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Moscow Slavophilism 1840-1865: a Study in
Social Change and Intellectual Development.

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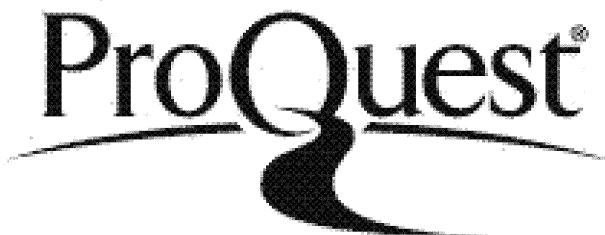


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Title of thesis:

Moscow Slavophilism 1840-1865: a Study in
Social Change and Intellectual Development

The thesis is concerned with the social and political thought of the Moscow Slavophiles, a small group of writers and thinkers active in Russia during the middle decades of the 19th century. The existing literature has made little attempt to relate the Slavophiles' ideas to social and economic changes taking place in Russia, instead preferring to take a biographical or textual approach. Where attention has been given to the importance of wider social and economic factors, the treatment has usually been brief and discursive.

This thesis tries to overcome the problem by devoting more attention to social and economic issues than has been customary in previous considerations of Slavophilism. Chapters 2 and 3 develop a detailed social biography of members of the Slavophile circle, casting doubt on the conventional view that they were representatives of the 'middle' provincial gentry, frightened by the prospect of economic change. In reality, they understood that economic change could offer benefits as well as costs. Several members of the circle reorganised farming practices on their landed estates to take advantage of the commercial opportunities given by technical and economic changes in agriculture.

Chapters 4-7 examine the development of Slavophile social and political thought, arguing that it evolved in response to changes in the social, economic and political environment. Before 1855, at a time when the

repressive Government of Nicholas I was unwilling to countenance publicly the prospect of reform, Slavophile political ideas were expressed via the medium of bizarre historical and sociological theories. However, after Nicholas' death, when the new Government began to actively consider the possibility of emancipating the serfs, Slavophile ideas began to be expressed in a more mundane form. At the same time, the contradictions between the populist elements in their thought and their interests as members of the wealthy gentry became more apparent. This contradiction became even clearer after 1861, and eventually helped fragment the earlier unity of the circle.

Chapter 7 examines a somewhat different theme; namely, the relationship between early Slavophilism and Panslavism. By examining Slavophile journals of the 1850's, the thesis casts doubt on the idea that there is a clear theoretical and historical distinction between Slavophilism and Panslavism. Panslavism appealed to those grouped around Slavophile journals because it seemed to offer Russia an opportunity to find new allies in the international system at a time when its fortunes were at a low ebb.

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'But now, O Lord, all this is done, and time has healed the wound'

(St. Augustine)

Introduction

The 'Slavophile idea' has been an enduring feature of Russian culture from the early 19th century through to the present day. Whilst the forms of its expression have changed radically with the passage of time, a central core has always remained intact: namely, a belief in the existence of a distinctive 'Russian soul' (*russkaia dusha*) which distinguishes the country and its inhabitants from all other members of the human race. In its most extreme guise, the doctrine has become the basis for the national chauvinism visible in generations of writers ranging from Ivan Aksakov to Valentin Rasputin. However, in its more liberal variant, derived, perhaps, from the ideas of the German historian Johann von Herder, the doctrine has inspired a more generous-spirited view of foreign cultures, in which every nation has the potential to make a positive contribution to the development of human civilisation.

The greatest problem faced by the student is the need to distinguish between the different phases and aspects of the 'Slavophile idea'. A number of historians have argued that changes in the doctrine can best be understood by means of a chronological examination. Alexander Yanov, for example, believes that a liberal conception of *russkaia dusha* always tends to give way to a more nationalistic form, a pattern he believes can be discerned in both the 19th and 20th-centuries.¹ By contrast, the Soviet historian K. N. Lomunov has claimed that this type of analysis is misleading, arguing that changes in the Slavophile idea have not simply been the product of some form of ill-defined intellectual decay, whereby the liberal elements are continually squeezed out by the chauvinistic.² Instead, he correctly points out that every generation of thinkers works

within a distinctive social, economic and intellectual framework, each writer interpreting the basic concept of *russkaiia dusha* to meet the demands of his own age. Consequently, a serious examination of the subject cannot confine itself to a study of ideas but must also examine the historical context in which they were expressed and developed.

The central focus of this thesis will be on the development of so-called 'classical Slavophilism' - the intellectual movement which had its origins in the Moscow salons of the 1830's and 1840's. It will also examine the way in which Slavophile ideas developed in the fifteen years or so following the end of the 'Remarkable Decade' of the 1840's, during which time Russian literature and culture witnessed the emergence of some of its finest talents. This time scale, which takes us through until approximately 1865, is somewhat unusual; most historians have concentrated on the development of Slavophilism under Nicholas 1, or, at best, continued their study up to the emancipation of the serfs in 1861. The decision to continue the examination beyond this point has not been taken casually; one of the central arguments of this thesis is that Slavophilism was above all a dynamic doctrine, the development and evolution of which responded to changes in the wider social and political environment. The challenges of emancipation and the years which followed it brought about marked changes in the ideas of the Slavophiles - a feature of their thinking which has been neglected by intellectual historians. As a result, there has been a tendency to consider early Slavophilism as a static corpus of ideas, susceptible to a straightforward process of description and analysis. The truth, however, is more complex and demands a new approach which seeks to understand Slavophilism as a social as well as an intellectual phenomenon.

The names of the thinkers studied in this thesis are well known to all

students of Russian history. Alexei Khomiakov (1804-1860) has often been regarded as the founder of Slavophilism. Both contemporaries and historians have gone to great lengths to show that he was a 'born' Slavophile, whose convictions never wavered between youth and old age. The same was true of Peter Kireevsky (1808-1856), whose name is best remembered as a collector of folk-tales and songs. By contrast, his brother Ivan Kireevsky (1806-1856), often regarded as the philosopher of the circle, only became a Slavophile after a long process of personal and intellectual anguish, resulting in a dramatic sea-change in his views during the 1830's. The intellectual evolution of the two most prominent younger members of the circle - Konstantin Aksakov (1816-1860) and Iury Samarin (1818-1877) - also followed a tortuous process. However, by the mid-1840's they identified almost completely with the Slavophile views of their elders.

Three other names must also be mentioned here, since they will occur frequently throughout this thesis. Alexander Koshelev (1806-1883) only began to take an active part in the Slavophile circle in the late 1840's, although he had been a close friend of the Kireevsky brothers since the early 1820's. He played a vital role in the development of Slavophilism during the years following the death of Nicholas 1 and helped determine the circle's attitudes towards emancipation. The same was true of Prince Vladimir Cherkassky (1824-1878) who co-operated closely with the Slavophiles during the era of reform whilst rejecting many of their social and religious ideals. Ivan Aksakov (1823-86), the brother of Konstantin, is a particularly difficult figure to assess. During the 1840's he was critical of many Slavophile ideas, and refused to accept the label as a description of his own views. However, in the course of the 1850's and 1860's he began to cooperate actively with the other members of the circle

and played an important role in acquainting the public with their views. He also helped develop the Panslav elements latent in their thinking about the role of the Russian nation in world civilisation. In addition to these central figures, there were also a number of minor epigones, such as Dmitry Valuev and A. N. Popov, whose role in the circle during the 1840's has received insufficient attention.

Historians have also failed to give much consideration to the female members of the Slavophile families.³ It will be seen in chapter 2 that Slavophile ideas first developed amongst the members of a small group of families closely linked by blood and marriage. The mothers, wives and daughters of the leading figures in the circle not only played an important role in encouraging the friendships between the various members but also contributed actively to the process of debate and discussion.

There is a vast literature on Slavophilism, some of it of dubious quality. Most books and articles have concentrated on the study of Slavophile ideas, often relating them to other intellectual currents in mid 19th-century Russia. It would be possible to provide a detailed account of how the evaluation of Moscow Slavophilism has changed during the last century and a half or so, ranging from comments by contemporaries such as Herzen and Solov'ev through to the most recent Soviet studies. However, whilst such an approach might be useful as a bibliographical review, it would not tell us a great deal about the radically different approaches which succeeding generations of historians have brought to the study of the subject. It is more useful to review the literature thematically, examining the various prisms through which Slavophilism has been viewed. Whilst no single approach can yield a complete insight into the subject

each does reveal a small fragment of the whole, thereby suggesting important ideas about future methods of study.

From Critique to Hagiography

The Slavophiles' contemporaries left a number of accounts which have greatly influenced historians. Since many of these memoirs were written by their intellectual opponents, the Westerners (*zapadniki*), the portrayal they give of Slavophile ideas and their authors is hardly sympathetic. When taken together, these assorted snapshots give the impression that members of the Slavophile circle were great eccentrics, whose extravagant ideas and attitudes banished them to the margins of civilised social and intellectual society. Alexander Herzen, for example, ironically described Konstantin Aksakov's bizarre penchant for wearing national dress in public in an attempt to proclaim his sympathy with "the oppressed life of the Russian people".⁴ Other accounts stressed the antiquated social structure of the Slavophile families, suggesting they stood out even amongst the traditional Muscovite nobility; the memoirs of Panaev, for example, provide a gently ironic account of the archaic social rituals followed in the Aksakov family.⁵

Alongside these good-natured and sympathetic portraits, there also ran a darker, more negative evaluation of the personalities in the Slavophile circle. Herzen, for example, cast grave doubts on the intellectual integrity of Khomiakov, a point echoed by the historian Sergei Solov'ev, who made a similar charge against Konstantin Aksakov.⁶ Such steadfast refusals to distinguish the ideas of the Slavophiles from the cruder

products of 'Official Nationality' reflected the Westerners' conviction that Slavophilism was a consciously dishonest doctrine. The father of the historian Boris Chicherin dismissed Slavophilism as an intellectual fad, popular amongst wealthy dilettantes with too much time on their hands.⁷ However, the memoirs which were written once the heat of polemical battle had died away usually gave more intellectual credence to the doctrine; for example, the Westerner historian Konstantin Kavelin, writing about the Slavophiles decades after the salon controversies of the 1840's had ended, provided an intelligent and well-argued critique of their views.⁸ Alexander Herzen, in his memoirs composed during the 1860's, argued that the Slavophiles of the 1840's had, like their opponents, been members of the generation of 'superfluous men', alienated from their surroundings by the harsh philistine values of the Nicolaevian Regime: "Yes, we were their opponents, but very strange ones. We had the same love but not the same way of loving - and like Janus or a two-headed eagle we looked in different directions, though the heart that beat within us was as one".⁹

Herzen's declaration has, in fact, misled generations of historians. A number of writers, such as Gerschenzon, have implied that members of the Slavophile circle were representatives of the intelligentsia, sharing the same animus as their better-known radical counterparts.¹⁰ In fact, as will be seen in the following two chapters, the Slavophiles were members of the wealthy Russian gentry who, for the most part, lived in the style of typical Russian *pomeshchiki*. In this, they were distinguished sharply from their Westerner opponents who were, for the most part, academics and journalists. The difference in the social background of the two sides played an important part in influencing their perception of the social, economic and political problems facing Russia, a fact seldom appreciated by

historians.

Whilst the accounts by contemporaries tended to portray the Slavophiles in a negative light, by the end of the century an entirely new trend became apparent in the historiography: the hagiographic portrait. These were particularly prominent during the 1890's, doubtless reflecting a growing unease within Russian society about the rapid pace of social and economic change, as well as concern about the development of the revolutionary movement. The Slavophiles seemed to offer a set of values quite different from those provided by the Marxists or Witte, each of whom in their own way threatened the security and status of the traditional gentry class.

Some of these portraits simply recounted the life story of the leading Slavophiles. Others attempted to give a rudimentary account of their ideas. Typical of the first type was A.S. Pol's account of the life of Khomiakov, evidently aimed at an audience of children. Pol' presented his subject's life as an exemplary model, suitable for imitation, praising Khomiakov as a man who "loved the truth and spoke it always".¹¹ Speeches about Khomiakov's life and works were a fashionable topic at *gymnasia* throughout Russia. In 1904, for example, P.N. Levashev gave a talk at a Petersburg college about Khomiakov's views on family life.¹² Khomiakov's memory was particularly revered in his home province of Tula where, ironically, he had never been popular during his lifetime. The local nobility celebrated the centenary of his birth by ordering a portrait to hang in their assembly hall whilst a local conference was held to celebrate his memory.¹³

Since they so clearly reflected the prejudices and preconceptions of their authors, hagiographic portraits and critical accounts alike are only

of limited value in helping us arrive at an objective portrait of Slavophilism. Fortunately, however, there are also numerous scholarly accounts to help us.

The Slavophiles and the Romantic Movement

Many academic works have sought to trace the intellectual origins of Slavophilism. Whilst most scholars agree that the doctrine built on elements in traditional Russian culture, the majority have also emphasised the influence of 19th-century European thought. This strand in the historiography can be traced back at least as far as the 1870's, to the work of the literary historian A. I. Pypin. Whilst Pypin did not deny that Slavophilism represented a "whole new doctrine" he argued vehemently that "the soil on which Slavophile ideas developed was that of German philosophy".¹⁴

A lengthy debate on this subject occurred throughout the final decades before the Revolution; numerous articles on this theme appeared in journals such as *Russkaia Mysl'*.¹⁵ The scope and sophistication of these articles naturally varied from author to author. In general, though, discussion focussed on the way in which the Slavophiles' treatment of nationality had been influenced by the conception of the *volk* current amongst early 19th-century German writers. As is well-known, many authors of the period followed Herder in arguing that every nation - usually conceived as a social entity whose members were united by common ties of language and cultural inheritance - was animated by its own distinctive national principle, distinctive from its neighbours. However, whereas the work of

Herder was at least partly informed by the rationalist spirit of the Enlightenment, later writers developed an essentially mystical conception of the nation. Unity of language and culture was seen as evidence of a more profound sense of shared identity, based upon ties of blood and kinship. According to writers like Pypin, the Slavophiles built on these ideas when developing their distinctive understanding of the Russian *narod*. Whilst foreign writers stimulated their general interest in nationhood, the Slavophiles were most concerned to define the characteristic national spirit (*narodnost'*) of the Russian people. All their discussions of religion, history and ethnography were inspired by this single intention.

This type of approach has been apparent in a number of more modern works, most notably Nicholas Riasanovsky's 'Russia and the West in the Teaching of the Slavophiles'. The book first appeared in the mid-1950's, and appears to have been influenced by the work of Lovejoy and the 'History of Ideas' seminar at Princeton; at least, the general approach of the two men towards the discipline of intellectual history is broadly similar.¹⁵ Lovejoy's work was particularly concerned with understanding how ideas are transmitted across time and between different countries - an interest which is evident in Riasanovsky's own work. In particular, his book focusses on the similarity between the 'thought-styles' of the German Romantic writers and those of the Slavophiles. Riasanovsky believes that the influence was a direct one, citing the similarity between the philosophical ideas of the Slavophiles and such German luminaries as Baader and Jacobi. He also argues, in an appendix to the book, that Khomiakov's philosophy of history was based upon that of Frederick Schlegel. Above all, Riasanovsky stresses the influence of the idealist philosopher Schelling on the Slavophiles, correctly pointing out that he was the most admired thinker amongst the

circle's members.

It is certainly impossible to understand the Slavophiles' ideas without examining how western thought influenced them. However, since few of their works took the form of a scholarly treatise, including the paraphernalia of footnotes, acknowledgements, and the like, it is impossible to trace the patterns of influence with any precision. Nor is it satisfactory to explain Slavophile ideas by reference to a nebulous 'intellectual climate'. It is perfectly possible to study, for example, the development of Schellingian ideas in Russia, and to examine the way they were propagated by Moscow University professors such as Pavlov and Davydov. It is also possible to show how the elder Slavophiles, in particular, were exposed to these ideas during the course of lectures and classes.¹⁷ However, the 'history of ideas' approach fails to take into account the social dimension of thought and is too ready to assume that the act of intellectual creation is a solitary process taking place in the individual's study or library. Though Riasonovsky's work is certainly illuminating in its remarks about the relationship between the cultural climates in Russia and Germany during the first half of the 19th century, it fails to provide us with all the tools necessary to understand Slavophilism.

The Slavophiles and Religion

Numerous books and articles have emphasised the religious elements in Slavophilism, arguing that they represented the most important *leitmotif* of the doctrine. This interpretation was particularly popular in the decades

before 1917 and was perhaps most clearly expressed by the authors of the celebrated *Vekhi* symposium. Several contributors built on Slavophile ideas when developing their thoughts about the problem of developing a new moral and intellectual culture - one which would be informed by an alternative set of values to those espoused by the radical intelligentsia. Admittedly, whilst the *Vekhi* authors may have been inspired by the Slavophiles, their own ideas bore little relation to those of Khomiakov, *et al.* The influence of German Kantian doctrine, along with a deep distrust of the collective ethos of the intelligentsia, combined to give the *Vekhi* symposium an individualistic gloss profoundly alien to early Slavophilism.¹⁹

This interest in the religious elements in Slavophilism was shared by many other early 20th-century writers. Zavitnevich, for example, composed a massive biography of Khomiakov in which he devoted an entire volume to his religious thought.²⁰ Florensky and Berdiaev also studied Khomiakov's religious writings, although they interpreted them in a radically different manner from Zavitnevich.²¹ Later writers have continued to stress the important influence of Russian Orthodoxy on Slavophilism. Bolshakoff devoted an entire book to a comparative analysis of Khomiakov's religious writings.²² Peter Christoff's monumental series of intellectual biographies, whilst scrupulously avoiding any simplistic analysis of the intellectual origins of Slavophilism, stress the influence of the Greek Fathers on the members of the circle.²³ Ivan Kireevsky, in particular, had many close connections with the monks of the Optina Putsyn monastery, cooperating with them in translating the works of St. Maximus and St. Chrysostom.²⁴ Khomiakov and Samarin were also well acquainted with the teachings of the Eastern Fathers and made many references to them in their own work.

Although lack of space precludes a detailed consideration of Slavophile theology, a few words can help clarify the nature of their ideas on the subject. In his Preface to Khomiakov's religious writings, Samarin observed that his friend's greatest contribution had been to devise a specifically Orthodox theology.²⁴ Earlier Orthodox writers had all written within the spirit of either Catholicism or Protestantism, failing to provide their readers with a description of the elements which set their own Church apart from those of the West. Khomiakov, like his friends, was not greatly interested in the usual problems which concerned western theologians - the nature of transubstantiation, the role of the priest, etc. Nor was he particularly interested in biblical exegesis, which played such an important role amongst the Protestant theologians of the period.

Slavophile religious writings tended to be inspirational in nature, emphasising the emotive aspects of religious experience in preference to its intellectual and doctrinal basis. This doubtless reflected the deep personal religious commitment of members of the circle, a phenomenon testified to in the accounts of contemporaries and evident in their personal diaries and letters.²⁵ Kireevsky, in particular, was greatly influenced by those Western religious writers who emphasised the experiential aspects of religion. The Protestant theologian Schleiermarcher, who emphasised the close relationship between feeling and piety, was favourite reading in his family.²⁶ Ivan was also a great admirer of Pascal, and a brief consideration of the Frenchman's work is found in his Collected Works.²⁷

There was a strong relationship between the social and religious elements in Slavophilism. The Slavophiles identified the central place of religion in the social and psychological life of the Russian people as one

of the most important features of Russian *narodnost'*. They believed that the country's entire social culture reflected the unity which informed its religious consciousness and argued that there was a vital link between the spiritual foundations of a society and the nature and quality of its social life. It would be tempting to conclude from this that the key to Slavophile social and political thought is to be found in its religious ideas and ideals. However, as Riasanovsky has shown, Slavophile religious thought with its emphasis on 'unity within the Church' (*sobornost'*) and its dislike of formal theology was, itself, a typical product of the Romantic era. Deciding whether the religious or romantic elements should be accorded primacy is a little like trying to decipher the old riddle of the chicken and the egg. No single element can necessarily be accorded priority over the other; the two developed in a complex symbiotic relationship, precluding simplistic discussion about which was the more profound or significant.

Slavophilism and Existentialism

Slavophile ideas have often appealed to writers whose own thought reveals a strong existentialist inclination. Nikolai Berdiaev's biography of Khomiakov reflected many of its author's characteristic concerns and preoccupations; the same was even more true of Lev Shestov's treatment of Kireevsky.²⁶ The result can be confusing, since it is not always clear whether they are expounding their own beliefs or attempting an exegesis of Slavophile doctrine. However, a number of more objective scholars have also noted strong existential tendencies within early Slavophilism, and a

brief examination of this complex topic can be illuminating.

There is much confusion about the nature and origins of existentialism, especially with regards to the debate about whether it should be regarded as an intellectual tendency or a 'state of mind'.²⁹ It is conventional to trace the roots of early existentialism to the revolt against Hegel in the middle decades of the 19th-century, a rebellion often considered to be symbolised in the thought of Kierkegaard. The Hegelian philosophy presented itself as an objective means of comprehending the entire matrix of human affairs, ranging from social to religious developments; every phenomenon could be ascribed a meaning within the confines of 'the system'. Kierkegaard revolted against this rational system in the name of the irrational, rejecting Hegel's argument that faith and religion were both phenomena whose inner nature could be understood from the detached perspective of a supreme rational philosophy.³⁰

The Slavophiles echoed Kierkegaard's rejection of the Hegelian system, as indeed did a number of other Russian thinkers of the period, including Herzen. Ivan Kireevsky and Khomiakov both argued that the Hegelian system represented the finite point of rational philosophy, since it asserted that all human and divine affairs were expressions of a rational process of historical development (and hence accessible to informed human reason). They disputed the German's belief that the essence of the divine and human worlds could be fully understood through the use of reason alone, and considered the exalted claims made for his philosophy to be both vainglorious and wrong.³¹ It was for this reason that the two men greatly admired Schelling's later thought, which attempted to move beyond the confines of simple reason in order to develop new forms of non-rational comprehension.

Samarin and Aksakov, belonging to a younger generation, were more directly exposed to Hegelian ideas during their years at Moscow University. Indeed, Samarin's first serious work revolved around an attempt to reconcile his Orthodoxy and his respect for Hegelian ideas - a palpable nonsense according to a strict interpretation of the German philosopher's system.³² The Slavophiles' dislike of rational philosophy, so characteristic of later existentialist thinkers, led them to place great emphasis on the emotional and affective elements in human thought - perhaps helping to account for their interest in religion. The Romantic cult of 'feeling' is evident in numerous Slavophile works and private letters, reflecting their belief that intense emotion could overcome the divisions between individuals and form the basis for a social community.

It is possible to see Slavophilism as yet another 19th-century version of the debate between Reason and Heart - the attempt to reconcile a respect for the life of the mind with the individual's desire to obtain emotional and social fulfillment. Slavophilism was at its most distinctively existential when it emphasised the need for social systems to recognise the needs of the 'whole man'. The Slavophiles' search for a new social order was inspired by their wish to discover a framework which would allow the individual to fulfil his social and emotional needs, as well his intellectual and personal desires. In a sense, the doctrine can be conceived of as a rejection of Descartes' celebrated dictum of "*cogito ergo sum*": the thinking man represented only one aspect of human existence, and by no means the most important or valid one at that.

Commentators of a neo-existentialist inclination, such as Berdiaev and Florensky, have argued that it is impossible to understand Slavophile ideas without understanding the personality of the men who expressed them. This

conviction did not simply reflect the conventional belief that a knowledge of biography can serve to increase our comprehension of an individual's thought; rather it had deep roots in their own conception of the nature of ideas. Florensky, for example, criticised the massive work of Zavitnevich for attempting to detach (*otdelit*) the personality of Khomiakov from his works, objectifying it as a separate phenomenon suitable for scientific study.³³ By contrast, argued Florensky, personality and ideas represented an integral whole, the division of which was conceptually impossible. His approach implied that the ideas of the Slavophiles were best seen as an attempt to resolve a series of individual and human dilemmas: to study the problems of their age "with the whole soul and the whole body" to use Unamuno's words.³⁴

The Slavophiles and Russian Society

All these approaches are ultimately unsatisfactory since they fail to understand that Slavophilism was as much a social phenomenon as an intellectual one. Even the detailed series of biographies by Peter Cristoff, which make Slavophilism so much more accessible to the English reader, have concentrated on the intellectual climate at the expense of a more general discussion. There has, however, been a considerable literature attempting to relate Slavophilism to the social and economic environment from which it emerged; a brief discussion of its merits and shortcomings is now in order.

The radical 19th-century journalist Dmitry Pisarev identified the social roots of Slavophilism as a crucial element in determining the

doctrine's contents as early as the 1860's. In an article about Ivan Kireevsky, published in the journal *Russkoe Slovo*, Pisarev argued that the speculative philosophy in which Kireevsky engaged was "the property of people of leisure", who were not forced by social circumstances to consider more mundane questions of poverty and deprivation. He identified Kireevsky as a member of the wealthy gentry, whose members shared a distinctive social psychology preventing them from rising "even for a moment above the views of his milieu".³⁵ Pisarev seems to have subscribed to a crude form of determinism, according to which the thoughts and beliefs of every individual were inextricably and rigidly linked to his social background and circumstances.

A few other 19th-century writers shared Pisarev's conviction that Slavophilism was in some sense a 'gentry ideology', although few rigorous attempts were made to examine the precise meaning of such an idea.³⁶ The voluminous Soviet literature on Slavophilism has developed these ideas at some length, attempting to relate the study of the subject to the broader canons of Soviet historical orthodoxy. Inevitably, many of these books have tended to reflect contemporary preoccupations and concerns. For example, the famous 1969 discussion about Slavophilism in *Voprosy Literatury* reflected the debate about Russian nationalism current in Soviet society in the late 1960's and early 1970's.³⁷ However, since Soviet authors have had extensive access to Soviet archives some of their work has been of value.

One of the earliest articles of the Soviet period was published in 1926 by the historian N.A. Rubinstein. He argued that Slavophilism was a characteristic ideological product of the middle gentry, articulating their values and beliefs against the doctrines of 'Official Nationality' which

reflected the concerns of the Court aristocracy.³⁸ Whilst the distinction is too crude to be of much interest, Rubinstein's assertion that the Slavophiles were members of the middle gentry has been influential, even though he provided little evidence to support his discussion of social provenance.

Several Soviet historians have tried to divide the development of early Slavophilism into neat chronological periods. The most celebrated discussion of this type, by S.S. Dmitriev, argued that pre-reform Slavophilism fell into three distinct phases: the years before 1848, the years between the European Revolution and the death of Nicholas I, and the final years before emancipation.³⁹ Such classifications are inevitably arbitrary, though they are useful for reminding us that Slavophilism underwent important changes in the first twenty-five years of its life in response to social, political and economic change.

Other Soviet historians have been more interested in classifying early Slavophilism according to its ideological content. The majority of writers, such as Iakovlev, view it as a species of gentry liberalism, opposed to the values of the centralised Nicoloaeian state.⁴⁰ A few authors, such as Dudzinskaia, direct most of their attention to Slavophilism during the reform period, viewing it as a type of bourgeois liberalism which reflected the ideological standpoint of large-scale commodity producers.⁴¹ Some of the best works, including those of Tsimbaev and Lomunov, avoid any dogmatic classification of Slavophilism, preferring to use a mass of archival sources to examine the subject with greater accuracy than can be achieved by employing printed sources alone.⁴² Whilst some of these latter works have shortcomings which make it hard for Western historians to accept their conclusions, they contain insights and materials

which are invaluable for further analysis.

Perhaps the best work on Slavophilism is 'The Slavophile Controversy', by the Polish-American historian A. Walicki. Since this thesis is in large part a response to the arguments put forward in this superbly written book, it is necessary to look at its approach in a little more detail. Walicki's treatment of Slavophilism owes a great intellectual debt to Mannheim's seminal study of German conservatism.⁴³ Following Mannheim, Walicki argues that European conservatism arose in the early 19th century, as a reaction to the French Revolution. Conservatives rejected the values of Enlightenment rationalism, which they perceived as a revolutionary doctrine, and were contemptuous of the values of the bourgeois society which was emerging in Europe in place of the *ancien régime*. The ideas of this conservative reaction varied enormously, from the violent ultra-montane beliefs of de Maistre to the eccentric romantic idylls of Novalis; all of them, though, reflected similar concerns and worries.⁴⁴

When discussing Slavophilism, Walicki introduces the *gessellschaft/gemeinschaft* distinction first introduced by Tonnies a century before. He argues that early Slavophile ideas represented an ideological defence of *gemeinschaft* against *gessellschaft*; that is, a defence of patriarchal society, with its emphasis on face-to-face relationships and customary law, against the more urbanised and anomic modern society emerging in Western Europe.⁴⁵ Walicki views the Slavophiles as members of the middle gentry who, by co-operating with the capitalist logic inherent in the emancipation process, contradicted the basis of their own doctrine, causing it to fall apart in the 1860's. According to this analysis, Slavophilism was essentially an anti-modernisation ideology, reacting against economic and social changes in Russia and the West which threatened

the status of the middle gentry. Walicki believes that the Slavophiles fused elements in traditional Russian culture with ideas borrowed from foreign thinkers, producing in the process a new and distinctive ideology which sought to resolve their personal and class dilemmas.

Outline of Thesis Structure

The approach followed in this thesis echoes Walicki's belief that changes in Slavophile ideas must be related to developments in the domestic environment. However, it disagrees with his analysis of the nature of these developments, and the way in which they affected the evolution of Slavophile doctrine.

The first part of the thesis develops a detailed social biography of the Slavophile families, showing that they belonged to the wealthy Russian *dvorianstvo* (nobility) and not the middle gentry as many students of Slavophilism seem to imagine. Chapter 2 argues that they came from families who, in the hundred years or so following the emancipation of the nobility, developed considerable fortunes based on the ownership of land, whilst at the same time evolving a lifestyle and outlook which was increasingly independent of the values of Court and state-service. Members of this distinctive social group were frustrated by the restraints imposed on them by the bureaucratic Nicolaevian state. Chapter 3 then examines the social and economic foundations of this new-found feeling of autonomy. In particular, it charts the rise of the Russian *pomeshchik*, whose life-style and identity reflected an orientation to rural living and farming rather than to urban life and bureaucratic or military service. The Slavophiles,

it will be seen, were imbued with the values of the 'Country' rather than the 'Court'. Members of this social milieu were often at the forefront of economic change, adapting the pattern of farming on their estates to technological developments and shifts in the market. By studying the pattern of farming on the estates of the Slavophiles themselves, it will be seen that there is little evidence to suggest that they were afraid of economic changes but, instead, saw them as a challenge from which they could profit. In the light of this evidence, Walicki's characterisation of Slavophilism as an ideology reflecting a fear of modernity becomes extremely questionable.

The second part of this thesis studies the development of Slavophile social and political thought between 1840-1865. Chapter 4 examines the curious logical structure of the Slavophile ideology created during the reign of Nicholas I, which enabled its authors to reconcile seemingly contradictory ideas and beliefs. The Slavophiles, it will be seen, had a distinctive gnostic vision of social and political life, which prevented them from distinguishing their utopian social visions from the 'real world' around them - a failure which was instrumental in allowing them to develop their idealised version of Russian history. Like so many 19th-century thinkers, the Slavophiles, at least before 1855, were political maximalists: they believed that their vision of heaven could be realised on earth - or at least in Russia. During this period of its evolution, the ideas of the leading Slavophiles seemed to bear little direct relation to the social and political environment in which they found themselves. However, a careful process of analysis enables us to see that their ideas in fact reflected the frustrations and tensions of a social elite irritated by its lack of power and status, but unwilling to renounce a political

system which guaranteed the order and stability of which it was a direct beneficiary.

Chapters 5 and 6 examine Slavophilism between 1855 and 1865, arguing that a fundamental transformation in the style of Slavophile social and political thought took place during this period. Once the Government declared its intention to emancipate the serfs, the Slavophiles were forced to examine social and political questions in a new light. Abstract discussions about the origins of the Russian state, or the moral potential of the Russian *narod*, were little help when confronted with more immediate problems. Some members of the Slavophile circle, most notably Konstantin Aksakov, were unable to respond effectively to the new conditions; other members, including Samarin and Koshelev, adapted easily to these new demands and played an important role in preparing the Emancipation Edict. These 'Slavophile reformers' saw emancipation as a challenge, offering the chance to improve popular welfare whilst at the same time providing the gentry with the chance to benefit from new economic opportunities. During this period, tension inevitably developed between the various members of the circle. Whilst it had been easy for them to agree about abstract questions of philosophy and history, it proved far harder to reach an accord about more practical questions. These disagreements became, if anything, even sharper after 1861.

Chapter 7 is perhaps best treated as an appendix to the rest of the thesis, since it deals with the Slavophiles' views about international relations. However, whilst the subject matter is distinct, it will be seen that here, too, their ideas reflected changes in the 'real world'. The national humiliation of Crimea encouraged the Slavophiles to reconsider their views about the significance of *narodnost'*. Whereas before the mid

1850's they viewed *narodnost'* as an essentially religious and cultural phenomenon, lacking strategic significance, after Crimea their views changed rapidly. The emergence of a marked Panslav tone in Slavophile journals reflected their belief that alliances based on blood and religion could offer Russia the chance to find new friends in the international system; these new allies would, in turn, help Russia regain the position it had lost at Sevastopol and Inkermann.

One final point should perhaps be made. The chapters that follow are all concerned with the Slavophiles' social and political thought, rather than with their religious ideas. Part of the reason for this is practical. The study of Slavophile theology would take us too far from the main theme of this thesis. The second reason concerns the nature of Slavophile religious thought. Eric Voegelin has pointed out that Russian culture never witnessed the clear division between Church and State which marked western culture after the middle ages.⁴⁶ As a result, there was an inbuilt tendency for Russian secular culture (including social and political thought) to take on a religious character - manifested by the failure to distinguish sharply between the heavenly world of dreams and the more mundane problems of everyday life. The Slavophiles' religious thought, like their secular thought, was based on a lack of understanding of the fundamental difference between these two realms. Both were expressions of a similar utopian and maximalist drive.

It will be noticed that very little has been said about the manner in which the social background of the Slavophiles influenced their ideas. The vast literature on the sociology of knowledge sometimes appears as a minefield to the historian. Its complex ideas and categories seem to have

little relevance to the concrete data which he needs to organise and interpret. At the risk of massive over-simplification, it is possible to discern two broad categories within the literature. On the one hand, there are writers such as Scheler who ascribe to the human mind, whether collective or individual, a certain autonomy; it has the potential to examine its own situation within society 'from the outside', even if the broad parameters of its inquiry are limited by certain factors such as class, psychobiology, etc. On the other hand, writers such as Lukacs are far more reluctant to accept that the human mind can acquire any perspectives and insights into society which are capable of transcending class interest, however broadly conceived.⁴⁷ The historian of Slavophilism faces numerous practical problems when attempting to apply this latter conception to his own subject. In what sense, if any, can it really be said that the Slavophiles' more fantastic ideas about Russian history and society were an objectification of their class interest? If there was a connection, it seems so obscure as to be hard to define. The work of theorists such as Scheler, by contrast, at least gives some scope to the individual to give a 'positive form' to his ideas, and devise a new and original product.

Whilst this thesis would certainly not claim to advance any new ideas on the subject, certain ideas from the sociology of knowledge have been cannibalised in an attempt to obtain a deeper insight into Slavophilism. In particular, Mannheim's distinction between 'general' and 'particular' ideologies has proved useful in explaining the development of Slavophile ideas over time. The German writer described a 'general ideology' as one which represented "the characteristics and composition of the total structure of the mind of the epoch or group". Whilst the contents of the

ideology might be determined in the most general sense by certain objective factors, there was no conscious understanding of the class character of their thought on the part of the individuals concerned.⁴⁸ By contrast, a 'particular ideology' is far more attuned to practical and immediate problems relating to class interest and consequently exhibits an unmistakeable class character. During the years after 1855, Slavophile thought increasingly took on the character of a 'particular ideology', although it never lost its concern with promoting popular welfare.

Mannheim's writings about the significance of utopian thought have also been used extensively in the thesis, especially when relating the Slavophiles' political ideas to their social biography. Mannheim argued that utopian thought was characteristic of social groups frustrated by the existing distribution of power and authority within society.⁴⁹ As a result, these groups' political thought attempted to transcend the limitations of the existing order, showing that it was an essentially contingent phenomenon lacking any wide-ranging legitimacy. The utopian elements in Slavophile ideology, which were dominant before 1855, reflected perfectly the tensions and frustrations of a group alienated from the values promulgated by the official representatives of the Russian Government.

The understanding of the relation between thought and society followed in this thesis can best be conceptualised in the form of a pyramid. At the bottom is the 'raw data' of the Slavophiles' social biography - wealth, service details, etc. The next level consists of what may broadly be termed 'social attitudes', the Slavophiles' instinctive perception of the world around them, a set of attitudes which tended to reflect the assumptions and values of their own social position and experience. Above

this lies the 'particular ideology' of the Slavophiles, a product of their conscious reflection about the specific problems of the world they lived in and the way these related to their own distinctive class interest. At the top, corresponding to Mannheim's 'general ideology', are the best-known and most abstract elements in the Slavophile doctrine - their philosophy, religious works, social ideals, etc. The relationship between these four elements was in no sense deterministic. Whilst there was an undoubted sense in which social background affected social attitudes which, in turn, affected conscious thought, the relationship could also be reversed; conscious thought could bring about a change in social attitudes. By treating Slavophilism in this way, we have a powerful new tool for understanding the forces underlying its construction and development.

1. See, for example, A. Yanov; *The Russian New Right*.
2. K.N. Lomunov (ed); *Literaturnye vzgliady i tvorchestvo slavianofilov (1830-1850)*, p.13.
3. See Chapter 2 *passim* for a description of the role played by the female members of the Slavophile milieu.
4. A. Herzen; *Ends and Beginnings*, p.189.
5. A. Panaev; *Literaturnye vospominaniia* p.149.
6. A. Herzen; *op.cit.*, p.183; S.M. Solov'ev; 'Zapiski', p.301.
7. B. Chicherin; *Vospominaniia B.N Chicherina. Moskovskii universitet*, p.21
8. 'Moskovskie Slavianofily v sorokovykh godov' in K. Kavelin *Sobr. Soch.*, vol. 3, pp.1133-1166.
9. A. Herzen; *op.cit.*, p.173.
10. M. Gerschenzon; *Istoricheskie zapiski*, p.4. "He was a superfluous man, like all the most advanced minds of his time".
11. A.S. Pol'; *Aleksei Stepanovich Khomiakov. Biograficheskii ocherk*, p.4.
12. P.N. Levashev; *Sem'ja i shkola po A.S. Khomiakovu*.
13. M.T. Iablochkov; *Aleksei Stepanovich Khomiakov (chestvovanie ego pamiat' v Tule)*. See also G.I.M., f.178 (Khomiakov), delo 5, 1,12.
14. A.I. Pypin; *Kharakteristiki literaturnykh mnenii ot dvadtsatykh do piatidesiatykh godov*, p.250.
15. See, for example, F.A. Stepun; 'Nemetskii romantizm i russkoe slavianofil'stvo', in *Russkaia Mysl'*, March 1910, pp.65-91. Also, M. Kovalevsky; 'Rannye revnitye filosofii Shellinga v Rossii, Chaadaev i Kireevsky', *Russkaia Mysl'*, 1916, #12, otdel 1, pp.115-135.
16. See, for example, A. Lovejoy; *The Great Chain of Being and Essays in the History of Ideas*, both of which contain much material which is relevant to the present discussion.
17. For a discussion of this subject see A. Koyré; *La Philosophie et le Problème National en Russie au Début du XIX Siècle*, pp.114-136.
18. For a brief discussion of the views of the Vekhi authors see J. Zimmerman; 'The Political Views of the Vekhi Authors', in *Canadian-American Slavic Studies*, 1976, vol.10, #3, pp.307-327.
19. V. Zavitnevich; *Aleksei Stepanovich Khomiakov* (2 vols).
20. N. Berdiaev; *Aleksei Stepanovich Khomiakov*; P. Florensky; *Okolo Khomiakova*.
21. S. Bolshakoff; *The Doctrine of the Unity of the Church in Khomiakov and Moehler*.
22. P. Christoff; *An Introduction to 19th Century Russian Slavophilism* (3 vols).

23. Kireevsky's diary is full of material about his activities at Optina Putsyn. TsGALI, f.236, op.1, delo 10. See, also, P.S. Chetvernikov; *Optina Putsyn, prilozhenie*.

24. W. Birbeck; *Russia and the English Church*, xxxiv-xlviii.

25. The extent of the religious convictions of the Aksakov family is a matter for some debate; certainly Sergei Aksakov was not particularly devout, and there are far less references in the family's correspondence to Church affairs than is the case in the other Slavophile families.

26. P. Hayner; *Reason and Existence: Schelling's Philosophy of History*, p.29.

27. Ivan Kireevsky; *Pol. Sобр. Soch.*, vol.2, pp.104-108.

28. See, for example, Berdiaev's biography of Khomjakov, cited earlier; see, also, the introductory remarks by Lev Shestov in his essay about Solov'ev's Philosophy of History: *Speculation and Apocalypse*, pp.18-21.

29. For a very straightforward introduction to the subject see J. Macquarrie; *Existentialism*, and W. Barrett; *Irrational Man*.

30. See, for example, Kierkegaard's various Aesthetic Dialogues, in particular *Fear and Trembling*.

31. See chapter 4, p.164 ff.

32. L. Calder; *The Political Thought of Iury Samarin*, contains a basic account of these events in the chapter 'Jousting with Hegel'. A more precise account is to be found in the introduction to Iu. Samarin; *Soch.*, vol.5, pp.VII - XXXIV.

33. P. Florensky *op.cit.*, p.9.

34. Macquarrie *op.cit.*, p.15.

35. D. Pisarev; 'The Russian Don Quixote' in his *Selected Philosophical, Social and Political Essays*, pp.148-171.

36. See, for example, V.D. Smirnov; *Aksakov, ikh zhizn' i literaturnaya deiatel'nost'*.

37. These seven essays, including contributions by Yanov and Dmitriev, took sharply differing viewpoints of Slavophilism, apparently reflecting their authors' own attitudes to the contemporary debates about Russian Nationalism. A brief study of the debate, by M. Chapman, is contained in *Studies in Soviet Thought*, 1979, vol.20, pp.23-42.

38. N. Rubinstein; 'Istoricheskaiia teoriia slavianofilov i ego klassovye korny' in M. Pokrovsky (ed); *Russkaia istoricheskaiia literatura v klassovom osveshchenii*, p.79.

39. S. Dmitriev; 'Slavianofili i Slavianofil'stvo. Iz istorii russkoi obshchestvennoi mysli serediny XIX veka', *Istorik Marksist*, 1941, bk.1, pp.85-97.

40. N.I. Tsimbaev; *Slavianofili'stva*, pp.64-67. Iu. Iankovsky; *Patriarkhalno-dvorianskaia utopiia*, pp.5-7.

41. E. Dudzinskaia; *Slavianofili v obshchestvennoi bor'be*.

42. Lomunov *op.cit.*; N.I. Tsimbaev; *op.cit.*

43. The best account of Mannheim's views on the subject is contained in his *German Conservatism*. See also *Ideology and Utopia*, esp. pp.206-215.

44. A vast literature exists on German conservative thought in the early 19th century. I have found the following particularly useful: R. Aris: *Political Thought in Germany 1789-1815*; R. Berdahl: *The Politics of the Prussian Nobility*; and K. Epstein: *German Conservatism*.

45. A. Weidle: *Russia Absent and Present*, p.134.

46. E. Voegelin: *The New Science of Politics*, pp.113-114

47. As well as the works of Lukacs and Scheler themselves, I am indebted to the lucid discussion contained in A. Child: 'The Existential Determination of Thought', in *Ethics*, 1940-41, vol.52, pp.392-418.

48. K. Mannheim: *Ideology and Utopia*, p.49-50.

49. *Ibid.*, pp.173-190.

Part 1

Social Biography

Independent Gentlemen

In spite of the extensive literature devoted to Slavophilism, little systematic effort has been made to explore the social background of the leading figures in the circle. Historians have preferred to concentrate on questions of psychology, attempting to show how the doctrine reflected the personal worries and *angst* of its leading proponents. Marc Raeff, for example, has argued that Slavophilism is best understood as a mood rather than as a coherent set of ideas; its complex ideology represented an attempt to account for its supporters' general sense of estrangement and malaise.¹ However, an emphasis on psychology alone is insufficient to interpret such a complex phenomenon as Slavophilism. One must also examine the social structure which gave rise to the doctrine, showing how it reflected and distilled the attitudes current in a particular section of Russian society.

The next two chapters will show that the Slavophiles came from a social milieu whose values were sharply opposed to those of the Tsarist Government in Petersburg. This is not to say that they were members of the 'alienated intelligentsia', as Gerschenzon argued.² Instead, they belonged to a section of the Russian nobility that was increasingly aware of its own identity and worth and which sought to reconcile its traditional historical role as a service Estate with a new place in Russian society.

Since the possession of private means was necessary to develop a life-style and social outlook independent of those dominating official society, this chapter will examine the extent of the Slavophile families' wealth. It will then examine the patterns of education favoured by the families, showing how they were educated in a spirit completely opposed to the

utilitarian ethos dominating the curricula in the state schools and institutions. This chapter will also investigate the Slavophiles' attitudes towards state-service, seeing how they gave it a lower value than did most members of the society around them. Chapter 3 will then show how the Slavophiles' sense of independence was manifested by a deep commitment to rural living and by a strong emotional link with the country estate. The lifestyle of a Russian landowner offered more scope for developing a sense of independence from the official world of Petersburg than did year-round residency in the capitals.

The Slavophile Families

All the leading members of the Slavophile circle came from families belonging to the old nobility, whose origins predated the Petrine Table of Ranks. The pre-revolutionary genealogist, Count Alexander Bobrinsky, traced the Khomiakov family name back to 1514; the Kireevsky family name was first recorded in 1618. According to his research, the Aksakov and Samarin families had roots going back even further in Russian history.³ Although we have few details about distant ancestors, it seems likely that several of the Slavophile families were descended from the state-servitors who received land in the 'frontier provinces' of Tula and Riazan during the 16th and 17th-centuries, as a reward for service to the Crown. Although many of these families later died out, or lost their land, a few survived and prospered into the 19th-century.

As any student familiar with 19th-century memoir literature is aware, many Russian noblemen took great pride in possessing an ancient and

distinguished family name; many such accounts began with a long description of the titles and honours held by the author's ancestors. It seems that the Slavophile families were no exception and regarded their lineage with considerable pride. For example, Konstantin Aksakov's certificate of entry into Moscow University, presented upon his matriculation in 1834, traced his family's ancestry back to the Varangian princes.⁴ Whilst the claims of this document were somewhat doubtful, they reflected the sense of pride which the family took in their past. The Khomiakov family took a similar pride in their history and the activities of their ancestors. The memory of a certain Peter Semenovich, who had held the post of Royal Falconer during the reign of Tsar Alexis, was particularly revered. The family archive contained a record of Peter Semenovich's appointment, along with details of the honours he received from his master. Liasovsky correctly points out that these documents would have helped impart a strong sense of tradition amongst later family members.⁵

Although it is difficult to compile detailed evidence, it does not appear that many ancestors of the Slavophiles ever held important positions at Court or in the military. In general, most had occupied the middle ranks in the army and bureaucracy. The only significant exception to this pattern was the Samarin family. Iury's maternal grandfather served as a Senator during the reign of the Emperor Paul, whilst his grandmother was on friendly terms with some of the leading figures at Court. Tsar Alexander I, himself, attended Iury's christening.⁶ However, such contacts were exceptional amongst the Slavophile families. The world of the Court and the senior bureaucracy was generally alien to them, as it had been to most of their forebears.

The family connections between the leading members of the Slavophile

circle were byzantine in their complexity. Since these relationships have been set out in a detailed family tree published in Florensky's book about Khomiakov, a few examples will suffice.⁷ Khomiakov himself was the brother-in-law of the poet Iazykov, whose satirical verses helped bring about the final rupture between the Slavophiles and the Westerners in 1845. He was also related, through his wife, to Dmitry Valuev, whose early death in 1849 robbed the circle of one of its most able and active members. The Aksakov family was connected, through marriage, to V. A. Panov, who played a considerable role in the salon debates of the 1840's. After the marriage of Ivan Aksakov in 1866, they were also related to the family of the poet Feodor Tiutchev, who was close to the Slavophiles throughout the period. The Aksakov family was also distantly related to the Samarin family, who were in turn related to the Sverbeevs, whose home provided one of the principal forums in which a distinctive Slavophile circle emerged. These relationships partly reflected the close-knit structure of noble society in Moscow during the mid 19th-century family. However, they also helped determine the development of the Slavophile circle itself, giving it a unity and structure which common intellectual affinities alone could never have provided.

Wealth

The leading Slavophiles received the bulk of their income from ownership of land and serfs (before emancipation, of course, the ownership of serfs was a better guide to an individual's wealth than the physical size of his estate). The majority of their estates were situated in the

fertile Black Earth region of central Russia. Khomiakov, Ivan Kireevsky, Koshelev and Cherkassky all owned considerable amounts of land in the provinces of Tula and Riazan. The Samarin family's most important estate was in Samara province, near the Volga River. The Aksakov family owned land in the less productive regions of Orenburg and Simbirsk.

It is difficult to make a precise estimate of the Slavophile families' private fortunes. Several factors make it hard to assess accurately the real wealth of any mid 19th-century Russian nobleman:

- 1) The Russian Government did not collect the kind of detailed statistics about tax-returns and land-ownership which are available to students of many western nobilities. The most complete records were probably those compiled by the Editing Commission, set up in 1859 to codify proposals for the abolition of serfdom.⁸ However, since the Commission was forced to rely on returns made by landowners themselves, it is certain that the figures it compiled were not completely accurate. Its published results contained certain inconsistencies and irregularities which limit their value to the researcher.
- 2) The amount of capital and income enjoyed by an individual was not a direct function of the amount of land and serfs he owned. An estate in a region of high fertility was far more valuable than one where the soil was poor. Figures about serf-ownership are only of value if such factors are borne in mind.
- 3) The income yielded by an estate largely depended on the efficiency with which it was run. A well-run property was naturally far more profitable than one where the administration was corrupt or incompetent.
- 4) The Russian agricultural economy was not fully integrated into the market by the mid 19th-century. Many estates were still organised on the

basis of self-sufficiency and cash-exchange was by no means common.⁹ In many cases, the only products sent to market were those surplus to local needs. Since the output of an estate was not expressed in money terms, it is almost impossible to quantify it accurately.

5) Non-agricultural activities such as forestry or milling were often very lucrative. In cases where local geographical and market conditions allowed for such activities, a landowner had scope to achieve a considerable increase in his revenues.

6) The extended family remained the social norm amongst the Russian nobility in the mid 19th-century. Several family members living under the same roof would often own property in their own right. As a result, it is sometimes hard to distinguish between the wealth of a family and that of its individual members.

7) The real value of landed property was affected by the size of the family which owned it, especially in the absence of primogeniture. The expectations of children in a large family were obviously far more modest than in one where there was a single heir. The Russian nobility was generally less successful than many of its western counterparts at devising strategies to ensure that family wealth remained intact.

Many of these problems will receive more attention in Chapter 3, which examines the structure of Russian agriculture during this period. The pages that follow will mainly focus on the 'raw data' of serf ownership and income, whilst attempting to put these figures into perspective.

The most detailed figures which have been compiled relate to the Khomiakov family. During the early years of the 19th-century, Stepan Khomiakov, father of Alexei, gambled away the family's fortune at the

English Club, running up a debt of a million rubles.¹⁰ Since Stepan had little interest in the problems of estate-management, it was left to his wife, Maria, to rebuild the family's wealth. Though not a particularly well-educated woman, she proved to be a redoubtable manager and, after a number of years, managed to restore the family's finances. Indeed, she continued to take an interest in the running of the estates until the time of her death, long after Alexei had taken over the primary responsibility for their administration.¹¹ (Whilst the extent of Maria's talent and aptitude at managing the family property was unusual, it was quite common for noble women to fulfil an important supervisory role during the mid 19th-century; the absence of husbands and sons on service-duties meant that the female members of the family were forced to develop an aptitude for estate-management). By the middle of the 1830's, after the death of his father, Alexei owned around a thousand serfs in his own right, located in five provinces. In addition, he inherited a very considerable sum of cash.¹² By 1860, after inheriting further land from his mother, Khomiakov's property was concentrated into four estates, with a total of 1,362 field serfs and 108 house serfs.¹³

The most striking feature of the Khomiakov family fortune was its liquidity. As is well-known, many noblemen were in chronic debt by the mid-1850's; by 1859, some 66% of all private serfs had been mortgaged to raise the money necessary to live in the westernised style favoured by the Russian nobility during the 18th and 19th-centuries.¹⁴ By contrast, documents preserved in the Khomiakov family archive, along with other evidence, show that the family estates were yielding a high income, with the result that the family was living well within its means. Records dating from the early 1830's show that at this stage the family fortune

included more than 420,000 paper rubles and 122,000 silver rubles.¹⁵ Sergei Aksakov estimated in 1838 that Khomakov's annual income was around 200,000 rubles.¹⁶ Even assuming that this figure refers to assignats, this would still suggest that Alexei's income was several thousand pounds a year, which compares favourably with the income of many members of the English county gentry during this period. In 1854, Khomiakov had sufficient capital to purchase an estate of 450 souls at a cost of 290,000 rubles.¹⁷

Perhaps the best evidence about the extent of the family fortune can be found in a document drawn up shortly after Alexei's death. Although its authorship is unclear, it contained proposals for the division of Khomiakov's property. The eldest son, Dmitry, was bequeathed the family's main estate at Bogoucharevo, plus a total of 5,500 *desiatiny* of land. Maria, the eldest daughter, was to receive some 200,000 rubles in cash (it was not specified if this was in assignats or silver rubles). In all, Khomiakov bequeathed around 480,000 rubles, as well as a large amount of fixed property.¹⁸ In spite of Khomiakov's considerable capital expenditure on improving the farming operations on his estates, he clearly had access to large sums of money throughout his life.

The two wealthiest members of the Slavophile circle were Iury Samarin and Alexander Koshelev. According to Ikonikov, Feodor Samarin (Iury's father), bequeathed his six surviving children more than 5,200 serfs after his death in 1853. Unfortunately, the data compiled by the Editing Commission does not distinguish clearly between the holdings of the children. It seems, though, that Iury had formal title to many of the 2,436 serfs on the family's Samara estate, as well as another 300 on a smaller property in Simbirsk. He certainly took chief responsibility for

supervising the Samara estate during the years following his father's death.¹⁹ Koshelev was even wealthier. He was born into a prosperous family of Lithuanian origin. During the 1830's and 1840's he made a fortune as a collector of the alcohol tax (using corrupt methods according to the testimony of Sergei Solov'ev).²⁰ By the late 1840's, he was able to buy an estate in Riazan province at the very considerable cost of 750,000 rubles.²¹ The precise extent of his holdings of land and serfs is unclear. The data compiled by the Editing Commission indicated that he owned around 3,500 male serfs.²² However, the Soviet historian E. Dudzinskaia has estimated that the real figure was much higher, pointing to an estimate by Samarin that his friend owned some 5,000 serfs.²³ The discrepancy may be accounted for by the fact that Koshelev's wife owned a considerable amount of property in her own right. In addition, as will be seen in the next chapter, Koshelev also received a considerable income from sources other than agriculture.

The Kireevsky, Aksakov and Cherkassky families were somewhat less wealthy. According to the Editing Commission figures, the Aksakov family owned 879 male serfs in Orenburg and Samara provinces. This figure is broadly confirmed in a submission made by Ivan Aksakov to the Third Section in 1849.²⁴ However, since there were ten children in the family, including seven sons, money matters were a source of considerable concern. One of the reasons that Sergei Aksakov, father of Ivan and Konstantin, took up writing during the mid-1840's was precisely to increase his income; letters to his publishers reflected his desire to earn as much as possible from his literary activities.

The figures for the Kireevsky family are more fragmentary. One biographer refers to the family's "thousands" of serfs, but without

providing any corroborative evidence.²⁵ A Third Section report of the mid-1820's noted that Ivan Kireevsky, together with his mother and brother, owned around 1,500 serfs.²⁶ However, the only precise figures available relate to Peter's small Orel estate, where there were 109 field serfs, and A.P. Elagina's Tula estate which had 253 field serfs. The family's main country residence, Dolbino, had around 300 male serfs.²⁷

The Cherkassky family were comparatively poor by comparison with other members of the Slavophile milieu. The records of the Editing Commission indicate that the Prince owned a total of 354 field serfs on his Tula estate (though his wife may also have owned property in her own right).²⁸ This lack of great landed wealth doubtless accounted for the family's comparatively modest standard of living.

The problems of interpreting these figures means there is a need for some kind of comparison. The best evidence about the pattern of serf-owning in Russia during the mid 19th-century can be found in the statistics published by A. Troinitsky, which were based on the figures collected during the Tenth Revision (1857). There are several flaws in the methodology employed by Troinitsky, limiting the value of his work for the modern student. Whilst his study provides us with a good knowledge of the pattern of serf-owning *within* individual provinces, it does not make allowances for the fact that some landowners owned property in more than one province. As a result, Troinitsky tended to overestimate the number of landowners in Russia, and consequently underestimated the average number of serfs owned by each of them. The author, aware of this problem, argued that it was not of great importance, since only a few noblemen owned serfs in more than one province. However, whilst it is true that such landowners only constituted a small minority, they were not as rare as Troinitsky

supposed. For example, in his book, Troinitsky drew up elaborate tables showing the number of landowners who owned more than a thousand serfs, the number owing more than 500, etc. According to these calculations, he determined that there were 1,396 nobles in Russia who owned more than a thousand serfs.²⁹ In fact, all his figures show is that there were 1,396 nobles who owned more than a thousand serfs *in a single province*. Troinitsky's figures therefore included landlords such as Samarin, who owned some 2,000 serfs in Samara province, though they excluded men like Khomiakov, whose properties were scattered across several different regions.

In spite of these flaws, Troinitsky's figures can be useful as a means of comparison, especially when combined with other data. His study reveals the very high concentration of serf-ownership in Russia. Some 3.74% of landowners owned 44% of all privately-owned serfs. The bottom 75% of landowners owned less than 20% of all serfs. We can disaggregate these figures to facilitate a comparison between the size of the Slavophiles' individual estates and those of their neighbours. In Tula province, the average number of serfs owned by each landlord was 102, whilst the number owning 500 or more was 50% less than the average for European Russia as a whole. In Riazan, the average number of serfs per landlord was just 75. By contrast, Khomiakov owned 230 field serfs in Tula, and 724 on two estates in Riazan. Just one of his estates, in fertile Dankovskii uezd, was amongst the two or three biggest in the district.³⁰ Koshelev's massive estate in Sapozhkovskii uezd (Riazan) was one of the biggest in the entire province.³¹ The figures for the Aksakov and Samarin estates, in the trans-Volga region, reveal a similar picture. Even though estates tended to be larger in these areas than in the European provinces, the Editing

Commission data shows that the estates of the two families were amongst the most substantial in their districts.

The possession of considerable private wealth enabled the Slavophiles to live a lifestyle not unlike that of their European counterparts. Since financial considerations did not force them to enter bureaucratic or military service, they were able to enjoy a considerable amount of leisure time. None of them were extravagant in private life; indeed, they tended to criticise sharply the spendthrift attitudes which were the hallmark of many members of the Russian *dvorianstvo*.³² However, their incomes allowed them to live in considerable comfort, owning or renting winter-homes in the more fashionable and expensive quarters of Moscow. Travel and education abroad, which helped facilitate an independent outlook, were commonplace in the families. Khomiakov lived in Paris for a year to study art and painting. The Kireevsky brothers finished their education in Germany, at the universities of Berlin and Munich, during which time they heard lectures from many of the most important intellectual figures in Germany, including Hegel and Schelling.³³ Khomiakov travelled abroad in later life and spent several months in England in 1847. Koshelev also travelled abroad for prolonged periods of time, visiting Germany, England, Belgium, Holland, and France. The Slavophile families also invested considerable sums of money in intellectual and cultural pursuits. It will be seen later that they spent large amounts on education, whilst Khomiakov paid up to 10,000 rubles a year for books in his private library. In spite of such expenditure, there is no evidence that any of the families experienced serious money troubles. The complaints about shortage of money, frequently found in letters and memoirs of the period, were absent in Slavophile

correspondence. When some minor figures associated with the circle, such as Dmitry Valuev, experienced money problems, they were always able to rely on the generosity and resources of their friends.³⁴

It was seen in Chapter 1 that a number of historians have described the Slavophiles as representatives of the middle gentry. The use of such terms frequently causes more confusion than it resolves. The label is hardly applicable to the Slavophiles, especially if used in a strictly economic sense. Troinitsky believed that any landowner with more than 500 serfs should be considered as wealthy. Another commentator, A. Vasil'chikov, agreed with him, arguing that noblemen owning more than 500 serfs enjoyed a lifestyle which set them apart from their poorer cousins.³⁵ In fact, Vasilchikov's analysis neatly illustrates the problem posed by the use of the term 'middle gentry'. Most historians have tacitly assumed that there was a direct relationship between money and lifestyle; any nobleman who had the means would leave the countryside for the city, where he could enjoy a more sophisticated social and cultural life. The next chapter will show the limitations of this conventional viewpoint; the possession of considerable landed wealth could be consistent with an attachment to rural life and a suspicion of Russia's *haute monde*.

The significance of the Slavophiles' wealth rested precisely on the power it gave them to determine the manner in which they spent their lives. It gave them the independence necessary to develop a lifestyle and outlook independent of the world around them.

Education

A study of the educational patterns favoured by the Slavophile families can throw light upon their attitude towards topics ranging from culture to service. Historians have given considerable attention to the changes which took place in the institutional structure of education during the mid 19th-century, along with the alterations made to the curricula followed in the universities and boarding schools. Cynthia Whittaker has examined the role of education in Tsarist society as seen from the perspective of Count Uvarov, the original formulator of the notorious doctrine of "Autocracy, Orthodoxy, Nationality".³⁶ Jessica Tovrov has paid attention to the attitudes found amongst the nobility, whose children were the principal consumers of education.³⁷ In this section, three aspects of the educational process will be considered as they related to the Slavophile families: the purpose of education as viewed from the perspective of the individual family; its content; and the institutional parameters within which it was delivered.

Two general attitudes can be discerned amongst those members of the pre-reform nobility who sought to give their children a good education. In the first place, many parents believed that providing children with an education increased their chances of obtaining a good job in the bureaucracy or military (a comparatively well-founded assumption). The wish to see children achieve a high rank often reflected a belief that social status depended on success in the state-service. The father of the 'anarchist Prince' Peter Kropotkin, for example, enrolled his two sons in the elite *Corps des Pages*, in the hope that it would lead to a glittering career for them.³⁸ Similarly, there was intense competition to enroll

children in institutions such as the Imperial Alexander *Lycée*, widely identified as 'breeding grounds' for those destined to reach the highest posts in Russian society.

Sometimes, the wish to ensure that children moved rapidly up the ladder of state-service was based on factors other than a desire for prestige and rank; it also reflected more mundane economic realities. For example, the comparatively impoverished family of Nikolai Miliutin, who served with Samarin and Cherkassky on the Editing Commission, devoted enormous trouble to obtaining their son's enrollment in the Noble Boarding School attached to Moscow University - an institution widely identified as providing an excellent education for future bureaucrats.³⁹ Similarly, the mother of Peter Semenov, who also later served on the Commission, worked hard to obtain the enrollment of her son in the *Corps des Pages*.⁴⁰ When financial difficulties forced her to withdraw him, he was sent to the School for Guard Ensigns and Cavalry Cadets, where the curriculum was expressly geared towards training boys for careers in the state apparatus. In cases where economic motivations were uppermost, there was naturally a tendency on the part of parents to try and ensure that their children received a practical education, geared towards the demands of service. Success in the bureaucracy or military offered the possibility of a considerable salary and pension, which could be used to supplement the meagre income from a family estate. It also gave high ranking servitors significant powers of patronage; they could use their position to help the careers of their younger brothers and cousins.

The second conception of education found amongst the nobility was profoundly 'aristocratic' in character, stressing the inherent value of knowledge and culture in their own right rather than as a means of

improving career prospects. Developing a cultivated personality itself became a means of improving social status and self-esteem. It should not, of course, be imagined that this ideal was only found amongst the highest reaches of Russian society; there were many boors and ignoramuses at the Court in Petersburg, just as there were men and women of great culture and refinement amongst the provincial gentry.⁴¹ However, the possession of money and leisure naturally facilitated the acquisition of a broad and wide-ranging education. The aristocratic conception of education tended to view it primarily as a civilising process, designed to train and improve the character of its pupils. Consequently, education was seen as a life-long pursuit, in which the individual continually attempted to broaden his cultural and intellectual horizons. It was this last feature which distinguished the aristocratic ideal of education from the functional one; the latter tended to view it as a finite process which ended once the child had acquired the skills necessary for his adult life.

The aristocratic conception of education prevailed in the Slavophile families. The leading members of the circle all had parents who were distinguished by their intelligence and education. The adjectives which recur most frequently in biographical accounts of them are *obrazovannyi* (educated) and *prosveshchennyi* (cultured). Khomiakov's father built up a magnificent library which formed the nucleus of his son's future collection. He also played an active role in Alexei's early literary activities of the 1820's, participating in some of the literary circles of the period.⁴² The Kireevsky brothers' father had a fluent reading knowledge of several European languages, and possessed a gift for more practical pursuits in the field of science and medicine.⁴³ Their stepfather, I.A. Elagin, was also a man of some intellect, who translated

Kant into Russian, though some of his contemporaries believed him to be fundamentally boorish behind a veneer of culture.⁴⁴ Koshelev's father was a man of considerable erudition; so too was the father of Samarin. The Aksakov brothers' father, Sergei, was the best known member of the Slavophile families. The publication of his celebrated autobiography in the late 1850's won him numerous readers amongst the Russian educated public. Although he did not achieve lasting fame as a writer until he was quite old, Sergei enjoyed numerous friendships amongst the literary elite of Moscow from his earliest adult years and was a close friend of the poet Derzhavin.⁴⁵

These six men, all born during the reign of Catherine the Great, possessed many of the distinguishing features of the social elite of the period. Each was conversant with the leading writers of the Enlightenment, including Voltaire and Diderot, though several of them were violently opposed to the atheistic tone of the new doctrines. According to one account, Vassily Kireevsky had been known to buy up all the available copies of Voltaire's works simply to consign them to the bonfire.⁴⁶ At the same time, several of these 'Slavophile fathers' had close connections with the burgeoning Masonic movement, which placed great emphasis on enlightenment and education. In general, they seem to have been attracted to the mystical German variety of Masonry, rather than its more rational English variant. Vassily Kireevsky, for example, was a close friend of Lopukhin, one of the most prominent Masons in Russia during the late 18th century. The curious fusion of rationalism and mysticism, so characteristic of Russian culture at the end of the 18th century, found a clear expression in the six 'fathers'.⁴⁷

In the light of these biographies, it is hardly surprising that so

much attention was devoted to the education of the members of the Slavophile circle of the 1840's and 1850's. The father of Iury Samarin retired from his post at the Court in order to devote his time to the education of his children, corresponding with several famous pedagogues in order to obtain the best advice.⁴⁸ The Khomiakov family moved to Petersburg in 1816, specifically to allow Alexei and his brother to have access to the best teachers.⁴⁹

Some of the best evidence showing the care which was lavished on the education of children in the Slavophile milieu can be found in the Kireevsky family archive. After the death of her first husband, the mother of the Kireevsky brothers, A.P. Elagina, turned to her cousin Zhukovsky for advice about the best means of educating her children. As a result, the poet became closely involved with the children's intellectual development, sending the family numerous books ranging from Plutarch to scientific works.⁵⁰ He also gave his cousin advice on the hiring of tutors and governesses, although it seems that Elagina did not always follow his recommendations.⁵¹ In 1821 the family moved to Moscow, at least partly in order to improve the children's education; their mother noted with relief that "finally the children will be able to have good advice in all subjects".⁵²

The most interesting aspect of the correspondence between Elagina and Zhukovsky is the light it throws on the former's attitude towards the function of education. Whilst she valued intellectual attainment, she viewed education above all as a moral process. On one occasion she wrote to her cousin, happily informing him about the benefits her children were obtaining from regular education, assuring him that, "you will find their spirits, their hearts, formed on the model of everything that is good".⁵³

Zhukovsky almost certainly shared these sentiments. He, himself, had been educated at the Moscow Noble Boarding School, whose Director at that time "stressed the importance of moral training of character".⁵⁴ The American historian Barbara Engel has suggested that the educational philosophy of Rousseau exercised a considerable influence on many cultured Russian families during this period. Whilst it is not clear whether Elagina was consciously modelling the education of her children on 'Emile', her belief in the moral imperatives underlying education was similar to that of the Frenchman.⁵⁵

In view of the care lavished on their own education, it is hardly surprising that men such as Ivan Kireevsky and Khomiakov, in turn, devoted great attention to the upbringing of their own offspring. Kireevsky, for example, agonised greatly over the problems and responsibilities involved in raising his children, his diary revealing his fear that he might prove unequal to the task. He went to enormous lengths to get his eldest son enrolled at the Imperial Alexander Lycée, in order that he might have "a glittering future". Eventually, the coveted permission was obtained, after Zhukovsky intervened with the Director of the Lycée, Prince Oldenburg.⁵⁶ Khomiakov also devoted great attention to the problem of his children's education. According to a close friend, he had strong views on the subject, fervently believing that parents should undertake the upbringing of their children personally rather than entrusting their future to a governess or tutor.⁵⁷

The Slavophile families generally favoured a home-based education for their children. Such an ideal ran counter to the wishes of the Government of Nicholas I, which attempted to regulate and reduce the number of private schools and tutors whilst making its own educational institutions more

attractive to the nobility.⁵⁸ The support of the Slavophile families for a home-based education was influenced by a number of factors. In the first place, the standards of state-sponsored education were very low before 1820 – the time when Khomiakov, the Kireevsky brothers and Koshelev were all educated. It is also possible that the families shared the nobility's general unwillingness to place their children in schools where they would be forced to mix with commoners. The Government's promotion of noble boarding schools was an attempt to respond to this widespread sentiment.⁵⁹ However, the most important reason for the Slavophile families' dislike of the state schools and institutions was almost certainly their repugnance at the values and attitudes promoted in the formal curriculum. The teaching offered by the state schools was normally weighted towards technical and practical subjects, whereas the Slavophile families favoured an education based on the study of languages and literature.

The Slavophile families were also reluctant to place children in boarding schools since it would involve separating them from their parents. The fear of such an emotional wrench was most visible in the Akaskov family. Sergei had himself suffered dreadfully as a child when sent away to boarding school in Kazan and he was reluctant to impose such pain on his own children.⁶⁰ In spite of the promptings of Pogodin, he refused to enroll Konstantin in the historian's pension in Moscow, which prepared boys for the University examinations. He valued the close emotional link with his son, the intensity of which was frequently commented on by the family's friends. In one letter, he observed that it would be strange "if at this time, when my son is just becoming a close friend to me, he were not under the same roof".⁶¹ A home-based education maximised the chances of moulding the character of the pupil and meant that the parents could supervise his

development closely, ensuring it was modelled on their own values and ethos.

A brief examination of the education of Samarin and Khomiakov reveals a good deal about the curriculum favoured in the Slavophile families, as well as the organisation of their studies. Iury Samarin's early years were spent in Petersburg, where his family enjoyed considerable connections within the city's social elite. The family spent several years in Paris and upon return to Russia found, to their considerable consternation, that the boy was unable to speak his native language fluently. His father, F.V. Samarin, moved the family to Moscow in order to continue the children's education, apparently hoping that the city would provide a healthy moral atmosphere in which to raise a family.⁶² He approached the celebrated French educationalist, Abbé Nicolle, whose pedagogical works enjoyed considerable popularity in Russia during the first decades of the 19th-century. On Nicolle's advice, a certain Pascault was appointed as the boy's tutor. During the following years, a close personal bond developed between the pupil and his teacher; it seems that the Frenchman exercised a strong influence on the development of Iury's character.⁶³ However, the family did not delegate complete responsibility to Pascault, rather continuing to take a detailed interest in their son's progress. They invited expert tutors from the universities to give Iury extra lessons. A daily journal was kept which recorded the boy's progress in all his subjects, as well as reviewing his more general development.⁶⁴ The curriculum, as might be expected, was a testing and ambitious one. By the age of eight, the boy studied Greek, German and Church Slavonic, having already obtained a high degree of fluency in Latin. (Classics did not generally figure large in noble education during this period of Russian

history, instead being largely confined to the seminaries). Though all the major subjects were taught, foreign languages dominated the curriculum. In 1834 at the young age of fifteen, Samarin entered Moscow University where he attended lectures by all the leading professors of the day, including Davydov, Pogodin and Shevyrev. He stayed at the university after receiving his diploma, earning his Masters degree in 1840.⁶⁶

Khomiakov's education was similar to that of Samarin. As mentioned earlier, his father had built up a superb library. Although no catalogue of the contents exists for these years it appears that it contained many works by the leading writers of the Enlightenment, including Montesquieu and Voltaire.⁶⁶ The library served as the main source of the books and materials used in the childrens' education. The family hired expert tutors to provide instruction in each of the major subjects. The most influential of these teachers was a certain Abbé Boivin, a Latin tutor, who was one of the numerous Frenchmen forced to move to Russia in the wake of 1789. He was a particularly vehement critic of the French Revolution and the rational social and political theories on which it was based. It is possible that his ideas may have influenced Khomiakov's own later distrust of such doctrines. Boivin, a Catholic, was also partly responsible for arousing his pupil's interest in theological questions.⁶⁷ The curriculum followed by the Khomiakov children was wide-ranging, though once again the study of languages appears to have predominated. However, other subjects were also taught, including mathematics, painting and drawing. In the early 1820's, Alexei attended lectures at the Mathematics Faculty of Moscow University, although it is not clear whether he ever formally graduated.⁶⁸ He completed his education by a year-long residence in Paris, where he studied art.

The education of Koshelev and the Kireevsky brothers followed a similar pattern. They received most of their earliest lessons from their parents. During their adolescence they were taught by expert teachers, who were qualified to give them more specialised instruction.⁶⁹ All three boys went on to attend lectures at Moscow University, though they never formally graduated.

The pattern of education favoured in the Aksakov family was somewhat different. Konstantin was educated at home by his father, before entering the Historical Faculty of Moscow University (a somewhat unusual choice since scions of well-to-do noble families usually favoured the Law Faculty). However, his brothers were sent away to receive their education. Ivan and Gregory attended the School of Jurisprudence, in Petersburg, which prepared officials for work in institutions such as the Senate and the Ministry of Justice. Another brother was enrolled in the *Corps des Pages*, though he died before completing his education there.⁷⁰ It is not clear why the Aksakov family were more willing to enroll their children in state educational institutions. However, since the family was less wealthy than other Slavophile families, it seems probable that career considerations loomed comparatively large.

It is interesting to examine the education of female children in the Slavophile families. In noble families where a functional view of education prevailed, the education of girls was not a question of great interest; formal instruction was limited, and emphasis was on the preparation of skills necessary for running a household. However, in families where an aristocratic conception of education prevailed, far more importance was attributed to the intellectual and moral development of female children, since they were viewed as individuals in their own right.

The mother played a particularly important role in the education of the female children in each of the Slavophile families, though it was a subject that was also treated with great seriousness by the father. A. P. Elagina, the mother of the Kireevsky brothers, had herself received an excellent education as a girl, sharing her lessons with the poet Zhukovsky. Languages dominated the curriculum, and Avdotia Petrovna became a linguist of great skill.⁷¹ Not surprisingly, she, in turn, devoted enormous care to the upbringing of her own daughter, Maria. During Maria's early years the male and female children in her family were apparently educated together. Lessons were given either by Elagina herself or by a German tutor who lived with the family.⁷² At a later stage, Elagina agonised over whether her daughter's interests would be best served by having her own governess or whether she should continue to be educated with her brothers.⁷³ Although boys and girls were usually taught separately in Russian noble families after they reached the age of seven, Elagina decided that Maria should continue to take lessons with Ivan and Peter, pursuing the same rigorous curriculum. The demanding nature of these lessons as well as the earnest manner in which Maria attempted to carry them out are visible in an entry in her diary:

Fr. Once a week translate 6pp from 11 to 1, Germ, 3 times a week, Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday. Translate 10pp each time and read 25 morning until 1, Eng, once, Monday evening. Russian twice a week: Wednesday, Friday, 15 pp a time; 9pp of poetry each time, 3 times a week read Karamzin from 5 to 7 after dinner. Twice a week Sismondi from 9 to 1.⁷⁴

Maria was not alone in her commitment to intellectual self-improvement. Vera Aksakova, sister of Ivan and Konstantin, received an education which provided her with fluency in three western languages, as

well as a deep interest in literature. However, her diary shows that she retained an almost excessive modesty; in spite of her accomplishments, she constantly sought mentors amongst the many intellectual figures who visited the family home.⁷⁵

The ideal of intellectual development continued long after childhood had ended. Elizavetta Khomiakova, wife of Alexei, devoted enormous efforts to learning the English language whilst she was in her thirties. Her workbooks bear testimony to the extent of her endeavours to master a subject she always found extremely difficult.⁷⁶ The excellent education received by the female members of the Slavophile families enabled them to acquire a reputation for intelligence throughout Moscow society. The historian Boris Chicherin recalled his amazement at the intellectual abilities of Iury Samarin's sister, Maria: "She was one of the most distinguished women I have ever met in my life... She had received an excellent education and, when she wanted, was able to carry on a scintillating and brilliant conversation, seasoned by her family's humour and irony, but without the least sarcasm or sharpness".⁷⁷ Such women were able to participate fully in the life of the Slavophile circle and play an important role in its development.

The achievements of the Slavophile theorists were only made possible by the intellectual training they received as children. The severe curriculum they followed had many similarities to the one which was imposed on the young John Stuart Mill by his father. Like Samarin and the Kireevsky brothers, Mill was drilled in the languages and classics from an absurdly young age, and his childhood was dedicated to the ideal of mental development. Yet, in spite of the common commitment to rigorous

intellectual achievement, there were also important differences. Education in the Slavophile families was designed to develop the character as much as the mind. The home-based pattern of education was distinguished by a certain fluidity, and encouraged close contact between parent and child. This type of education facilitated the transmission of a distinct set of values from one generation to the next. Culture and education were treated as absolute values, whose importance transcended the narrowly functional role they occupied in the state educational system. By 'opting out' of the official educational institutions, the Slavophile families were able to avoid exposing their children to a system of values and beliefs they found highly repugnant.

Service Records

Examining the service-records of the leading Slavophiles reveals a great deal about their attitude towards the state and to the traditional role and ethos of the *dvorianstvo*. Khomiakov and the Kireevsky brothers came from family backgrounds with similar traditions of service. Their fathers, born in the 1770's, had served in Guards regiments for a number of years. Both obtained the rank of Major before retiring to the country to supervise the running of their estates (a pattern that was by no means unusual for men of their generation and class). Khomiakov, himself, was in the Guards for two short periods in the 1820's, during which time he obtained the rank of Staff Captain. He enjoyed his time in the army and, according to the memoirs of a friend, believed that the military represented his true vocation.⁷⁸ Whilst it is wrong, as Bolshakoff does,

to ascribe to Khomiakov a martial outlook on life, there is little doubt that he valued the ideal of military service.⁷⁹ His attitude towards state-service in general was expressed in a letter sent to Venetvinov in which he argued: "Service is a necessity in Russia, not only in order to pay one's dues to the Fatherland, but also in order to fill the empty days and years with something".⁸⁰

Ivan Kireevsky, whose experience of state-service was limited to a few months work in the archives of the Foreign Ministry, agreed with Khomiakov that service could be of value, but questioned whether it could only be carried out within the confines of the military or bureaucracy. In a letter sent to Koshelev in 1827, he wrote, "I dedicate all my strength to the Fatherland" but added that, "it seems I can be of more use outside the service". He went on to observe that, "I can be a literary figure, promoting the enlightenment (*prosveshchenie*) of the people".⁸¹ Like the members of the later intelligentsia, Kireevsky seems to have believed that a writer and publicist was better able to promote popular welfare than a bureaucrat.

The attitudes of Ivan Aksakov and Iury Samarin towards service are of particular interest, since both men had extensive personal experience of working for Government Ministries. Aksakov's father, Sergei, had worked briefly as a literary censor, but his experience of the bureaucracy was limited. Ivan, however, worked for the Senate between 1844 and 1849, moving on to the Ministry of Internal Affairs where he served until 1851 (during most of this time he was posted to the provinces). The letters which he sent to his family during the 1840's reveal that he had continual doubts about the value of his work, oscillating between a belief that it was useful and a fear that it was a waste of time. At one point, in 1845,

he noted in a letter that he was constantly preoccupied by the problem of whether "to serve or not to serve; that is the question. How heavily it weighs upon my soul".⁶² Ivan even expressed these dilemmas in dramatic form in an unpublished play he wrote in 1843. The hero of the piece, a young man about to enter the service, similarly agonised over whether he was pursuing the right course of action.⁶³ Ivan's father, Sergei, did not consider that service was either necessary or particularly useful. However, his brother, Gregory (who himself had a successful career in the bureaucracy, serving as Governor of Samara), pointed to its potential value, arguing that service represented the most practical means of working for the welfare of society.⁶⁴

Ivan's doubts were not initially assuaged by his brother's advice. In another letter, he noted that his greatest fear was "to spend 25 years in the service, in order to wake up in the 26th", and observed that he had no ambitions to rise to a high position in the bureaucracy.⁶⁵ However, once he had been in his post a few years, the logic of Gregory's argument became clear to Ivan, and he realised that service could give him a chance to affect the development and implementation of policy. In one letter, he wrote dismissively of the intellectual salons of the capitals, noting that "whilst these gentlemen think and debate I want to do something", and went on to criticise his brother Konstantin for his laziness and indolent lifestyle.⁶⁶ Whilst Ivan acknowledged that much of his work was "petty, detailed, difficult, wearisome and particularly boring", he retained an enthusiasm for those aspects of it in which he could see some value. On one occasion he noted that, "I am usually proud to be engaged in the service and write my reports with enthusiasm, quickly and vehemently defending my opinions".⁶⁷ Above all, Ivan realised that his experience of

service had provided him with direct experience of the many practical problems of Russian life, a knowledge he was able to build upon during his later journalistic career. In the mid 1840's, when talking of his years in Astrakhan, he observed that, "I am grateful to the Revision not only for learning about service, but also for the experience, since, viewing the *narod* from all sides, and seeing all their needs, I know their real requirements better".⁸⁸

The Samarin had a much stronger tradition of service than any other Slavophile family. Iury's grandfather had been a State-Secretary and Senator and enjoyed the favour of the Royal Family. His father had served as an officer during the Napoleonic Wars, eventually becoming an equerry at the Court of Tsar Alexander, whilst his mother was a lady-in-waiting to the Empress. The Tsar and Tsarina both attended Iury's christening, acting as godparents.⁸⁹ Given this background, it is hardly surprising that Iury's father vetoed his son's desire to pursue an academic life, insisting that a career in state-service was more appropriate. As a result, Iury entered the Ministry of the Interior in 1844, serving initially in Petersburg and then working on the problem of peasant welfare in the Baltic region.⁹⁰

During the middle years of the 1840's, and especially under the new Minister Perovsky, the M.V.D. was acquiring a reputation for employing some of the most able and intelligent young men in Russia, providing them with plenty of scope to exercise their talents and abilities.⁹¹ However, Samarin intensely disliked his first few months in Petersburg, complaining that he felt cut-off from his family and friends in Moscow. After living in the city for a year he wrote to Khomiakov that, "never in my whole life have I been as discontented as I am now", adding that during his time in the city, "I have not only not achieved anything, but have myself

experienced much spiritual harm".⁹² In particular, Samarin felt alienated from the values and attitudes of his colleagues. "Amongst my acquaintances here I am seen as a representative of a style of thought which they are afraid of and do not like, or more accurately do not understand".⁹³

Perhaps the most pronounced feature of Samarin's letters during his first year in the M. V. D. was his conviction that all bureaucratic activity was completely futile. In one letter he noted that "the Government cannot create life, but it can consciously or unconsciously suppress it", whilst in another he observed that, "the Government cannot do anything and is without real strength, and in the present situation no decree or institution can be of any value".⁹⁴ However, it seems that many of these jaundiced attitudes may have been prompted by Samarin's homesickness as well as his inability to find fulfillment in the work he was expected to undertake in Petersburg. Like Aksakov, his ideas about service began to change once he had settled into his new role, and he began to develop a more positive attitude which lasted through the rest of his life. In a letter sent to A. N. Popov, Khomiakov observed that "practical affairs" had helped develop Samarin's character, even if they had suppressed his former good spirits.⁹⁵ The transfer to Riga in 1846 appears to have been particularly beneficial; it provided Samarin with the opportunity to become involved with practical measures which could benefit the local population, in place of the sterile paperwork which had demanded all his time in Petersburg. In July, 1846, he sent a letter to Konstantin Aksakov, who had bitterly opposed the decision to enter the bureaucracy, informing his friend that he had come to realise that service could offer certain benefits and opportunities - "and this is why I would remain in the service even if the decision were mine".⁹⁶ Three years later, after completing a total of five years work in the

bureaucracy, Samarin wrote about his first few weeks in a new posting in Kiev: "you would not believe how many departments, offices, senior officials and figures I have become acquainted with, the existence of which I did not know about. I have already doomed myself to the study of all of this; it is important that one of us has mastered the knowledge of official structures".⁷⁷ This knowledge served Samarin in good stead a decade later when he served on the Editing Commission in Petersburg, defending its reform proposals against the attacks of conservative bureaucrats.

Samarin, like Ivan Aksakov, was not interested in the social prestige which could be obtained through advancement in the bureaucracy. The two men were sufficiently confident of their own social position to ignore the frantic competition for rank which was common in Petersburg society. Richard Wortmann has shown that a considerable portion of the *dvorianstvo* was inclined to see true nobility as a function of character and education rather than bureaucratic or military position, an ethos which was certainly true of the Slavophile families.⁷⁸.

Since the Slavophiles did not see state-service as a source of either prestige or wealth, the leading figures in the circle only spent an average of three or four years in the employment of the state - considerably less than normal for young men of their background.⁷⁹ If it is assumed, with good reason, that service in the military or bureaucracy was one of the primary mechanisms by which young Russians were socialised into the values and norms of the Regime, then the significance of the Slavophiles' reluctance to devote their lives to service becomes clear: it reflected and re-enforced their disenchantment with the Regime's values.

Name	No. Years in Service	Branch of Service
	(before 1861)	
Khomiakov	3-4	Army (Guards Regiment)
Samarin	7	M. V. D.; Senate
Ivan Aksakov	7	M. V. D.; Senate
Ivan Kireevsky	<1	M. I. D.
Alexander Koshelev	3	M. I. D.; Min. of Education
Peter Kireevsky	0	-
Konstantin Aksakov	0	-
Vladimir Cherkassky	0	-

Family Structures

The debate between the Westerners and the Slavophiles which took place in the first half of the 1840's is often conceived of as a dramatic clash between two starkly opposing ideologies. The reality was somewhat more complex. Whilst the intellectual differences between such men as Belinsky and Konstantin Aksakov was enormous, some of the more moderate members of the circles were conscious of a common ground. Ivan Kireevsky and Granovsky, for example, both felt they occupied a position between the two camps, even though the former was firmly associated with the Slavophiles whilst the latter was viewed as a committed Westerner. Personal ties could also cut across the ideological divide. Not surprisingly, the closest bond was once again between Kireevsky and Granovsky. In 1845, at a time when relations between the two sides were breaking down, Kireevsky asked the Moscow University Professor to contribute an article to *Moskvitianin*, which at this period was under the editorial control of the Slavophiles. Granovsky refused, writing sadly that whilst he was prepared to co-operate

fully with his friend, he was not prepared to be associated with some of Kireevsky's colleagues on the journal.¹⁰⁰ The breakdown of relations between the two sides gave rise to numerous cases of personal anguish as the friendships of years were destroyed.¹⁰¹

Some contemporary historians have been inclined to treat the Slavophiles and Westerners as products of a similar social background. Nahirny, for example, quotes the words of Bogucharsky to make the point:

Khomjakov and Turgenev, Samarin and Kavelin, Aksakov and Panaev...equally belonged to the generation of the forties, all possessed many common and dear memories, behind all of them stood a manorial orchard...with its shadowy parks and poetical conversations, with its abundance of beautiful womanly faces.¹⁰²

However, in spite of a shared emotional ambience, the difference between the Westerner and Slavophile circles was, in reality, very great. The solidarity of the Westerner circle was based, above all, on intellectual unity. Even before Herzen's 1847 departure for Europe, there was a growing rift between its liberal and radical members, especially over questions of religion and materialism. The celebrated house party at Sokolovo, where the members of the Westerner circle gathered together for relaxation and discussion, served only to reveal the depth of the disagreements which divided them.¹⁰³ Once these disagreements emerged into the open, the disintegration of the Westerner camp could not be long delayed. By contrast, the unity of the Slavophile circle was assured by the ties of blood and friendship examined earlier. It was a social as well as an ideological union, its members frequently meeting outside the formal confines of the Elagina, Chaadaev and Sverbeeva salons. As a result, its unity was able to survive occasional intellectual disagreements.

The *kruzhki* of the 1840's have attracted considerable attention from historians who have examined the role they played in the development of Russian intellectual life.¹⁰⁴ The close ties of friendship which developed amongst their members possessed an important practical and psychological significance. Since the participants developed a strong sense of trust in one another, they could freely discuss subjects frowned upon by the authorities. Police reports of the period often refer to the problems involved with infiltrating the circles, since outsiders were automatically treated with a great degree of suspicion.¹⁰⁵ At the same time, the intimate atmosphere of the *kruzhok* provided its members with the emotional fulfillment they were unable to find in the harsh world of Nicolaevian Russia, with its emphasis on ritual and formality.¹⁰⁶ The *kruzhok* offered its participants the security of a private world where alternative values and sentiments forbidden in the outside world could find expression.

An attempt will now be made to examine the internal structure of the Slavophile families. The lack of detailed studies about the 19th century Russian noble family makes it difficult to acquire the detached perspective which a comparative analysis could provide. The work of Jessica Tovrov provides a useful starting point, but the value of her discussion of family structures is limited by its reliance on literary models.¹⁰⁷ The question of most interest here concerns the widely-held belief that the Slavophile families were both patriarchial and traditional in their organisation. Visitors to the Aksakov home, such as Panaev and Zagorskin, had no doubts about the old-fashioned nature of the household. The former commented after a trip to the family's Moscow residence that, "this was not town-life as we understand it today, but a patriarchial, gentry lifestyle transplanted to the town". He recorded in amazement how Konstantin always

used to kiss his father's hand on coming into the house, even when guests were present.¹⁰⁸ Tovrov, however, uses the terms 'patriarchial' and 'traditional' in a more precise sense. In particular, she draws attention to two crucial features which she believes distinguished the internal organisation of the noble family: the comparative absence of close emotional ties between its members, and the rigid role differentiation between the different sexes and generations. The Slavophile families, it will be seen, were conspicuous for their lack of such features.

It is difficult for the historian to recreate the emotional texture of a pattern of family-relationships more than one hundred years old. It is, of course, necessary to distinguish sharply between the 'public' and 'private' aspects of family life; family-members rarely presented the same face to the world that they presented to each other. Khomiakov, for example, gave the impression of being a somewhat distant figure, rarely treating even his closest friends as emotional confidantes. Although the death of his wife in 1852 caused him enormous agony, he never allowed his grief to become known to his friends.¹⁰⁹ Iury Samarin, who knew him as well as anyone, recalled that he only realised the extent of his friend's pain by accident during a visit to his country-house:

Once I lived with him at Ivanskoe. As he had several guests, all the rooms were occupied, and he moved my bed into his own room. After dinner, following long conversations enlivened by his inexhaustible gaiety, we retired, blew out the candles, and I fell asleep. Long after midnight I was awokened by some murmuring in the room, which dawn had barely begun to illuminate. Without moving or making a sound I began to peer about and listen. He was kneeling before his travelling icon, his arms crossed on a cushioned chair, his head resting in his hands. A restrained sobbing reached my ears. This continued until morning. Of course I affected to be asleep. The next day he greeted us gaily and spiritedly, with his usual good-natured smile. From a person who accompanied him everywhere I heard that this recurred nearly every night.¹¹⁰

Public displays of emotion were frowned upon amongst men of Khomiakov's background in mid 19th-century Russia; Marcus Aurelius' stoical 'Meditations' were popular in many noble households.¹¹¹ Whilst not all the Slavophiles were as restrained as Khomiakov, many of them shared his instinctive reserve. However, even the most cursory acquaintance with their personal correspondence and memoirs shows that this restraint was not carried through into their private lives.

The close bond between Sergei Aksakov and his eldest son has already been remarked upon when discussing the family's plans for Konstantin's education. Sergei had himself been brought up in a household which was distinguished by the intensity of its emotional ties.¹¹² This pattern was reproduced in his own home; the obsessive interest of the family members in each other's affairs can strike a modern Western student as almost neurotic. The family house at Abramtsevo, seventy kilometers north-east of Moscow, served as the primary focus for the family in the years before 1860. None of the children established permanent homes of their own in other areas of Russia or in Moscow itself. When the sons, such as Ivan and Gregory, were absent on service, they remained in close contact with the rest of the family. For example, during the month of October 1845, whilst working in Kaluga province, Ivan sent a total of nine letters back to Abramtsevo, covering everything from his health and details of his job to his opinions on art and literature.¹¹³ Konstantin Aksakov, who was not in the service and consequently spent more time at home, appears to have been an equally assiduous letter-writer. He wrote separately to his mother and father, as well as to his brothers and sisters. Once again the tone of the letters varied enormously, ranging from discussions of the poetry of Goethe and Heine to reflections on his mental state. The most striking aspect of

the family correspondence was the extensive and frank discussion of emotional matters. Konstantin's letters to his sister, Vera, were full of such melodramatic expressions as "my soul has been heavy during this entire period", and contained detailed reflections on the state of his psyche.¹¹⁴ The letters he sent to other family members were full of similar sentiments and, far from having the detached quality which Tovrov identifies as normal, reveal the depth of the bonds which united the family together.

Similar patterns are visible in the other Slavophile families. Khomiakov's letters to his wife are models of the kind of intimacy and tenderness which Tovrov believes was rare amongst husbands and wives in the first half of the 19th-century.¹¹⁵ The same is true of the relationship between Ivan Kireevsky and his wife, Natalia Petrovna.¹¹⁶ Close emotional bonds can also be observed between parents and children; Ivan's diary was full of agonised doubts about whether he was able to provide the right kind of upbringing and family background for his own children.¹¹⁷ Maria Khomiakova, in her memoirs of her father, Alexei, does not in the least give the impression of a remote and distant figure. A close friend of the Khomiakovs, V. I. Khitrov, confirms this picture in his own account of the family's life in the country.¹¹⁸ Alexei's letters to members of his family are full of minor snippets about his children's development – their love of the country sports, etc, – suggesting that he was intimately involved in their everyday lives and welfare.¹¹⁹

These strong affective bonds could also transcend close ties of blood. Khomiakov, by his own testimony, came to treat his nephew by marriage, Dmitry Valuev, "as a son", and was shattered by the latter's early death.¹²⁰ The comparatively open and fluid structure of the Slavophile

families meant that it was easy for a distant relative or outsider to be co-opted to the status of a family member and be treated accordingly. This was true, for example, of the young V. A. Panov, who lived with the Elagin family for some years. The correspondence between members of the Slavophile milieu reveals the ease with which non-family relations could acquire an emotional depth more commonly associated with blood-ties - a feature particularly clear in the relationship between Koshelev and Ivan Kireevsky in the 1820's.¹²¹ Of course, the Romantic 'cult' of the emotions probably helped exaggerate these sentiments; certainly the deep expressions of mutual regard and affection which pervade the Kireevsky/Koshelev correspondence would seem to owe much to a pale imitation of Schiller. However, it would be quite wrong to dismiss the emotional depth of the ties which were forged within and between the Slavophile families. It is, in fact, possible to question the accuracy of Tovrov's theory that such bonds were unusual amongst the Russian noble family during the early 19th century. An extended family may have contained some precise role divisions according to age and gender, but in many ways it possessed a much greater fluidity than the nuclear family which was beginning to supplant it during the second half of the 19th-century; this in turn meant that certain relationships could acquire an emotional depth in the traditional family which they could never have achieved in cases where the more modern type of family structure prevailed.

The question of role-differentiation within the Slavophile families is in some ways harder to assess than the emotional timbre of their relationships. At one level, there were clear differences; it was, for example, the men who entered state-service whilst the women organised the household. However, a detailed examination of the role of the women in the

Slavophile circle can be of great value for a number of reasons. In the first place, the mothers, wives and daughters of the leading Slavophile theorists were some of the best educated and most intelligent women in mid 19th-century Russia, and, with the exception of A. P. Elagina, have been unfairly ignored by historians. In the second place, an examination of their role in the circle can reveal a great deal about its internal structure, and the nature of the ties that bound it together. Finally, a study of the Slavophile women can show us the need to be cautious when applying such simplistic labels as 'patriarchial' to describe an institution as complex and diverse as the Russian noble family.

Since the time of Catherine the Great, there was always a small minority of women in Russian society, usually of aristocratic origin, who took an active interest in intellectual affairs. Many of these women found their *métier* presiding over the aristocratic salons of Petersburg and Moscow, where the discussion revolved around a variety of social and intellectual topics. There were numerous salons of this type in Moscow during the 1840's and 1850's, the most famous perhaps being that of Olga Dolgorukaia, a formidable woman of considerable erudition and conversational powers.¹²² There were also many lesser known salons, where the educated public of Moscow could gather together; a number of these were presided over by female members of the Slavophile families. The most famous was, of course, the salon of A. P. Elagina, which met at her house in north-east Moscow; the salon of Elizavetta Sverbeeva was also an important meeting place for members of the Slavophile circle.

The Elagina salon, which was one of the most important forums for the Westerner/Slavophile debate, was essentially intellectual in character, whilst the conversation in the Sverbeeva household seems to have been a

little more social in tone. Elagina's formidable erudition allowed her to play an active role in the discussions which took place in her home. It is difficult to reconstruct her own views about the controversies of the period, but it seems she did not entirely share the Slavophile views of her sons. Annenkov recalled that the Elagin house was "something like neutral territory", whilst Kavelin remembered it as having a distinct Slavophile bias, but one that was tolerant of other opinions.¹²³ All of those who attended the salon paid tribute to Avdotia Petrovna in their memoirs.

Kavelin recalled that, "it was possible to engage in conversation with Elagina for hours on end, forgetting the passage of time".¹²⁴

The role of both Elagina and Sverbeeva consisted of more than a contribution to the lively debate. They also played an important role organising the social life of those who visited their homes, and cementing the ties which bound their lives together. Elagina, for example, corresponded frequently with all her guests when they were away from Moscow, and kept them informed of developments in the city. When they unexpectedly failed to attend one of her *soirées*, she would write notes chiding them for their absence, and urging them to make sure that they were present on the next occasion.¹²⁵ It seems certain that her social tact and powers of organisation helped delay the final rift between the Slavophiles and Westerners; when the breach finally came, it upset her greatly. Many years later, long after the death of Ivan and Peter, she wrote wistfully to Sverbeeva, asking her if she remembered "our salon, gay, friendly, poetic, elegant... Is there anyone who now selflessly seeks goodness"?¹²⁶ Sverbeeva was less concerned with the Great Debates of the 1840's, but she also played an important role in cementing the personal ties between the members of the Slavophile group, sending and receiving letters, discussing

literature, and keeping its members abreast of each other's activities.¹²⁷

The younger female members of the Slavophile circle, that is the sisters of the leading writers and theorists, also played an active part in its literary and intellectual activities. Vera Aksakova, for example, exercised a great influence over both Ivan and Konstantin, the former recalling that she had greatly affected his intellectual development.¹²⁸ Although Vera only had a limited range of social contacts outside her immediate family and circle of friends, she had a deep knowledge of literary affairs, as well as of social and political questions. Her diary, covering the period between 1853 and 1855, shows her lively awareness of topics raging from the development of Russian literature to the progress of the Crimean War. Like most members of the Slavophile circle, and especially her brother Konstantin, she was an enormous admirer of Gogol, who was a close friend of the family and frequently stayed at Abramtsevo.¹²⁹ A deep knowledge and interest in literature was a hallmark of all the female members of the circle. The letters sent to Ivan Kireevsky by his sister Maria, who lived with her mother in Moscow, were full of accounts of literary developments and gossip and revealed her knowledge of both Western and Russian literature.¹³⁰ Other correspondence, such as that between E. Elagina (half-sister of Ivan) and N. A. Iazykova, shows a similar depth of interest and knowledge.¹³¹ The excellent education received by the female members of the family, with its emphasis on literature and languages, provided them with all the skills and interests required to participate in the controversies of the 1840's and early 1850's.

The Slavophile women did not, therefore, fulfil the roles which Tovrov has implied were normal for female members of the *dvorianstvo*. Their

intelligence and character, as well as the *mores* of their families, ensured that they did not simply become managers of household affairs or mothers of children. Marc Raeff has observed that the rigidly hierachial Russian family reflected the broader society, with its emphasis on rank and order.¹³² If he is correct, it seems likely that the fluid internal structure of the Slavophile families was a reflection of the fact that their members rarely devoted their life to service in either the military or bureaucracy. When fathers and brothers were constantly present in the household, continually interacting with the other family members, rigid distinctions of age and gender were less likely to develop. It will be seen in the following chapter that the Slavophiles spent a great deal of time on their country estates, where their families were largely isolated from the wider social world. Such a setting facilitated the breakdown of the conventional hierachial structures which were sometimes found in other noble families. Family life, with its emphasis on close emotional relationships, became an alternative to the harsher world of service. In the words of Zhukovsky: "you cannot be a good family man in the full sense of the word, a good husband, father and protector of his servants, without a good, tender and sensitive heart".¹³³

Social Life in Moscow

In order to put this information into perspective, it is interesting to examine briefly some aspects of the social and intellectual life of the Moscow nobility in the middle of the 19th-century. By doing this, it becomes easier to locate the Slavophile families more precisely within the

world of the 19th-century *dvorianstvo*. Moscow had become a focus for members of the nobility who disliked the Russian Court as early as the mid 18th-century; it is noteworthy that Shcherbatov's opinion of the old capital was so high.¹³⁴ Writing about the city in the 1850's, Chicherin observed that, "contemporary Moscow was above all a noble town. There lived the prosperous, independent families who did not seek a career and were not connected at Court".¹³⁵ Kropotin agreed with this description, and emphasised the political significance of the decision by part of the nobility to make Moscow and its environs their home:

Feeling themselves supplanted at the St. Petersburg Court, these nobles of the old stock retired either to the Old Equerries Quarter in Moscow, or to their picturesque Estates in the country round about the capital, and they looked with a sort of contempt and jealousy upon the motley crowd of families which came from 'no one knew where' to take possession of the highest functions of the Government, in the new capital on the banks of the Neva.¹³⁶

Alexander Herzen was more inclined to stress the rural tone of the Moscow nobility, observing that "life in Moscow is on the whole more rustic than urban, only the gentlemen's houses are closer together....With little to do they live without haste, with no particular worries, their sleeves not rolled up".¹³⁷ Not every observer, though, agreed with this characterisation of Moscow as a Russian village and the description of its nobility as a kind of transplanted rural gentry. The English traveller E. D. Clarke, for example, was very impressed by the glamour and sophistication of the Moscow nobility when he observed them gathered together at one of the city's balls.¹³⁸

In reality, the nobility of Moscow were, like the members of any other social group, comparatively heterogenous; it is hard to generalise about

their lifestyle in the mid-1840's. Kropotkin was certainly correct in noting the general dislike of the Court and officialdom. There was an almost complete divorce in Moscow between the social life of the nobility and the more formal receptions and parties held by the Governor-General.¹³⁹ Many families tended to shun social contacts altogether during the months when they were resident in the city, a move comparatively easy to make since the existence of the extended family ensured that there was always a ready supply of assorted relatives to serve as house-guests and visitors. The Slavophile families, themselves, rarely went to social gatherings outside their own immediate circle. Khitrov recalled that even as a young man Khomiakov did not share the typical Guardsman's love of sociability and entertainment, declining even to dance.¹⁴⁰ Koshelev noted that few members of the Slavophile circle enjoyed many outside social contacts during the 1840's, except with a few literary acquaintances such as Venetvinov and Odoevsky.¹⁴¹ A study of the memoirs of the period certainly seems to confirm that the Slavophiles had few contacts with the Moscow nobility generally. Princess Meshcherskaia was one of the few people outside the immediate Slavophile milieu who recalled frequent meetings with such figures as Khomiakov and Samarin.¹⁴² This apparent dislike of the social life of the city should not necessarily be seen as a sign of misanthropy; it was quite a common feature amongst many noble families. The biographer of P. A. Obolensky recalled that his subject rarely set foot outside his Moscow home, preferring the peace and quiet of a domestic routine.¹⁴³ E. A. Sabaneeva, writing of another member of the Obolensky family, observed that her subject rarely received guests, but was entirely content with the company of his family and a few close friends.¹⁴⁴

It is possible to discern three broad 'streams' of social life amongst

the Moscow nobility of the 1840's and 1850's. In the first place there were a few houses, such as the Dolgorukys, where the 'stiff' and formal tone resembled that of Petersburg high society. The families that attended such salons also dominated the guest list at the Society Balls, which were occasionally held at the homes of such men as P. P. Odoevsky. The writer K. K. Pavlova, enthusiastically reviewing one of these occasions, noted that "all Society was there"; certainly many members of the oldest and wealthiest noble families attended these occasions, along with a number of the most senior officials.¹⁴⁵ Far more common, however, were the gatherings at homes of families such as the Korsakovs, "a family which was completely of the old type".¹⁴⁶ The parties in such households tended to be far less formal than those in the homes of families such as the Dolgorukys; guests tended to drop by on a regular basis, to play cards or simply to talk with the hosts. However, more formal parties were occasionally held, and an extensive list of guests drawn up. Perhaps the most common type of social gathering, at least amongst those members of the prosperous Moscow nobility who had some pretensions to culture, involved a mixture of intelligent conversation and more general social gossip. Sometimes one household would acquire a reputation for a particular intellectual sympathy. The home of Baron and Baroness Shopping, for example, was noted for its Slavophile sympathies, since the Baron had an interest in Slavic mythology whilst his wife was distantly related to the Iazykovs and Khomiakovs.¹⁴⁷ The Kireev household was also widely identified with the Slavophiles; Khomiakov was a close friend of the head of the family.¹⁴⁸ More common, though, were the gatherings at families such as the Pashkovs, at which the conversation ranged over a variety of intellectual and social themes, without exhibiting any particular bias.¹⁴⁹

In some respects, then, the Slavophile households were not unlike those of many other prosperous noble families who lived in Moscow. One of the best accounts we have of a typical private soirée in the Elagin salon shows that here, too, the conversation ranged over a variety of social topics, as well as covering more intellectual themes.¹⁵⁰ If the Slavophile families were distinguished from the rest of the Moscow nobility it was above all by the extent of their learning, the depth of their culture, their earnest attitude towards philosophy and literature, and, perhaps, by a certain suspicion of the fripperies of social life. In other words, they displayed many of the traits shown by other members of the old nobility, but in a more pronounced, exaggerated form.

1. M. Raeff; 'Analysing the Realm of a Russian Utopia', in *Canadian Slavic Studies*, 1977, vol.11, #3, p.435.
2. M. Gershenson; *Istoricheskie zapiski*, p.4.
3. A. Bobrinsky; *Dvorianskie rody*. See, also, N. Ikonnikov; *Histoire de la Noblesse Russe*, for the history of the Khomiakov and Cherkassky families.
4. For documents relating to Aksakov's university career see TsGALI, fond 10 (Aksakovs), op.1, ed.kh.76.
5. The relevant documents are contained in G.I.M., fond 178 (Khomiakov), delo 1. Also see V.V. Liasovsky; *Alexei Stepanovich Khomiakov*, p.8.
6. *Russkij biograficheskij slovar'*, vol.18, p.133.
7. P. Florensky; *Okolo Khomiakova*, pp.49-50.
8. *Predlozhenie k trudam redaktsionnykh komissii dlja sostovlenija polozhenija o krest'ianakh*, vols.1, 2-6. (Henceforth referred to as P.T.R.K.).
9. For a brief discussion, see chapter 3 below, p.104 ff.
10. Liasovsky *op.cit.*, p.6.
11. The correspondence between Khomiakov and his mother is contained in G.I.M., fond 178, delo 31, but casts little new light on our knowledge of the relationship. For the importance of Maria on the development of her son's character, see *Russkij Arkhiv* (R.A.) 1879, bk.2, pp.356-357.
12. E. Dudzinskaia; *Slavianofilly v obshchestvennoj bor'be*, p.60.
13. Data compiled from P.T.R.K. (Tula, Riazan).
14. J. Blum; *Lord and Peasant in Russia*, p.380. For a discussion of spending patterns amongst the nobility, see A. Kahan; 'The Costs of Westernisation in Russia: The Gentry and the Economy in the 18th Century', in *Slavic Review*, 1966, vol. 25, #1, pp.40-66.
15. G.I.M., fond 178, delo 88, 1.3.
16. P. Christoff; 'Khomiakov on the Agricultural and Industrial Problem', in A. Levine & A. Ferguson (eds) *Essays in Russian History*, p.153.
17. G.I.M., fond 178, delo 94, 1.3.
18. G.I.M., fond 178, delo 88, 11.13-14.
19. Data compiled from P.T.R.K. (Samara); also V. Semevsky; *Krest'ianskii vopros v Rossii*, p.415. See also, N. Ikonnikov; *op.cit.*, (52 vols)
20. S.M. Solov'ev; *Izbrannye trudy, zapiski*, p.303.
21. Dudzinskaia *op.cit.*, p.67.

22. Semevsky *op.cit.*, p.408.

23. Dudzinskaia *op.cit.*, p.67.

24. I. Aksakov; *Pis'ma k rodnym*, p.499.

25. Liasovsky; *Brat'ia Kireevskie*, p.1.

26. M. Lemke; *Nikolaevskie zhandarmy i literatura*, p.68.

27. Data compiled from *P, T, R, K.* (Tula, Orel).

28. Data compiled from *P, T, R, K.* (Tula).

29. A. Troinitsky; *The Serf Population in Russia According to the Tenth Census*, p.84.

30. A. Povalishin; *Riazanskie pomeshchiki i ikh krestyane*, p.15.

31. *ibid.*, p.15.

32. See chapter 3, p.145 ff.

33. Ivan Kireevsky's letters during this period are available in his *Pol, Sabr, Soch.* vol.1., pp.14-58.

34. For details of Valuev's debts at the time of his death see G.I.M., fond 178, delo 94, ll.16-25.

35. A. Vasil'chikov; *Zemlevladelenie i zemledelie v Rossii i drugikh evropeiskikh gosudarstvakh*, vol.1, p.463.

36. C. Whittaker; *The Origins of Modern Russian Education: An Intellectual Biography of Count Sergei Uvarov, 1781-1855*.

37. J. Tovrov; *The Russian Noble Family: Structure and Change*.

38. P. Kropotkin; *Memoirs of a Revolutionary*, vol.1, p.75.

39. W. Bruce Lincoln; *Nikolai Miliutin: An Enlightened Russian Bureaucrat of the 19th Century*, p.4.

40. W. Bruce Lincoln; *Petr Petrovich Semenov-Tian-Shanskii, The Life of a Russian Geographer*, pp.5-6.

41. The memoir literature of the period contains numerous examples where noble families of limited means attributed great importance to education and culture. See, for example, the memoirs of A.I. Lelong, a female member of a Riazan noble family of limited means, whose family went to great lengths to ensure that their daughter achieved a good education. *R.A.* 1913, bk.2, 52-103.

42. In fact, Khomiakov sometimes resented his father's interference in his literary career. See V. Zavitnevich; *A.S. Khomiakov*, vol.1, p.81.

43. Liasovsky; *Brat'ia Kireevskie* p.1. For another account of Vassily Kireevsky, see the description of life at the family Estate of Dolbino by R. Peterson, in *R.A.* 1877, bk.2, pp.479-482.

44. Khomiakov's wife noted that Elagin was probably an atheist. *Pis'ma G.S. Batenkova, I.I. Pushkina, i E.G. Toljia*, p.22.

45. M. Lobanov; *Sergei Timofeevich Aksakov*, pp.14-15.

46. K. Kavelin; *Sobr. Soch.*, vol.3, p.1117.

47. For a good discussion of the Russian Masonic Movement see L.Ryu; 'Moscow Freemasons and the Rosicrucian Order', in J.G.Garrard (ed) *The 18th Century in Russia*, pp.198-232. Also, see P. Florovsky; *The Ways of Russian Theology*, pp.148-156; 170-175.

48. *Russkii biograficheskii slovar'*, vol.18, p.134.

49. Liasovsky; *Khomjakov*, p.9.

50. TSGALI, f.198 (Zhukovsky), op.1, ed.kh.107, 1.61.

51. *ibid.*, 1.81.

52. *ibid.*, 1.81.

53. *ibid.*, 1.81.

54. N. Hans; *The Russian Tradition in Education*, p.18.

55. B. Engel; 'Mothers and Daughters: Family Patterns and the Female Intelligentsia' in D. Ransell (ed) *The Family in Imperial Russia*, pp.51-52.

56. See TSGALI, fond 236, op.1, ed.kh. 10, 1.23. Kireevsky was constantly fearful that the sense of disorder he felt in his internal spiritual life would inhibit his ability to be a good father and family man. See also, *Perepiska V.A. Zhukovskogo c printsem Oldenburgskim o Kireevskom*.

57. G.I.M., fond 178, delo 2, 1.33.

58. *Board of Education; Special Reports on Educational Subjects*, vol.23, p.68.

59. *ibid.*, p.71.

60. S. Aksakov; *A Russian Schoolboy* (trans. J.D.Duff), esp. pp.1-52.

61. Barsukov; *Zhizn' i trudy Pogodina*, vol.3, p.181.

62. L.D. Calder; *The Political Thought of Iury F. Samarin, 1840-64*, p.12.

63. *Russkii biograficheskii slovar'*, vol.18, p.134. For Pascault's view of the relationship, see R.A. 1877, bk.2, p.42.

64. *Russkii biograficheskii slovar'*, pp.134-135.

65. This, of course, was his celebrated work 'Stepan Iakovsky and Feofan Prokopovich', in which he examined the conflict between the 'Protestant' and 'Catholic' elements in the Orthodox Church during the early years of the 18th century.

66. Unfortunately, the only surviving catalogues for the collection date from a later period, and are incomplete. See *Katalog biblioteka A.S. Khomjakova v Moskve*.

67. A. Gratieux; *A.S. Khomjakov et le Mouvement Slavophile*, vol.1, p.7.

68. Khomiakov attended regular classes at the University, and took the final examinations. It does not seem, though, that he was ever formally enrolled. A. Gratieux; *A.S. Khomiakov et Le Mouvement Slavophile*, vol.1, p.7; S. Bolshakoff; *The Doctrine of the Unity of the Church in Khomiakov and Moehler*, p.6.

69. A. Koshelev; *Zapiski*, pp.6-7.

70. Ivan's letters to his family whilst attending the School are in *Ivan Aksakov v ego pis'makh*, Pt.1, vol.1, pp.27-36.

71. K. Kavelin; *Sobr. Soch.*, vol.3, p.1116.

72. I. Kireevsky; *PoJ. Sobr. Soch.*, vol.1, p.5.

73. TSGALI, fond 198, op.1, ed.kh.107, 1.81.

74. A. Gleason; *European and Muscovite*, p.24.

75. V. Aksakov; *Dnevnik (1853-1855)*. The awe with which Vera treated the literary figures who visited her house is also clearly visible throughout her correspondence and notebooks. See, for example, *Literaturnoe Nasledstvo*, 1952, vol.58, p.792.

76. G.I.M., fond 178, delo 24.

77. B. Chicherin; *Vospominanija B.N. Chicherina*, *Moskovskij Universitet*, pp.107-108.

78. Zavitnevich *op.cit.*, vol.1, p.144. Also, see the memoirs of N.A. Mukhanov, who served with Khomiakov during his first period of service. *R.A.*, 1887, #1, p.243.

79. S. Bolshakoff *op.cit.*, p.8.

80. Khomiakov; *PoJ. Sobr. Soch.*, vol.8, pp.30-31.

81. I. Kireevsky; *PoJ. Sobr. Soch.*, vol.1, p.10.

82. I. Aksakov; *Pis'ma k rodnym*, p.516.

83. Shishkin Papers, 56/1, pp.1-33.

84. *Pis'ma k rodnym*, p.516.

85. *ibid.*, p.196.

86. *ibid.*, p.550, 517.

87. *ibid.*, p.108.

88. *ibid.*, p.54.

89. *Russkij biograficheskij slovar'*, vol.18, p.133.

90. Iu. Samarin; *Soch.*, vol.5, p.83. An account of Samarin's years in Riga is contained in his brother's Introduction to volume 7 of Iu. Samarin; *Soch.*, vol.7, pp.I - CXXXIV.

91. W. Bruce Lincoln; *Nikolai Milutin: An Enlightened Russian Bureaucrat of the 19th Century*, p.30.

92. Iu. Samarin; *Soch.*, vol.12, p.411.

93. *ibid.*, p.411.

94. *ibid.*, ps.141, 178.

95. Khomiakov; *Pol. Sobr. Soch.*, vol.8, p.193.

96. Iu. Samarin; *Soch.*, vol.12, p.177.

97. *ibid.*, p.211.

98. R. Wortmann; *The Development of a Russian Legal Consciousness*, p.93.

99. For typical pay scales see, P.A. Zaionchkovsky; *Pravitel'stvennyj apparat samoderzhavnoj Rossii v XIX v*, p.74 ff.

100. G.I.M., fond 345 (Granovsky), delo 13, 1.71.

101. A. Herzen; *Ends and Beginnings*, p.173.

102. V. Nahirny; *The Russian Intelligentsia. From Torment to Silence*, pp.116-167

103. Herzen; *op.cit.*, pp.198-206.

104. M. Aronson and S. Reiser; *Literaturnye kruzhki i salony*; N.L. Brodsky; *Literaturnye salony i kruzhki: pervaia polovina XIX veka*.

105. Lenke *op.cit.*, p.69.

106. For an interesting discussion of the relationship between the private and public worlds of Russian culture during the first half of the 19th century, see Iu. Lottmann; 'The Decembrists in Everyday Life: Everyday Behaviour as a Historical-Psychological Category', in Iu. Lottmann and B.A. Uspensky (eds) *The Semiotics of Russian Culture*, pp.71-123.

107. Tovrov *op.cit.*, Tovrov regrettably restricts her discussion to belles-lettres and manuals of etiquette; she does not make any significant use of memoirs in her study.

108. V. Panaev; *Literaturnye vospominanija*, p.149.

109. See, for example, the brief comments in his letter to P.A. and P.M. Bestuzhev found in G.I.M., fond 178, delo 27, 1.187. His friends were not, of course, insensitive to his pain; see, for example, the observations of V.I. Khitrov in G.I.M., fond 178, delo 2, 1.82.

110. P. Florovsky; *op.cit.*, p.40.

111. Wortmann *op.cit.*, p.97.

112. See the volumes *Years of Childhood* and *A Russian Schoolboy*.

113. I.S. Aksakov; *Pis'ma k rodnym*, pp.204-228.

114. TsGALI, fond 10, op.3, ed.kh. 150, 1.3.

115. Tovrov *op.cit.*, pp.97-98.

116. TsGALI, fond 236, op 1, ed.kh. 248.

117. See footnote 55 above.

118. G.I.M. fond 178, delo 1.

119. For example, the comments in an 1852 letter to the Bestuzhevs. G.I.M., fond 178, delo 27, 1.186.

120. Khomiakov: *Pol. Sобр. Soch.*, vol.8, p.450. His wife was even more upset by Valuev's death; see, for example, a letter in which she describes her late nephew as a 'saint', and laments the loss of "a dear friend, a true friend". G.I.M., fond 178, delo 33, 1.280.

121. See, for example, the form of address used by Kireevsky to his friend, in a letter of 1827; Kireevsky: *Pol. Sобр. Soch.*, vol.1, p.8.

122. Chicherin *op.cit.*, pp.93-94.

123. Herzen implied in his Memoirs that Elagina did not share the views of Ivan, describing him as standing 'alone in his own family'; Herzen *op.cit.*, p.186. Annenkov: *The Remarkable Decade*, p.92; K. Kavelin: *Sобр. Soch.*, vol.3, p.1126.

124. Kavelin: *Sобр. Soch.*, vol.3, p.1126.

125. See, for example, the note from Elagina to Granovsky in G.I.M., fond 345, delo 2, 11.159-160.

126. TsGALI, fond 472 (Sverbeevs), op.1, ed.kh. 632-a, 1.7.

127. See, for example, the letters from Konstantin Aksakov to Elizavetta, in TsGALI, fond 472, op.1, ed.kh. 619, 11.1-3.

128. N.I. Tsimbaev: *Ivan Aksakov v obshchestvennoi zhizni poreformennoi Rossii*, p.85.

129. *Literатурное наследство*, 1952, vol.58 contains important material about the relationship of Gogol to the Slavophile milieu esp. pp.533-796.

130. Several of these letters are available at TsGALI, fond 236, op.1, ed.kh. 82.

131. G.I.M., fond 178, delo 35, 11.6-7.

132. M. Raeff: *Origins of the Russian Intelligentsia*, p.49.

133. R. Wortmann *op.cit.*, p.134.

134. The Prince composed an address on the subject, under the title of 'A Petition of the City of Moscow on Being Relegated to Oblivion'; see 'Prince M.M. Shcherbatov: *On the Corruption of Morals in Russia*', p.79.

135. Chicherin *op.cit.*, p.92.

136. Kropotkin: *op.cit.*, vol.1, p.4.

137. Herzen *op.cit.*, p.181.

138. E.D. Clarke; *Travels in Various Countries of Europe, Asia and Africa*, pt.1, pp.64-65.

139. Chicherin *op.cit.*, p.92.

140. G.I.M., fond 178, delo 2, 11.3-4.

141. A. Koshelev; *Zapiski*, p.55.

142. *Vospominaniiia kniaginy Sofii Vasil'evny Meshcherskoi*, p.1. The members of the Slavophile Circle "valued her sharp and lively mind".

143. R.A., 1877, bk.1, #3, p.305.

144. E.A. Sabaneeva; *Vospominaniiia o byloem*, p.64.

145. K.K. Pavlova; *Sobr. Soch.*, vol.2, p.306.

146. Chicherin *op.cit.*, p.55.

147. *ibid.*, pp.105-106.

148. W.T. Stead (ed); *The K.P. for Russia, Reminiscences and Correspondence of Madame Olga Novikoff*, pp.7-8.

149. Chicherin *op.cit.*, pp.95-97.

150. TsGALI, fond 236, op.1, ed.kh, 82, 11.4-5.

The Foundations of Independence: The Rise of the *Pomeshchik*

It was seen in the previous chapter that Slavophilism first emerged as a coherent ideology in the salons of Moscow during the 1840's. It would be a mistake, though, to imagine that the leading figures in the circle were simply urban intellectuals who had no first-hand knowledge of the world of *mir* and peasant which they wrote about at such great length. Florovsky was inclined to dismiss the importance of rural background in shaping the ideas of the Slavophiles; writing about Khomiakov, he noted that "one gets the impression that he had no roots in the soil".¹ However, other writers, such as Berdiaev, have been more inclined to see the Slavophiles as "typical Russian *pomeshchiki*, who "sucked in their vital convictions with the milk of their mother". According to Berdiaev, "from childhood years there lived in the Slavophiles a dream of Russian Christianity, of the Orthodox way of life, of the Christian-Peasant commune, of the Christian-Patriarchal state, in which all relationships were modelled on that between father and child".²

It is, of course, difficult to prove or disprove the ideas of either scholar. However, in the chapter that follows, an attempt will be made to develop several of the points made by Berdiaev. The Slavophiles, it will be seen, were linked to the countryside by a complex network of social, economic and emotional ties; these ties, in turn, helped to determine their attitude towards the numerous social and political questions which arose in Russia during the middle decades of the 19th-century.

The Slavophiles and Russian Agriculture in the Years Before Reform

19th-century Russian agriculture has received an increasing amount of attention from historians during the last twenty-five years. However, interest has generally been directed towards the economic developments of the period rather than the social effects of the changes which took place. This neglect is perhaps surprising. 90% of the Russian population obtained their living from farming, and changes in the economic structure of agriculture naturally had profound consequences for noble and peasant alike.

It has often been argued that the Russian nobility had little interest in agriculture. The German traveller von Haxthausen, as attentive and knowledgeable commentator as any, observed in his notes about Russian rural life that

The Great Russian nobles have never been a rural aristocracy, residing in their castles, or trained in the chivalrous spirit of the feudal ages; they have always resided at the Courts of the Grand Dukes and Petty Princes, and in the towns, exercising military and political functions; those living in the country engaged in agriculture, but they were only insignificant or useless members of that body. Such was the state of things until quite recent times; even at present, the majority of them have no country-seats, like those found in the rest of Europe, and no agricultural establishments. All the land, arable, meadow and forest belong to the nobility, and is given up to the village Communes, who cultivate it and pay a tax for it.³

Other writers of memoirs and travelogues agreed with Haxthausen. Even as late as the 1870's, when poverty was forcing many noblemen to take a greater interest in their farming operations, the English journalist D. M. Wallace noted that the majority still failed to involve themselves in the running of their estates, preferring to delegate responsibility to a bailiff.⁴ Nor did descriptions of agricultural affairs figure large in the

voluminous memoir literature of the period. Many of the agricultural journals set up in the 1850's identified this lack of a 'farming culture' amongst the Russian nobility as the main obstacle to agricultural progress.⁵

A study of the *belles-lettres* of the period suggests a slight change may have been taking place in the nobility's attitude towards country life. The heroes of many novels, such as Lavretsky in Turgenev's 'Home of the Gentry', returned to their estates in a search for a peace and order they could not find in the capitals or in bureaucratic service. Doubtless some of these 'returning gentry' were inspired by the sentimental tradition which dominated French and German literature during the early 19th century. The pastoral idylls painted by Rousseau and his successors helped transform attitudes towards the countryside throughout educated European society.⁶ At a more prosaic level, however, the return to the family estate was often inspired by the need to exploit its economic potential more fully. The hero of Turgenev's short story 'Two Friends', Viazovnin, was forced to return to his estate by the constantly diminishing income he was sent by his bailiff; only personal management could reverse the problems, and restore his property to its former prosperity.⁷

Many writers of the period noted the interest of the leading Slavophiles in agriculture and agricultural science. K. Arsenev, for example, observed that Cherkassky was the owner of one of the best stud-farms in Tula province, whilst Koshelev was able to boast of one of the finest herds of cattle in the whole of Riazan.⁸ The agricultural journalist P. Rundev wrote a long article about Khomiakov's Riazan estate, praising the various improvements which had been carried out there.⁹ Some modern historians, including Peter Christoff, have also drawn attention to

the high quality of farming operations on the Slavophiles' estates, though without providing many details.¹⁰ References to agricultural affairs recurred frequently in Slavophile correspondence whilst Koshelev and Khomiakov, in particular, wrote extensively on the subject.

In order to understand the Slavophiles' attitude towards agricultural questions, it is necessary to provide a more general review of farming practices in mid 19th-century Russia. Recent books and articles provide us with a welter of statistics about changes in the pattern of Russian agriculture during the period; however, since the data-base for such studies is so poor, resulting in sharp disagreements between various scholars, only a limited use will be made here of their conclusions.¹¹ Of more interest is what a study of farming can tell us about the psychology of the Russian landed gentry during this period - their attitudes towards their estates, their concern about money, and their wish to secure a firmer economic foundation for their class.

The Slavophiles and the Agricultural Improvement Societies

A study of the expansion of modern farming techniques can tell us a great deal about the psychology and outlook of the men who adopted them. Confino has made an extensive study of the development of agronomy in late 18th century Russia, examining the publications of the St. Petersburg Free Economic Society.¹² The members of the Society were drawn almost exclusively from amongst the wealthier and better educated members of the *dvorianstvo* - men who possessed the education and intelligence to follow the course of the agricultural revolution taking place in Western Europe.

Their interest in agricultural science was above all theoretical; many of the Society's publications took the form of a scholarly treatise, giving advice about the most efficient way of organising the farming operations on the estate. Since the vast majority of members were absentee landlords, most articles were concerned with the difficulty of exercising effective supervision over the estate from a distance; many authors drew up model *nakazy*, giving precise instructions to the estate baliff about his duties and activities. The problem with Confino's study, as the author freely acknowledges, is that it tells us very little about the real state of Russian agriculture. Most *nakazy* were drawn up under the inspiration of physiocratic ideology, and were as concerned with discussing the contribution made by agriculture to the stock of national wealth as with the more prosaic problems of estate-management.¹³ This, of course, was partly a reflection of social reality in late-18th century Russia; since the majority of wealthy landlords were absentee, they had little interest in the practical problems of supervising farming operations.

Memoir and travel literature shows that attitudes towards agricultural development were beginning to change by the mid-19th century, at least amongst a minority of landowners. 'Hands-on' farming management was becoming more popular. Haxthausen recorded a meeting with a certain Karnovitch, a landowner in Yaroslav province, who was:

a scientifically educated man, knows Germany, France and England, and has informed himself on the spot as to the condition of husbandry in these different countries, and returned full of zeal and patriotism, to apply what he had learnt in making improvements at home, and to become the teacher and pattern of his district.¹⁴

The Tula landlord Karpinsky, who came from the same district as Khomiakov, also returned to Russia from a long trip abroad inspired by a wish to implement the new agricultural techniques he had witnessed at first-hand. As a result, he devoted his attention to restoring the fortune of the family estates, largely by means of more effective personal supervision.¹⁵ I. A. Raevsky, who was a close friend of both Cherkassky and Khomiakov, recalled that his father had spent a great deal of time and energy in stock-breeding; the testimony of other writers shows that an interest in animal husbandry was common amongst many landowners interested in improving the quality of farming on their estates.¹⁶ The increase in the number of agricultural journals in the 1840's and 1850's shows that there was an audience for such publications.

It is difficult to build up an accurate profile of an improving landlord but, like Karpovich, and indeed like the Slavophiles themselves, they were usually men of considerable education and culture. Confino has observed that the mentality of most Russian landlords was extremely conservative; they were suspicious of any form of change in agricultural practice.¹⁷ It seems likely that there was a close link between education on the one hand, and a willingness to introduce new forms of estate-management on the other; a good education encouraged an openness of mind, as well as providing the skills necessary to understand the ramifications of new methods of farming.

One of the most important Societies devoted to improving the quality of Russian agriculture was the Lebedian Society. In contrast to the Free Economic Society, its membership was largely made up of landlords who had extensive practical experience of running their estates. Alexander Koshelev joined in 1848; Samarin, Cherkassky and Khomiakov became members

in the following three years. All four men took an active part in its proceedings; Koshelev even became a Vice President. The Society played an important role in acquainting members of the Slavophile circle with new agricultural methods and techniques.

The Society was formally founded in 1847, in the Tambov town of Lebedian, although it seems that regular meetings had taken place for years between landlords visiting the town's annual agricultural fair.¹⁸ Most members came from Tambov and the four adjacent provinces of Riazan, Tula, Orel and Voronezh - that is from the Black Earth region of Russia. The two moving spirits behind the establishment of the organisation were a local landlord, P. A. Bulgakov, and the famous agronomist N. P. Shishkov, who was a close friend of Koshelev. The aim of the new Society was severely practical. Unlike the Free Economic Society, it showed little interest in abstract questions of social and economic theory. Instead it sought to promote "all branches of agricultural and rural industry", and encouraged the adoption of new farming techniques.¹⁹ It attempted to meet these goals by means of a regular annual meeting, lasting for several days. During the course of the sessions, members gave papers discussing some of the practical problems they had faced during the previous year, in the hope that their experiences could be of value to other landowners. These papers were then published in an annual Report.

Although some of the articles discussed new farming techniques adopted abroad, the emphasis was on more mundane questions. F. Mayer, for example, wrote about the introduction of new species of trees to the Black Earth steppe, and assessed the contributions this could make to the region's farms.²⁰ D. Babin wrote an article about a display of agricultural machinery in the town of Riazan, and evaluated its potential benefits for

local landowners.²¹ V. P. Volkonsky wrote about the improvements that could be brought about by the wider use of fertilisers.²² The Slavophile members of the Society also shared their farming experiences with their fellow landlords. Koshelev made a number of speeches to the annual meeting and contributed articles to the journal. In one, for example, he assessed the value of the new reaping machines which he had witnessed in operation during a trip to Britain.²³ One of the most interesting articles, mentioned earlier, was Y. Rundev's examination of the agricultural operations on one of Khomiakov's Riazan estates.²⁴ Rundev reviewed all aspects of farming operations, paying particular attention to the system of crop rotation employed and the widespread use of fertilisers to improve the soil. He argued that Khomiakov's innovations could be applied more widely in the Black Earth region, with beneficial consequences for agricultural production and landlord income.

Whilst it is interesting to examine the technical aspects of the articles published in the annual *zapiski* of the Society, it is more important to explore the contributors' general attitudes towards the function of agriculture. Few writers touched on such broad issues as the economic or humanitarian costs of serfdom; indeed they were scrupulous in their avoidance of such topics.²⁵ Instead, the vast majority were primarily interested in devising methods of increasing the financial returns from agriculture, suggesting various ways in which the landlord could maximise his income. Agricultural innovation was viewed as a means of enhancing the economic welfare of the gentry landowner. This attitude can be seen most clearly in an article by D. Ch and P. M. Preobrazhensky, examining rural book-keeping and accountancy, the quality of which was generally low before 1861.²⁶ In part, this simply reflected the fact that

most estates were self-sufficient economic entities, where the majority of products were consumed *in situ*; only the surplus was sold on the market. As a result, there was little need for detailed record-keeping. The best accounts were generally kept on the large estates of wealthy proprietors, where there was sufficient skilled manpower to organise the system and where detailed supervision and control was necessary to avoid fraud.²⁷ In complete contrast to this general pattern, the accounting system suggested by the Preobrazhenskys attempted to provide a rudimentary system of management accounting designed to facilitate effective management and decision-making, in the place of one which simply recorded financial transactions. The authors of the article viewed the estate as economic capital, whose function was to yield the highest possible return. They argued that the purpose of an accounting system should be to "show us what is the condition of our capital used in the acquisition of a property - is it growing or declining".²⁸ The accounts should be able to provide information necessary to identify weaknesses in the present structure of agricultural operations and "to discover causes whereby our property - our capital - is increasing or declining".²⁹ In particular, the authors pointed out that there was a need for more accurate information about the relative efficiency of the labour employed on the estate, so that it could be reorganised in the most effective way possible. In putting forward these suggestions, the Preobrazhenskys clearly had in mind estates which were organised on commercial lines where production was at least partly oriented towards the market. They identified one of the most important functions of a rural accounting system as the systematic recording of creditors and debtors. The Preobrazhenskys' article reflected the general attitude of most members of the Lebedian Society. Better management,

combined with a judicious use of new techniques, was seen as the key to increasing the gentry's income from their estates.

Some mention should also be made of another agricultural organisation which flourished during the middle years of the 19th-century - the Imperial Moscow Agricultural Society. Koshelev was invited to join the Society in 1851 - a move which he considered a great honour. He played an active role in its affairs, and served as Chairman in 1862.³⁰ Like the Lebedian Society, the Imperial Moscow Society gave most of its attention to practical problems; it set up an experimental farm to try out new agricultural techniques and ran a school to teach peasant children the rudiments of good farming practice.³¹ Some articles in the Society's journal dealt with the esoteric aspects of agricultural science, such as the use of chemical fertilisers.³² The majority, however, dealt with prosaic issues of more immediate concern to landlords. The Society took a particular interest in the role rural industry could play in increasing the income of the landlord; sugar-beet processing, for example, was the subject of numerous articles, and the Society even set up a special sub-committee to promote its development in Russia.³³

The Pros and Cons of Agricultural Modernisation

Whilst members of the Agricultural Improvement Societies, including the Slavophiles, saw better management and modern farming methods as the key to higher revenues, it would be wrong to imagine that a reluctance to modernise agricultural operations always reflected an innate conservatism or lethargy on the part of the landowner. Whilst there is a lack of any

systematic data, it is quite clear that many estates were yielding an excellent income using traditional farming methods. The Tambov estate of the Gagarin family, studied by Stephen Hoch, yielded an average annual income of 61,000 assignats from a male serf population of between 523 and 762 'souls'.³⁴ The family's other estates, studied by Kovalchenko, seem to have been giving even more impressive returns, although Hoch has questioned the statistical methods used by the Soviet historian.³⁵ Haxthausen cited the example of one small estate on the Volga, comprising some 300 souls, which provided an annual income of 100,000 rubles.³⁶ Nor, it should be noted, did investment in new machinery or fertilisers always prove profitable. Confino cited the example of one estate where income actually fell by 19% once new methods of farming were introduced.³⁷ These failures often reflected landlords' inability to understand that the employment of new techniques alone could not guarantee a higher income; the success of investment depended on a complex mixture of economic, geographical and technical factors. Wallace cited the example of two neighbouring landowners in a Central Russian province, one of whom took no interest in the running of his estate whilst the other invested in the latest German machinery to improve his farming operations. However, "though the estates are of about the same size and value they give a very different revenue. The rough practical man has a much larger income than his elegant, well-educated neighbour, and at the time spends much less".³⁸ The mistake made by the second landowner was that he had "studied abstract science without gaining any technical knowledge of details, and consequently, when he stood face to face with real life he was like a student who, having studied mechanics in a textbook, is suddenly placed in a workshop and instructed to manufacture a machine".³⁹

The success of any attempt to change the pattern of farming on a particular estate depended on a complex set of variables, a point Koshelev made forcefully in his articles about agricultural improvement. He argued that the optimum pattern of farming in a particular region depended on local circumstances. The most successful landlord was one who adapted to local conditions and did not try to run his estate according to any rigid blueprint. Successful innovation depended on the judicious adoption of new techniques and equipment, not a wholesale imitation of all the latest fads of agricultural science.⁴⁰

A landlord who was interested in carrying out changes on his estates had to make a number of complex calculations about whether they were likely to yield sufficient revenue to justify the expenditure. Most landowners were chronically short of the capital needed to purchase new machinery, finance new drainage schemes, etc.⁴¹ Ironically, it was the landlords who had capital available that had least incentive to invest in their estates; they were already obtaining a good income. In general, it is possible to identify three distinct sets of constraints faced by a landowner who wished to modernise his farming operations:

1. The natural constraints of soil and climate posed considerable limitations on the agricultural operations which could be pursued in a particular area. It was sometimes possible to modify these slightly, perhaps by employing new techniques to improve soil-fertility, but they remained for the most part firm parameters within which the landlord was forced to operate. For example, in northern provinces, where the soil was poor and the growing season was short, there was little that could be done to improve agriculture. Many landlords preferred to place their serfs on *obrok* (quitrent), rather than impose

direct labour obligations on them; the serf was then forced to seek some non-agricultural source of income, such as handicrafts, which in turn enabled him to pay higher obligations to his master.⁴²

2. The second set of constraints on agricultural improvement was the prevalence of a conservative mentality amongst peasant and landlord alike.⁴³ Wallace cited the case of one landowner whose attempts to introduce new machinery were foiled by the peasants' refusal to operate it - an example that was by no means unusual.⁴⁴ However, a landlord intent on modernising his farming operations could overcome this innate conservatism, at least to a certain extent. He might, for example, try to sell an increased percentage of his estate's products on the market, in place of the more traditional patterns of self-sufficiency. He could reorganise the system by which his serfs met their obligations to him; many of the agricultural journals of the period were full of articles comparing the relevant benefits of *obrok* and *barshchina* (corvee).⁴⁵ He might increase the scope of demesne agriculture on the estate, reducing the percentage of the land allocated to the peasants; it was generally easier to introduce new techniques and methods on his own land, rather than forcing a recalcitrant peasantry to adopt them on their allotments.⁴⁶ In fact, most improving landlords used a combination of these methods, adopting the patterns of farming and estate organisation which promised the greatest returns.

3. Most intractable of all was the structure of the traditional serf economy, resting as it did on a complex set of legally determined relations which reduced the landowner's ability to farm his estate as he wished. The lack of a flexible labour supply ruled out many

possible changes in farming techniques for the individual landowner, restricting his freedom of choice. Serfdom also prohibited the growth in urban population, which in turn hindered the development of the market for agricultural products. There was little point in investing large sums of money to improve the infrastructure and productivity of an estate if there was no chance of selling its output.

The most complex question faced by the student of 'improved farming' is determining how landowners reacted to this third set of systemic constraints. It would be tempting to presume that the limitations imposed by the serf economy automatically encouraged energetic landowners to view the traditional pattern of rural relations with distrust. However, many improving landlords showed little interest in questioning the principle of serfdom, concentrating instead on the best method of maximising their income under the existing system.⁴⁷ Indeed, some of the most prominent agricultural improvers were found in the conservative camp during the emancipation debates at the end of the 1850's.⁴⁸ Nevertheless, there was a marked tendency for 'improving landlords' to defend the principles of *laissez-faire* and free-labour; it will be seen in Chapter 5 that many members of the Lebedian Society, including several from the Slavophile circle, were active in the fight against serfdom. Agricultural improvers often possessed the kind of European outlook and energy which bred a natural hostility to serfdom.⁴⁹

The Slavophile Estates in Tula and Riazan

Most estates belonging to the leading Slavophiles were located in the fertile Black Earth regions of Russia, particularly in Tula and Riazan provinces. Since both these provinces were very large there was a considerable variation in the pattern of farming within each of them; agriculture was far more productive in their southern *uezdy*, where the soil was of a higher quality than in northern districts.⁵⁰ Riazan contained few industrial areas of any importance, but in Tula, many of the local serfs migrated annually to Moscow to work in the factories, returning only in the summer months.⁵¹ Many other serfs were employed in the metal industries of Tula city, described by one 19th-century English traveller as "the Birmingham of Russia".⁵²

Ivan Kireevsky's Tula estate was located in Belevskii *uezd*, one of the less fertile areas of the province; this may account for his comparative lack of interest in agriculture, since it was harder to improve the productivity of an estate with poor soil than one blessed with fertile land. By contrast, the Tula estates of Khomiakov and Cherkassky were located in the Black Earth part of the province, in Efremovskii and Venevskii *uezdy* respectively. Khomiakov also owned two estates in the fertile steppe area of Riazan (Dankovskii *uezd*), where the land was of a uniformly high quality. Koshelev's largest estate was also located in the southern steppe region of Riazan, in Sapozhkovskii *uezd*. Cereal crops predominated in the agriculture of the two provinces, the most important being rye and wheat. Interestingly, a large amount of livestock was raised in the area; sheep and cattle made up the majority of animals, but Riazan also had a flourishing pig-breeding industry.⁵³

It is difficult to establish the extent of 'improved farming' in the two provinces. The membership of the Lebedian Society, which was largely drawn from local landowners, numbered only 89, hardly suggesting that there was a great interest in agricultural modernisation.⁵⁴ Kovalchenko has estimated that only 5% of even the richest landowners in Riazan made any serious effort to overhaul their farming operations.⁵⁵ The Governor of Riazan noted in 1852 that "few pomeshchiki.....are involved with the improvement of agriculture by the use of scientific methods".⁵⁶ However, there is some evidence that new methods of farming were appearing, especially in Tula. A contemporary observer, I. Afremov, noted that new methods of cultivation were beginning to appear in Tula province by 1850.⁵⁷ Although he did not describe these changes, he was probably referring to the adoption of new systems of crop-rotation, which replaced the old three-field system and avoided the need to leave one third of the land fallow each year. Such a development represented, as Confino has pointed out, the most fundamental change in the structure of agriculture without which further reforms were almost impossible.⁵⁸ The statistician K. Arsenev pointed out that a large proportion of the land in Tula province had already been enclosed by 1848; the consolidation of land-holding is an important prerequisite for agricultural development.⁵⁹ Even in Riazan province, where changes were less widespread, a number of local landowners regularly met to discuss the problems of improving their farming operations. New agricultural machinery, in the form of seed-drills and threshers, was appearing in the area whilst a number of landlords, including Khomiakov and Koshelev, devoted considerable attention to the problem of drainage and soil improvement.⁶⁰ Traditional patterns of agriculture continued to predominate but on the large estates, in

particular, the first signs of rapid agricultural development were beginning to appear.

The incentive to overhaul the organisation of an estate was strongest when there was a ready market for its products. In the traditional agrarian economy, there had been few incentives to implement changes as long as the estate produced enough to feed the peasants and their master - and if possible provided a small surplus which could be sold to generate a cash income. Soviet historians have devoted enormous attention to the development of an agricultural market in 19th century Russia, including Tula and Riazan. The most important study, carried out under the supervision of the agrarian historian I.D. Kovalchenko, was based on an exhaustive study of regional price variations for different products; the authors pointed to a reduction in regional price differentials as evidence for the growth of a unified market.⁶¹

On the basis of the data compiled, the study concluded that Tula and Riazan, in spite of their geographical proximity, were not part of the same regional agricultural market.⁶² The fluctuation of prices in Tula indicate that the province was closely integrated with the agricultural market of Moscow province to the north; by contrast, price movements in Riazan followed those in the southern steppe provinces such as Voronezh and Kursk. However, whilst the statistical basis of the study is impressive, it relies too heavily on data compiled from estate records which were often far from accurate. It also relies too heavily on a study of price movements, ignoring the more mechanical aspects involved in the formation of a market (improvements in communication, etc). Even so, more recent Western research also suggests that regional agricultural specialisation had begun to develop in the central Russian provinces by the early 19th-century,

indicating that the market was sufficiently advanced to facilitate exchange between different regions of Russia.⁵³ Certainly, many of the pre-conditions for the development of an agricultural market existed in the Tula and Riazan.

1) Population in Tula and Riazan provinces was growing rapidly in the first decades of the 19th century. In Tula, the population rose from 876,000 in 1790 to 1.26 million in 1846: a rise of 69%. In Riazan, the rise was around 68%.⁵⁴ In Tula province, there was also an increase in the level of urbanisation, as greater numbers went to work in the armament and metal industries of the provincial capital. According to the pre-revolutionary expert, I. Ignatovich, the average allocation of land worked by each peasant household that remained in agriculture was insufficient to meet its needs. As a result, many households were forced to buy grain, which they paid for with income received from non-agricultural operations or from paid employment carried out on behalf of local landowners.⁵⁵ As a result, it can be assumed that there would have been a local market for grain.

2) The greatest constraint on the development of a market for agricultural products in the central Russian provinces was the lack of a communications infrastructure. The first railway did not reach Riazan until 1864 whilst Tula did not gain a link until several years later.⁵⁶ Ivan Aksakov pointed out in an 1858 survey of trading fairs (*iamarki*), carried out under the auspices of the Imperial Geographical Society, that poor communications fragmented the market and encouraged the proliferation of numerous local fairs to serve the local area.⁵⁷ However, there had been a considerable improvement in the road system of Tula and Riazan during the decades before 1850 which facilitated the transport of goods to market; a surprisingly high percentage of agricultural products were carried by cart.⁵⁸ In

addition, water transport was used extensively for moving agricultural products, making use of the River Oka and its navigable tributaries. Numerous wharfs designed to serve agricultural trade developed alongside the river banks at towns such as Shilovskaia, Zabelinskaia and Belev.⁶⁹ Canals and rivers remained the principal means of transporting grain until the early 1870's when they were finally supplanted by the railways.⁷⁰

3. Both provinces (especially Riazan) exported considerable quantities of grain to other areas of Russia and abroad. Many Riazan estates were integrated into the growing export market which was served by the Black Sea ports; grain was also shipped up the River Oka to Moscow. During the late 1830's, goods worth more than 7.7 million assignats were exported annually from the province by water; imports were only valued at one tenth of this amount.⁷¹

4. 'Rural-industry' - sugar-beet refining and distilling in particular - were common in both provinces. The distilling industry made use of the local grain surplus; both Tula and Riazan produced around 1.5 million *chetvertsy* of grain more than they consumed. In 1846, the Tula distilling industry had a turnover of 577,750 silver rubles, much of which was exported beyond the boundaries of the province.⁷² The sugar-beet factories sold products worth more than 312,000 silver rubles.⁷³ Textile factories were also comparatively common in both provinces. By the late 1850's, more than 60 landlords in Riazan alone had developed some form of significant industrial activity on their estates.⁷⁴ The existence of these industries indicates that the infrastructure existed to transport their products to market. It also shows that a considerable number of local landowners were involved in some form of commercial activity, exploiting every opportunity of increasing their income.

The farming operations of A. S. Khomiakov and A. I. Koshelev

Neither Ivan Kireevsky or Sergei Aksakov were particularly interested in the problems of estate-management (though some letters of the former showed an interest in the potential benefits of agricultural improvement). By contrast, Alexander Koshelev had the best claim to be the Slavophiles' leading agricultural specialist; his speeches and articles on the subject gained him a reputation extending far beyond his immediate circle. Iury Samarin noted that his friend's dearest wishes was to "become the best agronomist in Russia".⁷⁵

Koshelev shared the interest in stock-breeding displayed by many of Russia's agronomists and 'improving landlords'. He built up a thousand strong herd of cattle which was renowned for its quality, and incurred considerable expense by importing stud-animals from abroad in order to improve it still further. He also invested considerable sums in the provision of the most modern and hygienic forms of animal-shelter. He was one of the earliest landlords in Riazan to purchase new agricultural machinery and one of the first to introduce new systems of crop-rotation on his estate.⁷⁶ During his trips abroad, Koshelev made detailed studies of the latest agricultural methods employed by the local farmers. In 1849, for example, he made a trip to Holland and Belgium, visiting numerous farms in order to observe their operations at first hand. His diary of the trip reflected the enthusiasm with which he reacted to everything he saw. On one visit to a farm near Ghent, he recorded the system of animal husbandry employed, the modern design of the cow-sheds, etc. Visiting another farm, he praised the extensive use of modern agricultural machinery and noted the contribution it could make to increasing productivity.⁷⁷ It was not only

the technical aspects of agriculture in Holland and Belgium which impressed him. He also admired the high standard of living of the rural population, as well as the general level of cleanliness and order found on all the farms he visited.⁷⁸

In the course of his trips abroad, Koshelev increased his specialist knowledge through meetings with leading European agronomists. In 1849, for example, he became acquainted with the Belgian expert De Knut, who later became a corresponding member of the Lebedian Society. However, whilst he praised almost everything he saw, Koshelev argued in his articles and speeches that Russian agriculture could not advance simply by adopting techniques and innovations devised in the West. It was necessary to adapt western agronomy to Russian conditions.⁷⁹ Effective supervision and appropriate technical improvements held the key to increasing the profitability of an individual estate.

It has unfortunately proved impossible to examine the records of Koshelev's large estate in Riazan. However, the careful use of evidence allows us to reconstruct the broad outline of farming operations. Koshelev was well-aware of the close connection between agricultural development and changes in market conditions; his travel diary was full of observations about the prices obtained by farmers for their output, along with details of the costs of production they incurred.⁸⁰ The problem faced by Koshelev, and indeed by any Russian landlord interested in the commercial possibilities of farming, was devising a strategy to maximise the financial return from his property. There were, of course, numerous alternative courses of action open to the individual landowner. He had to decide, for example, whether it was most profitable to place his serfs on *obrok* or *barshchina*, which in turn meant deciding whether to hand over most of his

land to his peasants or farm it directly himself. The agricultural journals of the period carried on a lively debate about the relative profitability of *obrok* and *barshchina*. E. Protasev, a neighbour of Koshelev's, contributed an article to *Zhurnal Zemlevladel'tsev* in which he gave details of an estate where the return increased by 19% when the serfs were transferred from *barshchina* to *obrok*.⁶¹ On the other hand, a Penza landlord, writing in 1845, noted that he had improved the return on his investment by switching his peasants to *barshchina*.⁶²

In spite of a prolonged debate amongst historians about changes in the structure of 19th-century Russian agriculture, there has been little agreement. The pre-revolutionary specialist I. I. Ignatovich argued that *obrok* gained in popularity in Tula and Riazan in the seventy-five years before emancipation, particularly on the larger estates where absentee landlords could not provide the detailed supervision necessary if *barshchina* was to be profitably employed.⁶³ However, Ignatovich also pointed out that on estates where *barshchina* predominated, there was a marked tendency for the amount of land allocated to the peasants to be reduced in the decades before 1860, whilst the size of the landlord's demesne increased. There was often a sizable demesne agriculture even on *obrok* estates, presumably farmed by the use of hired peasant labour.⁶⁴ The Soviet historian B. G. Litvik has produced a different analysis of Black Earth agriculture during the period, pointing out that the division between *obrok* and *barshchina* was not nearly so rigid as has sometimes been supposed. Many peasants met their obligations by a mixture of cash-payments and labour services (this was certainly the case on Prince Cherkassky's Tula estate).⁶⁵ During the busy summer and autumn seasons, when the harvest was due, a landlord was likely to impose *barshchina* on his

serfs, in order to ensure that there was a labour-supply to carry out the work on his own land. In the winter, when there was little to be done, the landlord might well choose to put his peasants on *obrok*, so that he could receive a cash income from them.⁶⁶ By making use of a flexible system of obligations, the landlord was able to maximise his income.

The vast majority of the 2,500 serfs on Koshelev's Sapozhkovskii estate were on *barschina*; their master was a diligent enough landlord to ensure that his workforce received the supervision necessary on estates where direct labour obligations were imposed. Koshelev's biographer claims that he was a comparatively benign landlord, and that the 120 days labour-service demanded from each male peasant on the estate was considerably less than was usual in the district.⁶⁷ In fact, more modern figures indicate that whilst this figure was less than the average for *barschina* peasants, it was not outstandingly generous.⁶⁸ A brief look at other evidence weakens still further the idea that Koshelev was particularly benevolent towards his serfs. According to the 19th century agrarian expert, V. I. Semevsky, the average land allocation of 2 *dessiatiny* received by each of the *barschina* peasants at Sapozhkovskii was below the average for the district; an examination of the data compiled by the Editing Commission confirms his assessment.⁶⁹ Ten percent of the households on the estate met their obligations in the form of *obrok*; once again Semevsky argued that whilst the land allocation made to these peasants was no higher than the local average, the *obrok*-rate of 25 rubles per *tiaglo* was considerably above the norm.⁷⁰ The lack of reliable data on the question of obligations means that it would be unwise to place too much trust on Semevsky's figures. If Litvik's data about average local obligation figures is used as the basis for comparison, then Semevsky's allegations that Koshelev was

a harsh landlord tend to be borne out. However, if Kovalchenko's evidence is taken as the benchmark, then Koshelev's exactions appear more modest.

The figures compiled by the Editing Commission show that there was a very considerable demesne agriculture on Koshelev's estate - which was of course worked by the *barshchina* peasants. More land was kept in the hands of the estate than was allocated to the peasants; around 60% of this land was agricultural, whilst the rest was comprised of forest, etc.

Comparative figures for other estates in Black Earth provinces show a similar trend throughout the early years of the 19th century - demesne farming was increasing in scale as landlords began to orient their production towards the market. It seems that Koshelev decided that it was most profitable to produce grain directly for the market, rather than allocating more land to the peasants and extracting a surplus in the form of *obrok*.

In the absence of the relevant estate records it is, of course, impossible to know the precise details of agricultural operations at Sapozhkovskii. However, good records are available for the nearby estate of the Gagarin family, Pokrovskoe, which along with Koshelev's estate was one of the two or three biggest in the district. The male serf population of Pokrovskoe was around a thousand, the vast majority of whom were on *barshchina*. During the first half of the century, the percentage of the ploughed land on the estate allocated to the peasantry fell dramatically, whilst the share of the demesne rose from 11% to 47%.⁹¹ Three major crops were grown on the estate; rye, oats and buckwheat - although other crops such as peas and flax were also grown. The records indicate that a large proportion of these products were sent to market, although the precise figures fluctuated quite sharply from year to year.⁹² Even though the

organisation of Pokrovskoe was similar to Koshelev's estate in terms of the emphasis given to demesne agriculture and the orientation towards the market, its owners did not share the interest in improved agriculture; it continued to be farmed on very traditional lines. Even so, between 1856 and 1860, Pokrovskoe yielded an average income of 70,000 assignats. Since Koshelev's estate was two-and-a-half times bigger and better supervised, it seems likely that its returns were proportionally higher.

The most detailed records which have been assembled relate to the Khomiakov family estates. However, the surviving documentation is still extremely limited, and can only provide a general impression of the manner in which the various properties were organised. The lack of records partly reflects Khomiakov's personal supervision of his estates, which eliminated the need for detailed reports from stewards and elders. The family usually spent the summer and autumn of every year on their Tula estate; during this time, Alexei would undertake lengthy visits to his other properties, in order to make sure they were being properly run. V. I. Khitrov, who frequently stayed with the family during their sojourn in the country, recalled that Khomiakov devoted many hours of each day to agricultural affairs; the topic also recurred endlessly in the letters Alexei sent to his family whilst travelling on agricultural business.³³ The few records which survive suggest that the family estates were well-organised. Lengthy inventories of household purchases and contents were kept, as were detailed records about *obrok* payments and grain yields.³⁴ As was noted earlier, efficient book-keeping was vital if an estate was to be efficiently managed; one landlord from central Russia, writing about his own agricultural operations, noted that the first task facing any landowner who

wished to increase his income was to overhaul the administration of his property.⁵⁵

Khomiyakov's wish to increase his agricultural income encouraged him to invest considerable sums developing the infrastructure of his property; in an 1848 letter to A. N. Popov he spoke of his attempts to improve internal communications on one of his estates by building all-weather roads.⁵⁶ Rundev's description of one of Khomiyakov's estates in Riazan gives the impression that it was a well-maintained property, which did not exhibit the dilapidated air only too common in the 19th-century Russian village.⁵⁷ Khomiyakov was actively involved in the buying and selling of land, and was not content simply to improve the organisation and productivity of the estates which he inherited from his parents. In the middle 1830's, soon after the death of his father, he owned a number of different properties spread around European Russia; however, in the course of the following twenty years he seems to have pursued an active policy of consolidating these into a smaller number of large estates, selling off some of the old ones in order to buy new. In 1854, for example, Khomiyakov spent the very large sum of 292,000 rubles acquiring a large property of some 450 souls.⁵⁸ Only the Tula and Smolensk estates, which had been in the family for many decades, and were the favourite locations for summer residence, were immune from the trade in land.

As well as investing in new land and infrastructure, Khomiyakov pursued a number of different strategies to maximise the income from each of his properties, taking into account the prevailing local conditions and circumstances. For example, the peasants on the Smolensk estate all paid their obligations in the form of *obrok*, although only about a third of the land was allocated to them; it therefore seems likely that some of them

earned a living from handicrafts or similar occupations, whilst others worked as hired labour in the demesne fields.⁹⁹ In Tula, by contrast, Khomiakov pursued a completely different course of action. By virtue of an 1852 agreement, which will be examined below, he transferred almost all of the estate land to the peasants; consequently, the average size of each peasant allotment was one of the highest in the district, whilst there was no demesne agriculture of any note.¹⁰⁰ There is no direct evidence to suggest why Khomiakov pursued different policies on each of the two properties; the course of action he pursued on his Tula estate, in particular, was very unusual for the locality. However, given Khomiakov's 'hands-on' style of agricultural management, it seems certain that the different strategies pursued on each estate were the result of a deliberate policy rather than a random reflection of local history and traditions.

Although almost all members of the Slavophile circle were implacably opposed to serfdom, they showed few inhibitions about exploiting serf-labour on their estates. Indeed, both Samarin and Koshelev made great use of *barshchina*, even though it was usually recognised by contemporaries as the most humiliating and burdensome form of servitude. By contrast, most of Khomiakov's serfs were on *obrok* by the time of his death in 1860. However, it is by no means obvious that this should be interpreted as evidence of any particular moral scruple. For example, of Khomiakov's two estates in Dankovskii *uezd* (Riazan), one was on *obrok* and the other on *barshchina*; the reasons for the difference are unclear, but there is no evidence that their owner ever attempted to transfer the second estate to *obrok* as he surely would have done if he had allowed his moral principles to determine his agricultural strategy.

In 1852, Khomiakov made a decision not simply to switch the peasants

on his Tula estate onto *obrok*, but to carry out a private emancipation under the terms of an 1842 statute. A lengthy legal document was drawn up setting down the conditions under which the peasants were to receive land and gain exemption from their obligation to perform labour services.¹⁰¹ Each peasant obtained an allotment of around four *desiatiny* of land, which was about twice the average holding of an *obrok* peasant in the area. In return for this, the peasant had to pay a rent of 11 rubles, a figure somewhat higher than the average level of *obrok* charged on similarly sized estates in Efremovskii *uezd*. Each peasant also had to hand over 20% of his total harvest to the landlord, along with 20% of the hay crop. The agreement, anticipating the later Emancipation Edict of 1861, made the village *mir* collectively responsible for ensuring that all payments were made on schedule, a feature which protected Khomiakov against the danger of individuals defaulting on their debts. It is difficult to assess the significance of this agreement in the absence of detailed figures about the average level of obligations in Efremovskii *uezd*; it would seem to have been neither particularly harsh nor generous to the peasants.¹⁰² The obvious cost to Khomiakov consisted of the loss of any significant demesne agriculture on the estate, whilst at the same time he secured a cash income and goods in kind. The most difficult question to decide is whether Khomiakov instituted the change as a result of his dislike of serfdom, or whether he made the decision on commercial grounds; if the former had been the overriding consideration, it is unclear why he failed to carry out the same policy on his other estates. Since the 1852 agreement still provided him with a comparatively high return from his property, it seems most likely that he viewed it as a measure which could be beneficial both to himself and his peasants.

The principal objective of an improving landlord was to increase the revenue he derived from his estates; in essence, this could be achieved either by increasing the scope and profitability of demesne farming, or by raising the level of the surplus directly extracted from the peasantry. The figures published by the Editing Commission in 1860 indicate that Khomiakov charged *obrok* rates which were higher than the average for the areas in which his estates were located. The family archive contains some information which allows us to examine this question in a little more detail. The material appears in documents relating to the two villages of *Karchashina* and *Zaborova*, apparently located on one of Khomiakov's Black Earth estates. The records list 22 individuals who were responsible for making *obrok* payments (each being responsible for several *tiaglos*). The payments were made two or three times each year:

Year	Total receipts	% increase over previous year
1842	1153	-
1843	1314	13. 96
1844	1798	36. 83
1845	1843	2. 50
1846	1806	-2. 04 ¹⁰³

Between 1842 and 1846, there was an increase of around 57% in the total level of *obrok* collected in the two villages. Two individual cases illustrate the trend more exactly. V. Nikolaev, who was responsible for five *tiaglos* (households), paid a total of 70 rubles in 1842, 200 rubles in 1844 and 165 rubles in 1845.¹⁰⁴ V. Semenov, who was responsible for three

tiaglos, paid 70 rubles in 1842, 110 rubles in 1845 and 80 rubles in 1846.¹⁰⁵ The fluctuations, when combined with the differences in the level of obligations demanded from each *tiaglo*, indicate that the estate went to considerable trouble to review the rates charged every year. The average level of obligations paid by each *tiaglo* was apparently much higher than the average for Russia, and well above the normal level in the Black Earth region.¹⁰⁶ It is interesting to see that Khomiakov was able to increase the *obrok* rates so rapidly. This would tend to confirm the observations made by a Penza landlord in 1845 that the level of *obrok* charged on many estates was well below that which could be supported by the peasantry.¹⁰⁷ If Khomiakov's peasants had been living at a subsistence level in the early 1840's, they would simply have been unable to pay the higher charges. The modest rise in 1845, and the slight drop in 1846, suggests that by this time the maximum possible surplus was already being extracted.

The records for another village, Dvorianovo, provide us with details about the general level of arrears in *obrok* payments. There was, of course, no point in raising the level of obligations unless they could actually be collected. The success with which this function was performed reflected the overall efficiency with which the estate was managed. The level of arrears on noble estates was often enormous. One landlord in Riazan noted that when he took over a new estate it was intended to yield 16,000 rubles per annum; in actual fact, the figure collected never rose above 14,000, and often dropped as low as 9,000.¹⁰⁸ In Dvorianovo, where the *obrok* rate was set at a high level by the early 1850's, there were a total of 29 listed payers. The first installment of the *obrok* levy was due in January; by the 8th of the following month only two out of the 29 had not paid in full. The total of arrears were equivalent to just 5.5% of the

total obligations of the village. The number of defaulters was somewhat higher in a neighbouring village, but even here the arrears were only equivalent to 11.5% of total obligations due.¹⁰⁹ The figures reflect the general efficiency with which the Khomiakov estates were run, and indicate once again that the peasantry were able to meet the high level of *obrok* demanded from them.

The landlord who sought to maximise his income could also exploit the non-agricultural resources on his estate. The commercial harvesting of timber was a very important source of money for many landlords of the Steppe, which explains why the division of forest land became such an important issue during the debates over emancipation in the late 1850's.¹¹⁰ There are no records to indicate that Khomiakov was involved in forestry, though some of his estates were certainly located in areas where it was an important local occupation. He was, however, involved with other branches of rural industry. For example, after the death of his father, he inherited two distilleries located on the Smolensk estate. Although they were in a poor condition, Khomiakov invested considerable sums of money in them and made great efforts to ensure that they were run efficiently.¹¹¹ Of greater significance than the distilleries was the sugar-beet factory established on the Riazan estate of Lipits in which only free-labour was employed.¹¹² Sugar-refining was one of the most important industries in the area, and Khomiakov was following a well-trodden path in setting up a factory of this type. He was not alone amongst the Slavophiles in attempting to develop non-agricultural sources of income. Koshelev was at one stage of his life considerably involved in commercial milling operations, although he later abandoned them when the price of flour

fell.¹¹³ Samarin was also engaged in various forms of industrial and commercial activities; more than 400 of the serfs on his Samara estate were involved in these operations.¹¹⁴ There is, unfortunately, no way of knowing how significant a contribution was made by these non-agricultural operations to the income of the various Slavophiles. However, the fact that their estate-management policies were open and flexible enough to exploit these commercial possibilities says a great deal about their general attitudes towards their property.

This section has provided an insight into the different strategies which the Slavophiles used to maximise the returns from their estates. Market conditions in the Black Earth provinces allowed the moderate development of commercial farming. The Slavophiles took advantage of these opportunities; a considerable demesne agriculture was found on most of their estates, enabling production to be oriented towards the market as well as towards local consumption. Effective exploitation of the estate demanded the adoption of a 'hands-on' style of farming management, including the use of more sophisticated agricultural methods. By focussing on the idea of agricultural improvement, this section has also tried to emphasise certain salient features in the psychology of the Slavophiles, suggesting that they viewed their estates at least partly as economic capital - the main purpose of which was to yield the greatest possible income. Far from being the traditional *pomeshchiki* of hagiographic legend, interested only in a sentimental link with the Russian *pochva*, the Slavophiles viewed land ownership as a distinct profession. At a profounder level, of course, this analysis also challenges the idea that the Slavophiles were champions of antiquity, concerned with the defence of

a traditional life-style against the encroachments of modernity. In 19th-century Russia, the commercially and technically aware *pomeshchik* was a new social type, not a vanishing figure of the past.

The Slavophiles and Serfdom during the reign of Nicholas I

The serf order was an integral part of Russian life in the years before 1861, determining the nature of all social and political relationships. Although drawing historical parallels can be dangerous, there were clear similarities with the *ante-bellum* South. In the words of one of the most distinguished students of American history

slavery gave the South a social system and a civilisation with a distinct class structure, political community, economy, ideology, and set of psychological patterns and, as a result, the South increasingly grew away from the rest of the nation and from the rapidly developing sections of the world.¹¹⁵

Serfdom in Russia was also something more than a simple economic relationship. Centuries of legislation and decrees created a complex set of social and political institutions which helped stabilise an economic relationship of the most directly exploitative form. Serfdom created two classes in the Russian countryside; master and serf; exploiter and exploited; noble and peasant. The relationship between the two sides was frequently tense, occasionally exploding in the apocalyptic violence of 1667-1671 or 1773 - rebellions which haunted the imagination of the 19th-century *dvorianstvo*. In more normal times, as Stephen Hoch has shown us, the stability of the serf economy was ensured by more subtle and non-

violent mechanisms of social control, punctuated by the use of force to defeat potential rebels.¹¹⁶ The peasant responded to these pressures with a complex mixture of defiance and acquiescence; during periods of crisis or upheaval he was inclined to reject the authority of his master, whilst the rest of the time he found consolation in folklore fantasies which posited a mythical world of egalitarianism and justice.¹¹⁷

The members of the Slavophile circle had first-hand knowledge of the workings of the serf economy; their income and lifestyle depended on its successful operation. Many writers on Slavophilism have placed particular emphasis on the patriarchal elements in the doctrine, often claiming that these were a reflection of the leading figures' close personal relations with their own serfs. Liasovsky, for example, made much of the fact that the Khomiakov family had been rooted in the Russian soil (*pochva*) for many generations; he related one anecdote according to which a childless ancestor of Alexei, Feodor Khomiakov, gave his peasants the right to choose their next master, with the single proviso that the new *barin* should be a member of the Khomiakov family.¹¹⁸

It is impossible to verify the accuracy of such accounts, but this widely held story has helped promote an idealised portrait of the relations between serf and master on the Khomiakov estates. A similar story was told about Vassily Kireevsky, father of Ivan and Peter, by I. Peterson, a distant relative of the family. According to this story, Vassily Kireevsky acquired such a high reputation as a kind *barin* that some peasants from a neighbouring village approached him with the request that he buy them; after demurring about the cost of the transaction he agreed to do so.¹¹⁹ The rest of Peterson's account about everyday life at Dolbino emphasised the paternalistic nature of the relationship between serf and master which

prevailed on the estate. Vassily refused to allow his peasants to drink vodka and made strenuous efforts to promote their moral welfare and religious devotion.¹²⁰

It is difficult to generalise about so complex a relationship as the one between master and serf, particularly since it varied so much from household to household. The memoir literature indicates that it was possible for close personal bonds to develop between the two. I. Raevsky, for example, recalled that as a child he frequently played with the serf children.¹²¹ Other writers chose to emphasise the affectionate relationship that often developed between an infant child and his peasant nurse (*niania*).¹²² V. Khitrov recalled in his memoirs that Khomiakov would sometimes play cards and drink tea with his house serfs.¹²³ However, a realistic appraisal of the structures of the serf economy suggests that the idealistic descriptions of life on the Slavophile estates given by writers like Peterson were distorted accounts of the truth.

Whilst noblemen such as Khomiakov may have been able to develop a close personal relationship with their house serfs who at least lived under the same roof, it was a great deal harder to create ties of affection between master and field-serf. The development of a close bond between a noble family and their peasants could only take place over many generations. The process involved certain time-worn rituals, such as the presentation of a new-born eldest male child in front of the peasants so that they could welcome the young *barin*. However, as we have seen, Khomiakov bought and sold property on several occasions whilst Koshelev did not buy his principal estate until 1847; even the Aksakov family sold one of their two main estates during the 1850's.¹²⁴ It seems certain that this trade in land would have eroded the bond between peasant and master, though

it is theoretically possible that the peasantry might simply have transferred their allegiance to the new owner.¹²⁵ The fact that several of the Slavophiles were practitioners of improved farming and 'hands on' agricultural management was also likely to damage the relationship with their peasants. Increased revenues could only come from more effective exploitation of serf labour. By following the advice of the Preobrazhenskys and treating land as 'capital', the Slavophiles introduced a new element into the economic relations of the countryside which was unlikely to be harmonious with the traditional pattern of serf relations.

In the years after 1855, the Slavophile's critique of serfdom was largely based on an analysis of its economic and social consequences. By contrast, during the reign of Nicholas I their rejection of serfdom was almost entirely predicated on the belief that it was immoral for any individual to have a legal title of ownership over his fellow countrymen. This belief was not particularly unusual at this time, especially amongst the more liberal elements of the Russian *dvorianstvo*; ever since the publication of Radischev's 'A Journey From Moscow to St. Petersburg', many critics had attacked the moral foundations of a social structure based upon serfdom.¹²⁶

It is impossible to know with precision at what date the Slavophiles began to discuss serfdom amongst themselves. Koshelev recalled that it had become a common topic of conversation with his friends by the early 1830's - at a stage when Slavophilism had still not coalesced into a coherent ideology.¹²⁷ Ironically, the Slavophiles did not seem aware of the contradiction between their condemnation of serfdom on the one hand, and their willingness to make use of serf-labour on the other. At first sight this appears puzzling, but it is possible that Iu. Lottmann has provided a

partial answer in his study of the cultural life of the Decembrists.¹²⁸

Lottmann noted that discussion about social affairs in many of the leading circles and soirées was greatly influenced by the liberal values absorbed from Western literature and from trips to Europe; at the purely intellectual level, Russian reality was evaluated with the conceptual apparatus of a foreigner. However, for the vast majority of salon participants, intellectual discussion in the metropolis represented only a comparatively small aspect of their lives. Once they left its immediate influence, the entire evaluative structure which they used when assessing social and political issues was transformed, and the more traditional attitudes of the *pomeshchik* and *barin* began to come to the fore.

Lottmann's argument provides us with a useful starting point when analysing the relationship between the daily lives of the Slavophiles and the formal ideas they articulated in print and discussion, and will be returned to later.

Although members of the Slavophile circle shared similar lifestyles and backgrounds, their attitude towards serfdom was far from monolithic during the years before 1855. The differences can best be illustrated by comparing the views of Cherkassky and Kireevsky, since they stood at opposite ends of the spectrum on the issue. Both men owned estates in Tula on which they used serf labour; however, whilst Cherkassky became one of the most important abolitionists in Russia, his friend remained ambivalent about the whole question of emancipation.

Discussions about serfdom had taken place amongst a number of Tula landowners since 1837-38; after the publication of the Imperial ukaz in 1842, which permitted private emancipations, the members of this discussion circle were encouraged to put their proposals in a more concrete form. In

1844, nine of the province's landowners, including P. Miasonov and I. Raevsky, submitted their ideas to the Governor of Tula. The document suggested terms on which the local peasantry should be able to obtain greater freedom; the signatories proposed that each male peasant should be provided with a total of one *desiatin* of land, for which he would be charged three silver rubles. In addition, a further eight silver rubles would be payable *per annum*, presumably as compensation for the labour services relinquished by the landlord. The peasants would then have the right to move anywhere they wished within Tula province, as long as permission was first granted by the landlord and the village *mir*.¹²⁹ The Government rejected the proposals, fearing that they would lead to a reduction in the amount of land held by the gentry. However, three years later several of the signatories, joined this time by Prince Cherkassky, put forward a new set of proposals. This second document modified several aspects of the earlier version; the transition period was to be stretched over a longer period of time, whilst peasants were only to be allowed to buy their land on an individual basis rather than through the *mir*.

Miasonov and Cherkassky went to Petersburg to promote their scheme, defending their proposals in front of several senior officials; however, official opposition, aggravated by disagreements within the Tula circle itself, meant that they were unable to win support for their ideas.¹³⁰

The Tula circle conducted its operations in great secrecy; even Khomiakov was unable to find out any details about its existence, although he knew at least two of its members.¹³¹ In the absence of detailed records, it is impossible to know whether the participants were inspired by their dislike of the morality of serfdom, or by the hope that the proposed changes would be of economic benefit to the landlords. The agrarian

historian V. I. Semevsky pointed out that one of the declared aims of the Tula circle was to reduce the high level of indebtedness amongst the local gentry.¹²³ He also noted that the allocation of land they proposed to give to the peasants was only around 40% of the existing (inadequate) level, which meant that the landlords were guaranteed a high rental income from prospective tenants forced to acquire more acres on which to support themselves.¹²⁴ However, Semevsky's negative comments probably owed as much to his deep-seated suspicion of the pre-reform nobility as they did to a detailed study of the relevant facts. The willingness of the members of the Tula circle to even consider reform, especially one providing the peasantry with land, set them apart from the vast majority of their fellows. It is likely that the circle's members were strongly influenced by a project written by Cherkassky the previous year, in which the Prince had spoken of the need to give the peasants full rights of citizenship and a sufficient land allotment to support themselves.¹²⁵ The final proposals were naturally designed in such a way as to minimise the damage to the landowners' interests but this does not mean, as Semevsky implies, that the members of the Tula circle were self-serving in their suggestions.

Some historians have equated the possession of education and intelligence on the part of a Russian *dvorianin* with a commitment to liberal social and political values. In fact, as even the briefest glance at the memoir literature reveals, this assumption is by no means universally valid. The Tula landlord Karpinsky, for example, was fluent in several languages, and had a good knowledge of German philosophy; however, as his daughter remarked, "in spite of his European education my father was by upbringing and temperament a rooted Russian landowner, and for him any form of cultivation except by serfdom was unthinkable".¹²⁶ A brief

examination of Ivan Kireevsky's attitude towards serfdom reveals a similar picture; the possession of a first-class education did not necessarily result in a liberal social and political outlook. Koshelev recalled that his friend had taken a cautious attitude towards serfdom even during the mid 1830's, a time when the other members of the future Slavophile circle had no qualms about condemning the institution out of hand.¹³⁶ Kireevsky's doubts about the wisdom of emancipation were most visible in a letter he sent to his sister Maria in 1847, in response to her announcement that she was planning to liberate her own serfs under the terms of the 1842 Statute. Employing an argument that was to be much used by the opponents of abolition in the 1850's, Kireevsky wrote to his sister that whilst the ideal of emancipation might be a good one, the present moment was inopportune. He noted that he did not believe that it was "right and proper for Russia to keep serfdom for ever", but argued that such a dramatic change should only take place after other important reforms had been instituted.¹³⁷ In particular, he expressed a fear that premature emancipation of the serfs might result in their subordination to the authority of the *chinovnik*, who would prove even less tender-minded than the *pomeshchik*. He went on, in a passage notable for its condescending tone, to suggest that his sister's wish to liberate her serfs was inspired by a desire for vainglory (*tshcheslavie*), an accusation which seems unjustified given our knowledge of Maria's character.¹³⁸

Maria's reply to this letter is not generally known to students but casts more light on Kireevsky's attitudes, suggesting that it might be unwise to label his views on the basis of this one letter alone. Even though Maria knew her brother was ambivalent on the question of emancipation, the vehemence of his views caught her unawares; "Your

friendly(?) letter surprised me. I had expected from you advice of quite a different cast".¹³⁹ Not surprisingly, Maria complained about the tone of her brother's letter and went to great lengths to defend her motives in wishing to liberate her 238 serfs. She also indignantly noted that the peasants themselves had welcomed news of her intentions.

Four years later, Kireevsky wrote another letter about emancipation, this time to his old friend, Koshelev, who had already been involved in measures to promote the abolition of serf-labour. Kireevsky's attitude towards emancipation was more positive on this particular occasion, although he criticised some of his friend's views about the best means of instituting reform.¹⁴⁰ It therefore seems that Kireevsky's views on the subject tended to fluctuate; it might cynically be noted that he was favourable to the ideal of emancipation as long as it did not impinge on the finances of his own family.

Court and Country; Dvorianin and Pomeshchik

The end of compulsory service obligations in the late 18th-century paved the way for considerable change in the lifestyle of the Russian *dvorianstvo*. The Acts of 1765 and 1782 freed the nobility from their obligation to serve in the bureaucracy and the military, allowing them greater scope to determine the pattern of their lives. The extent of the transformation should not be overestimated; the force of custom and habit still prevailed throughout the first half of the 19th-century, ensuring that most young noblemen continued to spend at least a few years of their lives in service. Nevertheless, the 'Return of the Gentlefolk' to their

country estates, chronicled with such care by Turgenev, was a marked social phenomenon, visible in countless memoirs of the period.

The Government expressed disquiet about these developments as early as the 1760's, since it was afraid there would not be enough recruits to staff the upper levels of the military and bureaucracy.¹⁴¹ However, the significance of this complex social change has been somewhat distorted by its literary presentation in the fiction of Turgenev, Leskov, Goncharov, et al. The novelists of the period paid great attention to the psychological effects of the 'Return of the Gentlefolk'; heroes such as *Levitsky* were portrayed as figures alienated from the values and institutions of the Regime, desperately seeking to create on their estates a new social microcosm where they would be able to find a personal salvation and harmony denied them in the outside world. The traditional historiography identifies this social alienation as the defining feature in the birth of the Russian intelligentsia; the sense of *anomie* was combined with an exposure to radical foreign ideas to produce a critical outlook and ideology, relentlessly exposing the values of the Regime.¹⁴² However, the amount of attention given to the 'Origins of the Russian Intelligentsia' has masked the wider social implications of the change in noble lifestyles. Most returning *dvorianiny* were not radicals, and few of them followed Rudin to the barricades of Frankfurt or Berlin.

The Russian *dvorianstvo* had no strong tradition as a landowning class, and its provincial links had never been particularly robust. Land had traditionally been granted by the Crown as a means of providing servitors at the Court with a means of support; there was no deep feudal tradition inculcating strong ties between a noble family and a particular region of the country. Nor did the nobility possess local corporate institutions of

any significance. The provincial noble institutions created by Catherine the Great failed to win general support and were unable to establish a well-defined role for themselves.¹⁴³ Nor did the possession of local office provide the holder with great social prestige; indeed, it was often difficult to find candidates for many posts.

A brief comparison with the Prussian nobility can increase our understanding of some of the changes undergone by the Russian *dvorianstvo* during the first part of the 19th-century. Both nobilities possessed a strong service ethos; as Hans Rosenberg has shown, the power of the Prussian nobility ultimately rested on its domination of the local bureaucracy and the military, which it had built up over the course of several centuries.¹⁴⁴ Nevertheless, as Berdahl has convincingly argued, the ownership of land also played a crucial role in the history of the Junkers, forming "the core of its ethos".¹⁴⁵ The psychology of the Junker class, and their attitudes to such questions as authority and social status, were largely determined by the experiences they derived in managing their estates; a complex ideology was developed to explain and justify the patrimonial relationship between landowner and peasant which, in turn, had great ramifications for the way in which other relationships within society were conceptualised. As in Russia, state-service remained the norm for noblemen. In 1800, for example, some 68% of the Brandenburg nobility served as officers in the Prussian army whilst the senior positions in the bureaucracy were dominated by men of noble birth.¹⁴⁶ However, the status of the individual Junker continued to owe as much to his ownership of land and his ancestry as it did to his rank in the military or bureaucracy. Whereas in Russia a large section of the nobility owed its existence to the state, the Prussian nobility was conscious of its status as an independent

Stand, and possessed a sense of corporate identity which their Russian counterparts lacked. The Provincial Assemblies provided the Junkers with a local forum to establish a collective perspective on the social and political problems of the day, enabling them to oppose their will and ideas to those of the monarch.

During the 19th-century, there was a marked change in the lifestyle of a certain section of the Russian nobility which can perhaps be conceptualised in terms of a semantic contrast between the words *dvorianin* and *pomeshchik*. The *dvorianin* was defined by his membership of a distinctive *soslovie*, that is an Estate possessing certain specific juridical privileges – most notably the right to own serfs. By contrast, the *pomeshchik* was defined above all by his ownership of land; it was, in essence, a social and economic rather than a legal category. Pre-revolutionary historians, including Korf and Romanovich-Slovatinsky, failed to appreciate important changes in the social composition of the *dvorianstvo* during the 19th-century, treating its members as a single legal entity.¹⁴⁷ Gregory Freeze has recently provided a more sophisticated defence of this position, arguing that the *soslovie* system continue to be of importance in Russian society right down until 1917.¹⁴⁸ However, whilst his argument provides a useful corrective to some of the simplistic models of class stratification, which attempt to incorporate social change in Russia within a conceptual framework derived on the basis of western historical experience, Freeze ignores the many vital changes taking place within the noble *soslovie*.¹⁴⁹ In particular, he pays insufficient attention to the way in which the Russian *pomeshchiki* were acquiring a sense of their own distinctive role and status, based on the ownership of land and local prestige. By the middle of the 19th-century, there were a

significant number of wealthy noblemen in Russia who had stronger links with their estates than with the world of the Court and the bureaucracy.

The Slavophiles spent considerable lengths of time on their estates. Close supervision was necessary to ensure that farming operations were performed efficiently, especially in cases where *barshchina* was employed. Iury Samarin, for example, seldom visited his family's estates during the years he spent in the M.V.D., instead spending his time in the provincial towns to which he was posted. However, once he inherited his father's property in 1853, he returned immediately to Samara where he spent a large proportion of the next three years. Similarly, Khomiakov and Kireevsky both spent most of their early years of adulthood in Petersburg and Moscow, where they were active in the various literary circles of the day. Once they inherited property and married, though, they lived in the countryside for more than half the year, only visiting Moscow during the depths of winter or at times when the cultural life of the city was particularly active. The Aksakov family also spent most of the year at their country home of Abramtsevo, only making limited use of their house in Moscow. In the pages that follow, an attempt will be made to see whether the Slavophiles' preference for rural life was simply a function of their interest in farming, or whether there were also deeper emotional ties linking them to the countryside.

The memoirs of many noble residents of central Russia show that their authors felt a strong attachment and sympathy for rural life, a trait which seems to be found amongst all social and economic levels of the *dvorianstvo*. Baroness Mengden, a noblewoman from Moscow province, devoted part of her reminiscences to an affectionate account of her childhood on the family's country estate, south of the old capital.¹⁵⁰ O.I. Kornilova,

who came from a moderately prosperous family in Tula province, also recalled her childhood years in the country with great fondness, noting that, "in childhood we felt that everything around us was good, peaceful, bright....".¹⁵¹ Another noble from an old Muscovite family, A. P. Obolensky, retired to his family estate as soon as he had come into his inheritance; according to his biographer P. A. Viazemsky, the country was his favourite place of residence: "there he lived, Moscow he visited".¹⁵² Some memoirists such as I. A. Raevsky and O. I. Kornilova recalled how they had joined in the games and pastimes of the local peasant children.¹⁵³ Others such as A. I. Lelong and E. A. Sabaneeva (from Riazan and Tula respectively), spoke of the enormous role which the Church and religious festivals played in the lives of their families when resident in the country.¹⁵⁴ (During the first half of the 19th-century, many Russian nobles devoted a great deal of energy to building and rebuilding the churches on their estates, suggesting that religious life still played a very important role in their emotional and spiritual lives).¹⁵⁵ These accounts were doubtless tinted by a certain degree of nostalgia; it was not only in Russia that "country life became a symbol of lost innocence, of spontaneous simplicity and naturalness".¹⁵⁶ However, they do show the strength of the pastoral idyll in the psychology of a section of the Russian nobility. In some cases a noble family's residence in the country may have represented little more than a descent into a comfortable Oblomovism, and a life which was "singularly regular and monotonous".¹⁵⁷ However, in many cases the memoirs indicate that there was a far more active defence of the values of rural life, and a strong sentimental attachment to the country estate.

Most members of the Slavophile group shared this affectionate attitude towards Russian rural life. Khomiakov, for example, spent about six months

of every year in the country, arriving in June and leaving in December. (His late departure for the city in winter can be explained by his wish to enjoy the hunting season to the full). The best-loved family estate was at Bogucharevo in Tula province, although considerable amounts of time were also spent at Lipits, in Smolensk. V. I. Khitrov, a close family friend who had known Khomiakov since he was sixteen, often visited the Tula estate, and provides us with an intimate portrait of the daily life there. During the day, Alexei devoted his time to managing the estate or to hunting. In the evening, if there were no guests in the house, he retired to his study in order to write (he maintained a considerable library in the country as well as in Moscow).¹⁵⁸ During the summer months, there were frequently many guests in the house; Samarin, for example, often visited the family when on leave from the M. V. D. Sometimes Bogucharevo served as a meeting-place for Slavophile sympathisers; on these occasions the talk naturally tended towards an intellectual and cerebral tone. However, many visitors to the house, such as Khitrov himself, had no interest in the historical and philosophical debates of the period; in these cases, Khomiakov was happy to talk generally with his guests, and join them at cards.¹⁵⁹ In a letter to A. N. Popov, written in 1848, Khomiakov described a typical day at Bogucharevo: "I live now in the country; I bathe, I go out with the dogs, I shoot, I play at billiards with V. A. Trubnikov, and I grow my beard...".¹⁶⁰

In spite of the fact that this lifestyle was typical of many members of the Tula nobility, Khomiakov does not appear to have had many links with local society; he never held any local office for example, although he did take a good deal of interest in Tula politics when the debates over emancipation were raging during the second half of the 1850's.¹⁶¹ However, he enjoyed a certain amount of social contact with his immediate

neighbours, and the family's children frequently played with those of neighbouring landlords; Khomiakov often referred to his children's love of the country in the letters he sent to his sister-in-law.¹⁶²

Although there are few detailed accounts describing the daily life of the other Slavophiles on their estates, it seems their lifestyles followed a similar pattern. The life of the Aksakov family at Abramtsevo has received most attention from historians, especially those concerned with Russian literature, since numerous writers ranging from Gogol' to Zagorskin were frequent visitors.¹⁶³ Cherkassky and Koshelev also followed the familiar pattern of spending summer in the countryside and winter in Moscow, as did Samarin after his retirement in 1853. Their residence in the countryside gave them a chance to enjoy the peace of country life whilst supervising the efficient running of their property.

The attitude of the Slavophile milieu to rural life was expressed most vividly in the literary work of Sergei Aksakov. Although Sergei did not subscribe to many of the esoteric elements in Slavophile ideology, he shared the values of the circle's members. His lyrical descriptions of the Orenburg countryside reflected a preference for pastoral simplicity over the complexities and conflicts of urban life. He gave his readers a glimpse of a world touched by almost Rousseauian innocence and purity. The true Russian *dvorianin*, implied Aksakov, preferred to spend his time hunting and fishing to living in the city and working in the bureaucracy.

Rural life gave the Slavophiles a chance to pursue their favourite hobby - hunting. The sport was, without doubt, the best-loved occupation of the Russian nobility when resident in the country, and it is significant that most members of the Slavophile circle shared the enthusiasm for this most traditional of noble pastimes. Some Russian noblemen devoted enormous

time and money to their sport; one Tula landlord, N. V. Kireevsky (no relation), paid 13,000 rubles for nine horses, and frequently paid several hundred rubles for a particularly good hound.¹⁶⁴ Love of hunting is a familiar motif in the memoirs of writers from the Central Russian provinces.¹⁶⁵ The hunting sketches of Sergei Aksakov symbolised the attitude of the Slavophiles towards the sport. His writings stressed the thrill of the chase and the excitement of the kill, as well as giving a lyrical description of the beauties of the Russian countryside. Aksakov portrayed hunting as part of the natural order of rural life, which did not simply provide the Russian noble with an enjoyable pastime but could forge the development of his entire character and outlook. During the 1850's, Sergei even tried to interest his friends in publishing a journal devoted to hunting, though the project never got off the ground.¹⁶⁶

Khomiakov was also a keen huntsman and excellent marksman, and his letters are full of discussions about the subject. He devoted considerable sums of money to his hobby, building up an excellent pack of hounds. Khomiakov, like Aksakov, attached an importance to hunting which transcended its immediate importance as a mere sport; in an article written in 1845 for the journal *Moskvitianin*, he praised its character-building qualities.¹⁶⁷ Unlike members of the Prussian nobility, Khomiakov did not believe that the main benefit of hunting rested on the opportunity it gave to display the martial qualities of horsemanship and shooting. Instead he argued, in a manner reminiscent of the attitude to sport in 19th-century England, that hunting developed both the athletic and moral character of its devotees, as well as providing an excellent means of relaxation and enjoyment. The hunt seems to have acquired a significance in the mind of the Slavophiles as a symbolic link between the individual and the natural

world of the Russian countryside.

The only member of the Slavophile circle who did not share this affectionate attitude towards the Russian countryside was Ivan Kireevsky. His mother commented in a letter to Elizavetta Sverbeeva that her son's temperament was not really suited to the rhythms and customs of rural life, and that he preferred the city.¹⁶⁸ Ivan did not particularly enjoy hunting, nor any of the other traditional pursuits of the rural nobility; nor was he particularly interested in supervising the agricultural operations on his estates, although he did take a sporadic interest in possible methods of improving their cultivation.¹⁶⁹ It is, therefore, ironic that he spent a greater proportion of the year on his country estate than any other member of the circle, especially as the family owned a fine house in Moscow where his mother and sister lived all year long.

There are a number of possible explanations for this apparently bizarre contradiction. During the 1830's, in particular, Kireevsky saw the country as a place of refuge where he could retire after his bitter conflict with the authorities over the closure of his journal 'The European'. It was not unusual for noblemen of liberal or dissident sympathies to retire to their estates in order to avoid the incessant supervision of the Third Section. Chicherin, for example, described the country home of one young Russian liberal, N.I. Kritsov, whose home in Tambov province became a meeting-place for all the intellectual and liberally minded noblemen of the region.¹⁷⁰ However, Kireevsky's withdrawal from Moscow life in the 1830's was above all a psychological reaction, a wish to live quietly away from the tensions and upheavals of the old capital. A second attraction of life in the country at Dolbino, especially in the 1840's and 1850's, was the proximity of the Optina Putsyn

monastery. As is well-known, Kireevsky cooperated with the monks there in translating the works of the Greek Fathers into Russian; he also developed a close relationship with his Father-confessor Macarius, who exercised an important influence over his intellectual development.¹⁷¹ The third factor encouraging Kireevsky to maintain close ties with his native province was his interest in the local educational system. The development of education received a great deal of attention from all the leading Slavophiles; several of them wrote articles and essays on the subject. Kireevsky himself composed several articles arguing that the provision of a system of popular education, if informed by the correct principles, could actively strengthen the *narodnost'* of the Russian people.¹⁷² As well as treating the subject from a theoretical perspective, Kireevsky also became actively involved in the administration of local schools; from 1839 he held the post of honorary Inspector of Belev schools. A series of letters contained in the family archive show that he devoted a great deal of time to his work; Elagina wrote to a friend that her son was inspired by the wish "to be of help to these poor children".¹⁷³ Ivan was especially critical of the poor funding of local schools, and attacked the inadequate number of teachers in relation to the size of the classes.¹⁷⁴ It is impossible to know which of these three factors was most important in encouraging Kireevsky to spend so much time at Dolbino; between them, however, they were important enough to encourage him to overcome his dislike of the monotony of rural life and remain in the country.

The traditional image of the provincial *dvorianin*, promulgated in countless memoirs and travelogues, is one of an apathetic and ignorant individual, whose life consisted of a gentle slide into a moronic

Oblomovism. Perhaps the most negative portrait was given by the English traveller E.D. Clarke, writing in the early decades of the 19th century:

The picture of Russian manners varies little with reference to the Prince or the Peasant. The first nobleman in the empire, when dismissed by the sovereign from his person, or withdrawing to his Estate in consequence of dissipation and debt, betakes himself to a mode of life little superior to that of a brute.¹⁷⁵

The Russian priest I.S. Belliustin, who was close to several of the Slavophiles in the early 1860's, painted a picture of the provincial nobility that was equally stark:

In name they are "noble"; on that basis they regard themselves as a privileged class; given the right to live and act as they see fit, not inhibited by anyone or anything; every squire, even if he has just twenty or thirty male serfs, regards himself as an aristocrat, to whom all must subordinate themselves, and whom all must revere.¹⁷⁶

Ivan Aksakov, who spent many years in the provinces during his service in the M.V.D., vehemently criticised the tone of provincial society, attacking its small-minded parochialism and lack of interest in intellectual matters.¹⁷⁷ Other writers agreed with him. Vigel noted that whilst it was possible to find a comparatively exalted intellectual society in cities such as Kiev, the population of smaller towns like Penza was distinguished by its complete lack of interest in cultural affairs.¹⁷⁸

If this image of the provincial gentry was correct, then it would appear that educated and cultivated *pomeshchiki* such as the Slavophiles were exceptional figures. However, the conventional picture of a rural nobility sunk in a slough of Oblomovism may not be completely accurate. It is necessary to distinguish between the provincial *dvorianstvo* proper, whose entire lives were spent on their estates or in the district towns,

and the nobles who divided their time more equally between country estate and metropolis. Ivan Aksakov correctly noted that this latter group, to which the Slavophiles of course belonged, were generally far more interested in cultural affairs than the former.¹⁷⁹

We are fortunate in having available some information about the cultural level of the nobility in Tula province, where several of the Slavophiles owned land. In 1838 the geographer I.P. Sakharov drew up two lists of Tula inhabitants: the names on the first list belonged to writers and novelists who had extensive personal links with the province, whilst the names on the second list were those of 'lovers of enlightenment' (*liubiteli prosveshcheniya*), along with the owners of significant private libraries. The two lists were updated by I. Afremov in 1850.¹⁸⁰ These revised lists included the names of Khomiakov, described as "a famous author, member of the Moscow Society of the Lovers of Russian Literature, and a *pomeshchik* of Tula *uezd*". Ivan and Peter Kireevsky were also listed, the former described as "an honorary inspector of Belev schools, an author, and native of Belev *uezd*". Also included were the names of other literary figures who had links with Tula, including Zhukovsky and Turgenev. However, the vast majority of the 360 names on the two lists belonged to men who played a far more modest role in Russian intellectual life and whose activities are unknown to modern historians.

Although the biographical information contained in the two lists is limited, it allows us to draw up a collective portrait of the subjects. Most of the men on the two lists had close links with Tula society, and were not simply absentee landlords who happened to own land in the province. A study of the second list reveals that of the 189 names mentioned, 103 (or 54%) had either held a post in the local bureaucracy, or

served as a Marshall of the Nobility at the *uezd* or *gubernia* level. The holders of this latter post were usually members of the middle gentry, owning between 100 and 500 serfs.¹⁸¹ The data in the lists also tells us a good deal about the life-history of these individuals; eighty-three of them (or 44%) had a military rank listed against their name, whilst the vast majority of the rest possessed a civil rank, such as Collegiate or Civil Councillor. Only thirteen of the individuals on the list had no military or civilian service recorded against their name.

This information allows us to develop a picture of a typical 'cultivated nobleman' of Tula province. After a number of years in civil or military service he retired to the country with the rank of Major or Civil Councillor. Once he had settled down in the area he was likely to serve as Marshall of the Local Nobility or, more occasionally, to take up a post in the local administration. During the rest of his time he took a lively interest in cultural matters; the most common description of the names mentioned on the second list was that they owned 'noteworthy libraries'. He might also join a Learned Society of some description, and perhaps even write a book or pamphlet of his own. Of course, as Sakharov himself admitted, the lists were largely drawn up on the basis of hearsay and personal acquaintance; he did not have a first-hand knowledge of the extent of the intellectual commitments of those he listed. However, it is significant that he was able to find 360 names of individuals interested in cultural affairs; this figure represented around 9% of the landowners in Tula province. The information shows that the traditional picture of the Tula gentry provided by many writers of memoirs – that is of a class dedicated simply to hunting and card-playing – does not convey an entirely accurate picture.¹⁸² In particular, as in the case of the Slavophiles, it

was possible to combine an interest in traditional gentry pursuits with a commitment to intellectual and cultural matters; there was no necessary conflict between the two.

The apparent contradiction between the image of the rural *dvorianstvo* provided by Clarke et al, and the picture given by Afremov and Sakharov, can perhaps be explained by reference to the lack of an organised cultural life in the Russian provinces. A few major cities were able to boast of a fine theatre or opera, and the presence of a university or *gymnasium* often encouraged the development of local cultural and artistic activity. Nevertheless, the provincial nobleman who was interested in intellectual affairs was almost always forced to pursue his activities within the confines of his own study or library. The members of the Slavophile circle were typical of many other prosperous and educated members of the *dvorianstvo* resident on their Black Earth estates. Their interest in literature, history and philosophy was pursued in a solitary fashion whilst in the country. There was little point in establishing provincial clubs and societies when a large proportion of their prospective membership moved to Moscow or Petersburg for the winter.

Slavophile Asceticism and the Critique of High Society

Many commentators have remarked on the anti-state tone of Slavophile ideology, which will be examined in the following chapter. Some Soviet historians, such as Rubinstein, have suggested that their dislike of the bureaucratic state can be explained by reference to class. According to this argument, Slavophilism reflected the standpoint of the provincial

gentry, excluded from the leading postions of power.¹⁰³ Such a crude Marxist approach cannot stand close examination, since it attempts to reduce complex patterns of social differentiation and hierarchy to a simple question of class. A more sophisticated analysis must also take into account nebulous questions of social aspirations, attitudes, etc.

Perhaps the most useful way of approaching the problem is to make a distinction between Court and Country, an analytical approach familiar to students of West European history. One of the most distinguished exponents of this approach, writing about 17th-century England, defined the Country as consisting of a more or less self-conscious set of individuals who believed that their lifestyles represented "a mode of existence favourably compared with that of the Court".¹⁰⁴ The sentiments of such a group can be seen clearly in the statements of figures like the Earl of Southampton, who wrote, "I have been wholly a Country man, and seldom seen either the Court or London....In this life I have found such quiet and content that I think I shall hardly brooke any other".¹⁰⁵ The members of the Country were not simply the disgruntled elements excluded from Office; nor were they necessarily envious of the economic and political resources controlled by the Court. Above all, the distinction was a psychological one, based on self-assessment, and reflecting a contrast between different attitudes and beliefs.

Of course, the distinction between Court and Country in Russia was not simply a geographical one; nor was it contiguous with a distinction between town and country. Since the Court was located in the new capital, St Petersburg, Moscow can for all practical purposes be treated as part of the Country, even though the lifestyle of its inhabitants was unlike that of provincial residents. A fierce allegiance to Moscow was already apparent

in the 18th-century amongst writers like Shcherbatov, who favourably contrasted the social *mores* of the old capital with those of the new.¹⁸⁶ The rapid changes taking place in the structure of the Russian *dvorianstvo* – most notably the establishment of an important 'provincial dimension' in the life of many of its members – meant that there existed the potential for a cleavage between the Court and the bureaucracy on the one side, and a significant section of the *dvorianstvo* on the other.

It is tempting to argue that a clear distinction had developed in Russia between the professional servitor and the landed gentleman by the middle of the 19th-century, helping to exacerbate the schism between Court and Country.¹⁸⁷ Unfortunately, the evidence is inconclusive, though it is worth noting that by the late 1850's less than half the members of the senior bureaucracy were serf-owners.¹⁸⁸ In the case of the Slavophiles, the suspicion of the bureaucracy was undoubtedly heightened by their membership of families who lacked a strong tradition of state-service – a factor which helped fuel the anti-state element in their later thought. However, their dislike of Petersburg was not simply based on a distaste for the values and procedures of the bureaucracy; they also had a strong moralistic dislike of the social life of the new capital, and indeed of most 'high society' in general. This was visible, as seen earlier, in their unwillingness to participate in the majority of social functions, and in such ostentatious gestures as Khomiakov's self-righteous refusal to join in the social festivities at the balls he attended as a young guardsman.

Russian Court society, like its European counterparts, operated according to its own distinctive protocols and rituals. Success at Court, as Norbert Elias has shown, depended on an ability to understand the subtle nuances of dress and behaviour. Extravagance was a feature of Court life

throughout Europe, including 19th-century Petersburg; conspicuous consumption was necessary to establish social status, at least in the eyes of fellow Court members, and helped breed a lax attitude towards money.¹⁸⁹ Even Russian noblemen who were not at Court were often tempted into spending beyond their means, in an attempt to pursue a lifestyle in keeping with their self-image as members of the social elite.¹⁹⁰

The moral criticism of 'high society', evident in the memoirs of writers close to the Slavophiles, reflected their dislike and resentment of the Court. In particular, there was a strong tendency to criticise the luxury (*roskosh'*) of the new capital, and of many members of the nobility in general. E. I. Raevskaia, who knew both Cherkassky and Khomiakov, recalled in her memoirs that the material circumstances of her own childhood had been comfortable (*dostatochno*), and that her parents' income was sufficient to "feed, clothe and warm" the family.¹⁹¹ She warmly praised her father's refusal to run up debts, in contrast to many other noblemen of the period. However, the impression Raevskaia gave to her readers was misleading; the family were comparatively wealthy, and able to invest large sums of money in their daughter's education. It seems that Raevskaia had an instinctive liking for a simple (*prostoi*) lifestyle, and wished to impress readers with an account of the frugality and tranquillity of her childhood days. The same suspicion of polite society and extravagance can be seen in the memoirs of N.P. Grot, whose husband occasionally contributed to Slavophile journals. She provided a particularly interesting account of her uncle, a landlord from Riazan province, whom she described as "a true landlord, an enemy of metropolitan dandyism and luxury, exhibiting rural patriarchalism, even in his dress". He viewed Petersburg, in particular, as "a whirlpool in which people

perished".¹⁹² Such sentiments can even be seen in the person of Dmitry Bludov, who had close links with the Slavophiles in spite of holding a number of senior posts in the bureaucracy. In the letters he sent his children, he praised the virtues of economy: "I think that frugality for people who are not well to do is an obligation and naturally is to be preferred to the pleasant things in life".¹⁹³ Unfortunately, Bludov was not always able to practice what he preached!

The dislike of *roskosh'* was reflected in the letters and articles of many of the Slavophiles themselves. For example, in the 'Letter to the Serbs', written by Khomiakov in 1860, and signed by Samarin and Konstantin Aksakov among others, the author warned the 'younger brothers' against allowing their society to become corrupted by the temptations of wealth:

Do not use your wealth for empty opulence, indulgence and splendour! Let the rich person use his surplus wealth to aid the poor (of course not for the encouragement of parasitism), or for the cause of the common welfare and common enlightenment. Let there be in the Serbian land that sacred luxury which will not permit an industrious man to know want and privation. After that let wealth and opulence adorn the temples of God. But in your private homes there should be simplicity, which should also be true of all your home life. The luxury of the private individual is always the threat and detriment of society.¹⁹⁴

The same distaste for material extravagance was evident in Ivan Kireevsky's 1852 article comparing Russian society with that of the West. Luxury was condemned as "the logical consequence of the fragmented aspirations of man and society", and its appearance in Russia seen as "a disease caught from the neighbours".¹⁹⁵ This attitude, which was a perfect reflection of the ascetic elements in Kireevsky's own character, was representative of a more widely-based social attitude which distrusted materialism as a sign of moral weakness and decadence.

The Slavophiles' asceticism reflected their general preference for simplicity over complexity, private life over public life, family over society. If Elias is right in arguing that the Court was a distinct social configuration, where the battle for status manifested itself in a desperate search for wealth and rank, then the Slavophiles' rejection of Court *mores* was clearly 'political' - at least in the sense that it asserted an alternative vision of how society should be constituted. In rejecting the trappings of official society, they were rejecting many of its fundamental structures. When combined with other tensions, such as resentment against the petty interference and tutelage practiced by the Tsarist bureaucracy, the conditions clearly existed for the characteristic split between Court and Country. The absence of an effective system of local self-government made it difficult for such tensions to acquire the institutional form which they exhibited in countries such as Prussia, but they were clearly evident in the attitudes of a significant number of Russian noblemen.

The contrast between the respective values of Court and Country is most dramatically illustrated in the diary of A.F. Tiutcheva, the daughter of the poet F.I. Tiutchev. The family had close personal ties with all the leading Slavophiles throughout the 1840's and 1850's; Tiutcheva knew most members of the circle very well and identified herself strongly with their ideas. In 1853 she moved to the Court at Petersburg where she became a lady-in-waiting; five years later she became Governess to Maria Alexandrovna, daughter of Tsar Alexander II. The most interesting feature of Tiutcheva's diary was her criticism of the moral tone of Court life. The suspicion of the *haute monde*, which was such a marked feature of Slavophilism, is found on almost every page. "I am hardly able to say to what extent Society, and in particular the Court, produce in me a feeling

of melancholy since that time when I realised that hidden behind these masks was so much petty ambition and empty vanity, and how little truth and genuine sense of direction...".¹⁹⁶ She believed that Court society was incapable of taking an interest in any of the serious problems affecting Russian life and thought that most members of the Court were only concerned with social trivia. After attending one ball, Tiutcheva recorded her impression that, "there is something melancholy, a feeling of emptiness and solitude amongst the glittering crowds, well-dressed and lively, amongst the smiles and banal conversation, amongst the lace and the flowers".¹⁹⁷ She believed that the lack of moral conviction on the part of Russia's rulers would eventually weaken Russia, asking anxiously "what future awaits a people in which the highest classes are affected by a deep gangrene"?¹⁹⁸

Conclusion

The previous two chapters have attempted to develop a social biography of the Slavophiles in the hope that it will illuminate the presentation of their social and political thought given in the following chapters. By juxtaposing the most salient aspects of their social backgrounds against the backdrop of wider changes in the social structure of the country, it becomes possible to acquire a sharper insight into the distinctive milieu which produced Slavophilism. In the first place, the Slavophiles were members of the educated public, avidly following the cultural and intellectual debates taking place in western Europe. Their interest in ideas caused friction with a Government suspicious of all independent intellectual activity, as well as providing them with the raw materials

they needed for producing a coherent ideology encompassing all aspects of society, politics and history. In the second place, the Slavophiles were members of the old Muscovite nobility, marked by its traditional suspicion and jealousy of the values and institutions of the new capital. Finally, members of the Slavophile circle also belonged to the burgeoning numbers of wealthy *pomeshchiki*, who eschewed life in the service for life on their estates. Economic and sentimental factors combined to produce a new and distinctive social type, increasingly differentiating itself from the broader *dvorianstvo*. It is perhaps possible to borrow the terminology of the *annalistes* historians and refer to Slavophilism as the product of this distinct social-psychological complex, expressing itself in the form of a distinctive *mentalité*.

1. G. Florovsky; *The Ways of Russian Theology*, p.41.
2. N. Berdiaev; *Alexei Stepanovich Khomiakov*, p.16.
3. A. von Haxthausen; *The Russian Empire - Its People, Resources and Institutions*, vol.2, p.209.
4. D.M. Wallace; *Russia on the Eve of War and Revolution*, p.124.
5. See, for example, the editorial in the first issue of *Zhurnal Zemlevladel'tsev* (2,2.), 1858, #1, pp.10-11.
6. For a brief discussion, see R. Christianson; *Romantic Affinities*, pp.144-154.
7. I.S. Turgenev; *Stepnoi Korol' Lir (Povesti i rasskazy)*, p.230.
8. K. Arsenev; *Statisticheskie ocherki Rossii*, pp.453-455.
9. *Zapiski Iebedianskogo obshchestva sel'skogo khoziaistvo za 1851 g* (afterwards referred to as *ZLOSK*) pp.146-154.
10. P. Christoff; 'Khomiakov on the Industrial and Agricultural Problem', in A. Ferguson and A. Levine (eds) *Essays in Russian History*, pp.129-159.
11. For a discussion of some of the shortcomings of the Soviet data, see the discussion in S. Hoch; *Serfdom and Social Control in Russia*, pp.3-5.
12. M. Confino; *Domaines et Seigneurs Russes*,
13. *ibid.*, p.223.
14. Haxthausen *op.cit.*, vol.1, p.99.
15. *Istoricheskii Vestnik* (afterwards referred to as *I.V.*) 1897, vol.70, #12, pp.856-857.
16. *I.V.* 1905, vol.101, p.393. See also the testimony of V.S. Nikolaeva, *Russkii Arkhiv*, (R.A.), 1893, bk.3, p.115.
17. M. Confino; *Systèmes Agraires*, pp.225-233.
18. *ZLOSK*, za 1847g. III.
19. *ibid.*, p.7.
20. *ibid.*, pp.105-136.
21. *ZLOSK za 1850g.*, pp.31-44.
22. *ZLOSK za 1851g.*, pp.84-91.
23. *ibid.*, pp.556-574.
24. *ibid.*, pp.146-154.

25. Samarin noted that the failure of the Agricultural Improvement Societies to become involved with the emancipation question robbed Russia of an important source of expertise. Iu, Samarin; *Soch.*, vol.2, pp.141-142.

26. See, for example, the comments by one Penza landlord in 1845, contained in *Z.Z.*, 1858, vol.1, bk.1, pp.1-30.

27. Owners of the largest estates often established an office in one of the capitals to ensure that their properties were supervised and run efficiently; this, of course, generated a good deal of paper work.

28. *ZLOSK za 1851*, p.507.

29. *Ibid.*, p.507.

30. A. Koshelev; *Zapiski*, pp.136-137.

31. Details of the School, along with accounts etc, were published in the Society's annual journal. See, for example, *Zhurnal sel'skogo khoziaistva i ovzvodstva*, (ZSKO) 1840, vol.1, pp.36 ff.

32. See, for example, the detailed article 'Nachala zemledel'cheskoi khimii, primenennya k praktike sel'skogo khoziaistva', in *ZSKO* 1848, nos.7-8.

33. A specimen of the Committee's Annual Report can be found in *ZSKO* 1840, vol.1, #2, pp.19-20.

34. Hoch *op.cit.*, p.14.

35. The family owned three Estates in Tambov and Riazan, besides the one studied by Hoch. Butskoe, in Tambov, yielded a profit, after expenses, of 45,000 assignats from a male population of around 2,080. Mishinskoe, in Riazan, yielded a profit of around 36,000 assignats from a male population of around 800. Pokrovskoe, also in Riazan, yielded a profit of around 70,000 assignats from a population of around 1,000. See I.O. Kovalchenko; *Krest'iane i krepostnoe khoziaistvo riazanskoi i tambovskoi gubernii v pervoi polovine XIX vek*, ps.128, 168.

36. Haxthausen *op.cit.*, vol.1, p.370.

37. Confino; *Systèmes Agraires*, p.316.

38. Wallace *op.cit.*, pp.146.

39. *Ibid.*, p.144.

40. It is not, of course, possible to completely divorce the two motives. Even the most hard-headed improver was usually also interested in technical advances in agriculture for their own sake, whilst even the greatest dilettante was not prepared to invest money for ever without achieving some return.

41. By 1860, more than 60% of all private serfs had been mortgaged to the state by their owners, in order to raise cash. T. Emmons; *The Russian Landed Gentry and the Emancipation of 1861*, p.26.

42. I. Ignatovich; *Pomeshchich's krest'iane*, p.64.

43. Confino; *Systèmes Agraires*, pp.225-233.

44. Wallace *op.cit.*, pp.142-143.

45. See, for example, the calculations by E. Protasev, purporting to prove the superiority of free labour, in *Z.Z* vol.1, bk.3, esp. p.56. For an opposing view, see the recollections of a Penza landlord, who made the decision to transfer his serfs to *barshchina*, *Z.Z* vol.1, bk.1, esp. p.6.

46. The landlord's fields were, like those of his peasants, subject to periodic partition - thus reducing the incentive to improve them. Confino: *Domaines et Seigneurs*, p.115.

47. See footnote 45, above.

48. P. Semenov-Tian-Shansky: *Epokha osvabozhdenia krest'jan v Rossii*, vol.1, pp.100-101.

49. For an interesting comparison with the American South, where there was also a linkage between improved farming and a liberal mentality, see, E. Genovese: *The Political Economy of Slavery*, p.125 ff.

50. Arsenev *op.cit.*, ps. 449, 451.

51. *ibid.*, p.459.

52. E.D. Clarke: *Travels in Various Countries of Europe, Asia and Africa*, part 1, p.180.

53. Kovalchenko *op.cit.*, p.54.

54. In 1847 the Society had 52 full members and 12 corresponding members; in 1850 the respective figures were 89 and 7.

55. Kovalchenko *op.cit.*, p.113.

56. *ibid.*, p.114.

57. Confino: *Systèmes Agraires*, p.212.

58. Under the traditional system of agricultural organisation - based on the three-field system - the landlord's allotments were not immune from periodic redistribution, making it difficult to implement any long term strategy of soil improvement etc. Confino: *Systèmes Agraires*, p.104.

59. See, for example, M.F. Turner: *Enclosure in Britain 1750-1830*.

60. Kovalchenko *op.cit.*, p.108.

61. The price data compiled by Soviet historians shows that there was a very considerable disparity in prices. For example, in the 1840's and 1850's, the price of rye was three times as high in Petersburg as in Orenburg. I.D. Kovalchenko (ed.); *Vserossiiskii agrarnyi rynok*, p.152.

62. *ibid.*, p.161.

63. For a discussion of some of the issues involved, see the chapter 'Regional Specialisation and Trade in Late 18th Century and Early 19th Century Russia', in J. Pallot and D. Shaw: *Landscape and Settlement in Romanov Russia, 1613-1917*, pp.192-215.

64. Arsenev *op.cit.*, p.401.

65. Ignatovich *op.cit.*, p.60.

66. J.N. Westwood; *Russian Railways*, pp.302-303.

67. R. Garstand; 'Trade in 19th Century Russia' in D. French and J. Bater (eds); *Studies in Russian Historical Geography*, vol.2, p.339.

68. Arsenev *op.cit.*, p.449.

69. Kovalchenko; *Krest'jane i krest'janskoe khoziaistvo*, p.56.

70. R.A. French; 'Canals in Pre-revolutionary Russia', in R.A. French and J. Bater, *op.cit.*, vol.2, p.476.

71. Kovalchenko; *Krest'jane i krest'janskoe khoziaistvo*, pp.55-56.

72. Arsenev *op.cit.*, pp.449.

73. *ibid.*, p.450.

74. Kovalchenko; *Krest'jane i krest'janskoe khoziaistvo*, p.123.

75. Iu. Samarin; *Soch.*, vol.12, p.432, 434.

76. N. Koliupanov; *Biografija A.I. Kosheleva*, vol.2, p.196. Kovalchenko; *Krest'jane i krest'janskoe khoziaistvo*, pp.109-110.

77. *ibid.*, p.117-120.

78. *ibid.*, p.117.

79. See, for example, his article in *Russkaja Beseda*, 1856, vol.2, (*kritika*), pp.142-163, in which Koshelev reviewed two works of agronomy by N. Abashev and S. Dmitriev.

80. Kovalchenko *op.cit.*, vol.2, pp.115-116.

81. The article is contained in *Z.Z.*, vol.1, bk.3.

82. *Z.Z.*, vol.1, bk.1, p.6.

83. Ignatovich *op.cit.*, p.46.

84. *ibid.*, pp.52-53.

85. *Predlozhenie k trudam redaktsionnykh komissij (P.T.R.K.)*, vol.4, pp.20-21.

86. Ignatovich *op.cit.*, p.64.

87. Koliupanov *op.cit.*, vol.2, p.198.

88. This figure was broadly in line with those found on other Estates in Sapozhkovskii *uezd* including the Pokrovskoe Estate of the Gagarins.

89. V.I. Semevsky: *Krestjanskii vopros v Rossii*, vol.2, p.411. Details for Sapozhkovskii *uezd* can be found in *P.T.R.K.*, vol.3, pp.54-59. The figures about average land allocation in Sapozhkovskii *uezd* compiled by B.G. Litvik tend to confirm Semevsky's assessment that Koshelev was a harsh landlord. See B.G. Litvik: *Russkaia derevnia v reforme 1861 g.*, pp.97-98. However, if the figures compiled by Kovalchenko for the Gagarin Estates are accurate, they tend to show Koshelev in a more generous light. I.O. Kovalchenko: *Krest'iane i krestostnoe khoziaistvo*, p.143.

90. Semevsky *op.cit.*, vol.2, p.411.

91. Kovalchenko: *Krest'iane i krestostnoe khoziaistvo*, p.71.

92. *ibid.*, p.103 ff.

93. G.I.M. fond 178, delo 2, 1.11; delo 27, 11.169-170.

94. G.I.M. fond 178, delo 89 contains the journal containing purchase orders, records of spending etc.

95. Z.Z., 1858, vol.1, bk.1, V, pp.1-30.

96. V. Zavitnevich: *Aleksei Stepanovich Khomiakov*, vol.1, p.338.

97. *ZLISK za 1851 g.* pp.146-154.

98. G.I.M. fond 1781, delo 2, 1.94.

99. Semevsky *op.cit.*, vol.2, p.399. *P.T.R.K.* vol.4, pp.108-109.

100. *P.T.R.K.* vol.4, pp.32-33. The average allocation of land was around 4.5 *desiatiny* per soul. According to Litvik, the average for Efremovskii *uezd* for *obrok* peasants was 2.62 *desiatiny* per soul. Litvik *op.cit.*, p.74.

101. G.I.M. fond 178, delo 90, 11.1-13.

102. The average rate of *obrok* in Efremovskii *uezd* was around 9 rubles, although Khomiakov's peasants received a larger than average land allocation. Details about *obrok* rates in Efremovskii are taken from Litvik.

103. G.I.M. fond 178, delo 90, 11.22-23.

104. *ibid.*, 11.22-23.

105. *ibid.*, 11.22-23.

106. The data about the average level of *obrok* is notoriously inaccurate, and should be treated with caution. Comparative figures can be found in Ignatovich *op.cit.*, p.66, Litvik *op.cit.*, p.121 ff; Kovalchenko: *Krest'iane i krestostnoe khoziaistvo*, p.176 ff. The figures compiled by Kovalchenko show much higher average levels of *obrok* than those of Semevsky or Litvik.

107. Z.Z., 1858, vol.1, bk.1, p.6.

108. Z.Z., 1858, vol.1, bk.2, V, pp.33-40

109. G.I.M. fond 178, delo 90, 11.25-26.

110. The records of the Editing Commission show that there were considerable reserves of timber on many of the Estates owned by the Slavophiles, but give no indication of whether or not they were exploited by their owners.

111. G.I.M. fond 178, delo 89, 1,4. Khomiakov made sure that he received regular reports about the state of the distilleries. Fond 178, delo 92, 11,41-42.

112. V. Zavitnevich: *op.cit.*, pp.240-241.

113. E. Dudzinskaia: *Slavianofili v obshchestvennoi bor'be*, p.71.

114. *P.T.R.K.*, vol.3, p.4.

115. Genovese *op.cit.*, p.3.

116. Hoch *op.cit.*, esp. pp.91-186.

117. For an interesting discussion on this theme, see M. Perrie: 'Folklore as Evidence of Peasant Mentality' in *Russian Review*, 1989, vol.48, #2, pp.119-143. The best account of the peasantry's general attitude towards authority is still Daniel Field's classic *Rebels in the Name of the Tsar*.

118. This account is reproduced in, amongst others, Liasovsky: *Alexei Stepanovich Khomiakov*, p.5.

119. *R.A.* 1877, pt.2, pp.480.

120. *Ibid.*, p.481.

121. *I.V.* 1905, vol.10, p.394.

122. Sergei Aksakov was very close to his *niania* as a child; according to his memoirs, she helped instill in him a life-long interest in Russian folk-lore.

123. G.I.M., fond 178, delo 2, 11,30-31.

124. At one stage, during the 1850's, the family owned an estate in Simbirsk, though no further details are available.

125. Family structures in 19th-century Russia, amongst both the nobility and the peasantry, were very fluid, perhaps making the practice of co-option more likely. See D. Ransell (ed): *The Family in Imperial Russia*.

126. For a useful summary of liberal attitudes during the first two decades of the 19th century see M. Raeff: 'Filling the Gap between Radishchev and the Decembrists', *Slavic Review*, 1967, vol. XXVI, #3, pp.395-413.

127. *R.A.* 1879 #3, p.267.

128. Iu. N. Lottmann: 'The Decembrists in Everyday Life: Everyday Behaviour as a Historical-Psychological Category', in Iu. Lottmann and B. Uspensky (eds): *The Semiotics of Russian Culture*, pp.71-123.

129. Details can be found in Semeovsky *op.cit.*, vol.2, pp.238-250; O. Trubetskaia: *Biografija kniaza Cherkasskogo*, vol.1, bk.1, pp.10-24.

130. Trubetskaia *op.cit.*, vol.1, bk.1, p.23.

131. Khomiakov: *Pol. Sобр. Soch.*, vol.8, p.189.

132. Semevsky *op.cit.*, vol.2, p.239.

133. *Ibid.*, p.240.

134. The Project is contained in Trubetskaia *op.cit.*, vol.1, bk.1, *priл.*, pp.1-6.

135. *J. V.* 1897, vol.70, #12, p.857.

136. *R. A.* 1879, #3, p.267.

137. I. Kireevsky: *Pol. Sобр. Soch.*, vol.2, p.242.

138. *Ibid.*, p.243.

139. ТбГАЛИ, фонд 236, оп.1, ед.хв.82, л.16.

140. I. Kireevsky: *Pol. Sобр. Soch.*, vol.2, p.255.

141. A. Romanovich-Slovatinsky: *Dvorianstvo v Rossii*, p.410.

142. The classic account of this type is, of course, M. Raeff: *The Origins of the Russian Intelligentsia*.

143. One leading 19th century commentator argued that the end of compulsory service paved the way for the establishment of a close link between the newly liberated *dvorianstvo* and the areas where they owned land. M. Korf: *Dvorianstvo i ego soslovnoe upravlenie*, p.13. The best account of the noble institutions is still to be found in Romanovich-Slovatinsky *op.cit.*, esp. pp.399-501.

144. H. Rosenberg: *Bureaucracy, Aristocracy, Autocracy: The Prussian Experience 1660-1815*.

145. R. Berdahl: *The Politics of the Prussian Nobility*, p.14.

146. F. Carsten: *A History of the Prussian Junkers*, p.37.

147. See footnotes 141 and 143 for details.

148. G. Freeze: 'The *Soslovie* (Estate) Paradigm and Russian Social History', *American Historical Review*, 1986, vol.91, #1, pp.25-26.

149. Some useful ideas on this subject can be found in T. Taranovsky: 'Nobility in the Russian Empire: Some Problems of Definition and Interpretation', *Slavic Review*, 1988, vol.47, #2, pp.314-318.

150. *Russkaia Starina (R. S.)*, 1913, #1, pp.103-131, esp. 106-107.

151. O. I. Kornilova: *Byl' iz vremen krestostnichestva*, p.8.

152. *R. A.* 1877, bk.1, #3, p.311.

153. *J. V.* 1905, vol.101, p.394 (Raevsky); Kornilova *op.cit.*, p.63.

154. *R. A.* 1913, bk.2, #6, pp.778-808 (Lelong); E. A. Sabaneeva: *Vospominaniia o bytom*, p.4.

155. The Church at the Khomiakov Estate of Bogoucharevo was completely rebuilt in the 1830's, apparently at considerable expense. For an eyewitness description of the Church, see A. Gratieux; *Le Mouvement Slavophile à la veille de la Révolution*, p.38. Details can be found in G.I.M. fond 178, delo 93, Khitrov recalled that the village Church played a very large role in the family's life when in the country. G.I.M. fond 178, delo 2, *passim*.

156. N. Elias; *The Court Society*, p.215.

157. Wallace *op.cit.*, p.121.

158. G.I.M., fond 178, delo 2, 1.11, 1.48.

159. *Ibid.*, 1.29.

160. Khomiakov; *Pol. Sобр. Soch.*, vol.8, p.169.

161. See chapter 5 below, p.284 ff.

162. G.I.M., fond 178, delo 27, 1.186.

163. A large amount of material is contained on this subject in *Literaturnoe Nasledstvo*, 1952, vol.58, 533-796. Also see the memoirs of Zagoskin in *I.V.*, 1900, vol.80, #4, p.59. Perhaps because of his Westerner sympathies, Zagoskin was made uncomfortable by the old-fashioned life-style of the household.

164. N. Kireevsky; *40 let postoiannoi okhoty*, p.9.

165. The references to hunting in the memoir literature of the period are too numerous to list in detail. Note, in particular, Turgenev's own celebrated *Sketches From a Hunter's Album*; *Vospominanija N.K. Arnol'da*, pp.196-197; *Semeinija zapiski T. Toljchovoi*, pp.5-6.

166. *Pis'ma S. T. K. S. and I. S. Aksakov k I. S. Turgenevu*, ps, 61, 75.

167. Khomiakov; *Pol. Sобр. Soch.*, vol.3, pp.119-129. The subject of hunting recurs frequently in Slavophile correspondence.

168. TsGALI, fond 472, op.1, ed.kh, 632-a, 1.2.

169. See, for example, his discussion about agricultural prices, the possibility of investing in new farm machinery, etc., in a letter to Alexander Koshelev of February, 1856. I. Kireevsky; *Pol. Sобр. Soch.*, vol.2, p.285.

170. *R.A.*, 1890, bk.1, 501-525.

171. Numerous references about his visits to Optina Pustyn can be found in his diary, which is contained in TsGALI, fond 236, op.1, ed.kh.10. For a very brief description of Macarius, see S. Bolshakoff; *Russian Mystics*, p.183.

172. See his article 'Ob uezdnykh uchilishchakh', in TsGALI, fond 236, op.1, ed.kh.26.

173. TsGALI, fond 472, op.1, ed.kh, 632, 1.6 (in French).

174. TsGALI, fond 236, op.1, ed.kh, 54, 11.28-31, 1.38.

175. Clarke *op.cit.*, pt.1, p.37.

176. I.S. Belliustin; *Description of the Clergy in Russia*, p.133.

177. I. Asakov *v ego pis'makh*, pt.1, vol.3, *prilozhenie* pp.1-14.

178. F. Vigel; *Vospominanija* pt.1, ps. 135, 143.

179. I. Aksakov *v ego pis'makh*, pt.1, vol.3, *pril.* p.6.

180. I. Afremov; *Istoricheskoe obozrenie tul'skoi gubernii, dopolnenie*, pp.40-54.

181. Under the legislation of 1832, only those owning more than 100 serfs were eligible to stand for local office. Romanovich-Slovatinsky *op.cit.*, pp.498-499.

182. See, for example, the remarks by Iu. Karpinskaia in *I.V.*, 1897, vol.70, p.853.

183. A. Rubinstein; 'Istoricheskaiia teoriia slavianofilov i ee klassovye korny', pp.97-98.

184. P. Zagorin; *Court and Country*, p.33.

185. *ibid.*, p.34.

186. Prince M.M. Shcherbatov; *On the Corruption of Morals in Russia* (ed/trans. A. Lentini), p.79.

187. For two contrasting accounts see A. Zaionchkovsky; *Pravitel'stvennyi apparat samодержavnoi Rossii v XIX v.*; W. Pintner; 'The Social Characteristics of the Early 19th Century Russian Bureaucracy', in *Slavic Review*, 1970, #3, pp.429-443.

188. Zaionchkovsky *op.cit.*, p.92.

189. Elias *op.cit.*, p.37 ff.

190. A. Kahan; 'The Costs of 'Westernisation' in Russia: The Gentry and the Economy in the 18th Century', in *Slavic Review*, 1966, vol.25, #1, pp.40-66.

191. R.A., 1883, bk.2, p.72.

192. R.A., 1902, bk.2, p.469.

193. R. Wortman; *The Development of a Russian Legal Consciousness*, p.152.

194. P. Christoff; *An Introduction to 19th Century Slavophilism*, vol.1, pp.263-264.

195. I. Kireevsky; 'European Culture: Its Relation to the Culture of Russia', in M. Raeff (ed); *Russian Intellectual History*, p.202.

196. A.F. Tiutcheva; *Pri dvore dvukh imperatorov*, p.41.

197. *ibid.*, p.111.

198. *ibid.*, p.128.

PART 2

The Development of Slavophile Political Thought (1840-1865)

The next three chapters trace the development of Slavophile political thought from its emergence in the salons of Moscow in the late 1830's through until 1865. For the sake of convenience, the examination is divided into three chronological periods: the reign of Nicholas I, the period 1855-1861, and the years following emancipation. In reality, of course, the development of the doctrine was more haphazard than is implied by such a schematic approach. Nevertheless, presenting the material in this way helps show how changes in Slavophile thought responded to changes in the wider social and political arena.

The evaluation of Slavophile political thought contained in the following pages builds on the material contained in Part 1. The bizarre ideas about Russian history and society advanced by the Slavophiles were not simply products of a fevered imagination overheated by exposure to the Romantic thought of Western writers and thinkers. Slavophile political thought, in each of its stages, attempted to respond to the social dilemmas faced by its authors. The utopian elements in early Slavophilism reflected a deep-seated dislike of the values of Nicolaevian society. Karl Mannheim has shown how utopian ideas often serve the purpose of challenging the definition of social and political reality established by the rulers in a particular society. In the case of the Slavophiles, their utopianism reflected the frustrations of the Russian 'Country', excluded from power and influence.

Once the new Government of Alexander II made it clear that it was prepared to consider social reform, the position of the Slavophiles changed radically. Effective reform held out the possibility of reconstructing Russian society in a way that would more closely reflect their own hopes and values. As a result, the anti-state bias in their thought faded

rapidly, and was replaced by a greater emphasis on the practical difficulties of promoting change. However, in the course of this process, tensions began to divide the members of the circle. By the early 1860's, it became difficult to define precisely the meaning of Slavophilism.

Slavophile Political Thought During the Reign of Nicholas I

This chapter will focus on the social and political ideas developed by the Slavophiles during the reign of Nicholas I. It is precisely this period in their intellectual development which has received most attention from historians, frequently at the cost of a serious study of their later writings. No sustained attempt will be made here to examine the intellectual origins of their ideas; as was pointed out in Chapter 1, a great deal of attention has already been devoted to this problem without resolving the fundamental difficulty of determining how ideas are transmitted from one generation to another.

Slavophile thought during the Nicolaevian era was, above all, a response to contemporary problems and dilemmas. Ideas were borrowed from numerous sources in an attempt to construct a coherent ideology, capable of meeting the needs of its originators. The 'Slavophile system', as it can be called, was a typical product of an era of social alienation in which the chasm between intellectuals and the authorities, as well as between the land-owning *dvorianstvo* and the state, became sharper than ever. In the years before 1855, Slavophilism was an essentially critical doctrine, animated by a desire to analyse and expose the values and *mores* of contemporary government and society.

The eccentric nature of Slavophilism before the death of Nicholas can perhaps be accounted for by the fact that its ideas were never tested against the demands of everyday life. The most important imperative imposed by the discussions and disputes in the Moscow salons was for intellectual coherence and polemical sharpness. Social life was viewed

through a complex conceptual prism derived from the philosophical ideas of German writers such as Schelling and Hegel, who ironically had little familiarity with the social and political problems of their own country, let alone those faced by Russia. Of course, the Slavophiles were not completely estranged from the realities of Russian life. The previous chapter showed they were able to find solace in a retreat to family life and country residence. However, whilst the 'Slavophile system' attempted to respond to the numerous tensions and disorders experienced in the everyday world, it sought above all to resolve them at the highest level of intellectual analysis. Difficulties and frustrations which stubbornly resisted solution in everyday life could be miraculously swept away in the realm of pure thought and metaphysical speculation.

The Construction of an Ideology

Walicki is correct in viewing early Slavophilism as a distinctive *Weltanschauung*, a seamless intellectual web in which no single element can be understood without examining all the others. However, in order to make sense of the doctrine it is necessary to analyse its component parts separately, whilst bearing in mind that this is only an artificial procedure used to achieve greater insight into the nature of the whole.

The Slavophiles' social and political views cannot be understood without first examining their epistemological ideas. There were, in fact, numerous minor disagreements on this subject between the members of the circle. This partly reflected a generational difference. Khomiakov and

Kireevsky came to intellectual maturity at a time when Hegel was still little known in Russia. Aksakov and Samarin, by contrast, attended Moscow University when the German philosopher's influence was at its height.¹ However, the two younger men soon abandoned their youthful infatuation with Hegel, largely due to Khomiakov's influence. As a result, there were sufficient common features in the four men's work to permit a general discussion.

Two specific features of Slavophile epistemology deserve mention:

- 1) There was a marked desire, common amongst many European thinkers of the period, to overcome the limitation of human knowledge implicit in Kant's assumption that the observer could never aspire to complete knowledge of the object he perceived (i.e. the *noumena*). The desire to overcome this limitation, which was also the starting point of the philosophical development of such luminaries as Hegel and Schelling, formed the basis of Slavophile epistemological doctrine.
- 2) The Slavophiles rejected the idea that reason could serve as the supreme instrument of cognition. This belief was, of course, typical of the Europe-wide reaction against the values and assumptions of the *Aufklarung*. The corollary of this distrust of reason was a belief in some form of higher intuition, or *glaube*. Such intuition could enhance the individual's power of understanding and give him more penetrating insights into the nature of reality than could be obtained by reason alone. In the German context, of course, there were numerous disagreements about the nature of *glaube*. Some writers, such as Baader, took a fundamentally mystical view of the process; others

believed that it could be developed by any individual willing to devote time and energy to its cultivation.² A few German thinkers, most notably Kant, treated the elevation of intuition to the status of a philosophical concept with scorn: "It is announced that those who follow this philosophy are able, by a single penetrating glance into their own souls, to accomplish all that others can only achieve by the utmost industry, and indeed more".³ Such scepticism was rarer, though not unheard of, in the Russian context.

A short examination of the philosophical views of Ivan Kireevsky and Khomiakov can illustrate these ideas with greater clarity. Neither man gave detailed consideration to philosophical problems until the 1850's, though a close examination of their work indicates that their basic ideas on the subject developed many years earlier.

Kireevsky's thought revolved around his desire to reconcile the demands of reason with those of faith - precisely the issue which had dominated European philosophy since the years when Hamann first challenged the doctrines of the Enlightenment philosophers.⁴ The starting point for Kireevsky's analysis lay in his conviction that "the higher truths, the living insights, lie outside the abstract of the mind's dialectics".⁵ In an essay published in 1852, Kireevsky made clear his belief that insight into these higher truths was only available to those "with the proper inner condition of the thinking spirit".⁶ In other words, the act of cognition was a fundamentally existential act which involved the orientation of the entire man towards truth, and did not depend simply on his intellectual faculties.⁷

Kireevsky worked extensively on these problems in the years before his

death. His private papers and diaries contain numerous attempts at defining the conditions necessary for the individual to obtain the most profound philosophical insights. During this period, the religious element in his philosophical thought became increasingly pronounced. Since 'right-thinking' depended on the correct orientation of the whole man, and since the whole man could only be guided towards truth by subscribing to Orthodoxy, the very act of cognition became a fundamentally religious act.

In the last months of 1852, Kireevsky sketched out privately his ideas about the nature of 'Believing Reason', the philosophical concept with which he is most closely associated. At the heart of this doctrine was the idea that "belief is not opposed to knowledge; on the contrary it is a higher form of it".⁹ Kireevsky argued that the apparent contradiction between these two elements was in fact illusory, existing only in their lower forms. When considering complex questions, such as the nature of God and his relationship to man, it was necessary to employ the whole range of intellectual, moral and aesthetic faculties, using them in a complementary rather than a contradictory manner. The doctrine received its clearest expression in a philosophical essay published posthumously in *Russkaia Beseda*:

The first condition for the elevation of reason is that man should strive to gather together into one indivisible whole all his separate forces, which in the ordinary condition of man are in a state of incompleteness and contradiction; that he should not consider his abstract logical capacity as the only organ for the comprehension of truth; that he should not consider the voice of enraptured feeling uncoordinated with the other forces of the spirit as a faultless guide to truth.....that he should constantly seek in the depth of his soul that inner root of understanding where all separate forces merge into one living and whole vision of mind".¹⁰

Kireevsky's epistemology consisted of a curious fusion of individual and social elements. On the one hand, his belief that an understanding of the highest truths depended on the orientation of the whole man towards God had similarities with the personalist ideas of some 19th-century Protestant theologians. He was, for example, familiar with the '*Reden*' of Schleiermacher, in which the author argued that the most distinctive feature of piety was feeling.¹⁰ It was this aspect of Kireevsky's ideas that most directly reflected the intensity of his own personal religiosity, apparent in the diary he kept during the period.¹¹ On the other hand, Kireevsky also appeared to believe that the individual could only achieve the right attitude towards truth if he was a member of the Orthodox Church, the only institution capable of inculcating a correct balance of feeling and intellect.

Khomakov's philosophical ideas have received less attention than Kireevsky's, though his personal papers show that he was well-versed in the subject. The most systematic exposition of his views can be found in a review of Kireevsky's article 'On the Necessity of New Principles in Philosophy', and in two 'Philosophical Letters' he sent to Iury Samarin discussing recent developments in German philosophy.

In the first of his letters to Samarin, Khomakov followed Kireevsky in developing a critique of Hegelian rationalism. In particular, he sought to prove that these ideas, far from constituting a decisive break with earlier philosophers, were a direct heir of the school of 'abstract rationality' established by Kant:

Hegel could and did lead rationalism to its ultimate limit. A single example is sufficient to show at once the distance covered by the school in its development from Kant to Hegel. The founder of the school said, "We cannot know the thing (object) in

itself". The thinker who led the school to its consummation said, "The thing (object) does not exist in itself, it exists only in the knowledge of the concept".¹²

Therefore, according to Khomiakov, in the Hegelian system the real world lost its independent identity and "being has its reflections in the concept".¹³ In other words, all reality was reduced to an expression of the abstract idea. He went on to observe that in spite of the rational framework of the Hegelian system, it concealed in reality a "strange mysticism" in its determined ignorance of the phenomenal world.¹⁴

The Hegelian system led, according to Khomiakov, to a profound misunderstanding of the material world, and in particular the nature of temporal causality. In an amusing passage he illustrated his point by showing how a work of art would need to be understood if it was interpreted according to the strict canons of Hegelian thought:

We have before us an artist's painting, painted in such and such a year, and here are the preliminary sketches drawn ten years before. Here, the painting is the cause of the sketches, and not the sketches the cause of the painting, notwithstanding the order of time, and this not in a teleological sense but in a direct sense. Of course, the painting which gave birth to so many sketches is not the same as you see now - because it was only in its creative beginning, at the stage of desire - but at the same time it was also undoubtedly the same.¹⁵

Khomakov is being deliberately paradoxical here; modern students would question his analysis for underestimating the role played by empiricism in the German philosopher's thought.¹⁶ Nevertheless, Khomiakov's criticisms illustrate important aspects of his own philosophical ideas - especially his attack on the idea that the material world has no autonomous existence.

At the other extreme, however, Khomiakov also went to great lengths to attack the doctrine of materialism, growing rapidly in popularity amongst

Russian radical thinkers during the late 1850's. By employing his favourite dialectical form of argument, ironically derived from the German Idealist thinkers he rebuffed, Khomiakov asserted that materialism was itself a product of the failure of the Hegelian system. Once the German's followers realised their master's ideas were unable to provide an adequate account of the natural world, they turned the doctrine on its head and developed a thoroughly materialist account of reality. Consequently, according to Feuerbach and the other 'Young Hegelians' criticised by Khomiakov, the only reality in the universe was matter; the phenomenon of consciousness could only be explained by reference to its material base.

Although Khomiakov's criticism of these ideas was sometimes obscure, it centred on his belief that the materialists failed to explain precisely how material changes affected the realms of thought and consciousness. Khomiakov's dislike of materialism was based, above, all on his rejection of any deterministic system of thought which denied free will - a characteristic of many 19th-century thinkers appalled by the moral consequences inherent in a thorough-going mechanistic or materialistic interpretation of the world.¹⁷ Khomiakov addressed these problems in his 'Second Letter' to Samarin, in which he sketched the outlines of his own philosophical views.

Although Khomiakov's philosophical ideas have their champions, it is difficult to argue he had a first-rate philosophical mind. He failed to develop many of his ideas systematically and did not always understand the underlying arguments of the philosophers he criticised. Many of his ideas reflected the general approach taken by Kireevsky a few years earlier - an intellectual debt that Khomiakov freely acknowledged.¹⁸ Like Kireevsky, Khomiakov gave an important role to faith in the cognitive process: "I give

the name faith to that faculty of reason which apprehends actual data and makes it available for analysis and awareness by the understanding (*verstand*).¹⁹ The image used by Khomiakov to explain his ideas was that of a blind student of optics who, although knowing all the laws of physics, was unable to comprehend the nature of light since he could have no direct knowledge of a phenomenon he could not perceive.²⁰ Complete understanding depended on a fusion of consciousness, which comprehended the external form of an object, and belief, which was able to comprehend its essence.

The terms used by Khomiakov are not always clear; nor is he precise about the role of faith in the process of understanding. On some occasions he followed the approach taken by Hegel, distinguishing between a lower form of reason (*razsudok*) which could analyse the relationship between different concepts, and a higher form (*razum*) capable of achieving more profound insights. On other occasions, he followed Kireevsky in arguing that this higher faculty was distinct from all forms of reason, and was based on a direct form of intuition. However, the general thrust of his epistemology was similar to that of Kireevsky in that it set as its goal the attainment of a complete knowledge, capable of overcoming the dualism between subject and object. This sketch does not exhaust Khomiakov's ideas, especially on the role of will (*volia*) in his philosophy; this subject will be examined below. However, it is sufficient to enable us to proceed with our analysis of Slavophile social and political thought.

It is difficult to relate the philosophical ideas of Khomiakov and Kireevsky to the broader currents of European intellectual history. Although many of their ideas were designed to overcome the limitations inherent in the Hegelian system, particularly its 'abstract rationality', a great deal of their terminology was actually derived from the generation of

German philosophers who immediately preceded Hegel.²¹ Kireevsky's ideas about the role of reason as a coordinating faculty are similar to the ideas expressed by Jacobi in his polemic with Mendelssohn.²² Khomiakov's insistence that reason cannot be divorced from will also echoed the ideas of Jacobi and his contemporaries. Similarly, both Slavophiles were impressed by Schelling's attempts to develop a 'positive philosophy' combining the truths of revelation with the formal knowledge derived from reason.²³ However, neither man made any systematic attempt to develop the ideas of the German philosophers; they used much of the specialised terminology employed by Schelling *et al.*, but without giving any precise meaning to the terms they borrowed from them. Therefore, whilst it is possible to see a general resemblance between the philosophical ideas of Slavophilism and those current in Germany – especially in relation to the Europe-wide crisis of the *Aufklärung* – it would be wrong to make any precise comparisons.

Most 19th-century Russian philosophy was vitally concerned with the study of social life and history and did not restrain itself to a consideration of epistemological questions. In fact, as Copleston has pointed out, all histories of Russian philosophy which limit themselves to a study of its technical aspects fail to provide an adequate account of its overall development.²⁴ Of course, this interest in system-building did not originate in Russia itself, but rather in Germany at the end of the 18th and beginning of the 19th-centuries. At the heart of the Hegelian system, for example, was an elaborate philosophy of history which purported to explain the course of social and political development by reference to the gradual manifestation of the World Spirit in the temporal sphere. Other

German writers of the period, such as Schelling, may have disagreed with many of Hegel's interpretations and ideas, but they too sought to develop macro-systems which could explain all aspects of reality. It was, of course, precisely the extent of the claims made for these systems which helped account for their popularity in both Germany and Russia. They provided the initiated with a sense of knowledge and mastery of the historical process which generated enormous psychological satisfaction.

Although the Slavophiles criticised many aspects of German Idealist philosophy, they shared its belief that social life was susceptible to a complete interpretation, capable of laying bare the meaning of the historical process. For example, Khomiakov noted in one of the letters he sent to Samarin that:

...practical life itself is only the realisation of abstract concepts brought more or less fully into consciousness and a political problem very often includes an abstract nucleus accessible to a philosophical interpretation which will lead to the correct solution of a problem.²⁵

None of the Slavophiles produced an elaborate philosophical system of the kind developed by Hegel or Schelling. However, as Alain Besancon has brilliantly demonstrated, they did develop a peculiarly gnostic interpretation of social life, similar to that of Western Idealist philosophers.²⁶ The Slavophiles believed that no social or political institution could be understood simply by reference to its external form. In other words, just as in the realm of epistemology reason could not grasp the complete essence of an object, so social phenomena contained their own essence which was inaccessible to the descriptive and analytical techniques of the empirically-minded sociologist or historian. Slavophile social

thought of the period was therefore permeated by a thoroughly metaphysical element. Two key observations should be made about this aspect of the doctrine:

- 1) A great deal of Slavophile social thought exhibited a distinctive poetic character. Most social institutions were described in highly symbolic terms, as representatives of principles and values which transcended their immediate empirical significance. Numerous examples of this will be given in the text below, but perhaps the most famous was the symbolic interpretation of the two capitals of Russia - Moscow and St. Petersburg. Moscow was presented as the living embodiment of all the cardinal virtues which the Slavophiles believed were evident in early Russian history; Petersburg was portrayed as the representative of the negative features introduced at a later stage in the country's history.
- 2) The utopian quality in Slavophile thought which was, of course, one of its most pronounced features, rested upon the belief that it was possible to acquire a complete understanding of the deeper significance of every major Russian social and political institution, ranging from the commune to the autocracy. This belief made it possible for the Slavophiles to develop an idealised conception of Russian life which could be contrasted with the real world surrounding them. The value the Slavophiles placed upon a particular institution was not determined simply by its ability to promote some pragmatic goal, such as the physical or economic welfare of its members, but rather by the success with which it could provide a framework able to promote the development of the moral life. The Slavophile utopia portrayed a world where there was a complete congruence between the

social and moral orders, in which each institution was able to realise its higher vocation in everyday life. It will be seen in the following pages that the central weakness of Slavophile thought was its tendency to confuse these idealistic and realistic elements.

Utopia and Myth: Reconstruction of the Past.

Historical studies played a crucial role in the construction of the Slavophiles' ideology. The past gave them the raw material they used in developing their social and political ideas. The Slavophiles' understanding of history, more than any other aspect of their work, reflected the influence of the Romantic era. They believed historical scholarship should elucidate the *narodnost'* which informed every aspect of a country's social and intellectual life.

This approach reflected European historical scholarship of the period. Many historians reacted against the cosmopolitan doctrines of the Enlightenment, preferring to emphasise the distinctive and unique elements in a country's social and political constitution. The French historian Michelet, for example, devoted his celebrated work 'La Peuple' to a highly personal attempt at understanding the nature of his homeland. In his dedication to Edgar Quinet, at the beginning of the book, he noted that:

I have made this book out of myself, out of my life, out of my heart. It came from my experience rather than my study. To know the life of the people, their labours and sufferings, I had only to question my own memories.²⁷

This approach to historical studies was even more apparent in Germany, where a whole generation of historians followed Herder in trying to locate the national *volkgeist*. Herder's 'geneticist' approach to history encouraged his successors to view each national culture as a unified whole, which could only be understood in terms of its own values.²⁸ German scholars emphasised the role of the emotional and affective elements in history. Treitschke, for example, praised classical writers, such as Herodotus and Thucydides, for conveying the internal life of events they wrote about whilst still providing an accurate and informative record of their age.²⁹

Although the Romantic historians made few attempts to define the new historical canons, they all shared a belief in the efficacy of *verstehen*. They believed the historian could only fully understand his material by developing an emotional rapport with the subject matter. As a result, a genuinely national history could only be written by a native. The possibility of a Rankeian history, based on objective empirical analysis, was completely discounted. The tone of the new Romantic writers was therefore essentially esoteric. They believed that history's inner meaning was only available to a few initiates. The parallels with Slavophile epistemology, examined above, are obvious. In both cases, the deepest insights depended on the development of an ill-defined complex of mystical and personal qualities. They could not be conveyed by means of rational discourse.

Some historical works written by the Slavophiles can be classified as pure research. They possessed a scholarly quality easily recognised by modern historians. This was particularly true of books and articles

written by Iury Samarin, who received the best formal historical training of any member in the circle. His analysis of the emancipation process in Prussia, for example, was based on a long period of study of the relevant materials. It represented, in the opinion of his biographer, a substantial contribution to knowledge on the subject.³⁰ Several lesser-known figures in the circle also produced historical works of a high quality. I.D. Beliaev became Professor of History at Moscow University; his numerous published works even won praise from the fastidious Sergei Solov'ev.³¹ A.N. Popov, originally trained in the Legal Faculty of Moscow University, also achieved fame as a historian, producing a detailed study of the events of 1812.

Most Slavophile historical works, though, were not of such high quality. In particular, they often failed to distinguish clearly between 'history' and the 'philosophy of history' - a weakness which can be seen in Khomiakov's massive 'Notes on Universal History'.³² The first element in the 'History' consisted of an impressive range of factual and documentary material, collected by Khomiakov during a lifetime's diligent study. The second element was the "religious-mystical" component, the elaborate and sometimes obscure interpretive framework which he imposed on the material.

Khomiakov's philosophy of history has received a good deal of attention from Western historians and there is no need to say much on the subject here.³³ He believed that all nations could be divided into two fundamental types: the Iranian and the Kushite. The first represented the world of 'necessity', whilst the second represented the world of 'freedom'. All social and cultural phenomena, ranging from religion to philosophy, fell into one of these two categories. Needless to say, Khomiakov firmly denied the existence of any providential framework in history since it

would limit the scope for moral action. Unlike Hegel he did not purport to see any teleological movement towards a pre-ordained outcome.³⁴

The outlandish nature of these doctrines need not concern us here. It is more important to see how this style of writing generated confusion between the philosophical and empirical elements in historical analysis. Khomiakov made a number of fantastic assertions in his 'Notes on Universal History', arguing, for example, that Troy had been a Slavic city and that the English were part of the Slavic nation.³⁵ He made these bizarre statements as a result of giving priority to the theoretical (or dogmatic) elements in his work and interpreting the evidence to fit accordingly. For example, in both these cases Khomiakov's reasoning appears to have been guided by an undefined syllogism running along the following lines: first, only Slavic nations exhibited a particular set of features, such as a sense of shared identity and organic unity; second, English society possessed this sense of unity; third, the English must therefore have Slavic blood in them.

It would perhaps be unfair to make too much of this point, especially since references to the 'Slavic English' are only made in a comparatively casual manner in the 'Universal History'. The positive assessment of England found in Khomiakov's other writings was not normally couched in such terms. However, Khomiakov's confusion illustrates the dangers which result when an historian fails to distinguish between the factual material in front of him and his broader ideas about the nature of the historical process.

The historical writings of Ivan Kireevsky and Konstantin Aksakov revealed similar tensions and contradictions. Unlike Khomiakov, they

limited the scope of their investigations to a study of Russia and the countries of Western Europe. Their historical writings attempted to locate the Slavophile utopia within a temporal framework. In other words, they tried to justify their social and political ideas by claiming that they had once informed Russian culture and society; they were not simply the product of idle dreams. As a result, their historical work was less concerned with reconstructing the past than with studying the underlying forces which created the distinctive patterns of ancient Russian society.

Kireevsky's first major historical essay, 'The 19th Century', was published in 1832, several years before he turned decisively towards a Slavophile interpretation of Russia's past. Only in 1839 did he write, in response to Khomiakov's article 'On the Old and the New', an essay in which he established the basic groundwork for his later ideas.³⁶ The fullest expression of his views can be found in a famous article, 'On the Nature of European Culture: Its Relation to the Culture of Russia', published in the *Moskovskii Sbornik* of 1852.

Two themes ran through this article: first, Kireevsky examined the forces which shaped Russian history, paying particular attention to the influence of Orthodox religion on the country's social development; second, he contrasted this distinctive historical experience with that of Europe. Many of Kireevsky's ideas were borrowed from the French historian Guizot although, in characteristic fashion, he failed to acknowledge any intellectual debt. He followed the Frenchman in arguing that West European history had been shaped by three fundamental circumstances: its adoption of Christianity in its Catholic guise; the dominant influence of classical Rome on the cultural life of the West; and, finally, the role of conflict and violence in determining the development of statehood in Europe.³⁷ By

contrast, argued Kireevsky, Russia had received the Christian religion in its Orthodox form, had taken much of its culture from Greece, and had arrived at statehood without the violence and conflict typical in the West. The difference between the contemporary civilisations of Europe and Russia was, therefore, a reflection of the different principles informing their historical development:

The principles underlying Russian culture are totally different from the component elements of European peoples. True, the civilisation of each of these peoples has features peculiar to it, but their individual ethnic, political or historical peculiarities do not prevent them from forming a spiritual whole, into which they all fit as limbs into a living body.³⁸

Kireevsky's ideas about the historical process reveal the same confusion between the philosophical and empirical elements evident in Khomiakov's work. He was unable to decide whether a country's social and political development invariably reflected fundamental national and religious principles, or whether historical chance instead played the dominant role in shaping its evolution. His use of Guizot's formula implied that the course of Russian history had been determined by a series of random events, such as the absence of the Roman influence in both religion and culture. At the same time, whilst he was less nationalistic than most of his friends, Kireevsky believed the Slavic tribe had certain qualities which predisposed them to adopt Christianity in its 'true' form, enabling it to avoid the conflict and bloodshed which had been the hallmark of Western history.³⁹ In general, though, he was as strongly opposed to the deterministic interpretation of history as Khomiakov. It was this acceptance of the role of chance which helps explain his celebrated analysis of the Petrine era.

Kireevsky's analysis of the Petrine reforms depended on a fusion of two distinct types of historical analysis; a concrete set of historical events was explained by reference to super-historical forces. He argued that the reforms at the beginning of the 18th century had introduced a new element into Russian life - one based on foreign principles alien to the spirit of native development and *narodnost'*.⁴⁰ Consequently, the entire course of national development since that time represented an aberration, resulting from the destruction of the pre-Petrine social and political constitution. Russian society of the 19th century was estranged from its national foundations and "life itself has been drained of any essential meaning".

Konstantin Aksakov devoted more attention to the study of Russian history than any of his fellow Slavophiles. He developed most of his social and political ideas in the course of these investigations. He was less inclined than Kireevsky to emphasise the influence of Orthodoxy in Russian history, although he certainly did not ignore the role of religion in the country's past. Aksakov devoted most attention to the development of Russia's social and political institutions - above all to the Russian *narod*. Ivan Aksakov remarked that his brother's interest in the *narod* long pre-dated his academic studies of history. Even his early study of Hegel was inspired by a desire to achieve a clearer understanding of the role of the *narod* in Russian life.⁴¹ If there was a genuine populist amongst the Slavophiles, (this point will be debated below), it was without doubt Konstantin.

Aksakov's first historical writings, dating from the early 1840's, were composed whilst under the influence of the Hegelianism he imbibed in the

Stankevich circle. At this stage of his life, he still held an essentially dialectical view of Russian history. This was most evident in his Master's thesis about Lomonosov. There is much debate among historians concerning the interpretation of this thesis. Chizhevsky and Koyré argued that the dialectical structure of the thesis ran as follows: the pre-Petrine period represented the thesis of the syllogism, whilst the Petrine era was interpreted as the antithesis; the synthesis of these two would be a reinvigorated Slavophile Russia which would emerge at some unspecified point in the future.⁴² More recently, Walicki has put forward a second interpretation, arguing that the thesis of the syllogism is represented by a first 'universal' phase of Russian history, whilst the pre-Petrine phase becomes the antithesis, representing the negation of the universal. The post-Petrine era then becomes the synthesis, although the precise contours of the new society take a long time to emerge due to the maintenance of vestiges of the previous historical period.⁴³

This arcane debate is of little interest to anyone not concerned with the details of Hegelian influence in 19th century Russia. However, two general points of interest can be made:

1. Aksakov's adoption of a neo-Hegelian understanding of history meant that he was far less hostile to Peter the Great during his earliest years than in later life. According to the interpretive framework he adopted in his Master's thesis, the Petrine period was a necessary stage in the process of Russian historical development. However, by the late 1840's his view of Peter was entirely negative. He began to share Khomiakov and Kireevsky's voluntarist conception of history, arguing that the Petrine period should be interpreted as an historical accident and misfortune.

2. Aksakov believed that it was possible to divide Russian history into distinct periods, an idea that he once again almost certainly derived from Hegel. The historian's task was to show his readers the significance of these phases, each of which represented some profound social or moral principle.

Most of Aksakov's historical works were written as a polemical response to the ideas of other historians and journalists. He developed many of his most characteristic ideas in a series of articles reviewing Sergei Solov'ev's 'History of Russia', volumes of which appeared throughout the 1850's. Solov'ev had been close to the Slavophiles during the mid-1840's, when he had just begun his academic career in the Historical Faculty of Moscow University. However, the situation had changed radically by 1850 and he became one of the most trenchant critics of Slavophile ideas and scholarship. Solov'ev attacked Aksakov for his lack of interest in historical research, and chided him for giving insufficient attention to the role of the state in developing Russian society.⁴⁴ Aksakov responded vigorously to these criticisms, attacking Solov'ev's insistence that Russian society was simply an inert mass easily shaped by the will of the country's rulers.⁴⁵

The two men also disagreed about the best means of classifying the different epochs of Russian history. Solov'ev did not believe it was possible to divide Russia's past into neat historical periods. Aksakov, by contrast, claimed to see four different eras in Russian history, each one exhibiting a distinctive character. The first of these was the Kievan period, characterised by the existence of a myriad of separate communes united by a common religion and way of life, as well as by a common allegiance to the Varangian Princes. The second, 'Vladimir', period was

the era of fragmentation and chaos which followed the breakup of the Kievan lands. During these years the country was divided into numerous kingdoms, each with its own prince. However, whilst the early political unity was lost the sense of common social and spiritual identity remained. The third period identified by Aksakov was the 'Moscow' period, when the princes of that city brought all the Russian lands together into a single entity, allowing their sense of unity to be expressed in political form. The fourth, 'Petersburg' period was a time of decay and corruption.⁴⁶ In Aksakov's eyes, the sin of Peter the Great was not simply that he had borrowed from the West - earlier rulers had done the same. His fault lay in the fact that he borrowed indiscriminately, adopting not only the universal features of Western societies, but also exclusively national features which could not be transplanted successfully to other countries. (This form of Hegelian language remained with Aksakov throughout the rest of his life).⁴⁷ Aksakov rarely modified his ideas after the mid-1840's; the historical conceptions he developed in his review of the first volume of Solov'ev's 'History' guided all his later research.

The epistemological ideas of the Slavophiles, along with their characteristic approach to the study of history, were instrumental in allowing them to develop their distinctive understanding of Russian social and political life. It is to this element of the Slavophile system of ideas that the investigation will now turn.

Personality and Commune

All the Slavophiles believed in the existence of a distinctive Russian personality (*lichnost'*), though there was some disagreement between them as to whether it was the cause or product of Russia's unique historical experience. They were also united in their rejection of liberal individualism, especially as conceived by most European writers and theorists. The idea that human society might in some sense be the mechanical contrivance of individual wills was quite alien to them. The Slavophiles did not consider that tension between the demands of society and the sovereignty of the individual was inevitable. They argued, instead, that a perfect reconciliation could be achieved between the two. The Slavophiles were not, of course, alone in expressing such ideas during this period. The desire to reconcile the claims of the individual with those of society was at the heart of much Western political thought in the century after the French Revolution. The Slavophiles, however, articulated these ideas in their own distinctive manner, drawing on their research into Russian history to develop their views about the correct relationship between the individual and his fellow men.

The earliest and clearest exposition of these questions was provided by Iury Samarin in an essay published in 1847, replying to a previous article by the Westerner historian Konstantin Kavelin.⁴⁸ Kavelin's article reflected the strong influence which Hegel exercised on the younger members of the Historical Faculty at Moscow University during the 1840's; it also anticipated the ideas put forward by Solov'ev a decade later in his 'Historical Letters'.⁴⁹ Kavelin argued that a genuine sense of personality could only be the product of historical development; the inhabitants of

primitive societies formed an undifferentiated mass, lacking any clear sense of their identity and individuality. Kavelin believed that *lichnost'* in its fullest sense first emerged amongst the tribes of Germany. The wars which they fought against Rome, combined with the difficulties they encountered in the course of their nomadic travels, fostered a strong sense of individualism. This eventually found expression in a set of legal codes defending the dignity and worth of each human being.⁵⁰ Kavelin's analysis of the development of *lichnost'* followed the triadic formula used by Hegel when examining the evolution of human societies. The first stage of historical development was marked by a primitive sense of unity between the inhabitants of a country; in the second stage, conflicts and tensions began to appear between individuals as they obtained a sense of their own identity; in the last stage, the legal and state institutions provided the foundation for a 'higher' form of unity, acknowledging the existence of separate personalities whilst welding them into a distinct whole.

Samarin's response to this essay was a typical product of the era of Slavophile-Westerner polemics. He rejected Kavelin's claim that the Germans' historical experience was the only possible form of development and progress. He also attacked the understanding of personality which had evolved in the West, arguing that it constituted little more than simple egoism. According to Samarin, many Western writers and thinkers already rejected such a narrow definition of personality, whilst the revolutionaries' demands for universal brotherhood and community reflected a more general disenchantment with the atomism of European society.⁵¹ A true sense of *lichnost'*, he argued, could only achieve its highest expression when mediated by a set of social or communal organisations from which it could "receive objective and independent significance".⁵²

In the second part of his article, Samarin argued that Russia, rather than Germany, possessed the social institutions capable of promoting a genuine sense of *lichnost'*. He gave the reader a brief outline of Russian history, intended to show that the pre-Petrine constitution had been capable of satisfying the claims of both the individual and society - a feat which Kavelin argued was only possible in a country with modern, western-style state and legal institutions. Samarin paid particular attention to the ancient collective assemblies, such as the *veche* and the *zemskii sobor*. He argued that these bodies had been informed by a spirit of uniformity and harmony which transcended the differences between their individual members; in other words, the ancient assemblies acquired their own collective personality.⁵³ Samarin denied that the sense of unity apparent in the pre-Petrine social order depended on the suppression of *lichnost'*. It rested, instead, on the population's voluntary renunciation of the claims of personality.⁵⁴ The principle of *lichnost'* itself continued to find expression in institutions and individuals such as the Prince and the Tsar.⁵⁵

These ideas are obscure to modern readers, especially since Samarin failed to clarify his understanding of the relationship between the abstract principle of *lichnost'* and the manner in which it manifested itself in social life. A good deal of his language is redolent of Hegel, even though he had formally rejected the German's ideas some years earlier. However, the meaning of Samarin's ideas was quite clear to his contemporaries who were well-versed in the philosophical language of the time. The significance of the essay was acknowledged by Khomiakov who observed that "....for the first time definite Slavophile theses have been set out and consequently the beginning of a positive science laid...".⁵⁶

In particular, Samarin's article helped transform Slavophilism from a doctrine which devoted most of its interest to literary and philosophical questions to one focussing on social and historical problems.

The Slavophiles' interest in the peasant *obshchina* is well known to students. However, confusion has sometimes resulted from a failure to distinguish between their specific interest in the *obshchina* and their more general commitment to the values of *obshchinnost'*. The word *obshchinnost'*, like its religious equivalent *sobornost'*, is almost untranslatable; the nearest English equivalent is probably communalism. The Slavophiles believed that many social and political institutions had the potential to exhibit a sense of *obshchinnost'* – not just the peasant commune itself. For example, the harmony and unanimity noted by Samarin in the *veche* and the *zemskii sobor* could be seen as evidence of its existence. In a society or institution where *obshchinnost'* prevailed, there was an automatic resolution of tension between the individual and his fellow citizens. Personality found its highest expression only when it renounced its own egoism and sense of autonomy. This unity did not, of course, simply result from an agreement between all the participants at a particular meeting or assembly about a certain issue or problem. It represented a more profound psychological and spiritual accord, a phenomenon which the Slavophiles constantly struggled to express in the concrete language of social and historical analysis. Unfortunately, they did not always distinguish in their own minds between the abstract ideal of *obshchinnost'* and the particular instances in which it could be observed – a confusion resulting from their characteristic refusal to distinguish between the metaphysical and empirical components of their social doctrine.

Stephen Grant's study of the way educated Russians used the words *obshchina* and *mir* during the 1840's and 1850's casts some light on these abstruse issues.⁵⁷ Although the term *obshchina* was used long before the mid 19th-century, it came to prominence during the middle decades of the century amongst writers who believed the peasant commune held the key to social renewal in Russia. Whilst the word *mir* was used primarily as a simple descriptive noun, the word *obshchina* was employed in a way which reflected the author's own hopes and ideals. For the *narodniki*, the *obshchina* symbolised their hope for a socialist path of Russian development, building on the natural egalitarianism and generosity of the peasant. For the Slavophiles, it symbolised their hope that the spirit of *obshchinnost'*, discernible in the *mir*, could once again enlighten all aspects of Russian society.

It has been argued that the Slavophiles' interest in the commune was aroused by the conversations they had with Baron von Haxthausen during his visit to Moscow in 1842. It is clear from the Baron's memoirs that the subject loomed large in their discussions. However, a brief examination of the Slavophiles' published work shows their interest in the *obshchina* preceeded the German's trip to Russia.⁵⁸ Whilst Haxthausen's ideas may have encouraged the Slavophiles to re-examine their views, he was certainly not solely responsible for placing the commune at the centre of contemporary debate in Russian society.

The Baron appears to have been particularly impressed by his meetings with Konstantin Aksakov, an ironic state of affairs given the sharp differences in temperament and interests between the two men.⁵⁹ Haxthausen was primarily interested in the potential economic and social benefits

offered by the commune, and his studies of the subject were based on a wide experience of rural life in both Prussia and Russia. Konstantin, by contrast, had little personal knowledge of the Russian countryside. He rarely visited his family's estates, which were located in the distant provinces of Orenburg and Simbirsk, preferring to spend his time at the family home of Abramtsevo, outside Moscow. Unlike his friends, he did not have any first-hand experience of the practical problems of farming and estate-management. Although Aksakov carried out a small amount of sociological field-work in the 1850's, he never attempted the kind of detailed studies of rural life which were produced by a later generation of populist historians.⁶⁰ His lack of detailed knowledge about the commune and the peasant allowed him to forge his distinctive and idealised view of each of them. As a result, the *obshchina* which played such an important role in his thought was, in large part, a phantom lacking existence outside his own mind.

Most of Konstantin's social and historical works were dominated by his conviction that all human existence should be guided by a moral vocation, an attempt to "lead a rational human life, worthy of human beings".⁶¹ This moral life was conceived of in a thoroughly existential manner: "formulae...are not able to contain life".⁶² Unconsciously echoing writers such as Rousseau, he went to great lengths to demonstrate that a genuine morality must be internal and reflect a complete orientation towards a virtuous life; good laws, or a good constitution, might be able to regulate the actions of an individual, but unless they could bring about a change in his fundamental will, they could not transform him into a moral being. Moral truths, rooted in the spontaneity of human actions, were immeasurably superior to a legal morality imposed from outside. Aksakov's high

evaluation of the peasant *obshchina*, and the traditional way of life it embodied, becomes easier to understand in the light of these preoccupations. The commune's significance transcended its immediate importance as a social institution; instead it incorporated a particular set of moral and religious truths. By threatening to destroy the traditional pattern of life (*byt'*), Peter the Great had also threatened to destroy the Russian *polis* where the realm of the intra-mundane was spontaneously informed by a set of universal values. 'Good-living' was more than a life led according to an abstract set of formulae; it was, instead, an existence informed by morality at all levels of its development.

In his celebrated book about Russian theology, Pavel Florovsky put forward an argument which clarifies this aspect of Aksakov's thinking. Florovsky argued that in Slavophile thought the commune acquired a 'super-historical' quality. Although it possessed the temporal qualities of other social institutions it also expressed a set of divine attributes. It represented, as it were, an oasis of the heavenly order on earth.⁶³ As Florovsky points out, this aspect of Slavophile thought contradicted its aspiration to provide a coherent philosophy of history. At the heart of Slavophile social doctrine was the desire to fly from the constraints and realities of history and to locate a new social order which would not be subject to the vagaries of change. In actual fact, Florovsky does not distinguish sharply enough between the ideas of Aksakov and those of the other Slavophiles, whose understanding of the commune often diverged quite sharply; nor is he correct in limiting the scope of his argument to the commune since, as has been seen, it can also help explain the Slavophiles' treatment of many other social institutions.

Florovsky's book also casts light on Aksakov's understanding of the moral significance of the *obshchina*. In particular, certain aspects of Konstantin's thought seem to have contradicted the Christian doctrine of original sin - though he was, of course, a fervent defender of Orthodoxy. Whilst Konstantin did not believe in the perfectability of mankind, he hoped human nature could be transformed providing men were raised in a correct social environment.

Aksakov's account of the origins of the commune provided a clear example of his tendency to confuse the historical and super-historical worlds. His most detailed treatment of the subject appeared in an article which appeared in the 1852 edition of the *Moskovskii Sbornik*, 'On the Ancient Order Amongst the Slavs in General and the Russians in Particular'. In this essay, Aksakov developed many of the points made by Samarin in his polemical exchange with Kavelin five years earlier. In particular, he considered the vexed question as to whether the original Slav way of life had been based on the clan or the commune, a controversy which aroused a great deal of polemical discussion amongst Russian historians during the 1840's and 1850's. Kavelin argued in his 1847 essay that the commune did not exist in Russia prior to the Mongol invasion, a point restated on numerous occasions by other contributors to the leading 'thick journals' of the day; instead, he wrote, Russian society was organised according to the same clan principle found in other European societies. Aksakov attacked this idea, and followed Samarin in arguing that "the Slavs from the beginning lived in a communal order".⁶⁴ This was not, of course, to say that the family played no role in Slavic life; "family feeling and the family way of life were strong, are now strong, and will always be strong amongst the Slavs".⁶⁵ However, Aksakov argued that the existence of strong

family feeling did not prove the clan thesis of Kavelin et al. The social structure of early Slavic societies was sufficiently fluid to allow them to incorporate different forms of internal organisation. When social issues, such as property, were under discussion, the family immediately took on a 'communal' form.⁶⁶

The clan/commune controversy is arcane to modern students, and has been given more attention by historians than it strictly warrants. At the heart of the debate was the familiar question of the nature of historical development. The advocates of the clan thesis, such as Kavelin and Solov'ev, were effectively arguing that all societies underwent an identical course of unilinear historical development, a belief that clearly owed a great deal to Hegelian influence. According to this conception of history, all societies were organised according to the clan principle during their primitive stage of development; their evolution towards a more sophisticated and differentiated structure also followed a single path. By contrast, Aksakov and his supporters argued that Slavic societies had always been organised according to their own distinctive communal principle. Their evolution was not subject to the same laws as other European societies.

Aksakov wrote his 1852 article after considerable research although, as with so many of his historical works, he made great use of the 'Primary Chronicle' in his search for evidence. In his other works on the early commune, though, Aksakov reverted to his favourite style of academic argument - a mixture of dogmatic assertion and intelligent use of original material. His published reviews of the volumes of Solov'ev's 'History' were full of such statements as, "The Slavic commune was a commune of the Russian people founded on a moral basis" and, "When men form an *obshchina*

an internal moral law develops" - arguments which he then failed to develop or justify by reference to source material.⁶⁷ The coexistence of the dogmatic and academic approaches in Aksakov's work enabled him to construct his highly idiosyncratic vision of the commune. By juxtaposing reasoned historical arguments and unfounded assertions, he was able to present a view of the *obshchina* which, though grounded in Russian reality, also possessed the qualities of myth and fable.

The other Slavophiles did not entirely agree with Aksakov's assessment of the *obshchina*. Because they had greater knowledge of the realities of rural life, they made a more sober assessment of the commune's ability to serve as the basis for restructuring Russian society.

Khomiakov expressed his ideas most clearly in a letter sent to Koshelev in 1848. He argued that the the question of the *obshchina* had two distinct aspects: a general and a particular.⁶⁸ The general aspect was concerned with the kind of questions which occupied Aksakov - the commune's ability to provide a moral framework for human development, its ability to serve as a nucleus for a reinvigorated social life, etc. Khomiakov certainly did not dissent from his young friend's high opinion of the commune in this regard; indeed, he had himself put forward similar ideas since the late 1830's. However, Khomiakov paid far more attention to the 'particular' aspect of the question than Aksakov, that is to mundane considerations about the commune's effect on agricultural development, economic welfare, and so forth.

Khomiakov went to great lengths to show that communal land-tenure did not lead to agricultural backwardness, as many writers argued at this time. He tried to prove his case by citing developments in France, where the

existence of millions of individual peasant proprietors had not led to a high level of agricultural productivity, and Pomerania, where a communal system of land-tenure was combined with the use of advanced farming methods.⁶⁹ Khomiakov also put forward an argument, much favoured by the Slavophiles in the decade that followed, that the *obshchina* could perform a valuable welfare function. Since land was repartitioned every few years, according to the needs of its various members, the levels of destitution amongst the peasantry were automatically minimised. In addition, the commune provided protection for the elderly and indigent, ensuring that they did not die of neglect or starvation.⁷⁰

The accuracy of these observations need not detain us since they will be considered at length in Chapter 5. It is more important to examine Khomiakov's conviction that the general and specific aspects of the commune question were indissolubly linked, a clear illustration of his belief in the integral connection between social and moral order. The letter was written shortly after the events of 1848, at a time when Russian society was greatly worried about the outbreaks of disorder abroad. In a letter sent to A.N. Popov around the same time, Khomiakov noted that Russia could offer the world a model of a social and political system immune from the threat of rebellion, a point he developed further in his letter to Koshelev.⁷¹ The commune, he argued, gave Russia an institution capable of resolving the tension between labour and capital which was at the heart of the "terrible suffering and revolutionary tendencies" evident in Europe.⁷² The redistribution of the land automatically prevented the emergence of a landless proletariat subject to the poverty and deprivation witnessed in the West. Khomiakov also argued that the Russian *artel*, a kind of industrial cooperative, could provide a framework for economic development

capable of overcoming the schism between labour and capital.⁷³ The benefit of these institutions did not, in Khomiakov's view, simply consist of their functional value in diffusing social tensions. Their real value lay in the fact that they were informed by a spirit of "true enlightenment", capable of overcoming the fundamental egoism and conflict at the heart of Western society.⁷⁴

Koshelev wrote two letters in reply to Khomiakov, both of which reveal that he, too, sharply distinguished between the different aspects of the commune question. However, in other respects Koshelev's ideas diverged from those of his friend, though it should be noted that his opinions fluctuated considerably during the twenty years that followed.

In the late 1840's, Koshelev's views were close to those of Kavelin and other Westerners; in the first of his letters to Khomiakov he wrote that, "I want to speak about the *obshchina*...which you consider to be the cornerstone of our society, and in which you see the embryo of our future well-being....in it I find nothing except the infancy of our *narod* and the lack of a future for educated society".⁷⁵ Koshelev did not deny that the commune had played an important role in Russia's social development, but would not accept that this implied it should play a dominant role in the country's future evolution.

Koshelev argued that it was absurd to preserve the commune beyond its natural lifespan since "society must be built for progress, not *stasis*".⁷⁶ The absence of the *obshchina* in the rest of Europe did not show the poverty of the continent's social structure, but its maturity. "It seems to me that the Russian form cannot exist there since life has developed to the point where it cannot remain in the embryonic form manifested in the commune".⁷⁷ Koshelev did not believe that the *obshchina* would die out in

Russia since it would always be a necessary element in the country's social structure: "for me the commune is an evil, but a necessary evil".⁷⁸ Since Koshelev so disliked the *obshchina* as an abstract ideal, it is hardly surprising that he was even more worried about its practical impact on everyday life in Russia. Unlike Khomiakov, he believed the absence of private land-ownership amongst the peasantry severely weakened the incentive to improve agriculture and caused stagnation in the countryside.

Koshelev was most worried by the implications of the *obshchina* for private property. In one of his letters to Khomiakov, he noted facetiously that if the commune was so excellent it was difficult to justify private landowners remaining outside its confines.⁷⁹ More seriously, Koshelev believed that the development of all forms of private property was a necessary condition for Russia's social evolution. Only during the course of the next decade did he draw closer to the ideas of Khomiakov and Samarin.

This discussion of the Slavophiles' view of the *obshchina* and *obshchinnost'* enables us to continue our examination of their social and political thought. The next element which needs to be examined is their view of the Russian state, and its relationship with the other forces in Russian society.

The Role of the State in Slavophile Thought

Many students have pointed out that Slavophile doctrine was profoundly anti-statist in tone. Berdiaev noted that there was "a strong element of

anarchism in them [the Slavophiles]. They considered the state an evil and government a sin".⁸⁰ Even Bakunin observed that he sometimes agreed with the ideas of Konstantin Aksakov.⁸¹ At the same time, as we have seen, many scholars have emphasised the influence of German Romantic and Idealist thought on Slavophile ideology. A moment's pause should make us aware of a possible contradiction between these two viewpoints. Most early 19th century German thinkers believed the state could play a positive role in the organisation of a country's social life. Schelling, for example, viewed the state as a necessary and integral part of the nation. Hegel's belief that the state represented the summit of rational existence is too well-known to require comment here.⁸² The presence of such a contradiction is excellent evidence, if any is still required, that it is rarely possible to explain a system of ideas simply by reference to its intellectual antecedents.

Historians have tended to overestimate the anarchistic elements in Slavophilism, largely by giving undue attention to the ideas of Konstantin Aksakov. This trait in the historiography can be traced back at least as far as the 1870's, when the jurist A.D. Gradovsky wrote an important article about Slavophile political thought. The article, which reflected the influence of the étatist school of history, argued that the Slavophiles rejected the need for institutional structures or a legal system in Russia, since the country's society was marked by a high degree of spontaneous unity and harmony.⁸³ Close examination reveals that most of Gradovsky's quotations and references came from the works of Konstantin Aksakov. Later historians have followed this lead, mistakenly assuming that Aksakov's views were representative of his friends. Marc Raeff, for example, wrote that the celebrated Memorandum which Konstantin presented to Tsar Alexander

in 1855 on the question of the state was "the fullest and clearest expression of Slavophile ideology".⁸⁴ In fact, there were many differences between the Slavophiles on this question. Although most members of the Circle shared Aksakov's suspicion of the state principle, few shared his intense loathing.

One of the most important debates amongst 19th-century Russian historians concerned the origins of the Russian state. Many writers believed that the first organised state system was introduced in the 9th-century by the Varangian princes. Basing their arguments on material in the Primary Chronicle, they argued that the Varangians were invited to become rulers of Russia by the warring tribes in the south-west of the country - who could not agree which of their own number should be appointed prince. Pogodin was, perhaps, the most prominent exponent of this so-called 'Normanist Theory', but numerous other historians shared his views. Indeed, the theory had its defenders until recent years.⁸⁵

The Slavophiles became embroiled in this controversy. Walicki has surprisingly argued that Konstantin Aksakov was the only member of the circle who accepted the historical validity of the Normanist Theory.⁸⁶ In fact, most of his friends agreed with his views. For example, Samarin defended the theory in an 1840 letter sent to a French Deputy visiting Russia, Auguste Maugin.⁸⁷ Seven years later, in his polemical response to Kavelin, he identified the arrival of the Varangians as one of the most important episodes in Russian history.⁸⁸ Khomiakov also subscribed to the belief that Russian statehood emerged as a result of a peaceful 'invitation to rule', rather than by a process of conquest: "blood and enmity did not serve as the foundation of the Russian state".⁸⁹ Only the Kireevsky

brothers had serious reservations on the subject. In an article which appeared in 1845, Peter criticised Pogodin's defence of the theory, arguing that it would be difficult to have any sympathy for a country which so carelessly relinquished political authority to outsiders.⁵⁰ Ivan's view of the controversy was more ambivalent; in general, though, he accepted Khomiakov's view that the early Russian state had not been established on the basis of conquest and power.⁵¹

The rights and wrongs of this controversy need not concern us here. It is more important to see how the Slavophiles used the Normanist Theory to determine their approach towards theoretical questions about state authority and power. Whether or not they were convinced of the theory's historical authenticity, they used it as a kind of heuristic device to draw a sharp conceptual distinction between state and society. In this sense, the Normanist Theory can be compared with the Social Contract favoured by some 17th and 18th century political theorists, who used it to develop a precise conceptual distinction between the social structure and the state which exercised authority over it. (Such a parallel was almost certainly an unconscious one. Only Iury Samarin appears to have had a detailed knowledge of Western political theory). The belief that the Russian state was a distinctive entity, external to the life of the rest of the country, was at the heart of a great deal of Slavophile political thought.

The name of Konstantin Aksakov is most closely associated with the 'stateless' theory of Russian nationhood.⁵² A great deal of his thinking on the subject revolved around his celebrated distinction between State (*gosudarstvo*) and Land (*zemlia*), though he never precisely defined either term. His understanding of *zemlia* contained both a geographical and a

spiritual element. Its formal boundaries were contiguous with those of the Russian nation, whose unity was defined by its common attempt to develop a social structure capable of expressing its elevated moral vocation. In geographical terms, Aksakov believed that the *zemlia* was made up of the myriad of different communes spread throughout Russia, an idea he probably borrowed from Kireevsky.⁵³ The *zemlia* as a whole was informed by the spirit of *obshchinnost*, a sense of spiritual unity which allowed each member to understand that their individual identity only had significance as a part of the whole Russian people. The image which Aksakov most often used to convey his idea was that of a choir; the full beauty of the music only became apparent when all the voices joined together to produce a harmony containing a richer texture than could be obtained by any of the singers individually.

Aksakov's use of the Normanist Theory played a crucial role in his analysis of the relationship between the State and the Land.⁵⁴ Since he believed that the Varangians had been 'invited in' by the Russian tribes, it followed that the Land was chronologically prior to the State. More importantly, he believed that the institutions of the Land (commune, *zemskii sobor*, etc) were of far greater importance in the ethical life of the Russian people than those of the State. The State was unable to contribute to the moral welfare of its citizens; as an institution it was set apart and distinct from the Land. "The path of external truth is the path of the State", wrote Aksakov, arguing that "the State weakens internal law".⁵⁵ In other words, coercion or regulation by the State could only influence men's actions; it could not make them good. The most famous expression of this view was contained in a scribble in the margin of one of his essays where he wrote that "the State as a principle is evil".⁵⁶ Since

Aksakov had so negative a view of the State the question logically arises: why did he believe there was any need at all for a State in Russia?

Because Aksakov was not a systematic thinker, he never gave a complete account of his ideas about the role of the State in Russian life. However, numerous hints on the subject can be found throughout his work. In the Memorandum which he submitted to the Tsar, in 1855, he outlined two principal roles for the State in Russia: in the first place, he argued that the State alone possessed the ability to organise the defence of the Land against its enemies, that is against other nations who had no understanding or respect for Russia's elevated mission;⁹⁷ in the second place, Aksakov believed that as long as the institutions of the State were rigorously separated from those of the Land, it eliminated the need for the Russian people to involve themselves in politics. They could instead direct their wholehearted attention to more significant moral issues. It was for this reason that Aksakov favoured an autocratic constitution over a democratic one. It reduced the need for mass participation in the political process.⁹⁸

Elsewhere in his work, Aksakov expressed a number of other ideas about the State's role in Russian life. In spite of his high evaluation of the Russian people's moral potential, he never renounced the doctrine of original sin. He accepted that even in the best organised polity there would be individuals unwilling to subscribe to the laws established by the community.⁹⁹ As a result, a legal system and punitive sanctions would be needed to restrain these 'dissidents'.

The most complicated aspect of Aksakov's analysis of the Russian State was connected with his ideas about its historical development. It was during his treatment of this subject that many of his most characteristic

political ideas found their expression.

Aksakov's ideas about the early Russian State were developed most fully in his polemic with Solov'ev, in which he divided the country's history into distinct periods according to the nature of the prevailing political structure. He seems to have believed that the State played a progressive role in the development of the country during the 800 years or so before the reign of Peter the Great. The Moscow princes, for example, gathered together all the different parts of the Russian Land, enabling its sense of spiritual accord to be expressed in a geographic and political unity.¹⁰⁰ It was only during the Petrine Reforms that the State became an agent of destruction whose actions were harmful for the Russian Land.

Aksakov's analysis of this process of destruction can only be understood by examining his ideas about the 'right relationship' between the State and the Land. He argued that the relationship should be based upon a free union (*svobodnyi soiuz*) between the two - a state of affairs which he believed had prevailed throughout Russian history before Peter.¹⁰¹ The ideal of the *svobodnyi soiuz* rested on Aksakov's belief that it was possible to distinguish with complete clarity between the legitimate spheres of operation (*delo*) of the State and the Land.¹⁰² When the unwritten constitution worked correctly, each side respected the autonomy of the other and made no attempt to interfere in matters that did not fall within its legitimate suzerainty. Aksakov argued, for example, that during the 15th century struggles between the boyars and the Tsar, the State continued to respect the independence of the Land and made no attempt to involve it in conflicts which exhibited a purely political character: "The princes changed, but their relationship to the *narod* did not".¹⁰³

Aksakov's political ideal of the balanced constitution became most

apparent in his treatment of the *zemskii sobor*. Although he never completed his intended work on this institution, it played a central role in his political thought. Aksakov traced the decision to call the first *zemskii sobor* back to the time of Ivan the Terrible, a period of Russian history he treated in a surprisingly positive manner. He cited the decision to call the Land Council as evidence that the pre-Petrine State always listened to the voice (*gолос*) of the Land.¹⁰⁴ The *zemskii sobor*, as an institution of the Land, was distinguished by its spirit of *obshchinnost*, which enabled its members to debate in an harmonious spirit and arrive at decisions on the basis of unanimity. It served as a kind of national *veche*, articulating the concerns of the Land and ensuring that the Tsar was aware of his subjects' opinions. Many of Aksakov's other political prescriptions flowed from his understanding of the nature of the consultative process. For example, the impassioned attack he made on censorship in his 1855 Memorandum reflected his conviction that free expression was necessary if the Land were to make its voice heard.¹⁰⁵

Aksakov's dislike of formal institutional structures meant, of course, that his political ideal rested on a kind of national self-denying ordinance: the State would renounce its right to interfere in the moral development of its subjects whilst the citizens relinquished any claims to political authority. He did not seem particularly perturbed by the fact that this ordinance had broken down in the early years of the 18th century, with the result that the balance between the two sides had been disturbed. In spite of his attack on the abuse of State power, Aksakov remained idealistic enough to believe that political enlightenment and moral renewal could alone rectify these abuses and prevent them from recurring.

Ivan Kireevsky's attitude towards state and legal institutions bore a superficial resemblance to Aksakov's. However, he placed more emphasis on legal questions than his friend. Kireevsky believed that the legal systems found in Europe were a direct product of the West's distinctive pattern of historical evolution. Since European societies had originated in conquest and violence, they were marked by a sharp distinction between rulers and ruled. The resulting feudal period, which Kireevsky believed had been avoided in Russia, was marked by the fragmentation of society into numerous different fiefdoms, in which each nobleman attempted to be "a law unto himself in relation to others".¹⁰⁶ Consequently, Western societies possessed no sense of solidarity or shared identity. The only limitation which individuals "would accept to their actions was in the form of rules governing external relations".¹⁰⁷

In the absence of social unity, a system of law developed in Europe which was designed simply to regulate behaviour between the members of society: "Civil Law....was marked by the same formality, the same disputatious emphasis on the letter of the law, which constituted the very basis of public relations".¹⁰⁸ Kireevsky equated the existence of legal systems, especially the system of Roman Law, with societies that were torn apart by internal tensions; where there was no natural solidarity, a legal framework was necessary to diffuse and regulate conflict. By contrast, Russia "knew neither a rigid separation of immobile Estates, nor privileges granted to one Estate at the expense of another, nor of the resulting political and moral struggle, nor class contempt, class hatred and class envy".¹⁰⁹ As a result, argued Kireevsky, the country was marked by the spontaneous sense of unity which figured so large in Aksakov's work.

Kireevsky's discussion of law was extremely theoretical, designed to

illustrate the intimate connections between the spiritual foundations of a society and its sociological forms. However, in spite of his belief that legal structures played a smaller role in Russian society than in the West, Kireevsky was far less idealistic than Aksakov about the moral potential of the Russian nation. In a little known letter sent to Iury Samarin, he made clear his view that moral ordinances could not alone regulate a society composed of sinful human beings, "as if man were an angel".¹¹⁰ In another letter, sent to his sister Maria, he questioned the value of "freedom without legality" (*zakonnost'*), and spoke of the important role played by a legal system in securing social order.¹¹¹ It will be seen below that Kireevsky prized social stability far too highly to want to see it jeopardised by a radical overhaul of the structure of authority.

The other members of the circle were even less sympathetic towards Konstantin Aksakov's view of the state than Kireevsky. Their correspondence shows they considered his ideas to be fanciful and impractical.

This became particularly clear during the last months of Nicholas's reign. At the end of 1854, before the death of the old Emperor, Samarin, Koshelev and Ivan Aksakov decided to write a series of articles dealing with practical problems of government and administration. Samarin wrote to Konstantin telling him that:

After speaking with Ivan Sergeevich [Aksakov] we have decided that it would be a good thing to compose a report about the contemporary condition of those parts of the state apparatus with which we are acquainted through personal experience. We have decided not to touch on the general questions about the origins of the state [ne kasat'sia obshikh nachal] - because on this subject every word can become a matter for debate and a cause of misunderstanding - and instead limit ourselves to a criticism of the

existing state of affairs, and not suggest any remedies since our goal is to arouse interest and ask questions.¹¹²

The three men decided that Samarin would be responsible for writing about the bureaucracy whilst Ivan Aksakov would consider legal questions. Koshelev was charged with examining financial problems; his article on the subject which appeared the following year was presumably the result of these labours.¹¹³

Samarin made it clear in his letter that Konstantin would not be asked to contribute to the new symposium since he had no personal experience of the practical problems of administration. Konstantin was hurt and frustrated by his friends' decision to exclude him. As a result, he composed his 1855 Memorandum to the Tsar, mentioned above, hoping that it would influence government and public opinion. The ideas Konstantin expressed in his 'Memo' were similar to those he developed in his earlier theoretical essays, albeit expressed in a far more digestible form: suspicion of the state, a desire to minimise its role in Russian social life, etc.

Once the Memorandum had been composed, the other Slavophiles were generally pleased with its contents, congratulating Aksakov on its composition. However, this praise should not be taken as evidence that they supported the 'stateless theory' of Russian nationhood. Koshelev told Ivan Aksakov, many years later, that he had never accepted Konstantin's view that the Russian people were naturally non-political, or that tension between State and Land was an inevitable feature of Russian life.¹¹⁴ Iury Samarin, who had the most extensive experience of state-service of any member of the circle, recorded his disagreements with Konstantin in a

letter he sent in the mid-1850's:

You say,...that a difference of opinion has formed between us. I would go further; the difference is not only between you and me, but between you and all of us. For example, you recently outlined to me a whole thesis about the spiritual aspirations of the Russian people, and their indifference to state questions, to every aspect of life which concerns juridical questions. You are able to admire the history of Novgorod, the character of Novogrod, the sturdiness of its municipal institutions, which constrained the power and arbitrariness of the Princes. Is it not clear that within the narrow dimensions (*tesnye ranki*) of your system there is no room for many of the things that you have admired in the past?¹¹⁵

Whilst most members of the Slavophile circle disagreed with Konstantin, they made little effort to publicly rebut his ideas – one of the principal reasons that commentators have tended to assume that Aksakov's views were representative of his friends. The only systematic attempt at developing an alternative theory of state-society relations before 1861 was made by Khomiakov, shortly before his death in 1860.

Khomiakov shared Konstantin Aksakov's faith in the moral vocation of Russian society. In his article 'On Judicial Questions' he observed that the only possible goal for Russia was "to make itself the most Christian of all nations" and "to be a society established on the highest moral principles".¹¹⁶ He also echoed Konstantin's belief that no social or political institution could claim to be of value for all societies at all times. He argued, for example, that whilst the jury system might work superbly in Britain, it could not necessarily be transplanted to other nations.

However, other articles by Khomiakov show that he did not share Aksakov's contempt for all institutional forms. In his essay 'On the Old and the New', which dates from 1839, he attributed an important role to the

State in creating the Russian Land. Whereas Aksakov believed that the emergence of a unified Russian State, in the 15th century, simply gave political expression to a nation already possessing social and religious homogeneity, Khomiakov argued that the Muscovite State united different regions that had no sense of shared identity.¹¹⁷ By implication, the Russian Land owed its existence to the State and not vice versa - as Aksakov asserted. Khomiakov modified his views in some of his later articles, perhaps in response to Aksakov's ideas. However, in a speech given in March, 1859, he tried to develop a new way of conceptualising the relationship between state and society in Russia. A number of the ideas he expressed suggest that towards the end of his life he was very critical of Aksakov's simplistic conceptions about the 'statelessness' of the Russian nation.

The 1859 speech was one in a series made by Khomiakov to the Society of the Lovers of Russian Literature, an organisation noted for its Slavophile sympathies. Most of his addresses were concerned with cultural affairs, but he occasionally expanded the subject-matter to consider more general social and political questions. Some of the ideas Khomiakov put forward in his March speech had already been expressed by Aksakov. He argued, for example, that the Russian people were distinguished by their comparative indifference to political questions. Similarly, he agreed with Konstantin that one of the key roles of the Russian state was to guarantee the security of the country so that it would not be "defenceless in the face of pressure from other nations".¹¹⁸

However, Khomiakov also developed a number of new ideas. He followed certain German jurists by distinguishing between three types of law operating in all societies; private law (*pravo lichnoe*); social law (*pravo*

obshchestvennoe); and state law (*pravo gosudarstvennoe*).¹¹⁹ Khomiakov, like Kireevsky, readily accepted that a legal system was necessary in order to provide a defence against "every form of temporary, domestic upheaval", which would inevitably come about "due to the failings of men...which can only be suppressed by the necessary force".¹²⁰ It seems that Khomiakov took a far more Augustinian view of human nature than Konstantin Aksakov. He believed that Russian society would always be affected by serious tensions and conflicts which could only be resolved within the confines of a legal and state structure.

Khomakov's second major innovation was to argue that the Russian state was not simply an institution external to society, a mechanical edifice only intended to perform a limited set of so-called political functions. He instead described the state as "a living organic cover enveloping [society], fortifying and defending it from external threats, growing with it, modifying it, broadening and adjusting itself to its growth and internal changes".¹²¹ By arguing that there were three distinct spheres of social life, each governed by its own laws, Khomiakov overcame the simple dualism between state and society which was at the heart of Aksakov's political thought.

Although Khomiakov's ideas were not fully developed in this speech, it is clear he was rethinking his approach to social and political problems during the years before his death, perhaps in response to the new issues raised by the emancipation question. By reintegrating the state with society, Khomiakov was expressing ideas that were more in line with traditional German Romantic thought than with his earlier ideas.

The Political Significance of Slavophilism Before 1855

The study of the internal structure of Slavophile social and political thought carried out above, is, in some ways, the most straightforward process involved in developing a deeper understanding of the subject. Examining the relationship between the different elements of the doctrine is primarily a matter of textual exposition, involving a simple process of reconstruction and articulation. It is, however, a great deal more difficult to relate the doctrine to wider social and political developments during the Nicolaevian era. The most complex question needing to be resolved relates to the fundamental motivations underlying the construction of the 'Slavophile system'. Were the chief protagonists in the circle aware of the radical social and political implications inherent in many of their ideas - particularly their assault on political authority? Or were they, on the contrary, genuinely naive in these matters, blissfully unaware of the potential ramifications of the ideas they struggled to express in print?

The Slavophiles and Revolution

An unresolved paradox lies at the heart of much early Slavophile social and political thought. Why should a group of Russian noblemen who, in their private lives, were happy to exploit the economic advantages accruing from their social position, idealise the very class whose exploitation was the basis of their prosperity? And, more generally, why should members of the social and cultural elite idealise the ignorant and

ill-educated *narod*?

The work of Iury Lottmann, mentioned in a previous chapter, can give us some clues to explain this strange phenomenon.¹²² The Slavophile ideas examined earlier in this chapter were products of the intellectual salons of Moscow. The social consciousness which prevailed in this milieu was profoundly influenced by the whole nexus of Western ideas which penetrated into Russian society in the late 18th and early 19th centuries - ranging from the *volkisch* ideology of Herder to the liberalism of the French *philosophes*. However, during times when the social fabric of Russia was threatened, by war or revolution, the radical elements in Slavophilism faded rapidly; its proponents were forced to confront the contradiction between their social and political ideals on the one hand and their personal and class interests on the other. A study of their correspondence shows they were far more wary of the *narod* in private than in their public statements.

The Slavophiles followed the revolutionary events of 1848 with great interest. Some Soviet historians believe the European upheavals of that year encouraged them to become more interested in political questions, and argue that the wish to prevent revolution in Russia subsequently became the *leitmotif* of Slavophile doctrine.¹²³

The extent of the disorders in Russia was limited when compared with the violence in Europe, but the Government and upper classes perceived the threat as a grave one. A considerable amount of inflammatory literature circulated in the country, particularly in the western borderlands. A large number of pamphlets were directed at the army. One of these, entitled 'The Soldier's Catechism', proclaimed that any man who lived at the will of another was no better than a beast; it called on every soldier

to "join with the *narod* and to shoot those who give him the shameful orders to shoot at his brothers".¹²⁴ Another brochure, distributed in the Ukraine, was aimed at the peasantry, urging them to "throw back the knout which hangs over you and turn it against your masters".¹²⁵

Third Section reports show that the outbreaks of disorder caused enormous disquiet amongst officialdom.¹²⁶ The provincial gentry were even more worried; wild and inaccurate rumours added to their sense of panic. In Smolensk province, where some members of the Slavophile circle owned property, a local landlord recalled that:

At first..., there came a rumour that all Europe was involved in an uprising, that ruler was fighting ruler, that somewhere not far from us the peasants were slaughtering the landlords..., and that soon such a thing would take place in our area.¹²⁷

Outbreaks of violence also occurred in the central Russian provinces where most of the Slavophiles owned estates, as well as in the distant border provinces. There was, for example, a serious outbreak of violence in the immediate vicinity of the Kireevsky estate in Tula.¹²⁸ The usual stock of rumours circulated in the region. One local landlord recorded that his peasants were convinced the anti-Christ had appeared on earth and was responsible for all the upheavals.¹²⁹ Around the same time, Colonel Schwarzer of the Tula gendarmerie wrote to his superiors in Petersburg that:

many varied and wild rumours are circulating here. Tula, of course, lies on a great highway... and it seems that these rumours must originate in Moscow. They are not dangerous for the troops, nor for the other Estates, but amongst artisans and simple people, especially the privately owned peasantry who will always believe any fantasy... these rumours are a source of great harm.¹³⁰

Ivan Kireevsky was living on his Tula estate when the rebellions broke out. He received the first news of events abroad from his sister Maria, who wrote to him on the 1st March from Moscow telling him that "a terrible revolution" had taken place in Paris: "Louis Phillippe has already fled and is generally supposed to be in England. There is now a Republic in France". In the same letter, she observed that the disorders were spreading inexorably through Europe noting that, "there is also unrest in the Tyrol, and it is said that our troops are going to the aid of the Austrians".¹³¹ She wrote again two days later, telling Ivan about the Government's reaction to events and noting that the violence was escalating.¹³² She sent another letter several weeks later, listing some of the rumours circulating in Moscow. She recorded the words of a friend who had warned her that "war now seems imminent", and gave Ivan a first-hand description of events in Germany from a correspondent of hers who lived there.¹³³ Maria's panic-stricken letters cast light on the Kireevsky family's reaction to the disorders of 1848. Ivan received an account of events which was based on a potent blend of fact and rumour - a mixture which helps explain his own nervous reaction to the rebellions.

A few weeks after receiving the first letter from Maria, Ivan wrote to Pogodin in response to a petition the historian had sent him protesting about the new censorship regulations. Kireevsky argued that any harm which the regulations would do to literature faded into insignificance when set against the need to defend Russia against disorder:

Think; is it really the time to talk about literature during this period of senseless revolution in the West. Of course the constraints of censorship are harmful for literature, and even for the Government, because they weaken the mind without due cause; but all these considerations are of no consequence when set against current vital questions which we must hope the Government will resolve correctly. It is no

great shame if our literature dies for two or three years; it will come to life again.¹³⁴

Kireevsky then expressed his belief that the crisis demanded a reconciliation between the Government and society:

The Government must not now fight with right-thinking people. It must be assured that at the present moment we are all prepared to sacrifice our secondary interests in order to save Russia from upheaval and a pointless war.¹³⁵

Kireevsky advised the Government to quash rumours that it was considering an emancipation of the serfs, since these only stimulated further disorders. At a time of crisis, he identified the state as the only reliable defender of the upper classes against the threat of popular rebellion.

The correspondence of the Aksakov family, who were living at Abramtsevo when they first heard of the disorders in Europe, showed a similar reaction of fear and panic. On February 27th, Sergei wrote to Pogodin asking if he had heard about the "terrible news" from France. A few days later he wrote to his son Gregory, telling him that "Pogodin came here yesterday to bring news...of the terrible events which could change the entire order of things in Europe".¹³⁶ Other family letters recorded the usual crop of rumours about disorders and murders within Russia itself. Konstantin was perturbed by news of the events abroad and demanded a cultural quarantine to prevent the Russian *narod* against infection by the revolutionary virus. He even commended the Government for its efforts to stop the disorders spreading to Russia, praising the Imperial Manifesto which introduced new measures to achieve this. "Yesterday I read an

official article about the Manifesto. How fine it was! How brave and yet at the same time how moderate; it was written with great distinction and nobility, and with great firmness".¹⁸⁷

The reaction of Iury Samarin was more analytical than his friends, and showed greater understanding of the social roots of the rebellion. During 1848, he was serving in the Baltic provinces where outbreaks of disorder were amongst the most frequent in the Empire. However, as well as condemning the acts of violence, he made a systematic attempt to understand the tensions which generated them. In a letter sent to his parents he noted that "one thing seems certain; the foundation of the revolution is not political but social".¹⁸⁸ In another letter, he wrote that whilst he could not condone communist ideology he believed it was "simply a caricature of an idea that is excellent". In the same letter, he expressed the reformist streak that was to become so prominent a decade later, arguing that, "it is better to frankly recognise the need for a fundamental transformation to achieve a just order. This, in my opinion, is the only possibility of overcoming and defeating communism".¹⁸⁹

Whatever the varying reactions of the Slavophiles, the upheavals of 1848 illustrated the conflict between their formal ideas on the one hand and their basic instincts on the other. The egalitarian elements in their thought, which seemed so unlikely a product to flow from the pens of a group of prosperous Russian *dvorianiny*, declined rapidly when the social order appeared to face a fundamental challenge. Norbert Elias, examining the genesis of Romantic ideas in pre-revolutionary France, advances an argument which can cast light on Slavophilism.

These romanticising impulses can usually be located in particular elevated classes, especially in their elites, whose own claims to power are essentially unfulfilled

despite their high position, and cannot be fulfilled without destroying the regime which guarantees their high position.¹⁴⁰

Similarly, the liberal features of Slavophile ideology, especially its romantic view of the *narod*, collided with its authors' realisation that the Tsarist Regime was the main defender of the nobility against the anarchic forces of peasant disorder. It was, of course, this curious fusion of two contradictory elements which was the hallmark of Slavophilism throughout its many phases. Too conservative for the taste of the Russian liberals, they were too liberal for the taste of the Russian state.

The Slavophiles as a 'Loyal Opposition'

Whilst the radical elements in Slavophilism were moderated at times of crisis, the Tsarist authorities still treated the doctrine and its authors with great suspicion. The Slavophiles found it harder to publish their articles than such avowed radicals as Belinsky.¹⁴¹ In order to understand this official hostility, we need to examine the motives which impelled the Slavophiles to publish their articles and essays. Did they intend to challenge the authority of the Russian state, as many in the Government believed?

Since Slavophile ideas were so fantastic, it is tempting to see them as a form of 'conscious myth', designed to stimulate a sense of national pride and renewal. Ivan Aksakov wrote that, "Learned historical research not only serves the cause of abstract Slavophile theory, but can also convey to many our point of view".¹⁴² Khomiakov was not averse to engaging

in minor fraud to increase the impact of his ideas: he tried to pass off his article 'The Church Is One' as a re-discovered manuscript by one of the original Church Fathers.¹⁴³ However, whilst the Slavophiles were not unaware of the propaganda value of their ideas, there is little serious evidence to suggest they were not utterly convinced by the authenticity of their theories.

The Slavophiles' attitude towards their journalistic activities shows they placed great importance on winning a mass audience for their ideas. Throughout the 1840's, they made a number of attempts to establish a journal of their own, but their efforts were stymied by official hostility. Kireevsky exercised editorial control over Pogodin's journal *Moskvitianin* for a short time in 1845, but disagreements between the two men brought about a rapid end to the experiment.¹⁴⁴ The Slavophiles were therefore forced to express their ideas in occasional *Miscellanies* (*sborniki*), or in journals over which they had no editorial control. They worried enormously about the impact of their ideas on public opinion. After the issue of each *sbornik*, their letters were full of anxious debate about its reception amongst the educated public.¹⁴⁵ Although the Slavophiles knew that their ideas had little impact, they refused to lose heart. Khomiakov, in particular, pointed out that they could only win public support after a long period of careful preparation. He argued that many years of patient journalistic activity would be necessary to convince a largely sceptical audience.

The Slavophiles occasionally made direct attempts to influence the Government, but their lack of contacts amongst the political elite handicapped their efforts. Count Bludov, who occupied a succession of senior posts in the Government, was on friendly terms with several members

of the Slavophile circle and sometimes acted as a conduit in forwarding their petitions. He was instrumental in ensuring that Aksakov's Memorandum reached the new Emperor.¹⁴⁶ The Minister of Education, A. S. Norov, also had a number of contacts with the Slavophiles, especially Koshelev.¹⁴⁷ However, he was not in general sympathetic to their ideas, nor their desire to establish a new journal of their own.

The best 'contact' the Slavophiles had in Petersburg was, of course, A. F. Tiutcheva. Although she spent many years of her adult life at Court, there was nothing of the courtier about Tiutcheva. She condemned vehemently the flattery and obsequiousness she saw around her. The entries in her diary show her commitment to the value of 'plain-speaking' and 'loyal opposition', even at the risk of causing offence to those in authority. Because the Tsar was isolated from public opinion, it was "the responsibility of all those who are close to the Emperor to be the mouthpiece of social opinion, in order that the truth is able to penetrate to him - in such cases silence represents a deficiency in loyalty".¹⁴⁸ Every individual had to find the courage to defend his ideas before the members of the Court and "dare to say the truth to them, to force them to listen to it, and to open their eyes to the thousand things which are beyond their horizons".¹⁴⁹ And, echoing orthodox Slavophile ideas, she argued that the Tsar in his turn should ensure that he listen to public opinion, and avoid retiring behind "the inaccessible height of his powers".¹⁵⁰

The Slavophiles' penchant for wearing native Russian dress, which has long intrigued historians, can also be explained by reference to this tradition of 'plain-speaking' and loyal opposition. Their insistence on dressing in the costume of old Muscovy was, at one level, an assertion of

their sense of personal and cultural identity. Konstantin Aksakov noted in a *Molva* article that dress was a reflection of the individual's inward spirit, an affirmation of his sense of national identity.¹⁵¹ However, the Slavophiles also had a shrewd understanding of the symbolic nature of their actions. They insisted on wearing national dress even when their actions incurred great hostility from the authorities. Just as the distinctive dress of various contemporary youth cultures symbolises a protest against 'the establishment', so the Slavophiles' actions were a protest against the mores and values of the Court and official society.

Samarin sent his friends many letters from Petersburg warning them about the Government's anger over the dress issue, but they refused to heed his advice.¹⁵² The Governor-General of Moscow, Zakrevsky, was a particularly harsh critic of the Slavophiles' actions; he summoned Khomiakov in front of him on more than one occasion to justify his behaviour.¹⁵³ The Slavophiles, in turn, reacted bitterly to official censure. Sergei Aksakov mournfully noted that Government persecution made it "impossible for the Russian nobility to wear Russian dress", interpreting the prohibition as an assault on *narodnost'*.¹⁵⁴ The most dramatic confrontation took place in 1853, when Khomiakov was invited to appear before the Empress Maria Alexandrovna at her palace in Petersburg. He duly appeared, dressed in native costume. After a great deal of frantic consultation, he was refused admission by officials well-aware of the significance of this 'semiotics of protest'.¹⁵⁵

Slavophile protests were not directed at the principle of the autocratic structure of power as such but against its abuse (though the border-line was, of course, a fine one). Their reverence for the autocratic principle was unshaken by their dislike of its corruption in the

post-Petrine era.¹⁵⁶ However, whilst the advocates of Official Nationality argued that the power of the Tsar rested upon divine sanction, the Slavophiles never accepted the doctrine of divine right. Ivan Aksakov, for example, wrote that "autocracy is not a religious truth; it was, instead, a "practical truth, possessing no absolute significance, subject to all the conditions of time and place".¹⁵⁷ His brother Konstantin agreed with him, noting that "monarchy is not to be worshipped".¹⁵⁸ One of the sharpest attacks on the doctrine was made by Samarin in 1856, and published in a revised form six years later. He wrote that "we do not recognise the idea of divine right (*de jure divino*)", since it was a western concept which developed on the basis of an alien historical experience. He dismissed the idea that divine law could ever countenance the transfer of an entire nation into the hands of "a single person or family" - a clear attack on the patrimonial principle at the heart of official conceptions of the Tsar's power.¹⁵⁹ The Slavophiles' criticisms demystified autocratic power and weakened its claim to possess any foundation other than the promotion of popular welfare. As a result, they did not believe that the autocracy had the right to be immune from criticism; 'plain-speaking' was required to ensure that it operated in a way that was most beneficial to the autocrat's subjects. It goes without saying that these were hardly the ideas of courtiers!

The Government's Attitude Towards Slavophilism before 1855

Since Slavophile ideology was inspired by dislike of contemporary political institutions and values, it is hardly surprising that the

authorities treated its adherents with great suspicion. Unfortunately, the relationship between the Government and the leading Slavophiles was also marked by a catalogue of misunderstandings and confusion which heightened mutual dislike.

Several members of the circle were subjected to periodic police supervision from the mid-1820's, following the events of December 14th, 1825. It is impossible to establish the full extent of the connections between the Decembrists and the rest of Russian society. Kireevsky, Khomiakov and Koshelev, who were all young men at the time, had close personal links with at least some of the conspirators, although none of them were implicated in the formal investigations which followed the attempted coup.

The Kireevsky/Elagin family were on intimate terms with one of the leading figures in the coup attempt, G.S. Batenkov, though there is no evidence that politics were ever discussed during his visits to the family home.¹⁵⁰ Ivan Kireevsky was also a member of the the *Liubomudry* circle, as was Alexander Koshelev. Whilst it is unclear whether there was any connection between the *Liubomudry* and the Decembrists, circumstantial evidence suggests there may have been some informal links.¹⁵¹ Certainly Koshelev's family were terrified that their son would be arrested.¹⁵² Khomiakov was abroad during the actual rebellion and his letters of the time firmly condemned the uprising on Senate Square. Nevertheless, he, too, was well-acquainted with several salons where participants in the future coup openly discussed radical social and political ideas.¹⁵³

Whether or not the future members of the Slavophile circle had any prior knowledge of the Decembrist uprising, their close association with some of those implicated in the coup attracted official suspicion which

lasted in some cases until their deaths. Ivan Kireevsky was under constant police supervision throughout the late 1820's; officials of the Third Section intercepted his mail and made reports describing his movements and meetings with friends.¹⁶⁴ The hostility to his journal 'The European', which was closed after just two issues in 1832, was probably due in part to the censorship authorities' suspicion of its young editor. Koshelev's mail was also regularly intercepted by the Third Section and its contents recorded in official reports.¹⁶⁵

Once Slavophilism finally emerged as a distinct ideology, the Government took immediate exception to its central ideas and their principal authors. Samarin observed as early as 1844 that "the authorities are convinced that a political party is being formed in Moscow [which is] decidedly hostile to the Government, and that its slogan is: 'Long-life to Moscow and death to Petersburg' which means long-life to anarchy and death to the Supreme Power". In 1847 he sent advance notice to Khomiakov that the Government had given warrants for the arrest of several people close to the Slavophiles, including F. D. Chizhov. The news appears to have bewildered him: "I do not know why this is happening. Whether they are guilty of a particular offence, or are being persecuted for their manner of thinking is a matter of great importance for us - but I still do not know the answer".¹⁶⁶

Samarin's confused tone was ingenuous; there were, in fact, a number of reasons for the Regime's hostility. Some officials were perfectly well-aware of the radical implications inherent in certain Slavophile doctrines. There was also confusion in official circles about the precise membership of the Slavophile circle, as well as a lack of detailed knowledge about the ideas discussed in it. For example, in 1846 the Head

of the Third Section in Moscow, Dubelt, sent his superiors in Petersburg an account of the life and ideas of Konstantin Aksakov which was remarkably accurate. He described the young Slavophile as "moral and a believer", but also a "fanatic"; he concluded by saying that "in general the Slavophile tendency is not harmful" but argued that some of its ideas could have dangerous consequences.¹⁵⁷ However, Dubelt's later reports were much less accurate; in one, he mistakenly wrote that Shevyrev and Bakunin were members of the circle. His descriptions of the Slavophiles oscillated between the benignly patronising and the critically hostile. In 1852, shortly after the Slavophiles had issued a new *Moskovskii Sbornik*, he observed that "Slavophilism is again noticeable in Moscow" but once again noted that their ideas were harmless.¹⁵⁸ Two years later, though, he sent a far more damning report to Petersburg, writing that "under their [the Slavophiles] patriotic cries" were hidden sentiments and beliefs which were "against our society".¹⁵⁹ A close inspection of this report shows Dubelt was confusing the Slavophiles' ideas with those of the Ukrainian nationalist historian Kostomarov, whose call for the dismemberment of the Russian Empire was naturally disliked by the Government.¹⁶⁰ Such characteristic confusions and lapses by the police helped cement an official hostility to the Slavophiles which was difficult to overcome.

This hostility reached a crescendo in the years after 1848 when Samarin and Ivan Aksakov were arrested and questioned about their beliefs. Once again the Government was most worried about the implications of Slavophile ideas for public order. In a personal interview with the Tsar, Samarin was accused of whipping up hatred against the Germans in his controversial 'Riga Letters'. The Third Section was more preoccupied with Aksakov's latent Panslavism.¹⁷¹ In the following years, a real note of

fear crept into Slavophile correspondence as they became more aware of the extent of Government disapproval of their activities. Sergei Aksakov, for example, wrote to Ivan telling him that, "our letters are known not only to the secret police [and] to your superiors... but also to the other authorities", continuing that, "I am simply sick with fear for you".¹⁷² The censorship authorities stepped up their campaign against the Slavophiles and, after the appearance of the first volume of the 1852 *Moskovskii Sbornik*, stringent conditions were laid down limiting their right to publish.¹⁷³ As a result of this official hostility, the Slavophiles were forced to limit their activities to private discussions during the final seven years of Nicholas' reign.

Conclusion

Slavophile social and political thought during the reign of Nicholas I was a species of Mannheim's 'general ideology', reflecting, as was said earlier, "the characteristics and composition of the mind of the epoch or group".¹⁷⁴ The Slavophiles' ideas were as much a work of the imagination as of detailed scholarship, and it is perhaps irrelevant to criticise the low academic quality of much of their thought. Nevertheless, since they usually expressed their ideas in the language of social, historical and philosophical analysis, rather than by means of literature or art, an examination of their methodology is a legitimate exercise.

Slavophile social and political thought before 1855 was marked by its characteristic confusion of two distinct modes of analysis (for shorthand purposes one can refer to them as the empirical and the metaphysical). Its

ideas rested on a bizarre mixture of fact and fantasy; erudite argument was intertwined with breath-taking dogmatism to produce a distinctive new doctrine. The Slavophiles were not the only 19th-century thinkers who sought to destroy the distinction between the immanent and transcendent worlds. Secular writers such as Marx, as well as philosophers such as Hegel, also sought to realise universal truths such as 'social justice' or the 'World Spirit' within a temporal framework.¹⁷⁵ The psychological appeal of such an exercise varied from individual to individual. In the case of members of the Slavophile circle, their theories reflected personal disenchantment with a Nicolaevian Russia from whose values and institutions they felt alienated and estranged. By putting forward a 'maximalist' social and political programme, they exhibited their dislike of their country's ruling social mores.

It would, however, be a mistake to imagine that the roots of early Slavophile doctrine are to be found simply in its authors psychological estrangement from the world around them. The doctrine also had a clear social significance, hinted at earlier. Elias's argument that romanticising impulses are characteristic of secondary social elites holds true in the case of the Slavophiles. We saw in the previous two chapters that the members of the circle came from a social milieu possessing a strong sense of self-worth and dignity, which conflicted with their lack of power and status in a regime based upon the principle of bureaucratic autocracy. Early Slavophile doctrine, with its implied attack on the current distribution of political power, therefore reflected the frustration of a section of the population doomed to comparative social and political impotence.

In the following chapter, attention will turn to the reformist social

policies advocated by the Slavophiles during the preparations for the emancipation of the serfs. Moderate reform represented a pragmatic response to the social dilemmas faced by the members of the Slavophile circle. It provided the chance to eliminate the features of Nicolaevian Russia which they found unacceptable, whilst at the same time preserving intact the essential features of the social and political order.

1. For a discussion of Konstantin Aksakov's reaction to Hegel's ideas during the 1830's see his *Vospominanija studenta*. Whereas Aksakov never seemed perturbed by the contradiction between his Hegelianism and his Orthodoxy, the conflict tormented Samarin; his Masters thesis was inspired by a wish to reconcile the two. According to Dmitry Samarin, Iury's brother, Khomiakov played a vital role in guiding the two young men "to the light of God". For a discussion of these issues see L. Calder: *The Political Thought of Iury Samarin 1840-1864*, especially the chapter 'Jousting with Hegel'. Aksakov's correspondence with Khomiakov during this crucial period is found in G.I.M., fond 178, delo 33, ll.12-19.
2. For a brief discussion see P.C. Hayner: *Reason and Existence: Schelling's Philosophy of History*, pp.101-102. There is also a lucid discussion of these questions in A. Lovejoy: *The Great Chain of Being*, especially the chapter 'The Outcome of History and its Moral'. Also see F. Beiser: *The Fate of Reason: German Philosophy from Kant to Fichte*, p.82.
3. Kant's objections to esoteric theories of knowledge was at least partly based on his fears about their political consequences. See, for example, his warnings to the irrationalist philosophers Jacobi and Wizenmann: "Men of intellect and broad dispositions! I honour your talent and love your feeling for humanity. But have you thought where your attacks on reason are heading? Surely you too want freedom of thought to be maintained inviolate; for without this even the free fancies of your imagination will soon come to an end". Beiser: *op.cit.*, p.118.
4. For a brief discussion of Hamann's role, see Beiser *op.cit.*, pp.16-43.
5. I.V. Kireevsky: 'On the Nature of European Culture: Its Relation to the Culture of Russia', in Marc Raeff (ed): *Russian Intellectual History*, p.178. The central role attributed to philosophy is apparent in the same article: "Philosophy is more than just a meeting place for all branches of learning and all human affairs - a node, as it were, of universal consciousness; for, from this node, from this consciousness, guiding lines reach out again into all branches of learning and all human affairs, giving them meaning, establishing links between them, and shaping them according to their own lights". *ibid.*, p.178.
6. *ibid.*, p.193.
7. This emphasis on the existential dimension of knowledge again had many similarities to a number of late 18th-century philosophers, including Jacobi, who observed that, "We find ourselves placed upon this earth; and what our actions become there also determines our knowledge; what happens to our moral disposition also determines our insight into things". Beiser *op.cit.*, p.88.
8. TsGALI, fond 236 (Kireevsky), op.1, ed.kh 10, 1.2.
9. I.V. Kireevsky: 'On the Possibility and Necessity of New Principles in Philosophy', in J. Edie et.al.: *Russian Philosophy*, vol.1, pp.198-199.
10. For a brief account of Schleiermacher's ideas, see F. Copleston: *A History of Philosophy*, vol. 7, pp.149-158. It is interesting to see that Kireevsky was an admirer of Pascal's *Pensees*, with their distinctive emphasis on the immediate experience of God. See his article in I. Kireevsky: *Pol. Sibr. Soch.*, vol.2, pp.104-108.
11. The Diary is contained in TsGALI, fond 236, op.1, ed.kh.10.
12. A. Khomiakov: 'On Recent Developments in Philosophy', in Edie, *op.cit.*, p.227. See also Khomiakov: *Pol. Sibr. Soch.*, vol.1, p.267. Compare this statement with Kireevsky's earlier analysis of German

Idealism:

One abstract aspect of Kant's system was further developed by Fichte, who proved, through a remarkable chain of syllogisms, that the whole external world is but a phantom of the imagination, and the only thing that has a real existence is the self-developing Ego. Starting from the same premise, Schelling developed the reverse of this hypothesis, to the effect that whilst the external world does in fact exist, its spirit is none other than this human Ego, which develops through the life of the universe only to achieve self-knowledge in man. Hegel still further strengthened and elaborated upon this system of the independent development of human self-awareness. At the same time, probing more deeply than anyone before him into the very laws of logical thinking, he carried these laws to their ultimate conclusion, thereby enabling Schelling to prove the limitations of all logical thought. Thus western philosophy now finds itself in a situation where it can no longer continue along the path of abstract rationalism, having recognised its limitations; nor is it in a position to strike out on a new path, since all its strength has lain precisely in the development of the faculty of abstract thinking". (I. Kireevsky: 'On European Culture', p. 191).

13. Khomiakov: 'On Recent Developments', p. 226.
14. *ibid.*, p. 231.
15. *ibid.*, p. 230.
16. Khomiakov's charge was of dubious accuracy. A great deal of Hegel's philosophy represented an attempt to overcome the one-side egoism of Fichte, according to which external reality was simply posited by the Ego in an attempt to arrive at a sense of self-identity. For some comments on this problem see J. N. Findlay: *Hegel: A Reexamination*, p. 44.
17. Khomiakov's dislike of deterministic systems of thought was not unlike the reaction of many 18th century writers to the philosophy of Spinoza, which was interpreted as an attack on Free Will - and hence on the possibility of moral action. A great deal of Khomiakov's philosophical and historical thought was based on his dislike of 'necessity', a feature of his thought which was later developed by writers such as Shestov and Berdjaev. Although Khomiakov was not always clear on this subject, it seems that he believed that both pure materialism and pure (Hegelian) idealism were philosophies of 'necessity'. Each, in their different way, infringed on human freedom by reducing man's consciousness to a reflection of either matter or concept. Khomiakov's emphasis on will (*volja*) represented an attempt to escape from this dilemma, although his discussions of the subject tended to be rambling. See, for example, Khomiakov: *Pol. Sobr. Soch.*, vol. 1, pp. 273-276.
18. Khomiakov: 'On Recent Developments', p. 224.
19. *ibid.*, p. 251.
20. *ibid.*, p. 254.
21. Although Slavophile philosophy was clearly a reaction to the Hegelian system, many of the ideas they used as the basis of their critique dated back to the early years of the *Sturm und Drang* movement. In addition, as has been pointed out by many commentators, the Slavophiles borrowed many of the ideas and insights of the Russian Masonic Movement, along with those of mystics such as Baader and Boehme - all of whom pre-dated Hegel.
22. Beiser *op. cit.*, p. 87.
23. For a brief discussion of the limitations inherent in the traditional division of Schelling's thought into two distinct phases, see F. Copleston: *History*, vol. 7, p. 97.

24. F. Copleston; *A History of Russian Philosophy*, pp.4-5.

25. A. Khomiakov; 'On Recent Developments', p.232. Samarin made a similar point in some of his early writings, when trying to delineate the correct 'spheres' of religion, philosophy and political studies. Iu. Samarin; *Soch.*, vol.12, pp.130-131.

26. A. Besancon; *The Intellectual Origins of Leninism*, pp.63-78. For a more general discussion of the role of 'gnostic' ideas in European intellectual culture see E. Voegelin; *The New Science of Politics*.

27. H. Kohn; *Prophets and Peoples*, p.59.

28. S. Beiser *op.cit.*, pp.141-145. For the influence of Herder on Michelet, see H. Kohn *op.cit.*, pp.46-47.

29. H. Kohn *op.cit.*, p.107.

30. B. Nol'de; *Iury Samarin i ego vremia*, pp.90-93.

31. S. Solov'ev; *Zapiski*, p.368.

32. N. Berdaiev; *Alexei Stepanovich Khomiakov*, pp.148-149.

33. The best account is contained in A. Walicki; *The Slavophile Controversy*, pp.208-230.

34. Some commentators, most notably Pypin, have argued that there was in reality a very distinct teleological framework visible in Slavophile historical theories. A.I. Pypin; *Kharakteristiki literaturnykh mnenii*, p.292.

35. Khomiakov; *Pol. Sобр. Соч.*, vol.7, pp.338-342.

36. D. Offord and W. Leatherbarrow *A Documentary History of Russian Thought From the Enlightenment to Marxism*, pp.79-92.

37. I. Kireevsky; 'On European Culture', pp.180-183.

38. *Ibid.*, p.180.

39. *Ibid.*, p.195.

40. *Ibid.*, p.176.

41. P. Christoff; *An Introduction to 19th Century Slavophilism*, vol.3, p.82.

42. D. Chizhevsky; *Geigel v Rossii*, pp.166-175, esp. p.169; A. Koyré; *Hegel en Russie*, pp.166-167.

43. A. Walicki *op.cit.*, pp.292-294.

44. S. Solov'ev; *Zapiski*, p.301.

45. Aksakov criticised Solov'ev for failing to devote sufficient attention to a study of peasant customs and traditions. K. Aksakov; *Pol. Sобр. Соч.*, vol.1, pp.239.

46. K. Aksakov; *Pol. Sобр. Соч.*, vol.1, pp.44-50.

47. See footnotes 1, 42 and 43 for references covering Aksakov's early commitment to Hegelian ideas.

48. 'O mnemiiakh Sovremennika, istoricheskikh i literaturnikh', in Iu. Samarin; *Soch.*, vol.1, pp.28-121.

49. S. Solov'ev; *Zapiski*, pp.180-228.

50. Iu. Samarin; *Soch.*, vol.1, pp.35-36.

51. *ibid.*, pp.38-39.

52. *ibid.*, p.41.

53. *ibid.*, pp.56-57.

54. *ibid.*, p.64.

55. *ibid.*, p.52.

56. Calder *op.cit.*, p.105.

57. S. Grant; 'Obshchina and *Mir*', *Slavic Review*, 1976, vol.35, #4, pp.636-651.

58. I. Kireevsky had pointed to the significant role of the commune in Russian life as early as 1839, in his 'Reply to Khomiakov', Offord and Leatherbarrow *op.cit.*, p.83.

59. For a summary of Maxthausen's attitude towards the Slavophiles see *The Russian Empire*, vol.2, pp.183-184.

60. The early Populists, ranging from Herzen to Lavrov, developed their ideas on the basis of a study of abstract sociological and philosophical theories. Whilst the later generations of populist writers were not immune to this tendency, figures such as Stepniak, Vorontsov and Uspensky all based their ideas upon a more detailed study of peasant life than did their predecessors.

61. K. Aksakov; 'Memorandum on the Internal State of Russia' in M. Raeff (ed) *Russian Intellectual History*, p.236.

62. K. Aksakov; *Pol. Sobr. Soch.*, vol.1, p.2.

63. G. Florovsky; *The Ways of Russian Theology*, Part 2, pp.18-19.

64. K. Aksakov; *Pol. Sobr. Soch.*, vol.1, p.79.

65. *ibid.*, p.93.

66. *ibid.*, p.92.

67. *ibid.*, ps.50, 54.

68. Khomiakov; *Pol. Sobr. Soch.*, vol.3, p.458.

69. *ibid.*, pp.459-460.

70. *ibid.*, p.466.

71. Khomiakov: *Pol. Sобр. Soch.*, vol.8, p.178.

72. Khomiakov: *Pol. Sобр. Soch.*, vol.3, p.463.

73. *ibid.*, p.467.

74. Khomiakov: *Pol. Sобр. Soch.*, vol.8, p.178.

75. N. Koliupanov: *Biografija A. I. Kosheleva*, vol.2, *prikl.* p.103.

76. *ibid.*, p.105.

77. *ibid.*, p.108.

78. *ibid.*, p.108.

79. *ibid.*, p.105.

80. Berdiaev: *The Origin of Russian Communism*, p.29.

81. G. Woodcock: *Anarchism*, p.378.

82. cf Hegel's comment that 'The State is the true embodiment of mind and spirit, and only as its member the individual shares in truth, real existence and ethical status' (Quoted in H. Kohn *op. cit.*, p.118). In the work of both Schelling and Jacobi, too, the State was ascribed an 'organic' status, and seen as an integral part of the social fabric.

83. A. Gradovsky: 'Slavianofil'skaia teoriia gosudarstvennosti', in *Teoriia gosudarstva u slavianofilov*, p.68.

84. M. Raeff: *Russian Intellectual History*, p.230.

85. For a brief account, see N. Riasonovsky: 'The Normanist Theory of the Origins of the Russian State', in *Russian Review*, 1947, vol.7, #1, pp.96-110.

86. Walicki *op. cit.*, p.56.

87. Samarin: *Soch.*, vol.12, p.66.

88. Samarin: *Soch.*, vol.1, p.51.

89. Khomiakov: *Pol. Sобр. Soch.*, vol.3, p.28.

90. Walicki *op. cit.*, p.58.

91. I. Kireevsky: 'European Culture', p.195.

92. The following discussion is indebted to the ideas of the Soviet historian N.I. Tsimbaev, who has devoted a great deal of his work to Aksakov's 'Stateless' theory of Russian nationhood.

93. Kireevsky expressed precisely this idea in his 1839 essay 'In Reply to Khomiakov'. See the translation in D. Offord and W. Leatherbarrow: *op. cit.*, p.83.

94. The best-known consideration of the Normanist Theory, and its significance for the Russian political system, can be found in Aksakov's Memorandum to Alexander 2nd. However, it was an almost constant theme of all his historical writings, eg K. Aksakov: *Pol. Sibr. Soch.*, vol.1, ps.3, 47. Aksakov, like several of his friends, cited the Normanist theory whilst attempting to explain the events of 1612, when the 'calling in' of the Romanov dynasty was explicitly likened to the events of 862. K. Aksakov: *Pol. Sibr. Soch.*, vol.1, p.10.

95. K. Aksakov: *Pol. Sibr. Soch.*, vol.1, p.3, 300.

96. *ibid.*, p.56.

97. K. Aksakov: 'Memorandum', p.235.

98. *ibid.*, pp.236-237.

99. Whilst Aksakov's idealised picture of medieval Russia occasionally suggested it was a pre-lapsarian world of complete harmony, his commitment to Orthodoxy was strong enough to prevent him from arguing that there had been a complete absence of sin.

100. K. Aksakov: *Pol. Sibr. Soch.*, vol.1, pp.44-50.

101. *ibid.*, p.150.

102. *ibid.*, p.301.

103. *ibid.*, p.144.

104. *ibid.*, p.303.

105. 'Memorandum', pp.249-250.

106. I. Kireevsky: 'European Culture', p.187.

107. *ibid.*, p.187.

108. *ibid.*, p.187.

109. *ibid.*, p.197.

110. L. Calder *op. cit.*, p.160.

111. I. Kireevsky: *Pol. Sibr. Soch.*, vol.2, p.242.

112. N.I. Tsimbaev: 'Zapiska K.S. Aksakov "O vnutreniem sostoianii Rossii" i ee mesto v ideologii slavjanofilov', in *Vestnik Moskovskogo Universiteta*, 1972, series IX (History), p.52.

113. A. Koshelev: *Zapiski, prilozhenie*, 31-54.

114. Tsimbaev: 'Zapiska K.S. Aksakova' *op. cit.*, p.47.

115. *ibid.*, p.54. N.G. Sladkevich puts forward a different interpretation of the significance of the Memorandum, arguing that it was indeed representative of the opinions of the circle. See N.G. Sladkevich: *Ocherki istorii obshchestvennoi mysli Rossii v kontse 50-x - nachala 60-x godov XIX v.* p.138.

116. Quoted in L.E. Vladimirov: *Alexei Stepanovich Khomiakov i ego etiko-sotsialnoe uchenie*, p.35.

117. Khomiakov: *Pol. Sобр. Soch.*, vol.3, pp.17-18.

118. Khomiakov: *ibid.*, pp.432-433.

119. *ibid.*, p.432.

120. *ibid.*, p.433. It is perhaps worth noting that Khomiakov was extremely familiar with the work of St. Augustine. Florovsky *op.cit.*, p.41-42.

121. *ibid.*, p.433.

122. Iu.N. Lottmann: 'The Decembrists in Everyday Life: Everyday Behaviour as a Historical-Psychological Category', in Iu. Lottmann and B.A. Uspensky (eds); *The Semiotics of Russian Culture*, pp.71-123.

123. See, for example, N.I. Tsimbaev: *Slavianofil'stvo*, p.152 ff; A.A. Mikhailov: 'Revoliutsiiia 1848 goda i slavianofil'stvo', in *Uchenye Zapiski Leningradskogo Universiteta*, 1941, vyp.8, #73; S.N. Nosov: 'Vazhniy dokument o otoshnenie slavianofilov k revoliutsii 1848 g.', in *Vspomogatel'nye istoricheskie distsiplini*, vyp.11, Leningrad 1979.

124. A.S. Nifontov: *Rossia v 1848 godu*, p.96.

125. *ibid.*, p.82.

126. Nifontov quotes numerous extracts from Third Section reports showing the extent of the alarm. See, for example, the 1849 Report by Orlov, Head of the Third Section, Nifontov *op.cit.*, p.103. Some of the best evidence about the reaction amongst those at the Court can be found in the memoirs of Baron Korf, who was convinced of the dangers that the upheavals in the West were contagious. 'Iz zapisok Barona', *Russkaia Starina*, 1900, #3, p.564.

127. Nifontov *op.cit.*, p.129. For details of the reaction of the peasants in Tula Province see Barsukov: *Zhizn' i trudy Pogodina*, vol.9, pp.261-262.

128. *Krest'ianskoe dvizhenie v Rossii v 1826-49*, p.812. At least one Tula landlord suffered fatally at the hands of his peasants; *ibid.*, p.804 ff.

129. Barsukov: *op.cit.*, vol.9, pp.261-262.

130. Nifontov *op.cit.*, p.122.

131. TsGALI, fond 236, op.1, ed.kh.82, 1.6.

132. *ibid.*, 1.8.

133. *ibid.*, 11, 12-13.

134. I. Kireevsky: *Pol. Sобр. Soch.*, vol.2, p.249.

135. I. Kireevsky: *Pol. Sобр. Soch.*, vol.2, p.249.

136. Nifontov *op.cit.*, p.148.

137. *ibid.*, p.153. The events of 1848 encouraged Aksakov in his belief that the Russian *narod* lacked the revolutionary potential of the western proletariat; see his article 'Zapadnaia evropa i narodnost', in TsGALI, f.10, op.4, ed.kh.9,

138. Samarin; *Soch.*, vol.12, p.328.

139. *ibid.*, p.329.

140. N. Elias; *The Court Society*, p.222.

141. See Chapter 5, below, for a review of the problems faced by the Slavophiles in setting up a new journal in the mid-1850's.

142. N.I. Tsimbaev; 'S.M. Solov'ev i ego nauchnoe naselenie', in S.M. Solov'ev; *Zapiski*, p.366.

143. Besancon *op.cit.*, p.67.

144. For a brief discussion of Ivan Kireevsky's editorship of *Moskvitjanin* see Barsukov *op.cit.*, vol.7, pp.401-408.

145. See, for example, the letters from Khomiakov to A.N. Popov, in which he assessed public reaction to the Moscow Miscellanies of 1846 and 1847, Khomiakov; *Pol.Sobr.Soch.*, vol.8, ps.167, 171.

146. Tsimbaev; 'Zapiska K.S.Aksakova', *op.cit.*, p.53.

147. Koshelev; *Zapiski*, p.85.

148. A.F. Tiutcheva; *Pri dvore dvukh imperatorov*, p.13.

149. *ibid.*, p.14.

150. *ibid.*, p.37.

151. *Molva*, 1856, #21, p.240.

152. Iu. Samarin; *Soch.*, vol.12, pp.201-203.

153. G.I.M., f.178, delo 33, 1.71. For an anonymous attack on the authorities in relation to this incident see G.I.M., f.178, delo 1, 1.27. A brief account of Khomiakov's fraught relationship with Zakrevsky can be found in *Russkaja Starina*, 1879, vol.26, #11, pp.537-538.

154. *Ivan Aksakov v ego pis'makh*, pt.1, vol.2, p.143.

155. Khomiakov; *Pol.Sobr.Soch.*, vol.8, p.143.

156. See, for example, Konstantin Aksakov's eulogy about Tsar Alexander 2nd during a visit to Moscow, TsGALI, f.10, op.4, ed.kh.19, 11, 1-2.

157. N.G. Sladkevich; 'Oppozitsionnoe dvizhenie dvorianstva v gody revoliutsionnoi situatsii', in *Revoliutsionnaja situatsija v Rossii v 1859-1861 gg.*, vol.2, p.83.

158. N.I. Tsimbaev; *Slavianofil'stva*, p.157.

159. Iu. Samarin; 'Po povody tolkov o konstitutsii', in *Teoriia gosudarstva u slavianofilov*, p.61.

160. For details of the correspondence between Batenkov and Elagin see *Pis'ma G. S. Batenkova, I. I. Pushkina i Ye. G. Toljia*

161. Koshelev; *Zapiski*, p.12; Walicki *op.cit.*, pp.64-71.

162. Koshelev; *Zapiski*, p.16.

163. G.I.M., f.178, delo 1, 1.16. Khomiakov was an habituee at the home of the Decembrist poet Ryleev, but apparently always voiced objections to the radical ideas discussed there.

164. M. Lemke; *Nikolaevskie zhandarmy i Literatura*, pp.68-70; Koshelev; *Zapiski*, p.30.

165. *ibid.*, p.68.

166. Iu. Samarin; *Soch.*, vol.12, p.151.

167. G.I.M., f.404, ll.154-155.

168. M. Lemke *op.cit.*, 219.

169. *ibid.*, p.217.

170. *ibid.*, p.218.

171. B. Nol'de *op.cit.*, pp.47-49. I. Aksakov; *Pis'ma k rodnym*, pp.497-508.

172. I. Aksakov *v ego pis'makh* pt.1, vol.2, p.136. I. Aksakov; *Pis'ma k rodnym*, p.535.

173. For details of censorship restrictions in the wake of the 1852 *sbornik*, see M. Lemke; *Ocherki po istorii russkoi tsenzury*, pp.285-286. For Khomiakov's dismayed reaction to news of the official censure see G.I.M., f.178, delo 27, 1.181.

174. K. Mannheim; *Ideology and Utopia*, p.50.

175. For a discussion of some these issues, see Voegelin *op.cit.*, esp. the chapter 'Gnosticism - the Nature of Modernity'.

The Development of Slavophile Reformism (1855-1861)New Men and New Ideas: The Emergence of Slavophile Reformism

The death of Nicholas I transformed the Russian political landscape.

The Slavophiles reacted to the news predictably; despite their reverence for the autocratic principle, they were bitter about the way the Government had treated them. Vera Aksakova wrote in her diary that although her friends were sad to hear of the Tsar's death, they could not help feeling that, "some stone, some weight, has been taken off them, and that it has become easier to breathe; suddenly new hopes are springing up".¹ Alexander Koshelev's reaction was more bitter; many years later, he recalled that news of the Emperor's death was "not of great distress".² In a letter sent to Pogodin a few weeks after Nicholas's death he wrote that, "for thirty years they have placed us underneath an airless cover, and have tried in every way to extinguish our minds and wills".³ Ivan Kireevsky's comments were even more caustic, perhaps because he had been singled out for so much hostility by the authorities. In a letter sent to an old friend, P. A. Viazemsky, who worked in the Ministry of Education in Petersburg, he criticised Nicholas for his defence of "unprecedented censorship", observing sadly that the late Tsar "never liked literature and never served as its patron".⁴

In general, the Slavophiles shared the optimism about the new Tsar which was prevalent amongst members of educated society during the second half of 1855. Khomiakov confided his hopes to the historian Solov'ev, remarking that throughout Russian history, bad Tsars had invariably been

followed by successors who were more attentive to the wishes and needs of their people.⁵ Alexander II, widely rumoured to be more tolerant than his father, was able from his earliest days to count on the support of his more liberal subjects.

During the five years preceding the publication of the Emancipation Edict, the character of Slavophile social and political thought and, indeed, the structure of the circle itself, changed rapidly. The death of Ivan Kireevsky in 1856 robbed the group of its most able philosopher. Khomiakov also withdrew somewhat from public life, partly due to the impact of ill-health, and partly due to a desire to spend more time with his family after the death of his wife. As a result, the Slavophile banner was increasingly carried by men such as Samarin, Koshelev and Cherkassky who, whilst generally committed to traditional Slavophile ideas, were equally interested in the practical problems of social and economic reform. As a result, by 1861 the character of Slavophilism had undergone a considerable change; it was as much a practical ideology of social reform as a metaphysical doctrine. This chapter will examine the content of this new ideology of 'Slavophile reformism', espoused by Koshelev *et al*, whilst at the same time showing how it represented an attempt to respond to the changed conditions of Alexandrine Russia.

The Gentry Projects and the Birth of Slavophile Reformism

The new Regime at first gave no indication that it intended to confront the social problems highlighted by Russia's failures in the Crimean War. Not until the publication of the Nazimov Rescript in 1857 did

it became obvious that the Administration was committed to some form of emancipation of the serfs. During the five years before 1861, the Government received numerous petitions giving advice about the methods it should follow to implement reform.⁶ Whilst some of these petitions were composed by authors anxious to divert the Government's attention away from reform, most were written by staunch advocates of emancipation.

The authors of these projects fell into a number of categories. Some were written by members of the bureaucracy, including Count V. S. Lanskoi and Nikolai Miliutin. Miliutin, for example, wrote a *zapiska* outlining a scheme to emancipate the serfs on the estates of the Grand Duchess Elena Pavlovna, one of the strongest supporters of reform amongst the Royal Family. Later he expanded his scheme to consider the problems involved in liberating all the Russian serfs.⁷ Academics and intellectuals also wrote a number of projects. Kavelin and Chicherin, for example, both published outlines of their own ideas in Herzen's emigré publication '*Golos iz Rossii*' - though neither of these were presented to the Government.⁸

The majority of projects, however, were written by landowners and other individuals who had no formal connections with the world of the bureaucracy or academia. Several members of this latter group went on to acquire considerable fame; A. M. Unkovsky, for example, headed the liberal faction on the Tver Provincial Committee in the late 1850's.⁹ Most, though, were written by men whose biographies are unknown to historians, but who felt strongly enough about emancipation to devote time and energy to petitioning the Government.

Historians have given considerable attention to the development of reformist sentiment *within* the Government, as a result of interactions between a number of young 'enlightened' bureaucrats and figures from the

academic and intellectual worlds - meetings which took place within the confines of such institutional settings as the Royal Geographical Society.¹⁰ The existence of the 'gentry projects' shows, though, that there was also a certain level of support for the abolition of serfdom amongst a minority of Russian landowners.

Three leading members of the Slavophile milieu - Koshelev, Cherkassky and Samarin - were amongst those who submitted projects to the Government. Since these projects represented the first coherent attempt to adapt earlier Slavophile ideas to contemporary social problems, they are worth examining in some detail. As mentioned earlier, their authors were, by temperament and background, more suited to practical affairs than Khomiakov or Kireevsky, whose ideas had dominated the development of Slavophilism in the Nicolaevian period. The three projects showed an understanding of the complexities of social reform which marked a substantial development over earlier Slavophile ideas.

The earliest of the three projects was written by Iury Samarin, who began writing it in 1853, shortly after his retirement to the family estate in Samara. During the course of the next two years, he read extracts to his friends in the Slavophile circle.¹¹ The final text was completed early in 1856, and soon circulated amongst the upper reaches of the bureaucracy. In August, 1856, the Grand Duchess Elena Pavlova invited Samarin to a reception where she asked her guest for a summary of his work. She, in turn, passed it on to many other leading members of the Court.¹² It is unclear whether the project ever reached the Tsar himself, although Alexander II did often personally examine petitions presented to him by his subjects.¹³

The projects of Koshelev and Cherkassky were written a little later than Samarin's - in 1857 and 1858 respectively - though both men had written extensively on serfdom during the 1840's.¹⁴ An examination of the ideas contained in the three projects explains a good deal about the Slavophiles' attitude towards emancipation at a critical juncture: the period before the convening of the Provincial Committees in 1858. The Slavophile projects were, in many respects, typical of the submissions made to the Government during this period. Their authors' analysis of the problems facing Russia, along with their suggested solutions, were echoed by writers as diverse as Kavelin and Unkovsky.

The Crimean War sharply divided the Slavophile camp. The majority, including Khomiakov and the Kireevsky brothers, wanted to see a victory for Russian forces. A few, such as Koshelev, were prepared to look upon their country's military defeat with a degree of equanimity, hoping that it might stimulate support for economic and social reforms.¹⁵ However, once the conflict ended, all the circle's members were united in their wish to see Russia regain its status as a Great Power. Iury Samarin opened his project by considering the lessons of the War:

From the very beginning of the Eastern War, when it was still not possible to foresee its unfortunate outcome, the enormous capabilities of our enemy were of less concern to people who had knowledge of the situation of Russia than were our internal disorders".¹⁶

He went on to remark that, "we were beaten not by the external strength of the Western allies but by our own internal weaknesses". As a result, "neither in Vienna nor Paris nor London can we seek to rejoin the assembly of Great Powers, but only by concentrating on the internal condition of

Russia".¹⁷ Cherkassky agreed with his friend, noting that there was a vital relationship between a country's international status and the health of its society. (The Prince developed this thesis at considerable length in an article in the Slavophile journal *Russkaia Beseda*).¹⁸ The Slavophiles believed that support for reform was a patriotic necessity; their calls for change were at least partly inspired by their wish to see Russia once again enjoy the international prestige it had enjoyed under Alexander I.

All three projects condemned the immorality of serfdom. Once again, this argument was typical of many of the submissions made to the Government.¹⁹ Koshelev argued that a transformation in the consciousness of Russian society had taken place during the previous few years, with the result that "there are few people who now completely disavow the justice and necessity of the abolition of serfdom in Russia".²⁰ Samarin agreed with his friend, arguing that the moral case for abolition appealed most strongly to the younger generation of the Russian gentry, who had been educated according to different values from their predecessors:

A generation of landlords who blindly and utterly believed in the morality of serfdom, and were never worried about its abolition, are now dying out. Their children, educated according to other values, take up their family inheritance without having acquired the style of life or style of thought of their fathers.²¹

Such arguments were probably intended to calm the Government's fears that its emancipation plans would stir up massive hostility from the landed gentry. However, they also reflected the Slavophiles' deep abhorrence of serfdom; they believed that it degraded both the serf and the master who exercised power over him.

The Slavophiles' projects reflected their authors' concern about revolution and social disorder. A number of Soviet historians have argued that these fears, also expressed in many other *zapiski*, were an important factor in mobilising support for reform amongst a significant strata of the gentry.²² Samarin attacked the traditional belief that village life was based on an harmonious patriarchal relationship between peasant and master, in which the former accepted the latter's authority as a part of the natural order: "the landlord has the almost limitless and despotic power of a father in a family; but the peasantry do not see him as a father, but as their natural enemy...". Consequently, "the *narod* submit to the power of the landlord as a burdensome necessity" - not from any ingrained sense of its legitimacy.²³ Since the landlords were well aware of this fact, they lived in constant fear for their personal safety and property - which undermined the quality and security of their lives. Alexander Koshelev expressed this viewpoint even more strongly, arguing that peasant discontent had greatly increased and continued to grow with every passing day. "The number of acts of violence against landlords and their murder by serfs has increased; this is familiar to anyone living in the interior of Russia, and is perhaps recorded in the records kept by the Ministry of the Interior".²⁴ In actual fact, neither the published records of the M. V. D. nor the records of the Third Section bear out this claim.²⁵ However, there were outbreaks of disorders in the provinces where the Slavophiles owned estates, and Koshelev's worries were symptomatic of a general concern amongst members of the landowning nobility.

The Slavophiles wrote comparatively little about economic questions. Nevertheless, most members of the circle took a general interest in the subject and followed the debates and controversies of the period. Russia

witnessed a widespread debate over labour questions during the twenty years or so before emancipation. Particular interest was directed towards the Labour Theory of Value.²⁶ Writers such as Dmitry Milutin, I.V. Vernadsky, and Nikolai Chernyshevsky all stressed the importance of labour in the economic process and familiarised Russia's educated public with the economic ideas current in Europe. Virtually all western economic theory, whether laissez-faire or mercantilist, emphasised the superior productivity of free-labour over forced-labour. Once these ideas began to percolate through Russian society, they provided the moral critique of serfdom with an important economic foundation; it was increasingly argued that emancipation was vital in the fight to modernise Russia's economy.

Published and archival sources reveal that the Slavophiles were aware of many of these new ideas. Ivan Kireevsky's private papers show that he was familiar with the thought of J.S. Mill, T. Cooper, McCulloch, etc. He was particularly interested in the work of the Swiss economist Sismondi, whose ideas attracted considerable attention in Russia during the mid-1850's.²⁷ Konstantin Aksakov, who normally took little interest in sociological and economic theories, also began a study of the subject. Several of his later works contain quotations from Mill and Sismondi, as well as from a number of lesser known writers.²⁸ The three Slavophile 'reformers' were even more conversant with economic theory. Koshelev's articles were replete with references to the work of Ricardo, Smith and Bastia.²⁹ Samarin was particularly interested in the works of Mill.³⁰ Whilst the Slavophiles were not advocates of a completely free market in labour or goods, their interest in laissez-faire theory re-enforced their dislike of Russia's existing social and economic structure.

The Slavophile projects, like all others submitted to the Government, were intended to achieve certain political goals: namely, to encourage the authorities to sponsor the cause of emancipation. By stressing the connections between economic modernisation and Great Power status, as well as emphasising the dangers of social disorder, the Slavophile projects cleverly implied that the costs of maintaining the existing social system far outweighed the costs of change.

All three authors hoped that change could be brought about with the participation, or at least the acquiescence, of the landowners. Their projects minimised the likelihood of gentry opposition in order to calm Government fears about instituting reform. Before 1858, the Slavophiles believed that emancipation could be brought about by social initiative, avoiding state participation as far as possible (a hope which reflected their suspicion of bureaucratic participation in social affairs). Samarin, for example, argued that the *éstatist* approach had failed to achieve a satisfactory outcome when used to emancipate the serfs in Russia's western provinces in the early 19th century. He advised the Government to consult extensively with society when drawing up its reform plans, urging it to encourage participation by landlords and other interested parties. "The thought of using voluntary agreements to bring about the change from serfdom to a legal order is so attractive that nobody would argue with it".⁵¹ A lasting settlement could only be achieved on the assumption that "social opinion [will] work in concert with the Government". Samarin therefore suggested that the Government should avoid developing any grand strategy to accomplish change. It should, instead, "fix a definite period for the arrangement of private agreements, saying beforehand that upon its conclusion it will determine, by means of legal directives, the obligations

and duties of the peasantry on all those properties where the landowner has not yet come to terms with his peasants"³². In other words, the details of emancipation were to be worked out privately, subject to the threat of government action in cases where deadlock or inertia prevented agreement.

Cherkassky's project went to even greater lengths than Samarin's to avoid official interference in the reform process. The Prince suggested that the Government's role should be limited to setting the conditions for a private agreement between serf and landlord. He believed, for example, that the authorities should set a minimum price at which every serf would have an automatic right to purchase his own freedom.³³ His project also placed tremendous emphasis on the need to prepare public opinion to accept emancipation. The Prince was shrewd enough to realise that the success of reform would largely depend upon the willingness of landlords to make the new system work. He argued that, in the short-term, the Government should encourage a policy of *glasnost'*, in order to expose some of the brutalities and inefficiencies of the existing system. In doing so, public opinion would gradually begin to shift to a more liberal viewpoint.³⁴

Cherkassky naturally ascribed great importance to the role of education in preparing the ground for reform, though he realised this might take considerable time to affect the public's consciousness. A battle for the hearts and minds of the new generation, he argued, should be fought in the schools and colleges "where the flower of the Russian nobility is educated". Teachers should be appointed who had the ability "to examine the economic basis of serfdom and show their listeners its harmful affect on public policy". In time, there would emerge "a new generation, not only willing to sympathise, but also to act upon, the enlightened views of the Government about emancipating the serfs...".³⁵ Whilst this could take

fifteen or twenty years, it would provide the foundations for a lasting settlement.

None of the three men was naive enough to believe that a change of this magnitude could be instigated without any involvement by the Government. Samarin argued that government regulation and scrutiny were necessary to ensure landlords did not attempt to circumvent the new regulations by, for example, transferring field-serfs to domestic work in order to avoid the obligation to grant them land.³⁶ Koshelev was particularly interested in the financial aspects of reform, especially the question of compensation for landlords. He suggested that the Government establish special Credit Institutions in every province, to provide the landlord with compensation once he had come to agreement with his serfs. Officials would be appointed to check that emancipation was carried out according to the specified terms and ensure that both sides were faithful to the bargain.³⁷

There were minor differences between the three Slavophile projects, but they usually involved comparatively trivial details. All three projects agreed on a set of fundamental principles which guided the Slavophiles' attitude towards emancipation - at least until the debacle of the Provincial Committees in the final months of 1858. All three men favoured an emancipation settlement 'with land', for which landlords would receive compensation. They were hopeful that the abolition of serfdom could be brought about with a minimum of political controversy, by building on the kernel of abolitionist sentiment found amongst a small number of Russian landowners. However, the three projects could not consider all the complex questions raised by reform; nor were they able to articulate their

authors' views beyond a limited circle of friends and officials. It was left to the new Slavophile press to fulfil these important tasks.

The Development of a Slavophile Press

During the years before 1855, Slavophile ideas were largely confined to a small group of individuals who met in the salons of Moscow. Whilst their arguments occasionally evoked a sympathetic response from a broader spectrum of Russian society, they were unable to rival their westerniser opponents in public popularity.³⁸ The Slavophiles, of course, tried to establish their own publications in the years before 1855, but could not obtain the requisite Government permission. As a result, they were forced to publish in journals over which they had no direct editorial control.

The new Tsar did not immediately change the censorship laws, but the authorities began to interpret them in a more liberal fashion. A large number of new publications began to appear. One leading pre-revolutionary source claims an average of eight journals were founded every year between 1856 and 1863; a more recent book estimates that 150 new titles appeared between 1856 and 1860 alone.³⁹ The subject matter of such new publications began to alter during the second half of the 1850's, reflecting changes in the Russian intellectual climate. Works about sociology and economics became more popular, replacing the traditional interest in philosophy and art.

The Slavophiles' desire to establish a journal which expressed their views intensified when the Westerners received permission to publish

Russkii Vestnik. Koshelev, who led the attempt to found a new Slavophile journal, wrote to Pogodin that:

I consider it our undoubted duty to establish in Moscow a strong defence of, and active offensive for, the principles of Orthodoxy and *Narodnost'* which we profess, and without which *Russkii Vestnik* will conquer all, allowing Granovsky and Co. to become the spokesmen for Moscow.⁴⁰

The Slavophiles fought to win permission for their coveted new publication from the middle of 1855 onwards. In May of that year, Koshelev travelled to St. Petersburg to sound out the Minister for Education, Norov. Norov was non-committal and, as the months passed, it became increasingly apparent that he was reluctant to give his consent. Agonised discussion filled the correspondence of the Slavophiles as they desperately sought to find out how their application was proceeding. A frustrated Khomiakov wrote to Samarin later the same year, noting that "we have heard no news from the Ministry of Education....we have not been turned down nor given permission; evidently they wish to refuse".⁴¹

Koshelev was to publish the new journal; a young Slavophile sympathiser, T. I. Fillipov, was to serve as editor. In the summer of 1855, the two men met members of the Moscow Censorship Committee in an effort to enlist their support. They evidently made a favourable impression; one of the members, V. I. Nazimov, noted that Koshelev was a "rich and very enlightened landlord" and was fully qualified to be in charge of a new publication.⁴² However, although Nazimov wrote to the Ministry of Education urging them to support a new journal written "in the Russian spirit", permission was still slow to arrive; it seems the Ministry was still sensitive to the controversy over the publication of the 1852 *Moscow*

*Miscellany.*⁴³ Eventually, the bureaucratic battle was won, possibly with the support of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which smiled on publications promoting the cause of Russian foreign policy. The Tsar gave his permission for the new journal in December, 1855, and by February of the following year the Slavophiles were told they could proceed with publication.⁴⁴

Although pleased at the outcome, the Slavophiles' jubilation was muted by their long battle with the bureaucracy; Koshelev expressed concern that continuous interference by the authorities might make it impossible for publication to proceed.⁴⁵ However, only Ivan Aksakov seemed to have any real doubts about the wisdom of publishing a journal. In a letter sent to his father, he expressed a fear that a Slavophile journal would be too parochial and specialised to appeal to a wide audience.⁴⁶ Nevertheless, he took an active part in its organisation, becoming *de facto* editor in 1858, when Koshelev served on the Riazan Provincial Committee. *Russkaia Beseda* as the new journal was called, lasted four years in all, during which time its circulation never exceeded a few thousand. By the time it closed, Koshelev had lost an estimated 40,000 silver rubles.⁴⁷

The launch of *Russkaia Beseda* was announced before the Nazimov Rescript was issued, and early editions carried few articles about social affairs. The journal's target audience was the 'intelligent reader' who enjoyed a wide range of social and intellectual interests and had sufficient leisure to pursue them. As a result, its contents were eclectic. During the first two years of its life, the opinions expressed in the journal were characteristic of those articulated in the Slavophile salons of the 1840's and 1850's. The first issue carried a long article

about international politics by Prince Cherkassky, an article by Samarin about the relationship between *narodnost'* and modern science, and the first serialisation of Sergei Aksakov's childhood reminiscences. Later editions carried articles by Konstantin Aksakov and Khomiakov on linguistics, as well as numerous articles about Russian history and folklore. However, once Ivan Aksakov became editor, in 1858, the tone of the articles in the journal began to change. More attention was given to current affairs, particularly in the Slavic lands beyond Russia's borders. At the same time, religious and philosophical questions began to receive less coverage.

In 1858, Koshelev began publication of a supplement to *Russkaia Beseda*, entitled *Sel'skoe Blagoustroistvo*, which became the mouthpiece for the new ideology of Slavophile reformism. *Sel'skoe Blagoustroistvo* devoted its attention to the issues raised by the emancipation debate. In announcing the new journal, Koshelev wrote that he would particularly welcome contributions from landlords with personal experience of agricultural affairs - showing his determination that the new supplement should have a practical tone, providing detailed answers to problems facing the Russian landed gentry.⁴⁸ As a result, *Sel'skoe Blagoustroistvo* contained five times more articles about the problems of gentry agriculture than the problems of peasant farming.⁴⁹ Although some articles dealt with general questions, such as the origins of the commune, most considered far more prosaic topics. Typical, was an essay by a Poltava landlord, D. M. Bumovsky, entitled 'Statistical Information for a Project for the Improvement of the Peasant Way of Life in Poltava Province';⁵⁰ even more typical was an article by N. Ya. Dubensky, entitled 'On the Productivity, Profitability and Value of Land in Vladimir Province'.⁵¹ Other articles evaluated the potential impact of emancipation in particular regions,

advancing ideas about ways in which landlords could improve their farming and increase their income. Most contributors revealed first-hand knowledge of the problems they wrote about as well as an understanding of the new science of social statistics which was gaining in popularity in Russia during this time.

Two other Slavophile publications also appeared during these years. *Molva* was a weekly newspaper published and largely written by Konstantin Aksakov. Rather than address the new issues posed by emancipation, *Molva* continued to expound earlier Slavophile themes and concerns. *Parus*, edited by Ivan Aksakov, only appeared twice before the authorities closed it. Many of its articles were concerned with international relations and had distinct Panslav intimations. All four publications were run from a single office; subscriptions were organised centrally, as was the dispatch of 'approved' Slavophile literature. In the years after 1856, the journals increasingly replaced the salon as the major focus for discussion of Slavophile ideas. *Russkaia Beseda* and *Sel'skoe Blagoustroistvo*, in particular, provided a forum for the articulation of the new ideology of Slavophile reformism to a wide audience.

The new journals attracted a wide range of contributors. Earlier Slavophile publications, such as the 'Moscow Miscellanies' of the mid-1840's, had only contained articles by a dozen or so individuals. By contrast, more than ninety authors published work under their own names in *Russkaia Beseda* during its five year lifespan. Another forty contributed to *Sel'skoe Blagoustroistvo*. The contributors can be divided into a number of categories:

1. The original members of the Slavophile circle: Khomiakov, Samarin, Kireevsky, the Aksakov brothers, as well as individuals such as F. Chizhov who had been sporadically involved in the debates and discussions of the previous decade.
2. Men who had become close to the Slavophile circle during the early 1850's before the new journals were launched: for example, Prince Cherkassky, the historian I.D. Beliaev, Alexander Hilferding.⁵²
3. Figures from the academic world. The members of the Slavophile circle in the 1840's had been gentry intellectuals and never held any university posts. By contrast, several academics, such as the linguist V.I. Dal' and the Academician Y.K. Grot, published articles in *Russkaia Beseda*, usually on questions of linguistics and literature.
4. Members of the emerging professional intelligentsia of publishers and journalists. Peter Bartenev, for example, went on to found the influential *Russkii Arkhiv*. Peter Bessonov, who wrote for *Russkaia Beseda*, also developed extensive publishing interests. Several contributors, such as Chizhov, relied on journalism for a substantial part of their income - unlike the wealthy landlords who had filled the Slavophile salons in the 1840's.
5. The majority of contributions, especially in *Sel'skoe Blagoustroistvo*, continued to be written by members of the landed nobility. Many of these authors had previously written for the various journals dedicated to 'improved agriculture' (examined in chapter 3). It seems likely that this was where many contributors to *Sel'skoe Blagoustroistvo* first came into contact with Slavophiles such as Koshelev and Khomiakov.⁵³ The attitudes they expressed were typical

of the milieu of 'improving landlords', and will be examined more fully in the next section. They believed that emancipation gave the opportunity to put farming in Russia on a more efficient and organised basis, a development which could benefit all rural inhabitants, whether noble or peasant. Whilst they naturally expressed fears about the effect of emancipation on the landowning gentry, they were hopeful that a settlement could be reached which would be capable of promoting the interests of their own class.

Slavophile Attitudes Towards Emancipation and Modernisation

Soviet historians have made many studies of the economic foundations of serfdom in the years prior to emancipation. Although these studies vary in sophistication, a general theme runs through nearly all of them: namely that, to use Marxist terminology, a contradiction existed in Russia during the 1850's between the forces of production and the relations of production. As a result, Government efforts to institute reform were motivated by a desire to introduce a new economic system more appropriate to contemporary conditions.⁵⁴

The Slavophiles sometimes expressed grave fears about the economic welfare of the landed gentry. Koshelev, for example, observed that "the noble landowner is generally impoverished; never were there so many properties mortgaged as there are today".⁵⁵ However, the sceptical historian is bound to question whether economic factors alone encouraged gentry support for emancipation. Gerschenkron sensibly questions whether the loss of a vast free labour supply could ever have been in the interest

of landowners, however high the potential gains in productivity offered by a new rural order.⁵⁶ This would seem to be particularly true in the case of members of the original Slavophile circle who, as we have seen, already received excellent returns under the old system of agriculture. The Slavophiles' dislike of serfdom was motivated by a number of different factors.

Most of those involved in the debate about emancipation in the late 1850's had a clear idea of the kind of society they hoped to see emerge in Russia after reform. The Slavophiles were no exception. Several historians have drawn attention to the strong Anglophile sentiments visible in many of their writings in the 1840's. Khomiakov, for example, travelled to England in 1847, praising almost everything he saw. Koshelev visited the country several times, and was well acquainted with all facets of its social and political life.⁵⁷ It is even possible to draw a tentative parallel between Slavophilism and the Young England Movement which also flourished in the 1840's. Khomiakov's sympathetic discussion of Toryism appeared to owe much to the influence of Young England, whose ideas were widely discussed in English society during his visit in the mid-1840's.⁵⁸ (Kireevsky, it should be noted, was much less enamoured by the movement and made several sharp comments in a review of Disraeli's celebrated 'Young England' trilogy).⁵⁹

The Slavophile press of the 1850's often portrayed England as the model of a modern industrial country, combining an advanced economy with a unified and orderly society. Interestingly, the Slavophile articles of this period only occasionally dwelt on the horrors of social conditions in England, a topic which concerned so many European thinkers of the period.

Koshelev, in particular, was enamoured by England's Victorian civic culture, especially the burgeoning attempts to promote the welfare of the lower classes. During his trips to England, he visited a number of model housing projects in the new industrial cities, praising "the rich and the middle classes, lords and bankers, agriculturalists and manufacturers" for their initiative in improving the condition of the poor.⁶⁰ By the late 1850's, most of those grouped around the Slavophile press accepted the need for Russian modernisation along English lines. They contemplated with equanimity the vast changes in Russia's social and economic structures which would be necessary if it were to catch up with its western neighbours.

Members of the Slavophile circle devoted little attention to the question of industrialisation before 1855, though Khomiakov considered it briefly in an 1848 article.⁶¹ By the mid 1850's, most members of the original circle, along with their new allies in the Slavophile press, actively defended the development of Russian industry, seeing it as a necessary aspect of modernisation. Koshelev visited the Great Exhibition in England in 1851, writing an enthusiastic account of scientific and technological advances for his audience back in Russia.⁶² Koshelev understood that industrial development would involve massive changes in Russia's economy, including a move to free labour and a shift in resources from the agricultural sector to the factory; he noted that, "progress in manufacturing industry demands an increase in the number of workers" - a labour supply which would have to be made up of ex-serfs.⁶³

Cherkassky was even more radical in his analysis. In his project, he argued that one of the main factors necessitating the abolition of serfdom was the need to encourage industrial development. Indeed, at this stage

(1858), he was even willing to accept the need for a forced flight from the land. "The Government must by no means.....be afraid of the redemption of the peasants without land, because peasant labour, though valuable in its own way, long ago ceased to satisfy the demands of a rapidly developing economy".⁶⁴ The end of serfdom would have ramifications far beyond the manorial estate, paving the way for a new phase in Russian economic development - the emergence of an industrial base in which the country was so badly deficient when compared with its western neighbours.

In Western European countries, of course, the process of industrialisation was intimately bound up with the development of railways, which were used to transport raw materials to the factory and finished goods to the market. The Slavophiles were aware of the importance of the railways. Koshelev published two articles on the subject in *Russkaia Beseda*, arguing that the question of railway construction was "the most important topic" of the previous twenty five years.⁶⁵ He defended the Government's wish to see an increase in the total mileage of railways in Russia, claiming that their significance was, above all, economic rather than military. Failure to develop a rail network, he warned, would cause Russia "to be excluded from the world of trade and industry, and along with this from world politics and world society".⁶⁶

Other articles on the subject also appeared in *Russkaia Beseda*. A. S. Yershov contributed a technical essay examining the commercial viability of rail construction, the potential returns from cargo and passenger traffic, etc.⁶⁷ Chizhov contributed articles on the commercial viability of railway construction, later writing an important book on the practical problems of railway management.⁶⁸ Interestingly, with the possible exception of Konstantin Aksakov, no member of the Slavophile milieu in the late 1850's

worried about the social impact of railways, an issue of such concern to western conservatives.⁶⁹ They viewed with surprising equanimity the increased social mobility resulting from an expansion in the rail network.

European conservatives had long viewed education with a degree of suspicion, fearing that it might be a source of social discontent. However, all members of the original Slavophile circle supported increased educational provision, even of the general population, believing it instilled in children a sense of *narodnost'*.⁷⁰ Articles appearing in the new Slavophile press tended to stress the practical aspects of education, especially its role in fostering economic development. Some articles called for the establishment of schools where gentry children could learn book-keeping and administration, vital arts in the effective running of an estate.⁷¹ Cherkassky called for a general development in technical education, which would provide students with the scientific knowledge demanded in a modern economy.⁷² A. S. Yershov published an examination of institutions abroad, such as the Polytechnical Institute in Vienna, which sought to instil their students with a knowledge of technical and scientific subjects. He argued that the development of 'human capital' was vital in fostering economic development.⁷³ *Russkaia Beseda* also published a complete translation of W. Whewell's article on English education: 'On the Foundations of English University Education'. Whewell argued that there was a vital link between England's preeminent status as the world's leading industrial nation and the type of education provided in her leading schools and colleges: "the practical education given by English universities produces people fit for practical living". A staunch defender of the teaching of mathematics and other "useful" subjects, he scorned the syllabi of most German universities which stressed the teaching of

philosophy and "the dreams of system-makers".⁷⁴ The publication of such an article by a Slavophile journal says a great deal about the development of Slavophilism in the previous few years. In the 1840's and early 1850's, most of its leading adherents were, themselves, intimately involved with the intellectual world of the "system-makers"; by the late 1850's, the emphasis shifted towards those subjects of "relevance" to the demands of everyday life.

Whilst the articles in the new journals showed that the Slavophiles accepted the need for Russia to modernise all aspects of its economy and society, most attention was still directed towards changes in the countryside - especially the future relationship between the *dvorianstvo* and the peasantry. The role and status of the landed gentry in post-reform Russia was a theme of many articles in *Russkaia Beseda* and *Sel'skoe Blagoustrois'tvo*; it also occupied a good deal of space in the three Slavophile projects examined earlier.

The Slavophiles particularly admired the work of the social theorist Alexis de Tocqueville. Samarin, for example, praised him as "the French Slavophile", arguing that there was a close identity between their ideas about many critical social questions.⁷⁵ Cherkassky was even more enamoured of the Frenchman's ideas and wrote a long article for *Russkaia Beseda* discussing his views, along with those of his compatriot, Montalambert. Cherkassky was particularly interested in De Tocqueville's analysis of the social foundations of the French Revolution. He cited at length the Frenchman's conviction that the events of 1789 were sparked by popular resentment against the nobility's possession of 'unearned privileges'. Cherkassky and his readers could hardly have missed the parallel with

Russia, where the *dvorianstvo* also possessed a number of social privileges unmatched by social obligations. Emancipation offered Russia a chance to avoid the cataclysm which had consumed France.

The anglophilism of De Tocqueville and Montalambert is well-known to all students of European thought. Both men admired the English nobility, believing it possessed certain qualities absent in its French counterpart. Unlike the French nobility, their English equivalents had deep roots in provincial society; institutions such as the system of J.P.'s gave them a local power and prestige unknown on the continent. Similarly, whereas the French nobility had been largely urban, spending their time at the Court of King Louis, the English nobility preferred to live in the country, supervising and farming their estates.⁷⁶ Montalambert's praise for the independent spirit which he perceived in the English nobility and gentry was enthusiastically endorsed by Cherkassky, who agreed with the Frenchman that "the height of aristocratism is reached when a man dares to oppose the irrational demands of his day".⁷⁷ Cherkassky and Koshelev both saw the English county gentry and aristocracy as a model capable of inspiring the transformation of the Russian nobility in future years. They wanted the *dvorianstvo* to shed its specifically 'French' features (Court-oriented, lack of provincial roots, etc), and attempt to become more like the upper ranks of English society.

Since the Russian *dvorianstvo* was much larger than the English aristocracy and county gentry combined, its numerous members could not hope to aspire to the status of their English counterparts. Neither Cherkassky or Koshelev showed much sympathy for the plight of the poor *dvorianin*, a feature of their thought which set them apart from many other contributors to the Slavophile press. In his project, Cherkassky wrote that, "the small

nobility are alienated by their petty interests from the state and society around them; they have become unnecessary and even harmful members, and, by their life-style, disgrace the honour of their Estate...".⁷⁸ Koshelev was even more blunt: "of course the small nobility will lose out from the change-over, but there is no great harm in this". In an article published in *Sel'skoe Blagoustroistvo*, he argued that many members of the small nobility would have to give up their land after reform, but stressed that their compensation could give them "the possibility of finding another way of earning [their] daily bread", in one of the new urban professions for example.⁷⁹ Although these ideas were subsequently modified when the two men became involved with the practical problems of emancipation, their attitudes are revealing. They wanted the post-reform *dvorianstvo* to become more like its English counterpart: rooted in the land, wealthy, prestigious and independent from the state.

Koshelev identified the weaknesses of the Russian *dvorianstvo* as a product of "the vagueness and instability of our relationship with the peasantry", particularly in the crucial area of land-holding.⁸⁰ In his project he wrote that:

We know that in England the possession of the land is the basis of the power of the aristocracy; but we know that in Russia possession of the land has not given the nobility strength, importance or wealth. Why the difference? It is because we are not the complete masters of our land, but rather it belongs to us along with the peasantry.⁸¹

He went on:

ownership of land is, of course, the most reliable source of wealth, but this is only the case where ownership is certain, legally defined, and without attendant conditions which detract from its force".⁸²

Improved gentry status could only result from a solution to the complex question of land-ownership, one which would give the *dvorianstvo* full legal title to their property.

Articles in the Slavophile press echoed Koshelev on the question of land ownership. I.D. Beliaev, in an examination of the origins of serfdom, distinguished between two types of property ownership found amongst the peasantry in medieval Russia: the unconditional ownership of land and the right to use of the land.⁶³ This distinction was central to many discussions about property in the Slavophile press. Samarin argued in an 1857 article that the peasants' centuries-old use of the land gave them some rights of ownership: "He who lives on the land, who ploughs it, is without doubt its master, not on the basis of abstract law, but *de facto*".⁶⁴ Other writers in the Slavophile press tried to give this analysis a more legalistic or scientific gloss. A. Smirnov, for example, followed David Ricardo in arguing that economic capital consisted of 'stored labour'; the peasants possessed a right to part of the land since their labour had been instrumental in increasing its value.⁶⁵

The Slavophiles not only justified the peasants' right to land through their concept of 'dual ownership'; they also cited a more mundane set of reasons. Khomiakov, in one of his comparatively rare comments on the details of the emancipation process, noted that the peasantry had a "deep conviction" of their right to the land they worked. Taking the land away from them would result in "increased hatred towards the nobility", posing a grave threat to social order.⁶⁶ Samarin agreed, observing that "the peasantry are firmly convinced of their right to land. They would not accept, nor understand, that with the advent of personal freedom this right would be taken away from them". Indeed, any attempt to deprive them of

their allotments and fields would be met "with grape-shot and bayonets".⁶⁷

The juridical formula of 'dual ownership' provided the Slavophiles with a rationale for defending emancipation 'with land' whilst justifying their call for the peasantry to pay compensation. Compensation was effectively the cost of upgrading the peasants' right to land from one based on customary usage to one of full legal title. Meanwhile, the land remaining in gentry hands would be theirs by absolute right. They would enjoy the secure ownership of their property, identified by Koshelev as the key to increasing the status and welfare of the landed *dvorianstvo*.

The traditional serf economy was much criticised in the Slavophile press for the constraints it placed on the landlord's ability to improve the quality of his agricultural operations. It was seen in Chapter 3 that the existence of serfdom effectively circumscribed the landowner's freedom to organise his estates as he wished, a matter of particular concern for those interested in promoting improved farming. The presence of serf-allotments and fields on the manorial estate made it difficult for a landowner to consolidate and enclose his land, or benefit from the more efficient use of new machinery and scientific farming techniques.

A number of articles in *Sel'skoe Blagoustroistvo* suggested that emancipation, by resolving the vexed question of land ownership, would encourage the landlord to become involved with the efficient running of his estates. Koshelev argued that after emancipation it would be necessary to "turn the attention of the landlords to the improvement of farm implements, to machines, livestock, etc" - though he was doubtful of the value of indiscriminately importing the advanced farming methods employed in the west.⁶⁸

Another anonymous contributor to the journal identified the lack of

interest in agronomy amongst Russian landlords as the biggest obstacle to the country's agricultural development. As a result, one of the most important tasks in the post-reform era was to foster an 'agricultural culture', in which interest in farming matters would percolate throughout society.⁶⁹ E. S. Gordenko, also writing in *Sel'skoe Blagoustroistvo*, agreed with this analysis, praising the situation in England, "where the best and most hard-working section of the population live on farms and occupy themselves with agriculture".⁷⁰ He also expressed the unsentimental view of farming common amongst agricultural improvers, calling for the estate to be treated as a commercial enterprise with all the attendant concerns about efficiency, etc.

Prince Cherkassky also stressed the need for an increased knowledge of modern farming. He believed that the landlord's estate could play a vital educational role by showing the local peasantry the value of new agricultural methods, helping break down the barriers of ignorance.

Efficient landlord farming is without doubt one of the best breeding grounds for rational agriculture, the sole source and means of providing education in scientific farming to the peasants; only from this can the peasants learn about improved agricultural implements, better husbandry, more complex forms of crop rotation, better economic management.⁷¹

The interest in rational farming, so evident amongst the contributors to *Sel'skoe Blagoustroistvo*, helped foster open-mindedness towards emancipation, along with a willingness to view it as a means of improving the state of Russian agriculture. By destroying the constraints of the old serf-economy, emancipation could provide the landlord with a myriad of new economic opportunities.

The contributors to the Slavophile press often used the language of

European economic theory when defending the abolition of serfdom.

Samarin's claim that "the productivity of labour is in direct relation to the freedom of labour" was typical of these sentiments.⁹² Whilst the Slavophiles never became advocates of complete freedom of labour in the Western sense of the term, their views on emancipation were generally in accord with their theoretical beliefs. Samarin argued that labour was only at its most effective when motivated by material gain. Koshelev observed that *barshchina* was particularly inefficient since it gave the peasants no incentive to work efficiently.⁹³ A. S. Gordenko attacked serfdom, especially where *barshchina* was used, since it demanded constant supervision by the landlord. In Western Europe, he pointed out, a landlord was free to visit the city or travel abroad without having to constantly worry about the state of his property. By contrast, "with us the estate only yields an income when it is managed by the proprietor".⁹⁴

A few contributors to the Slavophile press questioned whether landlords would be able to obtain a labour force to work their lands once the emancipation settlement had been introduced. P. M. Shepelev, a regular contributor to *Sel'skoe Blagoustroistvo*, argued that each peasant should only receive a small allocation of land, so that he would have to work on his former master's estate for part of his income.⁹⁵ Some contributors were afraid that in the absence of landlord supervision the peasants would be too lazy to work their land (thus exposing certain doubts about the depth of their commitment to the assumptions underlying a laissez-faire view of labour productivity). However, such sentiments were exceptional; most contributors wholeheartedly supported the abolition of forced-labour.

All those grouped around the Slavophile press naturally believed that landowners should be compensated for the loss of their land. Khomiakov

argued that the emancipation process provided a chance to overcome the chronic indebtedness of the gentry; the state could set compensation payments against the money it had previously lent out.⁹⁶ He also suggested an embryonic form of privatisation, calling for the state to sell off some of its land and forests; Koshelev agreed, pointing out that the gentry could use their compensation payments to take advantage of the sale.⁹⁷ Samarin noted that compensation would provide the gentry with the capital they needed to improve their farming techniques, which would in turn help increase their future income.⁹⁸

Whilst anxiety over the future of the noble landowning class permeated the new journals, it would be wrong to assume that the Slavophiles' earlier concern with the welfare of the Russian *narod* simply evaporated during these years. They privately accepted that emancipation would impose considerable short-term costs on the gentry, whatever the possible long-term gains.⁹⁹ However, in public, the contributors to the Slavophile press usually argued that reform was not necessarily a 'zero-sum' game, but one from which all parties could benefit. N.Y. Dubensky, on the basis of a detailed study of agriculture in Vladimir province, argued that there was usually a high correlation between the welfare of landlords and the welfare of the peasantry; consequently, he believed that their economic interests were not, in general, contradictory.¹⁰⁰ N.A. Rigelman echoed this conclusion, arguing that with good-will on all sides, both parties could benefit from emancipation.¹⁰¹ A brief examination of the Slavophile press, along with other documents of the period, provides some idea about the role the peasantry was expected to play after reform.

The fullest examination of serfdom to appear in the Slavophile press

was I.D. Beliaev's 'History of the Russian Peasantry', one of the most detailed studies on the subject ever to appear. The book examined the various legal codes determining the rights and duties of the peasantry during the course of the previous thousand years. Beliaev argued that, according to the medieval *Russkaiia Pravda*, the 11th-century peasant possessed numerous civil rights, such as the right to bear witness in court and the right to move freely from area to area on payment of monetary recompense to the landlord.¹⁰² The Pskov code of the 13th and 14th centuries strengthened these privileges, confirming the status of the peasant as a legal personality, possessing rights in his own name.¹⁰³ The rest of the book traced the erosion of these rights during the centuries that followed, culminating in the legal measures of the 18th-century which finally confirmed the obligation of the peasant to serve his master, destroying once and for all his right of free movement. The accuracy of this discussion need not concern us here, although the scholarship was generally of a high standard. It is of greater interest to note the two conclusions implied by Beliaev's account. In the first place, it was impossible to justify the sanctity of serfdom by reference to any national patrimonial tradition, as some opponents of emancipation attempted to do. In the second place, Beliaev identified the crucial cause of the development of serfdom as the erosion of the peasantry's earlier legal privileges; consequently, legal and administrative redress represented the best means of restoring the rights they had lost over the course of the previous few centuries.

The Slavophiles' earlier positive view of the peasant commune could, of course, easily come into conflict with some of the ideas they developed after 1855, particularly their support for economic modernisation. Their

articles on the subject were, in fact, marked by a certain ambiguity. On the one hand, they recognised that the commune could serve as a source of social stability at a time of rapid change.¹⁰⁴ They also recognised its potential value in the new administrative system which would be established after emancipation; the commune could be given responsibility for collecting taxes, updating the recruit levies, etc.¹⁰⁵ However, whilst the Slavophile journals fiercely defended the commune in public, it is clear that some of the leading contributors privately entertained certain doubts on the subject. Cherkassky, for example, noted that he was uncertain about:

the unconditional supremacy of the communal system of land tenure, and dare to think that with the future development of citizenship, the increase in population and the increase in agricultural prices, our villages....will abandon this primitive, flawed system of land tenure, and follow the natural path of free development, until the point is reached where there is a more or less general understanding of private property.¹⁰⁶

Samarin agreed with him; in his project he argued that at least some of the peasants should be free to leave their villages in order to establish private farms of their own. Both men seemed to envisage the eventual transformation of the Russian peasantry into a yeomanry of the kind which existed in 17th-century England. Their defence of the commune in the immediate future largely reflected mundane considerations of security and administrative order.

The ideology of Slavophile reformism, at least as it developed before 1858, represented an attempt to 'square the circle'. On the one hand, its proponents wanted Russia to become a modern society, with all the

concomitant features of social mobility and industrial development; at the same time, they placed great store on preserving social stability and order. Their hesitation over the commune's future reflected their inability to decide which of these two was most important.

The historian N. A. Tsagolov has argued that the Slavophiles wanted to divide Russia's economy and society into two distinct spheres:¹⁰⁷ the first would consist of modern industry and market agriculture, making use of a free labour force; the second would include the majority of the peasantry, who would continue to live as before, except that they would be subject to the authority of the commune rather than the *pomeshchik*. Tsagolov's argument is convincing, and illustrates the depth of the dilemmas facing the Slavophiles. Their defence of modernity conflicted sharply with many of the traditional values they themselves espoused. Once Samarin, Cherkassky and Koshelev became actively involved in the process of reform in the Provincial Committees and Editing Commission, these dilemmas intensified. They were forced to confront the ambiguities and contradictions inherent in their ideas and search for a solution that would not offend their own values.

The Convening of the Provincial Committees

In 1858, the Government set up Gentry Committees in every Russian province to discuss possible methods of implementing its emancipation proposals. The aim of this measure was twofold: in the first place, the Government sought to exploit the specialist knowledge of the local gentry, who were familiar with the agricultural conditions in their own areas and,

consequently, well-placed to give advice about the likely effects of abolition; in the second place, the Government still hoped to win a measure of support for its proposals and was reluctant simply to impose its intended reform on a recalcitrant gentry. The authorities were fully aware that their proposals were likely to meet with opposition. For this reason, the Committees were given a detailed agenda to follow, in the hope that it would force them to consider the practical problems of implementation rather than the general principles underlying the scheme.¹⁰⁸ Once this agenda was made public, the debate about emancipation in the Russian press was transformed: wide-ranging considerations of the morality and efficiency of the serf economy gave way to detailed discussions of the Government's proposals. The Slavophile press was no exception. In the second half of 1858 and the first months of 1859 articles filled *Sel'skoe Blagoustroistvo* discussing the new Committees' activities, and assessing the likely impact of their proposals.

Samarin, Cherkassky and Koshelev had, at first, no hope of serving on the new Provincial Committees. The majority of members were elected by local landowners and, as Koshelev rightly observed, few delegates of liberal opinion would be chosen by such a conservative electorate.¹⁰⁹ However, the Government reserved the right to nominate two members on each Committee, and all three men were selected under this provision. In the final months of 1858, Cherkassky was appointed to the Tula Committee, Koshelev was asked to sit on the Riazan Committee, and Samarin travelled eastwards to work in Samara. Even before the Committees began work, in September and October, the three men knew that they would face serious opposition from the conservative faction on each Committee. They therefore decided to continue working closely with one another in formulating a

coherent set of proposals and tactics.

Koshelev suggested in June, 1858, that they should initiate a three-way correspondence to discuss their ideas. His friends agreed, and from this date onwards, each made two copies of their letters which they then forwarded to the remaining members of the triumvirate.¹¹⁰ They also occasionally met in person, sometimes in the company of their sympathisers, to discuss the problems and difficulties faced in their home provinces.¹¹¹ Although the three men occasionally disagreed about detailed issues which emerged whilst the Committees were in session, they remained of one mind about the fundamental principles involved in reform. They formed a distinctive group of 'Slavophile reformers', attracting support from some other liberal Committee members dotted around the country.

As soon as the Provincial Committees convened, it became clear that the Government's proposals would receive a hostile reception from the conservative majorities, as would any Committee members who supported reform. The proceedings dragged: "What can I say to you about our Committee", lamented Cherkassky in a letter to Koshelev, describing how discussions always collapsed in recriminations and arguments.¹¹² His correspondent sympathised, noting that "our Committee becomes worse and worse"; in a letter written eight weeks after the Riazan Committee opened its proceedings, he moaned, "we have not as yet resolved a single question of any importance".¹¹³ Samarin faced even worse problems, writing to Cherkassky, "things are going badly, so badly that it is worse than impossible", whilst telling Koshelev that "things here are going to the devil".¹¹⁴

As time passed, the fortunes of the three men began to diverge sharply. Samarin, profoundly contemptuous of the intellectual abilities of

his colleagues in Samara, found that his drafting and editing skills made him indispensable. By the end of 1858, he played an important role in preparing the Committee's proposals and was largely responsible for writing the last three chapters of its final Report.¹¹⁵ Cherkassky, by contrast, faced great hostility from fellow Committee members. He was also widely distrusted by Tula landowners, even though there were many liberals amongst the local nobility.¹¹⁶ Koshelev fared worse of all. The conservatives in Riazan were led by F. S. Ofrosimov, described by Koshelev himself as "very able". The conservative majority proved masterly at interpreting the Government's agenda to suit their own purposes.¹¹⁷

At the end of 1858, tensions between the two factions on the Riazan Committee exploded in dramatic fashion. Ivan Aksakov published an article in *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, defending Koshelev and Cherkassky and bitterly criticising their opponents. The conservative majority of the Riazan Committee was infuriated by the personal tone of the article and demanded an apology from Koshelev. When he refused, his opponents used the issue as a pretext to force his withdrawal from the Committee.¹¹⁸ In the days following his withdrawal, Koshelev visited St Petersburg, meeting with the Minister of the Interior Lanskoi - one of the principal proponents of reform in the capital. The Minister supported Koshelev, and secured his reinstatement on the Riazan Committee, along with the dismissal of one of his chief rivals.¹¹⁹ Not surprisingly, relations between Koshelev and the conservative majority continued to be tense, although they seem to have improved markedly once the business of drafting a Final Report began.

Since the Final Reports reflected the viewpoint of the conservative majorities, the three Slavophile reformers naturally dissented from their conclusions. Although the two factions disagreed on almost every subject,

most of the squabbling centred on two issues: the amount of land to be allocated to the peasantry, and the level of compensation to be paid by them to their former masters. Since it was impossible to bridge the gap between the two sides, the minority factions in Tula, Riazan and Samara all produced their own Final Reports, emphasising points on which they dissented from the views of the majority. Both Majority and Minority Reports were then forwarded to Petersburg for scrutiny by the Government.

During the months the Provincial Committees were in session, the Slavophiles' experiences helped determine their future attitude towards the reform process. In the first place, the implacable opposition of most of the *dvorianstvo* to reform had become clear. The three men's earlier hope that emancipation could take place on the basis of individual and social initiatives was clearly untenable. In the second place, the backing which the Government gave to the reformers on the Committees, symbolised by Lanskoi's support for Koshelev, showed that the Government, alone, had the political will necessary to abolish serfdom. The hostility of the Russian landowning nobility to emancipation inevitably pushed supporters of reform into the arms of the state even when, as in the case of the Slavophiles, they entertained grave doubts about the efficacy of Government action in resolving social problems.

The Slavophiles and the Editing Commission.

The Editing Commission was established in July, 1858. Its structure was overhauled the following February, under the chairmanship of Rostovtsev, when it was given the task of codifying the reports of the

Provincial Committees into a coherent set of proposals. In theory, the Commission was to be divided into two groups, the first consisting of career civil servants, the second consisting of gentry experts appointed from outside the bureaucracy.¹²⁰ In practice, this distinction was abolished almost as soon as regular meetings began.

Samarin was invited to join the Commission as one of the expert members, presumably because of the knowledge and skills he had demonstrated in his recent work on the Samara Committee. One of the bureaucrats appointed to the Commission, Nikolai Miliutin, was an old acquaintance of Samarin and wrote to his friend urging him to accept the appointment. Supporters of emancipation were, Miliutin noted, still small in number, and the Commission's task would not be easy: "hatred, calumny, intrigue of every kind will probably be directed at us".¹²¹ Samarin accepted the invitation, relishing the opportunity to become more involved in implementing reform. Cherkassky's invitation to join the Commission arrived a few days later; he accepted immediately.

Koshelev, however, was not asked to participate in the Commission's work. This omission came as a complete surprise to all three men; Samarin, for example, wrote to his friend on several occasions, confidently asking him when he was planning to travel to the capital. It is unclear why Koshelev was not appointed. Peter Semenov, who advised Rostovtsev on the composition of the Commission, certainly put forward Koshelev's name; it seems that Rostovtsev was at first receptive to the idea, before later changing his mind.¹²² Semenov suggested in his memoirs that Koshelev's earlier association with the liquor trade may have offended the sensibilities of the Commission's chairman, causing him to look askance at the appointment.¹²³ Koshelev believed that the refusal to appoint him

reflected an anti-Slavophile prejudice at the heart of the Government.

Tsar Alexander was certainly not particularly enamoured of Slavophile ideas and activities.¹²⁴ It is also possible that Koshelev's bruising battles with the authorities over the censorship of his journals may have damned his name in Petersburg.¹²⁵ Whatever the reason, his exclusion soured his attitude towards the Editing Commission, and established a psychological basis for the conflict which later divided him from his two friends.

Cherkassky and Samarin were both co-opted into the bureaucracy of the Editing Commission with great ease. The two men were invited to live at the Mikhailovsky Palace of the Grand Duchess Elena Pavlova, whose salon played a great role in mobilising support for emancipation at the highest levels of Russian government and society. Whilst resident at the Palace, the two men met the *haute monde* of Petersburg and discussed their ideas with members of the city's intellectual elite.¹²⁶ The Soviet historian E. Dudzinskaia has suggested that this experience overawed the two men, encouraging them to abandon some of their old ideas about reform in favour of those put forward by their new friends.¹²⁷ However, since both men had enjoyed close links with the Grand Duchess and her entourage for some years, Dudzinskaia's suggestion seems unlikely.

Of greater significance, perhaps, was the two men's exposure to the world of the 'Enlightened Bureaucrat'. The members of the Commission appointed from the regular bureaucracy shared a remarkably homogenous backgrounds. Most were comparatively young, typically born between 1815 and 1825. The majority entered service during the late 1830's after completing a diploma course at university. Only a few, like Lemansky, had no formal higher education. Although the majority of these 'bureaucratic

members' were from less privileged backgrounds than Samarin and Cherkassky, there were obvious similarities in terms of age and education. There were also numerous personal links between the two Slavophiles and the 'bureaucratic Commissioners'. Samarin, for example, had been acquainted with Miliutin and Arapetov since their service together in Petersburg during the mid-1840's, whilst Cherkassky was on close personal terms with a number of his new colleagues.¹²⁸

There was an even greater similarity between the backgrounds of the two Slavophile reformers and the Commission's gentry experts. The expert members were selected in two distinct phases, Samarin and Cherkassky being amongst the earliest appointments. A comparison between the backgrounds of the two Slavophiles and the eight other figures appointed during this first phase is illuminating.

Name	Date of birth	Education	Service	Prov, Cite,
Iu. F. Samarin	1819	Moscow Univ,	MVO/Senate	Samara
V. A. Cherkassky	1824	Moscow Univ,	-	Tula
V. V. Tarnovsky	n.a.	Moscow Univ,	Min. of Educ,	Chernigov
G. P. Galagan	1819	P.burg Univ	-	Chernigov
N. N. Zheleznov	1816	P.burg Univ	Academic	Novgorod
N. P. Shishkov	n.a.	n.a,	n.a,	n.a,
N. Kh. Bunge	1823	Kiev Univ,	Academic	-
A. D. Zheltykhin	1820	Penza gym.	State bureac,	-
P. A. Bulgakov	1806	Home	Tambov Governor	-
A. N. Tatarinov	1798	Naval College	State bureac,	Simbirsk ¹²⁹

Although the biographical data is far from complete, it is clear that the eight men had many features in common with Cherkassky and Samarin. Most had higher education and experience in the state bureaucracy (as opposed to the military). More than half had been involved in the Provincial Committees. All eight men also had a longstanding interest in

agricultural affairs. Some, like Bulgakov, had attempted to carry out significant improvements on their own estates. Others, like Shishkov and Zheltykhin, had a more formal interest in agronomy. (Shishkov had been the President of the Lebedian Society, and contributed to *Sel'skoe Blagoustroistvo*; Zheltykhin was editor of *Zhurnal Zemlevladel'tsev*).¹²⁰ In the light of this information, it is hardly surprising that Samarin and Cherkassky settled easily into their new role and found work in the Commission so congenial.

Cherkassky began work in Petersburg in April, 1859. He wrote to Samarin soon afterwards, urging him to follow as soon as possible so that they could discuss the reform proposals already being considered by the Commission. Samarin was unwilling to leave Samara immediately, possibly because he was busy winding-up the affairs of the local Provincial Committee. A few weeks later, Cherkassky wrote again, telling his friend to hurry since "all the major principles" of reform were to be decided by the end of May.¹²¹ Samarin eventually arrived in June to find the Commission in a state of uproar. The so-called 'aristocratic' faction in the Commission, aided by sympathisers elsewhere in the bureaucracy, was attempting to delay proceedings, disputing the principle of an emancipation settlement 'with land'.¹²² Eventually, internal opposition was defeated, and the preparations for detailed proposals began in earnest.

The Commission kept no formal records or minutes of its proceedings. It was divided into a number of sections, each dealing with a different aspect of the reform. Cherkassky, for example, sat on the Administrative and Agricultural Sections and played a major role in drafting the former's Final Report.¹²³ Samarin also worked in the Agricultural Section, helping to prepare many of its proposals.¹²⁴ During their time on the Commission

the two men worked phenomenally hard; meetings often continued until five o'clock in the morning. By the end of July, Samarin's health began to suffer, causing his friends grave concern; a few weeks later, he had a breakdown and was forced to go abroad to convalesce.

During their service on the Editing Commission, Samarin and Cherkassky worked closely with Nikolai Miliutin. Some contemporaries even described Miliutin as a Slavophile (showing how elastic the word had become in Russian society by the late 1850's). The three men met in advance of the Commission's meetings in order to discuss and prepare agendas, hoping that this would enhance their influence over the outcome of its deliberations.¹³⁵ Though it is difficult to reconstruct the nuances of the disagreements and debates which took place in the Commission, there is little doubt that the triumvirate exercised great influence over its proceedings. Ivan Aksakov noted that they were "the most active and important members of the Commission".¹³⁶

The co-operation of the three men was not founded on complete unanimity of views, but rather reflected mutual acknowledgement that each wished to promote an emancipation settlement fair to the peasants and landlords alike. Occasionally, one would change his views in response to prompting from the other two; for example, Cherkassky and Samarin converted Miliutin to the view that the peasant commune should be retained after emancipation. Nevertheless, important differences continued to exist. Cherkassky, for example, agreed with the majority of the Commission that the allocations of land made to the peasantry should broadly follow the existing pattern, subject only to the safeguard of a statutory maximum and minimum level. Samarin disagreed, pointing out that the present allocation of land was simply the result of historical accident, and argued that the

Commission should determine land allocation on the basis of need.¹³⁷ There were also disagreements about administrative questions. Cherkassky supported the development of local administrative institutions, such as the *volost'*, which would be distinct from the agricultural commune; Samarin opposed such a move, though he later changed his mind.¹³⁸

Koshelev, meanwhile, had left Russia for a tour of Western Europe, apparently to boost his spirits following his exclusion from the Commission.¹³⁹ During this period (Spring, 1859), his ideas about reform still closely coincided with those of his friends. Personal relations between them also appear to have been good; Cherkassky wrote to Koshelev in May, asking him to write a series of articles defending the Commission's proposals.¹⁴⁰ During his visit abroad, Koshelev stayed in touch with developments in Petersburg, reading the special journals published by the Commission.¹⁴¹ He was generally happy with progress, although he was afraid that his friends were too willing to compromise their principles in order to agree with the other members of the Commission. In early July, he wrote to Cherkassky, chiding him for shifting his position on the question of rural administration.¹⁴² However, in another letter sent a few weeks later, Koshelev noted that he was "very pleased with [the Commission's] conclusions, and have only a few minor comments; in general they are very good".¹⁴³

A few months later the position was transformed. Koshelev had become one of the most bitter critics of the Commission. His vitriolic attacks on its proposals threatened a personal rupture with his erstwhile friends. As Koshelev was happy to accept most of the Commission's proposals in July, it does not seem that his later disagreements with Samarin and Cherkassky can

have been based on a deep conflict of principle; nor, judging from the amicable tone of his letters in early summer, was there any personal animosity before August. A study of this rapid turnaround of events reveals a good deal about the emancipation process, as well as the effect it had on relationships within the Slavophile group.

The Editing Commission was set up to examine submissions from representatives of the Provincial Committees and to prepare detailed proposals about the implementation of reform. The administrative machinery was eventually set in motion, and delegates summoned from every Provincial Committee, including one to represent the opinion of the minority faction. Koshelev was selected as minority delegate from Riazan. He agreed to visit Petersburg, even though he entertained considerable doubts both about his fellow deputies and the Commission.¹⁴⁴

The Commission's members were suspicious of the forthcoming Assembly of the deputies, fearing it would articulate the one-sided interests of landlords in contrast to their own, supposedly more even-handed, approach. On the 15th of July, Cherkassky wrote to Koshelev, telling him that, "amongst the deputies is a terrible cabal, and we could very easily lose the battle. There is terrible opposition against our Commission".¹⁴⁵ When the deputies arrived in the capital in early August, Samarin and Cherkassky still viewed Koshelev as a natural ally. They urged him to avoid the company of his fellow deputies, suggesting that he should ignore the various strategy-meetings they were holding.¹⁴⁶

Meanwhile, certain members of the Commission, including Miliutin and Cherkassky, were preparing a 'coup' designed to minimise the threat which the deputies could pose to the progress of reform. A short submission,

entitled 'A Glance at the Peasant Question at the Present Time', was forwarded to the Tsar through Lanskoi. It suggested that the deputies should be excluded from considering any of the fundamental questions involved in emancipation, and that their role should be limited to providing technical information about reform in their home regions.¹⁴⁷ Miliutin and his colleagues sought, in effect, to achieve a pre-emptive strike which would eliminate the influence of the gentry deputies. The Tsar agreed to the proposal and, on the 15th of August, the deputies convened to hear a detailed description of their tasks. Samarin, who was present at this occasion, described vividly the horror on the deputies' faces as they began to understand the significance of the Tsar's *zapiska*.¹⁴⁸ They bitterly resented the emasculation of their role. In the course of the next few weeks, a bitter political battle developed in which each side attempted to manipulate the rules and instructions for its own interests.

Koshelev was infuriated by the decision to limit the role of the deputies. It instilled in him a hatred of what he perceived as bureaucratic arbitrariness. He quickly became a leading spokesman and pamphleteer for the deputies, helping them in their battle to win greater influence over the reform process. At first, the deputies attempted to lobby Rostovtsev, hoping to persuade him that the Commission lacked the specialised knowledge necessary to devise detailed reform proposals for all the different regions of Russia.¹⁴⁹ When this tactic failed, they directly approached the Tsar, who attempted to soothe their feelings by assuring them that he would personally listen to their disagreements with the Commission's proposals when they were finally considered by the Main Committee.¹⁵⁰ However, whilst the deputies won some minor concessions,

they were unable to exercise any real influence over the final emancipation proposals.

Koshelev's resentment at the arbitrary treatment suffered by the deputies affected his entire view of the emancipation process. He expressed his ideas over the next few months in a series of pamphlets and in an official submission commenting on the Editing Commission's proposals. In addition to attacking the Commission's attitude towards the gentry deputies, he singled out two aspects of its proposals for particular criticism: its ideas about the new system of rural administration, and its failure to respect the property rights of landowners.

Koshelev criticised proposals made by the Administrative Section of the Commission for extending the power of the bureaucracy into the countryside. "According to the 8th Report, the power of the landlords is to be completely abolished. Of course I will not shed any tears over this here; certainly not.....But I cannot help asking myself one question; to whom will this power be transferred".¹⁵¹ Koshelev argued that the Administrative Section wanted to introduce a new rural order based on a system of "bureaucratic management" which would destroy the "spiritual and material.....strength of Russia".¹⁵² Whilst the peasantry would be the main victims of the new bureaucratic order, in the long-term, "the private interests" of all rural inhabitants would be damaged by the "formalism of the *chinovnik*".¹⁵³

Submissions made by other deputies echoed Koshelev. A few, like Unkovsky, wanted more local powers to be given to the peasantry. The majority, though, were more worried about the effect the expansion of bureaucratic power would have on the local influence and prestige of the

landowning *dvorianstvo*. Koshelev shared both these fears, but his deepest concern was over the future of the *dvorianstvo*. He argued that the Government was faced with an important choice determining the future of the First Estate. Did it wish the *dvorianstvo* to consist of "real, land-owning, enlightened, strong members of the rural population; or urban speculators and tourists, and eventually subjects for restocking the bureaucracy"?¹⁵⁴ If the nobility was to avoid the latter fate, the new social and administrative structure in the countryside had to be designed in such a way as to ensure that wealthy landowners exercised the preponderant influence over local life.

Koshelev was particularly worried by the Commission's attitude towards private property. While serving on the Riazan Provincial Committee, he had supported a comparatively generous allocation of land for the peasantry. Now, however, he modified his position, in reaction to the Commission's proposals: "It is painful for me to raise my voice against an overly-generous land division and, in some areas, too low a level of obligations, as well as against the excessive privileges granted to the peasantry; but, justice in all things".¹⁵⁵ He drew up his own proposals, suggesting land allocation and obligation levels considerably less liberal than the Commission's.

As the meetings between the deputies and the Commission members became increasingly acrimonious, tension inevitably increased between Koshelev and his two old friends. In late autumn, Koshelev wrote to Cherkassky noting that, "from the words of the Princess [Cherkasskaia], and from your jokes, I gather that you believe me to be opposed to the Editing Commission cabal". In spite of his offensive choice of words, he sought to assure the

Prince that "in essence we seek the same thing, and there are no differences between us".¹⁵⁶ Cherkassky responded rather unconvincingly, observing that, "I don't at all think that you are conspiring against the Editing Commission"; he admitted, however, to thinking that Koshelev had been carried away by a "spirit of criticism", which was being exploited by their mutual enemies.¹⁵⁷ The Prince observed optimistically that his differences with Koshelev were limited to technical issues and expressed the hope that they could remain close personally in spite of their disagreements. It is clear, though, that their loyalty to one another was under considerable strain, which was made worse by the occasional thoughtless remark. Samarin's absence abroad, in search of a health-cure, did not ease matters. The relationship between Cherkassky and Koshelev had never been particularly close, and the presence of their mutual friend could have alleviated some of the strain.

Koshelev continued at loggerheads with his old friends throughout the first part of 1860. In April of that year, he wrote to Samarin, sadly noting the extent of the gulf that separated them. "We, that is the opponents of the Editing Commission, seem to you to be idealists or ill-intentioned, or even out and out *pomeshchiki*. You appear to us as idealists or ill-intentioned, or as out and out *chinovniki*". Once again he returned to his favourite theme, accusing the Editing Commission of trying to destroy "the local status of the landowners". Whilst he acknowledged that "in essence we seek the same thing", circumstance dictated that "we are in different camps, and must fight each other" (*deistvuem drug protiv druga*).¹⁵⁸

A New Twist on an Old Theme: Petersburg v. Moscow

This chapter has so far concentrated on the ideology and practice of Slavophile reformism, developed after 1855 by Samarin, Koshelev and Cherkassky. By contrast, neither Khomiakov or Konstantin Aksakov played any role in the official preparations for emancipation. However, both men took an active interest in reform, and followed events closely. Following his failure to be appointed to the Editing Commission, Koshelev visited the two men in Moscow on number of occasions, giving them news of developments in Petersburg. Cherkassky and Samarin also met their old friends during trips to the city, and kept up correspondence with them even when their work-load in the Commission was at its busiest.

Khomiakov spent a good deal of time on his estates during this period, which kept him informed about the development of abolitionist sentiment amongst his fellow Tula landowners. Small coteries of the local gentry had met together to discuss possible reform since the late 1830's, and, by the 1850's, their number had expanded considerably. The most important group centred around I.A. Raevsky, and included Cherkassky and Khomiakov amongst its habituees.¹⁵⁹ This group was, in turn, able to count on the support of a wider section of the province's nobility. The local Noble Assembly elections, in December, 1858, showed that the conservatives were still in a clear majority in Tula province, and Prince Cherkassky's attempted election to the Noble Committee was heavily defeated.¹⁶⁰ Nevertheless, more than a third of the voters - a remarkably high figure - attended a banquet in order to pay their respects to the Prince. The after-dinner speeches showed a considerable amount of support for the ideas and policies pursued by Cherkassky on the Provincial Committee. The warmest praise came from

Khomjakov, suggesting that he agreed with the Prince over most of the substantial issues involved in reform.¹⁶¹

Because Khomjakov did not sit on any of the committees involved in the reform process, he was unable to influence events directly. Surprisingly, he was not even particularly active as a publicist for the abolitionist cause, though a few years earlier he argued that the Slavophiles' main task was to influence public opinion. In the 1840's, he wrote a number of articles revealing his extensive knowledge of rural life and agricultural affairs¹⁶². However, by the second half of the 1850's his attention was focussed on other interests. He worked hard in his capacity as chairman of the newly-formed 'Society of the Lovers of Russian Literature', making a number of speeches and carrying out a considerable amount of administrative work. His speeches to the Society covered a range of historical, philosophical, and literary themes, and continued to espouse the ideas of early Slavophilism - the importance of *narodnost'*, the symbolic importance of Moscow in the Russian psychological culture, etc. He also devoted a good deal of time to his 'Notes on Universal History', as well as to his poetry.

Khomjakov's failure to become more involved in the emancipation process may also have partly resulted from personal tragedy. The loss of his mother and his wife in the mid 1850's affected him profoundly, as did a recurring eyesight problem. Under these conditions, he was happy to leave a great deal of the work to his friends in Petersburg who felt more at home in the committee-room and ante-chamber.

The most detailed account of Khomjakov's views on emancipation can be found in two letters: the first sent to Rostovtsev, the second to Cherkassky. The 1859 letter to Rostovtsev revealed Khomjakov's considerable

grasp of detail. It touched on a wide variety of themes, including the problem of organising landlord compensation and the difficulty of promoting the economic welfare of the *dvorianstvo*.¹⁶³

The letter to Cherkassky, written in May, 1860, sheds important light on the relationship between the Slavophile reformers in Petersburg and their old friends in Moscow. After a brief trip to the old capital, Iury Samarin observed in a letter that "Moscow is in an ill-disposed mood - even the circle of our close friends made a sad impression on me".¹⁶⁴ Unfortunately, he did not elaborate on these remarks, and it is not clear whether the two groups differed over a specific issue or a more profound conflict of principle. Khomiakov's letter to Cherkassky indicates that he had considerable reservations about some of the proposals put forward in Petersburg: "You know, and I have not tried to hide it, that I disagree with the Commission over many things".¹⁶⁵ Much of Khomiakov's criticism reflected his fear that the proposed terms and conditions were too harsh on the peasantry (a mirror image of Koshelev's fears that the gentry was being penalised by the proposed settlement). In particular, he regretted that the peasantry were not given the automatic right to redeem their lands, but, instead, were forced to wait for the landowner to take the initiative. Khomiakov was also afraid that the Commission's proposals about rural government would erode the autonomy of the peasant *mir*, transforming an independent social institution into a government agency. Nevertheless, he gave his blessing to the Commission's suggestions, believing that they represented a considerable advance over the existing state of affairs and should be welcomed by all opponents of serfdom.

Konstantin Aksakov completely rejected the need for compromise.

Temperamentally unsuited to the practical work necessary for implementing reform, Aksakov continued to view the world through the prism of early Slavophile ideology until his death in 1860. A study of his attitude towards emancipation is of value since it symbolises the contrast between two distinct phases in Slavophile thought.

Aksakov's newspaper, *Molva*, has received little attention from historians. Its aim was to popularise Slavophile ideas and introduce them to a wider audience. Some articles tried to explain Slavophile ideas about such complex topics as the moral vocation of the Russian *narod*, usually within the confines of a five hundred word editorial.¹⁶⁶ Other articles examined more contemporary problems, such as war and international relations.¹⁶⁷ The paper generally did not address the detailed issues raised by the emancipation debate. In one editorial, Aksakov expressed his ideas about the purpose of social reform, arguing that genuine progress should consist of "moving forward to the truth".¹⁶⁸ He did not, however, provide any ideas about how this ideal could be translated into action. A few other contributors, such as N. I. Tolstoy, were more realistic in their approach, but *Molva* does not appear to have built up any significant readership or influence amongst those responsible for developing reform proposals.¹⁶⁹

During the mid-1850's, Aksakov wrote an article entitled 'The Peasant Commune', in which he attempted to come to grips with the practical problems posed by emancipation. He began by arguing, unconvincingly, that public opinion had turned against serfdom, "and demanded remedies for escaping from this painful state of affairs". Aksakov predictably recommended that the new social order in Russia should be built around the

commune, which he characterised as "the ideal...to which we must strive".¹⁷⁰

Whilst Aksakov had been content in his earlier articles simply to praise the moral virtues of the commune form, in 'The Peasant Commune' he attempted to justify it on practical grounds as well. A number of his ideas echoed those put forward in Khomiakov's article of 1848. Aksakov argued that the concentration of land-ownership in England during the previous hundred years had been instrumental in causing a flight from the land, which, in turn, brought about an appalling rise in the number of urban poor. Unlike many of his Slavophile friends, Aksakov was not impressed by England's economic power and her liberal traditions; he dismissed the freedom of the press and the right to pursue litigation as "fruitless formalism", since they were only of benefit to the wealthy minority.¹⁷¹ Aksakov also dismissed French society, with its mass of small peasant farmers, as a possible model for Russian development. Whilst the two-thirds of the rural population who had their own farms were comparatively well-off, the remaining section lived in appalling poverty.¹⁷² Russia, by contrast, offered a model of a society capable of reconciling the economic, moral and personal aspirations of humanity. "The ideal of *obshchinost'* can develop far more easily on the basis of the communal form of land-ownership than on alternative forms of property tenure".¹⁷³ In other words, common cultivation of the soil was not only economically efficient; it also offered the best hope of developing a united and harmonious society.

Aksakov's detailed criticisms of the Editing Commission's proposals, which appeared in an anonymous pamphlet published in Leipzig in 1860, were informed by his distinctive moral vision of Russian society. The central

theme of these comments was the need to preserve the autonomy of the village *mir* against the inroads of bureaucratic interference. By expressing such a fear Aksakov was, of course, following in the footsteps of Ivan Kireevsky and Koshelev, who had both warned that there was no guarantee that bureaucratic power would be any less onerous than that of the landlords. Aksakov noted that in the past the landlord had often tolerated the autonomy of the *mir*, providing that it paid its various dues on time; as a result "the power of the landlord serves as a glass shield under which the peasants can live their own lives".¹⁷⁴ Once this cover was removed, the *mir* would be exposed to a new set of challenges which could prove more deadly.

Aksakov made no claim to be an expert on the practical details of emancipation. In his comments about the Reports of the Administrative Section of the Editing Commission, which were largely drafted by Cherkassky, he noted frankly that, "when the talk is concerned with the greater or lesser division of the land, or the valuation of private allotments, I neither understand about these things nor consider them important". By contrast, when the Commission's proposals touched upon the "spirit of the Russian people" Aksakov did not feel "able to remain silent".¹⁷⁵ Aksakov accused Cherkassky of only taking the landlords' interests into account when preparing the reform proposals of the Administrative Section. "Do they really want an emancipation settlement which satisfies the peasants? Of course not, since they say that the land is the exclusive property of the landlords".¹⁷⁶

Aksakov was also unhappy about the Commission's attempts to incorporate the peasant *mir* into the new system of rural administration which would be instituted after emancipation. "What do we see in this

Report... Neither more nor less than the complete destruction of the essence of Russia's communal foundations".¹⁷⁷ Aksakov was especially critical of those sections of the Report which set out regulations for the internal functioning of the *mir*. He was particularly incensed by the Commission's decision to allow the *mir* to take important decisions by majority vote, rather than requiring unanimous assent.¹⁷⁸

Aksakov attempted to sketch out an alternative set of proposals to those advanced by the Commission. In particular, he sought to devise a system of rural administration which would protect the peasants from bureaucratic power and interference. He accepted the Commission's suggestion that several villages should be grouped together to form a *volost'* and argued that all relations between the *narod* and the Government should be conducted by a small committee elected by the *volost'* Assembly. Such a system would, he believed, minimise contact between the state and the *narod*, decreasing the chances of the peasantry being contaminated by exposure to political power and institutions.¹⁷⁹

Conclusion

Slavophile reformism developed in response to changes in Government policy towards emancipation. Once it became clear that the Government was prepared to accept a certain amount of debate on the subject, as well as a degree of gentry participation in carrying out reform, individuals like Samarin and Koshelev rushed to take advantage of the new opportunities. Slavophile reformism was more than an ideology; it was a distinctive amalgam of thought and action. Its essence lay in its pragmatism. Whilst

the Slavophile reformers had clear ideas about the kind of emancipation settlement they wanted to achieve, they were prepared to compromise in order to defend the principle of abolition against its opponents.

Of course, questions of tactics could not be neatly separated from questions of principle. The quarrel between Koshelev on the one hand, and Samarin and Cherkassky on the other, was essentially about a single issue: at what stage did compromise with the state cease to be a pragmatic means of promoting reform and instead become a craven acceptance of bureaucratic tutelage over society? Koshelev was inclined to draw the line sooner than his two friends.

One further question remains to be answered. Was Slavophile reformism a new phenomenon, bearing little relation to the doctrine promulgated in the salons of the 1840's and early 1850's? Or was it, instead, the direct heir of those earlier Slavophile ideas, merely seeking to adapt them to contemporary realities? The answer lies somewhere between these two extremes. Early Slavophilism was far too abstract and philosophical to serve as the basis for a coherent ideology of social reform. It reflected the concerns of a social milieu frustrated by its lack of status in society, yet fearful of attacking outright the social and political structures which guaranteed its security. The task of the Slavophile reformers was to address contemporary developments in a realistic manner. By espousing the cause of reform, they sought to change society in a way that would resolve these dilemmas. The schisms and tensions which arose between the members of the circle were an inevitable concomitant of these changes.

1. V. Aksakova; *Dnevnik*, p.66.
2. A. Koshelev; *Zapiski*, p.82.
3. Sh.M. Levin; *Ocherki po istorii russkoj obshchestvennoj mysli*, p.309.
4. M. Gilleson; 'Neizvestnye publitsisticheskie vystuplenija P.A. Viazemskogo i I.V. Kireevskogo', in *Russkaja Literatura*, 1966, #4, p.132.
5. S.M. Solov'ev; *Zapiski*, p.335.
6. The best account of the projects can be found in N.S. Bagramian; 'Pomezhchich'i proekty osvobozhdeniya krest'ian', in *Revoluционная ситуация в России в 1859-1861 гг.*, vol.2, p.19 ff.
7. W. Bruce Lincoln; 'The Karlovka Reform', in *Slavic Review* 1969, vol.28, #3, pp.463-474.
8. K. Kavelin; *Sobr. Soch.*, vol.2, pp.9-87.
9. T. Emmons; *The Russian Landed Gentry and the Emancipation*, pp.89-95.
10. W. Bruce Lincoln; *Petr Semenov-Tian-Shanskii. The Life of a Russian Geographer*, p.16ff.
11. B. Nol'de; *Iury Samarin i ego vremja*, pp.61-62.
12. *ibid.*, p.74.
13. Bagramian *op.cit.*, p.22.
14. Koshelev; *Zapiski, prilozhenie*, pp.6-8. For details of Cherkassky's activities in Tula, see chapter 3 above, pp.124-126.
15. Koshelev; *Zapiski*, p.82.
16. Iu. Samarin; *Soch.*, vol.2, p.12.
17. *ibid.*, p.18.
18. See chapter 7, pp.350-354.
19. Bagramian *op.cit.*, p.20.
20. Koshelev; *Zapiski, pril.*, p.57.
21. Iu. Samarin; *Soch.*, vol.2, p.59.
22. Bagramian *op.cit.*, pp.22-23.
23. Iu. Samarin; *Soch.*, vol.2, p.25,28.
24. Koshelev; *Zapiski, pril.*, p.86.
25. *Krest'ianskoe dvizhenie v Rossii (1850-1856)*, pp.732-733.

26. A.A. Skerpan; 'The Russian National Economy and Emancipation' in A. Levin and A. Ferguson (eds); *Essays in Russian History*, pp.161-229.

27. 'Zanetki i vypiski dlia sochinenii po filosofii i politicheskoi ekonomii', in TsGALI, f.236 (Kireevskys), op.1, ed.kh, 13, 11, 11-13.

28. TsGALI, f.10 (Aksakovs), op.4, ed.kh, 56, 11, 5-6 & 28.

29. For example, *Sel'skoe Blagoustroistvo*, 1858, bk.4, p.45.

30. Mill's political views exercised far less influence on the Slavophiles than his economic views; the Englishman's liberal individualism was of far less interest to them than his views about economics.

31. Iu. Samarin; *Soch.*, vol.2, p.86.

32. *ibid.*, pp.115, 129, 134.

33. O. Trubetskaya; *Biografija kniaza Cherkasskogo*, vol.1, bk.1, p.17.

34. *ibid.*, p.39.

35. *ibid.*, pp.61-64.

36. Iu. Samarin; *Soch.*, vol.2, p.80.

37. Koshelev; *Zapiski*, pt.1, p.135.

38. *Ivan Aksakov v ego pis'makh*, pt.1, vol.3, p.281.

39. N.V. Lisovsky; *Bibliografija russkoi periodicheskoi pechati, 1703-1900 gg.* quoted in R. Starr; *Decentralisation and Self-Government in Russia 1830-1870*, p.57; E. Dudzinskaia; *Slavianofili v obshchestvennoi bor'be*, p.99.

40. N. Barsukov; *Zhizn' i trudy Pogodina*, vol.14, pp.313-314.

41. *ibid.*, p.316.

42. *ibid.*, p.320.

43. For details, see M. Lemke; *Ocherki po istorii russkoi tsenzury*, pp.285-286. For Khomiakov's view of the affair, see G.I.M., f.178 (Khomiakov), delo 27, l.181.

44. Barsukov *op.cit.*, vol.14, p.335.

45. *ibid.*, p.338.

46. *Ivan Aksakov v ego pis'makh*, pt. 1, vol.3, p.239.

47. *Ivan Aksakov v ego pis'makh*, pt.2, vol.1, p.26.

48. *Russkaja Beseda* 1858, vol.1, p.11

49. Yu.I. Gerasimova; 'Slavianofil'skii zhurnal "Sel'skoe Blagoustroistvo" i ego krest'ianskia programma', in *Revolutsionnaja situatsija v Rossii*, vol.7, p.186.

50. *Sel'skoe Blagoustroistvo*, 1858, bk.2, pp.3-14.

51. *Sel'skoe Blagoustroistvo*, 1859, bks 5&6, p.128ff

52. Cherkassky and Beliaev both prepared articles for the second edition of the 1852 *Moskovskii Sbornik*, which was banned by the censor. *Ivan Aksakov v ego pis'makh*, pt.1, vol.3, pp.14-15.

53. N.P. Shishkov, who contributed to the Journal, served as President of the Lebedian Society in 1859. M.S. Kyskhkin, another member of the Lebedian Society, also contributed to *Sel'skoe Blagoustroistvo*.

54. See, for example, the articles in *Revolutsionnaya situatsiia v Rossii, 1859-1861 gg.* This general analysis is visible in some Soviet works on the Slavophiles. See, for example, Dudzinskaya *op.cit.*, *passim*; Bagramian *op.cit.*, p.28.

55. Koshelev: *Zapiski*, *prii.*, p.18.

56. Gerschenkron argues that 'there is little evidence that in the decades preceding emancipation the institution of serfdom had become incompatible with the growth of agricultural output'. *Cambridge Economic History of Europe VI*, pt.2, p.706.

57. The fathers of Koshelev and Khomiakov were also keen anglophiles, which was doubtless the source of their sons' sentiments.

58. Note, for example, the parallel between Khomiakov's ideas about popular sports and pastimes, and the views expressed a little earlier by Lord John Manners in his famous pamphlet 'A Plea for National Holy-Days'. As well as Disraeli's own 'Young England' trilogy, I am indebted to R. Faber's recent book *Young England* for my discussion.

59. I. Kireevsky: *Pol. Sобр. Soch.*, vol.1, p.140-142.

60. Koshelev: *Zapiski*, *prii.*, p.20.

61. See chapter 4, pp.193-195.

62. Koshelev: *Zapiski*, *prii.*, pp.15-30.

63. *ibid.*, p.91.

64. Trubetskaia *op.cit.*, vol.1, bk.1, p.64

65. *Russkaja Beseda*, 1856, vol.1, p.148.

66. *Russkaja Beseda*, 1856, vol.1, p.151.

67. A.S. Yershov: 'Zheleznye dorogy' in *Russkaja Beseda* 1856, vol.2, pp.63-89.

68. During the 1860's, several members of the Slavophile milieu became involved with the railway business; in 1868 Chizhov led a syndicate which attempted to buy the Moscow-Petersburg line, in order to keep it in Russian hands. Chizhov was also, in the late 1850's, editor of the journal 'Herald of Industry', which devoted its pages to supporting the cause of Russian industrialisation. For a lucid discussion of some of these issues, see Thomas C Owen: *Capitalism and Politics in Russia. A History of the Russian Merchants*, esp. p.42 ff.

69. See, for example, Aksakov's editorial on the subject in *Molva*, #19, pp.217-218.

70. See, for example, I. Kireevsky: 'Ob uezdnykh uchilishchakh', in TsGALI, f.236 (Kireevsky), op.1, ed.kh, 26.

71. For a discussion of the importance of good book-keeping in the effective management of estates, see chapter 3, pp.95-97.

72. In particular, Cherkassky wanted to see an improvement in the teaching of subjects such as Economics in the Universities. Trubetskaia *op.cit.*, Vol.1, bk.1, p.16.

73. *Russkaja Beseda*, 1857, vol.2 (*kritika*), p.30.

74. *Russkaja Beseda*, 1858, vol.2 (*smes'*), p.164.

75. Iu. Samarin; *Soch.*, vol.1, p.401.

76. Kniaz V.A. Cherkassky; *ego stati, ego rechi, i vospominaniia o nem*, p.180.

77. *ibid.*, p.147.

78. Trubetskaia *op. cit.*, vol.1, bk.1, p.46.

79. *Sel'skoe Blagoustroistvo*, 1858, bk. 1, p.133. Koshelev's views were criticised by another contributor to the journal, I. Bilevich (published in 1858, bk.4, pp.192-198).

80. Koshelev; *Zapiski*, *pril.*, p.18.

81. *ibid.*, p.152

82. *ibid.*, p.152.

83. *Russkaja Beseda*, 1859, vol.1, (*nauk*), pp.67-69.

84. Iu. Samarin; *Soch.*, vol.2, p.147.

85. *Sel'skoe Blagoustroistvo*, 1859, bks 5&6, p.153.

86. Kholiakov; *Sobr. Soch.*, vol.3, pp.295-296.

87. Samarin; *Soch.*, vol.2, p.153.

88. Koshelev; *Zapiski*, *pril.*, p.71. For his general attitude towards agronomy, see his review of two works by N. Abashev and S. Dmitriev, published in *Russkaja Beseda*, 1856, vol.2, pp.142-163.

89. It seems that this work was in fact by E.S. Gordenko, although for some reason it is not signed. See 'Mysly ob uluchshenii sel'skogo khoziaistvo i byta zemledel'tsev', in *Sel'skoe Blagoustroistvo*, 1858, bk.2.

90. *Sel'skoe Blagoustroistvo*, 1858, bk.3, p.175.

91. Trubetskaia *op.cit.*, vol.1, bk.1, p.24.

92. Iu. Samarin; *Soch.*, vol.2.

93. Koshelev; *Zapiski*, *pril.*, p.12.

94. *Sel'skoe Blagoustroistvo*, 1858, bk.3, p.167.

95. Gerasimova *op.cit.*, p.188. Koshelev had dismissed this fear in his project, arguing that the peasantry would need to work for their former master for many years, in order to pay off their obligations. Koshelev; *Zapiski, prij.*, p.67.

96. Khomiakov; *Sobr. Soch.*, vol.3, pp.306-307.

97. Koshelev; *Zapiski, prij.*, p.70.

98. Samarin's argument was, effectively, that the higher cost of labour would make investment in capital equipment more attractive. "Who, for example, would invent or acquire machines or spend considerable sums in order to make economies of time and labour, when time and labour do not have any fixed cost for the landlord". Iu. Samarin; *Soch.*, vol.2, p.43. Samarin is of course tacitly assuming that the relative costs of the factors of production will be changed by reform, and that market pricing of both labour and capital is more likely to bring about an optimal utilisation of resources.

99. Samarin was particularly aware of the costs, noting in one of his letters to this friends that "our (ie the nobility's) losses will be enormous".

100. See footnote 51 above.

101. *Sel'skoe Blagoustroistvo*, bks. 5&6, p.123.

102. *Russkaja Beseda*, 1858, vol.1 (nauk), p.43.

103. *ibid.*, p.58.

104. See, for example, Koshelev; *Zapiski, prij.*, p.96.

105. For example, see Iu. Samarin; *Soch.*, vol.3, pp.218-225. Other contributors to *Sel'skoe Blagoustroistvo*, including G.F. Petrov-Solov and I. Golubtsov, also made much of the commune's potential administrative utility.

106. Trubetskaia *op.cit.*, vol.1, bk.1, p.27.

107. N.A. Tsagolov; *Ocherki russkoi ekonomicheskoi mysli perioda padenija krestostnogo prava*, pp.251-252.

108. For a brief discussion of the subject see, D. Field; *The End of Serfdom* pp.176-179.

109. Koshelev; *Zapiski*, p.95.

110. Samarin and Cherkassky agreed enthusiastically to Koshelev's suggestion. See Trubetskaia *op.cit.*, vol.1, bk.1, p.107.

111. See, for example, the account of the Raevsky circle in Tula, contained in *R.A.*, 1896, bk.1, pp.220-240

112. Trubetskaia *op.cit.*, vol.1, bk.1., p.173.

113. *ibid.*, ps.164, 199.

114. *ibid.*, ps.212, 215.

115. Nol'de, *op.cit.*, p.103.

116. *Russky Arkhiv (R.A.)*, 1896, bk.1, 220-240.

117. Koshelev; *Zapiski*, p.95.

118. For varying interpretations of this event see; Koshelev; *Zapiski*, pp.95-102; Povalishin; *op.cit.*, pp.314-318

119. Koshelev; *Zapiski*, p.99.

120. Dudzinskaia *op.cit.*, p.201.

121. Nol'de, *op.cit.*, p.113.

122. Koshelev reported in his memoirs that Rostovtsev was at first very friendly to him, hinting that he would receive an invitation, before the Chairman apparently changed his mind. Koshelev; *Zapiski*, p.103-104.

123. Dudzinskaia *op.cit.*, p.203.

124. Koshelev; *Zapiski*, p.105 (Koshelev identified Panin as the main opponent of the Slavophiles at the heart of the Russian Government). Note the Tsar's comment that "our friends the Slavophiles have done much harm in setting in motion the unfortunate trend of undermining the faith of the people in the Government". Qu, in A. Rieber, *The Politics of Autocracy* p.37.

125. See, for example, Koshelev's bitter comments in the final edition of *Sei'skoe Blagoustroistvo*, reflecting his anger at the constant harassment he faced from the authorities: "Not being able...to issue the journal on time and in the proper form, we would rather refrain from publication than give our readers articles that have been cut and watered down". *Sei'skoe Blagoustroistvo*, 1858, bks 5&6, p.28.

126. For a useful examination of the two men's relationship with the Salon, see W. Bruce Lincoln; *The Circle of the Grand Duchess Yelena Pavlovna, 1847-1861*, in *The Slavonic and East European Review* 1970, vol. XLVIII, #12, pp.373-387.

127. Dudzinskaia *op.cit.*, p.205.

128. See W. Bruce Lincoln; *Nikolai Miliutin: An Enlightened Russian Bureaucrat of the 19th Century; The Genesis of Reform; Russia's Enlightened Bureaucrats, Petr Semenov-Tian-Shanskii: The Life of a Russian Geographer*, Nol'de, *op.cit.*, p.114. P. Semenov-Tian-Shansky; *Epokha osvobozhdeniya krest'ian v Rossii*, vol.1, pp.132-163.

129. Biographical information derived from Semenov-Tian-Shansky *op.cit.*, pp.164-192.

130. *ibid.*, pp.164-192.

131. Trubetskaia *op.cit.*, vol.1, bk.2, p.8.

132. Field *op.cit.*, pp.253-264.

133. Trubetskaia *op.cit.*, vol.1, bk.2, pp.35-36.

134. Nol'de *op.cit.*, p.116.

135. Barsukov *op.cit.*, vol.17, p.86.

136. In his earlier projects, Miliutin had attacked the commune; however, once he realised its potential administrative utility he changed his mind on the subject.

137. Nol'de *op.cit.*, pp.115-156.

138. Trubetskaia *op.cit.*, vol.1, bk.2, p.41; Nol'de *op.cit.*, p.114. Miliutin unexpectedly seems to have sided with Samarin on this issue.

139. Trubetskaia *op.cit.*, vol.1, bk.2, p.11.

140. Trubetskaia *op.cit.*, vol.1, bk.2, p.9.

141. The Commission's journals were forwarded to Koshelev by Rostovtsev, in spite of the two men's earlier disagreements. Perhaps Rostovtsev had a guilty conscience!

142. Trubetskaia *op.cit.*, vol.1, bk.2, p.46.

143. *ibid.*, p.156.

144. See the comments in his *Zapiski*, p.116.

145. Trubetskaia, *op.cit.*, vol.1, bk.2, p.50.

146. Koshelev; *Zapiski*, p.117, "On my first day in Petersburg they strongly and persistently urged me not to take part in the meetings of the Deputies".

147. Trubetskaia, *op.cit.*, vol.1, bk.2, pp.76-77.

148. *ibid.*, pp.82-84. Note, too, the words of Koshelev, written a few months later; "They (the Deputies) did not imagine that they had been called to Petersburg simply to sit in their own houses answering the questions put to them, and filling out questionnaires". A. Koshelev; *Deputaty i redaktsionnaja komissija*, p.4.

149. Koshelev; *Deputaty*, p.7.

150. *ibid.*, p.11.

151. *Predlozhenie k trudam redaktsionnykh komissii po krest'janskomy delu. Otzyvy chlenov gubernskikh komitetov*, vol.2, pp.193-194.

152. *ibid.*, p.194.

153. *ibid.*, p.194.

154. *ibid.*, p.198.

155. *ibid.*, pp.278-279. Koshelev's views had undergone a sharp change since his days on the Riazan Provincial Committee, when he supported a more generous allocation of land. See Povalishin *op.cit.*, pp.330-331.

156. Trubetskaia *op.cit.*, vol.1, bk.2, p.95.

157. *ibid.*, p.95.

158. *ibid.*, vol.1, bk.2, pp.140-141.

159. *ibid.*, p.226.

160. Raevskaya noted in her recollections of the event that "from the very beginning a plot against the Prince was apparent". *R.A.*, 1896, bk.1, p.226.

161. Khomiakov praised the Prince for his commitment to promoting the dignity of man, whilst also seeking a practical agreement acceptable to all sides. Trubetskaia *op.cit.*, vol.1, bk.2, p.275.

162. See, for example, 'O sel'skikh usloviakh' in Khomiakov: *Pol. Sобр. Soch.*, vol.3, pp.63-74, which considered the role of sharecropping in agriculture.

163. See footnote 86, above.

164. Trubetskaia, *op.cit.*, vol.1, bk.2, p.139.

165. Trubetskaia, *op.cit.*, vol.1, bk.2, *prilozhenie*, p.53.

166. See, for example, the editorials on 'narodnost' (*Molva* #5); public opinion (*Molva* #12).

167. See, for example, the editorial on the Slavs (*Molva* #14); War (*Molva* #18).

168. *Molva* #6, p.73.

169. See, for example, Tolstoy's 'Uluchsheniia, neobkhodimiiia Vetruzhskomu kraiu' in *Molva* #15.

170. TsGALI, f.10 (Aksakovs), op.4, ed.kh.56, 1.1.

171. *ibid.*, 1.12.

172. *ibid.*, 1.1.7-8.

173. *ibid.*, 1.16.

174. *Zamechanie na novoe administrativnoe ustroistvo krest'ian v Rossii*, p.7.

175. *ibid.*, p.5.

176. *ibid.*, p.8.

177. *ibid.*, pp.55-57.

178. *ibid.*, p.68.

179. *ibid.*, p.56.

The Fate of Reformism: Slavophilism After the Emancipation

The Emancipation Edict of 1861 transformed the pattern of land-tenure in the Russian countryside and threatened the traditional structures of rural society. The men who prepared the abolition of serfdom - the young bureaucrats of the M.V.D. and the members of the Editing Commission - were motivated, above all, by dislike of the old social and economic order. Their involvement in the complex mechanics of the reform process, combined with the need to defend emancipation against its political enemies, meant that they devoted less effort to providing a definitive blueprint for Russia's future development.

Widespread discussion about social and political questions took place in Russia after 1861, in spite of official attempts to limit the debate. Whereas twenty years earlier the attention of the educated public was directed towards abstruse questions of philosophy, it now focussed on the more immediate problems of social reform. The surviving members of the Slavophile circle naturally became involved in these controversies. By reflecting on the new conditions of post-reform Russia, they were able to develop their earlier social and political ideas.

The death of Khomiakov and Konstantin Aksakov in 1860 completed the transformation in the personnel of the Slavophile circle which had begun with the death of Ivan Kireevsky in 1856. The two most prominent standard-bearers of early Slavophile ideas failed to live long enough to see the post-emancipation society they so fervently desired. As a result, after 1861 the development of Slavophilism lay almost entirely in the hands of the Slavophile reformers (Samarin, Cherkassky and Koshelev), along with

Ivan Aksakov.

During the two years following reform, Cherkassky and Samarin were both active in implementing the emancipation settlement in their home provinces.¹ Ivan Aksakov and Koshelev, by contrast, had more time to devote to journalistic and publicistic activities.² Between 1861-1863, therefore, it was the latter pair who acquired the highest profile in the debates of the period.

Russkaiia Beseda and *Sel'skoe Blagoustroistvo* both closed in 1860, in part because of a lack of subscribers. Aksakov wanted to develop a new publication which would devote most of its space to practical social questions, attempting to show the relevance of earlier Slavophile ideas to the changed conditions of post-reform Russia. Only by doing so, he reasoned, could Slavophilism win new supporters. The new journal, he told Princess Cherkasskaia, should serve as "a centre, linking all those of us who remain; an organ by means of which we can serve the memory of Khomiakov and my brother, publishing and defending their articles, so that their thought can remain vital and fruitful; illuminating and clarifying all the contemporary and factual questions of Russian life".³

Aksakov was, by temperament and background, a journalist, who had proved his talents whilst editing *Russkaiia Beseda*. Nevertheless, he was full of self-doubt about his new venture: "How can I publish a Slavophile periodical without the vivifying guidance and the severe control of Khomiakov and Konstantin?".⁴ He overcame these reservations, though, and launched his new publication in September 1861, under the title *Den'*, issued weekly in the form of a newspaper. Whilst the paper's format changed during its four year life, its contents reflected Aksakov's commitment to reviewing contemporary problems. One section covered

provincial life whilst others examined current social and political problems. Philosophical and historical questions were conspicuous by their comparative absence.

Aksakov's friends did not all agree with his decision to issue *Den'* as a newspaper. Iury Samarin argued that a 'thick journal' would be more appropriate, since it would allow fuller discussion of the problems facing Russia.⁵ Even so, many former contributors to *Russkaiia Beseda*, including Samarin, contributed to *Den'*. Aksakov, himself, exercised rigorous editorial control over the new paper, writing a high proportion of the articles. As a result, *Den'* largely reflected his personal preoccupations and did not always express the views of his Slavophile friends.

The Question of the Nobility

The abolition of serfdom threatened the economic welfare of the landed gentry. Although a few large landowners stood to gain from the development of commercial agriculture, many more faced great losses. The impact of the changes was muted by the conditions laid down in the Emancipation Edict; the gentry kept most of their land whilst their peasants were forced to pay redemption dues for their allotments which were well above market values. Even so, many noble landowners were unable to adapt to the new conditions - especially the loss of a free labour-force. Over the next forty years, millions of acres were sold to the land-hungry peasantry.⁶

The Emancipation Edict also threatened the social status of the landowning *dvorianstvo*. Before 1861, the rural nobility not only exercised power over their serfs but also carried out quasi-governmental functions in

the countryside. Although they retained some of these powers and privileges during the transitional period, their social status rested on increasingly uncertain foundations. Under these circumstances, it is hardly surprising that an anxious debate began about the future of the *dvorianstvo*.

The natural forum for this debate was the Provincial Noble Assemblies. The best-known discussions concerning the future of the *dvorianstvo* took place in Tver, where the local nobility had established their liberal credentials during the years before emancipation. The Report of the 1862 Tver Assembly argued that:

...there is needed the elimination of those hostile relations between the classes which are the result of the legislation of 19th February 1861, which raised the question of emancipating the peasants, but did not finally solve it. Elimination of class antagonism can be achieved only by (the classes) complete fusion.⁷

The Report was followed by an Address to the Tsar, calling for an end to noble privileges in taxation and other matters. However, the sentiments expressed by the Tver nobility were exceptional. Although some of their ideas were echoed in other Noble Committees, the vast majority of delegates defended the distinctive legal status of the *dvorianstvo*.⁸ Whilst the landed gentry were forced to accept emancipation as a *fait accompli*, they sought to minimise the damage to their interests.

Alexander Koshelev and Ivan Aksakov were both closely involved in the debate over the nobility's future, though they expressed radically different ideas. Throughout his life, Aksakov was more hostile towards the *dvorianstvo* than any other member of the Slavophile group.⁹ During his

years in the bureaucracy, he acquired instinctive contempt for the provincial nobleman which never entirely deserted him. His articles about the *dvorianstvo*, published in *Den'* in 1861 and 1862, helped set the terms in which the debate was conducted throughout Russian society. The most famous of these - "On the Self-Abolition of the Nobility as an Estate" - was published in January 1862. However, he had already outlined his ideas in two articles published the previous year, although, for some reason, these failed to attract as much public attention.

In the first of his articles, Aksakov examined the historical foundations of the Russian nobility, attempting to discover the origin of the privileges which set it apart from the rest of Russian society. He argued that the ancient aristocracy, descended from Riurik, had lost all its social significance during the early 18th century. The Petrine Reforms had transformed the nature of the nobility, making its status dependent on service rather than birth. As a result, by the middle of the 18th century the most important privilege of the *dvorianstvo* was its monopoly over the highest ranks in the military and bureaucracy.¹⁰ Catherine's reforms of the mid-18th century released the nobility from their obligation to serve the state; however, it also robbed them of their monopoly over the most important positions in the state hierarchy. Therefore, according to Aksakov, the nobility's sole privilege after 1762 was the right to own serfs. By destroying this final privilege, the recent Emancipation Edict left the nobility without any distinctive legal status.¹¹

Aksakov's argument was, in fact, of dubious validity. The Russian nobility still possessed a few minor legal privileges, even after they had lost their right to own serfs.¹² Nevertheless, the ideas Aksakov expressed in his first article paved the way for a series of recommendations which he

made to the nobility in his second essay on the subject:

- 1) The nobility should accept that its status as a separate Estate (*soslovie*) had vanished, since all its legal privileges had been removed.
- 2) The nobility should avoid any nostalgia for the past and apply itself, instead, to serious thinking about the future role it should play in Russian society.
- 3) The nobility should eliminate all the political and moral barriers separating it from other Estates.
- 4) The nobility should make a concerted effort to define carefully its attitude towards other Estates.¹³

Aksakov developed these points in a more startling fashion in his article published a few weeks later - "On the Self-Abolition of the Nobility As An Estate". In this, he warned against any attempt at establishing noble privileges on a new foundation, arguing that such a move would inevitably foment social division: "The moral unity of the Russian Land, so desirable and necessary for its progress, would be impossible if in the 19th century, at the beginning of its second millenium, there were to be created a new, privileged Estate, or an aristocracy of a western type". Aksakov suggested the nobility should, instead, "solemnly, in front of all Russia, undertake the great act of destroying itself as an Estate",¹⁴ renouncing all the legal privileges distinguishing it from the rest of Russian society. (There seems to be some confusion in Aksakov's thinking here, since he had previously argued that all legal privileges were swept away by the Edict of February, 1861). He continued to express these ideas for many years, even once the immediate controversy about noble status had faded. In an 1865 article, published in *Den'*, he called once

again for an end to the *soslovie* system, suggesting that it was an outdated relic of Russia's past.¹⁵

Aksakov was not the only journalist to write extensively about the *dvorianstvo*. Katkov's *Russkii Vestnik* also called for the abolition of the pre-reform Estate system, though its editor hoped to see the *dvorianstvo* transformed into an English-style gentry. Aksakov's hostility towards the nobility cost him many friends; *Den'* lost a third of its subscribers as a result of its editor's articles.¹⁶ Nor was the Government sympathetic to Aksakov's ideas: by the beginning of 1862, it was moving in an increasingly conservative direction, unwilling to antagonise a nobility already reeling under the impact of emancipation.¹⁷ The only place where Aksakov's words found a positive response was Tver, where the wording of the local nobility's Address to the Tsar reflected the tone of of Ivan's *Den'* articles.

Koshelev viewed the nobility's role in Russian life differently from his friend. Even before 1861, he devoted many of his articles and pamphlets to defending the status of the *dvorianstvo*, arguing it should play a leading role in provincial life after reform. Unlike Aksakov, Koshelev was himself a member of the *landowning* nobility and shared many of its attitudes and beliefs. Not surprisingly, he was inclined to treat its concerns and worries far more sympathetically than his friend.

At the end of 1861, Koshelev wrote a pamphlet, "What is the Russian Nobility and What Should It Be", which replied to several of the points made by Aksakov. It began by considering the legal codes of pre-reform Russia, which defined the privileges of each of the major social groups and set out their formal relationship to one another. On the basis of this

examination, Koshelev drew a distinction which informed all his later thinking on the subject. He argued that the old legal codes only referred to the *dvorianstvo* as a *sostoianie* (Association), not a *soslovie* (Estate).¹⁸ Unfortunately, he did not define these terms precisely, though the general thrust of his argument is, nevertheless, clear. By the term *soslovie*, Koshelev had in mind a social group defined by the possession of certain settled legal privileges - the right to exemption from taxes, etc. Its members were part of a corporation possessing a distinctive legal personality. By contrast, the members of a *sostoianie* were defined by such non-legal criteria as the possession of wealth and the pursuit of a particular occupation.

Koshelev believed that the post-reform *dvorianstvo* had lost its old role as a legally defined *soslovie* whilst failing to establish any new sense of identity. As a result, its members were increasingly racked by doubt about their role in Russian society:

Everyday we feel more and more deeply the insecurity of our Estate, we recognise more and more clearly that there is no firm ground under our feet; and with every day we become more and more convinced that there is another role awaiting us, and that we must strive to fulfil it with all our strength.¹⁹

In another pamphlet of the same period, Koshelev considered the various strategies open to the *dvorianstvo*. He agreed with Aksakov that it was impossible for it to become an aristocracy, at least in the Western sense of the term. The nobility was too numerous and diverse for such a move to be a serious option:

We have neither the historical basis nor the (financial) means. We number some 400,000 people of both sexes. Amongst us there are a few ancient nobles, dating back to the time of Rurik; many others are only of very recent origin. Some are masters of enormous estates; others do not have a piece of bread. Some of the nobility are

amongst the most educated people in Europe; but many (including some from ancient families) work in the fields, plough the land with their own hands, and are ignorant of Russian grammar. It is impossible to forge a real strong aristocracy from such elements.²⁰

As a result, another solution to the plight of the *dvorianstvo* had to be found - one which reflected its social and economic diversity.

Koshelev believed that the *dvorianstvo* could solve the problem by establishing itself as a new *sostoianie*, membership of which would depend on the ownership of property rather than possession of a legal rank. Defining its relationship with the *narod* was the biggest problem to be faced by this new *sostoianie*. Under the old system, the difference between noble and non-noble had been unambiguous, based on a clear legal distinction. Koshelev suggested that the new landowning *sostoianie* should be open to any individual who possessed the requisite amount of property; new recruits would automatically acquire the rank of *dvorianin*: "In this way we will not enter into an alien society, but rather it will come to us".²¹

Koshelev knew that only a few individuals could acquire the necessary amount of land to become members of the landowning *sostoianie*. He therefore recommended that the commune should continue as the natural 'home' for most of the *narod*.

The communes are necessary, they are for the state what ballast is to a ship - they guarantee stability; in them is found a reasoned conservatism; they will always preserve us from a proletariat; they are a true and familiar shelter for the great mass of the rural population. But the strong and wealthy cannot and must not remain in the commune; in it, they may either be despots or the victims of a general hatred and malevolence. They must have available to them an exit from the commune to another rural Estate.²²

Koshelev's ideas were an attempt to respond to the same dilemma faced by the Slavophiles before 1861 - the problem of reconciling social stability with the dynamism inherent in a modernising society.

Koshelev was more specific than Aksakov about the role he hoped the *dvorianstvo* would occupy in post-reform Russia. Whilst he agreed with his friend that the nobility should relinquish "all those privileges which separate it from other Estates", ²³ he believed it could still play an important role in defending Russian society against the dangers of bureaucratic tutelage:

We can raise ourselves in the eyes of the *narod* and acquire a real distinction. It [the *narod*] needs us; it is struggling with the bureaucracy even more than we are; we can now make ourselves its leaders. If we let slip the present propitious moment; if the *narod* settles this business without us - then Russia will forfeit the influence of its educated population, and we will find ourselves without a niche or worth.²⁴

Koshelev was incensed by the bureaucracy's failure to respect the social status of the gentry. In an 1862 pamphlet, he lamented that:

We [the *dvorianstvo*] are private people, educated and wealthy to a considerable degree; but what use is this education and wealth when we are not able to be independent, to live quietly as we wish?²⁵

He was particularly scathing about the arbitrary powers of the bureaucracy, which he believed had been strengthened by the Emancipation Edict:

We have no guarantee of our personal rights; we are subject to the arbitrariness of the local Police Captain and his officers; we are subject to authority on all sides; we cannot demand our rights under the law since it is hypocritical...²⁶

The *dvorianstvo*, therefore, had to concentrate on recapturing its earlier status and importance.

Koshelev believed the *dvorianstvo* could overcome its weakness by developing a robust understanding of its corporate status and independence. In a pamphlet written in 1865, he argued that the *dvorianstvo* lacked a clear sense of identity. Some of its members still considered themselves as *dvorianiny* - members of a *soslovie* distinguished by a tradition of state-service and legal privilege. Other noblemen were less interested in this conventional interpretation of their role, considering themselves first and foremost as landowners (*zemlevladel'tsy*). Koshelev suggested that the *dvorianstvo* could best advance its collective interests by adopting this second conception of its role. In future, it should, "stand on the soil of a landowner - firm and true".²⁷ Reconstructing itself in this way, it could maximise its influence against the hated bureaucracy (*chinovniki*).

The Slavophiles and the Debate over Constitutionalism

Numerous voices were raised after 1861 demanding institutional reforms to limit the power of the Government *vis a vis* its subjects. Some of these calls came from liberals like Unkovsky, who sought to increase the general population's participation in local administration as a means of protecting it against the dangers of bureaucratic tutelage.²⁸ By contrast, the 'aristocratic constitutionalists', such as N.A. Bezobrazov and A.P. Platonov, wanted political reforms which would increase the nobility's chances of vetoing any future Government proposals it disliked.

Early Slavophile ideology distrusted the power of the Russian state. Although it had not favoured the introduction of formal constitutional limitations on the autocratic Tsar, its authors believed that the Russian people's moral welfare depended on the state's recognition of society's autonomy and independence. Once the debate over constitutional reform began in the early 1860's, the Slavophiles were forced to re-evaluate their ideas on the subject.

Ivan Aksakov made the most ambitious attempt to adapt earlier Slavophile ideas on constitutional reform into a more sophisticated doctrine. The American historian, Stephen Lukashevich, has argued that Aksakov was primarily a publicist who made little contribution to Slavophile theory.²⁹ However, the Soviet historian, N.I. Tsimbaev, has pointed out that such a charge is unfair.³⁰ Aksakov made a concerted effort to organise his brother's ideas into a more coherent and realistic framework.

Aksakov's main contribution to Slavophile political thought was his theory of *obshchestvo*, first developed in a series of articles published in *Den'* in 1862. Tsimbaev has argued that the roots of the theory can be traced back to Ivan's writings of 1858. It seems more likely, though, that Aksakov was most influenced by Khomiakov's 1859 speech to the 'Society of the Lovers of Russian Literature', in which he delineated three different spheres of law: state law, social law and private law.³¹

Aksakov started his first article by criticising the belief that the state could create a healthy society. At one level, this argument developed the themes raised during Konstantin's polemic with the éstatist school of history. However, Ivan doubtless also had an eye on the recent emancipation settlement, which attempted to create a new society by means

of bureaucratic leadership and reform. "The state, whether autocratic, constitutional or republican, cannot by its very nature realise or achieve its goals except through the use of various bureaucratic forms and structures".³² This raised enormous problems in Russia where the state alone had the wherewithal to sponsor social change. "We have grown so used to official customs and methods that almost all of our suggestions and decisions take the form of legal projects [which never make use of] the vital strength of society".³³ In other words, whilst the state alone had the power to effect social change, any reforms it introduced would be fatally flawed. As a result, Russia lacked "an internal social life" and the "social strength" which were "the only powerful and moral force worthy of human society".³⁴

Aksakov's second article developed his ideas about the nature of *obshchestvo*. Whilst Konstantin had used the term to describe the upper echelons of Russian society - the antithesis of the *narod* - Ivan refined this simple dualism, arguing that there were three distinct elements in Russian society: the state, *obshchestvo* and *narod*. His understanding of the nature of *obshchestvo* was quite different from his brother's. For Ivan, *obshchestvo* was "that milieu in which is created the conscious mental activity of a particular *narod*; which, being created by the spiritual strength of the *narod*, elaborates the *narod's* self-consciousness". It was "nothing other than the organism of the *narod* in progressive motion, nothing except the *narod* in its developmental movement".³⁵

Digging beneath this abstruse jargon, it is possible to obtain a clearer understanding of Aksakov's conception of *obshchestvo*. It was not simply a social phenomenon; it was composed of a distinctive fusion of social and moral elements:

Obshchestvo is not created by the upper or middle *soslovie*, nor by the peasants and nobles, but is formed exclusively from educated people; or, more precisely, people of any social status who have sufficient education to engage in social activity, expressed in our time through literature.³⁶

In principle, then, *obshchestvo* was all-class in composition. However, Aksakov acknowledged that the low level of education in Russia meant that, in practice, most of its members came from cultivated noble families.

Aksakov's theory provided a ready-made social role for all intellectuals who shared his views. They alone possessed an intuitive understanding of the *narod*'s values, as well as the intellectual skills necessary to make them intelligible to a broader audience. In a letter sent to Koshelev, seven years earlier, Ivan had already shown that he did not share his brother's naive belief that the *narod* possessed such a degree of moral perfection as to preclude any attempts by outsiders to improve its condition:

The *narod* is so corrupted, so accustomed to a false way of life, that it requires a complete reeducation (*perevospitanija*); to achieve this goal will require great patience and a readiness to stand up to every shortcoming and loss.³⁷

The role of the nationally-oriented intellectual was to help the *narod* understand its fundamental roots and values. A certain parallel can be drawn with Gramsci's 'organic intellectuals' who possess an "emotional bond....with the people nation", and articulate the interests of a social class to which they don't belong. Aksakov's articles also anticipated some of the ideas developed by Lavrov and other populist theorists during the early 1870's, according to which the task of the intelligentsia was to instil in the peasantry a sense of self-awareness and self-identity.

Aksakov believed *obshchestvo* could play an important role in limiting the power of the state. Like Konstantin, he distinguished between the State and the Land, attributing to each a specific function (*delo*). However, since Russia lacked a mature "public opinion", it was virtually impossible for the Land to constrain the State. The *narod* did not understand how to secure its independent way of life against encroachment by the authorities.

"In the absence of *obshchestvo*, where it does not exist, the State principle increases the scope of its activity more and more, and is finally able.....to squeeze and suppress the life of an *narod* which is still at the primitive stage of its *narodnost*. has no sense of consciousness, and no hope of defending itself against its internal and external enemies".³⁸

Whilst Ivan's theoretical approach was different from his brother's, he still faced the problem of explaining how *obshchestvo* could use its self-awareness and moral strength to resist the State's claim for hegemony. His solution to the problem was similar to the one put forward by Konstantin. Ivan believed that the moral force of *obshchestvo* could be expressed most effectively through the power of the "free word" which, in turn, demanded an end to all censorship restrictions. He argued that *obshchestvo* only began to develop in Western Europe after the invention of the printing press. Technical developments allowed the formation of a public opinion capable of restraining governments. Aksakov claimed that public opinion, rather than constitutional safeguards, provided the best check on arbitrary and despotic rulers: "the English Parliament would not be as it is were it not for the English press".³⁹

Aksakov also believed that education was necessary to develop a mature public opinion. As a result, he was a staunch defender of popular

literacy. Education, he believed, should not only consist of instruction in the basic skills of reading and writing; it should also be directed towards a "personal, spiritual development"⁴⁰ which would facilitate the development of popular moral consciousness.

Although Aksakov did not discuss the future relationship between *narod* and *obshchestvo*, he seemed to have envisaged that the distinction between them would one day be obliterated. When this occurred, the entire *narod* would acquire a consciousness of its unique moral destiny and understand the need to delineate the scope of political power. In the meantime, Ivan made few practical suggestions about how to limit the power of the Russian state. There are hints in some of his articles that, unlike his late brother, he understood the value of formal constitutional constraints on government activity. In one article, for example, he noted that a study of the U.S. system of checks and balances could offer some interesting insights into the problem of controlling political power.⁴¹ However, whilst Ivan's theory of *obshchestvo* expressed his brother's political ideas in a new and sophisticated manner, he still failed to confront the difficult problem ignored by Konstantin - how could they be put into practice?

Alexander Koshelev's attitude towards constitutional questions differed sharply from Aksakov's. He began his 1862 pamphlet, 'Constitution, Autocracy and *Zemskaya Duma*', by discussing the role of constitutions in Western societies.

We know everything about the strengths of the French constitution and those of the German; we know about those of the Belgian, Spanish, Italian and several others; but we cannot examine the English constitution since no one can locate it; because, in England, it has developed over the course of centuries, gradually and piecemeal so to

say, according to the demands of the people and circumstances, and is contained in the numerous and bulky volumes of Parliamentary meetings.⁴²

Faithful to his Anglophile instincts, Koshelev argued that the only genuine liberty in Western Europe was found in England, where it was the fruit of a long process of historical development rather than the product of a formal constitution. Echoing earlier Slavophile ideas, he wrote that, "a constitution without roots in the life of the people...is paper, phrases".⁴³ For Koshelev, a balance of social forces was necessary to preserve the independence of society and the freedom of the individual.

Koshelev echoed Ivan Aksakov's definition of autocracy, contrasting it with despotism or tyranny: "Autocracy does not at all mean the boundless and unreasoning arbitrariness of a single person, acting only on the basis of his own wishes and views".⁴⁴ A genuine autocratic system of government demanded a dialogue between Tsar and people.

Once Koshelev established his basic definition of autocracy, he developed a thorough analysis of the bureaucratic degeneration of the Russian state. He criticised the process of bureaucratisation from two standpoints: as a corruption of the autocratic ideal, and as an attack on the power and prestige of the nobility. He argued that the Russian bureaucracy had expanded in size and power to the point where it almost formed a distinctive *soslovie* in its own right.

Appointed by the Tsar almost entirely from the nobility, the bureaucracy is something distinct, set apart, very harmful for the state, very lethal and unhealthy for Russia, and even dangerous for the Estate of which it is a product.⁴⁵

Consequently, the bureaucracy "screens Russia from the Tsar and the Tsar from Russia" with the result that "the bureaucracy rules and not the Emperor".⁴⁶ Koshelev was particularly critical of the provincial bureaucracy. He believed their incompetent and dishonest reports misled the Tsar and his Ministers about life outside the two capitals. Since the local bureaucracy was not properly controlled by central Government, its rule in the countryside became arbitrary and despotic: "the bureaucracy breaks the laws without ceremony; it sees them as articles in a book, as easy to change as they are to write".⁴⁷

Koshelev's interest in constitutional questions reflected his wish to limit the power of the bureaucracy. His first call for a *zemskii sobor* was made in 1855, in an article about the financial problems facing Russia. He revived this idea in his 1862 pamphlet, 'What Exit From the Present Situation'? Koshelev argued that Russia could only overcome its social problems if the Tsar showed confidence in his people by summoning their representatives to Moscow for consultation. "The calling of a *zemski sobor* in Moscow, in the heart of Russia, some distance from the centre of the bureaucracy is, in our view, the only way of resolving the great problems of our time".⁴⁸ Such an Assembly would allow the Tsar to become familiar with his people's needs. The bureaucracy would lose power once it was no longer the sole conduit between the Emperor and his subjects.

Koshelev provided a detailed blue-print for the new Assembly. He argued that it should contain representatives of the peasants and merchants, as well as delegates from the nobility.⁴⁹ However, his suggestions were not informed by a strong democratic spirit. Koshelev believed that the *dvorianstvo* should use its superior education and status

to exercise a leading role in a new Assembly. Some Soviet historians have suggested there was a close resemblance between Koshelev's views and those of the 'aristocratic constitutionalists' such as Bezobrazov.⁵⁰ Both men mistrusted the bureaucracy and saw constitutional reform as a way of reducing its power. However, Bezobrazov's defence of the nobility's juridical rights and privileges was alien to Koshelev.

Although Koshelev denied his ideas were influenced by any constitutionalist spirit, his two erstwhile colleagues, Samarin and Cherkassky, remained unconvinced. Whereas Koshelev looked at Russia's social and political problems through the eyes of a private citizen and dvorianin, his two friends viewed them with the éstatist perspective they had acquired whilst working in the Editing Commission.

Samarin and Cherkassky both treated the landed gentry with considerable suspicion, fearing they would try to sabotage the implementation of the Emancipation Edict. The two men's private correspondence was full of derogatory comments. Cherkassky bitterly recalled that the landowning nobility had done everything in their power to water down the Government's emancipation proposals in 1859-60.⁵¹ Samarin criticised the provincial gentry for being "stagnant, lazy, sluggish and inert", and cast doubt on their ability to engage in any practical activity demanding hard work.⁵²

Samarin was particularly scared that any new national consultative institution would serve the interests of the wealthy landowners and lead to the establishment of oligarchichal government. His views were expressed most vehemently in a short article, "Apropos the Discussion About a Constitution", which was sent to *Den'* in 1862, but left unpublished. The

American historian Terence Emmons argues that this article was intended as an attack on Koshelev's call for a *zemskii sobor*. However, it seems more likely that its intended target were the aristocratic constitutionalists, who sought greater political power for the wealthy nobility. Samarin argued that no political institution could claim to be appropriate for all nations; the correct form of state for a particular country was determined by the *narodnost'* of its inhabitants. He stressed that at that time, "we would consider as senseless any attempt to limit the autocracy in Russia.....it is not possible and would be a crime against the *narod*".⁵³ Samarin feared that the introduction of any form of national representation could only promote the interests of particular groups in society at the cost of the general welfare.

Samarin also believed, somewhat inexplicably, that the introduction of a constitution would lead to greater political centralisation, destroying the social and intellectual life of the Russian provinces. Such an idea seemed contrary to his general outlook, especially his belief that the state needed to play a dominant role in developing the country's social life. It is possible that Samarin's work in Samara province as a Peace Mediator encouraged his more sanguine attitude towards local affairs. He wrote to Nikolai Milutin in 1863 that, "the two years I have spent in the interior of the country have profoundly convinced me that the most useful sphere of activity is to be found here".⁵⁴

The Slavophiles and the Zemstva

The Government first considered the need to overhaul local government in 1858, when consideration of the emancipation question was still at an early stage. The Final Report on the subject, released by the Minister of the Interior, P. A. Valuev, in March, 1862, revealed the Government's reluctance to grant real independence to the proposed new local councils (*zemstva*).⁵⁵ Even Samarin was appalled by the bureaucratic tone of the document. However, as preparations for the new *zemstva* began in earnest, the Slavophiles began to disagree sharply amongst themselves about the new institutions.

In a great number of editorials for *Den'* concerning the proposed *zemstva*, Ivan Aksakov argued that the new councils should respect the distinction between State business (*gosudarstvennye dela*) and Land business (*zemskie dela*). In an editorial of January, 1863, he wrote that the new *zemstva* should reflect the character of the Land and limit their concern to moral and social questions; they should not be expected to carry out State functions. Their participation in administrative tasks should, he argued, "have a purely moral character founded on conscience rather than law" and should "express itself not so much by external displays of power....as by the expression of public opinion".⁵⁶

Aksakov's hopes were dashed by the publication of the final terms of the *zemstva* statute in January, 1864. In an article written a few weeks later, he noted sadly that the Government did not understand the need to respect the autonomy of society. The new law, "is simply a delegation by the Government, to society, of....several of its state functions".⁵⁷ By

acting in this way, the Government followed a long Russian tradition of treating local government as an administrative agent of the central authorities.⁵⁸ Aksakov was particularly critical of the M. V. D.'s power to set aside any *zemstva* decision of which it didn't approve.

Despite his disappointment with the *zemstva* statute, Aksakov had high hopes for the new councils in at least one respect. The Government had decided that the *zemstva* assemblies should be attended by representatives of all Estates. Aksakov hoped the meetings would provide an opportunity to bring about a reconciliation (*sliianie*) between the different social classes.⁵⁹ However, his lingering optimism was smashed as soon as the first few meetings took place. He bitterly criticised the proceedings of the assemblies, the lack of information about their activities, etc.⁶⁰ Whilst Aksakov accepted that the *zemstva* performed a useful role in promoting public health and education, they failed to live up to his early hopes of serving as a representative voice of the Land.

Koshelev was an active member of the Riazan Provincial Assembly and the District Assembly of Sapozhkovskii *uezd*. He took a far more positive view of *zemstva* achievements than Aksakov – in part because he had extensive personal experience of their operation. Many years later, he recalled his favourable impression of the first meeting of the Riazan Provincial Assembly:

This meeting made a strong, positive impression on me; it lasted from the 1st to the 18th December [1866], and during this time the members met and worked with great diligence. Many proposals were put forward; and although some of them revealed a lack of knowledge and a parochial perspective.....all the proposals were advanced on the basis of good-natured feelings and convictions. It particularly pleased me that there were many merchants and peasants amongst the delegates, that the meetings were all-

Estate in character, and that none of the nobles showed any support for serfom or Estate consciousness. How everything has changed."⁶¹

His high evaluation of the *zemstva* proceedings was confirmed the following year when, "the meetings went very reasonably and were not riven by party interests".⁶²

Koshelev believed the *dvorianstvo* could use the new *zemstva* to increase its power and prestige. Unlike Aksakov, Koshelev initially favoured a high property qualification (*tsenz*) for *zemstva* members, believing it would ensure the assemblies were dominated by gentry representatives.⁶³ Though the Government did not follow his recommendations, Koshelev still believed that noble delegates could use their superior education and political knowledge to exercise leadership over non-noble colleagues. Writing towards the end of the 1860's, when the *zemstva* had been in operations for some years, he noted that "our position in the country is becoming more acceptable with every passing day; the peasantry are becoming better disposed towards the landlords; our influence in the *zemstva* meetings is becoming greater".⁶⁴ Whilst Aksakov saw the *zemstva* as a means of diluting noble power, Koshelev viewed them as a means of promoting it.

Koshelev, unlike Aksakov, also praised the administrative value of the new *zemstva*. He pointed out that the Government could not be responsible for every trivial detail of administration in a country as vast as Russia. The *zemstva* could shoulder a number of these burdens and, with their greater local knowledge, deal with them more effectively than the central bureaucracy. He dismissed widespread claims that the *zemstva* were not

fulfilling their tasks efficiently, listing their achievements during their first year of existence:

The means of communication have improved remarkably almost everywhere; many large and useless roads have been closed; the many new roads demanded by trade and industry have been built; bridges and gateways have been repaired so that they can be used without danger; the grain stores have been filled with unprecedented quantities of grain; mutual insurance funds have been set up and are enjoying great success; although rural schools are not yet increasing in number, the recognition of the need to spread literacy has grown enormously in the *zemstva*, and as a result many provincial assemblies have proposed the construction of schools to educate pupils in rural areas, whilst almost all district assemblies have earmarked a greater or lesser sum for the construction of local schools.⁶⁵

Koshelev also made a number of criticisms of the *zemstva*, especially over their financial proceedings.⁶⁶ However, his strongest disapproval was reserved for the Government's attempt to limit the activities of the new councils. He attacked the new regulations of June, 1867, which placed severe restrictions on the various journals published by the *zemstva*, pointing out that the new councils would find it difficult to improve their operations unless they were allowed to learn from one another's mistakes.⁶⁷

Predictably, Koshelev's attitude towards the *zemstva* differed from Samarin's and Cherkassky's. The two members of the old Editing Commission sympathised with the Government's reluctance to grant substantial powers to gentry-dominated local councils, which might in turn use them to hinder the progress of reform. Whereas Koshelev believed the *zemstva* could give the *dvorianstvo* an independent power base, his two friends wanted to see the new councils firmly subordinated to state control.

Although arguments about the *zemstva* between Samarin, Cherkassky and Koshelev often took the form of arcane debate over trivial details of

organisation and membership, at the heart of the conflict was a competing conception of the role of state power in guiding social development.

Koshelev observed in a letter to Cherkassky that, "you expect good deeds (*dobra*) from above, whilst I only expect them from below; you hope that the Government and its bureaucrats will develop our social life whilst I am certain that nothing can come from this path of development".⁶⁸

Writing at the end of 1862, Cherkassky argued that the Government should ensure that each assembly contained a nucleus of state representatives, capable of providing non-noble delegates with the leadership necessary to overcome the obstruction of their better-educated noble colleagues.⁶⁹ (This demand, of course, was diametrically opposed to Koshelev's desire to see the *dvorianstvo* exercise the hegemonic role within the *zemstva*). The Prince also called for the Government to ban the Noble Provincial Assemblies, at least in their present form, since they served as a focus of opposition to government policy.⁷⁰ In an article published in *Den'*, in 1863, Samarin questioned whether the gentry had the intelligence and skill to organise the proposed new *zemstva* properly. One pre-revolutionary historian summed up the two men's attitude accurately, observing that their articles on the subject, "were marked by a lack of trust of society and its creative strength".⁷¹

Samarin and Cherkassky were afraid that the new *zemstva* might serve as a 'stepping stone' towards some form of national assembly - a fear shared by many in the Government. Cherkassky advised the M.V.D. to keep a careful watch on the new *zemstva* assemblies, in order to eradicate any tendency towards constitutionalism.⁷² Samarin initially favoured separate District Assemblies for each *sosolovie*, believing this would reduce the chance of them serving as prototypes for a national assembly.⁷³

In spite of his doubts, Samarin played an active role in the new *zemstva*. He helped introduce the new system of local government in his native Samara province, though he never became a member of a local assembly for fear it might jeopardise his relationship with local officials. However, he was elected as a member of the Moscow Provincial Assembly, where he served from December, 1866. In characteristic fashion, he devoted enormous energy to his work, mastering the mass of information which the Assembly required to carry out its tasks.⁷⁴ He insisted that the primary task of the *zemstva* was to provide local services, not to act as a representative voice of the local population. He also criticised delegates who wanted the new assemblies to consider more general problems, such as promoting the moral welfare of the peasants. Such tasks, he implied in a debate in the Moscow Assembly, were beyond the ambit of the *zemstva*.⁷⁵

The Slavophiles also took an interest in the other Great Reforms, though without the same passion that they devoted to the debate over constitutionalism and the future of the *dvorianstvo*. Ivan Aksakov devoted many of his *Den'* editorials to the legal reforms, a subject in which he had a good deal of specialist knowledge.⁷⁶ He also wrote many articles on the question of Church reform, arousing a furore with his attacks on the ecclesiastical hierarchy.⁷⁷ In general, though, the focus of attention of Slavophilism changed rapidly after 1861. The *narod* and the commune received much less attention than before; religious and philosophical questions were ascribed even less significance. The surviving members of the circle were instead forced to address the various issues thrown up by contemporary developments. Amongst these, of course, was the problem of social disorder.

The Slavophiles and the Problem of Revolution

The members of the Slavophile circle were greatly perturbed by the possibility of peasant revolt during the years before 1861; indeed, it was one of the strongest factors encouraging their support for reform.⁷⁶ Whilst their fears were doubtless exaggerated, records indicate there were enough rural disturbances to give some substance to their worries.⁷⁷ However, in spite of tension in the countryside, the peasants reacted with remarkable calm to the Emancipation Edict; local outbreaks of violence generally died away quickly.⁷⁸

Whilst the countryside remained calm, a new form of revolutionary violence arose which was quite different from the earlier anarchic upheavals of the peasantry. A series of mysterious fires which broke out in Petersburg, in 1862, was widely blamed by contemporaries on student radicals. In the same year, a young Moscow University student, P.G. Zaichnevsky, distributed a bloodcurdling pamphlet, 'Young Russia', calling for the overthrow of the Tsarist Regime. Similar tracts followed in its wake. Radical journalists, including Pisarev, Dobroliubov, and, of course, Chernyshevsky, introduced young members of the burgeoning intelligentsia to new, left-wing social and political ideas.⁷⁹

The generation of the 'sons' - the radical nihilists - exploded on Russian society with remarkable speed. Contemporary observers were forced to grapple with a new social phenomenon that was totally alien to their experience. Whilst the Slavophiles may have abhorred the views of their Westerniser opponents of the 1840's, the two sides at least shared a common frame of reference. By contrast, the attitudes and beliefs of the nihilists were quite unfathomable to them, as they were even to liberals

like Kavelin. The threat the revolutionaries posed to the social and political order was far more direct and orchestrated than the diffuse peasant violence of an earlier age.

The 1863 revolution in Poland heightened the sense of fear in Russian society, and strengthened the belief that order was collapsing. The reaction of the Slavophiles to all these events can best be seen in an exchange of letters between Samarin and Herzen, which followed a meeting between the two men in London in the summer of 1864. Samarin bitterly accused his old friend of using the radical journal *Kolokol* to stir up Russian youth and encourage them to attack the social and political fabric of their country:

I repeat to you a second time what I said to you in London; your propaganda has had a fatal influence over a whole generation as a destructive, unnatural habit which had taken hold of a youthful organism, the latter not yet having had time to mould itself and grow strong. You have dried up its marrow, weakened the whole nervous system, and rendered the generation of which I speak totally unfit for concentration of thought, self-restraint, and energetic action. How could it be otherwise? You have no ground to stand upon. The virtue of your preaching has evaporated; the result of many shipwrecks has been that you have not saved one single conviction; there remains nothing but revolutionary processes, nothing but a revolutionary routine, a kind of malady which I can't call by a better name than a revolutionary itch.⁸²

He described with revulsion the revolutionary tracts which had appeared on the streets of major Russian cities in which:

"they preached arson and treason - papers whereby gross atheism was thievishly ingrafted in the children of either sex, entrusted for religious teaching to teachers of Sunday Schools, 'subterranean' manifestoes, intended to deceive the peasantry, etc."⁸³

Samarin also bitterly attacked Herzen's support for the Polish revolutionaries, who attacked Russian soldiers and officials during the 1863 rebellion:

They tried to shoot Luders, the Grand Duke Constantine, and Count Berg, Viceroy of Poland; to poison Wieloposki, to cut off Trepov's head, not to speak of many others. You read in reports from Russian officers that the tossing up in the air of the bodies of the hanged peasants and Russian soldiers with throats ripped open and their skins turned inside out, like the facing of a coat, were features common enough during the pursuit of the Polish bands....What was your line of action when this sort of thing was going on.....you deliberately winked at everything and turned away from it, unwilling to see the truth.⁵⁴

Herzen's reply to these charges was interesting as well as shrewd. Predictably, he attacked Samarin for defending the repression in Poland and Russia; "a cry of protest and indignation rises from the bottom of my heart and conscience against the executions in Poland.....and, naturally, even more against any attempt at justifying this."⁵⁵ He then analysed the relative changes in the position of Slavophiles and Westerners since the salon controversies of the 1840's:

Recall the struggle waged by the Slavophiles against us in the forties and compare it with what is going on at the present time. The Slavophiles have become western terrorists, defenders of German state ideas whilst some of the Westerners (we, amongst them), renounced *salus populi* and sanguinary progress and support the self-government of every region, the village community, and the right to land.⁵⁶

Whilst Herzen's language was extreme, there was a good deal of truth in his claim. During the 1840's and early 1850's, Samarin had been one of the most vitriolic critics of the germanic and bureaucratic Russian state. By the mid-1860's, however, the Russian state had come to occupy an important role in his social and political thought.

The Slavophiles paid particular attention to the 1863 Polish rebellion and its aftermath (Poland, of course, formed part of the Russian Empire at this time). Samarin, Cherkassky, and Koshelev were all closely involved in the Government's measures to pacify the country. A study of their activities during the period casts light on their attitude towards social reform and its value in fighting the revolutionary movement.

Once the Tsarist Government crushed the revolt in the summer of 1863, it had to decide how to restore a lasting peace in the Polish lands. The Tsar approached Nikolai Miliutin, asking him to head a Special Commission on land-reform.⁸⁷ The Government hoped that the introduction of a new land-settlement would diffuse social discontent in Poland and weaken the nationalist impulse.

Miliutin asked his old friends - Samarin and Cherkassky - to join him in his work and, after some delay, they agreed.⁸⁸ The three men left for Poland early in October, 1863. The three men were instinctively sympathetic to the plight of the Polish peasantry, whom they identified as "our only ally" in a hostile country.⁸⁹ At the end of the month, they visited numerous farms and villages throughout Poland in order to obtain first-hand knowledge of local conditions. The local peasantry had been set free in the first decade of the 19th century, though without land. As a result, they were forced to pay for their small allotments by working the land of their former masters - a kind of *de facto* serfdom. Samarin's travel notes were bitterly critical of local noble landowners, citing many cases in which they flouted the rights of their tenants. In one village, the peasants had illegally "been moved to much worse land, making their lives harder and their livings worse".⁹⁰ Similar abuses were found elsewhere. Samarin believed that the absence of the commune, in both its

agricultural and administrative guise, made the peasantry's life still more difficult. The peasants lacked any institution capable of inculcating a sense of solidarity *vis à vis* their former masters.

All the Slavophiles identified the Polish nobility as a main enemy of Russia, since most of the rebel leaders had come from amongst their ranks. Writing in *Den'*, Ivan Aksakov argued that the disorders in the Kingdom were not the result of "a general rebellion, but an uprising of one section of the population, chiefly urban, the minor nobility and the proletariat".⁹¹ Samarin argued that the Polish nobility "possessed the dual characteristics of an Estate and a political party" and would use their social status to obstruct official attempts to introduce reform.⁹²

The three men returned to Petersburg at the end of 1863 to draft their proposals. The final terms of the land-settlement, published in March, 1864, were designed to improve peasant welfare and reduce the power of the Polish nobility. Hundreds of thousands of peasants received freeholds on their allotments whilst keeping the right to use the common pasture. They were not forced to pay redemption dues for their land. In addition to the land-reform, local government was also thoroughly overhauled, in an attempt to weaken the nobility's power in the provinces. All members of rural society were subjected to the authority of the new commune (*gmina*) whilst juridical distinction between the Estates was abolished.⁹³

Cherkassky and Samarin were not the only Slavophiles to defend the efficacy of state-sponsored reform in Poland. Koshelev was invited to become Minister of Finance in the new Polish Government, a post which he accepted enthusiastically.⁹⁴ He was joined in the new Government by Cherkassky, who became Minister of the Interior. The only Slavophile to voice any doubts about the two men's willingness to accept state office was

Aksakov. Shortly before Koshelev received his official invitation to join the Polish Government, Aksakov wrote to him that,

It seems that you will soon be appointed Minister. It must be hoped that you do not forget your social provenance. You are not entering the service of the Government but are [merely concerned] with one specific issue; you must nor forget your convictions nor your background....you are an ambassador from society, temporarily seconded on state business.⁹⁵

Aksakov's words sound slightly forlorn. Eight years of Slavophile reformism had shown that social and political change of any description could only come about *through* the state.

Conclusion

Once the Emancipation Edict had been issued, Slavophile ideas rapidly lost the public support they had briefly enjoyed during the late 1850's. There is no evidence that significant numbers of the landowning gentry espoused Slavophilism, even in an attenuated form. However, during the late 1860's, Slavophile ideas succeeded in attracting some support from other social groups - above all the merchant class and a small number of intellectuals. Ivan Aksakov's journal *Moskva*, which succeeded *Den'* in the mid-1860's, was funded by the Moscow merchants to the tune of 50,000 rubles.⁹⁶ Aksakov's nationalism appealed to them, since they hoped to use the journal as an instrument in their campaign for higher tariffs against imported goods. Samarin and Cherkassky, who both served on the merchant-dominated Moscow City Duma, also developed personal links with the business elite, and made speeches praising the merchants for their contribution to

Russian life. However, the alliance between the two sides was above all one of convenience, lacking any deep ideological foundations except for a diffuse commitment to Russian nationalism. Throughout the 1860's, the survivors from the original Slavophile circle found it impossible to win large numbers of supporters. The only element in their thought which struck a chord with the public was their Panslavism (see chapter 7 below).

Post-reform Slavophile social and political thought represented a curious fusion of its two earlier stages, examined in Chapters 4 and 5. Once the frenetic activity leading up to emancipation ended, the Slavophiles had more time to develop their theoretical perspective on the momentous changes which had recently taken place. However, the pace of social development precluded any return to the abstractions of the 1840's. The tempo of the times, the *zeitgeist*, demanded a more active consideration of the complex issues thrown up by reform. It is, therefore, hardly surprising that the divisions which were visible within the Slavophile group before 1861 cropped up once again.

All the Slavophiles' discussions of social and political issues ultimately came down to two key questions: *how* could reform be secured and *which* social groups should have most power? As in 1860, the answer to the these questions found Samarin and Cherkassky on one side of the fence, Koshelev on the other. The former pinned their hopes on the Russian Government, believing that it was the only institution capable of carrying through the modernisation of Russia's economy and society. Koshelev, by contrast, had a different vision of Russia's future, one in which the *dvorianstvo* would make use of their landed wealth and local power in the *zemstva* to serve as a counterweight to the state. Neither side could claim to be adhering faithfully to early Slavophile ideas, though Koshelev's

attack on the power of the state and his defence of the *zemskii sobor* was in many respects closer to the spirit of early Slavophilism. Ivan Aksakov, alone, made a concerted effort to relate the abstract social philosophy of early Slavophilism to real life. However, his articles were ultimately marred by the self-same weakness evident in his late brother's work: they failed to address the practical aspects of reform. Koshelev, Samarin and Cherkassky, whatever their theoretical differences, all showed a much livelier sense of tactics; they considered the mechanics of reform, as well as the goals.

The one area where the four men came to some agreement was on the question of the Russian nation's place in the world, and in the multinational Tsarist Empire. All of them wanted to see Russia command international prestige, and accepted that this demanded a strong state apparatus and army. It is to these questions that we must now turn.

1. Cherkassky and Samarin both served as Peace Mediators. The holders of this Office were normally drawn from amongst the younger and more liberal members of the *dvorianstvo*. The Peace Mediators were responsible for ensuring that agreements between landlords and peasants were drawn up in accordance with the regulations, and were implemented in a reasonable fashion. Both Samarin and Cherkassky fulfilled their duties admirably; they even managed to win the respect of many local landowners.
2. A. Koshelev; *Zapiski*, pp.136-137.
3. N.I. Tsimbaev; *I.S. Aksakov v obshchestvennoi zhizni pereformennoi Rossii*, p.72.
4. *ibid.*, p.77.
5. *ibid.*, pp.89-90.
6. For details of land sales see, A.P. Korelin; *Dvorianstvo v pereformennoi Rossii*, p.57.
7. T. Emmons; *The Russian Landed Gentry*, p.341.
8. Note, for example, the words of V.P. Orlov-Davydov, one of the leading campaigners for the retention of gentry privilege. "Every Estate has its own elevated calling and correct scope of action in ensuring the welfare of state and society". B. Veselovsky; *Istoriia zemstva*, vol.3, p.9.
9. Aksakov was even bitterly critical of his own brother, Gregory, when the latter decided to buy an estate of his own. I.S. Aksakov; *Pis'ma k rodnym*, p.540.
10. I.S. Aksakov; 'Dvorianskoe delo', pp.71-73, in A. Koshelev; *Kakoi izkhod dlja Rossii iz nyneshnogo eia polozhenija?*
11. *ibid.*, p.75.
12. For a summary of noble privileges in the post-reform period, see A. Romanovich-Slovatinsky; *Dvorianstvo v Rossii ot nachala XVIII-g veka do otmeny krepostnogo prava*, pp.214-215.
13. I. Aksakov; 'Dvorianskoe delo', p.81.
14. I. Aksakov; *Soch.*, vol.5, p.218.
15. *ibid.*, pp.369-374.
16. S. Lukashevich; *I.S. Aksakov*, p.1.
17. The Government dismissed (or to be precise 'retired') Lanskoi and N. Miliutin in the months following the promulgation of the Emancipation Edict, precisely to assuage gentry opinion.
18. A. Koshelev; *Chto takoe russkoe dvorianstvo i chem oni byt dolzhno?*, p.48.
19. *ibid.*, p.53.
20. *ibid.*, p.55.
21. *ibid.*, p.58.
22. *ibid.*, p.58.

23. A. Koshelev; *Kakoi izkhod*, p.16
24. *ibid.*, pp.16-17.
25. *ibid.*, p.17.
26. *ibid.*, p.17.
27. A. Koshelev; *Gолос из земства*, p.67.
28. For a discussion of Unkovsky's views, see N.I. Iordansky; *Konstitutsionnoe dvizhenie 60-x godov*, pp.69ff.
29. "Ivan's contribution to Slavophilism in the field of ideas was almost null". Lukashevich; *op.cit.*, p.1
30. Tsimbaev *op.cit.*, p.171.
31. See chapter 4 above, pp.208-209.
32. I. Aksakov; *Soch.*, vol.2, p.29.
33. *ibid.*, p.30.
34. *ibid.*, pp.30-31.
35. *ibid.*, pp.32-33, 36.
36. *ibid.*, p.42.
37. *Ivan Aksakov v ego pis'makh*, pt.1, vol.3, p.133.
38. I. Aksakov; *Soch.*, vol.2, p.37.
39. *ibid.*, p.45.
40. *ibid.*, p.40.
41. N.G. Sladkevich; 'Oppozitsionnoe dvizhenie dvorianstva v gody revoliutsionnoi situatsii', p.83, in *Revoliutsionnaja situatsija v Rossii v 1858-61 gg.*, vol.2.
42. A. Koshelev; *Konstitutsija, samoderzhavie i zemskaja duma*, p.5.
43. *ibid.*, pp.17-18.
44. *ibid.*, pp.18-19.
45. A. Koshelev; *Kakoi izkhod*, p.27.
46. *ibid.*, p.29.
47. *ibid.*, p.29.
48. *ibid.*, p.38.

49. *ibid.*, pp.39 ff.

50. Tsimbaev *op.cit.*, p.102.

51. Veselovsky *op.cit.*, p.21.

52. B. Nol'de: *Iury Samarin i ego vremia*, p.177.

53. Iu. Samarin: 'Po povodu tolkov o konstitutsii', p.62, in *Teoriia gosudarstva u slavianofilov*.

54. A. Leroy-Beaulieu: *Un homme d'état russe*, p.,178.

55. Veselovsky *op.cit.*, pp.14-16.

56. I. Aksakov: *Soch.*, vol.5, p.245.

57. *ibid.*, p.257.

58. *ibid.*, pp.244-245.

59. I. Aksakov: *Soch.*, vol.2, p.371.

60. I. Aksakov: *Soch.*, vol.5, p.259.

61. A. Koshelev: *Zapiski*, p.185.

62. *ibid.*, p.189.

63. Koshelev justified the *tzenz'* by arguing that it had existed in pre-Petrine Russia.

64. A. Koshelev: *Gолос из земства*, p.61.

65. *ibid.*, pp.6-7.

66. *ibid.*, pp.10-14.

67. *ibid.*, p.21

68. Veselovsky *op.cit.*, vol.3, p.22.

69. Trubetskaia: *Biografija kniaza V.A. Cherkasskogo, prilozhenie*, p.122.

70. Veselovsky *op.cit.*, vol.3, p.21.

71. *ibid.*, p.19.

72. *ibid.*, pp.21-22.

73. *ibid.*, p.20.

74. Nol'de *op.cit.*, p.194.

75. *ibid.*, p.194.

76. Aksakov was himself a graduate of the School of Jurisprudence and had worked for several years in the Senate.

77. I.S. Belliustin sympathised with the Slavophiles, describing himself "as a Slavophile with my whole heart", I.S. Belliustin; *Description of the Clergy in Rural Russia*, p.35.

78. See Chapter 5 above, p.242.

79. *Krest'janskoe dvizhenie v Rossii (1848-1855)*, pp.732-733.

80. The most lucid examination of such a rebellion (at Bezdnja in Kazan Province) is found in D. Field; *Rebels in the Name of the Tsar*, pp.31-111.

81. The relationship between the radical journalists and the revolutionaries is, of course, unclear. However, Chernyshevsky's connections with the first 'Land and Freedom' movement shows the fluidity of the boundary between legal and illegal activities.

82. W.T. Stead (ed); *The M.P. for Russia; Reminiscences and Correspondence of Madame Olga Novikoff*, p.24, Samarin's views bear a striking resemblance to those of the contributors to the *Vekhi* symposium published fifty years later.

83. *ibid.*, p.25.

84. *ibid.*, p.32.

85. A. Herzen; *Selected Philosophical Works*, p.547.

86. *ibid.*, p.548.

87. Leroy-Beaulieu *op.cit.*, p.101.

88. Leroy-Beaulieu *op.cit.*, p.179; Nol'de *op.cit.*, p.153.

89. Leroy-Beaulieu *op.cit.*, p.202 (Miliutin to his wife).

90. Iu. Samarin; *Soch.*, vol.1, p.359.

91. I. Aksakov; *Soch.*, vol.3, p.23.

92. Iu. Samarin; *Soch.*, vol.1, pp.369-370.

93. For a brief summary, see H. Seton-Watson; *The Russian Empire*, pp.376-377.

94. A. Koshelev; *Zapiski*, pp.144-145.

95. Tsimbaev *op.cit.*, pp.204-205.

96. *ibid.*, p.134.

The Slavophiles and International Relations

Historians of Slavophilism have often used images of disintegration and decay when describing its development in the years after 1861. The most famous account of this type, by Paul Miliukov, traced the process through a study of the ideas of Vladimir Solov'ev, Nikolai Danilevsky and Konstantin Leontiev.¹ The Cadet historian tried to show that the chauvinistic element in the thought of the latter two men was alien to the spirit of early Slavophilism, an argument echoed by numerous other scholars. Danilevsky, for example, introduced the ideas of Social Darwinism into his analysis of international affairs, arguing that the relationship between different nations was characterised by a struggle for military and political hegemony. By contrast, Miliukov implied, the nationalistic impulse of early Slavophile thought was restrained by its complex ethical foundations, which demanded that every culture be treated with respect.

A close examination of the Slavophile journals of the 1850's shows that the contrast between the two generations of thinkers has been overstated. Many articles written by 'first generation' Slavophiles also had strong chauvinistic overtones.

The literature on nationalism is vast, and yields few firm conclusions. However, a brief study of two of the most important books on the subject, by Gellner and Kedourie, can help put the debate into some kind of perspective.²

Kedourie's analysis is representative of much of the literature on

nationalism, viewing it as a product of the turbulent decades which followed the outbreak of the French Revolution. The intellectual *maelstrom* unleashed by the events of 1789 introduced new ideas into European consciousness, which in turn encouraged men to question the legitimacy of the existing social and political order. French Revolutionary ideology attacked the social and political forces which shackled the individual and constrained his will. Paradoxically, the same ideology also glorified the nation and the people, counterposing their youth and vigour with the sterility of the old political institutions which had restricted their activity. The breakdown of 18th century rationalism permitted these fundamentally mystical ideas to flourish: poets and scholars described the virtues of their nation without being forced to define them in tedious empirical terms. Logically, the 'informing principle' of a nation could take any form. In practice, most were inchoate, reflecting no more than a general sentiment that the boundaries of the state should be contiguous with those of the nation.

Gellner's argument, by contrast, attempts to show that the development of nationalist ideology was closely related to industrialisation. Modern economies require populations who think and act in the same generalised manner. This in turn depends on the existence of a uniform educational system, which only the modern state can provide. The nation state, and modern nationalism, should therefore be seen as a response to economic developments, rather than a product of the ill-defined hotch-potch of ideas current in early 19th century Europe.

The discussion in this chapter makes no attempt to contribute to this debate. Rather, its purpose is to show that neither of these two 'paradigms' can fully explain the nature of Slavophile nationalism.

Gellner's argument rests upon a set of economic foundations which do not apply to a largely agrarian and pre-industrial country such as mid-19th century Russia. Kedourie's argument, whilst undoubtedly telling us a great deal about the intellectual climate in which Slavophilism emerged, is too general and wide-ranging to provide a coherent understanding of any *single* nationalism.

The argument that will be advanced here reflects the general theme of this thesis: namely, that changes in social and political thought must be related to developments in the broader environment. The Slavophiles' attitude towards nationalism was largely determined by events in the international system in the 1850's and 1860's. In particular, the Crimean War caused them to question many of their earlier ideas and assumptions.

The Slavophiles' attitude towards Russian *narodnost'* was examined in an earlier chapter.² Since they believed that the essential features of *narodnost'* could only be known by using the esoteric and non-rational forms of human understanding, it is difficult to define precisely their ideas on the subject. It seems, though, that their conception of Russian nationality was marked by a profound ambiguity. On the one hand, they subscribed, whether consciously or not, to Herder's belief that every nation represented a single fragment of the jigsaw making up humanity, and believed that no single race could claim a monopoly over truth and virtue. At the same time, some of their articles implied that Russian culture possessed a universal validity, incorporating a set of spiritual and moral values of benefit to the whole of humanity.

This ambiguity was apparent in the Slavophiles' treatment of Russia's social and political institutions. On the one hand, they presented the

Orthodox Church as the one true Church, giving no credence to the idea that other confessions could claim equal status. On the other, they argued that some Russian institutions, such as the autocratic system of government, were peculiarly 'Russian truths' valid only for the Russian *narod*.⁴ The ambiguous relationship between these two conflicting understandings of *narodnost'* exercised an important influence on the development of Slavophilism during the second half of the 19th century. One path led to the universalism of Vladimir Solov'ev, who fervently attacked the idea that Russia could claim a unique status amongst the nations of the World. The other led to the Panslavism and chauvinism of Danilevsky and Leontiev.

The Slavophiles and the Crimean Conflict

The Slavophiles followed the progress of the Crimean War with great interest. According to Koshelev, the circle's discussion of theological and social questions gave way to consideration of military strategy and diplomatic developments.⁵ Even Ivan Kireevsky, who usually showed less interest in contemporary questions than his friends, believed that the conflict in the south represented a watershed in the development of international politics: "These are such unusual times as happen only once every thousand years; everything is mixed up; at the present moment, the past has not vanished, nor is the future yet visible".⁶ The circle's members did not always agree about the most desirable outcome of the conflict, but they all shared an apocalyptic sense that momentous changes were taking place in the structure of world society.

Some of the most detailed evidence about the Slavophiles' reaction to

the Crimean War can be found in the diaries of Vera Aksakova and A.F. Tiutcheva. During the critical months of the conflict, Tiutcheva was in attendance at the Court whilst Aksakova lived at her family home outside Moscow.

Vera was able to follow events in spite of her isolation in the Russian countryside. Her brothers served as conduits of information whilst other visitors to the house, such as Pogodin, informed the family about the latest news and rumours circulating in the capitals. The household subscribed to many of the leading domestic and foreign newspapers, allowing Vera to keep up with developments at home and abroad. The London 'Times' was her favourite source of information, since it contained detailed reports of Parliamentary debates and Government decisions in one of Russia's principal adversaries.⁷ Tiutcheva was much closer to the centre of policy-making. She had access to some of the dispatches and reports arriving from the Front and spoke daily with senior Government figures who made important decisions about the conduct of the War.⁸

Although the two women lived in such different environments, their analysis of events in the south was remarkably similar. The War evoked a strong emotional response in both women. They interpreted the conflict as one of principle: namely, Russia's right to defend the interests of the Turkish Sultan's Orthodox subjects. This view echoed that found in official circles. However, freed from the constraints of censorship, Aksakova's diary reflected her belief that the Government was doing too little to protect non-Russian members of the Orthodox Confession. On 21st December, 1854, she bitterly criticised the secular tone of a recently published Imperial Manifesto about the War, complaining that it said nothing about the religious foundations of the conflict nor the need to

defend Russia's co-religionists abroad. She identified the defence of the Orthodox Church as a sacred task of the Russian Government, praising, "the protection which all Russian Tsars have diligently maintained over many years, at the cost of Russian blood".⁹ Abandoning this duty would not only have rendered the present conflict pointless; it would also represent a betrayal of Russia's historical mission.

Aksakova and Tiutcheva both followed the military development of the conflict with great interest. Aksakova's diary was full of rumours and details about the siege of Sevastopol and the state of the defending Russian forces. Tiutcheva also viewed the siege with concern; on 24 September, she responded to a particularly alarming report by noting that, "my spirit is desperate... Sevastopol is in danger".¹⁰ The final surrender of the city appalled the two women, as it did the rest of Russian society. The defeat not only destroyed the myth of Russian military invulnerability; it also signified the defeat of Russia's claim to be the protector of the world-wide Orthodox Church.

The comments of Tiutcheva and Aksakova cast considerable light on their attitude towards the Government's conduct of the War. Tiutcheva wrote that, "the Eastern Question is a completely abstract question for the Petersburg mind", arguing that official Russia was unable to understand the impact of the War on the emotions of ordinary Russians.¹¹ She criticised the members of the Court for failing to treat the news from the Front with appropriate seriousness, preferring to live in their usual "empty and light-headed fashion". She was particularly critical of the Foreign Ministry, attacking its diplomats for "a lack of concern, weakness, indecisiveness, and lack of ability", and accused them of losing "the sense of all the historic traditions of Russia".¹²

Aksakova agreed with these comments, noting "how sickening and heavy it is to think that our brave troops are often killed because of the inexcusable blunders of their leaders".¹³ She was especially critical of the Foreign Minister, A. M. Gorchakov, whom she believed was "unwisely surrounded entirely by Poles and Germans".¹⁴ (Gorchakov was despised by all of the Slavophiles; Konstantin Aksakov even drafted a letter to the Tsar demanding his dismissal).¹⁵ Aksakova also attacked the Chancellor, Nesselrode, regarding him as too sympathetic to Austria. She believed that Russia's foreign policy could only be improved if the Tsar replaced his advisers by officials more imbued with the spirit of Russian nationalism. On hearing that the Tsar was making a brief trip to Moscow she remarked, "Thank God that the Emperor has at last left Petersburg and is now in Moscow, breathing different air, seeing different people and hearing different voices".¹⁶

Khomjakov's reaction to the Crimean War was imbued with the same patriotic sentiments shown by Tiutcheva and Aksakova. In his celebrated poem, 'To Russia', he referred to his fellow countrymen as "the chosen people", summoned by destiny to throw themselves into "a bloody conflict" to defend their co-religionists.¹⁷ He expressed these views more fully in an 1854 letter to the English theologian William Palmer which was intended, in the words of its author, to familiarise western audiences with "the feelings which pervade the whole country".¹⁸

Khomjakov's account of Russian war aims, whether accurate or not, provides an insight into his thinking about international issues. In spite of his anglophilism, the letter was bitterly critical of the policies pursued by the English Government.

I know too much of history to indulge in a feeling of indignation against any political tricksters such as Lord John Russel and Lord Palmerston. Machiavellism is no very new invention, and very worthless deeds have often been crowned by success; but I am sorry that England should have become the instrument of such a shabby intrigue, when it could have played such a noble part in the present events, without letting Russia usurp any exorbitant influence in the East.¹⁹

Khomiyakov's wrath was primarily directed against the diplomatic intrigues of the Western allies. He was particularly critical of their devotion to the balance of power which, he believed, they pursued at the cost of any ethical considerations. As a result, their russophobia inspired them to shore up the Porte, in spite of the dire consequences for the Sultan's Christian subjects.

There is, in a word, something ignominious about the conduct of so-called Christians who resort to force (*tirer le glaive*) in order to prevent other Christians from protecting their brothers against the caprice and cruelty of the Mohammedans".²⁰

This critique of *realpolitik* was accompanied by a staunch defence of the moral foundations of Russian foreign policy. Khomiyakov paid great attention to the role played by ethnic and religious ties in determining the pattern of international relations. "The Russian people is connected by ties of blood to the Slavs; it is connected to the Greeks by ties of faith".²¹ Consequently, argued Khomiyakov, Russia was entirely justified in demanding influence over the way that the Turkish Government treated its Orthodox and European subjects:

Russia has asked for guarantees; they have been refused; she has asked at the least for more weighty promises; they have been refused. Public opinion is aroused, and Russia has sensed that justice must be applied by force on a nation that understands neither justice nor the sanctity of promises.²²

Russia's present policy was, therefore, inspired by a quest for justice rather than a desire for conquest or power.

This is not the proud armament of England nor the warlike fervour of France; rather it is the calm and considered action of a man who has listened to his heart and conscience, has considered his obligations, and takes up arms because he would think himself guilty if he did not do so.²³

Although he did not fully develop the implications of his argument, Khomiakov clearly believed that Russia's sense of its international obligations and privileges rested on different foundations from its opponents. His attack on the balance of power system established the foundations for a thorough critique of the process of international relations, later elaborated by contributors to *Russkaiia Beseda*.

Khomakov believed that it was the duty of every patriotic male to become actively involved in the defence of Russia. However, his attitudes were not shared by all members of the Slavophile milieu. Nikolai Elagin, the half-brother of Ivan Kireevsky, was appalled when he was summoned to join the Belev militia (*opolchenie*).²⁴ Konstantin Aksakov also believed that service in the militia was pointless, and ignored Khomiakov's repeated demands that he should sign up. Ivan Aksakov and Iury Samarin, by contrast, both joined the *opolchenie*. The former served with the Moscow militia, acting as a supply officer during its long march to the Black Sea.²⁵ Iury Samarin joined the militia in Simbirsk, a province where he owned land. However, his mild manner and lack of military experience prevented him from enjoying the experience and he was not particularly effective as a Company Commander.²⁶

Panslavism in the Non-Russian Lands

In order to understand the Panslav sentiment which appeared in the Slavophile journals of the late 1850's, it is necessary to say a little about its emergence in the nations beyond Russia's borders. At its most basic level, Panslavism expressed a belief that all Slavic nations were united by a sense of common identity, based on shared ties of blood and culture. However, this simple premise gave rise to a bewildering number of different political doctrines and movements. Bakunin and Herzen saw a united Slavdom as a force for revolution; other writers believed that Panslav sentiment was a potential bastion for reaction. The precise significance of Panslavism was determined by the political and geographical configuration which gave rise to it.

Buno-Petrovich argues that "Russian Panslavism was the ideological heir of Slavophilism".²⁷ Whilst there is some truth in this assertion, it should be remembered that Panslavism first developed in the Western Slav lands, not in Russia herself. A few Panslav writers living beyond Russia's borders expressed strong russophile sentiments in their works. These feelings were naturally strongest in the southern Slav lands where the inhabitants generally belonged to the Orthodox confession, often suffering for their faith at the hands of their Turkish rulers. It was natural that some writers there looked to Russia as a possible source of liberation. The Croatian nationalist, L. Gaj, called for a political union of all Slavic countries to be headed by the Tsar.²⁸ Several of his fellow-countrymen echoed his demand, though many more expressed a fear that Russian leadership could eventually turn into Russian domination of their homelands. For this reason, most nationalist writers in Croatia and Serbia

denied that Panslav sentiment necessarily implied the need for a political union subject to Russian hegemony.²⁹ Instead, their Slavic sentiment served as a rallying point to unite their countrymen against Turkish rule and in support of political independence.

Anti-Russian sentiment was even stronger amongst writers in the western Slav lands. A few individuals, such as the Czech poet Kollar, expressed an admiration for Russia, but russophile sentiment was easily outweighed by russophobia.³⁰ The reasons for this distaste are not hard to find; the inhabitants of the Western Slav lands were largely Catholic, and well-aware that any form of political unity with Russia was likely to lead to an assault on their religion. Many Panslav writers from the Czech and Polish lands were also inclined to treat Russian civilisation with contempt, contrasting its barbarism with their own distinguished cultural traditions. After a visit to Petersburg and Moscow, the Czech writer Karl Havilcek noted that "the freezing temperature in Russia.....extinguished the last spark of Panslav sentiment in me".³¹ His compatriot, the historian F. Palacky, even argued that Slavs living under Austrian rule were more fortunate than nations such as the Poles, who were subject to Russian rule; Vienna was more inclined to respect the autonomy of her national minorities.³²

Czech and Polish writers tended to see Slavic sentiment as a tool in their struggle for *national* independence. For this reason, they were bitterly critical of Russian Panslavism, which they feared was a tool for Russian imperial expansionism. Prince Czartorysky, one of the leaders of the Polish aristocracy in exile in Paris, noted that,

It is extremely fortunate for the liberty of Europe that the so remarkable and very serious movement which agitates all the Slavic countries has been liberated through our efforts more and more from Russian influence.³³

The famous Polish poet, Adam Mickiewicz, agreed with Czartorsky. In the turbulent year of 1848, he even went so far as to propose the formation of a military Slavic League to defend the Catholic faith of his homeland against Russian aggression.³⁴ Palacky, too, bitterly attacked the Russian Panslavs for seeking to "absorb and destroy our nationality".³⁵

The Panslav sentiment which appeared in the Slavophile press during the late 1850's owed little to the ideas of Palacky and Mickiewicz. It owed far more to its contributors' wish to promote the international prestige and power of Russia.

Panslavism in the Slavophile Press

Russkaiia Beseda published numerous articles about Slavic affairs throughout the four years of its publication - a big contrast with the years before 1856, when few of the Slavophiles paid much attention to Slavic issues. In its final two years, when Ivan Aksakov served as *de facto* editor, more than half its pages were devoted to the subject. Panslav themes were even more prominent in Aksakov's own short-lived newspaper, *Parus*. The articles which appeared in the Slavophile press varied enormously in their tone and content. Some provided scholarly considerations of Slavic languages and literature; others were devoted to more overtly political questions. However, a common conviction lay beneath

this apparent diversity; namely, that Russia needed to strengthen ties with the Slavic populations living beyond its borders.

Prince Cherkassky and Panslavism

Students of Russian history know Prince Cherkassky for the role he played in the Editing Commission during 1859-1860. However, at the time of his death, in 1878, he was most well-known to Russian society for his interest in Slavic affairs. Ivan Aksakov wrote an obituary recalling the Prince's contribution to the 1867 Slavic Congress in Moscow and praised his attempts to promote solidarity between the nations of Eastern Europe.³⁶ At the time of his death, Cherkassky was serving as Head of the Civil Administration in Bulgaria, running the provinces recently liberated by the Russian army from the Turks.

The Prince's views about the Slavic Question and Russia's place in the world were first developed in a series of articles published in *Russkaia Beseda* during 1856-1858, many years before his service in Bulgaria. The articles reflected the Crimean War's impact on Cherkassky, and cast light on the way the conflict influenced Slavophile thinking about international relations.

Although they varied in their subject matter, a common theme ran through all five articles. Cherkassky believed that the War had destroyed the structure of international relations which had existed in Europe since 1815, with the result that a new system had to take its place. The first two articles examined events in Europe during 1855 and analysed the provisions of the Paris Peace Treaty. Cherkassky staunchly defended

Russian policy in the recent War, arguing that it was inspired by "a boundless love of the Fatherland and a complete devotion to Orthodoxy".³⁷ However, he was less interested in justifying Russian policy than in giving his readers a dispassionate analysis of the peace negotiations, discussing their likely ramifications for the future. He also examined what each participant sought from the negotiations. The Prince believed, for example, that Britain sought a settlement ensuring peaceful maintenance of the *status quo* in the years ahead. In spite of the anti-Russian tone of public opinion, the country did not wish to become involved in any future conflict. Skilfully using the Parliamentary Reports of the London 'Times', Cherkassky showed that the cost of the recent War had strained even Britain's considerable resources and argued that the country needed peace in order to rebuild its finances. British policy was therefore inspired by a search for a stable equilibrium which would safeguard her interests in India and the Mediterranean, whilst avoiding Anglo-Russian conflict in the Near East.³⁸

The tone of Cherkassky's later articles, written in 1857 and 1858, differed markedly from the first two. The terms of the final peace settlement had been published in the intervening period. Several of the provisions - especially the neutralisation of the Black Sea - aroused resentment throughout Russian society; it is hardly an exaggeration to say that Russian foreign policy during the next fifteen years was driven by a desire to reverse the humiliating terms imposed in 1856.³⁹ In his fourth article, Cherkassky argued that the Eastern Question remained the seminal problem of international relations, incorporating all the most important tensions and conflicts of principle that divided the Powers:

The Turkish Question, we say, today includes and incorporates, in a single general focus, all the vital substance of contemporary world politics. On this soil will be resolved, in the more or less distant future, all the problems which are agitating Europe at the present time....., the future of Greece, Turkey, and the Romanian People; the fate of Austria and the destiny of Germany and Italy which are linked with it; the alliance between Russia and France; the question of Egypt, the Suez isthmus and the mastery of the Mediterranean; the question of whether English predominance will continue or will be reduced to a more limited role.⁴⁰

Cherkassky implied that international relations were still in a state of flux; recent peace treaties had failed to resolve any of the vital issues at stake in the War.

In his final articles, Cherkassky developed Slavophilism's traditional notion that the cultures of Europe and Russia were informed by radically contrasting sets of values and beliefs. The Prince attributed an important strategic and geopolitical significance to this difference. Since he read the Western press, he was familiar with the strong russophobia found in countries such as Britain. The views of Lord Palmerston and David Urqhart were known to many educated Russians.⁴¹ In Cherkassky's view, the most significant expression of Western russophobia was to be found in the formation of the Triple Alliance between Britain, France and Austria, in April, 1856. The Prince argued that the new alliance was intended to replace the old 'Holy Alliance' between Austria, Prussia and Russia; its signatories sought to provide a defence for the new international system established by the negotiations at Paris and Vienna.⁴² Cherkassky was unaware of French doubts over the Alliance and believed that its formation was inspired by the three countries' desire to prevent Russia from reversing the terms imposed on her at Paris. The article was comparatively restrained in tone and did not indulge in any crude invective against Russia's recent enemies. However, its publication marked an important

development in Cherkassky's ideas; he had begun to view international relations as a zero-sum game, in which conflict between Russia's interests and those of the Western Powers was endemic.

Cherkassky's articles expressed a contempt for the whole diplomatic apparatus of modern Europe with its emphasis on treaties, protocols and the 'balance of power'. He argued that recent changes in the nature of international relations made such instruments irrelevant. In an article published in 1858, he wrote that the diplomats who attended the Paris Peace Conference were incapable of understanding the significance of the events they were expected to control. As a result, whilst the Conference was in session, "general attention was diverted from the diplomatic struggle to the vital practical concerns involved in the distant historical drama".⁴³ Events in south-eastern Europe were driven by a logic and momentum not susceptible to the mechanisms previously used to control international conflict. New forces capable of redrawing the map of Europe were emerging. The diplomatic world, according to Cherkassky, had acquired an almost epiphenomenal status and was fast becoming irrelevant in post-Crimean Europe.

Cherkassky was surprisingly reticent when examining the 'new forces' which he believed were becoming the most significant feature of international relations. The Russian Government was firmly convinced of the legitimacy of the existing structure of international relations, with its paraphernalia of formal diplomacy and treaties. Consequently, the censorship forced Cherkassky to choose his words carefully. However, in his private papers, which remained unpublished until after his death, he examined the topic far more frankly.

The Prince identified race and religion as the most important factors

determining the future pattern of alliances and enmities within Europe. He insisted on Russia's right to defend her interest of her co-religionists who lived under Turkish suzerainty, especially in cases where the other Christian Powers refused to act. Cherkassky did not believe that religion could be separated from politics. In Austria, for example, the Government considered that the Orthodox loyalties of many of its subjects encouraged them to see Russia as a natural protector and ally. As a result, the Austrian state had begun "a movement against Eastern Orthodoxy and the Russian influence which is inevitably connected with it".⁴⁴ Similarly, Vienna's efforts to convert the inhabitants of her Balkan provinces to Catholicism was inspired by the hope that it would turn them into more loyal subjects.

Although Austria had been neutral in the recent War, the Prince identified her as Russia's principal enemy. Vienna would always fear Russia's ability to serve as a magnet for its Slavic subjects, consequently viewing her eastern neighbour with suspicion and hatred. Cherkassky's insistence that blood and religion were becoming the fundamental forces in international politics represented a direct attack on the legitimacy of the Austrian Empire, and indeed on the whole contemporary European order.

The Culture and Politics of Slavdom

Other contributors to *Russkaia Beseda* addressed the Slavic Question in even more direct terms than Prince Cherkassky. Many articles took the form of a travelogue, which allowed the writer to give his readers easily digestible information about the folk-lore, religion and culture of the

areas he visited. F. V. Chizhov, who wrote about his experiences whilst travelling through Istria and Serbia, argued that there was a great need to increase the Russian public's abysmally limited knowledge of the foreign Slavs.⁴⁵ Most contributors chose to write about the Southern Slavs, presumably because countries such as Bosnia and Serbia were less well-known to the Russian public than the Czech or Polish lands. One of the most important series of articles, by A. Hilferding, gave a detailed description of life in Bosnia; the author attempted to give his readers a comprehensive picture of the geography, history and culture of the small Balkan nation. Descriptions of towns such as New Pazar were combined with lengthy accounts of local courting rituals, etc.⁴⁶ Hilferding also provided his readers with considerable information about the religious and ethnographic character of the regions he travelled through. The Bosnian Sketches, like many others that appeared in *Russkaja Beseda*, gave their readers a pot-pourri of information and impressions, consisting of a mixture of fact, description and analysis.

Though the approach was usually very impressionistic, a number of articles attempted to define the nature of Slavic *narodnost'*. When Chizhov visited the city of Trieste, he defined the city's character by reference to the its ethnic composition. He compared the spirit of self-interest, which he believed distinguished the German inhabitants, with the sense of solidarity displayed by the Slavic population living in the areas surrounding the city. "You cannot reach the heart of an Austrian by any means other than his personal profit", lamented the author, whereas "between the Serbians, Bosnians and Dalmatians there is a single feeling, a single thought".⁴⁷ Koshelev, who travelled through the territories of the Austrian Slavs for six weeks during 1857, expressed a similarly high regard

for the local population, but noted that the dispersal of the Slavic population made it difficult for them to develop any sense of mutual solidarity:

The Slavs, making up a majority of the population of the Empire, are fragmented to such an incredible degree that it constitutes the chief obstacle to the strengthening and development of *narodnost'*.⁴⁸

In spite of these problems, Koshelev believed that the Slavic world's sense of its own unity was becoming stronger:

Slavic *narodnost'* is alive, and, in spite of the obstacles which it faces on the path to its development, it is strong and spreading, and is even, in comparison with the years before 1848, more profound and of greater value.⁴⁹

Another frequent contributor to *Russkaiia Beseda*, E. P. Kovalevsky, gave his readers a detailed description of Serbian folk-culture. He expressed the traditional Slavophile view that folk-songs and legends directly reflected the *narodnost'* of the population; since Russians and Serbians belonged to a common tribe, they were able to appreciate and understand each others' cultures.⁵⁰ Chizhov agreed that the members of the Slavic race were united by bonds of sympathy and fellow-feeling; he recalled the warm reception he received in one Balkan town "simply by virtue of being a Russian".⁵¹

Religious questions occupied the minds of many who wrote for *Russkaiia Beseda* about the non-Russian Slavs. Most contributors echoed Cherkassky, arguing that religious questions were inherently political. For example, Kovalevsky noted during his trip through Dalmatia that "the power of the Catholic Church is becoming more and more absolute in the Austrian

territories", and attacked its attempts to win converts by the use of "force and intrigue".⁵² Everywhere that Kovalevsky travelled, he noted the decline of Orthodoxy and the rise of Catholicism. Other writers echoed his conclusions. The appearance of Jesuit missionaries in the region was a factor of particular concern.⁵³

Many other articles in *Russkaia Beseda* attempted to respond to Chizhov's complaint that the Russian public was insufficiently informed about Slavic affairs. M. Milichevich contributed an article about the Serbian *obshchina*, analysing its internal structure and *modus operandi*.⁵⁴ V. I. Vesselovsky wrote about contemporary Polish literature and its relationship to literary developments in Russia.⁵⁵ The historian Mikhail Pogodin compiled a list of all the journals devoted to Slavic affairs published in the Austrian Empire.⁵⁶

One of the most difficult tasks the historian faces is evaluating the political significance of these articles. Were they simply designed to increase the general understanding of Slavic *narodnost'* or were they, instead, inspired by a more directly political intent? Ivan Aksakov certainly wanted *Russkaia Beseda* and *Parus* to fulfil an important political function. Soon after the closure of his newspaper, *Parus*, he wrote to a friend, M. F. Raeovsky, describing his efforts to obtain permission for a new publication. The Government was determined that any new journal should be strictly non-political in character; the only articles about Slavic affairs it would allow were benign ones about such abstruse questions as comparative philology. Aksakov indignantly attacked these conditions, arguing that they would not allow discussion of the crucial question of "the right of the Slavic people to free development". He curtly dismissed the Government's demand that a future publication should avoid politics as

"an impossible thing".⁵⁷

No contributor to *Russkaja Beseda*, or the other Slavophile publications, wanted a political 'Slavic Federation' of the kind suggested by some writers in the 1840's. Koshelev correctly noted that the non-Russian Slavs were not interested in such a union but were more concerned with achieving political independence.⁵⁸ The contributors to the Slavophile press were, above all, interested in the potential power and prestige which Russia could accrue from a closer association with the non-Russian Slavs. Chizhov, recalling the events leading up to the outbreak of the Crimean War, noted that,

War broke out between us and Europe and what happened? One of the Slavic tribes directly affected showed us obvious and real sympathy - the Bulgarians. Another tribe of the same blood and religion decided not to enter into the camp of our enemies - the Serbs.⁵⁹

At times of challenge and difficulty, the solidarity between the Slavic nations was likely to be expressed in the form of alliances and mutual support. The loyalty of the foreign Slavs could strengthen Russia at a time when her international status was at a low ebb.

Other contributors echoed Chizhov's sentiments; one anonymous contributor to *Parus* believed that conflict between Russia and the Western Powers had become inevitable and argued that the country needed to find as many allies as possible.⁶⁰ The historian, Pogodin, who often contributed to the Slavophile press, echoed these views. In one article, he argued that the foreign policies of all the western countries, ranging from Britain to Prussia, were motivated by a hatred of all things Russian. Only

the Slavic nations of eastern and south-eastern Europe were exempt from this sentiment; Russia, therefore, needed to cultivate their support.⁶¹ Even Konstantin Aksakov, who rarely took a great interest in any country other than Russia, became a supporter of these ideas in the years following the Crimean War. He attacked the hypocrisy of an international climate that accepted the expansion of English influence in the Eastern Mediterranean without a murmur whilst simultaneously attacking the legitimacy of Russian claims in the Black Sea area. Expressing identical sentiments to Pogodin, he asked rhetorically "Who are our natural allies in Europe"? Predictably, the answer was that "our natural, trustworthy and reliable allies are the Slavs".⁶²

In the wake of the Crimean conflict, at a time when Russia's fortunes were low, it was perhaps inevitable that a number of its most patriotic citizens would blame their country's problems on the structure of international society. Their Panslavism was, in a sense, a revisionist ideology, attacking a system of international relations which they believed was organised in such a way as to deny Russia's legitimate national interests. An international political system founded on the claims of blood and religion seemed to offer Russia greater opportunities to rebuild its power and prestige than one based on the diplomatic niceties of the balance of power.

The Panslav tone of many articles in the Slavophile press incurred the wrath of the censorship. The Slavophiles' critique of the contemporary structure of international relations worried a Government which placed great importance on defending the legitimacy of every properly constituted

authority. Censorship reports of the period show time and again that the Government was immensely worried about the Panslav elements in Slavophilism.⁶³ Ivan Aksakov was treated with particular suspicion; the authorities were concerned about his ideas as early as 1849.⁶⁴

Whilst the Government was clearly hostile to Panslav ideas, it is harder to determine whether these ideas found any response from the Russian public during the 1850's. The circulation of *Russkaia Beseda* never exceeded a few thousand, which tends to confirm Chizhov's opinion that the Russian public was largely apathetic about Slavic affairs during this period.⁶⁵ By the late 1860's and early 1870's, of course, Panslav ideas were able to mobilise a considerable section of Russian opinion in favour of a more activist foreign policy - which, in turn, dragged the Government along in its wake. Before 1861, however, the Panslav ideas expressed in *Russkaia Beseda* only found a response amongst a small group of intellectuals and a handful of Moscow noble families.⁶⁶

In spite of the unpromising climate in which he had to work, Ivan Aksakov had very high hopes for *Russkaia Beseda*, believing it could serve as a nucleus for developing Russia's relations with the foreign Slavs. His relationship with the Slavic activist, M. F. Raevsky, was particularly important. The correspondence of the two men casts light on Aksakov's plans for the journal.

Raevsky, who travelled widely throughout the cities of Europe, provided Aksakov with many contacts, supplementing those which the Slavophile had already developed during a trip through Europe in 1857. The editor of *Russkaia Beseda* wrote constantly to his friend, urging him to find correspondents who could contribute articles about events in their own countries.⁶⁷ Aksakov also wanted Raevsky to develop a distribution network

for *Russkaia Beseda*, a prerequisite for achieving any influence amongst the non-Russian Slavs. However, these plans ran into many obstacles; occasional successes, such as an order by a shipping company in Trieste for ten copies of the journal, were outweighed by numerous setbacks.⁶⁸ Raevsky lacked the financial and organisational resources to organise an effective distribution network, and his failure to fulfil Aksakov's hopes occasionally led to a bad-tempered exchange of letters. An ambitious plan by Aksakov to translate *Russkaia Beseda* into all the main Slavic languages also failed to materialise, even though Raevsky devoted considerable energies to the project.⁶⁹

The failure of Aksakov's plans for the journal was predictable. *Russkaia Beseda* viewed the Slavic world from a Russian perspective; Panslavism seemed attractive to its contributors as a potential means of promoting Russia's international strength. These ideas were hardly calculated to appeal to the Slavic minorities outside Russia, who were most concerned with achieving their own goal of independent statehood. As a result, *Russkaia Beseda* never fulfilled its editor's hope that it would serve as a bridge between Russia and her Slavic neighbours.

The Slavophiles and Great Russian Chauvinism

Several contributors to the Slavophile press pointed out that Panslav ideology posed a grave threat to the stability of the Austrian Empire; indeed, this was part of its appeal. However, since Russia was, itself, a multi-national Empire, Panslavism was something of a 'two-edged sword'. If ties of blood and culture really were the basis of political solidarity,

then Russia's non-Slavic minorities had to be seen as a threat to domestic order.

The boundary between patriotism and chauvinism is a fine one. Historians normally exempt the early Slavophiles from the charge of chauvinism, citing their respect for many features of Western European culture. However, whilst it would be unfair to indict Kireevsky, Khomiakov, et al, of xenophobia, their private letters and diaries do show a degree of chauvinism - especially in their attitude towards the Germans. This is hardly surprising; members of the Slavophile circle came from a milieu in which anti-German sentiment was commonplace. Tiutcheva's attack on German officials at Court, like Samarin's snide comments about the German nation's undeserved sense of its superiority, could have been expressed by almost any member of the Russian land-owning gentry.⁷⁰

Before 1861, the Slavophiles rarely addressed the problem of Russia's non-Slavic minorities. The only member of the circle who took an abiding interest in the subject was Iury Samarin. His service in the Baltic Provinces during 1846-1848 gave him an opportunity to observe daily life in an ethnically heterogenous part of the Empire. He set down his conclusions in his famous 'Riga Letters' - the circulation of which enraged the Tsar and led to their author's temporary imprisonment.

The 'Riga Letters' were a curious mixture of anecdote, theory and polemic. Samarin argued that the Baltic provinces lacked any well-defined sense of *narodnost'*. Local society was fragmented. The upper layers were composed of the heirs of German warriors who had conquered the area in the medieval period. The lower classes, mainly of Finnish descent, were prevented by their German masters from developing their sense of cultural identity.⁷¹ Since Baltic society lacked any natural unity it had

inevitably been imposed from the outside, originally by Polish and Swedish conquerors - a process which Samarin described with approval.⁷² Russia's acquisition of the three Baltic provinces, at the beginning of the 18th century, was seen by Samarin as "an historically necessary event":

Russia can and must absorb [the provinces] not only into formal citizenship but make them a complete part of itself, seeing them not as an accidental acquisition but as an integral part of itself, temporarily separated, but now joined to it for all time.⁷³

Samarin's analysis of Baltic society was based on a discussion of the privileges enjoyed by the local German minority. In spite of efforts by Peter the Great and Catherine the Great to subject the area to the same laws as the rest of the Empire, the Baltic nobility and townsmen continued to enjoy privileges not possessed by their counterparts elsewhere in Russia. According to Samarin, these privileges were used to oppress the non-German majority. He bitterly listed several cases where local German officials had used their administrative powers to promote Protestantism and prevent conversions to Orthodoxy.⁷⁴ He also noted several occasions when he had himself been snubbed on account of his nationality, even though he occupied an important administrative post in the area.⁷⁵

Samarin's suggested remedies were bureaucratic and *étatist* in the extreme. He attacked the Baltic Germans' claim that their privileges were established by past statutes claiming, instead, that they were granted by a free act of the state and could therefore be revoked by the Tsar.⁷⁶ He wanted to see the Baltic provinces fully incorporated into the administrative structures of the Empire, dismissing the idea that they were fundamentally different from any other region. At this stage, however, Samarin did not demand a policy of overt russification nor a full-scale

attack on German culture; his call was for administrative uniformity and regularity.

After his transfer from Riga to the Ukraine, in 1849, Samarin took less interest in Baltic affairs. However, his friendship with Baroness Rahden, whose family came from the area, rekindled his interest in the subject after 1861.⁷⁷ His retirement from public life, in 1864, was at least partly prompted by the wish to begin his massive study on the 'Russian borderlands', the contents of which are beyond the scope of this thesis.⁷⁸

Samarin's correspondence with Baroness Rahden echoed many themes found in the 'Riga Letters'. He attacked the German minority's privileges and condemned their assault on the cultural identity of the local population.⁷⁹ Samarin had become, if anything, more chauvinistic during the fifteen years since he wrote the 'Riga Letters'. Although still falling short of a call for out and out russification, he was far more willing to countenance the use of state power to promote the Russian language and the Orthodox Church. His earlier emphasis on administrative uniformity was sliding towards a demand for cultural homogeneity - a marked feature of his writing in the late 1860's and 1870's.

The Slavophiles and Poland

The Polish Question posed a complex set of intellectual and practical dilemmas for the Slavophiles. Unlike the Baltic Germans, the Poles were members of the Slavic race. They were also, however, members of the Catholic Church - a factor which Samarin and Ivan Aksakov believed explained their frequent rebellions against Russian rule. Since Poland was

comparatively tranquil during the 1840's and 1850's, it received little attention in the Slavophile journals of the period. However, the 1863 revolt placed the Polish Question at the heart of Russian political debate. We have already seen how the surviving Slavophiles became involved in the practical problems of introducing land reform in the Kingdom of Poland; this section examines their attempts to explain the Polish crisis in theoretical terms.

Cherkassky and Koshelev wrote remarkably little about Polish affairs, even though they were intimately involved in developing the 1864 land-reform. Samarin and Ivan Aksakov, by contrast, contributed numerous articles and editorials on the Polish Question to *Den'*. *Den'* became involved in a heated polemic about Polish affairs with other Russian journals, most notably Katkov's *Russkii Vestnik*. Aksakov and Samarin both attacked Katkov's demand for a wide-ranging programme of russification in the Kingdom of Poland, arguing that it would be an unwarranted attack on Polish *narodnost'*.

Samarin and Aksakov accepted the Poles' claims that they represented a distinct nation, with a culture and history separate from Russia's. Samarin argued that Polish *narodnost'* closely resembled that of western nations, which was why the European Powers launched such a strident diplomatic offensive on Poland's behalf.⁶⁰ Aksakov agreed, expressing the usual Slavophile conviction that Polish *narodnost'* was found in its purest form amongst the peasantry, the only healthy (*zdrorovyi*) element in the country.⁶¹

The two men distinguished between the short-term and long-term when discussing the Kingdom of Poland's future. Both believed that Russian military and administrative rule was inevitable in the short-term, in order

to ensure that the recent land-settlement was given a chance to establish itself. However, they realised that the question of the Poles' right to political self-determination was bound to come to the fore in the near future. Samarin, in particular, attacked the foundations of the nationalist ideology current in mid-19th century Europe, rejecting the belief that every nation was entitled to statehood (a point he had made fifteen years earlier in his *Riga letters*).⁶²

At the heart of an independent state there always lies a more or less pure native element, composing as it were its nucleus, and a state-form only serves as one expression of this element - its external manifestation; but this still does not validate the opposite belief, since not every *narod* is capable at all times of clothing its existence in the form of an independent state; other conditions, which may or may not exist, are also necessary.⁶³

However, in spite of his doubts, Samarin advised the Russian Government to consult the wishes of the Polish people by means of a non-binding referendum. Once their wishes were known, the Government could consider the Kingdom's future more fully.⁶⁴

Aksakov also believed that the Polish people should be consulted about their political future. He advised the Government to summon the Diet (*sejm*), which he explicitly likened to the Russian *zemskii sobor* - an assembly capable of expressing the voice of the people.⁶⁵ The Government should agree to grant independence to the Kingdom should the *sejm* demand it. However, Aksakov made it clear in his *Den'* editorials that he had no doubts that Poland would slide into anarchy should the apparatus of Russian state power - the troops and officials - be withdrawn from the country.

Samarin and Aksakov both distinguished sharply between the Poles living in the Kingdom and their compatriots in the western provinces of the

Russian Empire. They were incensed by the demands put forward by some Polish nationalists that a reconstituted Polish state should incorporate large areas of Lithuania, Belorussia and the Ukraine. Aksakov argued that the ethnic complexity of the borderlands made such a claim absurd; even if the Poles were granted the right to political self-determination, they should not be allowed to re-establish a state along the boundaries of its 17th century predecessors.⁶⁶ Samarin agreed with his friend, noting that if the Poles were allowed to become political masters of the western provinces they were likely to prove quite intolerant of other national groups in the region.⁶⁷ The two men, therefore, supported a rigorous campaign of russification in the western provinces of the Empire in order to eradicate Polish national sentiment. Aksakov praised the confiscation of the property of Polish landlords who took part in disturbances. He also suggested that the remaining Polish landlords be encouraged to sell their land, in order to dilute their influence in the area.⁶⁸ Aksakov and Samarin both believed that in order to implement these policies effectively, it would be necessary to sack Polish officials, restocking the bureaucracy with men of Russian origin.

Conclusion

The Slavophiles came from a social milieu - the wealthy landowning gentry - which was distinguished by its strong patriotic sentiments. They did not need elaborate social and political theories to inculcate a deep love of their country. Indeed, it would be more realistic to assume that their ideas about the value of Russian *narodnost'* reflected, rather than

created, their patriotic instincts.

Slavophile nationalistic thought, like its western counterparts, revolved around the relationship between state and nation. Before the mid-1850's, the Slavophiles were above all interested in the latter, or, more specifically, in that section of the population (the *narod*) which was seen as its authentic expression. The Russian nation was defined in cultural, linguistic and, above all, moral terms. The state played no part in this conception of nationhood; indeed, it was seen as a threat to the cultural and moral integrity of the national spirit. Whilst early Slavophilism attempted to define Russian nationhood *vis a vis* other cultures, it rarely addressed the potential geopolitical ramifications of such comparisons.

By contrast, after 1855 Slavophile nationalism began to exhibit a more 'political' element. Nebulous feelings of cultural and moral superiority were unable to serve as compensation for the distress which followed Russia's humiliation in the Crimea. The Panslavism evident in Slavophile journals during the 1850's was still predominantly cultural, but it was tinged with a direct political intent. If Panslav ideology could unite the Slavs, and if Russia could place itself at the head of such a union, the country would acquire far greater status in the world. The fact that this programme clashed with just about every impulse of the non-Russian Slavs never seemed to worry contributors to the Slavophile press; they persisted in seeing evidence of cultural solidarity where in reality there was only discord and distrust.

"The idea of state-nationalism", to use Dmowski's phrase, only really came to the fore when the Slavophiles discussed national relations *within* the Russian Empire.⁸⁸ Their tolerance for the indigenous *narodnost'* of the Poles or the Baltic Germans was never as great as their liberal rhetoric

implied. Their defence of the minorities' right to cultural autonomy rapidly came into conflict with their demand for administrative uniformity throughout the Empire. At times of challenge, such as the 1863 Polish rebellion, it was the éstatist element that won through. Whilst Ivan Aksakov and his friends might have been happy to see the Austrian Empire disintegrate on national lines, they had no wish to see the same thing happen in Russia. National self-determination was to end on the far side of Russia's western and southern boundaries.

1. P. Miliukov; 'La décomposition du Slavophilisme', in *Le Mouvement Intellectuel Russe*, pp.377-439.
2. E. Gellner; *Nations and Nationalism*; E. Kedourie; *Nationalism*.
3. See chapter 4, above *passim*.
4. There were, on occasions, marked differences between the members of the Circle on this question. See, for example, the dispute between Khomiakov and Koshelev about the status of the Russian commune, examined in Chapter 4, above, pp.193-196.
5. *Russkij Arkhiv* (R.A.J. 1879, #3, p.267).
6. N.I. Tsimbaev; *Slavianofil'stvo*, p.259.
7. V. Aksakova; *Dnevnik*, p.50.
8. Tiutcheva's outspoken views on the War, and her later support for emancipation, ensured she had many enemies at Court; she ruefully noted that "they call me cunning, an intriguer". A.F. Tiutcheva; *Prj dvore dvukh imperatorv*, p.18.
9. Aksakova *op.cit.*, p.23.
10. Tiutcheva; *op.cit.*, p.155.
11. *ibid.*, p.127.
12. *ibid.*, p.155.
13. Aksakova *op.cit.*, p.3.
14. *ibid.*, p.118.
15. *ibid.*, p.179.
16. *ibid.*, p.154.
17. A.N. Rovniakov; *Bor'ba iuzhnykh slavian za svobodu i russkaia periodicheskaja pechat'*, p.34.
18. W. Birbeck; *Russia and the English Church*, p.165.
19. *ibid.*, p.165.
20. *ibid.*, p.170.
21. *ibid.*, p.167.
22. *ibid.*, p.168.
23. *ibid.*, p.168.
24. *Ivan Aksakov v ego pis'makh*, pt.1, vol.3, p.108.
25. For an account of Aksakov's experiences see *ibid.*, pp.103-224.

26. For an account of Samarin's time in the militia see *R.A.*, 1877, pt.2, pp.42-49.
27. M. Buno-Petrovich; *The Emergence of Russian Panslavism 1856-1870*, p.32.
28. H. Kohn; *Panslavism, Its History and Ideology*, pp.60-62.
29. Note, for example, the views of the Serbian nationalist V.S. Karadzhie and the Slovene poet F. Preshen. Kohn *op.cit.*, p.63.
30. Kohn *op.cit.*, pp.7-11.
31. *ibid.*, p.28.
32. *ibid.*, p.77.
33. *ibid.*, p.347. For an important discussion of the philosophical foundations of Polish nationalism, see V. Lossky; 'Three Polish Messianists', in *International Philosophical Library*, (Prague), 1937, #11.
34. Kohn *op.cit.*, p.46.
35. *ibid.*, p.22.
36. Kniaz V.A. Cherkassky, *Ego staty, rechi i vospominanija o nem*, pp.331-333.
37. *ibid.*, p.11.
38. *ibid.*, p.20. Cherkassky gave details culled from Parliamentary Reports about the cost of the War to England - around £50 million in 1855 alone.
39. For an interesting discussion of Russia's attitude to international affairs after the Crimean War see, W.E. Mosse; *The Rise and Fall of the Crimea System 1855-1871*.
40. Kniaz V.A. Cherkassky *op.cit.*, pp.212-213.
41. For a discussion, see J.H. Gleason; *The Development of Russophobia in Great Britain*.
42. Kniaz V.A. Cherkassky p.98.
43. *ibid.*, p.211.
44. *ibid.*, p.259.
45. *Russkaja Beseda*, 1857, #1, *Smes'*, p.1.
46. *Russkaja Beseda*, 1858, #3, *Smes'*, p.64; 1858 #1, *Smes*, p.59.
47. *Russkaja Beseda*, 1857, #1, *Smes'*, p.17.
48. *Russkaja Beseda*, 1857, #4, *Smes'* p.6.
49. *ibid.*, p.9.
50. *Russkaja Beseda*, 1858, #1, pp.10-12.

51. *Russkaia Beseda*, 1857, #1, p.25.

52. *Russkaia Beseda*, 1858, #1, *Smes'*, p.8.

53. The contributors to *Russkaia Beseda* disliked the Jesuits since the order was charged with the task of winning converts for Catholocism from other faiths.

54. *Russkaia Beseda*, 1859, #6, pp.44-64.

55. *Russkaia Beseda*, 1859, #3, *Obozrenie* pp.1-66.

56. *ibid.*, pp.67-100.

57. *Ivan Aksakov v ego pis'makh*, pt.2, vol.1, pp.16-23.

58. *Russkaia Beseda*, 1857, #4, *Smes'*, p.14.

59. *Russkaia Beseda*, 1857, #1, *Smes'*, p.1.

60. *Parus*, 1859, #1, p.9.

61. *Russkaia Beseda*, 1859, #1, *Smes'*, p.59. These comments of Pogodin were first made in a series of letters to the Ministry of Education at the height of the Crimean War.

62. TsGALI, fond 10 (Aksakovs), op.4, ed.kh. 29, 1,5.

63. M. Lemke; *Nicolaevskie zhandarmy i literatura*, p.218.

64. See, for example, the questionnaire given to Aksakov by the Third Section, after his arrest in 1849. I. Aksakov; *Pis'ma k rodnym*, pp.497-508.

65. A.G. Dement'ev; *Ocherki po istorii russkoi zhurnalistiki 1840-50gg*, p.392.

66. This was true, for example, of the Kireev family, which had close personal links with several members of the Slavophile Circle. See W.T. Stead (ed); *The M.F. for Russia. Reminiscences and Correspondence of Madame Olga Novikoff*, esp. pp.7-13.

67. *Ivan Aksakov v ego pis'makh*, pt.2, vol.1, p.2.

68. *ibid.*, p.4.

69. *ibid.*, p.5.

70. Iu. Samarin; *Soch.*, vol.7, p.38.

71. *ibid.*, pp.5-7.

72. *ibid.*, pp.16-17.

73. *ibid.*, p.18.

74. *ibid.*, pp.134-135, 143.

75. *ibid.*, pp.95-96.

76. *ibid.*, pp.131-132.

77. The baroness, who had many important connections at Court, was acquainted with several members of the Slavophile Circle; she was a close friend of Princess Cherkassky.

78. A. Leroy-Beaulieu: *Un homme d'état Russe*, p.245.

79. See, for example, his comment that "I tell you that I would be quite unable to recognise in principle that a privilege.....should be accepted as an insurmountable barrier to any progress", T. Sculley, H. Swediuk-Cheyne & L. Calder: *The Correspondence of Iu. Samarin and Baroness Rahden 1861-76*, p.42.

80. Iu. Samarin: *Soch.*, vol.1, p.287.

81. I. Aksakov: *Soch.*, vol.3, p.28.

82. Iu. Samarin: *Soch.*, vol.7, p.11.

83. Iu. Samarin: *Soch.*, vol.1, pp.326-327.

84. *ibid.*, p.344.

85. I. Aksakov: *Soch.*, vol.3, pp.30-31.

86. *ibid.*, p.35 ff.

87. Iu. Samarin: *Soch.*, vol.1, pp.328-329.

88. I. Aksakov: *Soch.*, vol.3, pp.88-92.

89. R. Dmowski: *The Problem of Eastern and Central Europe*, p.9.

Conclusion

The American historian Robert Darnton correctly observed ten years ago that intellectual history "has no governing *problematique*".¹ Arthur Lovejoy's emphasis on the study of ideas as a "pursuit of a disembodied national mind" fell from grace in the 1960's, to be replaced by an interest in the relationship between social history and the 'history of ideas'.² However, the torrent of words on the subject has not led to much consensus.³ Whilst most historians accept that the study of intellectual history cannot be divorced from social history, there has been little agreement about the relationship between the two disciplines.

The argument developed in previous chapters has accepted Felix Gilbert's celebrated assertion that "the investigation of subjects of intellectual history leads beyond the purely intellectual world and intellectual history as such does not exist".⁴ Slavophile doctrine, it has been seen, can only be properly understood when viewed within the social and political context of mid 19th-century Russian and European history. Its authors were members of a society undergoing considerable change; their ideas reflected the complex intellectual cross-currents and social tensions of the world around them. During the quarter century after 1840, Slavophilism changed markedly in response to developments in Russian society and Russian culture. The term 'Slavophile' meant something different in 1865 than in 1840.

It is seldom possible to discern the precise stages in the evolution of a doctrine - whether it be social, historical, religious or philosophical. Some historians have tried to identify different phases in the development of Slavophilism, but their conclusions have not been

convincing.⁵ Nevertheless, it is possible to distinguish between a number of distinct 'styles' of Slavophile thought, each of which followed the other in more or less chronological order.

Although the relationship between political thought and language is too vast a topic to be dwelt on at length here, a few words on the subject can cast light on our investigation. During the reign of Nicholas I, Slavophile political thought was couched in a distinctive vocabulary, which in turn reflected its authors' broader conception of the nature of the universe. Whereas the essence of rational thought, however defined, lies in the acceptance of a 'universal conceptual currency', the Slavophiles believed in the existence of 'special, privileged, insulated facts.....protected from contamination or contradiction by others, and living in insulated logical spaces of their own'.⁶

This is not merely to say that the Slavophiles believed in a sacred world inaccessible to human reason. So did Kant. However, whereas the German philosopher drew a sharp distinction between the heavenly world and the world around him, the Slavophiles refused to establish any clear boundary between the two. As a result of this conceptual confusion, they professed to see divine characteristics in social institutions. Unlike Hegel or Schelling, each of whom attempted to explain how the 'universal' found expression in the 'particular', the Slavophiles remained blithely unaware of the need even to address the issue. The Slavophiles' half-defined gnosticism allowed them to suspend the laws of reason and claim to see a heavenly beauty in the peasant commune and the Orthodox Church - where others saw only poverty and hypocrisy.

Walicki, following Mannheim, argues that such a style of pre-rational

thought is inherently 'primitive', a vestige of earlier beliefs destroyed by the advance of science and the Age of Reason. Both scholars see early 19th-century anti-rationalism as a reaction against the French Revolution, especially its attempts to enshrine the ideas of the *philosophes* in social and political life. At the heart of Walicki's ideas is a covert acknowledgement of Max Weber's fundamental argument: namely, that rationalism is an inherently modern 'thought-style', inseparable from advanced capitalism and bureaucratic administration. Weber's observations contain a great deal of value, even though it is a hundred years since he first expressed them. Nevertheless, their immense influence has sometimes restricted the scope of scholarly investigation. It is wrong to assume that all non-rational ideas are 'outmoded', or represent a curious exception in the general flow of intellectual evolution. Since Weber first developed his ideas, non-rational currents of thought have continued to persist in numerous guises: existentialism, nationalism, even organised religion - all of them show, in their separate ways, that reason never exercises complete sway over humanity. The glib assumption that anti-rationalism is the last resort of refugees from modernity does little credit to the facts. Anti-rationalism appears at all stages of human history; its presence does not necessarily tell us a great deal about the social and political structure of the society that begets it.

The social structure of mid-19th century Russia was radically different from that found in West European countries. Whilst the Prussian Junkers might have felt threatened by the growing economic and political power of the bourgeoisie, the same was not true of their Russian counterparts. The merchant class in Russia was the most traditional of Estates: it could hardly be seen as the bearer of a new rational social and

economic order.⁷ As a result, whilst Romantic social and political thought in the two countries reflected certain common concerns of the noble elites, there were also important differences. Russian Romanticism evolved within a distinct social configuration; its adherents used it to resolve other dilemmas than their Prussian counterparts.

The members of the Slavophile circle were wealthy men. Their estates yielded ample income to support their comparatively frugal lifestyles. There is no evidence to suggest they viewed economic change as a threat to their personal interests, nor those of their class. Khomiakov, Samarin, Koshelev and Cherkassky all enthusiastically embraced technical changes in agriculture which offered the prospect of higher financial returns. They rejected traditional patterns of agriculture in favour of ones more explicitly directed towards the market. And they all eagerly welcomed the emancipation of the serfs, believing it to be a necessary step in Russia's social and economic development. It is, therefore, hardly feasible to see early Slavophilism as a product of fears about social and economic change.

The dominant social *mores* of 19th-century Russia did not, however, value land ownership and farming as a high status occupation, but instead viewed them as peripheral activities incidental to the life of a nobleman. Although the 18th century *dvorianstvo* had obtained a considerable degree of independence and privilege, their 19th-century successors still lacked the social status of their West European counterparts. Whilst it was no longer compulsory to serve in the military or bureaucracy, "a temporary service in a state office remained a status convention for young noblemen".⁸ It is hardly surprising that men like Khomiakov and Samarin, whose lives were divided between the estate and the salon, felt estranged from many of the

values current in Russian society, especially those of the bureaucracy and the Court. They experienced the state as an alien institution which showed little respect for their intellectual and social aspirations.

The Slavophiles' social and political thought during the reign of Nicholas I reflected this tension, albeit in a particularly complex form. Just as their epistemology attempted to overcome the Kantian dualism between subject and object, so their reflections on Russian society exhibited their conviction that utopian visions could be actualised. Slavophile doctrine was sharply critical of the social and political realities of Nicolaevian Russia; at the same time, however, its authors were inhibited by their half-formed realisation that the collapse of the existing order would sweep away much that was of value. It was not only the threat of censorship which caused the Slavophiles to moderate the tone of their protests. Their reluctance to engage in overt oppositional activity reflected their ambivalent attitude towards the existing structures of Russian society. Whilst they were alienated from the values and institutions of the bureaucratic state, they were fundamentally 'at home' when living the lives of landed gentry. This curious dualism helps explain their support for social reform in the years after 1855. They wanted to sweep away all the features of Russian society they found repugnant whilst at the same time preserving institutions and customs which they believed were of value.

The Descent From Utopia

The concept of 'utopia' has attracted considerable attention from literary theorists, sociologists and historians alike. Sadly, they have not yet agreed on a common definition, let alone a shared understanding of the sources and significance of utopian thought. However, insights gleaned during the course of their debate can help put the development of Slavophile thought into some kind of perspective.

The best known utopias - More's 'Utopia', Butler's 'Erewhon', etc, - gave a concrete vision of their authors' ideal societies; the audience could relate more easily to these fictional 'pictures in words' than to an arid debate about social principles and philosophy. The Slavophiles never attempted to provide such a picture; although they idealised Russia's pre-Petrine past, they were too realistic to present it as a world without faults. Instead, they engaged in 'utopian thinking' - a search for "the underlying principles of an optimum society".⁹ Whilst the quality of their social and political thought left a great deal to be desired, they made a serious attempt to grapple with complex problems of social change and historical development.

The utopian impulse "can be read as expressive of specific social conflicts which it presumes to resolve".¹⁰ We have seen that the Slavophiles sought to resolve a series of different conflicts: the tension between the upper classes and the *narod*; the conflict between state and society; the strain between the bureaucracy and the gentry. Karl Mannheim's work tried to develop this basic idea, arguing that utopia was the "orientation of those aspiring classes that aimed at the complete or

partial overview of the social structure prevailing at the time";¹¹ by contrast, 'ideology' encapsulated the typical outlook of the dominant class. In the Russian context, the ideology of 'Official Nationality' reflected the values and attitudes of the bureaucratic elite. Slavophile utopianism, by contrast, was driven by the frustrations of a social group who were not part of this ruling elite, yet who felt themselves qualified by history, wealth and education to have an equal claim to social status and influence.

The insights of Paul Tillich on the subject are particularly valuable, providing an insight into the internal contradictions of utopian thought - which act as the motor of its development. According to Tillich, whilst utopian visions can enoble and inspire men:

the untruth of utopia is that it forgets the finitude and estrangement of man, it forgets that man as finite is a union of being and non-being, and it forgets that man under the conditions of existence is always estranged from his true or essential being and that it is therefore impossible to regard his essential being as attainable".¹²

Stripping these words of their metaphysical foundation, Tilich is saying that since all utopian dreams are unobtainable, they must always be at tension with the real world. The transfiguration of the social and political world can only ever be partial.

Building on Tillich's ideas, it appears that all utopian social theorists eventually face the fundamental challenge of responding to the 'finite' world of politics and social change. The success of their efforts depends on numerous factors: can they learn from their utopian dreams and begin the difficult task of applying their values to concrete problems? What form should their pathway from utopia take? Should they remain true

to their ideals and seek to transform society? Or should they submit gracefully to the 'limits of the possible' and simply work for the best possible solution? How will they understand new problems they encounter: in terms of their old thinking or by reference to a new set of ideas and values? The Slavophiles faced all these questions after 1855.

The ambiguity of the Slavophiles' attitude towards social and political questions became clear once the abolition of serfdom entered the political agenda, in the latter half of the 1850's. The reformist ideology they developed in response to the challenge of emancipation reflected the social dilemmas they had faced before 1855: they sought to promote social reforms which would increase popular welfare whilst preserving intact the interests of the landed gentry. During the second half of the 1850's, Slavophile social and political thought began to acquire greater autonomy from the metaphysical framework within which it first developed. Samarin, Cherkassky and Koshelev, in particular, began to use the 'means-end' language of practical social analysis. As they became involved in the various reform committees dealing with emancipation, they faced the detailed problems involved in bringing about emancipation. The moral impulse for abolition, whilst still informing their activities, had to be translated into a more practical social discourse. In other words, they had to become proficient in the conceptual vocabulary used by administrators and politicians.

Although the tone of Slavophile social and political thought changed rapidly after 1855, it was informed by the same motivation: to devise a world in which its authors could feel 'at home'. The Slavophile reformers' interest in England, examined in Chapter 5, was not fortuitous. English

society, at least when seen through rose-tinted glasses, seemed to incorporate all of the Slavophiles' most important ideals and aspirations. The English upper classes enjoyed great prestige and independence from the state, whilst remaining an integral part of the society around them. At the same time, the country appeared to combine the modern industrial economy, necessary for a Great Power, with a profound respect for the past. The search for this elusive combination of modernity with tradition became the hallmark of Slavophile reformism.

The Slavophiles' presentation of England as a paradigm for Russian social development was not necessarily a more useful guide to action than a fully-fledged 'utopia'. They still faced the problem of relating their ideals to the practical realities of specific reform-proposals: peasant land-allocations, redemption payments schedules, etc. By the middle of 1859, the three 'Slavophile reformers' had become so absorbed in detailed administrative problems that they had little opportunity to relate their proposals to broader ideals. For Samarin and Cherkassky, sitting on the Editing Commission, the priority was to defend emancipation against its opponents in the bureaucracy and the country at large. Their étatism had little theoretical foundation, but was instead a response to the demands of the moment. Koshelev, by contrast, remained faithful to at least one central component of the English paradigm - the desire to remodel the Russian *dvorianstvo* into an English-style aristocracy and gentry, with greater prestige and power than appointed officials.

The issues which divided the members of the original Slavophile circle in the late 1850's did not, of course, evaporate with the publication of the Emancipation Edict. Once the frenetic activity of the reform preparations was over, the Slavophiles could reflect more profoundly on

their recent experiences, and develop more fully their ideas about the problem of Russia's development. They were able to see how their earlier ideas stood the test of experience and modify them accordingly. Not surprisingly, the disagreements which divided them during 1859-1860 continued to find expression in their writings and letters. As a result, Slavophilism lost any remnant of the theoretical unity which had distinguished it in the years before 1855. Samarin and Cherkassky's enthusiasm for state action in the field of social reform remained unabated whilst Koshelev continued to argue that bureaucratically-led reform would always tend to be inimical to the interests of the gentry.

By the second half of the 1860's, each surviving member of the original Slavophile circle had developed his own interests and ideas. Samarin was increasingly concerned with the ethnic tensions inherent in a multi-national Empire, and was becoming a staunch advocate of the need for state action to promote Russian national identity throughout the Tsarist lands. Ivan Aksakov and Cherkassky were more concerned with the problem of promoting Russia's status abroad, by building on the supposed racial solidarity between the Slavs of Eastern and South-Eastern Europe. Alexander Koshelev, alone, continued to be preoccupied by domestic social questions; some of his writings on the peasant commune were even read with interest by the elderly Karl Marx. The four men remained on friendly terms with one another, but their friendship was no longer based on shared intellectual interests and social values as had been the case fifteen years earlier.

It was argued in the introduction that no single approach can provide a complete understanding of Slavophilism. The ideas advanced in this thesis would certainly not claim to be exempt from this limitation. The members of the Slavophile milieu were all intellectually able individuals, whose articles and essays reflected private hopes and fears. It would be absurd to suppose that such a complex, dynamic and wide-ranging ideology can be unlocked through the use of any one key. Nevertheless, by developing a social biography of the leading members of the Slavophile circle, we have developed a new perspective on the foundations of their social and political thought. Slavophile ideology, in both its 'abstract' and 'reformist' stages, was a doctrine of 'loyal opposition', whose proponents belonged to a social milieu occupying an uncertain position in mid-19th century Russian society. The ideology exposed the dominant social mores and values of the period to detailed scrutiny, without ever descending to an overtly hostile stance. When understood in this way, many of the ambiguities inherent in Slavophilism, including its ambivalent attitude towards political authority, begin to make sense. They reflected the wider uncertainties and doubts experienced by the members of the Slavophile circle themselves.

1. R. Darnton; 'Intellectual and Cultural History', in M. Kammen (ed); *The Past Before Us*, p.337.
2. Lovejoy's clearest statement of his credo can be found in his article 'Reflections on the History of Ideas', in *Journal of Intellectual History*, 1940, #1, pp.3-23.
3. W.J. Bouwsma; 'Intellectual History in the 1980's', *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 1981, #12, pp. 279-291.
4. F. Gilbert; 'Intellectual History', in F. Gilbert and S.R. Graubard (eds); *Historical Studies Today*, p.155.
5. See chapter 1, above, p.22.
6. E. Gellner; *Nations and Nationalism*, p.21.
7. For a good discussion of the Russian merchants see Thomas C. Owen; *Capitalism and Politics in Russia. A Social History of the Russian Merchants 1855-1905*.
8. Max Weber; *Economy and Society*, vol.3.
9. F.E. Manuel (ed); *Utopias and Utopian Thought*, p.vii.
10. *ibid.* p.xii.
11. J. Shklar; 'The Political Theory of Utopia; From Melancholy to Nostalgia', in Manuel *op.cit.*, p.101.
12. P. Tillich; 'Critique and Justification of Utopia' in Manuel *op.cit.*, p.299.

BibliographyNote on Sources

The research for this thesis has been based on a wide variety of sources, published and unpublished. There is a wide range of archival material available in the Soviet Union, much of it untapped by scholars. I was not, unfortunately, able to gain access to the Manuscript Section of the Lenin Library (Moscow), although it contains many documents which would have been of value (especially in relation to Chapter 5). Nor was I able to examine the material contained in the Institute of World Literature (Leningrad), though Soviet historians have already made extensive studies of the documents contained there.

There is, of course, a vast amount of published material about Slavophilism. The fullest bibliography is contained in the first volume of Zavitnevich's massive biography of Khomiakov, which is the inevitable starting point for all students of Slavophilism. The fullest bibliographies in an English-language publication can be found in the three volumes by Peter Christoff, listed in Part 4, below.

Part 1Archives

Tsentral'nyi gosudarstvennyi arkhiv literatury i iskusstva (TsGALI).

- Fond 10 (Aksakov family letters, published and unpublished manuscripts of Konstantin Aksakov).
- Fond 137 (Gerschenzon archive. Contains unpublished letter from Iu. Samarin to Chaadaev).
- Fond 236 (Kireevsky family papers, manuscripts).
- Fond 472 (Sverbeev family archive, including letters from E. A. Sverbeeva to various members of the Slavophile Circle).
- Fond 532 (Assorted letters of Khomiakov family).
- Fond 563 (Shevyrev archive. Contains letters from Iu. Samarin).

Gosudarstvennyi istoricheskii muzei. Otdel rukopisei (G. I. M.).

- Fond 178 (Khomiakov family archive. Contains various papers, letters and manuscripts).
- Fond 345 (Granovsky archive. Contains various letters etc, relating to members of the Slavophile Circle).
- Fond 404 (D. P. Golokhvastov archive. Contains a Third Section Report about Konstantin Aksakov).

Birmingham University Library (U. K.).

Shishkin Papers (S. P.).

File 56, 1-55 contains various literary manuscripts of Ivan and Konstantin Aksakov, some of which remain unpublished.

Unpublished Theses

M. Chapman: *Ivan Kireevsky: Life and Thought* (P. H. d. University of Liverpool, 1971).

R. D. Givens: *Servitors or Seigneurs: The Nobility and the 18th Century Russian State* (P. H. d.: University of California at Berkeley, 1975).

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E. I. Mokriak: *Dnevnik i memuary kak istochnik dlia izuchenia sotsial'noi psikhologii dvorianstva Rossii vtoroi poloviny XIX - nachala XX v.* (avtoreferat, Moscow University).

Part 2

The Writings of the Slavophiles

Mid-19th century Slavophile Journals.

Den' (1861-1865).

Molva (1857-1858).

Moskovskii Sbornik (M. S.) (1846, 1847, 1852).

Parus (1859).

Russkaisa Beseda (R. B.) (1856-1860).

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Writings of principal individuals associated with the Slavophile Circle.

The letters and articles of the Aksakov brothers, Kireevsky, Khomiakov and Samarin have been published in relatively complete form. No systematic attempt, however, has been made to publish the Complete Works of Koshelev and Cherkassky, both of whom contributed considerable numbers of articles to the Slavophile journals listed above.

In addition to the Slavophile journals and the items listed below, a number of articles and letters unpublished elsewhere can be found in the works of Trubetskaia, Koliupanov, Leroy-Beaulieu and Nol'de (see Part 4,

below). The journal *Russkii Arkhiv* contains numerous important letters which cannot be found elsewhere.

Some important articles and letters by members of the Slavophile Group have also been translated into English. See the works of Raeff (1966), Edie et.al. (1965), and Birbeck listed in Part 4, below.

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The correspondence between members of the Aksakov family and Turgenev is contained in *Pis'ma S. T., K. S., and I. S. Aksakov k I. S. Turgenevu* (Moscow, 1894). Other letters casting light on the family's literary interests can be found in *Literaturnoe Nasledstvo*, 1952, vol. 58, pp. 533-796.

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P. V. Kireevsky: *Pis'ma P. S. Kireevskogo 1824-1854*. (Moscow, 1905).

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The Correspondence of Iu. Samarin and Baroness Rahden, 1861-1876 (translated and edited by T. Scully, H. Swediuk-Cheyne, L. Calder) (Waterloo, Ontario: Wilfred Laurier University Press, 1972).

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Part 3

Memoirs, Journals, Literature and Documents of the Period.

The following official documents, published by the Tsarist Government, have been used extensively throughout the thesis:

Predlozhenie k trudam redaktsionnykh kommissii dlia sostovlenia polozhenia o krest'ianakh, (6 vols.).

Predlozhenie k trudam redaktsionnykh kommissii po krest'ianskomu delu. Otzyvy chlenov gubernskikh komitetov, (2 vols.).

The following journals were of value when examining agricultural developments of the period, along with changes in attitudes towards farming:

Zapiski lebedianskogo obshchestva sel'skogo khoziaistva.
Zhurnal sel'skogo khoziaistva i ovzvodstva.
Zhurnal zemlevladel'tsev.

The following memoirs, diaries and travelogues either contain material relating to the biography and ideas of members of the Slavophile Circle or cast a more general light on noble attitudes towards social and political developments during the period. Note the following abbreviations:

G. M. (*Golos Minuvshogo*).
I. V. (*Istoricheskii Vestnik*).
K. S. (*Kievskaia Starina*).
R. A. (*Russkii Arkhiv*).

Deputaty i redaktsionnaia komissia (Leipzig, 1860).

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I. V. (*Istoricheskii Vestnik*).
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Part 4: Secondary Literature

Since a full bibliography covering all the background material to this thesis would run to several hundred pages, I have only listed works mentioned in the footnotes, along with others which I have found particularly helpful or important. Note the following abbreviations:

Slavic Review (S. R.).

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