoes, tramcars, automobiles, airplanes, railroads, gigantic steamers

—so fascinating—such a great epoch, the like of which has never existed in the history of the world.” Here the authors of the declaration formally joined the ranks of urbanists and expressed their enthusiasm for the machine age. But further they announced two other principles, having no connection with the first and even antagonistic to it: “Long live the beautiful Orient! We join modern Oriental artists for concerted work,” and “Long live nationality! We walk hand in hand with the house painters.”

This dualism, in fact, was typical throughout the art of Larionov and Goncharova. It was at one and the same time cosmopolitan and national and it found its inspiration both in the latest Western ideas and in the Eastern primitives.

We shall return presently to the national and Oriental traits of their art, but first we must follow to the end the line of their Western adoptions. We know that Larionov had scarcely had time to become a Cubist when in the West Cubism developed into Futurism. Larionov, however, was not satisfied with a mere imitation of foreign artists, and so he unfolded his own theory, which he called “Radialism.” In opposition to the Impressionist method of painting in planes, Cubism wanted to conquer space by organizing it into geometric structures. Futurism added to that the organization of movement in space, and as this touched upon the problem of time in space it led the mind to the regions bordering on science and metaphysics. Radialism followed along these lines. “Science tells us,” Larionov reasoned, “that we see all objects through the medium of rays that emanate from them. Therefore, strictly speaking, we do not actually see the object as such, but only the sum of rays which coming from the source of light are reflected by the object and enter into the field of our vision.” Consequently, painting must represent not the visible objects but “certain forms selected by the artist’s own will and generated by the intersection in space of the reflected rays of various objects.” In works painted according to this theory the uninitiated spectator sees nothing but a chaos of intersected lines, with clusters of “rays” issuing in disorder from some points of intersection.

‘This part of Larionov’s and Goncharova’s art could not fail to provoke the liveliest controversies, and if it survived these polemics it was due to its other aspect. The fact is that in trying to find pat-

terns for their simplified painting, these artists bethought themselves of the original source of the Russian primitive—popular art. Did not Gauguin show enthusiasm for the art of Negroes and Aztecs, and did not the Russian adversaries of the Itinerants look for primitives in ancient icon painting? Then why not resort to the more immediately accessible forms of popular art, such as Russian lace, toys, snuffboxes, trays, or even the commercial signs made by provincial sign painters? That was the meaning of the formula "nationality and the Orient." The new art's passion for these sources was, of course, an exaggerated one; but undeniably it led the two artists to a great variety of new motifs, particularly of the ornamental type, and enabled them to develop their talents as colorists.

It was exactly this side of Russian art that had already brought it in touch with the West on a more or less equal footing. Here the Russian art abandoned the cosmopolitanism of mere imitators of the newest French and German trends for a genuine folk element. Although in itself this is not sufficient for an art to become truly national, yet it was actually this quality of the new Russian art that produced the greatest impression abroad. This brings us to the export of Russian art, which is associated with the world-famous Ballet Russe and the name of its chief organizer, Serge Diaghilev.

When Diaghilev started his enterprise all its essential elements were in readiness. In his earlier career he had gradually become the master of the three branches of art, which he later amalgamated in the Ballet Russe. He began by organizing exhibitions of the World Artists, then, being also something of a musician, he formed connections with the new generation of Russian composers, and finally, because he had served in the management of the Imperial Theatres, he had acquired familiarity with the classical ballet. In 1906 Diaghilev brought Russian paintings to Paris; in 1907 he acquainted the Parisians with Russian music (Historical Concerts), and in 1909 he inaugurated the Ballet Russe, which for twenty years, until his death in 1929, continued to unfold its fairy-like pageant, if not always from success to success, at least from one sensation to another. With the genius of a born impresario, Diaghilev realized that the ballet was the best form of art to make his

enterprise popular among foreigners, but his greatest achievement was the skill with which he combined the three branches of art—Russian scenery painting, Russian choreography, and Russian music—into a single masterpiece, possessing such peculiar freshness, vividness, and vigor.

The outstanding trait of the Ballet Russe, which enabled it to fascinate foreigners and to win their immediate recognition, was its exoticism. Here was something never seen before, something that carried the audience away from everyday surroundings into the world of fairy tales. This peculiar quality of the new Russian art was, indeed, due to its intimate connection with the national folklore, a circumstance attributable not only to a passing fashion, but to the general conditions of Russia's cultural development, which accounted for the tenacity and vitality of the popular element in art. Thus Tugendhold was perfectly right when, in replying to Marcel Prévost, who attempted to prove that the ballet could attain perfection only under a monarchy, he argued that although such was, undoubtedly, the historical origin of the ballet in Russia, its modern achievements had nothing in common with it.<sup>4</sup> They were based chiefly on folk dances and the "dancing tradition still flourishing among the Russian people." Equally indisputable is the fact that folk song and rhythm have played an important part in modern Russian music, and that the vivid, clear colors of popular art have inspired the scenery and the costumes created by Russian colorists. One can add to this the element of iconographic archaism, which is very evident in Bilibin's conventionalized drawing, and the Oriental element which permeates all modern Russian dances, music, scenery, and costumes. Tugendhold also mentioned two other important features—the chorus-like discipline in the movements of both the solo dancers and the supernumeraries, and the "truth in movement" corresponding to "truth in sound," which created the impression of spontaneity and sincerity. Finally, it must be pointed out that for the majority of Diaghilev's productions the subjects were taken either from Russian folklore or from Oriental tales, two sources particularly conducive to the development of all the above-mentioned traits.

Through the medium of this complex and well-integrated art,

<sup>4</sup> See his article in *Apollo*, 1910, X.

foreigners were brought in touch with a virtually unfamiliar culture, shown to them in its most peculiar aspects and with an emphasis upon its primitive side. Because of this, the impression produced was unusually strong and at the same time disturbing. The Ballet Russe was unanimously acclaimed at first, but voices were raised in protest when it became a regular item of the Paris winter season. Besides the nationalists' discontent with the predominance of Russians, there was also the "incompatibility of soul." This feeling became particularly strong each time that Diaghilev tried to introduce into his repertory some productions adapted from Western subjects or the music of Chopin, Schubert, and Debussy. In 1912 Lalo wrote in connection with the production of *L'Après-midi d'un faune*: "The Russians have provided us with many beautiful pictures and helpful lessons, but they are contributing to the deterioration of our taste with their passion for gorgeous and brilliant pageants, whose only aim is to delight the eye. Actually, it is barbarism disguised as refined art. *La marque des barbares est sur eux.*" The French people were also somewhat disconcerted by the lavish settings of the Ballet: the bright, vivid coloring of the Russian palette, the subtle voluptuousness of Bakst's costumes, Sudeikin's saturnalia of color, Bilibin's conventionalized drawing, Goncharova's primitives, and Larionov's geometric structures—all containing a vast amount of orientalism and primitivism. These fountains of color and chromatic feasts were in too great a contrast with the faded subdued shades of contemporary fashion and the intentionally modest theatrical productions which in those days avoided strong scenic effects and completely lacked harmony in the scenery, costumes, and music.

Here we must stress the fact that it was the Russian part of the Diaghilev Ballet, which during the first five years was its outstanding feature, that received unreserved recognition abroad. During those early years the Ballet relied almost entirely on the accumulated artistic resources of the Imperial Theatres, and the collaboration of the World Artists. But this initial success soon came to an end. The repeated production of the old ballets no longer aroused the former enthusiasm. It was necessary to progress with the times, which meant making the Ballet more European and introducing upon the stage artistic novelties from Montmartre and Montpar-



nasse, resulting in the stormy controversy that arose in Parisian artistic circles. As Diaghilev always welcomed new ideas, even at the risk of failure, he abandoned his earlier exoticism, which had been unquestioningly accepted by foreigners as the national Russian style, and fearlessly followed the latest Parisian vogue, winning thereby the approval of a few connoisseurs and the general resentment of the public. Gradually Benois and Bakst were replaced by Goncharova and Larionov; Borodin and Rimsky-Korsakov by Stravinsky and Prokofiev; Fokin, Nizhinsky, and the two ballerinas of the Imperial Ballet, Anna Pavlova and Karsavina, by Miasin, Nizhinskaia, and Lifar, all three trained by Diaghilev. Simultaneously the leaders of modern European art were brought to the forefront: Debussy, Ravel, Florent Schmitt, and Erik Satie replaced Chopin and Schumann, while Picasso, Matisse, Derain, Gris, Marie Laurencin, and Utrillo took the places of the Russian scenery painters. Only the staff of the Ballet could not be replaced. This actual coöperation of foreign and Russian artists contributed largely to the further development of Russian art. It must be added, however, that the second and longest period of the Ballet Russe, which began in 1914 with the production of Picasso and Satie's "Parade," belongs mostly to post-war days, when Russia was already cut off from the rest of the world.

What was the foreigners' impression of the Ballet Russe at this second period? The spontaneous recognition of an alien and exotic art was now replaced with a struggle against radical tendencies in Western art itself. In the heat of this struggle Russian artists were looked upon with increasing suspicion as the originators of barbarism in modern art, and even those critics who at first had been fascinated by Russian exoticism now began to feel restive and annoyed. We have a characteristic expression of this attitude in Arsène Alexandre's introduction to the catalogue of the "World of Art" exhibition of 1921.

We thought [he wrote] that after the exhibition of 1906 we understood Russian art. But now, in 1921 . . . it would be unwise to say, 'I understand.' . . . The newest tendencies . . . either abandon themselves in stormy transports, the rhythm of which escapes us, or else they combine inexorable realism with the stolid, elaborate detail work of the primitives. Neither their tradition nor their

innovation is the same as ours. Thus, in spite of the fascination their works still exercise upon us, we cannot agree entirely with them in understanding and emotions. Is it possible to transplant to our brain the mentality of another race? . . . The influence of Russian paintings would definitely destroy what little we have preserved of our national genius. That is why I rejoice over these unexpected revelations and at the same time am on the alert against them.

With Diaghilev's death in 1929 a note of reconciliation was introduced into this attitude; but it was a reconciliation with something that was forever ended and would never again be repeated. This fact was emphasized in most of the articles published in the commemorative issue of the *Revue Musicale*. "*La superbe folie, le bonheur de l'étrangeté, peut-être faut-il que la beauté meurt,*" wrote Countess de Noailles, the poetess. "*La magie charmante est finie,*" echoed E. Henriot, while Maurice Brillant spoke of a "by-gone power," and "an epoch entirely finished and now seeming to us distant. . . ."

These remarks, alluding to the end of the epoch of Ballet Russe, will serve us as a transition from the history to the present state of Russian art. The accelerated rhythm in which the latest trends followed each other and their extreme radicalism were confusing not only to the foreigners but to the Russians as well. We know that in Russia this succession of trends did not possess even that regularity which to some extent it still preserved in the West. In trying to overtake the Western development, Russian art passed far more quickly through these changes and in the process added to them its own eccentricities. As a result in Russia the new ideas had no time in which to take root, and exhausted themselves much sooner than they did in the West. The ultimate outcome was, nevertheless, identical in both cases. In Russia, as in the West, the circle was completed by a return to old artistic traditions and methods. The artists became more independent of the latest fashion and began to express in art their own individuality.

Contrary to the expectations of those who tenaciously predicted a revival of religious painting, attempts in this particular type of art were confined to stylization and intentional archaism. Sometimes, as in the works of Stelletsy, it was nothing but a rather

mechanical copying of ancient patterns. The intimate landscape stood on firmer ground, for it was able to combine realism with expression of individual moods, as for example in Kustodiev's village inns and secluded provincial lanes, or in Lakhovsky's picturesque corners of St. Petersburg, Pskov, and other Russian cities. But the trend which could be more easily understood by the foreigners was the return to painstaking execution of details, in the manner of Van Eyck, as seen in the works of A. Iakovlev and Shukhaev. Iakovlev, a prolific artist, presented to the European public many series of realistic pictures of his travels in the Far East and through Central Africa, and of everyday life in France. The realism in these paintings reminds one more of the old Russian Itinerants than it does of Gauguin's exoticism.

A separate place in contemporary Russian art belongs to the artists who have tried to combine realism with the most daring innovation. Boris Grigoriev's (b. 1886) works are a good example of this complex style of painting. Russian life of the moment (the early years of the revolution) supplied this artist with ample material, for it ignored in every possible way all outward conventionalities and presented subjects which would have aroused Van Gogh's envy. Anything that deviated from the normal became the rule, and in the quest to satisfy elementary needs the brute in man came to the fore. A dull bestiality was reflected even in the facial expression of the people. Thus reality approached stylization and caricature, and from it Grigoriev chose the types for his "Russia" and the landscapes of untilled land covered with the yellow ochre of clay and loess. From his awful, inexorably realistic canvases domestic animals look at the spectator with the huge, conscious eyes of man, while human beings are humbled to the level of animals.

Mark Shagal (b. 1887), a contemporary of Grigoriev, is a similar phenomenon. Both artists brought with them to Paris their individual impressions of lonely places in Russia. Shagal's recollections of Vitebsk, his native place, were as vivid as those Grigoriev had of his Russian village. In Paris they both went through the inevitable school of Cubism and conscientiously absorbed its teachings. Then gradually they were emancipated from its dead dullness, and relying on the all-too-vivid impressions of their earlier years, Grigoriev

began crowding his canvases with scenes from workaday life of the Russian masses, and Shagal with those of the Jewish Ghetto. But Shagal exceeded Grigoriev in his disregard of all natural laws. In his pictures human beings fly, stand on their heads, sometimes heads are detached from the bodies, attitudes are contrary to all laws of equilibrium, houses are deformed and bent like living beings, men are larger than buildings, and perspective is completely ignored. Without trying to compare the creative power of these two artists, we have apposed them only to show the traits they have in common as being characteristic of this particular phase in the development of Russian art. It was the time when every radical trend soon found itself in an impasse and was repudiated; the time of new pursuits, when talent, liberated from binding doctrines, sought an individual expression in art. In following this course the two artists in question have introduced significant modifications in their earlier style; their latest works show a gradual transition from the heaven (or hell) they had created to solid ground, which no mortal is ashamed to tread.

In describing all these modern trends, we have reached a sphere which lies beyond the revolutionary upheaval that had separated Russia from the emigration. A free and unhampered development of various trends, of course, has been possible only in the emigration. But we know that cultural life has not been at a standstill in Soviet Russia. Therefore we must see now what has taken place in the field of art under the rule of the Bolsheviks.

## IV

# ART IN SOVIET RUSSIA

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**T**HE fate of the figurative arts under the Soviet régime was in many respects similar to that of literature.<sup>1</sup> At first in both fields there was a sharp break between the old and the new. Simultaneously with the obliteration of the past many ultra-radical trends, the very latest fashions in art, appeared in the forefront. These groups, as those in literature, claimed to represent exclusively a specific revolutionary tendency, and therefore regarded themselves as being close to the new government and entitled to share in the profits. In both instances these claims were soon found to be largely imaginary. Under the NEP some remnants of the old pre-revolutionary trends emerged from concealment, while the relative freedom of the period permitted new sprouts to appear; some combination of the old and the new was attempted, and compromises between them were formulated. Finally, in later years when the government had mastered the situation in both fields, it imposed upon them a centralized control with crushing tendencies which threatened to render all these new shoots barren and to replace the spontaneous inspiration with the formal stamp of "social command." Yet it seems that quite recently there began a new period of reaction against the dead uniformity and submission to government orders.

We will begin with the exodus of the old trends. Their most eminent representatives, such outstanding artists as Maliavin, Korovin, Bilibin, Sudeikin, Sorin, Lakhovsky, Iakovlev, Shukhaev, Grigoriev, Somov, A. Benois, Goncharova, Dobuzhinsky, and Larionov all emigrated to foreign countries; Roerich withdrew

<sup>1</sup> See Part II, chs. 4 and 5.—Ed.

to exotic regions, while Repin established himself in Finland. Others who remained in Russia were silent, and in this enforced silence the triumphant cry of the Futurists resounded with great strength and arrogance. The new Bolshevik ideology stimulated the further development of many artistic "isms," which had originated before the revolution. "Collective man" became the slogan for both the Soviet state and Soviet culture. In order not to impede the development of a collective type of "new man," the inner and distinctive private life of an individual had to be set aside. Lenin himself proclaimed that after the destruction of the bureaucratic machine of the modern state "all citizens were to become employees and workers in a state syndicate," and "all should perform the self same work . . . carry out their tasks properly and receive equal remuneration." In echoing Lenin, Bukharin approached the human society as a beehive, where everything was based on a purely social point of view, admitting no trace of spiritual life. In accord with these views the historian Pokrovsky stated that "in an individual the Marxists did not see the creator of history, but only an apparatus by means of which history operates," and that "in the future these apparatuses, probably, will be produced artificially just as electrical accumulators are built at the present time." This theme of a Bolshevik robot was seized upon by both painters and poets. Demian Bedny sang of a marching crowd as of "millions of legs in one body" that has but "one step, one heart, and one will." The powerful people "under whose feet the pavement shakes and who will make the whole universe tremble," became the ideal of the new art. At the word of command this giant must repeat automatically the "rationalized" motions of the workman operating a machine, and the millions of concerted movements of hands, feet, and throats will result in an immense single whole. The transformation of a workman into one of the constituent parts of a machine is well illustrated in Krinsky's drawings, where figures are reduced to a few schematic tetragons, their movements are rectilinear and "rational," and in composition men are fused with parts of the machine. It is characteristic that the Bolsheviks found their ideal of "machinism" in Americanism, and from this point of view Maiakovsky sang of Chicago as "the electro-dynamo-mechanical city, built on a screw and rotating every hour around

itself," while Gastev in his appeal for Americanization wrote: "We shall seize upon the storm of the revolution, put into it the pulse of American life, and produce a work that will be as accurate as a chronometer. . . ."

The art of collective man had to be monumental. "Streets are our brushes, squares our palettes," Maiakovsky exclaimed vociferously. At first, this command that everything should be monumental found expression only in enlarging the regular forms to huge dimensions. Immense statues representing the heroes of the revolution—Marx, Engels, Radishchev, Herzen, Chernyshevsky, Stenka Razin, and Bauman<sup>2</sup>—were erected. But, as the work had to be finished rapidly, the statues were made in clay and plaster, and therefore soon nothing remained of these artistic creations. As to the cubist statue of Bakunin,<sup>3</sup> it so offended the workmen that it had to be destroyed. Other methods such as a lavish use of paint, for example, were employed in order to attain this unprecedented effect of grandeur. To celebrate the communist festival at which the collective man shook the pavement with thousands of feet, all the lawns, flower beds, and trees in front of the Grand Theatre at Moscow, were painted with red and purple paint. The crowd gazed with amazement at the sea of paint, which in geometrically intersected planes covered the streets, squares, buildings, and street cars. Thus, abandoning the limited canvases of salons and war-time exhibitions, the dubious art of the Cubists, Futurists, and Suprematists came hopefully out into the open. Carried to the extreme, it now was legalized by the October Revolution<sup>4</sup> that had given it an ideological foundation. The extent of this professional self-assertion was evident in the thousands and thousands of yards of painted linen which covered entire buildings during the celebration of the first Soviet anniversary. Tugendhold interpreted this as an effort at the "blasting and undermining of

<sup>2</sup> Radishchev, Russian liberal of the late eighteenth century, author of the first abolitionist tract in Russian literature. Herzen and Chernyshevsky, early Russian socialists of the mid-nineteenth century. Stenka Razin, leader of a peasant rebellion in the seventeenth century. Bauman, a revolutionary, killed during the civil strife in Moscow in October 1905.—Ed.

<sup>3</sup> Bakunin, the famous revolutionary of the mid-nineteenth century, founder of modern anarchism.—Ed.

<sup>4</sup> I. e., the revolution that overthrew the Provisional Government and established the Soviet régime.—Ed.

old slavish sentiments," covering up the sanctuaries, palaces, and monuments, and effacing their familiar forms. "That was the destructive work exacted by the psychology of the moment"—the psychology of the leaders, of course, for the workmen and peasant masses, according to Shchekotov, "regarded this orgy of color and line with disappointing bewilderment." In fact, Tugendhold himself admitted later that in ten years even those who had inspired this bacchanal regained their senses and ability to distinguish the "true sparks of creative genius from fireworks, ideology from phraseology, and revolutionary projects from irresponsible scheming."

After this chaotic period of Futurist predominance, revolutionary art was called upon to serve the Proletcult,<sup>5</sup> and it was placed under the centralized control of the artistic section of the Department of Figurative Arts (IZO), where systematic regulation replaced the former "liberal anarchy and battle of interests." A state fund and an All-Russian Purchasing Commission were instituted to replace the private Maecenases. The "Augean stables" in the Academy of Arts, that citadel of artistic bureaucracy, were cleaned and transformed into free state workrooms. Their work was given an industrial character tending towards the art of objects and towards factories, mills, commercial schools, and workshops. The new slogan was, "Produce objects, as a cobbler does shoes." The artist was to be but a highly qualified manufacturer, and art was transferred from the streets and squares to the laboratory.

But how was all this expressed on canvas? "Engineerism," that is, the cult of "machinism" and Americanism, was introduced into painting, while "constructivist" and "non-topical" art increased in power. From the studio of Lebedev and Lapshin there emerged numerous "suprematistic" and "cubo-futuristic" works, allegedly destined for the masses, but in fact quite beyond their comprehension. Tugendhold remarked that the attempt to introduce geometrical art into the workmen's clubs provoked a "crisis in club life and a decline in club attendance," in other words, it simply drove the people away.

With the introduction of the NEP the Purchasing Commission

<sup>5</sup> Abbreviation for "proletarian culture." See Part II, ch. 4.—ED.



was abolished, and freedom of supply and demand was proclaimed in its stead. The change naturally displeased the artists whom the Commission had patronized, but the old trends, which up to that time had remained inactive, profited by the new freedom and, like the Fellow Travelers in literature, these artists came forward once more. In the Spring of 1922 the Itinerants held their forty-eighth exhibition, which was followed by that of the Moscow Cézannists, all former members of the "Knave of Diamonds" group. Under the new conditions even the revolutionary artists returned to painting definite subjects. Before long another group was formed that chose "heroic realism" for its battle cry. Being patronized by the trade unions, this group was first allowed to hold a permanent exhibition of paintings on labor subjects, and then, in 1923, on the fifth anniversary of the Red Army, its works were shown at the War Museum and also at the Museum of Revolution, which had been opened during that same year. There was also a revival of portrait painting, and portraits of Lenin and of private individuals were exhibited. This concession to public demand resulted in a stream of people rushing at once to the exhibitions.

The "left" artists, however, soon proved unable to satisfy the demand. Their realism was of an inferior quality. Being trained to produce revolutionary posters, these painters now showed in their other works a notable lack of technical skill. Another accusation brought against the new group was that in its realism it was precisely the heroic that was not to be found. According to the critics, revolutionary passion and dynamic composition, the two most essential elements of the revolutionary art, were lacking in their works. Moreover, heroics were reduced to the level of a simple chronicle, a dry account of events. It was the same accusation that was brought against the Fellow Travelers in literature.

But in depicting everyday life the new group was as successful as were the writers of the same period. Perelman has pointed out that its members were to be seen in the factory, in barracks, at a Congress of the Comintern, or at a Soviet Convention. Yet, in the competent opinion of Tugendhold, it was "more the work of an artistic reporter than genuine art." In these paintings "work was represented as toil, as the grievous lot of the working classes, and not as the conscious labor of the proletarian." Besides, "the

dark, drab colors, the lifeless, flabby forms are nothing but legacies of the old Populist point of view which approached labor and life of the people as mere objects of pity." With a few exceptions, the critic could not find a single cheerful, active, or vigorous note. Thus, notwithstanding the "social command," no revolutionary painting was produced by the group of "Heroic Realism."

Another group which was organized at that time (1921) under the name of "Being" consisted of the former members of the "Knaves of Diamonds" who were joined by some younger artists. The psychology of these artists seemed untouched by the revolution. In fact, they passed from tormenting psychoanalysis and preoccupation with metaphysical depths to the sheer joy of living. They delighted in nature and color, were effervescing with youth and good health, and not particular as to what was to be painted: a tree, a peasant, a Communist youth, a landscape, or a nude. The whole universe was looked upon as an unbroken still-life, as the pretext for an orgy of rich color and sweeping brush strokes, to the detriment of form. Although in 1925 the "Being" merged with the group of "Heroic Realism," it retained its individual character. The sun, verdure, and atmosphere, the exuberance, freshness, and joy of living of the one contrasted vividly with the gray tones of the other. The public demanded paintings representing ordinary people, their life and daily surroundings, and the artists of the "Being," like the members of other groups, began to produce genre.

As in literature, the struggle between the "left" and "right" trends in art led to an attempt at compromise. There was little of the revolutionary in this compromise, nor did it as yet comply with the command for socialist construction. At this period the most important development in Soviet painting was the gradual drawing together of various trends and their move towards a common ground—an attempt to reproduce in art contemporary life. But this process of sovietization, or renunciation of the "inner sabotage" of early days, here as in literature, was not a capitulation either to the Communist dogma or to the political dictatorship of the Bolsheviks. To use Tugendhold's expression, the "straightening of the artistic front was carried out along the lines of a steady advance towards realism, as the only general and firm base of art."

Had the course of events in Soviet Russia been less turbulent, it is quite likely that this process of a mutual adaptation of old traditions and new ideological demands would have continued in that direction. But in 1928 a crisis occurred in Soviet life which inevitably affected art. In the *Almanac of Literature and Art* for 1929 it was admitted that the preceding year had been "the breaking point in the development of the arts." We shall take advantage of the *Almanac's* data to analyze the character of this crisis.

It was provoked by new demands upon art formulated in official quarters. In the first place, all the artistic groups had to be more precise in revealing their "class face." With the "tempestuous growth of socialist construction" mere words about artists supporting Communism, about their revolutionary art, etc., were no longer sufficient. It was necessary for art to take an active part in the construction. But notwithstanding lengthy discussions, the Soviet critics could not specify just how this active participation should manifest itself, and so they applied themselves all the more vigorously to exposing the forms in which art should not find expression, and condemning in the process all the previous attempts of the artists to approach the ideal of proletarian art. During the latter part of March 1928 this question was presented for debate at the Communist Academy, and the arguments lasted four evenings without, however, reaching any positive conclusions. Yet it was obligatory for the artists to comply with the repeated commands of those in power, and seek new forms or, at least, new formulas for artistic expression. But once again their efforts brought no positive results.

Then, unexpectedly, the string that had been pulled too far to the left snapped, and the organizations, which had been straining beyond their strength in that direction, were swept far to the right. The Soviet artists, who had failed to satisfy the government's social command, reverted to "abstract formal problems," and their works showed the triumph of the purely pictorial element. In 1928 the Society of Moscow Artists was organized in which the successors of the "Knaves of Diamonds" and other trends of the pre-revolutionary bourgeois art once again made their appearance. A collective article in the *Almanac* complained that they "had organized their own society and promptly repudiated revolutionary

themes [in art]. They maintained a high level of achievement, and under their influence other artists have reverted to expressing purely individual emotions and limiting themselves to landscape, portrait, and still-life painting." What was especially symptomatic, the public, particularly in the provinces, crowded their numerous exhibitions.

Thus did easel painting answer the prophets who had condemned it to failure and complete destruction. The efforts to find new ways of introducing art to the masses did not as yet progress beyond the painting of murals on the walls of workmen's clubs. But there were other branches of art more adapted to carry out the command that art be instilled in proletarian life. We have seen the new artists begin by demanding that pictures be replaced by "objects." What were then the achievements in the "art of objects" or, to use the old-fashioned term, applied or decorative art? In this branch it was not necessary to feel one's way or to invent artificial solutions, for here established forms already existed, and it only remained to endow them with new content. House furnishings, utensils, textiles, rugs, and all the extensive field of the *kustarny* industry (domestic handicrafts), seemed to offer opportunity for creating a new proletarian style. Once again we shall avail ourselves of the data published in the article in the *Almanac*, in which negative instructions are, as usual, definite and explicit. "Away with the aesthetic romanticists of the type of William Morris, with their handicraft production and their struggle against the machine! An end must be put to the break existing between art and factory production and to the industry of luxuries for the few. Long live the aesthetics of engineering, the aesthetics of expediency, the new socially expedient workaday forms!" But when recapitulating the actual achievements in this field, the author of the article arrives at most pessimistic conclusions. "Instead of creating new ones they only revived the old, most backward forms of applied art. Instead of designing new furniture, old pieces were collected from private residences in Moscow and from country manors, and were distributed among the new public buildings and institutions. The production of the state furniture industry was based almost entirely upon old patterns. The predominance of very old designs was likewise to be found in the textile industry."

The article supplies also the explanation of this phenomenon: "The consumer responds to old designs, but not to the limited attempts at introducing new ideas, and, after all, mills are worked for the consumer." And the Soviet ornament? "It has many variations on the themes of the state emblem (the sickle and the hammer), of the five-pointed star, and of parts of the machine. But unfortunately it is distinguished by a great lack of imagination and a primitive monotony of treatment." The problem of clothing was no better: "The list of the latest fashions in clothes was exhausted by the Pioneer (Soviet boy scout) costume and the red kerchief of the working women, which are actually not new. Arch-bourgeois dressmakers continue to work, and old copies of fashion magazines are in great demand." The products of domestic craft industry? "They prosper and unquestionably enjoy success abroad."

Thus we have enumerated all the "objects" the production of which was supposed to lead to the creation of a new proletarian style in the future.

The branches of the figurative arts, which were connected with Soviet propaganda, were in their development a far greater success. Aside from the broad field of "art in motion," or the Soviet cinema, this includes polygraphy and the poster. The Bolsheviks are proud, and quite justly, of their achievements in engraving and graphic art, although it should be remembered that the World of Art had initiated this work. In contrast to "picturesque" and "modernistic" Moscow, St. Petersburg was always regarded as being particularly the city of pure graphics. This was the result of studying the Empire style, which in old St. Petersburg and its suburban palaces was so distinctive and in such contrast to the merchant and decadent architecture of Moscow. The works of such pre-revolutionary artists as A. Benois, K. Somov, Dobuzhinsky, and Mme Ostroumova-Lebedeva continued to be reproduced even under the Bolsheviks. But theirs was a poetic representation of a noblemen's culture, or the life of a disappearing class. The Soviet engravers had to forsake the ideals of Versailles and the erotics of the eighteenth-century "marquises," and represent life in a new way. Moreover, they were obliged to simplify the technique of woodcuts, because delicate outlines could not be satis-

factorily reproduced on the poor paper available during the early years of Bolshevism. The Moscow school of engravers, under Favorsky's leadership, began its work in this new spirit—the spirit of the art of objects as opposed to aestheticism. In the treatment of revolutionary subjects, graphic art showed more boldness than did painting. It was easier for it to adopt both the necessary “dynamism in treatment” and the “industrial themes,” such as steel bridges, radio towers, etc. However, in spite of all this, Tugendhold admitted that “it would be an empty phrase to assert that new Soviet engravings had won their way into the books for the masses.” As of old, valuable illustrated editions remained beyond the reach of the mass consumer. “The art of engraving,” stated V. Polonsky, “is leading a miserable existence, for it cannot even reach the very restricted circle of consumers.” The needs of the masses continued to be satisfied by cheap, third-rate craftsmen, who filled their productions with “imported bourgeois banalities.”

We come at last to the favorite offspring of Soviet propaganda—the poster. A product of urbanism and revolution, it was the modern adaptation of the “Bible of the poor” transferred from a parchment manuscript to a street leaflet, and from the leaflet to a fence or wall. There the poster, like the severe and violent explosion of a bomb or sound of a tocsin, was given unlimited and appropriate use during the civil war years of 1918–20. Neither fine drawing nor complicated subjects were required, and the simpler the poster was, the more likely that it would be able to embody in the most understandable and striking form the popular slogans of the day: “Have you enlisted as a volunteer?” “Help the starved!” “Cossack, with whom are you, with them or with us?” “No surrender of Petrograd!” “Soviet Russia—a camp besieged.” “All for defense!” “Who is for the Soviets, and who is against the Soviets?” These are examples of the best posters by the greatest poster painter D. Moor (Orlov). V. Deni (Denisov), who ranked second, continued drawing his burlesque types in the style of pre-revolutionary *Satyricon*, contrasting the old trinity—the Tsar, the priest, and the bourgeois—with the new one: a workman, a peasant, and a Red soldier. In the works of these artists the military poster reached its climax. It is of interest to note that in this

field, as in literature, everything with an appeal to the people—the poster, the painted walls of the propaganda trains and boats—had perforce to speak and portray in the language and form of artistic realism. In this respect the poster was an exception to the general rule in the “industrial” and “constructivist” style of painting during the War Communism period.

After 1922 the poster, having played its part as “street art,” temporarily lost its political significance and was replaced by cinema posters, commercial advertisement posters, etc., but in recent years it has resumed its political and agitational form and was used for the propaganda of “social construction,” not so much on the streets as in workmen’s clubs and village reading rooms. Indeed, its themes are no longer the same, the colors are duller, the text dominates the picture, and so the poster has become of graphic assistance to lecturers. The favorite themes of these posters are Soviet elections, grain storage, collectivization, industrialization, and war on religion.

Architecture was placed in a more fortunate position under the Soviet régime than was any other branch of art. If modern architecture is, in general, that of an industrial stage in the development of society, in Soviet Russia industrial work has become the central idea of the new state order and its fetish. Granted that the machine serves as a basis for modern industry, in the case of the Communist régime it determines the entire character of life. And if modern architecture is the universal reflection of this combined power of machine production, it is to be expected that in Soviet Russia the cult of the machine will become its most outstanding characteristic and its principal task. We have already pointed out<sup>6</sup> that the style of architecture depends directly on building material, and that in Russia the national style was created by its native wood. The style established in wooden architecture, as we have seen, was later reproduced in stone. But in Russia, as in the history of architecture throughout the world, each time that a style was created by new building materials the lines of the building, which during the earlier period were of structural importance, gradually acquired a merely decorative, aesthetic significance and were freely applied as ornaments. The further a style

<sup>6</sup> See above, ch. I.—Ed.

is developed the more preponderant becomes the decorative element until it finally covers and dominates the structural lines of the building. This process leads to the degeneration of the original style, as for example in the transition from Renaissance to Baroque during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Through the restoration of the classic Empire style at the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth centuries Russia escaped the influence of the decadent Baroque. But this was not a national solution. It was to be expected that with the development of industry and machinery there would be an end to the imitation of old styles and that an entirely new one, of a strictly structural character, would be created. For a long time it was thought that the new architecture would be one of steel, of which the Eiffel Tower was a perfect example. But steel was replaced by steel and concrete, and soon the development of style depended upon these building materials and, of course, upon the industrial and mechanical nature of the problems it was called to solve. This type of architecture rapidly became popular in Europe and especially in the United States of America. But both in Europe and in America the architects resorted to various decorative methods in order to disguise as much as possible the ascetic severity of the structural lines of the modern buildings. In Russia, however, the tendency as usual was to carry modernism to the extreme; any addition of decorative element was rejected and every effort was applied to work out a strictly and consistently structural style of architecture.

We already know that "constructivism" was assigned an important part in other branches of Soviet art, and that attempts to apply this idea where there was no ground for its application led to great exaggeration and resulted in failure. Architecture was, perhaps, the only sphere where "constructivism" was in its place. Yet even here, instead of beginning with specific tasks, they advanced fantastic projects. Among the Soviet architects Tatlin represented the tendency to replace the old bourgeois forms with a "machine" style that would embody all the outstanding features of the modern world with its dynamic character, its rationalism, and its utilitarian attitude. No wood or stone was to be used in these structures; they were to be built entirely of metal, concrete, and glass. Tatlin's plans for the Palace of Labor in Moscow and



for the Monument of the Third International in St. Petersburg were to serve as examples of this "dynamo-monumental style." The latter was to be a huge edifice with three stories built in the shape of a cube, a pyramid, and a cylinder, each in turn to revolve perpetually—yearly, monthly, and daily. The ground floor was intended for meetings of legislative institutions and congresses of the Comintern, the second for executive agencies, and the third for the press and propaganda. Double walls were to provide even temperature. A gigantic spiral, which coiled around the entire building, was the symbol of the new spirit of Communist dynamics in contrast to the bourgeois horizontal, which was the symbol of the spirit of greed. Steel and glass, materials created by fire, symbolized the power of a sea of flame. The Palace of Labor was conceived on an equally grand scale and was to be one hundred meters long, with an aerodrome and radio station on the roof, and a central hall that could accommodate eight thousand representatives of the world's toiling masses.

Naturally neither of these projects ever materialized, because these grandiose plans were worked out with a total disregard for building material, technical possibilities, or the purpose for which the buildings were to serve. They had to be put aside when expert architects undertook the work and from fantastic sketches proceeded to actual construction.

The problem Russian architects had to face was that of applying engineering methods used in constructing bridges, elevators, and factories to the building of dwelling houses. Architects abroad scarcely ventured to do it. On the contrary, in building houses for the working people on the outskirts of large cities they always tried to make them look like individual units, in order to create, if possible, the illusion of a real home. But the Communist views on family life are well known. Their ideal—as yet not attained—is to create a type of dwelling house fully adapted to the needs of communal life. Thus for them the transition from a factory to a private dwelling was much easier than for the architects of other countries, because a similarity between the two buildings was desired.

In the quest for a new style the first things to vanish were

all the decorative parts that had been inherited from the Baroque—pillars, capitals, balustrades, broken pediments, etc. Only the most indispensable parts in the structure of a house, the walls, doors, and windows—the bare skeleton of the building—remained. However, with the development of the American skyscraper, the monotony has been broken by many divisions of walls and superimposed stories in a series of groups, systematically ascending towards a central tower. This type of modern architecture allows for the introduction of classical or even Gothic forms into it.

In Soviet Russia all disputes about modern architectural style have as their chief theme the question whether it is admissible to retain any connection with the past and use ornamental elements. The radical trend of pure constructivism absolutely denies this possibility, and deems that the success or failure of a building depends on the degree to which aestheticism is eliminated from its construction. A dwelling house is considered a success when the architect departs from the idea of family comfort and creates a type more nearly adapted to communal life. The fight against bourgeois tendencies in the field of architecture has grown more intense during recent years. Here the slogan "Bring art to the masses" found expression in the command that "social elements" take an active part in the discussions of architectural projects. Thus, in 1928 the *Komsomol Truth* demanded that there should be a public discussion of the project for Lenin's Library and the house on the banks of the Moskva River already under construction for the Central Executive Committee and the Soviet of People's Commissars. A public debate took place between Mordvinov, the leftist architect, and the rightists, over the erection of the post office in Kharkov; workmen interfered and with their arguments defeated the supporters of "pillars in Indian, Egyptian, and other abstruse styles." Mordvinov won the fight. However, here as in other fields, Soviet architects have not been able to progress from a repudiation of the "retrogressive, bourgeois tendencies" to positive achievements. In an article published in the *Almanac of Literature and Art* a Soviet critic was forced to admit that as yet there did not exist either a "united front of proletarian architects or a proletarian style of architecture." "The left sector of architects is disintegrating

into a number of trends and schools warring with each other," and the only remedy he could suggest was "to place architecture under a strict social control."

Thus the ultimate outcome of the development of architecture in Soviet Russia was the same as that we have observed in both literature and painting.

## V

# MUSIC

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**I**N passing to the history of Russian music, and in comparing it with that of the West, we shall find in this field the same parallelism in the development of general traits and the same peculiarities of detail—at times very essential—that we found in the history of painting and literature. Naturally here too, because of the special conditions of national development, the differences between Russia and the West were particularly great at the beginning of the Russian historical process, while with the approach towards modern times they become gradually attenuated and are replaced with a more and more clearly defined parallelism.

Western music was the product of a powerful cultural influence exercised by the church on the primitive folk song. The Gregorian church choral began by replacing the ancient five-tone scale of the folk song, which had neither fourth nor seventh, with the classic diatonic scale. Then, still within the confines of church music, began the development of modern harmony. Folk song supplied the melody; the medieval style of church music taught the accompaniment of consonant voices. Thus both monodic and polyphonic styles were introduced into the music of modern times, and it acquired systematized harmony. In Russia, in this case too, the Church avoided ancient folk music, and for centuries church and folk song existed side by side without in any way influencing each other. In fact, the Church actually persecuted folk song. As late as 1636, Patriarch Jehosophat ordered all Russian musical instruments burned at a solemn auto-da-fé in Moscow. The natural outcome was that Russian folk song has retained its peculiar rhythm and even its primitive scale until the present day, while

church music, through its seclusion, received no impetus from the outside and gave none to the laity. It remained for a long time as immobile, undeveloped, and monodic as it was when, as a part of the church service, it was brought to Russia either from Byzantium or the South Slavonic countries. Thus ancient Russia had no part in the development of the polyphonic style, which in the West paved the way for Palestrina and was nearing its final stage in the fifteenth century. Naturally Russia played no creative rôle in the further progress of Western music, when chromatics were added to the old diatonic scale and the ancient church modes were replaced by the modern major and minor. Therefore, in order to begin its own independent development, Russian music had to adopt the European technique, and only later, when that was mastered, did it find in the ancient Russian folk song its liberation from foreign shackles, and so was able to contribute its own national elements to the history of music.

Nevertheless, in the field of Russian church music, as in that of icon painting, there was a movement parallel with that of the West, though far more elementary.

Unfortunately it is very difficult to follow the progress of this movement, because the peculiar manner of writing music, which Russia, through the medium of the Southern Slavs, had adopted from the Greeks, complicates the study of the changes introduced by Russian singers. The earliest notation (*Kondakarny*) has not as yet been deciphered. All we know is that it preserved fully the wealth of the ancient Byzantine church music, which differed from the more modern one in that the continuous melody dominated the recitative while later it was just the opposite. Another notation now popularly known as *Znamenny* (semeionic from Greek *semeion* = sign), as written up to the fifteenth century, is even yet very little understood. The fact that this system of signs, later called "hooks" or "neumes," remained unchanged, testifies also to the changelessness of the music they represented. There were two reasons for this: first, sacred songs could not be changed because they constituted a part of the immutable divine service; and second, because in music the Byzantine achievements were so great that they were beyond the reach of the Russian people.

Moreover, those who transcribed the manuscripts did not understand the intricate signs, and in copying them they disfigured the neumatic writing. When in order to shorten the divine service the clergy introduced the custom of reading and singing several prayers simultaneously, the acme of confusion was reached. A contemporary describes the service as follows. "Two, three, or six people chant simultaneously without understanding what the other is saying, and the noise produced on both sides of the holy church by reading and singing is so great that no one can understand anything." But as long as the statutes and the text of the divine service remained unchanged and everything was read and sung as prescribed, the church was satisfied.

During the sixteenth century the early signs of an independent attitude toward what was being adopted manifested themselves in a protest against purely ritualistic views on the divine service. This led to various attempts at simplification of notation and even to the traditional monodic singing being accompanied by other voices. On this ground, as we have said, secular music in the West was successfully developed from sacred music, whereas in Russia, because of the complete ignorance of the theory of music, the disregard for folk songs, in which polyphony had already existed, and the unsatisfactory method of notation, the subject was confined, until the following period, to a few ineffectual efforts.

As a result of its ignorance and tardiness, in the second half of the seventeenth century Russia had to acquire from the West both the lineal notation and polyphonic choral singing. These innovations were introduced to Moscow by Kievan Russia, which had already adopted them from Poland. We know that all the contemporary influences both in literature and architecture came through the same channel. Up to the end of the eighteenth century the Ukrainian singers served as intermediaries in the assimilation of everything new in Western music. The early Russian reformer F. V. Rtishchev was so delighted with the polyphonic singing he had heard in Kiev that he had the choristers brought to his St. Andrew Monastery. Boiarin P. V. Sheremetev also had a number of Kievan singers and musicians at his home in Moscow. Paul of Aleppo has recounted that at the housewarming given by

Patriarch Nikon "both the Tsar and the Patriarch were very delighted with the singing of the Cossacks' children, brought from Poland by the Tsar as a gift to the Patriarch."

Judging by the following protest of Archpriest Avvakum, polyphonic singing must have gained favor rapidly. "In many of the churches at Moscow they sing songs instead of sacred chants, . . . wave their hands, shake their heads, and stamp their feet as do the Latin organists."

A far more important fact was that with the new style and method, music acquired also fresh themes. The profane style of Southeastern cantatas and psalms was introduced into the divine service. The Russian choristers lacked the skill and were not allowed to adapt ancient monodic melodies to the new style, and they accepted the new music, as they had accepted the old, without any change. Composers and theorists, following upon the singers, also came from the South, and one of them, N. P. Duletsky, a native of Lithuania, was made director of his Chapel of Singers by Tsar Theodore. He translated his *Idea on the Grammar of Music* (1679) from Polish into Russian and compiled a *Grammar of Musical Singing*, through which the Russians acquired a knowledge of the Italian school of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Duletsky's pupils soon mastered the elementary forms and methods of the Western style, and so with no difficulty could compose polyphonic chants of twenty-four or even forty-eight voices which they divided into groups in order to obtain a contrast of sound and variety of tone.

The denationalization of the Church, and the fact that there were many immigrants from South Russia in the ranks of its clergy, undoubtedly accelerated the transition from the Orthodox ideographic notation to this new Western style, but even their patronage was unable to establish it in Russia. Under Peter the Great and his successors the adoptions in this field, as in other branches of culture, were no longer made through an intermediary, but from a direct source. Polyphonic singing paved the way for secular music, which with the first days of Peter's reform found free access into the country. At the courts of Peter's successors Italian music and particularly Italian opera came to the fore. It was initiated by the Empress Anna, who in 1735 invited the Italian composer Fran-

cesco Araja to produce at the theatre in the Palace his opera *La Forza dell' Amore e dell' Odio*, as translated by Trediakovsky, with the choir of the Imperial Chapel of Singers acting as a chorus. "These musical singers," wrote Staehlin, "have developed the taste for Italian music to such an extent that in their interpretation of the arias many of them equal the best Italian artists."

From that time on Russia attracted many outstanding Italian composers. Not only did Araja live there for twenty-eight years (1735-63) and produce seventeen operas, but Raupach (1735-64), Galuppi, Angelini (1768), Traetta (1775), Paesiello (1783-85), Cimarosa (1789-92), Sarti (1798), and Astariti (1794-1800) also lived there. French comic opera was imported into Russia, and the operatic repertory was enriched by the works of Monsigny, Philidor, Grétry, Dalayrac, Méhul, and others. Empress Elizabeth rewarded Razumovsky, an Ukrainian court chorister and bandore player, by marrying him. The Emperors Peter III and Paul I both played the violin. In the days of Catherine II, Gregory Teplov, a well-known statesman, excelled as composer, virtuoso, and conductor, and in 1768 he led an orchestra at the theatre in the Palace in which the Princess of Courland, two Naryshkin brothers, Count Stroganov, Senator Trubetskoy, Chamberlain Iaguzhinsky, and other "thrice-noble" musicians played.

The entire preparatory period in the history of Russian music was effaced and made to appear imitative by the rays of Glinka's fame. Nevertheless, in the history of music, as in those of painting and architecture, we discover several independent manifestations that gradually created the atmosphere in which Glinka's advent seems neither sudden nor inexplicable. It is interesting to record that the first Russian composers came from the lower social strata and that their works brought to the stage both Russian folk song and customs. Indeed, they no longer were compelled to adhere to a "serious" form of music but were allowed to compose light, short, comic operas, which towards the end of the eighteenth century became very popular, and to introduce in them folk song and dance. One of these composers, Michael Matinsky, a serf of Count S. P. Iaguzhinsky who sent him to travel and study in Italy, merits special attention. Upon his return Matinsky wrote an opera called *St. Petersburg Merchants' Row* (1779) which, though lacking



musical value, nevertheless became a tremendous success with the public because of its popular content. In his opera *Matinsky* not only introduced folk songs, but also the ceremony of the bride's party on the eve of her marriage, and a musical characterization of merchants soliciting patronage. As a composer Evstigney Fomin, the son of a simple gunner, was of far greater importance. After receiving a primary education in music from Professor Buini, who taught piano at the Academy of Arts, Fomin was sent to Italy (1782-85) and obtained his academic diploma from Giambattista Martini, the famous contrapuntist of Bologna, with whom Berezovsky, the Russian composer of sacred songs, had studied at a somewhat earlier date. Mattei, who also taught Rossini and Donizetti, was Fomin's second master. Thirty operas have been ascribed to Fomin, but Finagin, a modern student, believes that there were only ten, four of which are still extant: *The Valiant Novgorod Knight Boeslaevich*, composed in 1786 at the command of Empress Catherine II, who had written the libretto; *Coachmen at Relay* (1787); *Orpheus* (1792); and *Americans* (1800). In *Coachmen at Relay* the songs and choral parts are combined mechanically, but the popular melodies are for the first time orchestrated without any disfiguring of their national peculiarities, while in *Americans* and more especially in *Orpheus* the musical interpretation of the characters is rather good. *Orpheus*, Fomin's opera of "lofty style," deals with a subject that was previously used both by Monteverde and Gluck and is written in the form of melodic recitative. The orchestration is simple but expressive and in harmony with the subject. In the free and artistic transmutation of the Russian folk song the national character is already beginning to be felt, and marks the transition to Glinka's works.

It is important to point out that, notwithstanding the lack of improvement in the quality of music, the interest in it and the means for its study increased. In the first half of the nineteenth century there already existed a long list of foreign operas translated into Russian and sung by a Russian cast. The public became familiar with Cherubini (1834), Mozart (1816-28), Rossini (1822), Weber (1829), and Herold (1834). In 1835-36 Meyerbeer's *Robert le Diable*, Rossini's *Semiramis*, and Bellini's *Romeo and Juliet* were presented by Russian artists. Cavos and Verstovsky com-

posed operas in the Russian style, and although these works were forgotten after the appearance of Glinka, they were nevertheless far more advanced than those of the eighteenth century. In the meantime symphonic and concert music was also developed, and in 1802 the first Philharmonic Society was formed in St. Petersburg. It was there that the French conductor Paris led performances of Haydn, Mozart, Handel, and Beethoven; Rode and Field made their appearances, and Catalani won her laurels. Many of the nobles had private orchestras made up of their serfs; the number of amateurs increased rapidly, and by 1822-23 there were in St. Petersburg twenty qualified professors and women teachers of music, and forty music shops. In fact, there developed a musical set and atmosphere due to which music as a profession was no longer confined to the lower classes but soon brought to professionals of the wealthy and privileged class, if not an income, at least honor and fame.

We shall now pass to the period in the history of Russian music which may be called "classical." Glinka's (1804-57) appearance marks the same stage in the history of music as that of Pushkin in the history of literature.<sup>1</sup> They each inaugurated a period of independent creation at a time when the old epoch of imitativeness had not yet become history, and consequently they were both equally misunderstood. Music and literature had just begun to free themselves of court patronage, but the new surroundings were still not congenial. Neither the composer nor the author had yet found their public; they had to be satisfied with friendly salons, or seek the patronage of the mighty. In music, because of the greater complications of a public performance, the feeling of dependence continued longer than it did in literature. This fact is clearly evidenced in Glinka's fate. As in the case of Pushkin, the standing of the artist among his contemporaries cannot restrain us, while speaking in retrospect, from placing Glinka's name at the head of the classical period of national Russian music.

Neither the indications that Glinka depended on foreign composers, nor the accusations of modern professionals that he was amateurish, can change our opinion on this subject. True, Glinka lived at a time when in other countries a national movement in

<sup>1</sup> See Part II, ch. 2.—Ed.

music had begun, and Weber had been acclaimed in Germany, but Glinka only met his famous contemporaries, Liszt, Berlioz, and Meyerbeer, at a later date. The idea of composing a national opera occurred to him not from a desire to imitate these composers, but because during his trip abroad in 1830-34 he felt that the Italian ideas were alien to his own. "Everything I have composed to please the people of Milan has proved to me that I was on the wrong path and that I could never honestly be Italian. Nostalgia gradually gave me the idea of composing in Russian," Glinka wrote in his notes, adding in explanation of his idea on the Russian style,

It was an arduous task trying to imitate the Italian *sentimento brillante*, as they call the sense of well-being which results from their natures being happily developed under the influence of the beneficent southern sun. We, people of the north, are different: we are either unmoved by impressions or they are engraved in our hearts; we feel either unrestrained joy or we shed bitter tears. In Russia, love, elsewhere a happy and vivifying emotion, always contains a tinge of sadness. No doubt our mournful song is the child of the north or perhaps was transmitted to us by the people of the Orient, whose song is equally plaintive even in happy Andalusia.

Here is the first indication that Russian folk song was to be the cardinal element in Glinka's works. This and the five-months' course in the theory of music which he took under Professor Dehn in Berlin on his way back to Russia, comprise all Glinka's resources. In his national opera *A Life for the Tsar* he combined the three elements: Russian folk song, Italian roulades, and German harmony and orchestration. Nevertheless Berlioz and Chaikovsky acknowledged that Glinka's opera was "truly national, original, having no prototype or antecedent," and a work which placed him among the "most outstanding composers of his time." Yet it was the same Chaikovsky who, admitting that *A Life for the Tsar* "in its genius, spirit, novelty, and irreproachable technique ranked among the greatest and deepest creations of art," was never reconciled to Glinka's amateurishness, which he ascribed to the effect of his surroundings.

The success of *A Life for the Tsar* was due largely to its plot,

for the choice of which Glinka was personally thanked by the Emperor, and to its title, which made it appropriate for official representations on imperial fete days. It was introduced to the public in 1836, the same year as Bruellow's painting,<sup>2</sup> and because at that period everything national was officially encouraged both works were promptly included in the list of great national creations. As to the merits of the music in Glinka's opera, the public appreciated only its tunefulness, while its popular element aroused profound contempt from the aristocrats who said that it was "music for coachmen." Verstovsky's opera, *Tomb of Askold*, which had been produced the year before, because of its less complicated technique and greater action appealed far more to the general public. Six years later the breach between Glinka and his audience grew even wider, for it was during that period that the composer first disapproved definitely of the Italian manner; he was now "dissatisfied with the existing musical system" in general, and found that "music needed to be invigorated and refreshed through the medium of other elements"; and so in *Ruslan and Liudmila* (1842) he put his new ideas into practice. This time, while the public liked the scenery and costumes designed by Bruellow, it was disappointed with the libretto, and particularly puzzled with the new and strange musical subtleties, so that the opera was almost a complete failure. According to Bulgarin's malicious review in the *Northern Bee*:

Everybody went to the theatre prejudiced in favor of the composer and with an ardent desire to contribute to his triumph, but they came away as from a funeral! The first words heard on everyone's lips were "how boring." Does it mean that the audience has not understood the music of *Ruslan and Liudmila*? Assuming this were so, for whom then are the operas composed? For the learned contrapuntists, for musical experts, and composers, or the public, the masses? Music composed to be immortal and for posterity should be kept in a portfolio, and the public given only that which it is able to grasp and to feel.

Even Glinka's friends were of the same opinion, and the opera was withdrawn from the repertory at the end of the first season and

<sup>2</sup> See above, ch. 2.—ED.

did not make its reappearance for twenty-one years. This so mortified Glinka that he went abroad, only to convince himself once again, after his success in Paris, that "his soul was Russian." There is a parallel between Glinka and Pushkin, whose *Boris Godunov* also had had a cold reception. Both failures were due to the backwardness of the Russian public which, being led by the court, reverted to simple music, and the following season in St. Petersburg the Italian opera celebrated one of its most brilliant triumphs.

There was scarcely any change in the situation when Dargomyzhsky (1813-69), another "gentleman dilettante" with novel ideas, decided to work on the development of Russian opera. "In my opinion," he wrote in 1853, "Glinka has developed only the lyrical in opera. His dramatic element is too monotonous and his comedy is not national. . . . I am working assiduously on our native dramatic moments in my *Rusalka* [Water Sprite]." This was achieved by melodic recitative. It is true that Glinka concentrated all his attention on the musical score and only when it was finished did he allow someone to write the libretto. This is particularly noticeable in *Ruslan and Liudmila*, where the greatest stress is placed upon the orchestral and vocal ensembles, while action is of secondary importance. But to Dargomyzhsky an opera had to be opera, i. e., words had to be as important as the music. This, of course, lent to his compositions greater realism. Yet his idea too was misunderstood at first. *Rusalka*, carelessly produced in 1856, was not sufficiently appreciated by the public, and late in 1857 Dargomyzhsky wrote:

My position in St. Petersburg as an artist is not an enviable one. The majority of our amateurs and newspaper scribblers do not think I am inspired. Their unimaginative ear demands melody, and that is not my object. I have no intention of lowering the level of music to entertainment in order to suit them. *I want sounds to express words directly.* But this is beyond their comprehension.

The words italicized comprised the program of the national school of music. Russian music followed the movement that prevailed between the eighteen-sixties and eighties in all other branches of art, and strove to be realistic. Therefore, when in 1866 *Rusalka* was again produced, Dargomyzhsky admitted that it had

"a fabulous, even mystifying, success," and explained the mystery as being the "work of time." In the meantime what exactly had happened that was new?

*Rusalka* was founded on a national theme which corresponded to the new mood, and besides that, during these years the amateurs and musical salons in Russia had been replaced by a musical set with a developed and serious professional interest in everything modern in the way of music. This was followed by something as yet unknown in Russian music—a strife among the various trends.

A. N. Serov (1820-71), the first qualified Russian musical critic, was a very characteristic figure of the intermediate period between amateurism and professionalism. With his brusqueness and passion for polemics he incurred the animosity of the two schools at that time in the process of formation—the European, or academic, which originated in the conservatories founded by the Rubinstein brothers,<sup>3</sup> and the Russian, which was still semi-amateurish. V. V. Stasov (1824-1906), who had been Serov's closest friend ever since their student days at the School of Law, became his bitterest enemy in championing the cause of the Russian school of music. Stasov praised the followers of Glinka, while Serov scorned the ambitions of this "mighty band" and voiced his great admiration for Wagner, ardently patronizing his appearances in Russia. Nevertheless, in composing *Judith* (1863), which brought him fame at the age of forty-three, and *Rogneda* (1865), Serov did not attempt to imitate his idol, but strove after Meyerbeer's superficial achievements, which were more suitable to his musical training. As is often the case with those expert in the history of their own particular branch of art or science, Serov was and consciously wanted to be an eclectic. He expressed the hope that the "Slavonic school would soon come into existence," and thought himself "justified in expecting that within it would be combined eclectically all that was best in its predecessors: . . . the dramatic truth . . . of the French and German schools, . . . the Italian tunefulness and purity of melody, and the serious, intellectual, and profound development of counterpoint as found in the German school—all this to meet under especial conditions of individuality emanating from a musical soil new and virginal." *En musique on doit*

<sup>3</sup> Anton (1829-94) and Nicholas (1835-81).—Ed.

*être cosmopolite*, Serov had written to Stasov during the years of their youth and friendship.

The Russian school of music, which derived its origin from Glinka, was destined to acquire a definite form under some of his younger contemporaries, whom Serov had refused to recognize. It was indeed a "special and individual" school, but by no means an eclectic one. Simultaneously with the Russian school and side by side with it, there was also founded a truly cosmopolitan school under the serious instruction of Anton Rubinstein at the Russian Musical Society in St. Petersburg (1862), and of his brother Nicholas in Moscow (1866). Serov, who had been ignored by the Rubinsteins, rebelled against this school, called it anti-national, and went so far as to say that no knowledge of music could be acquired under academic instruction, after which it became the fashion to belittle the importance of this so-called "cosmopolitan" movement. Thus the genius of Anton Rubinstein, the first Russian artist to be acclaimed abroad, was applauded only as a pianist, while his numerous compositions were considered of secondary importance, except for *The Demon*, which was produced at the Russian opera. This, however, cannot prevent us from recognizing that the works of Rubinstein not only have their value as scholarly reproductions of the old classics and romanticists ("academism"), but also have a definite individuality, melodic inventiveness, and even tinges of nationality, based on the adoption of the Oriental element, to which other Russian composers frequently resorted. But of course the chief value of the Rubinstein brothers to Russian music lies in their vast and important task of spreading really professional education throughout Russia. In this sense the opening up of high-grade musical schools at the capitals marked an era in the history of Russian music.

This circumstance naturally did not end the strife taking place between the national element and cosmopolitanism, but on the contrary only aggravated it. In the heat of this controversy Chaikovsky (1840-93), the most outstanding pupil of the St. Petersburg Conservatory and a real professional, who after his graduation in 1865 became professor at the Moscow Conservatory, was also called a cosmopolite. Although he wrote music treasured the world over,

which has outlived him and found a permanent place in cosmopolitan classical music, nevertheless the national spontaneity of feeling and the sincerity of its expression remained the essential parts of Chaikovsky's compositions. It was characteristic of him that this feeling proved to be profoundly sad and plaintive—such as the people abroad were accustomed to recognize as the "Russian soul." Chaikovsky did not introduce modern ideas in his music, and profiting thereby his enemies accused him of academism. But he possessed a style of his own, not only profoundly individual but autobiographic, for the creation of which he made use of every contemporary technique and coloring. Was Chaikovsky a Romanticist? The answer depends on one's definition of Romanticism. If it includes the lyrical and emotional in music, then Chaikovsky was a Romanticist, for he was both lyrical and emotional. But we are accustomed to think of Romanticism as tending towards a world of unreality and mysticism, and Chaikovsky possessed none of these traits; like the times he was rather realistic, and interpreted emotions as vividly as he felt them. At least he was never tearful or sentimental, as his enemies accused him of being, because his feelings were sincere and towards the end of his life even tragic. These very characteristics made his Russian soul a human one and understood by all mankind, and in spite of the accusations brought forward by the "refined" and "satiated" they secured him the love of the masses, which still continue to crowd the theatres and concert halls to hear *Eugene Onegin* and the Sixth Symphony.

We shall now pass to another trend, which regarded itself as representative in Russian music of the national tradition as inaugurated by Glinka. After 1859 a few composers who, like Serov, had had no systematic training and who therefore had been called "dilettanti," became intimate friends of Dargomyzhsky and *habitués* at his parties. Among them were Cui (1835-1918) and Musorgsky (1839-81), two young officers, and Balakirev (1837-1910), lately graduated from the university; somewhat later, in the early sixties, a naval cadet, subsequently naval officer, Rimsky-Korsakov (1844-1908), and Borodin (1834-87), a young professor of chemistry. Balakirev, the most erudite, soon be-



came the acknowledged head of the circle, the members of which he in turn initiated into the mysteries of musical technique. There was no lack of talent and zeal in the circle, and the youthful enthusiasm of its members was strengthened by the fact that as pioneers of the "Russian" school of music they found themselves opposed to the professional "cosmopolitanism" of the Conservatory. Although in the opinion of the public and the critics the latter occupied a dominating position, the Balakirev circle never considered laying down its arms. On the contrary, under the leadership of V. V. Stasov, its enthusiastic supporter, it courageously attacked the enemy. In the same year (1862) that the Conservatory was opened in St. Petersburg, the young musicians founded their own Free School of Music, and its concerts, conducted by Balakirev, became exhibitions of the works of modern Russian composers, whose motto was realism. Musorgsky, the most brilliant member of the new school, carried realism in music even further than Dargomyzhsky. It was not without cause that Musorgsky sympathized with Gogol and Nekrasov, and that in his zeal for exposing the evils of the day he was likened to Perov. "The artistic representation of nothing but beauty in a material sense," he said, "is crude childishness, art in its infancy. The finest traits of human nature and human masses . . . untouched by anyone, . . . the assiduous exploration of these unknown regions and their conquest, are the call of a true artist." Faithful to this call Musorgsky, with unprecedented daring, made music speak and depict indignation, suffering, and laughter, peasant life, the wooing of a half-wit, the sorrowful chant of an orphan beggar, and the psychology of a child at play; he even composed musical caricatures, while his musical satire rose to scourging sarcasm against the contemporary representatives of formalism in music. No other member of the circle ever dared come so dangerously near the truth. Subsequently Cui condemned it as a violation of the rules of art, while in his rearrangement of *Boris Godunov* Rimsky-Korsakov tried to soften Musorgsky's most salient audacities.

Musorgsky's two immortal operas—*Boris Godunov* and *Khovanshchina*—represent the composer's talent at its prime and at the same time prove his loyalty to the trend he had chosen. Both

themes enabled him to unfold great pictures of two momentous periods in Russia's historic past.<sup>4</sup> Music served only as a frame for the realistic content. Musorgsky wished to have a clear idea of the events and conditions of life during these remote periods, so with Stasov's assistance he studied all the authentic documents in detail. It took him five and a half years, from the autumn of 1869 to the spring of 1874, to compose *Boris Godunov*. He began *Khovanshchina* in 1872, and with interruptions worked on it until June 16, 1881, when he died at the age of forty-two. The works of Karamzin and Pushkin supplied the composer with the plot for *Boris Godunov*, but Musorgsky was not satisfied with merely following these sources. It is superfluous to speak of the exceptional gift for musical characterization which helped this composer reveal to the audience the soul of his heroes, for indeed his realism was not reduced to naturalism. On this subject Rimsky-Korsakov said that Musorgsky did not require a *leitmotif* in order to define his hero, but produced a living man with all a man's emotions. What Musorgsky made use of to enrich the subject was no less characteristic. The vivid reënactment of the social surroundings, in which Pushkin's chronicle unfolded itself on the stage, was most striking, and it is almost impossible to enumerate the typical traits which Musorgsky adopted directly from historical source material. The broad treatment of popular scenes is particularly characteristic and justifies his calling his operas "popular dramas." Musorgsky showed unusual perspicacity and tact when treating the psychology of the masses. Whereas the ideology of the eighties and seventies demanded a blind admiration of the masses, Musorgsky presented them on the stage as they were in reality without the slightest idealization, yet with a feeling of deep sympathy and understanding of the soul of the people.

*Khovanshchina* gave the composer an even wider scope for revealing his talent and the spirit of the times. The conflict of two cultures, the old and the new, that of the people and that of

<sup>4</sup> The action in *Boris Godunov* takes place during the Time of Troubles, in the early seventeenth century. *Khovanshchina* deals with the struggle between the Old Ritualists and the adherents of Western innovations during the early years of Peter the Great's reign.—Ed.

Peter, and its profound tragedy ending in a terrible scene with the self-immolation of the Old Ritualists,<sup>5</sup> supplied vast material for both musical characterization and scenery. The delay in the composition of the opera was due in part to the impossibility of including all the accumulated material in the confines of a scenic production. The difficulty was that the opera had no hero, only social sets and popular masses, which weakened the dramatic interest. But Musorgsky showed great artistic sense by introducing the moral and spiritual tragedy of Martha, the Old Ritualist, into this variegated texture of human relations.

Both these wonderful works brought the composer nothing but grief. *Boris Godunov* was not accepted by the Imperial theatre until it had been rearranged, and then, along with the public's acclaim, it provoked the disapproval of Musorgsky's friends and a frankly malevolent criticism from Cui. Some were annoyed with the musical daring of the "arrogant" composer, while others complained that Russia was represented in too dark a color, but to the composer's indignation all demanded "beauty in the music," which for the most part they were unable to detect. Musorgsky never saw his *Khovanshchina* produced or heard it played by the orchestra. At the time of his death he had only finished a piano score and orchestrated a few scenes. He was not understood until long after his death, and even then his posthumous fame was not based on what he regarded as his greatest achievement. While the conception of beauty in music underwent the change he had desired, Musorgsky the realist was not fully appreciated. This realistic psychologist was represented as a mystic even by those who recognized him. They based their belief on the fact that during his last years Musorgsky, under the stress of sad experiences, thought, spoke, and sang more of death than of life which he so loved and desired. We shall return again to Musorgsky in connection with a posthumous revival of his works.

Other members of the circle, less erratic and bohemian than the creator of *Boris Godunov* and *Khovanshchina*, though not endowed with equally great individual talent, have succeeded nevertheless in leaving a mark in the history of Russian music. We shall not enlarge on Balakirev, the theorist of the group, or César Cui,

<sup>5</sup> On the Old Ritualists and the practice of self-immolation, see Part I, ch. 3.—Ed.

the musical critic of the circle who propagated program music and recitative in the opera, and composed graceful songs and eight operas that have been entirely forgotten. A. P. Borodin was a greater musician, for he was equally the master of symphonic, chamber, and operatic music. His famous opera *Prince Igor* was finished after his sudden death in 1887 by Rimsky-Korsakov in collaboration with A. K. Glazunov (1865-1936). In its realistic popular scenes and its recitative element *Prince Igor* upheld the traditions of the circle. However, Borodin no longer avoided arias, and protested against the "purely recitative style," preferring *cantabile* and placing the vocal parts above the orchestra. The Oriental element in his music is common to other Russian composers; the importance placed upon this element actually created the erroneous impression abroad that Oriental melody and harmony were peculiar to Russian music. Finally, it must be pointed out that in the critics' opinion Borodin possessed a characteristic in common with Glinka, for his music was also objective, i. e., Borodin was able to withhold his own moods from his heroes, thus making them more striking and individual.

N. A. Rimsky-Korsakov lived longer and was more prolific than all the members of the circle, and it was natural that in his works the further evolution of Russian music found a more complete expression. He took an active part in this development, while among his pupils were some of the most talented representatives of the next generation of Russian composers. Like others of the circle, which he had joined in 1861 as its fourth member, Rimsky-Korsakov for a long time remained an amateur, but he soon outdistanced his friends by composing a symphony—the first Russian one to achieve great success when played at the concert in the Free School of Music. The symphony was followed by such important works as *Sadko*, a "musical picture" (1866), *Antar*, another symphony (1868), and finally by the opera *Pskovitianka* (1868-71). Even among others aside from the members of the circle, who composed only during their leisure moments, Rimsky-Korsakov's capacity for work was exceptional, and yet the young composer was never satisfied with his achievements and strove always for more. He rapidly outgrew the circle, and immediately following the completion of *Pskovitianka*, he underwent a radical

change, which was to play a significant part in the further development of the history of Russian music. A. K. Glazunov gave the following account of this change: "At that time there existed a fallacy that a free artist had no need to study. Rimsky-Korsakov did not share this opinion, and when composing *Pskovitianka* he complained bitterly to me that his hands were tied, that his aspirations were greater than his achievements. This fact weighed heavily upon him and he decided to learn the technique of composition. That necessitated his studying harmony, counterpoint, and the fugue intently," particularly as he was offered (1871) the vacant chair of composition and orchestration at the St. Petersburg Conservatory. Chaikovsky was profoundly stirred when in 1875 Rimsky-Korsakov sent him some fruits of his exercises in these "musical artifices," and was only apprehensive that this novice in technique should become too zealous and develop into a "dull pedant." Indeed, there is over-abundance of technique in the Third Symphony (1875), as in a number of other contemporary works, but a collection of Russian folk songs published by Rimsky-Korsakov at that same time brought him much nearer the national source of Russian music. After this he revised all his previous compositions, and also with renewed ardor applied his knowledge to composing in a new manner and to the rearrangement of Dargomyzhsky, Borodin, and Musorgsky's unfinished works. *May Night* (1878) and especially *Snegurochka* (Snow-Maiden, 1880), which took him only a few months to compose, were examples of the greatness of his achievements and marked his transformation into a devotee of the Russian folk song. "I am ashamed to admit that I was jealous," Chaikovsky wrote after hearing *Snegurochka*. At that same period the most perfect of Rimsky-Korsakov's symphonic compositions, such as *Spanish Capriccio*, *Sheherazade*, and *Easter Sunday* also appeared. The last-named composition was the result of the new position, that of assistant manager of the Imperial Chapel of Singers, which Rimsky-Korsakov received in 1883 and which led him to study music of the Orthodox church, thus paving the way for the peerless *Legend of the City of Kitezh*.

It is impossible, and not necessary for our purpose, to analyze Rimsky-Korsakov's creative genius after his musical individuality

had once been definitely established, and we shall only point out the chief characteristics of his works during the period of its full perfection. We must mention here that Rimsky-Korsakov was often compared to Wagner. Indeed, beginning with *Snegurochka* he more and more frequently recurred to a *leitmotif* for the characterization of his heroes, and like Wagner he chose his subjects almost exclusively from the national folklore, related to the legendary past when reality and fiction merged into an animistic conception of nature.

It continued so until Rimsky-Korsakov finally abandoned the forms of the old opera, with its arias and acts divided into solo numbers and ensembles, and, like Wagner, passed to uninterrupted action, where the unfolding of events and moods was expressed by the orchestra, while the part of the singers was confined to recitative. From a purely musical point of view it must be admitted that the broad treatment of the orchestra, the astonishing brilliance of complex instrumentation, and the bacchanal of sound, unknown to the old school, were gaining strength, and were the peculiar traits that made Rimsky-Korsakov so tremendously popular abroad.

However, besides the traits he had in common with Wagner, this composer had his own, absolutely Russian characteristics. Rimsky-Korsakov's recitative, with its uninterrupted interpretation by the orchestra, was not the foundation for musical construction, and the *leitmotif* therefore was not the chief factor. Even more important was the fact that Russian folklore, songs, *byliny*, sacred verse, popular legends, and tales did not attain the level of philosophical generalization, nor did they pretend to explain the history of mankind and the world. With Rimsky-Korsakov all these elements retained the artlessness of folklore, and that is why, instead of exalted inspirations, lyrical ecstasies, and profound dramatic conflicts, the theme of a tale was unfolded either in a satirical vein or in the form of an artistic miniature, as in *Tsar Saltan* or in *Le Coq d'or*. The tragedy of *Snegurochka* or the adventures of *Sadko* aroused the emotions of the audience but did not stir its mental powers, which was precisely what the change in public taste required. Because his music was too closely connected with the ideologic content of the drama, Wagner was

repudiated by the younger generation, whose new demands were for less ideology and philosophy and a more humorous attitude towards the theme, which had to be remote from reality. Rimsky-Korsakov possessed this gift, he also accepted some new ideas in harmony and thus was able to retain his connection with the later generation and to found a school which in fact was quite independent of the outmoded Balakirev circle.

We must add, however, that there is one exception in the works of Rimsky-Korsakov. Apart from his humorous and fantastic operas he composed the *Legend of the City of Kitezh*, a work with roots reaching into the national tradition, which approaches the psychology of the people from a different, a spiritually religious side and produces a deep emotion that reminds one of Wagner's *Parsifal* although quite foreign to its suffering and mysticism. But in his fantastic and fairy-tale works Rimsky-Korsakov always remained a cheerful realist, and his audience scarcely had time to accept the blending together of the fantastic and real worlds before he transformed mystery into an artistic skit.

After all that has been said it is not surprising that in the field of music we cannot draw such a distinct line between the generations as Merezhkovsky's manifesto did in literature<sup>6</sup> and the appearance of *The World of Art* in the figurative arts. The children were too closely bound by the teaching of the fathers to revolt either against their ideology or their methods. Let us review the entire situation. From 1882 to 1892 Chaikovsky ruled supreme on the operatic stage. After his death the legacy passed to Rimsky-Korsakov, who reconciled the Balakirev circle with the Conservatory. Following the death of Rimsky-Korsakov (1908) the scepter of the Conservatory and the musical world passed on to Glazunov. Although they looked upon Glazunov as being too academic, the younger generation still admired him as the last Russian classicist, a supporter of pure music, who protested against any romantic mixture of types and who composed instrumental music. Thus, thanks to the vigor, brilliance, depth, and productiveness of Rimsky-Korsakov, and Glazunov's gift for composition, the revolt was postponed for several decades, and then it was not mani-

<sup>6</sup> See Part II, ch. 3.—Ed.

fested by an entire school, such as the Balakirev circle, but found only individual expression.

A. N. Skriabin (1872-1915) was one of these individual rebels. His psychology and ideology closely resemble those of the aesthetes of the early twentieth century; but as compared to actual modern music, his innovations are as artificial as those of Richard Strauss in comparison to Wagner. Sabanciev, the critic, who was an intimate friend of Skriabin, described him as having been from early youth "delicate, effeminate, high-strung, self-confident, and prematurely sensual; erotic emotions were familiar to him when still a child, which explains the very great voluptuousness of his tone." Skriabin left the Cadet School after only four years of study; consequently he lacked a proper education. His works testify both to the great power he possessed as an artist and to his naïveté as a thinker. His notes contain a series of futile efforts at formulating a philosophical conception of himself as the center of creation. Skriabin's philosophizing friends supported his idea of the "Mystery"—an extraordinary and final creative effort in which there was to be no audience but all were to be performers. The composer never had time to write the "Mystery," for he died in 1915, yet he approached the idea in *Prométhée*, *Le Divin Poème*, and *Le Poème de l'extase*. Of course these orchestral compositions of Skriabin have musical value, but he attained the highest perfection in his works for the piano.

After Wagner in the West and Rimsky-Korsakov in Russia every musical work seemed but a brilliant imitation of new ideas. This explains why Skriabin, in spite of his great talent and the originality of his achievements in harmony, found himself in an impasse, gained no recognition outside of Russia, and did not influence the further progress of twentieth-century music. He had to cede the rôle of forerunner of new music to the representatives of younger generations (Skriabin was born in 1871, Stravinsky in 1882, and Prokofiev in 1891).

But here again we approach the moment when, like painting, Russian music became cosmopolitan without, however, losing its national character. Coming in touch with the newest Western trends, Russian music was not satisfied to imitate them, but in a



daring effort it tried to surpass them, and for a time succeeded in becoming a source of imitation for Europe.

Up to the end of the nineteenth century Russian music was, so to speak, provincial. Its very isolation from the course of progress in Western music helped it to acquire a national character and to create such valuable works that, when later the relations with the outside world were established, they proved to be of universal importance. Musical language, as opposed to literary language, is international, and unlike figurative arts can be easily transposed and reproduced in many copies. But it only lives during the few moments of its production. Thus, although music is more easily internationalized than any other art, it is more difficult for a musical work to obtain lasting international approval and it lapses sooner into oblivion. From this point of view we shall now examine what the Russian composers adopted from international music and what they added to it.

We know that Glinka, the founder of the national Russian school, was subject to foreign influences, though when he came in touch with them he was always conscious of feeling particularly Russian. The chief obstacle in those days to the development of a national independence in music was the imitation of Italian methods, and Glinka, who originally was fascinated by the Italians, deliberately changed his attitude towards them and began to compose in a different manner. His first opera nevertheless bore marked traces of the Italian influence. That Glinka depended also on the Germans is proved by the fact that five musical notebooks of Professor Dehn, with whom he had studied in Berlin, remained his chief manual of harmony until the last. During this same period (1833-34) these five small musical notebooks were also carefully copied by another novice, Dargomyzhsky. Both these composers traveled abroad repeatedly and so had the opportunity to study the new Western music at its very source and to meet its exponents. In 1830, when in Germany, Glinka heard *Der Freischuetz* and *Fidelio*, and in Italy met Donizetti, Bellini, and Mendelssohn. Later he met Liszt in St. Petersburg (1842-43) and Berlioz in Paris (1844). It was often said that Glinka's orchestration resembled that of Berlioz, in fact he himself admitted that the latter "made a deep impression" on him. Berlioz, in his turn, placed

Glinka "in the first rank of outstanding composers," recognized in him "a great master of harmony" and spoke of his orchestration as having "the most modern and vital tone of our time." He added, moreover, that Glinka unquestionably possessed "an original inventiveness for melody" (article in the *Journal des Débats*). Nevertheless Glinka preferred the less cultured Spain to any other European country, and he brought the tunes of its national dances to Russia. He did not approve of Liszt's playing, and showed enthusiasm for the already outmoded compositions of Gluck, when he heard them for the first time in 1847. From that time on Glinka studied Gluck's scores most carefully and never parted from them. During Glinka's last stay in Berlin, Professor Dehn succeeded in arousing his interest in Bach and seventeenth-century church compositions, thereby separating him definitely from all connection with modern music. Glinka was terrified by Weber's dominant seventh, he never learned to appreciate Schumann, while Mozart and Beethoven in his opinion had "stolen from Gluck unmercifully." All this is characteristic of Glinka's outlook on music, which even for those days was limited.

Glinka's successors had still less connection outside of Russia than he had, for at that time began the estrangement from the West which soon changed into open antagonism: youth wished to become independent. Dargomyzhsky made two trips abroad (1844 and 1864), but his attitude towards modern European music remained rather disdainful and he hated Western customs, especially those of Paris. He received a cool welcome at Leipsic and Paris, and the ovations tendered him at Brussels were unable to dispel his natural indifference to European fame, and yet Dargomyzhsky nevertheless insisted that Berlioz be invited to Russia. But the Western innovators had already progressed further and, at that time, were led by Wagner, of whom Dargomyzhsky had only a very superficial knowledge. The progressive tendencies of the "mighty band"—even when they agreed with Wagner—developed along independent lines, and the composer of "Rusalka's melodious recitative" found the melodies of *Tannhaeuser* artificial and its harmony showing "morbid traits." On the Russian stage, realism and truth were expressed by quite different methods. *The Stone Guest*, the opera Dargomyzhsky composed just before his

death (1868), became the new artistic testament for the members of the "mighty band," while it was not fully appreciated by the public until a much later date.

In Serov, Russia had a highly educated critic well versed in modern music. His object was to prove that the Russian national school was provincial and to retrieve Russian music from its isolation. As a youth his first infatuation was *Der Freischuetz*, but even at school he was well acquainted with the symphonies of Beethoven, then little known in Russia, Mozart, and the works of such modern composers as Schumann and Chopin. Then Weber and Schubert became gradually young Serov's favorites, but Meyerbeer, "*le favori de mon âme*—notwithstanding his falsity," soon became their rival. The appearance of Liszt in St. Petersburg during 1842 was to Serov "an event of world-wide importance." On his first trip abroad Serov heard *Tannhaeuser* and was fascinated with Wagner, whose theoretical compositions had been known to him since 1853. He met Liszt again in Weimar and with a growing intimacy he became absolutely captivated both by his playing and his compositions. At Baden-Baden Serov added another star to this constellation, in recognizing that in the domain of orchestral color Berlioz was the master of both Liszt and Wagner. During the meeting with his old idol Meyerbeer, Serov became convinced that, "as was to be expected, he equally hated with all his heart the entire new movement and Wagner's music." In the following year Serov heard *Tristan und Isolde* and *Lohengrin*; then he met Wagner personally and was definitely won over to his methods.

When, having absorbed the new ideas, Serov returned to Russia and found his friend and schoolmate V. Stasov ardently supporting the national Russian school, they naturally became bitter enemies. But neither did his admiration of Wagner find support at the Conservatory, which Rubinstein had lately opened. In such conditions Serov's extensive foreign experience found no immediate application in Russia. He sought solace in writing venomous articles, which brought him fame as a critic, but definitely severed his relations with the musical world. His operas were not sufficiently great to justify his written advocacy of modern methods and cosmopolitanism in music. The acclaim which *Judith* and

*Rogneda* received from the public should not be ascribed to Serov's admiration of Wagner, whom the Russian public was not yet able to appreciate, but to that secret love of Meyerbeer which he professed in his youth and to which in his works he always remained true. Indeed, it was due to Serov's efforts that *Lohengrin* was produced at the Imperial Opera in St. Petersburg, yet in spite of the enthusiastic reports which he sent Wagner after the performance, the opera was withdrawn from the repertory. In a word, Serov's propaganda of cosmopolitanism in music was too premature to be successful. But was the Russian public sufficiently mature for the "national school"?

The story of the "mighty band," as mentioned above, can best answer this question. At the time the "mighty band" was formed, there already existed in Russian music a certain national tradition. At the musicales, which its members first gave in Dargomyzhsky's home and subsequently at that of their leader Balakirev, the young musicians worshiped Glinka. The "mighty band" regarded Bach as a "musical fossil," Haydn and Mozart as "antiquated," and Beethoven, except for his Ninth Symphony and last quartets, "outmoded." Schumann was most popular with them, and they deigned also to approve of Chopin, but they accused Liszt of being theatrical, while Wagner was never even mentioned. Such was the mood of the small group of skilled amateurs at the beginning of the eighteen-sixties, when the leadership in musical education was assumed by the Rubinsteins' Conservatory. Anton Rubinstein had just returned from his first triumphal tour in Europe and was preparing himself for more extensive ones both in Europe and America. He could well have broadened the musical horizon of the national school, but he chose to ignore its members and they responded with sarcasm to his neglect. However, the Conservatory attended to its duties and, being patronized by many wealthy and influential people, it soon gained public approval. The "mighty band" had neither powerful nor wealthy patrons, but its spirit of opposition to everything old and its exclusiveness in the desire to develop a style of its own increased during the sixties. Balakirev, the school's exacting mentor, was the first to experience the result of this estrangement from the public taste. His Free School of Music and its symphony concerts

could not compete with those of the Conservatory. At the beginning of the seventies, resenting the public's lack of interest, Balakirev secluded himself and gradually became an odd type of mystic, a somber pessimist, and a real burden to himself and those about him. Cui, Borodin, and Rimsky-Korsakov, annoyed with Balakirev's dictatorship, deserted him, and in 1875 the "mighty band" ceased to exist. Borodin gives us a vivid description of the situation.

I think the course of events is a perfectly natural one. As long as we were under the wings of the brood hen (I mean Balakirev) we were as alike as eggs. But when we were hatched and feathered it became suddenly evident that each of us was covered with a different plumage. Then as our wings grew we flew in the direction that had the greatest individual appeal. The difference in our creative power and our aspirations is not to be deplored; quite the contrary, it is an excellent sign. It should be so when the artistic individuality is maturing and gaining strength, which Balakirev never did and still does not understand.

In this differentiation of the members of the "mighty band" those who approached closest to the Conservatory and the taste of the general public attained greater success. At that time Chaikovsky was the favorite composer, and because of the brilliance of his orchestration Rimsky-Korsakov inherited this popularity. Borodin remained a "gentleman dilettante," known to only a chosen few; but he was indifferent to fame and was willing to wait calmly for posterity to pass its judgment upon him (which took place rather soon, for he died in 1887). The most tragic fate of all was that of Musorgsky, the greatest of the "mighty band," because he chose to remain loyal to his standard without making any concessions. In a letter dated 1872 he announced to Stasov his motto: "To the new shores," while as early as 1861, in answer to a querulous note of Balakirev, he wrote: "It is time to stop treating me as a child who needs to be put in swaddling clothes in order to prevent a fall."

What were "the new shores" that Musorgsky was anxious to reach? He disapproved of composers who followed rules imposed by the official routine. "This is not what the modern man demands

of art, neither is it the artist's aim. Life, no matter where it finds expression; truth, no matter how bitter it be; fearlessness and words of sincerity to the people . . . that is my bent . . . that is what I want."

Thus men who were but recently friends went their different ways, and from that time on Musorgsky felt lonely, abandoned by everybody, and more and more often sought consolation in drink. With it all he continued to seek new ideas and was more fearless even than before, but his friends, including Stasov, unable any longer to understand him, predicted his downfall, and so left him to his fate. Musorgsky was forgotten in Russia, but when his aspirations, misunderstood during his lifetime, began to correspond to those of the new generation he was reborn to fame abroad. It was just at this period that Russia began to exert an influence on Europe, though it did not take place immediately. Before learning to appreciate Musorgsky in his original form foreigners came to know his music as interpreted by Rimsky-Korsakov, who rearranged all Musorgsky's unfinished works. *Khovanshchina* was the first one he finished (1881-82). Its impression on Rimsky-Korsakov was so fresh that he was able to reproduce the late composer's original ideas, but in order to adapt the opera for production he had to omit half the collected material. He proceeded with the task cautiously and with great tact, adding almost nothing of his own and merging his work into the personality of his late friend. *Boris Godunov*, the opera which needed only a finishing touch, was rearranged twenty years later (1896). But by that time Rimsky-Korsakov had changed, for he had studied Wagner's scores and had adopted his method of orchestration. When the West protested against Wagner this protest was reflected in Russia and led to the immediate revaluation of the works of Rimsky-Korsakov and Musorgsky. Rimsky-Korsakov's brilliant rearrangement of *Boris Godunov*, which had already been produced everywhere in Europe, suddenly appeared too much like Wagner. The new admirers then sought the original Musorgsky, and to their astonishment and delight, found him in his songs and piano compositions.

It would be unfair, indeed, to ascribe the new period in the history of Russian music, which then acquired world importance,

exclusively to Musorgsky. Besides Rubinstein and Chaikovsky, the two composers of the so-called "cosmopolitan school," who had preceded Musorgsky in popularity abroad, Borodin too became known in Europe at first mostly for his quartets, which continued to grow in favor, and exerted a definite influence on the music of Debussy and Ravel. The combination of Borodin's polyphonic style and his most original melodies suited perfectly the new trend in music. Nevertheless Musorgsky's success in the West was far greater. As early as 1896-1900 Pierre d'Alheim and his wife, the singer Olenina-d'Alheim, had introduced his works in France and Belgium. Debussy had the chance to study the piano score of *Boris Godunov*, brought by Saint-Saens from Russia in 1879, but it was Musorgsky's songs that made a lasting impression upon him. In 1900-06 Olenina-d'Alheim carried Musorgsky's songs back to Russia, and this time the forgotten works of the prophet not without honor save in his own country earned the acclaim of his own people. Shaliapin's inspired interpretation of Musorgsky's music greatly assisted its success. After a long absence from the Imperial opera Rimsky-Korsakov's version of *Boris Godunov* was again produced in 1904 at the Mariinsky Theatre in St. Petersburg. *Khovanshchina*, which had been rejected in 1882, was produced in 1911. After that both operas were introduced in Paris and other European cities, and during the nineteen-twenties, with Borodin's *Prince Igor*, became renowned the world over. Thus, after a period of twenty years, the creative genius of Musorgsky led Russia to the modern music of the twentieth century.

Vladimir Rebikov (1866-1920), the first "Decadent" in Russian music, survived the revolution, but has long since been forgotten and surpassed. Some of his modern ideas he acquired in Germany where he had studied at the end of the nineteenth century. Rebikov's sympathy with the modern literary trends in Russia is expressed in his being the first to adapt the verses of Balmont and Briusov<sup>7</sup> to his musical sketches. He was also one of the first to abandon the massive musical compositions of masters of harmony and to compose musical miniatures. From the standpoint of technique this was a liberation from traditional form and

<sup>7</sup> On Balmont and Briusov, the two leading poets of the Symbolist school in Russia, see Part II, ch. 3.—Ed.

harmony. Rebikov thought music a "language of emotions, and emotions possess no form, laws, or rules." As a true and conscientious Impressionist, he declared anything was permissible in harmony, and so employed most unusual chords. He ended his miniatures abruptly on a dissonant chord instead of the tonic, emphasizing thereby the fleeting impression of a psychological moment. Although after the beginning of the twentieth century Rebikov began to lag behind the other composers, he was fairly justified in regarding both Scriabin and Debussy as his imitators.

Before proceeding any further we must stop to examine the attitude of some other Russian musicians towards these new ideas. It was that of opposition, and the center of this opposition was the Moscow Conservatory, where Chaikovsky ruled supreme. During the struggle against modern methods introduced from the West in the era of Wagner and his followers, Brahms was the Muscovites' latest ideal, and S. Tanciev (1856-1915), the best of Chaikovsky's pupils, was called the "Russian Brahms." He sought the secrets of harmony in the old "strict style" of the thirteenth- and fifteenth-century contrapuntists. Like Brahms, Tanciev, also a recluse, looked for beauty in music and found it in a sentiment solemn and profound. His works, like those of Brahms, are not easy to understand, and their beauty is not fully revealed until one studies them closely. Indeed, both Brahms and Tanciev possessed a modern note, but in their conceptions they strictly adhered to Beethoven's classicism; they both regarded Wagner, and even more so the further development of music, as deviating sadly from the straight road. Tanciev lived long enough to see the great changes in the psychology of music, but he remained a stranger to them all and only retired the more into himself. However, his works were beyond the changing fashions, and consequently outlived them.

Others in Moscow were not satisfied with remaining passive, and so when Scriabin appeared on the scene the Conservatory organized an active opposition to the influence he was exerting. Rakhmaninov (b. 1873), a pupil of Tanciev and follower of Chaikovsky, led this movement in an effort to protect the old tradition from modernism. He was a native of Moscow and not altogether a stranger to new ideas. But as the years went by he became rather



pessimistic, and he developed a lyric strain even more intense than that of Chaikovsky. During the period of dry and artificial objectivity in music such lyricism appeared an anachronism, and for a time the representatives of the modern trends forced Rakhmaninov into the background, virtually ignoring him. But he became famous as an exceptionally talented pianist acclaimed throughout the world, as are his brilliant compositions.

Medtner (b. 1879), a Russianized German, composed music which reminds one more of Brahms than Chaikovsky and is understood only by a select few. He never aspired to fame and was content with his own ideas. Although he opposed innovators of Skriabin's type, Medtner nevertheless promoted the modern German influences. As a philosopher in music he sought the themes for his songs in the works of Nietzsche, Tiutchev, and Andrey Bely,<sup>8</sup> and thought that the "three great B's" (Bach, Beethoven, and Brahms) were his forerunners. Instead of the confused rhythm of the Impressionists, Medtner uses the clear rhythm of the classics, although complicated somewhat by those of Schumann and Brahms, and instead of the intricate modern harmony a rather dry polyphonic form. In 1905 when the Brahms Society was formed in Moscow, Medtner was surrounded by a group of enthusiastic admirers, but with the emigration his popularity has unjustly decreased.

The true innovators took their origin in St. Petersburg, where at their initial stage they were connected with the World of Art.<sup>9</sup> The new ideas embodied in Russian music and art were introduced by Diaghilev to Europe, where, after their first great success, they continued to develop in the latest European manner, and followed all its many changes. In this process it is possible to trace the succession of stages closely corresponding to those in the development of Western music. Impressionism was replaced with extreme forms of Expressionism, followed by a return to a "pure" form, which led to the revival of the polyphonic and pre-polyphonic periods, and finally all radical tendencies were abandoned in favor of methods and styles that shortly before had been regarded as being absolutely

<sup>8</sup> F. Tiutchev (1803-73), Russian poet known for the philosophical trend of his poetry. On Andrey Bely, one of the Russian Symbolists, see Part II, ch. 3.—Ed.

<sup>9</sup> See above, ch. 3.—Ed.

antiquated. We see in these quests of the new generation the same inconclusiveness as in other branches of art, and the same search for new and unknown styles to replace the outmoded ones.

The historian's study of these parallel stages in modern European and Russian music is greatly facilitated by the fact that Igor Stravinsky passed through all of them and in the process was transformed gradually from a composer representative of a definite epoch in Russian music into a leader recognized by all Europe.

Stravinsky (b. 1886) took private lessons in composition from Rimsky-Korsakov, whom he met in 1902 at Heidelberg, and his first works up to 1908 were influenced by the atmosphere that prevailed at the St. Petersburg Conservatory. Notwithstanding some early signs of modern tendencies Stravinsky until 1911 did not break the artistic ties which united him with the style represented in Russia by Rimsky-Korsakov; he only introduced characteristics peculiar to the Russian "decadent" aestheticism of those years, which, however, were not irreconcilable with the style of Rimsky-Korsakov's latest period. Rimsky-Korsakov had already effected the transition from romanticism to fantastic fairy tales, treated lightly and with humor, so that musical aestheticism had only to emphasize the element of unreality and to lend a note of burlesque to his humor. Stravinsky's admirers stress the objectivity of his style, which they connect with the return to "pure" music. However, one hesitates to call "pure" music the works of Stravinsky composed for Diaghilev's Ballet Russe, because in spite of his wish to remain independent in *L'Oiseau de feu* he was limited by Fokin's scenario, in *Petrushka* by Benois' conception of that production, and in *Le Sacre du printemps* by Roerich's stylization. In each of these works his music obediently follows the plot. Like the Impressionists, Stravinsky expresses himself "by means of color rather than line," but it is exactly in this that his connection with Rimsky-Korsakov's orchestration is most evident. Of course, in his use of the timbre of various instruments Stravinsky is more advanced than Rimsky-Korsakov, but in the development of harmonic nuances he follows along the same lines. All his early work is still connected with the harmonic period, which in Russia and in the West was nearing its final stage. In music, as in painting, Impressionism developed rather imperceptibly from Russian real-

ism, and equally, as in painting, it found its expression in the increase of dynamics and in an ever progressing simplification and disfigurement of traditional forms, until it reached the stage of Expressionism. In 1908-11 we can see the beginning of that new process, which is already familiar to us through the history of painting.

In Europe the period of "stripping" music was connected with the name of the Expressionist Schoenberg. But for the Russia of those days Schoenberg was too extravagant and difficult to understand, so that his influence passed almost unnoticed. The ties with French Impressionism were much closer, because Debussy, who himself had come under the influence of Borodin and Musorgsky, had visited Russia and had left his mark on the work of modern Russian composers. It is very difficult to trace the transition from Debussy to Schoenberg, from Impressionism to Expressionism, in Russian music. Karatygin (1875-1925), the musical critic, who was an unprejudiced witness of that period, met Schoenberg when the latter came to Russia in 1912. The critic was ready to acknowledge Schoenberg's genius, but he declined to understand the logic of his methods, and though he felt that "here Impressionism had reached its limits," he was unable to supply any other definition, and this fact worried and annoyed him. Karatygin connected Schoenberg's name with that of Stravinsky: "Stravinsky, like Schoenberg, the German modernist, has reached the extreme limit in the refinement of tone. I wonder whether it will be with the names of Schoenberg and Stravinsky that the course of Impressionist development in European music will end?" This was written in 1914 in connection with the production of *Le Sacre du printemps*. But as early as 1912 Karatygin told of Schoenberg's works gaining popularity in Russia.

The pronounced and convinced modernists provoke laughter and hisses from the audience. So it was with Schoenberg both in Europe and Russia. . . . In St. Petersburg a year ago [i. e., 1911], at the "Nights of Contemporary Music," when Schoenberg's Opus Eleven for the piano [Expressionist, composed in 1909] was introduced to the public it was received with roars of laughter. Recently . . . the wonderful Opus Ten of Schoenberg's first period (1906) was performed and met with far fewer objections. . . . But yesterday, at the per-

formance of his *Pelléas et Mélisande*, a symphonic poem (composed in his early manner of 1902) there were no hisses, but actually some applause.

While exposing the shortcomings of the composer, Karatygin at the same time emphasized "the great talent felt in every single measure, in the wealth of thematic inventiveness, in his firm, bold harmony, and in his exceptional mastery of ornamental polyphony. . . . Schoenberg is laconic, profoundly original, madly bold, but he has also an iron logic." It is important for us to note that on December 13/26, 1912, in reference to this review, Stravinsky wrote Karatygin the following lines from Clarens, where he was finishing his *Sacre du printemps*:

I realize from what you write that you admire and understand what is inherent in Schoenberg, this truly remarkable artist of our time. Therefore I think that you would be interested in his latest work, where his creative power finds its noblest expression. I speak of *Dreimal Sieben Gedichte aus Albert Giraud's "Lieder des Pierrot Lunaire" für eine Sprechstimme, Klavier, Floete (auch Piccolo), Klarinette (auch Bassklarinette), Violine (auch Alto) und Violoncelle*. It is what you, the "Contemporaries," ought to play. But perhaps you have already met him and he has told you about it, as he told me.

Having learned the facts about Schoenberg's personal influence and the high esteem in which Karatygin and Stravinsky held him, we can return to the characterization of Stravinsky's work during the new period, which began subsequent to 1911.

The large audience which in 1913 protested violently against the music of *Le Sacre du printemps*, when it was introduced in the regular season of the Ballet Russe, nevertheless felt instinctively that it was a new and unusual step in the development of music. The very choice of the subject was significant. From playing at "barbarism" in *L'Oiseau de feu*, which in 1910 had pleased the French public, and from burlesque *Petrushka* of 1911, Stravinsky the composer, following the example of Roerich the painter, passed to an attempt at reproducing a genuine prehistoric primitive, not only barbaric, but even savage. And in order to achieve that he had to introduce new colors into his music. Without attaining

the polytonality and atonality, the polyrhythms and arhythms of Schoenberg and his disciples, Stravinsky nevertheless, in his experiments in harmony and rhythm, made great progress in that direction.

The new period in the development of Western music represented a return to melody from the exclusive domination by harmony characteristic of the nineteenth century. Although Stravinsky's strength lay in harmony and rhythm, while his melodic inventiveness was not outstanding, the new stage in the development of his music was unanimously described by the critics as one of transition from the vertical harmonic style to the linear melodic one.

It was then that Impressionism, as seen in the works of Rimsky-Korsakov, and the aestheticism of the end of the century were both abandoned. True, Stravinsky retained his rôle of illustrator of the everchanging, picturesque moments in composing *Le Rossignol*, which was begun in 1909 and finished in 1914, in time for the Ballet Russe season, and in which he made his orchestra display all the iridescent shades and timbres possible. But B. F. Schloezer was correct in saying that *Le Rossignol* should be considered the first work in the "melodic period" of Stravinsky's art, and that it "represented a phase in which the composer collected his thoughts and hesitated between the two opposite issues open to him—the play of sounds and the prevalence of melody." In the meantime Stravinsky was transformed from a Russian into a European composer. He complied with the change in public taste, and the "Orient" in *Le Rossignol* ceased to be Russian or Asiatic and became pseudo-Chinese. But soon all exoticism disappeared from Stravinsky's music. Simultaneously with Diaghilev's Ballet Russe, Stravinsky was definitely Europeanized and before long exercised a marked influence over the young French composers. In order to attain this position it was necessary for him to speak the new Western language of music, and so Stravinsky directed his creative power along these lines. It must not be forgotten that during this period—1914-19—"intellect was more important than inspiration."

With the strengthening of the intellectual element that of experimentation also increased in power, and with it Stravinsky's music became actually "pure," in the sense that he sought new

effects in the surprising combinations of sound and timbre. In following the general trend of modern music which, by that time, had been established in the West, Stravinsky began to use chiefly instruments with a clear, distinct timbre, far removed from the modulations of the human voice or of stringed instruments. Thus in trying to create a new style Stravinsky, like his foreign colleagues, used an orchestra of unusual type in which the combination of instruments was changed to accord with the nature of the experiment. All this, of course, was reflected in the productions of the Ballet Russe, although this time it was not Stravinsky who served Diaghilev's purposes, but Diaghilev those of Stravinsky. *The Little Fox* (season of 1922) and *Wedding Feast* (season of 1923, composed in 1914-18) introduced a change in the style of music and in the character of the Ballet Russe.

Finally, in 1919 Stravinsky once again sought new and different ideas and methods, and both critics and loyal admirers found it very difficult to follow his strenuous efforts to grasp the modern movements and to satisfy the new taste.

This taste demanded that the old masters of the polyphonic, that is pre-classic, period be resuscitated. Diaghilev had just found in the library at Milan a manuscript by Pergolesi, the composer of *Serva-Padrone* (1710-36) and father of *opéra bouffe*. It was exactly what was needed for the Russian Ballet, and he suggested to Stravinsky that he arrange the pieces of manuscript into a ballet. Stravinsky accepted the offer but instead of an ordinary arrangement he composed *Pulcinella* (season 1920), an original creation, in which, however, he preserved the spirit of the light and witty Neapolitan sketch and refrained from extreme modern harmonies. The return to Italian was followed by a return to Russian style. *Mavra*, a comic opera, was composed by Diaghilev's order for the season of 1922 and was dedicated to Glinka, Chaikovsky, and Pushkin. In this work, with its syncopated American rhythms, frequent modulations, retarded cadences, and absence of the string quartet from the orchestra, Stravinsky was equally far removed from his prototypes. Yet he nevertheless sustained the key, introduced *bel canto*, and even deigned to adopt melodies from Russian, Gypsy, and Italian sources. Thus it justified the motto "Return to classicism," while the irony that permeated *Mavra* protected the

composer from being accused of apostasy. However, he ostentatiously displayed his return to classicism in his *Apollon Musagète* and *King Oedipus* (both composed in 1927), his return to Bach in a piano concerto (1924), and again to Chaikovsky in *The Kiss of a Fairy*. Each of these works confused the public and critics with its new method of composition. The orchestra grew ever smaller (in *King Oedipus* Stravinsky resorted to strings only), the harmony became more simple, the style more and more translucent, and dynamics yielded to majestic immobility. "It is only left for him to compose a mass," remarked Schloezer after *King Oedipus*, but instead Stravinsky astonished the public once again by composing *The Kiss of a Fairy*. When finally he arrived at the conception of a religious subject he produced the *Symphony of Psalms* (1930). In this work Stravinsky wiped out entirely his many experiments and returned to the colorful orchestration of which he was such a great master during his early creative period. The result was immediate: the public received the symphony with tremendous enthusiasm, while the critics found themselves in an awkward position, wondering "where Stravinsky was directing his gaze."

Another great name in Russian and in contemporary music generally, is that of Prokofiev. He is not only ten years younger than Stravinsky but by nature is a different and in many respects even a contradictory type. What Stravinsky attained with long study and close work on the score, came to Prokofiev as a gift. Everyone applies the words "young" and "cheerful" to him, the critics say that he "sings like a bird," and the opinion is unanimous that this young composer's creative power is inexhaustible. In his spontaneity, naïveté, eternal youth, and great productivity Prokofiev resembles Haydn and Mozart. While Stravinsky's metamorphoses were many and painful, Prokofiev's works are uniform in their precipitous flow, and the critics, whose opinion of Stravinsky was ever in sharp disagreement, are unanimous about Prokofiev. Only towards the end of his evolution did Stravinsky return to classicism, whereas Prokofiev, in a sense, is a classicist by nature—a classicist from the very beginning, notwithstanding the fancies and whims that outwardly express his buoyant imagination, and the spontaneous manner in which he welcomes every

new fashion. This is because he cannot give up his individuality; reflection and *Gruebelei* are alien to his nature. His youthful arrogance and innocent desire to cause astonishment should be attributed to this and not to snobbishness. Prokofiev was the appropriate person to protest against every type of psychology, philosophy, metaphysics, and mysticism in music, and, fortunately for him, he appeared when the time was ripe for this protest (approximately in 1909-11).

In what does Prokofiev's "classicism" consist? To begin with, in refusing to divide the timbres of various groups of instruments in the orchestra for colorful effects, and in acceptance of the orchestra as a whole. For as such it is more adaptable to the unfolding of themes in the classic cyclic form than to creating of romantic moods by spreading the melody over a harmonious background of soft and voluptuous chords. Instead of being colorful, Prokofiev's orchestra is graphic, and because of his individual peculiarities it is also brusque and pungent. This allows of sharp contrasts, abrupt turns, and the revival of melody, which scientific music had such difficulty in achieving, and which Prokofiev uses with such inexhaustible inventiveness. Rhythms are clear and accurate, which makes his music simple to understand and fascinates the audience. Prokofiev's art is not for the chosen few; it brings music back to the concert halls and thus makes it accessible to the masses.

Indeed, all these characteristics are not mere reminiscences of the classic epoch, for Prokofiev is modern, wanting to live the life of his time—and to its full extent. He adopts the dynamic spirit of the day with its impetuous, "cinematographic" aspect. His buoyancy is healthy and contagious, while he unfolds themes with such originality and lack of repetition that the audience has no time in which to relax.

Although Prokofiev is not an advocate of "pure" music he is actually serving it. He need not assume an attitude of protest against the literary and philosophic influences in music, because this position was assured before he appeared, but he profited nevertheless by the fruits of that conquest and paid his tribute to the times by choosing comic subjects for his compositions for the operatic stage.



What place does Prokofiev occupy in modern music's scheme of evolution analogous to that in the development of painting? We have called him a "classicist"—a term generally accepted as the opposite of "romanticist." But Prokofiev's buoyant temperament makes it rather difficult to assign him a definite place within the limits of any scheme. However, it is not only possible but quite natural to draw a parallel between his music and the corresponding moment in the history of painting. This gives us also the opportunity of filling the gap between Expressionism and the return to the past, which was left open when speaking of Stravinsky's evolution. We know that in painting there was not only a negative protest against the lack of form in Impressionism but also a positive effort to replace it with correct drawing and definite form. Prokofiev's art represents a similar stage in the development of Russian music. In an article published in *Rech* during 1916 Karatygin likened Prokofiev to the most sincere and talented of the Russian Cubist and Futurist artists. And in fact this parallel is fully justified by Prokofiev's outstanding characteristic—the return from the shapeless and colorful Neo-Impressionism to a definite form.

The youngest generation of modern Russian composers grew up under the influence of Stravinsky and Prokofiev, but they began working independently at a time when even their masters regarded the changes which took place during the first twenty years of the twentieth century as a matter of the past. Thus, being able to profit not only by the experience of their immediate predecessors, but also by that of the leaders of the preceding "harmonic" and "classic" periods, this young generation developed a broader outlook on the problems and methods of modern music. But of course in all their works the influence of Stravinsky and Prokofiev is particularly marked. We shall now cite as examples the names of a few young composers who have gained renown in the world of music. Markevich, even in his recent emancipation from the extremes of modern music, is a foremost follower of Stravinsky. Nabokov, a disciple of Prokofiev, like his master possesses an enthusiasm for modernistic music, temperament, and a spontaneous inspiration. The youngest of this generation, Julius Krein, the son of Alexander Krein, shows independence from both Stravinsky and Prokofiev and follows—in so far as he follows anyone—the

older romanticists and classicists of music. Of course, the ways of these young musicians are barely marked at present, and only the future can define their true character.

Music presents a tragic picture of ruins in post-revolutionary Russia. With great difficulty some young shoots are making their appearance from this chaos, but they are not "new" in the sense of being in harmony with their modern surroundings. To some extent the reasons for this chaos in music were the same as in literature. In both fields the most outstanding representatives of the pre-revolutionary period had emigrated abroad. Stravinsky was already at home in Western Europe when he was joined there by Rakhmaninov, Grechaninov, Medtner, and temporarily by Prokofiev. Talented conductors, singers, pianists, violinists, and 'cellists soon found work abroad. Those who remained in Russia were forced to lead a life of privation and dire need. With the institution of the NEP (New Economic Policy) artistic as well as all other enterprises were declared self-supporting, and another difficulty presented itself. There was no audience sufficiently educated to appreciate the subtleties of ultra-modernistic music; serious concerts did not pay expenses, and all the new compositions of this type were therefore destined to be heard only by a small circle of intimate friends, with no hope of ever being published; as to the larger and more important forms of composition, they could not even be publicly performed. It became more and more difficult to form an orchestra because, while many musicians played stringed instruments, very few could play the wind instruments. The young musicians were not interested in the oboe, flute, and brasses, and the older ones were gradually dying out. Moreover, the democratic spirit of the musicians found expression in a protest against the conductor's right to restrict the freedom of the members of the orchestra, and in 1922 they formed a conductorless orchestra (the First Symphony Ensemble, or *Persimfans*). As long as they retained their original enthusiasm and were playing familiar pieces this enterprise was successful, but when it came to learning new music, both the will and discipline vanished.

The destruction of the young shoots was due chiefly to the opposition between the social command ordering modern music for the masses, and the production, which adhered steadfastly to

the methods of the recent past. These methods had satisfied the refined and decadent taste of the Moscow Maecenases who patronized any new combination of words, color, and sound. Thus, as these works were only for the benefit of the chosen few, the rough, uncultured masses could not appreciate them, and unfortunately there was no one able to restore health to the decadent art. At first, during the period of War Communism, efforts were made to cultivate the very latest in music, thinking it (as in art it was thought of the Futurists) the most revolutionary. In this spirit A. S. Lurie tried to "command" the affairs of music. But soon it was realized that music of the modern type had no public, and that the present one needed something more simple, rhythmical, melodious, and gay. Besides the social command there was also a governmental command ordering propaganda music to be composed for solemn occasions. Contributors of course were found, but curiously enough they either represented that most conservative type of music, the church chant, or else were those who under the old régime composed cantatas for coronations, triumphal marches, and festival music. No wonder that the true musicians retired into themselves and, deaf to the new call, continued to work along the old lines, although with slight modifications.

To some extent we know these tendencies. In fact, revolution did not find any single trend dominating music, for it was really the period when all sought new ideas and bore the banner of innovators. The actual quality of their aspirations is better expressed by what was repudiated than by that which attracted them. They repudiated the opera, a form of music most appreciated by the general public. Opera was condemned as an artificial, conventional, and mixed form of music, not meeting the requirements of either realistic art or free inspiration. Even before the revolution the young composers showed preference for symphonic and chamber music, and after the October Revolution this tendency was strengthened by the fact that in both capitals the state opera remained under the old administration, which was averse to patronizing innovators and preferred modern staging of old operas such as *Faust* and *Carmen*. It was quite useless to compose music obviously destined to remain in the composer's portfolio; moreover, operas with a national spirit were considered outmoded, and new

themes, within the comprehension of the masses, were difficult to find.

At the same time the grandiose, monumental, and heroic themes suggested by the extraordinary events of the day did not appeal to the composers. Revolution had not yet had time to be covered with the growth of poetry and legend; and it was not so easy for a learned composer to sing of it in its crude state in music, as it was for a self-taught author in literature. Ideas on a grand scale, in Skriabin's style, also lost their attraction, for, apart from the fact that to carry them out required Skriabin's naïve conceit, mysticism at that time was out of place. Sabaneiev gives an excellent description of the desire to "de-skriabinize" Soviet music:

We were convinced that nothing ages as quickly as "novelty," and that there is nothing older than yesterday's novelty. . . . After Skriabin's subtleties, after his mystic ecstasies . . . we longed to cultivate lapidary, rather coarse, comic and grotesque moods. We required something fresh, vivid, lifelike, and cheerful in exchange for that overstrained, ecstatic, very fascinating, but nevertheless unhealthy atmosphere. There was no fresh air in Skriabin's works, only the ecstasy produced by an opiate, leading to the world of hallucinations.

The new slogan was "Back to health." In literature this same mood was expressed by a return to artistic realism,<sup>10</sup> but in music it was more complicated. "The natural course," Sabaneiev continues, "led to the enemy camp of musical academism." But the innovators did not believe in this course, and we see them in a state of confusion unable to form any definite ideas, although at times it is possible to detect the existence of some great creative impulses. This explains the pronounced failure of the Soviet composers to devote themselves to revolutionary themes, their abstention from definite utterings, and their intentional vagueness. Among creative musicians in Soviet Russia Sabaneiev places at the head of the list the following three names: N. Miaskovsky, S. Feinberg, and Anatole Aleksandrov. As they are little known abroad we shall adhere to the characterizations as given by Sabaneiev, who with N. Roslavets had represented the most radical

<sup>10</sup> See Part II, chs. 4 and 5.—Ed.

trend in Soviet music. Miaskovsky (b. 1881), a pupil of Glazunov and Rimsky-Korsakov, has composed many symphonies, and although a classmate of Prokofiev at the Conservatory, their temperaments are as opposite as the poles. Miaskovsky is so extremely melancholy and distressingly troubled that it makes his music somber and vague.<sup>11</sup> His manner of composition is restrained. His music is serious and a masterpiece of technique, but it has no outstanding individuality and tends to preserve a balance between modernism and conservatism. He is related to Chaikovsky through his lyrical pessimism and melancholy. However, he is also subject to other influences, ranging from Mozart and Grieg to Debussy and Skriabin, which makes him so changeable that his compositions lack individual style.

Feinberg (b. 1889), a pianist and composer for the piano, is in music a visionary forever surrounded by phantoms. His compositions somewhat resemble Skriabin, but without the latter's "Titanic pose," while his sonatas in many respects remind one of Schumann. Feinberg is a mystic and a belated romanticist, who continues to seek harmonies beyond the earthly reach. He composes only for himself, and his seven sonatas, which are extremely difficult, are little known outside the circle of his most intimate friends.

Anatole Aleksandrov (b. 1889), a "typical retrospectivist and painstaking composer of musical miniatures," spiritually resembles Medtner. He of them all is "the least affected by the cosmic influence of the revolution"; he is "imperturbable in his academism which, however, is no longer based on the classical substrata of Brahms, but on the modern ones of Skriabin and Medtner."

Further on, Sabaneiev names three national Jewish composers, M. Gnesin and Alexander and Gregory Krein. Gnesin is cold and scientific in his approach to the creation of national Jewish music. He also tried to compose a "revolutionary" symphony to Sergey Esenin's words, but failed to attain in it the "monumental style" which the Bolsheviks exacted; this work is far more typical of one of Rimsky-Korsakov's pupils or a disciple of the national Russian school than of a revolutionary innovator. Neither does Gregory Krein's style of composition show much effect of the revolutionary

<sup>11</sup> Cf. the editor's remarks on this subject in his postscript to this volume.—Ed.

years, and it is only Alexander Krein who is rather inclined "to leave the intimate circle and venture forth into a wider field," for in contrast to Gnesin he is passionate and temperamental. Although, like Rebikov, he repudiates the musical tradition in a revolutionary manner, he remains profoundly national. In him flows the Oriental blood of the race by which the *Song of Songs* was created, and from Ravel and Debussy he turns to the melodies of the ancient synagogue, which he endows with all the dynamic of his emotional nature. He is too realistic to be satisfied with Neo-Impressionism.

As we see, none of the outstanding composers who continued to work in the Soviet Union was the product of the October Revolution.<sup>12</sup> They were all born in the eighteen-eighties, and their creative power developed under the influences that prevailed at the border line of the two centuries. In those days radicalism in music was definitely artistic. The very nature of the extreme trends, which had as their aim the liberation of music from any literary, philosophic, or other similar association, rather alienated than connected the innovators with politics. This being the mood of the more gifted artists of Soviet Russia they could not possibly create the "monumental, heroic, and grandiose new revolutionary music" required of them by the Communist policy. But even in the field of music there soon appeared some followers of the radical trends, who, profiting by the play on words, established a connection with the radical political trends and tried to attain power under the new régime. Nicholas Roślavets (b. 1880), the Maiakovsky of music,<sup>13</sup> was the most outstanding among these "Fellow Travelers" and developed his own "formal" method. Having declared himself a "Positivist" and Marxist, Roślavets derided the "soul of music," and following a strictly "scientific formula" he composed "soulless, formalist music." But his theory, intended for a restricted circle of "connoisseurs of the perfect form," was as contrary to the Soviet slogan "Bring music to the masses" as was that of the Formalists in literature.<sup>14</sup> The workmen's clubs needed quite a different music, and when composing "revolutionary

<sup>12</sup> Cf. the editor's postscript to this volume.—Ed.

<sup>13</sup> On Maiakovsky, the Futurist poet of Soviet Russia, see Part II, ch. 4.—Ed.

<sup>14</sup> See Part II, ch. 4.—Ed.

works" even Roslavets was obliged to simplify his musical language. His rivals declared that "in his cantata *October* Roslavets defeated himself by repudiating all his previous compositions." This composer was to share the fate of the literary Formalists.

Boleslav Iavorsky, another alchemist in music, was far more fortunate, for he succeeded in making obligatory, at all the schools where he taught, the study of his theory in which he gave his explanation of harmony. For some time the number of his pupils was so great that all the students of music were divided into two cliques—"Iavorskists" and "Anti-Iavorskists." While Iavorsky could produce no examples to prove the superiority of his theory, his pupils, of whom Melkikh and Protopopov were the most outstanding, were rendered powerless by the thousand and one trivial rules of this esoteric teaching. In the mean time, the urgent command was issued for music to be of easy access to the masses, and it was necessary to accelerate the production of simple compositions. At this juncture the anxiety of the authorities was relieved by the composers of minor importance, who had been trained under the old régime, but were able to adapt themselves to the new requirements. A. Ostretsov, in a review of 1928, remarks that "such composers as G. Lobachev, D. Vasiliev-Buglay, and K. Korchmarev, were the first to answer the needs of the masses and actually showed how and along what lines the work had to be done." These representatives of the "labor trend" waged war on "aestheticism of the Impressionist type and on the art of pure, self-sufficient forms." For "choral collectives" Lobachev composed "precise and graphic pieces with a firm and bold rhythmical step, ending in fiery trumpet fanfares," on the themes *Mutiny Call*, *Victory Song*, *Form into Ranks*, and the like. Korchmarev, though outwardly connected with Rimsky-Korsakov's tradition, aspired nevertheless to "intensify the exhibition of man's social attitude towards reality," and so composed such characteristic pieces as *Engine C 15* and *Komsomol Leap Frog*. The reviewer admits, however, that "the sovietization of the Fellow Travelers was a process infinitely complicated and difficult. The charms of Debussy still exert great power over their mind, and the fact that Lobachev, and particularly Korchmarev, are attracted by French music is not to be denied." The example of Arthur Lurie, a "Decadent"

and "Neo-Impressionist," who had been the Commissar for Music and a dictator in that field, but later escaped to Paris, proves that it was almost impossible to rely upon these older men. The same reservations may be applied to Zolotarev (b. 1873), a pupil of Rimsky-Korsakov, Gliere, Ippolitov-Ivanov, and others. The Communists hold out more hope of the young generation of composers, which "follows an experimental course and submits its works to tests on the stage of workmen's clubs."

Undoubtedly the social upheaval, which brought the lower and upper strata closer together, also supplied new opportunities to music such as it had never had at the time of the aesthetic salons. The working masses were no longer satisfied with their old *chastushka* (a musical limerick) and demanded new music.

The dearth of suitable new music makes it necessary to choose from that of the old repertory. The Soviet radio has recourse even to transmitting musical programs from foreign stations. Naturally all this will inevitably influence the coming generation of Russian composers in their choice of trends. What course will they take? In part Prokofiev's popularity in Soviet Russia gives us the answer. His music is cheerful, youthful, and easy to understand, and these are the properties demanded by the people.



## EDITOR'S POSTSCRIPT

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**D**URING the last decade it has been possible to observe in the field of Soviet architecture and painting a development closely similar to that which has been taking place in Soviet literature.<sup>1</sup> In both cases there has been a noticeable tendency to do away with the extremes of the earlier revolutionary period and to maintain a certain degree of ideological unity among the artists all of whom were expected to serve the same social purpose. Art, like literature, had to be sufficiently simple to be understood by the masses, and while it had to assimilate all the technical achievements of the past, it was not to lose sight of the final goal—the socialist reconstruction of society.

In architecture the starting point in recent development was the competition for the projected Palace of the Soviets in Moscow. In publishing its report on the award, the governmental commission in charge of the competition formulated the fundamental principles which, in the opinion of the authorities, should control Soviet architecture. It should be "a people's architecture, essentially humane and rich with details that should appeal to the masses." It should also be based on a careful study of the architectural styles of the past, thereby "gaining for the new all the benefits which the old had developed." The publication of the report was followed by a long and lively discussion among the architects themselves in which its general propositions were dealt with in a more detailed and specific fashion. The new governmental attitude, which the Soviet architects had to accept as a guiding principle, meant in the first place a rejection of such extremes as "Functionalism" and "Constructivism." The artistic content of architecture could not and should not be reduced to

<sup>1</sup> See the Editor's Postscript to Part II of this work.

the concept of the "function" of a given structure or to the forms of the technique itself, because in both cases that would mean the negation of architecture as an art. Of course, Soviet architects should strive to create technically advanced and functionally adequate structures. But they should aim also at filling these structures with positive aesthetic content in harmony with the spirit of the great historical epoch in which it was their privilege to live.

The governmental pronouncement meant further a condemnation of modernistic tendencies in architecture pursued for modernism's own sake. As in literature, the command was "to learn from the classics." In the discussion that followed there was an attempt to determine which of the past architectural styles were more applicable to the problems of Soviet architecture. While it was admitted that certain technical achievements could be borrowed from every one of these styles, the prevailing opinion seemed to be that it was from the classical architecture of Greece and Rome that one could learn most. All Oriental styles, as well as Byzantine, Romanesque and Gothic, had been inspired by religion and mysticism. And the last was also expressive of the feudal age, just as the architecture of the Renaissance stood for the age of the despots, and the "functional" style of the post-war period for that of decadent capitalism. In contrast, classical architecture had been essentially civic and social in inspiration, which made it a much more acceptable model. Moreover, it had the advantage of offering a connecting link with the Empire style of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries in Russia, so that in following the classics one could also keep up a national tradition.<sup>2</sup>

While the most outstanding works of Soviet architecture continued to be structures of a mass character, such as "palaces of culture," workers' clubs and other public buildings, much more attention has been paid during these last years to the construction of modern apartment houses, a fact that must be connected with the new emphasis on the importance of family life and the official proclamation of the era of good living to be enjoyed by all.

With regard to painting there was a similar condemnation of extreme modernistic tendencies and of a formalist approach

<sup>2</sup> Cf. T. F. Hamlin, "Style Development in Soviet Architecture," *The American Quarterly of the Soviet Union*, Vol. 1, No. 1 (1938).

emphasizing artistic technique at the expense of the ideological content of art. To painting was applied the same slogan of Socialist Realism which was made an obligatory theory for the Soviet writers. As in literary works, pictures had to reflect the heroic age of socialist construction with its struggles, victories and aspirations, and they had to do it in a way that would make them easily enjoyed and appreciated by the people at large, and not by a limited group of connoisseurs. In their effort to fulfil this task the Soviet painters began to devote themselves to representation of such subjects as episodes in the lives of revolutionary leaders (Stalin and Lenin in the first place), the civil war, work and play on collective farms, the Dnieprostroy power-plant, the ironworks at Magnitogorsk, the construction of the subway in Moscow, and the conquest of the Arctic.

As in literature, a certain amount of individual stylistic freedom was allowed, and some painters continued to preserve moderately modernistic tendencies while others adhered to the World of Art tradition. But in view of the official demands for an easily understandable and civic-minded art, it was inevitable that in most cases the Soviet painters should go beyond the World of Art to the realistic style of the Itinerants, which now experienced something like a posthumous rehabilitation.<sup>3</sup> And while official critics speak of "the inception of a new realistic art" in Soviet Russia, to an outside observer this art does not look particularly new in anything but subject matter. In its technique as well as in its general aesthetic approach it reproduces all the characteristic features of Russian painting as it was back in the 'seventies and 'eighties. We are faced here with the paradox of a revolutionary government sponsoring a highly conventional and definitely old-fashioned art.

Music by its very nature is less amenable to governmental regulation and ideological pressure from outside than either literature or arts. Perhaps this explains the fact, pointed out in the last chapter, that for a relatively long time many of the outstanding Soviet composers shunned revolutionary themes and tended to pursue each his own individual way. It has been noted, however, that towards the end of the preceding period a general demand

<sup>3</sup> On the World of Art and the Itinerants, see above, Ch. III.

was formulated for the Soviet composers to bring their art into harmony with the spirit of the time, and to satisfy the needs of the masses. The great success which awaited Prokofiev upon his return to Russia was due not only to his extraordinary talent, but also to the fact that his manly and cheerful music met with official approbation and was pointed out as an example to be followed. That this advice did not remain unheeded can be demonstrated best in the case of Miaskovsky. It appears that the characterization of his music as highly introspective and pessimistic is no longer applicable in view of the different nature of the works he has produced in the course of the last decade. Soviet commentators are unanimous in describing the evolution of Miaskovsky as one from "doubts and gloomy forebodings" to "optimism and faith." Quite obviously, the composer has made a conscientious effort to identify himself with the spirit of the time as his Twelfth Symphony (also known as the Kolkhoz or Collective Farm Symphony) was dedicated to the fifteenth anniversary of the October revolution, the Sixteenth to Soviet aviation, the Eighteenth to the twentieth anniversary of the revolution, and the Nineteenth to the Red Army, while in 1939 he wrote an overture to commemorate Stalin's sixtieth birthday. A somewhat similar tendency has been noticeable in the work of M. Shaporin (b. 1887) who in 1939 produced a symphonic cantata *On the Kulikovo Field*, which is "permeated with love for fatherland and freedom" and thus forms a musical counterpart to the recent "defense literature" in Soviet Russia. In all these works the critics find the same fundamental traits characteristic of most of Soviet music in its latest stage: a monumental style, the prevalence of major tonality, and a preference for martial rhythms.

The last decade saw also the emergence of younger Soviet composers whose musical growth did not start until after the revolution. Of these the most famous and, undoubtedly, the most gifted is D. Shostakovich (b. 1909). Having begun with a symphony which showed unmistakable affinity with pre-revolutionary Russian music, he then became affected by the influence of Western European musical modernists. In his opera *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*, however, he made an attempt to create a work with social content and, in his own words, "to make the music as simple

and expressive as possible." Produced in 1934, the opera for a while enjoyed considerable success, but subsequently it was severely condemned as guilty both of "formalistic tendencies" and "vulgar naturalism," and its performance was discontinued by official order. The discussion which accompanied that act took the form of a veritable trial of Shostakovich who was accused of having fallen under the influence of such Western modernists as Schoenberg, Hindemith, Berg, and Křenek, representatives of the decadent bourgeois civilization and thus ideologically hostile to Soviet Russia. During the discussion Stalin was quoted to the effect that "music in Soviet Russia should be national in its form and socialist in content." Shostakovich remained in eclipse for two years, until the performance in January, 1938 of his Fifth Symphony which was acclaimed as a work of genius and led to his complete rehabilitation. In this symphony, according to the Soviet critics, Shostakovich has freed himself from all his former faults and has presented a work "glorifying the victory of a powerful personality over all doubts, and the joyous triumph of human reason." According to press reports, Shostakovich was engaged, on the eve of the present war, in writing his seventh symphony, with the image of Lenin as his inspiration.

Among the other younger composers one should mention A. Mosolov (b. 1900) whose *Iron Foundry*, in spite of its success abroad, has been condemned by Soviet critics for excessive modernism, but who in his Second Symphony (1934) has also "liberated himself of formalistic tendencies and has created a work emotionally satisfying and full of ideas"; I. Dzerzhinsky (b. 1909), author of the operas *Quiet Flows the Don* (1936) and *The Upturned Soil* (1937), with librettos based on Sholokhov's well-known novels; T. Khrennikov (b. 1913), whose First Symphony was performed in 1935, and A. Khachaturian (b. 1904). The last named, an Armenian by birth, is representative of the tendency on the part of many Soviet composers to achieve simplicity by turning to folklore, and together with others is responsible for the development of regional music in the Soviet Union (such as Armenian, Georgian, Bashkir, Turkoman, Uzbek, etc.). In the opinion of some writers the Oriental element in this regional music is much more authentic than that in the works of the pre-

revolutionary "nationalist" school, but it remains to be seen whether such ethnographic transcription is more capable of great artistic achievement than the nostalgic longing of a Glinka, a Borodin or a Rimsky-Korsakov for the Orient of his dreams.

MICHAEL KARPOVICH

*Cambridge, Mass.*

*October, 1941*



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