

A STUDY OF THE RUSSIAN INTELLIGENTSIA  
FROM THE LATE 1880's TO 1905

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A Study of the Russian Intelligentsia  
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## Introduction.

Many elusive problems have been presented to us by Russian history. One of the most interesting is the enigma of the intelligentsia. It is the purpose of this thesis to investigate some aspects of the Russian intelligentsia in order to shed light on its ideas and roles in society.

Throughout the nineteenth century, Russia was the most backward of major European nations. The population was predominantly illiterate, industrialization was only beginning to ripen in the 1890's, and as late as 1891 famine and epidemics were capable of decimating the population of entire districts. Anton Chekhov appraised the whole picture in 1895. "'This Russia of ours,'" the writer said, "'is such an absurd, clumsy country.'"<sup>1</sup>

The only enlightened voice raised in protest to this misery was the intelligentsia. The intelligentsia was the only educated critical force in the empire. Its members were the only people with scope and interest that pointed out shortcomings to an autocratic government that discouraged (many times violently) all criticism. Indeed, in 1917, due in part to the major role played by the intelligentsia, the Romanov dynasty was swept from the pages of history.

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<sup>1</sup>Maxim Gorky, Alexander Kuprin, and I. A. Bunin, Reminiscences of Anton Chekhov, trans. S. S. Koteliansky, and Leonard Woolf (New York, 1921), p. 3. Hereafter cited as Reminiscences.

Politics alone did not drain the talents of the intelligentsia. In many ways it represented one of the few direct social reform agents in Russia. The energetic activity of some of its members in trying to solve national social problems embedded in the plight of the peasants was unequaled. Peter Lavrov, radical Russian socialist of the 1880's and 1890's, called all the members of the intelligentsia "critically thinking individuals who dedicate their knowledge and understanding to the enlightenment of the dark people [peasants] and the betterment of their lot."<sup>2</sup> Other evidence, however, indicates that all members of the intelligentsia did not always live up to this high standard.

The history of the intelligentsia, according to most scholars, extended from 1840 to 1917. Some historians, however, Nikolai Berdiaev for example, place its origins much earlier, citing Alexander Radishchev and N. I. Novikov, reformers writing during the reign of Catherine the Great, as its founders. Soviet apologists, on the other hand, claim that the intelligentsia is performing a useful service in the Soviet Union today. The conception of the intelligentsia held by the various critics, therefore, differs widely.

With such a difference of opinion concerning the intelligentsia, it becomes necessary to narrow the scope

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<sup>2</sup>Alexander Kaun, Maxim Gorky and His Russia (New York, 1931), p. 138.

of a short investigation. The thesis, then, will consider the Russian intelligentsia during the brief period of its intense activities, from the late 1880's to 1905. This period is called, in Russian terminology, the nineties.

From the late 1880's until 1905 (the nineties), the face of Russia was changing rapidly. Heavy industry was growing at a breathless pace, and the old class structure that had stood so rigidly for centuries was rapidly crumbling. At the same moment increased foreign investments were offering many new opportunities to Russians, and opening new lines of communication in an otherwise underdeveloped nation. The tsarist bureaucracy during this period was visibly unable to cope with the change. Archaic methods were still employed by the government to treat new situations, which alerted reform-minded men and women all over Russia.

The intelligentsia of the nineties was also subject to vast alteration. The groups within its ranks, once small and ineffective, were expanding into sizeable forces. The traditional home of the intelligentsia, Saint Petersburg, — was joined by a host of new centers of activity. The limits of the intelligentsia's previous goals were expanded to keep step with new progress. By 1905 the intelligentsia had become a very strong critical force, indeed.

In 1905 the intelligentsia finally solidified into legalized political parties whose aims were tangible and relatively clear. The preceding era, therefore, the

nineties, was an era of transition of methods and ideas for the intelligentsia.

The connection in the pages of Russian literature between political or social reform and the art of writing is inescapably obvious. With this in mind, the writings of Maxim Gorky and Anton Chekhov were chosen as the major primary sources.

Maxim Gorky, a pseudonym for Alexy Pleshev, was born in 1868 in Nizhni Novgorod. His formative years were spent bounding from one menial task to another, or simply wandering about Southern Russia. He read prodigiously during this early period and in 1892 had some of his recorded memories published. By working hard with his writing and depicting scenes of desperate life in Russia, he became a celebrated literary figure by 1895. The writer continued his travel and writing in Russia until 1906, when he fled abroad. Gorky returned to his homeland in 1914 and promptly received wide acclaim for his sympathy with the Russian revolutionary movement. He traveled between Western Europe and Russia extensively from 1914 until his mysterious death in 1937.

As early as 1884, Gorky was embroiled with the intelligentsia. He was active with the members of the more radical elements and eventually his affiliation led to his arrest, in 1892, for subversive activity. His literary works show a wide understanding of the radical elements in the intelligentsia. He worked and lived with these people and his

final opus, Forty Years, the Life of Clim Samghin, while fictional, represents an extensive appraisal of the intelligentsia of the nineties.

Anton Pavlovich Chekhov, son of an ex-serf, was born in Taganrog on the Black Sea in 1860. Following a harsh childhood working in a store, he migrated in 1879 to Moscow. Here, in 1884 he obtained a degree in medicine from the University of Moscow. Most of his remaining years were spent either in Moscow or on various country estates he acquired from time to time. Chekhov traveled abroad three times, but displayed love for only one country, Russia. His famous stories and plays, written between 1883 and 1904, are scenes taken from rural life or from Moscow literary circles. Tuberculosis finally stilled his pen in 1904.

Unlike Gorky, Chekhov's entrance into the intelligentsia was made among the liberal elements. In the cities, he befriended the literary and professional reform groups. His assistance, given to the peasant, in the role of a doctor, brought him into contact with the Zemstvos, the local self-governing body staffed with many liberals. Chekhov's tales are reflections of his meetings with the liberal core of the intelligentsia and of contemporary social ills in Russia.

Both men wrote about Russia and its intelligentsia in the 1890's and both were accepted as members in its ranks. Gorky is recognized as the principal literary figure for the radical wing, while Chekhov was acquainted with the



liberal elements. Dmitry Merezhkovsky, a poet of the nineties, declared in his essay on Chekhov and Gorky, that if all the other works of his age were to disappear, a sociologist could paint a picture of the nineties from their writings alone.

Other writers, of course, have been used in the thesis as supporting evidence, or to add continuity to form and organization.

For the sake of clarity it is necessary to say a few words about the organization of my study. Under the first of several headings is a discussion of the social origins of the intelligentsia. The second heading includes a treatment of the institutions, groups, and parties the intelligentsia created and used. The third heading considers the social tasks and roles the intelligentsia reserved for itself. Under the next heading is a discussion of the important ethic of the intelligentsia, and how its members professed it during the nineties. In order to make each idea in the intelligentsia clear, the thesis is separated into two major divisions, the radical, and the liberal intelligentsia. Finally, there is a treatment of the isolation of the radical intelligentsia and a treatment of decay within the liberal intelligentsia.

## Chapter I

### The Social Origins of the Radical Intelligentsia.

From the late 1880's to 1905 the members of the radical intelligentsia were chiefly men and women under thirty years of age. They were deeply concerned about the future of Russia and her people and were dedicated to finding solutions for Russia's many problems. But like all young people they tended to be impetuous, and many of their actions approached the bizarre. To go without a night's sleep in order to discuss a currently popular social or political concept, was accepted by them as normal behavior. Springing from varied social backgrounds, these enthusiastic intellectuals converged into multifarious groups to examine or act on pertinent issues of their day.

The radical intelligentsia may be divided into three main cadres. One of these was made up of young men and women students enrolled at the institutions of higher learning in Russia.<sup>1</sup> It constituted the majority element in the radical camp. Another cadre was made up of itinerant elements--writers, teachers, political exiles, and expelled students--many of whom had been imprisoned for "unreliable activity;" the members of this cadre have been conveniently dubbed "professional revolutionaries" by modern writers. A third cadre, the proletariat, was composed of workers trained

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<sup>1</sup>Paul Milyoukov, Russia and Its Crisis (New York, 1905), p. 218.

by the students or the itinerants to carry on agitation among fellow workers. The radical activity of these proletarians was quickly drawn to the attention of the authorities, and the workers were arrested and jailed, or they fled to join the itinerant cadre. While it was not unusual that students, itinerants, and workers should be represented in one group, generally each cadre retained its own social hue and tended to cluster together in a more or less exclusive organization.

The student contingent of the radical intelligentsia studied in the universities. The centers of learning housing the young enthusiasts fell into two main categories. The first of these included the schools of higher learning in the large cities of Moscow and Saint Petersburg. In the second category were the institutes, technical colleges, and seminaries scattered throughout provincial Russia. In the late 1880's and the 1890's, for example, Gorky found active student groups in such widely dispersed cities as Kazan, Vladimir, and Odessa.

With few exceptions, in the 1870's, only the gentry educated their children. Even as late as "1879, 70% of the nine thousand students in Russia's nine universities came from the families of the gentry, officials, and clergy...."<sup>2</sup> By the 1890's, however, a change had occurred. Universities were admitting many students from the middle class, which

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<sup>2</sup>W. H. Bruford, Chekhov and His Russia (New York, 1947), p. 146.

had recently been created as one result of the lively industrial expansion in Russia. According to Gorky, it was this new middle class that supplied the Saint Petersburg and Moscow universities with most of their students. He noted that enrollees in the 1890's came from homes of doctors, professors, botanists, and contractors.<sup>3</sup> Students of humble origin were rare in the universities, but they played a substantial role in the radical activity.

The students of the provincial schools came from more obscure and less wealthy surroundings than those attending the great universities. While the middle class was represented, Gorky writes, in his autobiography, that he traveled in the company of sons of carpenters, small merchants, and even peasants. The squalor that accompanied the lives of many provincial students attested to their lack of financial support. In his autobiography, Gorky paints a dismal

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<sup>3</sup>Maxim Gorky, Forty Years, the Life of Clim Samghin, trans. Alexander Bakshy, and B. G. Guerney (New York, 1930-1933), Bystander, I, Magnet, II, Other Fires, III. Hereafter referred to under the separate titles, Bystander, Magnet, and Other Fires.

During Clim Samghin's (central figure in the three volume epic) early days, spent at the Saint Petersburg and Moscow Universities; his circle of radical friends included a large majority from the middle class. A sample includes: Samghin's father was a trader in factory articles, Premirova's father was a botanist, Liutov was the son of a wealthy Moscow merchant, Preiss was the son of a hat manufacturer, Samova's father was a doctor, and Turoboev's father, while of obscure origin, was certainly in the same social and economic class as the above. Lidia Varavka's father was a contractor and newspaper editor, as well as many other things. Kutuzov was the son of a mill owner, and the only member of the circle from humble origin. Oddly enough, he was the acknowledged leader of the circle.

picture of the students he lived with in Kazan. He describes how they existed on the paltry earnings of prostitute friends or found even less socially accepted methods of staying alive.<sup>4</sup>

Regardless of their habits and backgrounds, the students affiliated with radical circles showed little interest in formal course work. Seldom does Gorky comment, in his works, on future professional plans, examinations, class hours, or grades of the students. Students were expelled not for poor scholarship, but for participation in illegal political activity.

Usually, expelled students made immediate contact with the small but highly influential group of itinerant radicals. These "professional revolutionaries" Gorky depicts in his autobiography. A group he met in 1889 at Borissoglebsk is described as "a wild group of the 'intelligentsia.' They were nearly all 'unreliable,' had tasted the prison and the exile, had read a lot, knew different languages--they were expelled students, seminarians, statisticians, a naval officer and two officers of the army."<sup>5</sup> The family connections of most of the itinerants are obscure. Years of political exile and "unreliable activity" taught them to hide their identity. It is difficult to expose the origins of a significant number in order to determine a class

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<sup>4</sup>Maxim Gorky, My University Days (New York, 1930), p. 21.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 219.

orientation of the cadre, although many wore the conspicuous badge of education.<sup>6</sup> There were certainly many middle class and petty gentry in the flock, together with some of humble beginnings, and Gorky emphasizes that the nobility was always represented by some tormented soul who had surrendered great privileges to join the movement.<sup>7</sup>

The "professional revolutionaries" wandered about Russia, and maintained frequent contact with radical groups in the cities. They held odd jobs from time to time, wrote pamphlets of dissent, influenced others with their teachings, and left trails of unrest in their wake. One of the chief targets of their propaganda was the factory proletariat.

The proletarians who had been trained in radical thought by the itinerants and students composed the final cadre in the radical intelligentsia. They were unskilled industrial workers, avid for knowledge. The workers had originally been serfs or village craftsmen whose fathers had most assuredly been serfs. Growing industry had drawn them to factory areas where they lived and worked in crowded conditions. The miserable conditions of these factory hands provided a fertile breeding ground for discontent and the doctrines calling for social and political agitation rapidly took root. As a result, the small body of proletarian radicals grew swiftly in number. Paul Millyoukov writes of

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<sup>6</sup>Oliver H. Radkey, The Agrarian Foes of Bolshevism (New York, 1958), p. 59.

<sup>7</sup>Maxim Gorky, Mother (New York, 1923), p. 38.

innumerable incidents. "The story is always the same: A group of 'intellectuals,' mostly young men from the universities . . . conduct a socialistic 'propaganda' among local workingmen, and for this purpose organize several private circles for self-culture. The most intelligent among the pupils soon join their teachers in forming a local committee, which starts an 'agitation' on a large scale for an 'economic' struggle in the factories and workshops."<sup>8</sup> As the political and social activity of the proletarian radicals expanded and became more apparent to the government, they were arrested, jailed, and exiled. Upon return from exile, traditionally the classroom for the exchange of radical ideas, the ex-factory workers had little choice but to join the itinerant revolutionaries.

Factory workers who entered the ranks of the radical intelligentsia in the 1890's helped to change its basic social complexion. Its composition was also altered by the results of renewed activity among the university students.

Upon graduation from the universities, most of the students returned to the provincial or professional positions reserved for them by their families. They left the wild ravings of their youth to the new crop of freshmen who had just recently been pupils in the gymnasiums. Only the students who were compelled to withdraw for political activity maintained contact with the student body in the

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<sup>8</sup>Milyoukov, Russia and Its Crisis, p. 496.



schools of higher learning. New students who registered at the universities were met by these expelled veterans and were immediately introduced to radical ideas. Martov, an incipient "professional revolutionary" in 1891, described the atmosphere at the University of Saint Petersburg. "In the halls of the universities," records a Martov biographer, "his older comrades pointed out to him the bearded and somewhat disheveled figures of . . . students already celebrated for their illegal activities. When he and a few friends organized a study circle, one of these august figures . . . took the little group under his wing."<sup>9</sup> The attention of new students, during the 1890's, was quick to focus on political and social thought which soon resulted in an increase in the proportion of radical students in the universities.

This spread of radical activity in the schools led to a rise in the number of students expelled, and as the decade drew to a close the situation forced a reactionary government to crack down on universities and students with stern measures. Punishments became severe and some students were actually drafted into the army.<sup>10</sup>

Newly expelled students, suspect factory agitators, and itinerants were never afforded the choice of those students who returned home. Following four or five years

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<sup>9</sup>Leopold H. Haimson, The Russian Marxists and the Origins of Bolshevism (Cambridge, Mass., 1955), p. 66.

<sup>10</sup>Michael T. Florinsky, Russia: A History and an Interpretation (New York, 1955), II, p. 1166.

of political activity, these radicals found it impossible to retreat to a comfortable berth in society. They had to stay in the arena of activity.

The 1890's, therefore, witnessed the rapid growth of a radical intelligentsia of varied social patterns. A growing proportion of middle class students and ex-serf factory workers flowed into the intelligentsia and then assumed the title of itinerant of "professional revolutionary." They joined in the "unreliable activity" of an already existing itinerant element whose origins are varied and blurred.

## Chapter II

### The Basic Groups and Parties in the Radical Intelligentsia.

With rare exceptions the young radicals gathered into groups. In the late 1880's these groups were small reading circles, five or ten strong, that often met in cellars. It was within these small circles (kruzhki) that the radicals exchanged ideas, and educated themselves to the doctrines of constitutional government, socialism, and anarchism. The study circles continued to exist throughout the 1890's, remaining the nurturing beds of intelligentsia ideas and values, and isolated radicals instinctively joined them.<sup>1</sup> Later in the decade these kruzhki became the basic working unit of the mass political parties.

In the late 1880's and early 1890's, the kruzhki were generally disorganized, their meetings given to mass contradictions, shoutings, and mysticism. Young firebrands, whose conversations were more emotional than scholarly, shrieked their opinions at one another. They were the masters of a small flat. "They brought thick books under their arms and, poking their fingers at some of the pages, shouted at each other, each of them affirming the truth he liked

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<sup>1</sup>A. K. Wildman, "The Russian Intelligentsia of the 1890's," The American Slavic and East European Review, XIX (April, 1960), 157.

best."<sup>2</sup> Not all the meetings rose to such an enthusiastic pitch. Some circles were dominated by quasi-theologians and armchair metaphysicians who tried to remove themselves from the reality of the moment. Gorky gives an account of people in such a group immediately after they were told of a tragic workers riot. They discussed the riot as though it had occurred centuries ago. "'Yes,'" concludes Gorky's observer, "'these people have fenced themselves off from reality with an impenetrable network of words; they possess the enviable capacity to look through the horror of real facts to some other horror, perhaps only imagined.'"<sup>3</sup>

Throughout the nineties, the kruzhki maintained their independence; but later in the period more effort was put into serious discussion and study with less din and froth. Gorky cites a typical radical meeting which took place in 1897. "They did not shout. They did not wrangle. They conducted serious discussions of political economy. . . . With obvious enthusiasm they added up figures on oil, grain, sugar, fats, hemp, and many other kinds of Russian raw materials."<sup>4</sup>

Usually, these serious discussions were carried on by those radicals attracted to the socialism of Karl Marx. Gradually their interest in less concrete doctrines fell

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<sup>2</sup>Gorky, My University Days, p. 83.

<sup>3</sup>Gorky, Magnet, p. 722.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., pp. 130-131.

away and they spoke only in terms of the economic determinants of history. The new factory workers who poured into the intelligentsia were almost exclusively followers of Karl Marx.<sup>5</sup> Small in 1890, the Marxist element soon grew to a commanding position among the radical intelligentsia. Gorky provides a sample of Marxist growth in Magnet. His feckless character, Samghin, who is a Marxist messenger in 1897, observed that the number of errands were increasing. "By the rapid growth of these commissions, he was able to convince himself that the party's Marxist connexions in the Moscow factory district were growing remarkably."<sup>6</sup>

A second fundamental ideology within the radical intelligentsia was provided by the Narodniks (Populists). The Narodniks considered themselves the inheritors of the tradition of the Populists of the 1870's who were concerned with the establishment of an agrarian type of socialism. In the judgment of the Populists, of the 1870's, only the Russian peasant with his democratic ideas and institutions was able to save Russia from present and future misery. "Let us go to the village . . . . Let us gather together all who believe in the people . . . . Only there amidst the great people in the village . . . can salvation and reason be found."<sup>7</sup> In 1874 the Populists had carried their

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<sup>5</sup>Milyoukov, Russia and Its Crisis, p. 497.

<sup>6</sup>Gorky, Magnet, p. 578.

<sup>7</sup>James H. Billington, Mikhailovsky and Russian Populism (Oxford, 1958), p. 94.

message to the peasants in an unsuccessful exodus of love.<sup>8</sup> The exodus ended in tragedy, but the debacle in the spring of 1874 no longer frightened the Narodniks in the 1890's. They too looked among the peasants for the solution to Russia's problems. They too agitated and offered assistance among the villagers.<sup>9</sup>

While the Narodniks were more skillful than the earlier Populists, and while their power was manifested by extensive and frequent terrorism, the vague logical base of their theory caused them to lose ground to the Marxists. The new Populism (Narodnichestvo), however, remained one of the two major ideologies in the radical intelligentsia during the 1890's.<sup>10</sup>

Religious answers to Russia's social problems, put forth mainly by Leo Tolstoy and his followers, were found wanting by the intelligentsia. Tolstoy's creed of non-resistance to all evil seemed attractive to many thinkers, but lost its charm when problems remained unsolved. Anton Chekhov defected from the Tolstoy camp as early as 1891.<sup>11</sup> One of Gorky's Marxian radicals claimed, in 1897, that history was "'positively fed up with all these [Tolstoyan]

<sup>8</sup> Billington, Mikhailovsky and Russian Populism, pp. 79-80.

<sup>9</sup> Milyoukov, Russia and Its Crisis, pp. 491-492.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., p. 494.

<sup>11</sup> David Magarshack, Chekhov: A Life (New York, 1953), pp. 236-237.

sentiments.'"<sup>12</sup> In 1896, Gorky had one of his respected liberals in Bystander state: "'It's quite remarkable that the contumacious preaching of Liev Tolstoi doesn't find among our youth many disciples and apostles.'"<sup>13</sup>

As the nineties ripened the study circles began to label themselves Marxist or Narodnik. Scattered ideas, as interpreted by Gorky, began to fall into well-defined columns. "'We live in a triangle of extremities,'" Varavka, the liberal engineer in Bystander, announced in 1895, "'the sides of the triangle are bureaucracy, renascent Narodnichestvo, and Marxism.'"<sup>14</sup>

During the late nineties, both large radical contingents solidified into formal political parties. The Marxists unified in 1898 and copied their Western European contemporaries by calling themselves the Social Democratic Party.<sup>15</sup> Later in the period, 1901, the Narodnik factions finally came together to form the Social Revolutionary Party.<sup>16</sup>

As 1905 approached, young radicals flocked into the ranks of these two radical parties with little hesitation. Clim Samghin, in 1902, "was disgusted by the haste with which freshmen, the gymnasium boys of yesterday, declared themselves

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<sup>12</sup>Gorky, Magnet, p. 138.

<sup>13</sup>Gorky, Bystander, p. 660.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., p. 642.

<sup>15</sup>Haimson, The Russian Marxists, p. 80.

<sup>16</sup>Radkey, The Foes of Bolshevism, p. 51.



Social-Democrats, or Social-Revolutionaries."<sup>17</sup> By 1903 even high school students were joining the radical political organizations.<sup>18</sup> ✓

Unfortunately, despite all Russia's problems which the new parties promised to solve, despite the enthusiasm of party members, and regardless of the ideas the two radical fronts had in common, they never ceased to grapple with one another. They hurled diatribes back and forth, criticized each others' doctrines, methods, and goals.<sup>19</sup> They even went so far as to shun one another in public. "The young Marxists," Gorky discovered, "found it was not suitable that their representatives should appear before the public next to the representatives of the 'Narodnichestvo.'"<sup>20</sup> At times competition between the factions of the radical intelligentsia became so intense that observers began to wonder if they were not actually more interested in fighting each other than in destroying their mutual enemy. Milyoukov records an event that occurred in 1904 when the Social Democrats actually used violence to expel the Social Revolutionaries from a student meeting.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>17</sup>Gorky, Magnet, p. 583.

<sup>18</sup>Milyoukov, Russia and Its Crisis, p. 511.

<sup>19</sup>Gorky, Magnet, p. 137. For similar incidents, see also Magnet, p. 542, and Magnet, p. 336.

<sup>20</sup>Gorky, My University Days, p. 326.

<sup>21</sup>Milyoukov, Russia and Its Crisis, p. 505, fn.

To summarize, the basic working groups of the radical intelligentsia were the kruzhki or study circles. The circles were independent of each other and were the haven of the radicals of the 1890's. As the revolution of 1905 approached many kruzhki merged together into one of the two radical political parties which fought each other on every possible occasion.

### Chapter III

#### How the Radical Intelligentsia Viewed Its Tasks in Society.

The students, writers, and workers in the radical intelligentsia, as depicted by Gorky during the 1890's, were possessed by a crusading idealism. They saw a major role in history reserved for their plans and aspirations. They were surrounded by misery and poverty that had accumulated over the centuries, and these young people assumed that it was their responsibility to change this, and make Russia into a better civilization for their fellowmen. To give service to less fortunate brethren, they wanted to employ their strength and intelligence. They accepted this self-imposed mission with serious conviction, in many cases construing it as an unavoidable burden that had been thrust upon them. They were obsessed with this idealism. "'A heavy cross has bowed us down,'" cried one of Maxim Gorky's radical figures, "'everyone of us is a slave, chained by the past to the heavy chariot of history.'"<sup>1</sup> In his autobiography, Gorky describes the leader of a Kazan radical group. "It seemed to me that this man considered himself sentenced for life to help others."<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Gorky, Magnet, p. 545.

<sup>2</sup>Gorky, My University Days, p. 104.

The radical intelligentsia saw its task of lifting Russia and her people from drudgery sharply divided into two phases. The first phase was to destroy, by any means, the elements in society responsible for the perpetuation of evil. The second, was to build a new order. "'We . . . are called,'" cried one radical warrior, "'by the logic of history to destroy the old world, [and] to create the new life.'"<sup>3</sup> "Gorky makes no attempt to hide his own partisanship in this contest. Completely identified with his protagonists, he is as committed as they are to the overthrow of life as it is, in the name of a compelling vision of life as it should be."<sup>4</sup>

The initial task of the intelligentsia, to overturn life as it was, required definitions of the social disorder and its sources. In discussions about intelligentsia activity of the 1860's and 1870's, contemporary Russian conditions, and prophetic surveys of the future, ills of society were rapidly defined and blame for evils was affixed. The Russian misery, according to the radical intelligentsia, stemmed from the tsar, his church, his officials, and his system of government. This seemed especially obvious to them during the devastating famine of 1891-1892. The inability of the tsarist administration to cope with this dearth exposed its gross incompetence.

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<sup>3</sup>Gorky, Mother, p. 423.

<sup>4</sup>Rufus W. Mathewson, Jr., The Positive Hero in Russian Literature (New York, 1958), p. 222.

Milyoukov, the liberal professor, and Stepnyak, the revolutionary terrorist, both agreed in 1893 that the famine of 1891 was a decisive factor in pointing out the autocracy as the chief source of Russia's problems, and a decisive factor in renewing latent revolutionary ideas in the intelligentsia.<sup>5</sup> The membership of the radical intelligentsia accelerated rapidly following 1891.<sup>6</sup>

Since the source of evil was defined and revolutionary ideas were afoot, the decision that Gorky places in the mouths of his radical characters seems justified. "'First of all, we must destroy autocracy. After that, we'll see what's what.'"<sup>7</sup>

In order to accomplish the huge task of dismantling the Romanov monarchy, the radicals saw that they would need to uproot almost three hundred years of tradition and custom. The scope of the project did not deter them; rather it spurred them on. They harbored no qualms about the nature of the pending change or how the Romanov's were to be dispatched. "'It's clear as clear can be,'" observed one of Gorky's radicals, "'Russia must be hewn with an axe; it can't be sharpened with pen knives.'"<sup>8</sup> They surrendered

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<sup>5</sup>Milyoukov, Russia and Its Crisis, pp. 323-324.

<sup>6</sup>Wildman, "The Russian Intelligentsia," The American Slavic and East European Review (April, 1960), p. 162.

<sup>7</sup>Gorky, Magnet, p. 239.

<sup>8</sup>Gorky, Bystander, p. 453.

themselves totally to the chore of organizing a revolution. Revolution is the symbol of the radical destructive mentality throughout Gorky's works. "'We are the people,'" cried a typical radical, "'upon whom history has imposed the duty of organizing the revolution.'"<sup>9</sup>

Throughout Gorky's Forty Years, the Life of Clim Samghin, the planning for revolt involved two levels of organization. First, there were attempts to bring all the radicals and their groups under one tightly knit banner. This idea was popular with the leaders who saw unity as a prerequisite for success. "'The intelligentsia, as a whole, must become a single party and not split up into parts!'"<sup>10</sup> In general, however, all the members of the intelligentsia were convinced that a unified force would help them in fulfilling their destructive role.

Gorky's characters met the publication of the manifesto creating the Social Democratic Party with rousing cheers. "'It's long overdue. Everybody has been talking about what we must think, and we should be talking about what we must do.'"<sup>11</sup> "'A most important event,'" cried another one of Gorky's fictional tools, "'perhaps even a historical event.'"<sup>12</sup> "'Was a serious political party really possible?"

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<sup>9</sup>Gorky, Magnet, p. 133.

<sup>10</sup>Gorky, Bystander, p. 675.

<sup>11</sup>Gorky, Magnet, p. 238.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid., p. 237.

Questioned Clim Samghin, who had lost faith in the activity of the intelligentsia. "A party capable of organizing the intelligentsia," Samghin wondered, "of controlling the students' and workers' movements, of sweeping aside babblers, hysterical maniacs, and anarchists? . . . [If so] there would be a place for him, too."<sup>13</sup>

Unfortunately, despite fervent efforts to coordinate the various independent groups, the radical intelligentsia united into two parties, not one. Even the two parties were racked with internal fights and eventually split into even more parties.

Concurrent with efforts at unification ran a second level of organization: endless efforts to arrange the study circles into militant bands. In the case of some kruzhs this was successful and the small groups were used to raise funds for the parties. Gorky cites a typical incident at Saint Petersburg. "There were several who bustled about officiously like Popov [student radical]. They constantly thrust upon their fellow-students tickets for soireés, for the benefit of the Regional Organization movement, [radical local movement] or for concerts organized for mysterious purposes." "The lectures, arguments and whispers--all this chaotic noise of hundreds of young people intoxicated with a thirst for life and action. . . ."<sup>14</sup> The serious radicals

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<sup>13</sup>Gorky, Magnet, p. 241.

<sup>14</sup>Gorky, Bystander, p. 328.



probed the writings of Sergyei Nechaev, the cell organizer of the revolutionary 1860's (1869-1872), for the answers to organizational questions.<sup>15</sup> The writings of P. Tkachev (1875-1883), espousing the vanguard theory of revolution, were also influential in the study circles.<sup>16</sup> One of Gorky's Marxians felt: "'We must build an organization that could coordinate at a given moment all the revolutionary forces, all the outbreaks of revolution.'"17 Another radical cited the teachings of a great leader. "'He [Lenin] asserts the necessity of educating workers, intellectuals, into masters and artists of revolution.'"18

Disorganization, of course, did not disappear, and results of vigorous efforts fell far short of the goal. While many kruzhs became important cogs in an organized radical destructive machine, a disappointing number still floated about unattached and disorganized.

Groups beyond the select circle of radicals did not escape the zeal of the young revolutionaries. The radical intelligentsia would have considered its destructive power incomplete if the masses went unprepared for the coming

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<sup>15</sup>Gorky, Magnet, p. 188. For a discussion of cell and mass organization see also Donald W. Treadgold, Lenin and His Rivals (New York, 1955), pp. 38-39. Hereafter cited as Lenin.

<sup>16</sup>Haimson, The Russian Marxists, p. 36, discusses this point.

<sup>17</sup>Gorky, Magnet, pp. 542-543.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid., p. 542.

combat. "We, the intelligentsia, are the ferment which must coagulate the workers and the peasants into a single power."<sup>19</sup> The intelligentsia, therefore, carried on a most intensive campaign organizing the politically budding workers. It established reading groups among the factory hands and the peasants in order to educate them to the doctrines of radical thought. Many efforts with the populace ended in debacles, but the intelligentsia as a group continued its tireless efforts.

The destructive role of the radical intelligentsia, Gorky shows, went beyond organizing revolutionary forces within and outside its ranks. Perhaps the most obvious manifestation of this was displayed by the intelligentsia members when dealing with persons and programs not in sympathy with their plans. They showered strong disapproval on all those who did not conform to radical destructive ideas. Many talented writers, for instance, were expected to join the ranks of the Marxists or Narodniks. Their creative work was to be a guide post, or sign post, pointing the way to revolutionary activity. Gorky, while he never joined a party, did adhere to the radical canon directed at writers and calling for political pamphleteering.<sup>20</sup> Many of the young literary intellectuals, however, were enamored with the French symbolist school

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<sup>19</sup>Gorky, Magnet, p. 788.

<sup>20</sup>Mathewson, Positive Hero, p. 212.

that penetrated Russia during the 1890's.<sup>21</sup> This French thought that influenced the writers of the nineties (both decadence and symbolism), had little in common with revolution.<sup>22</sup> The members of the intelligentsia, therefore, upbraided the writers for inadequately displaying revolutionary zeal. "'Revolution demands that man humbly recognize himself as a servant of history, or its victim, instead of dreaming of the possibility of independent creative work.'"<sup>23</sup> "'I must say,'" said another radical, "'our writers . . . are Nietzscheans, Decadents, Libertines of words.'"<sup>24</sup> All these were terms of abuse when uttered by the radicals. Even the writers not subjected to the French school were condemned. "'I am often reproached,'" said Anton Chekhov, decidedly not a revolutionary writer, "'with writing about trifles. I'm told I have no positive heroes: revolutionaries, Alexanders of Macedon. . . .'"<sup>25</sup>

Passive critics of the radicals and their methods, especially liberals, were unmercifully chided and persecuted. Even the lightest criticism from the radicals called

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<sup>21</sup>Georgette Donchin, The Influence of French Symbolism on Russian Poetry (The Hague, 1958), p. 7.

<sup>22</sup>Paul Milyoukov, "Literature," in Outlines of Russian Culture, ed. Michael Karpovich, trans. Valentine Ughet, and Eleanor Davis (Philadelphia, 1948), pp. 54-61.

<sup>23</sup>Gorky, Magnet, p. 188.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid., p. 387.

<sup>25</sup>Magarschack, Chekhov, p. 371.

them dreamers and flatly accused them of living beyond their age. "'Liberal old men are still groaning and whispering in reviews that life like this is impossible,'" complained a young radical in a typical remark, "'while our generation has already solved the question of what sort of life we should live, and for what purpose.'"<sup>26</sup>

With the organization of revolution on two levels within the intelligentsia, the organization of groups outside the intelligentsia, and the disarming of unsympathetic or passive critics, Gorky concludes the significant destructive role of the radical intelligentsia. The intolerable government would soon crumble, and the creative role of the young people would begin.

The attitude taken by the radical intelligentsia toward their creative role in society was equally as enthusiastic as the destructive attitude. "'We ought to build a bridge across the bog of this rotten life to a future of soulful goodness. That's our task, that's what we have to do.'"<sup>27</sup> Following the final destruction of all evils the 'new bridge' was to lead Russia and eventually the world to a new life. The materials of construction with which the new structure was to be built were left vague by Gorky. So much energy was expended in thoughts of destruction that concrete plans for the future were rarely discussed.

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<sup>26</sup>Gorky, Magnet, p. 238. Further incidents of this nature may be found in Magnet, p. 43, and Magnet, p. 579.

<sup>27</sup>Gorky, Mother, p. 36.

The radicals were not, however, totally void of creative ideas. Their main constructive role consisted in outright assistance to the masses. This aid to the masses was to be made available after the demise of the great autocracy and was also to be distributed concurrently with the fall of the Romanovs.

The principle problem was to find a means of lifting the peasant and the urban worker from their state of ignorance and poverty. The radical intelligentsia, living in a state of constant solicitude for the peasants and workers, decided that education was the best ingredient they could provide the downtrodden. Some of the young people actually went among the masses, enduring hardships and scorn in order to bring the light to people who knew nothing better than hunger and wretchedness.<sup>28</sup> Gorky himself joined such a group, in 1888, headed by an itinerant radical named Romass.<sup>29</sup> Romass, dedicated exile, and leader of the expedition, suffered jeers, had his house burned to the ground, and was stoned by the unknowing peasants he was trying to teach. Neither the hostility of the people nor the authorities halted these radical campaigns. The intelligentsia always reasoned that once the people were taught, they would understand. Romass once told Gorky: "What is wanted is that they should learn to think and

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<sup>28</sup>Gorky, My University Days, p. 164.

<sup>29</sup>Kaun, Gorky and His Russia, p. 169.

they'll soon find out the truth.'"<sup>30</sup> Gorky considered that his duty in life was to help the people. "I felt my soul at peace and thought with pride that I was working 'among the people' and 'instructing' them."<sup>31</sup> Even the less energetic radicals were conscious of their obligation. "The life's aim of a man belonging to the 'intelligentsia,'" one itinerant radical told Gorky, "is an uninterrupted accumulation of scientific luggage in the view of distributing it disinterestedly among the masses of the people."<sup>32</sup> The intelligentsia reasoned, however, that education of the masses would not, in itself, solve all Russia's problems.

Despite economic growth resulting from the massive thrust of industrial expansion, Russia was still plagued by starvation, disease, and corruption on a large scale. Coupled with education for the people as a creative idea, the radical intelligentsia, Gorky relates, tried to expose flaws in the overall economy and culture of Russia. Elimination of these flaws would supposedly alleviate miserable social conditions in the empire. While many radical creative suggestions came in the form of blatant criticism, they were more in line with constructive rather than destructive philosophy. Scanning the economy of Russia, one radical complained because "despite the abundance of

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<sup>30</sup>Gorky, My University Days, p. 164.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid., p. 89.

<sup>32</sup>Ibid., p. 249.

forests in Russia, paper is bought in its millions of 'pouds' in Finland. 'There is much cedar wood in the Urals as you could possibly want,'" he continued, "'and of graphite also, and yet we [Russians] don't know how to make pencils.'"<sup>33</sup>

The radical intelligentsia, in Gorky's works, also compared progress of institutions in the West with that in Russia and concluded that Russians could learn a great deal about civilization by watching and gleaning what was needed from her European neighbors. The Church was singled out for special attention. "'The Catholics gave us Campanella, Mendel, and many scholars and historians; but our monks are leaden ignoramuses; they can't even write a mediocre history of the Russian sects.'"<sup>34</sup>

To infer that the radical intelligentsia solved the vast range of problems that faced Russia is to err. It discussed some channels open to reform. It suggested ideas that might have dented the huge mountain of issues and offered a little help to the people, but it was not, on the whole, constructive. Regardless of eloquent talk about what was needed for Russia, and how it was going to help, what the radical intelligentsia wished to destroy was always more prominently in view than what it wished to create.

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<sup>33</sup>Gorky, Bystander, p. 699.

<sup>34</sup>Ibid., p. 510.

## Chapter IV

### The Ethic of the Radical Intelligentsia.

Many demands were certain to be pressed on the radicals if they wished to accomplish their lofty tasks. They recognized this, states Gorky, and professed to a personal code of ethics that was to meet all responsibilities placed upon them. The ingredients of this code included sharpening practical abilities, adhering to a utilitarian attitude toward art, immersing oneself into the masses, and a willingness to perform any sacrifice for the cause.

Sharpening of practical abilities was best managed through study. The young radicals tried to learn everything connected with their role. Gorky notes young Marxists as they pontificated to each other: "'We must know all the truth, and all the falsehood.'"<sup>1</sup> Learning was not education in the formal colleges or universities. The official system of education had little to offer in the way of economics, political science, or social science, important fields of knowledge that had to be mastered. As a result, learning for the intelligentsia took place outside the class room.

Books were obtained that had been classified as "forbidden" by the government. Their content ranged in subject matter over a broad scope, including social,

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<sup>1</sup>Gorky, Mother, p. 36.



political, and economic criticism. The authors of these volumes were past revolutionary heroes, exiles, or foreign sages. Strict official censorship forced publishers to print these tomes abroad and smuggle them into Russia, or print them on clandestine domestic presses. The radicals considered the study of these books, and others like them, the core of their education.

A sample collection of rare and prohibited books owned by a radical is described by Gorky. "They were at the disposal of the students of the numerous Kazan schools and various revolutionary-minded people."<sup>2</sup> They included the Historical Letters, of Peter Lavrov, Russian radical socialist active during the 1870's and 1880's; What Is To Be Done, by Nicholas Chernyshevsky, and King Hunger, with Cunning Machinery, by Dmitry Pisarev, radical literary critic of the 1860's. Gorky mentions that these volumes were "considerably shabby and worn out."<sup>3</sup>

Another item necessary to the radical code of ethics was the ability to maintain an utilitarian attitude toward society. This was not a new concept with the Russian intelligentsia, the utilitarian aesthetic was developed by Nicholas Chernyshevsky in his The Aesthetic Relations of Art to Reality,<sup>4</sup> published during the 1850's. When

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<sup>2</sup>Gorky, My University Days, p. 79.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 79.

<sup>4</sup>Mathewson, Positive Hero, p. 80.

dealing with art forms it insisted on a functional approach. In a baser sense it demanded that the central hero, in a literary work for example, be dressed in the garb of success and meet with everlasting bliss as a direct result of loyal adherence to radical doctrines. It was exactly this serviceable ethic that drove the radicals of the 1890's to attack the symbolist poets who sought the good life in less obvious veins. This utilitarian view of the intelligentsia extended beyond art forms to embrace all culture.<sup>5</sup> It channeled every facet of a radical's existence toward the planned destructive and creative goals.

The radical code of ethics did not cease with the application of utilitarian standards, relates Gorky. The young people sought to go beyond mere practicality. Their ethic called upon them to immerse themselves into the people; it demanded "'dissolving in the masses,' precisely as it had been demanded by the Tolstoyan dressed as a peasant," decided a Moscow student in 1896.<sup>6</sup> Just as the earlier Populists had considered it correct to become absorbed by the masses, the intelligentsia of the 1890's claimed to perform the same duty. To be of service to

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<sup>5</sup>Rufus W. Mathewson, Jr., "The Hero and Society: The Literary Definitions (1855-1865, 1934-1939)," in Continuity and Change in Russian and Soviet Thought, ed. Ernest J. Simmons (Cambridge, Mass., 1955), p. 256.

<sup>6</sup>Gorky, Magnet, p. 126.

the people, they concluded that they must become part of the people.

Sacrifice was an arm band worn by the young radicals of the 1890's, and perhaps the major article in their professed code. They looked forward to sacrificing, says Gorky, and considered themselves Isaacs, offered up by their father, history, for the ultimate benefit of the people of Russia.<sup>7</sup> In 1904 Paul Milyoukov, the liberal historian, observed: "Our youth, year in, year out, makes sacrifice of itself for the cause of the liberation of Russia, with the ardor and readiness of martyrdom of a religious conviction."<sup>8</sup> This sacrifice appeared in many forms.

Imprisonment, with all its accompanying horrors, exile, disease, and cruelty, was an anticipated sacrifice. The radical intelligentsia expected to spend a good part of its future in a dingy cell of a tsarist dungeon. A sympathizer idolized the members of the intelligentsia, "'people whose lot is prison, exile, hard labour, torture.'"<sup>9</sup> An arrest in the middle of the night or a sentence to Siberia was taken as a matter of course to the most ardent radicals. As he was being carted away to jail, one of Gorky's revolutionary heroes sighed: "'So,

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<sup>7</sup>Gorky, Magnet, p. 126.

<sup>8</sup>Milyoukov, Russia and Its Crisis, p. 504.

<sup>9</sup>Gorky, Bystander, p. 130.

I too have been summoned to prison duty."<sup>10</sup> No members of the radical intelligentsia expected to elude the gendarmerie forever. Milyoukov records that in 1894, 919 persons were accused by the police of political crime. Figures rose steadily until 1902 when 3,744 were accused, and in 1903, 5,590 were accused.<sup>11</sup> Accusation of political crime meant at least arrest, and in most cases, imprisonment for the offender. These figures indicate the disregard the radical intelligentsia held for political crime and its consequences. It is most probable, however, that this particular part of the radical code was given more publicity than it deserved.

While thousands of radicals were being exposed to prison and exile, political criminals rose in prestige among the masses and among the radicals. In 1905 Milyoukov notes: "Political crime is considered by public opinion to be no crime at all; and to be branded as a political criminal by the police is a mark of distinction, gradually becoming a quite necessary qualification for everyone who claims to advocate liberal public opinion."<sup>12</sup>

Prison, according to Gorky, was not the only hardship the young people professed to endure as part of their ethic. Marriage and home life also marched to the

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<sup>10</sup>Gorky, Magnet, p. 245.

<sup>11</sup>Milyoukov, Russia and Its Crisis, p. 517.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid., p. 516.

sacrificial altar for the radicals. Perhaps after the great tasks had been accomplished, they could enjoy such pleasures, but not until then. "'Family life always diminishes the energy of a revolutionist. Children must be maintained in security,'" one radical asserted, "'and there's the need to work a great deal for one's bread.'"<sup>13</sup> Fascination with the cause led a student revolutionary to state: "'To be a revolutionary and to be married is a very inconvenient arrangement--inconvenient for the husband, inconvenient for the wife and in the end for the cause also!'"<sup>14</sup>

Necessities followed luxuries to the sacrificial block. A wretched existence was expected wherever the radicals lived or labored. To sacrifice one's self for the cause of a new Russia became a fetish. A radical in Chekhov's works was happy to find that he "was faced with a monotonous life of toil in the midst of hunger, coarseness, and stench."<sup>15</sup> Enduring these and other types of physical danger was looked upon as a duty to be performed by the radicals.<sup>16</sup> Even death for the cause was an obligation in the radical ethic. "'Let death make amends for death.

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<sup>13</sup>Gorky, Mother, p. 423.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., p. 111.

<sup>15</sup>Anton Chekhov, "My Life," in Chorus Girl and Other Stories, in The Tales of Chekhov, trans. Constance Garnett, 12 vols. (New York, 1916-1922), III, 42. Hereafter cited as Chekhov, followed by the story the citation is from, followed by the series title, followed by the page number.

<sup>16</sup>Kaun, Gorky and His Russia, p. 140.

That is, die so that people should arise to life again. And let thousands die in order that hosts of people all over the earth may arise to life again.'"<sup>17</sup>

The fruits of these sacrifices were never received by the radicals. They offered themselves up for the sake of the people, and expected no reward for their assistance to the masses, or no reward for their attempts to build a new society. "'We must give up all our forces to the regeneration of life; we must realize that we will receive no recompense.'"<sup>18</sup> "'Let us dedicate our powers all together, valiantly, and without sparing ourselves.'"<sup>19</sup>

While Gorky goes a long way to point out this ethic and its popularity among the radicals, he is cautious about stating who actually practiced it. This reservation on Gorky's part leads to the suspicion that the radical code of ethics was more professed than practiced. Regardless of its role as a practiced ethic, however, as a professed standard it was one of the major marks the radicals carried that separated them from society.

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<sup>17</sup>Gorky, Mother, p. 198.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid., p. 44.

<sup>19</sup>Gorky, Magnet, p. 112.

## Chapter V

### The Isolation of the Radical Intelligentsia.

In many ways the radical intelligentsia of the 1890's was alienated from Russian society. One primary characteristic was its inability to mix into the official estate system.<sup>1</sup> Because it was unable to "fit" into the system, the intelligentsia was persecuted and further alienated, which inevitably led to its complete withdrawal and isolation from an exceedingly hostile society.

The attitude of the government was one of the deterrents excluding the radicals from normal social intercourse. A police captain, in Gorky's Magnet, properly demonstrated the official position by insisting that members of the radical intelligentsia were "'recruited from among the failures.'"<sup>2</sup> The government frankly expected the young people in the intelligentsia groups to conform to its inane standards. One radical described by Chekhov, was bluntly advised: "'There are rules of the trade for governors, and rules for the higher clergy, and rules for the officers, and rules for the doctors, and every class has its rules. But you haven't kept to your rules, and you can't be allowed.'"<sup>3</sup> Such official advice, often

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<sup>1</sup>Martin Malia, "What is the Intelligentsia?" Daedalus, LXXXIX (Summer, 1960), 446.

<sup>2</sup>Gorky, Magnet, p. 98.

<sup>3</sup>Chekhov, "My Life," in The Chorus Girl, pp. 97-98.

manifested in the form of abuse, did not find favor among the radicals. They looked upon bureaucratic positions as ridiculous and considered officers of the tsarist regime rude, inane, and backward. They made no effort to hide their ill-feeling for the government and, as a result, official persecution and exclusion intensified throughout the period.

Forces leading to social rejection and exclusion from society did not cease with officialdom. Alienation, segregation and often harassment were directed at the intelligentsia from the masses of the people. The radicals strongly disapproved of, and regretted their isolation from the people. They professed great love for the workers and peasants and tried desperately to avoid any breach. Despite valiant efforts, however, a rift did occur. In the Russian Empire, where even a gymnasium education was a marvel, ignorant masses tended to view with suspicion those who had attained a reading and writing knowledge of one or more languages. The superior education and social backgrounds of many of the young radicals erected an insurmountable communication barrier.<sup>4</sup> The radicals were aware of this barrier and one purged army captain lamented: "'We have no friends, we are strangers from a strange land. To the people we are

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<sup>4</sup>Malia, "The Intelligentsia?" Daedalus (Summer, 1960), p. 454.



eccentrics, strangers.'"<sup>5</sup> In Kazan, Gorky was reproached by a peasant: "'You reason like 'the intelligentsia,' you are not one of us any more; for you an idea is above the people.'" "'You are with us, but you are not one of us.'"<sup>6</sup>

Often the shadow of alienation and exclusion seeped into the families of the young radicals. Fear of government reprisal or simple misunderstanding forced some families to banish their radical youngsters from home. Clim Samghin, Gorky's ambiguous tool in the trilogy, Forty Years, the Life of Clim Samghin, looked upon his own brother with chagrin for radical affiliations. Samghin also reminded other family members of their inability to become part of every day Russian life: "'My uncle is the . . . product of the decay of the upper crusts of society. . . . Like all the intelligentsia, he can't find a place for himself in life.'"<sup>7</sup>

A large Jewish element in the radical camp fostered exclusion of the intelligentsia from Russian society. Count Witte, Minister of Finance from 1892 to 1903, remarked that "it is certain that no nationality in Russia had yielded such a large percentage of extreme

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<sup>5</sup>Gorky, Bystander, p. 675.

<sup>6</sup>Gorky, My University Days, p. 102.

<sup>7</sup>Gorky, Bystander, p. 318.

radicals as the Jewish."<sup>8</sup> Some Jews even set up their own party. The Jewish Bund, or Socialist organization of the Jewish proletariat in Russia, Lithuania, and Poland, was "formally organized in Vilna in September, 1897."<sup>9</sup>

Jews were not accepted in the official class stratum in Russia, and Jewry was a social fringe that wore the badge of discrimination. "'A Jew is a Jew,'" a police captain stated to a radical, "'and you won't wash it off with water, no matter how holy. That's a fact.'"<sup>10</sup> The government policy toward Jews was one of perpetual harassment. Witte, explaining the pogrom in the city of Kishinev in 1903 says: "I would not venture to say that [V. K.] Plehve [Minister of the Interior from 1902 to 1904] personally and directly organized these pogroms, but he did not oppose . . . [them]."<sup>11</sup> Paul Milyoukov wrote in 1905 of "particularly hard conditions of existence created for the Russian Jews during the last twenty-five years by the restrictions and prohibitions of the law."<sup>12</sup> The governor of Vilna, Mr. Pahlen, advised: "A revision of

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<sup>8</sup>S. Witte, The Memoirs of Count Witte, trans, and ed. Abraham Yarmolinsky (New York, 1921), p. 379.

<sup>9</sup>A. L. Patkin, The Origins of the Russian-Jewish Labour Movement (Melbourne, Australia, 1947), p. 113.

<sup>10</sup>Gorky, Magnet, p. 99.

<sup>11</sup>Witte, Memoirs, p. 381.

<sup>12</sup>Milyoukov, Russia and Its Crisis, p. 500.

the laws concerning the Jews is absolutely urgent, and every postponing of it is pregnant with most dangerous consequences."<sup>13</sup> The government side-stepped the Jewish persecution issue by declaring that only participation of Jews in the revolutionary movements caused ill-treatment. This, however, does not stand up in face of the fact that Plehve, as head of the political police, conducted anti-Jewish activity in the early 1880's when all revolutionary action was at a virtual standstill.<sup>14</sup>

The abuse imposed on the radical intelligentsia as a result of its inability to "fit" into the Russian system forced its members to withdraw entirely from the daily social and economic life of the 1890's. They did not hold normal positions of employment, they did not assume conventional dress, and often they faced starvation rather than surrender to a conformity which required that they shed their ideals. They had "a certain fugitive quality which marked [them] . . . with an unmistakable though ineffable exclusiveness."<sup>15</sup>

The intelligentsia, thus, was isolated and excluded from normal Russian society. Its conflict with the government, its superior education, and its Jews were

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<sup>13</sup>Milyoukov, Russia and Its Crisis, pp. 501-502.

<sup>14</sup>The Diaries of Theodor Herzl, trans, and ed. Marvin Lowenthal (New York, 1956), p. 387.

<sup>15</sup>Kaun, Gorky and His Russia, pp. 138-139.

significant factors forcing it to follow a social and economic path apart from the other social groups of Russia.

## Chapter VI

### The Social Origins of the Liberal Intelligentsia and Its Vehicles of Reform.<sup>1</sup>

The liberal intelligentsia was a reform minded group that remained "oppositional to the tsarist regime" without being revolutionary."<sup>2</sup> Its members, during the 1890's, acted within legal bounds to bring about social, economic, and political improvement to Russia. They were mainly older people, experienced with life and work in the empire, and generally in constant contact with the reality of Russian problems. They held discussions together in homes, at organized congresses, and played their reform role through the Zemstvo, organ of local self-government in Russia, and through various professional associations.

The social composition of the liberal intelligentsia was made up of middle class professional people and landed gentry. These contingents tended to be socially equal, and generally located high on the class ladder of late nineteenth century Russia. The liberal intelligentsia also tended to be an integral part of society and was not alienated from life, as was the radical intelligentsia.

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<sup>1</sup>Anton Chekhov remained apolitical throughout his life. As a result, other sources must be used to reconstruct a vision of the social origins, and political activity of the liberal intelligentsia.

<sup>2</sup>Milyoukov, Russia and Its Crisis, p. 518.

The contingent of the liberal intelligentsia drawn from the growing professional ranks<sup>3</sup> was made up of doctors, lawyers, professors, engineers, agronomists, and veterinarians.<sup>4</sup> They lived and worked in the large urban centers and in the towns of the great empire.

The increased economic and social prestige flowing to the professional people during the 1890's enticed doctors, lawyers, engineers, and other groups to seek political influence. The search for political recognition brought them into contact with the static government structure and gave them a good summary of overall conditions in Russia. The state of these conditions forced the professional people to cry out for reform.

The reform work progressed through professional groups, largely located in the cities, and through the Zemstvo. "The growth of professional groups reached respectable proportions by the middle of the nineties."<sup>5</sup> Two such organizations were the Moscow Society of Jurisprudence and the Economic Society of Saint Petersburg. They were both made up of lawyers, economists, statisticians, and journalists. Although founded earlier in the nineteenth

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<sup>3</sup>George Fischer, Russian Liberalism: From Gentry to Intelligentsia (Cambridge, Mass., 1958), p. 49, shows this expansion of the liberal professions by citing the population census of 1897 which placed almost half a million people in the categories associated with the professions.

<sup>4</sup>Haimson, The Russian Marxists, p. 217, and Milyoukov, Russia and Its Crisis, p. 286, both make this point.

<sup>5</sup>Haimson, The Russian Marxists, p. 50.

century, the two societies became very active in liberal reform during the 1890's, as evidenced by government attempts to restrict their activity in 1898 and 1899.<sup>6</sup> There were other independent professional groups, such as the Moscow Committee of Education for the People, which drew government abuse in 1895 for its liberal actions,<sup>7</sup> and also many groups that acted through the Zemstvo, such as the Congress of Naturalists and Doctors that met in Moscow in 1894 and in Kiev in 1896.<sup>8</sup>

The second contingent in the liberal intelligentsia in the 1890's was the landed gentry. Its members were descendants of the old land owning idle aristocracy, whose numbers had diminished considerably since the "great reforms," initiated by Alexander II (1855-1881). "As soon as serfage was abolished [1861] it was no longer possible to live like 'the flowers of the field.' Many a proprietor who had formerly vegetated in apathetic ease had to ask himself the question: How am I to gain a living?"<sup>9</sup> Only a few capable aristocrats could cope with the new problems that rose from labor, scientific agriculture, and capital. The remaining nobles drifted away from

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<sup>6</sup>Fischer, Russian Liberalism, pp. 57-58.

<sup>7</sup>Konni Zilliacus, The Russian Revolutionary Movement (New York, 1905), pp. 262-263.

<sup>8</sup>Haimson, The Russian Marxists, p. 50.

<sup>9</sup>Donald Mackenzie Wallace, Russia, 2nd. ed. (New York, 1905), p. 456.

the land. "It is only, I fear, a minority of the landed proprietors," states Donald Mackenzie Wallace, an English scholar observing Russia in the nineties, "that have grappled successfully with these and other difficulties of their position."<sup>10</sup>

Although organized earlier than the professional people, the landed gentry entered reform activity as a result of its search for political freedom, and following its observations of wretched conditions in Russia. Situated on the countryside, these gentry were long a part of the Zemstvo organizations, and they used these organs to introduce reform. The landed gentry was by no means unified in its political or economic approaches to Russian life. The members considered here, however, were interested in social and political reform, and grouped together into organizations directed to that end.

One such gathering, calling itself "Beseda," was founded in 1891 by liberal landowners, to improve rural conditions by following no specific set of rules or goals. The liberal gentry also revived the old Zemstvo Union in the 1890's, another effort aimed at reform.<sup>11</sup> Many of the local Zemstvos were also quite active throughout Russia during the 1890's, increasing liberal reform work.

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<sup>10</sup>Wallace, Russia, p. 459. Michael Karpovich, Imperial Russia, 1801-1917 (New York, 1932), p. 59, also discusses this point.

<sup>11</sup>Treadgold, Lenin, pp. 54-55.



The Zemstvos, or provincial and district assemblies of deputies elected by the various social classes to take care of local interests, were the chief resort of Russian gentry liberalism.<sup>12</sup> Officially sanctioned in 1864 as part of the "great reforms" of Alexander II, the Zemstvos were composed of estate owners and peasants who were elected by the local population. The Zemstvo was to concern itself with "'local economic needs': upkeep of roads and bridges . . . maintenance of prisons, hospitals, and lunatic asylums; promotion of industry, commerce, and agriculture; prevention of famine; advancement of public health and education; relief of the poor."<sup>13</sup>

In carrying out the duties of trying to improve living standards in rural Russia, the Zemstvo encountered innumerable drawbacks. The recipients of their aid, chiefly the peasants, remained suspicious of the Zemstvo apparatus, and the country people blamed the Zemstvo for much of their own misery. In spite of Zemstvo efforts, the rural animosity continued unchecked because inadequate funds were available for ample education.<sup>14</sup> The peasant attitude is typified by the wagon driver in Chekhov's Schoolmistress,

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<sup>12</sup>Milyoukov, Russia and Its Crisis, p. 288.

<sup>13</sup>Florinsky, Russia, p. 898. See also, Anatole Leroy-Beaulieu, The Empire of the Tsars and the Russians, trans. Zenaide A. Ragozin, 3rd ed. (New York, 1898), II, 150-208, for an excellent discussion of the Zemstvo. Hereafter cited as Empire of the Tsars.

<sup>14</sup>Leroy-Beaulieu, Empire of the Tsars, p. 177.

who coming to a washed out bridge on a country road, immediately cursed the Zemstvo for the calamity.<sup>15</sup> "The Zemstvo was blamed for everything," writes Chekhov in Peasants, "for the arrears, the unjust exactions, the failure of the crops."<sup>16</sup> And, the hostile attitude in rural opinion was not restricted to the peasantry. Wallace says that "many people draw . . . the conclusion that the Zemstvo is a worthless institution which has increased the taxation without conferring any corresponding benefit on the country."<sup>17</sup>

Peasant suspicion and inadequate funds were not the only impediments to the growth and the usefulness of the Zemstvo. Perhaps the strongest deterrents to the success of that organ of self-government were government attempts to limit and interfere with its authority, as the autocracy did with all reform institutions. Paul Milyoukov states that the Zemstvos "were reprimanded and censured by the organs of the central government; their scope was now and then curtailed; their initiative in this or that branch of local affairs was called in question; their debates were more than once stopped; their petitions were disregarded."<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>15</sup>Chekhov, The Schoolmistress, p. 14.

<sup>16</sup>Anton Chekhov, "The Peasants," in The Unknown Chekhov, trans, Avrahm Yarmolinsky (New York, 1954), p. 194.

<sup>17</sup>Wallace, Russia, p. 500.

<sup>18</sup>Milyoukov, Russia and Its Crisis, pp. 292-293. Leroy-Beaulieu, Empire of the Tsars, p. 174, also makes this point.

Wallace observed cynically that the government considered it necessary "to curb and suppress the ambitious tendencies of the . . . [Zemstvo], and accordingly it was placed more and more under the tutelage of the provincial Governors."<sup>19</sup> To make matters even worse, many gentry liberals of the nineties fraternized with the autocratic government,<sup>20</sup> making it more difficult for the majority in the Zemstvo to continue reform endeavors without officials prowling about their desks.

With all these drawbacks it seems a wonder that the gentry liberals were able to accomplish anything at all. For, to their credit, they managed to carry out some reform measures. "Virtually they were the first to come to the villages with messages of health, sanitation, enlightenment, and with sound reasons for private economy. Whatever had been done for culture in the Russian villages was done by the Zemstvos."<sup>21</sup>

Apart from its being the major channel to reform for the gentry liberals, the Zemstvo also acted as a cohesive force, drawing together the gentry and the professional liberals.<sup>22</sup> To carry out its functions, the Zemstvo hired

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<sup>19</sup>Wallace, Russia, p. 499.

<sup>20</sup>Fischer, Russian Liberalism, p. 19. Treadgold, Lenin, p. 56, also makes this point.

<sup>21</sup>Milyoukov, Russia and Its Crisis, p. 296, and Wallace, Russia, p. 501, make this point.

<sup>22</sup>Fischer, Russian Liberalism, p. 81.

doctors, schoolteachers, statisticians, and agronomists. This hired body of personnel was known as the Zemstvo's "third element."<sup>23</sup> This "third element" became the most active force in the Zemstvos during the 1890's, and was the connecting link between rural liberalism and the professional liberals in the urban areas. Anton Chekhov, incidentally, was a doctor employed in the Zemstvo's "third element."<sup>24</sup>

While the Zemstvo remained the paramount meeting place for the liberal intelligentsia, other common ground did exist, and soon alliances seemed appropriate. One such alliance, although dominated by the progressive liberals from the cities, was the "Union of Liberation." "It was the combination of . . . two elements--the Zemstvo workers and the members of the liberal professions--which brought about the formation in 1903 of the so-called 'Union of Liberation.'"<sup>25</sup> This body eventually served as the core of the liberal Constitutional Democratic Party (Kadet) which was formed in 1905.<sup>26</sup>

The liberal intelligentsia of the nineties, therefore, was composed of middle class professional people and landed

<sup>23</sup>Milyoukov, Russia and Its Crisis, p. 290.

<sup>24</sup>Magershack, Chekhov, p. 253.

<sup>25</sup>Karpovich, Imperial Russia, p. 64, and Zilliaccus, Revolutionary Movement, p. 357, for a similar discussion.

<sup>26</sup>Treadgold, Lenin, pp. 194-195, discusses this point.

gentry who were interested in reform. The liberal intelligentsia carried out its major reform activity through the Zemstvos, and through the various professional groups organized largely in the urban areas.

## Chapter VII

### The Liberal Intelligentsia, Its Task and Its Ethic.

Every day the liberal intelligentsia faced Russia's ignorant masses, rampant contagious diseases, famines, and filth. Its self-imposed task was to usher in a new life for the people of Russia by removing these obnoxious forces that were preventing Russia's growth. The liberal intelligentsia, it follows, worked along functional lines. Beseda, the liberal organization founded in 1891, had as its only requirement for membership "that all engage in some kind of 'practical' work in town council or Zemstvo organization."<sup>1</sup>

The liberals approached many problems, among which were low educational standards, lack of medical care, poor agricultural methods, and the inadequate Russian political structure. Perhaps the most prevalent ill, the low level of education, a phenomenon that retarded progress throughout Russia, received the most careful evaluation by the liberals. They saw the necessity of conducting a vigorous program of school building and instruction among the illiterate. The liberal doctor in Chekhov's My Life insisted on upgrading education in Russia because, "'if you build this school . . . it's not for the peasants,'" he pointed out, "'but in the name of culture, in the name

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<sup>1</sup>Treadgold, Lenin, p. 55.

of the future; and the worse the peasants are the more reason there is for building the school."<sup>2</sup> "We ought to realize that without a wide education of the people," Chekhov told Gorky, "Russia will collapse, like a house built of badly baked bricks."<sup>3</sup>

Reform did progress, and during the 1890's "a real start was made in the field of primary education."<sup>4</sup> In the rural areas the Zemstvo was influential in initiating progressive steps toward a higher standard of education. "It had done a great deal to provide . . . primary education for the common people."<sup>5</sup> Anton Chekhov, himself, built three schools for the people of Russia.<sup>6</sup> In the urban areas, the liberals set up committees, such as the Moscow and Saint Petersburg Committees on Education for the People, to investigate illiteracy and take steps toward bringing it to an end.

The wiser liberals realized that finding good teachers was another problem that prevented a high literacy rate and progress toward reform.<sup>7</sup> "We ought in Russia to give the

<sup>2</sup>Chekhov, "My Life," in The Chorus Girl, p. 129.

<sup>3</sup>Gorky, Reminiscences of Chekhov, p. 2.

<sup>4</sup>Karpovich, Imperial Russia, p. 42.

<sup>5</sup>Wallace, Russia, p. 501. Leroy-Beaulieu, Empire of the Tsars, pp. 183-184, discussed this point.

<sup>6</sup>Bruford, Chekhov, p. 61.

<sup>7</sup>Milyoukov, Russia and Its Crisis, p. 475.

teacher particularly good conditions,'" said Chekhov, "'and it ought to be done as quickly as possible.'" He told Gorky in the 1890's that a teacher "'ought to be the first man in the village; the peasants ought to recognize him as a power, worthy of attention and respect.'"<sup>8</sup> The Zemstvo liberals did hire teachers and raised salaries,<sup>9</sup> but improved conditions came slowly.

Lack of medical care was another plaguing problem that concerned the Russian liberals. Disease and epidemic were always present, and any move toward medical reform was regarded as a step forward. Chekhov's enthusiastic doctor in My Life, "wanted to study anti-toxins against typhus, and . . . cholera."<sup>10</sup> Zemstvo liberals of the 1890's tried "to organize a system of doctors, hospital assistants, and dispensaries by which the peasant would not have to go more than fifteen or twenty miles to get a wound dressed or to have a consultation or to obtain a simple remedy for ordinary ailments. They felt the necessity, too, of thoroughly reorganising the hospitals and the lunatic asylums, which were in a very unsatisfactory condition."<sup>11</sup>

Many advancements were made by bringing medical aid

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<sup>8</sup>Gorky, Reminiscences of Chekhov, p. 2.

<sup>9</sup>Leroy-Beaulieu, Empire of the Tsars, p. 185.

<sup>10</sup>Chekhov, "My Life," in The Chorus Girl, p. 159.

<sup>11</sup>Wallace, Russia, p. 503. Leroy-Beaulieu, Empire of the Tsars, pp. 186-189, discusses this point also.



to Russians.<sup>12</sup> The otherwise dejected doctor in Ward No. Six, was pleased with the advancement of medical care in Russia. "Psychiatry with its modern [1892] classification of mental diseases, methods of diagnosis, and treatment, [1s] . . . a perfect Elbrus in comparison with what had been in the past. They no longer poured cold water on the heads of lunatics nor put strait-waistcoats upon them; they treated them with humanity, and even, so it was stated in the papers, got up balls and entertainments for them."<sup>13</sup>

The liberals concern for practical problems also extended to agriculture, and thus to scientific farming as a means of diminishing the starvation and bankruptcy common in Russia. The liberals reasoned that only technical farming would save the people from famine and themselves from financial ruin. They introduced improved methods, and their first mission was to keep the population from facing the lean kine which so often followed a fat one.<sup>14</sup> Zemstvo conferences, called by the tsar in 1902 to discuss crop failures, reverted to education. At the conferences, the liberals decided that a good system of agricultural education for Russians would be an excellent base upon which to build a new era in Russian farming.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>12</sup>Milyoukov, Russia and Its Crisis, p. 296.

<sup>13</sup>Chekhov, "Ward No. Six," in The Horse-Stealers, p. 59.

<sup>14</sup>Leroy-Beaulieu, Empire of the Tsars, p. 190.

<sup>15</sup>Milyoukov, Russia and Its Crisis, p. 475.

The liberals also questioned themselves about the government and they understood that the old system was incompatible with their reform ideas. Their dealings with the government, however, followed a more practical axiom than the wild path pursued by the "starry-eyed" radicals. Political liberalism in Russia from the late 1880's to 1905 was, of course, nonhomogeneous, but it may be divided into two main currents.

The division tended to follow the social pattern of the liberal intelligentsia. On one hand, there were the gentry land owners who based much of their political thought on a slavophile tradition, and whose interests were directed more toward "public works" and social relief than politics.<sup>16</sup> They did enter the political arena, however, working for gradual change in government and putting no faith in revolution.<sup>17</sup> One of their leading spokesmen, V. Maklakov, developed his political liberalism, "not in opposition to, but in harmony with the general program of 'improving the Russian state' by starting from 'that which already existed in reality.'"<sup>18</sup> On the other hand, the professional liberals were anxious for a final victory over autocracy

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<sup>16</sup>Michael Karpovich, "Two Types of Russian Liberalism: Maklakov and Milyoukov," in Continuity and Change, p. 135.

<sup>17</sup>Fischer, Russian Liberalism, p. 18.

<sup>18</sup>Karpovich, "Two Types of Liberalism," Continuity and Change, p. 132.

and objected to a compromise with it.<sup>19</sup> They pressed hard and many times illegally for a constitutional democracy which would redirect part of the national imperium from the tsar to an elected congress. Paul Mil'yukov, leader of "left wing" liberalism admitted the program was ambitious but denied that it was utopian.<sup>20</sup> This move was obviously calculated to separate the "left wing" liberals from the radical intelligentsia and hence, insure gentry support.

As 1905 approached, the "left wing" gained in numerical strength in the liberal intelligentsia, assuming the label "Democratic Constitutionalists."<sup>21</sup>

The improvement of education, medical care, agriculture, and the political system were all part of a task they carved out for themselves. The will to fulfill these duties gave rise to an ethic for many liberals as is well displayed in the works of Anton Pavlovich Chekhov. Andrey, a liberal in Three Sisters, stated: "I am in the service of the Zemstvo, I am a member of the Rural Board, and I consider this service . . . sacred and elevated. . . . I am a member of the Rural Board and I am proud of it."<sup>22</sup> Ivanov, the land owner, told a friend: "I have worked and hoped and

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<sup>19</sup>Karpovich, "Two Types of Liberalism," Continuity and Change, p. 136.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid., p. 137.

<sup>21</sup>Fischer, Russian Liberalism, p. 27.

<sup>22</sup>Chekhov, "Three Sisters," in The Plays of Anton Tchekov, trans. Constance Garnett (New York, nd.) p. 169.

tilted against windmills with the strength of ten—not sparing my strength. Tell me, could I have done otherwise? There are so few of us and so much to do."<sup>23</sup>

The liberal ethic best manifested itself in Chekhov's plays and stories when his characters tried to teach the lessons of practicality and hard work at exigent problems to friends, neighbors, artists, and even radicals. Ionitch, the town doctor, who seethed for a time at the laziness around him, advised his fellow townsmen: "One should work, and one ought not to live without working."<sup>24</sup> Irina, in Three Sisters, thought that "man ought to work, to toil in the sweat of his brow, whoever he may be. . . . How delightful to be a workman, . . . or a schoolmaster teaching children, or an enginedriver."<sup>25</sup> An energetic estate owner lectured a landscape artist in An Artists Story: "'One cannot sit with one's hand's in one's lap. It's true that we are not saving humanity, and perhaps we make a great many mistakes; but we do what we can, and we are right.'"<sup>26</sup>

In one of Chekhov's figures, the liberal ethic of practicality assumed the cloak of a religious calling. "'Christ, I hope, taught us a rational, intelligent, and

<sup>23</sup>Chekhov, "Ivanov," in Plays of Anton Tchekoff, trans. Marian Fell (New York, 1923), p. 150.

<sup>24</sup>Chekhov, "Ionitch," in The Lady With a Dog, p. 83.

<sup>25</sup>Chekhov, Three Sisters, p. 122.

<sup>26</sup>Chekhov, "An Artists Story," in The Darling, p. 171.

practical love," the liberal zoologist preached to an indolent enemy. "'This advocacy of love for love's sake, like art for art's sake, if it could have power, would bring mankind in the long run to complete extinction.'"<sup>27</sup>

According to this ethic the symbolist and decadent poets appeared to be as immoral to the liberals as they did to the radicals. These poets were accused of wasting time, space, neglecting important problems, and misleading their readers. Chekhov, himself, attacked them and their work. "'As for the so-called decadents,'" said Chekhov, "'they're cheats, the lot of them--cheats and not decadents. They're selling inferior goods. Religion, mysticism, and all that sort of thing.'"<sup>28</sup> The liberals in Gorky's Magnet, also frowned on the activity of the symbolists and decadents. "'Here are people preaching crass sensuality,'" criticized a liberal newspaper editor, "'and fleeing from life, from reality.'"<sup>29</sup>

Instruction in the ethic of liberalism extended beyond acquaintances and poets; the liberals even tried to teach the radicals. The common meeting ground for the liberals and radicals was generally the area of politics where the gentry and professional liberals considered their radical brothers overzealous and most impractical. Radical

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<sup>27</sup>Chekhov, "The Duel," in The Duel, pp. 130, 134.

<sup>28</sup>Magarshack, Chekhov, p. 370.

<sup>29</sup>Gorky, Magnet, p. 351.

enthusiasm was quietly admired, but their program of excitement, and violent change, lacked practicality according to the liberal opinion, and was doomed to failure. Chekhov lectured, in 1902, to a student who spoke favorably of the radical solution to Russia's political crisis. "'But what kind of politics is it?'" Anton Pavlovich queried the student. "'Forward without fear or doubt!'"--that's not politics. If you ask me to go forward, you must show me the way, the aim, the means. Nothing has so far been achieved in politics by 'the frenzy of the brave'." <sup>30</sup>

Milyoukov voiced much the same sentiment. "The only hope for a peaceful issue rests with such elements as, either by their social position or by their political views, are intermediate between the rulers and the revolutionaries." <sup>31</sup>

"To some of us . . . [radical] demands are generally unacceptable," continued Milyoukov in a commentary on radical political ideas, "while others consider them as being outside [the realm of] practical politics." <sup>32</sup>

The liberals of the 1890's, it may be concluded, saw their role in society as that of an agent, trying to solve by practical means the problems facing Russia. Chekhov's works show that the will to complete these tasks grew into

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<sup>30</sup>Magarshack, Chekhov, p. 369.

<sup>31</sup>Milyoukov, Russia and Its Crisis, pp. 517-518.

<sup>32</sup>Karpovich, "Two Types of Liberalism," Continuity and Change, p. 139.

an ethic for many people. The ethic manifested itself chiefly in the form of advice given by liberals to others.

## Chapter VIII

### Decay Within the Liberal Intelligentsia.

The liberals sacrificed their strength for a practical good, but unfortunately their successes were petty and insignificant relative to the untouched mountain of ills remaining to be healed. Throughout the liberals' campaign of reform, they consistently drew only partial success,<sup>1</sup> which sooner or later brought discouragement and despair.

According to Anton Chekhov, the members of the liberal intelligentsia were soon overcome by the misery they had set out to remove, and became part of that which had to be reformed. "I worked passionately," cried Ivanov, the land owner, "risked everything. . . . So I heaped burdens on my back, and it broke."<sup>2</sup> Chekhov thought that even those who continued with the unequal struggle between reform and Russian misery, became numb. "Teachers, badly paid doctors, and their assistants, with their terribly hard work, have not even the comfort of thinking that they are serving an idea or the people, as their heads are always stuffed with thoughts of their daily bread, of wood for the fire, of illnesses." He thought they lived "a hard-working, and uninteresting life, and only silent, patient cart horses

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<sup>1</sup>Leroy-Beaulieu, Empire of the Tsars, p. 186.

<sup>2</sup>Chekhov, Ivanov, p. 125.



. . . could put up with it for long."<sup>3</sup> Perhaps Chekhov is severe in exposing the shortcomings of the liberal intelligentsia, but he is realistic and no study of the 1890's is complete without considering his observations.

Chekhov's plays and stories point clearly to several adverse forces that plagued the liberals and finally rang the death knell to their energy. He points to the apathy and indifference of people as a disheartening force working contrary to reformers. The ignorance of the great mass of the people also appears as an agent eroding the optimism of liberals. These forces, coupled with a copious quantity of other deterrents placed in the path of the liberals, such as the depressing lack of cultural stimulus in Russia, and official moves to limit reform activity, bludgeoned the liberals into submission.

Indolent landowners and professional people, hardened toward reform by the wax of apathy, discouraged others from working for improved conditions. A gentry estate owner in An Artists Story, complained: "'The hardest thing of all,' he muttered. . . . 'The hardest thing of all is that, work as one may, one meets with no sympathy from anyone-No sympathy!'"<sup>4</sup> The professor's wife in Uncle Vanya, could easily understand why her step-daughter was apathetic toward the idea of improving her estate. "She lives here in this

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<sup>3</sup>Chekhov, "The Schoolmistress," in The Schoolmistress, p. 10.

<sup>4</sup>Chekhov, "An Artists Story," in The Darling, p. 159.

desperate loneliness with no one around her except these colourless shadows that go mooning about talking nonsense and knowing nothing except that they eat, drink, and sleep."<sup>5</sup> "I work day and night," complained the Zemstvo doctor in An Unpleasantness. "I get no rest, I'm needed here more than all . . . the other clowns taken together! I've made myself sick with work, and what I get instead of gratitude is to have my salary thrown in my teeth!"<sup>6</sup> Such blatant indifference to reform can also be seen in Doctor Dimov's wife in The Grasshopper.

Apathy reigned amongst officials in generous proportion. "I have never met," concludes Chekhov, "a single civil servant who had any idea of the meaning of his work: usually he sits in the metropolis or the chief town of the province, and writes papers. . . . But that those papers will deprive some one . . . of freedom of movement--of that the civil servant thinks as little as an atheist of the tortures of hell."<sup>7</sup> How was it possible for conscientious reformers to remain steadfast in their zeal when the greatest authority in the land resided with officials who "commonly show neither an extensive nor a profound knowledge of the country which they are supposed to govern, and seem always

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<sup>5</sup>Chekhov, Uncle Vanya, Fell translation, p. 47.

<sup>6</sup>Chekhov, "An Unpleasantness," in Unknown Chekhov, p. 154.

<sup>7</sup>Gorky, Reminiscences of Chekhov, p. 19.

to have a fair amount of leisure time at their disposal?"<sup>8</sup>

One stamp of indifferent official which Chekhov constantly parades before the reader is the lackadaisical servant of justice. Of crown prosecutors he writes: "'They are like pimples on the seat of justice--disposing of the fate of the people.'"<sup>9</sup> In The Court, further displays Chekhov's attitude toward the apathetic officials of justice. A scene at a murder trial is typical. "The dingy windows and walls, the voice of the secretary, the attitude of the prosecutor were all saturated with official indifference . . . as though the murderer were simply an official property, or as though he were not being judged by living men, but by some unseen machine, set going, goodness knows how or by whom."<sup>10</sup>

Ignorance of the peasantry strained the eagerness of the liberals. Chekhov shows that the superstitious peasant's actions caused many reformers to lose heart and cease reform activity.<sup>11</sup> In 1891, when doctors entered Saratov to inoculate peasants against cholera, the peasants suspected doctors of injecting the disease into them. This ignorance caused them to turn on the doctors, who they

<sup>8</sup>Wallace, Russia, p. 334.

<sup>9</sup>Gorky, Reminiscences of Chekhov, p. 14.

<sup>10</sup>Chekhov, "In The Court," in The Schoolmaster, p. 171.

<sup>11</sup>Chekhov, "My Life," in The Chorus Girl. Chekhov's own loss of enthusiasm on this point is well stated in "Peasants," in Unknown Chekhov, pp. 201-202.

slaughtered in panic.<sup>12</sup> The land owner in My Life, became discouraged when she saw the "'you work for long, long years, your whole life, in the end some practical results are obtained, yet what . . . are they, your results, what can they do against such elemental forces as wholesale ignorance . . . degeneration?'"<sup>13</sup>

Moreover, added to apathy and ignorance were active forces imposed on the liberals. For instance, the courts of Russia which had functioned through the Zemstvos since the reforms of the 1860's were, in 1889, placed under the authority of the central government. Official seizure of the courts was an act contrary to the reform spirit and dissatisfied a wide element in the liberal camp.<sup>14</sup> Often individuals with doubtful intentions directly prevented reform. At times they obtained positions in the Zemstvo itself,<sup>15</sup> and as a result deterred liberals from continuing work. One incident of this nature is recorded in An Unpleasantness. "'What can I do if the Zemstvo people wipe the floor with us physicians,'" spoke up the doctor in the story, "'if they hinder us at every step? To hell with them, I don't want to work for them, that's all! I don't

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<sup>12</sup>Wildman, "The Russian Intelligentsia," American Slavic and East European Review (April, 1960), p. 173.

<sup>13</sup>Chekhov, "My Life," in The Chorus Girl, p. 138.

<sup>14</sup>Florinsky, Russia, pp. 1199-1200.

<sup>15</sup>Leroy-Beaulieu, Empire of the Tsars, p. 167.

want to!"<sup>16</sup>

If we assume that reform implies a degree of honesty, the practice of bribery must have been a great hindrance to the morale of the liberals seeking to remake Russia. This was one ill they could not possibly remove. Officials throughout Russia expected bribes and often refused to fulfill their function without a "tip."<sup>17</sup> Chekhov's cattle dealer bribes his way to market in a six day journey trying to get his bullocks to the buyers before the season draws to a close.<sup>18</sup> Nobody seemed surprised that the farmer was forced into bribing the officials along the trail, least of all the farmer. The town records in In The Coach House were befuddled because, as a lackey pointed out: "'Our lady, you know, bribed the police and the doctors.'" He added with dismay: "'You can do anything with money.'"<sup>19</sup> Wages were at the starvation rate in Russia among most of the people. It is not unusual that bribes were expected, nor is it unusual that bribery as an institution was in Russia to stay. Regardless of their hard work, their exposing of evil or truth, the liberals could never hope to retard the practice of bribery. A reformer, especially one who was not

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<sup>16</sup>Chekhov, "An Unpleasantness," in Unknown Chekhov, p. 153. Zemstvo intrigues were not unusual as evidenced in "The Begger," in The Horse-Stealers.

<sup>17</sup>Wallace, Russia, p. 255.

<sup>18</sup>Chekhov, "The Cattle Dealers," in The Schoolmistress.

<sup>19</sup>Chekhov, "In The Coach House," in The Schoolmistress, p. 235.

overly endowed with wealth, naturally was frustrated rather than fired up at meeting such widespread corruption.

Refined culture was a rarity to most Russians.<sup>20</sup> The low level of culture, especially in the provinces, appeared disgraceful to any educated person. Chekhov constantly shows in his works that this, perhaps more than any one thing, drove the liberals to discouragement and eventually degradation. He wrote in 1888, upon the occasion of his return to his provincial birthplace, Taganrog: "'I could see how . . . empty, lazy, illiterate, and uninteresting Taganrog is. I could not see a single sign post on which the words were correctly spelt.'"<sup>21</sup> Chekhov's stories attest again and again to this sterility of thought in rural Russia and how it infected the fervor of the reformers. The liberal doctor in My Life, was constantly depressed by the condition of his town. "'Civilized life has not yet begun among us. The beginning of Russia was in 862, but the beginning of civilized Russia, has not come yet.'"<sup>22</sup> A Zemstvo inspector complained that only Moscow and Saint Petersburg had any semblance of culture, while the other parts of Russia amounted to nothing. He lamented the fate of four sisters, daughters of a provincial gentryman, "this was not life here, but bits of life . . . and he even felt

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<sup>20</sup> Milyoukov, Russia and Its Crisis, p. 431.

<sup>21</sup> Magarshack, Chekhov, p. 114.

<sup>22</sup> Chekhov, "My Life," in The Chorus Girl, p. 136.

sorry for these girls, who were living and would end their lives in the wilds, in a province far away from the center of culture."<sup>23</sup>

In one sense this may have been the major reason for the wane of liberal ardor. Many in the intelligentsia had studied at the great universities and had tasted the refinements of Western Europe. Dropped from interesting and sympathetic surroundings into a cultural desert, they were forced sooner or later to adopt the ways of the desert, or simply flee from their homes, which many did. The professor's wife in Uncle Vanya, said: "I have spent my life working in the interests of learning. Now I suddenly find myself plunged into this wilderness, condemned to see the same stupid people from morning till night and listen to their futile conversation."<sup>24</sup> At Home finds a young girl returning to her estate after five years study at the university. She hopes to meet a nest of intelligentsia activity, but instead she is confronted by "people so indifferent and careless. They seemed to have no fatherland, no religion, no public interests."<sup>25</sup>

Apathy and ignorance worked together with widespread corruption and the absence of culture to decay the liberal fervor. The weary intelligentsia watched problems grow

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<sup>23</sup>Chekhov, "An Official Duty," in The Schoolmistress, p. 136.

<sup>24</sup>Chekhov, Uncle Vanya, p. 30.

<sup>25</sup>Chekhov, "At Home," in The Duel, pp. 269-270.

faster than solutions could be found. To these conditions, the liberals surrendered and corroded. A veritable army of Chekhov's reformers cried out and gave up the ghost. A dejected doctor told Uncle Vanya that "there were only two respectable, intelligent men in this county, you and I. Ten years or so of this life of ours, this miserable life, have sucked us under, and we have become as contemptible and petty as the rest."<sup>26</sup> Ivanov, who worked so hard, turned into an intellectual and physical shadow. "Less than a year ago I was healthy and strong, full of pride and energy and enthusiasm. I worked with these hands here, and my words could move the dumbest man to tears. I believed in a bright future then. Now I am tired and without hope. My neglected land looks up at me as reproachfully as an orphan."<sup>27</sup> In the struggle for a better life the young land owner in My Life was also defeated. She asked her husband if "our successes had any perceptible influence on the life around us, have they brought any benefit to anyone whatever? No. Ignorance, physical uncleanness, drunkenness, an appallingly high rate of infant mortality, everything remains as it was, and no one is the better for your having ploughed and sown, and my having wasted money and read books. Obviously we have been working only for ourselves, and have advanced ideas only for ourselves."<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>26</sup>Chekhov, Uncle Vanya, p. 64.

<sup>27</sup>Chekhov, Ivanov, pp. 125-126.

<sup>28</sup>Chekhov, "My Life," in The Chorus Girl, p. 137.



It was the surrender in the face of many obstacles that caused Chekhov to lose faith in the liberal intelligentsia. He watched so many zealots give up the struggle and degenerate to the level of neglect and apathy that he looked upon the intelligentsia as a society mainly of talkers with few workers. Chekhov, in The Party, written in 1888, condemns a liberal enthusiast who had just arrived from the university to begin work. "'But in another year he will be bored like so many others and go off to Petersburg.'"<sup>29</sup>

Chekhov's opinion did not change later in the 1890's. He wrote to a friend in 1899: "The whole . . . [liberal intelligentsia] are the sons of their age. At the university they are full of idealism and give great hope for the future, but when they go out into the world they are soon as bad as the rest, and you find them as doctors owning villas, hungry chinoviki, and thieving engineers, or even as Katkovs [anti-reform editor of the Moscow News] and Pobidenostsevs [Procurator of the Holy Synod and the symbol of reaction in Russia]. 'I don't believe in our intelligentsia. It is hypocritical, false, hysterical, half-educated, lazy. I don't believe in it even when it is suffering and complaining.'"<sup>30</sup> In Three Sisters first performed in 1901, Vershinin asks: "If one listens to a man of the educated

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<sup>29</sup>Chekhov, "The Party," in The Party, p. 35.

<sup>30</sup>Bruford, Chekhov, p. 164.

class here . . . he is worried to death. . . . [He] is peculiarly given to exalted ideas, but why is it he always fall[s] so short in life? Why?"<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> Chekhov, Three Sisters, p. 142.

## Conclusion.

In many respects, the intelligentsia of the 1890's preserved a heritage passed down by previous generations. Its basic goals, political, and social reform in Russia, remained those established in the 1860's and 1870's. Still numerically small, it constituted a significant body of educated men and women, and it found its thinking running contrary to the ruling authority in Russia.

During the 1890's, Gorky wrote of people whose ideals were the same as members of the intelligentsia of the past. The ethic calling for sacrifice, which the young radicals professed loudly, if many did not actually practice it, can be traced back to earlier radical activity in earlier generations. The terrible destructive force disclosed in the radical intelligentsia of the 1890's had manifested itself throughout the 1860's, especially in M. Bakunin and S. Nechaev, and through the early 1880's in the assassins of Alexander II. Many of Gorky's figures displayed their strong ties with the past by openly worshiping such august idols as Belinsky, the literary critic of the 1840's, and the immortal Chernyshevsky, drawing comparisons between these heroes and themselves.

On the other hand, Chekhov accomplishes the same thing with his stories of the liberal intelligentsia. Their emphasis upon the necessity of lightening the misery of the peasant was not created by the liberals in the 1890's. The

roots of this theme may be traced to the Populists of the 1870's who wanted to help the peasantry, and to the "repentant noblemen," the gentry intelligentsia, of any era between 1840 and 1890. Strains of this idea were also evident in Journey from Saint Petersburg to Moscow, published by Alexander Radishchev in 1790.

There were, however, innumerable characteristics in the intelligentsia of the 1890's that marked it as unique. Perhaps the most obvious was that the social composition in both the radical and liberal camps was wider, and more inclusive than in earlier decades. While students, gentry, and exiles had always been active in the past, the influx of a large number of workingmen was a new agent entering the intelligentsia. So too, the arrival of a large group of professional liberals changed the social base of the intelligentsia.

Both the workers and the professional people contributed a stabilizing element to the intelligentsia of the 1890's. The need of the factory worker for daily economic necessities, and the professional's desire to subsist with a higher economic standard prevailing in Russia, tended to push the intelligentsia along a more practical road than it had previously taken. This manifested itself within the liberal intelligentsia by the attack on exigent problems, and within both the radical and liberal camps by an introduction of organizational activity on a large scale. Although the actual ability to organize was weak, and

unsuccessful in comparison to goals that were set, it was a new current in the intelligentsia. Organization had been discussed by the intelligentsia in the past, but in the 1890's the first major political parties actually took shape, and the intelligentsia formed other concrete and useful organizations such as the Beseda, and the Union of Unions. L

The increased size and scope of the intelligentsia was another development of the 1890's. The intelligentsia was no longer numbered in the few thousands, but approached half a million people in its membership. Its activities, once confined to Saint Petersburg and Moscow, extended throughout European Russia and in many cases Siberia by the end of the nineteenth century. The small circles of gentry and students common to the earlier periods were changing into large operations with many sympathizers, contributors, and slogans.

The growth of industrialization brought many new and conflicting economic, social, and political views to the thinking Russians of the nineties. These new views, with catalytic action added by the ethic of the reformers, created the most profound differences between the intelligentsia of the 1890's and its predecessors. While earlier reformers rarely if ever fully agreed on methods of action and theory, they at least considered themselves allies in a common cause. The intelligentsia of the 1890's, however, was hopelessly split. This split occurred between the individuals in the intelligentsia, between the major groups and

parties, and perhaps most profound of all, between the radical and liberal arms of the intelligentsia. The schisms caused the intelligentsia to become not one single force aimed at causing the dethronement of a common enemy, but a series of forces fighting one another with more vigor and success than they fought the common enemy. The differences, small at the beginning of the 1890's, widened as the decade drew to a close. Hence, by 1905, it was impossible to visualize the intelligentsia as a single concept, but easy to see it as a multitude of concepts with little in common with each other.

Factionalism made it impossible for the intelligentsia to carry out its mission. Had the parties and groups joined hands in a collective effort, several possibilities would have availed themselves. First, the most ludicrous schemes for reform, to which Russians seemed peculiarly addicted from time to time, would have been quickly dissolved in the majority will, leaving only the wiser and more practical remedies open to serious consideration. Second, the intelligentsia might have been able to draw on the talents of all members at any one time, given some general organizational unity. This would have given it a virtually inexhaustible reservoir of needy information, power, and energy. During any crisis these elements could have been stationed at key positions, insuring a high degree of success regardless of the prearranged goal. Third, such an impressive force might have well found support rather than opposition from the

tottering monarchy. The tsar might have conceded and added his power and prestige to the intelligentsia.

Perhaps, however, the answer to the question: Why did the intelligentsia fail?, remains embedded in circumstances much too complicated to be solved by a few artificially tailored steps to success. Perhaps Chekhov was closer to the truth when he claimed that there was no real intelligentsia in Russia, but "'only people who when they are young all chirp rapturously like sparrows on a heap of muck, but at forty are already old and start thinking of death.'"<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Magarshack, Chekhov, pp. 371-372.

## Bibliographical Essay.

### Primary Sources.

The major sources that contributed to the chapters on the radical intelligentsia were the writings of Maxim Gorky. His three volume Forty Years, The Life of Clim Samghin, Bystander (New York, 1920), Magnet (New York, 1931), and Other Fires (New York, 1933), is a fictional history of the Russian intelligentsia from the early 1880's to 1907. This work delineates the attitudes of the intelligentsia concerning science, religion, literature, politics, and many other topics that dominated Russian intellectual life during the nineties. The history also gives an account of the beginnings of the radical political parties and their problems. Although a primary source for the nineties, the work has all the drawbacks of a memoir, Bystander was written in 1927, Magnet was written in 1928, and Other Fires was written in 1931. Gorky's autobiography, My University Days (New York, 1930), written and first published in 1923, was also helpful. This book contains recordings of Gorky's observations from the late 1880's to the early 1890's, during his activities along the Volga, chiefly in the towns of Kazan and Nizhni Novgorod. Mother (New York, 1923) was written to bolster the cause of revolution in Russia. This novel was rushed into its first publication at the request of no less a figure than Lenin, and contains information helpful in answering the question: What did the radical



intelligentsia consider its tasks to be? The work is strongly didactic and Gorky readily admitted its literary shortcomings. Finally, several of Gorky's plays were useful for his discussion of the intelligentsia in a different medium. Summer Folk, and Children of the Sun both written in 1905 contain interesting material.

Anton Pavlovich Chekhov, unfortunately, did not deal directly with the problems of the Russian intelligentsia, but his literary endeavors disclose a wealth of information about it. His Tales of Chekhov (New York, 1916-1922); translated by Constance Garnett, and The Unknown Chekhov (New York, 1954) were the major sources used to reconstruct the attitudes of the liberal intelligentsia during the 1890's. Several of Chekhov's plays, especially Ivanov, and Uncle Vanya (New York, 1923), translated by Marian Fell, and written in 1889 and 1899 respectively, and Three Sisters (New York, nd.) translated by Constance Garnett and written in 1901, provide invaluable ideas. Chekhov published hundreds of stories during his long literary career, but I have attempted to use citations from only those stories written during the nineties. Chekhov's basic ideas on the intelligentsia, however, changed little from 1883 to 1904.

Other primary sources used were memoirs, scholarly studies written by Russians and other Europeans, and reports of travelers and exiles. Chief among these was the Reminiscences of Anton Chekhov (New York, 1921), written by Maxim Gorky. Gorky cites Chekhov's general attitude concerning

the inadequate administration of Russia, his feelings toward the downtrodden Russian schoolteachers, and his ideas about the heartless dispensers of justice in Russia. The Memoirs (New York, 1921) of Count Witte, Minister of Finance, give his view of government attitudes toward domestic issues during the nineties. These Memoirs evidence an understandable bias in Witte's favor. Paul Milyoukov's Russia and Its Crisis (Chicago, 1905) is an indispensable source. Written in English during that liberal professors visit to the United States in 1903, the work includes his opinion of the struggle in Russia between the tsar and the forces of liberation. The work employs a mass of facts (some more reliable than others), to support anti-tsarist arguments.

Scholarly studies used in the thesis include Milyoukov's Outlines of Russian Culture (Philadelphia, 1948), edited by Michael Karpovich. This book gives a splendid analysis of the art and literature of the 1890's. Donald Mackenzie Wallace's revised Russia, 2nd ed. (New York, 1905) is invaluable for comments concerning rural Russia during the nineties and for its discussion of the actual functions of the Zemstvo. The book is a masterpiece of fluent style. Along the same lines as Wallace, Anatole Leroy-Beaulieu's The Empire of the Tsars and the Russians, Vol. II (New York, 1898) supplies pertinent information on rural Russia and the workings of the Zemstvo during the late nineteenth century.

Primary sources also include the accounts of travelers in Russia, and interested participants in the Russian

problems. The Diaries of Theodor Herzl (New York, 1956), European Zionist leader, contains Mr. Herzl's record of travel in Russia during the 1890's, and his version of discussions he had with Plehve and Witte on the Russian-Jewish question. Konni Zilliacus also contributed to the thesis with his Russian Revolutionary Movement (New York, 1905). Although Mr. Zilliacus' book is frankly biased in favor of the revolutionary forces, it is helpful for remarks on the liberal organizations active in the cities during the 1890's. Finally, Nikolai Berdiaev's The Russian Idea (New York, 1948), although written considerably after Mr. Berdiaev's exodus from Russia, contributed provocative ideas on the nature of the Russian intelligentsia and its activity before the 1890's.

### Secondary Sources.

Secondary sources were important for biographical material, chronology, and historical and literary background. Alexander Kaun's Maxim Gorky and His Russia (New York, 1931) gives an excellent account of Gorky's activities throughout his life. Kaun's work is also helpful for suggestions on titles of Gorky's books and plays that deal with the intelligentsia. Both David Magarshack's Chekhov: A Life (New York, 1953), and W. H. Bruford's Chekhov and His Russia (New York, 1947) provide a similar service for Chekhov. Magarshack's book is the more inclusive of the two, and Magarshack's study of Chekhov the Dramatist (London, 1952) discusses additional Chekhov ideas.

Contemporary studies on the intelligentsia undertaken in various fashion by scholars were few, but useful. Leopold Haimson's The Russian Marxists and the Origins of Bolshevism (Cambridge, Mass., 1955) supplies useful ideas and information on the radical intelligentsia during the nineties, especially on the Marxist elements. Oliver Radkey's The Agrarian Foes of Bolshevism (New York, 1958) offers insight and chronology for the Social Revolutionaries. A. L. Patkin's work, The Origins of the Russian-Jewish Labour Movement (Melbourne, Australia, 1947), sums up the relationship between the Jews in the Russian intelligentsia and other members in the intelligentsia, and between the Jews and the Russian government. Patkin's book avoids falling into the abyss of gory details, as many works that consider Russian-Jewry tend to do. Donald Treadgold's Lenin and His Rivals (New York, 1955) was helpful, especially his carefully written chapter, "The Year 1898." James H. Billington's Mikhailovsky and Russian Populism (Oxford, 1958) is excellent, supplying information about the early Narodnik movement and one of its leaders. Alfred Meyer's Leninism (Cambridge, Mass., 1957) was useful, especially his observations in the chapter on "The Task of the Proletariat and Its Auxiliary Forces." Michael Karpovich's Imperial Russia, 1801-1917 (New York, 1932), while it covers the entire nineteenth century Russian crisis, was especially helpful in the chapter on "Reform and Reaction (1855-1905)." George Fischer's Russian Liberalism: From Gentry to Intelligentsia

(Cambridge, Mass., 1958), while occasionally unsupported, contains a wealth of material on liberal efforts during the 1890's, and injects much useful material on the political clash between the old land owners and the new 'left wing' professional groups from the cities.

In the field of literature, aside from the already mentioned Outlines of Russian Culture by Milyoukov, The Positive Hero in Russian Literature (New York, 1958) by Rufus B. Mathewson, Jr. was helpful in analyzing Russian writers and writings during the nineteenth century. His comments on Chernyshevsky and Gorky are vivid and well organized. Georgette Donchin's The Influence of French Symbolism on Russian Poetry (The Hague, 1958) is a key work in comparative literature. It was useful in uncovering roots and definitions of symbolism, popular in Russia from 1890 to 1910. Finally, Michael T. Florinsky's mammoth Russia: A History and an Interpretation (New York, 1955) served as a dictionary and encyclopedia for transliteration, chronology, and historical information.

Innumerable articles were helpful in contributing ideas and facts to the thesis. "Two Types of Russian Liberalism: Maklakov and Milyoukov," in Continuity and Change in Russian and Soviet Thought (Cambridge, Mass., 1955) edited by Ernest J. Simmons, clarifies many points on the political dichotomy that existed between the major liberal factions. In the same work, Rene Wellek's article "Social and Aesthetic Values in Russian Nineteenth Century Literary Criticism,"

and Rufus Mathewson, Jr.'s. contribution, "The Hero and Society: Literary Definitions," give additional information on radical literary criticism and its relation to the functional approach of the radical ethic. Two articles by George Fischer; one, "The Russian Intelligentsia and Liberalism," in The Harvard Slavic Studies, Vol. IV, Russian Thought and Politics (Cambridge, Mass., 1957), and another, "The Russian Intelligentsia," in The Transformation of Russian Society (Cambridge, Mass., 1960) edited by Cyril Black, give Mr. Fischer's exclusive view on the nature of the intelligentsia of the 1890's. Daedalus: Journal of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, LXXXIX (Summer, 1960), contains a number of articles on the Russian intelligentsia. Martin Malia's "What is the Intelligentsia?" pp. 441-458, Boris Elkin's "The Russian Intelligentsia on the Eve of the Revolution," pp. 472-486, and Richard Pipes' "The Historical Evolution of the Russian Intelligentsia," pp. 487-502, are informative discussions about the actual nature of the Russian intelligentsia.

Articles in the learned journals were also useful. Allan K. Wildman's "The Russian Intelligentsia of the 1890's," in The American Slavic and East European Review, XIX (April, 1960), 157-179, comments on the kruzhki, and George Z. Patrick's article "Chekhov's Attitude Toward Life," in the Slavonic and East European Review, X (April, 1932), 658-668, while helpful in pointing out many stories in which Chekhov touches on the intelligentsia, is of dubious accuracy.

A Handbook of Slavic Studies (Cambridge, Mass., 1949), edited by L. I. Strakhovsky is excellent for bibliography, including general works, monographs, special studies, anthologies, and translations of literature and journals.

Finally, the Bol'shaia Sovetskaia Entsiklopedia (Moscow, 1949-1958), edited by S. I. Vavilov was helpful in locating names of obscure Russian authors.

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