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**RUSSIAN NATIONAL IDENTITY AND RUSSIA'S
FUTURE IN THE LITERARY JOURNALS NOVYI MIR
AND NASH SOVREMENNIK: 1992-1993**

BY

GALINA VAISMAN

**A thesis submitted to the Faculty of
Graduate Studies in partial fulfilment of
the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts**

**Institute of Central/East European and Russian-Area Studies
(CERAS)
Carleton University
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IN THE LITERARY JOURNALS NOVYI MIR
AND NASH SOVREMENNİK: 1992-1993

Submitted by
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in partial fulfilment of the requirements for
the Degree of Master of Arts

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ABSTRACT

One of the main concerns expressed by Russian intellectuals after the fall of the Soviet Union and its leading ideology are those related to national identity and the future of the country. The literary thick journals (tolstye zhurnaly) Nash Sovremennik and Novyi Mir, whose history extends to the Soviet period, are utilized to demonstrate the polarization of intellectuals with regards to questions of identity and Russia's fate as a nation. The journals' articles address problems of Russia's national history, Orthodoxy and the Orthodox church, and the influence and appropriateness of foreign ideas and models for Russia's future development. After reviewing articles published in the two journals for the years 1992 and 1993, conclusions regarding the relationship between national identity and a vision of Russia's future path will be drawn.

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Introduction

During these times of rapid change, when the Russian political leaders are consumed with the pragmatic, short-term demands of policy-making, Russian intellectual elites are asking theoretical questions regarding the direction and purpose of reform, and the future of the country in general.

The discussion surrounding such issues is rich and diverse. The uncertainty created by the collapse of the Soviet Union and its ruling ideology has challenged intellectuals to make sense of the ever changing environment and the implications for Russia's future. Solid philosophical positions take time to develop, and the fluidity of Russia's intellectual discourse makes it difficult to categorize intellectuals as belonging to the "right" or "left" ideological camp. In this atmosphere of conflicting ideologies and visions for Russia's future, pluralism, in the western liberal sense of the word, has become characteristic of Russia's intellectual discourse.

Pluralism; the existence of diverse groups holding different opinions and interests - political, social, religious, etc. - which can be legitimately expressed, is generally considered to be a positive feature of a democratic society. Yet pluralization can also become an impediment to the accomplishment of practical affairs when pluralist discourse becomes polarized to such an extent that social cohesion becomes nearly impossible.

Post-Communist societies are now trying to give meaning to the rapid changes and the influx of foreign ideas influencing the lives of their citizens. In Russia, where conditions of censorship and isolation from Western philosophical and political debate has been the general rule for seven decades (some would argue for several centuries), intellectuals play a particularly important role in exposing and interpreting ideas and discussing their applicability and usefulness for Russia.

In the Soviet period, the intelligentsia had wide access to the public realm, as it was assigned a leading role in shaping the views of the Soviet population¹. Since the fall of the Soviet regime, many groups have entered the public arena and are vying for public attentions. In spite of the new competition, intellectuals (artists, writers, scholars and publicists) continue to play an important role in shaping society's perception and interpretation of the political affairs of the country.

Today, as in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, the intellectuals are fundamentally divided on the most important social issues confronting the Russian

¹The use of the word intelligentsia is different in the Soviet period than it was in nineteenth century Russia. In the Soviet definition, the intelligentsia was an occupational category, denoting highly skilled, non-manual workers, such as writers, scientists, and academics.

government and people².

The purpose of this study is to delineate the intellectual debate which helps shape the public's interpretation of Russia's current situation and the direction of her future development. The debate is particularly important now, when the collapse of the Soviet regime has left Russians without any substantive ideology to explain the difficulties and chaos of the transition period. The study will attempt to discover whether there exists a correlation between intellectuals' understanding of national identity and national "character", on the one hand, and their recommendations for the political, economic and social institutions for the Russian nation on the other. When theorists attempt to attribute specific qualities to a nation group as a whole, and try to define its 'national character', do they do so with the intention of justifying the appropriateness of a prescribed form of social and political organization?

Utilizing the familiar medium of the literary thick journals (*tolstye zhurnaly*), the traditional forum for the creative intelligentsia, this paper will examine themes which

²The compiled works entitled Vekhi [1909] and Iz glubiny [1918], Moskva; Izdatel'stvo "Pravda", 1991, containing the works of such prominent Russian theorists as N. Berdiaev, P. Struve and S. Frank address the problem of the intelligentsia and the destructive consequences of its oppositional stance. Their oppositional stance towards the regime earned them the distrust of state authorities and served to divide and antagonize the population.

contribute to the understanding of Russia's national identity and their relation to the vision of Russia's future.

My choice of thick journals was guided by the assumption that they have been and will continue to be an important medium for the transmission of political ideas. Thick journals have nearly a two hundred year history in Russia.³ Readers looked to these journals not only to find the most recent works of poetry and prose, but also for hidden or implicit political and social ideas, which were otherwise forbidden expression by censors.⁴ Having a rich tradition of being at the forefront of social and socio-political discussion makes thick journals a particularly interesting subject for the study of current political and social thought.

Both in their form and in their content, thick journals were an effective medium for the expression of political ideas. They were more intelligible and less reactionary than

³ Many classics of Russian literature made their debut in journal form. So, for example, Lev Tolstoi's War and Peace and Anna Karenina, as well as Fedor Dostoevsky's Crime and Punishment, The Idiot and Brothers Karamazov made their first appearance in the journal "Russkii Vestnik". In the Soviet period, the journal Novyi Mir was the first to expose the work of Alexander Solzhenitsyn, in spite of opposition from officials in the Writers' Union. For a short, but informative article dealing with the history of "thick journals" in Russia see, V. Lakshin; "Okno v mir", Literaturnaia gazeta, no. 24, 1993. p.6

⁴Thick journals were often closed, both by Tsarist authorities and by Soviet censors for publishing forbidden works. For example, Zhdanov's 1946 speech regarding the journals Zvezda and Leningrad which were accused of betraying the revolutionary role of literature by publishing pessimistic works of poetry and prose. Doklad o zhurnalakh Zvezda i Leningrad, Moskva, GOS. Izdatel'stvo polit. lit., 1952.

newspapers, yet being a monthly, they responded more quickly to contemporary issues than did books or scholarly publications. Like minded people often congregated around specific literary thick journals, which served as a forum for intellectual discourse.

The years 1987-1989 were very fruitful for most literary journals. Readers were continuously being exposed to new tales of horror and deceit on the part of Stalin and other Party officials. The circulation of some journals increased by over 50% between 1987 and 1989. By the early 1990's, however, the excitement of publishing former dissidents and exposing the deeds of the Communist regime had subsided and attention shifted towards Russia's current and future problems.

The rise of national independence groups in most parts of the Soviet Union exposed the shallowness of the slogan, "brotherhood of the Soviet people". It became legitimate to address Russia's problems directly, without disguising them in Soviet terminology. 1991 was a pivotal year for Russia, and literary journals did not fail to mirror the resulting tension and confusion prevailing in Russian society.

The literary journals Nash Sovremennik and Novyi Mir are particularly interesting as a study of prevailing attitudes towards change among the intellectual elite. In fact, the two journals have been chosen precisely because they have a reputation for taking an oppositional editorial stance on socio-political issues.

Novyi Mir has been a "liberal" journal since its founding in 1925. Liberal, in so far as it published (whenever censorship was relaxed) a wide variety of ideological and literary tendencies. Its editors had a reputation for pushing the limits of official toleration and, and when possible, defended writers who were otherwise unpopular with the regime.⁵ Nash Sovremennik has generally taken what its editors call a "patriotic" position. Its editors took every opportunity to defend Russia against accusations of chauvinism towards other Soviet nationalities and published works which were "pro-Russian" at a time when "brotherhood of nations" was still part of the official ideology.⁶

These two journals were among the more popular and better known journals during the Soviet period. Their extended history and reputation gives them an advantage over new publications competing to capture the attention of readers. The readers' familiarity with these journals provides them with a consistently high circulation, which means a wider

⁵Tamara Miller, Biographical Index of the Contributors to Novyi Mir; 1925-1934, Ann Arbor; Ardis, 1983. Also, Dina Spechler, Permitted Dissent in the USSR. Novy Mir and the Soviet Regime. New York; Preager, 1982.

⁶Nash Sovremennik (as well as other journals which took a "patriotic" position) was involved in a polemic with Novyi Mir over the issue of Great Russian chauvinism in the late 1960s and early 1970s. See, for example, Edith Rogovin, Novi Mir, Cambridge Press, New York, 1981.

audience for their ideas⁷. Although the circulation of the two journals has suffered a substantial drop between 1992 and 1993, it has remained roughly comparable month by month.⁸ The reputation of their editors for supporting two dichotomous perspectives on Russian national identity, her past and future development makes the two journals a logical focus for a study of pluralization and polarization.

The basic format of the journals, which has remained virtually unaltered since the time of their inception, is as follows: The first half of the journal is traditionally reserved for works of fiction and poetry, and the second half contains literary criticism and essays covering political, social and historical themes. This paper is concerned with the second, non-literary section.

The contributors to the second, non-literary, section come from various professional backgrounds (economists, writers, political scientists, historians, theologians, etc.), a fact which enables us to explore many themes in the debate surrounding national identity and paths of development.

⁷ The circulation of both journals has declined substantially since the early 1990s. The decline (and in some cases, elimination) of state subsidies, the increase in postal costs, and the price of paper have contributed to this decline. However, even with the decline, the current numbers reflect a very large circulation by western standards, particularly in light of new competitive market conditions.

⁸ For example, in January 1992, Nash Sovremennik printed 204,665 copies. By November 1993, that figure had dropped to 57,130. A similar phenomenon can be observed for Novyi Mir which had a circulation of 250,000 in January 1992, and merely 53,010 by December 1993.

The analyses of Nash Sovremennik and Novyi Mir covers a two year period, 1992 and 1993. The subject of national identity is broad and can be discussed from many angles. After a perusal of all the articles published in the non-literary sections of both journals, I selected those articles which addressed the most frequently recurring and controversial themes. The questions, or the themes, into which this paper has been divided, are most representative of the main concerns of the journals' contributors and editors. These concerns are delineated into four chapters, the subjects of which are as follows:

The first chapter of this thesis will address the question of national history and the selective use (and abuse) of Russia's history to demonstrate the specificity of a Russian "character" and to legitimize support of particular political and ideological positions. History can serve as a justification for decisions made in the present. For example, portraying the past in a wholly negative light justifies a revolutionary break with tradition and the sacrifices necessary for the construction of a better future.⁹ Furthermore, history can be used as a tool for demonstrating some innate characteristics of a nation, its people and its leaders.

⁹ The Soviet regime, for example, created a wholly negative image of pre-revolutionary Russia, with its exploited masses, its despotic Tsars, its corrupt Church and its villainous bourgeoisie. This made it easier for a regime to justify and legitimize the revolution as well as the hardship which accompanied it.

In the second chapter we will examine how Russian identity is seen to be related to the outside world. Do Russian thinkers perceive their country as belonging to the western tradition, which stands for individualism, and a rational faith in progress, or do they see her as resembling the eastern traditions, with its heritage of communalism, and traditional social organization? This question was particularly important in 1992-1993, when the initial influx of foreign goods, ideas, and foreigners themselves brought the question of identity to the fore. In this chapter we will also consider the revival of the Eurasian idea, harking back to the Eurasian movement among the emigré community in the 1920s, whose representatives see either isolation or a union with the Islamic countries as the only means of securing Russia's national security.

The relationship of Orthodoxy and other religions to the Russian state will be the subject of the third chapter. This discussion will begin by considering the historical role of the Church and its relation to the concept of Russian statehood. It will proceed to consider how religion in general and Orthodoxy in particular are viewed by contemporary critics, and what role religion is to play in contemporary Russian politics.

In the fourth chapter our attention will be focused on cultural, ethnic and ideological categories. The journals' portrayal of various groups in society and their relation to

Russian national identity will be examined. We will see how publicists portray minorities and foreigners, and how they isolate and categorize newly emerging groups such as the entrepreneurs, and the democrats and what implications this has for political institutions. Furthermore, we will see if the authors single out any group as being an impediment to Russia's development or bearing responsibility for the problems Russia encounters.

These questions are important because it is easier to define national identity in negative rather than positive terms. It is more convenient to say what Russia is not, what is alien to her people, than to define what it is to be Russian. This will enable us to see the way intellectuals have responded to the new elements saturating Russia and the new myths and stereotypes they have created to explain the changing living environment.

In the final chapter the individual themes discussed in the preceding chapters will be combined, and their political significance assessed. We will reflect on whether the intellectuals contributing to the two journals have painted a picture of the Russian people and their national character and what this implies for their vision of the political organization required for the nation.

The individual intellectuals who contribute to the journals, and their personal or professional affiliation, will

be discussed only in those cases where they are specifically introduced by the editors. The reason being that in Russia, as in other post-Communist countries, political and philosophical ideas are fluid and yet unformed. In their search for answers and solutions to Russia's problems, individual intellectuals frequently change their political orientation and affiliation. For example, those who once lectured Marxism-Leninism went on to support "democracy" and market reform. Some changed their affiliation again, once the real consequences of the "free-market" became apparent in Russia.¹⁰ Consequently, the role of the journals' editorial board in selecting essays that represent their particular perspective will be of extreme importance. Whether motivated by a specific political objective, or concerned to provide a variety of perspectives on a given topic, the editorial board serves as a filter through which readers receive their interpretation of specific questions.

¹⁰ Michel Urban's article "The Politics of Identity in Russia's Post-Communist Transition: The Nation against Itself", in Slavic Review 53, no.3 (Fall 1994), is a good discussion of changes in "identity" among Russia's elites after the Soviet period.

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CHAPTER TWO

THE USES OF HISTORY

The search for national identity is accompanied by the quest to discover roots, origin, and history. The desire to define oneself in collective terms, as belonging to a community, ethnic group, or a nation, is a long-standing human characteristic. The most often used, and often abused, framework for this definition is history. Russian thinkers are not alone in their search for a national identity. All nations have produced thinkers, publicists, propagandists or philosophers who have tried to establish the distinguishing and outstanding qualities of their people, of their traditions and their achievements¹.

History is used in two ways; as the explanation of the past and a tool for forecasting or recommending the path for the future. National history is pertinent to the quest for identity, as a collection of achievements and failures. But it is also important to matters of future development, providing "lessons" upon which to base long term development. Questions related to the optimum form of government and social organization, to the proper relation between the layers of power, and other related to nationhood invoke references to historical precedents for their answers. The differences of

¹Canadians, too, have devoted attention to this topic. See, for example the recently published book dealing with the difficulties of self-definition among Canadians, Lost in North America. by John Grey, Vancouver; Talonbooks, 1994.

opinion regarding Russia's present and future have their origins in diverse understandings of Russia's past.

It is generally assumed that one of the most effective methods of promoting national consciousness is to instill a sense of common history in the population. National history, as the study of past events and accomplishments of a particular cultural or national group, can have profound meaning to a people who are in the process of reevaluating their past, present and future as a nation - as a method of nation building.²

For Russia, as for other former Soviet republics which have become independent states, the question of national history is of extreme importance. The Soviet practice of politically motivated historical interpretation, and of distorting, eliminating or fabricating historical facts, has produced a fictitious tale for each nationality's development. Freed from the purposeful falsifications of Soviet historical scholarship, and the limitations of a singular Marxist-Leninist interpretation, Russians, like most other ethnic groups, have begun to reconsider their heritage; to rediscover their culture, language, traditions and national heroes.

This chapter will investigate the different ways in which

²In an article entitled "From National Movements to Fully Fledged Nations." which appeared in New Left Review, no.198 (1993) 3-21, M. Hroch identifies scholarly inquiry into the history and customs of a group as the first step towards modern nation building.

Russian intellectuals perceive the history of their nation and will consider how their particular interpretation of history is used to construct their vision for Russia's future. The discussion will dwell on articles written by writers in the 1990s, yet where appropriate, essays written in previous decades will also be examined. The reason for referring to both is that writers who have discussed these themes in the past are often invoked as authorities in support of a particular point. In such cases, the views of the quoted authority will receive closer attention.

Throughout the Soviet period, publicists took on the function of historians, as they were entrusted by the regime to present the correct historical interpretation to the public. Yet, it remains to be seen whether publicists, freed from the official requirements of a "correct" version of history, have become any less rigid or dogmatic and more willing to engage in a debate, to consider various opinions with regards to historical interpretation. For this reason, the editors' selection of historical documents or previously unpublished works will be indicative of their personal involvement with the topic as they are now able to make choices with regard to content and perspective.

Since the early Gorbachev period, both professional historians and publicists have been eagerly uncovering various aspects of the Soviet past which had hitherto been hidden from public attention. Not only were the crimes of Stalin and his

apparatus exposed, but Lenin - a symbol of all that is wise and benevolent - became a subject of public scrutiny³. The inquiry into Russia's history extended beyond the Soviet period. Russians began to take a great interest in their pre-revolutionary past, and began to question its Soviet interpretation. Having rejected many of the myths produced by the Soviet regime, Russian intellectuals (publicists, scholars and others) have a unique opportunity to reconsider their past and to reconstruct or give new meaning to the history of their country; to uncover the legends which would be capable of uniting the population and providing a sense of pride and community⁴.

The reevaluation of history is not simply a matter of retelling events. Discussions are often normative in nature. Discussions attempt to evaluate the impact of specific events on Russia's overall development, rather than the events themselves. This evaluation of past events often carries an implicit vision of the future in so far as it expresses an author's search for a continuum, for a perpetuation of

³ Khrushchev's ascendance to power, and his exposure of Stalin's crimes in 1956 marked the first step towards reevaluating history and placing under question myths which were created by Stalin for the purpose of social control and complacency. Medvedev, Roy. Khrushchev, Brian Pearce tr. New York; Anchor Books, 1984. p.83-104.

⁴ In his book Tsar and People; Studies in Russian Myths, New Haven; Yale U.P., 1961, Michael Cherniavskii explains that myths are universal in so far as they attempt to justify and explain reality. They are specific to particular societies in so far as the historical conditions which are taken into account are unique.

specific traditions in the life of the country. In other words, the debate over history is not value-neutral. The thinkers who treat the topic of Russia's history have strong preferences for the direction in which Russia should develop. Ideas about Russia's past are as diverse as those relating to her future. For many intellectuals, the past is a subject of pride and woeful reminiscence about the days of glory, when Russia was a great power, and society was connected by bonds of tradition. For others, it is a reminder of what is to be avoided in the future.

It is not unusual that in recreating their history, many intellectuals are boastful of their country's successes and silent about its failures. The phenomenon of national glorification is not new to this century nor to Russia. The legends of every state are filled with tales of virtue and heroism. Almost without exception, the legends of one's own state (or ethnic group) are presented in a particularly glorious way, focusing on triumphs, justifying achievements and ambitions and down playing the defeats and shortcomings. Yet glorification of the past is not the only phenomenon occurring in Russia. The opposite trend, that of shame and rejection of the past, also is exhibited by many Russian intellectuals.

As a political tool, glorification of the fatherland functions to instill a sense of pride and belonging in the nation's citizen and furthers both a sense of distinctiveness

from and commonality with the rest of the world. A knowledge of history provides a nation with a sense of continuity between past, present and future.

As an instrument of propaganda, history can be used to justify or explain particular choices (political, economic) made in the present. This tendency is more pronounced during historical turning points, times during which one segment of 'history' is perceived to be completed, and another is about to begin. At such times it is believed that the fetters of history can be shed and that it is possible to create the nation anew. Historical precedents are drawn upon selectively, with the notion that those which are deemed positive can be left intact while those which are negative can be tossed aside. As we witnessed in the Soviet case, history can be used to reinforce political positions and justify political decisions.

When the Soviet Union fell apart there was a general feeling that an entire chapter of history had come to a close. Similar to the euphoria felt by revolutionaries following the overthrow of the tsar in 1917, the end of the Soviet period is seen as the end of an epoch, an opportunity to rebuild the country and reshape its future. Two interesting, if contradictory phenomena are occurring side by side in intellectual debates. On the one hand, there is the desire to start fresh, to tear away the fetters of history and to determine the new path of the country according to new ideas

and fresh models. At the same time, there is a call to remain true to Russian traditions, not to follow blindly the trodden path of other nations, not to accept foreign models which might impede, or retard the development of Russia's native customs. Of course the disagreement lies in the identification of these traditions and customs as being either native or "foreign". In this way, some aspects of Russia's past are rejected or overlooked, while others are accentuated and praised.

Many believe that Russia should now 'return to her roots', a turn of phrase which has different meanings for different thinkers. Others believe that it is time to plunge ahead, forge a new path for Russia based on the example set in the West, which is a model of prosperity and wealth. Those who support a return to traditional Russian values, to the ways of a pre-revolutionary Russian society, will point to those episodes in her history which reveal the positive aspects of the period, thereby building a case for the desirability of such a return. Those who now support rapid change along the Western path, portray Russia's past as largely repressive, and not conducive to progress.

Those who want to recapture Russia's 'true' spirit (as they see it), mystify aspects of Russian society which were said to be pure and as embodying religious optimism and spirituality, free from moral corruption, and so forth. The peasant is one such example. The peasant commune is said to be

the natural arrangement for Russian peasants, who are characterized as being concerned with the community first, and entirely unmotivated by wealth or private gain⁵. Furthermore, the lamentations for the past do not include a serious discussion of the possible implications of these institutions in today's context. However, those who wish to emulate the western path also fail to consider the readiness of the population or the ability of current institutions to accommodate drastic innovations.

In this way, debate devoted to historical themes implicitly or explicitly contributes to the discussion of Russia's future development. They give insight into the way Russian intellectuals see and use the past and consequently, where they believe the road ahead should lead.

There is one general theme which divides contemporary Russian intellectuals occupied with the question of history; whether Russia belongs to a universal historical trend of development, or whether she has her own particular path, incomprehensible to the outside observer. The former view holds that Russia's history is an integral part of world history, that there are general trends of historical development which will be followed by most countries

⁵Of course, when painting a picture of Russia's past and of the communally oriented individual, these writers neglect to mention the collectivization campaign, and ignore the fact that it required great effort and cost in human lives to destroy the peasants' instinct of private ownership of land and to make them servants of the state in the late 1920s and early 1930s.

(including Russia), with due allowance for pace.⁶ The latter view denies that there is a universal pattern that dictates human development and holds that Russia is a unique culture and nation and that it has a unique 'mission' which only she can know and which she is destined to follow. These two perspectives inform the way individual authors perceive specific historical events and therefore deserve closer consideration.

Universalism

An article published in Novyi Mir in August 1993 entitled, "*Intelligentsia v chas ispytaniia*" (The intelligentsia in the hour of judgement), is a strong expression of the first argument. Aleksei Kiva, clearly states his position with regards to Russian history,

I dare say that there is nothing in Russian history which is specific, unique, which would fundamentally distinguish her from the history of development of other nations. Rus' conquered and was conquered by others, foreign cultures were forced upon her, but she too did the same with her subjects. The Russian people formed by mixing many traditions, just as did the cultures of Europe...Some cultures, such as the Japanese, underwent a greater period of isolation than others, but when they opened to the world, they showed themselves adept at incorporating the traditions from other cultures without

⁶This is not the same as "historical Darwinism" which would hold that the laws of historical development are like the laws of nature. The universalist vision sees more active, rational participation on the part of individuals within a state. See the discussion of M.P. Pogodin in Edward Thaden, Interpreting History. New York; Columbia University Press, 1990. Pp.193-198.

fearing that they will lose themselves in the process." ⁷

Every nation has its own legends, explains Kiva. But the further a nation appears to lag behind other leading nations, the more it relies on historical and national myths to justify or explain away this lag. In saying this, the author reiterates his scepticism with regard to the view which claims that Russia has her own unique historical path. Her backwardness vis-à-vis Europe is a result of perfectly objective historical circumstances, not of some mystical uniqueness which will someday manifest itself in greatness. Kiva rejects both the view that Russia has a unique path which is revealed only to her countrymen, and the view which pronounces Russia a barbaric nation as compared to the rest of the civilized world (Europe).⁸ He believes that every country has travelled the road of despotism, and that the process of development and enlightenment was not easy for any. Every nation has its myths, writes Kiva. The further a nation lags behind others, the more disorderly are its affairs, the more fantastic and exaggerated are its myths.⁹ Kiva's position, while supporting a universal trend of development, does not

⁷Aleksei Kiva, "Intelligentsia v chas ispytaniia," Novyi Mir no. 8 (1993), 161.

⁸Here, in the second example, A. Kiva refers to P. Chaadaev, who pronounced such a verdict on Russia in his first Philosophical Letters. Rossiia glazami russkogo. (Russia in the Eyes of a Russian). A.F. Zamaleev, ed., St. Petersburg; Nauka, 1991. p.19-138.

⁹ibid. p.163.

insist that every nation need develop at the same pace. Yet, when events move as quickly as they have in Russia, there is a temptation to want to speed ahead and take the next step forgetting that every stage of development requires its predecessor.¹⁰ A country cannot bypass the less pleasant stages of historical development and step directly into prosperity because the population must be ready to receive and accept specific ideas embodying particular institutions. Kiva uses the example of private property, saying that while it is essential and beneficial, it is not yet widely accepted by the population.¹¹

Those Russian intellectuals who share the universalist view of historical development discourage emphasising abstract national characteristics. At the same time, in their desire to follow universal development, to gain the benefits from the achievements of a more advanced stage of development, intellectuals try to jump ahead of history, to advocate social arrangements for which society is not prepared or for which the necessary preconditions do not exist.

Another way a writer distinguishes him/herself as a

¹⁰This idea is not unlike the Marxian concept of history which postulates the logical unfolding of history from one stage of development to the next. History is a conscious, comprehensible and knowable process. This perspective was viewed by many Russian patriots in the late 19th century as the embodiment of western arrogance and the cause for their judgements on Russia's underdevelopment. Today, those who hold the strongest anti-western views also oppose the universalist perspective of development.

¹¹ibid. p.167.

universalist is by expressing patience and openness to external analyses of Russia's problems. While the particularist perspective is resentful of outside intervention and advice on the grounds that foreigners cannot understand the deep meaning of Russia's affairs, the universalist perspective looks favourably to outside advice, believing that Russia's problems are not unique to her alone.

The chief editor of Novyi Mir, Sergei Zalygin, expresses the universalist perspective in a discussion of Douglas Wainer's book entitled Models of Nature: Ecology in Soviet Russia. The book is a critical view of Russia's environmental problems. While it was written by an American, Zalygin writes that it was a great contribution to the understanding of Russia's problem. It could have easily been written by me, or one of our own experts, says Zalygin. Ecology is an international concern, he adds, and therefore other nations' interest and offers of assistance in our ecological problems is a positive phenomenon.¹² As we will see below, the particularist perspective frowns upon an American or other foreigner's analyses of Russia's problems and believes that no foreigner can truly understand Russia and her unique situation.

Particular Path

¹²S. Zalygin, "Otkroveniia ot nashego imeni" (Revelation on our behalf), Novyi Mir, no.10 (1992). 214-216.

The particularist perspective rejects the position of universal progress. It holds that there is no universal yardstick according to which the achievements of a culture can be measured. Every culture has its own unique path to follow.

In the articles under consideration, this view is most often linked with an isolationist position. It is first argued that Russia is unique and has a distinct destiny outside of the main current of universal development, and then it is suggested that in order to maintain this unique quality and fulfil her historical mission, Russia needs to insulate herself from the world and protect herself from the corrupting influences of other cultures.

Nash Sovremennik took this approach when it published an article by P. Savitskii, originally written in 1924. Savitskii insisted on the uniqueness of the Russian way and rejected universalist perspectives of historical development which results in a "crazed" attempt to emulate foreign models, mindless of differences in culture and heritage. He demanded a return to Russian Orthodoxy, and a rejection of all western-atheist institutions. He said that for the last 200 years (since the reign of Peter the Great) Russia had been ruled by atheists who tried to compare Russia negatively to the rest of Europe. In his eyes, Eurocentrism drove the Russian rulers to catch up to Europe. In the process, the people were estranged from their tradition and driven to rebellion and revolution, which, in turn, made room for the Bolsheviks.

Rejecting all theories of universal development on the grounds that they place Europe at the pinnacle of human achievements, Savitskii concluded that "these universal measurements allow Europeans to use the same yardstick and divide the world into 'progressive' and 'backward' cultures".¹³ This view is generally hostile to outside intervention and treats the introduction of foreign institutions on Russian soil with suspicion, if not disdain.

It is believed that the attempt to emulate foreign models force Russia into a competition for which she is not suited due to her entirely different traditions and direction of development. All models which originate on foreign soil are hostile, and those of the West are viewed with particular suspicion, a point which will be discussed in the next chapter. Russia does not resemble the West not because she lags behind in development, but because she is intrinsically different and her path will therefore never resemble that of other nations.

The particularist perspective can be seen in another article published in Nash Sovremennik in 1993. Aleksandr Kazintsev's argument is grounded in his theory that Russians are guided by different rules than are the legal-minded people of Europe. Russians do not follow laws blindly, he says. They

¹³P. Savitskii, "Evrazeistvo", Nash Sovremennik, no.2 (1992) 145-52. Peter Savitskii was one of the leading theorists of the Eurasianist school of thought which will be treated at length in chapter two.

have higher values based on compassion and love for their fellow humans.¹⁴ In fact, the Russian spirit is unable to coexist with a European system of governance. Russians are a free and wilful people and cannot be forced into the restrictive models drawn up by others. The importation of foreign models proved to be disastrous for the Russian spirit 200 years ago, and today, once again, it is having the same consequences.

Kazintsev claims that Russia's government was once based on the direct relation of each person to the monarch. Bureaucracy, imported from the West 200 years ago, destroyed this intimate relation. At one time, the monarchs were all very kind to their subject¹⁵. They never forgot them or neglected them. Now, he says, we must work towards the revival of Russia in her past glory. We must bring back the *Government of the People (gosudarstvo liudei)*.¹⁶

The village, which was remote from the corruption of city life, was seen as the bastion of community and humanity - a place where every person loved their neighbour and saw themselves as an inseparable part of the community. This

¹⁴Kazintsev, Aleksandr, "Rossiia: gosudarstvo liudei", Nash Sovremennik no. 2 (1993). 177-183.

¹⁵The myth in Russian historical writings about the 'gentle tsar' and his benevolence towards his people is very well portrayed in the first two chapters of M.Cherniavsky's book, Tsar and People: Studies in Russian Myths, entitled "Saintly Princes and Princely Saints" and "The Most-Gentle Tsar" p.1-44. op.cit.

¹⁶ibid. p.182.

picture was an idealized one even in the nineteenth century, when it was most vividly painted by the Slavophiles and Populists. In the 1990s, when the village is an exception as a form of social organization, when large cities are the norm, and society is incapable of agreeing except on very general principles, this romantic vision is devoid of all meaning. Personal allegiance cannot hold together a large and diverse society, and this is the very point which Kazintsev and like-minded thinkers overlook.

When the contributors to Nash Sovremennik point to the lack of liberal, individualistic and democratic traditions in Russia, they seem to imply that these qualities are incompatible with the Russian character. Rather than saying that these institutions have been weak due to particular circumstances, but will become strong given other, more favourable ones, they conclude that if Russia never had them then she does not need them at all. In saying that the Russian people have a strong attachment to religion and love of the motherland, these writers imply that they are incapable of cultivating the respect for the individual required by a liberal, legal-based society.¹⁷

¹⁷ The ensuing discussion will demonstrate how this deterministic view of Russia's history contradicts their own criticism of western scholars. They criticize A. Yanov, for example, for saying that Russia was despotic before the revolution, after the revolution and has the tendency to be despotic after the fall of the Soviet regime.

The Soviet Period

Intellectuals who are trying to give meaning to the events of the last seven decades, face the difficult task of explaining whether the Soviet period was a logical continuation of Russia's development, an unfortunate event which contributed somewhat to Russia's growth, or something evil imposed on Russia from the outside. It is interesting that those who believe in the uniqueness of Russia's path are not agreed on the value of the Soviet experience.

For those who hold the particularist position, two scenarios are possible in their assessment of the Soviet period: 1) The Soviet period destroyed Russia's traditions and led her away from her natural path. It was destructive to Russia and was supported by western enemies.¹⁸ 2) The Soviet period is seen as having saved Russia from the influence of the West by isolating her from western influence and infiltration.¹⁹

Those who adhere to the universalist position judge the Soviet period to have been an unfortunate occurrence, but not one which was somehow imposed from the outside, but rather one for which the whole population must take responsibility.

An article published in the first issue of Novyi Mir for

¹⁸In this way, a negative image of the foreigner is planted and reinforced in the mind of the reader.

¹⁹This perspective also reinforces the image of the West as being threatening to Russia.

1992 addresses the problem of deterministic view of Russian history.²⁰ Alla Latynina and Iuliia Latynina explain that while it is not possible for Russians to sever themselves from their past, nor to reject their historical inheritance, history is not fate. Russians are not bound to a linear historical unfolding, nor must they repeat past mistakes. The authors reject the argument which claims that the Revolution grew directly and naturally from the Russian religious and communal tradition. For them, this is the same as arguing that Stalin was a direct result of Ivan the Terrible.

The authors criticise western scholars (singling out Richard Pipes and Alexander Yanov) who present a cyclical, deterministic concept of Russian history and claim that the Kolkhoz grew naturally out of the Russian *obshchina*, Stalin out of Ivan the Terrible, Communist bureaucracy out of the Mongol tradition, and the Russian lack of initiative and passivity in business out of Orthodoxy.²¹ But just as they criticize Western scholars, they also target the so-called "patriots" who write for Nash Sovremennik, and assert that Bolshevism did not break with any Russian tradition, but

²⁰Latynina, Alla and Iuliia, "Vremia razbirat' barrikady" (Time to Dismantle the Barricades), Novyi Mir no.1, (1992), 220-236.

²¹The authors do not cite specific works with which they disagree, but it can be guessed that for Alexander Yanov, they are referring to The Russian Challenge and the Year 2000. A. Solzhenitsyn also criticizes westerners and emigres such as Yanov for equating Tsarist Russia to Communism. "Nashi pliuralisty" (Our Pluralists), Novyi Mir, no.4 (1992), 211-225. (Originally written in 1982)

rather reinforced the structures which were natural to the people - communal structures. For these "patriots", Communism was a saving grace for Russia because it aborted the growth of capitalism on Russian soil and isolated her from other foreign influences.

The authors support a more measured view of Russia's past, one which will not reject or ridicule her heritage and accept it as an organic part of the present, yet not hinder reform for which the country is ready. They reject radical utopianism which calls for one great leap to a brighter future as well as the romanticism which calls for a return to the Golden epoch. The former sees salvation in the eternal and the future, the latter in the eternal and the past.²² For the authors, the view which holds that Bolshevism was logically and organically continuous with the Russian past is in no way superior to the one which claims that Bolshevism was an accident and should not have occurred but should have been prevented.

They explain why they reject such theories, and with their explanation reveal their own position with regard to the relationship between past and present. History is a result neither of rules nor of accidents, but of a collision of human wills. Where there is freedom of the human will, there is the possibility of making mistakes. Therefore, the authors argue, when we look to the "reasons" or the causes of totalitarianism

²²ibid. p.221

in Russia, we have to reject theories supporting either historical "accidents" or "rules". Instead of pointing fingers of blame, Russians need to accept their inheritance. Only in doing this can we accept our freedom as active makers of the future, write the authors. In this way, their discussion of the choice between one view of history over another is intricately bound with their perception of freedom and responsibility.

A similar perspective can be found in Novyi Mir's issue no. 10. The article, written by V. Zhivov, is about the philosophy of Nikolai Berdiaev (1874-1948), or rather, a protest against the fact that Berdiaev's philosophy has become an authoritative explanation of the Revolution.²³ In his book, The Origins of Communism in Russia, Berdiaev argued that the Revolution grew naturally out of Russia's cultural-religious tradition. He drew parallels between Russian Orthodoxy and Communism, and treated Russian intellectual history as a natural predecessor to the thought of Lenin and the Bolsheviks.²⁴

The author's strongest criticism of Berdiaev is that he did little more than echo the stereotypes common among Western

²³V. Zhivov, "O somnitel'nom i nedostovernom v istoriosofii N.A. Berdiaeva", (Regarding the Questionable and Unreliable in the Historical Philosophy of N.A. Berdiaev), Novyi Mir, no.10 (1992), 216-221. Zhivov is referring to N. Berdiaev's book, The Origins of Russian Communism, written in exile in early 1930.

²⁴N.A. Berdyaev. The Origin Of Russian Communism. Michigan; University of Michigan Press, 1972.

intellectuals writing about Russia during the 1930s, namely the view that communism grew naturally out of Russia's cultural-religious tradition. Berdiaev, Zhivov writes, was ceaselessly searching for specifically Russian qualities which allowed the revolution to take shape there alone.²⁵ But history does not lend itself to such simplifications. Berdiaev neglected certain aspects of Russia's history in order to make his argument sound flawless and convincing. For example, he ignored the emergence of a business class in Russia at the turn of the century. If Berdiaev included this fact, it might have contradicted his argument about the docile, servile nature of the Russian religious-cultural type, so he simply omitted it from his discussion. This kind of selective evidence gathering is what gives Berdiaev's book the semblance of logical cohesion and contributes to its current popularity among scholars and journalists alike. Zhivov argues, however, that the revolution was not a result of some logical development of Russia's history, and that Communism is not an inherently Russian model, suitable for some abstract, static "Russian character".

Igor' Shafarevich's article, *"Rossiia i mirovaia*

²⁵V. Zhivov, op.cit. p.219.

His other objection has to do with the way the book is being treated in Russia: as the authoritative voice on the Russian revolution and its causes. The work is being quoted with increasing frequency by politicians, academics, journalists, etc. The book offers an interesting perspective, if taken as one of many theories on the subject, as opposed to an unchallenged statement of fact.

katastrofa", published in Nash Sovremennik, expresses the opinion that the revolution was singularly disastrous for Russia. He writes, "The revolution, which was partly financed by Wall Street, destroyed peasant life, the Orthodox Church and other Russian traditions without which Russia became weakened."²⁶ He makes a sweeping narrative of several hundred years of Russia's history in an attempt to demonstrate the difference between the 'Russian way' and the 'Western way'. The western path is one of destruction and exploitation in the name of 'progress', technology and wealth.²⁷ Russia, writes Shafarevich, rejected this path of destruction. She chose to develop slowly, in harmony with nature. In spite of the almost irreversible damage done to Russian traditions by the revolution, she must fight against the Western attempts at dominance and refuse to be governed by foreign concepts of progress. In the eyes of the author, Russia and the West are fundamentally different in their traditions, and in their religious outlook²⁸.

For Shafarevich, the Soviet period was a result of western intervention, a tragedy that befell Russia by the hand of evil-wishers. Its institutions and its forms were foreign

²⁶Igor' Shafarevich, "Rossiia i mirovaia katastrofa" (Russia and the world catastrophe) Nash Sovremennik, no.1 (1993), 100-130.

²⁷ibid. p.119-123.

²⁸Shafarevich makes it very clear that Orthodox christianity is not like western christianity - Catholicism and Protestantism. op. cit. p.123.

to Russia and they took her off her natural path of development. The most important task facing Russia now is to return to this "Russian way" - to a simple life, to Russia's former religiosity and moral structure. Shafarevich does not explain how Russians are to delete the past 70 years from their memory and to return to the agrarian, or "traditionally Russian" lifestyle. Nor does he elaborate on what the "Russian way", to which he wants Russia to return, will entail in the 1990s. In his mind, the "Russian people" is a static category and "the people" have not changed in their expectations nor in their world perspective since the nineteenth century.

The first issue of Nash Sovremennik for 1992, as well as the first issue for 1993, carry articles by S. Kara-Murza. While the two articles deal with different topics, both carry an endorsement of the Soviet regime. The first discusses Russia's poor economic situation resulting from privatization, and says that Russians are losing sight of the positive achievements of the last 70 years. Concern for the public well being was once the norm, says Kara-Murza. In capitalism, which Russia is not trying to build, individualism reigns supreme, and all we have is the right to be poor.²⁹ The second article, entitled "Unichtozhenie Rossii" (The Destruction of Russia), deals with the intellectuals and their responsibility for

²⁹ S. Kara-Murza, "Pazмышleniia ob ekonomike i narode" (Thoughts on the Economy and the Population), Nash Sovremennik, no.1 (1992), 154-166.

breaking up both the Russian empire and the USSR.³⁰ Kara-Murza maintains that the Russian Empire and the USSR served to ease ethnic tensions. Both served to prevent ethnic warfare. Brotherhood in all aspects flourished under both regimes. What we have in their place, concludes Kara-Murza, is ethnic warfare and destruction.³¹

Their discussions of history allow intellectuals to make certain recommendations for Russia's future. Some, particularly those who publish in Nash Sovremennik, claim to support change along Russia's "traditional" lines. In fact, when we consider their recommendations for Russia's future, it becomes evident that what they really want is a return to the past, to a point in time when these traditions were said to be in their pure form. The changes which have taken place in the last 70 years (and in many cases, since the reign of Peter the Great), are ignored. The Soviet period is either brushed aside as an aberration resulting from foreign intervention or, it is said to have been a positive phenomenon, for it saved Russia from the destructive consequences of western liberalism and capitalism. In both cases, the western way is rejected in favour for a return to the past or isolation.

The "Russian Way", to which writers like I. Shafarevich wish to return, is an abstract, poorly defined idea which sees

³⁰ S. Kara-Murza, "Unichtozhenie Rossii" (The Destruction of Russia), Nash Sovremennik, no.1 (1993) 130-140.

³¹ibid., pp. 131-133.

progress in the ways of the past and fails to recognize the changes which have taken place in Russia's material, social, political and cultural life. Unscathed by the Soviet past, by the revolution or by other historical processes, Russia is expected to reemerge from her hibernation and reclaim her former glory.

Conclusion

The liberal intellectuals, who are accused of utopianism, of trying to jump over the realistic restrictions imposed by history, to escape from history and achieve instant progress, have a great deal in common with those who wish to return to some idyllic past, to reconstruct society on the principles of community, love and spiritual unity. In their desire to recapture a life unadulterated by materialism and reason, the latter are able to brush off the impact of the Soviet period with a single statement, "it was foreign to Russia". Saying this, they are able, with great agility of logic, to claim that the next reasonable step should be a return to the place where the "Real Russian Path" was broken off.³²

Often, those who ache for a revival of Russia's past justify their desire by explaining that they do not wish to actually return to the past, but rather to reinstate the

³²For some, this is pre-Petrine, for others, it is pre-revolution.

ideals which prevailed in an earlier period.³³ What is missing in the analyses of the romantic conservative thinkers is an understanding of the interrelation between the material progress of their country (for example, urbanization, mass literacy, mass culture) and the world view of its population. They seem to want to transcend material barriers, and to chose those elements of the past which are congruent with their image of the idealized Russian state, and impose them on the people who are today, no longer the same as they were when living under different conditions one hundred years ago.

They assume that the Russian people - their soul and their 'essence'- have remained unchanged from a much earlier period. Consequently, they assume that Russian people would welcome a return to former conditions.

Likewise, the liberal writers and publicists who publish in Novyi Mir have a tendency to want to transcend the limits of existing material reality. While understanding that universal development involving the evolution from one form of social, political, and economic organization to another is a gradual process, their impatience with the underdevelopment of many Russian institutions causes them to want to jump ahead, skip the necessary preconditions and introduce changes in Russia for which her people and institutions may no be ready.

The understanding and interpretation of history can play

³³For example, A. Kazintsev's introduction to I. Solonevich's article in Nash Sovremennik, no.12, (1992) 138-139.

an important role in giving meaning to the future. Whether one is critical of Russia's heritage and wishes to catch up to the more developed western countries, or one looks with romantic nostalgia to Russia's past harmony and glory, wishing to return to the lost paradise, a vision of the past informs the aspirations for Russia's further development.

Chapter Three
East and West in the Understanding
of Russian Intellectuals

In a recent book entitled Nationalism, of which several chapters are devoted to the exploration of the origins of national identity in Russia, Liah Greenfeld argues that contact with the West, forced upon the country by Peter the Great's reforms, marked the beginning of Russian national consciousness.¹ It is difficult to accept her theory as an explanation for the origins of Russian national consciousness. The intensity and determinism with which Greenfeld links every aspect of Russian national identity to the West assigns a strictly reactionary role to the Russian educated elite. Yet while her conclusions are insufficient, her work brings to the fore a significant and recurring theme in Russian national identity - the West.

Greenfeld explains her position by writing that by removing Russia from her isolation and introducing her to Western culture and achievements, Peter the Great forced the Russian nobility to recognize the discrepancy between their own country and the West. In spite of Peter's reforms, Russia was unable to reach Western levels of development in technology or science. Her relative backwardness and her inability to catch up to the West caused a mixed response

¹Greenfeld, Liah, Nationalism, Cambridge; Harvard University Press, 1992. Pp.189-274.

among the educated elite. As Greenfeld explains, there were three ways in which they could deal with this incongruence; 1- to strive to become like the West, to imitate it in spite of all obstacles; 2- to view it in relative terms, saying that while the West had merits, Russia had qualities of her own, and Europe was generally an inappropriate model for Russia; 3- to reject the West because it was evil and its influence could not but harm Russia. Greenfeld believes that the first two options were too humiliating for most of the Russian elite, so they turned towards the third option - resentment of the West.²

In this chapter, the way in which contemporary Russian intellectuals perceive their country in relation to the West and the East will be examined. First, the portrayal of western and eastern traditions and institutions will be analyzed by looking at the images the East and West invoke in the minds of the Russian intellectuals. Later, we will see what influence and impact each is said to have on Russian traditions, and how this influence is judged by intellectuals. We will consider

²The following passage is exemplary of the severity of Greenfeld's argument, and reveals the extent to which she believes the West forms the single and all meaningful influence for Russian national identity. "The West," she writes, "was an integral, indelible part of the Russian national consciousness. There simply would be no sense in being a nation if the West did not exist," p.254. Russian identity, according to Greenfeld's analysis, was a product of a reaction to and resentment of the West, and was arrived at as an antitheses to the West. "It was *ressentiment*, (*sic*) not social concerns, that fuelled Russian national consciousness and it was *ressentiment*, (*sic*) not sympathy for the peasantry, that made the peasant a symbol of the Russian nation." p.258.

the difference between Russian intellectuals who believe that Russia belongs to the western tradition and those for whom Russia is an eastern country, and explore the reasons offered by advocates of the eastern or western path of development. Alternately, we will look at the Eurasianist perspective which claims that Russia is neither east nor west, but belongs to an entirely separate heritage.

Under consideration will be questions related to Russia's past: From which tradition did Russia originate? To which tradition does Russia belong? In addition, we will examine questions which deal with the future of the country: What model should Russia follow? The western, eastern, or neither?

The perception of the East and West as dichotomous entities has a long tradition in Russian thought³. The West was understood as European society (in contemporary discussions it includes the United States) which is associated with rationalism, individualism, Catholicism or Protestantism and bourgeois economic relations. The East is associated with collectivism, spiritualism, and a homogeneous society.

³ N. Berdiaev, (whose work The Origing of Russian Communism has recently gained popularity among Russian students of the revolution and its causes) wrote, "The Russians are a people in the highest degree polarized: they are a conglomeration of contradictions...The inconsistency and complexity of the Russian soul may be due to the fact that in Russia two streams of world history - East and West - jostle and influence one another. The Russian people are not purely European and they are not purely Asiatic." The Russian Idea, London; Geoffrey Bles, 1947. p.1-2.

The West in the eyes of the Westernizers and Slavophiles

The West is not simply a geographical classification. When referring to the West, one refers to political, religious and social characteristics and has in mind a concept of progress along rational lines. A theory of the West accompanied by either a rejection or an acceptance of the principles it is said to represent was commonly used by Russian thinkers as a sounding board for formulating a Russian path of development. The "West" was used as a reference point from which to measure Russia's standing.

Students of national identity often state that society first becomes conscious of itself and begins to develop a sense of national identity when it comes into contact with foreigners.⁴ The reign of Peter the Great created a situation in which foreigners and foreign ideas were imposed on a society which for many centuries had been isolated from western civilization and its philosophical and structural (r)evolution. For this reason, the reign of Peter the Great is often cited as a turning point in Russian history⁵. While many of his ambitious reforms were premature, and so did not

⁴ Hans Rogger quotes Paul Milyukov, Hans Kohn and Georg von Rauch in support of this position. See the introduction in, National Consciousness in Eighteenth-Century Russia, Cambridge; Harvard University Press, 1960.

⁵This is not to say that Russia did not have contact with the world beyond its borders prior to Peter the Great.

immediately take root in Russian soil,⁶ many others effected profound change in the intellectual, administrative, military and social life of the country. In his drive to modernize Russia and make her strong militarily and financially he sent military, technical and scientific personnel to train in western methods and technology, and invited many western "experts" to Russia. The increased exposure to foreign ideas and customs could not but produce a lasting effect on Russia.

Historians, publicists, and other intellectuals in the eighteenth century were deeply divided on the question of the West and its influence on Russia. Peter's ambition to build a centralized, well run state and competent military, worthy of comparison to the more advanced European states, required large scale borrowing and importing of western institutions and ideas. Many regarded this with satisfaction, relishing the thought of Russia's imminent parity with the more advanced western nations; others regarded this with hostility, seeing it as a threat either to their interests or to Russian traditions which they deemed more valuable.

The disagreement was related both to the merit of western norms and institutions in and of themselves and to their applicability and appropriateness for Russia. By the early nineteenth century the influence of the West on Russian

⁶For example, the separation of administrative and judicial powers, which were part of Provincial Reforms of 1719, failed to effect the system in place. V. Klyuchevsky, Peter the Great, New York; Vintage Books, 1958. p.228-247.

customs and traditions was a topic of great importance to intellectuals. The current debate about the West has a historical precedent in the nineteenth century. The debate between the Slavophiles and Westernizers brought out many of the themes and ideas which are now at the forefront of intellectual debate.

The Slavophiles

Among the most consistent in their criticism of the West were the many theorists who were grouped into the category of Slavophiles⁷. Ivan Kireevskii (1806-1856), one of the first thinkers to articulate Slavophile ideas, believed that Europe (the West) was on the path of decline and decay. His criticism was premised on religious grounds which extended naturally to the social. According to Kireevskii, the Enlightenment spirit was so pervasive, that it has penetrated all spheres of European life, including religious faith. When rationalism is applied to the realm of religion it is inevitably reduced to atheism. It was rationalism leading to atheism which was to be scorned and avoided at all costs.

⁷The perception of the West among the Slavophiles, particularly their belief in the fundamental opposition between the West and Russia is the subject of Nicholas Raisanovsky's, Russia and the West in the Teaching of the Slavophiles. Massachusetts; Harvard University Press. 1952. Even prior to the Slavophiles, the historian, M.P. Pogodin (1800-1878) argued that Western Europe and Russia were two great qualitatively different world civilizations: "Western European civilization was heir to ancient Rome and Eastern European civilization was heir to the Eastern Empire." in Walicki, The Slavophile Controversy. p.48-49.

The strongest object of criticism for the Slavophiles was European Christianity. The Catholic Church was accused of rationalizing faith (attempting to prove dogma by rationalistic arguments) thereby transforming the Christian community of tradition into a political association based on contract.⁹ Protestantism, which was seen as the most corrupt form of Christianity, and which grew out of Catholicism, was seen as the next logical step when rationalism and politics entered into religion⁹. For the Slavophiles (particularly the early Slavophiles), religion was organically connected to the social realm, so a weak or corrupt religion, as they believed the European to be, could not but result in a weak and fragmented society. Other prominent Slavophile theorists, such as Khomiakov (1804-1860), also believed that Europe had come to a spiritual dead-end; that it had surpassed its creative possibilities and was undergoing a gradual process of decline and decay.¹⁰

As a rule, the Slavophiles repudiated Peter the Great for attempting to imitate Europe.¹¹ The changes which his reforms

⁹Walicki, A, The Slavophile Controversy. Oxford; Clarendon Press, 1975. p.135-140.

⁹The relationship of religion and national identity will be treated more fully in chapter four.

¹⁰Zen'kovskii, V.V., Istoriia Russkoi Filosofii (History of Russian Philosophy). Leningrad; "EGO", 1991. Vol. 1, part 2. p. 24-26.

¹¹Iu. Samarin (1818-1876), for example, admired aspects of western culture such as the value placed on liberty, despite his Slavophilism in the religious sense. See V.V Zen'kovskii, op. cit.

effected in the Church and in the organization of society were particularly painful for the Slavophiles, who valued and romanticized the purity of Orthodoxy and its organic connection to the Russian spirit. Throughout Slavophile and pre-Slavophile thought, there is an image of a decaying Europe with its corrupt christianity, incapable of change, improvement or spiritual harmony.

There are several ways that Slavophile hostility towards Europe can be explained. One is to say, as does Greenfeld, that their response was typical of the pauper who, seeing his wealthy neighbour, is reminded of his wretched condition and resents this reminder. Their harsh judgements of the West were guided by envy and resentment. According to Greenfeld's logic, those Russian intellectuals who held an anti-Western stance did so purely out of a feeling of inadequacy vis-à-vis the West.

For many Russian intellectuals, the rejection of the West did develop out of the understanding that Russia would never be able to catch up to its more developed civilization. It was a recognition that in spite of the importation of western technology and expertise, Russia remained relatively backward by comparison. The logic of such thinkers can be understood in terms of resentment. There were many others, however, who believed that Russia's institutions were valuable in and of themselves, and that European ways were incompatible or

threatening to them. They defended Russia's ancient traditions and saw the West as a poisoning influence. So while this defensive reaction, this "resentment" as Greenfeld calls it, could have motivated some of the Slavophile theorists, it is impossible to agree with her in attributing this motive to Russian intellectuals en mass.

Many Slavophiles held sincere romantic notions about the greatness of the peasants and of Russia's purity, uncorrupted by rationalism and the greedy drive for unrestrained development¹². They accepted tsarism as the desirable form of autocracy, and Russian Orthodoxy as the natural centre for national harmony. They believed that social relations in Europe have been reduced to rational calculation, whereas in Russia, traditional peasant communes insured the perpetuation of custom and kinship.

The introduction of western ideas into Russia could not but poison the idyllic traditions of the past. In their philosophies, there is nothing negative in the past. The glorification of the past becomes synonymous with national identity and the nation itself.¹³

¹²Ironically, the Slavophile's love of the masses was philosophical, and did not lead them to advocate any practical improvements in the lot of the latter, (for example, education).

¹³The romantic conservatism of the Slavophiles was not without influence from German romanticism of the nineteenth century. Writing about German and Russian national self-consciousness and its romantic view of the national past, Hans Kohn says:

...the new nationalism looked for its justification and differentiation from the West to the heritage of its past. It often extolled ancient traditions in contrast to the Western

The Slavophile's hostility towards the West was also bound up with their conviction of western contempt of the East, of Orthodoxy, and of Russian civilization in general.

The Westernizers

As a rule, the Westernizers viewed Europe more favourably than did their Slavophile colleagues although their judgements were not unequivocally positive¹⁴. What distinguished them from the Slavophiles was the priority they gave to individual

Age of Enlightenment. While English and American nationalism was, in its origin, connected with the concepts of individual liberty and represented nations firmly constituted in their political life, the new nationalism, not rooted in similar political and social reality, lacked self-assurance. German, Russian, or Indian nationalism appeared as something deeper than Western nationalism, richer in problems and potentialities. The quest for its meaning, the musing about a national "soul" or "mission", the discussion of its relationship to the West, all these became characteristic of the new nationalism... To the German romanticists the nation-state or folk-state was not a societal organization based upon human law with the purpose of assuring man's liberty, security and happiness, but an organic personality, God's creation, like the individual himself, only infinitely greater and more powerful.

Nationalism; its Meaning and History. Princeton, N.J.; Van Nostrand, 1965.

¹⁴Many Russian intellectuals felt contempt towards Russian backwardness. P. Chaadaev, whom it is difficult to categorize as either Slavophile or Westernizer, wrote, "...Isolated in the world, we have given nothing to the world, we have taught nothing to the world; we have contributed nothing to the progress of human spirit...not a single useful thought has sprouted in the sterile soil of our country;. " "first Letter" of the Philosophical Letters cited in Walicki, The Slavophile Controversy. p.100. Chaadaev was proclaimed officially dangerous by the authorities and placed under house arrest as a result of the Philosophical letters. Herzen also wrote that Russia had nothing to lose in a revolution, has no rights, no freedom, etc. has only to gain these...

freedom, and to universal human qualities. The gradual replacement of archaic institutions of the past, of community relations based on kinship and custom, by a system based on political and juridical organization was viewed as a positive step towards the emancipation of the individual from the bonds of tradition.

The West was not necessarily the subject of blind admiration, nor were its faults overlooked. In many cases, the institutions of the West were treated as an inevitable step in human history. For example, neither Belinsky nor Herzen, two of the more prominent thinkers contributing to the Westernizer school of thought, were enthusiastic sympathizers of the bourgeoisie. Rather, they 'accepted' it as a historical necessity, as being the only force capable of struggling for universal values - even if unknowingly, out of self-interest.

The Westernizers, unlike the Slavophiles, welcomed the fact that human relations would be based on more rationalistic grounds. The regulation of social affairs by a legal code rather than custom or the whim of individual landlords, for example, was seen as the emancipation of the individual from arbitrariness.

They admired European civilization for its achievements and believed that Russia should learn from the European example. Their admiration of Europe was not restricted to the material, scientific and intellectual spheres, but encompassed

the political and legal aspects of European life, where reason liberated the individual from the bonds of custom and the force of fate.

The West in the Eyes of Contemporary Critics

As we saw in the above discussion, the West was almost always synonymous with European civilization. In contemporary debate, the West includes the United States. The Soviet regime built a strong foundation of anti-American stereotypes, and contemporary anti-westerners have ably picked up on the traditional images and have added some of their own for emphasis.

One of the most frequently exploited image of the USA in the journal Nash Sovremennik is that of a scheming, power-hungry country, plotting to overthrow Russia at the first possible opportunity. In 1992, Nash Sovremennik published an article by V. Petrov entitled "Pravda ob amerike" (The Truth About America).¹⁵ The essay is supposed to reveal to the reader the side of America which is never shown in the press; the secret of who actually "runs" the country. The essay's main point is that the United States is run by masons, who are controlled by the Jews. Petrov writes, "Today, almost all trade, all Trusts, banks and national wealth is under the

¹⁵V. Petrov, "Pravda ob amerike" (The Truth About America), Nash Sovremennik, no.2 (1992), 171-174.

influence of the Jews and their agents."¹⁶ In this way, the Jews also control the domestic political situation. Petrov adds, "The Masonic order of B'Nai Brith [in New York] is the secret centre from which the whole world is operated." As outrageous as this statement may be, it confirms the old stereotype that the West, and especially the United States has a secret plot to overrun Russia (and the Soviet Union before it).

An article published in the June issue of Nash Sovremennik also addressed the question of America's role in the collapse of the USSR.¹⁷ Is it not suspicious, asks Nazarov rhetorically, that the West celebrated Gorbachev as the "man of the century" when his every action resulted in destruction. He destroyed a huge country with its infrastructure and built nothing in its place. Nazarov does not pursue this question and goes on to explain the importance of an isolationist government capable of rebuilding Russia from within, free from the intervention of outsiders. Nevertheless, his point is clear and so is the accusation and hostility directed against the West.

Masons and Jews are not the only evil-doers in the West, however, for the Vatican has also come under attack in Nash Sovremennik. A letter to the editor, entitled "O vatikane - i

¹⁶ibid. p.171.

¹⁷Mikhail Nazarov, "Istoriosofiia smutnogo vremeni" (Philosophical History of the Times of Trouble), Nash Sovremennik, no. 6 (1992), 143-150.

ne tol'ko o nem" (About the Vatican - and not the Vatican Alone) published in the number 6 issue in 1993 gives a completely fantastic account of western scheming against Russia since the reign of Ivan the Terrible, when Vatican agents are said to have initially penetrated the tsarist estate¹⁸.

The West is not only shown to be corrupt and ruled by secret agents, but that the destruction of Russia is one of its primary objectives.

The editors of Novyi Mir look more favourably to the West and its institutions. The first issue for 1992 carried an article by Lev Simkin entitled, "Zakon i pravo" (The Law and Rights)¹⁹. The subject of the essay is the progress of judicial reform. He discusses the poor state of the courts, pointing not only in their internal functioning, but to the sad state of disrepair of most court buildings in the country. This, says Simkin, testifies to the low priority the legal process had in the Soviet Union. This must change if we are to reform our society.

Throughout the article, Simkin makes frequent references to western models of judicial organization and cites several as examples from which Russia should learn. While he praises western legal institutions, he does not suggest that Russia

¹⁸Letter to the editor, Nash Sovremennik, no.6 (1993), 190-192.

¹⁹Lev Simkin, "Zakon i pravo" (The Law and Rights), Novyi Mir, no. 1 (1992), 207-219.

should copy any system, instead supporting the idea that a judicial system must reflect the values of the society which it is to serve.

Western economists, such as Fredrich von Hayek, are praised in Novyi Mir for contributing to the understanding of communism and capitalism and their relation to politics and society. In the July 1992 issue, the journal published its third article on Hayek. Having serialized his book The Road to Serfdom in the seventh and eighth issues of 1991, Novyi Mir was announcing the translation of the economist's latest work, The Fatal Conceit; the Errors of Socialism, in Russian.²⁰ The announcement includes a short excerpt from the book, which conveys Hayek's main idea: Capitalism has evolved naturally and through the survival of the fittest and most adaptable groups, capitalism has insured the betterment of society. It is the highest evolutionary form of human interaction. Socialism is explained as being a delusion based on false assumptions about individuals.

Novyi Mir concludes the review by saying that the translation of Hayek's work into Russian is a significant and necessary contribution to the understanding of economic liberalism. What makes this article interesting is that Hayek is a well-known enemy of socialism, communism or any other theory which attributes to the individual qualities other than

²⁰"Byl li sotsializm oshibkoi?" (Was Socialism a Mistake?), Novyi Mir, no. 7 (1992) 117-120.

rational-individualism. His work goes farther than simply saying that the socialist experiment had unfortunate and lamentable consequences for many millions of people. His work suggests the foolishness of those who lived under the system and believed in its illusions. The uncritical acclamation of Hayek's work seems odd even in light of Novyi Mir's liberal publishing practice.

The fact that Russia has been 'opened' for observation and criticism by the international community is distressing for many Russians who consider themselves loyal patriots. The suspicion, harboured by patriots and romantic conservatives to the effect that the West fails to understand and appreciate Russia's unique civilization or that it holds Russia and her customs in contempt, is tightly bound with their distress. Just as their counterparts two centuries earlier reacted defensively to the condescension with which western travellers discussed Russia,²¹ today's patriots are highly sensitive to the scrutiny of western visitors who can now wonder freely through the country, passing judgements as they wish²².

²¹For example, sixteenth and seventeenth century travellers, such as G. Fletcher (1549-1611), who wrote in his Of the Rus Commonwealth that Russia was a tyrannical state, without common justice and lacking in true knowledge of God. Also Sigismund von Herberstein (1486-1566), who made similar comments in his two volume Notes upon Russia.

²² It should not be forgotten that less than ten years ago, a foreigner's movement was restricted, as were his meetings with Russians closely observed. The Soviets could control the picture they presented of their society. And although most knowledgeable observers understood that they were being shown an edited version of the life of the country, they could but suspect what the actual

The East in the Eyes of Contemporary Critics

The East is not a geographical category and its definition has changed over the centuries. Just as the West once stood for Europe and its philosophical tradition, and later came to encompass the United States and its economic domination, so too, the understanding of the East among contemporary conservative writers is different than it was among the Slavophiles writing in the previous century. For the Slavophiles, the East meant Orthodoxy, i.e., unadulterated christianity. They paid no attention to the Asian countries, or even to the many non-Orthodox peoples populating the eastern and northern frontiers of the Russian empire.

In the works of the Slavophiles, the East appeared as an abstract idea, a symbol. For contemporary critics, the eastern part of the world is a comprehensible reality. The Soviet regime incorporated the eastern and Islamic elements into its structures and to some extent, incorporated Eastern customs and culture to the western part of the country²³. Consequently, when reference to the East is made by Russian writers, it now include the Islamic peoples of former Soviet republics as well as the countries of Asia.

By and large, Nash Sovremennik publishes authors who look favourably to the East and its traditions. Eastern forms of

situation was.

²³The extent to which these minority groups were included in the state hierarchy, while controversial, is not the subject of this paper.

political, economic and cultural (spiritual) organization are presented as having more in common with Russia's.

An article entitled "*Organicheskaja demokratiia*" (Organic Democracy) by A. Dugin, explains the three different types of democracies, the first - based on liberalism, the second - on egalitarianism, and the third - on fraternity, and explains that only the latter is acceptable for Russia²⁴. Democracy based on fraternity or 'organic' democracy, as Dugin calls it, sees the people not as atomized individuals, but as an organic whole, with its own single spiritual and cultural essence. Using Karl Schmitt as his authority (but without citing his work), he explains that organic democracy is only possible in a homogeneous society. To maintain this homogeneous society there needs to be a real distinction between a person and a citizen. Not everyone living in a country can be its citizen and enjoy its privileges.²⁵ Dugin believes that every nation is home to those elements who simply do not belong, who are foreign by virtue of their beliefs and aspirations. If a nation is to prosper, society needs to be homogeneous, i.e., made up of people who share the same belief system and the same goals for their country. If outsiders and minorities are

²⁴Aleksandr Dugin, "*Organicheskaja demokratiia*" (Organic democracy), *Nash Sovremennik*, no.10 (1992), 139-147.

²⁵It is interesting that Schmitt, the man on whom Dugin relies for his authority, eventually became a member of the Nazi party of Germany. Fortunately, his current revival is based not on his theories of "organic democracy", but on his criticism of liberalism as a political theory.

given equal rights, they will undermine the homogeneity of the population. Therefore, Dugin concludes that it is the duty of the government to decide the criteria for determining who will be awarded citizenship and to enforce this criteria strictly.²⁶

Dugin insists that Russia cannot follow the example of the West, with its cultural and ethnic mixing. Russia is a country of the East, and only in the East, where the population is collectivist by nature, can a truly organic democracy ever function.

The political consequences of this eastern type of democracy are made explicit by Dugin. If society is homogeneous, possessing one single will, than only one ruler is needed to govern. No force is necessary to secure the cooperation of the people, because they and the ruler are two parts of a single whole. They - the will, he - the executor of the will²⁷. Because there are no conflicting interests between the people making up society, there can be no conflict

²⁶Clearly, the new amendments to the Law on Russian Federation Citizenship would not satisfy the contributors to Nash Sovremennik. See, for example, Viktor Khamraiyeu, "Every Russian Will be Coded for Life" Sevodnia, no. 2 (1994) 2, condensed text in Current Digest, XLVI, no.46 (1994) and "Order no. 330 of the Russian Ministry of Internal Affairs, "On the Organization of the Work of the Internal Affairs Agencies in Implementing Russian Federation Legislation on Citizenship"; promulgated 30 June 1994; signed by Gen of the Army V. Yernin, minister of internal affairs", full text printed in FBIS-USR, no.095, 30 August (1994), 2-6.

²⁷This principle is similar to the one that powered the fascist theories of Hitler, ("Fuhrer") and Mussolini, ("Il Duce").

between ruler and ruled²⁸.

In this scheme, the role of politics is reduced a bare minimum. The public sphere within which competing interests battle for dominance disappears, and there remains only the harmony of a single interest and will.

Eurasianism

The Eurasian school of thought is one among several which developed among the Russian emigré communities. However, it is worthy of special consideration because it has received the greatest attention on the pages of Nash Sovremennik (as well as other conservative or nationalist publications). It represents the isolationist perspective, which believes that Russia is following a road of her own, and that her interests are best served if she closes her doors to the influence of both the East and the West.

The Eurasian movement developed among the emigré intellectuals who left Russia before or during the 1917

²⁸This is reminiscent of J.J. Rousseau and his description of the 'General Will'. "Each of us puts his person and all his power in common under the supreme direction of the general will, and, in our corporate capacity, we receive each member as an indivisible part of the whole." Jean-Jacques Rousseau; The Social Contract and Discourses. G.D.H. Cole, trnsl. London; Everyman's Library 1983. p.175. What is different in the two theories is the motive for action in cooperation. While Rousseau's community member acts in unison with the community because he/she sees it in their best interest, they writers in Nash Sovremennik would deny that the individual was motivated by calculating rationality. Instead, they simply "feel" what is best for the nation and cannot help but acting in a way to facilitate this goal.

Revolution²⁹. Some of their ideas bore resemblance to those of the Slavophiles. For example, they believed that Russia was not a European state and did not fit a universal process of historical development, and that Orthodoxy was not only the most pure and uncorrupted forms of Christianity but was an inseparable part of the Russian nation. However, further elaboration reveals the distinction between the two.

The Eurasian school had its social, political, religious, strategic and geographical elements. They believed, for example, that Russia's geographical location gave her a unique position among the states of the world³⁰. Being neither European nor Asian, Russia was portrayed by the Eurasians as having more affinity to Eastern traditions and customs - to collectivism rather than individualism, to autocracy rather than pluralism.

In spite of their flight from Russia during the Revolution, and their early condemnation of the regime's

²⁹The concept of Eurasia a geographical entity existed prior to the nineteenth century. However, the date for the 'founding' of the Eurasian school of thought, or "movement" is controversial. Prince D. Mirsky writes that the Eurasian movement began in 1921, in Sofia. Prince D.S. Mirsky, "The Eurasian Movement." The Slavonic Review, 6 (1927-28), 311-320. Milan Hauder, in a book entitled What is Asia to Us?, Boston; Unwin Hyman, 1990, writes, "...the Eurasianist Movement,.. gathered together Russia's most brilliant minds in exile during the 1920s." p.60. All agree that the movements leading intellectuals were, P. Savitskii (1895-1968), N.S. Trubetskoi (1890-1938), and G. Florovskii.

³⁰As described by Prince Mirsky, "Eurasia is neither Europe nor Asia. It is a "continent" by itself, situated east of Europe, and north of Asia, roughly contiguous with the old Russian Empire, and even more closely with the present USSR." in "The Eurasian Movement", The Slavonic Review. vol.6 (1927-28), 311-320. p.313.

excessive violence, their theory evolved from criticism to half-hearted support of the regime. Many Eurasianists began to speak of the "deep justice" underlying the Revolution and understood it as a rebellion of the Russian spirit against the Europeanization of the country, begun by Peter the Great and continued by successive monarchs.

Their perception of the state places the Eurasians ideologically close to the romantic thinkers who search for the overarching "Idea" to unite society and bring it in harmony with the governing powers. Yet they were less romantic than were their Slavophile predecessors. For the most part, their attention was turned to the practical task of making Russia a great power. Citing D.S. Mirsky, one of the foremost Eurasianist theorists, "European Communism and (to a less extent) Fascism, are obviously groping after a more organic and coherent order of society, in which the State would not be the abstract, mathematical resultant of isolated and dispersed electoral wills, but a union of "symphonic" groups, organised into a higher unity by a common Faith."³¹ The Idea was a utilitarian device for uniting the population behind its leaders.

While Eurasianists rejected the universalism of Marxism, with its historical "laws" which place Russia at the tail-end

³¹Ibid., p.318. Here, too, society, or "the People", is seen as having one "symphonic" personality and the one-party rule of the Bolsheviks was seen as suitable because it was in accordance with the unexpressed but evident "symphonic" will of the People.

of human civilization, they recognized the Bolsheviks as a regime which was capable of building Russia to be a great power. As their vision evolved, they began to be increasingly sympathetic towards the Soviet regime. They saw in the Bolsheviks the less than perfect realization of their dream; Russia, isolated from the damaging competition with the West, maintaining its geographical integrity, governed by a unitary leadership which is capable of uniting the population behind a single Idea. They accepted the Bolsheviks as a beginning of the fulfilment of their vision of Russia. They lamented the absence of Orthodoxy in the Bolshevik scheme, but this did not preclude their support of the regime.

The role of Orthodoxy was viewed in a utilitarian manner. Orthodoxy was important in so far as it served the needs of the state, and it was easily overlooked for practical and strategic ends. Here, the Eurasianists differ greatly from the Slavophiles (particularly for the early Slavophiles), for whom Orthodoxy was indeed a virtue. Many Slavophiles wrote extensively on religious matters and their concern for the well-being of Orthodoxy was genuine and often formed the basis for their ideas³².

The Eurasian ideology is now being revised on the pages of Nash Sovremennik. In the second issue for 1992, the journal featured a section entitled "*Otkryvaia kontinent rossii*"

³² See, for example, the works of Ivan Kireevskii (1806-1856), Iurii Samarin (1819-1876), or A. Khomiakov (1804-1860). in V.V.Zen'kovskii, Istoriia Russkoi Filozofii, vol.1, parts 1 and 2.

(Opening the continent, Russia). It included four articles by the original theorists of the Eurasian school of thought with a short introduction by a contemporary historian.

The series began with Vadim Kozhinov's article, "*Istoriosofiia evraziitsev*" (Philosophy of the history of Eurasianists)³³, which introduces the school and its theorists as being the first to work towards elevating Russia above the stereotype of lagging behind Europe. This five-page introduction is followed by the essay entitled "*Evraziistvo*" (Eurasianism) by one of the founding ideologues of the movement, Petr Savitskii.

Savitskii's article, "*Evraziistvo*", which was originally published in Berlin in 1925, is a conceptual outline of the Eurasian school of thought³⁴. It speaks both about its geographical and cultural uniqueness. Russia, located on the Eurasian 'continent', belongs neither to the eastern nor to the western cultural tradition even though it incorporates elements of both. Savitskii points to the Slavophiles as the initiators of Eurasian ideas, although he adds that the Eurasian school developed these ideas more fully and with

³³Vadim Kozhinov, "*Istoriosofiia Evraziitsev*" (Philosophy of the history of Eurasianists), Nash Sovremennik, no.2 (1992), 140-145.

³⁴Petr Savitskii, "*Evraziistvo*" (Eurasianism), Nash Sovremennik, no.2 (1992) 145-152.

greater precision.³⁵

This article also expresses the rejection of Europeans, who look down on Russia, holding her as inferior because she does not resemble them. Europeans set themselves as the model of development and call their model "universal", writes Savitskii, and it is this universalism which the Eurasians reject. There are no universal measures of progress. The achievements of every culture must be judged according to its own merits, not according to some universal standard subjectively set by the Europeans.³⁶ His criticism of European civilization bears a resemblance to the Slavophile critics, for Savitskii argues that Europeans paid a high price for their "progress" in the form of religious and spiritual bankruptcy. He warns that atheism and materialism, an inevitable product of European civilization, must not be accepted on Russian soil.

Savitskii rejected the Bolsheviks and in this respect differed from other Eurasian thinkers. In his eyes, they were atheist who could not but do evil to Russia. And yet he wrote with some satisfaction about the fact that Russia became isolated and was able to rebuild herself from inside. Savitskii did not propose any specific "model" or "mould" for

³⁵For example, while the Slavophiles focused on the common Slavic element, the Eurasian thinkers stress that there are great differences between the western and eastern Slavs, and Russia cannot be defined culturally simply by her 'Slavness'. Savitskii, p.147.

³⁶ibid., p.147.

Russia's future government, but said that it must invariably be based on Russian tradition. In this sense, he did not fully acknowledge his debt to the Slavophile theorists as his thoughts varied little from theirs.

The next two articles, also originally published in Berlin in the early 1920s, reiterate the idea that the Russian Revolution was somehow a sign of religious justice, a necessary evil following decades of anti-religiosity and spiritual weakness. In spite of the pain which Russia was suffering, it stood to profit from the Revolution, because the Bolsheviks severed ties with the international order and thereby gave Russia an opportunity to gather her strength and regain her lost glory³⁷.

It is difficult to accept Eurasianism as an original philosophical category; Rather, it seems to be a conglomerate of ideas which appeal to Russia's uniqueness and proclaim anti-Western sentiment. It becomes clear that the strongest and most consistent point of the Eurasian argument is its resentment of the West. It is this anti-Westernism which allowed Eurasianist thinkers to overlook or forgive the anti-religious campaign of the Bolsheviks and to see in the regime a kind of saviour for Russia. Although the Eurasianists did not outline a specific plan or agenda for ruling the country,

³⁷P. Suvchinskii, "*K preodoleniiu revoliutsii*" (Overcoming the revolution), *Nash Sovremennik*, no.2 (1992), 153-160 and N.S. Trubetskoi "*My i drugie*" (We and others) also in the same issue, 160-166.

their support of the Soviet regime suggests that they sanction policies of one-man or one-party rule, and that the Orthodox foundation of the Russian state can be compromised for more practical concerns.

What was stubbornly overlooked by both Slavophiles and the Eurasian theorists, was that Russia had the beginnings of many traditions. They rejected some 200 years of Russia's history due to its "European" style, thereby conveniently eliminating this period from their vision of Russia's past and tradition.

Contemporary debate on Eurasian themes

The concept of Eurasia has changed since the 1920s. From a self-contained geographical entity, which was neither East nor West, Eurasia has come to be perceived by many as a Russian-Muslim union. Angry at the breakup of the USSR and the resulting security threat to Russia, and sharing their predecessors suspicion for the West, the new Eurasianists are turning to a union with the southern and eastern countries of the former Soviet Union as a way to ward off the perceived European threat. Contemporary Eurasianist, aside from turning their attention to the East, are even more concerned about practical matters than were their predecessors. The latter were writing from emigration and were probably conscious of the limited exposure of their ideas in Russia. The former are now living in Russia, anxious to implement their changes in

Russia.

Today's proponents of Eurasianism are characterized by a higher degree of militancy. Their discussion is dominated by strategic considerations, even viewing a union with the Muslim states as a means to restrain western aggression and to guarantee a greater degree of security for the Russian state. It should be stressed that their main concern is Russia's security, not any particular union or alliance. Some thinkers reject a union with the Muslim states, believing that it would pose a threats to Russia's integrity.

Some of the key ideas of the Eurasian school have, once again, gained prominence in intellectual circles.³⁸ Contemporary sympathizers of the Eurasian philosophy share the opinion that the influx of western ideas and institutions is Russia's greatest problem. The two solutions most frequently offered are isolation and a closer link to the East, specifically, a union with Islamic states³⁹. The Eurasian

³⁸In fact, it could be said that the main Eurasian position was prominent even during the Soviet period. Isolation from the outside world, particularly from the West, was not only a theoretical position, but government practice. And the concept of one single national will acting in unison to build communism may have long ago become the object of cynicism, but it was nevertheless the official ideological position upon which the state was built. The reasons were different, of course. It was not to nurture a strong Russia, nor to rebuild Orthodoxy, but the coincidence should be noted.

³⁹This would not have been characteristic of a Eurasianist solution in the 1920-30. While they stress the influence of the East on Russia's culture, union with both Islam and Catholicism would be equally distasteful to early Eurasianists.

The nature of such a union is not explicitly stated by the theorists, although one can conclude from their ideas that it would be a military and economic union, which would allow Russia greater

theory has always had a strong geographical element. The space in which Russia is located, the Eurasian continent - which more or less coincided with the boundaries of the former Soviet Union, needed to be defended in order for Russia to maintain her integrity. oppose the breakup of the USSR, and wish to form stronger ties with the former republics.

As Nash Sovremennik continues its publication of articles on the Eurasian theme, these two positions are more thoroughly exposed. An essay entitled "*Dukh evraziitsa*" (The spirit of a Eurasianist) explains why a union with the East is advantageous for Russia⁴⁰. History, writes Sultanov, has always been one of empires and the struggle for power. The USA, which is at the top of the capitalist hierarchy, controls the entire global neo-capitalist network through its financial system. If Russia is to defend herself against the Western empire led by the USA, she needs to find reliable allies. The most obvious and compatible are the Muslim and Turkic peoples⁴¹. It is a myth that Islam and Orthodoxy are necessarily conflictual. The Asian republics have been wrongly accused of living better than the Russians. Their people have also suffered much and know the virtue of strong government. The author concludes that if Russia is to defend herself

independence from Europe and the USA and more control than it would have in a union with the West.

⁴⁰Shamil' Sultanov, "*Dukh Evraziitsa*" (The spirit of a Eurasianist), Nash Sovremennik, no.7 (1992), 143-149.

⁴¹ibid., p.145.

against the imperial aspirations of the capitalist West, her only hope is a Slavic-Turkic union.

But an earlier article by Igor Artemev entitled, "*Rossia i sredniaia aziia*" (Russia and Central-Asia), put forth the opposite position regarding the Muslim peoples and union with the East⁴². Artemev targets Pan-Islam as being a threat to Russian security. "The Muslims are trying to convert the Russians to Islam", he writes. Organized mafia clans from Caucasian background are on "Russian" territory and have already demonstrated their threat to Russia.

Artemev's disapproval of a Russia-Muslim union does not disqualify him as a Eurasianist. His preoccupation with Russia's security, his anti-westernism, and his isolationist perspective all bring him close to Eurasianist thinkers. His concluding thoughts to the effect that Russia needs to defend herself and her citizens both at home and in the former Soviet republics reflect an aggressiveness which is common to contemporary Eurasian thinkers.

Continuing the discussion about Islam and the East, Nash Sovremennik published an article in its ninth issue called "*Est' li v evrazii mesto dlia russkikh?*" (Is there room for Russians in Eurasia). This article, too, rejects the notion

⁴²Igor' Artemov, "*Rossia i sredniaia aziia*" (Russia and Central-Asia), Nash Sovremennik, no.7 (1992), 140-143.

that a union with the east is in Russia's favour⁴³. Mialo believes that Russia is always taken for granted, that her good deeds and efforts to help others are always used against her. In our perpetual role as 'older brother', writes Mialo, we Russians have been made to carry the burden of others on our shoulders. Our unions with other states have put us in a disadvantageous position and have forced us to compromise our national interests. He does not rule out the possibility of a union with the East, but concludes that the union can potentially be just as destructive as one with the West if Russia does not act boldly to assert her interests. Again, we see that geopolitical considerations are at the forefront of contemporary Eurasian thought.

In April, 1993 an article entitled "*Turan vmesto SSSR?*" (Turan instead of the USSR?) appeared in Nash Sovremennik⁴⁴. It carried an anti-Muslim tone, saying that Communism was opposed to Christianity, yet while Orthodox churches were being destroyed, mosques were built all over the territory. Artur Gevorkian warns that the Muslim population is growing at a rate four times greater than that of Russians, and if Russia does not look after her interests and regain her rightful territories, she will be overwhelmed by the Turkic people.

⁴³Kseniia Mialo, "*Est' li v evrazii mesto dlia russkikh?*" (Is there room for Russians in Eurasia?), Nash Sovremennik, no.9 (1992), 102-106.

⁴⁴Artur Gevorkian, "*Turan vmesto SSSR?*" (Turan instead of the USSR?), Nash Sovremennik, no.4 (1993) 138-144.

Essays carrying Eurasian themes did not appear in Novyi Mir. Although many of its articles express concern for the possible damage done to Russia's culture as a consequence of blind imitation of western models, the West itself is not seen as "threatening" to Russia. Where western practices are seen to have a negative impact on Russia, the responsibility is placed not on the West, but on Russians themselves for imitating or being negligent with regards to Russia's traditions. Therefore, the emphasis of Novyi Mir is not to protect Russia from evil-wishers from the West, but to make its own intellectuals and leaders more aware of the consequences of imitation.

Conclusion

The articles discussed above demonstrate that the West is a subject of considerable interest to the publicists and theorists trying to define Russia's future course of development. The West, which once represented the European nations, now includes the United States. In fact, the USA has become the dominant image of the West. This is particularly true for those critics whose ambition it is to show that the West is an inappropriate example for Russia by exposing only the negative aspects of western institutions and practices. Those who believe that the West has valuable lessons from which Russia stands to benefit often fail to offer critical assessment of western institutions in general.

Nash Sovremennik publishes articles which are unequivocally hostile to the West and its influence on Russia. All aspects of western culture - religious (catholicism/protestantism), political (democracy, liberalism), economic (the market, capitalism), intellectual and moral - are scorned, ridiculed, exaggerated in their negative aspects and presented as something which Russia should not, under any circumstance, follow. Western neo-capitalist leaders (Jews and Masons), and its religious hierarch (Pope and the Vatican) are accused of scheming to undermine Russia. The East is treated with more ambiguity, and the editors allow space for both those who encourage Russia's eastern ties and those who discourage these, opting rather for an isolationist position.

Novyi Mir's position with regards to the West is generally positive, although articles condemning the outright duplication of western forms appear with some frequency. In this respect, Novyi Mir demonstrates greater intellectual rigor in making the distinction between the achievements of the West on the one hand and the appropriateness of these models for Russia on the other. Many authors encourage the development of Russia's native traditions and the exercise of caution when transplanting western models lest they interfere with these. At the same time, none of the articles criticized western institutions in their own right - the question is always one of their appropriateness for Russia.

The focus on the West among current publicists and writers is understandable in light of the country's recent past. Isolated from the western world, the Soviet people received only a censored, selective impression of the conditions beyond the borders of the USSR. The reaction to the influx of foreign ideas and people varied. Some welcomed the influence of the West and viewed it as the embodiment of good; of what Russia should aspire to resemble. Others looked at it with resentment, seeing in it all the pretence, superficiality, greed and individualism which Soviet propaganda described. The lack of consensus on the part of intellectuals and the population is testimony to the ambivalent role of the West and East in Russia's thought.

Chapter Four

Religion and the Orthodox Church in Russian National Identity

Before the Revolution of 1917, Russia considered itself to be part of the Christian civilization and some thinkers saw Russia as the protector of true Christianity. The Orthodox Church was viewed by many as the purest form of Christianity and an indivisible part of Russian national identity. With the successful Bolshevik revolution, scientific communism and Marxism-Leninism replaced religion as the moral foundation of Soviet society. The Church lost all semblance of autonomy, many of its clergy were deported and its activity was reduced nearly to a standstill¹.

With the fall of the Soviet regime and the lifting of restrictions on religious activity, a plethora of religious groups and sects made their way into Russian society. The Orthodox Church is now competing with other religions to reclaim its place of importance in society. The future role of the Orthodox church and of other religions in the new Russian nation is a question of great interest to Russian intellectuals. Some see the Orthodox church as an inseparable

¹Religious repression remained the rule throughout the Soviet period, in spite of a few short lived exceptions when the Church was given added autonomy in return for its support in raising troop moral during WWII, and the Party directives of 11 November, 1954 on freedom of conscience which stated that being a religious believer was not incompatible with being a good citizen.

part of Russia's history and identity as a nation. They believe that the Russians are Orthodox people and that no other form of Christianity is appropriate for them. Others believe that religion is a private matter, and while the Orthodox church is an important part of Russia's history, it is not a determining factor in terms of identity.

Foremost among the questions under debate are, 1) What should be the relation between the church and the state? 2) Should Orthodoxy reclaim its place as the official religion of the Russian state? If so, what does this imply for non-ethnic Russians? 3) Is Orthodox Christianity compatible with ideas of democracy and personal freedom? 4) What should be the treatment of other religions in Russia?

These questions are important because implicit in their answer is a statement of tolerance or intolerance towards those who have different beliefs and world outlook. They also reveal the extent to which religion is seen as an individual choice with the role of the state limited to a guarantor of freedom of conscience (i.e., insures negative freedom), or as an official mandate defining the state and a moral code enforced by political power. The significance of the Orthodox church and its close relationship with the state prior to the revolution, makes these questions particularly pressing now, when the nature of the future Russian state are being debated.

Orthodoxy and the Orthodox Church

One of the distinguishing features of the Russian Orthodox church of previous centuries is its close, almost 'symbiotic', identification with the Russian state.² Placing its support entirely behind the monarchy, the church treated it as a divine authority. Unlike in the West, where the church and state were rivals for authority, the Russian church spoke of the 'unity' of the monarchy and of Orthodoxy. Some dogmas and rituals of the Russian church were changed by Patriarch Nikon's reforms (which led to the schism of 1660 splitting the Old believers from the established church). Peter's reforms, which abolished the patriarchate and seized from the church much of its autonomy and independence, served to alter the nature of the church in Russia even further. In spite of these changes, however, the church remained the State's faithful servant and its identity remained indivisible from that of the Monarchy.

The last five years have witnessed a successful revival of the Russian Orthodox Church. However, there is no consensus as to the relation the Church ought to have to political power and to what extent it should be identified with the Russian people. In spite of the fact that the church has been changed by the repressive measures of the Soviet regime and that the

²Richard Pipes; Russia under the Old Regime. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1974. p.221-226. Pipes writes, "The Orthodox church never had the power and the cohesion needed to defend its interests from secular encroachments...it had little choice but to adapt itself to whatever temporal power it happened to live under." p.224.

society in which it functions differs greatly from the largely illiterate Russian population of past centuries, many of those who are helping to revive the church are looking to reinstate it in its pre-revolutionary, pre-Petrine form.

The emancipation of the Russian Orthodox Church from the crippling grip of the Soviet regime was a significant step for the revival of Russian national identity. But while there is little doubt that the emancipation is a positive step, there is no consensus on the role of the Orthodox church in Russia's past or future. Intellectuals differ on whether Orthodoxy was a positive aspect of Russia's past, or whether it served as a hinderance to Russia's progress. Consequently, they are by no means unanimous as to the church's role in Russia's future.

Both Nash Sovremennik and Novyi Mir devote considerable attention to questions of religion in general, and Orthodoxy in particular. Their contribution to the debate takes several forms; publication of works of religious figures, and essays written by social/political critics on topics related to religion. The essays are generally not restricted to theological aspects, but cover a broad range of issues related to religion, such as the political, social and spiritual. Authors addressing this topic are divided as much by their views of religion per se, as by their political convictions. For some, religion is a private matter, something contributing to individual freedom; for others, the Church is a symbol of Russia's nationhood, an indivisible part of her identity.

The two topics most often addressed in the journals are the relationship between the Church and State in Russia; and the relationship between religion and the individual - religion and individual freedom.

Religion and the Individual

The distrust of the masses and of every one of its individuals is a characteristic feature of Russian conservative thought. Just prior to the turn of the century, the dominant figures in the court of tsar Alexander II, Konstantine Pobedonostsev, wrote a book in which he developed his ideas about the evils of democracy and individual freedom. It is called Reflections of a Russian Statesman. Here, as in all of his other essays, he justifies autocratic rule by saying that the average person has no use for freedom. "What will the average person do with this freedom which democracy offers?"³. This distrust of and dislike for the individual has

³In that same book, Pobedonostsev expresses his views on the value of public education as well as on the press. "...the debate about what should be taught to our children, is ridiculous. Farmers do not need to know about physics, and shepherds about history. ...By tearing the child away from the domestic hearth,...they [educators] deprive his parents of productive force which is essential to the maintenance of the home, while by raising before his eyes the mirage of illusory learning they corrupt his mind, and subject it to the temptations of vanity and conceit." p. 401. His disregard for civil liberties makes itself felt with his contempt for the press, and its supposed power (keeping in mind tsarist censorship laws) of exposing the most private affairs and sticking its nose into things which should not be its concern [politics] p. 397-399 of "The Falsehood of Democracy" in Readings in Russian Civilization, Vol.II Thomas Riha, ed. London: University of Chicago Press, 1969.

a tradition in Russian history, and the Soviet regime served to reinforce and amplify this tradition. It is this distrust and disdain that now finds expression in many articles in Nash Sovremennik.

The number seven issue of Nash Sovremennik carried an essay by Iu. Boradai which addressed the question of totalitarianism.⁴ He explains that totalitarianism is a Western phenomenon. He reinforces the Slavophile belief that atheism and amorality are the inevitable result of the application of reason to matters of religion and faith. In explaining this he adds that the growth of government and its control of society through the legal system is an inevitable result of the moral decay caused by the privatization of morality. When religious traditions cease to be a guiding force in society, the government must replace it as the regulator of the people's actions. When morality becomes a private matter rather than the dictate of religion and tradition, the legal system is introduced to fill the vacuum, to prevent the war of all against all.

In Russia, the idea of 'sobornost', embodied in the commune, protected the individual, imbued him with a sense of responsibility for, and religious faith in, the community of which he was a part, writes Borodai. If religious traditions continued to play an important part in Russia's society, there

⁴Iuri Boradai, "Totalitarizm" (Totalitarianism), Nash Sovremennik, no.7 (1992), 121-131.

would be less corruption and less of a need to legislate behaviour.

In conclusion, Borodai says that he places his support behind authoritarianism which he distinguishes from totalitarianism by saying that the former is rooted in tradition and culture. On the one hand, he is critical of the totalitarian, over-legislated society which must govern every aspect of people's behaviour. In this sense, it might appear that he supports individual freedom, or at least, deregulation of behaviour. Yet he seems to be oblivious to, and untroubled by, the subliminal yet equally compelling force of tradition which has an even greater capacity to dictate people's actions. In fact, we see that tradition and authoritarianism become interchangeable in Borodai's scheme. His concern for over-regulation of human behaviour is limited to formal, legal regulation. He is not troubled by societal or traditional regulation of the religious state, for example.

In late 1990, in recognition of the growing importance of religion in Russia, the editors of Novyi Mir, had introduced a new section to the journal entitled "*Religiia i sovremennyi mir*", (Religion and the Modern World). In the September issue of 1993 two interesting articles were published in that section. One was called "*Dve svobody*" (Two Freedoms), and the other, "*Rokovoe slovo*" (Fateful Word). The two articles express opposite views on the question of religion and the individual, and it is clear, upon reading them both, that the

editors of Novyi Mir intended the first article to serve as an intellectual provocation, and the second as a sharp and cogent rebuttal. Both by its strength and its ability to refute the first essay, it is clear that the second article is the one which the editors want to present as being the more legitimate position, and the one with which the reader is supposed to feel more in sympathy.

The author of the first article, Vladimir Semenko, puts forth an argument which we have already encountered in Nash Sovremennik - that there is no room for freedom of conscience in a Christian society. The logic of his argument is as follows: Humans are sinful from the very start (original sin). Given the freedom of choice, they will choose evil. The very existence of a choice between Good and Evil is indicative of a decline into atheism - a fundamental lack of faith - because a true Christian has only one path to follow, the one laid out by Christ.⁵ The author continues by explaining that the right to choose between good and evil which is preached by the liberals is testimony to their sinfulness. Their teaching of freedom of choice stands in opposition to the Christian doctrine which tells us that there is only one path to salvation. To heed the teaching of the Church, to live according to the rules of Christ, is to be truly free.

Semenko understands religious piety as the unquestioning

⁵Vladimir Semenko, "Dve svobody" (Two notions of Freedom), Novyi Mir, no. 9 (1993), 156-163.

obedience to the Church and its interpretation of the scriptures, and in his work, this interpretation extends easily from the religious to the political realm. Early in the article the author asserts the incompatibility of Christianity and pluralism, to the degree that the latter is said to be hostile to the former. Freedom of choice and pluralism, he says, are preached not by Christians, but by lawyers and liberals who have their own interest in human sinfulness.⁶ It was the liberals and left-radical intelligentsia who were responsible for the separation of Church and state which, in turn, heralded a century of destructive secularism in Russia. His concluding remarks confirm that the Church and State must be reunited, and that this new "religious government" should once again preside over questions of conscience.

The second article, written by Renata Gal'tseva, challenges the logic of Semenko's position, also from a religious perspective. She objects both to the author's view of the primacy of evil in the human being, and to the relation which this view necessitates between the individual and Church/State. But her biggest criticism is directed towards the author's elusive use of terminology which allows him to substitute compulsion for freedom.⁷

What Semenko wants to do, she says, is to free people

⁶ibid, p.159.

⁷ Renata Gal'tseva, "Rokovoe slovo" (Fateful word), Novyi Mir, no.9 (1993), 164-171.

from the burden of choice, primarily because he does not trust people to make the right one. Giving people a choice is like tempting them to chose evil. According to his logic, 'freedom' is the right to be spared the possibility of making the wrong choice. Gal'tseva compares Semenko's definition of freedom with Lenin's; In both, freedom means the recognition, on the part of every member of society, of the existence of only one single unfaltering path, the path of Truth which will be shown to them by a vanguard. Whichever way one looks at it, insists Gal'tseva, this can never amount to freedom. It is always compulsion, regardless of how benevolent the vanguard is. Either way, freedom is sacrificed in the name of Truth and is safeguarded by someone other than the individual.

Gal'tseva points to what she sees as a great irony in Semenko's logic: The Church has been freed from decades of oppression and now it looks with suspicion and resentment to the very power which liberated it. "In fact," she says, "it would seem that he much prefers our former powers [Soviet] because they produced ready-made, disciplined people who were trained in the virtues of obedience."⁸ She concludes her essay with the observation that Semenko inadvertently reveals himself as one who is nostalgic for the former regime, and if he and those who share his opinion were given the opportunity, we can predict with some certainty what kind of regime they would recreate, and we already know from experience that there

⁸ibid. p. 171.

is no room for religion nor for the individual in an order such as that.

For the first author, the burden of choice between good and evil is too much responsibility for humans to bear. What they needed is obedience and faith in a single path towards salvation. The opportunity to be shown the truth, this right path to salvation, was the essence of freedom. The second author argues that the last seven decades of Russia's experience have shown that a society built on the principle of a single Truth breeds irresponsibility and passivity. Only with the freedom to make choices between good and evil can a society of responsible people be built. Freedom must be an integral part of religious and every other aspect of human life. A rich religious life cannot exist where the activities of the Church are symbiotically connected to the state. The two necessarily have different mandates.

But Gal'tseva has little support among most essayists writing for Nash Sovremennik, who agree with Semenko's thesis that, guided by tradition, which is reinforced by the Orthodox church, the individual will be free from difficult choices and the possibility of making mistakes. Displaced from tradition, the individual will be vulnerable to the temptation of selfish impulses and other vices of evil seduction.

Religion and the State

Governments in the western world do not associate

themselves directly with specific religious ideologies, nor rely on them for legitimacy. Politics belong in the public realm; a collective space where diverse groups of many beliefs, traditions and interests can come together and influence the general social and political environment. Religion and faith, on the other hand, are private matters not requiring the consent of others, outside the control of any secular ruling body. For this reason, the fact that some Russian thinkers now insist that the Russian state is inconceivable (certainly incomplete) without the direct attachment of the Orthodox church strikes one as unusual. For some, this idea seems somehow threatening.

While atheism was the official position of the Soviet regime, the vision of Russia in its pre-revolutionary form, as the unity of Orthodoxy and government, was kept alive both by those who were in forced emigration and those who maintained an appearance of faithfulness to the regime⁹. Nash Sovremennik, the explicit mandate of which is the revival of the Russian nation, frequently prints articles which argue that the unity between church and state is a necessary part of such a revival. The logic of a close union between church and state has implications for Orthodoxy and other established Churches in Russia, as well as for the people living in

⁹See, for example, the essays published in Mikhail Meerson-Aksenov's compilation of "Samizdat" essays; Political, Social and Religious Thought of Russian "Samizdat" - an Anthology. Belmont, Mass.; Nordland. 1977, or any of the number of "samizdat" publications now available.

Russia.

In December, 1992, Nash Sovremennik reprinted a manifesto by I. Solonevich, an emigré publicist writing in the pre-war period. Its title is "Politicheskie tezisy", (Political Thesis), which is introduced as a program of the Russian national opposition¹⁰. The article is replete with inflammatory statements regarding the desperate need for a return to monarchism and the urgency of solving the "Jewish question", each problem being organized into its own thesis. But while his theses deal with many aspects of the Russian state, (which will be discussed at length in the following chapter) at almost every turn he takes an opportunity to affirm the Orthodox foundation of the Russian state.

While claiming that political power should not interfere in the functioning of the church, he nevertheless assigns the latter a function which binds it directly to the state's actions. The church, he says, should be first and foremost a moral-educational body at the service of the state, ensuring the patriotic-moral 'vospitaniia' [upbringing/education] of the Russian people.

The Church is expected not only to perform the function of educator but also to be the state's unconditional ally in all its endeavours. Relations between the Church and the

¹⁰I. Solonevich, "Politicheskie Tezisy", (Political Thesis) Nash Sovremennik, no.12, (1992), 139-159. By "National Opposition", the writer probably means opposition to the anti-national democrats which have arisen out of the same mould as the Soviet intellectuals.

ruling powers were always based on harmony of interests, says Solonevich. Theirs was a friendship of mutual support.¹¹

In the seventh thesis the author states his position on the question of Orthodoxy and politics. "Russian Orthodoxy is not merely the religion of most Russian people, but is the moral-religious foundation of the Russian national government".¹²

In the author's opinion, Orthodoxy is inseparable from the conception of a Russian state. The Orthodox faith needs to be made Russia's official religion, and enforced by the Russian state. Furthermore, the author declares that freedom of conscience has no place in Russia - foreign religions must not be allowed to flourish. In fact, all other religions should be forbidden to proselytize in Russia.¹³

For Solonevich, no political program aimed at Russia's revival can afford to omit the direct participation of the Orthodox Church. In spite of the importance he places on the Church, nowhere in the essay is there an indication that he values Orthodoxy for its moral codes, its religious rite, or its centuries-old traditions which are dear to the Russian people. As he paints his picture of the ideal Russian state and the nature of its ruling elite, it becomes clear that what is needed from the Orthodox church, first and foremost, is

¹¹ibid. p.142.

¹²ibid. p.142-144.

¹³ibid p.144.

obedience.

The state he envisions is a powerful, centralized wielder of authority, capable of asserting its will on a possibly reluctant population. According to his scheme, the church is valuable in so far as it can be trusted to be the state's faithful partner in enforcing obedience. In his theses, the Church serves as the state's 'right hand man', as an instrument of moral compulsion. The church is responsible for carrying out the state's program of inculcating in the citizen a sense of duty and obedience to the state.

Solonevich takes for granted that all Russians are Orthodox. He does not acknowledge the possibility of a native Russian belonging to a different religion. For him, to be Russian is to be Orthodox, and a Russian state populated by Russian people is an Orthodox state without exceptions.

An essay written by I.A. Il'in almost one hundred years ago, published in the third and fourth issues of Nash Sovremennik in 1993, is another good example of the political structure envisioned by a writer when he discussed the organic connection of Orthodoxy and the Russian state¹⁴. In the beginning of his essay, Il'in established the concept which allows him to make an effortless transition from religion to politics; he wrote, "The political organism is first and

¹⁴Il'in, I.A. "Ob organicheskom ponimanii gosudarstva i demokratii" (On the Organic Understanding of Government and Democracy), Nash Sovremennik, no.3 (1993) 138-148. Also, "Izbrannye stat'i" (Selected Essays), Nash Sovremennik, no.4 (1993) 145-155.

foremost a spiritual entity." Abstracting the individual, Il'in wrote that Russians think with their hearts, unlike the Catholics and Protestants, who are dependent on reason¹⁵. Morality and love, he wrote, is much more important to Russians than politics and economics. The government, based on Orthodoxy, will serve its people, and the people will naturally serve their government.

If this kind of logic was romantic and simplistic one hundred years ago, its full endorsement by the editor of Nash Sovremennik magnifies this effect tenfold. The introduction to the article, indicative of the journal's editorial position, states that Il'in's words are like medicine against atheism, cosmopolitanism and other anti-national and anti-government tendencies¹⁶.

Both Il'in and Solonevich envision the Russian nation as an indivisible union of Orthodoxy and politics. Il'in's conception, however, begins and ends with Orthodoxy, while Solonevich's begins and ends with the powerful state. Instead of a coercive political elite painted by Solonevich, which presumably does not shy away from reason and calculation to build its state of strength and an Orthodox church which is to submit to the state's will, Il'in proposes an apolitical state, based on Christian love and fraternity, free from the

¹⁵ Il'in, no.4 (1993) p. 149

¹⁶ Il'in, no.3, p.139.

conflict and coercion which riddles the author of the first essay. Although Il'in does not develop his vision of Orthodoxy, nor indicate that it is supposed to serve as the base of the state, it is clear that the political is lost to the religious in his "nation of love".

The essays published in Novyi Mir do not mix religion with the particular nation state as do those which appear in Nash Sovremennik. They focus primarily on the universalist character of religion, on Orthodoxy as a Christian religion, and on Russia as a nation which has much in common with other Christian nations. Religion is not described in terms of a national attribute, but rather as something which either complements or contradicts general philosophical principles relating to society, politics and economics.

The first issue of Novyi Mir for 1992 carried two articles in the section, "Religiia i sovremennyi mir" (Religion and the modern world). The first article is written by a Polish political analyst who writes for the Catholic journal Znak. Its title is "Desiat' zapovedei demokratii v khristianskom razumenii" (Ten Commandments of Democracy in Christian Reasoning), and its explicit object is to demonstrate the compatibility of Christian teachings about freedom and community with democratic values and an economic system which encourages initiative and independence. "The low level of democratic culture in post-socialist countries requires an active, dynamic Church, not an authoritarian-

bureaucratic one. One which will be capable of developing a positive democratic culture," writes Vil'kanovich¹⁷.

The second article in the set is entitled "Poiski khristianskikh osnov demokratii", (In Search of Christian Basis of Democracy) in which the author, Iu. Shreider, says that democracy was born out of Christianity, and the two are now unimaginable without one another.¹⁸ The basis of Christianity is justice, not hatred or exclusiveness, says the author. For too long we have been taught to hate - first the rich, the ideologically opposed, foreigners, and now we are coming up with new enemies. This will never lead us to democracy. The time has come, he says, to find a common purpose without having to also find a common enemy. This we can do with the help of Christianity¹⁹. Private property is also defended on the basis of Christianity in so far as private property allows the individual to be productive and independent, thereby contribute to the community.

What is interesting about these two articles is not necessarily their theological cogency, for many may object to their particular vision of Christianity. Rather, what sets these essays apart from the ones published in Nash Sovremennik

¹⁷Stefan Vil'kanovich, "Deciat' zapovedei demokratii v khristianskom razumenii" (Ten Commandments of Democracy in Christian Thought), Novyi Mir, no.1 (1992), 198-203.

¹⁸Yu. Shreider, "Poiski khristianskikh osnov demokratii" (In Search of Christian Basis of Democracy), Novyi Mir, no.1 (1992), 203-207.

¹⁹ibid. p.203-204.

is their focus on the compatibility of Christianity with the principles of democracy and liberal economy. Furthermore, no attempt is made to subjugate religion to the agenda of nation building, or to place a political government in charge of religious activity.

After publishing several articles which discuss the compatibility of Christianity in general with progress and democracy, Novyi Mir published an article which explores the potential of religious principles to hinder human advancement. Published in the no.5 issue in 1993, the essay suggests that Orthodoxy may have been the cause for Russia's backwardness²⁰. Gurvich writes that the Orthodox church always opposed social innovation, took the most reactionary measures against change, and supported archaic social structures. Gurvich cautions the reader that in calling for the revival of Orthodoxy in its mystical spiritualism, we are recalling a thousand years of apathy, a poor work ethic and a philosophy which equates ambition with avarice and independence with egoistic individualism²¹. Interestingly, Gurvich does not distinguish between Orthodoxy and the Orthodox church.

It is naive to believe that Orthodoxy will save the Russian nation, writes Gurvich. After all, on the eve of the Revolution, 99 percent of the Russian population was Orthodox,

²⁰Vladimir Gurvich, "Natsional'naia ideia i lichnost'" (The National Idea and the Individual), Novyi Mir, no.5 (1993), 205-209.

²¹ibid. p. 207.

and that did not prevent the destruction of the country. He does not suggest that Russia should reject Orthodoxy, but rather that she should be weary of those mystical, irrational elements which distract one's attention from active participation in solving Russia's real and immediate problems.

In September 1992, Novyi Mir published a series of essays by the Polish poet Czeslaw Milosz entitled "O katolitsizme" (On Catholicism)²². The essays discuss his own beliefs and the foundation for his faith in Catholicism. Without a word of insult to other forms of Christianity, nor of any outright insistence on the absolute superiority of the Catholic order, he explains what he believes to be the virtues of the faith and its strongest qualities.

Milosz disapproves of the identification of religion with the definition of national character. The nationalist-chauvinist facade of Catholicism in Poland in the late 1930s and the involvement of the Church in anti-Semitic pogroms caused him to turn away from his religion initially, and embrace the tenets of Marxism. His early estrangement from Polish Catholicism and the circumstances associated with his later return to his faith reflect not only the author's thoughtfulness but also the high value he places on individual choice in regards to religious and spiritual matters. Throughout his essays, he expresses scepticism about religious

²²Czeslaw Milosz, "O katolitsizme" (On Catholicism), Novyi Mir, no.9 (1992), 166-181.

dogma, and defends an individual's right to question with one's intellect the principles of one's faith.

An article such as the one above would not find its place in Nash Sovremennik. No such positive assessments of Catholicism, nor such an unorthodox endorsement of rationalism as applied to religious faith, has appeared on its pages. The essays printed in Nash Sovremennik scorn rationalism as the closest ally of atheism. When "foreign" religions are discussed, it is always with a tone of criticism, either of the religion itself or of its influence in Russia.

The articles by Milosz are characteristic of the general stance taken by the editors of Novyi Mir in exposing the readers to a variety of religious perspectives. At the same time, the journal does not overlook those who oppose the strong presence of foreign religions in Russia. An article appeared in Novyi Mir in June, 1993 in which a deacon expresses his frustration with the behaviour of foreign missionaries. In "*Trudnoe voskhozhdenie*" (A Difficult Ascent), A. Kuraev argues that Orthodoxy needs to make a firmer stand in protecting its faithful against conversion.²³

The primary object of Kuraev's criticism is the Evangelical American Protestant mission in Russia. American missionaries, particularly the Baptists with orators like Billy Graham, come into Russia preaching a "generic

²³A. Kuraev, "*Trudnoe voskhozhdenie*" (A Difficult Ascent), Novyi Mir, no.6 (1993), 162-183.

Christianity" and a general Christian love. Then they hand out Bibles, saying that the word of God is one and that all Bibles are the same. Their Bibles contain seemingly innocent explanatory notes with 'helpful' suggestions on how the text should be interpreted. This method is highly effective on a population which is used to dogma and has not yet learned that an interpretation of a text is itself open to interpretation²⁴.

The missionaries invite people to meetings and social functions which are all disguised to appear innocent and full of concern for Christian brotherhood. Only upon the third or fourth meeting, says Kuraev, do the missionaries begin to expose their true intentions. They begin to suggest, and then insist, that Orthodox icons are a form of idolatry, that the Orthodox church is backwards and not compatible with Russia's well being and the material progress of her people: They assure the people that they too can experience the American dream if they work hard and believe.

Kuraev finds the activity of the Protestant missionaries in Russia problematic for two reasons: first, because they do not expose their real intentions until they have bought the people's trust; second, they try to turn the population against Orthodoxy, while preaching a 'generic Christian brotherhood'. The Orthodox church is powerless to defend its faithful. Its churches are falling apart, it cannot afford to

²⁴ibid., p.164.

pay its priests and it needs the assistance of the government if it is to remain viable in Russia. Kuraev suggests that foreign religious proselytizing should be limited in one fundamental way: "Confessional non-anonymity". Every missionary must declare his purpose, make explicit his religious denomination and affiliation²⁵. This is the only way to protect trusting worshippers, concludes Kuraev.

This essay is significant because of the balance between its passionate subject matter and its measured tone of criticism. Kuraev is obviously upset at the financial disadvantage of the Orthodox church and the resulting inability to compete with the wealthy missionaries from the USA. Yet nowhere does he suggest that the Russian government protect Orthodoxy by banning all foreign missions in Russia. He simply says that the Church is currently under great danger, and that it needs assistance to get back on its feet.

A large part of his essay is devoted to the theological differences between Orthodoxy and Protestantism. Nowhere in his discussion does he equate Protestantism with atheism, or the American public with rationalist egoists, nor implicate the American government in the work of the missionaries, as do most authors who contribute to Nash Sovremennik.

The essay is accompanied by a note from the editors which serves as an explanation for its appearance. It states that the section "Religiia i sovremennyi mir" (Religion and the

²⁵ibid., p.173.

contemporary world) is not meant to be to be a forum for airing disputes among churches. Instead, the aim is to expose the readers to a variety of currents in contemporary religious thought²⁶. The appearance of the essay is significant, for it shows the journal's recognition of the Orthodox perspective, yet the introductory note reveals timidity on the part of the editors.

In Novyi Mir, religion is rarely discussed in the same breath as politics, government and national identity. In Nash Sovremennik, the opposite is true. Orthodoxy is always discussed as being inseparable from the Russian nation and its identity. Even if religion is not the subject of a given essays, Orthodoxy is almost everywhere mentioned as part of Russia's political, cultural and spiritual identity.²⁷

Conclusion

The articles printed in Nash Sovremennik lack any clear understanding of the individual as separate from the national will. The belief of the individual is inconsequential compared to the mandate of the collective. In a scheme such as this, when the individual is lost to the collective, and the

²⁶Ibid., p.162.

²⁷ "The Orthodox Church is vital to Russian nationhood," writes N. Lysenko "Nasha tsel' - sozdanie velikoi imperii" (Our Aim is to Create a Great Empire), Nash Sovremennik, no.9 (1992), 122-131. M. Lobanov writes, "Russia's history, her fate and her future is indivisible from Orthodoxy" in "Podvizhniki i tushintsi" (Movers and...), Nash Sovremennik, no.5 (1993), 135-143.

collective is decided by those who envision nationhood, there cannot be a concept of an individual's relation to religion.

Orthodoxy is presented as an attribute of the Russian people. It is an unconscious inheritance which is vital to their collective identity, but which cannot be questioned or understood with the use of reason. Therefore, Orthodoxy is valuable in so far as it is Russian and Russianness cannot be understood without Orthodoxy.

The articles published in Novyi Mir stress the importance of the individual in any concept of religion. Religious freedom means freedom of consciousness and is never the same as moral compulsion. Both its essays dedicated to the discussion of religion and individual freedom and other essays published in the section "*Religiia i sovremennyi mir*" stress individual inspiration as the force behind religious faith (for example, Milosz's essays).

The relationship between religion and the state is clear and unambiguous in the essays published in Nash Sovremennik. The two are seen as indivisible, as partners working towards one common goal. The goal is the maintenance of a strong, indivisible Russian state. The mandate of the Church comes from the state and its task is portrayed as having something in common with parenting; of inculcating the necessary values and of teaching the virtues of obedience.

The articles published in Nash Sovremennik, as well as the provocative article by Semenko in Novyi Mir deny the

need for individual freedom in religious matters. In their formulations, religion and questions of conscience ought to be the jurisdiction of a religious state, which will guide the people to a moral and righteous existence.

In Novyi Mir, Christianity is presented as being completely harmonious with the tenets of liberal democracy, with freedom of choice and conscience, with tolerance of other beliefs and with respect for the individual choice of others. Most of the articles published there do not focus on the specifically Russian aspects of Christianity, nor proclaim that Orthodoxy is the only pure, uncorrupted form of christianity. The importance of christianity in Russian life is acknowledged with the many articles published on that topic. However, there is no suggestion that religion should somehow be connected to political power or should be used to reinforce the state's agenda. Although it publishes articles which appeal to state support of Orthodoxy as the founding religion of Russia, it does not make Orthodoxy exclusive nor deny others the freedom of conscience.

Novyi Mir publishes articles from a variety of religious perspectives, allowing the reader to form her/his own opinions about the importance of religion and its role in social life. As a rule, their articles reflect the compatibility of Christianity with human freedom and democracy.

The place of religion in society is an important indicator of the perimeters of freedom awarded to individuals

within a state. Freedom of conscience and the right to worship in one's temple of choice is an important element of a liberal society. To declare, as do most of the writers who contribute to Nash Sovremennik, that freedom of conscience has no place in Russia, and that the Orthodox church should be the official religion and an inseparable part of the national government is worrisome when combined with the declamation of freedom of consciousness, because it does not leave an option to those minorities who are of a different faith, or to Russians who are not Orthodox.

Furthermore, a symbiotic relationship of the Church and state leaves the individual virtually unprotected from the ruling powers. The presence of the political power will be felt in every aspect of life and there will be no escape from the government's watchful eye if the Church is its faithful servant.

The fact that Nash Sovremennik, a journal which places such a supreme value on Orthodoxy, did not publish a single article which dealt strictly with its theological or spiritual aspects of Orthodoxy, is testimony to the fact that for its editors, Orthodoxy is valuable as part of the national identity, not for its theological and spiritual traits. When Orthodoxy is discussed in the same breath as politics on the pages of Nash Sovremennik, its primary purpose is generally not religious. The articles which trumpet the virtues of an official Orthodox Russian state are not trying to resurrect

Orthodoxy for its religious values. These articles generally lack any theological theory of Orthodoxy. Instead, Orthodoxy is presented as a vehicle for regaining Russia's former glory, her lost sense of community, and her cohesiveness. Orthodoxy is valuable in so far as it can aid the efforts of the state and give it added legitimacy²⁸.

²⁸ Much the same way that the Soviet regime used the Orthodox church to increase morale during WWII.

Chapter Five
Minorities, Social and Political Groups
As Categories for Expressing the Character of the
Russian Nation

The increased confusion and deterioration of living conditions resulting from the rapid pace of change since the collapse of the Communist regime is leading some Russian intellectuals both to question the desirability of these changes, and to search for explanations for Russia's decline in the form of scapegoats.

The drive for simultaneous reform in the economic and political sphere is creating new and unfamiliar consequences for the Russian population. It is difficult to feel fully oriented in a rapidly changing environment. At the same time, new groups are emerging which, by virtue of their increasing visibility, appear to be "in control" of the situation in the country. These groups, whose presence in Russia is relatively new, or has not been felt to the same degree, are often the subject of curiosity and even criticism. Their portrayal by Russian intellectuals is an important point in our consideration of national identity.

Discussion of various groups and categories can be used as a tool for gaining insight into how Russian intellectuals understand the "meaning" of being Russian. Seeing how Russian intellectuals portray particular groups allow us to identify

which characteristics are considered to be alien to the Russian character and which are viewed as harmonious. In this chapter, we will look at how specific groups are portrayed in the two journals. First, the representation of foreigners and minorities will be considered. Minorities, foreigners and foreign organizations represent what Russians are not and are viewed by some as posing a threat to Russia's integrity. Foreigners are external foes, while minorities are internal ones. In most cases, foreigners and minorities are discussed in pejorative term in Nash Sovremennik. As a rule, Novyi Mir does not which define Russia in strict us/them categories and therefore do not isolate foreigners and minorities as a category.

As we saw in the previous chapter, a nation increases its sense of self-awareness when it comes into contact with foreigners. Russia's current situation bears some semblance to the era of Peter the Great in so far as the foreigners are by and large westerners. Non-Russians in the states of the former Soviet republics are usually not referred to as "foreigners". This could be result of the fact that Soviet nationalities policy, while not producing actual "brotherhood" among nationalities, did serve to integrate ethnic and national groups to some degree. Consequently, westerners are the subject of most discussions of foreigners.

Following a discussion of the treatment of ethnic minorities and foreigners, our attention will turn to the

increasingly active new social groups in Russia, the entrepreneurs and democrats. Entrepreneurs and democrats, in spite of the overlap, are two of the more visible groups which have established their presence in the post-Communist period. The categories have different meaning to different people, depending on their ideological persuasions. While this fact makes it difficult to define them precisely, it reveals the extent to which these groups are understood or misunderstood by the intellectuals who are using the terminology. For example, we will see that democrats are often represented as intellectuals (*intelligenty*), a word with somewhat negative connotations in Soviet usage.

The treatment of individual groups will include an evaluation of their contribution to Russia's problems or to their solution. Furthermore, their representation is important in providing insight into the stereotypes and myths now forming among intellectuals (and being transferred to readers) about the new social and ethnic groups at the forefront of activity in Russia. In this respect, it will be interesting to observe the extent to which these ideas echo the stereotypes and prejudices of the Soviet regime.

Our previous discussion revealed how myths are used to justify attitudes and behaviour. Old myths can serve to reinforce new ones. For example the Soviet myths about the entrepreneur or the petit-bourgeois, their ceaseless quest for profit and their lack of concern for society is easily

transplanted into today's Russia. These old prejudices come into operation when a scapegoat is needed to explain the dislocation of many Russian people.

The rapid change taking place in the country has by no means been received with enthusiasm by all. For many, the influx of foreign goods and ideas is a confirmation of all their suspicions; all the negative images accumulated over the past seven decades have manifested themselves on Russian soil. The increase in crime, the lack of discipline among youth and the growing disparity between the rich and poor are all seen as immediate results of liberalization; these fit the decade-old stereotypes of the West, and its corrupt ways. This has made it convenient for anti-western thinkers and politicians to attribute Russia's problems directly to foreign influence. The prejudices formed against the West throughout the Soviet period combined with the dissatisfaction of many with the results of reform make it easy for those opposed to the present regime to present their platform.¹ The West and its allies (among them, liberal intellectuals, "democrats" and the capitalist business class) are important symbols for those who are eager to point the finger of blame for the country's problems.

The portrayal of "democrats" and entrepreneurs allow us

¹For a good description of popular conceptions of the United States during the 1970s and early 1980s, see Vladimir Shlapentokh, Soviet Ideologies in the Period of Glasnost. New York: Praeger, 1988. p.97-104.

to see how ideas such as democracy, market-economics and progress are perceived by the journals' contributors and presented to the readers of the journals.

Our discussion of various groups will also allow us to incorporate the subject of identity into a discussion of Russia's actual and immediate problems and recommendations for its future. It reveals the extent to which Russian intellectuals perceive the Russian people and their inherent characteristics as having much in common with other nations, or as being completely unique, threatened from the outside and from within by those "forces" which want to alter her nature.

Foreigners

The efforts of the Soviet regime to expose and exaggerate the negative aspects of life outside the communist camp, combined with the enforced isolation of most Soviet citizens, contributed to the mystery and misconception surrounding foreigners.

The West has always been an object of great interest to Russian thinkers. In chapter three of this study, we saw how western ideas were received by Russian thinkers in the nineteenth century, and how these ideas were seen to coincide or contradict Russia's homogeneity. Here, we will look more directly at the way intellectuals perceive the increased foreign (western, specifically) involvement in Russia's affairs. Discussions almost always express hostility towards

some generalized foreigner or foreign power, against the mythical foreign menace, carried over from the soviet period.

The increased foreign presence in Russia after the break-up of the Soviet Union was perceived variously by different intellectuals. Some welcomed international aid and acknowledged that only with the help of the international community will Russia be able to follow through with the intended reforms. Others saw the increased foreign meddling in Russian affairs as humiliating, if not threatening to her sovereignty and integrity.

An article typical of the second perspective appeared in the eighth issue of Nash Sovremennik in 1992. Its title is "Tret'ia sila" (Third [middle] power).² The Communists have fallen, writes Andreev, and the democrats are revealing their incompetence. Foreign powers have penetrated Russia and are dictating their terms to the Russian government. As Andreev sees it, the problem lies in the fact that foreigners are deceitful, and under the pretence of wanting to assist Russia, are actually seeking their own advantage. Yet they have been allowed to dictate how Russia should run her affairs. Andreev cites the IMF as an example. Without any concern for the Russian people, it is pressuring the government for a deficit free budget. The government must resist all such pressure and reestablish its monopoly over international trade and

²Andrei Andreev, "Tret'ia sila" (Third [middle] Power), Nash Sovremennik, no.8 (1992), 111-117.

resources. Andreev concludes by saying that Russia's national policy cannot be reduced to the dubious interests of the West³.

According to Andreev, even foreign aid is usually a disguised attempt to hamper Russia's revival according to her own needs. He concludes with a warning, saying that if the foreign community tries to resist Russia's revival and prevent her from regaining her dignity, the suppressed sense of degradation among the people will give birth to a new dictator, the cruelty of which the world has not seen before."⁴.

The ninth issue of Nash Sovremennik carries an article by A. Markov, who addresses the issue of Russia's eastern territories and the relations between Japan and Russia in general⁵. Markov, while admitting that tension has been characteristic of Russian-Japanese relations, argues that this situation has been aggravated by the ceaseless interference of the USA and European countries. In the end, he simplifies his argument by concluding that the USA "created" the problem of the Northern territories during the Cold War and continues to impose its influence in the region⁶.

³ibid., p.114.

⁴ibid., p.117

⁵Andrei Markov, "Kto sozdal problemu <<Severnykh territorii>>" (Who Created the Problem of the "Eastern Territories"), Nash Sovremennik, no.9 (1992). 112-122.

⁶ibid., 110-11.

Interestingly, Markov does not fault Japan for the characteristically hostile Russo-Japanese relations. Instead, this is treated as a natural course of relations between two countries.

In this article, as well as the one which preceded it, foreigners are accused of having a hidden agenda for Russia's downfall. Reinforced is the Soviet myth that Russia is under threat, and that foreigners (westerners) spare no means to keep Russia weak and unenlightened.

Because all discussions of foreigners centre around Russia's security, westerners are seen as the predominant foreign menace. It would seem that other groups, such as minorities who want to secede from the Russian Federation, would also be viewed as a threat to Russia's integrity, and challenge her identity as a nation. Yet, surprisingly, there is little mention of specific groups, and comments on secession is restricted to a warning that it needs to be stopped.⁷

Minorities

Minorities, like foreigners are an interesting category because they indicate how protective Russians are of their own identity or defensive of their uniqueness. The broader and more encompassing the categories for foreigners and

⁷For example, a discussion published in Nash Sovremennik, no.6 (1993), 98-104, which states that all acts leading to separatism within the Russian Federation must be forbidden.

minorities, the more pronounced is the statement of uniqueness.

Minorities are not simply those whose customs and beliefs are different from those of Russians. They are also incorporated into the theme of Russia's security and integrity. In the case of the Jews, which are the single most frequently discussed minority group in Nash Sovremennik, they are portrayed as having a secret agenda, a hidden plot to destroy Russia.

"*Eres' Zhidovstvuiushchikh*", (Heresy of the Jews) deals with the role the Jews have played throughout Russia's history⁸. Beginning in the fifteenth century, when Jewish traders are first said to have come into contact with the trusting Russians, until the present, Jews, particularly the intellectuals, have been a corrupting influence on Russian society, writes Kazintsev.

In an article which deals with the destructive nature of the reforms taking place in Russia, O. Bakhmet'ev portrays the Jews as swindlers, thieves, and traitors.⁹ They are portrayed as parasites who, having escaped Russia, are exploiting her from Israel.¹⁰

⁸Aleksandr Kazintsev, "Eres' zhidovstvuiushchikh" (Heresy of the Jews), Nash Sovremennik, no.9 (1992). 165-175.

⁹Oleg Bakhmet'ev, "Osadok bol'shevizma" (Bolshevism's after-taste), Nash Sovremennik, no.7 (1993), 143-150.

¹⁰ibid., p.145. Bakhmet'ev says that the Jews have tricked us into buying alcohol and meat from Israel, and then adds facetiously that soon, Russia will be asked to buy Israeli cabbage and potatoes

Explicit anti-Semitism is also printed in the fourth issue of Nash Sovremennik for 1992.¹¹ Dmitrii Balashov, who writes about the secret organizations plotting against Russia, singles out the Jews (used interchangeably with Jewish Masons 'zhidomasonry') as being most dangerous to Russia. The Jews are accused not only of aspiring to world domination, but of controlling the CIA and other institutions which are hostile towards Russia.¹²

Although Jewish communities have lived in Russia for more than a thousand years, they are still treated as foreign, alien and hostile to Russian culture and prosperity.

Frequent interviews with Nikolai Lysenko, who is introduced as the leader of the National Republicans also express hatred towards the Jews. The first interview appeared in the ninth issue of Nash Sovremennik in 1992. The second appeared almost a year later, in the number seven issue in 1993.¹³ The specific questions asked by the interviewer differed, but Lysenko was nevertheless given ample opportunity to reiterate his most heartfelt point; The penetration of

too.

¹¹Dmitrii Balashov, "Anatomiia antisistemy" (Anatomy of an anti-system), Nash Sovremennik, no.4 (1994) 150-155.

¹²ibid., p.151.

¹³Interview with Nikolai Lysenko, "Nash Tsel'- sozдание velikoi imperii" (Our Mission is to Create a Great Empire), Nash Sovremennik, no.9 (1992), 122-131. "Otkrovennyi razgovor o 'druz'iakh', 'vragakh' i korennykh interesakh natsii" (An Honest Discussion About 'Friends', 'Enemies' and the Nation's Native Interests), Nash Sovremennik, no.7 (1993) 150-159.

Russia by Jews and their American allies, is destructive for Russia. "If the Jews do not stop interfering in our national affairs," concludes Lysenko, "they will simply be thrown out of Russia."¹⁴

In the article entitled "Organicheskaiia demokratiia" (Organic Democracy), with which we have dealt previously, A. Dugin says that while minorities can reside in Russia, they cannot share equal rights with Russians.¹⁵ By virtue of their different traditions and customs, they have a potential of disturbing the natural homogeneity of the nation, explains Dugin.¹⁶

The discussion of minorities, and of foreigners, is revealing not only of the tolerance, or lack thereof, of heterogeneity, but also of the relationship between "national characteristics" and political and social organization. Portraying Russia as being under constant threat from both external and internal forces, leads an author to two possible conclusions regarding protective measures to ward off the threat. The first is to recommend that Russia take a strong stand against the West by forming strong alliances with the

¹⁴Interestingly, when the interviewer asked how the rights of the Jews will be defended in Russia, Lysenko replies that the Israeli embassy in Russia will defend Jewish rights, just like the rights of the French (Quebecois) are controlled by the French embassy in Canada.(!) p.152.

¹⁵Aleksandr Dugin, "Organicheskaiia demokratiia" (Organic Democracy), Nash Sovremennik, no.10 (1992), 139-147.

¹⁶ibid., p.143

former Soviet republics. The second is to suggest that Russia isolate herself from all outside intervention and rebuild herself from within. In some cases, the two scenarios are combined - as in the case of some contemporary Eurasianists.

Democrats and Intellectuals

In the opening of his essay "*Organicheskaiia demokratiia*" (Organic Democracy), A. Dugin writes, "democrats are an elite who are alienated from the real struggles of the masses..."¹⁷. As he continues his brief indictment of the liberal democrats, his position sounds more and more like the accusations waged against the radical intelligentsia of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.

At that time, the intelligentsia was accused of being removed from the suffering of the people - as being cowardly and unwilling to take responsibility for their utopian dreams and ambitious plans and for always taking a counter productive, oppositional stance¹⁸. Today, the democrats stand accused of orchestrating the destructive policy of perestroika, and for being in partnership with all those who wished Russia evil. And so it is that in Nash Sovremennik, intellectuals are synonymous with democrats, and both denote westernism and a tendency to be torn away from actual concerns

¹⁷A. Dugin, "*Organicheskaiia demokratiia*" (Organic Democracy), Nash Sovremennik, no.10 (1992), 139-147.

¹⁸Vekhi and Iz glubiny opp. cit.

of the people. In the context of the two journals, "democrats" refer to those officials who took over after the August coup. They support market reform and liberalization of prices.

In September 1993, Nash Sovremennik published an article entitled "*V kakom politicheskom opyte nuzhdaetsia Rossiia*" (What kind of Political Experience does Russia Need), in which G. Chufrin argues that liberalism and democracy are not appropriate models for Russia.¹⁹ Why is it, asks Chufrin rhetorically, that democracy cannot take root on Russian soil and that the so called "general human values" (*obshchechelovecheskie tsenosti*) transform themselves into demagoguery, the destruction of the national government and the suffering of the entire population?²⁰

His answer is clear; "It is because our 'democrats' - westernizers, who are traditionally torn from the populace, offer our people programs which are absolutely incompatible with the realities and traditions of Russian life."²¹ In saying this, he reinforces both the idea that democracy and liberal economy are inappropriate for Russia, and that democrats, much like the intellectuals of the last century, are incapable of recommending anything that meets the needs of the Russian people, or is applicable in the Russian context.

¹⁹Gennadii Chufrin, "*V kakom politicheskom opyte nuzhdaetsia Rossiia*" (What kind of Political Experience does Russia Need), Nash Sovremennik, no.9 (1993), 144-148.

²⁰ibid., p.144.

²¹ibid., p.144.

The number eight issue for 1992, Nash Sovremennik carried an article in which we can see the assessment of the political elite. The post-communist, "democratic" government has shown its incompetence in a very short time, says Andreev. Never have our people been so destitute and our affairs in such disorder²². He hypothesises that the democrats have arisen from the same roots as the Bolsheviks; in the "lumpen-intellectual revolutionism".²³

An article by Mikhail Lobanov, which treats the victimization of Russia throughout the ages, reads, "The destruction of our government [*razgosudarstvenie*] has always been the main aim of our enemies, from the "Jewish-Mason" [*zhidovstvuiushchikh*] sects of the middle-ages, to today's "democrats". They spared no means towards this end..."²⁴ According to Lobanov, the democrats and others who support president Boris Yeltsin are actively trying to starve the Russian opposition. Behind their fancy words and promises,

²² Andrei Andreev, "Tret'ia sila" (Third [middle] Power), Nash Sovremennik, no.8 (1992) 111-117. This statement is interesting because it reveals the expectations placed the reform process. The author writes, "Only a few months have passed since the August coup, and already evil reigns supreme in our country. Millions are poverty stricken, organized crime abounds, our national wealth is being sold off and the vast space of the USSR is being sectioned off..." p.111. All of these "crimes" are attributed directly to the democrats, and all this they were able to accomplish in only a few months.

²³ibid., p.111.

²⁴Mikhail Lobanov, "Podvizhniki i tushintsi" (Movers and...) Nash Sovremennik, no.5 (1993), 135-143. p.135.

there lies a real hatred towards Russia and her people.²⁵

A more tolerant approach to intellectuals and democrats is typical of the articles published in Novyi Mir. The first issue of Novyi Mir for 1992, published a round-table discussion entitled "Rossiia, kotoruiu my obretaem" (The Russia Which We Are Discovering).²⁶ The discussions centred around various themes concerning Russia's present political, economic, ecological and social conditions. Discussants expressed various views regarding Russia's problems and their possible solutions.

One discussant, Iu. Latynina, commented on the role of intellectuals (used interchangeably with intelligentsia) in the reform process. She stated that the intelligentsia can play a primary role both as a source of optimism and hope for the population, and as a support system for the political powers. The role of the intelligentsia is not only to help build schemes for a better future, but to offer positive reinforcement by presenting the present in optimally positive and constructive terms.

The intelligentsia should help formulate plans for the future, she says, but in a way that is practical, with an eye to the means of achieving them. For example, the market is an object of criticism as a result of misconceptions and myths

²⁵ibid., p.139-140.

²⁶"Rossiia, kotoruiu my obretaem..." (Russia which We are Discovering...), Novyi Mir, no.1 (1993), 3-43.

which surround its functions. The intellectuals should clarify what it is and what results and effects can be realistically expected.

In conclusion, she suggests how the intellectuals can have a more positive role in the reform process. They need to form a consensus on the national question. The intellectuals need to reinforce that Russia is a European nation - to disassociate it from the old empire and from Asiatic attachments. They need to impress upon the population that progress lies in the road ahead, not the road back to imperial times. Lastly, intellectuals need to formulate a single position with regard to government. The two extremes of uncritical support vs. absolute opposition must find a medium.²⁷

Another speaker, S. Kurginian, takes an even more supportive position with regards to democrats and intellectuals. He believes that the road which lies ahead is going to be singularly unpleasant for Russia. Nevertheless, she must endure the difficulties in order to build a free society. Someone needed to do the "dirty work" and make the unpopular decisions. The Democratic forces have taken this task upon themselves, and they will become the "sacrificial lamb" for all those who are looking to blame someone.²⁸

²⁷ibid., p.35. It might be said that Latynina expresses unusual optimism in the ability of intellectuals to reach a consensus among themselves.

²⁸ibid., p.31.

In March, 1993, Novyi Mir published an article by Viktor Iaroshenko entitled "Popytka Gaidara" (Gaidar's Attempt).²⁹ Although the article is introduced as a "chronicle" of the first year and a half of Russia's first post-Communist government, Iaroshenko's perspective is unmistakably sympathetic. Throughout the article, which is part-fact, part-commentary, he tries to impress upon the reader the kinds of difficulties involved in the reform process from Communism to democracy. The new officials had to step in, he says, often without extensive administrative experience, and make decisions which they knew would have painful consequences and would meet with disapproval from the population.

His comments are not entirely without criticism. He concedes that there are cases of corruption, that deputies and officials still take bribes. At the same time, he says that the opposition is wasting its time in trying to expose the incompetence of our corruption-ridden democracy.³⁰

Iaroshenko is critical of the opposition, which calls itself "patriotic", for demanding that government control the economy. Their demands really translate into a call for subsidies, handouts, preferential treatment, etc..³¹ He is equally critical of their paranoia about Russia's security.

²⁹Viktor, Iaroshenko, "Popytka Gaidara" (Gaidar's Attempt), Novyi Mir, no.3 (1993), 107-142.

³⁰ibid., p.126.

³¹ibid., p.120.

Why are these "patriots" so concerned about the dubious motives of the West when lending Russia money? he asks. Russia cannot continue reforms without additional capital. Their [patriots] time would be better spent if they were not so preoccupied with the motives of others.³²

Furthermore, he defends the "democratic" government against accusations of being anti-national by the "patriotic" opposition. He quotes Gaidar's July 1991 speech at the Supreme Soviet: "We are accused of being Westernizers, theoreticians of western orientation. This is true. But we are patriots of our country, and are convinced that these political measures accord with her [Russia's] long-term interests".³³

A common theme runs through the articles which deal with political elite, specifically democrats: those who want to see a strong state that is capable of setting "order" in the political and economic spheres, oppose the democrats and the western-oriented intellectuals. This is so of politics, and equally true in the economic sphere.³⁴

³²ibid., p.121.

³³ibid., p.129.

³⁴An interesting article appeared in Novyi Mir by A. Solzhenitsyn. It is not included in this main discussion because, written in 1982, it does not deal with Russia's current democrats or liberals,. However, its publication in Novyi Mir is interesting and deserves mention. Speaking about the West, Solzhenitsyn says that pluralism [democracy] has been placed as the highest end and means. This is why the West is paralysed. It has lost its ability to judge between absolutes, between good and evil. Everything is relative.

There is a correlation between writers' attitudes towards democrats and western-oriented intellectuals and their tolerance towards diversity, heterogeneity, and to some extent, disorder. The greater one's desire for order, discipline, homogeneity and control, the less favourably one looks towards democrats and the often chaotic process of democracy itself.

The Entrepreneurs and Capitalism

In his book The Controversy over Capitalism, Walicki writes that, "It was a traditional preoccupation of the Russian intellectuals to ponder over Russia's future in terms of desirability of undesirability of following the example of Western Europe."³⁵ Because Western capitalism was such an important focus in their considerations, writes Walicki, a study of their perception of capitalism was key in understanding their aspirations.

Negative connotations associated with terms such as "capitalism", "free enterprise", and "market economics" taught during the Soviet period persist in the minds of many Russians.³⁶ By association, the entrepreneur is viewed as a

³⁵Andrezj Walicki, The Controversy Over Capitalism: Studies in the social Philosophy of the Russian Populists. Oxford; Claredon Press, 1969. p.132.

³⁶ In the Soviet publication entitled "Osnovy marksizma-leninizma", Soviet scholars outline the characteristics of the new stage in the general crisis of capitalism, "...the growth of new contradictions within the imperialist camp, especially between the USA and other developed capitalist countries resulting from the

self-seeking egoist, who is entirely unconcerned with the well being of society.

For those writers who are published in Nash Sovremennik, the entrepreneurs, just like the democrats, are anti-patriotic westernizers, willing to sell off Russia's belongings to any foreign buyer.

An article entitled "Razmyshleniia ob ekonomiki i narode" (Thoughts about the economy and the people), addresses this very issue. Kara-Murza discusses the concept of free enterprise and comes to the conclusion that "freedom" is a great deception.³⁷ In the USA, free enterprise has benefitted only a few. Most are free in so far as they are free to be poor. Free enterprise, writes Kara-Murza, does not give the freedom it promises. "We do not need freedom to allow us to be poor."³⁸ He is aware that given the choice, many of those who are unhappy with their condition will not chose a path that will perpetuate their misery. The author, anticipating their choice, suggests that it is better to curtail freedom than to have the freedom that yields an impoverished existence.

strengthened expansion of American imperialism and its fight for world domination." Short Handbook of Communist Ideology. Synopsis of 'Osnovy marksizma-leninisma', Selected by Helmut Flescher. Holland; D. Reidel Publishing Company, 1965. p.22-30.

³⁷Sergei Kara-Murza, "Razmyshleniia ob ekonomike i narode" (Thoughts About the Economy and the People), Nash Sovremennik, no.1 (1992), 154-166. This is not unlike Pobedonostsev who, as we saw in the above discussion, stated that the average person has no use for freedom.

³⁸ibid., p.164.

In an article entitled "Osadok bol'shevizma" (Bolshevism's Remains), Bakhmet'ev refers to the market as a bazaar, and to businessmen as parasites, speculators (*spekulianty*), dealers (*dilery*) or shashlik-stand owners with thick gold rings on fat, hairy fingers (*kooperatory-shashlychniki s zolotymi perstniami na tolstykh volosatykh pal'tsakh*).³⁹

A more generous assessment of entrepreneurs and their contribution to Russia's economic growth can be found in the articles published in Novyi Mir. An article dealing directly with entrepreneurs in Russia was published in the eleventh issue of Novyi Mir in 1993.⁴⁰ In it, P. Penezhko explores the activity of entrepreneurs and the impact of these activities in Russia. In his initial comments, Penezhko toys with some of the stereotypes held about the entrepreneurs, and it even appears that he might be agreeing with some of them. But as his narrative continues, we learn of his appreciation of those people who were willing to take risks in Russia's volatile economic climate. He writes about his acquaintance with some of the more active businessmen in St. Petersburg and Moscow and his eventual understanding of their activities and contributions not only to the Russian economy, but to Russia's social and cultural life.

³⁹Oleg Bakhmet'ev, "Osadok bol'shevizma" (Bolshevism's Remains), Nash Sovremennik, no.7 (1993), 143-150. p.143-144.

⁴⁰P. Penezhko, "Predprinemateli" (Entrepreneurs), Novyi Mir, no.11 (1993), 175-195.

He writes of their very typical beginning in the Soviet period: school, army, factory, promotion, etc. and their very typical routine, books, holidays on the Volga, travel with children, etc. and with these comments disproves the myths about their mysterious, and evil origins. Penezhko does not try to paint a glorious picture of entrepreneurs, nor try to exaggerate their achievements. Many have succeeded, he writes, but many more have been defeated. He even expresses sympathy towards the American businessmen who are completely disoriented in the ever-changing rules and regulations for investment.⁴¹

In conclusion, Penezhko writes that the government is not doing enough to assist those with initiative. The unbearably high taxes, the confusion in legislation and jurisdiction are all contributing to the difficulties of the development of small private business in Russia. Russia's new democratic government leans on business for support, says, Penezhko, yet is unwilling provide proper conditions for its growth.⁴²

An article by A. Ivashchenko, printed in April 1993, expresses regret over the fact that Russians who contributed to her economic growth prior to the Bolshevik revolution have been forgotten.⁴³ He discusses the example of the Vereshchagin

⁴¹ibid., p.181.

⁴²ibid., p.194-195.

⁴³Anatolii Ivanshchenko, "Zelenye pobegi na zasokhshem dreve", Novyi Mir, no.4 (1993), 145-156.

brothers. One brother is a well known artist whose work is widely exhibited and was popular even during the Soviet period. But no one knows of the second brother, says Ivanshchenko. He was an agronomist, who cultivated Russia's dairy industry. His contributions have been all but forgotten.

Ivanshchenko concludes by saying that Soviet propaganda has been so successful in penetrating people's consciousness, that artists, musicians and almost all other professions have been placed above entrepreneurs. Enterprising individuals who have made substantial contributions to Russia's economy have either been neglected or viewed as villains and exploiters.

In April 1993 Novyi Mir carried an article by S. Alekseev⁴⁴, whose argument focuses primarily on the positive aspects of a liberal economy and the accompanying structural changes (defence of private property, rule of law, equitable taxation, reinvestment in economy, and others)⁴⁵. But he warns that capitalism cannot be a pre-fabricated formula - we cannot 'build' capitalism as we built communism. It cannot be a scheme which we design in our drawing rooms and impose on to the population. Its growth should be facilitated and the more severe consequences of its early development curbed.

⁴⁴S. Alekseev, "Nash Shans" (Our Chance), Novyi Mir, no.4 (1993), 137-144.

⁴⁵Alekseev makes a distinction between capitalism and 'the market', explaining that the former encompasses the structural aspects as named above, while the latter is restricted to the exchange of goods and consumption. p.140.

His argument regarding the necessity of capitalism cannot be understood apart from his universalist position on the movement of history. In chapter one of this paper, it was argued that writers and publicists who attempt to give meaning to Russia's past represent two distinct positions. The first, the particularist, holds that Russia has a historical mission, a unique, unrepeatable path which cannot be understood by the outside world. The second, the universalist, believes that civilization is progressing along a common path that leads from absolutist, feudal arrangements to a society organized by rational, impartial institutions. Alekseev bases his support of capitalism on the second, universalist position.

For many centuries Russians have been taught that they have a special mission in the world, writes Alekseev. "Moscow as the Third Rome", "Russians as the guardians of pure Christianity", "Russians as the Big Brother in the construction of Communism" - these ideas have been heard so many times, that they have become part of the Russian mentality⁴⁶. Alekseev argues that Russia is still suffering from the consequences of the last communist myth, which tried to prove yet again that it can take a different path from that of the rest of the civilized world.

Conclusion

The portrayal of attitudes towards newly emerging groups

⁴⁶ibid. p.141.

and concepts completes the picture both of national identity and political character. These will be discussed at some length in the concluding chapter.

Nash Sovremennik presents itself as a platform for the national, spiritual opposition, and its mandate as facilitating Russia's revival. Those who contribute to the journal hold that Russia's spiritual future can only be secured in a fortified entity, safe from the corrupting influence of the West. They see Russia as being organic in its social and political constitution, with a government that will act as a centralized, philanthropic institution, controlling, regulating, and distributing.

For those writing in Novyi Mir, Russia is a society of free and competing individuals. No exceptions are made for minorities and no barriers are erected against foreigners. This free society is not going to arise overnight, and the various contributors warn readers of the difficult road ahead.

What is missing in this picture is a vision of social purpose, an "idea" (as Nash Sovremennik refers to it) that will give meaning to the difficulties to be endured. As some of the writers for Nash Sovremennik have noted, freedom is not a sufficient incentive. It is too distant as compared to the immediacy of poverty, and being "free-yet-miserable" is not an option that is likely to be favoured by many.

Chapter Six

Conclusion

National identity can be perceived broadly to encompass almost all aspects of national life, from the most spiritual to the most profane. In this paper, we have examined several themes which provided insight into the way intellectuals perceive Russian national identity. National identity or national character, in turn, has a bearing on the type of political organization that is viewed as being most desirable for the nation.¹

The collapse of the Soviet regime created a disoriented society, lacking in an overarching idea or ideology to give meaning to the situation in which it found itself. The relationship between national identity and a vision of the future is not simple or direct. In some cases, national identity is fabricated in order to fit the political vision of the intellectual. In other cases, a vision of the individual and of society precedes a model of the future. Alternately, it can simply be pointed out that every model of economic and political institutions requires corresponding behaviour and attitudes from the population.

In the journals Nash Sovremennik and Novyi Mir, the

¹ Just as a vision of 'natural' man informed the characteristics of the sovereign and of political organization in general in the works of Thomas Hobbes, J.J. Rousseau, John Locke and other political theorists.

relationship between national identity and a vision of the political and economic character of Russia's future society differs as a result of the different mandate of the journals. Nash Sovremennik tries to demonstrate that Russia and her people are of a particular "nature" and "character" in order to "prove" that its vision of Russia's future is the only legitimate one, the only one that will accord with their nature. There is no singular and uniform vision of the Russian "character" in Novyi Mir. Its articles generally convey the message that under a Soviet regime, we, the people, had to behave and even think, in specific ways, dictated by the very institutions we created. To behave and think differently, as individuals, Russians need to fundamentally change the way they conduct politics and the way they run the economy.

By using specific themes relating to national identity, we were able to see the correlation between national identity and a vision of a future path in the two journals. History, and its selective interpretation, can be used as a means for demonstrating some 'inherent' or 'innate' qualities of the Russian people and the political organization most complimentary to these qualities. Furthermore, an understanding of the interplay between Russia's history and the history of other nations is instrumental in formulating a strategy for Russia's future.

Myths relating to national character are frequently invoked to justify a political strategy for the future. Our

discussion of the West and East, and of the role and function of religion, demonstrates the possible uses of national characteristics to draw political conclusions. Drawing upon myths about the Russian nation and stereotypes about non-Russian, foreign nations, allows the author to make sweeping recommendations regarding the desirability or undesirability of a particular path of development. For example, described as communally oriented, spiritual, religious, and respectful of authority, the Russian people are not suited for western institutions leading to a western-type, rationalistic, egoistic and atheist society.

The study has revealed that the two journals differ in their perception of national identity and Russia's future. While the views of individual authors may coincide on certain issues, for the most part, Nash Sovremennik and Novyi Mir publish writers who have contrasting positions with regards to national 'character' and the significance of Russia's current situation. The following two scenarios can be used as examples to represent the way each journal views Russia's past, present and future in light of the general characteristics attributed to the Russian people. While the examples are interpretations of the journals' general views, and do not represent every article published, they are all useful in demonstrating the contrast between the journals.

Nash Sovremennik

The editors of Nash Sovremennik openly admit that their

journal is a forum for the national-patriotic position. In this sense, its position is more outwardly ideological. Most articles convey the idea that there exists a Russian essence, a general characteristic inherent to all Russian people.² Their perspective can be summarized as follows:

History demonstrates that Russia is a unique nation with unique mission and character that is incomprehensible to the rest of the world. Western notions of progress do not apply to her, nor is it desirable that she undertake a western path of development. The rationalism of western politics, the atheism of its spiritual life and individualism in economic and social interaction, are all characteristic of western society that are not in accord with Russia's 'nature'. Russia needs to return to an Orthodox government that will reinstate its control in the political and economic sphere, take a firm stand against internal and external aggressors, and all those

²The practice of making sweeping generalizations about the Russian people in general is not new to Russian philosophical thought. For example, Nikolas Danilevskii, the prominent theoretician of Pan-Slavism, wrote, "...there hardly ever has existed or exists a people so capable of enduring such a large share of freedom as the Russians and so little inclined to abuse it, due to their ability and habit to obey, their respect and trust in the authorities, their lack of love for power, and their loathing of interference in matters where they do not consider themselves competent." Ironically, this author then concludes, "This nature of the Russian people is the true reason why Russia is the only state which never had (and never will have) a political revolution, ie., a revolution having as its aim the limitation of the power of the ruler,". "The Slav Role in World Civilization" printed in Readings in Russian Civilization, Vol. II, Thomas Riha, ed., University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1969.

who are currently destroying the country with importation of western models.

The representation of the Russian people as one single entity, capable of possessing a single national will is instrumental to the journals positions regarding the nature of Russia's political future. The possession of one single, unitary will -"the will of the people", is in every respect coincidental with the national interest.

Having thus constructed their image of the people, their vision of the corresponding government required by them seems almost self-evident. Being in possession of one will, the Russian people need a leader who will know and understand this will. They do not require freedom of choice, particularly as the freedom of today amounts to the choice between the freedom to be 'free and poor' or 'free and miserable'. They need a government and a Church that is capable of protecting them from the evil influences of the West and other foreign bodies who are tirelessly scheming against Russia.

They see Russia as capable of being an internally non-differentiated society, entirely homogeneous in faith.³ The people are said to be carriers of a subconscious Russianness, which is inaccessible to the outside observer, and

³It would seem that the editors wish to do away with the political realm altogether: To eliminate the realm in which conflicting interests battle each other for dominance. This is consistent with their belief in a single national will; there can be no conflicting interests in a homogeneous society they envision.

incomprehensible to any foreigner.

Failing to distinguish what is habitual from what is 'natural' (habit with nature), Nash Sovremennik concludes that because the Russian people have not before lived in a liberal, democratic political order, it is unnatural for them to do so.

Novyi Mir

The editors of Novyi Mir present the journal as a platform for the 'exploration' of ideas relevant to Russian national identity. They publish a wide array of opinions on specific subjects, and two ideologically opposed essays are often found side by side with a note from the editors advising the readers to make their own judgments. For this reason, it is much more difficult to summarize the overall position of the journal. There is no notion of "the people" as a collective, in Novyi Mir. Instead, the national identity and "consciousness" of the population is seen as something that changes with the political and economic spheres. Society is portrayed as being comprised of individuals who are capable of being rational and reasonable, and possessing the ability to see their interests and act accordingly.

Portrayed in this manner, the individual is not bound by the will of a single leader who is designated to act in his or her best interest. In spite of the element of "chaos" and disorder of liberal democracy, it is presented as being the only political order capable of accommodating the dynamic

interests of the many group and individuals. The primacy of heterogeneity for the editors of Novyi Mir is evident both from the articles themselves, and from the above mentioned practice of printing competing views in succession.

Christianity in general is viewed as being completely compatible with freedom and democracy. Religion is relegated to the private sphere, and freedom of conscience is favoured over religious compulsion. The views with regards to Orthodoxy vary with different authors. Many authors believe that the government should assist the Orthodox church in its revival, after many decades of oppression under the Soviet regime, however, it is never suggested that the government itself should be a religious one, or be symbiotically connected to the church.

Most articles convey the idea that the path ahead is going to be long and difficult. No utopian schemes or ready-made formulas for Russia's revival have been printed in Novyi Mir during the two year period.

Russia's integration into the world community is seen as a desirable process, and the assistance of the international community is viewed as necessary for the transition to a democratic, market based society.

Solid ideological positions have not yet formed in Russia, and political and social discourse is characterized by fluctuation and fluidity. It is interesting that while the

opinions and affiliations of individual intellectuals have undergone transformation and evolved in response to the rapidly changing social and political environment,⁴ the thoughts and ideas expressed in the journals remained relatively consistent during the two year period, and did not react to any specific events taking place. This consistency on the part of the editorial board, has facilitated the study of polarization of thought on questions of identity and its relation to Russia's future.

The two journals express polar views with regard to questions of national identity. The opinions of individual authors may coincide on particular issues, but for the most part, the editors of the two journals publish authors who are representative of their editorial position. The themes which relate to national identity discussed in this paper, have demonstrated the correlation between concepts of national identity and a vision of Russia's future path. But while these journals have different editorial positions, and appear to represent two opposite ideological "camps", we have seen that opinions within each journal are not uniform. Pluralism may not be a sufficiently compelling concept during times of

⁴ The breakup of the Soviet Writers Union offers an interesting example of the changing affiliations of the intellectual elite. The Russian branch of the Writers' Union, part of which declared its independence from the Soviet Writers Union, soon splintered into several "unions" divided along ideological lines, personal interests and affiliations. Many other, parallel writers' and poets' organizations were also formed, and a given writer belonged to several organizations at the same time, or changed his/her membership from one organization to another, to yet another.

increasing difficulty and disorientation if there is no means for consensus. The journals themselves are an example of the lack of homogeneity among intellectuals in formulating a vision of Russia's future and providing a sense of common purpose that could assist in the overcoming of the difficulties which lie ahead.

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