

2012

## Intellectual Culture: The End of Russian Intelligentsia

Dmitri N. Shalin

*University of Nevada, Las Vegas*, [shalin@unlv.nevada.edu](mailto:shalin@unlv.nevada.edu)

Follow this and additional works at: [https://digitalscholarship.unlv.edu/russian\\_culture](https://digitalscholarship.unlv.edu/russian_culture)



Part of the [Asian History Commons](#), [Cultural History Commons](#), [European History Commons](#), [Intellectual History Commons](#), [Other Languages, Societies, and Cultures Commons](#), [Political History Commons](#), [Slavic Languages and Societies Commons](#), and the [Social History Commons](#)

---

### Repository Citation

Shalin, D. N. (2012). Intellectual Culture: The End of Russian Intelligentsia. In Dmitri N. Shalin, 1-68.  
Available at: [https://digitalscholarship.unlv.edu/russian\\_culture/6](https://digitalscholarship.unlv.edu/russian_culture/6)

This Article is protected by copyright and/or related rights. It has been brought to you by Digital Scholarship@UNLV with permission from the rights-holder(s). You are free to use this Article in any way that is permitted by the copyright and related rights legislation that applies to your use. For other uses you need to obtain permission from the rights-holder(s) directly, unless additional rights are indicated by a Creative Commons license in the record and/or on the work itself.

This Article has been accepted for inclusion in Russian Culture by an authorized administrator of Digital Scholarship@UNLV. For more information, please contact [digitalscholarship@unlv.edu](mailto:digitalscholarship@unlv.edu).

## Intellectual Culture: The End of Russian Intelligentsia

### Dmitri Shalin

No group cheered louder for Soviet reform, had a bigger stake in perestroika, and suffered more in its aftermath than did the Russian intelligentsia. Today, nearly a decade after Mikhail Gorbachev unveiled his plan to reform Soviet society, the mood among Russian intellectuals is decidedly gloomy. "The intelligentsia has carried perestroika on its shoulders," laments Ury Shchekochikhin, "so why does it feel so forlorn, superfluous, forgotten"? [1] G. Ivanitsky warns that the intellectual strata "has become so thin that in three or four years the current genocide against the intelligentsia would surely wipe it out." [2] Andrey Bitov, one of the country's finest writers, waxes nostalgically about the Brezhnev era and "the golden years of stagnation when . . . people could do something real, like build homes, publish books, and what not." [3]

The frustration and self-doubt afflicting Russian intellectuals today might seem excessive but they are hardly unprecedented. In the last hundred sixty years or so, every crucial turn in Russian history has touched off a new round of debates about the intelligentsia, its role as the conscience of society and the guardian of national culture. This discourse by and about the intelligentsia has shaped Russian intellectual culture with its distinct themes, literary props, psychological traits, and favored political agendas. Russian intellectual culture shares with its Western counterpart the belief in directed social change and cultural critique as a tool for social reconstruction. East or West, intellectuals produce a "distinctive culture of discourse" [4] through which they stake their claim to status and income in a modern society. The greater the significance society assigns to the written word, intellectual creativity, and social criticism, the greater prestige and privilege the intelligentsia enjoys in society. Keeping aflame critical discourse and promoting high culture, therefore, the intelligentsia also increases its cultural capital.

What sets Russian intellectual culture apart is a crying gap between its modern aspirations and the nation's conservative heritage. Its other distinctive feature is the bold, even extravagant, manner in which Russian intellectuals have asserted their vanguard role and claimed moral leadership in society. As Alexander Yanov, a prominent Russian intellectual, put it, "One advantage that Russia has over the West is its colossal intellectual wealth." [5] The implication is that if only the Russian intelligentsia could deploy its intellectual resources fully, reforms in their country would have a chance. This sentiment is shared by many Russian

intellectuals who continue to search for ways to mobilize culture as a strategic national resource and, in the process, improve their own sinking fortunes.

Whatever their vested interests, intellectuals' yearning for stewardship in a rapidly changing Russian society should not be treated lightly. The ongoing discourse about the intelligentsia and its role in current reforms has left a mark on public consciousness and found its way into wider social practice. The question is where the intelligentsia would like to take the nation, and whether the nation is willing to follow its intelligentsia.

To understand intellectual discourse in today's Russia, we need to examine Russian intellectual culture in its formative years. [6] After tracing the origins of the Russian intellectual tradition, I outline its evolution in the Soviet era. Next, I address the challenges that the intelligentsia faces in post-Soviet Russia, the stunning reversal of fortunes that Russian intellectuals have suffered in recent years, and their struggle to reassert their critical role in society. And finally, I offer some speculations about the Russian intelligentsia's future.

### **The Origins of Russian Intellectual Culture**

Although the Russian intelligentsia did not evolve into a self-conscious social force until the mid-19th century, its origins can be traced to the early 18th century, when Peter the Great embarked on a crash campaign to modernize Russia. Backward, insular, and largely illiterate, Russia was to be brought abreast with the leading European nations through radical reforms in its political, religious, military, and civil service structures. To that effect, Peter I invited to Russia experts from all over Europe, sent young men abroad for study, set up a civil service bureaucracy, reorganized the army and the navy on Western models, established the Russian Academy of Science, and encouraged court poets to immortalize the Tsar's glorious deeds. This forced Westernization exposed the country to the ideas that had no roots in Russia proper and that were met with resistance from the noblemen, many of whom saw the reforms as an affront to Russian Orthodoxy and considered Peter the Great an anti-Christ. But the new class of servicemen and courtiers who owed their fortunes to Peter the Great and his successors learned to appreciate the new ways and prided themselves on being the purveyors of European mores in their roughhewn homeland.

It would be wrong to assume that the proto-intellectual strata planted during the Peter the Great's reign instantly produced Western-style

intellectuals sold on the ideals of religious tolerance, political liberty, and a constitutional state. The ruthless manner in which Peter I imposed his reforms on his countrymen was inimical to the Occidental humanistic heritage with its signature belief in the dignity of every human being. Nor was there any evidence that the Russian servicemen, clerics, academics, and poets had any agenda of their own. Whatever their internal squabbles and personal gripes against the powerful, the 18th century bureaucrats by and large identified with the state, its authoritarian domestic policies and imperial aspirations abroad.

As the century wore on, signs began to emerge that the Westernized intellectual strata was coming into its own and growing uneasy about Russia 's backwardness. Catherine II's interest in the French Enlightenment encouraged Russian writers to voice their judgments about the country's social and political affairs. But when some dared to shed their roles as official bards and court wits and venture an opinion mildly critical of her majesty's realm, they were sternly reprimanded by the Empress. Dissatisfaction with the serfdom that Vasily Kapnist cautiously conveyed in one of his poems was met with a rebuke from Catherine II, who told the writer to mind his own business and barred him from court. Nikolai Novikov, a prominent publisher and educator in Catherine II's reign, was sent to prison after he satirized Russia 's gentry. When Western-educated Alexander Rudishchev wrote a book lamenting the Russian peasants' sorry state, he was stripped of his nobleman's status and sentenced to death (the verdict was later changed to a life-long exile with the confiscation of property). [7]

During the reign of Alexander I, the gap between autocracy and the Westernized strata grew wider. In 1812, Napoleon suffered a crushing defeat. The Russian troops triumphantly marched into Paris . As it happened, the occupiers fell under the spell of republicanism. Thirteen years later, the young military commanders attempted to overthrow the Tsar and replace autocracy with a constitutional monarchy -- an event that dramatically underscored the extent to which Western ideals permeated Russia 's educated class. The Decembrists' uprising, as this event was called, failed miserably, but in the eyes of many contemporaries and future commentators, it marked a watershed in Russian history. The 1825 coup pinpointed the growing alienation between Western-minded intellectuals and a nation still deeply ensconced in its premodern ways, and it presaged the emergence of a politically-conscious, socially up-rooted, and increasingly radical Russian intelligentsia.

The French Enlightenment, German philosophy, and early socialist teachings were among the most important Western currents that shaped Russian intellectual culture in its formative years. To the Enlightenment, Russian intellectuals owed their preoccupation with constitutional polity and the republican system of government. German philosophy left its mark on Russian intellectual discourse through a theory that hailed the world historical spirit passing through several progressive stages and elevating humanity to an imminently rational state. The socialist ideas that began to reach Russia in the 1840s furnished fresh rationales for a critique of Russia's backward economy and pervasive inequality.

The term "intelligentsia" has a Latin root and the Russian grammatical form, suggesting a hybrid origin. George Fedotov, gives a precise date when the intelligentsia was born: 1837, the year Alexander Pushkin died. [8] Petr Boborykin claimed to have coined the term in 1866. [9] Its most likely source is the Hegelian philosophy of spirit which envisioned a superhuman intelligence operating in the universe and inexorably moving society toward an ever more perfect state via the rationalizing activity of self-reflexive minds. From this abstract philosophical doctrine, Russian intellectuals inferred that their country had to be modernized in line with world historical (read Western European) development and that the elite of Western-educated, publicly-minded individuals was best suited for the job. The Westernizers did not seem to be overly concerned that their schemes had hardly any moorings in the Russian political tradition. They had little doubt that their intelligence, theoretical savvy, and boundless energy will surmount the historical obstacles in their path. Hence Georgy Fedotov's famous definition: "The Russian intelligentsia is a group, movement, and tradition that is marked by the principled nature of its objectives and the groundlessness of its principles." [10] The arrogant stance that the Westernized intellectuals assumed with regard to their own cultural heritage had a direct impact on their psychology and behavior. Having sided with progress, Russian intellectuals could not help but feel superior to their society. With the native tradition cast as a fetter on their enlightened spirit, they were apt to scorn as a retrograde any person who saw something valuable in Russia 's past. Self-appointed agents of history, they treated all mundane authorities and institutions with contempt and vowed to destroy them. Alas, being ahead of one's time proved exceedingly costly, as critically thinking intellectuals discovered in their struggle with Russia 's formidable secrete police called upon to crush the enemies of the state.

The critical intellectual ferment is already evident in Peter Chaadaev, a celebrated 19th century intellectual whose robust critique of Russia 's

insular ways and longing for European culture so much angered Nicholas I that he pronounced Chaadaev a "madman" -- the first, though hardly the last, case of its kind in the Russian intelligentsia's beleaguered history. Taking his cue from Schelling, Chaadaev extolled "universal intelligence," "universal reason," "one single intellectual force in the whole universe," and "the unique vision of the future granted to some chosen men" whose selfless labors were enlisted to impart the world historical wisdom to reality. [11] Chaadaev's views were unabashedly elitist: I have always thought that humanity could advance only by following its elite, by following those who have the mission of leading it; . . . that the instincts of majorities are necessarily more egotistical, more emotional, more narrow . . . that human intelligence always manifests itself most powerfully only in the solitary mind, center and sun of its sphere. [12]

Once the task of universal intelligence was fully comprehended, everything had to submit to its impersonal dictate. The individual was but a vehicle for divine providence, his private existence largely irrelevant in the face of the universal spirit's transhistorical agenda: "[T]he human being should be understood once and for all as an intelligent being in abstraction, but never as the individual and personal being, circumscribed by the present moment, an ephemeral insect, which is born and dies on the same day, and which is linked with the totality of things merely by the law of birth and corruption." [13] From now on, every person's objective value was to be judged by his readiness to subordinate his private urges to universal reason and to fulfill its ultimate goal.

Having set for himself and his contemporaries this lofty ideal, Chaadaev quickly discovered how hard it was to live up to it. In 1836, after his philosophical letters incurred the Tsar's wrath, Chaadaev found himself hounded by the police and shunned by the public. Hastily, he renounced his views and retreated into proud solitude. Later on, when Alexander Herzen, another prominent Russian intellectual, praised Chaadaev as a precursor of free thought in Russia, Chaadaev dispatched a letter to the political police headquarters where he denounced his compatriot and in the most abject terms swore his loyalty to the Tsar. Asked why did he have to abase himself so, he replied that one simply "must save one's skin." [14] This surrender had its emotional toll on Chaadaev, who had foreseen the crushing burden that the intellectual would bear in this God-forsaken land: "Where is the man who would be strong enough not to end up hating himself, living in eternal contradiction, always thinking one thing and doing another. . . . What causes this terrible ulcer which is destroying us?" [15] This "terrible ulcer" would eat away at several generations of Russian intellectuals daring to oppose the powerful state. Few would suffer

more from it than Chaadaev's friend, Russia 's beloved poet, Alexander Pushkin.

Educated in the state-run lyceum for noblemen, Pushkin imbibed in his formative years free thinking that would lead his friends to the Senate plaza, the famous place in St. Petersburg where the Decembrists staged their abortive coup. Pushkin did not mince words in his early lyrics, which breathed regicidal fervor:

You, scoundrel autocratic!  
I hate thy throne and I hate thee.  
My heart feels cruelly ecstatic  
When your and your's doom I foresee. [16]

His contemporaries remembered Pushkin in his young adulthood as an irreverent, Jacobin spirit who did not mince words vilifying the government: "At the governor's [mansion], on the streets, at the plaza, he was always eager to explain to anybody that he who did not want to change the government was a scoundrel. His conversation was replete with cursing and sarcasm, and even his courtesy was punctuated with an ironic smile." [17] Despite his radicalism, the poet's political preferences were rather modest: he was ready to settle for a constitutional monarchy.

Rulers! your laurels and your crowns accrue  
To your estate from law and not from nature;  
You hover high and mighty over nations,  
Alas, eternal law reigns over you [18].

Even in the liberal reign of Alexander II (the Tsar himself at one point toyed with the idea of constitutional monarchy), such rhetoric was deemed to be highly inflammatory. The Tsar had little use for a poet who dared to put him on notice that

I cannot force my bashful muse  
Tsars and their courtiers to amuse. [19]

Pushkin's verses, widely circulated and popular among future Decembrists, landed him in exile, from which the poet would not escape until after the failed Decembrists' uprising.

After Alexander I died in 1825, his son, Nicholas I, ascended to the throne. Before he brought Pushkin back from exile, he ordered him, along with a few other free thinkers, to write a report on the linkage between

youth education and pernicious republicanism, effectively inviting the poet to repent for his own youthful indiscretions. Pushkin's reply was emblematic of the torturous exercises that Russian intellectuals would have to go through to save their skins without completely dishonoring themselves. He charged his friends with "criminal delusions" and "low morals," blamed "foreign ideologism" and "deficient education" for their "wanton behavior," called for "drastic measures" to stem free thinking among Russian youth, and demanded "the end to home schooling" which lets youngsters escape the state's "omniscient oversight. [20] At the same time, he intimated that harsh censorship might have driven honorable men to clandestine publications, that it was better to expose the youth to republican ideas in school than make them yield to hostile agitation later on, and that the person's rank in society ought to be made commensurate with his education -- quite nonorthodox ideas, given the period's reactionary tenore.

About the same time, as if to calm his guilty conscience, Pushkin wrote one of his best known verses which he dedicated to his comrades exiled to Siberia:

Deep down in the Siberian mines  
Sustain your proud, silent patience,  
Your anguished toil will slowly grind,  
Your noble dreams won't vanish traceless.

Confidently, Pushkin predicted that the time would come when

Your heavy fetters will fall off,  
The walls of prisons crumble -- and freedom  
Will greet you at the gates,  
As friends restore your swords to you. [21]

These words are familiar to all Soviet school children. Much less known is Pushkin's other side, his secret dealings with the authorities, his endless entreaties to the chief of Russia's secret police: "If the emperor wishes to use my pen, I would be eager, according to my abilities and with requisite precision, to fulfill his highness's will. . . . I offer my magazine to the government -- as its tool for shaping public opinion." [22] And this is from the man who confessed that he was "tired to depend on the good or bad digestion of one superior or another. . . . The only thing I crave is independence." [23] And again: "What a devil's jest to force me, with my mind and talent, to be born in Russia!" [24] "Of course, I loath my homeland from head to toe, though I feel annoyed when a foreigner



shares with me this feeling. But you, who is not on the leash," queried Pushkin his friend, "how can you live in Russia ? If the Tsar granted me freedom, I wouldn't stay a month around here." [25] No wonder that trying to reconcile these conflicting sentiments, Pushkin became ill-tempered and depressed. The freedom from political demands was all an artist should long for, according to mature Pushkin. Here is his much quoted verse written in the poet's last year that sums up his disillusionment:

I do not cherish your much touted rights  
Which sets some heads to reeling.  
I don't blame the Gods who have denied me  
The sweet pleasure of disputing taxes and meddling  
With tsars forever waging wars among themselves.  
Why should I care if our press is free  
To gull its readers, if watchful censorship  
Thwarts noisy demagogues' ambitious designs.  
All these, you see, are *words, words, words*.  
Far better, nobler rights are dear to me;  
Far more auspicious freedoms I am craving:  
To bow to the Tsar, to bow to the people --  
What difference does it make? God be their judge.

To no one else  
Accounting for my deeds, pleasing no other but myself,  
Refusing for a prize to bend my neck, my conscience, my beliefs,  
Wandering here and there as I alone see fit,  
Standing in awe, admiring nature's sacred beauty,  
Beholding artistry inspired flight, transfixed  
In joy and gratitude by its eternal truth --  
Now, that is happiness! Those are the rights. . . .[26]

Toward the end of his life, Pushkin grew increasingly irritated with his old friends and unhappy about the real and imaginary slights he had suffered from Nicholas I and his servants who never believed in his conversion. Several times he offered to resign from his lowly position in the court hierarchy, but was discouraged to go through with his request. A notorious skirt chaser, he found the tables turned on himself when Georges Dantes, a dazzling Frenchman serving in the Russian army, began to stalk his wife. The duel that followed left Pushkin mortally wounded. On his deathbed, he pleaded with Nicholas I to forgive his indiscretion, asking his friend Zhukovsky to "tell him that it's a pity I have to die; I would have been his completely." [27] The autocrat struck a

noble pause, forgiving Pushkin his sins against the throne, paying off his numerous debts, and promising to take care of his wife and children. The foremost poet and intellectual of his time, Alexander Pushkin died a broken man.

### **The First *Intelligenty***

Neither Chaadaev nor Pushkin saw themselves as *intelligenty* -- members of the Russian intelligentsia. Both were firmly rooted in the estate system and harbored class prejudices against the lower orders common at the time. Most contemporary Westernizers resigned themselves to studying the latest foreign theories among like-minded nobles. Stankevich, Granovsky, Turgenev, Ogarev, Herzen -- the golden youth of the 1840's gathered in small circles where free thinking continued to flourish in the stifling atmosphere of Nicholas I rule. "What is, is right," pronounced the reigning Hegelian wisdom, from which the Russian intellectuals concluded that they must be patient, that universal spirit cannot be rushed, that no order was ready to fall until it had exhausted its historical potential.

The revolutionary tide that swept Europe in the late 1840s washed on the Russian shores socialist slogans which exploded Russia 's stagnant culture. The case of Alexander Herzen, the brilliant socialist writer and one of Russia 's first political exiles to the West, is most revealing here. Son of a Russian nobleman and a wealthy French woman, Herzen was schooled at his father's estate in a typically eclectic fashion, learning Latin, German and French, reading Voltaire and Diderot, soaking up the republican spirit. He enrolled at Moscow State University , where he joined a clique of youth looking for ways to snub Russia 's hated institutions. The young men's aversion to autocracy was awakened by the Decembrists' uprising and fortified by the heavy dosage of Fourierism and Saint Simonism. In 1834, the student group was exposed and its leaders exiled to the East, where Herzen spent eight years, working in various provincial administrations and learning more than he cared to about Russia 's retrograde customs. After a return to Moscow engineered by his powerful friends, Herzen was exiled one more time, came back again, and in 1847, under the pretext of his wife's poor health, managed to leave Russia and never returned to his homeland.

Residing alternatively in Switzerland, France, Italy, and finally London, he took active part in the revolutionary upheavals that swept Europe from 1848 on, and in the process underwent what he called "perestroika of all convictions." [28] He rejected German idealism as too abstract and consecrated himself to socialism and materialism, convinced that science

and education could alleviate absolutism, foster equality, and deliver humanity from its misery. While Herzen's passion for liberalism sometime approached religious fervor, his caustic, brilliant mind continued to check his intellections against reality, openly acknowledging wherever the former exceeded his expectations:

Liberalism is the last religion , though its church is not other-worldly and its theodicy is political; it stands firmly on the ground and allows no mystical reconciliations; it has to reconcile itself with reality in deed. . . . Liberalism exposed the chasm in all its nakedness; the sickly consciousness of this chasm breeds irony and skepticism that mark the modern man and help him sweep the remnants of past idols. Irony conveys the disappointment that logical truth is not the same as historical truth, that aside from dialectical development, truth has its passionate and contingent development, that in addition to reason, truth also has its romance. [29]

In the mid-50s, Herzen started a successful publishing venture, which included his famous magazines "Kolokol" (The Bell) and "Voices from Russia " where intellectuals could clandestinely publish their philippics against the Tsarist state. The magazine issues were smuggled back to Russia where they were widely read by the regime's proponents and opponents, with the top courtiers boasting their familiarity with the latest magazine articles. Herzen was among the very first in Russia to zero in on *glasnost* as a pivot on which progressive reforms must turn. "Thanks to censorship, we are unfamiliar with glasnost, which amazes, frightens, and offends us. It is time for the comedians from the imperial secret police to realize that sooner or later their actions, kept secret behind bars and buried in cemeteries, will become known and their shameful deeds will be revealed in their utter ugliness to the entire world." [30] This will be the central theme of Herzen's magazine throughout its life span. "If we listen carefully to public opinion," wrote an anonymous contributor to the first issue, "we hear one demand: glasnost. If you read the underground literature, we come across the same demand: glasnost. Now every fact points out that the only way to fight today's evil is glasnost. . . . The choice is between these two options: cruelty and glasnost. . . ." [31]

Herzen's own belief in the power of glasnost and enlightenment remained unshaken throughout his life, but his hope to see liberal ideas triumph in his lifetime gradually faded away. He was also profoundly disaffected with the West and its bourgeois culture -- *meshchanstvo*, as the Russians would call it contemptuously. All of Europe , in his estimation, split into two competing and equally philistine camps: "[O]n the one hand, there

are philistine-proprietors anxious to hold on to their monopolies, on the other -- propertyless philistines (*meshchane*), which strain to dispossess their counterparts but do not have enough strength. That is to say, greed on the one side, envy on the other." [32] So, there seemed to be little hope for a rational, humane community anywhere in the world. As his hopes waned, Herzen grew ironic, wistful, and sarcastic, as so many of his Russian contemporaries who had placed stock in reason only to discover that reality refused to submit to its dictates. Herzen's irritability and unhappiness was exacerbated by personal misfortunes and family problems, as well as generational shifts. The new crop of Russian intellectuals found him too liberal and conciliatory. Indeed, toward the end of his life, Herzen renounced revolutionary violence as inimical to constructive social change. He did it just as the mood back home was turning more belligerent. Herzen's final judgments read as a warning to the coming generation of freedom fighters who failed to understand that "civilization by the whip, liberation by the guillotine," would spell new a tyranny: "Every cause that requires crazy, mystic, and fantastic means will in the end breed crazy consequences along with the reasonable ones. Clearly, this is not our path -- understanding and discussion are our only weapon." [33]

Herzen's social origins and considerable family fortune might have something to do with his political moderation. But for his successors who could boast neither his pedigree nor his financial resources, moderation in the fight for freedom and equality was no virtue. The new breed of intellectuals known as *raznochintsy* (literally, people from different ranks) came from diverse social and economic strata. The sons and daughters of clergy, servicemen, teachers, or gentry -- one thing all these people had in common was that they severed most of their ties with their social strata and often maintained a threadbare economic existence. It is this new crop of declassé intellectuals who came into their own in the 1850s and blossomed in the 1860s that was for the first time identified as "the Russian intelligentsia." While paying homage to their predecessors and borrowing from them some insights, the new intellectuals spurned noblemen-critics as dreamers, lost souls, or "superfluous people" [34] incapable of linking their thoughts and deeds. Pushkin was for them "not serious enough," "too much of an epicurean," "too harmonious by nature to take on life's anomalies." [35] Ivan Turgenev, another nobleman writer with liberal sensibilities and a penchant for compromise, also found himself shunned by the progressively militant intellectuals.

Vissarion Belinsky, Nikolai Dobroliubov, Nikolai Chernyshevsky, and Dmitri Pisarev are key figures who perfected an intellectual style that would

dominate high culture discourse in Russia until the early 20th century. Here are some key themes and accents that marked their discourse and gave Russian intellectual culture its unique historical flavor:

(1). A critical approach to every social event or institution that is judged from the standpoint of how it fits into the progressive historical agenda.

(2). A moral maximalism or an expectation that the *intelligenty* subordinate their private needs to public interests, treat every person according to his contribution to the liberation process, and do everything possible to hasten the arrival of a just society.

(3). A vanguardism that calls upon a few educated, conscientious, critically-minded individuals to lead the toiling masses toward the final battle against the oppressive and obsolete regime.

(4). An ideologically inspired compassion for the toiling classes and oppressed groups who suffered under the autocratic regime without being able to voice their grievances or understand what causes their pains.

(5). A programmatic commitment to political, social, and economic equality as the historically most efficient and humane form of societal existence.

(6). A readiness to resort to class violence as a necessary evil under the conditions where the reactionary state suppresses glasnost and stifles legitimate venues for social reconstruction.

(7). A split between word and deed, with the free word persecuted by the defensive authorities acquiring the status of the ultimate deed.

(8). An ironic detachment in interpersonal relations and sarcastic attitude toward all authorities, which highlighted the gap between the official roles that the Russian intellectuals had to play in public and the ideal selves they aspired to be.

(9). A principled opposition to bourgeois culture or *meshchanstvo* in all its manifestations found in contemporary family life, relations between friends, artistic tastes, etc.

(10). An exalted vision of art and literature as a powerful medium for shaping public opinion and communicating to the masses socialist ideals

and ideologically sound attitudes toward the extant society.

This list is not exhaustive; a particular stylistic feature could be present or absent in any given individual; but somewhere at the intersection of these discursive traits emerged the 19th century intelligentsia's creed. The change in the Russian intellectual style could be gleaned from Dobroliubov's celebrated dictum:

[T]he mass of people who 'think that they are above the present reality' is swelling year by year; perhaps, everybody will soon outgrow this reality. [But] what we need now are not people who would 'raise us above reality' but who would raise -- or teach us how to raise -- the very reality to the level of the rational demands we make. In a word, we need people of action and not just those withdrawn, epicurean, bent on theorizing individuals. [36]

There was no consensus at the time, or for that matter at any other point in Russian history, as to how reality could be brought in line with reason. But the notion that political means alone might not suffice in bringing about an emancipated society sank roots at this historical juncture. Take Vissarion Belinsky, an iconic figure among the Russian *intelligenty*. He started as a moderately conservative idealist, gradually moved toward left Hegelianism with its maxim -- What is rational must be made actual, then fell under the spell of Saint Simonism, and finally declared himself a social radical. "The entire public foundation of our age requires a painstaking review and radical perestroika," wrote Belinsky in 1840, and this necessitates violence as a tool for social engineering: "It is ridiculous to believe that [social change] could happen by itself, in a timely fashion, without violent uprisings and bloodshed. People are so stupid that they must be lead to happiness by force. . . . I am beginning to love mankind according to Marat: to make the least part of it happy I seem to be ready to destroy the rest of it with fire and sword." [37]

One should resist the temptation of reading too much into such inflammatory rhetoric (Belinsky was no more bloodthirsty than the young Pushkin). It must be judged against the backdrop of Nicholas I's suffocating empire where every independent thought was met with police crackdown, every free spirit faced ostracism and repression. To be sure, Belinsky was exaggerating when he wrote, "I am mortified by this spectacle of a society in which leading roles are given to scoundrels and perfect mediocrities, while everything noble and talented is hauled away to rot on an uninhabited island," [38] but he was no malicious slanderer, and he certainly expressed an opinion current among his educated

contemporaries. We should also balance the intelligentsia's radical declarations with its commitment to glasnost, art, and literature as vital to social progress -- the commitment shared by nearly all Russian intellectuals, even those strenuously opposed to violence, up until the late 1980's. "For us, the Russians," wrote Chernyshevsky, "literature and poetry have a tremendous importance that is not matched anywhere in the world. . . ." [39] The significance that the intelligentsy assigned to literature in the 1850's and 60's was far greater than the role they reserved for violence.

For the public, literature is not something that makes it forget life's worries, not a sweet daydreaming in comfortable chairs after a fat meal -- no, from the standpoint of the public, literature is *res publica*, a public cause, a great deed, the source of moral joy and exaltation. . . . Where there is a public, the writing has national content. . . . Where there is a public, there is public opinion. [40]

The mid-19th century intelligentsia's contribution to the cause of freedom was mostly through literary criticism, which was just about the only semi-legitimate (censorship remained strict throughout the 19th century) form of critical discourse possible at the time. It is through a painstaking, sometimes forced, occasionally brilliant critique of literary works, theater performances, music events, painting exhibits, etc., that the Russian public learned how to glean the *Zeitgeist* in artist's work. Through the eyes of Belinsky, Dobroliubov, Chernyshevsky, and Pisarev, many loyal Russians came to see corrupt state officials brought to life by Gogol's satirical imagination, to empathize with the yearnings of superfluous people like Lermontov's Pechorin and Ostrovsky's Oblomov, to discern the new hard-edged intellectuals exemplified by Turgenev's Bazarov or Chernyshevsky's Rakhmetov. The last type is particularly interesting, for it embodied the qualities that Russian intellectuals valued in themselves. "Rakhmetov can do without what is called personal happiness," wrote Pisarev about a revolutionary hero pictured in Chernyshevsky's novel "What is to be Done"; "he has no need to refresh his strength through a woman's love, pleasant music, Shakespearian play, or a festive supper with good friends. He has one weakness: a good cigar which he needs to clear his thoughts. But even this pleasure is but a means for him: he smokes not because he enjoys smoking but because smoking stimulates his mental activity." [41] What is remarkable about such statements that proliferated in this era is their cultivated ascetism and emotional self-repression. There seemed to be no room left for private feelings in the Russian intelligentsia's moral calculus; a person was not to be judged on any other basis than his ideological convictions. We already saw a hint of

this antipersonalism in Chaadaev (though not in Pushkin, the quintessential humanist!) who urged that the individual was but an "abstraction" and "ephemeral insect" devoid of significance apart from his preassigned place in the world historical drama. One senses even a greater stringency in the self-imposed rigors of the intelligentsia. "The death of the particular for the sake of the universal -- such is the universal law," intoned Belinsky. "From now on, man is nothing for me; man's beliefs are everything. Conviction is the only thing that can unite me with people or turn me away from them." [42]

You need not be a psychiatrist to suspect that such vociferous opposition to the private sphere and personal pleasures had something to do with the profound emotional disturbances hobbling Russian intellectuals. This emotional rigorism could be traced in part to the hiatus between the harsh realities spawned by quasi-modern Russia and intellectuals' longing for illusive Western liberties, between the communal bliss promised by socialist theories and the punishing discipline imposed on recalcitrant individuals by the Tsarist regime. Hence, the moralism, defensiveness, self-loathing, and sarcasm directed toward everyone and everything working for the status quo.

I find Herzen's testimony especially moving here. His passion for justice never throttled his instinct for truth, his demanding attitude toward others did not blind him to his personal shortcomings. His humanism is nowhere more evident than in his brutally honest self-indictment where he ruminates on the price he and his loved ones had to pay for his endless struggles and sacrifices.

We were born to destroy, our business was to weed and tear down, and for that purpose [we had to] negate and ironize -- but even now, after we struck fifteen-twenty blows, we see that we built nothing, that we educated nobody. The consequence -- or to put it bluntly -- punishment -- can be seen in people surrounding us, in the relations inside our families - - and most of all, in our children. [43]

Herzen's self-irony would be carried out by his successors into stinging sarcasm and intolerance toward anyone who did not share their convictions. Herzen spotted this personal style in the Russian intellectuals who visited him abroad, such as Engelson and Nechaev, as well as his fellow immigrant, Mikhail Bakunin. Here is his take on the Petrashevtsy, a socialist circle busted by the Russian secret police in 1849:

This circle included people who were young, gifted, extremely clever and



educated, but also irritable, sickly, and broken. . . . Young emotions, bright and cheerful in their origins, were pushed inside and replaced with pride and jealous competitiveness. . . . They did not know what happiness was, did not care to nurture it. Under the mildest pretext they struck back ruthlessly and treated the people closest to them rudely. They did as much damage and spoiled as many things with their irony as Germans did with their sugary sentimentality." [44]

Needless to say, not all intelligenty personalized such qualities. Still, there is enough evidence to be gleaned from their diaries, correspondence, and writings to corroborate Herzen's testimony. [45] Bred into their bones and calcified there, the rage against autocracy drove the *intelligenty* toward endless self-sacrifices and martyrdom, but it also disfigured their personal lives, cost happiness to their loved ones, and left a trail of bitterness in its wake that no hope for a better future could erase.

### **Soul-Searching and Self-criticism Among Intellectuals**

By the time the 1860s came to a close, Russian intellectual culture acquired its familiar traits and every educated person aspiring to be *anintelligent* started feeling its powerful pull. There was still the question to be answered as to how Russian reality could be brought in line with perceived historical demands. The *intelligenty* offered to lead the way, but who would heed the call? According to one Decembrist, "a party of masked men" pouncing on the regal cortege would suffice to set Russia on its modern path. But as Mikhail Lunin (the memorable phrase was his) and the Decembrists learned, remonstrating on the Senate plaza was not nearly enough.

Then came the familiar saw: the toiling masses -- the people -- must be roused and turned loose against their oppressors. In the 1870s, the young populists took to the countryside where they tried to persuade the peasants that their conditions were much too harsh and that they ought to rise and make their voice heard. The people were to be led by "the critically thinking personality that understood itself as a possible and necessary agent of human progress." [46] The populist campaign was the first concerted attempt to foment revolution in Russia. Alas, it failed even more ignominiously than the Decembrists' reckless gamble. The masses did not know what to make of the populists' clamorous agitation. Rebelling against the Tsar, the protector of Russian Orthodox Church, seemed to many blasphemous. No wonder that some populists were turned in to the police by the very people they swore to liberate. A handful of intellectuals were executed, many ended up in jails or in Siberian exile, feeding an

image -- popular or sinister depending on one's bias -- of a young freedom fighter/nihilist sacrificing his life in the struggle for people's happiness.

Disgusted with such political turpitude and embittered by the secret police's brutal response to their propaganda, the *intelligenty* sought to regroup. Some hot heads gave up on spreading the word altogether and resorted to propaganda by deed: bombing the royal family, assassinating state officials, sabotaging official institutions. Dmitri Karakozov's unsuccessful attempt to assassinate Alexander II in 1866 opened up a new chapter in the intelligentsia's struggle with Russian Tsarism. However, by the time the splintering populist organization, the "people's will," managed to track and assassinate Alexander II, the public mood in Russia swung to the right.

As we saw earlier, intellectual culture in Russia received an impetus from Peter the Great's crash campaign to Westernize Russian society. Radical *intelligenty* were very well aware of this connection. According to Chernyshevsky, it is the task for a critically-minded intellectual, artist or writer "to facilitate in every way possible Peter the Great's cause." [47] Yet, just as the Westernizers lurched toward socialism and materialism via left Hegelianism, another faction -- the Slavophiles -- unfurled their banners heralding Russia's cultural superiority and its unique path among the European nations. Aleksei Khomiakov, Ivan Kireevsky, Fedor Tiutchev, Ivan and Konstantin Aksakov belonged to this influential group whose members saw the country's past as laden with religious archetypes bearing good tidings for Russia's future. What the Westernizers considered to be signs of backwardness -- weak legal state, abridged personal freedom, rudimentary market, constricted property relations -- the Slavophiles hailed as the country's traditional strength in which every Russian should take pride. To the Western preoccupation with the law, the Slavophiles juxtaposed the Russian concern for the ethically guided action; the Russian peasants' preference for communal living, they argued, was loftier than European individualism inspired by arrogant humanism; the aversion to private property and competition underscored the Russian peasants' immunity to bourgeois culture. Even the obedience to the Tsar and his servants' harsh orders revealed the loyalty and patience of Russia's long-suffering people. This patriotic exegesis that envisioned Russian culture as a cut above any Western European model was vividly rendered in Leo Tolstoy's novel *War and Peace*. [48] There was a message for the intelligentsia in these Slavophile musings: stop imitating the West, cease leading Russia into the abyss, learn from the Russian people. As Konstantin Leontiev, a staunch conservative and a

dye-in-the-wool Slavophile put it, "[H]e who understands how vitally important the cultural, national style is for our state, what a saving grace it could be for the Slavs to shed the mental yoke of Europe, must wish not to enhance the intelligentsia's impact on the simple folk, but quite to the contrary -- he must look for the best and easiest ways to emulate the muzhik." [49]

The Slavophiles's nationalism was laced with irony, for the 19th century Russian patriots owed as big a debt of gratitude to European thought as did Westernizers. Slavophilism was propelled into being by the romantic reaction to the French revolution as exemplified by Joseph de Maistre (he lived in Russia for a while and his words and writings enjoyed considerable influence here) and it was especially indebted to the latter Shelling. This eminent German philosopher spurned the Enlightenment and rationalism, elevated the mystical and irrational intuition as the surest way to discern divine will, and enjoined each Folk to carry out God's commandments in its own inimitable fashion. Still, it should be stressed that, unlike their ultra-conservative followers, the original Slavophiles did not deny other nations their special place in world history and urged their countrymen to appreciate other people's customs. The point was to find a proper balance between the national and the world historical:

[T]he advocates of Western Europe tout exclusively the European national form [*narodnost*] which they endow with world historical significance and in the name of which they deprive the Russian people the right to the universally human [*obshchechelovecheskoe*]. . . . But who said that the national view [*narodnoe vozzrenie*] rules out the universal human view? Quite to the contrary. We say English literature, French literature, German literature, Greek literature, and that does not bother us. . . . Why not grant the same right to the Russians? . . . To deny the Russian people the right to its own national view is to hold them back from partaking in the world historical cause. [50]

A great Russian writer, Fedor Dostoyevsky, articulated a similar view in his famous "Pushkin speech" in which he tried to reconcile the Westernizers and Slavophiles. The speech was given on June 8, 1880 , in connection with the dedication of a monument to Pushkin. [51] It belongs to the venerable Russian tradition, still very much alive, that seeks to fathom Pushkin's legacy for the present time, i.e., to decipher the cultural/political message to posterity embedded in Pushkin's literary corpus. In Dostoyevsky's exegesis, Pushkin went through three stages in his career: (1) the wandering period, where he acted and wrote as a typical Russian intellectual seeking to escape oppressive Russian

institutions and find solace in a foreign tradition; (2) the nativist period, where a mature Pushkin discovered that peace is not to be found outside the country's borders but in Russian popular culture, in its rich heritage of fairy tales, cultural masterpieces, and the imperial glory secured for the nation by Peter the Great and his successors; (3) the synthetic period, where wise Pushkin summoned his genius to fuse the native tradition with the cultural riches of other nations. In his talk, Dostoyevsky warned the intelligentsia ("the Russian wanderers") that it must reclaim its national roots or risk becoming an albatross around the country's neck. "Humble yourself, proud man; first and foremost break your pride. Humble yourself, idle man; first and foremost come and toil on your homeland's soil." [52] Countering the rising tide of political violence, Dostoyevsky deployed his celebrated argument against cruel means as inimical to genuine social reconstruction:

Let's try to imagine that you are erecting a building that in the end would secure happiness for the entire human race, would guarantee people peace and security at last. Imagine, also, that for that purpose you have to torture to death just one human being -- maybe even not a very good person, the one who might appear down right ridiculous to some. . . . Would you consent to be an architect in such an undertaking and remain forever happy . . . if in the foundation of the building there is the suffering of just one, even if only the pettiest, being ruthlessly and unjustly tortured to death? [53]

What makes the Russians different and what Pushkin's genius revealed beyond reasonable doubt, according to Dostoyevsky, was that his countrymen were endowed with the rare ability to empathize with the pain and suffering of the entire humanity:

Yes, the calling of the Russian person is undoubtedly all-European and universal. . . . Oh, European nations -- they do not even know how they are dear to us! I believe that in the future we, or rather our successors, future Russian people, will understand to the last person that to be a true Russian means this: to strive to bring about a final reconciliation of European contradictions, to alleviate the European angst in our universal and all-embracing Russian soul, to absorb [*vmestit*] in it our brethren with the brotherly love, and ultimately, perhaps to say a final word about the great universal harmony, the brotherly agreement among all tribes that live according to Christian evangelic law." [54]

The great novelist's exegesis might have been flawed (as we saw earlier, Pushkin never completely surrendered his wandering spirit), but

Dostoyevsky rightly sensed a new movement afoot in his land. Indeed, the public was ready to believe that "all our slavophilism and westernism is but one great confusion, albeit a necessary one." [55] With the radical intelligentsia losing its monopoly on high cultural discourse, the intelligentsia began to split into competing camps. Radical intellectuals included the old-style populists, anarchists, social democrats, social revolutionists, and since the early 20th century, the Bolsheviks. The liberal camp was mostly inhabited by *Zemstvo* activists who came from local administrations elected by popular vote from different social strata following Alexander II's cautious political reforms. Moderate conservatives with religious interests centered around the "Vekhi" group, whose leading representatives -- Nikolai Berdiaev, Petr Struve, and Sergei Bulgakov -- grew away from Marxism while remaining committed to personal freedom and parliamentary institutions. There was also the rightist faction, represented by Pobedonostsev, Leontiev, and their clones, which championed ultra nationalist causes and encouraged the black hundreds movement sworn to stamp out foreign influence and eradicate the left.

Any account of this period would be incomplete without mentioning Anton Chekhov, a famous playwright and short story writer. The sickly, somewhat reclusive man commanded respect from nearly all intellectual factions in Russia, even though left- and right-wing intellectuals felt uneasy about his politically noncommittal stance. Chekhov decried "partisanship and cliquishness" which dominated the contemporary cultural scene and which he found inimical to creativity and fairness: "I fear those who search between my lines in the hope to discover some tendency and pronounce me a liberal or a conservative. I am not a liberal, a conservative, a gradualist, a monk, or an indifferentist. . . . My sacred creed is human body, health, wit, talent, inspiration, love, and absolute freedom, the freedom from violence and lies whichever form the latter might take. [56] Chekhov's resentment toward the partisan intelligentsia nagging him to choose between political camps would show more of an edge with time. This is what he had to say about left-wing intellectuals a few years before he died: "I do not believe in our intelligentsia, mendacious, sanctimonious, hysterical, bad-mannered, lazy -- do not believe it even when it complains and pines away, for its oppressors come from its very depth. I believe only in separate individuals, whether they are *intelligent* or muzhiki, for they are a real force, even if a small one." [57]

The first sentence from this passage has been quoted ad infinitum and remains as popular among today's critics of Russian intelligentsia as it was early in the century. Yet, it is apt to be misinterpreted as a blanket

condemnation of all Russian intellectuals. In fact, Chekhov's views were far more differentiated and complex. His writings are filled with passages where he praises the intelligentsia's selfless work and forthright attitudes. [58] More importantly, the commentators tend to overlook that Chekhov's revolt against the intelligentsia represented a revolutionary turn toward civic virtues vital to a civilized society the Russian intellectuals professed to endorse. *Poriadochnost* and *intelligentnost* are two terms that, following Chekhov, the Russians would use to denote the new attitudes that the *intelligentny* must cultivate in themselves and display in all life's circumstances. Both words refer to a person who is trustworthy in his dealings, respects people regardless of their status, strives to do justice to an opponent's argument, displays professionalism in his work, and seeks to practice what he preaches. The *intelligentny* who embody these social qualities possess moral intelligence -- a trait by no means confined to people with educational credentials, white-collar workers, artists, etc., but widely spread throughout the population. Moral intelligence is not a badge of honor that, once awarded, could be proudly displayed on any occasion: it is a claim to be redeemed, an ongoing accomplishment, an identity that is good only until further notice. Raising oneself from the depraved conditions and becoming a morally intelligent person -- such is an ideology that Chekhov bequeathed to his countrymen, particularly those aspiring to join the ranks of the intelligentsia:

What if you write a story about a young man, son of a serf, ex-shop-keeper, a high school and college student, brought up to honor the rank, to slobber over priests' hands, to jenuflex before other people's thoughts, who gave thanks for every piece of bread he received, was whipped repeatedly, walked through wet streets in leaking shoes, engaged in fights, tormented pets, loved to dine with rich relatives, casually lied to God and people just because he felt his nothingness -- write how this young man is squeezing a slave out of himself, drop by drop, and how one glorious day he wakes up and realizes that not the slave's blood is coursing through his veins but real human blood. [59]

Chekhov's influence would be felt in many subsequent debates about the intelligentsia. A new element in these debates was the strong accent on *intelligentnost* ("moral intelligence" is the best translation I could think of here) as a trait distinguishing genuine *intelligentny*, on the intelligentsia as an ethical rather than a socio-economic category. Ivanov-Razumnik highlighted this usage in his widely read history of the Russian intelligentsia's political activism, where he censured those who "equate every 'educated' person with the representative of the intelligentsia, forgetting that no educational certificate can in and of itself turn an

'educated' person into an *intelligent*." [60] Tugan-Baranovsky meant very much the same thing when he wrote that "the term 'intelligentsia' is commonly used here to connote not so much a socio-economic as socio-moral category." [61]

Characteristically, intellectuals with disparate political agendas sought to appropriate Chekhov's legacy for their cause: those on the right quoted approvingly his harsh words about the intelligentsia, while those left of center recited his paeans to civic virtues. We can see this in two influential volumes that appeared a few years after the revolutionary upheavals of 1905-1907 shattered the Tsarist authorities' confidence and forced them into political concessions. One was published in 1909 by several religiously oriented writers under the heading *Guideposts. Essays on the Russian Intelligentsia*; the other, *The Intelligentsia in Russia*, was assembled a year later by liberals as a response to *Guideposts* (in Russian -- Vekhi).

The first opus opened up with a frontal attack on the Russian intellectual tradition. Nikolai Berdiaev used the derogative term *intelligentshchina* (rabid intellectualism) to disparage Russian intellectuals for their "cliquishness," "extreme emotionalism," "political despotism," and "artificial isolation from national life" -- the qualities that, according to Berdiaev and his colleagues, incited the bloody confrontations between workers and the authorities. [62] Petr Struve condemned radical intellectuals who breathed "arrogance and haughtiness" and showed "intolerance to dissident." Such intellectuals like to strike "the proud and offensive pose of a savior," to contrast themselves to "*obyvateli*" or down-to-earth citizens preoccupied with their daily routines; yet, their reckless agitation and aversion to work through normal political venues precipitated chaos and bloodshed. [63] The intelligentsia displayed religious fervor in its political pursuits, but its "asceticism" and "vacuous heroism" was the obverse of "patient selfless work" [*podvizhnichestvo*] expected from a devout Christian, in as much as the bellicose intellectuals paid only lip service to "the notion of people's equal worthiness, of the absolute dignity of every human personality." [64]

In a piece titled "The Ethics of Nihilism," Semen Frank endeavored to show that "The intelligentsia's entire attitude to politics, its fanaticism and intolerance, its impracticality and ineptitude in political matters, its obnoxious penchant for factional fighting, its warped sense of the state's mission -- all this flows from its monastic-religious spirit, from the fact that its political activities are undertaken not so much to carry out reforms, objectively useful in a secular sense, but to exterminate the enemies of faith and to convert by force the infidels into its own faith."

[65] Mikhail Gershenson shed light on the intelligentsia's disturbing psychological traits underscored by a sharp contrast between the intelligentsia's moralism in public affairs and unscrupulousness its members sport in private life. "The intelligentsia's everyday life is, as a whole, a terrible mess," charged Gershenson; its members show "not a trace of discipline, no effort to be consistent even in public; days are wasted God knows how, as the spirit moves you, everything is topsy-turvy; idleness, untidiness, homeric unreliability in personal affairs, naive lack of good faith in work, unbridled tendency toward despotism in politics, callous indifference to another personality; before the authorities -- sometimes proud challenge, sometimes meek compliance. . . ." [66]

The Vekhi authors had their own list of exemplary Russian thinkers -- Pushkin, Gogol, Dostoyevsky, Fet, Tiutchev -- whom they praised lavishly for their nonpartisanship, humanistic beliefs, and universal, often religious, values -- all conspicuously absent in left-wing radicals. To head off the intelligentsia's dangerous proclivities, the Vekhi writers exhorted its members to give up its obsession with politics, look deep inside their hearts, and rediscover the Christian faith from which the spirit of justice and egalitarianism so dear to socialists had originally sprung. "For all those who subscribe to this idea, which in my deep conviction, has religious roots," concluded Struve, "it must be clear that the Russian intelligentsia needs a radical perestroika of its social-economic worldview. I think that such a perestroika is already under way" [67]

A year after Vekhi, the Russian liberals brought out a volume summing up their political creed. Liberal intellectuals concurred with the Vekhi writers that the left radicals's militancy and partisanship were regrettable, particularly after the 1905-1907 upheavals and subsequent reforms opened up the political process, allowing Russian political parties to work together for socio-economic progress. But the liberals chided the Vekhi critics because the latter seemed to shun politics and disregard the historical context that exacerbated the intellectuals' mores. "[O]ne could not help meeting with disbelief and incredulity this call: be a human being, have faith, learn to love," inveighed Ivan Petrunkevich, "for the inevitable answer is: precisely because I treat and feel myself a human being in solidarity with all other human beings, I find it necessary to foster the [political] conditions without which human dignity will suffer; precisely because I love and have faith, everything that concerns my personal life recedes into the background." [68]

Dmitri Ovsianiko-Kulikovskiy noted with satisfaction the movement from the ideologically rigid ideological platforms to a more tolerant attitude



toward the opponents. "Since the [18]80s, the call toward 'nonpartisanship' [*bezpartiinnost*] was heard among the intelligentsia, though this nonpartisanship should be understood in an ideological sense - - as freedom from the demands of one or another ideology." He paid homage to Chekhov, whose stance, he insisted, did not mean the wholesale withdrawal from politics: "Among the people who advanced this slogan was Chekhov, who was immediately derided as lacking principles. Now we know that the freedom from powerful ideologies does not mean the lack of principles and is far from implying intellectual and social indifferentism. The type of an *intelligent* without a definite ideology but with definite principles and a thoughtfully chosen social and political orientation is currently becoming more and more wide-spread." [69]

Pavel Miliukov, a historian by training and head of the Constitutional Democratic party, ridiculed the extremists' belief in "panaceas, messianic doctrines, immediate and decisive role of personal sacrifice." [70] At the same time, he rejected the religious critics' spurious attempts to drive a wedge between the rootless intelligentsia and the patriotic folk, since "the appearance of the intelligentsia is the necessary preliminary condition before a nation can acquire its own self-consciousness. Self-consciousness is already a product of the consciousness-raising by the *intelligently*." [71] Miliukov pointed out that overzealous habits were forced upon the intelligentsia by oppressive political institutions which left few alternatives to the progressive forces opposed to the autocratic rule. The situation changed for the better, he went on, since the parliamentary organs began to be formed in Russia after 1905, and it would continue change in the future, as the Russian political process was funneled into more normal channels: "As its influence grows, the sectarian character of [the intelligentsia's] ideology would weaken, its content diversify, its goals become more specific, its immediate task grow more concrete, its business like qualities improve, and its public activity acquires continuity, organization, and systematicity." [72]

The liberal pragmatism seemed at odds with the the Vekhi writers' revivalist tone, but the differences between the two should not be exaggerated. Both groups acknowledged that ideological extremism disfigures those who give in to it, both emphasized the civilizing effect that the rule of law has on society, both endorsed reforms carried out through legitimate political channels and urged intellectuals to cultivate civility as a condition for civic society. The primary target audience in each case was the nascent middle class, whose entrance on the political scene was delayed by the country's autocratic tradition. Moreover, neither program really implied that the Russian intelligentsia would cease to be a

political force. Contrary to all appearances, the Vekhi authors remained squarely rooted in the Russian intellectual tradition -- witness their passion for justice, exalted view of high culture, and commitment to public discourse as a vehicle for social reconstruction. What they endeavored to do was to clean up Russian intellectual culture by ridding it of its ideological intolerance, emotional violence, and heroic grandstanding -- the points on which conservatives and liberals saw eye to eye.

Such was the era's original contribution to Russian intellectual culture. This epoch started with the Slavophiles' attack on the extreme westernism and Dostoyevsky's critique of the intelligentsia's rootlessness, it witnessed Chekhov's appeal for civility and nonpartisanship, and it ended in soul-searching by the Vekhi authors and liberal thinkers. Anton Chekhov was particularly instrumental in exposing the lack of civility among the intelligentsia, its failure to see the link between bourgeois culture and democratic institutions. By rejecting *meshchanstvo*, Russian intellectuals also rejected the civic virtues undergirding bourgeois democracy: the respect for law, private property, and the dignity of other people; the willingness to compromise and work through legitimate political channels; the cultivation of professionalism and hard work. Chekhov's ambivalent attitude toward the intelligentsia reflected the intelligentsia's own ambivalence about middle class values. Late bloomers by world historical standards, Russian intellectuals could see not only the glories of capitalist modernity but also its distempers and discontents. The intelligentsia might have been a modernizing force in Russian history, but it also wished to prolong the remnants of communitarianism hailing back to Russia's premodern past. Hence, the philippics against bourgeois philistinism, contempt for *obyvateli* and *meshchane*, dismal work habits, and the bohemian unscrupulousness in personal relations. With Chekhov, Vekhi critics, and liberal intellectuals, Russia began to inch toward psychological modernity which grounds civic society in civic virtues. After all, lasting social change must encompass both personality and institutions, whether you start with oneself or with the political system. Were it not for the Bolshevik revolution, the liberal program of fostering a middle class culture and civic society in Russia might have succeeded. Alas, liberal critics were not able to get their message across. They remained marginal in the overpoliticized world of Russian cultural politics and soon yielded to left-wing radicalism.

### **The Intelligentsia Under the Soviet Rule**

One reason the 19th century intelligentsia tried to shoulder such a heavy load of responsibilities was that it could not find an ally in its strenuous

efforts to bring political modernization to Russia . While in Europe the intellectual strata grew largely from the bourgeoisie and more or less faithfully served its needs, the Russian intelligentsia had virtually no ties to the third estate, which did not come into its own until way into the 19th century. Before the intelligentsia could liberate any class, therefore, it had to mold it into a self-conscious political entity. If the Decembrists had any claim to stake concerning class representation, it had to do with the gentry's interests. This claim, made in a rather oblique fashion, did have some historical grounds: the Decembrists were committed to liberating their estate from autocratic excesses and consolidating the gains the Russian gentry made during the reign of Catherine II. For all their republican zeal, however, the Decembrists had no intention of dismantling serfdom; they were also quite content to leave the monarchy in place.

The emancipation schemes favored by the populists were designed to benefit "the people" -- the toiling masses oppressed by the Tsarist regime. But the Russian serfs were too broad, illiterate, and dispersed a social entity to act as a self-conscious agent of historical change. Liberal intellectuals appealed primarily to the middle class, which stood to gain the most from the intended political reforms. The middle class was an increasingly assertive social stratum at the turn of the century, though its influence was confined chiefly to cities and provincial centers. Conservatives wished to preserve the present class structure or, better still, to go back to some more archaic social forms concocted by the conservative romantics' vivid imagination.

There was also a small Social Democratic party whose followers embraced the Marxist doctrine, pinning their hopes on wage labor -- the proletariat. But their claim to "representing a class" was particularly far-fetched, given that industrial workers made up barely three percent of the Russian population at the century's turn. [73] Realizing that nurturing the Russian proletariat was a long term project, moderate Social Democrats -- the *Mensheviki* -- tried to open up their party and turn it into a mainstream organization with a broad socialist appeal. The party's radical wing, the *Bolsheviki*, remained committed to the communist dogma that envisioned the proletariat seizing power and freeing the country from the parasite classes exploiting wage laborers. A thankless task of raising the workers' class consciousness fell into the lap of educated party members. The latter went about their business in much the same way as their populist predecessors, relying primarily on propaganda and agitation, but also making a concerted effort to set up a party organization, train professional revolutionaries, and utilize clandestine publications.

From the start, the Bolsheviks' feelings about the intelligentsia were drenched with ambivalence. Vladimir Lenin and his followers understood all too well that an educated elite had to rouse and lead the masses to the barricades. They also acknowledged their debt to the great tradition of Russia's radical democrats. At the same time, the Bolsheviks went out of their way to distinguish themselves from both populist intellectuals, whose program they found unsuitable for the industrial age, and liberal thinkers, whose middle class instincts and preference for discursive means were unmistakably bourgeois. As Leon Trotsky (a Menshevik who later joined the Bolshevik faction) noted in his early piece about the intelligentsia, Russia lacked well organized socio-economic groups, and that compelled radical intellectuals to act as a "class substitute" and to invest much time in training progressive classes for their final assault on the autocratic state. "However great the intelligentsia's role might have been in the past," Trotsky pointed out, "it will occupy a dependent and subordinate place in the future." [74] Thus, the Bolsheviks declined to count themselves among the ranks of the mainstream intelligentsia. They saw their party as the vanguard of the working class and reserved no special political role for the intelligentsia in a future socialist society where intellectuals would simply become a service group distinguished by its education and occupational status.

While in opposition, the Bolsheviks listed among their political demands basic civil liberties. They reasserted their commitment to glasnost after the revolution toppled the Tsarist regime in February 1917, using newfangled political institutions to buttress their public image as a radically democratic force. Sometime in the Summer of 1917 state institutions began to collapse, and on October 26, 1917, the Bolsheviks seized power. Almost immediately, they ordered the closure of hostile publishing outlets, starting with the conservative press, then spread the ban to liberal newspapers, and eventually disallowed any publications that refused to bow to the Bolshevik dictate. [75] The October revolution (critics would call it a "putsch"), dealt a major setback to the hopes for democratic reform the Russian intelligentsia had nurtured for decades.

Nothing could have done more to unite the faction-ridden Russian intellectuals, who were willing to tone down their differences in order to express their collective dismay at such a flagrant attempt to suppress glasnost. Zinaida Gippius was right when she claimed that the intelligentsia was "solidly anti-bolshevik at the time" and that "the exceptions were very few." [76] Virtually all nongovernment newspapers attacked the Bolsheviks, demanding the restoration of glasnost. The nation's leading intellectuals wrote personal letters to the Bolshevik

authorities pleading with them to change their misguided course and set free the citizens arrested on trumped-up ideological charges (correspondence between the writer Vladimir Korolenko and Anatoly Lunacharsky, head of the Department of Education, is a fine example of this genre). Even some intellectuals close to Lenin felt startled by his reckless grab for power. Maxim Gorky, an important writer and a well-known public figure with links to the Bolsheviks, waged a losing battle against the new regime on the pages of his newspaper "New Life." "Lenin, Trotsky and their cronies have already been poisoned by power," wrote Gorky on November 7, 1917 ; "witness their shameful attitude toward the freedom of speech, personality, and the sum total of rights for which democracy fought for a long time." [77] Rather than mobilizing the national intellectual resources, charged Gorky , the Bolsheviks declared war on the intelligentsia. Not only were intellectuals losing their livelihood and their rights -- they were also terrorized by the armed workers pitted against the middle classes by the unscrupulous communists. "Something urgent needs to be done, we have to stop the process that leaves the intelligentsia physically and spiritually exhausted; it is time to realize that it is the nation's brain and that it was never more needed than today." [78]

Needless to say, Gorky 's newspaper was closed. To this tirade, Lenin answered with a well-known quip about those "pathetic *intelligent*y, the lackeys of capitalism who pride themselves on being the nation's brain. In fact, they are not the brain but shit." [79] This motto summed up the views on the recalcitrant intelligentsia held by the Bolsheviks during this period. There were concerted efforts to engage intellectuals with valuable technical skills (military officers, railroad engineers, doctors, etc.) in state's sponsored programs, but those with a liberal arts education and/or hostile worldview were considered to be a drag on the economy and a dangerous fifth column that must be neutralized before the disgruntled intellectuals regroup and start fomenting an opposition. After a brief respite that the communist government gave to the nation in the hope of restoring its economic health, the Bolsheviks renewed their attack on the intelligentsia. In the Spring of 1922, Lenin ordered massive arrests among the Bolsheviks' one time allies, the Mensheviks. Some were deported to Russia 's Far East , some sent into a permanent exile abroad. The Social Revolutionists met with the same fate in the Fall of 1922. The world was startled when in August of 1922 the Bolsheviks put the nation's leading philosophers on a ship (it would become known as the "philosophical ship") and sent them into exile in the West, with the promise to shoot every person who would dare to come back. [80] The newspaper Pravda printed an article on August 31, 1922 , to mark the occasion, bearing an

eloquent title: "The First Warning." About the same time, Felix Dzerzhinsky, the feared head of the secret police, dispatched a directive to his deputy: "Information must be gathered by all departments and funnelled into the department of intelligentsia. For every *intelligent* there must be a file. . . . Also, we must keep an eye on all literature in our jurisdiction." [81]

To assert strict control over brainworkers, to separate the politically reliable from the unreliable intellectuals, to instill communist ideology in the professional cadres, and to raise the new generation of the proletarian intelligentsia -- such were the key elements in the Communist party policy in regard to the intelligentsia. [82] "We need the intelligentsia cadres that are ideologically trained in a certain way," wrote Nikolai Bukharin, a leading communist intellectual at the time. "Yes, we shall mold *intelligenty*, we shall manufacture them as if on the assembly line." [83] Countering the charge that the Bolsheviks betrayed the intelligentsia's emancipatory ideals, Lunacharsky wrote that you "cannot expel Bolshevik- *intelligenty* from the intelligentsia and cross out the great role it played in the history of this 'order.'" [84] But he also noted cynically, "The more lacking in ideas the person is today, the more valuable he is. That is to say, if a technical specialist [*spets*], say, some engineer, has many ideas, it is worse, for these ideas distract a person from his work. But when he has no ideas, we could let him work right away. . . ." [85] The Bolsheviks were setting up a social machine where every cog and spindle was to serve its function, with the intellectuals doing its job as social technicians under the close supervision of the Communist party's social engineers.

Not all intellectuals immediately rejected the Bolshevik takeover. Some felt that the new regime deserved a chance, that it had to act swiftly to fend off the reactionaries, that civil rights would be restored once the emergency situation eases up. As usual, Russian writers lead the way. Vladimir Mayakovsky, Alexander Block, Valery Briusov, Sergei Esenin, Nikolai Kliuev, Boris Pilniak, Isaak Babel and several other prominent literary figures threw their lot with the Bolsheviks. Poet Briusov became a censor. Mayakovsky prided himself on dedicating his muse to the proletarian cause. Esenin and Kliuev hailed the revolutionary whirlwind that stirred the hitherto inert peasant masses into political action. [86] Pilniak and Babel wrote novels glorifying the Soviet power's early years. Particularly intriguing was the case of Alexander Block, Russia 's premier symbolist poet. Block greeted the October revolution with an article titled "Can the Intelligentsia Work with the Bolsheviks?" His answer: "It can and it ought to [for] the intelligentsia hears the same

music as the Bolsheviks. The intelligentsia has always been revolutionary. The Bolshevik decrees are the symbols of the intelligentsia. [The latter's] bitter feelings about the Bolsheviks are a surface phenomenon, and they are beginning to pass away." [87]

Block's clumsy attempt to justify the October revolt by invoking poetic symbols of "chaos," "storm," and "rebellion" supposedly shared by the revolutionaries and creative intelligentsia provoked a fierce rebuttal from the old school thinkers who accused him of kowtowing to the Bolsheviks, thumbing his nose at the rule of law, and betraying innocent victims sacrificed to the revolutionary cause. Ilya Erenburg reminded Block in his article "The Intelligentsia and Revolution" that violent means compromise sound ends and that the lofty slogans deployed by the Bolsheviks could be just a cover-up for their ruthless drive to power. Every time I hear slogans like "peace" and "brotherhood," intimated Erenburg, I could not help wondering if "they are about to start shooting," "if I am going to be killed." [88]

Block penned a few more articles on revolution and the intelligentsia and gathered them in a separate volume bearing the same title, but his enthusiasm for the new regime ebbed as the Bolsheviks stepped up the arrests and expulsions of intellectuals. In his last public speech, he suddenly changed his tune and reverted to time-honored Russian symbols. The occasion could not have been more portentous -- the literary gathering commemorating Pushkin's death. Block quoted Pushkin extensively, citing the famous lines from the 1836 verse where the poet intimates his subversive wish "for no livery/to bend my neck, my conscience, my beliefs." Also recited were Pushkin's paeans to "a secret freedom" that would take a new meaning for several generations of intellectuals forced to live under the Soviet rule:

Love and a secret freedom were my beacon,  
They taught the heart its simple tune,  
To all chicanery my voice was immune,  
As people's judgment it steadfastly echoed. [89]

Block ended his speech with a thinly veiled warning to the powers never to meddle with the poet's secret freedom. "Let bureaucrats face scorn if they wish to guide poetry into some authorized channels, if they violate its secret freedom and try to mess up with its mystic destiny." [90] Soon afterwards, Block's health took a turn to the worse. He applied for an exist visa to go abroad for medical treatment, but it was denied. After prominent Bolsheviks pleaded his case before the authorities, the

Politburo, the Communist party's ruling organ, reversed its earlier decision, but it was too late. Wilting away in matters of months (doctors were never sure what ailed him), he died at the age of 41, a few days before the state finally issued him an exit visa. The prophetic words he voiced in his last public speech served as a poet's own epitaph: "It wasn't the bullet of Dantes that killed Pushkin. He died because there was no more air to breath." [91]

Block's fate was not unique among the intellectuals who frowned at the liberal government brought to power in February of 1917 and sided with the Bolsheviks after they took over the reins, either out of conviction or just to see a steadier hand at the helm. Esenin and Mayakovsky committed suicide. Kliuev, Pilniak, and Babel died in Stalin's concentration camps along with countless communist sympathizers and fellow travellers. Even the Communist party intellectuals who pledged to weed out the bourgeois intelligentsia and replace it with proletarian seedlings discovered that they were not immune to the anti-intellectualist forces they had set in motion. Bukharin, Radek, Piatakov, Zinoviev, Kamenev, Rykov, Rakovsky and many others who belonged to the Bolshevik braintrust perished in Stalin's purges. Lunacharsky died from natural causes, but only because he did not live long enough to see the mass purges. Thanks to his expulsion from the country, Trotsky managed to survive longer: he was murdered on Stalin's order in Mexico , in 1940. The purges came in waves, decimating all classes in Soviet society, but the hardest hit, in relative terms, was the intelligentsia.

Not held in high esteem by Lenin and his comrades, Joseph Stalin went to unimaginable lengths to settle scores with everybody who had ever had the misfortune to doubt his intellect and moral intelligence. In the mid-30s, he unleashed an unprecedented campaign against the party brass, setting cadres with working class backgrounds against old time party theoreticians. [92] By far the most sensational public trial staged by Stalin's henchmen was directed against the so-called Rightists-Trotskyites Block, featuring as a star defendant Nikolai Bukharin, once designated by Lenin as the party's leading intellectual. As you read the ridiculous charges levelled against the defendants, hear the obsequious praise they heaped on Stalin, and recoil at the way they abased themselves hoping to save their own and their relatives' lives, you realize that the absence of glasnost is not the worst thing an intellectual could face. Although Bukharin found courage to deny some of the charges brought against him, he confessed to monstrous crimes he had never committed:

I admit that I am guilty of treason to the Socialist fatherland, the most



heinous of possible crimes, of the organization of kulak uprisings, of preparations for terrorist acts and of belonging to an underground, anti-Soviet organization. . . . The severest sentence would be justified, because a man deserves to be shot ten times over for such crimes. . . . I am kneeling before the country, before the Party, before the whole people. The monstrosity of my crimes is immeasurable especially in the new stage of the struggle of the U.S.S.R. [93]

This was the last public statement Bukharin would ever make. He knew that his life was about to end. Yet, he was praising his mortal enemy ("in reality the whole country stands behind Stalin; he is the hope of the world; he is a creator" [94] ), just because there was still a glimmer of hope -- not to save himself but to save his loved ones held hostage by Stalin. *Golos, glas, glasnost* -- the root morpheme is always voice, an ability to utter, make sense, express oneself. It is this God's gift that Lenin and Stalin took away from their people. Worse than that, Stalin made them say things they did not mean, things they found repugnant. The voicelessness enforced by the autocratic Tsars seemed like a bliss compared to the perverse glasnost of the Stalin's reign:

People gifted with a voice faced the worst possible torture: their tongue was ripped out and with the bloody stump they had to praise their master. The desire to live was irrepressible, and it coerced people into this form of self-annihilation, just to extend one's physiological existence. The survivors turned out to be as dead as those who actually died. [95]

These words belong to Nadezhda Mandelstam, the widow of Osip Mandelstam, arguably the greatest 20th century Russian poet, who perished in Stalin's concentration camps. Nadezhda Mandelstam's memoirs are among the most rivetting accounts documenting the intelligentsia's subterranean existence in this macabre age. She wrote about the Russian intelligentsia who was brought up to revere the spoken word, who saw major strides made toward free expression, and whose members woke up one day in a different country, where the free word became a capital offence. While some intellectuals publicly attacked the revolutionary decrees curtailing glasnost, other chose to lay low in the hopes that the Bolshevik rule would not last. In the end, they all were condemned for their negative attitudes which earned the intelligentsia the reputation as a reactionary force in the eyes of the new authorities. And since the state quickly asserted its monopoly over employment, intellectuals had little choice but to cooperate with the regime.

"Is there anybody among us," wrote Zinaida Gippius, another survivor

from this era, "the most farsighted and incorruptible person imaginable, who is not haunted by the memories of the compromises we were forced to make in the St. Petersburg's captivity, who did not plead with Gorky for something or other or ate stale bread from the enemies palms? I know the taste of such bread, of this damn ration, as well as the feel of Soviet money in my hands. . . ." [96] The Soviet government had no intention to make the intellectual's ideological capitulation easy. It did not spare efforts to intimidate the intellectuals, to show them who was the boss, drumming into their heads the conditions of surrender for which they would be rewarded according to the sincerity of their remorse and the willingness to inform on their brethren still persisting in their obstinate ways. Most chose to compromise not out of conviction but out of necessity, citing the survival instinct, the need to protect children. "Theoretically, I know that one should not compromise, but how could I urge somebody to throw caution to the wind and not to compromise, to forget about your children. To all my friends I counsel -- compromise," wrote Nadezhda Mandelstam. "There is one more thing I can add: do not bring children into this monstrous world." [97]

Writers and artists found it particularly hard to silence the voice of their conscience. "I do not harbor hatred to anybody -- that is my 'precise ideology,'" wrote Mikhail Zoshchenko in 1921. [98] These words would be dredged up twenty five years later by Yury Zhdanov, a party hack in charge of Soviet art and ideology, who publicly humiliated the writer for his conciliatory stance and counterrevolutionary sentiments. When Yuri Olesha talked about the psychological difficulties that intellectuals faced adjusting to the new regime, he became a synonym of "*gnilaia* [rotten] intelligentsia" and subjected to endless derisions as an ideologically unstable element (Ilf and Petrov's fictional *intelligent* Vasily Lokhankin had some traits reminiscent of Olesha). "I seize my own self, reach out to strangle that part of myself which suddenly balks and stirs its way back to the old days," wrote Olesha; "I wish to stifle that second 'self,' and the third self, and every 'self' which come to haunt me from the past." [99] Vladimir Mayakovsky described his arduous labor of fitting an old self into the procrustean bed of Soviet ideology as "Stepping on your own song's throat." His own labor continued until the moment when he finally sent a bullet through his head. Something broke inside him, some wayward self escaped from the dungeon, an old song he was trying to strangle burst out and momentarily deafened his ideological sensibilities. Maxim Gorky did not have to do his penance in public, for he was too much revered by the Bolsheviks as the first proletarian writer, but when he yielded to the tempting invitations and returned to Russia from his exile in Italy, he found himself increasingly isolated, mistrusted, and

ignored. Soon after his son was murdered by the NKVD, Gorky died under mysterious circumstances. But not before he paid his tribute to the glories of the Stalinist system as the founder of the "socialist realism" in literature and the chief "engineer of human souls."

The Bolsheviks stopped exiling their enemies abroad in the early 20s, though a handful found their way to the West in the mid-20s. About the same time, the officially sponsored trips abroad by Soviet citizens were drastically curtailed (Mayakovsky committed suicide soon after he lost his travelling privileges when the authorities began to suspect his loyalty). Those who missed the last train or did not wish to taste the stale bread of emigration, were forced to collaborate with the regime. As time wore on, everyone felt the psychological pressure to reconcile one's actions loyal to the regime with heartfelt beliefs. Some time in the early 30s, poet Boris Pasternak acknowledged that the Soviet power was well entrenched, that the Russian people seemed to have sided with the communists, and that it was time for writers to accept the inevitable. [100] Osip Mandelstam, who worked for various Soviet publications, called himself "a Bolshevik without a party card." [101] Mikhail Bulgakov assured the NKVD, a KGB precursor, that he considered the Soviet regime "extremely stable," that he "sunk strong roots in Soviet Russia," and that he could "not imagine himself as a writer outside" his homeland. [102] Marina Zvetaeva, who returned to the Soviet Union after 17 years in emigration, had to swear her political correctness and the loyalty of her husband arrested by the NKVD soon after his return ("[My husband] served his homeland and the communist idea with his soul and body, word and deed.") [103] Anna Akhmatova, whose husband, poet Nikolai Gumilev, was executed by the Bolsheviks and her son languished in the Gulag, had to repent in public after being vilified for writing apolitical, decadent verses. Mikhail Zoshchenko contributed to Lenin's hagiography with his stories and visited the infamous Baltic-White Sea channel project where political prisoners were used as slave laborers. Yuri Olesha penned essays about the happy family of Soviet people and took part in the campaign against the composer Dmitri Shostakovich. And these were the best and the brightest, individuals whose personal courage, indomitable spirit, and creative accomplishments would be an inspiration for generations to come.

To be sure, the above mentioned artists and intellectuals did their penance under duress, trying to protect themselves and save their relatives' lives. Their loyalty oaths are to be taken with a bucket of salt. But it would be a mistake to dismiss their conversion experiences as nothing else but protective mimicry, strategically deployed by hunted intellectuals. "Mandelstam," wrote his widow, "always tried to make up his

mind freely and check his actions against reality, but even he was not an entirely free person: the noise of time, the noise of life conspired to suppress his inner voice: 'how could I be right if everybody thinks otherwise'." [104] The cognitive dissonance between one's actions and one's beliefs, exacerbated by the enforced unanimity, goaded everyone to accept what then appeared to be an objective judgment of history.

We should also resist the temptation of erecting too sharp a divide between the innocent intelligentsia bludgeoned into collaboration with the regime and the latter's faithful servants. There were many communists, state officials, and lowly bureaucrats who never completely surrendered their "secret freedom" and felt perturbed by Stalin's atrocities. We find numerous, often grudging, references in the memoirs from this era that hint at a helping hand that this or that Soviet official offered beleaguered intellectuals in times of trouble. It could be none other than Anatoly Lunacharsky, head of the Enlightenment Ministry supervising the communist education and propaganda, who bombarded the Politburo with letters demanding an exit visa for Block and helped dozens of intellectuals to leave Russia when it was still possible. Or it could be a lowly Soviet clerk arranging a ration card for a hungry writer and declining to report his angry mutterings to the secret police. "These were people who did quite well "up there" but who did not forget their old friends. Some of 'us' are still alive thanks to their efforts." [105]

Sorting out victims and predators inhabiting the Soviet zoo is not an easy task. "As very many people, and especially *intelligenty*, and especially artists, and especially writers, Yuri Olesha was this era's victim and its gardener, its prisoner and its mason." [106] Whether they were on good terms with the regime or languished on its margins, intellectuals lead a double or triple existence, thinking one thing to themselves, sounding another within an earshot of family and friends, and saying and doing something else in public. This multi-layered existence left a profound mark on the Soviet intellectual's psyche. He could pride himself on his "secret freedom," but he also knew that he was compromising with his conscience. The pattern familiar to us from the time of Pushkin and Chaadaev blossomed in the Soviet Union where doublespeak and doublethink were perfected into an art form. Just consider Mandelstam's 1934 verse bitterly renouncing Stalin and his 1937 poem where he sings praise to the tyrant. Bulgakov's novel "Master and Margarita" satirized Soviet society, but the same author wrote a play "Batum" extolling Stalin's virtues. Pasternak's "Doctor Zhivago" could not erase his verses about the nation builder, Joseph Stalin. Anna Akhmatova, a proud spirit steadfastly squelching every temptation to collaborate with the regime, wrote a poem

glorifying Soviet Russia's spectacular accomplishments. Most of these writings are unexemplary and better left unread (though Mandelshtam's 1937 Ode to Stalin is a work of rare poetic power!). [107] Some of them were written under duress (Akhmatova hoped to buy with her verses amnesty for her son). But all the writings testified to the torturous existence led by the Soviet intellectual burdened with conscience and memory.

Even in this eerie age there were certain standards of morality accepted within the intelligentsia circles. When Stalin called Pasternak and questioned him about Mandelshtam who was recently arrested by the NKVD for his anti-Stalinist verse ("Why didn't you plead for your friend?," Stalin asked Pasternak. "If my poet friend were in trouble, I would have climbed the wall to save him"), [108] Pasternak answered that he did complain about Mandelstam's arrest and that his friend should be released. No, he did not confront the tyrant; he did not tell him what a disgrace to humanity he was or put him on notice that there was a special place reserved for him in Dante's ninth circle of hell. But Anna Akhmatova and Nadezhda Mandelshtam were exactly right when they concluded in their post mortem to this conversation that, under the circumstances, Pasternak's behavior "merits a solid 'B' grade." Agonizing about one's actions in morally charged situations, evaluating and reevaluating an individual's conduct under trying circumstances, would become a sad pastime for Soviet intellectuals.

Saltykov-Shchedrin, the famous 19th century satirist, formulated a classical question facing Russian intelligentsia -- What is to be done when there is nothing you can do? As Soviet experience showed, there were things intellectuals could do to salvage their battered conscience. This is the advice Arkady Belinkov had to offer in his book about Yuri Olesha, a brilliant study indispensable for understanding the psychology of Soviet intelligentsia: "The worst thing that an intellectual could do [while working for the system], is to strive to do his base duty with distinction, better than others, to become the first student." [109] In other words, one had to do as little damage to others as possible, take only such onerous assignment that could not be evaded, and do private penance among friends for one's less than commendable deeds. Mikhail Svetlov joked: An honest person is the one who never does anything dishonest, except when he is forced to, and who is disgusted with himself every time he does a dishonest thing.

Irony, sarcasm, black humor, anecdotes parodying official symbols would become an indispensable weapon in the arsenal of the Soviet intelligentsia

struggling with inane Soviet realities. We can see them as a socio-psychological hygiene practiced by people seeking to protect their faces underneath the repugnant masks they wore in public. Irony is a clue, to himself as well as to others, that what seems to be going on is only a front not to be confused with a private self hidden beneath the official uniform. Ironic detachment is worn like a merit badge (or a stigma depending on how you look at it) that the individual uses to highlight his difference, to let an alternative spiritual reality peak through the debased ideological discourse. We have seen how this behavioral gambit was used by 19th century intellectuals to a rather mixed effect. The same technique would be used, though more as a prophylactic or survival strategy, by the Soviet intelligentsia.

Nadezhda Mandelshtam remembers the encounters she had in the early 20s with Ilya Erenburg when "he looked on everything as if he were a stranger . . . and hid himself behind ironic omniscience. He already figured out that irony was the weapon of the helpless." [110] We can find brilliant examples of irony and satire in Shklovsky's book "The Zoo," in Mikhail Bulgakov novel "Master and Margarita," in Mandelshtam's "The Forth Prose." Or in this passage from Arkady Belinkov in which he lampoons the Soviet reluctance to admit that there might be problems in this most perfect of the possible worlds:

Even in our days, though extremely rarely and only in extraordinary situations sometimes arise minor contradictions between bad artists and wonderful society. To be sure, they are resolved expeditiously, but to ignore them altogether would be a touch premature. Those minor and instantly resolvable contradictions usually arise in connection with the slight incongruity between socialist realism and realistic socialism. [111]

Such overextended official rhetorics and symbols would be immediately recognized by any Soviet intellectual as an irreverent gesture toward official Soviet ideology. But an experienced censor would also have no trouble smelling a ruse, which is why none of the just mentioned books could be published in Stalin's Russia . Written in secret and kept away from outsiders, sometimes even from family and friends, such works should be seen as surviving monuments to "secret freedom," Pushkin's and now the Soviet intellectual's last solace. As for irony, this ultimate weapon of the spiritual proletariat, it was directed mostly at the relatives, colleagues, and friends who bore the brunt of bitterness and alienation that the creative spirits suffered in the land of perverted glasnost. Memoirs from this period tell us about the price intellectuals paid for their survival, about their collective "traumatic psychosis," as Nadezhda

Mandelstam called the phenomenon, though we are already familiar with it under the name "terrible ulcer" that Chaadaev gave to it back in the 19th century. Subsumed under these terms are abnormalities encysted in a psyche that suffered intellectual abuse first hand or witnessed the ideological bloodbath from afar. A silent witness, points out Igor Kon, a sociologist who survived Stalinism, was worse off in some ways, particularly if he was young. [112] Helplessness and terror experienced by the children whose parents were declared to be "enemies of the people" induced a trauma they would not be able to shake for life. This grim legacy of political purges will remain with the Russian intelligentsia for some time to come.

The Stalinist era made few original contributions to Russian intellectual culture that were not already in place during the Tsars. Perverted glasnost was one, fear of taking an unpopular stance and going against the majority was another, plus a compulsive jocularity that masked the victim's pain. On the whole, the Stalinist only era exacerbated certain trait in Russian intellectuals culture. It gave them a grotesque, offensive form which left permanent scars on human beings thrust into the vortex of Russian history and forced to wade through hostile intellectual currents. Its legacy was apparent in the ever-widening gap between word and deed, in the perverted glasnost imposed on the population by the NKVD inquisitors, in the spiritual withdrawal by intellectuals labelled "inner emigration," in the off-putting interpersonal style aimed at debunking official realities through exaggerated irony and sarcasm, and the resultant pattern of self-loathing revealed by intellectuals alienated from society, from each other, and from their public selves. The Stalinist social technologies stifled personal voice, drove private feelings inside, installed false-consciousness in place of freely chosen convictions, and replaced the curative powers of dialogue with the numbing force of propaganda. It would take decades for Russian intellectual culture to free itself from the Stalinist legacy. This process is far from being complete; in fact, it has barely begun; but it is going on, thanks to the ideological thaw that Russia experienced after Stalin's death.

### **The Intelligentsia and the Thaw**

The first step toward sheering Russian intellectual discourse of its Stalinist diction was made not by an intellectual but by the uncouth, boorish Nikita Khrushchev, Stalin's protege and the survivor in the on-going Kremlin's struggle for power. The intelligentsia did not have a monopoly on suffering in Stalin's Russia . All social strata were equally affected, including the privileged party nomenklatura. Khrushchev had his reasons to hate Stalin;

he never forgot how "the greatest leader of all time" humiliated him by ordering this poorly coordinated man to dance Ukrainian folk dances before his laughing comrades, though that was a trifle compared to what Stalin did to his flunkies. More to the point, the political purges that affected many of Khrushchev's friends were about to consume him as well. Whether or not Stalin was poisoned by his comrades fearing for their lives, as some researchers suspect, is debatable; there could be no doubt that toward the end of his life, Stalin was a menace to every sane person in the land.

In 1956, Khrushchev gave a speech at the 20th Party Congress in which he denounced Stalin and his terrorist tactics. The speech was secret, the speaker was mainly preoccupied with the plight of innocent communists devoured by the Gulag, but its effect was felt by the entire country. In 1961, at the 22d Party Congress, Khrushchev reaffirmed his commitment to the rule of law, democratic procedures within the party, greater freedom for artists, and improving welfare of the population as a whole. "Society [that] shoved the flute down the artist's throat," [113] seemed ready to recoil from past horrors and grant its members greater leeway. Khrushchev might not have realized what he set in motion, but the seeds of glasnost he planted survived his reign, sprouted in underground intellectual bunkers, and in time, sapped the communist regime's vitality to a point when it was ready to collapse.

"It is amazing how I survived through those harrowing years," wrote Boris Pasternak soon after Stalin's death. "It is simply unbelievable what I allowed myself back then. But then my fate shaped me exactly the way I shaped my fate. I foresaw a lot and, what is most important, I could not accept a lot of things . . . I did not store enough patience [for the ordeal]. . . . My time is still far away." [114] Pasternak was right: his time would come nearly thirty years after his death. Meanwhile, he had to face the expulsion from the Soviet Writers' Union, renounce his Nobel Prize awarded to him for his novel "Doctor Zhivago," endure heart attacks precipitated by his daring decision to make his lonely voice heard. Still, the portentous fact was that Pasternak found courage not only to write a novel defying the socialist realism's canons but also to publish it abroad - something that could not have happened without Khrushchev's thaw. The vials of tears shed by those lucky enough to survive Stalin's regime nourished the new intellectual currents and helped reestablish the link between the old and the new intelligentsia.

Ever since the Bolshevik takeover, a debate was raging inside and outside Russia as to whether the old Russian intelligentsia was dead and whether



it could be brought back to life. According to Georgy Fedotov, one of the most perceptive historians to study the subject, "The intelligentsia that was decimated by the revolution has lost its meaning and could not be resuscitated." [115] Other writers disagreed, arguing that the old Russian intelligentsia might be dead but the new one, bearing a strong family resemblance to the prototype, will no doubt emerge. Fedotov himself was ambivalent in this regard; at the end of his career he called for a new "intellectual elite" that could rejuvenate Russia. [116] I leave aside the question of whether the intellectuals who called themselves *intelligenty* in post-Stalin Russia are related to the old intelligentsia. What is important is that these intellectuals took pride in calling themselves by this word commonly used as a term of derision in Stalin's time, that they were eager to trace their lineage to their illustrious predecessors and continue their emancipatory work. I cannot do any justice here to the diverse intellectual currents that sprung to life in this heady era, but I will try, using a wide brush, to paint the major ideological divides along which intellectuals arranged themselves during Khrushchev's thaw and beyond.

There were a great many intellectuals awakened by the de-Stalinization campaign who realized that the Soviet regime was an aberration. What they could not agree upon was whether socialism was the culprit or just its Stalinist incarnation. Most liberal intellectuals who chose to collaborate with the regime tried to humanize it through painstaking education designed to expose Stalinist excesses and turn the country toward democratic socialism. Andrey Sakharov, Russia's leading dissident, spoke in his path-breaking book that set him on the collision course with the authorities about "the moral attractiveness of the ideas of socialism and the glorification of labor, compared with the egotistical ideas of private ownership and the glorification of capital," leaving no doubt where his own heart was. [117] Vladimir Lakshin, a widely read Soviet critic, described in very similar terms the ideals that animated him and his colleagues at *Novy Mir*, a premier literary magazine in post-Stalin Russia : "But we believed in socialism as a noble ideal of justice, we believed in a socialism that was human through and through and not just with a human face. We regarded the democratic rights of the individual as incontestable." [118]

The key element in the program advanced by Sakharov and his liberal followers was *glasnost* and intellectual freedom, i.e., the need to bring to the open forum all political issues and the right to voice one's opinion regarding any policy matter. From the start, the intelligentsia set out to work within the legal bounds, since Khrushchev's reforms contained an implicit promise that one could criticize past mistakes and offer fresh ideas for the future. "The Democratic movement," asserted Andrey Amalrik,

"intends to operate under the rule of law and glasnost and to work for glasnost, which distinguishes it from small and big underground groups." [119] "Glasnost, honest and unabridged glasnost," insisted Solzhenitsyn, "such is the first condition of every healthy society, including ours. Whosoever does not want glasnost for our society -- is indifferent to his homeland and thinks only about himself. Those who do not wish glasnost in our society do not want to cure its ills but to drive them deeper inside where they could fester." [120]

In 1962, Novy Mir published Solzhenitsyn's powerful novel "One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovitch" in which the author, drawing on his own experience in the Gulag, wrote about a political prisoner's daily routine. Khrushchev personally approved the publication and rumors swirled about the Lenin Prize waiting for the author. But the prize went to somebody else, Khrushchev was deposed, and Leonid Brezhnev's conservative regime came to power, dashing hopes for further liberalization. This is when the ideological scales began to fall off from the intelligentsia's eyes and the Democratic movement went underground. At this very point, a rift had surfaced within the ranks of the intelligentsia, one that is still apparent today, which separated intellectuals who chose to continue working for liberalization through official channels and those who gave up on reforming the system from within.

Among those who took the second route were Andrey Amalrik, Valery Chalidze, Alexander Volpin, Petr Grigorenko, Vladimir Bukovsky, Vladimir Maximov, Natalia Gorbanevskaja, Viktor Nekrasov, and a few dozen other activists. Their program centered around human rights and the need to hold the Soviet government accountable for its deeds. The idea, that is sometimes attributed to Alexander Volpin, seemed simple and unimpeachable: the government must respect its own laws, as well as the international covenants it has signed. The point was to spotlight the cases where the state validated legal procedures and to bring the weight of public opinion to bear on the culprits: "We do not have to obey anything but the law. We must defend our laws from the abuse by the authorities. We are on the side of the law. They are against it." [121] Demonstrations ensued; signed petitions went to the top; courts where political dissidents went on trial were picketed by the Democratic movement activists who demanded glasnost in court rooms guaranteed by the Soviet law. As a result, public attention was drawn to the fact that local Soviet authorities routinely used extra-legal means against independent trade union activists, harassed religious worshipers, curtailed political prisoners' rights, violated the UN resolutions guaranteeing freedom of speech, political gatherings, and emigration. The world was not amused to learn that UN

Human Rights Charter signed by the Soviet Union was not released to its citizens.

Compelling as the idea behind it was, the Democratic movement petered out after several years of fruitful work that exposed to the world numerous abuses by the Soviet authorities. The movement's activists vastly underestimated the government's resolve to stamp out political dissent, the ruthlessness with which the KGB would clamp down on the intelligentsia. Soon after Nikita Khrushchev was deposed, the new regime put the liberals on notice that it would not tolerate open dissent. The future's chilling auguries came through loud and clear in early 1966 when the authorities staged the first political show trial in the post-Stalinist era, sending to prison Andrey Siniavsky and Yuli Daniel for publishing their works in the West without state approval. More trials followed. Some activists from the Democratic movement were imprisoned, others sent into internal exile, still others forced to emigrate.

Along side the Democratic movement, other intellectual currents were gathering momentum that advocated ethnic minorities' rights, religious freedom, artistic freedom, the freedom of emigration, and so on. Of particular note among these groups was the movement initiated by Alexander Solzhenitsyn and his close friend Igor Shefarevich. Both writers sought to revive the nationalist themes that lay fallow since the Slavophiles introduced them into public discourse, giving a special emphasis to "the traditional ancient Russian notion of *pravda* [truth] as an expression of justice that is superior to any formal law."

[122] Solzhenitsyn took issue with Sakharov's notion that intellectual freedom and human rights were key to social reconstruction in Russia:

Look farther ahead, look at the West. Surely, the West is awash in all sorts of freedoms, including intellectual freedom. Did it save it? Today we can see the West: its will paralyzed, sinking fast, oblivious of the future, its soul neurotic and enfeebled. In and of itself, intellectual freedom can not save us. . . . The absolutely necessary task [facing us] cannot be reduced to the political liberation, but to the liberation of our souls from the participation in the lies imposed on us. . . [123]

Borrowing from the Vekhi platform, Solzhenitsyn decried the Democratic movement's preoccupation with politics and scolded Russian intellectuals for neglecting their national roots. The Russian intelligentsia would have to reinvent itself, he insisted; it has to be reconstituted around "a morally intelligent core [*intelligentnoe iadro*]" that is distinguished not by its members' "scientific degrees, the number of publications, years of

schooling . . . but by the purity of their strivings, by the willingness to make a spiritual sacrifice -- for truth and most of all -- for this country where one lives." [124] Solzhenitsyn called the Russians to "national repentance" and urged his fellow citizens not to cooperate with the regime or, to use his memorable line, "not to live by lie."

One more important intellectual spring broke through the infertile Soviet ground in the post-Stalinist era. It was championed by the creative intelligentsia, mostly writers, like Andrey Siniavsky, Yuly Daniel, and Joseph Brodsky, who were fed up with politics, shunned official society, and pursued free aesthetic expression. Those who shared this creed had as exalted a view of the artist's place in society as did their 19th century radical predecessors, but they did not want to see art and literature as playgrounds for conflicting ideologies. Whatever literature had to teach society should not be done through moralizing and didacticism. Here is how Joseph Brodsky framed the idea:

Books became the first and only reality, whereas reality itself was regarded as either nonsense or nuisance. Compared to others, we were ostensibly flunking or faking our lives. But come to think of it, existence which ignores the standards professed in literature is inferior and unworthy of effect. So we thought, and I think we were right. [125]

"The intuitive preference was to read rather than to act," Brodsky went on, "No wonder our lives were more or less in shambles." But with certain qualifications, the same could have been said about any person striving to be morally intelligent under the increasingly oppressive conditions in Russia. By the mid-70s, the Soviet government opened up a frontal attack on dissent of all stripes, confronting the Russian intelligentsia with the familiar conundrum -- what is to be done when there is nothing you can do. Decent choices were few: to withdraw from society and become an internal emigre, to go underground and keep exposing Soviet power abuses, to work through legal channels, doing what one possibly could to educate society, especially the new generation. Dissident intellectuals who tried to keep the government's feet to the fire by exposing the KGB abuses in the West resented their liberal colleagues still working for the state. The smoldering debate about the morality of collaboration with the communist government bent on preserving its power at any cost revealed the deepening rift between radical and liberal intellectuals. The defiant Solzhenitsyn broke with his liberal colleagues at Novy Mir over its cautious editorial policies and challenged every Russian citizen to "fortify oneself and refuse to budge, sacrificing one's life rather than the principle!" [126] Solzhenitsyn set an example himself by publishing his works abroad

and openly meeting with Western reporters. As Boris Pasternak before him, Solzhenitsyn was expelled from the Writers' Union, but unlike his predecessor, Solzhenitsyn was deported from Russia, after which he lived as a political exile in the US. The same fate befell Arkady Belinkov who, having reached the safety of exile, launched a scathing attack on his liberal colleagues:

[I]n the concrete history of the 1960s, K. Fedin is worse than N. Gribachev, P. Antokolsky is more dangerous than V. Kochetov, E. Evtushenko is more repugnant than A. Markov, B. Slutsky is uglier than V. Firsov, P. Nilin is more base than I. Shevtsov, I. Selvinsky is more sinister than A. Sofronov, V. Shklovsky is more distasteful than V. Ermilov because all these carbonari, Jacobins, freedom fighters, breaknecks do to [free] public thought what ultramasons, Vendéans, cossacks, and black hundreds did, except that the former crowd does its thing with panache and flare, with a sense of poetry, harmony, and charm. . . . [127]

Understandably, the loyal liberals who came into their own in the 60s (they are still commonly referred to in the intelligentsia parlance *asshestidesiatniki* -- the generation of the 60s) had a very different idea about their mission in society. Efim Etkind, a scholar and a literary critic, confronted head-on the dilemma that Solzhenitsyn presented to his countrymen, "Aren't the absolute refusal to compromise and the unconditional determination to pursue truth and defend human rights always preferable to the willingness to play politics, make compromises, and show moral flexibility?" [128] Etkind's answer: Solzhenitsyn fell victim to "moral maximalism" especially dangerous in the current political climate. No dissident acts in a vacuum; his choices affect other people who might suffer gravely after the individual decides to take a heroic ego trip. [129] Solzhenitsyn, Etkind charged, vastly overestimated the public's interest in challenging the powers and seriously underestimated the fact that "the enlightenment must precede [political] renaissance, [that] underground publications are not sufficient. . . . The first task is to teach, educate, enlighten. To participate in this centrally important -- indeed the only relevant activity in our time, we should be ready to conceal thoughts, yield and maneuver, of course within the morally acceptable limits." [130] Lakshin's rebuttal to Solzhenitsyn was even more forceful. Lakshin charged that the imminent author snubbed his colleagues at Novyi Mir, that his "indifference to means, the psychology of the preventive strike, cruelty and lying" reflected his prison camp experience, that "Solzhenitsyn also imbibed the poison of Stalinism," that "the author who addresses us with his passionate appeal for us to pursue truth, humanity, and goodness scorns to observe these commandments in his own dealings."

[131] Meanwhile, the liberals in good standing with the government had to voice their approval when the Soviet Union invaded Czechoslovakia (Novyi Mir publicly endorsed the invasion), look the other way when Sakharov was forced into exile, keep their outrage to themselves when the state placed dissidents into psychiatric wards, curse the Communist party's harebrained economic schemes in the relative privacy of their home, and rely chiefly on the time-honored "secret freedom" (which was renamed at the time into "inner freedom") to keep their sanity intact. Such was the "moral torture," as Etkind put it, that the intelligentsia suffered after Khrushchev's demise. Soviet intellectuals coping with the adversity in the post-Stalinist era reminded one of Spanish Jews forced to choose between their own traditional faith and official conversion, with either option entailing a prohibitive cost. Thinking one thing, saying another, and doing something altogether different, intellectual marronos populating Soviet society could not help but lose track of their private and official identities. The recourse to irony seemed natural. "In the atmosphere of mendacity," remembers a veteran of those years, "all-consuming irony becomes a universal self-defense mechanism." [132] But in the end, irony and self-parodying did not so much keep apart official and unofficial selves as helped the individual cover up the snarled web of his motivation. The burden of affliction from which intellectuals suffered in post-Stalin's Russia might have been somewhat lighter than the "terrible ulcer" that sent Chaadaev into depression, and it was probably less clinically disturbing than the "traumatic psychosis" that disfigured Nadezhda Mandelstam's generation. Still, it did a lot of damage to the intellectuals' selfhood, sapped their creative energies, and played havoc with their private lives.

If the Russian intelligentsia learned anything in the post-Soviet period, it is to mistrust left radicalism that shaped the 19th century intelligentsia. The break had not come easily or swiftly. "You see," remembers one veteran of the era, "for all our irreverent dissidence (*inakomyslie*), our hearts responded with emotions to the old [communist] symbols, images, and commandments which -- miraculously and in spite of everything -- retained for us the purity of that original flame." [133] Even seasoned fighters and internal emigres with no illusions about the regime resorted to the communist lingo to explain their ways, as did Brodsky during his 1963 trial when the prosecutor pressed him to demonstrate how his life style jibed with the Soviet people's efforts to build a communist society: "Building communism is not just operating the machine and plowing the earth. It is also the work of the intelligentsia which. . ." -- that is as far as the judge permitted the future Nobel laureate to take his argument. [134] But by the mid- 70s, when the Brezhnev regime entered the

stagnation years and open dissident voices were brutally silenced, the liberal intelligentsia began to slip off its socialist moorings. The preoccupation with moral intelligence inched its way back into existence. [135] Soviet intellectuals sought moral fortitude in the works of Pushkin and Chekhov, placing on their agenda "the acquisition of a 'secret freedom,' the acquisition through one's own intellectual and moral effort." [136] Camus's "Myth of Sisyphus" captured the intelligentsia's imagination as emblematic of its hopeless existence amidst official hypocrisy and corruption. [137] With the increased repressions came thoughts about emigration (an option that virtually disappeared in the late 70s) and the longing for the West and faraway cultures. "It was not just political anecdotes and irreverent songs that sustained us in those years, it was not just the irony which became the signature trait of our spiritual makeup, it was also the longing for Paris which we had no chance to see - - ever." As before, intellectuals turned their bitterness and anger against themselves and their loved ones. Moral compromises, forced voicelessness, the fear of cracking under the KGB pressures -- all these features explain the ambivalence that post-Stalinist Russia and the intelligentsia it engendered continue to elicit in intellectuals who lived through this muddled era.

As for the Russian intellectual culture, it did undergo some changes during this period. Khrushchev's thaw left an indelible mark on the new generation of Soviet intellectuals evident in their skepticism about socialist ideologies, the renewed belief in glasnost as a condition for social reconstruction, a willingness to take a public stance, the narrowing of the gap between word and deed. But other features ingrained in the intelligentsia's collective consciousness -- vanguardism, moral maximalism, ironic detachment, contempt for *meshchanstvo*, belief in the literature's transformative role -- remained largely unaffected. If anything, violent emotions, self-loathing, and standoffish demeanor were exacerbated by the situation where one was presented with a clear choice, albeit an unpalatable one, between the repression awaiting those who dared to stand up to the powers and closet liberalism that relegated the morally intelligent person to a moral torture chamber. Lakshin had a point when he charged his esteemed colleague, Alexander Solzhenitsyn, in reproducing totalitarian stratagems in his own conduct. But did liberal intellectuals free themselves from this syndrome? The test came as Mikhail Gorbachev opened up a new and final chapter in Soviet history.

### **Perestroika and Beyond**

Neither "glasnost" nor "perestroika," as we saw earlier, are recent

inventions. Both terms have a long pedigree in Russian intellectual history. Count Petr Viazemsky, a friend of Pushkin, hailed glasnost and decried its absence in Russia as early as 1831. [138] Following him, Herzen, Dobroliubov, Chernyshevsky, Ivanov-Razumnik, Miliukov and other Russian intellectuals identified the right to voice one's opinion on the full range of public issues as indispensable for a healthy society. The same goes for "perestroika" which was invoked by Russian politically-conscious intellectuals to highlight the importance of making a radical break with past beliefs and practices and setting the country on a path toward political modernization. What made Mikhail Gorbachev's usage different was that he invoked both terms simultaneously and employed them to advance a liberal rather than radical political agenda.

The Soviet leader came to power in April of 1985. Within a year he was talking about the need for glasnost in politics and perestroika in the economy, but ideological blinkers were still on tight. Few people inside or outside the Communist party took Gorbachev's musings seriously -- they saw too many government-instigated campaigns peter out in the past. Skeptics notwithstanding, the new rhetoric took wing, generating unprecedented changes in Soviet domestic and foreign policy. That perestroika had plenty of substance could no longer be denied once political prisoners were set free, censorship eased up, political dissent tolerated, emigration allowed, and disarmament talks pushed beyond all expectations. The first signs that the intellectuals were taking Gorbachev seriously came about a year and half into his tenure, as some journalists tested the limits of glasnost by bringing up topics previously excluded from public debate. Alexander Vasinsky wrote the pioneering article bearing the title "The Ballad of the Difference of Opinion" where he urged that all opinions, including the ones we passionately oppose, be given the benefit of the doubt. To add extra weight to his argument Vasinsky dug up a rare quotation from Lenin in which the founder of the Soviet state chastised those who "spread hatred, intolerance, contempt, etc., toward dissenters [*nesoglasnomysliashchie*]." [139] Following Vasinsky, other intellectuals picked up kindred themes with fewer and fewer references to the communist luminaries. "One of the conditions of honesty and directness that our time demands," asserted Sergei Averintsev, a leading Russian philologist, "is putting an end to the situation where we confuse the dissenter (*nesoglasnyi*) with the enemy. The intelligentsia must nurture in itself the culture of dissent (*kultura nesoglasii*), the culture of debate. I am talking not just about weak tolerance but true respect for the opponent." [140] "We still do not have enough courage to say 'the king is naked,'" charged Vladimir Dudintsev in an article denouncing past abuses in Soviet science. "And this is in spite of the democratic foundations of our



society which requires glasnost, and therefore the freedom to defend one's views. The final judge in any dispute should be the argument, yet it is power and connections, I am sad to say, which often decide the matter." [141]

By 1988, the communist hierarchs realized that Gorbachev's changes had gone too far and started pressuring him to slow down reforms. Immediately, the intelligentsia swung into action, claiming an equal partnership in the reform process. Khrushchev's failure to carry out his reform, intellectuals maintained, had much to do with his turning his back on the intelligentsia and neglecting to tap the intellectual resources that proved indispensable in his earlier struggle with the party hierarchy. The man who started the political thaw after Stalin's death "paid dearly for his mistrust and contempt for the intelligentsia," [142] charged Fedor Burlatsky, a former Khrushchev's aid, in a statement echoed by many *shestidesiatniki*. This was a thinly veiled warning to the new administration to engage the intelligentsia, to make it a full partner in Gorbachev's reforms. Poet Andrey Voznesensky predicated the success of social reconstruction on the nation's ability to mobilize its intellectual resources, to deploy culture and moral intelligence -- two areas in which Russian intellectuals traditionally claimed a special expertise:

A spiritual revolution is stirring in our land, a life and death struggle for a new thinking against the still powerful inertia of the past. This is not a cultural revolution, but a revolution by Culture. . . . Born again is the old Russian word glasnost, the word that makes active repentance a norm and that goes back to Tolstoy whose ideal of fighting evil with active conscience has such resonance today. [143]

Perestroika reignited the old debate about the intelligentsia, its place in the reform process, the linkage between the old and the new intelligentsia, and the troubled relationship between the intelligentsia, the people, and the state. For the first time, the intelligentsia had a chance to settle old accounts, regale its survival stories, expose the enemies of nonconformist intellectuals. Many established scholars, writers, and artists expressed remorse, or were called upon to repent by their colleagues, for their past actions or inactions. Relishing their newly found freedom and capitalizing on their access to secret archives, intellectuals delved into areas once excluded from public discussion: the famines, economic failures, environmental disasters, forced collectivization, mass purges, the Gulag culture, persecution of religious and ethnic minorities. . . .

As soon as the first rays of glasnost shined through ideological

obfuscations, the intelligentsia set out to reassert its world-historical calling and reclaim responsibility for the future. Intellectuals searched their illustrious pedigree, sought to own up to their past mistakes, and drew heavily on the Vekhi critique which exposed the Russian intelligentsia's unsavory practices. Following Chekhov, intellectuals hailed moral intelligence [*intelligentnost*] as a defining characteristic for anyone claiming membership among the intelligentsia's ranks. A highly respected Russian scholar, Dmitri Likhachev, told an interviewer that "an unschooled peasant can be called an *intelligent*, but the same cannot be said about a ruffian, even if he is burdened with intellect, scientific degrees, and official honors. . . . For 'Russian *intelligent*' designates a soulful, moral, rather than cerebral, category. Better put: unless movement of the heart precedes movement of thought, a person cannot be called an *intelligent*." [144] This wording suggests a shift in focus away from the intelligentsia as a corporate group that marked the official Soviet perspective and toward *intelligentnost* or moral intelligence as a personal disposition and a pattern of conduct displayed in a particular situation. This theme looms large in a posthumously published note [145] by A. F. Losev, a celebrated Russian philosopher, a survivor of numerous campaigns against the intelligentsia. Losev's article is titled "*Ob intelligentnosti*," which could be freely rendered thus: "On Feeling, Thinking, and Acting as an *Intelligent*." In this remarkable piece, the author talks about moral intelligence as a total way of life and a peculiarly Russian ideology which "appears out of nowhere, all by itself; it acts without understanding its own action; it pursues as its end the well-being of humanity, and it does so without having any clear idea of its actions. The true ideology of true moral intelligence is naive." The *intelligent*, goes on Losev, could not be socially indifferent; he is acutely aware of the world's inanities and is determined to "transform reality" -- he is a "person who takes the interest of humanity as his own." Moral intelligence is "conscious spiritual labor to improve oneself and to make the world around us rational." The true *intelligent* is no utopian dreamer; he can critically assess reality, he knows when to act, when to lay low, where and how to pick up a fight. In time, moral intelligence becomes self-reflexive and more assertive. The labor of moral intelligence is the work of reason in history carried out by a particular individual who fights the day's brush fires with his sight trained on his destiny, which is to be a civilizing force in history. The life of moral intelligence is subject to all the vagaries of everyday life, it is tragic, heroic, and beautiful at the same time.

These ruminations about the intelligentsia's mission in society fall squarely within the Russian intellectual tradition. The all important difference, however, is that intelligence is perceived here as a moral agency par

excellence and the intelligentsia is cast as a social force whose mission is not to drag the unwilling society along the preordained historical path but to ameliorate it via public discourse and personal example. "Jesus Christ," suggested one of the participants in the ongoing debate about the intelligentsia, "was in essence a prototype of the *intelligent*." [146] The latter is akin to an individual who is "born again" and who strives to be righteous himself rather than to impose a particular scheme on society (from which it follows that "to call oneself an *intelligent* is like giving oneself a medal" [147] ). This and similar statements have familiar messianic overtones, but they are also refreshing insofar as their critical thrust is directed at oneself rather than others. Note, however, that the intelligentsia's commitment to moral means did not slow its enlistment in government sponsored institutions -- ministries, think-tanks, state committees, and other organizations that were in the past closed to Russian intellectuals practicing moral intelligence. Russian intellectuals took full advantage of the new opportunities. Once intellectuals weaned on hatred toward the state found themselves working for it, they discovered that their ideals did not mesh easily with the demands of power. As Chekhov surmised a century ago, the intelligentsia was hardly immune to the ills of Russian bureaucracy, from whose head it had originally sprang. The way intellectuals in power acted amidst the rough and tumble of Russian politics in the Gorbachev's and especially the post-Soviet era, changed many minds about the intelligentsia's touted virtues.

Never before did the intelligentsia enjoy a greater influence in their homeland than during the heyday of perestroika. Gorbachev's reforms assured intellectuals the right to free speech, unprecedented artistic freedom, wide access to the mass media, the chance to be elected to the Soviet legislature and to serve in government. In addition to the rights commonly found in capitalist societies, Russian intellectuals still benefited from the largely socialist system that guaranteed employment to everybody, required little work, and subsidized the intelligentsia's creative pursuits. Thus, throughout perestroika years, movies continued to be shot, books published, concerts given, research projects publicly funded -- all this with little regard for the fact that there might have been no market for the resulting products. No wonder perestroika received such accolades from the intelligentsia. "There is no doubt," wrote in 1989 Nathan Edelman, a well-known Russian historian, "that the intellectuals' support for perestroika is virtually unanimous." [148] Obviously, things could not go on like this for any length of time without a major shake-up. And when reality testing began, the intelligentsia's fortunes sunk fast.

Simply put: glasnost was already perestroika for the intelligentsia. It was

common for intellectuals giddy from reforms to opine that if they had to choose between glasnost and sausage they would not hesitate to go with the former and forgo the latter. For economically more vulnerable social groups, however, perestroika was less of a promise than a threat mounting daily in the ever-harsh economic environment. The perestroika movement reached its high-water mark in 1989 when the political forces in Russia became increasingly polarized. In 1990, the ideological middle ground seemed to evaporate and Gorbachev's political base shrivelled to a dangerous point. Whereas his constituents on the left felt irritated by Gorbachev's refusal to dismantle the one party state, his constituents on the right urged the return to the relative stability provided by the socialist economy. A year later, the situation in the country resembled the disarray that followed the February 1917 revolution. The communist party stalwarts staged a coup against Gorbachev in August 1991, cracking the whip one last time to see if the Soviet citizen's old reflexes still worked, but it was too late. The failed putsch delayed Gorbachev's exit from the political scene by a few months. The Soviet Union hurtled fast into oblivion, with nothing left in the tool kit of empire to save it from collapse. As the Soviet Union went into a tailspin, Boris Yeltsin, head of the Russian Federation, saw an opportunity to force Gorbachev out of his office: there was no need for a president in a country that did not exist, he reasoned. Most Russians seemed to agree. The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics ceased to function, and herewith began a dramatic reversal of fortunes for the Russian intelligentsia.

The tales of woe that befell the intelligentsia in post-Soviet Russia are gruesome. The Academy of Science had no money to pay its scholars; those who could find employment were leaving the country in great numbers starting in the early 90s, while their less known colleagues had to look for supplementary employment in the still fragile private sector. The artistic unions that in the past supported Russian film makers, actors, writers, painters, musicians and others fortunate enough to belong to the so-called "creative intelligentsia" had lost their resources and could no longer furnish their members with lucrative contracts and commissions. Scores of artistic companies, including the world-famous Bolshoy Ballet, went into bankruptcy or teetered on the brink. Thick literary journals and high-brow newspapers that boasted circulation in the millions during perestroika saw their press runs dwindle to a few thousand copies. The Russians who used to pride themselves on being a nation of readers, theater goers, music lovers, and art exhibit aficionados, seemed to have lost interest in high culture, as attested by empty theaters, poorly attended shows, unsold books, etc. To add insult to injury, the intelligentsia was held responsible for every mishap Russia faced since

Gorbachev came to power. And of course there was no longer an overbearing state to kick around, to blame for the intellectuals' misfortunes. The state for which the intelligentsia fought tooth and nail was lying in ruins, with the Russian house of intellect buried under its rabbles.

The bitterness that the intelligentsia has harbored toward the authorities is welling up again, though this time its animus is directed against itself. "I detest being an intellectual," confides Alexander Panchenko, a prominent Russian scholar and a public thinker with liberal credentials. [149] Another well-known writer, Alexander Ivanov, tells the interviewer who dared to address him as an *intelligent*: "Please do not call me with this disgusting word. I never considered myself an *intelligent* and always viewed this term with contempt." [150] If Lenin ever was right, adds Ivanov, it was in his assessment of the intelligentsia as the nation's excrement. Sergei Govorukhin, a film critic, concurs with this assessment, and so do several other writers with the Slavophile leanings and the desire to restore Russia's former glory. The anger enciphered in such statements has raised the temperature of the debate about the intelligentsia which, sadly, fell into the old habit of showering opponents with sarcasm and humiliating remarks. It is as if the Russian intellectual culture was suddenly thrown back to its beginnings. The situation is hardly helped by the fact that now everyone is free to say whatever one wants to say and everybody is talking simultaneously without much regard for the opponent or a concerted effort to join issues. The bloody confrontation between Yeltsin's government and the recalcitrant Russian Parliament in October of 1992 amplified to a deafening point over-acidulous invectives the Russian intellectuals were trading ever since the Soviet Union's demise. The whole situation is eerily reminiscent of the emotional malaise that afflicted the Russian intelligentsia after each previous revolution and that provoked the Vekhi authors' monumental inquiry into the Russian intelligentsia's wayward life style. "Nine-tenths of our intelligentsia is afflicted with neurasthenia," wrote Mikhail Gershenson, one of the sanest voices in Russian intellectual history, whose insight rings true today as it did ninety years ago; "there are almost no normal people among us -- everybody is acerbic, withdrawn, restless faces contorted in a grimace, either because one was crossed or because one was saddened. . . . We infect each other with bitterness and have so much saturated the atmosphere with our neurasthenic attitudes toward life that a fresh person, say, the one who lived for a while abroad, could not help feeling suffocated in our midst." [151]

It is all the more important to discern amidst this din the voices that heed

Chekhov's call to civility and emotional sanity. Sergei Averintsev, Dmitri Likhachev, Marietta Chudakova, Viktor Sheinis, Yuri Levada -- these are just a few respected voices among today's intelligentsia which use glasnost not to drown the opponents' views but to further dialogue and which continue to urge the return to sanity in public discourse. What draws these very different authors together is the realization that there is more to democracy than constitutional guarantees and representative institutions, that civil society begins with civility, that Russia will continue on its downward path until its citizens can see that, to paraphrase John Dewey, democracy does literally begin at home. Marietta Chudakova's article published in Literaturnaia Gazeta on the eve of the Soviet Union 's collapse is as good an example of a clear-headed attitude toward the current chaotic situation in Russia as you can find in recent literature. Chudakova reminds her readers about Olga Fridenberg, a friend of Boris Pasternak and a keen student of ancient Greek literature, who had this to say about Russian intellectual culture shortly before she died in 1956:

Everywhere, in all organizations and homes, a nasty squabble [ skloka] is raging on, the poisoned fruit of our social order, a new concept hitherto unknown to civilization and untranslatable into any other language. It is hard to explain what it really is: a mean-spirited, petty rivalry, venomous factionalism that sickens all against each, an unscrupulous envy that breeds endless intrigues. It is sycophancy, libel, informers, the desire to unseat the rival, deliberate feeding of ugly passions, nerves perpetually set on edge, and moral degeneration that makes a person or a group run amok. Squabble is a natural state for people who are rubbing against each other in a dungeon, helpless to resist the dehumanization they have been subjected to. Squabble -- is the alpha and omega of our politics. Squabble -- is our methodology. [152]

The irritability, intolerance, and aggressive demeanor obvious today, Chudakova argues, stem from the old habits intellectuals are unable to shed. Now that the ideological husks are peeled away, the raw anger and bitterness are no longer hiding under the veneer of respectability and politeness. The difference between the past and present discourse, according to Kama Ginkas, a stage director, is the same as between "a philosophical chat at a fire-side and philosophizing with your thumbs slammed in door jams." [153] The need to pour the bitter irony and sarcasm on the opponent is even more painfully obvious today than in Russia 's recent past. Rassadin calls it "slovenly irony," Poliakov laments "the total ironism" pervading today's Russian culture, and Shvedov decries "endless jocularly, coy and empty irony" filling the pages of literary magazines. [154] Add to this the devastating impact that market pursuits

have had on old friendships, the loss of relatives, colleagues, and friends to emigration, the precipitous decline in public's interest in high culture, persistent economic uncertainty, anti-intellectualism fanned by the political right -- and you will have the picture of a malaise that plagues the intelligentsia's psyche. [155] It is as if someone suddenly removed ferment from the perestroika brew, causing the drink to go sour and giving imbibers a monstrous headache. Intercut with the feeling of bitterness wide-spread among the Russian intelligentsia today is the nostalgia for the good-bad-old days before perestroika when its members knew exactly what they were fighting against and for, when people clung onto every word uttered by an artist, when there was hope. The empire's vices, including the hated censorship, the necessity to speak an Aesopian language and create with no chance to have an audience, now appear to some to be hidden virtues. [156] Not surprisingly, Alexander Pushkin's verse on Pindemonti is quoted ad nauseam, its author is portrayed as "perhaps the freest man in Russia 's entire history," [157] and his "secret freedom" is touted as the last refuge of the *intelligent*.

Is this the beginning of the end for the Russian intelligentsia, as many authors inside and outside Russia argue? After all, this ideological order has accomplished its main goals: the overbearing Russian state is cut down to size, political absolutism is broken, glasnost reigns supreme, and Russia is firmly set on its path toward political modernization. As a historical force bearing the birthmark of its premodern origins, the intelligentsia must yield the center stage to make room for professional politicians, market-conscious artists, and state bureaucrats. But its historical mission has not been accomplished yet. There is still the unfinished agenda of psychological modernization, of developing civic culture that the intelligentsia has to take up, and that calls for moral as well as emotional intelligence.

Georgy Fedotov saw silence, quietude, holding back one's feelings as a signature trait of Russia 's spirituality. [158] Much of what is valuable in Russian culture, he maintained, comes from this emotional and intellectual wound-up already evident in early Russian monks. As I have tried to show in my chapter, such voicelessness has a darker side. For much too often it has been an involuntary, forced silence that deprived humans of *glasand glasnost*, drove their negative feelings inside, and turned their anguish on themselves and others. The emotional abuse that Russian intellectuals casually heap on each other these days is a sure sign that they and their predecessors were themselves abused. All those who had gone through Stalinist purges, were intimidated by the KGB, witnessed ideologically inspired violence could not help being deeply troubled by

their experiences. The Russian intelligentsia's frustrations go back for centuries and are fuelled by an intellectual culture whose participants had their feet to the fire until they agreed to say things repugnant to their conscience. Herein lies the hidden cesspool fouling Russia's intellectual life.

Contrary to the intellectuals' belief that Pushkin was the freest man in Russia and that his "secret freedom" is all that the true *intelligent* needs to be happy, Pushkin was a troubled man who was badly hurt by others and in turn hurt many people about him. His inner freedom underscored his longing for basic rights -- to express oneself, to move freely, to choose his own fate -- the birthmark longing of a Russian intellectual. B. Kistiakovsky, one of the Vekhi authors, exposed the intelligentsia's tendency to juxtapose inner freedom and legal liberty nearly a century ago: "But inner freedom, immediate spiritual freedom, can be realized only under the conditions of external freedom -- the latter is the best school for the former." [159] The disregard for human rights and legal guarantees breeds moral maximalism, rabid intellectualism, and emotional violence. Common among Russian intellectuals, these qualities reflect a country disfigured by absolutism, a country which drags its people into distorted communications against their will, forces them to say things they do not mean and cover up their insincerity by irony and sarcasm. No intellectual prowess makes up for deficient emotional intelligence in everyday settings; no concern for the well-being of humanity justifies callousness toward people in our immediate surroundings; no inner freedom exonerates a person from the responsibility for his conduct; no ethical commitment absolves one from the need to respect law. When these common sense precepts are routinely violated, the community suffers, everyone is in distress.

The collective howling we hear today in Russia bears more than a fleeting resemblance to the post-traumatic stress syndrome common among people who went through harrowing experiences and who failed to come to grips with what they felt at the time because their feelings were deemed to be worthless and politically incorrect. Russian intellectual culture continues to evolve; there is much in it that is precious; it contains models of rational, moral, and emotional intelligence that could help Russian intellectuals rid themselves of the regnant obsessions and find the via media between facile intellectualism and emotional excess. The direction in which Russian intellectual culture has been evolving in the last few years, however, gives a cause for concern. It might not be indicative of the nation's long-term future, but it is sure to complicate the healing process. Still, the very fact that intellectuals are finally free to express



their feelings, however distorted these might be, is progress. Everything that helps bring these pent-up feelings into the open and channel them into an intelligent discourse should be welcome. The agenda for the day is to focus the intelligentsia's attention on its own emotional life, to help it comprehend the distorted communications behind Russian intellectual culture, to make it understand that democracy is also a certain quality of experience, a socio-psychological culture outside of which democratic institutions could not sink roots and are sure to wilt away. In short, one has to balance intellect with emotional intelligence and see to it that our emotions are intelligent and our intellect is emotionally sane. [160]

## References

1. U. Shchekochikhin, "Vlast' i intelligentsiia," *Literaturnaia Gazeta*, July 28, 1993.
2. G. R. Ivanitsky, in *Intelligentsiia i Vlast'* (Moskva: Soiuz Kinematografistov SSSR, 1992), p. 70.
3. A. Bitov, "Privatizatsiia sovetskoi vlasti," *Novoe Russkoe Slovo*, January 31, 1993.
4. Alwin W. Gouldner, *The Future of Intellectuals and the Rise of the New Class* (New York: The Seabury Press, 1979), p. 5.
5. A. Yanov, "Gde ispytyvaetsia novoe myshlenie," *Izvestiia*, December 8, 1990.
6. There are several important monographs and article collections on the Russian intelligentsia that the reader might wish to consult for further study: Isaiah Berlin, *Russian Thinkers* (New York: Penguin Books, [1948] 1978); Richard Pipes, ed. *The Russian Intelligentsia* (New York: Columbia University, 1961); Marc Raeff, *Origins of the Russian Intelligentsia. The Eighteenth Century Nobility* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World), 1966; Alexander Gella, ed. *The Intelligentsia and the Intellectuals: Theory, Methods and Case Study* (Beverly Hills, CA: Sage, 1976); Abbott Gleason, Peter Kenez, and Richard Stites, eds. *Bolshevik Culture, Experiment and Order in Russian Revolution* (Bloomington, IA: Indiana University Press, 1985); Marshall S. Shatz, *Soviet Dissent in Historical Perspective* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. I particularly recommend the fine work by Vladimir C. Nahyrny which gave me an insight into the subject that I sought to develop in my study, *The Russian Intelligentsia. From Torment to Silence* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transactions

Books, 1983). Among the Russian works, of particular interest are the following collections *Vekhi. Sbornik statei o russkoi intelligentsii* (Moskva: Tipografiia V. M. Sablina, 1909); *Intelligentsiia v Rossii* (S. Petersburg, 1910); *Iz pod glyb. Sbornik statei* (Paris: YMCA Press, 1974); *Intelligentsiia. Vlast. Narod*. Ed by L. I. Novikova and I. N. Sizemskaiia (Moskva: Nauka, 1993). For the official Soviet perspective on intelligentsia see *Sovetskaia Intelligentsiia (Istoriia formirovaniia i rosta 1917-1965 gg.)* (Moskva: Mysl, 1968).

7. See Vladimir Nahirny, *The Russian Intelligentsia. From Torment to Silence* (New Brunswick: Transaction Books, 1983), pp. 36-49.

8. Georgy P. Fedotov, "Tragediia intelligentsii," in *Sudba i grekhi Rossii*, Vol. II (St. Petersburg: Sofiia, 1991), p. 142.

9. Petr D. Boborykin, *Vospominaniia* (Moskva: Izdatelstvo Khudozhestvennoi Literatury, [1906] 1965), p. 283. On p. 241 of his memoirs, Boborykin states: "I was a born 'citadin,' a city dweller, or what later on in the Russian press I myself Christened by the name 'intelligent.'" See also "Russkaia intelligentsiia," *Russkaia mysl* (no. 12, 1904).

10. Georgy P. Fedotov, "Tragediia intelligentsii," in *Sudba i grekhi Rossii*, Vol. 1 (St. Petersburg: Sofiia, 1991), pp. 71-2.

11. Peter Chaadaev, *The Major Works of Peter Chaadaev*, ed. by Raymond McNally (Notre Dame: The University of Notre Dame Press, 1960), pp. 113, 111, 149, 138).

12. Ibid., p. 201.

13. Ibid., pp. 190-1.

14. Isaiah Berlin, *Russian Thinkers* (Penguin Books, 1979), p. 15.

15. Ibid., p. 60.

16. Alexander S. Pushkin, *Polnoe Sobranie Sochinenii v Desiati Tomakh* (Moscow: Izdatel'stvo Akademii Nauk SSSR, [1817] 1962, Vol. I), p. 323. Here and elsewhere in the text, translation from Russian is mine, unless otherwise indicated.

17. P. I. Dolgorukov, "Kishinev 1822 goda genvaria," *A. S. Pushkin v*

*vospominaniikh sovremennikov*, Vol. 1 (Moskva: Khudozhestvennaia Literatura, 1974), p. 350.

18. Pushkin, *Polnoe Sobranie Sochinenii v Desiati Tomakh*, op. cit., p. 322.

19. Ibid., "For N. Ia. Pliuskovoi," Vol. 1, [1819], p. 340.

20. Ibid., Vol. VII, pp. 42-49.

21. Ibid., Vol. III, p. 7.

22. Ibid., Vol. 10, "Letter to A. Kh. Benkendorf, July 21, 1831 ," p. 639, and "Letter to A. Kh. Benkendorf, circa July 21, 1831 ," p. 656.

23. Ibid., p. 770.

24. Ibid., Vol. 10, "Letter to N. N. Pushkina, May 18, 1836 ," p. 583.

25. Ibid., Vol. 10, "Letter to P. A. Viazemsky, May 27, 1826 ," p. 208.

26. Ibid., Vol. III, "(From Pindemonti)," p. 369.

27. V. A. Zhukovsky, "Letter to S. L. Pushkin, February 15, 1837 ." In A. S. *Pushkin v Vospominaniikh Sovremennikov*. Vol. II (Moscow: Khudozhestvennaia Literatura, 1974), p. 349.

28. Alexander Herzen, "Byloe i Dumy," In A. I. Gertsen, *Sochineniia*." Vol. 5 (Moscow: Gosudarstvennoe Izdatel'stvo Khudozhestvennoi Literatury, [1862] 1956), p. 98.

29. Ibid., pp. 373-4.

30. Ibid., Vol. 4, [1858], p. 401.

31. "Zapiska o pismennoi literature," *Golosa iz Rossii*, Vol. I (Moskva: Izdatel'stvo Nauka, [1856] 1974), p. 60.

32. Herzen, "Byloe i dumy," *Sochineniia*, Vol. 5, p. 383.

33. Alexander Herzen, "K staromu tovarishchu." In A. I. Gertsen. *Sobranie Sochinenii v Vosmi Tomakh*, Vol. 8 (Moscow: Izdatelstvo Pravda, 1975), pp. 335, 325.

34. Nikolai Dobroliubov, N. A. Dobroliubov. *Izbrannoe* (Moskva: Sovremennik, 1984), p. 297.
35. Ibid., p. 437. "Take Pushkin," Vissarion Belinsky once pointed out, "no sooner did he write two or three loyalist poems and put on the court uniform as he had lost people's love!" "Vybrannye Mesta iz Perepiski s Druziami Nikolaia Gogolia," in V. G. Belinsky. *Sobranie Sochinenii v Trekh Tomakh*, Vol. III (Moskva: Gosudarstvennoe Izdatel'stvo Khudozhestvennoi Literatury, [1847] 1948), p. 712.
36. Dobroliubov, *Izbrannoe*, op. cit., p. 295.
37. Vissarion G. Belinsky, "Letter to V. P. Botkin, December 10, 1849," "Letter to V. P. Botkin, September 8, 1841," and "Letter to V. P. Botkin, September 8, 1841," in V. G. Belinsky, *Izbrannye Pis'ma*, Vol. 2 (Moskva: Gosudarstvennoe Izdatel'stvo Khudozhestvennoi Literatury, 1955), pp. 133, 201-202, 158, pp. 173-4.
38. Belinsky, *Izbrannye Pis'ma*, Vol. II, p. 81.
39. N. G. Chernyshevsky, *Izbrannye esteticheskie proizvedeniia* (Moskva: Iskusstvo, 1978), pp. 174.
40. Belinsky, *Sobranie sochinenii*, Vol. I, [1840], pp. 715-6.
41. Dmitri Pisarev, *D. M. Pisarev. Literaturnaia kritika*, Vol. II (Moskva: Khudozhestvennaia Literatura, 1981), p. 11.
42. Belinsky, *Izbrannye Pis'ma*, Vol II, "Letter to V. P. Botkin, June 13, 1840 ), p. 81 and "Letter to N. A. Bakunin, November 7, 1842 ," p. 201.
43. Alexander Herzen, "Letter to N. P. Ogarev, December 2, 1869 ," in A. I. Gertsen. *Sochineniia*, Vol. XXX (Moskva: Gosudarstvennoe Izdatel'stvo Khudozhestvennoi Literatury, 1957), p. 271).
44. Herzen, "Byloe i dumy," *Sochineniia*, Vol. V, p. 607.
45. See an important work by Vladimir C. Nahirny, *The Russian Intelligentsia. From Torment to Silence* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transactions Books, 1983), pp. 69-86.
46. Petr L. Lavrov, "Istoricheskie pisma," in *Intelligentsiia. Vlast'. Narod*, ed. by L. I. Novikova and I. M. Sizemskaiia (Moskva: Nauka, 1993), p.

51).

47. Chernyshevsky, *Izbrannye esteticheskie proizvedeniia*, [1855-6], op. cit., p. 445.

48. Isaiah Berlin had this to say about Tolstoy's view of the Europeans and their Russian imitators: "Tolstoy looks on them as clever fools, spinners of empty subtleties, blind and deaf to the realities which simpler hearts can grasp, and from time to time he lets fly at them with a brutal violence of a grim, anarchical old peasant, avenging himself after years of silence, on the silly, chattering, town-bread monkeys, so knowing, and full of words to explain everything, and superior, and impotent and empty." Isaiah Berlin, *Russian Thinkers* (London: Penguin Books, [1948] 1978), p. 64.

49. Konstantin H. Leontiev, ""Kak nado ponimat sblizhenie s narodom," in Konstantin Leontiev, *Zapiski Otshelnika* (Moskva: Russkaia Kniga, 1992), p. 510.

50. Konstantin A. Aksakov, "O russkom vozzrenii," in K. S. Aksakov and I. S. Aksakov, *Literaturnaia Kritika* (Moskva: Sovremennik, 1981), pp. 198, 197.

51. Fedor M. Dostoyevsky, *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii v tridtsati tomakh*. Vol. 26 (Moskva: Nauka, [1880] 1984), pp. 136-49.

52. Ibid., p. 139.

53. Ibid., p. 142.

54. Ibid., p. 148.

55. Ibid., p. 147.

56. Anton P. Chekhov, "Letter to A. N. Pleshcheev, October 4, 1888," in *Sobranie sochinenii v dvenadtsati tomakh*, Vol. 11 (Moskva: Gosudarstvennoe Izdatel'stvo Khudozhestvennoi Literatury, 1956), p. 263.

57. Ibid., "Letter to A. F. Marks, February 25, 1899," Vol. 12, p. 305.

58. E.g., he writes about his town's neighbors: "The intelligentsia here is very nice and interesting. And most importantly -- honest." Ibid., "Letter to Menshikovu, October 12, 1892," Vol. 11, p. 593.

59. Ibid., Vol. 11, "Letter to A. S. Suvorin, January 7, 1889 ," p. 328-9.
60. Vasily Ivanov-Razumnik, "Intelligentsia i sotsializm," *Intelligentsia. Vlast. Narod.* (Moskva: Nauka, [1907] 1993), p. 218. His two volumes on the history of Russian social thought appeared in 1907, see *Istoriia russkoi obshchestvennoi mysli* (S. Petersburg, 1907).
61. Mikhail I. Tugan-Baranovsky, *Intelligentsiia v Rossii* (S. Petersburg: Zemlia, 1910), p. 248.
62. Nikolai A. Berdiaev, "Filosofskaia istina i intelligentskaia pravda," in *Vekhi. Sbornik Statei o russkoi intelligentsii* (Moskva: Tipografiia V. M. Sablina, 1909), pp. 1, 2, 9.
63. Petr B. Struve, "Geroizm i podvizhnichestvo," Ibid., p. 41.
64. Ibid., p. 56.
65. Semen L. Frank, "Etika nigilisma," *Vekhi*, p. 204.
66. Mikhail O. Gershenson, "Tvorcheskoe samosoznanie," Ibid., pp. 80-1.
67. Petr B. Struve, "Intelligentsia i narodnoe khoziaistvo," in *Intelligentsia. Vlast. Narod.* (Moskva: Nauka, [1908] 1993), p. 205.
68. Ivan Petrunkevich, "Intelligentsiia i Vekhi," in *Intelligentsiia v Rossii. Postanovka Zadachi* (S. Petersburg: Zemlia, 1910), p. 6.
69. Dmitri N. Ovsianiko-Kulikovskii, "Psikhologia russkoi intelligentsii," Ibid. p. 217.
70. Pavel N. Miliukov, "Intelligentsiia i istoricheskaia traditsiia. Postanovka zadachi," Ibid., p. 92.
71. Ibid. pp. 151-2.
72. Ibid., p. 92.
73. See Dmitri N. Shalin, "Marxist Paradigm and Academic Freedom," *Social Research* 47:361-382.
74. Leon D. Trotsky, "Ob intelligentsii," in *Intelligentsiia, Vlast. Narod.* (Moskva: Nauka, 1993), pp. 115-6).

75. Peter Kenez, "Lenin and the Freedom of the Press," in Abbott Gleason, Peter Kenez, and Richard Stites, eds. *Bolshevik Culture, Experiment and Order in Russian Revolution* (Bloomington, IA: Indiana University Press, 1985), pp. 130-150.
76. Zinaida N. Gippius, *Zhivye Litsa* (Leningrad: Iskusstvo, [1922] 1991), p. 38.
77. Maxim Gorky, *Nesvoevremennye mysli. Stati 1917-1918 gg.* (Paris: Editions de La Seine, 1971), p. 102.
78. *Ibid.*, p. 244.
79. Vladimir I. Lenin, "Letter to M. Gorky, September 15, 1919," in *Polnoe Sobranie Sochinenii, 5th edition*, Vol. 51 (Moskva: Izdatel'stvo Politicheskoi Literatury, 1965), p. 48.
80. Viacheslav Kostikov, "Izgnanie iz Raia," *Ogonek* (no. 24, 1990, pp. 14-16).
81. Felix Dzerzhinsky, "Letter to Unshlikht, September 5, 1922," in Viktor Topoliansky, "Na Kazhdogo intelligenta dolzhno byt delo," *Literaturnaia Gazeta* (August 11, 1993).
82. See Charles Rougle, "The Intelligentsia Debate in Russia 1917-1918," in Nils Ake Nilsson, ed. *Art, Society, Revolution. Russia 1917-1921* (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell International, 1979), pp. 54-105.
83. Quoted in Viacheslav Kostikov, "Volia k Vlasti i volia k kulture," *Ogonek* (no. 50, 1990), p. 17.
84. Anatoly V. Lunacharsky, *Literatura Novogo Mira. Obzory, Ocherki, Teoriia.* (Moskva: Sovetskaia Rossiia, [1932] 1980), pp. 107-8.
85. Anatoly Lunacharsky, quoted in Kostikov, "Izgnanie . . .", p. 16.
86. Katerina Clark, "The City versus the Countryside in Soviet Peasant Literature of the Twenties: A Duel of Utopias," in Abbott Gleason, Peter Kenez, and Richard Stites, eds. *Bolshevik Culture, Experiment and Order in Russian Revolution* (Bloomington, IA: Indiana University Press, 1985), pp. 175-89.
87. Alexander Block, "Mozhet li intelligentsiia rabotat s bolshevikami," in

Alexander Block. *Sobranie Sochinenii* Vol. 6 (Moskva-Leningrad: Khudozhestvennaia Literatura, [1918] 1962), p. 8.

88. Ilya Erenburg, "Intelligentsiia i revoliutsiia," *Literaturnaia Gazeta* (no. 10, March 9, 1994 ).

89. Alexander S. Pushkin, "K N. Ia. Pliuskovoi," *Polnoe Sobranie Sochinenii*, Vol. I, [1819], p. 340.

90. Block, "O naznachenii poeta," *Sobranie Sochinenii*, Vol. 6, p. 167.

91. Block, *Ibid.*, p. 167.

92. See Lewis H. Siegelbaum, "State and Society in the 1920s," in Robert O. Crummey, ed. *Reforms in Russia and the U.S.S.R. Past and Prospects*(Urbana, IL: University of Illinois, 1989), pp. 126-43 and Richard Stites, "Iconoclastic Currents in the Russian Revolution: Destroying and Preserving the Past," in *Bolshevik Culture*, ed. by Abbott Gleason, Peter Kenez, and Richard Stites (Bloomington, IA: Indiana University Press, 1985), pp. 1-24.

93. *Report of Court Proceedings in the Case of the Anti-Soviet "Block of Rights and Trotskyites"* (Moscow: People's Commissariat of Justice of the U.S.S.R., pp. 768, 775, 779.

94. *Ibid.*, p. 778.

95. Nadezhda Mandelstam, *Vospominaniia* (New York: Izdatel'stvo Imeni Chekhova, 1970), p. 219.

96. Gippius, *Ibid.*, p. 41.

97. Nadezhda Ia. Mandelstam, *Vtoraia kniga* (Moskva: Moskovskii Rabochii, 1990), pp. 461, 82.

98. Quoted in Vera von Wiren, "Introduction," in Mikhail Zoshchenko, *Pered Zakhodom Solntsa* (New York: Chekhov Publishing Corporation, 1973), p. 2.

99. Quoted in Arkady Belinkov, *Sdacha i gibel sovetskogo intelligenta. Yuri Olesha* (Madrid: Esiciones Castilla, S. A., 1976), p. 264.

100. Nadezhda Mandelstam, *Vtoraia kniga*, p. 134.



101. Osip Mandelshtam, *Otklik neba. Stikhi i Proza* (Alma-ata: Zhazushy, 1989), p. 148.
102. Quoted in Marietta Chudakova, "Bulgakov i Lubianka," *Literaturnaia Gazeta* (December 8, 1993).
103. Marina Zvetaeva, "V sledstvennuiu chast NKVD," *Literaturnaia Gazeta* (September 2, 1992).
104. N. Mandelstam, *Vtoraia kniga*, p. 231.
105. Georgy Ivanov, "Peterburgskie Zimy," in *Serebrianyi vek. Memuary* (Moskva: Izvestiia, 1990), p. 229).
106. Belinkov, *Sdacha i Gibel*, p. 283
107. Joseph Brodsky once told me that he considered this poem among the very best Mandelshtam ever wrote.
108. Anna Akhmatova, "Listki iz dnevnika," in *Serebrianyi vek. Memuary* (Moskva: Izvestiia, 1990), p. 422.
109. Belinkov, *Sdacha i gibel*, p. 167.
110. N. Mandelshtam, *Vtoraia kniga*, p. 19.
111. Belinkov, *Sdacha i gibel*, pp. 186-87.
112. Igor Kon, "Epokhu ne vybiraiut," *Sotsiologcheskii Zhyrnl* (no. 2, 1994), p. 174.
113. Belinkov, *Sdacha i gibel*, p. 382.
114. Boris Pasternak, "Letter to Olga Fridenberg, July 1, 1954," in *Perepiska Borisa Pasternaka* (Moskva: Khudozhestvennaia Literatura, 1990), pp. 273-74.
115. Fedotov, *Sudba i grekhi Rossii*, Vol. 1, p. 100.
116. Ibid., Vol. 2, pp. 206-227.
117. Andrey D. Sakharov, *Progress, Coexistence & Intellectual Freedom* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1968), p. 71.

118. Vladimir Lakshin, in Michael Glenny, ed. *Solzhenitsyn, Tvardovsky, and Novy Mir* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1980), p. 66.

119. Andrey Amalrik, *Prosushchestvuet li Sovetskii Soiuz do 1984 goda?* (Amsterdam: Fond Imeni Gertsena, 1970), p. 7-8.

120. Alexander Solzhenitsyn, *Bodalsia telenok s dubom* (Paris: YMCA Press, 1975), p. 541.

121. Vladimir Bukovsky, *I vozvrashchaetsia veter. . .* (New York: Khronika Press, 1978), pp. 212-213.

122. Alexander I. Solzhenitsyn, *Publitsistika. Stati i rechi* (Paris: World, 1981), p. 338.

123. Alexander Solzhenitsyn, "Na vozvrate dykhaniia i soznaniia," in *Iz pod glyb* (Paris: YMCA Press, 1974), pp. 21-2.

124. *Ibid.*, p. 251.

125. Joseph Brodsky, *Less Than One. Selected Essays* (New York: Farrar Strauss Giroux, 1986), p. 30.

126. Solzhenitsyn, *Bodalsia telenok*, p. 603.

127. Belinkov, *Sdacha i gibel*, pp. 456-457.

128. Efim Etkind, *Zapiski ne zagovorshchika* (London: Overseas Publications Interchange, 1977), pp. 247.

129. Etkind cites his own example: in the foreword to his book on poetry translation, Etkind said that foreign poets had been lucky with their Russian translations because these were often done by outstanding poets in their own rights, like Pasternak and Mandelstam, who were discouraged to write and publish their own poetry (*Ibid.*, p. 234).

130. *Ibid.*, p. 249.

131. Lakshin, *Ibid.*, p. 61.

132. Andrey Kolesnikov, "Chelovek kak tsitata," *Panorama* (no. 659, November 24, 1939).

133. Anatoly Makarov, "Inye vremena," *Literaturnaia Gazeta* (no. 13,

March 30, 1994 ).

134. "Transcript of the second trial of J. Brodsky," pp. 348-467 in Etkind, *Zapiski ne zagovorshchika*, p. 439.

135. V. I. Tolstykh, "Ob intelligentsii i intelligentnosti," *Voprosy Filosofii* (no. 10, October 1982), pp. 83-98; V. F. Kormer, "Dvoinoe soznanie intelligentsii i psevdocol'tura," *Voprosy Filosofii* (no. 9, September 1989), pp. 65-79 (published posthumously, originally written in 1969).

136. Makarov, "Inye vremena. . ."

137. A. Lebedev "Apologiiia Sizifa," *Literaturnaia Gazeta* (February 14, 1990).

138. Petr A. Viazemsky, "Mnenie Eshche odnogo grazhdanina" [Excerpt from Viazemsky's Diary]," *Smena* (August 8, 1991).

139. Aleksandr Vasinsky, "Ballada o raznykh mneniiax," *Izvestia* (October 22, 1986).

140. Sergey Averintsev, "Po linii naibol'shego," *Sovetskaia Kultura* (February 21, 1987).

141. Vladimir Dudintsev, "Genetika sovetsti," *Izvestia* (February 17, 1987).

142. Fedor Burlatsky, "Ispoved reformatora," *Literaturnaia Gazeta* (July 19, 1989).

143. Andrey Voznesensky, "Pered stykovkoi vekov," *Sovetskaia Kultura* (February 21, 1987).

144. Dmitry Likhachev, "Nelegkaia nosha akademika Likhacheva," *Moskovskie Novosti* (September 18, 1988). The words are a partial paraphrase of Likhachev's words by the interviewer, A. Chernov.

145. A. F. Losev, "Ob intelligentnosti," *Sovetskaia Kultura* (January 1, 1989).

146. K. M. Kantor, "Stenograficheskii otchet," *Intelligentsiia i vlast* (Moskva: Soiuz Kinematografistov, 1992), p. 60.

147. Natalia Ivanova, "Prezentatsiia apokalipsisa, ili kto ne uspel, tot opozdal," *Literaturnaia Gazeta* (September 8, 1993).
148. Nathan Edelman, *Strana i Mir* (no. 1, 1989).
149. Alexander Panchenko, "I Detest Being an Intellectual," *Moscow News* (no. 50, 1991).
150. Alexander A. Ivanov, "Interviu s A. A. Ivanovym, intellektualom iz Rossii," *Novoe Russkoe Slovo* (March 1, 1994).
151. Gershenson, "Tvorcheskoe samosoznanie," pp. 89-90.
152. Olga Fridenberg, in Boris Pasternak, *Perepiska s Olgoi Fridenberg*, ed by Elliott Mossman (New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovitch, 1981), p. 291. Quoted in Marietta Chudakova, "Blud Borby," *Literaturnaia Gazeta* (October 30, 1991).
153. Kama Ginkas, "Vysokoe kosnoiazychie," *Literaturnaia Gazeta* (December 25, 1991).
154. Stanislav Rassadin, "Prodazhnye i zaprodannye," *Literaturnaia Gazeta* (November 3, 1993); Evgenii Shvedov, "Utonchennaia ubogost sverkh ironii," *Smena* (May 29, 1992); Poliakov, "Ia ne liubliu ironii tvoei," *Literaturnaia Gazeta* (August 18, 1993).
155. M. Berg, "Plius emigratsiia vsei strany. . ." *Moskovskie Novosti* (July 19, 1992).
156. Andrey Konchalovsky, "My ishchem schastia na storone i nekhodim naiti ego doma," *Izvestiia* (September 24, 1992); A. Bitov, "Privatizatsiia sovetskoi vlasti," *Novoe Russkoe Slovo*, January 31, 1993 .
157. Stanislav Rassadin, "Dzyk, dzyk," *Literaturnaia Gazeta* ( February 17, 1993 .
158. Fedotov, *Sudba i Grekhi Rossii*, Vol. 2, p. 175.
159. B. A. Kistiakovsky, "V zashchitu prava," *Vekhi*, p. 127.
160. See Dmitri N. Shalin, "Critical Theory and the Pragmatist Challenge," *American Journal of Sociology* (Vol. 98, 1992, pp. 237-279) and "Zametki o retsessivnykh genakh russkoi kultury," *Evropeets* (no. 4,

1994).

---

