

Restoring Wholeness in an Age of Disorder: Europe's Long Spiritual Crisis and the Genealogy of Slavophile Religious Thought, 1835-1860

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September 2008

Many German writers, journalists, and scholars who witnessed the collapse of the Wilhelmine Reich in 1918 interpreted this event as the culmination of a protracted, European-wide crisis that had originated more than a century before in the breakdown of traditional political institutions, socioeconomic structures, moral values, and forms of epistemology, anthropology, and religiosity. For these intellectuals, as well as anyone else who sought to restore what they considered to be Germany's spiritual vitality, one of the immediate tasks of the early Weimar years was to articulate authentic, viable modes of being and consciousness that would generate personal and communal wholeness in a society out of joint.¹ Among the dizzying array of responses formulated at that time, several of the most provocative drew upon disparate, even antagonistic strands of Protestantism in the hope that the proper appropriation of Germany's dominant confession could help the country overcome its long spiritual crisis.²

¹ *The Weimar Dilemma: Intellectuals in the Weimar Republic*, edited by Anthony Phelan (Manchester University Press, 1985); Dagmar Barnouw, *Weimar Intellectuals and the Threat of Modernity* (Indiana University Press, 1988); and *Intellektuelle in der Weimarer Republik*, revised edition, edited by Wolfgang Bialas and Georg G. Iggers (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1997). For impressionistic accounts, see Egon Friedell, *A Cultural History of the Modern Age: The Crisis of the European Soul from the Black Death to the World War*, 3 vols., translated by Charles Francis Atkinson (New York: A. A. Knopf, 1930-1932); Joseph Roth, *What I Saw: Reports from Berlin, 1920-1933*, translated with an introduction by Michael Hofmann (New York: W. W. Norton, 2003); Eric Voegelin, *Autobiographical Reflections*, edited and introduced by Ellis Sandoz (Louisiana State University Press, 1989); and Karl Löwith, *My Life in Germany Before and After 1939: A Report*, translated by Elizabeth King (University of Illinois Press, 1994).

² I have in mind here the reconstituted *Volkskirche*, which offered Protestantism as a bulwark against republicanism and the centrifugal forces straining the traditional fabric of German culture and society; the reconfiguration of liberal Protestant humanism by Paul Tillich, which sought to bring about a synergetic relationship between religion and culture that would allow humans to make the transcendent their own; and the neo-orthodoxy of Karl Barth, Friedrich Gogarten, Eduard Thurneysen, and Rudolf Bultmann, which located human freedom in obedience to the Lord and placed redemption beyond culture. For the *Volkskirche*, and other similar church movements, see Daniel R. Borg, *The Old-Prussian Church and the Weimar Republic: A Study in Political Adjustment, 1917-1927* (University Press of New England, 1984);

This recasting of a particular strand of Christianity to resolve the dilemmas and, just as often, meet the demands of modernity was paralleled by several Russian thinkers who found temporary refuge in the German capital in the early 1920s.³ These itinerant members of *russkii Berlin*, including Pavel Novgorodtsev, Nikolai Berdiaev, Lev Karsavin, Semën Frank, Boris Vysheslavtsev, Vasilii Zen'kovskii, and Nikolai Losskii, offered their fellow émigrés familiar signs and symbols ostensibly drawn from Eastern Orthodoxy that they thought would help to facilitate, among other things, the spiritual renewal of the entire European Continent. They broadly, and at times at cross currents, promoted a similitude anthropology that located human will and freedom not in nature but in God, and that grounded ethics in the notion that humans were created in the image and likeness of God; an epistemology that necessitated the maintenance and cultivation of religious consciousness in order to receive and act upon transcendental values; a

and Klaus Scholder, *The Churches and the Third Reich*, vol. 1, translated by John Bowden (London: SCM Press, 1987), 3-73. For Tillich's new theonomy, see Paul Tillich "On the Idea of a Theology of Culture," in *What Is Religion?*, translated by William Baille Green, edited by James Luther Adams (New York: Harper & Row, 1969), 155-181, originally delivered in 1919. For the most important documents of neo-orthodoxy during the Weimar period, see Karl Barth, *Epistle to the Romans*, translated from the 6th edition by Edwyn C. Hoskyns (Oxford University Press, 1933), especially the second edition (1922); and *Anfänge der dialektischen Theologie*, 2 vols., edited by Jürgen Moltmann (Munich: Chr. Kaiser Verlag, 1962-1963); excerpts of which have been translated into English in *The Beginnings of Dialectic Theology*, edited by James M. Robinson, translated by Keith R. Crim and Louis De Grazia (Richmond, VA: John Knox Press, 1968).

³ I have relied upon the following titles as guides through "Russian Berlin": Marc Raeff, *Russia Abroad: A Cultural History of the Russian Emigration, 1919-1939* (Oxford University Press, 1990); Robert C. Williams, *Culture in Exile: Russian Emigrés in Germany, 1881-1941* (Cornell University Press, 1972); Richard Pipes, *Struve: Liberal on the Right, 1905-1944* (Harvard University Press, 1980), chapter 9; *Russkii Berlin, 1921-1923*, edited by L. Fleishman, R. Kh'iuz, and O. Raevskaia-Kh'iuz (Paris: YMCA Press, 1983); S. S. Ippolitov, *Ocherki antibol'shevistskoi emigratsii*, vol. 1 (Moscow: Izdatel'stvo Ippolitova, 2002), 43-104; Viacheslav Kostikov, *Ne budem proklinat' izgnan'e... Puti i sud'by russkoi emigratsii*, second edition (Moscow: «Mezhdunarodnye otnosheniia,» 1994), especially Part 1; P. E. Kovalevskii, *Zarubezhnaia Rossiia. Istoriiia i kul'turno-prosvetitel'naia rabota russkogo zarubezh'ia za polveka (1920-1970)* (Paris: Librairie des Cinq Continents, 1971); *Chronik russischen Lebens in Deutschland, 1918-1941*, edited by Karl Schlögel et al. (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1999); and *Russische Emigration in Deutschland 1918 bis 1941: Leben im europäischen Bürgerkrieg*, edited by Karl Schlögel (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1995). For first-hand accounts, see Iosif V. Gessen, *Gody izgnaniia. Zhiznennyi otchet* (Paris: YMCA Press, 1979); S. L. Frank, *Biografiia P. B. Struve* (New York: Izdatel'stvo imeni Chekhova, 1956), chapter 7; Nikolai Berdiaev, *Samopoznaniie (Opyt filosofskoi avtobiografii)* (Paris: YMCA Press, 1949), chapter 10.

theonomous ecclesiology that made the Orthodox Church a free institution of obedience to an otherworldly God; and a providential historiosophy that was not world-immanent but world-transcendent.⁴

Often framed as the very essence of Orthodox Christianity, these categories possessed a relatively brief genealogy in Russian religious thought that can be traced back to the formation of early Slavophilism (1835-1860).⁵ This indebtedness to the first generation of Slavophile thinkers, especially Aleksei Stepanovich Khomiakov (1804-1860) and Ivan Vasil'evich Kireevskii (1806-1856), was often acknowledged by those Russians who in exile turned to Orthodoxy to address contemporary problems, and is commonly noted in scholarship.⁶ What is less well known is the original meaning and content of these Slavophile concepts that permeated and molded the Russian religious renaissance as it took shape abroad in the 1920s.

⁴ I derive these generic categories from the following Weimar-era works: *Sofiia. Problemy dukhovnoi kul'tury i religioznoi filosofii*, edited by Nikolai Berdiaev (Berlin: Obelisk, 1923); Lev Karsavin, *Filosofiia istorii* (Berlin: Obelisk, 1923); *Pravoslavie i kul'tura. Sbornik religiozno-filosofskikh statei*, edited by V. V. Zen'kovskii (Berlin: «Russkaia kniga,» 1923); Nikolai Berdiaev, *Novoe srednevekov'e. Razmyshlenie o sud'be Rossii i Evropy* (Berlin: Obelisk, 1924); and *Problemy russkogo religioznogo soznaniia*, edited by Boris Vysheslavtsev (Berlin: The YMCA Press, 1924). For a comprehensive bibliography, see *Russkie pisateli emigratsii: Biograficheskie svedeniia i bibliografiia ikh knig po bogosloviu, religioznoi filosofii, tserkovnoi istorii i pravoslavnoi kul'ture, 1921-1972*, edited by Nikolai Zernov (Boston, MA: G. K. Hall & Co., 1973); *Materialy dlia bibliografii russkikh nauchnikh trudov za rubezhom. (1920-1930)*, edited by E. V. Spektorskii (Belgrade: Izdanie Russkogo Nauchnogo Instituta, 1931); and *L'émigration russe. Revues et recueils, 1920-1980*, edited by T. L. Gladkova and T. A. Osorgina (Paris: Institut d'études slaves, 1988).

⁵ It was not just Russian émigrés who turned to early Slavophilism to address the spiritual crisis in post-1918 Europe. Several German publishing houses translated Slavophile writings to provide what one editor considered to be an Eastern Orthodox critique of European culture. See, for example, Iwan W. Kirejewski, *Russlands Kritik an Europa*, edited and introduced by Alfons Paquet, translated by Nicolai von Bubnoff (Stuttgart: Fr. Frommanns Verlag, 1923); idem, *Drei Essays*, translated and introduced by Harald von Hoerschelmann (Munich: Drei Masken, 1921).

Other figures in this multi-layered genealogy were Vladimir Solov'ev (1853-1900) and Fedor Dostoevskii (1821-1881), the latter of whom became an important cross-cultural figure in the post-war period, especially in regards to questions about Europe's spiritual crisis. See, for example, Hermann Hesse, *In Sight of Chaos*, translated by Stephen Hudson (Zurich: Verlag Seldwyla, 1923), originally, 1920; Eduard Thurneysen, *Dostoevsky*, translated by Keith R. Grim (Richmond, VA: John Knox Press, 1964), originally, 1921; and Barth, *Epistle to the Romans*, especially the second edition.

⁶ Nicolas Zernov, *The Russian Religious Renaissance of the Twentieth Century* (New York: Harper & Row, 1963); and *Russian Religious Thought*, edited and introduced by Judith Deutsch Kornblatt and Richard F. Gustafson (The University of Wisconsin Press, 1996), 6-10.

The remainder of this paper seeks to fill in this lacuna by demonstrating how Slavophile terms and ideas informed the linguistic and conceptual framework deployed by Russian thinkers in the 1920s. It does so not by examining the immediate context of the interwar period, but rather by investigating a previous, discrete moment in Russian intellectual history: the Slavophile recasting of intelligentsia discourse in the idiom of Eastern Orthodoxy during the reign of Nicholas I (1825-1855). Such a genealogical analysis establishes the historically contingent content of Slavophile religious thought, which, in turn, helps to unpack many of the categories embedded in the complex of ideas expressed by Russian émigrés in the decade after the Bolshevik Revolution.⁷ As we shall see below, the anthropological, epistemological, ecclesiastical, and historiosophical categories inherited in the twentieth century from Khomiakov, Kireevskii, and other early Slavophiles were principally organized around intelligentsia themes that first arose in the second quarter of the nineteenth century, namely the problem of Russia's cultural and historical backwardness (*otstalost'*); the proper coordination of freedom and necessity (*neobkhodimost'*) to overcome this backwardness; whether personhood (*lichnost'*) was exclusively grounded in the material realm or partly grounded in the divine; whether the law-governed process of historical development (*zakonomernost'*) was immanent or providential; the role that religion played in a person's moral progression and, thus, a nation's historical advancement; and the need to check both institutional and personal arbitrariness (*proizvol*) in response to the ever-expanding capabilities and prerogatives of

⁷ By genealogical analysis I mean the study of a specific episode in history in which an established, usually dominant complex of ideas was reinterpreted in such a way as to impose upon it new but culturally viable meanings that previously did not exist. Once this linguistic and conceptual alteration has been received by public opinion and embedded in its discourse, this formative change usually becomes standardized to such a degree that the innovative content remains intact and operative even as new layers of meaning and context are added to it. For a broader discussion of this approach, see Raymond Geuss, *Morality, Culture, and History: Essays on German Philosophy* (Cambridge University Press, 1999), 1-28.

state authority (*vlast*) and the gradual erosion of conventional cultural standards that had once guided individual behavior and ordered social life.

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One of the central questions to engage European thinkers after the French Revolution in political sovereignty, the Kantian revolution in ethics and epistemology, and similar moments of intellectual and sociopolitical rupture was how best to overcome the sense of personal alienation and spiritual disjointedness that resulted from the weakening and, in some cases, out-right destruction of traditional institutions and value systems. An array of antagonistic answers was offered in response to this question, especially in regards to the role that religion should play in fostering Europe's post-Napoleonic recovery and reintegration. The contours of this debate over religion were generally expressed in three broad programs: the reinstatement of conventional forms of Christian discipline and authority, embodied most clearly in the Holy Alliance and the Prussian state's adoption and propagation of pietistic fundamentalism;⁸ the annihilation of supernatural and transcendental modes of cognition, considered by atheists of various persuasions to be the

⁸ Frederick B. Artz, *Reaction and Revolution, 1814-1832* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1934), chapter 3; H. G. Schenk, *The Aftermath of the Napoleonic Wars: The Concert of Europe—An Experiment* (New York: Howard Fertig, 1967), chapter 1; Maurice Bourquin, *Histoire de la Sainte Alliance* (Geneva: Librairie de l'Université, 1954), chapter 8; Robert M. Bigler, *The Politics of German Protestantism: The Rise of the Protestant Church Elite in Prussia, 1815-1848* (The University of California Press, 1972), 136 ff.; John E. Toews, *Hegelianism: The Path Toward Dialectical Humanism* (Cambridge University Press, 1980), 243-254; Owen Chadwick, *The Popes and European Revolution* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981), chapter 8; Christopher M. Clark, "The Politics of Revival: Pietists, Aristocrats, and the State Church in Early Nineteenth-Century Prussia," in *Between Reform, Reaction, and Resistance: Studies in the History of German Conservatism from 1789 to 1945*, edited by Larry Eugene Jones and James Retallack (Providence, RI: Berg, 1993), 31-60; Friedrich Wilhelm Graf, "Die Spaltung des Protestantismus. Zum Verhältnis von evangelischer Kirche, State und ‚Gesellschaft‘ im frühen 19. Jahrhundert," in *Religion und Gesellschaft im 19. Jahrhundert*, edited by Wolfgang Schieder (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1993), 157-180, especially 164-173; Richard Fargher, "Religious Reactions in Post-Revolutionary French Literature: Chateaubriand, Constant, Mme de Staël, Joseph de Maistre," in *Religious Change in Europe, 1650-1914: Essays for John McManners*, edited by Nigel Aston (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1997), 257-274; and Owen Bradley, *A Modern Maistre: The Social and Political Thought of Joseph de Maistre* (University of Nebraska Press, 1999), chapter 8.

principal psychological barrier to humanity's immanent advancement toward rational, secular autonomy;⁹ or the renovation of Christianity through speculative philosophy and other forms of critical inquiry to make it accessible to educated society and relevant to the demands of the modern age.¹⁰

A similar question about the role of religion occupied educated Russia in the first quarter of the nineteenth century, generating an array of answers that paralleled those in contemporary Europe. In response to the upheavals that had unsettled the Continent for nearly twenty-five years (1789-1815), leading figures in Russian government, court, church, and public opinion sought to strengthen the established order through the imposition of traditional Orthodoxy or, in some cases, the introduction of alternative types of Christian faith. The offices of the Russian Church, the Russian Bible Society, the "Dual Ministry" of Spiritual Affairs and Popular Enlightenment, and various mystical groups used different elements of Christianity to restore the integrity of Russian society by bridling individual passion with barracks-style symmetry, biblical discipline, and spiritual hygiene and by directing social behavior toward revealed moral truths.¹¹

⁹ Karl Löwith, *From Hegel to Nietzsche: The Revolution in Nineteenth-Century Thought*, translated by David E. Green (Columbia University Press, 1991); Sidney Hook, *From Hegel to Marx: Studies in the Intellectual Development of Karl Marx* (The University of Michigan Press, 1976); Toews, *Hegelianism*, especially 255-355; Van Austin Harvey, *Feuerbach and the Interpretation of Religion* (Cambridge University Press, 1995); *The Young Hegelians: An Anthology*, edited by Lawrence S. Stepelevich (Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press International, 1997); Warren Breckman, *Marx, the Young Hegelians, and the Origins of Radical Social Theory: Dethroning the Self* (Cambridge University Press, 1999); Andrew Wernick, *Auguste Comte and the Religion of Humanity: The Post-Theistic Program of French Social Theory* (Cambridge University Press, 2001); Gareth Stedman Jones's introductory essay to Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The Communist Manifesto* (New York: Penguin Books, 2002), 3-184; and Richard Olson, *Science and Scientism in Nineteenth-Century Europe* (University of Illinois Press, 2008).

¹⁰ Laurence Dickey, "Hegel on Philosophy and Religion," in *The Cambridge Companion to Hegel*, edited by Frederick Beiser (Cambridge University Press, 1993), 301-347; Richard Kroner, *Speculation and Revelation in Modern Philosophy* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1961), 239-311; M. H. Abrams, *Natural Supernaturalism: Tradition and Revolution in Romantic Literature* (New York: W. W. Norton & Co. 1973); Toews, *Hegelianism*, chapters 2-3.

¹¹ Alexander M. Martin, *Romantics, Reformers, Reactionaries: Russian Conservative Thought and Politics in the Reign of Alexander I* (Northern Illinois University Press, 1997); Richard Wortman,

These efforts to deploy religion to buttress the status quo were not entirely successful, as domestic episodes undermined the imperial regime's legitimacy and, consequently, compelled some members of educated society to alter the conventional understanding and application of faith in Russia. One of the main propositions of Catherinian autocracy was that only the state could guide and direct Russia, as it alone stood above the petty, willy-nilly interests of the empire's disparate social groups.¹² The validity of this universalist claim began to erode as a result of administrative caprice during the last decade of Alexander I's reign (ca. 1815-1825) and, paradoxically, Russia's military success in the "people's war" against Napoleon.¹³ Ideological dissatisfaction erupted in December 1825 when veterans of the Patriotic War of 1812 and regiments under their command violently repudiated autocracy, an event that both expressed and accelerated discontent with Russia's existing political culture. The repression of the Decembrist Uprising by the newly ensconced Nicholaevan regime and the establishment of a vast surveillance apparatus that brokered neither public nor private dissent convinced many that autocracy was no longer an agent of goal-oriented

Scenarios of Power: Myth and Ceremony in Russian Monarchy, vol. 1 (Princeton University Press, 1995), chapter 8; Francis Ley, *Alexander I^{er} et sa Sainte-Alliance (1811-1825)* (Paris: Librairie Fischbacher, 1975); A. N. Pypin, *Religioznye dvizheniia pri Aleksandre I* (St. Petersburg: Gumanitarnoe agentstvo «Akademicheskii proekt,» 2000), based on the 1916 edition; and I. A. Chistovich, *Istoriia perevoda biblii na russkii iazyk*, 2nd edition (St. Petersburg: Tipografiia M. M. Stasiulevicha, 1899), 16-109.

¹² For a wide-ranging discussion of "the languages and practices of Russian statehood," see David MacLaren McDonald, "Domestic Conjunctures, the Russian State, and the World Outside, 1700-2006," in *Russian Foreign Policy in the Twenty-First Century and the Shadow of the Past*, edited by Robert Legvold (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007), 156-160. For an account specifically related to Catherinian Russia, see Cynthia Hyla Whittaker, *Russian Monarchy: Eighteenth-Century Rulers and Writers in Political Dialogue* (Northern Illinois University Press, 2003), chapter 5.

¹³ Martin, *Romantics*, chapter 5. For first-hand accounts of domestic discontent that had been growing in Russia since the end of the Napoleonic wars and the *Arakcheevshchina*, see *Readings in Russian Civilization*, vol. 2, edited and introduced by Thomas Riha (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1964), 295-302; Marc Raeff, *The Decembrist Movement* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1966); and *Arakcheev: Svidetel'stva sovremennikov*, compiled by E. E. Davydova, E. E. Liaminaia, and A. M. Peskov (Moscow: Novoe literaturnoe obozrenie, 2000).

development but, rather, a major obstacle to Russia's movement along the path of world history.

This sense of historical and spiritual stasis generated one of the most provocative symbols of the Nicholaevan era: backwardness.¹⁴ In this conceptualization, Russia lagged far behind its European counterparts because of unfavorable cultural conditions that long ago had separated it from the genuine source of world-historical advancement. As such, Russia was fundamentally incapable of pursuing the necessary course toward universal concord, however defined, since it lacked the proper developmental stimulus available to other peoples. The search was on in capital-city salons, student circles, journalism, and scholarship to identify and activate the authentic agent of moral and historical progress, a search that, as we shall see, brought questions of faith to the center of public opinion, especially in debates between Russian Hegelians, who sought to overcome religion, and the first generation of Slavophiles, who sought to reform it.

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In his classic study on the origins and principles of revolutionary practice, Nicholas Lobkowitz identified two forms of agency, each seemingly antagonistic toward the other, in Hegel's philosophy of history.¹⁵ The agent of progress identified in *Phänomenologie des Geistes* was man himself, willfully and actively participating in the process by which reason gradually emerged from and, then, definitively established itself in history. The agent of history principally outlined in the introduction to *Vorlesungen über die Geschichte der Philosophie*, on the other hand, was reason alone, which, in its absolute

¹⁴ The *locus classicus* for Russian backwardness is Petr Chaadaev's anonymous "Filosofskoe pis'mo," *Teleskop*, vol. 34, no. 15 (1836), 275-310, which will be examined in detail below.

¹⁵ Nicholas Lobkowitz, *Theory and Practice: History of a Concept from Aristotle to Marx* (University of Notre Dame Press, 1967), 154-155. Cf. Leszek Kolakowski, *Main Currents of Marxism*, translated from the Polish by P. S. Falla (New York: W. W. Norton and Co. 2005), 63 ff.

movement toward actualization, dialectically used humanity as an instrument to realize itself in historical time. Depending on which type of agency was emphasized, Lobkowitz concluded, Hegel's historiosophy either imbued humans with a tremendous amount of dignity and freedom in their individual responsibility to bring about the goal of world history or, conversely, subordinated free will to the inexorable forces of progress that brokered no volitional dissension from man.

These divergent categories in Hegel's philosophy of history helped to mold the language, symbols, and experiential self-interpretation of "young Russia" during the 1830s and 1840s,¹⁶ as it sought to challenge the autocracy's claim to universality and historical agency, reinvigorate Russia's world-historical advancement, and overcome emotional turmoil and uncertainty in their personal lives.¹⁷ Alienated from the dominant structures of Nicholaevan Russia—an era commonly described by Aleksandr Pushkin, Aleksandr Griboedov, Mikhail Lermontov, Nikolai Gogol, and cultural critics for its spiritual frailty, moral decadence, intellectual atrophy, social vacuity, and anthropological

¹⁶ The phrase "young Russia" belongs to Mikhail Gershenzon, *Istoriia molodoi Rossii* (Moscow-Petrograd: Gosudarstvennoe Izdatel'stvo, 1923). For the various entry points by which Hegel's writings entered Russia's public sphere, see B. F. Egorov, "Ocherki po istorii russkoi kul'tury XIX veka," in *Iz istorii russkoi kul'tury*, vol. 5, edited by A. D. Koshelev and B. F. Egorov (Moscow: «Iazyki russkoi kul'tury,» 1996), 185-201. Vivid first-hand accounts of Hegel's reception and alteration in Russia can be found in Alexander Herzen, *My Past and Thoughts*, translated by Constance Garnett (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1982), 229-253; Pavel Annenkov, *The Extraordinary Decade: Literary Memoirs*, edited by Arthur P. Mendel, translated by Irwin R. Titunik (University of Michigan Press, 1968), 21-27; and N. G. Chernyshevskii, "Ocherki gogolevskogo perioda russkoi literatury," *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii*, vol. 3, edited by V. Kirpotin (Moscow: OGIZ Gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo khudozhestvennoi literatury, 1947), 198-226. The academic literature on Hegel's influence in Russia is extensive. For useful accounts, see Martin Malia, *Alexander Herzen and the Birth of Russian Socialism* (New York: Grosset & Dunlap, 1965), chapter 10; Dmitrii Chizhevskii, *Gegel' v Rossii* (Paris: «Dom knigi» i «Sovremennye zapiski,» 1939); Alexandre Koyré, "Hegel en Russie," in *Études sur l'Histoire de la Pensée Philosophique en Russie* (Paris: Librairie Philosophique J. Vrin, 1950), 103-170; *Gegel' i filosofii v Rossii 30-e gody XIX v.-20-e gody XX v.*, edited by V. E. Evgrafov et al. (Moscow: Izdatel'stvo «Nauka,» 1974); Andrzej Walicki, *A History of Russian Thought: From the Enlightenment to Marxism* (Stanford University Press, 1979), chapter 7; and Ana Siljak, "Between East and West: Hegel and the Origins of the Russian Dilemma," *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 62:2 (April 2001), 335-358.

¹⁷ John Randolph, *The House in the Garden: The Bakunin Family and the Romance of Russian Idealism* (Cornell University Press, 2007).

deficiency¹⁸—Russian Hegelians initially adopted a strictly deterministic understanding of moral and historical progress in which *lichnost'*¹⁹ was a vessel through which *zakonomernost'*²⁰ rationally and inexorably worked itself out. Young men like Nikolai Stankevich, Mikhail Bakunin, and Vissarion Belinskii, all of whom were born sometime around Napoleon's invasion of Russia, initially assumed that the end of history would come into being through non-volitional forces that dialectically propelled humanity toward its "optimistic" end. Man in this formulation constituted the "arena within which the rite of self-determination [*tainstvo samoopredeleniia*] and the ultimate manifestation

¹⁸ N. A. Polevoi, "Neskol'ko slov o sovremennom russkoi literature," in *Literaturnaia kritika. Stat'i i retsenzii, 1824-1842* (Leningrad: «Khudozhestvennaia literatura» Leningradskoe otdelenie, 1990), 328-329; Kireevskii's review of Griboedov's "Gore ot uma," in *Evropeets. Zhurnal I. V. Kireevskogo*, edited by Leonid G. Frizman (Moscow: Izdatel'stvo «Nauka», 1989), 105-110; V. G. Belinskii, "Geroi nashego vremeni," *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii*, vol. 4 (Moscow: Izdatel'stvo Akademii Nauk SSSR, 1954), 193-270; and Annenkov, *The Extraordinary Decade*, 46-47. (Throughout this paper I cross-reference Titunik's translation with P. V. Annenkov, *Literaturnye vospominaniia*, edited by B. M. Eikhenbaum [Leningrad: «Academia», 1928].) For an analysis of Pushkin, Griboedov, Lermontov, and Gogol along these lines, see T. I. Radomskaia, *Obretnie otechestva: Russkaia slovestnost' pervoi poloviny XIX veka* (Moscow: Sovpadenie, 2004).

¹⁹ *Lichnost'* constitutes one of the major themes of modern Russian history and, as such, is well examined in academic literature. I have principally relied on the following titles: Jochen Hellbeck, "Introduction" and "Russian Autobiographical Practice," in *Autobiographical Practices in Russia—Autobiographische Praktiken in Russland*, edited by Jochen Hellbeck and Klaus Heller (Göttingen: V&R unipress, 2004), 13-14, 281-285; V. S. Ikonnikov, *Opyt russkoi istoriografii*, vol. 1 (Kiev: Tipografiia Imperatorskogo Universiteta sv. Vladimir, 1891), 193-198; Andreevich [E. A. Solov'ev], *Opyt filosofii russkoi literatury*, 2nd edition (St. Petersburg: Tipografiia Pervoi Spb. Trudovoi Arteli, 1909); L. A. Kolobaeva, *Kontseptsiia lichnosti v russkoi literature rubezha XIX-XX vv.* (Moscow: Izdatel'stvo Moskovskogo universiteta, 1990); Derek Offord, "Lichnost': Notions of Individual Identity," in *Constructing Russian Culture in the Age of Revolution: 1881-1940*, edited by Catriona Kelly and David Shepherd, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 13-25 and 51-52; V. V. Vinogradov, *Istorii slov*, 2nd edition, edited by N. Iu. Shvedova (Moscow: 1999), 271-309; Oleg Kharkhordin, *The Collective and the Individual in Russia: A Study of Practices* (University of California Press, 1999), 184-190; and N. I. Liban, *Stanovlenie lichnosti v russkoi literature XVIII veka* (Moscow: Izdatel'stvo Moskovskogo universiteta, 2003).

²⁰ The centrality of *zakonomernost'* to Russian philosophies of history prevents me from giving a detailed bibliographic account of its usage. For some of the works that have informed this paper, see Leopold Haimson, *Russia's Revolutionary Experience, 1905-1917: Two Essays*, introduced by David M. McDonald (Columbia University Press, 2005), ix-x; S. M. Solov'ev, *Istoriia Rossii s drevneishikh vremen*, Book 1, edited and introduced by L. V. Cherepnin (Moscow: Izdatel'stvo sotsial'no-ekonomicheskoi literatury, 1960), 55-59; V. O. Kliuchevskii, *Kurs russkoi istorii*, 3 vols., edited by N. L. Rubinshtein (Moscow: Gosudarstvennoe sotsial'no-ekonomicheskoe izdatel'stvo, 1937), especially lectures 1, 2, 26, and 41; Nikolai Kareev, "Istoricheskie zakony ili zakony istorii" *Entsiklopedicheskii slovar'*, vol. 26 (St. Petersburg: Brockhaus-Efron, 1894), 481-482; idem, "Sotsiologiya," *Entsiklopedicheskii slovar'*, vol. 61 (1900), 77-83; and N. L. Rubinshtein, *Russkaia istoriografiia* (Moscow: OGIZ Gospolitizdat, 1941).

of the ‘Creative Idea’ is performed.”²¹ The notion that Reason or Spirit emerged in human consciousness through an impersonal, immanent process that was external to the self precluded the possibility of personal initiative or intervention. From this perspective, human will could not vitiate or alter the course of history, and stages in historical development could not be circumvented or even accelerated. What was required of the individual was to coordinate, even subordinate his will to the objective laws of history, laws that ineluctably led to the establishment of a rational world order.²²

Due to a variety of personal experiences and ideological influences, Belinskii and Aleksandr Herzen soon inverted those Hegelian concepts that they found to be overly deterministic and impersonal to formulate a conception of *lichnost’* according to which the human person freely participated in the aesthetic and pedagogical act of making reason conscious in the world. The result of such action was two-fold: it would emancipate the embryonic Russian nation from political absolutism, i.e. from the principle barrier to world-historical progress, and embed Russia’s national development in the unfolding process of universal history. Although still understood in teleological

²¹ Annenkov, *The Extraordinary Decade*, 20 and 27-28, assigned this deterministic optimism to Mikhail Bakunin’s influential early reading of Hegel. (I have slightly amended Arthur Mendel’s translation.) See also Chernyshevskii, “Ocherki gogolevskogo perioda,” 202-203. For Bakunin’s initial embrace of Hegel, see Chizhevskii, *Gegel’ v Rossii*, 84-112; and A. A. Kornilov, *Molodye gody Mikhaila Bakunina. Iz istorii russkogo romantizma* (Moscow: Izdanie M. i. S. Sabashnikovykh, 1915), chapter 23.

²² N. V. Stankevich, “Opyt o filosofii Gegelia. (Perevod),” in *Nikolai Vladimirovich Stankevich. Stikhotvoreniia. Tragediia. Proza*, edited by Aleksei Stankevich (Moscow: Tipografiia i slovolitnia O. O. Gerbeka, 1890), 183-238. This article, which was first published in *Teleksop*, vol. 28, nos. 13-15 (1835), 3-28, 145-166, 256-294, is a translation of Joseph Willm, “Essai sur la philosophie de Hegel,” *La Revue Germanique*, 3^e série, nos. 1, 5, 7-8 (Jan., May, July-Aug. 1835). Much of Willm’s essay is composed of quotations from Hegel’s preface to the 2nd edition of his *Enzyklopädie der philosophischen Wissenschaft im Grundriss* in vol. 8 of *Werke in zwanzig Bänden*, edited by Eva Moldenhauer and Karl Markus Michel (Frankfurt am Main, 1970), 13-32; and from Hegel’s lectures on the history of philosophy in vol. 17 of *Sämtliche Werke. Jubiläumsausgabe in zwanzig Bänden*, edited by Hermann Glockner (Stuttgart: Fr. Frommanns Verlag, 1959), 23-80. For similar statements by Bakunin and Belinskii, see M. A. Bakunin, “Gimnazicheskie rechi Gegelia. Predislovie perevodchika,” *Moskovskii nabliudatel’*, Part 16 (1838), 5-21; Bakunin’s letter to Aleksandra and Natalia Beyer, 2 July 1837, in Bakunin, *Sobranie sochinenii i pisem, 1828-1876*, vol. 2: *Gegelianskii period, 1837-1840* (Moscow: Izdatel’stvo Vsesoiuznogo Obshchestva Politkatorzhan i Ssyl’no-Poselentsev, 1934), 31 and passim; and Belinskii, “Ocherki Borodinskogo srazheniia” and “Mentsel’, kritik Gëte” in *Polnoe Sobranie Sochinenii*, vol. 3 (1953), 325-356 and 385-419.

terms, history in this sense was not thought to advance along the “path of perfection” solely in accordance with the dictates of some “natural, fated, and inevitably progressive scheme.” Instead, the course of world history was partly contingent upon the “phenomenal, chance protests” of self-conscious individuals who revolted against the impediments of reason, a historiosophical assertion that not only accommodated human freedom but necessarily required its intervention to fulfill the *telos* of history. Human freedom, or the “fullness of spiritual and material existence,” was understood in this sense to be both the active means and the preordained end of history.²³

Central to this Hegel *à la russe*, whether in its more volitional or its more deterministic orientation, were the materialistic and atheistic tenets of Left Hegelianism, concepts that altered the discursive framework of “young Russia” by embedding an array of new categories in public opinion, which, to borrow the language of John Toews, anthropocentrically reduced the “actualization of the absolute” to the “self-actualization of man.”²⁴ Viewed through the analytical lenses of David Strauss, August Cieszkowski, Ludwig Feuerbach, and Bruno Bauer,²⁵ Hegel’s historiosophy and philosophy of religion

²³ The historiosophical language in this paragraph comes from Annenkov, *The Extraordinary Decade*, 90 and 220, which he attributed to Herzen. (Once again, I have slightly altered Titunik’s translation.) See also Gertsen, *Sobranie sochinenii*, vol. 9 (1956), 151; V. G. Belinskii, “Sochineniia Derzhavina,” *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii*, vol. 6 (1955), 582; and idem, “Rukovodstvo k poznaniiu novoi istorii dlia srednikh uchebnikh zavedenii,” *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii*, vol. 8 (1955), 272, 276. Cf. M. M. Grigorian, “V. G. Belinskii i problema deistvitel’nosti v filosofii Gegelia,” in *Gegel’ i filosofiiia v Rossii*, 69-87.

²⁴ Toews, *Hegelianism*, 1-3. See also Hannah Arendt, “From Hegel to Marx,” in *The Promise of Politics*, edited and introduced by Jerome Kohn (New York: Schocken Books, 2005), 70-80; and Hook, *From Hegel to Marx*. Stankevich’s and Bakunin’s initial deterministic reading of Hegel was cast in Christian terms and advocated the notion that Christianity constituted a rational religion of love that was in the process of realizing and purifying itself over time. Although Bakunin jettisoned the Christian content of this historiosophy in the early 1840s, he maintained a deterministic reading of Hegel for the remainder of the remarkable decade. See his “Die Reaction in Deutschland,” *Deutsche Jahrbücher für Wissenschaft und Kunst*, nos. 247-251 (17-21 October 1842), 985-987, 989-991, 993-995, 997-999, and 1001-1002.

²⁵ Herzen first encountered Hegel’s philosophy in the summer of 1839 through Cieszkowski’s *Die Prolegomena zur Historiosophie* (1838) or at least a review of that work in *Hallische Jahrbücher für deutsche Wissenschaft und Kunst*. See A. I. Gertsen, *Sobranie sochinenii v tridtsati tomakh*, vol. 22 (Moscow: Izdatel’stvo Akademii Nauk SSSR, 1961), 38 and 307. Herzen enthusiastically read

were construed to mean that the procession of history, which was activated and guided by revolutionary *praxis*, perpetually negated the structure of the present; and that the dialectical progression of consciousness in world history had already moved beyond the need for God.²⁶ History, therefore, became dependent upon the godless individual, sometimes recast as the godlike man, willfully acting in accordance with the laws of development and consciously committing himself to the necessity of humanity's immanent and natural self-redemption.²⁷ Religious faith and metaphysical speculation, what Herzen derisively called "scholasticism" and "mysticism," stood as outdated modes of consciousness that had to be overcome in Russia, as they already had been in the political, literary, and philosophical centers of Europe.²⁸ Scientific empiricism, not belief in the living God as man's transcendent ground, offered the only avenue toward truth,

Feuerbach's *Das Wesen des Christentums* in the summer of 1842. See Gertsen, *Sobranie sochinenii*, vol. 9 (1956), 19 and 27. Bakunin and Belinskii became acquainted with David Strauss's writings no later than early 1840. See Belinskii's 26 February 1840 letter to Bakunin in Belinskii, *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii*, vol. 11 (1956), 484-485. For the initial reception of Cieszkowski's work by Stankevich, Bakunin, and Ogarev, see André Liebich, *Between Ideology and Utopia: The Politics and Philosophy of August Cieszkowski* (Boston: D. Riedel Publishing Co., 1979), 59 and 337n.114.

²⁶ This description of Hegel's philosophical system and its Left Hegelian alterations belongs to Malia, *Herzen*, 225 ff.; Eric Voegelin, *Science, Politics, and Gnosticism* (Wilmington, DE: ISI Books, 2004), 50-57; Löwith, *From Hegel to Nietzsche*, 70-71; and Kolakowski, *The Main Currents*, 68 ff. The introduction of *praxis* to the philosophy of history represented a major conceptual shift in the understanding of teleology, emphasizing revolutionary action over the dialectical process of gradual self-overcoming. See Lobkowitz, *Theory and Practice*, 193-206; Lawrence S. Stepelevich, "August von Cieszkowski: From Theory to Praxis," *History and Theory*, 13:1 (Feb. 1974), 39-52; Liebich, *Between Ideology and Utopia*, chapter 2; and Laurence Dickey, "Saint-Simonian Industrialism as the End of History: August Cieszkowski on the Teleology of Universal History," in *Apocalypse Theory and the Ends of the World*, edited by Malcolm Bull (Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1995), 159-199.

²⁷ Vera Ammer, *Gottmenschentum und Menschgottum: Zur Auseinandersetzung von Christentum und Atheismus im russischen Denken* (Munich: Verlag Otto Sagner, 1988), 89-99, generally casts Herzen's appropriation of Left Hegelian atheism in these terms.

²⁸ Gertsen, *Sobranie sochinenii*, vol. 9 (1956), 24. See also Vasilii Botkin's letter to Belinskii, dated 22 March 1842, in which he delineated the movement in Europe away from the medieval "world of spontaneity [*neposredstvennost*], patriarchy, obscure mysticism, authority, [and] religious belief" toward a modern era of "thought, analysis, [and] rights, which emanate from the essence of the subject.... In France the rejection of the middle ages was realized in the sphere of community; it was realized in poetry by Byron; and now it is occurring in the sphere of religion thanks to Strauss, Feuerbach, and Bruno Bauer." Cited in V. G. Belinskii, *Pis'ma*, vol. 2, edited by E. A. Liatskii (St. Petersburg: Tipografiia M. M. Stasiulevich, 1914), 418.

moral progress, and, thus, “salvation for modern man.”²⁹ The human person was to orient herself not toward a supernatural or transcendental authority, i.e. the illusory product of false consciousness, but toward an anthropological ideal of “rational man” and “purified personality.”³⁰ Humanity could attain authentic freedom only after man became conscious of the world-historical fact that he was his own supreme being. Faith, therefore, had to be replaced by reason if man was to become his higher self. Consequently, God and His earthly institution, the Church, were understood to be obstacles in the actualization of the unfettered personality and the advancement of history. It was Hegel’s “algebra of revolution,” Herzen insisted, that postulated the inevitable destruction of the “Christian world, the world of tradition that has outlived itself.”³¹ The salvation of Russia and the world necessitated the end of religion.

Interpreted through the experiential matrices engendered by the Nicholaevan police state and the institutional culture of Official Nationality, which embraced Russian Orthodoxy as an ideological pillar of the regime,³² Hegel’s philosophical system partly generated an immanent, materialistic revolution in consciousness that helped to undermine traditional religiosity among some members of educated society.³³ The tenets

²⁹ Gertsen, *Sobranie sochinenii*, vol. 8 (1956), 114. Science’s “right... to obliterate” religious beliefs and cultural traditions, to use the phrase of Pavel Annenkov, constitutes one of the main themes in Gertsen, “Diletantizm v nauke” and “Pis’mo ob izuchenii prirody,” in *Sobranie sochinenii*, vol. 3 (1954), 7-88 and 91-315. Cf. Annenkov, *The Extraordinary Decade*, 94-95.

³⁰ Annenkov, *The Extraordinary Decade*, 58-59. Cf. Belinskii, “Rukovodstvo k vseobshchii istorii,” in *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii*, vol. 6 (1955), 93.

³¹ Gertsen, *Sobranie sochinenii*, vol. 9 (1956), 23. For the relationship between atheism and revolution in Herzen’s and Nikolai Ogarev’s émigré journalism, see V. S. Panova, “Kolokol” Gertsena i Ograeva ob ateizme, religii, i tserkvi (Moscow: «Mysl’» 1983).

³² For the doctrine of Official Nationality, see A. N. Pypin, “Kharakteristiki literaturnykh mnenii ot dvadtsiatykh do piatidestiatykh godov. Istoricheskie ocherki. II. Narodnost’ offitsial’naia,” *Vestnik Evropy*, no. 9 (Sept. 1871), 301-351, especially 312 ff.; and Nicholas Riasanovsky, *Nicholas I and Official Nationality in Russia, 1825-1855* (University of California Press, 1959).

³³ Much of the language in this paragraph comes from Ernst Cassirer’s description of the atheistic attack on religious conventions in the late French Enlightenment. See *The Philosophy of the Enlightenment* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1955), 134-135. Not all *gegeliansty* embraced this reading of Hegel. Timofei

of Orthodoxy began to lose their claims to validity and truth among successive generations of *intelligenty*, who generally experienced the faith of their fathers as a hindrance to intellectual, social, and cultural progress. The Russian Church, which was legally protected, privileged, and regulated by the imperial bureaucracy, was thought to enslave its flock to invisible tyrants and earthly despots. Worst of all, Eastern Orthodoxy failed to establish a genuinely ethical community in Russia, as evidenced by the evils of serfdom and absolutism. Orthodox Christianity was understood in this sense to constitute an apologia for political oppression and manifest one of the primary examples of Russia's backwardness. As such, the Orthodox Church and its static doctrines had to be overcome by the willful actions of the autonomous *lichnost'* and the rational course of historical advancement, forces that would overcome the fallacy of God, secularize and ethicize the Beatitudes, break the ecclesiastical shackles that bind the human spirit to corrupt clerics, and emancipate the Russian people (*narod*) from supernatural and terrestrial slavery.³⁴

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For the early Slavophiles, attempts by their contemporaries to secularize the meaning of history and anthropologize the idea of God radically destabilized the only structures that engendered moral and historical progress.³⁵ They believed that the collapse of transcendental reality, i.e. the spiritual realm from which humans acquired absolute moral

Granovskii, for example, broke with Herzen and Annenkov over this very issue, claiming that the atheistic tenets of European socialism derived from Hegel undermined "the concrete, historical basis of existence" and destabilized the idea of the immortality of the soul, which for him constituted the foundation of ethics. In Annenkov, *The Extraordinary Decade*, 142-143. For an analysis of this moderate position, see Derek Offord, *Portraits of Early Russian Liberals: A Study of the Thought of T. N. Granovsky, V. P. Botkin, P. V. Annenkov, A. V. Druzhinin and K. D. Kavelin* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1985).

³⁴ V. G. Belinskii, "Letter to N. V. Gogol," in *Selected Philosophical Works* (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1948), 503-512.

³⁵ On the secularization of sacred history, see Karl Löwith, *Meaning in History* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1949). On the anthropologization of the idea of God, see Wolfhart Pannenberg, "Anthropology and the Question of God," in *Basic Questions in Theology*, vol. 3, translated by R. A. Wilson (London: SCM Press LTD, 1973), 80-98.

values and around which they ordered their temporal lives, would enslave human consciousness and, thus, human behavior to the mechanical forces and biological impulses of nature, reducing *lichnost'* to the level of a beast engaged in the frighteningly monotonous movement from birth to death. To counter this devaluation and destruction of God's moral world order, the Slavophiles introduced Russian public opinion to an array of historiosophical, anthropological, and theological categories, partly drawn from their reading of Schelling's philosophical system that sought to ground human freedom and the eschatological advancement toward the Kingdom of God in the necessity of the living God.³⁶

Nearly two decades before the Hegelian revolution swept through "young Russia," Schelling's *Naturphilosophie*, which posited the idea that nature was an organism guided by spirit,³⁷ exerted significant influence on the study of natural science, natural history, and aesthetics at the imperial universities in Moscow and St. Petersburg, as well as on the interpretation of art, poetry, and history in informal discussion groups that principally met in the ancient capital.³⁸ One such group, the Lovers of Wisdom

³⁶ See, for example, Kireevskii's well-known declarations in "O neobkhodimosti i vozmozhnosti novykh nachal dlia filosofii" and "Obozrenie sovremennogo sostoianiia literatury," in *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii I. V. Kireevskogo v dvukh tomakh*, vol. 1, edited by M. O. Gershenzon (Moscow: Tipografiia Imperatorskogo Moskovskogo Universiteta, 1911), 262-264 and 127-128, respectively; hereafter cited as *PSS Kireevskogo*.

³⁷ Robert Stern's introduction to F. W. J. von Schelling, *Ideas for a Philosophy of Nature as Introduction to the Study of this Science*, translated by Errol E. Harris and Peter Heath (Cambridge University Press, 1988), ix-xxiii. Cf. Malia, *Herzen*, 73.

³⁸ Egorov, "Ocherki po istorii russkoi kul'tury," 171-184, provides a nice topography of how Schelling's work was appropriated, recast, and disseminated in imperial Russia. For a first-hand account of Schelling's initial impact on Russian thought, see Aleksei Galakhov, *Zapiski cheloveka*, introduced, compiled, and prepared by V. M. Bokova (Moscow: Novoe literaturnoe obozrenie, 1999), 80-92 and 211-212. For secondary sources, see G. G. Shpet, "Ocherk razvitiia russkoi filosofii," in *Sochineniia*, foreword by E. V. Pasternak (Moscow: Izdatel'stvo «Pravda,» 1989), 11-342; Z. A. Kamenskii, *Russkaia filosofii nachala XIX veka i Shelling* (Moscow: Izdatel'stvo «Nauka,» 1980); A. A. Kornilov, *Kurs russkoi istorii XIX veka* (Moscow: Izdatel'stvo M. i S. Sabashnikovykh, 1912), 79-90; Alexandre Koyré, *La Philosophie et le Probleme National en Russie au Début du XIXe Siècle* (Paris: Librairie Ancienne Honoré Champion, 1929); Wsewolod Setschkareff, *Schellings Einfluß in der russischen Literatur der 20er under 30er Jahre des XIX. Jahrhunderts* (Leipzig: Kommissionsverlag Otto Harrassowitz, 1939); Charles Quénet, *Tchaadaev*

(*liubomudry*), played a particularly important role in the mid 1820s in introducing Schelling's system to educated society,³⁹ including Khomiakov and Kireevskii who belonged to the group. Its journal, *Mnemosyne* (1824-1825), promoted Schelling's contention that human freedom was grounded not in the immanent unfolding of empirical reality but in the eternal realm of transcendental reality. In an aphorism about the history of philosophy and the limits of epistemology, one of the journal's editors explained that man, in his unending quest for ultimate knowledge, existed in between two worlds, the conditional realm of matter and the absolute realm of the transcendent. The material world in which humans lived their physical existence was understood to be ruled by the principles of finiteness and necessity. If man remained trapped in the static, closed realm of natural existence, he could not advance towards higher stages of being, which were attained by achieving higher levels of knowledge. But because he was created as a rational being, and as such reflected the very essence of the unconditional, man possessed the cognitive capability to leap out of the material world of sense perception and willfully aspire "toward supreme, authentic knowledge," which resided in an otherworldly domain governed by the principles of infiniteness and freedom. It was these transcendental qualities that generated the possibility of self-development and unending progress.⁴⁰

et les Lettres Philosophiques: Contribution a l'Étude de Mouvement des Idées en Russie (Paris: Librairie Ancienne Honoré Champion, 1931), 180-187; and Malia, *Alexander Herzen*, chapter 5.

³⁹ Z. A. Kamenskii, *Moskovskii kruzhok liubomudrov* (Moscow: Izdatel'stvo «Nauka» 1980); Victor Terras, "Schellingianism," in *Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, edited by Edward Craig (New York: Routledge, 1988), 520-522; P. N. Sakulin, *Iz istorii russkogo idealizma. Kniaz' V. F. Odoevskii. Myslitel'.—Pisatel'*, 2 vols. (Moscow: Izdanie M. i S. Sabashnikovoykh, 1913); Pavel Miliukov, *Glavnye techeniia russkoi istoricheskoi mysli*, vol. 1, 2nd edition (Moscow: T-va I. N. Kushnerev i Ko., 1898), 358 ff.; and K. B. Umbrashko, *M. P. Pogodin: Chelovek. Istorik. Publitsist* (Moscow: Institut rossiiskoi istorii RAN, 1999), 125-127.

⁴⁰ Prince Vladimir Odoevskii, "Aforizmy iz razlichnykh pisatelei, po chasti sovremennogo germanskogo liubomudriia," *Mnemozina*, II (1824), 83-84. For similar language, see π. π. [Mikhail Pavlov], "O sposobakh issledovaniia prirody," *Mnemozina*, IV (1825), 20 ff.

This attempt to resolve the problem of freedom and necessity by grounding human nature in an indeterminate Absolute was not an uncommon maneuver following the Kantian revolution in the metaphysical foundations of moral experience and epistemology.⁴¹ What principally distinguished Schelling's conceptualization of man's ultimate *Grund* from the general orientation of German idealism, a distinction that strongly influenced the Slavophile repudiation of Hegel and helped to shape its commitment to religious consciousness as the key to engendering self-determination and self-consciousness,⁴² resided in his insistence that human freedom emanated not from some abstract notion of God (*ein bloß Begriff*; in Russian, *myslenno* and *razumno*) but from a God who, although inaccessible to rational cognition, was real and actual.⁴³ The divine gift of free will, which constituted the organizing principle of human decision-making and action, came not from a God of the dead but from the God of the living.⁴⁴ It was solely because of God's incarnational intervention in the course of man's material, finite existence that the "melancholy monotony" of coming-to-be and passing-away had been disrupted, a gratuitous act of love from above that gave postlapsarian man the capability to escape the finality of material death by morally returning to God.⁴⁵

⁴¹ Toews, *Hegelianism*, chapter 2.

⁴² Nicolai von Bubnoff, "Begleitwort," in *Russische religionsphilosophen Dokumente*, edited, translated, and introduced by Bubnoff (Heidelberg: Verlag Lambert Schneider, 1956), 10. See also Setschkareff, *Schellings Einfluß in der russischen Literatur*, 1.

⁴³ Werner Marx, *The Philosophy of F. W. J. Schelling: History, System, and Freedom*, translated by Thomas Nenon (Indiana University Press, 1984), 64-65. See also Toews, *Hegelianism*, 53-54; Eric Voegelin, *The New Order and Last Orientation*, in *The Collected Works of Eric Voegelin*, vol. 25, edited by Jürgen Gebhardt and Thomas A. Hollweck (University of Missouri Press, 1999), 203; Terry Pinkard, *German Philosophy, 1760-1860: The Legacy of Idealism* (Cambridge University Press, 2002), 329; and Malia, *Alexander Herzen*, 78. The German terms comes from F. W. J. Schelling, *Philosophische Untersuchungen über das Wesen der menschlichen Freiheit*, in *Sämtliche Werke*, vol. 7, edited by K. F. A. Schelling (Stuttgart und Ausburg: J. G. Cotta'scher Verlag, 1860), 358. The Russian comes from Kireevskii, "Rech' Shellinga. (1845)," *PSS Kireevskogo*, vol. 2, 92-93.

⁴⁴ Schelling, *Philosophische Untersuchungen*, 346. Cf. Marx, *The Philosophy of Schelling*, 72.

⁴⁵ The phrase "melancholy monotony" belongs to Schelling; see Emil L. Fackenheim, *The God Within: Kant, Schelling, and Historicity*, edited by John Burbridge (University of Toronto Press, 1996), 104.

Historical progress was ultimately dependent, therefore, on revelation, which gave each person the possibility to break out of her natural confines and begin the gradual process of morally aspiring to the living God.⁴⁶

Schelling's "metaphysics of agency," to use the terminology of Terry Pinkard,⁴⁷ was built around a theocentric humanism that generally corresponded to the "image and likeness" anthropology just then beginning to circulate in Russia's spiritual academies and public sphere.⁴⁸ Schelling based his argument that man's finite freedom emanated exclusively from God's infinite freedom on "the concept of derivative absoluteness or divinity," i.e. the postulation that God would only reveal himself to a creature that was similar to Him, namely a free being that was, in its humility to God, self-determining. This similarity to the living God meant that man in his actions must be "just as" free as his Creator, a religious conceptualization of will and conduct that made individual freedom sacred, absolute, and divine. The revelation of similitude anthropology imparted soul-saving knowledge to man, whereby he became aware of the fact that he possessed a spiritual personhood (*Selbstheit* or *Persönlichkeit*) that necessarily but freely drew him back to God.⁴⁹

Although human action had been liberated from the immanent course of determinism by its derivation from God's infinite freedom, it did not lose its determinacy,⁵⁰ as free will was humbly grounded in divine will, the locus in which

⁴⁶ Jerry Day, *Voegelin, Schelling, and the Philosophy of Historical Existence* (University of Missouri Press, 2003), 165-180.

⁴⁷ Pinkard, *German Philosophy*, 325. Cf. Fackenheim, *The God Within*, 112.

⁴⁸ See Patrick Lally Michelson, "'The First and Most Sacred Right': Religious Freedom and the Liberation of the Russian Nation, 1825-1905" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Wisconsin—Madison, 2007), chapter 1, for a detailed discussion of similitude anthropology in the Moscow Spiritual Academy.

⁴⁹ Schelling, *Philosophische Untersuchungen*, 346-347; and idem, *System des transzendentalen Idealismus*, in *Sämtliche Werke*, vol. 3 (1858), 582. Cf. Marx, *The Philosophy of Schelling*, 72-73.

⁵⁰ Schelling, *Philosophische Untersuchungen*, 352. Cf. Marx, *The Philosophy of Schelling*, 63.

absolute freedom and absolute necessity found complete harmony. Man in this sense possessed a “double life” (*gedoppeltes Leben*) in which he participated both in the life of God and in the unique life that belonged exclusively to him, the created personality.⁵¹ Any form of “ontological decapitation,” to borrow Eric Voegelin’s vivid description of deicide,⁵² that reduced man’s authentic double life to a single, anthropocentric life, would be disastrous for the creature made in the image and likeness of God. Free will had been gifted to man to engender a life in God, but if this freedom was divorced from its divine origin and diverted from its ultimate purpose, then it would lose its authentic reality, causing man to fall, once again, into the monotonous trap of mere appearance, natural causation, and eternal death. There was no real life outside of God’s plan. Man’s highest goal was to embody God in his actions, to act in accordance with the divine will.⁵³ It was the conviction that man’s free will was guided by God’s hidden imperative, a conviction “deeply buried in human reason,” that propelled man toward unending perfection and, consequently, activated the process of historical progress.⁵⁴ Schelling’s historiosophy operated, therefore, on the assumption that the human person could achieve genuine freedom only by liberating herself from the dead necessity of matter and by subordinating herself to the living necessity of Providence. Translated into the historiosophical idiom of contemporary Russia, *zakonomernost’* was not world-immanent, as Russian Hegelians generally maintained, but world-transcendent.

⁵¹ Voegelin, *The New Order*, 218-219; Fackenheim, *The God Within*, 94-95.

⁵² Voegelin, *The New Order*, 195.

⁵³ Schelling, *System der gesamten Philosophie und der Naturphilosophie insbesondere*, in *Sämtliche Werke*, vol. 1 (1856), 562. Cf. Voegelin, *The New Order*, 219.

⁵⁴ Schelling, *System des transzendentalen Idealismus*, 346; cf. Marx, *The Philosophy of Schelling*, 8. Kireevskii, “O neobkhodimosti,” *PSS Kireevskogo*, vol. 1, 261, employed the same terminology.

Access to this metaphysical realm and, thus, the transcendental experiences that engendered moral and historical development could not be achieved solely through rational cognition. Reason alone could not explain the purpose of human existence, nor could it be used as the absolute standard to perceive the ultimate vocation of life without denying the reality of the spiritual domain. The normative foundation of human freedom, which resided in God, was accessible to man solely through religious consciousness, the only form of consciousness that, as a gift from God, was receptive to divine revelation. Faith in a supermundane God did not constitute a passing phase in universal history that was to be replaced by science and logic.⁵⁵ Rather, belief constituted an essential, permanent mode of cognition that, once integrated into and girded by other modes of comprehension, transcended the narrow formalism of logical deduction and revealed the transcendental realm of absolute Being, the sacred domain from which human freedom and destiny emanated.

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In the spring of 1842 Petr Chaadaev sent a letter to Schelling decrying the pernicious influence that the Hegelian revolution in historiosophy, “which teaches the dynamic advancement of humanity’s spirit and reduces the role of the individual spirit to nothing,” was having on contemporary Russian and European thought. “I must tell you,” Chaadaev informed his acquaintance and mentor,

that we find ourselves in a kind of intellectual crisis, which will probably determine the future of our civilization, a home-grown reaction that preys upon us, a natural consequence of the foreign influences that are still among us to this day. Each event in the advancement of the human spirit has for us, therefore, the greatest significance. And that philosophy, which reigned supreme in Berlin before your arrival there, having penetrated Russia and placed fashionable ideas in several of our young minds, threatens completely to distort our national sentiment. Its prodigious elasticity, which can be used

⁵⁵ Andrew Bowie, “Schelling,” in *Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, 516; Voegelin, *The New Order*, 195; Fackenheim, *The God Within*, 113; and Pinkard, *German Philosophy*, 328-329.

for all sorts of applications, has cultivated among us a plethora of bizarre ideas about our history. Its fatalistic logic, which has nearly eliminated free will [*le libre arbitre*] and which finds inexorable necessity lurking everywhere..., is prepared to reduce all of our history to an arrogant apotheosis of ourselves. Finally, it threatens to deprive us of the most valuable legacy of our pious ancestors, of those modest virtues that an austere religion had placed in their hearts....

The only recourse to save Russian and European civilization from the rigid determinism, cultural self-destruction, and ideological deformation that seemingly emanated from the systems of Hegel and his progeny was to ground human freedom in the necessity of the living God, who revealed man's destiny by implanting transcendental concepts—to be realized in historical time and social reality—in the soul of each person. Chaadaev hoped that Schelling's recent lecture series about mythology and revelation at the University of Berlin would facilitate this *contre attaque* by finally eradicating the destructive tendencies that continued “to flourish in [Europe's] academic capital.”⁵⁶

Nearly six years before Schelling received this letter from his Russian admirer, Nicholas I had sentenced Chaadaev to house arrest for the publication of an epistolary essay in which the former imperial aide-de-camp condemned his own homeland for spiritual vacuity, cultural stasis, and historical immaturity.⁵⁷ Chaadaev's “philosophical letter,” as well as the seven other unpublished letters *adressées à une Dame* that had been

⁵⁶ The French-language letter can be found in Mikhail Longinov, “Vospominanie o P. Ia. Chaadaeve,” *Russkii vestnik*, 42 (Nov. 1862), 159-160; *Oeuvres Choisies de Pierre Tchadaïef*, edited by J. Gagarin (Paris: Librairie A. Franck, 1862), 203-206; and P. Ia. Chaadaev, “Tri pis'ma,” *Zven'ia*, vol. 5 (1935), 220, 225.

⁵⁷ Chaadaev's philosophical letter, originally written in French, was first published in 1836 in Russian. It was most likely translated by Aleksandr Norov, a member of *arkhivnye iunoshi, liubomudry*, and S. E. Raich's circle. See M. D. El'zon, “Kem bylo perevedeno «Filosoficheskoe pis'mo»?,” *Russkaia literatura*, no. 1 (1982), 168-176. For the publication history of the philosophical letters, as well as the first complete edition of the French-language letters, see Raymond T. McNally, “Chaadaev's Philosophical Letters and His Apologia of a Madman,” *Forschungen zur osteuropäischen Geschichte*, Band 11 (1966), 24-129. English-language translations can be found in Peter Yakovlevich Chaadaev, *Philosophical Letters and Apology of a Madman*, translated and introduced by Mary-Barbara Zeldin (University of Tennessee Press, 1969); and *The Major Works of Peter Chaadaev*, translated, with commentary, by Raymond T. McNally (University of Notre Dame Press, 1969). For a general account of Chaadaev's life, see McNally, *Chaadaev and His Friends: An Intellectual History of Peter Chaadaev and His Russian Contemporaries* (Tallahassee, FL: The Diplomatic Press, 1971).

circulating in manuscript form in Moscow's salon society since at least the late 1820s, has long been considered a "point of departure" in the course and structure of Russian intellectual history.⁵⁸ These letters were especially important in establishing some of the most venerable motifs of the intelligentsia tradition, most notably the concept of Russian backwardness. Often overlooked in scholarly accounts of Chaadaev's contribution to Russian thought is the fact that his letters, especially *letter première*, engaged and ultimately shaped the broader discussions about freedom, necessity, historiosophy, and religious consciousness then beginning to engage the first generation of Hegelians and Slavophiles.⁵⁹

In fact, the concerns expressed by Chaadaev in his 1842 letter to Schelling echoed several of the issues initially raised in *Les Lettres Philosophiques*, issues that Chaadaev partly appropriated from Schelling's earlier works, e.g. the contention that divine revelation alone generated moral progress and historical advancement; that the laws of development were engendered not by nature or immanence, but rather by the transcendent; and that the free path toward human perfectibility not could be derived from the dead necessity of material causation, but solely from the living necessity of

⁵⁸ Herzen, "Ot izdatelei," *Polarnaia zvezda* (1861), 141. See also Gertsen, *Byloe i дума*, in *Sobranie sochinenii*, vol. 9, 139. For examples on the centrality of Chaadaev's letters to Russian intellectual history, see Alexandre Herzen, *Du Développement des Idées Révolutionnaires en Russie*, 2nd edition (London: Jeffs, 1853), 94 ff.; Longinov, "Vospominanie o P. Ia. Chaadaeve," 150-154.; Mikhail Gershenzon, *P. Ia. Chaadaev. Zhizn' i myshlenie* (St. Petersburg: Tipografiia M. M. Stasiulevicha, 1908); Quénet, *Tchaadaev et les Lettres Philosophiques*, 394-418; and A. A. Ermichev and A. A. Zlatopol'skaia, "P. Ia. Chaadaev v russkoi mysli. Opyt istoriografii," in *P. Ia. Chaadaev: Pro et Contra* (St. Petersburg: Izdatel'stvo Khristianskogo gumanitarnogo instituta, 1998), 7-40.

⁵⁹ This issue was not missed by Pavel Miliukov, Ivanov-Razumnik, or Mikhail Gershenzon, all of whom identified the problem of necessity and freedom, as well as its solution in religious consciousness, in Chaadaev's philosophical letters. See Miliukov, *Glavnye techeniia*, 380-382; Ivanov-Razumnik, *Istoriia russkoi obshchestvennoi mysli. Individualizm i meshchanstvo v russkoi literature i zhizni XIX v.*, vol. 1, 3rd edition (St. Petersburg: M. M. Stasiulevich, 1911), 328-331; and Gershenzon, *P. Ia. Chaadaev*, 76-82.

Providence.⁶⁰ To recover this underappreciated aspect of Chaadaev's philosophical letters, this section examines the language and categories that Russia's most provocative francophone thinker introduced to educated society, focusing primarily on how the form and content of Chaadaev's philosophy of history influenced the religious and historiosophical tenets of early Slavophilism.⁶¹ It was this influence that helped to shape the Slavophile understanding of and commitment to religious consciousness, freedom, and discipline as the essential impetuses to Russia's moral and historical advancement toward the Kingdom of God.

In the spring of 1833, just three years before Chaadaev's philosophical letter appeared in the journal *Telescope*, Count Sergei Uvarov noted in his first official pronouncement as minister of popular education that he would make Russian Orthodoxy, alongside autocracy and nationhood (*narodnost'*), one of the ideological foundations of the imperial educational system. The intent, he informed His Imperial Majesty, was to transform each professor and instructor into a "valuable instrument of the government" in its quest to cultivate a new generation of students loyal to the throne,⁶² a proposition that

⁶⁰ For Schelling's influence on Chaadaev and his philosophical letters, which was transmitted through private conversations, personal correspondences, and published works, see Quénet, *Tchaadaev et les Lettres Philosophiques*, 168-172; McNally, *Chaadaev and His Friends*, 180-181; and Evgenii Bobrov, "Shelling i Chaadaev," in *Filosofii v Rossii. Materialy, issledovaniia i zametky*, vol. 4 (Kazan': Tipolitografiia Imperatorskogo Universiteta, 1901), 1-17.

⁶¹ Miliukov, *Glavnye techeniia*, 393-394, made this link between Chaadaev and the Slavophiles. It is important to note here that although Chaadaev's philosophical letters influenced the Slavophile conception of how religious consciousness and historiosophy operated together, Chaadaev considered the Slavophiles to be his principal adversaries. He was especially upset that Slavophiles used Schelling's categories to develop their own philosophy of history. See Quénet, *Tchaadaev et les Lettres Philosophiques*, 314 ff. Alexandre Koyré, "Russia's Place in the World. Peter Chaadaev and the Slavophiles," *Slavonic Review*, 5 (15 March 1927), 598n.3, complicates this picture by arguing that Chaadaev's Slavophile opponents were Mikhail Pogodin and Stepan Shevyrev, not Khomiakov or Kireevskii.

⁶² Uvarov's ministerial circular, dated 21 March 1833, was published in *Zhurnal Ministerstva Narodnogo Prosveshcheniia*, 1 (1834), xlix-l. Kornilov, *Kurs russkoi istorii*, 84-85, argues that Chaadaev's condemnation of Orthodoxy was directly aimed at Uvarov's adoration of Russia's historical faith, and that this split between public opinion and official ideology initiated a dramatic change in the course of Russian intellectual history.

resonated in ministerial halls and at court following the Decembrist revolt that saw some of the empire's most promising young men turn against autocracy.

Yet in Chaadaev's sociology of religion, Orthodoxy could offer no pedagogical hope for Russia, other than perhaps the languid obedience and inert piety that Official Nationality seemed to call for, as its religious orientation was monastic, introspective, and, consequently, devoid of dynamic principles that could generate personal and historical progress. The fateful decision made in tenth-century Kievan Rus' to adopt Eastern Orthodoxy, Chaadaev insisted, had isolated Russia from "the general law of humanity,"⁶³ as the Byzantine tradition it appropriated was confined to the static asceticism and introverted mysticism of primitive Christianity. Because of its religious isolation and peculiarity, Russia was closed off from the vigorous spiritual doctrines that, for nearly two millennia, had been propelling the Roman Catholic world toward the Kingdom of God. Instead of embracing the social ideas of Western Christendom that had engendered Europe's moral being, i.e. "the ideas of duty, justice, law, and order," the Russian people confessed and practiced aspects of the Christian faith that made them "individualistic, volatile, and incomplete" (*tout y est individuel, et tout y est flottant et incomplet; individual'no, shatko, nepolno*).⁶⁴ Most disastrously, the servility and docility of Orthodoxy, which permeated Russian culture, separated its followers from the universal course of Providential history, which necessitated an active, free, and outwardly oriented religiosity to establish the "perfect order" on earth.⁶⁵

⁶³ For the French-language version, see McNally, "Chaadaev's Philosophical Letters," 40; for the Russian-language translation, see "Filosoficheskie pis'ma P. Ia. Chaadaeva. K g-zhe***," *Poliarnaia zvezda* (1861), 152.

⁶⁴ McNally, "Chaadaev's Philosophical Letters," 38; "Filosoficheskie pis'ma," 149.

⁶⁵ McNally, "Chaadaev's Philosophical Letters," 41; "Filosoficheskie pis'ma," 155.

Central to Chaadaev's critique of contemporary Russian society and its cultural heritage, and what constituted the lynchpin of his historiosophy, were two interrelated concepts: a two-world theory of human perfectibility;⁶⁶ and the notion that it was religious ideas, not material interests or natural causation, that initiated and guided the process of historical development. The stimulus to human progress was world-transcendent, not world-immanent. Although man physically lived in the mundane world, another world existed outside the realm of empirical reality. Because he was created by God and, therefore, in possession of divine characteristics that resided in his soul, man was capable of relating to the transcendental reality. In fact, failure to orient one's soul to the Divine eventually caused psychological damage, as the soul, much like the body, required its own regimen, which could only be derived from the supernatural realm from which it had originated.⁶⁷ It was this necessary subordination of the soul to the transcendent that initiated the procedure by which man, in his unending quest for perfectibility (*perfections indéfinies; bezkonechnoe sovershenstvovanie*), morally ascended to God and engendered the process by which the Kingdom of God was eschatologically actualized in social reality.⁶⁸

Chaadaev's two-world theory, which made the synonymous movements of human perfectibility and historical progress contingent upon man's moral assimilation to the living God, directly challenged materialist philosophies of history that grounded the processes of moral development in the natural sequence of human consciousness, i.e. the

⁶⁶ I borrow, and slightly amend, the language of "two-world theory" from Hannah Arendt, *The Life of the Mind*, vol. 1 (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1978), 23-26.

⁶⁷ McNally, "Chaadaev's Philosophical Letters," 35; "Filosoficheskie pis'ma," 144

⁶⁸ McNally, "Chaadaev's Philosophical Letters," 82; "Filosoficheskie pis'ma," 160.

notion that human nature ascended to higher stages of being on its own accord.⁶⁹ According to Chaadaev, the structure of the material world was deterministic and, as such, entirely static, a closed cycle of finite physical existence and eternal spiritual death. It could not provide man dynamic principles with which to leap out of his limited, temporal existence. Moral progress, therefore, was not immanent in nature, but required, rather, the vertical intrusion of transcendental categories, of truths not made by human hands, into the horizontal realm of human existence.⁷⁰ Any attempt to act in this world in accordance with a historiosophy exclusively organized around “the meaningless system of mechanical perfection,” would lead that person or community down the slippery slope toward “imaginary perfectibility” and “infinite degradation.”⁷¹ The only truths that resided in human consciousness were the ones primordially deposited there by God.⁷²

In this formulation of how divine gifts vitiated material causation, Chaadaev made religious ideas the impetus to historical development.⁷³ Actual progress and genuine moral ascent in the natural world was ultimately dependent upon revelation. God propelled history forward by creating a “moral sphere,” independent of human reason, out of which arose a particular community’s “modes of existence.”⁷⁴ All social and cultural manifestations, e.g. values, mores, interests, even political and legal institutions, were the ever-unfolding epiphenomena of religious ideas that had been graciously

⁶⁹ McNally, “Chaadaev’s Philosophical Letters,” 80, 84; for the Russian, see Aleksandr Pypin, “Kharakteristiki literaturnykh mnenii ot dvadtsatykh do piatidestiatykh godov. Istoricheskie ocherki. III. Proiavleniia skeptitsizma,” *Vestnik Evropy*, no. 12 (Dec. 1871), 165 and 167.

⁷⁰ McNally, “Chaadaev’s Philosophical Letters,” 84.

⁷¹ McNally, “Chaadaev’s Philosophical Letters,” 42, 83-84; “Filosoficheskie pis’ma,” 155; and Pypin, “Proiavleniia skeptitsizma,” 167.

⁷² McNally, “Chaadaev’s Philosophical Letters,” 77; Pypin, “Proiavleniia skeptitsizma,” 164.

⁷³ McNally, “Chaadaev’s Philosophical Letters,” 43, 77-78; “Filosoficheskie pis’ma,” 158.

⁷⁴ McNally, “Chaadaev’s Philosophical Letters,” 44; “Filosoficheskie pis’ma,” 159.

implanted from above at the beginning of a people's historical existence.⁷⁵ Different stages in history were engendered not by changes in economic well-being, but, rather, by spiritual advances initiated by revelation, the only force capable of stimulating moral progress and, thus, historical advancement. Religion, in this sense, constituted the “actively creative agent” of history as well as the “soul of social existence” that shaped human behavior.⁷⁶ Religious consciousness properly ordered, therefore, was not some archaic form of “fanaticism and superstition,” but an invaluable type of non-rational cognition that allowed the religious person, who was attuned to *la puissance surnaturelle*, to ascertain and participate in God's revealed plan.⁷⁷

By postulating the existence of a transcendental reality and by locating the stimulus of moral and historical progress in God, Chaadaev helped to establish the notion in Russian discourse, which gained credence among Slavophiles, that the historiosophical problem of freedom and necessity could only be resolved in the maintenance and cultivation of religious consciousness. The materialist explanation of human advancement obliterated free will, as it mistakenly reduced the processes of historical development to the deterministic laws of natural evolution or their socialist variants. The concept of divine revelation, however, liberated man from the dead necessity of matter, by making the pursuit of unending moral perfection a free choice that, although God-given, was the responsibility of each person to make operable. Divine reason, Chaadaev declared, functioned in this world “in such a way as not to destroy the freedom of human

⁷⁵ McNally, “Chaadaev's Philosophical Letters,” 43; “Filosoficheskie pis'ma,” 157. Gershenzon, *P. Ia. Chaadaev*, 79; and Ivanov-Razumnik, *Istoriia*, vol. 1, 331, highlight this aspect of Chaadaev's historiosophy.

⁷⁶ McNally, “Chaadaev's Philosophical Letters,” 44; “Filosoficheskie pis'ma,” 159-160.

⁷⁷ McNally, “Chaadaev's Philosophical Letters,” 43, 84.

reason.”⁷⁸ The living necessity of Providence allowed for and required free will to actualize God’s plan. In particular, it was the Incarnation that expressed and symbolized the eternal harmony of absolute freedom and absolute necessity in which neither was subordinated to the other. The Word had become flesh in order “to lead man to his destiny, without limiting his freedom or suppressing any of the forces that are inherent to him.”⁷⁹ Lifted out of the material world by grace incarnate, man’s ultimate vocation became the task of voluntarily ordering his personal conduct in accordance with the dictates of Providence. Only humble faith in God above preserved human freedom, dignity, and purpose in the horizontal world of social phenomena.

Having explained the structural processes of spiritual development, the task of the historian was to identify and explicate the original religious ideas that a particular people had received or adopted at the moment of its historical birth.⁸⁰ The intent was to determine what religious principles a people manifested in its day-to-day life, which could be gleaned from learning what, if any, role a nation had played in the course of universal history, so that these divinely ordained concepts might be reawakened in the collective, but slumbering memory of contemporary society. It was in this manner that “national conscience” (*Conscience nationale*; translated into Russian as *natsional’noe samosoznanie*) became authentic. The divinely created “moral sphere,” which shaped a people’s psychological and social contours in its pre-conscious past, became fully operable once that people became aware of the *idées positives, vérités évidentes*, and *convictions fortes* long-ago implanted in it by God. Over the course of time,

⁷⁸ McNally, “Chaadaev’s Philosophical Letters,” 78; Pypin, “Proiavlennii skeptitsizma,” 164.

⁷⁹ McNally, “Chaadaev’s Philosophical Letters,” 44; “Filosoficheskie,” 160.

⁸⁰ “Chaadaev’s Philosophical Letters,” 41; “Filosoficheskie pis’ma,” 155. Miliukov, *Glavnye techeniia*, 261, insisted that this conceptualization of the historian’s role, partly established in Russia by Chaadaev, engendered a dramatic reorientation in the purpose and methods of the historical sciences in the 1830s.

consciousness of these uniquely expressed spiritual principles would begin to dominate public opinion and, thus, facilitate the process by which a people endlessly realized its transcendental essence, fulfilled its exclusive historical mission, and eschatologically established the Kingdom of God on earth.⁸¹

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In the spring of 1860, Aleksei Khomiakov addressed a public meeting of the Society of Lovers of Russian Literature to report on the various books that that organization intended to publish in the coming year. Of the several works under consideration, Khomiakov highlighted a recently submitted manuscript by Mikhail Longinov, who was seeking to publish a biography of Petr Chaadaev. In the course of describing the content of Longinov's study, Khomiakov began to reminisce about his one-time adversary, who had died in 1856. "Almost all of us gathered here knew Chaadaev," the well-known Slavophile reminded his audience. "Many of us loved him, perhaps none more than those who were considered to be his opponents." Although this affection was partly generated by Chaadaev's "refined intellect, aesthetic sensibility, and generous soul," such fondness was principally the result of Chaadaev's personal contribution to making Moscow the intellectual capital of Russia, a remarkable feat considering the limits imposed at that time by censorship and repression. It was during the 1830s, Khomiakov recalled,

when it seemed that all thought had fallen into a heavy and forced slumber that [Chaadaev] was especially valuable to us, because it was he who kept vigil and roused us from our dreams. It was he who refused to extinguish the lantern as twilight began to envelop us.... But he was most valuable to his friends because of his constant despair, a despair that was conveyed to us by the courage of his lively intellect... and that emanated from purely ethical concerns.⁸²

⁸¹ McNally, "Chaadaev's Philosophical Letters," 44, 82, 89; Pypin, "Proiavleniia skeptitsizma," 166-167; and "Filosoficheskie pis'ma," 159.

⁸² Khomiakov, "V zasedanii 28 apreliia 1860 goda," in *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii*, vol. 1, edited by I. S. Aksakov (Moscow: Tipografiia P. Bakhmetev, 1861), 717-721.

Whatever differences had developed between Chaadaev and the Slavophiles over the course of two decades, and there were many, Khomiakov preferred to remember the indispensable role played by Chaadaev in casting a bright light on the morbid darkness of the Nicholaevan era. For it was his philosophical letters that provided Khomiakov's generation with an array of signs and symbols to confront the institutional and ideological forces hindering the narod's moral progress and, thus, Russia's historical development.

One of the essential concepts that the Slavophiles adopted from Chaadaev, as well as from Schelling, was the contention that religious ideas, not material interests or natural causation, generated and sustained historical development. The particular religion or confession that a people adopted at the moment of its initial formation constituted the foundational kernel from which all social, political, and cultural manifestations emanated over time.⁸³ It was impossible, therefore, to separate a people's religious past from its present or future, as every narod necessarily matured or decayed according to the potential of its original spirit.⁸⁴ According to Khomiakov, faith comprised the limit of man's "inner development."⁸⁵ It determined his personal actions in this world and, in a collective sense, shaped the course of an entire nation's historical trajectory.

In Chaadaev's philosophy of history, the religious principles initially adopted by Kievan Rus' had placed Russian history in a spiritual *cul de sac* of asceticism and mysticism. The Slavophiles maintained the generic structure of Chaadaev's historiography, while inverting its fundamental categories and, thus, its outcome.

⁸³ V. I. Kerimov, "Filosofiia istorii A. S. Khomiakova. (Po stranitsam odnoi poluzabytoi raboty)," *Voprosy filosofii*, no. 3 (1988), 89-90; V. A. Koshelev, "Paradoksy Khomiakova," in A. S. Khomiakov, *Sochineniia v dvukh tomakh*, vol. 1, edited by E. V. Kharitonov (Moscow: Izdatel'stvo «Medium,» 1994), 11-12; and Tat'iana I. Blagova, *Rodonachal'niki slavianofil'stva: A. S. Khomiakov i I. V. Kireevskii* (Moscow: Izdatel'stvo «Vysshiaia shkola,» 1995), 53-54, 62.

⁸⁴ Miliukov, *Glavnye techeniia*, 372.

⁸⁵ Quoted in Blagova, *Rodonachal'niki slavianofil'stva*, 53.

Byzantine Orthodoxy and its patristic heritage, the Slavophiles insisted, contained dynamic religious principles necessary to stimulate progress, principles that found their way into the day-to-day structure of Russian culture (*russkii byt*) at the moment it converted to Christianity. In fact, it was Eastern Orthodoxy in its various manifestations, e.g. Byzantine and Russian, that authentically expressed the principles of moral and historical progress embedded in the Christian gospels. The social practices, political institutions, and cultural norms of the Latin West, on the other hand, exemplified religious categories that exclusively emphasized scholasticism, rationality, and heteronomy, as well as their dialectical, Protestant offspring, radical autonomy and hyper-subjectivity. It was Russia, not contemporary Europe, that practiced religious principles that once made universally conscious would further mankind's eschatological progression toward God.

The Slavophile inversion of Chaadaevian categories altered the content of Russian historiosophical discourse.⁸⁶ One of the primary innovations resided in Khomiakov's and Kireevskii's argument that the spirit of history did not definitively attain its fullness in a single people, but that the responsibility of achieving mankind's destiny continuously transferred from one *narod* to the next, depending on what stage was necessarily unfolding at that moment. Once a particular people had added its essential feature to universal consciousness, thereby engendering a higher stage of being, history, which was eschatologically advancing forward, required a new agent of progress.⁸⁷ This conceptual shift in the idea of historical agency opened the possibility for Russia to participate in the

⁸⁶ See Annenkov, *The Extraordinary Decade*, 95-96.

⁸⁷ This description of Kireevskii's contribution to the place of Russia in world history belongs to Miliukov, *Glavnye techeniia*, 372-374. Christoff, *Xomjakov*, 195, attributes a similar understanding of agency transference in Khomiakov's historiosophy.

goal-directed movement of history, a theoretical transformation of the existing historiosophical apparatus that was to reverberate throughout the course of Russian intellectual history, as successive generations of intelligenty were always able to find a special place for Russia in what one historian has called the “geography of salvation.”⁸⁸

The most significant modification to Chaadaev’s philosophy of history, an alteration that took into account basic intelligentsia categories used to discern the effective modes of historical being, occurred in Khomiakov’s historiosophy, which posited the notion that history operated according to two antagonistic, elemental religious principles that engendered either a teleology of material determinism or an eschatology of spiritual freedom.⁸⁹ This formulation of religious antinomies, expressed most clearly by competing notions of the Divine, introduced educated society to an array of binary categories—personhood versus necessity, faith versus reason, theonomous obedience to God versus institutional heteronomy—that Khomiakov contended were individually operative in each nation’s historical experience and tangibly articulated in its social production of culture. A narod that adopted religious principles organized around the idea of materiality (*materializm* or *veshchestvennost*) and symbolized by a divinity that took the form of necessity, inexorably manifested a political culture disposed to conquest, *étatisme*, and aristocracy; and it produced types of cognition inclined toward analysis, rationalism, and empiricism. The volitional religious current, on the other hand, which

⁸⁸ Laurence Dickey, “*Translatio Imperii* and *Translatio Religionis*: The ‘Geography of Salvation’ in Russian and American Messianic Thinking,” in *The Cultural Gradient: The Transmission of Ideas in Europe, 1789-1991*, edited by Catherine Evtuhov and Stephen Kotkin (New York: Rowan & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2003), 16.

⁸⁹ Khomiakov, “Otryvok iz Zapisok o Vsemirnoi Istorii,” *Ruskaia beseda*, II, Book 20 (1860), 107-179. The basic outline of Khomiakov’s historiosophy circulated among friends and colleagues for nearly twenty years before fragments of it appeared in *Ruskaia beseda*. The full text, which totaled several hundred pages, was first published in 1871-1872 under the title *Semiramida*. For a general discussion of Khomiakov’s philosophy of history, see Peter Christoff, *A. S. Xomjakov*, 190-198.

was organized around the principle of spirituality (*dukhovnost'*) and a God symbolically represented by a freely creating personality, gave rise to a political culture of harmony and communal wholeness in which man's moral development was continuously stimulated and the human person maintained her distinct rights (*prava*); and it generated modes of consciousness that sought synthesis, reconciliation, and transcendence.⁹⁰

The primordial religious principle of free spirituality, perfected in time by Incarnation, Resurrection, and the Body of Christ, entered Russian culture at the moment of its historical formation, which occurred concomitantly with Kiev's conversion to Byzantine Orthodoxy, the type of Christianity that, in the words of Iurii Samarin, most fully expressed "the religion of moral freedom."⁹¹ Interacting with Russia's indigenous cultural norms and social values, this influx of spiritual freedom revealed itself in a variety of unique ways: the Russian peasant commune (*obshchina*), which embodied the religiosity of liberty and equality in socioeconomic terms; believing reason and the integrity of the human person (*tsel'nost' lichnosti*), which expressed the wholeness of transcendental spirituality in epistemological and ontological terms; and catholicity (*sobornost'*), which manifested the synergetic mystery of God's unconditional love for His children and man's free obedience to his Creator in ecclesiastical terms.⁹² For Slavophiles, Russia's historical task was to embed these tangible and ideational expressions of creative, spiritual freedom in universal consciousness, thereby facilitating the process by which mankind progressed to a higher level of being, i.e. a level of being that was closer to God.

⁹⁰ V. I. Kerimov, "Filosofiia istorii," 98; and Koshelev, "Paradoksy Khomiakova," 10-11. The Russian terms belong to Khomiakov. See his "Otryvok iz Zapisok," 112-113; quotations from Blagova, *Rodonachal'niki slavianofil'stva*, 53, 59-60.

⁹¹ Iurii Samarin, "Ot redaktsii," *Russkaia beseda*, II, Book 20 (1860), 105.

⁹² Kerimov, "Filosofiia istorii," 96-100; and Blagova, *Rodonachal'niki slavianofil'stva*, 67-68, 77.

Since Russia's foundational religious principle was one of freedom, its historical destiny could only be realized in that same spirit. Any deviation from or violation of this mode of existence would foment tremendous psychological and cultural turmoil, as it would mean that Russia was no longer acting or developing in accordance to its own spiritual substructure. In Slavophile historiosophy, this threat of religious corruption was real and perennial. The "religion of material or logical necessity," and the physical and ontological violence it engendered, constantly sought to annihilate the religion of free creativity by undermining its sacred categories and destroying its visible manifestations.⁹³ The state, as a worldly mechanism derived from the principle of materiality, continually branded its sword against the Church, which was not of this world. If political absolutism surmounted and dominated divine institutions, whose only means of defense was the Word of God, then its actions would generate two types of ersatz religion: an official, heteronomous religion from which "nihilism" dialectically arose in revolt; and a popular, heterogeneous religion from which a "fetishism" of rituals decadently originated.⁹⁴ These threats also emanated from intellectual currents, including contemporary ones, that embodied the dead spirit of necessity. Positivistic materialism, idealism, and the other "modern philosophical schools of Germany" constituted deterministic forms of thought that opposed and sought to destroy the living spirit of freedom.⁹⁵ As such, the religious principles that generated harmony, reconciliation, free obedience, and moral progress, and which constituted the essence of Russia's authentic historical life, had to be defended as absolute and inviolable against institutional and

⁹³ Samarin, "Ot redaktsii," 105. Cf. Koshelev, "Paradoksy Khomiakova," 10-11.

⁹⁴ Koshelev, "Paradoksy Khomiakova," 12. The terms *nigilizm* and *fetishizm* belong to Khomiakov.

⁹⁵ Samarin, "Ot redaktsii," 105.

ideological adversaries.⁹⁶ In this sense, religious liberty, as the sole guarantor of ecclesiastical theonomy and the psychological foundations of religious consciousness, constituted the *sine qua non* of Russia's destiny.

Central to the basic components of Slavophile historiosophy was an ontological theory, principally drawn from Schelling and Chaadaev, that posited the existence of an authentic realm of being located in the transcendent and a transient realm of appearance located in nature; a universal world perfected by God's will and a circumscribed world limited by subjectivity.⁹⁷ Although man lived in both realms, he was predisposed, as a God-like creature, to orient himself freely to the Creator's higher truths, to things unseen, from which he acquired moral freedom and personal dignity. Because divine truth resided outside the confines of physical reality, the ways of God were inscrutable and inaccessible to the dialectical process of human reason.⁹⁸ Rational cognition might act as a guide for man in the material world, for which it was properly suited, but it could not cross over the boundaries that definitively separated divine revelation from human thought. The development of rational knowledge, however valuable in this world, could not provide the means to salvation in the other world.⁹⁹ The only mode of cognition that could open the human person to the eternal gift of saving grace was religious

⁹⁶ Koshelev, "Paradoksy Khomiakova," 10.

⁹⁷ Khomiakov, "Predsmertnoe neokonchennoe sochinenie A. S. Khomiakova," *Russkaia beseda*, II, Book 20 (1860), 8 and passim.

⁹⁸ Kireevskii, "O kharaktere prosveshcheniia Evropy i o ego otnoshenii k prosveshchenniu Rossii. (Pis'mo k gr. E. E. Komarovskomu), in *PSS Kireevskogo*, vol. 1, 178, 186; and A.-S. Khomiakoff, "Quelques mots par un chrétien orthodoxe sur les communions occidentales a l'occasion d'un mandement de mgr l'archevêque de Paris," in *L'église latine et le protestantisme au point de vue de l'église d'orient* (Lausanne & Vevey: B. Benda, 1872), 185-186. For the Russian-language translation, cf. Khomiakov, "Opyt katikhizicheskogo izlozheniia ucheniia o tserkvi" and "Neskol'ko slov pravoslavnogo khristianina o zapadnykh veroispovedaniakh. Po povodu odnogo okruzhnogo poslaniia Parizhskogo arkhiepiskop," in *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii Alekseia Stepanovicha Khomiakova*, vol. 2, 5th edition (Moscow: Universitetskaia Tipografiia, 1900), 10, 12, and 162, hereafter cited as *PSS Khomiakova*.

⁹⁹ Kireevskii, "O neobkhodimosti," 240, 247, 248.

consciousness, or believing reason, which constituted a higher type of reasoning than empirical deduction, as it employed all of man's cognitive faculties.¹⁰⁰ Faith, itself a gracious gift from heaven, granted man epistemological access to the "inner mysteries of God," which, once humbly received, enveloped the faithful in the "spirit of divine wisdom."¹⁰¹

The human person was capable of attaining religious consciousness because she was created in the image and likeness of God, which meant that she passively possessed certain divine-like qualities that, once recovered and made operable, actively obligated her to assimilate to God. Reason, although flawed and limited, could become conscious of its "essential relationship to God" because the Creator had implanted the possibility of similitude in the very structure of human nature.¹⁰² In fact, man's movement toward the Divine constituted his free destiny. God imposed upon each person the obligation not to be satisfied with approximate perfection, but to strive continuously and vigorously toward absolute perfection. Divine Providence intended humans to be like God in their moral behavior.¹⁰³ God's plan could not be realized, however, by external force or authority, as coercion interrupted the synergetic tension between God's gracious descent and man's erotic ascent. The individual person must willfully submit to the divine vocation embedded in her. The assimilative process of spiritual progress necessitated free will. Once man became cognizant of this "vital relationship" between Providence

¹⁰⁰ Kireevskii, "O neobkhozimosti," 250, 257.

¹⁰¹ Khomiakov, "Opyt katikhizicheskogo izlozheniia," *PSS Khomiakova*, vol. 2, 11-12, 18; and Khomiakoff, "Encore quelques mots par un chrétien orthodoxe sur les communions occidentales a l'occasion de plusieurs publications religieuses, latines et protestantes," in *L'église latine*, 265-266, originally published in 1858; cf. idem, "Neskol'ko slov pravoslavnogo khristianina o zapadnykh veroispovedaniakh. Po povodu raznykh sochinenii latinskikh i protestantikh o predmetakh very," in *PSS Khomiakova*, vol. 2, 219.

¹⁰² Kireevskii, "O neobkhozimosti," 261.

¹⁰³ Khomiakoff, "latines et protestantes," 269-270; cf. idem, *PSS Khomiakova*, vol. 2, 222.

and freedom, he gained awareness of the “moral world order” that mysteriously resided in the transcendent, but was made accessible to him through voluntary participation in the living necessity of God’s will.¹⁰⁴ It was this consciousness of moral freedom, of the freedom to choose between the love of God and the pride of *egoizm*, that definitively established the way in which man’s finite reason related “to God, the eternal source of reason.”¹⁰⁵

Yet the human person could not properly fulfill her free destiny in the solitude of “individual religiosity.” Because of moral imperfections that could never fully be overcome, every person, including the faithful, was “blind” and in perpetual revolt against God. Man on his own always fell away from the Lord.¹⁰⁶ For faith to be active and salvational, it required the believer to be a member of the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church, which alone on earth preserved God’s revealed truth, provided a loving sanctuary for the soul’s salvation, and facilitated the gradual process by which man aspired to perfection.¹⁰⁷ The Christian Church, therefore, constituted a unique institution in the world of sin. Unlike social organizations, legal systems, or government, all which emanated from the natural world and, thus, expressed man’s fallen state, the Church was governed by God’s moral law of gracious, unconditional love. Religious freedom, principally the separation of church and state and freedom of conscience, was the necessary foundation for genuine faith. The Church was not an authority (*avtoritet*); it was truth that sought free believers. Membership, therefore, could never be compelled,

¹⁰⁴ Kireevskii, “O neobkhozimosti,” 231.

¹⁰⁵ Khomiakoff, “latines et protestantes,” 259-260; cf. idem, *PSS Khomiakova*, vol. 2, 215-216.

¹⁰⁶ Khomiakoff, “latines et protestantes,” 299; cf. idem, *PSS Khomiakova*, vol. 2, 242. See also Blagova, *Rodonachal’niki slavianofil’sva*, 77.

¹⁰⁷ Khomiakov, “Opyt katikhizicheskogo izlozheniia,” *PSS Khomiakova*, vol. 2, 10-12, 22; and Khomiakoff, “latines et protestantes,” 265-266; cf. idem, *PSS Khomiakova*, vol. 2, 219-220.

nor could the Church be used to judge those outside its walls.¹⁰⁸ The human person voluntarily entered the Body of Christ and, once inside, willfully subordinated herself to its divine traditions and doctrines, a concept that Ivan Aksakov later called “free obedience to God and the truth in his Church.”¹⁰⁹ In this manner, conscience was not enslaved to dogma. Rather, it was liberated from the anthropocentric shackles of material existence by “illuminated grace” and, thus, lifted to “those inaccessible heights where Divinity manifests itself.”¹¹⁰ Fully grounded in the freedom of Christ, whose divine life and redemptive death were institutionally manifested in the theonomous Church, man once again was psychologically disposed to pursue “inner perfection” and “divine contemplation,”¹¹¹ the sacred means by which humans freely achieved their moral and historical destiny.

It was this combination of man’s ability to become conscious of his similitude to God and the holy unity engendered by mutual love, as embodied in the Church, that opened the human heart to “the mystery of moral freedom in Christ and union with the Savior.”¹¹² Yet in the political and intellectual context of mid nineteenth-century Russia, the Slavophile project of cultural renewal through Christ the Redeemer and His earthly Body was hemmed in by the competing forces of an autocracy that subordinated faith to its profane needs and an increasingly radical intelligentsia that sacrificed God at the altar

¹⁰⁸ Khomiakov, “Opyt katikhizicheskogo izlozheniia,” *PSS Khomiakova*, vol. 2, 6-7, 17, 20; and Khomiakoff, “latines et protestantes,” 269-271; cf. idem, *PSS Khomiakova*, vol. 2, 222-223.

¹⁰⁹ Ivan Aksakov, *Sochineniia I. S. Aksakova*, vol. 4 (Moscow: Tipografiia M. G. Volchaninova, 1886), 107. This aspect of Khomiakov’s ecclesiology was noted in Annenkov, *The Extraordinary Decade*, 96-97.

¹¹⁰ Khomiakoff, “Quleques mots d’un chrétien orthodoxe sur les communions occidentales, à l’occasion d’un article de M. Laurentie,” in *L’église latine*, 39-40, 44-45, 58-59, originally published in 1853; cf. idem, “Neskol’ko slov pravoslavnogo khristianina o zapadnykh veroispovedaniakh. Po povodu broshury g. Loransi,” *PSS Khomiakova*, vol. 2, 53, 56-57, 67. See also idem, “Opyt katikhizicheskogo izlozheniia,” *PSS Khomiakova*, vol. 2, 4, 13.

¹¹¹ Khomiakov, “Opyt katikhizicheskogo izlozheniia,” *PSS Khomiakova*, vol. 2, 18; and Khomiakoff, “latines et protestantes,” 302; cf. idem, *PSS Khomiakova*, vol. 2, 244.

¹¹² Khomiakoff, “latines et protestantes,” 265; cf. idem, *PSS Khomiakova*, vol. 2, 219.

of unfettered personality. If salvation, i.e. the ultimate goal of moral and historical progress, was partly dependent upon sanctuary in a theonomous church, then the narod was condemned, at least temporarily, to a life of spiritual stasis, as the contemporary Orthodox Church was not free. It was protected and, thus, corrupted by secular authority, which had reduced the Body of Christ to an intolerant instrument of empire that persecuted believers and non-believers alike. And if salvation was partly dependent upon the function of religious consciousness, then the soul of every person was threatened with eternal damnation, as the Russian intelligentsia and its European counterparts were systematically undermining religious belief. Transcendental reality, the authentic source of human freedom and dignity, was being closed off by the hubris of the godless man, who, having fled the debauched Church of the Petrine reforms, imparted greater authority to his rational cognition than to the faith of his fathers.

The state's sustained assault against the Orthodox Church and the tenets of religious freedom precipitated the collapse in Russia of the one institution that preserved God's truth and guided the narod in its quest for forgiveness and salvation. The consequences for Russia's moral and, thus, historical development were disastrous. Once the Orthodox faith had begun to rely on the coercive measures of criminal law to defend itself against heresies, sectarianism, dissent, and confessional competition, it became a barrier to the only source that engendered human progress, God's revealed truth. By subordinating the divine mission of the Church, which had received an otherworldly commission to save souls and lead its freely obedient members toward moral perfection,

to the “narrow goals of official conservatism,” the imperial regime violated the synergetic relationship between God and man.¹¹³

The Slavophiles contended that the deleterious effect of reducing *sacerdotium* to *imperium* was most readily visible in contemporary educated society. The criminalization of faith and the stricture against “honorable and real criticism” had barricaded the doors of the Church against those who eagerly sought God. Since faith was only operable if it was grounded in truth and freely accepted by its adherents, the corrupted Church, which manifested not “true belief” but “dead belief” and formalism (*kazenshchina*), could no longer attract sincere believers from literate Russia.¹¹⁴ Compromised by their obeisance to “the rotten cloak of earthly armor” and their dependence upon the “scholastic armor” of institutional heteronomy, the clergy and hierarchy of the Russian Church failed to raise their flock according to the Orthodox doctrines of truth and love, a catastrophic failure that opened public consciousness to the acolytes of atheism.¹¹⁵ The advent of unbelief among members of educated society, therefore, was not solely the consequence of foreign ideas—like German idealism and, its dialectical epigone, atheistic materialism—seeping into Russian universities.¹¹⁶ It was primarily the long-term effect of imperial expansion into every realm of life, especially those realms, like Church and conscience, that could only operate freely and unconditionally. The state, by denying freedom of conscience to its citizens, and the Orthodox Church, by acquiescing to and supporting the machinations of empire, were annihilating the psychological foundations of religious consciousness,

¹¹³ Samarin, “Predislovie,” *PSS Khomiakova*, vol. 2, iv-v.

¹¹⁴ Khomiakov, “Opyt katikhizicheskogo izlozheniia,” *PSS Khomiakova*, vol. 2, 18; and Samarin, “Predislovie,” iv-v, viii.

¹¹⁵ Khomiakov, “David,” in *Stikhotvoreniia* (Moscow: Sinodal’naia Tipografiia, 1910), 132-133; and Samarin, “Predislovie,” vii-viii, xxxi-xxxiv. Cf. Kireevskii’s letter to A. I. Koshelev, 15 Oct. 1853, in N. P. Koliupanov, *Biografiia Aleksandra Ivanovicha Kosheleva*, vol. 2 (Moscow: Tipo-litografiia Vysochaishe utverzhdenного Tovarishchestva I. N. Kushnerev i Ko., 1892), Appendix 8, 84.

¹¹⁶ Samarin, “Predislovie,” iii-iv.

the only conduit by which the Orthodox faithful could morally progress and, in turn, the Russian nation could advance to higher stages of historical being.

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When Russian émigrés to Weimar Germany turned to religion to explain Europe's long spiritual crisis—a crisis that in their opinion had just culminated in world war, revolution, civil war, and the collapse of four empires—they drew upon several ready-made concepts that had been in circulation in Russian public discourse for nearly eighty years. In place of the godless religion promoted by Bolshevism and the conventional doctrines adhered to by the Moscow Patriarchate as well as the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad, these émigré thinkers appropriated elements of Slavophile religious thought, especially its anthropological, epistemological, ecclesiastical, and historiosophical categories, to help chart Europe's course toward renewal.

The genealogy of Slavophile religious thought offered in this paper has shown that these appropriated categories were first formulated in an earlier period of turmoil, this one brought upon by some of the most significant episodes and phenomena of the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries: the political upheavals engendered by the French Revolution and amplified by the Napoleonic wars; broad, sustained assaults on traditional modes of consciousness and socioeconomic organization; the ever-expanding purview and technological capabilities of the bureaucratic police state; and the destructive tendencies of the atheistic intelligentsia, which sought a radical replacement of the existing order of being and reality through revolutionary action. Just as importantly, this paper has demonstrated that émigré thinkers who appropriated Slavophile religious thought in the 1920s inherited a complex of ideas and problems that originally coalesced

during the reign of Nicholas I: an indigenous form of Hegelianism that understood religious consciousness to be an outdated mode of cognition that had to be overcome; an interpretation of Schelling that emphasized the transcendental aspects of his philosophical system in which free will and historical necessity were grounded in a living, personal God; and a native historiosophy articulated by Chaadaev that conceived of Russia as culturally backward and that offered religious ideas as the sole stimulus to civilizational advancement.

In response to these events and trends, early Slavophilism recast the burgeoning intelligentsia discourse of Nicholaevan Russia in the idiom of Eastern Orthodoxy, a reconfiguration that sought to generate moral and historical progress through the establishment of inviolable spheres of spiritual development, e.g. a theonomous church liberated from state tutelage in which individual conscience was guided toward the Christian God of love and freedom. Faith, in this case a reformed Orthodoxy that could appeal to the sensibilities and demands of modern society, was to provide Russia a middle course between bureaucratic absolutism and atheistic radicalism as it willfully advanced along its providential path toward spiritual integrity, social concord, and cultural harmony. And it was this application of religion to resolve the problems of one volatile era that provided Russian émigrés with categories and language to restore wholeness in a subsequent age of disorder.