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Russian Philosophy as an Expression of Russian National Consciousness

ERRATA

- p.7 4th line at the bottom of the page: "O. Spengler" instead of "Spenger."
- p.17 12th line at the bottom of the page: "exist" instead of "exiSt."
- p.18 6th line at the top of the page: "acutely" instead of "accutely."
- p.20 3rd line at the top of the page: the article "the" at the end of the line should be deleted.
- p.20 1st line at the bottom of the page: "best" instead of "beSt."
- p.23 15th line at the bottom of the page: "scientist" instead of "scientiSt."
- p.29 8th line at the top of the page: include the article - "Secondly, the preacher's statement..."
- p.29 7th line 7 the bottom of the page: "rest" instead of "reSt."
- p.29 3rd line at the bottom of the page: "Moulder" instead of "molder."
- p.46 7th line at the bottom of second paragraph: "the" instead of "thee".
- p.53 1st line at the top of third paragraph: "occurred" instead of "occured".
- p.69 1st line after the quote should be read: "Ostrowski's conclusion does not undermine the concept of historicism being a peculiar ..."
- p.70 1st line at the top of third paragraph: "fulfil" instead of " fulfill."
- p.77 1st line at the top of sec. paragraph: "central" instead of "cenral."
- p.77 7th line at the top of sec. paragraph: should be "criteria of the beautiful" with the article.
- p.82 1st line at the top of the page: should be "the shining god" instead of "the sunny god."
- p.82 3rd line at the bottom of first paragraph: "Byzantine" instead of "Bizantine."
- p.83 4th line at the top of the page: "reminiscent" instead of "reminniscent."
- p.83 6th line at the bottom of the page: "completely" instead of "complete."
- p.106 6th line at the bottom of sec. paragraph: "demonstrated" instead of "demonstated."
- p.109 5th line at the bottom of first paragraph: "at least" instead of " at east."
- p.109 4th line at the bottom of the page: "been" should be deleted.
- p.120 2nd line at the bottom of sec. paragraph: "represents" instead of "rerresents."
- p.147 3rd line at the top of sec. paragraph: article "the" should be deleted at the end of this line.
- p.149 3rd line at the top of fourth paragraph: "country" instead of "county."
- p.161 3rd line at the bottom of first paragraph: "significance" instead of "signify / chance."
- p.170 4th line at the bottom of the page: "essence" instead of "core."
- p.172 3rd line at the top of the page: the article should be added - "from the point."
- p.184 6th line at the bottom of the page: should be "once it is changed for good, the rest will follow it."
- p.188 5th line at the top of the page: should be "interest of" instead of "interest to."
- p.193 3rd line at the bottom of the page: "traditionalists'" instead of "traditionalists."
- p.195 1st line at the top of the page: the word "indicated" should be deleted.
- p.202 4th line at the top of sec. paragraph: "able to" instead of "able."
- p.207 7th line at the bottom of the page: "develop" instead of "developed."
- p.212 7th line at the bottom of the page: "empirical" instead of "sensual."
- p.213 9th line at the top of the page: "analysis which is..." instead of "analysis, it is..."
- p.214 5th line at the bottom of the page: delete "would" after the word "heart."
- p.215 2nd line at the top of sec. paragraph: "begins" instead of "began."
- p.219 7th line at the bottom of the page: delete "the" before "Solovyov's."
- p.230 10th line at the top of the page: delete "to" after the word "contradict."
- p.231 3rd line at the top of the page: "too" instead of "to."
- p.235 5th line at the top of sec. paragraph: "than" instead of "that."
- p.238 10th line at the top of sec. paragraph: "divided" instead of "devided."
- p.242 2nd line at the top of sec. paragraph: "wilfully" instead of "willfully."
- p.244 1st line after the quote: "reminds the Stoic" instead of "reminds of the Stoic."
- p.246 1st line at the top of the page: "themselves" instead of "itself."
- p.247 10th line at the bottom of the page: "made" instead of "done."
- p.247 7th line at the bottom of the page: "coinciding" instead of "coincided."
- p.249 5th line at the top of the page: "allows us" instead of "allows."

RUSSIAN PHILOSOPHY
AS AN EXPRESSION OF RUSSIAN
NATIONAL CONSCIOUSNESS

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Summary

The main hypothesis of the thesis is that the specific features of Russian philosophizing which distinguish it from Western models reflect the concepts and approaches which had manifested themselves in Muscovite Russia by the second half of the XVIth century. The core of these concepts was formed by the words *pravda* ('truth' and 'justice') and *volya* ('will' and 'freedom'). Over the centuries *pravda* gradually relinquished its meaning of righteous legal relations to *zakon*. At the same time *pravda* was joined with the Christian concept of a merciful God and through this secured a position beyond *zakon*. In the course of this development *pravda* moved close to the concept of *svet* ('light' and 'world') acquiring the significance and image of the supreme ethical and aesthetic value. The value of *pravda* predetermined a strong anti-state feeling and a cultural preference for a unity of personalities compared with a unity of citizens. Through this development *pravda* moved closer to the concept of *volya*. *Volya* acquired the meaning of 'freedom from any sort of dependency and responsibility'. It is also essential that *volya* also bore the meaning of unrestricted inner freedom, freedom of soul, and through this the social connotations of the word were linked with the individual connotation. From early times *volya* was associated with *mir* ('community' and 'peace') and through this association it expressed a united collective consciousness as opposed to a bondage brought about by political relations. Being allied with God's *Pravda*, *volya* bypassed legal relations aiming to transform them into personal ones. These relations were based on feeling rather than on reason, and because of this the heart, symbolizing love, as opposed to the mind, came to the fore. This understanding presupposed a preference for moral relations as opposed to political ones. The specifics of this thinking also found its expression in such conspicuous characteristics as historicism, aestheticism, and mysticism.

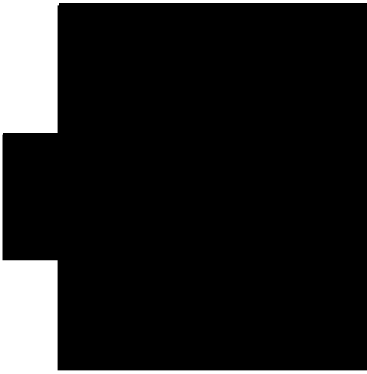
In the XIXth century the refined concepts linked with *pravda* and *volya* found their expression in the works of writers, poets, and thinkers. This expression allowed the thinkers of the second quarter of the XIXth century to take up a specific position, of reflection, and to formulate the concepts of *wholeness* and *sobornost'*. Their

rigorous search for national identity resulted from the painful social problem of the abolition of serfdom which was taken not only in a political but also in a strong ethical sense. In their turn Solovyov and other outstanding Russian thinkers following this line of intellectual development created a particular philosophical tradition where metaphysical, epistemological and ethical concepts obtained their distinctive features. Their doctrines, Solovyov's in particular, united historicism, aestheticism, and mysticism including them in one system of coordinates, and expressed the striving towards concrete living knowledge. The aim was to provide not merely intellectual satisfaction but to allow humankind to participate in God's goals. This participation was regarded by Russian philosophers as both a moral activity and a moral obligation.

Statement

I, Oleg A. Donskikh, state that this thesis contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university or ther institution and affirm that to the best of my knowledge, the thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference is made in the text of the thesis.

Signature

A large black rectangular box redacting the signature of the author.

Chapter 1

PHILOSOPHY AND NATIONAL CONSCIOUSNESS

The Russian philosophical tradition which was established in the second half of the XIXth century provides us with an extremely worthwhile subject for study for the following reasons.

- With Vladimir Solovyov, Russian philosophy acquired a level comparable with that of Russian literature, music, and science (represented by such names as Dostoevsky, Tolstoy, Borodin, Tchaikovsky, Mendeleyev). Unfortunately, this philosophical tradition, after flourishing in the second half of the XIXth century and the first quarter of the XXth century, was eradicated by the Soviet authorities and for seventy years Russian philosophy was treated as if its interest was merely historical. But this is not the case: the main themes and concepts presented by eminent Russian philosophers are still of great importance for Russian contemporary consciousness and form a significant part of the all-human cultural consciousness.
- The origin and development of this tradition is observable: there is sufficient data to trace the philosophical themes and the ways they have been developed.
- This is a philosophical tradition which has been moulded under the great influence of contemporary Western philosophy, German philosophy in particular. However, at the same time Russian philosophy has acquired noteworthy specifics in topics and approaches which cannot be explained by external influences but rather by certain characteristic constituents of Russian cultural life.

In order to formulate correctly the primary objective of this research we have:

- a) to define philosophy as a cultural phenomenon, and along with this to describe its place among other spheres of spiritual life and its social role; b) to outline the concept of national consciousness; c) and to contour a hypothesis of the relationship between national consciousness and an incipient and further philosophizing.

It is necessary at the onset to identify the most important traditions and sources for the issues which are to be discussed in this thesis.

First, there is the approach to the origins of philosophy which takes into account the whole cultural context including political ideas, social structure, arts, and so on - we will call this the 'culturological' approach. Unfortunately contemporary histories of philosophy predominantly follow the positivistic approach and retrospectively regard philosophy exclusively as a constituent of scientific development. Thus those working in the frame of the culturological tradition still remain deep in the shadow of the positivistic writers. However, it can be stated without any exaggeration that only this wide culturological method provides the basis for investigating the problem of the origin of philosophy (and science as well). The author of this thesis has been greatly influenced by such Russian scholars as P.Florenskii, S.Trubetskoi, and A.Losev. The Western tradition is represented by W. Jaeger, F.M.Cornford, B.Snell and M.West.¹ Cornford's seminal works on the beginning of Greek thought were especially important because his detailed elaboration of the problems established a firm ground for further studies in this area.

Second, the author's approach to history has been directly and indirectly influenced by K.Jaspers, his concept of 'axis time' in particular; by M.Weber, for his investigation of the interrelation between religious issues and economic structure presented in his famous *Protestant Ethics and the Spirit of Capitalism*; and by E.Durkheim with his approach to the origin of religion and to the role of the division of labour in the history of human society.² This work has also been inspired by the ideas of such scholars as N.Danilevskii, O.Spenger, and, in particular, A.Toynbee.³ Arguing against the too-straightforward approach to historical matters presented by the theory of progress, they elaborated alternative doctrines dealing with distinct civilizations (or 'cultures') as individuals rather than necessary stages of the all-

¹ Pavel Florenskii *Obshchechelovecheskiye korni idealizma* (The all-human roots of an idealism). Sergiyev Posad, 1909; S.N.Trubetskoi "Kurs drevnei filosofii" (Course in ancient philosophy) // *Complete works*. V.5. Moscow, 1912. A.F.Losev *Ocherki antichnogo simvolizma i mifologii* (Outline of ancient symbolism and mythology) V.1. Moscow, 1930; W.Jaeger *The Theology of the Early Greek Philosophers* Oxford, 1947; F.M.Cornford *Principium Sapientiae (A Study of the Origins of Greek Philosophical Thought)*. New York, 1965; B.Snell *The Discovery of the Mind. The Greek Origins of European Thought*. New York, 1960; M.West *Early Greek Philosophy and the Orient*. Oxford, 1971.

² *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life* (Eng. trans. 1915), *The Division of labour in Society* (Eng. trans. 1933.)

the theory of progress, they elaborated alternative doctrines dealing with distinct civilizations (or 'cultures') as individuals rather than necessary stages of the all-human evolution. Toynbee's concept of 'the challenge' as well as his treatment of the interrelations between nomadic people and agricultural populations were especially significant for the purposes of this work.

R. Collingwood's influence can readily be seen in those parts of the thesis relating to the reflective position and reflection as a defining feature of a philosophical attitude to the world. These ideas have been elaborated by Collingwood in such works as *The Idea of History* and specifically in his *Essay on Metaphysics*.

The cultural history of Russia owes much to such historians and historians of religious thought as M.Rostovtsev, G.Vernadskii, P.Milyukov, A.Kartashev, J.Meindorf, G.Florovskii, G.Fedotov, not to mention many other writers whose works deal with specific topics.⁴

Important data is provided by linguistic analysis of such words as 'pravda', 'volya', and 'zakon'. Analogous treatment of the linguistic terms can be found, for instance, in A.Wierzbicka.⁵ In relation to Greek philosophical terms similar investigations were carried out by representatives of the A.Losev philological school, by A.Lebedev and A.Takho-Godi in particular.⁶

In relation to the history of Russian philosophy the classic works of V.Zen'kovskii and N.Lossky were considered. More recent treatments of Russian thought, including the important works of P.Christoff, J. Bayley, A.Zamaleyev, were also taken into account.⁷

³ N.Danilevskii *Rossiya i Evropa* (Russia and Europe), (First publ. in 1869); O.Spengler *The Decline of the West* (first Eng. translation 1926-28); A.Toynbee *A Study of History* (1934-1961).

⁴ Particular works of these authors are mentioned in the following chapters.

⁵ A. Wierzbicka *Semantics, Culture, and Cognition. Universal Human Concepts in Culture-specific Configuration*. New York, Oxford, 1992.

⁶ A.Lebedev "TO AΠEIPON: ne Anaksimandr, a Platon i Aristotel'" (TO AΠEIPON: Not Anaximander, but Plato and Aristotle) // *Vestnik drevnei istorii*. N. 1,2. 1978; A.Takho-Godi "O drevnegrecheskom ponimanii lichnosti na materiale termina *sōma*" (About Ancient Greek understanding of personality in relation to the term *sōma*) // *Voprosy klassicheskoi filologii*. (Problems of classical philology). Vv. 3-4. 1971.

⁷ V.Zen'kovskii *History of Russian Philosophy*. Eng. trans. 1981. N.Lossky *History of Russian Philosophy* New York, 1951 (published first in English, and only in 1994 appeared a revised Russian edition); P.K.Christoff *The Third Heart. Some Intellectual-Ideological Currents and Cross Currents in Russia 1800-1830* The Hague-Paris, 1970; J. Bayley *Pushkin. A Comparative Commentary* Cambridge,

The author wishes to express his gratitude to Professor John Bigelow of Monash University for providing the opportunity to discuss the main ideas of the thesis and for useful advice in relation to specific issues.

* * *

It seems reasonable to begin from the following statement: each sphere of spiritual life (including religion, science, philosophy and art) with its place amid others and its social functions are to be justified by culture. This means, first, that a sphere has to be complementary to others, possessing at the same time its own place in the spiritual universe. Second, there should be a ground for personal choice in the process of self-realization: the set of social values should contain the values of this sphere. Third, the sphere should stay in correspondence with the existing social structure, which means that the activity related to this sphere is accepted by society. Consequently, the appearance of a new sphere of spiritual life is to be recognized and justified as such. But this means that it cannot come into being as a *new* sphere of spiritual activity, because it has to grow as part of an old sphere hiding its nature under cover of this old sphere.

Let us examine from this point of view the trial against Socrates. It is known that he was brought to trial for impiety and for corrupting the youth of Athens. It is possible to say that his right to act as a free intellectual was also on trial. Socrates was a strange man, who was eagerly searching for the absolute principles of being. His personal justification for this activity was based on the conviction that the Cosmos was virtuous by nature, that the Cosmos was a moral being rather than just an 'It', as Nature is for modern science and technology.⁸ This meant that the Cosmos was organized according to absolute principles, otherwise the gods - keepers of the world structure - could not exist and could not do what they had to. Therefore, for Socrates the study of these principles was necessary if he wished to participate consciously in the world harmony. He regarded social justice as a part of this harmony. Each

⁸ The significance of Socrates' view can be seen in the following statement: "Plato, Aristotle, and the Stoics, all saw in the regular motions of the heavenly bodies the clearest evidence, not of any blind necessity of 'natural laws', but on the contrary of divine intelligence and will". (In: Cornford *Principium Sapientie*, P. 20-21).

creature, including the sun, stars, and citizens, had to behave according to some hidden law which ruled equally the heavenly and the earthly worlds.

It was not cardinal for Socrates whether his fellow-citizens approved of his behaviour or not. The most essential thing for him was to be himself and to follow the voice of his demon. His trial showed that his contemporaries considered that his style of thinking was in strict contradiction to traditional beliefs and so his activity was regarded to be a great danger for the traditional style of life. It is easy to see that the accusations against him were made in the frame of the traditional religious sphere. Socrates likewise justified his style of thinking by referring to traditional religion: it is known that he himself knew that he had been inspired for his mission by Apollo and he stated according to the *Apology*: "I do believe that there are gods, and in a far higher sense than that in which any of my accusers believe in them."⁹ Therefore, the possibility of the opposition to traditional beliefs had to be grounded in the split between different sets of myths within these traditional beliefs rather than in the split between different spheres of spiritual life.¹⁰ (In *Phaedo* Socrates, for instance, referred to mysteries as to the source of his inspiration and understanding of his role as philosopher.¹¹) At the same time Socrates clearly outlined his important social responsibility to criticize the existing institutions in order to improve them according to God's will: "I ... am a sort of gadfly, given to the state by God; and the state is like a great and noble steed who is tardy in his motions owing to his very size, and requires to be stirred into life."¹² It is obvious that in saying this Socrates was firmly insisting on the social and political importance of the reflective activity in relation to the state as well as to common beliefs.

And so, there is a cultural contradiction: the break through the religious frame was justified by arguments taken from that same frame. Philosophy from the very beginning had to realize itself as a part of religious tradition, a kind of intellectual

⁹ In: *The Essential Plato* Trans. B. Jowett, (1999.) P. 538.

¹⁰ F.Cornford explaining this split alludes to the twofold functions of the gods, who have to keep the institutions of order, both of the world and of society, and along with this have to control seasonal powers. (*Principium Sapientiae*, P. 258)

¹¹ "And I conceive that the founders of mysteries had a real meaning when they intimated ... that he who arrives there after initiation and purification will dwell with the gods. For "many," as they say in the mysteries, "are the thyrsus-bearers, but few are the mystics," – meaning, as I interpret the words, the true philosophers." In: *The Essential Plato*, Pp. 607-608.

¹² Ibid. P. 532.

teaching which was in contradiction to common beliefs. Hence the main objective of the Greek thinkers who retrospectively became regarded as 'philosophers' was to understand God as an absolute truth and an absolute value, and accordingly to represent a man and his *arete* ('virtue, excellence'). Some scholars even speak about the "philosophical religion of Greek intellectuals" in contrast to Olympic religion and different mysterial doctrines, like Orphics.¹³ It is known that along with the statement that 'Everything has been originated by water' Thales stated that 'Everything was alive and full of demons.' Plato was eager to understand God as the One. It is also known that the most 'scientific' of all ancient philosophers Aristotle in his *Metaphysics* defined philosophy as the area of study, which explored the first causes, and he called this area "theology." Even the materialistic tradition of Democritus and Epicurus included a doctrine about gods and their relations with people, and Lucretius compared Epicurus and other philosophers to the oracles of Apollo. The examples can easily be multiplied. In order to contrast one set of traditional images and beliefs to another set it was necessary to outline the space which would make the comparison possible. That is why Socrates formulated his goal as to find the absolute concepts which would include all the specific concepts being the particulars of these general ones. In other words, Socrates consciously put the task of the creation of metaphysics. In doing this Socrates obviously overcame the realm of religion: his aim was to establish a set of basic concepts which would embrace all spheres of human life. It can be easily proved by the way of reasoning presented in the *Apology*, when Socrates described himself discussing the basic values with politicians, then with poets, then with artisans.¹⁴ This investigation led him to the goal of finding the absolute values and concepts, which would cover all the particular values and concepts.

In the modern times the pendulum of philosophy has swung from the domain of religion to that of science. Philosophy in its method and presentation of results is very similar to those of science. It is enough to recall Spinoza's geometrical treatment of metaphysics and ethics. Only existentialism seems to have been untouched by this influence. However, it is easy to demonstrate that philosophy, especially if taken in a culturological context, is neither religion (or theology), nor science.

¹³ See: F.F.Zelinskii *Drevnegrecheskaya religiya* (Ancient Greek Religion) Petrograd, 1918.

¹⁴ *The Essential Plato*, Pp. 518-520.

In contrast to religion, philosophy, first, does not have any specific rituals and social institutions, and, second, does not divide the world into profane and sacred parts, but rather tries to grasp the world's wholeness. The ultimate aim of religion is to maintain an interaction between the sacred and human communities. This leads to the formation and maintenance of a special group of people responsible for the correctness of this interaction, while philosophy does not tend to lead to the establishment of such an institution. Moreover, whereas religion places man in the position of interrelation with the sacred, philosophy in its turn places him in a position of pure reflection.¹⁵ Because of its reflective nature, philosophy separates itself from theology: the latter develops its views from inside a set of given statements and beliefs, the former (even 'religious philosophy') elaborates its concepts from outside particular statements and beliefs, observing them in the field of analysis. For instance, Thomas Aquinas separates those statements which can be proved by reason from those which cannot, demonstrating not only the difference between reason and revelation (he states that there ought not to be a contradiction between them) but also in a very refined form outlines the division of the world into sacred and profane parts. The Trinity, the central doctrine of intellectual Christianity, according to St. Thomas remains beyond any reasonable exploration. In discriminating between different truths Aquinas puts himself beyond the sphere of religion and works as a philosopher rather than as a theologian.

At the same time in certain respects there is a radical difference between philosophy and science, and so it is possible to share H.Reichenbach's indignation if we expect any scientific results from philosophy.¹⁶ It does not need to be demonstrated that philosophy deals with concepts at the highest abstract level. However, these very concepts are beyond scientific analysis. For example, if we understand Aristotle's definition of "metaphysics" as an expression of a scientific programme (or paradigm) we immediately arrive at a contradiction. Collingwood shows that if metaphysics is the science of pure being, it cannot exist, "because a science of pure being is a contradiction in terms".¹⁷ Collingwood concludes that, as it

¹⁵ There is a collection of definitions demonstrating the reflective nature of philosophy in the book: O.A.Donskikh, A.N.Kochergin *Antichnaya filisofiya. Mifologiya v zerkale refleksii* (Ancient Philosophy. Mythology in the Mirror of Reflection). Moscow, 1993. Pp. 212-232.

¹⁶ See: *The Rise of Scientific Philosophy*, Berkeley & Los Angeles, 1963.

¹⁷ R.G. Collingwood *An Essay on Metaphysics*, Oxford, 1940. P. 11.

cannot be exploration of pure being, philosophy has to become a study of presuppositions. However there is another choice: to presuppose that philosophy is not science at all but a distinct sphere of spiritual activity. It is possible to add that the concept of 'pure being' as well as such concepts as 'absolute good', 'nothing', 'beauty', and 'meaning of life' are deprived by definition of any particular content which can become the object of scientific analysis. The recognition that metaphysics by nature deals with general concepts and lacks the concreteness and precision of science forms the foundation for Saint-Simon's and Comte's formulation of the so-called 'law of three stages.' According to this law the intellectual development of human society goes through three progressive stages: religious, metaphysical, and scientific. Metaphysical concepts cannot be analyzed as such and have to be replaced by scientific analysis of phenomena and their relations.¹⁸

This shift from religion to science is sometimes understood in such a way that philosophy does not have its own preserve but serves merely to illuminate certain gray areas for religion (theology) or science. Bertrand Russell expressed this idea clearly in his *History of Western Philosophy*:

Philosophy ... is something intermediate between theology and science. Like theology, it consists of speculations on matters as to which definite knowledge has, so far, been unascertainable; but like science, it appeals to human reason rather than to authority, whether that of tradition or that of revelation. All *definite* knowledge - so I should contend - belongs to science; all *dogma* as to what surpasses definite knowledge belongs to theology. But between theology and science there is a No Man's Land, exposed to attack from both sides; this No Man's Land is philosophy.¹⁹

If Russell is right, then philosophy does not possess any independence either in its subject or in its approach, because it is impossible to consider No Man's Land seriously in this respect. This concept is purely negative and remains so by definition: every important 'clarified' statement belongs either to the religious sphere or to science. In this case philosophy is no more than a set of obscure opinions of mediocre quality, waiting for the rubbish bin of culture or for gracious transformation into theological or scientific assertions. Moreover, it is not at all clear what the social value of dealing with this is and, therefore, it is impossible to imagine a social role in relation to such an activity.

¹⁸ See: *The Positive Philosophy of Auguste Comte* (by Harriet Martineau). London, 1853.

Fortunately, the situation is more complicated and at the same time more promising for philosophy, if we take into account that philosophy has to possess some positive quality: otherwise we cannot find it in No Man's Land. Moreover, philosophy has to be comparable with both theology and science, commensurable with them. Russell lists a set of questions which are supposed to be the business of philosophy, for example: Has the universe any unity or purpose? Is the world divided into mind and matter? Are there really laws of nature, or do we believe in them only because of our innate love of order? He declares at the same time that no definitive answers can be given. Therefore, "to teach how to live without certainty, and yet without being paralyzed by hesitation, is perhaps the chief thing that philosophy, in our age, can still do for those who study it".²⁰ Nevertheless, it is not clear why answers to these particular questions form a ground for such an obscure thing as philosophy which is neither religion nor science.

At this stage it is important to explain how the word 'philosophy' will be used in this thesis. It is obvious that any attempt to provide a definition is impossible in this case because each philosophical school maintains its particular understanding and, accordingly, definition of philosophy. Our goal is more modest: we have to point to some specific features of the phenomenon commonly called "philosophy" in order to find the place it occupies in culture. These features should provide some positive picture otherwise it will be impossible to recognize the interrelation between philosophy and religion and science. Therefore, we have to describe an approach from the outside to the phenomenon of philosophy. In doing this we should presuppose that there is something more than just a set of nebulous questions, that there is some content which distinguishes philosophy from science as well as from the other spheres of spiritual life.

In order to understand what philosophy is (or more cautiously to grasp something of the nature of philosophy as a cultural phenomenon), we must look to its origins.

Philosophy came into being during the so-called "axis time" (Jaspers), along with such religions of revelation as Zoroastrianism and Buddhism. The specific feature of this time was the destruction of clan consciousness. Socrates' trial shows this clearly. During this period each member of a community was to discover for

¹⁹ *History of Western Philosophy*. London, 1994. P. 13.

himself the spiritual foundation for his life. He was to define his own attitude to the world, to the universal laws, to the gods. Obviously, this feeling of personal responsibility differed significantly from one society to another and from one person to another. The intellectuals of that period, like the Jewish prophets, Socrates or Plato, expressed it more strongly than others. ("I would rather have my people know me than bring offerings to me." Hosea 6.6;" "...You ask, 'Why shouldn't the son suffer because of his father's sins?' The answer is that the son did what was right and good. He kept my laws and followed them carefully, and so he will certainly live. It is the one who sins who will die. A son is not to suffer because of his father's sins, nor a father because of the sins of his son. Good people will be rewarded for doing good, and evil people will suffer for the evil they do" Ezekiel 18, 19-20.) We can easily compare these declarations with that of Socrates' treatment of the slogan of the oracle of Delphi "Know thyself and Thou will understand gods and the universe". Thus, a man recognizes himself when he finds himself in a position which demands that he endure by himself, and he has to find the spiritual support to continue. He cannot gain this support from tradition and, therefore, has to seek for it exclusively through intellectual clarification of the grounds of this tradition in an effort to find something new to help him grasp the situation and choose the right position.²¹

In a historical and social sense this means that philosophy appears when there is a decay of clan consciousness and, therefore, at a time of the formation of individual consciousness. It also means that the system of social taboos is in the process of being substituted by a phenomenon such as an individual consciousness. Accordingly, an individually chosen decision has to be made at least in some cases.

One can find clear evidence of this spiritual process in the decomposition of mythological thought accompanied by the search for the justification of different forms of behaviour. A good example of both processes is provided by Hesiod. In the *Theogony* he not only draws together existing myths, giving genealogies of the gods, but also creates some gods himself in his attempts to classify the gods. Zeus' triumph

²⁰ Ibid. P. 14.

²¹ The principle yet ultimate difference between the Greek thinkers and the Jewish prophets is defined by the distinction between polytheism and monotheism. To understand the words of the one God is not the same task as to understand the essence which lies beyond (or beneath) the various manifestations of numerous gods. While we have the one and only God and therefore one absolute divine criterion in the first case, reason alone can be criterion in the second.

over other gods appears to be extremely important for the poet. The rest of the divine world is presented in relation to Zeus' supreme dominance. The endeavour to put all the gods in order shows that already something in the mythological world cannot satisfy the human mind. Similar efforts to regulate mythology were undertaken by the Orphics and some other religious thinkers like Ferekides. Along with this, Hesiod's major poem, *Works and Days* represents the moral appeal to the individual consciousness. He demands that a measure be observed in every action. At this time the meaning of *arete* (the Greek ideal of personal moral excellence) was developing from the concept of proud and military valour²² to that of moral virtue. This development, probably influenced by economic and political changes, had none the less to find its spiritual justification. Mythological thought offered habitual forms of this justification like, for example, the appeal to Apollo of Delphi to sanction new laws.²³ However, these laws had to be clearly formulated and they had to be understood by each citizen.²⁴ The position of mediator between laws given by gods and citizens, who had to fulfill these laws, was taken by the intellectuals, and the Sophists were merely the most visible among them. It is worth mentioning that the very term 'law' was taken from political life, and when Heraclitus, for instance, stated that "It is wise, listening not to me but to Law..."²⁵ he is appealing to the Law of Nature convinced that there must be a basic similarity between cosmic and human order.

The first 'philosophers' (it is probably better to call them just 'thinkers' or 'sages' or 'seers') can also be clearly understood if we take them as conscious participants in the process of the decomposition of myth. Thales' concept of 'water' is much closer to Homer's 'Ocean' than to the liquid hydrodynamics is dealing with.²⁶ The same can be said about Heraclitus' 'fire', Anaximander's 'apeiron', and so on.

²² Brilliantly presented by such character as Odysseus in the *Iliad*.

²³ See: S. Lurie *Istoriya antichnoi obshchestvennoi mysli* (History of Ancient social thought). Moscow-Leningrad, 1929.

²⁴ Aristotle in the *Constitution of Athens* quotes the oath given by every Athenian citizen when he reached 18 years which includes the responsibility to obey the established laws as well as the laws given unanimously by the people.

²⁵ M.C. Nahm *Selections from Early Greek Philosophy*. New York, 1964. P. 67.

²⁶ It is very interesting to see that Thales' 'water' is understood after Aristotle in the empirical sense. Of course, there are some pictorial examples of this sense as well. However, if we take into account Thales' statement that all things are full of gods ("daimon"s) his empirical approach to reality is less plausible from the scientific point of view.

Their activity can be called *reflection upon myths*. (Of course, one can find in early fragments some statements, which can be assumed as 'scientific', or at least 'pre-scientific'. However this does not undermine the above thesis because, if we speak about general concepts and the most general notions, their mythological origin is undisputable.)

This process was accompanied by the development of an intellectual approach to spiritual matters. First, in their search for a right and just order of things the Greek thinkers had to compare different myths, and this activity forced them to apply reason to arrive at basic concepts. Indeed, if it was impossible to find the right order in myth itself (intimately linked with the established tradition) it was necessary to overcome its limitations. Second, if we take into account the process of emancipation of individual human consciousness from the chains of clan consciousness, it is necessary to presuppose that a simple appeal to tradition proved to be impossible. And so, individual reasoning was inevitable, because it had to outline the space for comparison and discussion by formulating general terms. The widest concepts, like 'being', 'arche', 'arete', 'eidos', 'idea', 'morphe', 'apathia', 'atom', and so on, were either inventions of philosophers or the words of the ordinary language modified by them. It is worth emphasizing that an appeal to reason does not exclude myth as such. We have seen that Socrates in criticizing some traditional beliefs did so from the standpoint of other beliefs rather than pure reason, because pure reason as such does not exist. He shared with his fellow citizens principles of democratic institutions and some myths as well. His position allowed him to find himself beyond the immediate content of the existing spiritual world, and he was eager to discover the most basic principles and images from which particular ones could be deduced. He definitely remained in the same spiritual universe and, therefore, remained closely limited by the values and general mythological concepts of his society. The same thing is clear with Plato whose dialogues are filled with traditional mythological images and along with these with brilliant deductions.

Thus, the intermediate role of philosophy can easily be recognized in its reflective character. Many statements about philosophy demonstrate this fact. Heraclitus says: "Of all men whose accounts I have listened to, not one has got far enough to know that wisdom is divided from all [other] things."²⁷ According to

²⁷ Nahm *Selections*, P. 69.

Jamblichus, Pythagoras expressed the nature of philosophy in terms of different kinds of people: "Some are influenced by the desire of riches and luxury; others by the love of power and dominion, or by insane ambition for glory. But the purest and most genuine character is that of the man who devotes himself to the contemplation of the most beautiful things, and he may properly be called a philosopher."²⁸ It is clear from these sayings that the pioneers of European philosophy were acutely conscious of their reflective position, a position beyond everyday matters. In addition, it is necessary to state that the nature of the process of reflection forces it ultimately to embrace the whole universe. Indeed, the break-through to this position makes it impossible for it to be limited by any particular sphere, partly because myths form spiritual justification for each and every area of human activity, partly because, by its nature, reflection exceeds any particular domain.

Thus, philosophy from the beginning has possessed four features which can be called its strengths (or weaknesses, depending on the point of view): 1) it is an individual search for understanding of the social position of man; 2) this search is based on reason rather than on tradition, however it is limited by this tradition; 3) it is reflective by nature; therefore it is universal; 4) it creates general terms which outline the new space for discussion (these terms form what is named 'metaphysics'. The activity in this sphere of spiritual life is justified by social consciousness of the transitional period as well as a position beyond everyday matters. Its content embracing the basic concepts and interrelations between the most significant powers which keep the order of the universe including human beings seems to be far more than just No Man's Land. Moreover, it is obvious that it cannot be replaced by any other form of social consciousness.

These characteristics of the philosophical approach determine some consequent features. If philosophy is an intellectual reflection on universal matters it cannot be limited in its analysis. The first major characteristic relates to the rational nature of philosophizing. Dialectics appears immediately along with the rise of philosophy. This means that contradictory statements are inevitable and it is possible at the same time to confirm or to reject any particular statement. This contradictory and all-refuting nature of philosophy manifested itself not only in the appearance of the contrasting doctrines, like Heraclitus' permanent flow versus Parmenides'

²⁸ *The Pythagorean Sourcebook and Library*. Compiled and translated by Kenneth

motionless spherical universe. The Sophist movement provides the most telling example: the ultimate criterion of the art of the speaker (the main goal of Sophist education was to prepare students for political activity) lies in the ability to deliver two equally persuasive speeches denying and defending the same issue. It is no accident, therefore, that the classical period was followed by a period of all-embracing skepticism.

The dialectical nature of philosophy leads us to the conclusion that philosophy is, in the first instance, pure understanding. It can formulate problems, examining them from different angles, but it has no means of ultimately resolving them. In its pure form philosophy can demonstrate the consequences of the acceptance of any chosen position, but it cannot indicate what has to be chosen (critical function). In order to make a decision, philosophy has to appeal to some set of values or axioms provided by the other spheres of human life. In other words, philosophy can make it obvious that a defined position has consequences, but it has no moral right or authority to force somebody to give up this position. It can discuss, but it cannot bring about an ultimate decision. Philosophy is reasoning and understanding. This is exactly the point of demarcation between philosophical and religious thought. The apologetics of Christianity make this clear. Tertullian, for instance, insisted that the ordinary Christian was higher than an outstanding philosopher, because he knew what God was while philosophers were still discussing it.

The third characteristic relates to the reflective nature of philosophy. In its search for general understanding philosophy does not limit itself to any particular sphere of human life - religion, political ideology, science, moral behaviour, laws, art, and so on. If we turn again to the Greek philosophy it is easy to recognize concepts which belong to major spheres of spiritual life²⁹: the concepts of 'law' and 'justice' ('dyke') are borrowed from the sphere of legal thought and politics, the concepts of 'apathy' or 'hybris' are taken from the sphere of moral relations. Only religion and science, however, seem to pretend to offer general understanding presented in clearly formulated concepts as philosophy does. There is one more sphere of spiritual life which not only grasps the whole reality, but also brings the general statements in relation to it. This is art. It was mentioned that for Greeks there was no principle

Sylvan Guthrie. Phanes Press, 1987. P. 70.

²⁹ It is obvious that there are no strict boundaries between different spheres, and in trying to establish them retrospectively we are following a habitual scheme.

difference between poet, seer, or philosopher: wisdom could be gained differently – through inspiration, or vision, or reasoning. The great Greek poets, like Homer and Hesiod, were regarded as sages, and their opinions were taken as revelations. But the art does not strive to establish the integrated hierarchical system of knowledge and the pieces of wisdom revealed to us by great poets and artists remain separated.

This makes the connection between philosophy and religion on the one hand and philosophy and science on the other hand broader and closer than connections with other spheres. Moreover, as religion and science try to incorporate other spheres, their relationship with philosophy becomes even more contradictory. Neither religion nor science are satisfied with philosophical analysis: religion because of philosophical freedom, science because of metaphysical generality. Both are eager to include philosophical understanding as parts of their paradigms. What does this mean for philosophy?

When philosophy dedicates itself unreservedly to theology or science, it is easy to demonstrate that in both cases philosophy disappears not only by definition, but also as a field of discussion and understanding. Theoretical arguments in favour of this are:

- The intention of philosophical approach is to embrace reality as a whole and, therefore, to overcome any particular boundaries, the limits of any particular doctrine. This means that philosophy can destroy any well-established and accepted teaching or paradigm by casting doubt upon it. If philosophy is only a part of a religious doctrine or a scientific paradigm it is artificially locked into a limited space for discussion; it is forced to restrict its thought by limits set from outside. This means that philosophy cannot develop universal knowledge but only discuss some distinct problems. The use of arguments and concepts generated restrictively within the covering doctrine and not being allowed to reflect upon them, philosophy disintegrates into pieces and no longer exists as genuine philosophy. In short, this means that by nature philosophy as a whole cannot function as a part of any other knowledge. (This is an additional argument against the description of philosophy as “No Man’s Land.”)
- There is a possibility that philosophy, freely reflecting on its own ground, has discovered that the axioms of a particular religious doctrine are the best.

Therefore, these axioms are not set from outside but form a genuine core of philosophical research. At the same time the dialectical nature of philosophy has to be taken into account. Philosophical doctrine based on these axioms should be eager to refute itself, or this tendency has to be deliberately suppressed. And in this case again there cannot be a normal progression of philosophical research.

Thus, philosophy can exist only and exclusively as an independent and self-sufficient sphere of human intellectual life.

There are two different approaches to the history of philosophy which provide us with different pictures of the process of philosophical development: 1) The first simply lists philosophers and their doctrines. Authors of these surveys do not usually trouble themselves with attempts to discover any sort of underlying order. Diogenes Laërtius with his compilation *Lives, Teachings, and Sayings of Famous Philosophers* is one of the best examples of this approach. 2) Hegel probably was the first to describe the history of philosophy as a teleological process: each significant philosopher or school of philosophy found its place as a step on the ladder towards Hegel's all-embracing and complete system, which in its turn reflects the logic of the development of an Absolute Idea. He explored the laws of dialectical logic which provided a matrix of the development of philosophy.

However, in practice the history of philosophy is predominantly viewed as an only partly organized body of names and doctrines, where external rather than internal principals are used. In order to bring together all these names and doctrines, at least two principals are usually employed: chronology and place of origin (nationality). Chronology can be accepted at face value, especially with such broad terms as 'ancient', 'medieval', and 'modern'. Nationality, on the other hand, is not quite so simple: it is a natural and yet complex characteristic. Such labels as "British empiricism", "German idealism" or "French existentialism" not to mention "Chinese philosophy", "Indian philosophy", or "Jewish philosophy" are commonplace. In the Western philosophical tradition the history of philosophy is usually divided into different national traditions. Authors of the collective work *General History of*

*Philosophy*³⁰ introduce philosophical systems according to the place of origin. Thus, philosophy is divided into Western and Eastern. Eastern is in its turn subdivided into Indian, Chinese, and so on. Western is chronologically divided into ancient, medieval, and modern, with their subdivisions according to the principle of nationality: Greek philosophy into Milesian philosophy and that of Western Greece, and so on. Though in some cases these subdivisions are not sufficiently precise, looking at the XIXth century we discover French, English, and German traditions. Russian philosophy is also added by the editors.

This order based upon chronology and place of origin is understandable and, though being external to the content and the structure of the doctrines themselves it is to an extent linked with this content. For instance, the label 'medieval philosophy' implies that all the issues are seen in relation to Christianity and therefore to such problems as the nature of God and predestination. With place of origin the situation is different. If we compare such expressions as "German science" and "German philosophy" differences are apparent. With the former it is presupposed that science is general and scientific doctrines do not bear the stamp of their origin. Therefore, an indication of place means no more than the place where scientists were working, or to their origin. But with philosophy this indication proposes more than that: "German philosophy" reflects to some degree a specific character of the country and its population. Though this cannot be clearly defined it should be emphasized that philosophy is more intimately linked with a particular culture than is science.

One of the best examples of the tendency to present philosophy as part of scientific development and, therefore, to isolate it from national cultures can be found with positivism, a trend in philosophy which can be defined as the highly aggressive ideology of scientific *Weltanschauung*. Reichenbach declares: "And yet, there are philosophers who refuse to acknowledge scientific philosophy as a philosophy, who wish to incorporate its results into an introductory chapter of science and claim that there exists an independent philosophy, which has no concern with scientific research and has direct access to truth. ... They reserve the name of philosophy for their

³⁰ *Obshchaya istoriya filosofii* (General History of Philosophy). Vv. 1-2, St. Petersburg, 1910. This is a collective work including chapters written by the most famous, predominantly German, philosophers (von Arnim, Windelband, etc.)

fallacious attempts at a super-scientific knowledge and refuse to accept as philosophical a method of analysis designed after the pattern of scientific inquiry."³¹

There are at least three arguments in favour of the underlined statement in the paragraph before last and so against Reichenbach's view: First, philosophical doctrines aim to embrace everything as an understandable totality; therefore they cannot be complementary to each other: we have to choose between them. In other words, metaphysically, philosophical doctrines are incommensurable: Plato's image of the world is absolutely strange to that of Hegel or Leibniz. Second, the only champion of the view that science forms a part of national culture and that the spirit of a culture, including science, can never be transferred to another culture was O. Spengler, who defended this idea in his famous book *Decline of the West*. But even in this case the difference between philosophy and science remains. Science tends to rewrite itself at any stage of its development with every significant discovery. By doing this, science excludes its own genuine history from the body of its own knowledge, replacing it by a sort of retrospective history. That is why there is no need to read classical scientific works in order to become a scientist. The situation with philosophy is different: Plato's writings cannot be excluded or rewritten³². Third, science relates to technology, to material artefacts, while philosophy deals exclusively with concepts and notions. Because of this, the scientific attitude to the external natural world is more independent from particular culture than is the philosophical attitude.

If philosophy and science do not belong to the same realm, then the positivistic approach to philosophy is not viable. And this is the first axiom of our research: philosophy is something specific and is different from any other form of social consciousness including science, religion, and art. Otherwise talking about the development of an independent philosophical tradition does not make any sense.

It should be noted that, in order to present philosophy as science, positivists tend to reserve to philosophy exclusively epistemological issues. This statement needs further explanation in relation to the very nature of philosophical knowledge and its ways of development. It is significant that Reichenbach talks about method of

³¹ Reichenbach *The Rise of Scientific Philosophy*, P. 305.

³² It is another problem that we can understand Plato to the extent he was understood by his contemporaries. For our purposes it is sufficient to note the difference between attitudes to scientific and philosophical classics.

analysis rather than about metaphysics, ethics, or aesthetics. While metaphysics or ethics are expected to provide us with interrelated positive statements about the world and man, epistemology relates to the structure of these statements and to the sufficiency of arguments. Epistemology is the most esoteric part of philosophical knowledge as this is exclusively a preserve of philosophers themselves. Collective consciousness on the other hand is satisfied by rigid positive sayings. It does not care about the demonstrations. At the same time philosophers, and in this respect they differ dramatically from sages or prophets, are eager to prove their statements with reasonable arguments. It is observable that at some stages of philosophical development this epistemological activity becomes much more important than ontological issues. In addition this sphere of philosophical activity intersects with scientific (and theological) activity, while metaphysical and ethical issues occur predominantly outside this intersection.

Now let us look at philosophy from outside. If we take philosophy not as a sort of individual undertaking but as a new and necessary expression of social consciousness, we have to find a ground for this new form of collective spiritual endeavour. This can be found in sociology, especially in the theory of collective consciousness elaborated by Emile Durkheim.

Durkheim investigated this phenomenon of collective consciousness from the point of view of solidarity, a concept which views society as an organic system, that is that society is more than a sum of individuals. He found that solidarity was a product of the division of labour. This solidarity is a purely moral phenomenon. In order to find something tangible in relation to solidarity Durkheim approaches the notion of law. He states that "...social life, especially where it exists durably, tends inevitably to assume a definite form and to organize itself, and law is nothing else than this very organization in so far as it has greater stability and precision. The general life of society cannot extend its sway without juridical life extending its sway at the same time and in direct relation. We can be certain of finding reflected in law all the essential varieties of social solidarity."³³ We have mentioned earlier that social activity to establish laws was initiated in the Greek city-states at some stage of their history. From the point of view of our research the most important fact is that it was a

very specific activity, reasonably organized. It is impossible to find any other activity which drives intellectual power to such an extent as this lawmaking one. It was a problem of survival for any particular state. The rest of social life was based upon tradition and customary law. At the same time the very ground for the lawmaking activity was that tradition and customary law could not keep social order. The processes of the destruction of the ancient mythological system along with the appearance of a reflective approach, expressed by the first sages, corresponded with the process of transition from monarchic to democratic forms of social organization³⁴.

Similar processes corresponding to the dramatic change from traditional institutions to new ones can be observed not only in Greece but in other countries during the *axis* time. However, philosophical traditions appear later as well, and so connecting them exclusively with the *axis* time is not correct. In order to generalize this situation we can look at the pure logic of the process: during the formation of new forms of social life, people cannot apply previous knowledge based upon tradition, therefore they have to develop consciously a knowledge based on another tradition.

The thesis connecting philosophy with the dramatic periods in the history of particular states is not obvious. That is why, dealing with the appearance of a Russian philosophical tradition, it is useful to draw a larger picture of the historical circumstances relating to some different and at the same time well-established and well-known philosophical traditions. (The only purpose for look at these examples is to emphasise the link between philosophy and social circumstances. It is, of course, absolutely clear that the actual forms of dependence were extremely complicated.)

It has already been mentioned that Greek philosophy was forming at the same time that new democratic institutions were being established. It is interesting to observe that the first sages, with the remarkable exception of Thales, are excluded from the history of philosophy³⁵. Indeed, Thales' statement that "the first principle of things is water"³⁶ is retrospectively supposed (by modern positivistic tradition) to be

³³ Emile Durkheim *The Division of Labor in Society*. Trans. by George Simpson, Fourth Printing, New York, 1960. Pp. 64-65.

³⁴ J.-P. Wernand *Proiskhozhdeniye drevnegrecheskoi mysli* (The Origin of Ancient Greek Thought). Moscow, 1988; Jeffery I. H. *Archaic Greece. The City-States*. B.C. London, 1976; E.D.Frolov *Rozhdeniye grecheskogo polisa* (The birth of the Greek city-state). Leningrad, 1988.

³⁵ See, for instance, D. W. Hamlyn *The Penguin History of Western Philosophy*. London, etc., 1990.

³⁶ Nahm *Selections*. P. 38.

more important than, for example, Hesiod's, Solon's, Pittak's repetitive insistence that people should know the measure and know themselves. But it is the case only from the point of view of the positivistic history of science. It should be noted that Thales with his 'water' was considered to be one of the seven sages, and, therefore, we can assume that he was much closer to their kind of thinking than is usually recognized. Following our line of argument we can presuppose that the sages were trying to find a spiritual device against *hybris*. Their 'measure' was a clear expression of these efforts. This measure was connected with the universal cosmic law. Therefore, first, the state, in order to be just, had to embody this law in its institutions; and, second, an individual, in order to be a just and good citizen, had to accept this law personally. For Thales 'water' was an 'arche', the most respectable and the oldest thing among the other things. And if we take him as one of the sages we have to accept the view that he was seeking for the main source of cosmic justice. This search for justice rather than for any purely scientific explanation of all things found its clear demonstration with the next great philosopher Anaximander. The best known fragment states: "And from what source things arise, to that they return of necessity when they are destroyed; for they suffer punishment and make reparation to one another for their injustice according to the order of time..."³⁷ The social content of this fragment is obvious. The same can be found with Heraclitus: "The sun shall not transgress his measures; if he does, the Erinnyes, the supporters of justice, will find him out."³⁸ Heraclitus equates justice with wisdom in its all-penetrating character. "Wisdom is a single thing. It is to understand the mind by which all things are steered through all things."³⁹ Though it can be argued that Heraclitus made this assertion in relation to the law of nature, this objection does not change the point that philosophy was developed using the state as a model. The very concept of law was borrowed from political life. Pythagoreans connected numbers with evil and good, and harmony was supposed to be a correct combination of opposites. Here again we can find an effort to explain social and individual life through the general approach to cosmic order.

Chinese philosophy appeared during the 'Period of the Warring States' (4th – 3rd centuries BC). It was a response to great social instability. Two schools the

³⁷ Ibid., P. 40.

³⁸ Ibid. P.70.

³⁹ Ibid., P. 69.

Confucians and the legalists, actually equated themselves directly with the state consciousness, while Taoism developed a far more abstract doctrine of Virtual Tao. Though Taoists advocated the simple life, and rejected Confucian and legalist doctrines, it is impossible to deny that their concept of life following nature, which in its turn represents Tao, is an expression of a negative attitude to the state, and would not have appeared without this attitude.

Arabic philosophy developed during the first stages of the establishment of the new political order under the rule of the caliphs. As soon as this incentive came to an end, philosophy declined, clearing the way for theology and the pure mysticism of Sufi. Though Arabic states and Arabic culture have existed for 14 centuries, we know the names of outstanding philosophers only from the first centuries of its history, such as Alfarabi, Avicenna, Averroës. It is worth noting that Arabic science of international importance, including astronomy, mathematics, and sociology, continued to develop for a much longer period.

These examples describe a situation similar to the Greek one: there had been no philosophy in their earlier history. It could be expected that with such countries as England, France, or Germany which had inherited a long tradition of philosophizing from scholastic times, the situation would be different. People already had at their disposal a specific language to express abstract ideas and general doctrines, which is not the case when philosophical enquiry first makes its appearance. However, there is no significant difference in the case of incentives. A period of intensive philosophical development is always linked to a period of dramatic social change. If we turn to the beginning of modern philosophy we encounter mighty social changes resulting in the Renaissance spiritual turnover, and then in the Reformation. Therefore, it is no accident that Francis Bacon, an ardent proponent of experimental science, wrote a utopia, *New Atlantis*, and Hobbes' best known book, where materialistic philosophy appeared for the first time in its most rigorous form, dedicated his main work to an analysis of the social order proving that monarchy was the best way to constitute a political structure in favour of the people.

Thus, a general statement can be made: a conscious search for social order in those times when the established one is not working is unable to find its ground in the earlier forms of spiritual life and has to give room for a specific intellectual activity called philosophy. This does not mean that philosophy in the forms we recognize it

now always appears during transitional periods. This premise however is necessary if not sufficient.

If we now confront the features of philosophy we have examined: the search for a new social position, the reliance on reason rather than tradition, and its reflective nature, with a recognition of the necessity for lawmaking, we can now describe philosophy as an activity creating a state in the spiritual sphere. The outcome of this activity is a state built of concepts. The very nature of this activity explains the hierarchical arrangement of ideas and, therefore, the search for the most general categories, such as *being* (Parmenides), *apeiron* (Anaximander).

It should be emphasized that philosophy is in no way equated with political philosophy. As soon as philosophy appears it starts to think over much more than social order and political power, though they always remain important issues for traditional philosophy. The point is that the initial period of philosophical development is connected with changing social circumstances which demand new tools in order for it to be re-established. Moreover, as soon as the situation is stabilized, philosophy is believed by the authorities to be harmful, because further reflection on state institutions is taken as destructive. Arabic philosophy provides us with the clearest case of such refutation of philosophy. It can be also mentioned that Rome, with its cult of state, displayed a predominantly negative attitude to philosophy. And philosophy was not developed by the Romans. Only some ethical doctrines, brilliantly expressed and principally borrowed from the Greeks can be noted.

The author of this thesis is fully aware that the problems touched upon earlier need more attention and some statements may seem to be superficial. The approach can be justified exclusively in relation to the direct goal of this research: to outline the object of investigation, making it clear what should be regarded as philosophy in relation to such a vague phenomenon as national consciousness.

We must now turn to the conception of national consciousness.

On September 1, 1947 the Spanish priest who preached a sermon for the crowd assembled in the main square of Salamanca stated that Spain was eternal: "Spain had existed long before the national revival of the *caudillo*, Generalissimo Franco. It had existed under the Bourbons and the Hapsburgs and before the union of Aragon and

Castile by the Catholic Kings, Ferdinand and Isabella. It had existed at the time of the Visigoths and of the Romans and of Tubal (a descendant of Cain and the first to settle in Spain); and it had existed even before that, before the creation of the world itself, in the mind of God.⁴⁰ This is an extremely clear manifestation of an idea of national identity as belonging to eternity rather than to any particular epoch of national development. First of all it is necessary to exclude the nuance of national pride (though it was, probably, included to some extent by the orator) in order to avoid nationalistic overtones. Secondly, preacher's statement can be taken in different ways. However, the most straightforward literal understanding leads us to the concept that nation 1) bears a teleological meaning, nation is supposed to be a goal in itself; and 2) it is an ideal, and so it is spiritual rather than material. At the same time it is a rational expression of the simple fact that this phenomenon of nation is unique, and, therefore, general principles cannot be applied to the concept of a particular nation.

The uniqueness of a nation is defined by the unrepeatable combination of different factors, involving a place, which is occupied by certain ethnic groups; these very groups themselves; their traditions; history, taken in multiple relations; and so on. National consciousness is a spiritual constituent which allows people to perceive all other factors in relation to this one.

The formation of national consciousness is inevitably linked with the formation of the state. The two are so close that in some cases they can displace each other. Thus, taking 'nationality' as an expression of national identity Henri Hauser asserted that in seventeenth century France "the idea of nationality was eclipsed by the idea of the state."⁴¹ Public institutions, and the state in particular, is the only factor which unites all the reSt. Talking about French patriotic feelings, W. Church states that before the Revolution the monarchy was their "chief source, inspiration, and focal point. Such factors as territory, language, religion, and race may have contributed to the matrix, but these were merely conditioning elements whereas the monarchy was the molder, the dynamic force. It was the monarchy that built the realm by assembling its disparate territories and merging them into a single whole. Only the monarchy was capable of controlling the dissident elements in the complex social structure and

⁴⁰ H. Koenigsberger "Spain" // *National Consciousness, History, and Political Culture in Early-Modern Europe*. Ed. by Orest Ranum. Baltimore and London, 1975. P. 144.

⁴¹ Quote from: William F. Church "France" // *Ibid.* P. 44.

directing them toward higher ends..."⁴² Emphasizing the role of the state, we cannot generalize this picture, equating state consciousness with national consciousness. If we again turn to French national consciousness we can find an assertion that the idea of *patrie* "resulted from the dissociation of the idea of king from the idea of nation."⁴³ A concept of kingdom separated from the idea of a king is *contradictio in objecto*, but a concept of fatherland without relation to a particular form of government would seem to be understandable. Here we can find the difference between state consciousness and national consciousness: an idea of a unanimously recognized public power over a particular land and people residing in this land is a crucial constituent of *national* consciousness, but it does not assume any specific form of this public power. At the same time a state consciousness relates to a particular configuration of this power. In short, it is sufficient for national consciousness to rely on any legitimate power while state consciousness is concerned with particular authoritative institutions. That is why though these forms of consciousness can coincide at some stages of national development at other stages they inevitably come into contradiction. Socrates' case again provides us with a good example of such a dissension.

At this point we have to clarify the common ground for state and national consciousness. It has been noted previously that national consciousness manifests and at the same time forms itself during a time of crucial growth for some group of people into new forms of social reality, a time of the answer to the challenge⁴⁴, a challenge which calls into question the very existence of a group of people. The establishment of these new institutions vigorously provokes a political activity based on reason rather than tradition and customary law. Though the challenges can be different - disasters, enemies, diseases - the only possibility of overcoming any challenge relies on the idea of unity. The main enemy of this idea is always found in the egoism of the powerful members of society who are pursuing their personal interests and disregarding interests of the rest of the population. The Greeks used the word *hybris* to describe this unrestricted personal chasing of egoistic interests. Both state and national consciousness coincide in their negative attitude to *hybris*, pursuing social unity. They both take society as a whole, a totality rather than an aggregation of

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ The word 'challenge' is used in Toynbee's sense.

individuals. The second common feature between these forms of consciousness is a recognition of the primacy of this unity: the whole is higher than its parts. It is inevitable for national consciousness, by definition: it simply does not recognize individuals; national consciousness replaces clan consciousness. Any person is taken exclusively as a representative rather than an individual. The state consciousness by its definition relates to social institutions which exist only through people being separated from these very people. The third common feature is associated with the nature of power, valued for its quality. With the legitimacy comes an ideal of justice. Only a power which is true can provide justice. And *vice versa*: only a just power is assumed to be true.

This difference between state and national consciousness can be discovered in regard to the highest authority, that is to divine power. State consciousness seeks support from this authority, and this search can be observed, for instance, in the establishment of the relationship between state and church. National consciousness, on the other hand, takes divine authority surpassing any earthly power as the ultimate guarantee of a just order. That is why religion, dealing with heavenly powers, comes to the fore. It can be argued that in some known cases this role of ultimate judge is reserved for the people rather than for the gods. However, even in these cases a) people are taken as imbued by divine authority – *vox populi – vox dei*; or b) the division is made between the universal will and the will of everybody (Rousseau) and this universal will is something separated from the real people and, therefore, something much closer to the divine than the human. In addition, if power, represented by the state (the subject of state consciousness), can be just or unjust in relation to people, the nation (the subject of national consciousness) need not be taken in this way at all.

These ideas being formative for national consciousness stand in relation to other particular ideas, as well as to values and beliefs. It is not obvious whether national consciousness can be presented as a well-structured unity. However in this thesis we will take into account the basic concepts which have been outlined along with the basic values which manifest themselves in these concepts. These concepts are embodied in the social and political structure, manifested by myths and images, and expressed by works of art and by words.

In summary we can describe national consciousness as including:

- a concept of nation taken as an eternal idea, forming a ground for national identity;
- an embodiment of this eternal idea in fatherland embracing the land and the people occupying this land as a whole, and as a goal in itself;
- an idea of a legitimate and just earthly power on this land, relying on divine power or, more cautiously, on some supreme uniting principle;
- values, attitudes, beliefs, and so on as its content intimately linked with the preceding ideas.

In order to avoid any associations with nationalistic ideologies it is necessary to emphasize the following. National consciousness comes with the appearance of relatively large states uniting people of different traditions and ethnic origins. In Greece the institution of citizenship was far more important than ethnic origin. The Egyptian empire amalgamated people of different ethnic origin and the main discrimination was between Egyptians and non-Egyptians rather than between, for instance, black and white Egyptians. The same can be said about the Arabic, Chinese, and Indian states. Even the so-called national states which have appeared in Europe since the XIVth century have obviously not been ethnically pure. Therefore, national consciousness clearly relates to state structure rather than to ethnic origin. If we turn to Russian national consciousness, it relates to the people who inhabit the Russian country, including the Tatars, Jews, Finno-Ugric people, rather than to those people of pure Russian ethnic origin. (It is in any case impossible to define what pure Russianness is.⁴⁵) Any particular national consciousness is exemplified in the unique combination of different factors, where ethnic origin can play its role. However ethnic origin is never taken as a principal constituent apart from some significant exceptions when nationalistic movements for political purposes have started to play with concepts of pure ethnicity.

Inasmuch as national consciousness is a living thing, it is a dynamic phenomenon. The basic values of the people who inhabited Kievan Rus' in the XIth

⁴⁵ A good example that the "Russianness" does not relate to ethnicity can be found in: Archbishop Nafanail *Besedy o Svyashchennom Pisanii i o Vere i Tserkvi* (Conversations on Holy Scripture and on belief and Church). V. 1. 1991. P. 124-125. Archbishop Nafanail emphasizes that "Russianness" primarily keeps a religious

century were different from those who lived in the Moscow Grand Duchy in the XVth century, and apparently from those who walked along the avenues of St. Petersburg at the end of the XVIIIth century. The question is whether there is anything in common between all those people of Kiev, Moscow and St. Petersburg. In addition, it is not obvious that members of different layers of society possess the same consciousness. Therefore, we have to narrow the subject of the research.

The first point, which allows this restriction, can be deduced from the previous consideration: as we regard only the principal constituents of national consciousness, we do not have to follow it in detail through all the stages of Russian cultural development. We have to take into account crucial events of the development of the Russian state which manifested significant features of national consciousness. Indeed, there were only a few events in Russian history which could be described as formative in (or demonstrative of) national consciousness. These are the moments of national triumph, linked with the battle of Kulikovo in 1380, the defeat of the Kazan khanate in 1552, and the defeat of Napoleon in 1812. For some reasons these battles have remained in Russian popular memory as uniting state, people, and church. It is extremely important to bear in mind that methodologically for our purposes the popular image of these historical episodes is far more important than the real course of events. They became focal points of Russian national consciousness. We will return to them when we discuss the historical perspective.

Secondly, national consciousness manifests itself in language, as well as in literature, fine arts, in attitude toward different state and other institutions, and events, in the self-consciousness of individuals, and so on. Obviously all these elements cannot be taken into account. This research concentrates predominantly on the basic concepts of national consciousness as they are expressed by such words as 'pravda' (meaning *justice* and *truth*) and 'volya' (*freedom* and *will*), paying some attention to 'mir' (*community* and *peace*), 'svet' (*world* and *peace*) and 'zakon' (*law*). Literature will form another source for this exploration. Fine arts and architecture will be discussed only in a few, though significant, cases. This choice has been made after long consideration of different possibilities in order to deal somehow with such a unique and complex phenomenon as national consciousness in its relation to the formation of philosophy.

meaning and relates to Rus' being the keeper of the Orthodox belief through

To sum up, we have to note the following. Philosophy appears as an individual search for understanding of the social position of man, during a time when people are not satisfied with the existing order, with the goal of finding a just order on the basis of an all-embracing law. The philosophical search is reflective by nature and, because of this, inevitably frees itself from the immediate limits of a given tradition establishing itself on reason rather than on tradition yet remaining at the same time in the same spiritual universe. The dialectical nature of philosophy allows it to outline problems, making them clear from a general point of view, but it has no means of resolving them. Because of this, philosophy establishes close relations with other spheres of life, religion and science in particular, though it is not dissolved in them. The content of philosophical knowledge is formed by the concepts borrowed from the existing spiritual world with its specific values and images and arranged in relation to the most basic principles reminiscent of the political structure maintained in relation to the supreme power. National consciousness is taken as including a concept of nation taken as an eternal idea; a connection of this idea with the idea of fatherland and with the idea of a legitimate and just earthly power in this land. These considerations form the logic and content of this thesis.

The main hypothesis of the thesis can be presented as the following: Russian philosophy in the form in which it appeared in the second half of the XIXth century is a reflection on the basic concepts and approaches elaborated and manifested in Muscovite Russia by the second half of the XVIth century. Being preserved particularly among peasants it formed the ground for the reflection at a time when the great Russian literature was intensively developing. The values and concepts of this ancient consciousness was also expressed by the Slavophiles in their approaches to the crucial issues of Russian history as well as in the concepts of *wholeness* and *sobornost*'. In their turn Solovyov and other outstanding Russian philosophers worked in the cultural frame outlined by earlier writers, poets, and thinkers.

The next (second) chapter "The formation of Russian national consciousness" deals with the history of Russia outlining the specifics of the Russian historical development and the most significant events which led to the formation of the basic nation-wide themes, concepts, and values.

The third chapter "Historicism. Aestheticism. Mysticism" deals with three conspicuous features of Russian consciousness. The analysis of these features allows us to describe the specifics of the national approach to reality and characterize such important concepts as "Russian land", "mir" ('peace' and 'world'), "light".

The fourth chapter "The key concepts of Russian mind" treats the content of national consciousness dealing with such words as *pravda*, *volya*, and *zakon*. These words reflect the interrelations between an individual and the supreme source of power over Russian land.

The fifth chapter "Preconditions of reflection by the time of Pushkin" presents the most important issues which, while being discussed at the end of the XVIIIth to the beginning of the XIXth, have led to the formation of the ground for further literary and intellectual development. The views of such writers as Fonvizin, Karamzin, and Derzhavin are investigated and compared.

The sixth chapter "Pushkin's world view" presents Pushkin's understanding of basic values through the three-dimensional scheme of historicism, aestheticism, and mysticism, as well as his treatment of the concepts related to the words *pravda* and *volya*. Pushkin is chosen on the grounds that his works have from the middle of the XIXth century been recognized as the purest expression of national consciousness.

In the seventh chapter "The Cultural Development in the second quarter of the XIXth Century", the cultural and intellectual situation of the time immediately prior to the appearance of the first philosophical works is described and analysed. The role of the Slavophiles with their concepts of *wholeness* and *sobornost'* is presented as crucial in the formation of Russian national philosophical tradition.

The eighth chapter "The framework and the principal themes of Russian philosophical development" presents the outline of the ways philosophical doctrines can be constructed on the basis of the concepts and approaches elaborated by the national consciousness by the second half of the XIXth century.

The ninth chapter "The beginning of national philosophy" presents V. Solovyov's philosophical doctrines as reflecting the essential features of the Russian national consciousness of the Muscovite period. His system of *omni-unity* unites the historical, aesthetic, and mystical aspects of the world; it also elaborates specific national themes in philosophy, such as *Sophia*, and forms the ground for a peculiar development of metaphysics, epistemology, and ethics.

Chapter 2

The Formation of Russian National Consciousness

The purpose of this chapter is to emphasize the events and concepts which had a crucial influence on the formation of Russian national consciousness. To do this it is necessary to outline briefly Russian political and cultural history which for the purposes of this discussion is divided into the following periods:

1. the 'Kievan period': from the IXth century (when the Rurik dynasty came to power in all Rus' lands) up to the Mongol-Tatar invasion of 1238-1240;
2. the 'Mongol yoke': 1240 - 1480;
3. the Muscovite period: from 1480 to the beginning of the XVIIIth century;
4. the 'St. Petersburg period': from the turn of the XVIIth and XVIIIth centuries to 1917;
5. the 'Soviet period': 1917 - 1991.

There are some problems with this division because, for example, some parts of Rus'-Russia were under foreign rule for some time. However, it is sufficient for our purposes.

It should be mentioned in advance that the upshot of the following overview of Russian history is aimed to find and to examine the content of national consciousness from the point of view of its impact on the future philosophical tradition. For instance, at least three formative historical influences which were especially important for the rise of a distinctive philosophical tradition in Russia. The first was the position of Rus' as a trading crossroad among many very different groups and a consequent identification of "Holy Rus'" with the land rather than with an ethnic group. The second was the commitment of Russia to Christianity, the conviction that first Rome and then Constantinople had, each in their turn, lost their former roles as bastions of the faith; and that Moscow's destiny was to become the Third Rome, the last one. The third formative experience in Russia was a cruelly enforced Westernization which created a gulf between peasants and merchants on the one side, and the ruling classes on the other. After the Patriotic war against Napoleon,

this division within Russian society became too painful to bear – both for those who had resisted Westernization and for the thoroughly Westernized intellectuals who had not ceased to be Russians.

Rus' inherited from the very beginning a unique position among other countries. As M. Rostovtsev has pointed out, the country which later became known as *Rus'* was founded by the Scythians as a trade country on the crossroads from Scandinavia to Greece and through the steppes from China to Europe. Slavic tribes took this region over from the Goths and with it the trade. Rus' from the start was a commercial state with an agricultural and forest-living population and so, from the very beginning, it had at its disposal all the contacts which had been left by its predecessors. As Rostovtsev says,

The Russia of Kiev was at the same time the last link of an ancient historical chain and the first of a new one. Kievan Russia was the immediate successor of the series of commercial states which had replaced one another in the steppes of South Russia from time immemorial, and at the same time the mother of the subsequent Slavonic Russian states in Western Russia (the Galicia of to-day), on the upper course of the Dnieper (the modern White Russia), and, most important of all, between the upper Volga and the Oka, Great Russia, the *Russia* of modern times.⁴⁶

This view with some modifications is supported by archaeological, anthropological, and linguistic data. Two types of agricultural societies existed (one of 'long barrows' and another of 'conic barrows'), which can be confidently related to different ways of development – 'slow' and 'fast'. The latter was connected with steppe nomads. Archaeologist P. Dolukhanov observes: "Conic mounds' ... may be viewed as a later northern replica of Bronze Age steppic kurgans: symbols of regional power of group oriented chiefdoms"⁴⁷. Early urban centres developed where there was a high concentration of conic mounds. "These areas ... were actively involved in a Slavic socio-political network, with a great number of small ephemeral chiefdoms

⁴⁶ M. Rostovtzeff *Iranians & Greeks in South Russia*, New York: Russell & Russell, Reprinted 1966. P. 220.

⁴⁷ Pavel M. Dolukhanov *The Early Slavs. Eastern Europe from the Initial Settlement to the Kievan Rus*, London & New York, Longman, 1996. P.169.

exercising power over local groups of people and regionalized resources.⁴⁸ At the same time all the major settlements provided evidence for the multi-ethnicity of their populations. The interaction between local groups united by trade resulted in the outgrowth of a Slavic *lingua franca* which later produced different regional dialects and, in the course of time, languages.

The establishment of Kievan Rus' is closely linked with the Vikings. (The very word *Rus'* is derived from the Finnish '*Routsi*' which was used to designate 'Sweden'.⁴⁹) Scandinavia was part of a trade network including the northwestern Slavic markets, and in the middle of the IXth century the Vikings became attracted by flourishing southern markets. In contrast to the West, their expansion never took the form of peasant colonization. Dolukhanov points out that "The Vikings formed a social élite of the newly emerging Slavic statehood. They considerably enhanced the process of social development, creating and protecting the infrastructure and establishing new local markets."⁵⁰ Later this state of affairs was supported by a code of customary law known as *Pravda Russkaya* (Rus' Justice). This code, chartered under the reign of Yaroslav the Wise, considered the Rus' "as active members of a military-merchant community, regardless of ethnic affiliation."⁵¹ And so Rus' a) inherited and kept some of those previous relations⁵², and kept them in memory as well; and b) inherited a view which was wider than the average compared with other countries. (Probably, only the Arabs, and the Byzantine Greeks at that time had a similar attitude to other countries.)

Rus' occupied an intermediate position between the nomadic states of the steppes, the military Varangians on the North, the settled Finnish tribes in the North-East, the strong state of the Muslim Bulgars to the East, and the Khazar khanate with its Jewish religion in the South. In addition, Rus' had well established connections with Byzantium which was, from the Xth to the XIth centuries, one of the greatest

⁴⁸ Ibid. P. 190.

⁴⁹ There are numerous works on this matter. One of the most recent is: Melnikova E.A. and V.Ya.Petrukhin "Nazvanie 'Rus' v rannei etnokul'turnoi istorii Russkogo Gosudarstva" (The name 'Rus' in the early ethno-cultural history of Russian state) // *Lingvisticheskaya rekonstruktsiya i drevneishaya istoriya Vostoka* (Linguistic reconstruction and the ancient history of the East). Moscow, 1989. Pp. 42-55.

⁵⁰ Dolukhanov *The Early Slavs*, P. 190.

⁵¹ Ibid. P. 195.

⁵² Probably, due to this past history, being a successor of Germanic tribes (Goths) Rus' kept better relations with Varangians. See: Rostovtzeff, op. cit. P. 219.

states in the world. (It is known that there was a special Russian district in Constantinople for Russian merchants.) Maintaining animated commercial (and military) contacts with all these people, Russian merchants were always aware of different people and different cultures and had to be more open to them than, for instance, inhabitants of purely agricultural countries. The specifics of this mentality with its acceptance of different cultural frames can be demonstrated by the fact that the Grand Duke of Rus' Vladimir was called 'Kagan', the nomadic title for the highest ranked ruler. Metropolitan Hilarion of Kiev, for example, referred to Vladimir in this way in his famous *Sermon on Law and Grace*. Vladimir was a Norman warrior who also possessed the greatest nomadic title, being at the same time the ruler of a predominantly agricultural population.⁵³ C. Halperin notes that it is probably the only case of the use of this title by someone who was not a nomad.⁵⁴ It should be also mentioned that there had always been influential communities of Jews in Kiev and Tmutorokan' (on the North shore of the Black Sea.)

As at the time of Grand Prince Vladimir (970 - 1015) the inhabitants of the Slavic federation were predominantly pagans (especially in rural areas), Vladimir for multiple reasons decided to establish religious unity. With this painful choice the exterior and interior cultural diversity of the federation became a crucial factor in the recognition of the true path. Arguments had to be found in favor of the chosen religion. The interesting fact is that probably the strongest argument emerged in disputes with the Jews. The argument was used that the Jews' kingdom had been destroyed because of the sins of the population, but the Christian states were flourishing.

Christianity was officially adopted by Rus' from Byzantium in 988-9, not long before the Great Schism between the Catholic and Orthodox Churches, the so-called "East-West Schism of 1054". Though there were already some significant differences between the Roman and Eastern Churches by the time of its conversion, Rus' accepted them both as parts of one Christendom. To cite one example: Grand Princess

⁵³ V. Toporov also mentions that this title is close to Jewish kִהָנִּין. V. Toporov "Ob iranskom elemente v russkoi dukhovnoi kul'ture (On the Iranian element in the Russian spiritual culture) // *Slavyanskii i balkanskii fol'klor. Rekonstruktsiya drevnei slavyanskoi dukhovnoi kul'tury: istochniki i metody*. (Slavic and Balcan folklore. Reconstruction of the ancient Slavic spiritual culture: sources and methods) Moscow, 1989. Footnote 21, P. 54.

Olga, Vladimir's grandmother, sent a message to the Emperor Otto the Great asking for missionaries. However, after the Schism Rus' had to define its position in relation to Western Christianity. Though this position was predetermined by a variety of reasons, including trade, political and cultural links, Byzantium expected Rus' to make this position clear. By the time of schism Rus' had its own Christian history with its indigenous saints (Boris and Gleb) and a well-established Church. However being forced by circumstances to separate itself from the West Rus' after the second half of the XIth century started to acquire a new historical consciousness.⁵⁵

It is important to acknowledge the fact that, in contrast to Western culture which accepted Holy Scripture in Latin, the Slavonic language was used exclusively in the Russian church from the onset. G.Fedotov considered this a great misfortune for Russian culture, because it did not foster connections between the Byzantine and Russian clergy.⁵⁶ G.Florovsku among others disagreed with him.⁵⁷ While it is possible to agree with Fedotov to some extent, the fact that the recognized and appreciated distinguished linguistic taste of Russian writers and readers would have been impossible if they had not had an extensive body of literature in their native tongue must also be taken into account. Florovsky is certainly correct in his conclusion that "in the great Russian art of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries one discovers not only a high level of artistic mastery but also deep insights into the mystery of man ... It would not be an exaggeration to assume that the aesthetic culture of that time was refined and profound."⁵⁸ The key words here are "aesthetics" and "mystery", since they express essential values for the Russian mind.

During this period the concept of 'Russian land' was formed. As A. Nasonov has established, the expression was first applied to the territory of the middle

⁵⁴ Charles J. Halperin *Russia and the Golden Horde*, Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 1985. P. 12.

⁵⁵ See: O. Pritsak *The Origin of Rus'* V. 1. *Old Scandinavian Sources other than the Sagas*. Cambridge Mass: Harvard University Press, 1981. P. 32. It is necessary to note that Northern Rus', Novgorod in particular, kept strong relations with the West, and in doing this acquired specific cultural features which were later exterminated by Muscovite rulers.

⁵⁶ George P. Fedotov *The Russian Religious Mind*. V. 1, New York: Harper & Brothers, 1946. Pp. 39-41.

⁵⁷ Georges Florovsky, "The Problem of Old Russian Culture", *Readings in Russian Civilization*. V.1, Sec. ed., Chicago & London, 1969, Pp. 215-216.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.* p.217

Dnieper.⁵⁹ The unity of 'Russian land' was from the beginning understood as a *political* and by no means ethnic unity. For instance, after the 'Russian land' had been divided between two princes Yaroslav and Mstislav unity was restored under the rule of Yaroslav. This event was described by the chronicler in the following words: "... all the power was taken by Yaroslav, and he was autocrat upon Russian land."⁶⁰ In the course of time the term spread over all the lands united under the rule of the Russian princes of the Rurik dynasty. Old 'Russian land' (the territory which included the semi-states of Kiev, Chernigov, and Pereyaslavl') was expanding with the opening up and development of the new lands, and the term was applied to them as well. There were different reasons for this, including geographical conditions, the process of colonization, and economic circumstances. However, the main reason was the unity of authority. The state land was growing with the annexation of new lands by Kievan and other princes and was considered to be 'Russian' as soon as tribute started to be collected.⁶¹ The same situation remained after the Mongol invasion: though princes of the Rurik dynasty lost their supreme power in subordination to the ruler of the Golden Horde, they continued to be the local authorities and even tribute collectors in some cases.

The political unity of Russian land by the middle of the next period was, however, not supported by spiritual unity. Two hundred years of Christianity had not been enough to establish a united spiritual authority. The first attempt by Prince Vladimir to found such an authority by combining different pagan gods had been unsuccessful. Conversion to Christianity was more profitable. The church established new episcopates, and the bishops were predominantly chosen from 'Kievo-Pecherskaya Lavra.' This monastery became in the XIth century the cradle of Russian culture, and so the growth of Russian land was paralleled by the spread of Christian culture. Missionary activity was an extremely important part of this process. The increase of 'Russian land' was supposed to be the growth of Christianity in opposition to the pagan and Muslim beliefs of the new population. However, the process was to take several centuries, and was to some satisfactory degree completed as a response to the Mongol challenge with the great monastic movement initiated by Sergius of

⁵⁹ A.N.Nasonov "*Russkaya zemlya*" i obrazovaniye territorii drevnerusskogo gosudarstva (The "Russian land" and the formation of the territory of the ancient Russian state) Moscow, 1951.

⁶⁰ Quote from: Nasonov, P. 33.

Radonezh. B. Gasparov shows this in his analysis of the best-known literary work created at the end of this period, *The Lay of Igor's Campaign* (1187) which presents a pagan rather than a Christian attitude to the world, its sacral content reflecting a Slavic pre-Christian worldview in the most pure form⁶². This is especially significant because *The Lay of Igor's Campaign* is much closer to the popular consciousness expressed in oral literature.⁶³ If we turn to the original works of Church authors from that time we definitely find Christian ideology.

It should be emphasized again that this term ('Russian land') was never used in relation to ethnicity. The territory from the start was populated by people of different ethnic origins, including Finno-Ugric people, Hungarians, Jews, Norsemen, Turks, and, of course, Slavs. The monks of the Kievan monastery, 'Kievo-Pecherskaya Lavra', in the XIth century also came from various origins. There are many reasons for this indifference to ethnic origin. However it is sufficient for the purposes of our research just to note it. It goes with the idea that all people have their own laws and rites, and hence justice as well as injustice are conditional rather than absolute. Nestor, the author of the *Tale of Bygone Years*, expressed clearly this idea that people created their own laws because they were not aware of God's law, and so their rites and laws taken from their fathers seemed to them to be the only just and fatherly ones. Genuine difference is made exclusively by acceptance of God's law through Christianity. As soon as any people join the family of Christians they overcome their previous style of life, and all these people are equal before the face of God. The end of the Kievan period was marked by endless quarrels between Russian princes of Rurik origin, which greatly facilitated Genghiz Khan and his inheritor's defeat one by one of the Russian principalities.

By the middle of the XIIIth century Rus' had been taken over by the Tatar and Mongol horde. Thereafter up to 1480 it remained a subordinate province of the great state of the Golden Horde. This second period of Russian history has recently been

⁶¹ Nasonov, op. cit. P. 217.

⁶² B. Gasparov Poetika "Slovo o polku Igoreve" (Poetics of *The Lay of Igor's Campaign*) // *Wiener Slawistischer Almanach*, Sonderband 12, Wien 1984. Also: V.V. Martynov "Sakral'nyi mir "Slova o polku Igoreve" (The sacral world of *The Lay of Igor's Campaign*) // *Slavyanskii i balkanskii fol'klor*, Moscow, 1989. Pp. 61-78.

⁶³ Ibid. Pp. 280 et al.

the focus of passionate discussion⁶⁴. A well-established Christian view (reflected by the very name 'The Tatar Yoke') presented this period negatively: a Christian country ruled by a pagan or Muslim sovereign (under the rule of khan Uzbek who reigned from 1313 to 1340, the Tatars were converted to Islam⁶⁵). Another view presents this period as a symbiosis of two different cultures: settled and nomadic. As always there are arguments in favour of both pictures. From the point of view of this research it can be taken for granted that Russian culture became imbued with elements of both cultures, though it is beyond doubt that in religion Rus' remained strongly Christian. It must be remembered that Genghiz Khan's policy was not to break religious traditions: religious authorities of defeated countries were protected.

During this period when Rus' disappeared as an independent state, the Slavic people had to answer a great challenge (Toynbee) from another cultural tradition. The strong religious response of the population resulted in the eventual formation of a new Christian nation. The most important historical event of this time was the battle of Kulikovo (8 Sept. 1380), when after 140 years of suppression the Russians defeated the forces of the Golden Horde.⁶⁶ This battle demonstrated the developing independence of the Russian lands from Tatar rule. The victory was of great importance for Russian consciousness though less so from a political point of view (two years later the Tatar dominance in Russian lands was restored). It has been understood as the manifestation of a growing Russian state with its own spiritual power.

This period of Russian history is also-called 'the Golden age of Russian sanctity' (Fedotov). The most venerable among Russian saints, St. Sergius of Radonezh, blessed Great Prince Dmitry Donskoy of Moscow before his battle with the Mongol forces at Kulikovo.⁶⁷ By 1354 St. Sergius founded the Church of the

⁶⁴ For instance: L. N. Gumilev *Drevnyaya Rus' i Velikaya Step'* (Ancient Rus' and the Great Steppe). M., 1989; O. Suleimenov *Az i Ya*, Tashkent, 1970.

⁶⁵ As a response to khan Uzbek's attempts to forcibly convert them to Islam the Mongols (the name 'Mongol' is used as a collective word for people of different ethnic origin, where Turks (Tatars) formed a majority) who inhabited the Volga region organized a rebellion, and soon after some of them escaped to Rus' (see: L. Gumilev *Iz Istorii Evrazii* (From the History of Eurasia). M., 1993. P.73-74.)

⁶⁶ The more correct term for the 'Golden Horde' is 'Qipchaq Khanate,' which is used by modern scholars.

⁶⁷ The importance of this meeting between the Great Prince and St. Sergius is reflected in the well established view that Dmitrii would not have decided to fight against the Mongols without this blessing.

Trinity which became the most distinguished centre of Russian religious life. He initiated a powerful monastic movement, and his disciples founded up to 80 monasteries which contributed to the development of the Northern and Eastern regions. Although he did not write anything himself, his image and teaching were preserved by both oral and written traditions and his life, described by one of the greatest writers of ancient Russia, Epiphanius the Wise, became the model for subsequent generations of Russian people. The greatest recognition of St. Sergius' contribution to Russian culture can be found in Florensky's work "The Holy Trinity Monastery and Russia", where he states that the very word "Trinity", as it was used by St. Sergius, ingeniously expressed the essence of the national search for unity and fraternal love.⁶⁸ After St. Sergius, this idea found its highest manifestation in Andrei Rublev's "Trinity", which was incorporated into the Iconostasis of the Trinity church.

This is the time of the so-called 'Second South-Slavic influence.' After the cultural dormancy which followed the Mongol invasion, in the XIV and XVth centuries many books and icons came to Rus' predominantly from the Bulgarians and Serbs, and in some cases directly from Byzantium. Also many translations replaced earlier ones. This activity had several results. First, it led to the literary language being put in order by clearing it of local words, establishing regular rules of orthography, drawing it nearer to Greek orthography, and so on.⁶⁹ Second, it initiated a new style called 'braiding of words' (*pleteniye sloves*), which survived up to the XVII century. Third, it brought about a new interest in theological matters. Fourth, Russian iconography established strong connections with the "Paleolog Renaissance" – an important period of Byzantine art - and also with the Serbian school of painting which flourished in the second half of the XIVth century.⁷⁰ In general, the literary style of this time can be characterised as extremely expressive, emotional to the point of exaltation and, along with this, abstract, theologically separated from everyday

⁶⁸ In: P. Florensky *Opravdaniye Kosmosa* (Justification of Cosmos). St. Petersburg, 1994. Pp. 171-172.

⁶⁹ A. I. Sobolevskii "Yuzhnoslavyanskoye vliyaniye na russkuyu pis'mennost' v XIV – XV vekakh" (South-Slavic influence on Russian writing in the XIV – XV centuries). // *Perevodnaya literatura Moskovskoi Rusi XIV – XV vekov*. (The translated literature of Muscovite Rus' from the XIV to the XV centuries.) St. Petersburg, 1903. Pp. 3-4.

⁷⁰ See: D. Likhachev "Nekotoryye zadachi izucheniya vtorogo yuzhnoslavyanskogo vliyaniya v Rossii" (Some objectives for the investigation of the Second South Slavic

life.⁷¹ At the same time these translations were predominantly to do with liturgical requirements and did not affect the theological activity as such. The greatest stimulus to translation among the South Slavs was the Hesychast movement which, though a continuation of an ancient monastic tradition, acquired a new theological basis in the works of St. Gregory Palamas. He insisted on the possibility of the deification of the whole man through the God-man communion in the form of a vision of the "divine light," or "uncreated energy," analogous to that of Christ's transfiguration on Mount Tabor. This communion could be gained not through the mind but rather through a pure heart. The passionate debates on the issues raised by Palamas led to the last great period of Byzantine theology. Although collections of the leading Hesychasts were available in the Slavic language only a few of them reached Muscovy.⁷² Along with this the Hesychast movement influenced Russian spiritual life via its ideology and practice. However, as the average level of education was low and concentrated predominantly on practical problems, Russians were not yet prepared to discuss theological doctrines.

This period provides us with the first visible signs of a peculiar Russian spirituality manifesting itself in architecture, painting, and literature. By this time the Russian ideal of beauty was expressed especially in the cathedrals of Suzdal and Vladimir. It is interesting that, although many foreign master builders participated in these constructions, the peculiar type of Russian cathedral overshadows all foreign influences.⁷³ The Suzdalian cathedral became the model for Italian architects who later constructed the cathedrals of the Moscow Kremlin. In the "Suzdalian architectural type" there are original onion-like cupolas painted in blue and golden colours and harmonious synthesis. Up to the beginning of the XVth century the specifically Russian "High Iconostasis" appeared in Moscow cathedrals. It amalgamated three to five rows of icons into an integral colour composition. In so far as sculpture was considered to be pagan art, and some Councils of the Orthodox Church forbade sculpture, there are only a few sculptures left from both the Kievan and Muscovite periods. This may be the reason for the blossoming of painting (as, for

influence in Russia). // *Issledovaniya po drevnerusskoi literature* (Investigations in the ancient Russian literature). Leningrad, 1986. Pp. 11-16.

⁷¹ Ibid. P. 29.

⁷² Francis J. Thomson "The Corpus of Slavonic Translations Available in Muscovy" // *California Slavic Studies* XVI. V. I. Berkeley, etc. 1993. P. 184-185.

⁷³ George Vernadsky, *Kievan Russia*, New Haven & London, 1973. Pp. 58-59.

instance, the reason for the flourishing of the ornamental motives and miniatures in Arabian art is a sort of reaction to the interdiction against the depiction of personal images).

During this period because of its geographical position and the abilities of its rulers the Moscow principality gradually became increasingly influential, removing the power over Russian principalities from the other princes one by one. By the end of this period after the decline of the Byzantine Empire and the fall of Constantinople in 1453 the Russian state remained the only great bearer of Eastern Orthodoxy and was imbued with this character. The Russian state after that time became the only powerful protector of the Orthodox religion. Furthermore, Russian ecclesiastical thought after that time was firmly grounded upon that idea. The predominant reason was the Council of Ferrara-Florence (1438 - 1439), where the Greeks accepted the union with the Pope hoping to receive Western aid against the Ottoman Turks. Constantinople had been seized by the Turks 14 years after the Council, and the Russian people linked the one as a betrayal of true belief and the other as a punishment. After his return to Russia, Isidore, Council Metropolitan of Moscow, and already a cardinal of the Roman Catholic Church,⁷⁴ was dismissed and imprisoned by Grand Duke Vassily II. At that time "Russian piety" was set up against the rapidly waning prestige of the Greeks".⁷⁵ In 1472 Ivan the Third married the niece of the last Byzantine Emperor, Sophia Palaeologus (Zoa Palaeologa). This marriage had been arranged by the Pope with two main purposes in mind: to have a potential ally against the Turkish threat; and to spread his control over Orthodox Christians. Though Sophia's influence over Ivan III should not be overestimated, it cannot be denied that she and the Greek nobles who accompanied her strengthened the Byzantine cultural influence on the Russian authorities.

The next period of Russian history was the Muscovite which began with the renunciation of the Mongol yoke in 1480 and lasted for approximately two centuries up to the reign of Peter the Great (1689 - 1725). It can be divided into three sub-

⁷⁴ John Meyendorff, "Was There Ever a "Third Rome"? Remarks on the Byzantine Legacy in Russia" // *The Byzantine Tradition after the Fall of Constantinople*, Charlottesville & London, 1991. Pp. 45 - 60. P. 47.

⁷⁵ Dimitri Stremoukhoff, "Moscow the Third Rome: Sources of the Doctrine" // *The Structure of Russian History, Interpretive Essays*, New York, 1970. Pp. 108 - 125. P. 110.

periods: the first sub-period, which is of most interest for us, from the end of the Tatar Yoke up to the acquisition of Kazan in 1552; the second up to the establishment of the Romanov dynasty in 1613; and the third up to the reign of Peter the Great.

The first sub-period is of crucial importance for the formation of Russian national consciousness: it can be explained as a completion of the processes initiated during earlier times. The Moscow principality, then kingdom (after 1547), gradually acquired greater and greater power and with the defeat of the Kazan Khanate (one of the inheritors of the Qipchaq [Golden] Horde) became one of the mightiest states in the world. This event was reflected in numerous popular historical songs, which is the clearest sign that the event had become truly an integral part of national consciousness. Anthony Jenkinson in his book published at the end of the XVIth century wrote about the Russian Tsar: "The king of these parts is very mighty, since he has won a great many victories, both over Livonians, Poles, Lithuanians, and Swedes on the one hand, and over the Tatars and pagans on the other."⁷⁶ The historian A. Yanov observes that around the same time, after the conquest of Narva in 1558, "Russia became practically the main center of Baltic trade, and one of the centers of world trade."⁷⁷ He provides convincing evidence that Russia in the middle of the XVIth century was much better known and respected by European countries than it was a century later. The growth of trade corresponded to intensive urbanization, which "became a truly national phenomenon."⁷⁸

This sub-period is also marked by heated religious discussions. The reasons were 1) the appearance of heretics known as 'Judizers' who became very influential and acquired support from the upper levels of the state and church hierarchy. The discussions on faith included many people. The Novgorodian Archbishop Gennagii claimed that "from the time when the sun of Orthodoxy rose over our land, we had never had so much heresy: in houses, on the streets, in the marketplace, everyone – both monks and laymen – is dubiously discussing the faith..."⁷⁹ 2) The problem of the secularization of church lands was to become a stimulus for the dispute between the non-possessors (also-called 'the Trans-Volga elders') and the Josephites. The former, led by one of the most venerated monks in Russian history and the first relatively

⁷⁶ Quote from: A. Yanov *The Origins of Autocracy. Ivan the Terrible in Russian History*, Berkeley, etc., 1981. P.2.

⁷⁷ Yanov *The Origins...* P.3.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

independent theologian Nilus of Sora (he wrote about the contemplative life as a means of attaining a spiritual self-perfection), favoured the radical separation of church and state, advocated monastic poverty, religious freedom, independence from the state, and loyalty to Constantinople. The 'Josephites' (the followers of the famous Abbot of Volokolamsk Monastery St. Iosif) did not have a liberal attitude toward problems of faith and strongly supported church ownership. They looked to the state to guarantee this ownership and on this basis accepted the subordination of the church to state authority personalized by the tsar.

To some extent Iosif expressed the idea of "Caesaropapism," which had been inherited from Byzantium. (It is worth mentioning that this idea could not have appeared before the fall of Constantinople and the Balkan states, but after that the sovereign of Moscow step by step acquired the title of "Tsar" (the Slavonic word from "Caesar") - the sole Orthodox authority in the world.⁸⁰) St. Iosif wrote: "By nature the Tsar is like all other men, but in authority he is like the Highest God."⁸¹ At the same time it is noteworthy that St. Iosif argued that it was possible and even necessary to resist a sovereign who deviates from the norms of piety. He was following the principle: "Render ... unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God, the things that are God's." (Matthew 22, 21) Thus the subject of the Tsar's power is the body and not the soul. Iosif wrote: "If the Tsar who rules men is himself ruled by evil passions and sins, such as rapacity and anger, deceit and iniquity, pride and wrath, and worst of all, lack of faith and blasphemy, such a Tsar is not God's servant but the Devil's, and he should not be considered a Tsar, but a tormentor."⁸² (Though there were attempts to undermine the significance of this statement, it is clear that Iosif thought of secular power as not subordinated to the power of church but rather as restricted.) However, in the course of time, fighting against the Non-possessors, the Josephites often transformed themselves into the obedient tool of the supreme secular power. With the support of this power they not only defeated but ruined their opponents, and with this they inevitably linked the church with the state

⁷⁹ Quote from Yanov *The Origins...* P. 164

⁸⁰ Though as has been mentioned Ivan IV officially accepted this title in 1547, his father Vassily III had frequently used it.

⁸¹ Quote from: Dmitri Obolensky, "Russia's Byzantine Heritage" // *The Structure of Russian History, Interpretive Essays*. New York, Random House, 1970. P. 11.

⁸² M. Szeftel *Russian Institutions and Culture up to Peter the Great*. Variorum Reprints. London, 1975. Article VII. P. 20.

to such an extent that later the church, with some important exclusions, could not establish any spiritual opposition to the state.

However one and half centuries after Iosif's death the discussion arose again about the relationship between the authority of the Tsar and that of the head of the Orthodox Church during the case of the Moscow Patriarch Nikon. This case clearly demonstrated the difference between the Russian and the Greek Patriarch's relation to the Tsar's authority. Arguing against Paisii Ligarid's thesis that the "Tsar could nominate archimandrites and any other church authorities"⁸³ Patriarch Nikon stated that the tsar widened his authority beyond the church and in so doing opposed the Divine laws. Nikon accused the monarchy of having transformed itself from defender of the church into being its owner and manager.⁸⁴ After the deposition of Patriarch Nikon the council had to define the relationship between the two authorities. And under the pressure of the common opinion of the Russian church the Ecumenical Greek patriarchs, those of Alexandria and Antioch, previously strong supporters of the Byzantine model, declared that the "Tsar had an advantage in political affairs and [the] Patriarch had an advantage in church affairs."⁸⁵ (In the course of history this definition lost its meaning with Peter the Great's foundation of the Holy Synod.) This declaration is a significant sign of Russian consciousness especially as it was made following the dramatic events of the dethroning of the Patriarch and the triumph of the tsar's authority. During the next St. Petersburg period the Church was formally subordinated to the state. At the same time, as Szeftel observes, Iosif's idea of the tsar-tyrant "accompanied, as a minor motive, that of tsar-God's vicar during the sixteenth century, and in seventeenth century it became a most important concept of the Schism."⁸⁶

The Patristic tradition of the XIV and XVth centuries was abandoned after the break from Byzantium in the XVIth century. Suspicions about Greek piety drew attention to the Western church. The first full translation of the Russian Bible instigated by Archbishop Gennadii at the end of the XVth century was made from the Vulgate. Florovsky concluded that "there was no rupture within spiritual experience;

⁸³ Quote from: Archpriest Lev Lebedev "Patriarch Nikon" ("Patriarkh Nikon"). // *Bogoslovskiye trudy* (Theological Transactions). No 23. Moscow, 1982. P. 187.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ Quote from: Lebedev "Patriarch Nikon" // *Bogoslovskiye trudy*, No. 24. Moscow, 1983. P. 161.

⁸⁶ Szeftel *Russian Institutions*. P. 29.

on the contrary Russian piety ... appears even archaic. But theology had lost the Patristic style and methods. The works of the Fathers became archives, lifeless documents."⁸⁷

In the fifteen to twenty years after the defeat of Kazan khanate the Russian state went through a devastating swing from greatness to obscurity. The second sub-period lasts from the beginning of *oprichnina* up to the Assembly of the Land (Zemskii Sobor) of 1613. This is one of the most appalling periods of Russian history. According to Yanov, "In the census books of 1573-78, 93-96 percent of the villages of the Moscow region are listed as uninhabited."⁸⁸ The most important fact of this second sub-period is that the earlier "rapid transformation of the *kholops* (slaves) into freemen gave way to an equally swift reverse process. Henceforth, the free laborer gradually disappeared from the face of the Russian earth, and became a serf belonging either to other men or to the state. And this is how it would be for centuries to come."⁸⁹ The events of Smuta (the Time of Troubles) at the beginning of the XVIIth century demonstrated that the only force with the authority to confer a just, balanced and respected power was the Assembly of the Land: the whole population of the country, and not any particular group, like the boyars, or the Cossacks. At the same time during the Smuta the great uniting role was played by Patriarch Germogen (1606-1612.⁹⁰) Until his death from starvation he defended the ideal of an Orthodox Russian country fighting against any attempt to violate this ideal irrespective of whether the danger was coming from Poland or from the Russian people themselves. His heroic behaviour inspired the population to overcome their local and group interests and led them toward the Assembly of the Land. Thus, the Russian Orthodox church came to be the uniting factor of the Russian land, confirming the unity of land and church. When the Tsar was away from Moscow the Patriarch was recognized as the head of state⁹¹.

By the end of the XVIth century (in 1589) the head of the Russian Church acquired the title of Ecumenical Patriarch ("Patriarch of Moscow and all Russia"),

⁸⁷ G. Florovsky "The Ways of Russian Theology" // *Aspects of Church History. The Collected Works of George Florovsky*. V. 4. Belmont, 1987. P. 191.

⁸⁸ Yanov *The Origins...* P. 5.

⁸⁹ Ibid. P. 6.

⁹⁰ See, for instance: A.V.Kartashev *Ocherki po istorii russkoi tserkvi* (Studies in the history of the Russian church). V. 2. Moscow, 1992. Pp. 65-81.

⁹¹ Ibid. P. 75-76.

which meant that he became one of five equal patriarchs of the Orthodox Church, and his residence Moscow (along with Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem) became one of the capitals of Orthodoxy. When we take into account that all other centers were at that time under foreign rule, it is difficult to overestimate the significance of this fact. This event emphasized the historical chain of Christianity through agreement with the four existing patriarchies.⁹² Significant as it was in the development of the Russian Church, the establishment of the Moscow Patriarchy was not reflected in the national consciousness to any considerable extent, a consequence of the destructive nature of this sub-period of Russian history.

The third sub-period can be characterized by attempts at reform which gradually led the country towards stability. The most important event is the Schism (*Raskol*, literally 'split', of the 'Raskolniki' (another word for 'Old Believers', a term meaning *schismatics*), which began after 1654. The Old Believers were Russian Christians who refused to recognize the liturgical reforms introduced by Patriarch Nikon. These reforms were Greek orientated and included the obligation to make the sign of the cross with three fingers instead of two, and some minor textual corrections in liturgical books.⁹³ The Old Believers, though always firmly suppressed by officials, formed some very strong confessions which have survived up to the present. Their fidelity to old Orthodoxy, manifested in their eyes by the Council of 1551, forced the majority of Russians to become more aware of religious matters. The Old Believers also transferred to some extent their firmly negative attitude to Peter the Great to other layers of Russian society. Peter in their eyes was an Anti-Christ, and they preferred to burn themselves rather than to comply with his orders. Thus, with the Old Believers we encounter the tragic fact of Russian life, which was developed to its greatest degree during the rule of Peter the Great, that is the split of society into two different, unequal, parts. In the first stages of the Schism representatives of different layers of

⁹² Boris Godunov – later the Tsar of Russia - did everything he could to arrange for the new patriarch the place of honour after the Constantinople patriarch, however he did not succeed and the historical chain remained untouched.

⁹³ There are well argued views, presented by N. Kapterov and other authors, that the Old Believers in reality defended the old Greek rites and texts against the Greek impostors. In this case the whole matter was predominantly not of ecclesiastic nature but the last battle between the Church and the State. See, for instance: K. Skvortsov "V poiskakh pravdy" (In search for *pravda*) // *Russkoye Vozrozheniye* (La Renaissance Russe). 1979. Pp. 75-93.

society were sympathetic to the Old Believers, although later Old Believers predominantly included peasants and merchants (who were usually of peasant origin.)

During the Muscovite period Russia realized itself as *Holy Russia*. This expression reflects the deep conviction of the Russian people that they were chosen keepers of Orthodox Christianity. This was not to claim that the population were holier than others but rather indicated the national ideal. This ideal distinguishes Russia from 'old and merry' England, 'beautiful' France, or 'noble' Spain.⁹⁴

The most striking thing with this ideal is that it was neither the Tsar, nor the people who were taken as 'holy' but rather the country, the land. The concept of united Christianity and Russian land was clearly expressed, for instance, in *Zadonshchina*: "Tsar Batyi had four thousand armour-clad warriors, and he took all the Russian land from east to west. At that time God punished Russian land for its sins. ... God has forgiven Russian princes ... at the Nepryadva river."⁹⁵ The expression 'Russian land' is used here as a general term and as a subject, and later Russian princes, not the Russian people, are singled out for forgiveness. Even when the 'Russian land' was presented as a subject, as, for instance, in Vladimir Monomach's "As I do not wish any evil, but only good to brothers and to Russian land"⁹⁶, it was in connection with the princes (which comes from the context of the *Homily*, where Vladimir was talking about the intestine strifes between princes).

In addition, the very expression 'Russian land' often is associated with the words 'Christian faith': "Let us test our brave people, and fill river Don with blood for Russian land and for Christian Faith!"⁹⁷ A similar expression can be found in *Word about the Downfall of the Russian Land*: "You [Russian land] ... astonish by ... great towns, marvelous villages, ... churches and severe princes, honest boyars, multiple grandees - you are filled with everything, Russian land, Orthodox Christian belief."⁹⁸ Thus, again 'Russian land' is connected with threatening Russian princes and Christian belief. The most numerous people in this land namely the peasants, acquired a name after baptism - 'krest'yane' ('Christians, baptised people'). Later, as it follows

⁹⁴ A.V.Kartashev *Vossozdaniye Sv. Rusi* (The Reconstruction of Holy Rus'). Paris, 1956. P. 29.

⁹⁵ "Zadonshchina" (Behind Don-river). // *Izbornik* (Collection), Moscow, 1969. P. 394.

⁹⁶ Vladimir Monomakh "Poucheniye" (Instruction). // *Izbornik*, Pp. 166-168.

⁹⁷ Ibid. P. 384, also on the same page. And pp. 386, 394, 396.

from the letters of prince A. Kurbsky in the XVIth century, the expression 'Russian land' with the epithet 'holy' was applied to the land and to Christian belief, but not to the tsar, and even later in the XVIIIth century the use of the epithet 'holy' remained anti-state.⁹⁹ Thus, 'Holy' is always reserved exclusively for the land. It is also an important fact that the expansion of the term 'Russian land' seems to stop at the end of the formative period of Russian consciousness at the end of the XVIth century. Siberia or the Far East although included in the Russian state, remained ideologically separated from 'Russian land' as such.

During the first sub-period the very expression *Holy Russia* arose from the depths of popular consciousness along with the famous doctrine "Moscow - the Third Rome". Kartashev calls this 'word-revelation'.¹⁰⁰ Rus' realized itself as a successive ring in the chain of Christian states. Moreover, in this situation the question arose again of the position of Russia in world history. The idea was that Christianity had been maintained in the Roman Empire and that, after the fall of the first Rome, Constantinople became its indisputable successor. Nevertheless, the betrayal of Orthodoxy in Florence had deprived the Second Rome of its importance in world history and the Great Duchy of Moscow remained the only custodian of pure Orthodoxy (note, however, that Russians always understood their faith to be Grecian).

The creation of the idea "Moscow - the Third Rome" occurred during the reign of Ivan the Third, Grand Prince of Moscow in 1462-1505. It should be emphasized that the idea of the Third Rome was connected with the fall of Constantinople rather than with the emergence of the Russian state under the supremacy of the Muscovite Grand Prince. Evidence supporting this can be taken from the fact that at least two more cities, which were politically challenging Moscow at that time, pretended to become the "Third Rome" - Tver' and Novgorod.¹⁰¹

Significantly, the idea of the Third Rome was proclaimed in the most pure and assertive way not by politicians, but by a monk Filofei of Pskov, who wrote in his letter to the Grand Duke of Moscow, Vassily III, son of Ivan IV: "All Christian realms will come to an end and will unite into the one single realm of our sovereign,

⁹⁸ "Slovo o pogibeli russkoi zemli" (Word on the collapse of Russian land). // *Izbornik*, P. 326.

⁹⁹ See: M. Cherniavsky *Tsar and People*, New Haven and London, 1961. Pp. 101-127.

¹⁰⁰ Kartashov, *Vossozdaniye*, P. 29.

¹⁰¹ See: Likhachev, *Natsional'noye samosoznaniye*, P. 99, also Pp. 82-94.

that is into the Russian realm, according to the prophetic books. Both Romes fell, the third endures, and a fourth there will not be."¹⁰² There are some significant points in this statement. 1) Eschatology, about which V.Malinin wrote: "With Filofei a theory appeared of the world calling on Russia to be not the only Orthodox but also the final kingdom, which was to exist up to the end of the universe".¹⁰³ 2) The mission to keep true Christian belief: Ivan the Terrible told the Jesuit emissary Possevino that "Russians believe not in Greeks but in Christ; we acquired Christian belief at the beginning of the Christian church, when the apostle Andrew, Peter's brother, came to these lands in order to go to Rome. Therefore we in Moscow accepted Christian belief at the same time as you in Italy, and since that time have kept it invariable."¹⁰⁴

This statement is of special importance in the context of the marriage between Ivan the Third and the Byzantine princess Sophia Palaeologus, and the declaration of the independence of the Russian church from the Patriarch of Constantinople¹⁰⁵. J.Meyendorff argues that politically this theory "had little practical application."¹⁰⁶ He is definitely right; this idea was much more significant spiritually than politically. Moreover, the Muscovite rulers, Vassily III and Ivan IV were eager to avoid any reference to this theory or to the rights of the Muscovite state to the Byzantine heritage in their diplomatic activity. Instead they tried to prove their primordial rights to govern the Russian state and so a theory was created which traced their origin to Augustus through his brother Prus.¹⁰⁷ At the same time diplomatic correspondence did not mention the rights obtained through the marriage of Ivan III to a Byzantine princess.

Dimitri Stremoukhoff sums up the place of the theory "Moscow - the Third Rome" in the national consciousness of the Muscovites in the sixteenth century. "It forms the core of the opinions developed by the Muscovites about their fatherland."¹⁰⁸ P.Miliukov provides brilliant examples of the acceptance of this theory, quoting an anonymous transcriber who wrote in the middle of the XVIth century: "from the time of the Councils on the New Saints, convokes in Moscow, the churches of the Lord in

¹⁰² Quote from: Meyendorff, op. cit. P. 49.

¹⁰³ V. Malinin *Starets Eliazarova monastyrja Filofei...* (Elder of Eliazarov monastery Filofei ... Kiev, 1901. P. 616.

¹⁰⁴ Quote from: Likhachev, Op. cit. P. 100.

¹⁰⁵ See also: Paul Miliukov, *Outlines of Russian Culture*. Philadelphia, 1948. P. 18.

¹⁰⁶ Meyendorff, op. cit.

¹⁰⁷ See, for instance, Likhachev, *Natsional'noye samosoznaniye*, Pp. 103-104.

Russia were not bereft of the holy relics, and Russia truly radiated piety like the Second Rome, the ruling city (i.e. Constantinople)", and further: "There the Orthodox faith was corrupted by the Moslem heresy of the godless Turks, whereas on Russian soil it began to glow with the teaching of our Holy Fathers."¹⁰⁹ Still there are significant problems with the interpretation of the theory "Moscow – the Third Rome", recently reconsidered, for instance, by D. Ostrowski.¹¹⁰ We will look at some of these problems later when the question of the interrelations between power and people is discussed. However, one point should be mentioned at this stage: to what extent was the idea of the Byzantine successor understood by the Russian Tsars in relation to their power?

A comparison of the ceremony of the coronation of the Russian tsar with that of the Byzantine emperor shows a very important difference between the attitude to the position these rulers hold in the Christian world. While the Byzantine emperor was presented during this ceremony as the head of all Christians, the Russian monarch was not. The ceremony was amended twice (first during the reign of Ivan IV in the XVIth century, secondly in the second half of the XVIIth century after prayer-books were revised by patriarch Nikon), and in both cases the Moscow tsars were presented exclusively as rulers over the Russian state.¹¹¹

With the conquest of Kazan Khanate the theory "Moscow – the Third Rome" achieved its completion. Indeed, the Greeks betrayed the Orthodox faith at the council of Ferrara-Florence, and soon afterwards were defeated by the infidel Turks; Holy Russia remained truly Orthodox, and for this fidelity not only escaped subordination to the Tatars but also annexed their lands. (Berdyayev states that with this concept Russians acquired a messianic vision which remained unshaken up to the communist period.¹¹²) Therefore, rather than object, it should be noted that of even greater

¹⁰⁸ Stremoukhoff, op. cit. P. 120.

¹⁰⁹ Miliukov, op. cit. P. 23.

¹¹⁰ D. Ostrowski *Muscovy and the Mongols. Cross-cultural influences on the steppe frontier, 1304-1589*, Cambridge: University Press, 1998.

¹¹¹ Savva V. *Moskovskiye tsari i vizantiiskiye vasilevsi. K voprosu o vliyanii Vizantii na obrazovaniye idei tsarskoi vlasti moskovskikh gosudarei* (Muscovite Tsars and Byzantine basileuses. On the problem of Byzantine influence on the formation of of Muscovite tsars' idea of power). Khar'kov, 1901. P. 157.

¹¹² Berdyayev N.A. *Istoki i smysl russkogo kommunizma* (Sources and meaning of the Russian communism). Moscow, 1990. P. 9.

significance is the fact that this idea was accepted by the public around the middle of the XVIIth century and survived for centuries.¹¹³

It is necessary to add that during the Muscovite period a new attitude to authorship and to the role of the individual was developed - authors began to express their opinions, to talk about themselves, to explain the reasons for writing their works. This fact cannot be overestimated from the point of view of the formation of collective consciousness, and cultural consciousness in particular.

The next so-called St. Petersburg period formally began with the foundation of St. Petersburg in 1703, although from a wider perspective it began with Peter the Great's reforms. Peter initiated a forceful and cruel westernization of the country, paying no respect to traditions and beliefs. During and after his reign Russian society was split into a westernized upper class and a traditional lower one (the Old Believers formed part of the second). After his death Peter remained the most contradictory figure in Russian history. It has been mentioned that Peter was considered to be the Anti-Christ by Old Believers, and he was considered by the upper class as a hero who, to quote chancellor Golovkin, "by indefatigable labor and leadership led us out of the darkness of nonexistence into being and joined us to the society of the political peoples."¹¹⁴ Such a rift was not apparent in the Kievan period, despite the fact that the social situation for the first two centuries after conversion was very similar.¹¹⁵ The ideal of "Holy Russia" gradually became the ideal of the "Great Russia". Furthermore the image of Peter as the "great reorganizer", whose energy enabled Russia to become one of the most powerful states in the world, inspired the Russian revolutionaries at the beginning of the XXth century. During this phase of Russian history we can find two cultures: the old one, religious, Orthodox and more or less steady; and the new Westernized culture, liable to all trendy Western winds. Here we do not want to abuse the former or the latter culture, or imply any moral evaluation, but rather to try to

¹¹³ Zen'kovskii S. "Russkoye staroobryadchestvo. Dukhovnyye dvizheniya semnadsatogo veka." (Russian Old Belief. Spiritual movements of the seventeenth century). // *Forum Slavicum*. Band 21. München: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 1970. P. 39.

¹¹⁴ Chancellor Golovkin in his speech at the celebration of victory in the second Great Northern War. Quote from: A. Yanov *The Origins...* P. 1.

¹¹⁵ Dmitri Obolensky, "Russia's Byzantine Heritage", *The Structure of Russian History, Interpretive Essays*, New York, Random House, 1970. Pp. 12-13.

tease out the facts of the matter. This division continued as the older Kingdom was transformed into Empire.

The most noticeable current of Russian life in the eighteenth century was without a doubt a growing enthusiasm for Western ideas. To illustrate this change, one can turn to the realm of iconography. As Cherniavsky has observed, "the portrait of Peter, contrasted with that of his father, speaks for itself: instead of the pectoral cross, the crown, and the *barmy*, we see Western armour; instead of the orb and scepter, two decorations showing a naval battle (on the left) and the plan of St. Petersburg (on the right); instead of the traditional, awesome, ringing titles, the inscription — not even in Russian — PETRUS PRIMUS RUSSORUM IMPERATOR."¹¹⁶

The influx of foreigners into Russian political life, and a new capital, a symbol of Westernization, St. Petersburg with its bureaucracy, provoked the resistance of traditionally minded people. It was contrasted with Moscow, a genuinely Russian city. Opposition to St. Petersburg and the government of foreigners arose out of a complex of personal, political, and social motives, out of a set of historical circumstances in which it "could become identified as national opposition. Peter's forceful attempts to create a universal service state; the gentry's attempts after his death to free themselves from the burdens of state service; the uncertainties of dynastic succession ... these were the factors that in time made the invocation of the nation a necessity for government as well as public opinion."¹¹⁷ This invocation could not find its target in the westernized upper layers of society but rather in the lower classes, which were supposed to keep traditions.

One of the crucial facts of the period was that the Russian Church was deprived of the Patriarch by Peter the Great's reform. The reform was arranged after the Protestant model, and the main idea was 1) to have a council (Holy Synod) instead of a Patriarch, and 2) to have it ruled directly by the Tsar (or emperor), and so to subordinate the Church administratively to secular power (this subordination was expanded to such a degree that the priest under law had to inform authorities about any significant fact, which he became aware of in confessions). The position of chief

¹¹⁶ M. Cherniavsky *Tsar and People. Studies in Russian Myths*, New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1961. P. 79.

¹¹⁷ H. Rogger *National Consciousness in Eighteenth-Century Russia*, Cambridge Mass. 1960. P. 9.

procurator was created (a layman, representing the Tsar in church affairs, who obtained ministerial rank in the XIXth century), some of those procurators, such as Melissino and Chebyshev, were even ardent atheists.¹¹⁸ One can easily observe the spread of French literature, German romanticism, English and German freemasonry, and so on. Suffice it to say that there were about 150 publications of Voltaire during the XVIII century, Catherine II was in correspondence with Voltaire and Diderot, and Emperor Pavel I (1796 - 1801) invited the Society of Jesus to Russia, after it had been suppressed by Pope Clement XIV). During the XVIIIth century, especially under the rule of Catherine II the Russian Church was also deprived of its great land possessions¹¹⁹. The Russian Orthodox Church's spiritual and economic situation declined to such an extent that it almost completely lost its authority, the attitude to the church from both upper and lower layers of society was predominantly negative, and the Russian people sought spiritual inspiration outside the official church. This can be proved by numerous facts, such as the number of saints (the XVIIIth century is the poorest in this respect, only two saints came from this period); the spread of Masonic ideas among faithful Orthodox believers, like Lopukhin, who could not find satisfaction in the existing church; and the founder of new monasticism Paisii Velichkovskii could not find a place in Russia and resided in Romania (we could take into account that under Paisii's influence Optina Pustyn' became a centre of Russian spirituality in the XIXth century).

The process of the emancipation of the mind was to some extent initiated by Peter the Great's reforms. However, under the reigns of Peter the Great himself and his successors nobody could feel free, though some liberal ideas were spread during this time. The main reason was that human and economic rights were not supported by the state. On the contrary, Peter himself was doing his best to control all spheres of human life. Neither noble nor peasant was protected from unjust intervention. Catherine II, being well acquainted with the Western ideas of the time was eager to introduce some of them into Russian life. As she was inclined to liberal ideas¹²⁰ one of her most significant objectives was to create a civil society. She realized that this

¹¹⁸ See: Kartashev, *Studies...*, V. 2. Pp. 485-488.

¹¹⁹ It is sufficient to mention that in the XVIth century the Russian church owned up to one third of the land of the country.

¹²⁰ The validity of this by no means obvious statement was well demonstrated by V.V. Leontovich in his *Istoriya Liberalizma v Rossii 1762-1914* (History of Liberalism in Russia 1762-1914). Paris, 1980 (Pp. 27 - 33).

was impossible without the formation of a middle class whose rights would be guaranteed by the state. However, in contrast to the West with its mature urban life, Russia was not prepared for this approach. In his research dedicated to the structure of the urban population in the XVIIIth century and its everyday life A. Kizevetter came to the conclusion that the Russian city during the entire century was by no means similar to the Western city but remained "...an archaic *posad* [trading quarter situated outside the city wall], which came just as it was into the new Rus' from the old Muscovite kingdom."¹²¹ That is why Catherine II turned to the noble class and in 1785 recognized its rights and civil freedom. Thus, as K. Zaitsev, one of the best specialists in civil law, says, "if the West had a city-dweller as a type of free citizen, who served as a model for the rest of the society in the process of equalization and liberalization, the figure of nobleman (*dvoryanin*) played an analogous role in our country."¹²² That is why the noble class came to be predominantly responsible for the further development of Russian culture up to the middle of the next century.

Taking into account this liberal political reform, the growth of education and an increasing familiarity with Western political and religious writers by the end of the XVIIIth century established a solid ground for the development of social and individual reflection. During the XVIIIth century Russian literature underwent essential changes through classicism (with its abstract world view and the strict distinction between genres) to sentimentalism (with its close attention to human feelings rather than to deeds). This process corresponded, partly under the influence of early romantic ideas, to an increasing interest in peasants as pure representatives of Rusianness. The abstract motifs of the purity and simplicity of rural life gradually acquired strength and frankness¹²³. As Rogger observes, "the closer we come to the end of the century, the clearer is the rural-urban distinction expressed in social terms. Town and court are corrupting influences not merely by the accident of environment or geography, but the fact that the social groups that consider them *their* territory have become estranged from the real Russia. Having become less Russian in their pursuit of worldly goods and values (mostly of foreign origin), the urban classes of Russian

¹²¹ A. Kizevetter "Novizna i starina v Rossii XVIII St. " (Newness and oldness in Russia of XVIII century) // *Istoricheskiye ocherki*. M., 1912. P. 269.

¹²² Quote from Leontovich *Istoriya...* P. 34.

¹²³ If we take into account the nature of Russian cities this view shows itself to be even more unrelated to real life.

society had also become less human."¹²⁴ A genuine interest in the folk population with its rites, songs, and attitude arose and along with this the great problem whether Russia was a European country or something different. Peter's reforms and the subsequent development of the country forced the intellectual elite of Russian society to be permanently aware of the position Russia occupied in the world and of Russia's role in world history. Evolving in forms borrowed from the West, the new Russian literature by the beginning of the XIXth century had the strength to express these ideas in clear and elaborate language.

Thus, the XVIIIth century is marked by the duality of social life. The Russia of government was a country leading by wise regulations and experiencing gradual favourable changes while in reality the great majority of the population still kept the way of life inherited from the old Muscovy. In the circumstances, with the population estranged from the authorities, any development of national consciousness was simply impossible. The only possibility which remained was to prepare the soil for this development by constructing a bridge between the upper and lower classes.

From the point of view of this development the most important event of the St. Petersburg period was the Patriotic War of 1812. It is not necessary to elaborate on the unity of the whole society during the military activity which, immediately after the end of the war, was destroyed by the existing political and economic order. Along with the great pride the country experienced there came an extremely strong feeling of the unbearable gap between the majority of the population and the upper educated layer of society. This feeling had characterized Russian life since the second half of the XVIIIth century. However after the war it became the most painful subject of social life. It inspired the Decembrists to their revolt of 1825 and resulted in the permanent disaffection of much of educated society during the reign of Nicholas I (1825 – 1855.) It instigated an agitated search for national identity which, by the second half of the century, resulted in the appearance of a national philosophic tradition.

When a distinctive philosophical tradition was emerging in Russia it drew upon resources which which had been formed by historical forces particularly those which clustered around the image of "Holy Rus'" and "Moscow – the Third Rome". Although from the beginning of the XVIIIth century with its overpowering

¹²⁴ Rogger *National Consciousness*, P. 132.

Westernization other values were put in the fore some outstanding thinkers of the third quarter of this century and the first half of the XIXth century turned to the values of the Muscovite period in order to find the essentials of Russian national consciousness. And their thoughts and attitudes became crucial in the process of the formation of the emerging philosophical tradition.

Before we go further it is necessary to outline the frame we seek for the conspicuous features of Russian national consciousness. Three currents can be identified as exclusively pervasive in the river from which the rising Russian philosophy draw its strength – historicism, aestheticism, and mysticism. They manifest themselves in relation to the such issues as a) humankind, b) being, and c) super-being. First, as we are talking about national consciousness, it, by definition, relates to other groups of people, to other communities, to other nations. In short, it forms its attitude towards the rest of humankind. It is known, for instance, that in antiquity this attitude predominantly manifested itself in what could be called “national egoism”, which was based on the conviction that the other people are less human, and, therefore, consisted of barbarians. O. Spengler stated: “When Plato is talking about humankind he means Greeks in contrast to barbarians. This coincides completely with the anti-historical style of ancient life and thought...”¹²⁵ In case of Russian national consciousness it can be characterized as historicism – Russian people understood themselves as a successive link of the chain of kingdoms. This formula, if taken without further details, remind us the formula of progress, however this is not the case, and we have to chase the differences.

Second, the attitude towards being. “Aesthetical” here means that being manifests an ideal reality, rather than is something indifferent, given as just a surrounding. The opposite attitude can be denoted as “practical”. In the first case the social consciousness considers humankind as part of nature, and in the second case nature is regarded as part of humankind.¹²⁶

¹²⁵ *Zakat Evropy* (Decline of Europe) Novosibirsk, 1993. P. 58.

¹²⁶ It is obvious that nature is always taken through the eyes of a given social relationship, just due to the simple fact that it is human being who is considering nature by its limited resources. However, inside the circle of human understanding nature can be regarded by particular social consciousness as the continuation of human world (the expansion of modern technology clearly demonstrates this approach), or, on the contrary, the human world can be presented as a continuation of natural relations.

Third, relationship with super-being, with the divine reality: whether or not super-being causes the visible events. Or: whether we rely predominantly on physical being or on super-being. Whether visible events are mere manifestations of the invisible causes, or, on the contrary, visible events form their own successive chain. In the first case the social life and social consciousness in particular are predominantly organized in relation to the reality which is beyond the mere appearance of earthly things. In the second – the social and spiritual life is aimed to deal predominantly with material world itself.

The goal of the next chapter is to outline the corresponding features of Russian national consciousness.

Chapter 3

Historicism. Aestheticism. Mysticism.

Section 1. Historicism

The birth of historical consciousness in Rus' relates to the period of Christianization, and the first signs of its appearance can be traced in the first chronicles. Though the Russian state under the rule of the Rurik dynasty had existed for more than one hundred years before the conversion into Christianity in 988, the very nature of paganism prevented the formation of a sense of history. The pagan image of time rests in the idea of cycles and, therefore, cannot serve as a basis for the development of history.¹²⁷

It should be also noted that from its beginnings the historical consciousness developed in an immediate link with geographical consciousness, involving a strong sense of Rus' links with its neighbours. The Slavic tribes of Rus' were always surrounded by people of different cultures and different religious confessions. Rus' had constant and strong links with pagan people (the Finnish tribes, the Varangians, the steppe nomads), the Muslims (the Volga Bulgars), the Jews (Khazar Khanate), the Christians (the Balkan Bulgars, the Greeks of Byzantium). It should also be taken into account that the greatest cities, established for commercial purposes, were inhabited by different ethnic and religious groups: the Christians, the Jews, the Turks, and so on.¹²⁸ It has already been mentioned that Rus' had been founded by the Scythians as a trade country on the crossroads from Scandinavia to Greece, and through the Steppes from China to Europe. After the conversion to Christianity the contradiction between the geographical significance of the state and the considerably less important position among the subjects of the Byzantine Christian federation became obvious.¹²⁹ It is

¹²⁷ See: M. Eliade *The Myth of the Eternal Return*, London, 1954.

¹²⁸ See: Toporov, op. cit., also H. Birnbaum "Christianity before Christianization: Christians and Christian Activity in Pre-988 Rus'" // *Christianity and the Eastern Slavs. California Slavic Studies XVI*. V. 1. Berkeley, etc., 1993.

¹²⁹ D. Obolensky insisted that Byzantine authorities established the view that the Byzantine empire occupied a central position in the Byzantine Commonwealth of Nations. And "the technical political terms which were applied to the members of this Commonwealth could best be understood in the light of the Roman conception of 'foederatio' which defined the status of the "socii populi Romani", autonomous subjects of the empire who, by virtue of the treaty (foedus) concluded with Rome,

known that Rus' was listed somewhere around the 80th place among those subjects of the Ecumenical Orthodox Church of Byzantium. Though the claim of political domination over Rus' was of ideological value only the Byzantine authorities did not wish to lose it. (Later, between 1394 and 1397, the Patriarch of Constantinople, Anthony IV, in his letter to Basil I of Moscow, rebuked him for removing the emperor's name from the commemorative diptychs of the Russian Church and for his declaration "we have the Church, but not the emperor". The patriarch stated: "It is not possible for Christians to have the Church and not to have the emperor ... The holy emperor ... is not as other rulers and governors of other regions are ... he is consecrated *basileus* and *autokrator* of the Romans – that is, of all Christians."¹³⁰) The Byzantine Emperor manifested his political claims most notably by exercising his right to appointment of the metropolitan, the head of the Russian Church. Thus, the specific attitude to history and people, which expressed itself with the coming of Christian times, in chronicles and literary works on related topics, was shaped in this singular disproportion between the political and the religious significance of the state which was overcome only after the fall of Byzantium in 1453.

Russian history as it is presented in the *Tale of Bygone Years* (the reconstructed earliest Russian chronicle) forms part of world history. The same attitude connecting local history with the history of humankind can be found in the Western and Byzantine chronicles. While dealing with world history Russian chronicles were predominantly mere translations of the Byzantine chronicles (the most popular of them was written by Gregory Amartolos, who finished his narration at 864, with additions from the chronicle of Simeon Logophet up to 948). Once they turn to the history of Rus', the chronicles, in marked contrast to other genres of the time, were written creatively. The ancient Russian chronicles were the recognized chef d'oeuvre of this kind of literary works. (The same can be said of some of the *Lives* of the Russian saints.) In the chronicles Rus' is seen as the legitimate successor of previous kingdoms. This historiography incorporated the Christian philosophy of history: each significant event was understood as predetermined by God's will. A brilliant example of such an attitude to history can be found in the answer to the

guarded her frontiers in exchange for a regular subsidy, imperial protection and the right of self-government." (D. Obolensky *The Relations between Byzantium and Russia (11th – 15th Century)* // *The Byzantine Inheritance of Eastern Europe*. Variorum Reprints. London, 1982. V. P. 5.

envoy sent by the Pope to convert Russians to Roman Catholicism (this passage was included into *the Life of St. Alexander Nevskii*, composed at the beginning of the 1280s):

From Adam up to the flood and to the division of people, from the confusion of the people to Abraham, from Abraham to the passage of Israel through the Red Sea, from the Exodus of the sons of Israel to the death of King David, from the beginning of Solomon's reign to Augustus, from Augustus' power up to the Nativity of Christ, from the Nativity of Christ to the Passion and Resurrection, from the Resurrection to the Ascension into heaven, and to the reign of Constantine, from the beginning of Constantine's reign to the First Council, from the First Council to the Seventh, we know all this well, and we do not listen to your teaching.¹³¹

This chain of events was presented as equating the passage through the Red Sea, and the First Council which took place in 325 at Nicaea, and uniting them all into the one great divine chain of historic episodes. The historical role of Christ was emphasized by mentioning four events in relation to His life: the Nativity, the Passion, the Resurrection, and the Ascension. Marc Bloch pointed out in another context in his *Apologie pour le métier d'historien*, in relation to some Western peace treaties, that similar passages did not necessarily manifest a real sense of history and often could be included in documents as mere clichés. However, in the case of early Russian literature it can be demonstrated that these paragraphs were understood quite literally: Christianity formed the frame of Russian historical thought. In the *Capture of Ryazan' by Batyi* (composed no later than the middle of the XIVth century) the struggle between the Russians and the Tatars was presented as a struggle between the Christians and the infidels, and Russian warriors were described as the heroes of Christianity. Oleg Ingvarevich, for instance, was compared with St. Stephan.¹³² The same historical and religious frame has been found in the well known original *Tale about the Capture of Constantinople by the Crusaders* which tells us about the fall of Constantinople in 1204, written, probably, by a witness of the event. Soon after the capture of Constantinople Rus' was taken by the Mongol Horde, and this was understood in the same terms. In the surviving preliminary paragraphs of the poetic *Word on the Downfall of Russian Land* the author relates to Rus' as to a truly

¹³⁰ Ibid.

¹³¹ The translation is made after the text from *Izbornik* (Collection) Moscow, 1969. P. 339-341, taking the translation by G. Fedotov in his *The Russian Religious Mind* (New York, 1946. P. 383) into account.

¹³² In: *Izbornik*, P. 349.

Christian state and proudly talks about numerous pagan people who had been previously been subjugated to the Christian Russian people.¹³³ It is interesting to note that the idea that a mighty state could only be Christian was expressed indirectly in the popular *Tale about the Indian Kingdom* where the Indian King Ioann was presented as Christian.¹³⁴

The discussions with the Jews formed an extremely important page in the history of developing Russian Christian consciousness. Hilarion of Kiev in his famous *Sermon on Law and Grace* contrasted the Jewish Law with Christian Grace by demonstrating that the Law was the predecessor of Grace, not only in a religious but also in a historical sense.¹³⁵ One of the two founders of The Monastery of the Caves (Kievo-Pecherskaya Lavra) in Kiev, St. Theodosius, used to go to the city to dispute with the Jews. The 'Jewish problem' was so important for society that special compositions against the Jews appeared. The original compilation, known as *Explanatory Biblical History* ('Tolkovaya Paleya'), was specially designed to prove the truth of Christianity compared with the false Jewish views.¹³⁶ In the XIIIth century (no later than in 1262) another compilation appeared which was known as the *Judaic Chronograph*. Approximately from the same time (or earlier) there came also a treatise known as *The Words of the Holy Prophets* ('Slovesa Svyatykh Prorokov'), where the problem of the fall of the Judaic kingdom and the rise of the Roman Empire was under investigation.¹³⁷ The kind of Biblical thinking in terms of kingdoms replacing one another in the course of time because of the sins of the population became very popular. (The Jewish influence on the Russian mind later revealed itself in the most significant heresy of Muscovy, the heresy of the 'Judizers' which related to the second half of the XVth century and came to in Rus' from both the West and Byzantium.¹³⁸)

¹³³ See: "Slovo o pogibeli russkoi zemli", P. 326.

¹³⁴ "Skazaniye ob Indiiskom tsarstve" (Tale about the Indian Kingdom). // *Izbornik*, Moscow, 1969. P. 362.

¹³⁵ See: Illarion, Metropolitan, "Slovo o zakone i blagodati" (Word on Law and Mercy) // *Krasnorechiye Drevnei Rusi*. Moscow, 1987. Pp. 43-44.

¹³⁶ M. Tikhomirov, op. cit. P. 141.

¹³⁷ Op. cit. P. 143-144.

¹³⁸ See: Kartashev *Ocherki...* V. I. Moscow, 1993. P. 489-505; there are also indications that there was a link between the heresy of the chions (Minor Asia) and the 'Judaizers' – See. G. Prokhorov "Preniye Grigoriya Palamy..." // *TODRL*, XXVII. Pp. 329-369.

The understanding of History at that stage is based on two principal concepts. First, the only true state is a Christian state, and so this state will always overcome other states in the course of time; therefore, the true history of humankind is the history of the establishment and development of the Christian state. Second, the Christian state lasts as long as its population expresses Christianity and does not fall into sin.

Thus, Muscovite Russia inherited from Kievan Rus' the strong feeling of a historical chain which united all the principal events of human development. Historiography was an area, which had been skillfully accepted and greatly elaborated from the very beginning. On the turn of the XVth century an interest grows to the history of the Russian state: not only the writers of chronicles, but artists and architects appeal to the past.¹³⁹ The chronicles of Moscow were amalgamated with the earliest chronicle, *Tale of Bygone Years*, by the end of the XVth century, but in 1408 Metropolitan Kiprian arranged to create the first national, as opposed to the Muscovite, Novgorodian, and so on. This chronicle included not only the local chronicles of the principalities close to Moscow, but also these listing the events of Lithuanian history, the history of Western Rus' in particular, because Moscow was eager to repossess some of the Lithuanian lands which had earlier belonged to Rus'.¹⁴⁰ Significantly the author of this chronicle clearly expressed his position as relating to divine truth rather than to the service of an earthly ruler. Alluding to the great writer of the first chronicle, the Muscovite author stated that his task was to depict all bad and good deeds indifferently.¹⁴¹

With the appearance of the theory 'Moscow - the Third Rome' and with the establishment of the Moscow Patriarchate by the end of the XVIth century the formation of Russian historical consciousness was complete.¹⁴² Serge Zenkovsky demonstrates that after the establishment of the Moscow Patriarchate the theory 'Moscow - the Third Rome', previously the spiritual possession only of the upper

¹³⁹ See: Likhachev D.S. *Natsional'noye samosoznaniye Drevnei Rusi* (National self-consciousness of Old Rus'). Moscow-Leningrad: Izd-vo AN SSSR, 1945. Pp. 70 et al.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid. P. 72.

¹⁴¹ Ibid. Pp. 74-75.

¹⁴² There is one more topic in regard to the relations between the Russian tsar and the Church which is definitely connected with the idea of 'Moscow - the Third Rome'. We will turn to this topic later when the idea of power is discussed.

level of educated clergy, became part of the national consciousness.¹⁴³ The same process can be observed in the flourishing of folkloric historical songs which related predominantly to the history of the XVIth and XVIIth centuries.

It is necessary to state that this consciousness was definitely not historical from a positivistic modern point of view:

- As we stated above, this consciousness clearly distinguished between sacral and secular events; and because of their unconditional spiritual value the events of the sacred and church history were regarded as much more important and sense-formative than any other events. The recorded history in this case was of secondary value.
- Because of this all the explanations were readily found not in the economic life or in political and geographical interests, but directly in human nature: degree of piety and obedience to God's will generated everything, from earthquakes to wars and prosperity. Cultural events were interwoven with natural ones, for instance Jerusalem was considered the centre of the Earth because God's coffin had been placed there. In a work such as *Fiziolog* animal behaviour was presented in a way to provide the models for Christian people irrespective of whether or not these models could be found in reality; nature was taken as demonstrating subordination to the restrictions and limits established by God; storms, earthquakes, and so on were linked with people's sins¹⁴⁴.

For these reasons this kind of historical consciousness should probably be called *quasi-historical*. On the one hand, it strives to present the historical chain of events and to find the right link in the chain for particular people. On the other hand, the lack of discrimination between the natural and the cultural, the sacred and the profane, the miraculous and the empirically proved, forces it to represent these events in parables rather than descriptions. This allowed to disregard some obvious historical lacunas. Because of this, for instance, the role of the Third Rome was conferred on Moscow and not on Kiev, and so on. With quasi-historical consciousness the interest in history finds its frame of reference not in history as such but in the religious, in our

¹⁴³ Op. cit. Pp. 37-40.

¹⁴⁴ Smirnov I.P. "O drevnerusskoi kul'ture, russkoi natsional'noi spetsifike i logike istorii" (On Old Russian culture, Russian national specifics, and the logic of history). // *Wiener Slawistischer Almanach*. Sonderband 28. Wien, 1991. Pp. 34-37.

case Christian, myth and doctrine, and with this its intentions are transformed from temporal to eternal. Ostrowski correctly indicates that

When Filofei refers to "the Holy Apostolic Church, which is in place of the Roman and Constantinopolitan and which is situated in the divinely protected town of Moscow, the Church of the Dormition of the Most Pure Mother of God," he means to indicate that the Christian realm in the ideal sense has not moved. It cannot move because it is universal and eternal. Only the capital of its secular protector, which is connected with the physical world, has moved within the eternal abstraction, called "the Church"... In short, the Third Rome theory as formulated by Filofei had nothing to do with *translatio imperii*, and had everything to do with establishing what the grand prince's duties were in regard to the Church.¹⁴⁵

Ostrowski conclusion does not undermine the concept of historicism being peculiar feature of the Russian mind. In this respect the history of the *Tale About the Novgorodian White Cowl* (which was written about the same time) should be noted because the author of this *Tale* did his best to demonstrate the translation of the church power from one capital to another. And so historicism should be understood, first, as an intention to present significant events in a particular way rather than in order to analyze them historically, second, as a means to establish and maintain close links between past, and present, and future.

Thus, these two events – the fall of Byzantium, and the repudiation of Rus' from the Mongol yoke as the reward for keeping Orthodoxy untouched, formed a historical and at the same time mystical concept, which became an essential part of the consciousness of the Russian people. (Berdyayev states that with this concept Russians acquired a Messianic vision which remained unshaken up to the communist period.¹⁴⁶) At least three significant consequences which stand in relation to the historical consciousness as it has been formed by Russian culture must be mentioned. First, this consciousness put the image of Russia itself into a specific and contradictory position: Russia was completing the chain of historical development and at the same time entering the era when this development stopped. We can observe similar views with chiliastic ideas, and, later, with the Communist movement. Second, compared with the West the backwardness of social development was readily explained by these specifics, and, therefore, had to be defeated ideologically, as well as economically. Peter the Great and Bolsheviks provide ready examples. Both had to

¹⁴⁵ Ostrowski, op. cit. P. 230.

¹⁴⁶ Berdyayev *Istoki*, P. 9.

fight against the Russian Orthodox church in order to eradicate any sign of its real influence. Third, the historicism as it was connected with the meaning of the phrase 'Russian land' always related to the power (of princes or, later, of tsars) as the most significant factor of Russian social life.

The first consequence is of the greatest importance for Russian spiritual life. With the image of Russia leading the world to a truly Christian kingdom we approach messianic and eschatological views. The idea that, after the fall of Byzantium along with the establishment of the Russian state the formation of the messianic concept of an ideal Russian state was being formed. This has been eloquently expressed by different authors, Berdyaev in particular (especially in his works on Khomyakov and Dostoevsky).¹⁴⁷ Relating to their messianic character Berdyaev equated the Russian Orthodox understanding of history with Communist ideology.

In its own dream Rus' faced the situation that it had to fulfill two complementary functions: to keep the genuine Christianity; to execute its ordinances. Great Russian princes and later tsars came to be the supreme defenders of Orthodoxy all around the world.¹⁴⁸ Eikalovich defines messianism as

an ideology which includes some or all of the following elements: the calling for participation in the destiny of humankind through the service, teaching, suffering or redemption, (which is analogous to the principal themes of the life of the actual Messiah), taken in the eschatological or apocalyptic perspective in order to fulfill God's design for humanity.¹⁴⁹

However, in regard to Russian spiritual life the emphasis was always on the first function – to keep the tradition of true Christianity rather than on the corresponding service. The Russians thought that they had overcome the Greeks as the ardent guardians of Orthodoxy, and through this they had become closer to Christ.¹⁵⁰ Certainly in relation to this function of stewardship, the Schism of the second half of

¹⁴⁷ Ibid. P. 9 et al. Also the same author: *Mirosozertsaniye Dostoevskogo* (Dostoevsky's Worldview), *Russkaya Ideya* (The Russian Idea), etc.; Eikalovich G., Abbot, "Ideologiya Sv. Rusi" (Ideology of Holy Rus'). // *Novyi Zhurnal* (The New Review). Book 139. New York, 1980. Pp. 225-239. Also: Kartashev *Vossozdaniye. Zen'kovskii S. "Russkoye messianstvo"* (Russian messianism) // *Forum Slavicum*. Band 21. München: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 1970. Pp. 25-40.

¹⁴⁸ Kartashev *Vossozdaniye*, Pp. 36-37. See also: Eikalovich *Ideologiya*, P. 226.

¹⁴⁹ See: Eikalovich *Ideologiya*, P. 225.

¹⁵⁰ As Trubetskoy states, "Russian national messianism was always expressed with the assertion of *Russian Christ*" (Trubetskoi E.N. "Staryi i novyi natsional'nyi messianism" (Old and new Russian messianism). // *Izbrannoye* (Collection of chosen works). Moscow, 1997.

the XVIIth century occurred which separated the Old Believers from mainstream society. The Old Believers willingness to die for the ideal of true Orthodox Christianity was so great, that no less than 20 000 of them set fire to themselves simply in order not to serve the tsar who no longer represented a truly Orthodox ruler. This is definitely far from the messianic views which are ascribed to Russians by Berdyaev. At the same time this is different from what is known about Communist ideology. The very term 'messianic' is not clear enough, and there are considerable discrepancies in understanding the concept. The Russians did not dream about spreading the Orthodox faith all around the world, and neither the ruler nor the people could be held responsible for messianic service. As a country, Russia as such, 'Russian land', was understood to be 'holy', the idea of preservation predominated over the idea of proselytizing. This is, by the way, peculiarly different from the Jewish idea of the 'chosen people.'¹⁵¹ The idea that the land itself has been chosen by God, did not provide the possibility for expanding it to other lands. In this respect it should be mentioned that as soon as the formative period was completed the name 'Russian land' stopped being applicable to the newly annexed territories.

Second, the greatest endeavour of the Russian people was always directed inside rather than outside, into improvement of soul rather than the construction of juridical institutions. Therefore, it is likely that Fedotov is more correct in his outline of the Russian mind when he talks about 'eschatological consciousness' and not about 'messianic consciousness'.

Russian eschatological views stand in close connection with Christian ideology. The Christian image of time is different from both the pagan image of cycle, eternal repetition, and from the modern image of an infinite line stretching from past to future. With Christianity we find the image of creation (the appearance of the world in a particular point along with time itself) and the image of the Last Judgment (after which any historical development stops as well as time itself). The goal of every Christian is to save his soul for eternal life after the Judgment. This motif is always important for Christianity, though there were periods when it was far more significant. In this regard it is of extreme importance to note that during the formative period Russian spiritual life was coloured by the expectation of the Last Judgment. The year

¹⁵¹ See, for instance: Fedotov G.P. "Osnovy khristianskoi demokratii" (Foundations of the Christian democracy) // *Khristianin v revolyutsii* (The Christian in revolution). Paris, 1957. P. 131.

1492 was the year 7000 according to the calendar based on the idea of the creation of the world. This counting of years was in use up to the reign of Peter the Great, and the ancient chronicles listed events according to this calendar. It is worth noting that in relation to the date, 7000 years, the Moscow Metropolitan Zosima wrote a commentary on the paschal canon where the first formulation of the theory 'Moscow – the Third Rome' can be found. If we take into account the recent works in this area this theory probably was firstly formulated in such a way that Moscow in the sequence of kingdoms was presented as the Third Jerusalem and not the Third Rome.¹⁵² However, in the context of our work it does not make a great difference: still Russian history was put into a Christian historical frame. The passionate expectation of the Last Judgment and the end of the world which had been experienced by the people before and during the year 1492 was later transformed into the eschatological feelings linked with the last kingdom with Moscow as its capital, which would remain up to the Last Judgment, that was up to the end of history.

The specifics of Russian eschatology since Kievan times, as formulated by Fedotov, could be found in the emphasis on salvation and transfiguration of the Earth rather than on punishment.

At least one can say that Russian eschatological consciousness was divided between the negative and positive sides of the expectation, or putting it in other terms between the medieval image of Judgment and the ancient Church expectation of eternal life. The last trend is perhaps responsible for the strange popularity in Russia of some pre-Nicene fathers, commonly neglected as "superseded" by the classical and post-classical patristic thought.¹⁵³

This concept was clearly expressed by Metropolitan Hilarion in his *Sermon on Law and Grace*: "Law was precursor and servant to Grace and Truth, still Grace and Truth are servants to the World to come, to the incorruptible life. In the same way as Law is leading his servants to beneficial baptism, baptism leads its sons to the eternal life. Moses and the prophets had preached Christ's coming, and Christ with His apostles the Resurrection and the World to come."¹⁵⁴ Being inherited from Kievan Rus' this specific eschatology remained unshaken through the centuries. In other words, the pseudo-historicism was strongly linked with the concept of keeping true

¹⁵² See: Ostrowski, op. cit. Pp. 221-222.

¹⁵³ George P. Fedotov *The Russian Religious Mind*, New York, 1960. P. 386.

Christianity up to the end of the World, and so up to the anticipated eternal life. Thus, the historicism (or *pseudo-historicism*) predetermined the specifics of the eschatological character of Russian consciousness.

In the history of human culture at least three different kinds of eschatological feeling in relation to the destiny of humankind (they are sometimes intermixed in different proportions) can be found.¹⁵⁵ The first, predominantly characteristic for Western culture (of course, not everyone will agree with such generalizations, but it is impossible to avoid them), is the concept of infinite progress, when everything, all the cultural and technological artefacts, along with the human personality, will perish in the course of time. With this concept the society is pre-occupied solely with the present moment, because only the present, the actual situation, is of real value. Any moment in the past, which has been overcome, as well as any moments in the future, which will be overcome in the course of time, are of relative value only, they do not possess their own value but are valuable steps toward an indefinite future. And so, only the moment of the present is of absolute value. There are significant consequences of this presentation of time. First, because the past is not valuable, this culture strives to exhibit its values and basic images as being absolute, that is inherent in humankind as a totality. All the differences between various cultures are regarded as relative, whereas the similarities are taken unconditionally. Second, moral progress is supposed to be incomprehensible, because if only precious ones are the moments of the present, the criteria of moral behaviour again can be found only in the present. Therefore it is possible to have exclusively utilitarian criteria which link moral behaviour with the personal state of being. And so, even if personal progress can be found, nothing like the moral progress in regard to humanity as a whole will be observed.

The second approach, religious in its content, is represented by the view that, in the face of the Day of Judgment, nothing is valuable save the salvation of human soul. For adherents to this version of reality, cultural progress is absolutely superfluous. Both approaches are similar in the sense that they observe no intrinsic value in culture itself. The principle difference can be found in the attitude to the past:

¹⁵⁴ *Krasnorechiye Drevnei Rusi*, P. 42. Partly a translation from Fedotov's book was used (P. 386.)

some historical events are of greater value than others. Thus Christ's Birth, the Crucifixion, and the Resurrection defined the following years, providing a model of behaviour. In other words, this approach presumes an existence of the divine plan which had outlined the development of humankind from the start to the end and created the conditions for the personal search for salvation. Thus, some cultural events are considered to bear super-natural meaning, and, again, culture as such does not possess any inner value.

The third type of eschatology is both mystical and paradoxical: the idea is that we cannot know when the end should come and, along with this, we have to live as if history and human culture in total are justified by special super-meaning.¹⁵⁶ The principal specifics of this approach can be expressed as follows. First, human culture with all its artefacts and events is valuable (though both artefacts and events could be of different value), because it is the only way for people to reach salvation. All people are intimately connected, and it is impossible for a member of society to be saved where all the others are fallen. Humankind as a whole is considered to be the subject of salvation, through the salvation of its individual members. Second, the social being is a necessary presupposition of individual beings, and, therefore, the presupposition of any reflection upon personality and individuality. And this particular kind of eschatology arises with Russian historicism.

The next stage of the development of historical consciousness began in the second half of the XVIIIth century with the appearance of historical writings which were closer to the thought of the time¹⁵⁷.

Since Peter the Great the calendar was changed from the old calendar, starting from the Creation of the World, to the modern one, which had been accepted by all other European countries. Along with changes in the calendar Russia, according to Peter's thought, had to elaborate its history written at the corresponding level of

¹⁵⁵ See: Fedotov G.P. "Eskhatologiya i kul'tura" (Eschatology and culture). // *Novyi Grad. Sbornik statei*. (New City. Collection of Articles). New York, 1952. Pp. 319-331.

¹⁵⁶ This idea inspired Newton to investigate the Book of Daniel, and Pascal to search for the truth beyond the physical world.

¹⁵⁷ Though Peter I issued several decrees in relation to the writing of Russian history and collecting ancient chronicles, his efforts for a number of reasons could not bring about satisfactory results.

science¹⁵⁸. There is a recognised and understandable connection between the writing of history and the growth of nationalism. However, under specific circumstances of the Peter I reforms which put the state into a subordinate position in regard to Western thought, this was only partly the case for Russian consciousness. "Looking down from the heights of their achievement on this country still ridden by priestcraft and superstition, Western historians saw in Russia an earlier stage of history which they had long surpassed."¹⁵⁹ Because of this the writing of history in Russia was far from purely academic. Being governed by strangers of Germanic origin Russian historians were much more sensitive to some topics than their Western colleagues. Thus, the problem of the invitation of the Norman rulers in the IXth century was magnified into a great dispute which has still not been satisfactorily resolved for public consciousness¹⁶⁰. The principal problem, which definitely was not academic at all, could be formulated as whether the Slavic people were capable of establishing a state order by themselves or had to invite the Germans in for this purpose. The answer also was supposed by no means to be purely academic but rather a demonstration of patriotism. Notwithstanding this, in the second half of the XVIIIth century important works appeared, where authors expressed some views about the course of Russian history, based on facts rather than on fabricated schemes. At least one work should be mentioned in this respect, Prince Shcherbatov's *On the Corruption of Morals in Russia*. The author argued that the only guarantee of prosperous life would be the harmony between the tsar and the upper class of society. Russia enjoyed this great advantage during the first years of the rule of Ivan the Terrible.

But when monarchy turned to despotism and raised its creatures to share the seat of government, not only the boyars but all Russia suffered. The one principle, therefore, which history and an enlightened intelligence revealed was that no reform, no introduction of foreign techniques, must take place at the expense of the union between monarch and nobility.¹⁶¹

Whether Shcherbatov was right or wrong in his generalizations, the most significant fact was that his works demonstrated the rise of an independent reflective

¹⁵⁸ In 1711 Peter indirectly requested from Leibniz a treatise on the origin of Slavs and their language.

¹⁵⁹ Rogger *National Consciousness...* P.188.

¹⁶⁰ It should be noted that a similar situation with William the Conqueror did not bring such trouble for English historians. In this case it is also important to emphasize that this is still a problem in public opinion, and especially for the nationalistic one, while professional historians have drawn the picture of the event in detail.

attitude, because the earlier historians, including Lomonosov, consciously or unconsciously assimilated themselves with the state. One of the best works on Russian history was I. Boltin's two volumes of *Commentary on ... the History of M. LeClerc*. LeClerc in his huge history of Russia tried to prove the insurmountable backwardness of the Russian people, who were pushed out of this disgraceful condition by Peter the Great. In his *Commentary* Boltin did not rely exclusively on political history but developed a concept of a peculiar national consciousness. On this basis Boltin rejected efforts to judge a nation in accordance with any presupposed criteria. It was actually the first professional answer to the assertion raised not only by LeClerc but by the Peter the Great's contemporaries that the real history of the Russian state began with Peter's activity.

Thus, significantly, in the midst of the ocean of mystical and scientific works and fiction in translation, the most interesting and original works are those analyzing the historical specifics of the Russian state amidst the other states, and the peculiarity of Russian culture as well (Tatishchev, Boltin, Shcherbatov, and so on). The Russian historians of the second half of the XVIIIth century tried to nail down the foundation of Russian national consciousness without recourse to religious and church ideology in particular. With their works Russian history acquired a new dimension – a secular scale of historical events. The greatest work in this respect was Karamzin's *Memoir on Ancient and Modern Russia* which demonstrated a very high level of professionalism, accuracy and reflection. We will turn to this work later.

¹⁶¹ Rogger *National Consciousness...* P.226.

Section 2. Aestheticism

It is obvious that until any form of spiritual life has been fully matured and shaped by its own concepts and laws, it, being amorphous, can be found dissolved in other forms of spiritual life. This is particularly true in regard to aesthetics. A famous historian of culture, S.Averintsev, stated that the Ancient World and Middle Ages were marked by the absence of a differentiated science of aesthetics and, therefore, all other forms of spiritual life concerned with the understanding of being were coloured by the aesthetic attitude.¹⁶² The Russian medieval attitude to life, nature, and God is especially notable for its aesthetic component, and so we have to define the specifics of this component.

Since we are dealing with aesthetics we have to examine beauty, the central concept of this form of human consciousness. There are two basically different approaches to the definition of beauty: first, through numbers and ratios, when beauty can be presented as harmony; and, second, through the expression of the divine, when beauty is something which one can feel beyond mere appearance. These two approaches do not necessarily exclude each other; however in many cases they offer us different criteria of beautiful. It is clear that the Russian approach to the understanding of beauty falls into the second category. This can be seen in 1) the attitude to nature, and 2) the specific features of Russian art during the formative period. Also we have to bear in mind that this approach was not expressed exclusively in specific forms but rather penetrated all spheres of life.

It should be noted that the pagan beliefs, which could be found prior to the conversion to Christianity at the end of the Xth century was imbued with the veneration of natural forces. Nature is taken 1) on personal level, as 'you' instead of the modern 'it'; 2) as participator in all major events; and 3) as beautiful. Fedotov

¹⁶² Averintsev S.S. "Predvaritel'nyye zametki k izucheniyu srednevekovoi estetiki" (Preliminary notes on the study of medieval aesthetics) // *Drevnerusskoye iskusstvo. Zarubezhnyye svyazi*. (Old Russian Art. Foreign links.) Moscow: Iskusstvo, 1975. Pp. 373. The first part of this statement is a commonplace. B.Gibson, for instance, noted: "There have been critical and philosophical pronouncements on art ever since Plato; but the philosophy of art, as a special topic, conducted by philosophers, dates from the end of the eighteenth century." (*Muse and Thinker* London, 1969. P.27.) However, the second part is far less obvious.

provides many examples in his book of this strong and sincere sense of nature¹⁶³, and these examples can easily be multiplied. Nature is often taken 1) sympathetically, when it is co-suffering and co-rejoicing with men; and 2) symbolically when it is supposed to express divine meaning. After the conversion to Christianity it is easy to observe the co-existence of the Christian attitude to nature (when nature was taken just as a background for divine and human events) with the pagan veneration of physical forces. Fedotov confronts the indisputably Christian Cyril of Turov's *Words* with the basically pagan *Igor's Tale*. Whereas the latter presents the picture of permanent interrelations between people and nature, Cyril's *Words* present us with no more than adaptations of Gregory of Nazianzus' paschal homilies. The symbolic character of this secondary presentation of natural events is emphasized by the fact that the description of spring lacks any local Russian features.¹⁶⁴ When physical and animal life is supposed to supply people with models of Christian behaviour authors again are not concerned with the plausibility of the described examples and mix the correct ones with the mythical: the sea is limited by the sand shores; the female-lion gives birth to the dead cub, and only after three days does the male-lion resurrect the cub with his breath, and so on.¹⁶⁵ The *Igor's Tale*, on the contrary, is full of landscapes and descriptions of natural events which are easily recognizable to Russian eyes. Modern scholars are in agreement by common consent in regard to the pagan background of this masterpiece.¹⁶⁶ Taking into account the difference in approaches we can formulate the hidden goal of the formative period as being to unite the abstract Christian understanding of beauty with the specific feeling of beauty, characteristic of the pagan consciousness. Christianity forced the converted people to feel the sole divine power beyond the appearance of things.

Russia accepted Christianity from Byzantium when the fighting against the so-called "Iconoclasts", who considered the worship of icons (images) as idolatry, finished victoriously for the "Iconodules", those who assumed it to be possible and

¹⁶³ Fedotov, *The Russian Religious...*, p. 369-370.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid.

¹⁶⁵ Smirnov *O drevnerusskoi*, Pp. 35-36.

¹⁶⁶ See, for instance: Gasparov B. "Poetika "Slova o polku Igoreve" (Poetics of *The Lay of Igor's Campaign*). // *Wiener Slawistischer Almanach*, Sonderband 12, Wien, 1984.

even necessary that art should express the world of the divine.¹⁶⁷ The echo of these discussions was sounded in different spiritual fields long after the iconoclasts had been defeated. However, Russia was never inclined to accept this iconoclastic attitude to art¹⁶⁸, even though - significantly - it accepted extreme forms of monasticism. The Byzantine religious thinker, St. John of Damascus, an ardent fighter against iconoclasts, was one of the most respectable saints in Russia, and, moreover, his writings were perhaps the most important source of philosophical thought for ancient Rus'.

There is a well known legendary story about the conversion of the Kievan Slavs to Christianity, persuaded by the beauty of the Byzantine church service at St. Sophia cathedral. Vladimir's envoys who visited different sorts of services reported to him that they did not observe happiness during Bulgar [Muslim] worship; they did not see glory in German churches. Then they visited Greek churches, and they knew not whether they "were in heaven or on earth. For on earth there is no such splendour or such beauty," ... And they continued: "We only know that God dwells there among men, and their service is fairer than the ceremonies of other nations. For we cannot forget their beauty."¹⁶⁹ Though legendary, this story emphasizes the most valuable features which were expected from the church service, revealed during the communication with God, namely *happiness*, *glory*, and *beauty*. One of the most popular images uniting these three concepts is, probably, the *Sun of Truth*, which is applied to Christ.¹⁷⁰ This shining beauty reflects ancient pagan attitude to the sun and unites it with the new image, that of Christ. The ancient veneration of fire, lightning, and sun itself was extremely popular among the Slavs: it is known that only two gods, both connected with fire, were venerated by all Slavic tribes. These were Perun, who

¹⁶⁷ For Islamic art such a possibility is strictly forbidden, partly as a result of the influence of the Byzantine iconoclast movement. Some modern scholars argue against the possibility of such influence but the problem remains - See, for instance: Oleg Grabar "Islam and Iconoclasm" // *Iconoclasm. Papers given at the Ninth Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies*. March 1975. University of Birmingham 1975. Pp. 45-52.

¹⁶⁸ With the few exceptions of sectarians.

¹⁶⁹ "The Russian Primary Chronicle" // *Readings in Russian Civilization*. Ed. By Thomas Riha. V. 1. Chicago & London: The University of Chicago Press, 1964. P. 28.

¹⁷⁰ See: Boris Uspenskii "Solyarno-lunarnaya simbolika v oblike russkogo khrama" (Solar and moon symbolism in the appearance of Russian church). // *Christianity and the Eastern Slavs*, v. 1., Berkeley etc., 1993. P. 243.

was equal to Jupiter and Zeus, being the storm god of thunder and lightning, and Svarog, who was identified with the Greek Hephaistos, the drying-house fire. There are some indications that "among the multiform divine powers worshipped by Slavs, one is believed to rule over the others in heaven and to care for celestial things,"¹⁷¹ which probably facilitated the process of transition from paganism to Christianity.

The first, Kievan, period was strongly marked by the so-called "dual faith" ('dvoeveriye') that represented the co-existence of Christianity with ancient paganism. What happened during this formative period can be described as a transformation to unifying system. The ancient dualism of good and bad, light and dark¹⁷² and eclecticism was gradually replaced by a system based upon the more or less clear principle of the only God – Creator, who presented Himself as Trinity. The most important point for our research is that the existential meaning of this transition coincides with its aesthetic meaning. Moreover, the existential meaning is developing itself through the aesthetic one. God as the essence of being is found through the splendours and wonders of nature, such as the sun, the moon, the stars, light, and darkness, animals, and birds.¹⁷³ He is also discovered through beauty. It was noted earlier that the social consciousness of that time did not discriminate between different spheres of social life.¹⁷⁴ If we correlate this with the non-discrimination between cultural and natural life, the spiritual world, if presented ontologically, was at the very same time presented aesthetically and ethically. The reasons for this are the following:

- The very vocabulary did not supply the speaker with the words to express the pure concepts deprived of any sensual associations¹⁷⁵ and so the images from the very beginning were presented in forms which involved aesthetic and moral associations and evaluations.

¹⁷¹ Roman Jakobson "Slavic Gods and Demons" // *Selected Writings*, v. VII, Berlin, etc.: Mouton Publishers, 1985. P. 5.

¹⁷² Ibid.

¹⁷³ V. Monomakh *Poucheniye...* // *Izbornik*. P. 150-152.

¹⁷⁴ This discrimination comes with the clear division of power and responsibilities between different social institutions.

¹⁷⁵ It is known from the history of philosophy that this process of clarification of concepts takes centuries.

- There should have been an established social institution which could teach and support not only literacy but also abstract thinking in particular, but this was not the case at that time.

Consequently, there should appear and should be developing a special social and linguistic frame for systematic thinking prior to any clear differentiation could be made.

Thus, there were neither tools nor people with the corresponding culture of thinking which would help to eliminate ontology, the understanding of being as such, from the culture as a totality. There were no prerequisites, and so any story or image along with its ontological meaning bore aesthetic and ethical constituents: 'being' was instantly understood as the 'good' and as 'beauty'. At this stage we will put aside the ethical component, and concentrate on the aesthetic one.

The Christian understanding of Being offers us the following picture: the whole world is divided into two unequal parts, created and uncreated. The uncreated part includes God, the Trinity. The created part in its turn is divided into visible, sensual, and invisible parts.¹⁷⁶ The created world by definition is not self-sufficient and bears the form and power given by its creator. In order to recognize the beauty of the world, man has to recognize God, in the same way as he has to find God's image in himself and in others. Therefore, this approach to aesthetics is by its nature concerned with the manifestation of divinity rather than with harmony.

This is the general course of development, from the veneration of the forces dissolved in nature and manifested by natural forces to the veneration of a personal God, which can be discovered in any developed pagan society converted to Christianity. The peculiarity of the Russian aesthetic approach is found, first, in the specific emphasis on light; and, second, in the wholeness of presentation and perception. This does not mean that other countries were deprived of these features, however with Russian culture they became crucial. It is no mere coincidence that 'world' and 'light' are denoted by one Slavic word 'svet.' Along with this, 'world' is denoted as 'mir'. It has been demonstrated recently that the word 'mir' came from

¹⁷⁶ See: Averintsev *Predvaritel'nyye zametki*. The scheme presented above does not coincide completely with Averintsev's, but the differences can be disregarded for our purposes.

Iranian Mithra, the sunny god of light and the god of social agreement.¹⁷⁷ Therefore, the very concept of world is represented by the words which stand in relation to light, to Sun directly or indirectly, as the following examples show: "There are two existing worlds, rational and sensual, and there are two who light them up, God and Sun"¹⁷⁸; "Until sun is shining the whole world exists now and forever"¹⁷⁹; "Shining as the sun in the world providing the blind with light"¹⁸⁰. (At the same time in its meaning of 'peace' *mir* is often found in connection with 'love', emphasizing the unity of nature.) This visible, sensual light gradually became secondary in relation to the divine light, and in this respect the Russian culture as well as the Bizantine culture in the course of time came to be in contrast with the ancient Greek attitude to reality with its domination of visible, tangible forms.¹⁸¹

The art in its literary and visual forms was the first form of religious and national self-reflection in Rus'-Russia. Russian icons from the XVth century clearly demonstrate the predominance of light colours in comparison with Byzantine icons of the same period. The special role of gold and light blue colours should also be noted.

Russian iconographers painted icons literally 'on light': "The icon is painted on light... Light when it corresponds to tradition, is g o l d i n g, i.e. it is light, pure light, and not a colour. In other words all the images appear in the sea of the gold grace, washed by the currents of Divine light. It is the space of genuine

¹⁷⁷ Roman Jakobson "Slavic Gods and Demons" // *Selected Writings*, v. VII, Berlin, etc.: Mouton Publishers, 1985. P. 56, and especially in: Toporov V. "Ob iranskom elemente v russkoi dukhovnoi kul'ture (On the Iranian element in the Russian spiritual culture) // *Slavyanskii i balkanskii fol'klor. Rekonstruktsiya drevnei slavyanskoi dukhovnoi kul'tury: istochniki i metody*. (Slavic and Balcan folklore. Reconstruction of the ancient Slavic spiritual culture: sources and methods). Moscow, 1989. Pp. 43-49.

¹⁷⁸ *Slovar' drevnerusskogo yazyka (XI-XIV vv.)* (Dictionary of the Old Russian Language (the XI-XIV centuries), v. IV. Moscow, 1991. P. 541.

¹⁷⁹ Ibid. Similar expressions in: I.I.Sreznevskii *Materialy ...* (The Preparatory Materials or the Dictionary of the Ancient Russian Language) ... V. II. Moscow, 1955. P. 147.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid.

¹⁸¹ O.Spengler strongly emphasizes the fact that the specifics of the ancient Greek attitude to reality lies in its visibility and tangibility. It relates to Byzantine culture as geometry with its emphasis on form relates to algebra with its emphasis on numbers. A.Losev always highlighted the significance of this statement of Spengler.

reality."¹⁸² Light is assumed to be the universal substance. Forming the background of the image, the light penetrates all images from behind representing the uncreated world and so depriving images of the earthly life and of bodily self-sufficiency. Light plays the same role in Russian churches – the onion-like cupolas are reminiscent of the candle fire, permanently burning toward the sky. This concept is exposed very clearly, especially when compared with the Byzantine cupola, which symbolizes the sky itself. It is also different from the Gothic cathedral with its spire directed into the sky, expressing the reaching toward the divine heights and overcoming the limits of this world.¹⁸³ The golden cupolas of the Russian churches, being the images of divine light, seem to the observer to be 'burning with heat.'¹⁸⁴ The light is both the intermediate between the divine and human worlds and at the same time the expression of the divinity on the earth. It is also worth noting that in literary works, for instance in the poem *Word about the Downfall of the Russian Land*¹⁸⁵, the epithets for the Russian land are 'bright'¹⁸⁶, and 'illuminated'¹⁸⁷, and the author is delighted with the beauty of the Russian land. This emphasis on light is even more striking if we take into account the fact that the old Russian literature was almost complete devoid of colours. A specialist in Russian medieval literature, A.Panchenko, demonstrated that "the absolute majority of the texts, which are traditionally believed to be produced by the old Russian artists, demonstrate a complete or almost complete lack of colours."¹⁸⁸ In his effort to explain this fact A Levitskii proves that the intense feeling of light as opposite to darkness a) is shared by lay and church literature, b)

¹⁸² Florenskii, Pavel "Ikionostas" (Iconostasis) // *Filosofiia russkogo religioznogo iskusstva XVI-XX vv.* (Philosophy of the Russian religious art of the 16-20th centuries). Moscow: Progress, 1993. P. 272.

¹⁸³ Trubetskoi E.N. "Umozreniye v kraskakh" (Philosophy in colours). // *Izbrannoye* (Collection of chosen works). Moscow, 1997. Pp. 327 – 329.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid.

¹⁸⁵ "Word on Collapse".

¹⁸⁶ Even 'svetlo-svetlaya' (bright and bright) // *Izbornik*, P. 326.

¹⁸⁷ See: Michael Cherniavsky *Tsar and People. Studies in Russian Myths*. New Haven & London, 1961. Pp. 104-105.

¹⁸⁸ A. M. Panchenko "O tsvete v drevnei literature vostochnykh i yuzhnykh slavyan (About the colour in the old literature of the Eastern and South Slavs) // *Trudy Otdela Drevnerusskoi Literatury* (Proceedings of the Department of Old Russian Literature), v. XXIII. Leningrad, 1968. P. 3.

emphasizes the wholeness of the world being an expression of its divine unity. In this case there is neither place for half-tints, nor for rainbow colours.¹⁸⁹

The Russian icons forcefully demonstrate the essence of Russian spirituality: deep mystical tranquillity, divine mercy, and intercession. Characteristically the most famous masterpiece of that period was Rublev's "Trinity", which represented the divine unity of the Universe. With this unity we approach the feature of the Russian art which was earlier called *wholeness* of presentation. The very symbol of the Trinity, which means the unity and the wholeness of God Who is Three in One, acquired an enormous popularity in Rus'-Russia, and there is nothing comparable in Byzantine art. In the *Life of St. Sergius of Radonezh* the biographer stated that St. Sergius founded the church dedicated to St. Trinity because "the constant observation of this church could overcome the fear of the hateful disunion in the world."¹⁹⁰ It is a fact of extreme importance that, even though this church was not the first dedicated to the Trinity (there were a few churches of the Trinity in Byzantium and in the West), the popularity of these churches in Russia appears to have been unprecedented: there were up to thirty-four such churches in XVIth century Russia.¹⁹¹ The differences between the earlier images of the Trinity and Rublev's are of particular importance. Rublev implemented a new composition of Trinity, he equated the angels in their dignity and significance. While the old compositions emphasized the predominance of the middle angel, Rublev, though he painted this angel higher than others, arranged this in such a way that he did not suppress the bilateral ones but rather united them. His nimbus is also similar to those of the others, and not cross-like as was usual in the older tradition.¹⁹² Thus, the idea of the unity of three in one and *vice versa* is emphasized and expressed more clearly, and more compassionately than anywhere else.

¹⁸⁹ A. Levitskii "Elementy poetiki "sveta" v drevne-russkoi literature" // *Russkoye Vozrozhdeniye* (La Renaissance Russe) Paris et. al. No 5, 1979. Pp. 127-145.

¹⁹⁰ Quote from: Florenskii, Pavel "Troitse-Sergiyeva lavra i Rossiya" (Holy Trinity and St. Sergius Monastery and Russia). // *Opravdaniye Kosmosa* (Justification of Cosmos). St. Petersburg, 1994. Pp. 171-172.

¹⁹¹ See: Konrad Onasch "Identity models of old Russian sacred art" // *Medieval Russian Culture*. California Slavic Studies XII. Berkeley, etc.: University of California Press, 1984. P. 188.

¹⁹² N. Pokrovsky *Ocherki pamyatnikov khristianskoi ikonografii i iskusstva* (Sketches on the works of Christian Iconography and Art), St. Petersburg, 1900. P. 359.

The striving for the wholeness of image found its exceptional expression in the invention of the so-called High Iconostasis. The unity of the created and uncreated worlds is emphasized by the composition of the High Iconostasis which unifies Christ, Mother of God, saints and angels in one comfortably visible picture. Serving earlier as a simple partition between the altar and the congregation, iconostasis during the formative period was transformed into the screen formed usually by five rows of icons strictly arranged vertically and horizontally, which separated the sanctuary from the nave. As Pokrovsky observes, "The iconostasis ... is no less than a pictorial "Summa Theologiae" of the Eastern Church, an iconic representation of the conceptual-imperceptible cosmos."¹⁹³ Iconostasis presents to the observer the whole picture of the invisible part of the created world. This picture unites history and cosmos: its point of departure is the Annunciation and it is completed by the image of Christ in Judgement. The image of the invisible world is arranged in rows presenting the layers of celestial powers. Therefore, the general idea of iconostasis (the wall, the boundary between the visible and invisible worlds) is the unity of God and the people seeking for salvation through the concept of intercession. The idea of wholeness is also emphasized by the church itself, which unites the uncreated and created worlds in an inseparable totality. It should be noted that with this arrangement each particular icon is participating in the wholeness of the overall concept of the world.

Another important side of Russian iconography is its tendency to implement and elaborate different theological concepts. With the absence of anything similar to Western scholasticism, Russian thought found its expression in paintings. It was demonstrated that Pskovian iconography experienced strong Western influences; some of the compositions were partly taken from prototypes printed in the West, for instance from German engravings.¹⁹⁴ Testimonies of eminent specialists in iconography, such as Misyur'-Munekhin and Maxim the Greek, mention the specifics and originality of the Pskovian icons.¹⁹⁵ And so it is of particular interest that though Western heresies, which were predominantly spreading from Novgorod and Pskov, had been exterminated, the Pskovian painters were later invited to Moscow. Their task was to decorate the new chambers of the Moscovite tsar palace of the newly

¹⁹³ Ibid. P. 186.

¹⁹⁴ Kartashev *Ocherki...*, v. 1. P. 515.

established tsardom straight after the coronation. The main topics of the compositions chosen for these decorations included: 1) the link between the new kingdom and the old Israelite kingdom, 2) the image of an ideal Christian ruler, fulfilling his religious and moral responsibilities; 3) the subordination of the ruler to the Christian church and its ideals. They express the grandeur of the tsar in such bright colours that one of the best known historians of Russian medieval culture Zabelin connected the decoration with the defeat of the Kazan and Astrakhan kingdoms. However, another historian, N.Andreiev, demonstrated that the whole plan and topics were arranged prior to these events,¹⁹⁶ being an expression of pure theological thought rather than any reflection of the real events.

Russian iconography, being a "theology in colours" ¹⁹⁷, reveals, first, its dependence on the literary sources, second, its continuing efforts not only to retain the traditional images but also to answer new questions. Russian iconography shows the signs of freedom which are difficult to find in the doctrinal sphere of the Orthodox church. One of the best specialists in iconography N.Kondakov, in his general work *The Russian Icon*, draws attention to the creative freedom of the Russian iconographers, who invented their own compositions, uniting traditional scenes with new ones based upon apocrypha, and who were not afraid of incorporating popular topics taken from peasant life, and so on.¹⁹⁸ With the defeat of the non-possessors the Russian Orthodox church initiated a great movement in order to honour the unity between church and kingdom. It has been stated earlier that the theory "Moscow - the Third Rome" did not base its expression in political life and in dogmatic literature, and remained predominantly a part of popular consciousness. More indicative, therefore, is the fact that iconography expressed this idea in the clearest possible way. For instance, in order to understand the icon *The Military Church (Tserkov' voinstvuyushchaya)*, painted in 1552, it is necessary to be aware of this theory: along with the traditional figures presenting the Heavenly Jerusalem, the Russian princes including St. Vladimir, St. Boris and Gleb, St. Alexander Nevskii, and Vladimir

¹⁹⁵ N. E. Andreiev "Ioann Groznyi i ikonopis' XVI veka" (Ivan the Terrible and Iconography in the 16th century) // *Studies in Muscovy. Western Influence and Byzantine Inheritance*, London, 1970. P. 196.

¹⁹⁶ Ibid. Pp. 188-191.

¹⁹⁷ The brilliant expression of E.Trubetskoi is used here.

¹⁹⁸ N. Kondakov *Russkaya Ikona* (Russian Icon). Prague, 1931.

Monomakh appear.¹⁹⁹ The specifics of Russian iconography by no means undermines the fact that it has formed a significant part of Russian spiritual development, connected with literature, Church and everyday life, political tendencies, and so on. During the Muscovite period it expressed itself to such a degree that Kondakov compared its development with the Renaissance in the West.²⁰⁰

The high aesthetic value of the Old Russian literature does not require any specific demonstration. Russian chronicles are unanimously recognized as among the *chef d'oeuvres* of the genre for their eloquent and psychologically correct presentation of events, colourful descriptions, and legends. All this transforms them from a plain list of annual events into interesting and instructive reading. A high literary taste can easily be observed through the centuries, and one can find it in the lives of the saints, in the descriptions of travel, in spiritual verses, in homilies, and so on. For our thesis it is significant that they are marked by the striving for wholeness which can be found, first, in the very method with which these works were arranged by the ancient authors, and, second, in the structure of particular works.

The eminent historian of the medieval Russian culture, Dmitrii Likhachev, emphasizes that one of the most striking features of ancient works, translated or original, is their permanent relation to history as totality. Any work either mentioned the principal events of world history (e.g. the Creation of the world, the Tower of Babel) or was included into a larger collection of works where these events were presented. "A constant cycle-formation is taking place. Even the notes of the merchant from Tver Afanasii Nikitin about his *Travelling across Three Seas* were included in the chronicle." Through this the *Travelling* was transformed from a geographical work to a historical one.²⁰¹ Any and each work was included in the collections and the collection of collections, and because of this inclusion it became a part of the whole.

As it was noted earlier, the expression of necessary general reference to the whole in particular works can be observed in the fact that the content of any work was recognised through the reference to the events of world history. In some cases it was manifested by the prologue starting from the Creation, as, for example, in *Reading*

¹⁹⁹ N. E. Andreiev "Literatura i ikonopis'" // *Studies in Muscovy. Western Influence and Byzantine Inheritance*, London, 1970. Pp. 75-76.

²⁰⁰ Kondakov *Russkaya Ikona*, V. 1. Pp. 8-9.

²⁰¹ Ibid. Pp. 11-12

about the *Lives and Murder of Boris and Gleb*, or *The Story about Sorrow-Misfortune*. The latter opens with the words: "At the beginning of these Ages, liable to decay, God created Sky and Earth..." Sometimes the same allusion was made through hints, like, for example, in *Zadonshchina*, where the author started from the proposal to look from the Kievan hills to the North where was the land of Japheth, the son of Noah, and then to the East, where was the land of Shem, and so on.²⁰² Such events as the battle between the Russians and the Tatars were in this way transformed into the clash between the descendants of Noah, forming a significant event of overall world history. Thus, any literary work directly or indirectly presented us with the wholeness of human history from the Creation up to the Last Judgement, as well as did the High Iconostasis and the Church building itself. Typologically the wholeness observed in literary works is based on the same principle as in iconography: the seemingly accidental events of the earthly life exposed on the background of general Christian history acquired their value and right location on the iconostasis of world history.

The same can be observed with music. It is known that Church music is arranged in daily and yearly cycles, and every piece of music forms a part of the whole liturgy. During the Kievan period the Russian church accepted the Greek liturgy and was very cautious not to implement any innovation²⁰³. Later, during the formative period the so-called 'Homoniya' and 'Razglasiye' were developed. The first term denotes the mode of singing when additional vowels were inserted between consonants instead of the lost sounds which related to the letters '□' and '□'. 'Razglasiye' stands for the simultaneous singing and reading of different texts in order to shorten the very long service, which otherwise could last up from 5 to 6 hours.²⁰⁴ These two characteristics of church singing caused the great problem for the church because they deprived the service of clarity and understanding. The singing became a self-sufficient musical event with no awareness of the content. (This kind of service is in some cases still preserved by the Old-Believers.) In short, the singing was taken by the majority of population as an aesthetic rather than religiously meaningful event. Paradoxically, this did not mean that singing became estranged from the

²⁰² See: "Zadonshchina", P. 380.

²⁰³ N. N. Trubetskoi "Pravoslavnoye tserkovnoye peniye v yego istoricheskom razvitii" (Orthodox Church Singing in its Historical Development). // *Le Messenger*, 126, 1978. P. 140.

totality of the church service; on the contrary, it was perceived as a necessary part of the whole event of liturgy. However, later, during the XVIIth and XVIIIth centuries the lack of understanding facilitated the penetration of foreign influences into the Orthodox incantation, especially from Italy, Poland, and Germany.

Along with the emphasis on the light and the wholeness of being one more feature of the medieval aesthetic approach to reality should be mentioned, though it is by no means peculiarly Slavic or Orthodox: the symbolic character of any particular thing or event. This relates to the specific attitude to reality when it is assumed that everything gained its being, its very existence from the Creator. St. Augustine, being in this respect greatly influenced by Neo-Platonic philosophy, insisted that everything existed exclusively because the existence possessed Good. Everything was created by God, who was by Himself an Absolute Good (because of this, evil is non-existence rather than a form of existence). There are at least three consequences of this attitude: first, the objectivity of any particular being depends on the divine unity; second, stretching this attitude to the limit we have to state that there are no particulars as such, everything is a necessary part of the whole being; third, the visible world could be and should be taken only as a manifestation of God's omni-presence.

This attitude found its full expression in the semantic syntax of Russian iconography. The very language used by the painters was different from ours, revealing itself in inverted perspective instead of the direct perspective which became standard in the West after the Renaissance. In contrast to the linear vision which depicted a particular moment in time and a given location in space, the medieval painter arranged the objects according to their significance, which in its turn was based upon the closeness to God, and, therefore, to the source of Being itself. "...The representation of an object in the system of inverted perspective is presented not through individual consciousness, but in its GIVENNESS."²⁰⁵ The question was discussed at the Stoglav Council of the Russian Church in 1551 whether or not it was possible to represent on icons people who were not holy (e.g. Roman soldiers in the depiction of the Crucifixion). The necessity to differentiate between holy and non-holy corresponded to the worshipping goal of the painting: to arrange an image in a way that would retain the contact of the praying person with the icon.²⁰⁶ In addition, it

²⁰⁴ Ibid. P. 141.

²⁰⁵ Boris Uspensky *The Semiotics of the Russian Icon*, Lisse, 1976. P. 71.

²⁰⁶ Ibid. P. 69.

should be noted that the inverted perspective allowed the artist to arrange the items of composition in such a way that the observer was included. Instead of being an outsider he discovered himself as part of the interior content. Thus, the icons united and expressed all three features mentioned earlier: first, they emphasized the objectivity of things through their closeness to the divine source of existence; second, any object (or figure) was supposed to have its own place in accordance with the meaning (value) of this object and not in accordance with its visual image; third, all the elements of picture and the picture itself, including the observer, had a symbolic meaning, which expressed the divine wholeness of the world.

This symbolism of the medieval approach to reality found its complete expression not only in Russian iconography, but also in Russian literature, and in the Russian attitude to Nature. If everything possesses its being from God, it participates in the wholeness of life, and, therefore, it possesses a meaning which can be found not only in any particular thing but also in its relation to the wholeness of the world, being its symbolic manifestation. However, we must remember that these features can easily be found in Western as well as in Russian culture. Averintsev mentions that by 1500 the Russian icon provides an example of art where the represented reality is depicted not as some sort of aesthetic ideal or nature as such, but just as *being*.²⁰⁷ Yet the same can be said, for instance, of the works of Jan van Eyck.

The specifics of the Russian Orthodox attitude in this respect can be discovered in the direct continuation of the old Christian tradition linked with the name of Dionysius the Areopagite and known as 'apophatic (negative) theology'. It has already been mentioned that Russian culture was influenced by Hesychast movement - the last great flight of the Byzantine spiritual life, and this movement was the proper confirmation of the ancient apophatic doctrine. The historian and theologian, Vladimir Lossky, considered *apophatism* to be the peculiar characteristic of Orthodoxy as opposed to the Western Catholic tradition.²⁰⁸ St. Gregory Palamas was eager to provide a dogmatic foundation for the mystical experience which allowed deification. In its turn deification is the possibility for the human being to be united with God through direct participation in His energies. This theory is based on the distinction between the divine essence and divine energies.

²⁰⁷ Averintsev "Predvaritel'nyye", P. 395.

²⁰⁸ Vladimir Lossky, "Theology and Mysticism in the Tradition of the Eastern Church", *Understanding Mysticism*, London, 1981. Pp. 169 - 178.

The energies are not effects foreign to the divine essence; they are not acts exterior to God, depending on His will, like creation of the world or acts of providence. They are the *natural* processions of God Himself, a mode of existence which is proper to Him and according to which God exists not only in His essence, but also outside His essence.²⁰⁹

This means that the whole world is filled with these energies, and through the upholding of the particular state of mind and body it is possible for the human being to participate in them. With this the apophatic theology is transformed into the theology of light.²¹⁰ The most striking example, which demonstrates that this idea has remained within the Orthodox Church, can be found in the life of St. Seraphim of Sarov (1759 – 1833.) One of his admirers N.Motovilov left a description of his own experience. He asked St. Seraphim, how could he be firmly assured that he was “in the Spirit of God?” How could he by himself recognize His true manifestation? In answering this, St. Seraphim asked Motovilov to look in his face.

Encouraged by these words, I looked in his face ... Imagine in the centre of the sun, in the dazzling brilliance of his midday rays, the face of the man who talks with you. You see the movement of his lips and the changing expression of his eyes, you hear his voice, you feel someone grasps your shoulders; yet you do not see hands, you do not even see yourself or his figure, but rather a blinding light spreading several yards around and throwing a sparkling radiance across the snow blanket on the glade and into the snowflakes which do not stop falling...²¹¹

Thus, one of the peculiarities of the medieval aesthetics in Russia was the feeling of the direct presence of God's energies in the visible world, the energies which could be seen by human beings as the uncreated light. At the same time this attitude by definition negates the possibility of approaching God through reasoning, because it emphasizes rather the role of the mystical union with God. This idea coloured the Russian aesthetic attitude to reality: the integrated wholeness of reality being defined by the divine light is obviously very attractive to the Russian mind, and the idea of the divine energies present in the world not only strengthens the supernatural meaning of light but also explains the divine unity of the world.

It is still unclear to what extent Russian iconography was influenced by the Hesychast movement. However, it is obvious that the people who transferred

²⁰⁹ V.Lossky *In the Image and Likeness of God*, New York, 1974. P. 54.

²¹⁰ V.Lossky's expression to designate this particular side of Orthodox theology.

²¹¹ Quote from: Lossky *In the Image...*, P. 67.

Byzantine cultural achievements during the period of South-Slavic influence, like for example Metropolitan Kiprian, first, shared Hesychast ideas and, second, were linked with the Northern Russian monasticism. This relates to such painters as Theophanes the Greek and Andrei Rublev. It is known that Hesychasm prevented Byzantine culture from following the path of secularization which had begun in the West and resulted from the Renaissance with its cult of Man replacing God. In Russia this spiritual movement of Hesychasm initiated the rise of culture, which remained predominantly sacral up to the XVIIIth century.²¹²

It is sufficient for our purposes to state that there existed a spiritual movement in Rus' connected with the name of St. Sergius of Radonezh which was similar to Hesychasm in Byzantium. St. Sergius was known for his visions. These visions, as well as some observations of his pupils, were marked by their direct relation to fire and light. This is of specific importance if we take into account that visions known from earlier times were connected predominantly with dark forces.²¹³ The peculiar role of light and radiance can be found in the works related to other saints.²¹⁴ This emphasized connection with light found its expression in painting. V. Lazarev noted this influence in the icon of "The Transfiguration" from Pereyaslavl'-Zalesskii, where Christ was depicted as radiating silver and blue light.²¹⁵ However the most striking thing in relation to the works of the painters associated with the Hesychast movement was that the actual development of Russian iconography was linked with the name of Andrei Rublev, who began to depict moderately shining beautiful light rather than the bright blinding light of the Transfiguration. The colours of Rublev's "Trinity" were closer to nature than to divinity, and at the same time they expressed the nature of the heavenly world in the clearest way possible. In this moderation we can observe one more specific characteristic of Russian monasticism manifested by Russian art and connected particularly with such names as St. Sergius and Nilus of Sora. Instead of suppression of the worshipper by the severity of the Deity (which can be observed in the Byzantine art) or by burning divine light, the Russian painters tried to avoid any

²¹² John Meyendorf "Sv. Grigorii Palama", ... *Le Messenger*. V. IV. No. 128. Pp. 64-65.

²¹³ Ibid. P. 136.

²¹⁴ See: A. Klibanov "K kharakteristike mirovozzreniya Andreia Rubleva" (In Relation to Andrei Rublev's *Weltanschauung*) // *Andrei Rublev i yego epokha* (Andrei Rublev and his Epoch) Moscow, 1971. P. 79.

exaggeration. In the best works they presented the loving unity of the eternal world which was so close to the surrounding nature and at the same time so far from the quarrels and worries of everyday life. This feeling of temperance and moderation also penetrated the compositions of Russian icons where, inspite of the depiction of light and the attraction to bright colours like heavenly blue and gold, this moderation is especially indicative. The moderation also found its expression in literary works, and we will return to this when discussing the specifics of Russian mysticism.

Thus, in addition to the features of wholeness and the specific attitude to light we can note symbolism, characteristic for Christian art as such, and moderation.

It should be said in advance that the direct appeal to aesthetical tradition outlined in this section can be observed since the beginning of the XIXth century. For instance, the evolution of the Muscovite artistic tradition found its bright expression in folk art and in different handicraft industries, especially in those linked with the Old Believers. It is known that the ordinary course of progress usually causes the gradual destruction of the ancient traditions under the influence of urban industrial development. An expert in the history of the Old Believer, V.Teteryatnikov, noticed that in contrast to this general picture Russian cultural life is marked by two peculiar features. First, if we take into account Peter the Great's activity at the beginning of the XVIIIth century designed to implement foreign patterns and models we would definitely expect the gradual disappearance of the ancient art. In spite of this, almost all industrialized branches of folk art, stylistically linked with the ancient tradition, emerged and flourished almost simultaneously from the end of the XVIIIth century. Second, some branches of the folk art industries, which had previously been established under Western European influence, began to acquire archaic features from the end of the XVIIIth century, and this process considerably increased in the middle of the XIXth century.²¹⁶ Teteryatnikov demonstrated that this reanimation of the ancient tradition was the involuntary result of Old Believers activity. Since the time of Ivan the Terrible a split appeared between upper and lower layers, between the Russian folk and the westernized part of society. During and after the time of Peter the Great the Old Believers were the only people who were not touched by

²¹⁵ V.N. Lazarev *Feofan Grek i yego shkola* (Theophanes the Greek and His School). Moscow, 1961. P. 102.

contemporary decrees which were intended to eradicate the very basis of the previous artistic life. They kept the traditional handicrafts, the ancient design of books, the folk and church songs (with the elaborate system of notation), and so on. During the reign of Catherine II (in the second half of the XVIIIth century) they were granted some economic rights which allowed them to settle near important industrial centres such as Moscow and Nizhnii Novgorod. Under their influence some branches of industry, borrowed earlier from the West, acquired traditional Russian themes, motifs, and patterns.²¹⁷

The search for genuine Russian Orthodox music began in the 1860-s with the famous writer and music critic Prince Odoyevsky²¹⁸ and such great Russian composers as Glinka, Rimskii-Korsakov, and Tchaikovsky. It should be noted that the unity of music in Old Russia was based on *liturgy*, which formed the centre of musical performance, similar to the role played by iconostasis, and church as a whole, in relation to painting. The music was a part of the event which had to be experienced from the beginning to the end. For composers of the time it was, along with the search for folk-tales and songs, a pursuit of the old Muscovite tradition. Tchaikovsky expressed the main task as "the repossession for the Orthodox church of its property, which was violently taken away, through the harmonization of the ancient melodies by the intermediacy of the strict style."²¹⁹ Once again we can observe that a reflection on a particular sphere of art, in this case music, in order to discover the rootstock, began in the XIXth century looking not to the immediate previous stage of development but to the Muscovite Rus' of the XVIth century and earlier.

²¹⁶ V. M. Teteryatnikov "Staroobryadtsy – sozdateli russkogo narodnogo iskusstva" (Old-believers - creators of Russian folk art). // *The New Review* New York, 1977. V. 126.

²¹⁷ These patterns later influenced the Russian *avant-garde* of the XXth century.

²¹⁸ See: N. Cornwell *The Life, Times and Milieu of V. F. Odoyevski 1804-1869*, London, 1986. Pp. 134-142.

²¹⁹ Quote from: Trubetskoi "Pravoslavnoye tserkovnoye peniye..." P. 147.

Section 3. Mysticism

'Mysticism' is a word which is commonly misunderstood. The Western tradition draws a rigorous distinction between the scientific and the religious, or mystical, approach to understanding. For instance, Russell, in his article on the subject, shows that the greatest philosophers, such as Heraclitus, Parmenides, Plato, Spinoza, were mystics.²²⁰ If we take this for granted, we would have no option but to rewrite the history of Western philosophy. Would it then be a true history? Stace in his book indicates that

It would be better if we could use the words "enlightenment" or "illumination", which are commonly used in India... But it seems that for historical reasons we in the West must settle for "mysticism." All that we can do is to try gradually to overcome the prejudices which it tends to arouse.²²¹

At this point we have to clarify the parameters of the word 'mystics' in order to outline the specifics of Russian mysticism. It is, of course, impossible to provide a correct and exhaustive definition of 'mysticism,' and we do not wish to pretend to form such a definition. It seems that the best way to approach the phenomenon of mysticism is trying to avoid unnecessary associations and restrict ourselves to the sources of indubitable knowledge; and to its principal goal. On the one hand the problem is whether genuine knowledge comes from reason or from other sources, such as intuition and revelation. On the other hand the criterion can be found in the goal of cognition: either knowledge, which can help with the difficulties of our earthly life (utilitarian goal), or that knowledge which stands in relation to the ultimate spiritual reality in order to save the soul. In this work we will predominantly use the word 'mysticism' in relation to the sources of knowledge, although in some cases, we will turn to the second meaning as well.

The ultimate intention of empiricists is to derive all human knowledge from the primary empirical experience on the basis of reason. This is an extremely important and useful intention, not the least due to its strong restrictions, and it does in fact create the core of the scientific approach to reality.

²²⁰ Bertrand Russell, "Mysticism and Logic" // *Mysticism and Logic and Other Essays*, London, 1949.

²²¹ W. T. Stace, *Mysticism and Philosophy*, London, 1961. Pp. 15-16.

However, although empirically we can recognize the great cultural value of revelations in the history of humanity, it is impossible to deny the existence of a certain vagueness and irrationality inherent in human personal experience. It would seem reasonable to pay attention to this side of human actuality and to characterize mysticism as the endeavour to accept data from non-empirical sources of thought. It does not necessarily require that we accept theism or pantheism. (Stace shows the possibility for even the atheistic approach to some trends of mysticism.²²²)

Much more problematic is the question about the relationship between mysticism and rationality. The cliché is to understand 'mystical' as a synonym for 'irrational,' on the basis that it is impossible to examine and strictly formalize mystical experience. However we cannot be certain that there are not ambiguities in our rational representations of the empirical data. Besides, we recognize Neo-Platonic or St. Thomas Aquinas' views to be presented in purely and highly logical and rational form even though the subject of their investigations is obviously mystical from the empirical point of view. Therefore, we recognize the possibility of rational thinking about such concepts as God, ecstasy, angels, and so on. In addition, if we consider that Neo-Platonism is a school of philosophy, we are forced to conclude that in the history of Western philosophy there is a great school whose founder had an important mystical experience (it is well known from Porphyry) which he attempted to rationalize. The very terminology of the Neo-Platonic epistemology was taken from the mysteries - the word 'Theoria' in mysteries designated the passionate contemplation of the deity, and 'Extasis', for example, signified the state of unity with the divine essence, and so on. It is also useful to remember that the word 'mathematikos' referred to the second stage of the initiation to the Pythagorean mysteries. Thus, there were no impassable boundaries between the rational and the irrational in Greek spirituality.

Therefore, in relation to the sources of knowledge we can have both experimental and observational data on the one hand, and personal experience of intuition and revelation on the other. However, at the next stage, the spiritual experience and reflected revelations can be rationally refined into the system, and so there is no contradiction between the source of knowledge and the way it is

²²² Ibid., Pp. 123-124.

developed. The problem arises when we try to choose between those different sources of knowledge.

When we are talking about a particular approach to knowledge we have to start from the time when the difference between distinct approaches has been acknowledged by a culture itself. This did not happen in Rus' prior to the formative period, though there was widely known translated works which discussed this difference. The statements of belief was taken dogmatically, and there were no signs of rational critical work in relation to the accepted doctrines. Moreover, one of the greatest puzzles of the history of Russian cultural progress is the almost complete absence of intellectual development in the forms known in the West. The well known historian of Russian culture, Florovsky, stated:

The most disquieting question in the history of Old Russian culture is this: What was the reason for what can be described as its intellectual silence? There was a great art, and there was also an intensive creative activity in the political and social field, including ideological speculations. But surely nothing original and outstanding has been produced in the realm of ideas, theological or secular.²²³

The situation seems even more puzzling if we take into account that Rus' "never knew any ascetic denial of culture, ... as was familiar to the monks of Cluny in an acute form, as well as to some currents of Byzantine monasticism."²²⁴ Though, after these statements had been made the new translations into Church Slavonic language were discovered they nevertheless remain true. This means that before the end of the XVth century with the appearance of the theological works of St. Nilus of Sora and other authors, it is impossible to discuss any particular approach to cognition, whether mystical or scientific. The Old Russia for about five centuries after the conversion to Christianity did not see any contradiction between Reason and Revelation, which became around the same time so characteristic for the Western tradition.²²⁵ However the foundations of a specific attitude to the problem had been

²²³ G. Florovsky "The problem of Old Russian culture" // *Readings in Russian Civilization*. V. 1. P. 220. The problem is discussed by Francis J. Thomas "The corpus of Slavonic Translation available in Muscovy. The cause of Old Russia intellectual silence and a contributory factor to Muscovite Cultural autarky" // *Christianity and the Eastern Slavs*. *California Slavic Studies* XVI, v. 1, Berkeley, etc., 1993.

²²⁴ Fedotov, *The Russian Religious Mind*, P. 377.

²²⁵ Different approaches to the problem and the interrelations between the scholars are brilliantly characterized by Etienne Gilson *Reason and Revelation in the Middle Ages*. N.Y., 1969.X

prepared earlier, when the Second South Slavic influence in the XIVth century brought into Rus' numerous new translations including the works of the Hesychasts. The discussion between scholars influenced by Western thought, especially by the teaching of St. Thomas Aquinas, lead by Barlaam the Calabrian and rigorous Byzantine monks under the guidance of St. Gregory Palamas turned out to be the last great current in Byzantine theology. The impact of this discussion on educated Russian monks can be seen by the kinds of translations which were available in Muscovy: not only the Hesychasts themselves were translated (though with some strange gaps) but also the Fathers who had influenced them, and some re-translations of the important theological works.²²⁶

From the "Life" of St. Sergius of Radonezh it is known that he was greatly interested in this discussion and one of his pupils probably visited Mount Athos in order to obtain accurate information about it.²²⁷ St. Sergius established a spiritual tradition, which on the one hand continued the old Kievan tradition of St. Theodosius, and on the other acquired some important new features. From the point of view of our research the most significant innovation was his mystical experience. St. Sergius was granted at least two visions of the divine world: the vision of the bright celestial light and many birds, and the vision of Our Lady. (As has been mentioned previously, from the "lives" of saints who used to live prior to St. Sergius, they had sometimes experienced dark visions, but there were never any signs of bright celestial visions.) Taking into account these visions and the dedication of the newly established church to the Trinity Fedotov calls St. Sergius the first Russian mystic in strict sense of the word.²²⁸ This point is of great importance because Russian religious life did not focus on mysticism during the first three centuries of its existence, and this, along with the dedication of life to the Trinity, separates St. Sergius from St. Theodosius (one of the most venerated saints from the Kievan period). St. Sergius' visions should be viewed in the context a) of the aesthetics of light examined in the previous chapter; b) of the teaching of the Hesychasts, which was also touched on in the previous chapter.

²²⁶ See: Thomas "The corpus of Slavonic Translation", Pp. 184-185. Also: Sobolevskii A. I. *Perevodnaya literatura Moskovskoi Rusi XIV – XV vekov*. (The translated literature of Muscovite Rus' from the XIV to the XV centuries.) St. Petersburg, 1903.

²²⁷ Fedotov G.P. *Svyatyte Drevnei Rusi* (Saints of Old Rus'). 3rd edition, Paris: YMCA-PRESS, 1985.P. 139.

²²⁸ Ibid. P. 138. See also: G. Fedotov *The Russian Religious Mind*, N. Y 1946. P. 388.

The light of St. Sergius' visions can be compared with the light which was seen by the apostles at Mount Tabor during the Transfiguration of Jesus, the so-called 'uncreated light'. This light along with the silence (it is known from St. Sergius "Life" that he tasted 'delightful silence' as well) plays a singular role in the doctrine of the Hesychasts. John Meyendorff mentions four meanings of the word 'Hesychasm' (from the Greek *hesychia* – 'silence'): a) the specific form of asceticism known from the very beginning of historical monasticism; b) in the XIII - XIVth centuries the monastic practice of the concentration and praying with constant repetition of the name of Jesus, the so-called psycho-somatic technique of praying; c) the teaching of St. Gregory Palamas; d) the movement of the proponents of the Orthodoxy of the XIVth century.²²⁹ Though the question of the influence of Hesychasm (in its different meanings) on Russian culture has not been satisfactorily resolved in detail, it can be said that the intentions of the Hesychasts gained sympathy among Russian monks. Their principal intention, to possess unity with God through His uncreated energies, had being practiced by monks for a long time prior to the XIVth century controversy. St. Gregory Palamas defended the very nature of their intentions from the attacks of Barlaam the Calabrian in the spirit of the greatest Eastern intellectual authorities including Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite, St. Basil the Great, St. John of Damascus, and Symeon the New Theologian.

The principal question can be formulated as to whether it is possible to man to reach deification through the mystical light which unites him with God in the depths of his spirit, or whether there is an insurmountable gap between the human and the divine. St. Gregory gave a positive answer to this question. It is not necessary to go into the details of his approach. However, in view of the significance of the Hesychasts movement for Russian spirituality, we do have to outline the principal points. The answer is found in the so-called "apophatic" (negative) way of comprehending God, characterized by the negation of all the possible definitions of God, as He is beyond any of them. He is beyond Discourse, Intuition and Being.²³⁰ "By the ... law of truth the boundless Super-Essence surpasses Essences, the Super-Intellectual Unity surpasses Intelligences, the One which is beyond thought surpasses

²²⁹ Meyendorff Ioann, Archpriest, "Sv. Grigorii Palama, yego mesto v predanii tserkvi i sovremennom bogoslovii" (St. Gregory Palamas, his place in the Church tradition and in the modern theology // *Le Messenger* No 127-128, IV, 1978. P. 63.

the apprehension of thought, and the Good which is beyond utterance surpasses the reach of words".²³¹

- This apophatic way is not just a complementary way to the kataphatic (positive) way (as it was taken, for instance, by St. Thomas Aquinas), or just as an opposition (Nicholas of Cusa), but is the highest and the only true way to reach unity with God, which is in turn the only goal of Christian life. This is a specific state of human beings, rather than one of the possible ways to rationally approach the divine essence. In addition, positive (kataphatic) theology wishes to see in God the simplest object which can be considered through the analogies. This approach leads to the point that the simplest thing is identical to its attributes, and this conclusion is *contradictio in objecto*. "On the contrary, using unknowability as a point of departure, one would sooner affirm that God cannot be termed a simple essence than allow His absolute unknowability to be weakened. Nonetheless, the same theology affirms with no less force the possibility of knowing God."²³²
- The obvious contradiction between the absolute impossibility of approaching God, Who is beyond everything, and the possibility of obtaining knowledge of Him is resolved by the doctrine of the divine energies. St. Gregory Palamas discriminates between the essence of God (which is unapproachable) and the energies of God, which are "the natural processions of God Himself, a mode of existence which is proper to Him and according to which God exists not only in His essence, but also outside His essence."²³³ At the same time God obviously remains identical in both modes of existence whether in essence or in energies. The energies are uncreated, and this differs them from all the creation including man. Moreover, "each energy is God Himself."²³⁴ It follows from this discrimination between essence and energies that a) through these energies we can somehow participate in God's essence (without becoming God, because otherwise Trinity would be transformed into Multiplicity); b) the energies, being living and personal forces rather than abstract notions, confer their dynamic character on the corresponding mystical

²³⁰ See: *Dionysius the Areopagite on the Divine Names and the Mystical Theology*. Trans. By C. Rolt. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1920. P.52.

²³¹ Ibid. Pp. 52-53.

²³² Vladimir N. Lossky *In the Image and Likeness of God*, P. 51.

²³³ Ibid. P. 54.

²³⁴ Quote from: Ioann Meyendorff "Sv. Grigorii Palama, yego mesto..." *Le Messenger*, N 127. V. IV, 1978. P. 61.

experience. They can be approachable in the form of 'divine light,' for instance, the light which was seen by the apostles at Mount Tabor. It is because of this the notion of light and the related images were so important for the Hesychasts. Moreover, this light is grace. As St. Gregory states "Illumination or divine and deifying grace is not essence, but the energy of God". By grace "God totally embraces those who are worthy, and the saints embrace God in His fullness."²³⁵ In order to obtain the light and the grace the monk has to keep silence and to learn the special technique of praying. Thus, St. Gregory unites the doctrine of the divine energies with the old monastic tradition.

- The possibility of achieving deification through participation in the divine energies is based on the unity of mind and body, because this state cannot be gained through spiritual activity alone. (It is known that St. Thomas Aquinas taught that possessing corporeal as well as spiritual life, man became higher than angels deprived of bodies. The difference with Palamism could be found in the role played by the body in the whole process of deification. However, this problem is definitely outside the goal and competence of our research.)

It is indicative that even recently differences in attitude to apophatic theology can be clearly observed in the works of Russian and Western scholars. While Lossky and Meyendorff emphasize the principal difference between kataphatic and apophatic ways by demonstrating that apophatism is by no means merely complementary to positive knowledge, Western experts take it exactly with this complementary meaning. It is now a commonplace that the ground for negative theology was elaborated first by Plato and Aristotle and then by Plotinus. These ideas were then borrowed by Christian theologians, like Clement of Alexandria. In all these cases we definitely observe different understandings of 'negative theology'.²³⁶ However the general attitude can be described as follows: negative theology was developed by the Greek philosophers and then enriched by apologetics and the Church Fathers "in the light of revelation."²³⁷ A specialist in the history of European thought, R. Mortley, for instance, brings together the views of philosophers and those of Christian theologians discriminating between negation as such and negation taken as an abstraction. He

²³⁵ Quote from: Lossky *In the Image*, p. 59.

²³⁶ See: *Prudentia*, Supp. Number 1981 The Via Negativa, especially articles by R. Mortley, E. Osborn, G. Ardley.

²³⁷ G. Ardley "From Greek philosophy to apophatic theology" // *Prudentia*. P. 142.

describes the negative theology of Plotinus (justly confirming the closeness between his attitude and that of Clement) in the following words:

...We begin by seeing things in a totality of parts, as encased in a sphere. This in fact corresponds to Plotinus' view of the spherical encasement of the real: he is concerned here that we see things rightly to begin with, that is holistically. Then the method of *aphairesis* takes over, and we remove various elements of this familiar and composite picture. But then there comes a halt to the abstraction process, and to the thought process in general: we must 'invoke the god'. ... Clement uses the word *analysis*, but he means abstraction, and says that contemplation involves abstracting depth from bodies, then breadth and length. Arriving at this point, we abstract its position and so are left with unity itself. This is said to be equivalent to 'casting ourselves into greatness of Christ', but there remains a further stage, that of moving up to the unknowable First Cause. This takes place after the abstraction process has been exhausted, and constitutes another, extra-rational step.²³⁸

Though the idea of an extra-rational step appears here, the whole understanding of the process is a proper continuation of Plato's and Aristotle's dialectics. Moreover, this is more or less correct only in regard to the Alexandrian theology of Clement and Origen. The insurmountable gap between philosophy and theology in this respect appeared later in the works of Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite and Cappadocian fathers. They emphasized the difference between the God of revelation and the God of philosophers. Lossky stated that for a philosopher, even if he was talking about the ecstatic unity with the One, the very nature of God remains some kind of object, something which is positively defined. For Dionysius, on the contrary, deification means a break out from the sphere of the created²³⁹. Here we approach another concept, that of grace, which separates the Christian approach from the philosophical one. Though man should strive towards deification, it is impossible to reach it without divine grace. However this is always a gift. A man himself is too weak and, being a part of the created world, is too estranged from the essence of God, and so he obtains communication with this essence exclusively through grace.

The attitude to grace is another point which distinguishes Western from Eastern tradition. According to St. Augustine there is a crucial contradiction between

²³⁸ R. Mortley What is negative theology? The Western origins // *Prudentia*. P. 12.

²³⁹ V. Lossky "Ocherk misticheskogo bogosloviya Vostochnoi tserkvi" (Sketches on the mystical theology of the Eastern Church). // *Misticheskoye bogosloviye*, Kiev, 1991. P. 114.

grace and freedom. The main issue discussed by St. Augustine in his rejection of the Pelagius doctrine was the interrelation between the human ability to reach salvation through fulfilling the commands of God and God's grace. St. Augustine, in contrast to Pelagius, insisted that human efforts alone, due to sinful human nature, are nothing, and God's gift of grace is the only hope for salvation. On the ground of rationalistic reasoning this problem cannot be resolved, as either the human freedom of will or God's omnipotence must be rejected. The solution given by the Eastern Church Fathers and accepted by the leading Russian saints, including Sergius, Nilus, and Seraphim, can be expressed in the following way: God's grace by itself as well as virtue by itself are insufficient in regard to salvation; only the ceaseless human striving towards good along with grace can raise the soul to perfection. The crucial point here is that the human striving itself is not a waste of time, and the grace is not given to honour these empty efforts. It is a confirmation that there is neither salvation without efforts nor without grace.²⁴⁰ St. Augustine's mistake from this point of view is that he remained on the purely rationalistic level. Thus, both grace and freedom in their open communication rather than opposition lead to deification. In contrast to the Neo-Platonic doctrine, this is not a step-by-step process but a gradual one. We cannot go into further detail including the relations between spirit and heart, reason and feeling, and so on. It is enough at this stage for our purposes to underline the absence of contradiction in relation to a matter which raised enormous discussion in the West.

Thus, the first manifestation of a peculiar Russian mysticism we can find with St. Sergius of Radonezh. However it did not reveal itself in any kind of theological doctrine. St. Sergius' mysticism is expressed exclusively in the way of everyday life. His life was dedicated to the Trinity, which served as symbol of unity, and St. Sergius himself was understood as one of the most significant and popular images in Russian religious life. The unity of human and divine can also be found in the fact that, during the liturgy, an angel prayed with St. Sergius, as was once discovered by three of his closest pupils. His famous visions again related not to his individual salvation but confirmed the everlasting divine support for his efforts. St. Sergius naturally combined in himself a depth of mystical experience with successful political activity. Though he rejected the proposal to become Metropolitan of Moscow, he remained the religious leader of the Russian people and inspired Prince Dimitry to fight against the

²⁴⁰ Ibid. P. 225-226.

Tatars. Yet later, along with the rise of Moscow to the level of a mighty state with one autocratic ruler, these two sides of St. Sergius' activity split into two religious movements of the Non-possessors and the Josephites. The mystical side remained with the former, and the leader of the Non-possessors St. Nilus of Sora became the first theologian in the proper sense of the word. (The intelligentsia of the XIXth century unanimously contrasted St. Nilus to St. Joseph in favour of the former. However the authors of the XXth century, Fedotov and Kartashev, re-estimated this approach. Taking into account their arguments and the whole course of historical and religious development it seems methodologically correct to look at these spiritual leaders of the beginning of the XVIth century as expressing two sides of one tradition which were so complementarily in the life and activity of St. Sergius.)

St. Nilus emphasized the psychological side of religious experience, almost completely ignoring the practical one. In his writings we can find an elaborated expression of the spiritual experience closely connected to that of the Mount Athos' monasticism (St. Nilus visited Greece together with his friend Ivan Okhlebinin) and obtained through his life at Sora. St. Nilus' works show his acquaintance with the Church Fathers as well as with Scripture, and many pages consist of a series of quotations. The principal ideas of St. Nilus could be summed up in the following statements²⁴¹:

- this life serves exclusively as a preparation for eternal life; the best thing in the world is suffering because it clears up the soul;
- the best way of life is monasticism which should, however, be spiritual rather than corporeal; its main goal is to obtain a spiritual perfection. Because of this the principal object of the monk's labours is his heart and thought rather than the body. St. Nilus vigorously rejects excessiveness in this sphere, advocating tolerance and moderation;
- the spiritual should predominate over the ceremonial, and in accordance with this he estranged himself from any sort of institutionalized economic life;
- the church should not be embellished with expensive decoration and should not possess golden vessels, and so on. It is much better to distribute everything but the most necessary to the beggars;

- the highest state which can be gained by a monk is the state of pure contemplation and meditation. In order to reach this state the monk should practice the so-called 'clever praying' (the Hesychast term);
- the striving toward spiritual perfection should be conscious and rational. St. Nilus, and this is probably the most striking feature of his attitude, thought that the monk should not be deprived of his freedom of will, which was the common view of the time. Because of this he fought against the severe persecution of heretics, insisting on persuasion and discussions rather than physical punishment;
- at the same time he insisted on the unity of Christian doctrine and life. St. Nilus strove for greater knowledge, because he thought that without genuine knowledge the true goal could not be recognised. St. Nilus reproached monks who preferred to live "according to their passionate wills"²⁴², and not according to the holy writings;
- A critical approach to religious writings was advised. He expressed this in his famous words that "there are many writings however not all of them are of divine nature".²⁴³

Summing up St. Nilus' attitude in the light of the Hesychast and St. Sergius tradition we have to emphasize both the unity of mind and body, rather than a preference for the spiritual, and the learned way to God, based on human free will and understanding. According to St. Nilus' views the monk is completely estranged from everyday life, providing spiritual and verbal rather than any form of economic help to the rest of society. That is why neither individual monks nor monasteries should possess anything.

This problem led to a struggle which ended with the total defeat of the Non-Possessors. Their opponents, the Josephites, linked themselves with the central power, and in contrast to St. Nilus' teaching they insisted on strict measures in relation to heretics (under the Spanish influence even up to executing them through *auto-da-fe*, which had not been customary in the previous tradition). The Josephites were very

²⁴¹ Here we present them after A. S. Arkhangel'skii *Nil Sorskii i Vassian Patrikeyev. Ikh literaturnyye trudy i idei v Drevnei Rusi* (Nilus of Sora and Vassian Patrikeyev. Their literary writings and ideas in Ancient Rus'). St. -Petersburg, 1882. Pp. 128-136.

²⁴² Quote from *ibid.* P. 136. ("Po svoim strastnym volyam zhiti.")

²⁴³ Quote from *ibid.* P. 134.

suspicious in relation to any individual strove for knowledge, and, therefore, accentuated the role of established ritual. They also firmly declared the necessity for the monasteries to possess lands and people cultivating these lands.

Though the very goals for St. Nilus and St. Joseph were the same, and St. Joseph was no less Christian than St. Nilus, they could not agree on the ways which would lead the country toward these goals. The illuminated ascetic mysticism of St. Nilus after two generations of fighting succumbed to the opponents, who transformed the church into a state institution, facilitating later the work of Peter I. In this way mysticism was relegated to the periphery of ecclesiastical life. The fateful point occurred in the middle of the XVIth century: the Council of 1551 (the so-called "Council of One-Hundred Chapters") demonstrated the victory of the Josephites, Trans-Volga monasteries were destroyed, and with them mysticism in Russian monastic life. With the triumphant Josephites outward piety and a too close relationship with the secular authority marked the life of the Russian Church. Fedotov noted the decay of sanctity measured by the number of saints canonized after the period since the second half of the XVIth century.²⁴⁴

One problem arises in relation to the Old-Believers. Being in opposition to secular power they, notwithstanding, turned to the Josephites rather than to the Non-Possessors. This is even more striking if we recall that one of the most important centres of this movement was the Trans-Volga forests and marshes. In order to explain this we have to take into account that the main issue which prompted the Schism was the attitude to outward forms of religious life (the sign of the cross with two fingers instead of three.) It was mentioned earlier that the Old-Believers retained the idea of 'Moscow - the Third Rome' and along with this, being severely persecuted, had to mould their attitude to secular power. They also supported the idea of the pious and righteous Orthodox ruler (they regarded Peter I as the Anti-Christ). An ideal expression of all these issues was found in the proceedings of the Council of 1551, which linked the Old-Believers with the Josephites. However, in contrast to the Josephites the Old Believers never put this attitude to a pious ruler into practice, keeping it exclusively as an ideal. If we also consider the fact that St. Nilus was indifferent to secular power and to any forms of economic life, and this attitude was impossible for a people under oppression, it is understandable why the Old-Believers

²⁴⁴ Fedotov, *Svyatyye...*, P. 188.

were able to keep many forms of ancient life, but especially this pure mystical side of it. Contrary to Protestant tradition, which greatly emphasized an individual's struggle for salvation (as we find, for instance, in John Bunyan's allegorical work *Pilgrim's Progress* which depicts Christian's abandoning wife and family in order to start a pilgrimage from the City of Destruction to the Celestial City) the Old Believers anthropocentric view stated that individual personality was by no means a goal in itself. In their understanding of a man's goal was his relationship with God which could be established exclusively through the Church, whether it possessed a hierarchical priesthood or not. At the same time a mystical attitude toward tsardom manifested itself in a belief that the fall of the Anti-Christ could not be the result of human efforts but of Christ's.²⁴⁵ That is why the Old Believers did not support any social movements which were supposed to change the existing social order. Their attitude was always purely mystical and based on the idea that all troubles were sent as a punishment for the betrayal of the old piety. Shakhov offers some striking examples which demonstrate the Old Believers' indifference to a state as such.²⁴⁶

The resurrection of this mystical side of church life relates to the turn of the XIXth century and, therefore, coincides with the period of formation of the means of reflection on national consciousness.

Thus, a strong conviction in the existence of a historical chain which united all the principal events of human development was formed in Russian consciousness. This *quasi-historical* consciousness clearly distinguished between sacral and secular events; and the events of the sacred and church history were regarded as sense-formative. The recorded history of earthly events was of secondary value: the only true state is a Christian state, and the Christian state lasts as long as its population expresses Christianity and does not fall into sin. All the explanations were readily found in human nature: degree of piety and obedience to God's will. At the same time because of the sense of historical chain an idea of Holy Rus', Christian Rus' was related to the land and not to any ethnic group. The historicism as it was connected with the meaning of the phrase 'Russian land' always related to the power as the most notable factor of Russian social life. This chain also manifested itself in the theory

²⁴⁵ M. O. Shakhov *Filisofskiye aspekty staroveriya* (Philosophical Aspects of the Old Belief). Moscow, 1998. P. 102.

²⁴⁶ *ibid.* Pp. 102-103.

"Moscow – the Third Rome". With this theory we approach Russian messianism and eschatology. The specifics of Russian messianism is found in the fact that the Holy land cannot be spread as such, and so it is seen rather through the righteousness of belief. It is intimately linked with the eschatology which stands in contrast to the concept of infinite progress. This eschatology is based on idea that we have to live as if history and human culture in total are justified by special super-meaning and every member of humankind has to fulfil its particular aim and the emphasis is made on salvation and transfiguration of the Earth rather than on punishment.

The specifics of Russian aestheticism as it was expressed in literature and painting is found 1) in the striving for divine wholeness where the uniting force was found in the light; 2) in moderation, which did not allow anything to become self-sufficient and through this to destroy or disturb this wholeness. This approach intimately unites both the concept of beauty as the manifestation of the divine and the concept of beauty as harmony.

The attitude to reality is based on the conviction that it is possible to establish a proper relationship between the human being and the Absolute, and this relationship is the sole source of indubitable knowledge. This possibility was theoretically demonstrated by the Hesychasts in their doctrine of the Divine energies. However, in contrast to the Western scholastics, in which the kataphatic (positive) approach equaled in the end intuition and reason, the Russian saints favoured the apophatic (negative) approach. They thought that only the apophatic approach united both intuition and reason in the striving for salvation.

Chapter 4

THE KEY CONCEPTS OF THE RUSSIAN MIND:

PRAVDA AND VOLYA

Nicholas Zernov in his book *Three Russian Prophets: Khomiakov, Dostoevsky, Soloviev* stated that "The birth of Russian culture dates from 988, the year when missionaries from Constantinople brought the message of the Eastern Orthodox Church to the people of Kiev and Novgorod. The Orthodox Church became the centre round which the various tribes and races inhabiting the Russian plain were to find their spiritual unity and that distinctive outlook which is what we really mean when we speak of "Russia"²⁴⁷. This statement, though being highly plausible, is at the same time inaccurate for at least two reasons: 1) Zernov oversimplifies the picture by ignoring that a) political unity of the land preceded Christian unity, and it is impossible to imagine a politically united country without cross-cultural contacts; b) the previous pagan culture of the people who were gradually being Christianized was exactly what generated the specifics of Russian Christianity. 2) The peculiar Russian culture as an organic wholeness rather than a conglomerate consisting of the elements of different cultures, was formed much later over at east three to four centuries after the formal Baptism. The development of such concepts as *pravda*, *volya* and *zakon*, as well as of some others closely related to them, can be specifically taken as a demonstration of this statement. The goal of this chapter is to outline the content of the national ideal as it appears through these concepts.

Christianity was so important for Russian consciousness that the corresponding expression appeared in respect to the national ideal - *Holy Rus'*; which meant that Russian consciousness was primarily submitted to the idea of God. However, the concept of the One Almighty God was formed in relation to concepts which had been existed prior to the baptism: *pravda* and *volya*. In this thesis, these concepts have been chosen for the following reasons: a) they are closely connected with political thought and practice because they express the highest ideals of political and social life, they also express both collective and individual ideals; b) they at the

²⁴⁷ Nicholas Zernov *Three Russian Prophets: Khomiakov, Dostoevsky, Soloviev*, London, 1944. P. 13.

same time do not belong exclusively to the sphere of political thinking, penetrating different areas of spiritual activity. The second statement, if applied to the circumstances when different spheres are not developed and, therefore, not separated from each other, seems to be anticipating a later stage. However, two easily recognizable meanings of both these words, being definitely inherited from the past, show that their application goes beyond political and social issues. The word *pravda* bears the meanings of 'truth' and 'justice', and the word *volya* - the meanings of 'will' and 'freedom'. (It is interesting that in the Russian word *spravedlivost* ('justice') we can find the same root as in *pravda* (as in '*pravyi*' ('right' in two meanings: 'correct' and 'just')), while in the English word *justice* we can see the root '*jus*' (from Latin 'law') which connects it with the state and legal system. When it is necessary to translate the word *pravda* in its primary meaning, it can, for instance, be done through the word 'righteousness', uniting to some extent meanings of 'truth' and 'justice' (see: St. James version of Matthew 5, 6).

It is not the purpose of this research to provide an exhaustive list of contexts, and it is sufficient to demonstrate the most apposite ones. It is also necessary to remember that the linguistic meanings of the words of natural languages are not concepts, and, therefore, they can be taken exclusively as indications to general and sometimes vague ideas and cultural values. They form specific semantic fields where the meanings overlap each other and different words can express similar concepts emphasizing differences in nuance or different aspects. Vice versa: one word can express different meanings in different contexts.

We will start with an analysis of the concept of *pravda*. It appears reasonable to investigate it in relation to the concept of law, especially taking into account that very often *pravda* appears in the same context as *zakon* ('law').

The famous historian of Russia, G. Vernadsky, stated that

... As it was the case with other peoples, the Slavs had developed some general ideas on law and justice long before the appearance of written codes among them. The words *pravda* (law, justice, truth) and *zakon* (law, religion) are among the oldest words in the Slavic languages.²⁴⁸

The first code of laws was compiled in the XIth century and is known as *Pravda Russkaia* ('Russian Law'). There is a resemblance between this document and

²⁴⁸ *Medieval Russian Laws*, trans. by George Vernadsky, New York, Inc., 1965, p. 3.

King Alfred's Wessex laws and also the earliest Norwegian laws.²⁴⁹ In this case the word *pravda* is taken as the 'code of laws.' However at least from the Xth century, the word *zakon* was used in the same meaning. It is necessary to mention in this respect the Byzantine law, including the Church one. The Bulgarian compilation of the Byzantine law, the so-called *Zakon Sudnyi Liudem* ("Court Law for the People"), which appeared no later than the Xth century, was extremely popular in Russia²⁵⁰ since the acceptance of Christianity, along with the *Nomokanon* by Ioann Scholastic. According to a historian of Old and Medieval Russia, M. Tikhomirov, the oldest version of *Russkaia Pravda* appeared as the legislation of Novgorod under the influence of *Zakon Sudnyi Liudem*.²⁵¹ However, it should be noted that it was influence and not a mere translation and compilation. In order to understand the interrelations between the Byzantine and Russian law codifications, we have to take into account an amazing fact discovered by a specialist in the history of Russian language, Boris Unbegaun. This is a gap between the old legal vocabulary, which is predominantly of Russian origin, and the rest of the literary vocabulary, including the most abstract words, which is predominantly a Church-Slavonic one. Unbegaun explains this fact by presuming the existence of an elaborated customary law prior to the establishment of the state.²⁵² The appearance of the word *zakon* in the Treaties with the Greeks in the Xth century bears the meaning of 'written law' along with the meaning of 'religious law, rite': "...Will be punished in accordance to the Greek law [*zakon*], and in accordance to the Russian statute [*oustav*] and law [*zakon*]."²⁵³ There is no word *pravda* in this Treaty of the year 945 or in Oleg's Treaty of 911. In the latter we can find expressions like 'according to law [*zakon*] and to custom [*pokon*].'²⁵⁴ This is a well established understanding of the term *pravda* as of law

²⁴⁹ Ibid. p. 4.

²⁵⁰ Ibid. p. 5-6.

²⁵¹ M. N. Tikhomirov *Issledovaniie o "russkoi pravde"* (Study on 'Russian Pravda'). Moscow, Leningrad, 1941, p. 48-61, an idea of Novgorodian origin of *Russkaia Pravda* was elaborated earlier by N. A. Maksimeiko in *Opyt kriticheskogo issledovaniia Russkoi Pravdy*, Kharkov, 1914.

²⁵² B. O. Unbegaun "Yazyk russkogo prava" (Language of Russian Legislation). // *Selected Papers on Russian and Slavonic Philology*, Oxford, 1969. P. 313.

²⁵³ "Pokaznen budet po zakonu Grecheskomu, po oustavu i po zakonu Ruskomou". Quote from The Treaty of 945 – I. I. Sreznevskii *Materialy dlya slovary drevne-russkogo yazyka* (Data for the dictionary of the Old-Russian language). V. 1. 1955. Column 922.

²⁵⁴ Ibid. Col. 921.

(*zakon*) in the context of *Pravda Russkaia* (middle XIth century), although it is interesting that there was probably a difference between the words *zakon* (oral law, rite) and *pokon* (written law).²⁵⁵ This difference appeared already at the beginning of the Xth century in the Treaty of 911 between Rus' and Byzantium. In the Xth century the word *zakon* was also understood as 'law approved by tradition and religion', in such contexts as 'according to the ... Christian (or Jewish, or pagan law)': "Our Christians of Rus' would bring an oath according to their belief, and the non-Christians according to their law [*zakon*]"²⁵⁶ In this meaning *zakon* partly intersects with *pravda* which appears as a title for the first Russian code of laws. *Pravda* ['juridical rights'] can be found with similar meaning in the following words of the Novgorodian Chronicle: "And the juniors have sworn to stand together for life or death, for the *pravda* of Novgorod".²⁵⁷ *Pravda* could also be found with the more narrow meaning of 'agreement': "An agreement (*pravda*) was written in relation to the rights of the Russians in Riga..."²⁵⁸ At the same time it should be noted that *pravda* often appears in one context with such words as 'love', 'truth', 'courage', however the same is not the case with *zakon*.

It is no later than the XIth century when the word *zakon* was opposed to higher divine law, that was the law of Grace. In one of the most famous works of Old Rus' *The Sermon on Law and Grace* Metropolitan Hilarion presented the Law given to Moses and through him to the Jewish people as a necessary and at the same time preparatory stage for Grace, which came later with Christ. "Law [*zakon*] is the predecessor and the servant of grace and truth; in their turn truth and grace are the servants of the future era, that is of eternal life".²⁵⁹ Hilarion presented the triumphant victory of Rus' over the Khazar khanate as the victory of Grace over Law: when the beneficial belief expanded all over the earth and reached the Russian people, "and the lake of law [*zakon*] dried up, and the evangelical spring became full and covered the

²⁵⁵ A. A. Zimin in: *Pamiatniki prava kievskogo gosudarstva*, Moscow: Gosjurizdat, 1952, p.105.

²⁵⁶ Sreznevskii *Materialy...*, Ibid. Col. 922. "Da na rotu idut nashi khristiane Rusi po vere ikh, a ne khristiane po zakonu svoemu".

²⁵⁷ Quote from the *Novgorodian Chronicle of Older and Junior Texts* in: M. N. Tikhomirov in "Filosofiia v Drevnei Rusi" (Philosophy in old Rus') // *Russkaya kul'tura X-XVIII vekov* (Russian culture of the X-XVIII centuries). Moscow, 1968. P. 152

²⁵⁸ Sreznevskii *Materialy...*, V. 2. Col. 1358.

²⁵⁹ In: *Krasnorechiye Drevnei Rusi (XI-XVII)* Moscow, 1987. P. 42.

whole earth, and spilled upon us".²⁶⁰ (The interpretation of Hilarion's words as relating not only to Israel but also to the Khazar khanate was provided by Tikhomirov²⁶¹) Thus, *zakon* is presented as yielding to grace and truth in time (being the first stage of human development) as well as in space. Although Hilarion does not use the word *pravda* in his Sermon in the wide sense of grace, belief, and truth, the concept is expressed very clearly. The word *pravda* is definitely used only with the meaning of 'justice': Hilarion stated that Vladimir "shepherded his land by justice [*pravda*], courage, and reason".²⁶² *Pravda* is used along with truth [*istina*] in the same context: you are dressed in justice [*pravda*], shod in truth [*istina*], crowned with reason."²⁶³ *Pravda* is something elevated, and because of this Vladimir is called "a friend of *Pravda*."²⁶⁴ However it is still 'justice', found at the same level as courage, reason, and belief. It seems plausible that, before the Baptism and in the first centuries after it, both words *zakon* and *pravda* were very close to each other denoting law, belief, statute, tradition. However the word *zakon* was predominantly applicable to the law which was created in order to control people's behaviour from outside, while *pravda* was increasingly acquiring the meaning of control from inside. It is also important to mention that for Hilarion, for instance, grace in contrast to law was intimately linked with freedom: when he compared law and grace with Agar - slave and Sarah - free woman and then developed this comparison.²⁶⁵ In this case *zakon* was opposed not only to grace but also to freedom.

It has already been noted that the words cannot be taken strictly as having well defined and refined meanings. In relation to the words *zakon* and *pravda* it seems plausible to separate them according to the criterion of an inner-outer distinction. *Zakon* is a right given to someone, *pravda* is a right accepted and agreed to by this someone. *Zakon* is a condition of social justice while *pravda* is a source of social justice and, moreover, this very justice itself. Therefore, the word *zakon* remains more or less in the same meaning which is 'an established order' and the expression, "God's *zakon*", means 'the established rules of Christian belief' ("The Suzdalian

²⁶⁰ Ibid. P. 44. "...i zakonnoye ezero presshe, evangel'skyi zhe istochnik navodnivsya i vsyu zemlyu pokryv i do nas pazliasya".

²⁶¹ Tikhomirov "Filosofiya ..." P. 132.

²⁶² *Krasnorechiye Drevnei Rusi*, P. 45.

²⁶³ Ibid. P. 49.

²⁶⁴ Ibid. P. 47.

²⁶⁵ Ibid. P. 43.

bishop Dionisii came to Novgorod teaching God's law [*zakon*], and implementing the Orthodox belief and true Christianity".²⁶⁶) In this context it is clear that *zakon* appears to be a condition or a frame, while true Christian belief is a content. Thus *pravda* began to oppose *zakon* as inner versus outer, and *pravda* through the concept of Divine was understood as an established direct inner link between God and Man, while *zakon* became secondary in relation to *pravda*.

From the XIIIth century the word *pravda* was used in the expression "God's *pravda*": "...Send to us, and we will give you rights [*pravda*] in accordance to God's justice [*pravda*]"²⁶⁷ We meet here the word *pravda* in two quite different meanings simultaneously: a) 'rights, acquired through agreement' and b) 'justice'. It can be seen that the word *pravda* bore a more general meaning, embracing both a customary law and the law established by princes. In this case *pravda* relating to the balance between customary law (ancient laws and rites, uniting all people who constitute the community (*mir*) and the external yet necessary law of the ruling clique, forms a general meaning, which can be presented as 'an established law'. In its turn the expression 'God's *pravda*' embracing both 'truth' and 'justice,' but in contrast to other truths and justices (which form the basis of agreements) is absolute: "Prior to any *pravda* (agreement) it is necessary to talk about God's *pravda* (justice)."²⁶⁸

The passionate dispute between the Non-Possessors and the Josephites forced its participants to define their attitude to authority and power through the concept of *pravda*. Iosif of Volotsk wrote about the necessity to rule according to the ideal of *pravda* in his *Epistle to the Grand Prince*. According to him, a monarch was provided with the sceptre of power in the earthly kingdom in order to teach people to keep *pravda* in the likeness of the heavenly kingdom.²⁶⁹ Here the striking contrast between power and *pravda* can easily be recognized. This opposition found its pure

²⁶⁶ Sreznevskii *Materialy*..., V. 1. Col. 922.

²⁶⁷ Sreznevskii *Materialy*..., V. 2. Col. 1356. («...и вышлите к намъ, а мы правдоу дамы по Божьи правде.»)

²⁶⁸ Ibid. Col. 135. «Преже всякая правды подобно есть о Божия правде глаголати».

²⁶⁹ *Poslaniia Iosifa Volotskogo* Moscow, Leningrad, 1959. P. 183 «Занеже, государь, по подобию небесныа власти дал ти есть небесный царь скипетр земного царствия силы да человеки научиши правду хранити» И далее: «Якоже кормчий бдит всегда, тако и царски многоочиты твой ум съдержит твердо добраго закона правило иссушаа крепко беззакония потоки, да корабль всемирныа жизни, сиречь всеблагаго царствия твоего не погрязнет волнами неправды.»

manifestation in the popular Russian aphorism "God is not in power but in *pravda*". In this understanding of *pravda* the Non-Possessors are similar to the Josephites. Moreover, one of their leaders, Vassian Patrikeyev, added new colour to this understanding. In his *Epistle in Answer* Vassian contrasted the *pravda* of God with the *pravda* of man²⁷⁰. It means that only one genuine *pravda* exists and this is God's truth and justice. This attitude emphasizes *pravda*-s manifestation at the personal level: people should in the end come to God's *pravda* through personal search for *pravda*-s, otherwise society is destroyed. The personal *pravda*, which is subordinated to earthly interests, divides people: they tend to reject God's *pravda*, which is in heaven. These *pravda*-s lead to untruths and injustices. Therefore, people should subordinate themselves to God's *pravda*. This can be achieved predominantly through love. The idea is definitely taken from the Bible but it acquires a specific meaning. The love of *pravda* forms the core of a loving attitude to people and nature. Furthermore, it is equated with the love of God himself. It is sometimes self-sufficient. One of the most educated scholars of Medieval Russia, St. Maxim the Greek, who was very close to the Non-Possessors, in his works played with the words which had the root 'prav', including 'pravednyi' ("righteous"), 'pravota' ("rightness", "truth"), and *pravda*.²⁷¹

In relation to Unbegaun's statement that, although all the abstract ideas were expressed in Church-Slavonic language, the juridical terms and concepts were expressed in Old Russian it is interesting to note that *pravda*, as can be seen from the texts, was used equally in both the religious and juridical spheres. Therefore, we should presuppose an interaction between different meanings of this word. And so the formation of the concept of *pravda* demonstrates clearly not just the implementation of the Christian concept of justice (Greek *dykaïosynē*) but also the complicated

²⁷⁰ («Слово ответно». «Аще убо въистинну правду глаголете, праваа судите сынове человечести, негде рече блаженный Давид, аки укоряа неких человек неправду, юже ... сопротивляются божией правде, их же зубы оружия и стрелы, и язык их меч остр, иже ищуще поставити правду свою, правде божией не покоришася, ниже бо могут. Мудрования бо их не божииим духом водятся, но в тине *земных вещей* валяющиеся». Quote from: N. A. Kazakova *Vassian Patrikeyev I iego sochinienija*, Moscow, Leningrad. 1960. P. 255

²⁷¹ «... Да и сам сподобишася безосудно глаголати пред ним: «Сътвориш суд и правду, не предаждь мене обидящим мя, но приими мя, раба твоего, в слажение (=наслаждение) благ твоих, яко праведен еси владыко, и правды възлюбил еси, и правоты виде лице твое, и ты въздаси комуждо по делом его», яко тому подобает слава, и честь, и поклоняние в бесконечные веки, аминь.»

process of the adjustment of the ancient Slavic concept to the new Christian one. The unity of truth and justice in this word is also emphasized by the antonyms: *non-pravda* [*nepravda*] could be presented both as *lie* [*lozh*, *krivda*] or as 'the absence of laws' [*bezzakoniye*]. At the same time *krivda* acquired two meanings which are 'lozh' ('lie') and 'injustice': "Pravda with God and *krivda* on earth."²⁷² With its meaning of 'absence of laws' *krivda* did not belong to Church-Slavonic and became a popular word which acquired a meaning exactly opposite to that of *pravda*.

In the course of the centuries the word *pravda* gradually lost its juridical meanings in favour of the meaning of 'truth and justice' in general. For instance, the Moscow Patriarch Iosif said to tsar Aleksei Mikhailovich in 1650: "Look, my lord, how good has it been to stand up for *pravda*: the glory comes even after death".²⁷³ In this case it is extremely difficult to discriminate between 'truth' and 'justice,' because the word *pravda* obviously expresses both meanings. It is also plausible to presuppose that the word *istina* ('truth') under the influence of *pravda* was often used in the wider meaning, acquiring the meaning of 'justice' as well, especially in such contexts such as "to stand up for *pravda*" (equal to "to stand up for *istina*"). This wide meaning embracing both the highest truth and the highest justice is recorded more than one century prior to this saying of Iosif.

During the time when the theory Moscow – the Third Rome was being shaped the concept of *pravda* underwent significant elaboration. It was noted that by this time *pravda* had acquired both juridical and religious meanings blending them into a complicated unity. On the one hand it could be found in the numerous legal documents and yet, on the other hand, it played an important role in the religious contexts being linked with such words as "love" and "mercy". Thus, *pravda* related the juridical contexts to the highest ideal, to the divine absolute, and it related the abstract religious concepts to the realities of social life. This combination of meanings can easily be found in the writings of one a well known XVIth century thinker Fedor Karpov. In his writings *pravda* almost always appears together with *zakon*. For instance, "...With every civil order *pravda* and laws [*zakony*] exist so as to improve

In: "Epistle to Tuchkov-Morozov" // D. M. Bulanin *Perevody I poslaniya Maksima Greka*, Leningrad: Nauka, 1984, p. 202.

²⁷² V. Dal *Tolkovyi Slovar'*. Sec. Ed. St. Petersburg, Moscow, 1881. V. 2. P. 194.

²⁷³ Quote from: Sergei Zen'kovskii *Russkoye staroobryadchestvo* (Russian Old-Believers' Movement). Reprinted. Moscow, 1995. P. 181.

the badly organized..."²⁷⁴ At the same time in the context with "mercy" *pravda* is clearly associated with the legal system: "...*pravda* without mercy is torturing..."²⁷⁵ There is another important aspect of this combination because from the juridical point of view *pravda* is different for the different layers of society. The *pravda* of the noble class can be opposite to that of the peasants. However, God's truth cannot be split into multiple meanings, as it is the single highest truth for all people.

Fedor, one of the most educated persons of the period, expressed his ideal of the 'State [kingdom] of *pravda*' in his *Letter to Metropolitan Daniil*.²⁷⁶ He discriminated between *pravda* as such and laws which are based on *pravda* (*zakony pravednyye*) and contrasted both with 'patience' (*terpeniye*). The use of the word 'patience' in this context is not customary. However it is clear what Karpov meant by this: in the orderly and justly established state there is no discrepancy between the inner personal feeling of *pravda* and the demands of the state; therefore there is no need for patience. The 'patience' is regarded by him as a symptom of social injustice. Following the fifth book of Aristotles' *Nicomachean Ethics* which differentiated between truth and justice Karpov contrasted *pravda* with *zakon*, stating that *zakon* was a rationally established social obligation which should always be corrected by *pravda*. That is why *pravda* is much higher than *zakon*, though both are opposed to patience: *pravda* cannot be unjust while *zakon* can, therefore *zakon* should always be in correspondence with *pravda*. In order to assert his attitude to the law Karpov uses an expression "*zakony pravednyye*", righteous laws which are based on *pravda*. The tsar being the guarantor of these laws should to be lifted to the same level as *pravda*. Karpov expressed these concepts in the following words:

...Every town and every kingdom, according to Aristotle, has to be ruled by the superior through *pravda* and through the known righteous laws, and not through patience. In order to gain this we people being found ourselves in a great sea troubled by terrible tempests, need to live under the rule of the

²⁷⁴ Quote from: "Poslaniye Karpova mitropolitu Daniilu" (Karpov's epistle to metropolitan Daniil). // *Pamyatniki literatury Drevnei Rusi. Konets XV – pervaya polovina XVI veka*. Moscow, 1984. P. 510. («...во всяком гражданстве правда и законы ко исправлению неустройных...»)

²⁷⁵ Ibid. «...Правда без милости мучительство есть».)

²⁷⁶ «Послание Карпова митрополиту Даниилу» has been written approximately between 1533 and 1539 – see: A. I. Klibanov *Dukhovnaya kul'tura srednevekovoi Rusi* (Spiritual Culture of Medieval Rus') Moscow, 1996. P. 207.

tsars, who are righteously shepherding us in these kingdoms and towns according to their mercy...²⁷⁷

Karpov insists that *pravda* should be connected with mercy, otherwise the strict implementation of laws can lead to atrocities.²⁷⁸

While Karpov was trying to elaborate the most general approach to *pravda*, Ivan Peresvetov and Afanasii Nikitin were eager to present the Russian land as the state of *pravda*. Analyzing their ideal a specialist in Russian medieval culture, Klibanov, comes to the conclusion that *pravda* was understood by these writers as being higher than justice:

We would not commit a sin against truth if we were to unite the two concepts of "Pravda" and "Justice". However, taking into account writings of Afanasii Nikitin and Peresvetov, it would be accurate to separate these concepts. "Justice" is just one derivation of "Pravda". The latter is an all-embracing ideal: God's Truth [*Pravda*]! Justice is a regulative social and moral norm, which presents *pravda* in the sphere of earthly (secular) relations of people.²⁷⁹

The idea of God loving *pravda* rather than belief itself comes from the previous century.²⁸⁰ Peresvetov raises the powerful image of *pravda* uniting the Christian and popular understanding. In his interpretation of the work, *A Story of Constantinople*, Peresvetov opposes the *pravda* of Christianity, symbolized by an eagle, to the false truth [*krivda*] of Islam, symbolized by a snake. Although temporary victory of *krivda* over *pravda* is possible, *pravda* will ultimately win. God permitted Magmet the Sultan to take over Constantinople; however in doing this Magmet could not get *pravda*, which left the Earth for Heaven anticipating and awaiting a future victory. He concluded that "God loves *pravda*, and *pravda* is the most powerful thing of all things."²⁸¹ Being intimately linked with God *pravda* resides in heaven, rather than on earth. Everything had been given by God to Magmet, but *pravda*. In the form

²⁷⁷ Quote from: *Pamyatniki*. P. 512. («...Всяк град и всяко царство, по Аристотелю, управлятися имать от начальник в правде и известными законами праведными, а не терпением. Зане мы, человеци, иже есьмя в сем море велицем, в нем же бури бедны, требу имамы жити под цари, иже нас в царствех и градех своих по коегождо сподоблению праведне пасут»).

²⁷⁸ See: Klibanov *Dukhovnaya kul'tura*. Pp. 212-213.

²⁷⁹ Klibanov *Dukhovnaya kul'tura*, P. 221

²⁸⁰ See: Ibid. P. 222.

²⁸¹ Quote from: Klibanov *Dukhovnaya kul'tura*, P. 222. It is interesting to see the image of an eagle which is the symbol of apostle John the author of the fourth Gospel

of an ineffable light *pravda* left Constantinople just prior to the moment when city was taken by Magmet's troops. The tongue of flame rose from the cathedral of St. Sophia to heaven, the gates of heaven sprang open allowing this flame to enter, and then the gates closed.²⁸² Peresvetov clarified the concept of this ineffable light by saying that it was the Holy Ghost.²⁸³ This idea is a religious and dogmatic expression of the belief that while *pravda* resides in heaven, *krivda* remains on earth. This belief is mentioned in different versions of religious verses, an extremely popular genre among Russian peasants which has survived up to our century. In the old religious verse "Of How Many Parts Was Adam Created?" the conclusion is: "Now Falsehood has put Truth to rout, and Truth has passed into the heights of heaven, but Falsehood has remained on the damp earth – she has entered into our eager heart."²⁸⁴ Yu. Sokolov, following N. Tikhonravov, linked an image of the earthly victory of Falsehood over Truth [*krivda* over *pravda*] with the anticipation of the Last Judgement: "(“This shall be for the latter time, it shall be for the eight thousand years”) enables us to see the reflection in religious verses of the pessimistic attitudes which were characteristic of the period around the year 1492, “when there came to an end the apocalyptic seven thousand years from the creation of the world...”²⁸⁵ This belief survived up to our times. For instance, in 1991 the same idea was recorded from an Old-Believer. The verse is called “Mad People in the World”: “To do something bad we are ready any time. On the other hand, to behave according to God’s law seems difficult... Something has become irritated in the world, Everything has gone wrong, Pravda has not remained anywhere, the people are drowning in Krivda.”²⁸⁶ The same motif survived in the form of the version of Psalm 14.²⁸⁷ It is worth noting that the field of battle between Pravda and Krivda is a heart and not a

who was also the author of *Apocalypse*, and this is perfectly apposite in the situation of the destruction of the greatest centre of Christianity.

²⁸² Ibid. 224.

²⁸³ Here again the strong echo of the Acts can be noted: the image of the ascending Holy Ghost stands in specific contrast with the tongues of flame which descended onto apostles.

²⁸⁴ Quote from: Y. M. Sokolov *Russian Folklore* Hatboro, 1966. P. 374.

²⁸⁵ Ibid.

²⁸⁶ *Dukhovnyye Stikhi. Kanty*. (Sbornik dukhovnykh stikhov nizhegorodskoi oblasti) (Religious Verses. Chants. (A collection of religious verses of the Nizhnii Novgorod district) Moscow, 1999. P. 328. («Сотворить худое дело Мы готовы каждый час. А по Божьему закону Будто тяжело поступать... Что-то в мире взволновалось, Все пошло наоборот, Нигде правды не осталось, В кривде тонет весь народ».)

mind and this is understandable if we take into account the intimate connection between truth and love and mercy.

With the most striking power the motif of a heavenly residing *pravda* was represented in the religious verse *Profound Book* which deals "with the origin of the world and its phenomena, and the chief objects on the earth (as to which object is "father " and mother" of all things), of living creatures and holy relics."²⁸⁸ In particular, the origin of God's people [*mir-narod Bozhii*] is explained. The main goal of this verse was to provide people with a popular version of the structure of the universe. Although the *Profound Book* represented a mixture of Christian and pagan elements, the ideal of *Pravda* was definitely a Christian one. According to the *Profound Book* the personified *Pravda* "went to Heaven, to Christ, the heavenly tsar"²⁸⁹ while *Krivda* remained on earth spoiling people. The ultimate victory of *Pravda* over *Krivda* was seen in the images of the Last Judgement. Russian depictions of this great subject presented *Pravda* shooting *Krivda*, and *Krivda* falling in fear.²⁹⁰ Thus, *Pravda* represents the highest divine value, which rests with Christ, and at the same time it is separated from him.

In addition, some clichés of Russian folk poetry should be mentioned. One of the most popular expressions from bylinas (Russian traditional heroic poems) is "to serve by belief and *Pravda*".²⁹¹ Bogatyrs (the heroes) come freely to the ruler (usually Prince Vladimir) "to serve him by belief and *pravda*". It is particularly characteristic for the bylinas of the Ilya Muromets cycle in contexts like: "I, son of a peasant have come to you, prince, to serve by belief and *pravda*".²⁹² The same expression can be found in Russian folk songs. For instance, in the famous collection of Petr Kireyevskii this expression can be found in songs 81, 83, etc.²⁹³ Apart from this expression the word "*pravda*" in bylinas and folk songs is used predominantly in the context of

²⁸⁷ Ibid. P. 286.

²⁸⁸ See: Sokolov *Russian Folklore*, Pp. 373-374.

²⁸⁹ Quote from: M Gromov, N. Kozlov *Russkaya filosofskaya mysl' X-XVII vekov* (Russian philosophical thought of 10-17th centuries). Moscow, 1990. P. 220.

²⁹⁰ *Sochinniya N. S. Tikhonravova*. V. 1. *Drevn'aya Russkaya Literatura*. Moscow, 1898. P. 339.

²⁹¹ «Послужить верой-правдою».

²⁹² *Byliny* (Bylinas) Leningrad, 1957. P. 80, also in other bylinas, see: P. 203.

²⁹³ *Sobraniye narodnykh pesen P. V. Kireyevskogo* (A collection of folk songs by P. Kireyevskii). V. 1. Leningrad, 1977. Pp. 108,109.

'truth, true words.'²⁹⁴ Again we can see two different meanings of *pravda*: 'endeavour for justice' and 'truth'.

Now we turn to the concept of *volya* as it was established over the ages by Russian consciousness. This word bears two meanings, of 'will' and 'freedom', which in their interrelations form a very specific concept. As an adjective it means 'free, independent, autonomous, having power in itself'. *Volya* as a noun means 'freedom from any sort of dependency and responsibility', and at the same time it has a meaning of 'inner freedom, freedom of soul', and so it exceeds any social connotations and relates to the essence of human personality.

These meanings of the word could be seen from the earliest times. For instance, *volya* in the first meaning is found in *Izbornik*²⁹⁵ (collected in 1076): "... Give your body up to nakedness, your volya to trampling, stomach to fast ..."²⁹⁶ Or: "I am ready ... to execute what is demanded by the volya of your heart"²⁹⁷ This meaning of will is inseparably connected with the meaning of 'power': "Be reasonable and comprehend what is God's power [*volya*]"²⁹⁸ This motif of 'being in someone's will' is, probably, the most frequent at that time. Along with this the meaning of 'freedom' in both the individual and the social aspects can be found in such expressions as "Volya of declaration," "Preach the truth, free volya"²⁹⁹ or in "He residing the St. Yurii land will be given freedom..."³⁰⁰

The concept of *volya* was being developed in relation to the word *mir*. It should be mentioned that *mir* is one more important word which has two very different yet interconnected meanings: 'community and cosmos' and 'agreement, peace'. With both meanings *mir* is understood as 'secular, everyday' and, therefore, is contrasted to 'sacred'. In the contexts with *volya* the first meaning should be emphasized. The pair of words *mir-volya* stands in genetic relation with an ancient couple of Indo-European gods Mithra and Varuna. V. Toporov has established that

²⁹⁴ *Byliny*, Pp. 16,174,... *Sobraniye narodnykh pesen P. V. Kireyevskogo*: No's 30, 68.

²⁹⁵ The word "Izbornik" means a collection of stories.

²⁹⁶ «...Предаж(ь) тело свое наготу, волю на попьрание, оутробу на постъ.» *Slovar' drevnerusskogo yazyka (XI – XIV vv.)* (Dictionary of Old-Russian Language (11-14 centuries) V. 1. Moscow, 1988. P. 472.

²⁹⁷ «...се готовъ есмь... сътворити елико велить воля сердца твоего». Ibid.

²⁹⁸ «Боуди съмъслън, разумеи чьто е воля божиа.» Ibid. P. 473.

²⁹⁹ «Воля оглаголения» *Sreznevskii*. V. 1. P. 298.

³⁰⁰ Ibid.

the relation between the vedic Mithra and Varuna as of centre and periphery, order and destruction, life and death is similar to the Slavic *mir* – *volya*.³⁰¹ Those who deny *mir* express individual as opposed to social, disagreement and anxiety versus agreement and peace. In its relation to *mir*, *volya* acquires the meaning of the inner state of an individual, linked with his soul and heart, rather than his social state based on agreement and, consequently, on reason.

The crucial tension which forms the very core of the concept of *volya* can be found between the idea of inner freedom and the conscious feeling of the infinite spaciousness of the Russian land. It has been noted on numerous occasions that the so-called "Russian soul" is associated with the spaciousness of the Russian state. We can find a similar link between *mir* and *volya* in the following words by Prof. Arseniev: "Two elements seem to contend for domination in the history of Russian soul: being implanted to custom and everyday of life, striving for the strong patriarchal style of family life, love of beauty in the way of life, and, at the same time, striving toward distance, mobility, instability, a search for new horizons."³⁰² The concept of *mir* can be easily recognized in the beauty of communal life and *volya* in the striving for new horizons. Arseniev lists the manifestations of *volya* in the activity of Russian explorers, robbers and religious pilgrims, as well as in the spiritual search for the "New City" and metaphysical longing for the ultimate meaning of life. The connections between these notions are understandable. However the problem is whether the spaciousness influenced the Russian soul or the soul influenced the spaciousness. Yet it is quite obvious that the soul cannot influence space as such. The point is whether the soul can be open to spaciousness or closed. Rome tried to fence off the barbarians and established a famous earthen wall which separated Southern Europe from Northern Europe, civilization from barbarism. The Great Wall of China played the same role, not even in reality but as an expression of an attitude towards Northern neighbours. The Russian state was being developed in a different way towards the nomadic steppe. This relation was ambivalent: the Steppe attracted and frightened at the same time. Even later in the Muscovite time along with the

³⁰¹ See: V. N. Toporov "Ob iranskom elemente v russkoi dukhovnoi kul'ture" // *Slav'anskii i balkanskii fol'klor* (On the Iranian element in Russian spiritual culture // Slavic and Baltic Folklore). Moscow, 1989. Pp. 43-52.

³⁰² N. S. Arseniev "Russkiye prostory i narodnaya dusha" (Russian spaciousness and popular soul). // *Iz russkoi kul'turnoi i tvorcheskoi traditsii* (On the Russian cultural and aesthetic tradition). Frankfurt am Main, 1959. P. 167.

strengthening of the autocratic state the most autonomous part of the Russian peasantry moved from the centre to the periphery. (This process is described by the famous historian, Pavel Milyukov, in relation to the development of the Muscovite state.³⁰³) The very specific way of life which is close to the border of the state but at the same time free from the actual responsibilities before this state brings a peculiar nuance into the consciousness of people. The meaning and the image of *volya* was always connected with the image of the trespassed border. (It does not mean, that all people followed this way of life; however the very possibility of this choice was of the great importance.) The borders of the state put the limit to the regularly established way of life subordinated to the state laws. This image has also borne a much deeper meaning since Pre-Christian times: it also means the border between life and death. For instance, we can take the most famous document of pagan consciousness *The Lay of Igor's Campaign*. Boris Gasparov in his study of the poetics of *The Lay* demonstrates clearly that the very crossing of the river, which separates the Russian land from Kipchak's land, means in fact the destruction of the Russian troops. In this mythological *Weltanschauung* the return of Prince Igor from his captivity is presented as the miracle of resurrection.³⁰⁴ At the same time the nomads are not apprehended as barbarians though they reside over there, on the other side of the border, but as different (it has been mentioned earlier that Vladimir bore the title of *kagan*, the highest title of the Steppe ruler). Through the connection with the different volya (freedom) is attracting and frightening at the same time. On the one hand it is attractive because it provides a possibility to escape from the pressure of an unjust power. On the other hand it is frightening because of its uncertainty. The choice can be made on the ground of ones own will. With this we approach the issue of the inner - outer attitude to *volya*.

This issue was elaborated during the discussions related to the idea of free will, which was at that time (the second half of the XVth century) usually expressed by the word "samovlastiye"³⁰⁵ ('autonomy') as, for instance, in the expression "samovlastiye dushi" ('autonomy of the soul'). *Izmaragd*, a collection of moral

³⁰³ P. Milyukov *Ocherki po istorii russkoi kul'tury* (Outline of the history of Russian culture). V. 3. St. Petersburg, 1903. P. 68-69.

³⁰⁴ B. Gasparov "Poetika "Slova o polku Igoreve" (Poetics of *The Lay of Igor's Campaign*). // *Wiener Slawischer Almanach*, Sonderband 12, Vienna, 1984. P. 133-138.

³⁰⁵ Russian word "samovlastiye" combines the meanings of 'auto' and 'power'.

exhortations very popular in the XIV and XVth centuries, included *The Word on the Autonomy of Soul*. The anonymous author wrote: "We are created autonomous by God; to be saved or to perish depends solely on our will [*volya*]"³⁰⁶ The same problem was discussed in other works of the period and even earlier. However, only at the turn of the XV and XVIth centuries did the problem of the autonomy of the soul become one of the most significant problems in relation to the core of human personality.

From the angle of social life it can be stated that this was the time of the finalization of the transitory process from clan (linked with *mir*) consciousness to the individual consciousness which would be regulated by norms rather than by tradition. The discussion was initiated by a heretic, the leader of the so-called Judaisers, Fedor Kuritsyn. In his *Laodikiiskoye Epistle* Fedor emphasized that the autonomy of the soul is complementary to belief: "The soul is autonomous while belief imposes limits..."³⁰⁷ A prophet coming to teach people brings the belief which in its turn brings a fear of God. This fear becomes the weapon of the soul. If there is no belief, the autonomy of the soul can break through all limits. It is obvious that heretics emphasized the autonomy and freedom of the soul contrasting them to the blind subordination to Church authority. However, at the same time the problem was under discussion even among the most righteous Orthodox circles. The opposition 'St. Nilus versus St. Iosif' presupposes different attitudes to the problem. St. Nilus of Sora put emphasis on the individual spiritual life by saying that the genuine sphere of a monk's activity is his heart³⁰⁸. He, therefore, seems to be quite indifferent to the social relations or even to the communal church life, which is Iosif's major concern. The mystical spiritual church is more important to St. Nilus than the real earthly church. He defends the autonomy of a critically thinking individual, and through this he directly defends free will. According to him, the soul should be subordinated to divine scriptures and guided by them. He formulated the problem as follows: there are many writings, and it is not an easy task to distinguish between the authentic ones and the frauds. This differentiation cannot be achieved without inner freedom. At the same

³⁰⁶ «Самовластии Богом сотворены есмы или спасемся или погибнем волею своею» – Quote from: Klibanov *Dukhovnaya kul'tura*, P. 136.

³⁰⁷ «Душа самовластна, заграда ей вера» - Ibid. P. 143.

³⁰⁸ A. S. Arkhangel'skii *Nil Sorskii i Vassian Patrikeyev. Ikh literaturnyye trudy i idei v Drevnei Rusi* (Nilus of Sora and Vassian Patrikeyev. Their literary writings and ideas in Ancient Rus'). St. -Petersburg, 1882. Pp. 129.

time *volya* cannot find any guidance in itself because if it is not being led by the divine doctrines it becomes a toy for passions. St. Nilus reproaches the monk wish "to live according their passionate wills [*volya*'s], and not according to divine scriptures."³⁰⁹ It is clear that for him *volya* can fight against passions through subordination to scriptures. Yet it is much less clear what can lead *volya* to discriminate between good and bad in the scriptures themselves. The only answer is that there is something higher than actual words, and this is God's *pravda* comprehended by the soul. In order to penetrate the meaning of writings the monk should apply his mind first, and then, if it is still has not been grasped, put it aside waiting for understanding to come.³¹⁰ Thus, this ultimate understanding is supposed by St. Nilus to come not from the mind but from the other source, which is the heart. Similar ideas (though not the same in details) were later expressed by the heretic Feodosii Kosoi, who was very popular amongst the peasants.

It is indicative that there is no contradiction between St. Nilus and St. Iosif in regard to this point. Though in his earlier works (for instance, in his epistle dated 1479) St. Iosif did not touch on this problem, later he defended the idea of the autonomy of human will on the basis that man was created in the image of God: "Man being created in the image of God ... bears in him God's likeness, soul, word, and mind... For again in the image the self-ruled [*samovlastnoye*] and possessing in a man expresses itself..."³¹¹ Though St. Iosif definitely recognised free will at the same time he always emphasized the crucial role of the established institutions. Their power, according to him, was supposed to restrict different personal *volya*-s. The steps are: a monk has to obey the Church, the Church has to subordinate itself to the tsar. However, there is a limit for this subordination of the Church – the Church should obey the tsar until he defends the ultimate *pravda*. St. Iosif's followers greatly simplified this doctrine. In a work such as *Balaam's Conversation* the autonomy of man is negated on the ground of the very existence of the rulers and the power:

Many people say that man has been created autonomous [*samovolen*] by God ... However, if a really autonomous man had been created by God in the world, he would not have established tsars and great princes and other

³⁰⁹ «по своим страстным волям жити, а не по святым писаниям». Quote from: Arkhangel'skii Nil Sorskii, P. 136.

³¹⁰ Ibid. P. 133.

³¹¹ «... человек, по образу Божию созданный, носит в себе Божие подобие, душу и ум... Еже паки по образу глаголет самовластное человека и обладательное.» Quote from: Klibanov *Dukhovnaya kul'tura*, P. 157.

authorities, and would not have separated one tribe from another. God created righteous tsars and great princes and other authorities in order to limit this world [*mir*], and in order to save our souls.³¹²

In this case *volya* from the very beginning was limited by external power. Moreover, this is the most significant task of this power (authority) to restrict people's freedom and will. This idea became a favorite for Ivan IV, known as Ivan the Terrible.

Ivan IV grasped the concept of autonomy predominantly as the autonomy to fall. In this case the main task of the earthly authorities is to save people: "... It is in your writings far from truth that God created man and bequeathed him with freedom [*volnost'*] and honour. ... As soon as [Adam] transgressed the precept the punishment was great! This is the first bondage [*nevolya*] and dishonour".³¹³ Ivan often alluded to this concept because it justified everything done by the sovereign. The tsar's *volya* in this case is law and power in itself: this is *volya* which was granted by God to the one in order to restrict all other personal *volya*-s, and along with this there is no power on earth which would restrict it. Moreover, it is not only *volya* but *pravda* in itself as well.

Ivan's understanding had a long tradition in Russian history. To provide just one example it is worth recalling the event of 1432. When princes at that time (almost

³¹² «Мнози убо глаголют в мире, яко самоволна человека сотворил есть Бог на сесь свет. Аще бы самовластна человека сотворил Бог на сесь свет, и он бы не устави царей и великих князей и прочих властей и не разделил бы орды от орды. Сотворил Бог благоверныя цари и великие князи и прочии власти на воздержание мира сего для спасения душ наших». Quote from: Klibanov *Dukhovnaya kul'tura*, P. 157. In the so-called *Kormchaya*, the book used to rule the church, taken from Byzantium (the manuscript copy from the XIIIth century) there is an interesting article of the Russian origin on the same subject. In his instruction to those who has come to confess the confessor says: "You have to feel fear and love towards the rulers, because if you do, you will avoid evil, which generates hatred, and through love you will learn the essentials... All power from God, honour everyone in accordance to their ranks" "...также и къ властительмъ страхъ имей и любовь: боябоя ихъ съблюдешися отъ зла, имъ же ненависть приходить, и любя я, тьное отъ нихъ воспримеши... Всяка власть отъ Бога; по саньмъ же всемъ честь отдавай." (Quote from: Dyakonov M. *Vlast' moskovskikh gosudarei. Ocherki iz istorii politicheskikh idei Drevnei Rusi do kontsa XVI veka*. St. Petersburg, 1889. P. 40.)

³¹³ «...Што Бог сотворил человек и волность ему даровал и честь, ино твое писанье много отстоит от истины:... Егда заповедь преступи и каким осужением осужен бысть! Се есть первая неволя и бесчестье...» Quote from: Klibanov *Dukhovnaya kul'tura*, P. 159.

exactly one hundred years before Ivan IV was born) were arguing against each other while trying to obtain the 'yarlyk' (edict) of the Khans of Kipchaq Horde in order to have the title of Grand Prince all over Russian land, the diplomats who represented the Moscow Prince Vassily II had to reject the Last Will of his father Vassily I. His opponent Prince Yurii based his claim on this Last Will and was absolutely sure that this was a crucial argument. In their appeal to the Khan the representatives of Vassily II put forward an argument that the opposite side (Prince Yurii) wished to gain the kingdom "in accordance with the dead decree of his father rather than in accordance with your permission as a free [vol'nyi] tsar."³¹⁴ This argument presupposes the ultimate predominance of the sovereign's will over all other sources of authority. This tradition has also been reflected in such expressions as 'to go in someone's volya', 'to put onto someone's volya', 'to be in someone's volya'³¹⁵. For instance, when the Moscow Patriarchate was under establishment the whole cause was confided to the tsar's authority: "Right Reverend Metropolitan Iov, ... and along with him the whole church council presented the matter, after it had been discussed, to the volya of the pious Tsar and Grand Prince, to Fedor Ivanovich, our pious Tsar and Grand Prince of the whole of Russia, to decide."³¹⁶ This action demonstrates that tsar's volya (simultaneously 'will' and 'power') was taken as the final authority. The same formula was used in discussions with the Ukrainian Cossacks who requested Alexis to take Ukraine under rule about half a century after the Moscow Patriarchate had been instituted. The Cossacks were seeking for the legal guarantees to assure their privileges were included into the Pereyaslav Agreement. In reply to this they were told that the only guarantee was the tsar's volya, and that the tsar's word could not change.³¹⁷ In the XVIIth century this meaning of volya was consciously contrasted

³¹⁴ «...по мертвой грамоте отца своего, а не по твоему жалованию волного царя.» See: R. Skrynnikov *Tretii Rim* (The Third Rome) St. -Petersburg, 1994. P. 18. The same meaning can be found in the chronicle – «... тебе, своему государю, волному царю правяся». Ibid., P. 19.

³¹⁵ «Ходить в чьей-нибудь воле», «Положить на волю», «Быть в чьей-нибудь воле».

³¹⁶ «И преосвященный Иев митрополит, ... и весь освященный собор, говоря и советовав меж себя о всем том, положили на волю благочестивого государя царя и великого князя, как о том благочестивый государь наш царь и великий князь Федор Иванович всеа России, произволит». Quote from: A. Kartashev *Ocherki*. V. 2. P. 27.

³¹⁷ N. Andreiev "Pereyaslavskii dogovor" (Pereyaslav treaty). // *Studies in Muscovy. Western Influence and Byzantine Inheritance*. London, 1970. P. 51.

with the Western idea of freedom. Milyukov offers the brilliant example of this attitude in relation to the discussions with the Poles. In reply, to gain freedom through union with Poland the Russians said: "Your freedom is precious to you ... yet our subjugation [*nevolya*] is precious to us. You have no freedom [*vol'nost'*] but rather willfulness [*svoyevoliye*]: the strong is robbing the weak... However, in our country the most noble of boyars does not have the power to offend the last man of the common people because the tsar maintains our justice. But if the tsar himself would act unjustly, this was his own *volya*..."³¹⁸

The only restriction of the tsar's *volya* in theory was his piety, his adherence to the Orthodox Church and its doctrines, and, therefore, it was supposed that the tsar would rule subordinating his will to the highest and absolute *pravda*. This is a clear continuation of Iosif's attitude. One of the most striking examples of this attitude can be found in the documents of the interrogation of famous Archpriest Avvakum, one of the heroes of Raskol, who could much more easily admit the impiety of the Patriarch rather than that of the Tsar.³¹⁹ If we again return to the controversy between St. Nilus and St. Iosif and present it through such terms as *pravda* and *volya* it should be concluded that their ideal was almost the same. However, St. Nilus' concern was the individual aspect of the relationship between *pravda* and *volya* while St. Iosif was more concerned about the social aspect of their relationship. This difference shaped their conflicting attitudes to property: St. Nilus did not care about property, yet his fear was that the burden of ownership could delimit *volya* and distract it from the search for God's *pravda*. St. Iosif thought that, in order to fulfil God's *pravda volya* should subordinate itself to the Church and State. Iosif's followers could not keep his attitude, and in the course of time the institutions by themselves became the manifestations of *pravda*, while *volya* was reserved for the autocratic tsar. They subordinated themselves to the state, and with the state support they ruined their opponents, the Non-Possessors. But this was their Pyrrhic victory: they had to identify themselves with the lay authority, and when later Peter I initiated the Church reform,

³¹⁸ «Вам дорога ваша свобода ... а нам наша неволя. У вас не вольность, а своеволие: сильный грабит слабого... У нас, напротив, самый знатный боярин не властен обидеть последнего простолюдина: по первой жалобе царь творит суд и расправу. А если сам царь поступит неправосудно — его воля...» Quote from: Milyukov *Ocherki*. P. 84.

³¹⁹ *Materialy dlya istorii raskola...* (Materials for the history of schism...) Ed. by N. Subbotin. V. 2. Moscow, 1876. Pp. 22-23.

taking the Protestant churches as a model, the Russian Orthodox Church had neither material nor spiritual power to oppose the tsar's plan.

The most intelligent and yet the most gloomy agent of this Church Reform was the famous Feofan Prokopovich. The reform presupposed the abandonment of the Moscow Patriarchate, and the formal subordination of the Church to the tsar, who would rule it through his representative, the so-called Chief Procurator. Feofan not only wrote the project of this reform but also defended its ideas in his books. The most indicative of Feofan's works in relation to this issue was *The Pravda of Monarch's Volya*³²⁰ which perfectly expressed the concept of the absolute power of the tsar. This work was characterized by an eminent Russian writer of the second half of the XVIII century prince Shcherbatov as "...a monument of flattery and servility of the monk's will in relation to the ruler's."³²¹ Feofan's views seem to be not a continuation but rather the crucial step in the development of St. Joseph followers' attitude to autocratic power. Feofan completely and ultimately prevented the monarch's *volya* from being subordinated to *pravda*.³²² In fact, *pravda* was under the rule of *volya*. It is interesting that in Feofan's usage of these words *pravda* keeps the two meanings, 'justice' and 'truth', while *volya* reserves almost exclusively the meaning of 'will'. Feofan's approach manifested the great violation of the traditional Orthodox views as well as the influence of Catholicism with its emphasis on the Pope's infallibility, and particularly of Protestantism with its subordination of the Church to state authorities.

The same attitude could be found with other people who surrounded and open heartedly supported the tsar-reformer. For instance, one of Peter's statesmen, Alexei Kurbatov, expressed the idea of the supremacy of secular power over spiritual power in his letter to Peter in the following words: "God... put people into your autocracy... for you would rule their everyday needs with *pravda*. And also now, most gracious

³²⁰ «Правда воли монаршей».

³²¹ "О povrezhdenii npravov v Rossii" knyazya M. Shcherbatova i "Puteshestviya" Radishcheva ("About the damage of morale in Russia" by prince M. Shcherbatov and "Journey" by Radishchev) Moscow, 1985. P. 80.

³²² See: G. Florovsky "Ways of Russian Theology." Part One. // *Collected Works*. V. 5. New York, 1979. Pp. 118-119.

sovereign, we can see that God wishes you to care for and watch over our spiritual needs... as you should see your autocracy in everything."³²³

Peter's own concept of the state and of his autocratic role is clearly found within the ideology of enlightened absolutism: the ruler was the first servant of the abstract and depersonalized State, which all men had to serve.³²⁴ The problem arose from the fact that in the situation of a lack of a sufficient code of laws the formally depersonalized institutions in reality were working in accordance to the will of particular personalities. Despite all his formal attempts, the Emperor ruled by means of persons, not institutions, and "the original appellation, "The Lords Senate" ('Gospoda Senat'), was changed to "The Lords Senators" ('Gospoda Senaty'). The identification of the Emperor's will and the State in this case was carried out to the extent that the Emperor could not tolerate the intrusion of any abstraction represented by an institution."³²⁵

The problem, therefore, manifests itself in the fact that tsar's *volya* is mediated and violated in its relation to people by the numerous *volya*-s of his servants. *Volya* was lifted higher than laws in both cases: the tsar's *volya* is higher just by the nature of the tsar's power; at the same time the *volya*-s of the tsar's servants are in a position beyond any particular law as well due to their predominant relationship with the tsar's *volya* rather than with the legal system. The difference is that in the eyes of ordinary people the servants' *volya*-s were always regarded as completely deprived of any *pravda*. *Pravda* in this case was transformed from the highest principle, which underlies civil and all other laws, into state *volya* itself. There are as many *pravda*-s as *volya*-s: each *volya* acts in accordance with its own *pravda*. Yet, obviously enough, these *pravda*-s completely lost their God's nature.

In contrast to Iosif's tradition the opponents began to gradually strengthen their position. The Russian Orthodox Church, ruled by the Josefites, lost its power because being during centuries strongly linked with the state it was losing the authority of the strong and autonomous defender of the Christian population, as well

³²³ «Бог ... предаде в самодержавствие твое люди ... в житейских потребах управляти в правду. Ныне же, всемилостивейший государь, видим, яко и в духовных хочет Бог, да ты попечешься и усмотриши ... да во всем всего сам твое самодержавие изволишь усмотрети». Quote from: Kartashev, *Ocherki...* V. 2. P. 328

³²⁴ Michael Cherniavsky *Tsar and People. Studies in Russian Myths*. New Haven and London, 1961. P. 82.

as its property and with this its influence. From the second half of the XVIth century and through the whole history of Russia up to year 1917 the Old Believers (they were counted up to 25 million by the beginning of the XXth century) resurrected and kept St. Nilus' tradition of an almost absolute indifference in regard to state authorities including the tsar. Even during the most severe persecutions they did not rise up against the tsar though they regarded Peter to be the Anti-Christ. The voluminous literature of the Old Believers is marked by a complete ignorance of the problems of state and social structure. There are no complains in regard to the injustice of the social order or to economic inequality.³²⁶ This attitude is well seen in the case of Peter I. The Old Believers considered him to be the Anti-Christ and yet they preferred to burn themselves but not to rebel.³²⁷ From the angle of this research the point is that they saw as their chief goal to keep true traditional Orthodox belief (*pravda*) personally and in their communities rather than to openly oppose authorities. And later they never supported any attempts to strike against authorities.

The Old Believers are mentioned here because in the course of time they began to represent the most noticeable link between the old and modern times. The peasant ideal of the proper relationship between tsar and people, as well as between *pravda* and *volya*, seems to be a mixture of both St. Nilus' and St. Iosif's views. The ordinary people apparently were not indifferent to authorities as the Non-Possessors were. At the same time they recognized the tsar as being willful and free. However this attitude was never transferred to bureaucracy and its representatives. The people, peasants, approached the concept of the relationship with the tsar through the institution of community (*mir-obshchina*). *Mir* possesses *volya* in the same way as the tsar possesses *volya*. Otherwise their relationship does not make sense. However the nature of these *volya*-s is different: the tsar possesses *volya* because it has been given to him by God; *mir* possesses *volya* because it was established as an autonomous unity. The main goal and inspiration for both *volya*'s is *pravda*, which is one and the only one God's *pravda*. The tsar is regarded as an embodiment of this *pravda* on

³²⁵ Ibid. Pp. 86-87.

³²⁶ M. Shakhov *Filosofskiye aspekty staroveriya* (Philosophical Aspects of the Old Belief). Moscow, 1998. Pp. 102-103.

³²⁷ The link between the Raskol and Peter's reforms is presented in: K. Skvortsov "V poiskakh pravdy" ("The Search for Pravda" // *Russkoye Vozrozhdeniye* (Russian Renaissance) Paris, Moscow, New York. N. 6, 1979.

earth: "Where there is a tsar, there is *pravda*".³²⁸ People's *pravda* in its turn can be found in their unity. This unity should be established on the basis of love which is *pravda* in human hearts. The tsar's *pravda* is higher than that of the people: "If the people sin, the tsar will atone for their sins by prayer, and if the tsar sins, the people will not be able to atone for his sins by prayer".³²⁹ This approach is apparently contrary to any theory of the origin of supreme power through delegation (like, for instance, Thomas Hobbes' theory³³⁰ though his doctrine intersects partly with the above one, there is a difference in principle: Hobbes sees the sovereign as the defender of the people in the physical sense of the word, while in Russian consciousness tsar is the defender of the people first of all in a spiritual sense.)

A question arises about the interrelation between *volya* and *zakon*. It seems quite obvious that *volya*, particularly in the meaning of 'freedom', being in strong contradiction to the law should be put into some kind of interrelation with legal institutions. It is a commonplace for any juridical doctrine to link human freedom and a clearly defined and properly implemented system of laws, which guarantees people's property and rights as well as state protection from any form of illegal intervention. However this is not the case with the meaning of *volya*. Indeed, the ensuring of *volya* by means of strong laws was discussed in the second half of the XVIIIth – beginning of the XIXth centuries (in terms of *vol'nost'* and *zakon*) under the strong influence of Western juridical ideas. Nonetheless, the more Russian popular consciousness was reflected by writers and thinkers, the more this dependence of *volya* from *zakon* was discredited. (We will examine and demonstrate this process later taking Pushkin's poetry as an example.) In Russian national consciousness *volya* in both meanings, 'freedom' and 'will', can be delimited only by *pravda*. The inner personal *pravda* rules individual *volya* and at the same time it reflects the highest God's *pravda* which restricts collective *volya* through the figure of the tsar. Laws in this relation seem to be an imperfect reflection of *pravda*. Genuine slavery is caused by the aversion of God's *pravda*. The monk Savva clearly expressed this medieval understanding: "If the tsar or prince ... does not worship our God Lord Jesus Christ

³²⁸ The proverbs are taken from Dahl's dictionary: «Где царь, там и правда».

³²⁹ «Народ согрешит – царь умолит, а царь согрешит – народ не умолит».

³³⁰ In *Leviathan*.

he is a slave and he is condemned".³³¹ This understanding is apparently different from the understanding more common in the West. The Romans implemented a system of laws equating them to the highest principles: this system is probably not perfect but it still remains the manifestation of the highest truth. Unlike this approach Russian consciousness separated truth (*pravda*) from laws (*zakon*). Over the centuries *pravda* was gradually relinquishing its meaning of righteous legal relations to *zakon*. At the same time *pravda* was joined with the Christian concept of a merciful God and through this secured a position beyond *zakon*. In the course of this development *pravda* moved close to the concept of *svet* ('light' and 'world') acquiring the significance and image of the supreme ethical value. Thus, *pravda* acquired a visible aesthetic component. The value of the concept of *pravda* predetermined (or rather reflected) a strong anti-state feeling and a cultural preference for the unity of personalities compared with the unity of citizens. Through this development *pravda* was moving closer and closer to the concept of *volya*.

Volya in Russian consciousness is 'boundless, independent of any social or other restrictions'. As an adjective it means 'free, independent, autonomous, having power by himself'. It is extremely significant that *volya* means freedom from any sort of dependency and responsibility. It is also important that *volya* bears the meaning of unrestricted inner freedom, freedom of soul, and through this the social connotations of the word were linked with individual connotation. From the old times *volya* was associated with *mir*, and through this association it expressed united collective consciousness as opposed to a bondage brought about by political relations. Being allied with God's *pravda*, *volya* bypassed the legal relations and formed a direct link with the supreme secular power represented by the tsar. The specifics of this relation lies in its personal rather than its legal nature. This relation between people and sovereign is based on feeling rather than on reason, and because of this the heart, symbolizing love, comes to the fore compared with the mind.

³³¹ «Аще бо царь или князь... не поклоняется Богу нашему Спасу Господу Иисусу Христу, ... той воистину раб есть и проклят!» Quote from: R. Skrynnikov *Tretii Rim*, P.47.

Chapter 5

Preconditions for reflection by the time of Pushkin

The goal of this chapter is to discover and outline the most important features of Russian cultural life which predetermined the growth of national reflection and through this created the conditions for the appearance of a national philosophy.

During the second half of the XVIIIth century the gradual process of the emancipation of Russian spiritual culture and literature, in particular, from state guardianship and censorship can be observed.³³² Free expression of personal attitude to what was said became possible (with the notable exception of the reign of Pavel I). This developing awareness of personal dignity, though restricted almost exclusively to the nobility, became characteristic of the time. A deep consciousness of dignity based on state recognition of their personal and economic rights was necessary for citizens to obtain economic and spiritual freedom. Together with this recognition the progress in education at the time made possible reflection on national identity, which involves the explication of the principal values and concepts of national consciousness. This process was initiated by Peter I's reforms. However under the reign of Peter I himself as well as his immediate successors nobody could in reality feel free, though some liberal ideas were discussed during this time. The main reason was that human and economic rights were not actually recognized by the state. On the contrary, Peter himself was eager to establish a regime which would control all spheres of human life. Neither nobles nor peasants were safe from unjust intervention by the authorities.

A new epoch started with Catherine II who consciously introduced liberal principles formulated by French thinkers into Russian political and social life. She understood clearly the basic principle of the European liberal movement that civil law should stand higher than state law.³³³ These ideas in their relations to economic, social and personal rights became the ordinary issue for the top layer of Russian society by

³³² Lesskis mentions that this process was common for the whole of Europe. See: Lesskis G. *Pushkinskii put' v russkoi literature* (Pushkin's way in Russian literature). Moscow, 1993. P. 53.

³³³ Leontovich V.V. *Istoriya Liberalizma v Rossii 1762-1914*. (History of Liberalism in Russia 1762-1914). Paris, 1980. P. 31.

the end of the XVIIIth century. It is worth noting that we are talking about consciousness and so it is not of crucial importance whether these ideas were embodied in Russian life by that time or not. The very fact that the concepts of human rights, freedom and political power were under discussion, and attention and respect for these ideas paid by the supreme ruler are of great significance. This period of Russian life is marked by paradox: the more the Russian nobility acquired the consciousness of free people, of citizens, the stronger became the serfdom.³³⁴ Hence the most educated and conscientious members of the nobility felt that the existing dissension and confrontation between different layers of society was unbearable. They thought that society should re-establish itself on the basis of new principles. It can be noted that the Russian mentality in respect to the issue of personality and human rights from the second half of the XVIIIth century had to embrace the whole of European history since the Renaissance. However it was obvious that the straightforward incorporation of Western ideas into Russian life would not work. Though the first signs of a Russian liberal thinking strongly connected with Western political thought could be observed in some projects written in relation to Anna's accession to the throne in 1730³³⁵, the circle of participants was too narrow. The activity of the so-called "Educated squad"³³⁶ was important. However it was all about power, and human rights were not touched.

The reform of the Orthodox church after the Protestant model presupposed the almost absolute supremacy of the monarch over Church. The most influential member of the "squad" and the principal driving force of Peter's Church reform, Feofan Prokopovich, came to this idea when a comparatively young man. In Feofan's play *Vladimir* the prince, exercising his power, brought a new religion into the country. In the play the sovereign power definitely surpassed ecclesiastical power, and this fact drew Feofan's attention to the concept of power itself.

Power always attracted Prokopovich, and all his life he remained a servant and ideological spokesman for the mighty. His old yearning for imperial grandeur, imperial magnificence, and strong authority, could not be satisfied in the Ukraine. From an ideologist of Christianity using power as its

³³⁴ Ibid. P. 36.

³³⁵ A. Kizevetter "Ivan Petrovich Pnin" // *Istoricheskiye ocherki*. M., 1912. P. 62.

³³⁶ «Ученая дружина».

instrument, Prokopovich is transformed into an ideologist of state power using Christianity as its instrument.³³⁷

In his praise of the idea of the ultimate, supreme, perfect power of the tsar, Feofan did not hesitate to call the tsar "bishop of bishops",³³⁸ emphasizing that there was only one power, and there was no such thing as spiritual power being equal in any respect to the power of the secular sovereign. Through the first half of the XVIIIth century this approach was predominant.

The situation had changed dramatically by the end of the century. Between the second half of the XVIIIth and the first quarter of the XIXth centuries the preconditions of national reflection have been formed. Their formation is connected with changes in the social position of the nobility, the growth of education, and the spread of Western literature, French in particular, the establishment of private magazines, and so on. Yet it appears that the reflection on the place occupied by man in society and the universe, and upon specific national issues was linked most intimately with 1) the activity of the Masons; 2) the discussions on language; 3) the discussions between conservatives and modernists; 4) the influence of Romanticism; 5) the re-establishment of the Russian Orthodox monasticism. These spiritual events, though very important, probably would not lift the possibility of national reflection on the level it influenced the beginning of national philosophy. However, they were all necessary if not sufficient.

Russian society acquired the concept of universal rights and familiarized itself with the thinking on political and social problems mostly through Masonic doctrines and practices. According to some estimates, the Masonic lodges embraced up to one third of Russian officials, and so the Masonic influence on society was more than significant. The Masons raised and considered such questions as the relationship between Man and God, reason and belief, Church and State. In their search for a virtuous life combined with inner freedom, the Masons taught about the advantage of heart over reason. They were convinced that heart was linked with the source of faithful knowledge about ourselves and our blessedness while reason was just a

³³⁷ George Y. Shevelov *Two Orthodox Ukrainian Churchmen of the Early Eighteenth Century: Teofan Prokopovych and Stefan Iavors'kyi* Cambridge Mass. P. 222-223.

³³⁸ This title almost definitely referred to the Pope, equating the tsar with the head of the Catholic Church, and this is a sign of Feofan's catholic education. However at the same time it shows how far away from the Orthodox consciousness of the Russian population the reformers were.

temporal device which could consider only minor things.³³⁹ The Masonic doctrines called for the acquisition of the inner kingdom of God on behalf of the outer one. This tendency to rely on heart as the organ of wisdom was apparently in opposition to the positivistic and materialistic orientations of the Age of Enlightenment.³⁴⁰ At the same time, in accordance with the classicist doctrine, the Masons regarded Man as a citizen of the world³⁴¹ From the concept of reason common to all people the conclusion was made that all people had the same law and the same civil rights and, therefore, they had to consider the world to be the one and only city for all people,³⁴² and this conviction contrasted with views which considered the national culture as something basically specific.

The Masonic approach to the nature of state was being changed in the course of time, it also was different with different lodges. While the earlier Masons of the middle of the XVIIIth century discussed the so-called natural rights and natural laws, the Masons of the second half of the XVIIIth century, including Saint-Martin and the Russian Masons after him, were inclined to share the divine theory of the origin of the state. One of the most eminent Russian Masons, Ivan Yelagin, translated in 1785 Saint-Martin's book where the monarch was given the title of "the head and father of his people".³⁴³ However all Masonic groups were united by the intention to serve the state, and along with this they were convinced that the freedom regarded as an independence from external forces is much less important than inner freedom. People would be able to find inner freedom exclusively by and through themselves: "Real freedom is a freedom from passions and not from authorities."³⁴⁴

The Masonic movement initiated strong social reflection on the issues raised in these discussions. Talking about the hearts being cleaned by virtue one of the best known members of the Masonic society, Ivan Lopukhin, wrote:

This moral rebirth, which is the only possibility for man to obtain the likeness and image of God, and which should be the main subject for all the

³³⁹ See: Vernadsky G.V. *Russkoye masonstvo v tsarstvovaniye Ekateriny II* (Russian Masonry during the reign of Catherine II). Petrograd, 1917. P. 141.

³⁴⁰ Voltaire's ideas were also well known by the Russian nobility. However, in contrast to the Masons doctrines, they were usually taken directly from French books, while the Masons, in order to attract a bigger audience, initiated a great publishing activity, printing books in Russian.

³⁴¹ Ibid. P. 161.

³⁴² Ibid.

³⁴³ Ibid. P. 169.

³⁴⁴ Pozdeyev — Quote from: Vernadsky, op. cit. P. 170.

regulations and exercises of the Christian Church, cannot be acquired without the action of the all-mighty power; however it is necessarily assisted by human will, which has obtained freedom from God, and which is the highest gift on which the singular greatness of man is established.³⁴⁵

Lopukhin regarded Masonic activity as a school of reflection, specifically because the main task of the Masonic life lay in the conscious effort to be aware of God's presence: "We can never do enough to educate people from their infancy to the end of their lives in this holy ability to sense God's presence everywhere."³⁴⁶ This is clearly a message to every individual to adopt a position of reflection on self in order to constantly analyze and purify the content of mind in the acute presence of the Divine Being. In his speech "On the Love of Death" another famous Mason, Gamaleya, formulated the main objective of Masonic life as the following: "Thus, ... let us try to kill all the unkind qualities of our will and thus allow free growth of the qualities of our good will."³⁴⁷ Though the Masons always emphasized that their intentions related to the personal rather than social or political issues, the government and Catherine II, in particular, thought with good deal of reason that their intentions would not be restricted exclusively by these personal issues. Because of this the attitude to the Masons was extremely complicated, and the state authorities as well as the majority of the population were suspicious of them. (This mistrust considerably limited the possibility for the Masons to be heard by the rest of society. It should be recalled that the rest of society was suspicious of the Masons up to the point that the corrupted word for 'freemason', that is *farmazon*, became a coarse word.)

³⁴⁵ «Сие моральное перерождение, чрез которое только человек становится образом и подобием Божиим, и которое долженствует быть главным предметом всех уставов и упражнений Христианской церкви — не может, конечно, произойти без действия силы Всемогущей; но непременно содействовать оному должна и воля человеческая, коей свобода дана от Бога, как дар величайший и особенно составляющий величие человека.» "Zapiski senatora I.V. Lopukhina. 1859" (Notes of the Senator Lopukhin) // *Rossiya XVIII stoletiya v izdaniyakh Vol'noi russkoi tipografii A.I. Gertsena i N.P. Ogareva* (Russia of the 18th century in the publications of Free Russian Publishing House of A.I. Gertsen and N.P. Ogarev). Reprinted. Moscow, 1990. P. 22.

³⁴⁶ «Не можно довольно с самого младенчества и до конца жизни воспитывать в людях оный святой навык ощущения везде присутствия Божия.» Ibid.

³⁴⁷ Quote from: Vernadsky *Russkoye masonstvo* ... P. 145. In these words it is easy to find a coincidence with Kant's principal idea, expressed in his *Critique of Practical Reason*. In mentioning this fact we just wish to underline the level of philosophical thought and language of the time.

The doctrine of the 'Inner Church', presented in Russian by Lopukhin, was of great importance to the Masons. They thought of the true Church as being based exclusively on the image and words of Christ.³⁴⁸ This Church should embrace all true Christians who were in search of salvation. Lopukhin thought that while the ordinary Christianity in the course of time reduced itself exclusively to words, leaving aside feelings and deeds which were of much greater importance, the principal goal of the Inner Church was to gradually unite all people on the basis of love. This doctrine was in accordance with the statements about the relationship between mind and heart in favour of the latter, as we observed earlier.

The spread of the Masonic doctrines coincided with the spread of French materialistic and political philosophy of the period of the Enlightenment. Catherine II was in correspondence with Voltaire and Diderot. Education intended to pursue inner freedom seemed for her to be much more dangerous than any open discussion of the political and social structure. The principal point in relation to Russian spiritual life was that an acquaintance with French ideas was predominantly going through the books in French while Masonic ideas due to the very extensive activity of Novikov, Lopukhin, and others spread all over Russia in Russian³⁴⁹.

If we take into account the number of books published by the Masons (hundreds) and the fact that later, in the first quarter of the XIXth century, the educated nobility participated enthusiastically in the Masonic lodges, it is easy to imagine the influence of their concepts on the Russian spiritual life. Masons initiated the discussion of such topics as the relationship between personality and state, the search for inner freedom, and familiarized the Russian society with the corresponding terms and concepts. A famous liberal historian of the Russian culture, Ivanov-Razumnik, as well as later authors of a famous collection of articles *The Landmarks*, considered the Masonic movement as the starting point for the formation of the very specific layer of society which is the Russian intelligentsia.

³⁴⁸ This approach reveals the Protestant roots of the Masonic movement, and this again limited their influence on the Orthodox population.

³⁴⁹ The Mason's activity was interrupted by Catherine II. However during the reign of Alexander I the Masonic lodges were again permitted. The new lodges began their activity in French, but in some years they accepted regulations in Russian. (See: A. Pypin *Obshchestvennoye dvizheniye v Rossii pri Aleksandre I* (*Social Movement during the Reign of Alexander I*) St.-Petersburg, 1885. P. 299.

It is necessary to mention that a great proportion of the Masonic literature was mystical in its content providing doctrines on different kinds of light, spirits, levels of nature, and so on. However, under the guise of these concepts the most important issues, which later formed the core of Russian philosophy, were under discussion. The crucial difference between the Masonic doctrines and the discussions held later in the middle of the XIXth century can be found in the nature of the Masonic approach to these issues. It was too abstract: Man was considered to be always the same despite origin, culture, nationality, history, and so on. The approach was conspicuously cosmopolitan; in the oath which had to be declared by the new master we found

I count myself to be a citizen of the world, and the whole world to be like one city ... People have been given a mind, which teaches us what to do and how to behave. Therefore we have one general law of nature, and due to this general law we are citizens...³⁵⁰

Being foreign to ordinary Russian life the Masonic doctrines were also too complicated, sometimes because of their content, sometimes because of the form of expression, and sometimes for both reasons. And so, if we take into account that Russian literary language of that period was not yet as developed as the European languages (for instance, in relation to well established philosophical terminology) the circle of readers was necessarily quite narrow.

Western thought of the middle and second half of the XVIIIth century began to elaborate the concept of the vital opposition between urban and rural life in favour of the latter. This doctrine presupposed that closeness to nature and the simplicity of life were virtues in themselves (Rousseau's 'noble savage' comes to mind). Urban life was contrasted to pastoral life also as the cosmopolitan to the national. These motives had imbued Russian literature since Trediakovskii.³⁵¹ At the beginning they were expressed in an artificial and imitative form, but in the course of time they were elaborated more originally and deeply. Compared with Western Europe the majority of the Russian population used to live in the country, and urban life was very similar to country life, that is why this motif acquired great popularity. Even a predominant part of the gentry did not wish to offer themselves for state service seeking the shelter of their granges and estates, where they were the sole masters.³⁵² "The idealized, poeticized village remained throughout the rest of the century the model held up to the

³⁵⁰ Quote from: Vernadsky *Russkoye masonstvo* ... P. 161.

³⁵¹ For instance, in his "Verses in Praise of Country Life."

town to demonstrate its corruption."³⁵² Along with the superficial and non-critical acceptance of Western ideas this motif awoke a serious and long lasting interest in the folk culture. In contrast with the West Russian literature did not have anything like Chateaubriand's *René* with the romantic hero secluded from society in order to encounter a real life. Russian everyday life was by itself too close to nature and such motifs had not been developed to any notable degree.

In order to reflect on essential issues and express the results of this activity a correspondingly elaborate language is needed. After Peter I's reforms the upper strata of Russian society preferred to use French rather than their native language. At the same time numerous foreign words and phrases came into the Russian language, to the extent that the public could no longer use it. Concerns about this were expressed by Peter I himself in relation to the administrative language. Later attempts were made to address this problem many times. Such institutions as the Department for Translations (*Perevodcheskii Departament*), the Free Russian Assembly (*Vol'noye Rossiiskoye Sobraniye*), and the Russian Academy (*Rossiiskaya Akademiya*, which later in the XIXth century became the part of the Imperial Academy of Sciences) were established with the main goal of purifying and standardizing the Russian language. The greatest writers of the time were involved in this activity, and in 1789 the first volume of the *Dictionary of the Russian Academy* was published: the sixth was issued in 1794. *Universal Russian Grammar*, written by Kurganov, was published for the first time in 1769 and during over the next 60 years it was published 9 more times. This popular work contained the collections of proverbs, riddles and songs, samples of letters, and so on.³⁵⁴ In the second half of the XVIIIth century the syllabo-tonic system of poetic language reached its strength in the poems of such writers as Sumarokov, Knyazhnin, and Vassily Petrov.

The concerns about Russian language were strongly connected with the thoughts about the dignity of the nation. The idea of the dignity of Russia and its respectable rank among other countries became a significant point in the discussion which was initiated by the legendary admiral A. Shishkov. This discussion raised such topics as the origin of the Slavic language, the usage of old Slavonic words, and education based on native language. Shishkov was a famous conservative thinker who

³⁵² See: Rogger *National Consciousness...* P. 129.

³⁵³ Ibid. Pp. 130-131.

³⁵⁴ Ibid. P. 119.

did his best to support the dignity of the old Russian (Church-Slavonic) language. Shishkov presented his views in writing but also established a society named "Gathering of the Lovers of Russian Literature."³⁵⁵ His book *Discourse on the New and Old Style of Russian Language*³⁵⁶ became the most famous of his works. The admiral and his supporters were known as 'archaists' in contrast to 'innovators' with the outstanding writer and thinker N. Karamzin as their recognized head. Their battles progressed during the first 20 years of the XIXth century, and each member of the educated society had to find his position in these battles.

Behind the debates on Russian language and its evolution the problem of national identity was under discussion. At least two points should be mentioned: 1) the problem of the predominant source of national cultural development: whether it was old Russian culture or the culture of Western Europe and 2) whether language was a universal device expressing general ideas which were the same for all nations, or language somehow expressed the specific character of the corresponding nation. Shishkov in his writings was eager to prove that Russia had to develop its culture on the basis of the old Russian values and achievements. He and his supporters listed numerous examples where foreign expressions and idioms had been translated into Russian without any true understanding and feeling of the native language. Karamzin was the first to become aware of its danger and in the later editions of his popular *Letters of a Russian Traveller* he substituted Russian, or even Slavonic, words for the foreign ones he had first employed.³⁵⁷

Karamzin stated, that "Peter the Great made us Europeans. Complaints are useless. The link between the minds of ancient and modern Russians interrupted forever."³⁵⁸ Therefore, the choice was whether Russia should follow the rest of educated humankind, or should it go together with educated Europeans to the universal goal of the integrated human civilization. Accordingly, Karamzin and his supporters rejected any value in the Russian messianic concepts. The idea of the universality and basic organic unity of the whole of humanity was contrasted to the concept of national self-sufficiency. Shishkov in his turn stood up for the concept of the significant link between old and modern Russia, which, he thought, created the

³⁵⁵ «Беседа любителей русского слова».

³⁵⁶ «Рассуждение о старом и новом слоге Российского языка»

³⁵⁷ *Rogger National Consciousness...* P. 124.

groundwork for a national peculiarity and self-sufficiency. During these discussions the name 'slavophile' was created (by Pushkin's uncle Vasilii), and such topics as the attitude to Peter's great reforms, and the historic role of Russia became an essential part of Russian thinking.

Although Shishkov was later treated by the intelligentsia as an ignorant and outmoded writer his thoughts and role in the history of national development has recently been to some extent reconsidered, his concept of language, in particular. Shishkov realized that the meanings of words could not be reduced to their denotations, but formed the entirety of interrelations. Therefore the whole meaning of each word is always unique and characteristic for each distinct language³⁵⁹. This amazingly coincided with the Romantic cult of the uniqueness of each nation and to a certain degree anticipated Von Humboldt's concept of linguistic relativity. Shishkov lost his battle, and Old Slavonic has not been readopted, but his intentions can be seen to be extremely important for the development of Russian consciousness. In the first half of the XIXth century the movement of the so-called "junior archaists" originated. They continued Shishkov's war against uncritical use of foreign words defending the simplicity and expressiveness of the popular language. Pushkin shared many of their views, though he did not think that the high lyrical poetry could be resurrected.³⁶⁰

Romanticism brought into European consciousness a new attitude to history: to comprehend the spirit of a nation had become as important as to comprehend the spirit of laws in the middle of the XVIIIth century. Romanticism was not exclusively literary phenomenon, it became a mark of the time. The most important Romanticist issue in relation to our work is the problem of personality and people. With the French Revolution which destroyed the old order it became far more significant to explore the spirit of the history of different nations rather than the legal systems. For some writers of the time the very words 'Romanticism' and 'nationality' were synonyms.³⁶¹ Exactly at this time Walter Scott invented the historical novel, which greatly

³⁵⁸ Quote from: *Istoriya russkoi literatury XIX veka* (History of the Russian literature of 19th century). Ed. By D.N. Ovsyaniko-Kulikovskii. V. I. Moscow, 1910. Pp. 82-83.

³⁵⁹ See: Gasparov, P. 32-34. Shishkov uses a specific term in relation to the word's interrelations "the circle of denotation" (круг знаменования.)

³⁶⁰ See: Yurii Tynyanov *Arkhaisty i novatory* (Archaists and Innovators). München, 1967. Pp. 163-166.

³⁶¹ Ibid. P. 196

influenced all areas of modern literature.³⁶² Romanticism transformed the problem of people into the problem of nations. While people are basically the same from the classical point of view, they are different as nations taken as specifically historical and even metaphysical bodies. It was not an accident that the greatest Russian writer of the turn of the XVIII-XIXth centuries, Karamzin, became a historian.

There is one more factor which is of great significance for Russian spiritual life: the re-emergence of Russian Orthodox mysticism. This spiritual movement is connected with such names as Paisii Velichkovskii, Tikhon of Zadonsk, and Seraphim of Sarov. St. Paisii (1722-1794) was not an independent and original thinker, yet he dedicated his life to the resurrection of Byzantinism in the Russian Church. He cut short his education in the Kievan Spiritual Academy because of the emphasis on Latin rather than Greek church fathers, and left the Academy for a Greek monastery. He turned to the ways of the XVth century. Florovsky wrote about Paisii:

Not accidentally the elder Paisii was very close to St. Nil of Sora, whose interrupted work Paisii revived and continued (his literary dependence on St. Nil is fully obvious). This work signified the return of the Russian spirit to the Byzantine fathers.³⁶³

St. Paisii translated a great number of the works of the Greek fathers including Simeon the New Theologian and Gregory Palamas. The heyday of this work can be seen in the 5-volume "Encyclopaedia of Asceticism"³⁶⁴ *Dobrotolyubiye*. Paisii's life and works influenced many monasteries in different parts of Russia. The most significant and respectable centre of Russian spirituality in the XIXth century, Optina Pustyn', was developed under Paisii's influence as well. If we take into account that Optina Pustyn', with its strictly ascetic and mystical spirit, played an important role in the lives of Gogol, Kireyevskii, Dostoevsky, Tolstoy, Leont'ev, it can be concluded that is impossible to overestimate Paisii's influence on Russian culture.

St. Tikhon of Zadonsk and St. Seraphim of Sarov provided the Russian people with the brilliant models of the ascetic approach to life. Dostoevsky in his search for a perfect man thought of Tikhon (who was canonized a saint in 1862). It is no accident that one chapter of Dostoevsky's novel *The Possessed* (which however was not

³⁶² Pushkin in: V. XI, P. 121.

³⁶³ G. Florovsky "Ways of Russian Theology." Part One. // *Collected Works*. V. 5. New York, 1979. P. 160.

³⁶⁴ The expression is taken from: A. Zamalejev *Lepty. Issledovaniya po russkoi filosofii*. (Mites. Investigations in Russian Philosophy). St. Petersburg, 1996. P. 282.

included in the first edition) is called *At Tikhon's Place*. There is a legend that, just before Gogol died, he uttered the words which were a repetition of the Tikhon words: "Ladder! Give me a ladder!"

St. Seraphim established in the small town Sarov the second centre of Orthodox spiritual life in XIXth century Russia. His famous saying that the only goal of life was to possess the Holy Spirit and through this many around would be saved became the quintessence of the truly Orthodox yet mystical approach to life. It is impossible to overestimate St. Seraphim's significance during the time of decay in church life in Russia. Fedotov stated that St. Seraphim was the only one amongst modern Russian zealots who broke the Synod seal and ascended to the icon.³⁶⁵ "The very appearance of Seraphim in the circumstances of the XVIIIth and XIXth centuries presupposes the reemergence of the mystical tradition."³⁶⁶ This resurrection of the ancient mystical tradition became extremely important in the middle of the XIXth century when the conscious search for national identity became a symptom of the time.

All these preconditions resulted in a fully-developed reflection on national issues which could be found, for instance, in Karamzin's *Memoir on Ancient and Modern Russia* which is considered an example of the most mature work from the point of view of national reflection at the beginning of the XIXth century. The work, written in a clear and rich language by a writer who was competent in history and possessed a good knowledge and experience of the issues raised, became a landmark on the way to a national philosophy.

In order to demonstrate the difference between the predominant approach to national issues of the second half of XVIIIth century and that developed by Karamzin it would be useful to compare his work with the project of the Russian constitution (usually called *The Discourse on the Compulsory State Laws*³⁶⁷), prepared by one of the greatest writers and thinkers of the previous generation Denis Fonvizin. The comparison seems to be particularly indicative because both works are dedicated to similar issues, such as the nature of power, the interrelation between personal freedom and laws, between freedom and ownership. (The comparison is even more indicative

³⁶⁵ G. Fedotov *Svyatyie Drevnei Rusi* (Saints of Ancient Rus'). 3rd edition. Paris, 1985. P. 235.

³⁶⁶ Ibid.

if we take into account that in his discussions with the conservative thinkers, like Shishkov, Karamzin occupied the position of a modernist, because he accepted the fact that since Peter Russia changed dramatically, and we had to accept these changes. And so we can expect Karamzin to be very close to Fonvizin.)

Although the time span between these works is only 30 years the difference is crucial: while Fonvizin's reasoning can be easily applied to almost every country (only occasional applications to Russian life can be made) Karamzin's goal expressed in his *Memoir* is to make conspicuous distinction between Russia and other countries in order to construct a system of proper laws.

First of all the works are different in their methodology. Fonvizin begins with the most general statements, like: "The supreme power is given to the ruler exclusively for the good of his subjects"³⁶⁷ This power can be properly used by the ruler only if it is united with virtue. As God is subordinated to the good and so omnipotent, the ruler has to subordinate himself to the good. (Fonvizin did not use the word *pravda* in his *Discourse*, however it is clear that he thought of something which was both 'truth' and 'good' and this definitely provided us with the concept of *pravda*.) Fonvizin discriminates between state and fatherland. He comprehends fatherland as based exclusively on good general laws which bring the common utility and which do not depend on the whims of the ruler or his favourite. The state, in contrast, is based on despotism, which manifest a lack of true laws compensated by autocracy. There are two noticeable features of true power: rightness [*pravota*] and meekness [*krotost*], and "they are the rays of divine light which declare that the power is established by God."³⁶⁸ The word *pravota*, used by Fonvizin, looks somehow strange in this context: the word *pravda* would be definitely expected. (Probably, Fonvizin chose this word in order to emphasize the second feature, that is meekness, as *pravda* is too general and does not tolerate the less general word.) Rightness makes the ruler respectable, while meekness makes him beloved. Thus, though Fonvizin does not use the word *pravda* he expresses the same meaning, emphasizing the most important features of a concept very close to Russian *pravda*.

³⁶⁷ «Рассуждение о непременных государственных законах» (*Discourse on the compulsory Russian laws*, written between 1780-1783.)

³⁶⁸ *Russkaya filosofiya vtoroi poloviny XVIII veka. Khrestomatiya.* (Russian Philosophy of the Second Half of 18th Century.) Sverdlovsk, 1990. P. 173.

³⁶⁹ *Ibid.* P. 177.

With *volya* situation is different: Fonvizin uses this word exclusively in order to express the meaning of will; when he needs to signify the concept of freedom, he uses the word *vol'nost'*. If the concept related to *pravda* connects it with the divine light and good, freedom appears to express the highest ideal for an earthly life. Fonvizin links freedom with the institution of ownership: "Apparently it is impossible to destroy freedom and not to destroy at the same time the right of ownership, and it is impossible to destroy the right of ownership without freedom is being exterminated."³⁷⁰

Fonvizin demonstrates his brilliant acquaintance with contemporary theories of natural rights, and reason in his eyes is definitely higher than feeling. He states that the mind is never corrupted to the extent that the heart can be corrupted, and so the reason should be taken as the basis for the establishment of the state. Thus, Fonvizin's ideal is: on the basis of reason to implement the divine good into the system of laws represented by the ruler, who will display his good nature through rightness and meekness; in its turn this system will guarantee freedom and the right of ownership. In other words, *pravda* will guarantee *volya*. The whole logic of the work is based on deduction: Fonvizin holds the general concept of the good state, which he calls 'fatherland'; however the fatherland is not considered to be different from any other 'fatherlands' precisely because of the deductive nature of his classical approach. This explains, by the way, why the emphasis on reason is so important for Fonvizin.

Karamzin's work, in notable contrast to Fonvizin's *Discourse*, opens with the following statement: "The present is a consequence of the past."³⁷¹ For Karamzin this is not a mere declaration but a vital key to the understanding of the political and social issues, as well as the key to the corresponding recommendations designed to improve the state structure. First, Karamzin wishes to find the causes which in effect led to the establishment of the most spacious country in the world. His approach takes the existing legal system as the starting point of analysis, presenting the system of laws which has naturally grown from ordinary Russian life. Although it is beneficial to know the codes of other states, we cannot expect them to provide us with general conceptions or with guidance in formulating our own laws.³⁷² Karamzin states that

³⁷⁰ Ibid. P. 182.

³⁷¹ R. Pipes *Karamzin's Memoir on Ancient and Modern Russia*, Cambridge, Mass. 1959. P.103.

³⁷² Ibid. P. 184.

"the laws of a nation must be the outgrowth of its own ideas, customs, habits, and special circumstances."³⁷³ Because of this it is, for instance, absolutely impossible to borrow any of the well established systems of laws, whether it is the Code of Napoleon or the Code of King Frederick, and implement them directly into Russian life.

The most significant of Karamzin's conclusions are the following. Rus' from the very beginning flourished under the rule of wise princes who were able to combine autocracy with democratic institutions. The particular balance of these centres of power enabled the creation of a strong state, because "political slavery is incompatible with civil freedom."³⁷⁴ During and after two centuries when country was destroyed and humiliated by the barbarians, the Muscovite state was established on a different basis which was a wise autocracy. The democratic institutions disappeared unregretted, and only loyalty to the sovereign remained. Freedom was sacrificed on behalf of the virtue of obedience. At the same time this virtue was established on the moral strength of tsardom. As soon as this moral strength began to weaken during the time of the elected ruler, Boris Godunov, the power acquired by the monarch could be used against the subjects. The only way to prevent this violation of the ruler's most sacred obligation is morality. Morality is the only means to keep "the ancient covenant between authority and obedience."³⁷⁵ The moral respect for this covenant distinguishes a civilized society from one ruled by the private natural law.

Karamzin investigated the peculiarity of Russian life as it had been shaped by history, geographical position, and other factors. The uniqueness of the Russian society he found in the combination of the ancient customs of the East, as well as of the Byzantine customs, which were adopted together with Christianity, and certain German customs, imparted by the Normans.³⁷⁶ Moreover, Karamzin unhesitatingly used the symbol of the two headed eagle to describe the Russia's intermediate position between East and West. This position resulted in a situation when the establishment of the Russian monarchy was based on moral virtues rather than on borrowed universal principles. This monarchy in the course of time proved to be the most appropriate form of government for the country. In this, Karamzin obviously

³⁷³ Ibid. P. 184-185.

³⁷⁴ Ibid. P. 109.

³⁷⁵ Ibid. P. 135.

³⁷⁶ Ibid. P. 110.

praises heart over reason. This relates to both monarch and subjects. According to Karamzin, Russia experienced its happiest time during the reign of Catherine II "who had vowed to rule following the *dictates of her heart*."³⁷⁷

Karamzin stated that there was, therefore, no chance to deduce the laws from the general principles. The logic of lawmaking should be the opposite: there was the Code of Laws (so-called 'Ulozheniye') composed in the middle of the XVIIth century during the reign of Alexei Mikhailovich. This Code, and the edicts and decrees issued since that time, should be taken as the foundation for the modern Code.³⁷⁸ These edicts and decrees had to be classified, then organized under their proper articles, and after that put into a consistent whole. Only on the basis of this amended and critically re-thought Code could the general rules be formulated. It is important to emphasize that reason, following this way of lawmaking, though playing a significant role, is still secondary in relation to the content of the Code which is taken for granted.

According to Karamzin, relying on the nature of man is much more important than the best possible Code: "The main trouble with the legislators of the present reign is their excessive reverence for political forms. ... Let us follow a different principle, and say that the matters are not forms but men."³⁷⁹ The supreme law is the emperor himself, he is supposed to rule in favour of justice: good people should love him, bad ones should fear him. "In the Russian monarch concentrate all the powers: our government is fatherly, patriarchal. The father of the family judges and punishes without protocol. The monarch, too, must in condition of different nature, follow only his conscience and nothing else."³⁸⁰

Karamzin's ideal of the state (or it is probably better to use the word "fatherland") can thus be presented as the following: *pravda* as the supreme idea of a nation is expressed in the whole history of the country, and it is impossible to deduce *pravda* from any general principles. The sovereign personifies this *pravda*, ruling according to the instructions of his heart, and his main goal is to establish just and personal relations between people; political freedom at the same time is the function of personal freedom, because it depends on the personal choice between good and bad.

³⁷⁷ Ibid. P. 137.

³⁷⁸ Ibid. P. 187.

³⁷⁹ Ibid. P. 192.

³⁸⁰ Ibid. P. 197.

In his understanding of freedom Karamzin approaches the old concept of the word rather than the new one implemented by contemporary political thinkers, especially the French ones. Freedom is what transforms a man into personality:

Can slaves love? Are they capable of feeling gratitude? Love and fear are incompatible; free man alone possesses the capacity for feelings. Although the absence of all restraint is harmful, freedom is a precious thing, consistent with monarch's interests; freedom was always the glory of kings. Liberty exists where decent men can live without fear; slavery exists where laws are absent, where the righteous and the wicked perish alike. Freedom is wise and sacred – while equality is nothing but a dream.³⁸¹

Later, in his *Thoughts on True Freedom* (1825) Karamzin expressed the same understanding of the truth as in the *Memoir* seeing the supreme truth [*pravda*] in Providence and eternal laws, which led the Slavic tribes to the formation of the greatest empire on earth. Answering the liberals with their hedonistic ethics, he concluded: "For a moral being there is no happiness without freedom; yet this freedom is given by neither Monarch, nor by Parliament. Each one gives it to himself with God's help. We have to win freedom in our hearts through clear conscience and trust in Providence."³⁸²

If we now compare the views, expressed by the two great thinkers the striking difference is evident: in Fonvizin's case there is a clear preference for reason at the expense of heart; *pravda* guarantees *volya*; the sovereign in his turn is considered to be the guarantor of just laws, which manifest *pravda* itself. In contrast with Fonvizin, Karamzin states that *volya* guarantees *pravda* through the just personal relations; the sovereign is not the guarantor of laws but law himself; and the heart with its endeavour towards good is more important than reason. *Volya* (will) opens heart to *pravda*; and at the same time only the heart of a *vol'nyi* (free) person can approach the same.

Later we will see that Tchaadayev construed his critical attitude toward Russia through the negation of Karamzin's ideas. This was realized by one of his younger contemporaries, Prince P. Vyazemskii. In his draft of a letter to Minister Uvarov Vyazemskii clearly indicated: "Tchaadayev's letter is nothing else but the negation of

³⁸¹ Quote from: R. Pipes *Karamzin's Memoir on Ancient and Modern Russia* Cambridge Mass. 1959. P. 44.

³⁸² *Essays on Karamzin: Russian Man-of-letters, Political Thinker, Historian, 1766-1826*. The Hague-Paris, 1975. P. 198.

Russia, which had been described by Karamzin from the original."³⁸³ This means that Karamzin was regarded by the educated layer of society as the creator of a genuine image of Russia. If it had been just an ordinary opinion Vyazemskii certainly would not have referred to Karamzin's work.

The significant progress of public consciousness during the XVIIIth century can be demonstrated with Gavril Romanovich Derzhavin, the greatest Russian poet before Pushkin. Derzhavin's family belonged to the lowest layer of the nobility. At the same time Derzhavin was able to reject the Empress, Catherine II's, request that he dedicate some poems to her, which would have been unconceivable behaviour for the earlier poets. Derzhavin, being the proponent of the classicist tradition, presented himself in his poetry as a universal man. He was the strong defender of human rights referring to the unity of human nature, sharing these views with the Masons. At the same time his political and social concepts were certainly restricted by his origin and self-identification and, therefore, he could not become a poet who would express in his works the Russian national identity in its integrity. At the same time he took two extremely important steps towards this expression in his poems: a) he expressed himself as a free personality, and b) in particular by placed himself in a reflective position in relation to the content of his works.

Derzhavin possessed an *inner freedom* to the highest degree. His best poems, if compared with the works of Lomonosov, Sumarokov, or other eminent poets of the XVIIIth century, are not just repetitions of the trivialities of the classical morality, but are always presented in a way that there is space between the direct content of a work and the author's attitude to this content.³⁸⁴ In his later poems in particular Derzhavin proclaimed himself to be free from any ambitions in relation to power, and to be the proponent of the enjoyment of the private life (poem *Freedom* (1803): "I do not wish to swap my freedom and conscience for dreams [about power and gold].") At the same time, in his earlier works, he often connected his inner freedom and search for truth with social duties and with conscience.³⁸⁵ He always placed the emphasis on a

³⁸³ Quote from: P. Ya. Tchaadayev: *Pro et Contra* St. -Petersburg, 1998. P. 120.

³⁸⁴ S. Averintsev emphasizes Derzhavin's freedom ("the freedom of genius") which found its most visible expression in his use of metre. - "Poeziya Derzhavina" // *Poets*, Moscow, 1996. P.132, also 135.

³⁸⁵ In *Felitsa* Derzhavin praises Catherine II for defending a situation where conscience and *pravda* do not contradict each other («Где совесть с правдой

freely and consciously chosen social position (for the noble class anyway). There was no contradiction between this and the earlier statement that Derzhavin shared Masonic convictions in regard to the universal omni-human values. The difference between him and the previous poets was crucial if we take into account that Derzhavin presented his views as being freely accepted by himself and not just taken for granted.

Derzhavin's inner freedom, shaping his attitude towards social issues, is filled with the *dignity* of a citizen, again unimaginable for earlier poets.³⁸⁶ He defended the ideal that the law was higher than the monarch's will, and that, therefore, the poet's duty was to be responsible before the law rather than before a person. Because of this, for Russian radical thinkers like Radishchev and Ryleyev, Derzhavin served as a model of the poet-citizen (disregard the obvious fact that he was monarchist and an advocate of serfdom). He also always emphasized that the monarch was a mortal human being and because of this equal to any of his subjects including the lowest slave.³⁸⁷ At the same time Derzhavin's image of the society was far from democratic. He presented society as consisting of strictly separated groups, each of which was predestined to fulfil its specific duties. Moreover, his attitude to uneducated and illiterate people was quite arrogant, and he certainly did not wish to think about their specific values. He personally had made too many efforts to stand beyond them in his own life, and this prevented him from the next step: to progress from the universal to the national, leaving this for Pushkin.

Derzhavin boldly, frankly, and vigorously disputed the freedom of the poet against the mob – "Go away impertinent yet vulgar mob, which is despised by me!"³⁸⁸ The same view was later expressed by Pushkin in his *Poet and Crowd*: "Go away, I

обитают? ... У трона разве твоего!» In *A Grandee* Derzhavin draws his ideal of the statesman: "Grandeess are the healthy members of the body, They diligently fulfil their duties.. in order to care about people, to love tsar, craving for common good, ... and speak the truth (*pravda*)". («Вельможи – здоровы члены тела, Прилежно долг все правят свой... Как блюсть народ, царя любить, О благе общем их стараться; ... Стоять – и правду говорить».)

³⁸⁶ See: Lesskis, P. 36 comparing Lomonosov and Derzhavin in this respect.

³⁸⁷ The most powerful manifestation of this idea occurs in the famous poem *To Rulers and Judges* («Властителям и судиям». – Переложение 81 псалма). The same motif can be found in other important poems – *The Vision of Grandee* (*Видение Мурзы*) – «Владыки света люди те же, В них страсти, хоть на них венцы...», etc.

³⁸⁸ «Прочь дерзка чернь, непросвещенна и презираемая мной!»

do not wish to deal with you.³⁸⁹ Both poets have in common the demand for an absolute inner freedom, and argue against the view that the poet has to be useful to society and that this can be gained exclusively through the negation of the state, a view which later formed a core belief of the intelligentsia.

Even democratic critics, whose attitude to Derzhavin was far from positive and objective, recognized his contribution to the discovery of genuine personality in contrast to the concept of an abstract personality typical in Masonic writings (for instance, for Radishchev).³⁹⁰ Anyone would agree that without this discovery the progress towards a literary revelation of national character would be absolutely impossible. Furthermore, and they overlooked this, Derzhavin separated himself from the characters of his poems, and hence a new form of the expression of personal views became possible. Pushkin's attitude to Derzhavin evolved from admiration to the almost complete denial of his literary merit.³⁹¹ Notwithstanding this, it is possible to affirm that it was Derzhavin who, as a poet and as a personality, came closest to Pushkin as a national poet. There is also one specific feature of Derzhavin's works, which make them close to Pushkin's: their reflective character. Indeed, Derzhavin in his later years supplied his poems with extensive commentary, indicating prototypes, events, and personal attitudes. This commentary (though it is not included in the context of the works themselves) is similar to Pushkin's lyrical deviations, which took the form of, for instance in *Eugeny Onegin*, a sort of game played by poet with his reader and thus creating a significant additional dimension. This dimension allowed Derzhavin to express himself as an active personality and not exclusively as an objective observer hidden behind the lines. Derzhavin bore this particular dimension in mind when he stated in his famous *Monument*,³⁹² that he was the first, who dared in Russian language 'to talk the truth to tsars with a smile'. It was obvious for him that

³⁸⁹ «Подите прочь, - какое дело поэту мирному до вас! В разврате каменейте смело: Не оживит вас лиры глас!»

³⁹⁰ See: Ivanov-Razumnik *Istoriya russkoi obshchestvennoi mysli. Individualizm i meshchanstvo v russkoi literature i zhizni XIX* (History of Russian social thought. Individualism and bourgeoisness in the Russian literature and life of the 19th century). 3rd edition. V.I. St. Petersburg, 1911. Pp. 43-46. A typical intelligent approach towards Derzhavin occurs, for instance, in A. Pypin's *History of Russian Literature* (See: Pp. 89-90.)

³⁹¹ The characteristic of Pushkin's remarks is presented by Pypin in: Pypin's *History of Russian Literature*, V. 1. 1903. P. 374.

³⁹² Taken by Pushkin to serve a model for his *Monument*, although apparently after the Ovidius prototype.

to present the truth did not mean to become a prophet but to remain a personality. Again a great distance between Derzhavin and earlier poets including Lomonosov and Sumarokov can be seen in these words.

It should be also mentioned that Derzhavin's image of God correlates with the aesthetical approach outlined in the earlier chapter. The unity and mystery of world Derzhavin relates to light. In his *God* light penetrates everything: the expression from the Creed "light from light", including the creation of celestial bodies, suns, stars, burning ether, of all the shining worlds, and so on, are much more important for him than creation by word which is mentioned once (or twice if we count the line that God *called out* the chaos from the chasms of eternity). It is also not an accident that the as it is presented by Derzhavin wholeness of Being in God is reached by man through God's *pravda*. Although the word *pravda* is not often in his poems.

To sum up, the evolution of Russian thought during the XVIIIth century demonstrates a) the movement towards traditional values inherited from the Muscovite Rus', and 2) the formation of the new position of reflection. The Masons were eager to implement new principles in the Russian consciousness through their doctrines which were borrowed from the West. In doing this they provided an educated layer of society with the possibility to discuss such topics as the nature of the relationship between personality and state, the principles of moral life based on inner freedom, the concept of the 'Inner Church' and with the corresponding language. They regarded their activity as a school of reflection through which the presence of God is discovered in personal as well as in social life and in nature. Being strange to the majority of population their activity nonetheless ploughed up the soil for further intellectual development towards the values of the indigenous population. Also borrowed from the West the motif of the advantages of peasant life compared with the urban one became very popular in the literature of the second half of the XVIIIth century and attracted attention to the traditional values. An important step to the incipient reflection was made through discussion of linguistic issues, which not only allowed to elaborate the usage of Russian language but also raised the problem of national dignity. Romanticism forced Russian thought to consider the idea of the spirit of nation by the analysis of its own peculiarity. All these factors along with the re-emergence of Russian Orthodox mysticism prepared a new position for reflection and

converged the values and interests of the Westernized educated layer of society with the values of the majority of Russian population.

This shift from purely borrowed concepts to the ones which reflected the essentials of the traditional worldview was demonstrated by the comparison of Fonvizin's and Karamzin's works. Fonvizin connects *pravda* with the divine light and good, while freedom expresses the highest ideal for an earthly life. *Pravda* should be implemented into the system of laws represented by the ruler, who will display his good nature through rightness and meekness; in its turn this system will guarantee freedom and the right of ownership. In other words, *pravda* will guarantee *volya*. Fonvizin's system a) presents *volya* as not complementary to *pravda* but dependent on it; b) lacks sense of history, c) takes society as a raw material for the social reformer; d) gives preference to reason rather than to heart. Karamzin, on the contrary, states that *volya* guarantees *pravda* through the just personal relations; the sovereign is not the guarantor of laws but law himself; and the heart with its endeavour towards good is more important than reason. *Voiya* (will) opens heart to *pravda*; and at the same time only the heart of a free person can approach the same. Karamzin possesses a living sense of history and his approach to society is marked by respect to its traditional life.

Derzhavin in his poems expressed the shift from the concept of an abstract personality typical for Masonic doctrines to the genuine personality. He demonstrated a high degree of inner freedom and dignity which clearly corresponds with Karamzin's approach. Derzhavin's image of God correlates with the aesthetical approach outlined in the earlier chapter. The unity and mystery of world Derzhavin relates to light. Thus the movement towards direction of national traditional values and concepts became visible in his works. However much more completely and consistently they were presented by Pushkin.

Chapter 6

Pushkin's worldview

Viewed through Pushkin's eyes Russia in 1815 appeared to be the most powerful state in the world, although internally its social conflicts remained unresolved. Like Karamzin before him, Pushkin realized first that universal principles, no matter how just and brilliant they might be in themselves, could not be introduced into Russian society without risking dire consequences; and, second, that it was impossible to understand Russia without understanding its history. This chapter attempts to understand the nature of Pushkin's approach to these matters on the basis of the analysis of his understanding of the concepts related to *pravda* and *volya* viewed through the three-dimensional scheme: historicism, aestheticism, and mysticism.

Romanticism influenced Pushkin in his understanding of the nature and role of the poet, who, a stranger and wanderer in this world possesses a gift to express a divine power which renews humankind. Such a view was clearly stated, for instance, by Kuchelbeker in the 1820s. At least two points marked the specifics of Russian romanticism. First, it was imbued with the intention of establishing new reality above all in the moral sense. This was noted by Kireyevskii in his "Outline of Russian literature in 1829"³⁹³. Second, to some extent Russian romanticism reflected a leaning towards Greek orthodoxy and a hostile attitude to the Church of Rome.

Pushkin had become a cultural myth before the mid 1830s, and this myth spread all over Russia immediately after his death. Gogol in 1835 described him as a unique phenomenon, "a Russian man in his ultimate development, as he will probably appear before us in two hundred years".³⁹⁴ Pushkin also played a significant role in the emergence of Russian philosophy: his works were explored in depth by

³⁹³ *Polnoye sobraniye sochinenii I.V. Kireyevskogo* (Complete works of I.V. Kireyevskii). Ed. by M. Gershenzon. Vv. I-II. Moscow, 1910. Pp. 18-19.

³⁹⁴ Quote from: Gasparov B.M. "Poeticheskii yazyk Pushkina kak fakt istorii russkogo literaturnogo yazika" (Pushkin's poetic language as the fact of the history of Russian literary language). *Wiener Slawistischer Almanach*, Sonderband 27, Wien 1992. P. 20. See also some other remarks about Pushkin's Russianness (Odoyevsky, Dostoevsky, Kireyevsky, etc. at pp. 17-20.

philosophers, starting with Solovyov; and only later interest in Dostoevsky exceeded interest in his predecessor. Yet at the same time Pushkin never expressed any philosophical ideas as such: he himself is a pure manifestation of poetry, and one of his sayings was "The purpose of Poetry is Poetry."³⁹⁵

Pushkin's worldview taken as the expression of Russian national consciousness can be put into the framework outlined in the opening paragraph of this paper: it is historical (in this respect Pushkin is in direct contrast to Derzhavin), it is aesthetic, and it is mystical. If the second point is beyond dispute, the first and the third need to be examined.

Let us start from Pushkin's position on the author in relation to what he has been writing, a position that is reflective rather than included into the context. It is highly likely that Derzhavin with his sense of inner freedom and dignity of the poet indirectly influenced Pushkin in his formation of this position. This can be concluded if we take into account that Derzhavin and Pushkin created with great strength the image of the author who stands behind the events being described – Derzhavin in such poems as *Felitsa* (and in his later commentaries to these poems) and Pushkin with his lyrical deviations; and that Derzhavin was the first to express clearly the position that the poet's own dignity is beyond the immediate content, and, therefore, occupies a reflective place in relation to his poems. This position was clearly understood by Pushkin as beyond any particular party or group. The best known example can be found in Pushkin's poems about the destiny and role of the poet. However, Pushkin held the same position in other matters. For instance, discussing the events relating to the suppression of the Decembrists' rebellion, Pushkin wrote to Delvig: "Let us be neither superstitious, nor one-sided as French tragedians; but let us observe the tragedy with Shakespeare's eyes."³⁹⁶ Pushkin was consciously trying to avoid narrow-mindedness and to stand as an objective observer who is not involved in immediate everyday opinions and quarrels.

One more argument can be added. It was commonly held by democratic literary critics, starting from Belinsky, that Pushkin in his political approach and social views was extremely close to the Decembrists. However, some studies show clearly that, though Pushkin shared some of the Decembrists' attitudes and values, his position was different. Moreover, his views evolved in the opposite direction – from

³⁹⁵ Quote from: Frank S.L. *Etyudy o Pushkine* (Etudes on Puskin).Münich, 1957. P.81.

the ideology of the French Enlightenment and heroic hedonism to Christianity.³⁹⁷ His friends, members of secret societies, sensed Pushkin's disagreement with them and this was probably the reason why Pushkin was not invited to become a member. In 1826 Pushkin wrote the famous *Stanzas* to Nicholas I. Many of his friends reproached him for this poem, and he had to justify himself. In his answer, *To friends*, dated 1828 he had to reassure them: "No I am not a flatterer, when I freely praise the tsar..."³⁹⁸ Notwithstanding this disclaimer Katenin wrote a kind of parody called *Old story*.³⁹⁹ The poet here is represented as a slave who worships his master. This slave does not care about freedom: "What does it mean this quasi freedom?"⁴⁰⁰ The attitude towards the sovereign was a crucial point of disagreement. The difference lies in the contrasting approaches to social reforms: while the Decembrists, being either republicans or constitutional monarchists, were radicals, Pushkin was skeptical about the possibility of radically improving society by violent means. The Decembrists, on the other hand, considered any kind of conservative political approach to be a weakness or even a crime.

In his attitude towards the monarchy Pushkin was closer to Derzhavin than to his own friends. However, one substantial motif distinguishes Derzhavin from Pushkin in their definitions of the worth of a poet and a citizen: while Derzhavin finds this worth in his relation to values common to humanity in general, in his case Christian values, Pushkin sees a citizen's dignity in relation to his ancestors, to the history of his country, through which God sanctions all the self-confidence and the greatness of man.⁴⁰¹ Derzhavin proclaimed his contempt of the mob on the grounds of

³⁹⁶ Ibid. P. 40.

³⁹⁷ See: Lesskis G. *Pushkinskii put' v russkoi literature* (Pushkin's way in Russian literature). Moscow: Khudozhestvennaya Literatura, 1993. P. 367 et al.

³⁹⁸ «Друзьям» – «Нет, я не льстец, когда царю хвалу свободную слагаю».

³⁹⁹ These events are analyzed by Yu. N. Tynyanov in: "Arkhaisty i Pushkin" (Archaists and Pushkin). // *Arkhaisty i novatory* (Archaists and innovators). München., 1967. Pp. 163-166.

⁴⁰⁰ «Что значит мнимая свобода, Когда есть стрелы и силки?»

⁴⁰¹ «Два чувства дивно близки нам –
В них обретает сердце пищу –
Любовь к родному пепелищу,
Любовь к отеческим гробам... (III, 242)//
стр 369

And he continues:
На них основано от века
По воле Бога самого

the difference between educated and uneducated people. Pushkin, coming from a noble family with 600-year-old history, defended aristocratic nature of Russian literature, saying that "our literature ... differs from others because it does not bear the stamp of a slave's humiliation. Our talented people are noble, independent ... Our writers are taken from the aristocracy..."⁴⁰² Pushkin was chastised for similar statements by his contemporaries (for instance, by Ryleev⁴⁰³) as well as later by democratic and Marxist critics. However, even if there is in him a particle of aristocratic haughtiness, far more important is the sharp immediate feeling he has for the past. Lesskiss states that "with this deeply intimate and lyrical attitude to the past, to the history of his country, with these patriotic feelings, Pushkin was nationalist to the hilt."⁴⁰⁴ For instance, one finds many ironic remarks directed at the clergy, and in this respect Pushkin continues a popular tradition. Furthermore, he sometimes allows himself a direct blasphemy,⁴⁰⁵ which has led some scholars to conclude that Pushkin was an atheist. However, if we recall, for example, Tatyana from *Eugeny Onegin* (her letter to Eugeny) it seems much more likely that Pushkin's attitude to these matters was grounded in the basic striving after the spiritual freedom of personality.⁴⁰⁶ At the same time he was persuaded that the Russian church served to enlighten society, which differentiated it from the Catholic church.⁴⁰⁷ In contrast to Catholicism, which created a specific society independent of civil laws, Orthodoxy was dependant upon a single, supreme-monarch power. Nonetheless, Orthodoxy was separated from other social groups by the respect of the whole society for the holiness of religion, and so it was always regarded as a mediator between the monarch and his people. "We owe monks our History, and therefore our education."⁴⁰⁸ (Here the word 'History' definitely means 'Chronicles.') Pushkin held this view from 1822 to the end of his life. And so, trying to free himself from any prejudices and seeking for inner freedom, he placed himself in a position beyond everyday quarrels and opinions. He blamed

Самостоянье человека

И все величие его. (III, 848).»

⁴⁰² Quote from: Lesskiss, *Pushkinskii*... P. 369.

⁴⁰³ Ibid.

⁴⁰⁴ Ibid. P. 367.

⁴⁰⁵ It is sufficient to recall his *Gavriiliada*.

⁴⁰⁶ See: Lesskiss, *Pushkinskii*... P. 194-195.

⁴⁰⁷ Whether it is true or not from an objective historical point of view, this opinion was part of the Russian mentality.

⁴⁰⁸ "Zametki po russkoi istorii". V. 11, P. 17.

Catherine the Great for her unfair attitude towards the Church, which he attributed to her pursuit of absolute power. She deprived the Church of its independence confiscating all the monastic possessions, transforming priests into ignorant and miserable people. As Pushkin notes: "This is a pity! It is precisely the Greek confession, different from all others, which confers upon us our specific national character".⁴⁰⁹

From this point we can proceed to Pushkin's historicism. Pushkin expressed his mature views in his prose as well as in poetry written in Boldino. While earlier he believed that Russia should be enlightened in order to progress to the level of European nations, in Boldino he wrote: "Russia never had anything in common with the rest of Europe, ... its history requires another concept, another formula, instead of that deduced by Guizaut from the history of the Christian WeSt."⁴¹⁰ Therefore, Pushkin approached the point from which the Slavophiles (as well as Westernizers) started their search for a Russian philosophy of history. However, Pushkin did not arrive at a Slavophile view. He believed in the uniqueness of Russian history, but he did not bind himself by any preconceived doctrine. He definitely believed that the specifics of the Russian national character were rooted in the climate, forms of everyday life, and religion.⁴¹¹ His image of Russian history, in contrast to that of the great majority of his contemporaries, was dynamic rather than static. This becomes clear, for instance, in his discussion with Khomyakov, as it was remembered by A. O. Smirnova. Khomyakov, the leader of the Slavophile movement stated that Peter the Great thought as a German. Pushkin asked him what allowed him to conclude that the Byzantine ideas of Moscow Tsardom were more national than Peter's concepts? This question clearly demonstrates that Pushkin did not think of any epoch of Russian history as a *model era* in the way the Slavophiles thought of the Muscovite period. At the same time he was the last man to reject the significance of the Byzantine heritage. He specially praises monks who "retained the faint sparks of Byzantine education."⁴¹²

⁴⁰⁹ Pushkin A.S. "O russkoi istorii XVIII veka" (On the Russian history of the XVIII century). // *Collection of works*. V. 7. Moscow, 1976. P. 164.

⁴¹⁰ Pushkin, *Complete...* XI, 127.

⁴¹¹ Pushkin A.S. "O narodnosti v literature" (On popularity in literature) // *Complete Works*, V. XI. P. 17.

⁴¹² Pushkin A.S. "O nichtozhestve literaturny russkoi" (On miserableness of Russian literature). // *Complete Works*. V. XI, P. 268.

In his essay "On National Drama and on 'Marfa Posadnitsa'" ("O narodnoi drame i drame 'Marfa Posadnitsa,'" 1830), Pushkin insists that a writer treating historical themes should "resurrect the past age in all its truth" (XI, 181)". And it can be done only through insight. Pushkin wrote: "No matter how strong the preconception of ignorance is, how greedily one accepts calumny, a single word, spoken by such a person as you, destroys them forever. Genius uncovers the truth at the first sight, and, as the Holy Writ says, truth is stronger than the tsar" (XVI, 224)."⁴¹³ Thus, our conclusion coincides with that of Evdokimova's: "Unlike Karamzin, for whom historical heroes, such as the tsars, symbolically reveal the signify / chance of the historical process but are unable either to influence the process or be influenced by it, Pushkin focuses on the dynamic relationship between the individual and the flux of history."⁴¹⁴

Pushkin approaches Christianity as a living church – he rejects all the expressions of "confessional narrowness."⁴¹⁵ In his letter to Tchaadayev he wrote that the unity of the Christian church is not rooted in the Papacy but in the idea of Christ.⁴¹⁶ That is why he understood Protestantism as a democratic stage in the history of Christianity in comparison with Catholic monarchism. Pushkin's positive attitude towards Protestantism is especially significant if we take into account the common negative attitude to Protestant confessions in Russia. Pushkin's approach to the Catholic church demonstrates that he valued highly the spiritual role of the church but not its political influence. His feeling that political power played too major a role in Catholicism explains his extremely negative attitude to Feofan Prokopovich, who worshipped the idea of power itself: "Our clergy prior to Feofan deserved respect, it never besmirched itself by the meanness of the papacy, ..." ⁴¹⁷ Though he very much appreciated some characteristics of the Orthodox church (for instance, he thought that a movement like the Reformation would be impossible in the framework of Orthodoxy) he did not think that Orthodoxy was about the only genuine church preserving the traditions since the time of Christ. On the contrary, he thought that the

⁴¹³ Svetlana Evdokimova *Pushkin's historical imagination* Yale University Press, 1999. P.37.

⁴¹⁴ Ibid. Pp. 42-43.

⁴¹⁵ This topic was explored by S. Frank in: *Etyudy o Pushkine* (Etudes on Puskin). München, 1957. Pp. 103-104.

⁴¹⁶ See: P.Ya. Tchaadayev: *Pro et Contra*, St. -Petersburg, 1998. P. 69.

⁴¹⁷ Ibid. P. 74.

Schism of the XIth century, which separated the churches, was harmful to Orthodoxy as well as to Catholicism. Russian Orthodoxy came to be deprived of real education. Pushkin once said: "If we were to limit ourselves by the Russian bell alone we would do nothing for human thought, and we would create only parish literature."⁴¹⁸ The image of the Great Schism of 1054, when mutual anathemas were exchanged and the church split into two, Catholic and Orthodox, led Tchaadayev to conclude that Russia had to break with Orthodoxy and join the Catholic church. Pushkin on the other hand maintained that he was proud of Russia's remarkable history. At the same time he did not underestimate religion. He was deeply convinced that Christianity plays a crucial role in social life, that is why "by the beginning of the 1830s Pushkin came to understand the strong link between the spiritual state of modern society (and modern personality) and Christianity, and in his Boldino tragedies and poems he sought a way out of the moral crisis caused by the adherence to a hedonistic principle."⁴¹⁹ Pushkin was persuaded that Peter's reforms, aimed at implementing European education in Russia, were necessitated by the historical development of Russia. At the same time he considered this educational backwardness a price paid by Russia to facilitate the Christian education of Western Europe since it was Rus' that had saved Western Europe from the Mongol invasion.

This wide and dynamic approach to history defined Pushkin's attitude to Peter the Great. The greatness of the Tsar – the Worker was portrayed in such works as *Poltava*, and *The Bronze Horseman*. Pushkin perpetuated a heroic image of Peter, because he believed that all the achievements of XVIIIth century Russian culture were grounded in Peter's westernization of Russia. However, as can be seen from *The Bronze Horseman* and from Pushkin's historical works, he saw clearly in Peter's times an immense gap between the wise intention of new laws and institutions and the cruelty in the implementation of his decrees. Working in the archives Pushkin discovered that the immediate impression of Peter's everyday activities was far from the level of his known acts of statesmanship. This is seen from numerous remarks in Pushkin's notebooks.⁴²⁰ He compares Peter with a despotic landowner, and so on. However, Peter's most inappropriate measure in Pushkin's view was his introduction

⁴¹⁸ Quote from Frank, P. 105.

⁴¹⁹ Lesskiss, P. 485.

⁴²⁰ See: Milyukov P. *Zhivoi Pushkin (1837-1937)* (Pushkin alive). Sec. Ed. Paris, 1937. P. 78.

of the Table of Ranks. According to Pushkin the Table mixed social groups and undermined the position of the most honorable one – the Russian nobility. As was noted earlier, this attitude was not just a desire to keep privileges for their own sake (it is known that Pushkin was opposed to serfdom); it was a conviction that society should have an independent cultural authority, based not on rank or service but on long tradition, and therefore independent from supreme political power.⁴²¹ This conviction for him was more basic than the idea prevalent at that time of the abolition of serfdom. It would seem plausible that Pushkin realized that, if society does not have such a social group independent of the tyranny of power, the whole society is a society of slaves. He saw the dignity and great advantage of Russian literature in the fact that it was created by noble people who were not slaves of the powers that be. The fact that Pushkin supported the reforms of the XVIIIth century when the rulers had overthrown aristocratic ambitions, and so the mode of governing remained the same as before the reforms is evidence that Pushkin thought about spiritual opposition.⁴²² At the same time, in his studies of the Pugachov rebellion, Pushkin became deeply aware that the rebels were the last people with the power to bring about real independence.

Also, contrary to the majority of his thinking contemporaries, Pushkin put himself beyond the widely discussed rivalry between St. Petersburg and Moscow. He loved the ancient Russian capital, but this love did not prevent him from a love of the new capital with its distinct beauty and with its administrative imperial leadership. Yet he definitely believed that the unnatural character of this great city could, and in fact did, come into conflict with the advantages of enlightened European influence. This problem was presented in *The Bronze Horseman* with such artistic power that it became the starting point for this motif in the Russian literature that followed (Gogol and Dostoevsky in particular.)

One more significant factor is that Pushkin understood history through his connection with generations of ancestors. History for him was a living thing rather than a subject of academic interest and his perception of history is vivid and personal. This is an opposite side to his conviction of the necessity for ideals in art (see below).

There is one more motif connected with history which had been worrying Pushkin since the end of the 1820s: the emptiness of the soul, the indifference to the

⁴²¹ See: Frank, P. 54-55.

great problems, which he saw as a dangerous disease of modern times. (Tchaadayev in his correspondence with Pushkin connected the motif of the inevitable destruction of the old world and the coming of the new one.⁴²³) It is obvious from his letters to Pushkin that Tchaadayev was sure that Pushkin shared his views or at least partially shared his feelings.

As for aestheticism, it is obvious that "the vigorous power of beauty"⁴²⁴ forms the highest point of intentions for the poet. (It is worth noting that Pushkin's language and images are so beautiful in themselves that the reader sometimes loses the concept concealed under this wonderful cover of words.)

In his programmed poems like *Prophet*, *Poet*, *To the Poet* Pushkin clearly expresses a dualistic concept: the poet as a man who belongs to the earthly life stands in contrast to the poet who in his state of inspiration becomes imbued with God's power and understanding.⁴²⁵ Firstly, Pushkin emphasizes the gap between the two different states – the man is lost when the poet appears and *vice versa*, and there are no transitional stages between them. The clearest manifestation of this difference can be seen in *Egyptian Nights*, where a miserly Italian improviser under the impulse of poetic inspiration is transformed into a prophet. A poet as man might be a weak and depressed person who can rely exclusively on his own mind and reason, in the state of inspiration he becomes equal to celestial powers.

Secondly, these powers flow from his heart rather than from his mind. This deep conviction that the heart is the centre of intuition and genuine comprehension links Pushkin with religion and alienates him from positivistic doctrines. The same idea can be found in Batyushkov's works – "Great thoughts flow from the heart."⁴²⁶ It is necessary to mention that the epoch of Alexander the First was extremely sentimental, and the concept of the role of the heart as an organ of inner religion was a commonplace. But the same feelings are expressed in the Bible. And so the problem arises whether it is just an expression of a trivial concept current at the time, or whether there is some specific feature in Pushkin's approach. It should be pointed out

⁴²² Complete..., V. XI, P. 14.

⁴²³ Ibid. XIV, 437-438.

⁴²⁴ Душа трепещет пред «...мощной властью красоты».

⁴²⁵ This concept is not original; however it happened to fit perfectly Russian consciousness in its transition from the ancient to the modern phases.

that during the Alexandrian epoch (1801-1825) religious mysticism based on the Protestant model was very popular among the Russian nobility. The principal difference from the Orthodox teaching was the emphasis on the inner life of the heart in contrast to any rites, visible signs, dogmas, or even sacraments. The inner Church was contrasted with the External Church. It was a reawakening and continuation of the Masonic movement of the previous century. Pushkin definitely did not share this abstract mysticism. As has been shown previously he was intensely involved in real life both with its deficiencies and with its great advantages. He certainly preferred the real Orthodox Church with its real history to any sort of Universal invisible Church of the Russian mystics of the time. Thus, for Pushkin, an image of heart did not bear any mystical allusions to another reality or something like it. He simply attests to the true fact that a poet does not know the source of his inspiration, and that it is connected with heart rather than with mind.

Thirdly, the element which is inevitably linked with the heart in this state of inspiration is fire. This celestial fire is in complete contrast to earthly cold. This motif goes through all Pushkin's works. He often uses the expression "cold and indifferent crowd," with no fire in its soul. There is nothing worse for Pushkin than coldness, absence of passion or love. Fire destroys incompleteness of being and through this purifies it – Pushkin defines the dwelling-place of God as a fire: "Where a pure fire is devouring an imperfection of being."⁴²⁷ The cold heart is closed to this divine fire, while the heated heart allows the poet to penetrate nature (*Prophet*). We will return to this point later when discussing Pushkin's mysticism.

When Pushkin defended the freedom of the poet he was at the same time rejecting the idea of the utilitarian usefulness of art, which was widespread at that time. For instance, this view was expressed by Merzlyakov – 'archaic' scholar and poet – in his *Short outline of the theory of belles-lettres* published in 1822: "The first and the last goal of art is to support virtue as well as possible."⁴²⁸ Pushkin on the contrary defended the poet's freedom from any restrictions.

⁴²⁶ Batyushkov K.N. *Opyty v stikhakh i proze* (Essays in verse and prose). Moscow 1977. P. 394. In our case it does not matter that this is a translation of L. de Vovenart's *Maximes*.

⁴²⁷ Gershenson M. *Mudrost' Pushkina* (Pushkin's wisdom). Moscow, 1919. P. 36.

⁴²⁸ «Первая и последняя цель его (т. е. искусства), - сколько возможно, споспешествовать добродетели». Quote from: Sakulin P.N. "Knyaz' V.F. Odoyevskii" (Prince V.F. Odoyevskii). // *Iz istorii russkogo idealizma* (From the

Beauty for the poet is always connected with rest, peace and 'wholeness.' All wishes and movements of the soul come from man's imperfection. The deficiency of man's nature generates them. Perfection, on the other hand, generates emotion and rest. In the poem, *The Angel*, Demon himself emotionally participating in the nature of an angel acquires a certain degree of inner peace. 'Wholeness' is a divine gift and cannot be acquired by one's own will. This idea was expressed in the famous line in the little tragedy *Mozart and Salieri*: "Villainy and genius are incompatible."⁴²⁹ Genius is completeness and rest, and is therefore estranged from any activity.⁴³⁰

For Pushkin God is beauty; therefore He is 'non-doing' and eternal rest. According to Gershenzon, he thought of God as of an *absolute non-existence*: "If one asks Pushkin what God is? He would answer: God is on the last rung, higher than the angels, because the angels possess being to some extent, though it is a minimal activity; God is absolute non-existence."⁴³¹ Probably Gershenzon goes too far in formulating this idea. However it seems fairly plausible that Pushkin's intentions led him towards this concept. Tatyana is 'higher' than Onegin because she 'rests' while Onegin does not have any peace. Nevertheless, Tatyana does not know happiness either. According to Pushkin there is no happiness for human beings, there is only the possibility of 'rest' and freedom. His well-known words (from *Evgenii Onegin*) are: "I thought that freedom (*vol'nost'*) and rest could replace happiness. How wrong I was."

Here we approach one of the most important points in Pushkin's *Worldview*: it is deeply tragic and pessimistic. He once said: "All of us - from coachman to the first poet sing dolefully."⁴³² It follows from the previous consideration - if only rest and freedom are possible (and even they can be gained only with great difficulty) there is no place for happiness. Happiness cannot be granted to an imperfect being and so it cannot be granted to man. The clearest expression of this concept is probably in *The*

history of Russian idealism). V. I. Moscow, 1913. V. 1. Chapter 1. P. 54. Nonetheless, in contrast with this, Merzlyakov stated that belles-lettres did not know any rules. Ibid. P. 159.

⁴²⁹ The translation by A. Pytman is taken from: Alexander Pushkin *Selected Works in Two Volumes* V. 1. Moscow, 1974. P. 126.

⁴³⁰ See: Gershenzon *Mudrost'*... P. 16-18.

⁴³¹ Ibid. P. 15. It is very tempting to link this idea with that of Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagites and hesychast's image of God - the Divine Darkness. However, in this case the similarity is more typological rather than coming directly from Orthodox tradition.

⁴³² Quote from: Frank, (P. 126) «...от ямщика до первого поэта - мы все поем уныло».

Bronze Horseman, though many other poems and compositions could be cited - *The Queen of Spades*, "little tragedies" - *The Covetous Knight*, *Mozart and Salieri*, *The Stone Guest*, *Feast in Time of the Plague*. The only possible way of achieving happiness, temporarily and exclusively by the poet, is to contemplate the divine beauty of nature or works of art and inspiration (*From Pindemonty*.⁴³³) This does not contradict the previous statement: the poet, participating in divine wholeness, does not belong to this life.

According to Pushkin there are two sorts of mind: one is cold and prosaic, and uncreative (related to earthy, everyday life), the other which is infinitely 'higher' stands in relation to celestial life and fire. There appears a peculiar motif in Pushkin's poetry - he finds fault with science because it is an expression of the first sort of reason - cold and prosaic.⁴³⁴

Tchaadayev wrote: "God created beauty in order to make it easier for us to comprehend Him."⁴³⁵ Pushkin would agree with this. Throughout his life Pushkin gave expression to the unity of beauty and divinity: for instance, in some of his best lyrical poems he compared a woman's beauty with divinity. The same idea is expressed indirectly when he says that a maiden's heart manifesting its divine nature does not know law.⁴³⁶ Yet Pushkin's understanding of divine beauty is tinged with tragic overtones: it is not achievable, or is only temporarily achievable because a human being is imperfect. 'Wholeness' as well as happiness are hidden in absolute divine rest, immovability, which is non-being. In order to pass through this gap between defective earthly life and celestial wholeness, one has to die (*Prophet*.) This transformation through death provides the prophet with 'whole' knowledge, or, probably better expressed, with a knowledge of the wholeness of being. Yet this

⁴³³ «По прихоти своей скитаться здесь и там,
Дивясь божественной природы красотам
И пред созданиями искусств и вдохновенья
Трепеща радостно в восторгах умиленья
Вот счастье, вот права...»

⁴³⁴ This motif is analyzed by Gershenson (Op. cit. Pp. 36-38.) However, I think that being right in emphasizing that Pushkin could not tolerate any limitation of the poet's free will Gershenson is exaggerating Pushkin's hatred of science and culture. And it is not accidental that he took his quotations from *Tsygany* (*The Gypsies*), an early romantic poem.

⁴³⁵ «Бог создал красоту для того, чтобы нам легче было уразуметь его.» - Tchaadayev P. Ya. *Stat'i i pis'ma* (Articles and letters). Vv. I-II. Moscow, 1997. P. 27.

⁴³⁶ «Затем что ветру и орлу, и сердцу девы нет закона.»

knowledge has nothing to do with the rational knowledge provided by science. It is at this point that we approach Pushkin's mysticism.

To some extent Pushkin's mysticism already has been described in regard to his aestheticism: the unity of beauty and knowledge characteristic of a divine celestial being which can be contemplated through an ardent heart clearly shows that Pushkin's worldview was mystical rather than reasonable. He also expressed a view that the reason of the heart was infinitely higher than that of the mind. One can also discern elements of mysticism in Pushkin's historical thinking, first of all in his attitude to the messianic destiny of Russia.

Since the appearance of the concept *Moscow – the Third Rome* a tendency existed in Russia to interpret events in the light of this theory, for example, such events as the rise and fall of False-Dimitry (who, first regarded as an Orthodox son of Tsar Ivan, later was considered as a renegade into the camp of Catholics,) and the reforms of Peter the Great (who was considered to be the Anti-Christ by the Old Believers.) The opposite view was held by the educated statesmen of Russian society, who thought of Peter as a victorious ruler who initiated a series of triumphs over the Muslim Turks. These and other events viewed from a messianic perspective served as a model in the interpretation of the wars against Napoleon.⁴³⁷

Kuchelbeker wrote in *Mnemozina* in 1822: "Let there be created for the honour of Russia truly Russian poetry. Let Holy Russia be the foremost power in the universe, not only in the civil but also in the moral realm!"⁴³⁸ This is an example of the messianism inspired by 1812. Pushkin, being a contemporary of these Russian victories, was a son of 1812 as well, though sometimes he found fault with Russian life and people in well-known words about the soul and talent. Messianism unites historicism with mysticism, a mystical strife toward the universal, which nevertheless includes the national peculiarities of a particular country. Thus contradictory foundations (universal and specific) coincide in the divine plan of human development.

⁴³⁷ See: Gasparov, *Op. cit.* Pp. 86-89.

⁴³⁸ «Да создастся для славы России поэзия истинно Русская; да будет Святая Русь не только в гражданском, но и в нравственном мире первую Державою во вселенной!» Quote from: Sakulin, V. I. Part 1. P. 256.

In his letter to Tchaadayev Pushkin states that he "would not wish Russia to have a history different from the one which had been sent by God"⁴³⁹. The nature of Pushkin's attitude to Russia and its history was expressed in various works. However, from 1825, when he was writing *Boris Godunov*, until his death the following concept held: the established order whether or not it was good should not be disturbed; any effort to destroy this order is harmful and useless.⁴⁴⁰ This inspired him to write two ill-famed poems – *To Slanderers of Russia* and *The Borodino Anniversary*. The concept seems to contradict our earlier statement that Pushkin's approach to history was dynamic rather than static. However, there is no contradiction: historical events are flowing, but there is some hidden divine reason manifested by an inner order which is absolutely inaccessible to human understanding. This mystical view distinguishes Pushkin from Tolstoy. Tolstoy was eager to persuade the reader that historical events cannot be regulated by anybody, and if someone, like Napoleon, thinks that they are under his control he is wrong. Pushkin would be in agreement with this general statement. But Tolstoy related to the infinity of social events which form history – as they are infinite they cannot be controlled. He rejected any suggestion that there was something underlying the observable events, and furthermore he rejected the possibility of such an idea. Pushkin, on the other hand, being far less positivistic than Tolstoy believed in the divine destiny of a great nation.⁴⁴¹ It is worth to take into account Evdokimova's observation that all Pushkin's heroes who were trying to "verify harmony with algebra" failed: Boris Godunov, Salieri, Hermann, Aleko, plus all other characters who strive to manipulate chance and Providence. History should be grasped through insight and divination. "No credit is granted for their apparently righteous endeavours; with all their gifts and accomplishments, the tragic ruler and the tormented musician lack something that lies beyond their control – God's grace."⁴⁴² (P. 58)

⁴³⁹ Quote from: Frank, P. 45.

⁴⁴⁰ Gasparov, Op. cit. Pp. 297.

⁴⁴¹ In his analysis of *The Queen of Spades*, Gershenzon argued Pushkin's views were much closer to Tolstoy's, than they probably were. – See: Gershenzon, Op. cit. P. 104. It seems that Pushkin's view was closer to Solovyov's as expressed in his famous saying, 'God's idea for any nation.'

⁴⁴² Evdokimova *Pushkin's historical imagination*. P. 58.

At the same time, even if one takes into account that Pushkin paid his tribute to the ordinary mystical mood of his epoch with its fortune-telling, and card-reading,⁴⁴³ the very nature of his mysticism was different. It was based upon a deep belief in the divine presence in the world and the possibility of humans being participants in it, as are all genuine poets. This kind of mysticism influenced Pushkin's attitude to Christianity. He noted: "Ancient history ended with God-man ... Correct. The greatest spiritual and political revolution on our planet is Christianity. In this sacred element the world perished and was renovated. Modern history is the history of Christianity."⁴⁴⁴ Thus, Pushkin's approach to the New Testament was at the same time aesthetic and mystical. He remarked that no one could resist its divine eloquence.⁴⁴⁵

These points of attraction – historicism, aestheticism, and mysticism – coloured Pushkin's understanding of 'truth' and 'justice' (*pravda*) and 'will' and 'freedom' (*volya*), concepts which form the core of Russian consciousness.

It should be noted from the start that Pushkin uses the term *pravda* comparatively rarely compared, for instance, with the word *volya*, and there are only a few contexts where this word means something more than just ordinary 'truth' as opposed to 'lie', and so on. Hence, it would be stretching the point too far if the following analysis were based exclusively on the word *pravda*. The national concept of *pravda* is covered by Pushkin's use of such words as "honour", "right" ('just'), "plausible".

I would like to analyze the concepts of *pravda* and *volya* from the personal aspect and then the social one.

Pushkin the core of a personality predominantly associates with the word 'honour' ('честь'), which plays an extremely important role in his works. In his imagined conversation with Tsar Alexander I Pushkin noted with affection that the tsar "had respected truth ('pravda') and personal honour"⁴⁴⁶. The word *honour*

⁴⁴³ There are some well-known examples like *The Queen of Spades*.

⁴⁴⁴ Pushkin A.S. "Zametki na vtoroi tom Istorii russkogo naroda N. Polevogo" (Notes on the second volume of the History of Russian people by N. Polevoi). // *Complete...* V. XI, 127.

⁴⁴⁵ *Complete...*, XII, P. 99.

⁴⁴⁶ «Вы можете иметь мнения неосновательные, но вижу, что вы уважили правду и личную честь даже в царе».

appears in connection with 'pravda' (personal honour), 'honesty,' 'justice' ('true honour'), 'morality,' 'Christian conscience.'⁴⁴⁷

As it directly follows from the Pushkin's earlier statements, one can expect that the poet would defend the possibility of penetrating divine truth, but at the same time the social constituent of this truth should be stressed. A straightforward expression of this kind can be found in Pushkin's letter to Count Tol': "Genius discovers truth from the first glance, and *truth is stronger than the tsar himself*, as is said in the Holy Scriptures."⁴⁴⁸

Pushkin's understanding of *pravda* is rather complex. He appears to distinguish *pravda* as simple correspondence to facts from the higher *truth*. For instance, when a historic work designed to prove that Napoleon did not in reality visit the plague-stricken hospital in Yaffa appeared, Pushkin wrote that the light of truth should be condemned in case it cringes to common opinion, and that the lie which raises us above it should be considered much more valuable.⁴⁴⁹ Though this is a clear expression of Romanticism (it is known that, for instance, Goethe thought along the same lines, saying "Do we really need such a miserable truth?"⁴⁵⁰) the use of the word *pravda* shows that Pushkin spoke about a higher truth and justice, and not just about making a true statement about some event. Pushkin was entirely convinced that art could not dispense with ideals. It should establish absolute goals and standards. He could not tolerate the praise of evil or a pathos of denunciation, which in Pushkin's times was becoming so strong in European literature. Thus, social truth and justice (*pravda*) is portrayed in his poetry as the loftiest ideal which exceeds any restrictions of earthly life revealing itself in the flash of inspiration.

There is another aspect of the statement on the higher truth than just the factual expression of events. The key to this aspect can be found in the famous *Elegy* (written earlier in the same 1830 year): "... Sometimes again I will fill myself

⁴⁴⁷ Lesskis, P. 126.

⁴⁴⁸ *Complete...*, XVI, P. 224.

⁴⁴⁹ «Да будет проклят правды свет,
Когда посредственности хладной,
Завистливой, к соблазну жадной,
Он угождает праздно! – Нет!
Тьмы низких истин мне дороже
Нас возвышающий обман... (III, P. 253)

⁴⁵⁰ Quote from: Ekkerman I.P. *Razgovory s Goethe v posledniye gody yego zhizni* (Conversations with Goethe in the last years of his life). Moscow, 1981. P. 165.

with harmony, I will sob on the fantasy..."⁴⁵¹ The truth of feeling is no less valuable than the truth of the description of the event. The so-called "truth", "the miserable truth" which destroys the image of the hero is transformed into lie from the point of view of feeling. Pushkin is striving for the wholeness of the image (true or fantasy) and the feeling in relation to this image. Therefore he by no means put fantasy beyond truth but the wholeness beyond separation.

Pushkin's attitude to monarchy is based upon his deep conviction of the necessity of enlightenment, good education. This is difficult to prove by direct quotations. However from all Pushkin's remarks it follows that he considered education to be a strong factor in social development. This resembles his approach to personality: he believed coldness of soul to be the worst possible characteristic, and social stagnation was for him the end of real life. From this point of view he considered the Russian monarchy (the Romanovs in particular) to be the most western-oriented and revolutionary element in Russian society. The basic idea expressed in his well known conversation with Mikhail Romanov is that authority should preserve law and order, and not allow the destruction of state institutions. That is why he contrasted *pravda* with 'mutiny', an opposition which can be found in his works from 1822 onwards.⁴⁵² *Pravda* is associated with social justice and law based upon tradition, whereas 'mutiny' (мятеж) is opposed to law.⁴⁵³ 'Mutiny' in its destructive nature is close to 'despotism'⁴⁵⁴; both break the law and tradition. Probably the most significant point in Pushkin's understanding is his equation between despotic people and a despotic ruler. This view distinguishes him from the majority of Russian educated people who were eager enough to condemn a despotic ruler and to justify the right of ordinary people to rebel.

It is very difficult to name any other concept in Pushkin's poetry equal in frequency of use and meaningfulness to the concept of *volya* / *vol'nost'*. At the beginning of his career in 1817 he wrote the famous poems *Vol'nost'* and *To Tchaadayev* where "holy vol'nost'" is presented as the most precious thing. And not

⁴⁵¹ «... Порой опять гармонией упьюсь, Над вымыслом слезами обольюсь...»

⁴⁵² Lesskis, P. 170-171. In: «Послание к цензору» - Ты черным белое по прихоти зовешь ... Глас правды мятежом».

⁴⁵³ Ibid. P. 168.

⁴⁵⁴ *Самовластье* - it is seen from such expressions as 'самовластительный злодей' etc. It is interesting to note that in his assessment of the Pugachov rebellion Pushkin

long before his death Pushkin expressed his understanding of this concept in such poems as *From Pindemonti* and *It is time, my friend, it is time...* The later use of the word is completely different from the earlier one, and the evolution must be explored.

In his first poems Pushkin undoubtedly follows Radishchev and Kapnist - famous poets of the second half of the XVIIIth century. *Volya, vol'nost'* is understood as political freedom, intimately connected with the legal system of the state. It also reflects Rousseau's theory on the dialectics of the common will and the will of everybody: "...There are no obstacles for the common good, I see my part in the power of all the people, I express my will while expressing the will of all the people, This is the law in the state."⁴⁵⁵ These words provide us with the key to the Pushkin ode written twenty-seven years later: the tsar expresses the common will, which establishes the law, and in its turn the will of all the people is subordinated to this common will. The common will (*volya*) becomes the law for free (*vol'nyye*) citizens. Taking into account this understanding it seems possible to explain Pushkin's appeal to the tsar to subordinate himself to the law, and through this subordination *vol'nost'* and rest (peace) will become eternal guards of the throne

Be ye the first to bow you down
Beneath Law's canopy eternal:
The people's bliss⁴⁵⁶ and freedom vernal
Will keep forever safe your crown.⁴⁵⁷

Pushkin maintained to the end of his days this high appraisal of *vol'nost'*, *svoboda* (freedom). He considers it demonic to doubt the intrinsic value of the word. In his poem *Demon* one of the negative characteristics of the Demon is that "He did not believe in love and freedom..."⁴⁵⁸ There is no difference between Pushkin and Radishchev's concepts of freedom but their approaches to freedom are different. Radishchev's is that of the slave ("Allow the slave to praise you"⁴⁵⁹), while Pushkin does not use this word. A slave can praise freedom, but he cannot become free, even

Pushkin came very close to Derzhavin who actively participated in the events on the side of the government. - Lesskis, P. 423-425.

⁴⁵⁵ Radishchev *Vol'nost'* - Quote from: *Russkaya poeziya XVIII veka* (Russian poetry of 18th century). Moscow, 1972. P. 407.

⁴⁵⁶ The word 'bliss' is used here instead of 'happiness' in order to keep the rhythm.

⁴⁵⁷ «Склонитесь первые главой Под сень надежную закона, И станут вечной стражей трона Народов вольность и покой». (Transl. by W. Arndt)

⁴⁵⁸ «Не верил он любви, свободе...»

⁴⁵⁹ «Позволь, чтоб раб тебя воспел».

if freedom has been given to him. This dialectic between inner and external freedom attracted Pushkin's attention from the beginning of the 1820s.

Pushkin's earlier enthusiasm for the idea of liberty (*vol'nost'*) changed in 1823. He realized that people could think differently from him and his friends, and that concept of freedom was now far less attractive to the people than had been thought. Ordinary people did not share political values of liberal thinkers. Pushkin expressed the new views in his famous poem *As Freedom's Sower in the Wasteland* with the famous tragic lines "Why offer herds their liberation? For them are shears or slaughter-stall."⁴⁶⁰ This crisis forced Pushkin later to avoid any presupposed concept. By this time he shared liberal views and identified freedom with the establishment of European legal institutions. This can be seen not only from his poems but also from his notes on Russian history of the XVIIIth century: "... Our political freedom is inseparable from the liberation of serfs ... and the strong unanimity can put us alongside enlightened people in Europe."⁴⁶¹ Now he realized that the meanings "to be free" and "to love" are both expressions of forces of one's soul rather than external institutions and that in order to become free it is necessary to acquire the corresponding state of soul. The sower is disappointed, not in the concept of freedom itself but in the soil which has not been ploughed up. That is why Pushkin began to analyze the problem from the angle of individual soul, of personal inner life.

One must mention that another poet Nikolai Yazykov expressed exactly the same views in two elegies at the same time which coincide with Pushkin's *Sower* even in metre (we will turn to these Yazykov's elegies later.) This coincidence in the thoughts of the poets who met each other two years later cannot have been an accident. Disappointment in the ideals of the Enlightenment and the year 1812 were being experienced by the educated class. Pushkin's great contribution can be seen in the fact that he turned to an analysis of the concept of 'volya-freedom' on the personal level.

This search for inner freedom can be traced in such poems as *The Prisoner of the Caucasus* and, particularly, in *The Gypsies*. The hero of *The Prisoner of the Caucasus* has dedicated his life to the search for freedom – "the proud idol"; his personal freedom has become for him the only target in the world. The result is

⁴⁶⁰ «К чему скотам дары свободы? Их должно резать или стричь.» (Trans. W. Arndt.)

⁴⁶¹ *Complete...* V. XI, P. 15.

devastating – not only has the search led to external slavery, but he has also become a slave of “the proud idol” internally. He cannot bring any happiness to the girl who loves him, and he is an unhappy man himself, because his freedom is in itself and for itself. Thus, freedom being an end in itself is absolutely fruitless.

The hero of *The Gypsies*, Aleko is “a free man of the world”. He is living “by *volya* of God”⁴⁶². However he is not a free man at all. He is a proud man, and his soul is taken by passions. His search for freedom is artificial, he is an exile among free gypsies, and that is why Pushkin compares him with Ovid. They are both strangers among free people, and it does not matter that one was exiled by the emperor and the other was impelled to escape from social bounds by his own will. If the internal freedom does not coincide with the external it transforms a person into a slave. These motifs are actually quite widespread in romantic literature. Probably the most striking idea of *The Gypsies* can be found at the end: the gypsies, for whom their freedom is absolutely natural, are not happy at all. The epilogue states:

Yet you, too, Nature's sons undaunted,
Are strange to happiness, it seems!
Your ragged shelters, too, are haunted
By omens and oppressive dreams,...⁴⁶³

The explanation again can be found in the nature of freedom - if it is an end in itself it cannot bring any happiness, it is futile. In the case of Aleko there is an additional motif: the search for freedom is generated by his mind rather than by his heart; it is unnatural. The heart is the natural organ of will and freedom (that is of *volya*.) Reason, on the other hand, through its pseudo-freedom establishes the most formidable dictatorship of laws. It is not by accident that in *To a Grandee* reason appears near fearful freedom (*svoboda*): “...You saw a whirlwind of the tempest, The fall of everything, the union of reason and furies, The law established by terrible freedom,...”⁴⁶⁴ A similar dictatorship can be established by public opinion, and it does not matter whether it is manifested in the form of fame or in the form of abuse. The negative attitude to fame is expressed in *The Conversation Between Bookseller and Poet*. According to the poet, fame and women's attention (intimately linked with

⁴⁶² «Вольный житель мира», «...свой день Он отдавал на волю Бога».

⁴⁶³ «Но счастья нет и между вами, Природы бедные сыны! И под издранными шатрами Живут мучительные сны,...» (Trans. by W. Arndt.)

fame) kills freedom: "Enough! No more the dreamer brings His freedom there for sacrifice;..."⁴⁶⁵) However, there is one significant exclusion – when fame is deservedly linked with the person, it is justified. If a person is commensurable to the phenomenon, *volya* (liberty) is compatible with the nature of the phenomenon. In the poem *To Sea* which was written at the same time as *The Conversation Between Bookseller and Poet*, Pushkin found this commensurability between the sea and Napoleon. The French emperor was strangely enough defined as "a singer of the sea"⁴⁶⁶, probably in order to underline this equivalence. The explanation can be found in Pushkin's negative attitude to any manifestation of inequality between inner and outer *volya* (freedom and will), which appears to be a lie. In the case of an emperor, specifically a self-made emperor like Napoleon, fame is unavoidably linked with his position. In *The Hero* Pushkin defines him as *a warrior crowned by vol'nost'*⁴⁶⁷. In contrast, in the case of the poet, fame immediately impedes his development and, therefore, fights against his *volya*. Any form of external dependency is harmful for the poet's (or, more widely, for a human being's) soul.

The question arises, what can be set up against this futile 'reasonable' freedom/liberty, based upon laws? The answer is obvious: the brotherly union of loving hearts. This union is free (*volen*), it does not restrict any particular *volya* of any one of the participants. Pushkin dedicated many lines to the friendship (union of loving hearts) established during his study at the lyceum in 'Tsarskoye Selo,' e.g. "My friends, our union is beautiful, It is indivisible and eternal – It is immovable, free, and unconcerned."⁴⁶⁸ This fraternal union is different from any political union for at least two reasons. First, it is not established through reasonably constituted laws and human rights, which cannot bring any happiness. Second, political laws are enforced by the state, that is by some impersonal body, while relations between members of such a union are secured by personal intercourse. The state is contrasted

⁴⁶⁴ «...Ты видел вихорь бури, Падение всего, союз ума и фурий, Свободой грозною воздвигнутый закон,...»

⁴⁶⁵ «Но полно; в жертву им свободы Мечтатель уж не принесет;...» (Trans. by W. Arndt.)

⁴⁶⁶ «Он был, о море, твой певец».

⁴⁶⁷ «Сей ратник, вольностью венчанный...»

⁴⁶⁸ «Друзья мои, прекрасен наш союз! Он, как душа, неразделим и вечен – Неколебим, свободен и беспечен...» - *October 19*.

to a fatherland: "The rest of the world is a foreign land, while our fatherland is Tsarskoye Selo⁴⁶⁹."

Thus, personal relations form a basis for an inner freedom, which in its turn defines an external one. At the same time the key word is "fatherland". Pushkin has a very personal feeling towards the history of his country. This personal attitude he determined through chain of ancestors. No force is required to assume this attitude, and so it is absolutely natural, and therefore, in contrast to the political relations there is no lie involved. Earlier we mentioned that Pushkin found his dignity in his relation to his ancestors, to the history of his country, through which God sanctions all the self-confidence and the greatness of man. Thus, Pushkin's historicism coincides with the idea of *volya*. Turning again to *The Gypsies* it is very natural to suppose that the unhappiness of the gypsies' life directly relates to the absence of any ancestral land, and, therefore, of genuine history.

Pushkin also found an explanation for the emptiness of the free demon. Five years after *The Demon* he wrote the short poem *An Angel*: "Demon, The spirit of negation, the spirit of suspicion, Watched the pure spirit, And He for the first time began to know the involuntary heat of emotion.⁴⁷⁰" The Demon is free but as he is pure negation and he does not have anything to fill his soul. Suddenly he feels that this possibility has been opened for him with the presence of a beautiful perfect being. This touch of beauty as well as the touch of history can be gained exclusively through God. This state of mind is akin to the divine fire, which "is devouring the imperfection of being⁴⁷¹" This state is a passion. However it is a passion which is not at odds with the main goal of life. It does not detract from *pravda*. On the contrary, this is the only way to approach it, to break through to *pravda*.

Earlier it was mentioned that for Pushkin the light of truth stands condemned if it bows to public opinion, and now a further point can be added: Pushkin valued the immediate truth of the senses much more highly than the truth of facts. In his *Elegy* (1830) Pushkin presents the values of life in the following way: "I want to live – to suffer and to think, To taste of care and grief and tribulation, Of rapture and of sweet exhilaration, Be drunk with harmony; touch fancy's strings And freely weep o'er its

⁴⁶⁹ «Нам целый мир чужбина; Отечество нам Царское село».

⁴⁷⁰ *Ангел* «Дух отрицанья, дух сомненья На духа чистого взирал, И жар невольный умиленья Впервые смутно познавал».

⁴⁷¹ «Пожирает несовершенство бытия».

imaginings...⁴⁷² Thinking itself forms no more than a part of life which is passion. At this point *volya* meets *pravda*. The place of their intersection is heart. A hero remains a hero until his heart (actually, the *pravda* of his heart) rules his *volya*. If not, the hero is transformed into a tyrant – “Leave the heart to the hero! Otherwise what will he be without it? A tyrant.”⁴⁷³

We follow the same path when it is discovered that in his notes Pushkin has stated: “There is no truth (*pravda*) where there is no love.”⁴⁷⁴ The heart is an organ of love, and therefore *pravda* is intimately connected with the heart rather than with reason. These links enable us to find the answer to an extremely bizarre conclusion to the brilliant poem included in the *Egyptian Nights*.

Why does the wind revolve inanelly
In hollows raising leaves and dust,
While vessels in the doldrums vainly
Await its animating gust?
Why, spurning mountain crag and tower,
Does the great eagle's fearsome power
Light on a withered stump? Ask him!
Ask Desdemona why her whim
Did on her dusky moor alight,
As Luna fell in love with night?
Like wind and erne, it is because
A maiden's heart obeys no laws.
Such is the poet: like the North,
Whate'er he lists he carries forth,
Wherever, eagle-like, he flies,
Acknowledging no rule or owner,
He finds a god, like Desdemona,
For wayward heart to idolize.⁴⁷⁵

The strangeness of the conclusion can be seen in that the heart has to choose its god, to idolize something. All the struggle for the *volya*, *vol'nost'* seems to end

⁴⁷² A translation of Irina Zheleznova from: Alexander Pushkin *Selected Works in Two Volumes*. V. 1. Moscow, 1974.

⁴⁷³ «Оставь герою сердце! Что же Он будет без него? Тиран!»

⁴⁷⁴ «...Нет истины, где нет любви» (*Complete...* XII, P. 36).

here. Moreover, the whole laborious search for *volya* seems to vanish, as at the end of the search *volya* chooses an idol to subordinate itself to, and with this to lose itself. Of course, the easiest way to approach this problem is to state that Pushkin as a poet does not need to be consistent, and he freely plays with different concepts. However, the very importance of the topic to Pushkin and the obvious maturity of the poem do not allow us to follow this line of reasoning.

The key can be found in the earlier works. We have discovered that for Pushkin *volya* is by itself an empty concept, and if it becomes a goal it does not bring happiness but rather disappointment and suffering. Therefore, it is a necessary and, moreover, not the ultimate step. Human nature needs freedom for itself but only as a means of expressing its inner *pravda*. Desdemona's *pravda* is to love, and it does not matter whether it be Othello or someone else. This is her free choice made in accordance with her inner *pravda*; thus her *volya* is justified. She is commensurable with her *pravda* and there is a harmony between her *pravda* and her *volya*. Pushkin discovers the same harmony in Napoleon. His free choice is in accordance with his nature, his inner *pravda* was fame, and only in its union with fame could his *volya* be realized.

At the same time, as it follows from *From Pindemonte* (though Pushkin is talking about "rights" and not about the legal system, it is obvious that he was bantering the 'rights, guaranteed by laws') this inner and the highest *pravda* which coincides with *volya* is higher than any established law. Pushkin contrasts the political rights with the rights which are given by nature: "I have but little use for those loud 'rights' – the phrase That seems to addle people's minds these days ... Quite other, better rights are dear to me; I crave quite other, better liberation:..." Pushkin then passes on to pure romantic 'rights': "To move now here, now there with fancy's whim for law, At Nature's godlike works feel ecstasy and awe, And start before the gifts of art and inspiration With pangs of trembling, joyous adoration..."⁴⁷⁶ Once again *pravda* is found in the process of the free and willful choice of the object of idolization.

If we turn from these examples to another angle we can find that history has put different possibilities before people. However, only one choice, namely the continuation of what has been built by ancestors, is genuine. (Frank emphasizes that

⁴⁷⁵ Translated by Walter Arndt in: Alexander Pushkin. Ann Arbor, 1984. P. 85.

Pushkin's political thinking is national and patriotic.⁴⁷⁷ He correctly characterizes Pushkin as a conservative thinker. Although it should be emphasized that Pushkin's conservatism is inseparably connected with the demand for free cultural development, well established law and order, and independence of personality, being therefore linked with liberal views. The three main elements of Pushkin's conservatism are: history is created by great leaders, who feel better than others the needs of people and the chain of events; admiration for the historical past; and peaceful continuity of cultural and political development.⁴⁷⁸

At this point we can see that Pushkin's views coincide almost completely with those of Karamzin, as they were expressed in *The Memoir*. Moreover, Pushkin's approach conspicuously bears the features of historicism, aestheticism, and mysticism. Pushkin adds some significant features to Karamzin's picture: the dialectics of *pravda* and *volya*; and deeper analysis of these concepts at the personal level.

Pravda can be manifested by the ideal figure of the Tsar, but it can never be incorporated into the legal system, because in this case it would become something necessary and given from outside. Pestel' had not realized the truth that *pravda* by its very nature would never fit any legal system and named the basic document *Russian Truth - Russkaya Pravda*.⁴⁷⁹ Here we can discern the difference between Pushkin and the Decembrists. *Pravda* always remains outside immediate political and institutional relations based on reasonably established regulations. And only *volya* is allowed to interact with *pravda*.

In his poetry Pushkin united the *pravda* and *volya* of a political ideal of the previous century with the personal *pravda* and *volya* of sentimentalism and romanticism.

⁴⁷⁶ Trans. by Walter Arndt.

⁴⁷⁷ «Общим фундаментом политического мировоззрения Пушкина было национально-патриотическое умонастроение, оформленное как г о с у д а р с т - в е н н о е сознание.» Frank, Op. cit. P. 43.

⁴⁷⁸ See: Frank, *Etyudy...* Pp. 47-53. «Лучшие и прочнейшие изменения суть те, которые происходят от одного улучшения нравов. Без насильственных потрясений политических, страшных для человечества» (Pp. 49-50.)

⁴⁷⁹ See: Ivanov-Razumnik *Istoriya russkoi obshchestvennoi mysli. Individualizm i meshchanstvo v russkoi literature i zhizni XIX* (History of Russian social thought. Individualism and bourgeoisness in the Russian literature and life of the 19th century). St. Petersburg, 1911. 3rd ed. V. I. Pp. 118-120.

The question arises whether Pushkin can be taken as a representative of the whole Russian society's worldview. On the basis of this paper it can be concluded that Pushkin's views in connection with the concepts of *pravda* and *volya* were different from those expressed by the poets of the XVIIIth century like Radishchev or Derzhavin. It might be premature to conclude that Pushkin's understanding was typical of the rest of contemporary society, a view which has been based so far exclusively on the statement that Pushkin became a most significant figure and a cultural myth. In order to justify his role as a model we have to turn to contemporary evidence.

In fact, almost everything which can be found in Pushkin's poems can be found in the poems of his immediate predecessors and contemporaries.

In his *To Goethe's portrait* (1819) Vassily Zhukovskii takes the word *svoboda* ('freedom') far from its political meaning: "Taking a courageous *svoboda* as a law He was traveling by his all-seeing thought above the world. And he has grasped everything in it, And has not subordinated himself to anything."⁴⁸⁰ Here freedom is presented as being the law above all the laws of nature. Zhukovskii's ideal as it appears in his famous *Singer in the Camp of Russian Warriors* included trust in the Creator, subordination to righteous (*pravo*) authority and *pravda* opposed to non-*pravda* (*nepravda*). At the same time Zhukovskii, in accordance with his character and romanticist tradition, was inclined to emphasise the personal rather than social aspect of *volya* and *pravda*.

In the poem *The Hope* K. Batyushkov Zhukovskii's contemporary defended the freedom of a lofty soul as a person's greatest possession.⁴⁸¹

In his poem *Derzhavin* Ryleyev stated that 'holy *pravda*' was the first duty of a poet.⁴⁸² The word *pravda* was used in both meanings: those were 'truth' and 'justice'. The poet has to speak the truth and fight for social justice. It is necessary to point out that though Ryleyev in his views belonged to the tradition of XVIIIth century with the understanding of *svoboda* and *pravda* in a peculiar political and social

⁴⁸⁰ «К портрету Гете» - Свободу смелую приняв себе в закон, Всезрящей мыслию над миром он носился. И в мире все постигнул он - И ничему не покорился. - From: *Poety Pushkinskoi pleyady* (Poets of Pushkin's pleiad). Moscow, 1983. P. 69.

⁴⁸¹ «Кто, кто мне силу дал сносить Труды и глад и непогоду, И силу - в бедстве сохранить Души возвышенной свободу?» Ibid. P. 145.

sense⁴⁸³, he used them in a noticeably wider meaning than just a political one. To give only one example, in his poem, *The Desert*, written in 1821 describing the undisturbed country life the poet mentions that "Freedom [svoboda] and rest are always with him"⁴⁸⁴. This is an ideal which was also expressed a few years later by Pushkin and Lermontov with the only difference that in their poems *svoboda* was replaced by *vol'nost'*. Ryleyev is definitely talking about precious inner freedom.

The same motifs can be found in other poets such as Katenin, Vyazemskii, Baratynskii. It can be noted that in the first third of XIXth century, Pushkin harmoniously united two literary traditions which expressed two different social attitudes to the idea of *pravda* and *volya*: the classical tradition, which can be attributed to Derzhavin, with its cosmic approach to God's *pravda* and *volya*, and the sentimental (or rather romanticist) one, which can be linked to Zhukovskii, with its intimate personal expression of the same concepts.

The most striking resemblance with Pushkin's evolution in relation to these matters can be definitely seen in the poems of N. Yazykov. Though from the beginning he expresses the same ideal of political freedom as did Pushkin (for instance, *Dedicated to A. Yazykov*), later in the mid 1820s he wrote the *Elegy*, which repeated to a great extent Pushkin's *Sower*: "The inspiration of proud freedom! You are not heard by people: Blessed vengeance is silent, And does not rebel against the tsar."⁴⁸⁵ And around the same time in another *Elegy* he expressed an idea that centuries would pass before Russia would come out of its sleep.⁴⁸⁶ In the following year he wrote poems about the inner freedom of the poet. Along with this he reminded Pushkin that during their meeting they "called freedom to our Rus"⁴⁸⁷. Yet Yazykov mentions *svoboda* and *rest* as the guards of the poet.⁴⁸⁸ It is also interesting that Pushkin aside he uses the word *volya* and its derivations much more often than other

⁴⁸² «Святая правда – долг его;...», Also: «Повсюду правды верный жрец.» Ibid: Pp. 373-374.

⁴⁸³ Like in the following: «Твои дела тебя изобличат народу; Познает он – что ты стеснил его свободу,...» ("People will realize that you have constrained their freedom") – from *To Favourite*. Ibid. P. 348.

⁴⁸⁴ «С ним вместе обитают Свобода и покой С веселостью беспечной...» Ibid. P. 356.

⁴⁸⁵ «Свободы гордой вдохновенье! Тебя не слушает народ: Оно молчит, святое мщенье, И на царя не восстает.» Ibid. P. 619.

⁴⁸⁶ «Столетия грозно протекут, - И не пробудится Россия!» Ibid. Pp. 620.

⁴⁸⁷ «Зовем свободу в нашу Русь...» Ibid. P. 627.

⁴⁸⁸ In *To E. A. Baratynskii*. Ibid. P. 639.

poets. It is especially important that Yazykov became one of those poets close to the Slavophiles. Though it is too daring to conclude anything in relation to Pushkin's potential development, interrupted by his untimely death, it seems much more likely (taking in account Yazykov's example) that it would have been a development towards the Slavophiles rather than towards the Westernizers.

Thus Pushkin presented a national ideal in its framework of historicism, aestheticism, and mysticism, emphasizing the importance of *pravda* and *volya*, at the level of conscious personal reflection. He advanced the work which Karamzin had set in motion in relation to state consciousness.

Chapter 7

The intellectual development in the second quarter of the XIXth century

In the introductory chapter the hypothesis assumes that there exists an intimate relationship between the appearance of philosophizing and the clearly realized necessity to resolve painful social and political problems. In the Russia of the XVIIIth – XIXth centuries this painful problem presented itself in the guise of the existence of serfdom. Though it was widely discussed from the second half of the XVIIIth century, only after the Napoleonic wars did it acquire a pressing ethical dimension: the dignity of the great victorious empire was absolutely incompatible with the fact that the overwhelming majority of its people was almost completely deprived of human rights. It was also of great importance that this paradox was discussed by Russian intellectuals primarily in the sphere of morality, and so could not be resolved exclusively by political tools. Serfdom created the so called "sick conscience" of the educated layer of the society. This conscience demanded understanding and action.

In this thesis we put aside the political aspects of this problem and deal exclusively with its epistemological and ethical dimensions. The question can be formulated as follows: the actual state of the social and political life in Russia was intolerable because of the existence of serfdom, i.e. because of the split of the society into unequal parts with different rights. The problem had to be resolved whether a) by a complete change of the political and legal system in accordance with the European models; or b) by the gradual transformation of the existing society in the direction of a wholeness and unity in social life. The first approach by its nature does imply that a political system has a predominant significance in relation to other social institutions: once it is changed, all the rest becomes perfect. The second approach, on the contrary, is based on the premise that political system is of secondary importance compared with social 'morale' and self-understanding, which cannot be changed so easily. It follows from these premises that: on the one hand actual social consciousness, as well as the existing social institutions, do not mean much, the principles of universal justice can be directly incorporated into society; on the other hand, the given

consciousness and institutions are of primary importance for future social development.

Now with the appearance of the artistically refined national self-consciousness in the first quarter of the XIXth century, so vividly presented particularly in the works of Karamzin and Pushkin,⁴⁸⁹ a new situation arose. The earlier rational Masonic approach did not encounter any opposition because the traditional life did not manifest itself on the level of reflection. Because of this the two levels of consciousness could and did co-exist without contradiction. With the new situation the rational approach was confronted by the new consciousness on the same level and, as a consequence, it had no choice but to confirm itself by denial of the values underlying the opposite view.

It is easy to trace the intimate connection and similarity between Pushkin's worldview and that of Karamzin. In his poetry Pushkin united the *pravda* and *volya* of the previous century's political ideal with a personal *pravda* and *volya* of sentimentalism and romanticism. Thus, a similarity is clear in Pushkin's and Karamzin's views as they shared the same attitude towards Russia and its great historical destiny. A difference can similarly be discovered in the fact that Karamzin presented the national ideal at the level of the state, while Pushkin presented it at the level of the individual human being, a citizen of this particular state, a resident of the Russian land. There was also one more essential feature uniting these two writers - a wholeness of perception - which was noted and valued by the intellectuals of XIXth century Russia. This wholeness of perception famous poet and thinker, Fedor Tyutchev, found in Karamzin, who "...Could unite everything in the inviolable common order, linking all the humanly good by Russian passion."⁴⁹⁰ The wholeness of Pushkin's worldview is incontestable.⁴⁹¹ At the same time Pushkin and Karamzin were both "Europeans" in the cultural sense of the word, and "patriots" proud of being the Russians. It is also of extreme importance that both men defended their

⁴⁸⁹ These two writers are taken as a model, and there is no intention to ascribe to them the appearance of a new kind of national consciousness. Obviously, this is impossible from the cultural point of view. They are taken here merely as the brightest representatives of the educated layer of Russian society, which was the genuine bearer of this new consciousness.

⁴⁹⁰ «Умевший все совокупить В ненарушимом, полном строе, Все человечески-благое, И русским чувством закрепить». (На юбилей Н. М. Карамзина 1866).

⁴⁹¹ It is enough to recall the famous Dostoevsky speech on Pushkin. Solovyov always emphasized that Pushkin's worldview was an organic one.

views against the attacks of their opponents. On the one hand they were in opposition to those who, like A. Shishkov, insisted that Russianness accommodated all the beginnings and the ends in itself (the ultra-conservative position).⁴⁹² On the other hand, they opposed those who thought that Russia should build itself by means of copying European political institutions and by using only European social and political standards and values. It is interesting to note that, though from the beginning both Karamzin and Pushkin were predominantly regarded as markedly westernized (when the ultra-conservatives were still strong), later they came to be regarded as conservatives.⁴⁹³

The first half of the XIXth century is one of the best known periods in Russian cultural history. The famous quarrel which took place at the end of this period between the so-called *Slavophiles* and *Westernizers* has been described in numerous books. From the point of view of the origin of a national philosophy this quarrel is crucial, because it was the *Slavophiles* who clearly formulated the basic aims, terms, and problems of the future philosophy. This chapter aims to demonstrate that *Slavophiles* concepts appeared as a negation of negation (denial of the Westernizer's denial of the national ideal in the works of some of the best Russian writers) and through this the fresh and positive affirmation of the worldview presented by Karamzin and Pushkin. In the process of this negation the *Slavophiles* shaped the key concepts which later became the specific concepts of Russian national philosophy.

The main split between the educated and the westernized group in society on the one hand, and on the other hand the rest of society following the traditional lifestyle (including peasants, merchants, and a considerable part of the nobility), caused by Peter the Great's reforms entered the intellectual sphere of Russian life at the beginning of the XIXth century. If Russian national philosophy had been destined to appear exclusively on the lines of this split it would have been either a simple continuation of the Western rationalistic tradition, or a non-systematic mixture of general statements related to religious, political, social, and domestic issues. In both cases it would not have appeared as an originaive event of spiritual and intellectual life.

⁴⁹² The term 'охранительный' which is used in Russian in relation to this social and political position cannot be adequately translated.

⁴⁹³ It is enough to quote articles against Pushkin written by the extremely popular literary critic D. Pisarev.

The great cultural contribution of such writers as Karamzin and Pushkin can be found in the fact that they synthesized these two lines of thought. This synthesis was expressed in their works, not as an eclectic mix of incompatible elements but as an organic whole. The basis of this synthesis was, as we have seen, formed by reflection on the values of the traditional constituents of national consciousness. Being specific this synthesis was not at the same time attempting to construct fences between Russian and Western-style national consciousness. It is to their credit that they were not inclined to replace traditional concepts by Western ideas or to accept solely these traditional concepts in isolation from the rest of the world. In their works, in Pushkin's works in particular, as has been shown in the previous chapter, Russian national consciousness was presented as an invaluable and undeniable part of the consciousness of all nations of the world, based on the distinctive features of Russian history.

However this artistic presentation of a national, and at the same time world-wide view did not cancel the pre-existing lines of thinking, orientated either on Western or on traditional patterns. On the contrary, it provided society with new possibilities. The universal rational approach of the XVIIIth century was based on the unconscious assumption that society was a kind of raw material, which had to be used to construct a social edifice on the foundation of reasonably elaborated principles. This is exactly what we found in Fonvizin's views as opposed to Karamzin's.⁴⁹⁴ On the other hand, the traditional consciousness existed as a non-articulated part of everyday life and, therefore, was as such beyond any rational approach. It could manifest itself only negatively, by opposing any changes. Yet by the end of the first quarter of the XIXth century with the appearance of the artistically articulated and presented national worldview uniting both sides, the circumstances had changed. The uniqueness of the situation could be found in the fact that the earlier patterns instead of being aims in themselves and existing separately from each other were transformed into the ultimate possibilities of highly sophisticated and poly-dimensional consciousness. They began to co-exist within the united consciousness functioning as its limits. V. Zen'kovskii in relation to this process in Russian thought uses the word 'polarization'.⁴⁹⁵

⁴⁹⁴ Karamzin criticized similar views in Speranskii's approach to the development of Russian State.

⁴⁹⁵ Zen'kovskii *Istoriya...* V. 2. Part 1. P. 9.

And so by this time we have essential constituents leading to the appearance of philosophy: an articulated worldview which reflected the basic traditional values; the specific conditions which created the reflective position beyond the immediate content of political interests; and the realized necessity to formulate these values on the rationally refined level. It should be mentioned that the interest to the Western philosophical doctrines was very high, and from the beginning of the XIXth century along with philosophical courses in universities there were circles arranged to study philosophy. Also in their traveling abroad members of the educated nobility included visits to universities and philosophical courses in particular. For instance, Kireyevskii made acquaintance with Hegel and Schelling, visited lectures of Schleiermacher, and so on.

Now we turn to the thinkers who sketched the first drafts of national philosophy and implemented the concepts which expressed its specific issues and values: Tchaadayev, Kireyevskii, Khomyakov. We will also observe the corresponding themes in the Russian poetry of the mid XIXth century. This will allow us to outline the intellectual circumstances in which Russian philosophy was shaped.

It was mentioned in the previous chapter that Tchaadayev construed his critical attitude to Russia through the negation of Karamzin's ideas. This was clearly realized by Prince P. Vyazemskii.⁴⁹⁶ Vyazemskii was talking about Tchaadayev's famous first "Philosophical Letter" published in the magazine *Teleskop* in 1836.

Tchaadayev's views can be presented in terms of the following statements.⁴⁹⁷

- Religion forms the centre of individual life as well as of social life in its totality. "Christianity reveals itself not as a moral teaching alone ... but as an eternal divine force which acts universally in the spiritual world, and so its visible revelation should serve as a permanent lesson to us. This is the proper meaning of the statement, expressed in the creed of the one universal Church."⁴⁹⁸ (In *Apology of a*

⁴⁹⁶ There is no lack of evidences for the indignation of members of society felt offended for Russia by Tchaadayev's tone and valuations, however it was Vyazemskii who related Tchaadayev's ideas to the image of Russia created by Karamzin.

⁴⁹⁷ It should be noted that the whole set of Tchaadayev's letters became known only a century after the first letter was published, and the statements here do not relate directly to those which were not acknowledged in his time.

⁴⁹⁸ P. Ya. Tchaadayev *Polnoye sobraniye sochinenii i izbrannyye pis'ma* (Complete collection of works and selected letters) V. 1. Moscow, 1991. P. 332.

Madman Tchaadayev stated: "The way to heaven leads not through the motherland but through Truth."⁴⁹⁹

- The people of Western Europe incorporated Christian concepts into their social institutions and thus created modern civilization. Their economic wellbeing had a spiritual wellbeing as its source. In Western Europe ideas always followed rather than preceded economic and other interests.
- Russia accepted Christianity from Byzantium, which cultivated the ascetic and mystical sides of the doctrine. That is why, while in the West "Christianity pompously walked along the path indicated by its divine founder, we did not advance anywhere."⁵⁰⁰
- Peter the Great linked us with Western Europe, he "threw us the raincoat of civilization. We took the raincoat but did not touch education."⁵⁰¹ This means that our church, the beliefs, acquired by us prevent us from union with the family of Christian nations.

Tchaadayev's first letter puts before us a predominantly historiosophical doctrine. However, from other philosophical letters (the second to the eighth) and from *The Apology of a Madman* it can be easily seen that this doctrine forms part of a wider metaphysical and epistemological doctrine.

The life of a spiritual being embraces two worlds, but the only known world is the world of our experience. As it is made up of particular facts it is impossible to find any laws in relation to this world. Therefore, we are forced to admit the existence of higher reason, which relates to the world as to the one.⁵⁰² At the same time the nature of reason consists in its ability to subordinate itself: the more reason is subordinated to one principle the stronger it is. This explains the power of mathematical sciences, based on the strictest rules.⁵⁰³ This means that Truth as well as Goodness come from outside, rather than from inner experience. At the same time a man becomes a man because of the ability to discriminate between good and evil rather than because of his ability to discover physical laws. The revelation of these principles can be observed in the course of history, which is clearly demonstrated by the social development of the

⁴⁹⁹ Ibid. P. 523-524.

⁵⁰⁰ Ibid.

⁵⁰¹ Ibid. P. 330.

⁵⁰² Ibid. P. 352.

⁵⁰³ Ibid. Pp. 357-358.

West. Russia is the only country which was not touched by this development. The problem is that Truth and Goodness are revealed to Man, not in their genuine forms but through forms which Man is able to comprehend, including time and space. However, genuine forms, flowing from the external source, are unlimited and eternal. And they are exactly what moulds the pattern of our thoughts. If we strive towards these genuine forms we are able to reach the point when all humanity in its entire historical development is absolutely embraced by our inner life, and everything is equally significant. Tchaadayev emphasized many times that this absolute understanding is gained exclusively through subordination to certain narrow principles. It is clear that some of Tchaadayev's basic ideas are borrowed from the doctrines of European philosophy, including Kant and Spinoza, as well as from European and Russian history. The most important thing is that Tchaadayev does not follow blindly European intellectual authorities but, on the contrary, freely constructs his own original doctrine alluding to these authorities only when it is necessary.

Tchaadayev is sometimes called "the first Russian philosopher" and it is easy to list the arguments in favour of this view. If we take into account the freedom with which he linked his personal ideas with the realm of abstract concepts and the consistency of his thought, it is clear that he could and did work as a genuine philosopher. He also expressed concepts which linked him with Kireyevskii, Dostoevsky, and Solovyov, which means that he used to work in the same spiritual space as did these thinkers. There are, however, two arguments which prevent us from calling Tchaadayev "the first Russian philosopher".

1) He did not formulate the specific terms to express the national core of his doctrine. The peculiar terms which characterize Russian national philosophy were shaped by Kireyevskii, Khomyakov, and Solovyov.

2) Though later (actually, fairly soon after *First Letter* was published) Tchaadayev came to the conclusion that the Russian 'backwardness', the very absence of true civilization, was at the same time a great advantage, he still thought that Russian history failed to provide significant positive results in the spiritual or in social spheres.

This is understandable if we take into account that Tchaadayev's crucial question (in the *Second Letter*) and the starting point of his thought was: Why did the Russian Orthodox church fail to protest against serfdom, which was fully established by the beginning of the XVIIth century, more than six centuries after the introduction

of Christianity?⁵⁰⁴ If we take into account his conviction that religion forms the foundation of cultural life this would have been impossible. Let us now turn back to the basic idea that philosophical activity is caused by social and political problems. The Tchaadayev's train of thinking can be formulated as follows. On the one hand, taking into account his highly developed ideas such as the wholeness of human consciousness, based on the spiritual unity of the universe, and his firm belief in the 'highest logic of history', it is impossible to deny that the very basis of his thought was genuinely national. On the other hand, Tchaadayev denied any value of these ideas equaling them to zero and endeavouring to replace them with the borrowed concepts. However his negation related exclusively to the value of Russian history and this is, probably, the only point of disagreement between Tchaadayev and the Slavophiles. In the most part they shared all the concepts, including their negative attitude towards Russian contemporary life, longing for wholeness of being, the crucial role of religion, that is its relation to the supernatural, and so on. It is extremely important that the basis of agreement was much wider than the points of disagreement. This means that the very space of reasoning had been well established by the earlier intellectual and spiritual development.

The closeness of Tchaadayev, usually known as 'Westernizer', to the views of the Slavophiles makes it extremely difficult to distinguish clearly between these trends of Russian thought. A. Zamalejev gives expression to the generally accepted view when he distinguishes between the Westernizers and the Slavophiles on the ground of the difference in their social and political orientations.⁵⁰⁵ On one side there was an intelligentsia, formed by the intellectuals not of noble origin, which was grasped first of all by the Western social ideas. On the other side there was an educated gentry who supported Russian Church and the popular peasant worldview. This is only partly true if we take into account that the representatives of both trends shared a similarly negative attitude towards current Russian social and political life. The democratic historian of the XIXth century, Ivanov-Razumnik, had a deeper understanding of this. He saw the Westernizers and the Slavophiles as 'realists'

⁵⁰⁴ Ibid. P. 347.

⁵⁰⁵ A. Zamalejev *Kurs istorii russkoi filosofii* (Course in the history of Russian philosophy). Moscow, 1996. P. 191.

opposing 'romanticists.'⁵⁰⁶ The Westernizers recognized Christianity, both Catholicism and Orthodoxy, as the driving force of history only in the remote past. (From the point of view of the later Westernizers, Tchaadayev was completely wrong in this respect when he thought of Christianity as of an active agent of development.) The Westernizers' approach to the current social and political matters was pragmatic and positivistic rather than rooted in any consistent doctrine. On the other hand, the Slavophiles were eager to elucidate what they thought of as peculiar to the Slavic and Orthodox worldview. And so, these trends were different not ideologically but rather psychologically. Florovskii presented them as different psychological and cultural approaches.⁵⁰⁷ Following this line of argument P. Vinogradov distinguished between the Westernizers and the Slavophiles on the ground of their different understanding of the principle of culture. The Westernizers proceeded from the image of culture as the product of conscious human creation.⁵⁰⁸ The Slavophiles, on the other hand, thought of culture as of unconscious collective creativity. It is therefore understandable that the Westernizers placed emphasis on science and positivistic philosophy, intimately linked with science, in order to find efficient and fast ways to resolve social problems. In so doing they did not search for any general consistency but tried to apply the most fashionable theories. Therefore, their views were easily evolved from Schellingianism through Hegelianism to Marxism, while the Slavophiles' evolution was different. The Slavophiles were eager to demonstrate the specific features of the national worldview through the construction of general philosophical doctrine.

Because the Westernizers challenged the Slavophiles exclusively on the ground of the difference in approach, in the course of time the pole of opposition changed from the Slavophiles to the traditionalists, who took it for granted that Russian political and social institutions were different from those in the West and that it was a great advantage rather than a deficiency. "Traditionalists" (this term is used exclusively to differentiate them from the Slavophiles) based their views on the ideal of Russian political, social, and cultural life expressed in the triadic slogan formulated

⁵⁰⁶ Ivanov-Razumnik *Istoriya russkoi obshchestvennoi mysli* (The history of Russian social thought) St. Petersburg, 1911. 3rd ed. V. I. P. 340.

⁵⁰⁷ Arch-priest G. Florovskii *Puti russkogo bogosloviya* (Ways of Russian Theology) 3rd ed. Paris, 1983. P. 249

⁵⁰⁸ See: Ibid.

by Prince S.Uvarov: "Orthodoxy, Autocracy, Nationality."⁵⁰⁹ The traditionalists were no less educated and intellectually strong than their opponents. Westernizers had strong arguments in their favour if we look at some obvious advantages of European everyday life: strong social institutions and legal system, which found its most notable manifestation in the enormous industrial growth (which was represented by Tchernyshevskii's use of the image of the Crystal Palace erected for the international exhibition of the achievements in technology in London in the middle of the XIXth century) characterized by the leader of the Slavophiles Khomyakov as "holy miracles".⁵¹⁰ Convinced of Russia's backwardness they called for the European models to be implemented in Russian life in order to gain the advantage of an economically and socially developed country.

Shevyrev's article "A Russian's view on Education in Europe", published in 1841 in the magazine *Moskvityanin*, became the manifesto of this traditionalist position. According to Shevyrev, Russia had preserved untouched three fundamental feelings which form the basis for future development: religious feeling; feeling of state unity; and consciousness of nationality, which is

...exactly what prevents the futile efforts to inculcate the Russian mind and heart with something which does not suit the Russians. This feeling is the measure of our writers' firm success in the history of literature, it is the touchstone of their originality⁵¹¹.

It is clear that from the very beginning this position was opposed to the Westernizer's views. This ideological opposition between the Westernizers and the traditionalists formed the extreme poles of Russian spiritual life, which was clearly recognized by the educated layer of society.

What was the Slavophile position in relation to the above? From the point of view of the Westernizers it coincided with the traditionalists one because the Slavophiles insisted on Russian 'originality' as an advantage compared with European achievements. At the same time from the point of view of the traditionalists the

⁵⁰⁹ The word 'nationality' stands here for the Russian "narodnost'", which is actually untranslatable: it means orientation towards the common people (predominantly peasants which is obvious for an agricultural country), with their beliefs and traditions taken as being 'higher' than any implemented by Western countries.

⁵¹⁰ In: Chernyshevskii's novel *What Is to Be Done?* and Khomyakov's poem *To Russia*.

⁵¹¹ Quote from: *Istoriya russkoi literatury* (The history of Russian literature). Ed. by D.N.Ovsyaniko-Kulikovskii. V.II. Moscow, 1910. Pp. 82-83.

Slavophiles were too close to the Westernizers because they regarded Russian originality as an advantage not in its actual mode but in an ideal and spiritual mode, being persuaded that the Russian state was currently backward in regard to the European political and social institutions. At the same time both the Westernizers' and the traditionalists' positions overloaded with ideological content, became sterile in relation to the development of Russian culture. As it happened the most original and significant Russian thinkers and writers, including Dostoevsky, Leskov, Yurkevich, Solovyov, Leontyev, Rozanov did not belong to either of these trends, and moreover encountered distrust and hostility from both the Westernizers and the traditionalists.

In the course of time, the Slavophiles were excluded from the immediate ideological and political struggle, and were, therefore, pushed into a position 'beyond the barriers', a position of reflection. And this is exactly what was needed for the shaping of philosophical views.

Thus, by the end of the 1840s the situation in Russian spiritual life was to follow the poles formed by the Westernizers (who established themselves by negation of the peculiarities of Russian national consciousness expressed by Karamzin and Pushkin) on the one hand, and by the traditionalists (who established themselves by negation of the Westernizers' point of view, negation of negation) on the other hand. The middle ground remained for those who could not deny the values achieved by the original development and at the same time did not think that these values were perfectly embodied in Russian life of that time. The paradox of Russian life was that this middle position, being ideologically more indifferent than the other trends of thought, was forced into immediate ideological fighting and, because of this, formed the basis for philosophical reflection. Both Tchaadayev's position and that of the Slavophiles was in the middle rather than closer to the ideologically refined poles. Because of this they both played significant roles in the formation of Russian national philosophy. However the position of the Slavophiles had an important benefit: while Tchaadayev saw the greatest advantage of Russian compared with European life in its unelaborated and undeveloped condition (that is in its vagueness and absence of reasonably established rules and institutions), the Slavophiles were eager to find and express positive national values. In doing this they laid the foundation for a national philosophy. Moreover, the expression "the foundation of national philosophy" can be now put into its exact context: what we find in Slavophile's writings are clearly

formulated concepts of the Russian national consciousness and indicated the ways metaphysics and epistemology could be developed on the basis of these concepts.

We now turn to the writings of Kireyevskii and Khomyakov, the so-called 'older Slavophiles'. These two authors are well known, and their views have been described in different ways. For the purposes of this thesis only the most significant statements will be chosen.

Two articles will be used to characterize I.V.Kireyevskii's views: "On the Character of European Education in Its Relation to Education in Russia" and "On the Necessity and Possibility of the New Foundations of Philosophy."⁵¹² It is necessary to emphasize from the beginning that under the word 'education' (*prosveshcheniye*) Kireyevskii means much more than education in a proper sense, for him it is culture in general, and, therefore, all his reasoning relates to culture. According to Kireyevskii, the three elements of the initial European education are: 1) the Roman Catholic Church; 2) the Roman system of education, rooted in ancient Greek cultural achievements, and 3) the State system, which arose on the ground of violence. Being the foundation of European culture, Ancient Rome unavoidably had a profound influence on this culture. The crucial feature of Roman cultural life can be found in the fact that "external rationality exceeded the inner essence of things."⁵¹³ This can be demonstrated by the prevalence of law over family life, as well as subsequent following expansion of laws over social justice, the predominant development of the forms in poetry and language to the detriment of content, and so on. When the Roman Church separated itself from the rest of the Christian world these peculiarities of the Roman mind expressed themselves in the predominant elaboration of the logical side of the Christian doctrines, which can be observed in scholasticism. In addition, as the unity of the Church was based exclusively on external forms, this unity was manifested by the figure of the Pope, the only head of the Christian Church. This rationalistic approach expressed itself in the whole course of European political, social, and spiritual history. Because of this, modern European philosophy which began with Descartes followed in the footsteps of the earlier scholasticism.

Kireyevskii further maintained that, in contrast to the Western European development, the Eastern Church predominantly sought for the rightness of the

⁵¹² Quotations are taken from: I.V.Kireyevskii *Izbrannyye statyi* (Selected articles) Moscow, 1984.

⁵¹³ Ibid. P. 209.

'thinking spirit' condition. In their search for truth the Eastern Fathers sought inner wholeness uniting all the spheres of human activity into the single living and highest sphere.⁵¹⁴ These Eastern doctrines came to Russia from the very beginning. Russian land found its unity not in language or state institutions but in a unity of belief. At the same time the Russian Church did not pass its form to other institutions, unlike the Catholic Church, which originated, for instance, monastic orders and courts of inquisition.⁵¹⁵ The main difference between the Europeans and the Russians is rooted in the fact that life in the West is split into different areas isolated from each other, and, therefore, religion, rationality, aestheticism, striving after creature comforts, are completely separated. In Russia all these activities are united by religious feeling. The development of each sphere of social and spiritual life in the West is readily transformed into a self-sufficient activity or institution. Consequently, fine arts in the West were being developed in the name of pure beauty, they generated 'dreaminess and multiplicity of heart aspirations.'⁵¹⁶ Russia, on the contrary, kept beauty and truth (*pravda*) strongly linked at all times. This European split between material and spiritual life into separated spheres led to the transformation of virtue into self-satisfaction. In contrast to this, the Russian is never satisfied with himself, he is always aware of his deficiencies. The question arises: why, notwithstanding the advantage of the wholeness of life, Russian education (i.e. cultural life) is so backward compared with the Western? Kireyevskii's answer is by no means convincing. According to him, wholeness expressed by Russian culture had its dangers, because respect for tradition had transformed itself into respect for its external forms, which found tragic manifestation in the atrocities of Ivan the Terrible and in the XVIIth century Schism. However, the fundamentals of genuine Russian culture were still alive among ordinary people, and, therefore, when the educated layer of Russian society in the end realized the insufficiency of European education it would turn to these national foundations in order to create the new culture.

The idea of wholeness allows Kireyevskii to formulate new objectives of philosophical development. He presented the European philosophical tradition as distorted by the one-sided rationalism which had earlier struck the Roman Church. On

⁵¹⁴ Ibid. P. 221.

⁵¹⁵ Ibid. P. 226.

⁵¹⁶ Ibid. P. 233.

the basis of some accidental rationalist thinking the Roman Catholic Church introduced a change into the Creed of the Universal (Ecumenic) Church:

This caused the first duality in the very foundation of Western belief, which was followed by the appearance of scholastic philosophy inside the belief, then reformation of the belief itself, then philosophy outside the belief. The first rationalists were scholastics, their descendants were called Hegelians.⁵¹⁷

The genuine aim of philosophy is, therefore, grounded not in striving for isolated truths but for placing man "in relation with the ultimate truth, the inner demand, which penetrates reason."⁵¹⁸ Thus, the aim of philosophy can be found exclusively outside philosophy, in the wholeness of a human being. This wholeness cannot be achieved on the basis of reason. After the Reformation with its emphasis on individual rather than collective consciousness and belief this possibility is even less: "To construct the edifice of belief on the basis of personal opinions is the same as to construct a tower in accordance with the ideas of every worker."⁵¹⁹ Therefore, it is obvious that the *wholeness* which is being sought after cannot be reached by reason alone. That is why "the Orthodox believer knows that for wholeness of truth wholeness of reason is needed, and the search for this wholeness is the continuous aim of his thought."⁵²⁰ At the same time it is also obvious that just as rational logical thought always leads to diversity, 'wholeness' can be found on the ground of the inseparable unity of belief and reason, which is the significant characteristic of the Eastern Church Fathers' approach. Consequently, the aim of modern philosophy should be to arrange all the cultural and intellectual achievements of the European development in accordance with this approach.⁵²¹ As soon as this is achieved, reason will infer its conclusions not from the abstract concepts but from the very root of self-consciousness, where being and thought form an absolute identity.⁵²²

It is possible to demonstrate that even the idea of wholeness alone as it has been presented by Kireyevskii could form the ground for further philosophical development. It is also easy to demonstrate that this idea stands in close relation with the idea of *pravda*. However, the concept of *volya* did not uncover itself clearly in Kireyevskii's thought, though some hints of it could be found in the way he presented

⁵¹⁷ Ibid. P. 241.

⁵¹⁸ Ibid. P. 249.

⁵¹⁹ Ibid. P. 256.

⁵²⁰ Ibid. P. 261.

⁵²¹ Ibid. P. 264.

the relationship between God and man. This relationship is based on love rather than on law; and love, by its very nature, cannot be based on coercion. However the concept which introduced *volya* more directly into Russian philosophical reasoning can be found in the writings of another outstanding Slavophile thinker Alexei Khomyakov.

Before we turn to Khomyakov's works it is worth mentioning that the Westernizer Ivanov-Razumnik, elaborating his criterion of demarcation between the Slavophiles and the Westernizers (romanticists against realists) came to the conclusion that the most significant difference between them related to the problem of individuality versus collectivism. He wrote that, although from the beginning the Westernizers valued the idea of nationality as being substantial, it was later developed into sociological nominalism (however with the most significant writers this nominalism never reached its ultimate forms⁵²³). The problem was whether 'social' was predominant over 'individual' or, on the contrary, an individual was predominant over social institutions. Though Ivanov-Razumnik was definitely right seeing the difference between these trends in the problem of the relationship between society and individual, he was still wrong because he considered the opposition in the one-dimensional Western scheme. In doing this he missed the point. He was following the liberal tradition of European political thought (presented in the French *Declaration of Rights of Man and Citizen*) defending the rights of an individual over the rights of any social groups or institutions, i.e. Ivanov-Razumnik was seeking for balance rather than for organic unity.

Khomyakov, on the other hand, tried to find the kind of unity which would occur beyond the opposition 'social versus individual'. Both society and individual are for him personalities, and, therefore their relationship should be based on love rather than on law, and therefore, this relationship should be based on freedom rather than on any form of coercion. Khomyakov followed Kireyevskii in his endeavour for unity and wholeness, which were found in the concept of the Universal Church. While the state unites people on the basis of legal regulations, the Church unites people through participation in sacraments. This is essentially different from legal relations and forms the highest kind of unity. "The mystery of the moral freedom in Christ and the unity of the Saviour with the conscious creature can be properly disclosed only to

⁵²² Ibid. P. 267.

the freedom of human reason and to the unity of mutual love."⁵²⁴ Khomyakov thought that the Orthodox Church was closer to the Christian ideal than Catholicism and Protestantism. This did not mean that he was unaware of the deficiencies of the Orthodox Church. This was not at all the case. However for him the visible Church was subordinated to the invisible Church. He rejected both Catholicism and Protestantism on the ground of their incorrect (as he thought) attitude to freedom: Catholicism expressed unity without freedom while Protestantism expressed freedom without unity.⁵²⁵ In the first case a personality was suppressed, in the second case a unity was destroyed. Khomyakov named the proper relationship between society and personality "sobornost" (collectivism, conciliarism). The word was obviously taken from the Creed ("I believe in One, Holy, *Catholic*,⁵²⁶ and Apostolic Church"). At the same time in Russian it acquired a meaning which is untranslatable into other languages. Following the Greek original it means 'universal', however in addition it means 'based on agreement' (describing the relationship between members of the universal unity). With *sobornost* we approach unity rather than union, because 'union' bears the nuance of the 'united political body'. Khomyakov defended the correctness of this Russian translation of the word 'Catholic' in his letter to the Jesuit Prince Gagarin.⁵²⁷ For Khomyakov *sobornost* meant precisely the freedom based on loving unity where every member kept his own specific features. Khomyakov thought that the Church provided us with the example of this unity, which aimed to embrace in the course of time the whole of humankind.⁵²⁸

The history of humankind was presented by Khomyakov as a permanent fight between two opposite principles, which he called the Kushite and Iranian. The former taking its origin from Ethiopia, subordinates human beings to matter, to natural necessity, and because of this it expresses itself in a form of indefinite pantheism. The

⁵²³ Ivanov-Razumnik *Istoriya...*, P. 341-342.

⁵²⁴ Khomyakov A.S. "Po povodu raznykh sochinenii ... o predmetakh very" (On the different writings about the subjects of belief). // *Sochineniya bogoslovskiy* (Theological works) St. Petersburg, 1995. P. 206.

⁵²⁵ Ibid. P. 216, 224.

⁵²⁶ In Russian the word "*Catholic*" is presented as "*Sobornaya*".

⁵²⁷ Ibid. Pp. 275-280.

⁵²⁸ A commentary on Khomyakov's understanding of *sobornost* in relation to the Creed from the point of view of the Orthodox Christian can be found in: Archbishop Nafanail *Besedy o Svyashchennom Pisanii i o Vere i Tserkvi* (Conversations on Holy Scripture and on belief and Church). V. 1. 1991. Pp. 112-119, 133-136. Archbishop Nafanail's commentary coincides with the one presented in this chapter.

Iranian principle, in contrast, expresses itself in the highest personal morality of monotheism.⁵²⁹ In fact, it is the struggle between necessity and freedom. Though, partly under Hegel's influence, Khomyakov believed in the highest aims of history and its immanent logic, he at the same time thought that this would not weaken human freedom; on the contrary, these aims and logic were based on human freedom. There were, according to Khomyakov, two notably opposing types of human personality which coincided with the above principles: the type seeking for freedom (Iranian) and the type seeking for subordination (Kushite); they were not purely represented as such, but any actual personality combined both principles in different ratios. This combination led to the inevitable tragedy in human life: being free by nature man sought for subordination, which destroyed the wholeness of personality. Therefore, the search for an ideal of human life was in reality the endeavour for *sobornost'*, the genuine unity of free personalities forming the actual unity of the whole universe. It is important to emphasize that this unity is not exclusively spiritual, it embraces spiritual and physical in one (later Vladimir Solovyov expressed this unity by the image of 'God-Humankind').

In order to understand the relationship between man and nature we must take into account the meaning of 'wholeness': this concept presupposes that a human being cannot be regarded either as exclusively spiritual, or as exclusively physical; therefore a human cannot be separated either from God, or from nature. A strong sense of this unity found its expression in the Russian poetry of this period, particularly in the verses of F. Tyutchev and A. Tolstoy, the poets who carried further the Karamzin-Pushkin trend in literature. The congeniality between poetry and religious and philosophical thought demonstrates clearly that both the literary and the religious and philosophical development of Russian national culture sprang from the same source, and what was expressed by poets in their symbolic images was at the same time expressed by thinkers in their doctrines.

There is one remarkable and revealing theme which marked the XIXth century consciousness: the idea of the "Russian God". This expression is commonly connected with the name of Nicholas, bishop of the Christian church of Myra, in Lycia, Anatolia, (known in the West also as Saint Nicholas of Bari). The cult of St. Nicholas was so popular in Russia that he was often called the "Russian God" by non-

⁵²⁹ Khomyakov "Zapiski o vsemirnoi istorii" (Notes on world history) // *Sochineniya*,

Orthodox people.⁵³⁰ However at the beginning of the XIXth century the expression "Russian God" came to be linked with the events of the Patriotic War of 1812 and was used predominantly not in relation to St. Nicholas but rather to God the Creator, God the Saviour and Guardian of Russia. It was not a sort of paganism, but an idea which emphasized some kind of special relationship between God and Russia. It recalls a similar sort of relationship which was assumed between the Jewish people and Yahweh, and, in fact, linked with the Russian messianic vision which influenced the Slavophile movement. However this comparison can be made only in a very narrow sense. First, the "Russian God" appears exclusively in the particular context of the defense of Russian land: "O, Russian God, be our shield!" in Zhukovskii's famous poem dedicated to the Patriotic War of 1812,⁵³¹ or "The enemies were in disarray - It came from the burial mound: "The Russian God is strong!"... - from Ryleyev's "duma" ('thought') *Dimitrii Donskoi*, which described the Kulikovo battle.⁵³² Second, the most striking difference between the Russian and Jewish approaches to the issue is that in the Russian case God is linked with the land rather than with the people. This recalls the motif of the "holy land" (F.Glinka - *The Military Song* (1812)) Glinka also uses the expression "Our God": "Our God heard our prayers and oaths..."⁵³³ Even in the famous Vyazemskii's *Russian God* the name is applied predominantly to the land as such, beginning with the description of bad roads.

It can be presupposed that the concept and image of the Russian God played the role of an intermediate step between the predominant XVIIIth century image of Almighty God the Creator, God the Father and predominant turn to God the Son, to Christ in the middle of the XIXth century. This evolution is obvious, and the idea of the Russian God manifested the transition. In order to substantiate this statement it is sufficient to compare Derzhavin's *God*, the most outstanding in Russian poetry (and, probably, in Russian literature) depiction of the Almighty and All-merciful God (1784), with the famous Tyutchev poem *These poor villages* (1855) with the lines "Tsar of Heaven, burdened by the cross, walked as a slave all over you, native land,

V. VI. P.33.

⁵³⁰ See: B. A. Uspenskii: *Filologicheskiye razyskaniya v oblasti slavyanskikh drevnostei (Relikty yazychestva v vostochnoslavianskom kul'te Nikolaya Mirlikiiskogo)* (Philological explorations in the field of Slavonic antiquity (Pagan relics in the East Slavic Cult of Nicholas of Myra) Moscow, 1982.

⁵³¹ «О! Будь же, Русский Бог, нам щит!»

⁵³² «Враги смешались – от кургана Промчалось: «Силен Русский Бог!» - ...

blessing you."⁵³⁴ The shift between God-the Father and God-the Son emphasizes the transition between the classical attitude to the problem of the place occupied by man in the universe: abstract and based wholly on reason; and the new, less abstract, more personal and sensual one.

There is also one more significant point: God-the Son actualizes the unity of the divine and the earthly natures. Nature displays harmony in the same way that God-Man (Christ) has manifested the harmony of earthly life. Only human beings are able and do estrange themselves from nature and, therefore, from their own nature. This idea can be found again in Tyutchev's verses: "There is undisturbed order in everything, Total consonance in nature, - And in our illusory freedom We are conscious of our discord with it."⁵³⁵ The link between the deep awareness of Christ's everlasting presence and the craving for the unity of the whole universe including humanity is not direct, notwithstanding it is a very significant in Russian thought.

The loving unity of the whole universe is presented in the remarkable poem by A. Tolstoy *Me, in the darkness and dust...* where all the natural objects communicate through love and endeavour for God. The concluding words of the poem are: "There is nothing in nature, Which does not breathe with love."⁵³⁶ This unity not only among living creatures but among the living and the dead is also expressed in the lines from the poem *Ioann Damaskin* (St. John of Damascus): "But while I experience an eternal sleep My love is not dying ..."⁵³⁷ If the poem *Me, in the darkness and dust* is obviously connected with Pushkin's *Prophet*, *Ioann Damaskin* links the Russian culture of the XIXth century with IX-Xth century Byzantine culture. The idea of the unity of the whole of being, where the external as well as the internal, and the natural as well as the supernatural penetrate each other, is expressed with a peculiar strength

⁵³³ «Наш Бог внимал мольбам и клятвам...» (From: *Year 1812*).

⁵³⁴ «Удрученный ношей крестной, Всю тебя, земля родная, В рабском виде царь небесный Исходил, благословляя». This poem recalls *The New Jerusalem* by Blake written in the first decade of the XIXth century. However there is a significant difference: while Blake stresses the human endeavour to build Jerusalem, Tyutchev simply confirms that though the land is poor and scanty, it contains the highest spirituality in itself.

⁵³⁵ «Невозмутимый строй во всем, Созвучье полное в природе, - Лишь в нашей призрачной свободе Разлад мы с нею сознаем». (*Певучесть есть в морских волнах* 1865).

⁵³⁶ «И ничего в природе нет, чтобы любовью не дышало» in: *Polnoye sobraniye sochinenii gr. A.K.Tolstogo* Complete Edition. V. 1. St. -Petersburg, 1907. P. 392.

⁵³⁷ «Но, вечным сном пока я сплю, Моя любовь не умирает,...» Ibid. P. 45.

by Tyutchev. S. Frank noted that in his poetry Tyutchev was always aware of the invisible penetrating the visible.⁵³⁸ The motif of unity in Tolstoy's poems goes along with the motif of the eternal existence of images and thoughts which inspire works of art: "In futility you, artist, think that you are a maker of your works! They stray eternally beyond the earth, not seen by eyes."⁵³⁹ (The same theme can be found in the first part of *Ioann Damaskin*.)

Moreover, in relating the source of artistic inspirations to the heavens Tolstoy outlines his position as an artist as beyond the visible world and everyday life. He clearly expresses his social role as reflective indicating that he does not belong to any of the opposing groups: "I am not a soldier of any of two camps, but only a fortuitous guest..."⁵⁴⁰ With this we approach his famous humorous poem *Pravda*, where *pravda* is presented as similar to the world itself: *pravda* is so big that no one is able to embrace it in its entirety, and so everyone fights for his individual image of *pravda*.⁵⁴¹ In addition, it is worth noting that A. Tolstoy shares the same attitude to beauty as Dostoevsky. He thinks that beauty is the power which leads the world. In his *Literary Confession* Tolstoy states: "My conviction is that the poet's mission ... should lift people's level of morality, imbuing them with the love of beauty, which discovers its own application without any external support."⁵⁴²

Taking into account how close the contemporary poetic themes and approaches and a clearly presented reflective position are to those of the Slavophiles we again can see in the latter the continuation of the Karamzin and Pushkin tradition in Russian culture. Poetic works pour an additional light onto such concepts as *wholeness* and *sobornost'*. The sense of the unity of the universe conveyed by the above poems, in the form of the harmony of personalities united by love, transforms the universe into a group of subjects rather than objects, because it is impossible to imagine love between objects. The *wholeness* and *sobornost'* express different aspects of what later Solovyov calls 'Omni-unity': the wholeness is not just the One, but the united multiplicity; this multiplicity in its turn is formed by free personalities,

⁵³⁸ S. Frank "Kosmicheskoye chuvstvo v poezii Tyutcheva" (The feeling of cosmos in Tyutchev's poetry) // *Russkoye Mirovozzreniye* (Russian worldview) St. Petersburg, 1996. P. 325.

⁵³⁹ «Тщетно, художник, ты мнишь, что творений своих ты создатель! Вечно носились они над землею, незримые оку». Ibid. P. 375.

⁵⁴⁰ «Двух станов не боец, но только гость случайный». Ibid. P. 412.

⁵⁴¹ Ibid. Pp. 249-250.

otherwise love does not make sense. These personalities being linked by love do not subordinate or suppress each other, as would be the case if they were linked by law (whether social or natural). Therefore their unity should be characterized by *sobornost'*. At the same time the uniting force of love makes this wholeness alive and dynamic rather than static. In addition, wholeness means not only the unity of recently existing beings but their unity with dead ones, as well as with those who are to come. Wholeness, consequently, not only unites living beings but also links them with those beings from the past and future.

At this point we can demonstrate that the views of the Slavophiles fit the three-dimensional cultural space outlined by historicism, aestheticism, and mysticism. In this respect we have to take into account Tchaadayev's views as well because, as has been mentioned, his approach is basically the same as that of the Slavophiles.

A historical dimension is manifest in the thinking of Tchaadayev, Kireyevskii, and Khomyakov. The immediate result of Tchaadayev's thought is his historiosophy. For him world religions do their utmost to understand God, and through this understanding create cultures in the course of time. Being the manifestations of divine activity, they are, for Tchaadayev, the driving forces of different cultures, rather than pure images, doctrines, and so on. In his *Fifth Letter* he wrote: "However we would retire into ourselves, however we would dig into the concealed depths of our hearts, we would never be able to find anything but the thought inherited from our earthly ancestors."⁵⁴³ This quote reflects the same feeling of "living history" which we have found in Pushkin's approach.

Khomyakov wrote the voluminous *Notes on World History*. However this work can be put to one side because, although it obviously demonstrates his interest in history, the history in this case does not appear as a dimension, but as an aim in itself. More important in this respect is that all Slavophiles reasoning is based on the feeling of being in history. This can be seen in Kireyevskii's approach to rational thinking and Khomyakov's defence of Orthodoxy. As we observed earlier Kireyevskii was eager to construct a new foundation for philosophy not from a set of arguments, but by an indication of the deficiencies of contemporary schools of philosophy, deficiencies which were caused by the specifics of their historical development. This did not allow these traditions to follow ways which, he believed, would be much more

⁵⁴² *Polnoye Sobraniye Sochinenii* (Complete Works). V.1. St. Petersburg, 1907. P.25.

productive. Khomyakov also tried to prove the superiority of the Orthodox Church to the rest of the Christian Churches by demonstration of its historical fidelity to original Christianity. Logical as well as theological arguments prove to be secondary in this historical approach to demonstration.

An aesthetical dimension is also quite obvious. Tchaadayev noted: "God created beauty in order that we would understand Him."⁵⁴⁴ This statement does not depart far from Dostoevsky's "Beauty will save the world", and both express the same attitude to the importance of beauty for the human worldview. In his fragment *On Architecture* Tchaadayev declares: "In general, it is beyond doubt that beauty and good come from one source and are subordinated to one law ... the history of Art is nothing else but a symbolic history of humankind."⁵⁴⁵ This is the purest expression of an idea that divine good manifests itself through beauty. Moreover "goodness and beauty are linked and merged in the most absolute and the widest idea of morality."⁵⁴⁶ It seems obvious for him that good is beauty, and vice versa.

Kireyevskii does not demonstrate his attitude toward beauty in any specific statements, however all his writings are permeated with the worship of beauty. Clear evidence can be found elsewhere in his works. For instance, in the articles mentioned previously he described the development of Western Art as arising from a one-sided pagan veneration of beauty "instead", he continues "...of keeping the meaning of beauty and truth (*pravda*) in an inseparable connection ... which preserves the general wholeness of human spirit and holds the truth of its manifestations ..."⁵⁴⁷ Here beauty is presented not as a part but as a keeper of wholeness. Kireyevskii finds fault with the West where beauty, being separated from belief, has been transformed into mere decoration, has become a part of the world theatre, instead of the world's authentic existence. In this case the feeling of beauty does not lead to God and goodness but exclusively to an artificial enjoyment.⁵⁴⁸ The crucial role of beauty in Kireyevskii's approach, at least to religious and philosophical matters, is clear from these statements.

⁵⁴³ Tchaadayev *Polnoye...*, P. 385.

⁵⁴⁴ Ibid. P. 470.

⁵⁴⁵ Ibid. P. 444.

⁵⁴⁶ Ibid. (Fragment 1).

⁵⁴⁷ Kireyevskii *Izbrannyye statyi*, P. 233.

⁵⁴⁸ See, for example, *ibid.* P. 257.

Khomyakov when presenting the concept of *sobornost'* in his theological works does not relate to beauty directly; he predominantly uses the words truth (*pravda*) and love. For instance, the Christian Church should reveal to all people complete freedom which "can be gained by truth (*pravda*) and love."⁵⁴⁹ Concepts of truth, freedom, and love were in this respect more important to him, since he was defending the idea of the unity of the Church. However he provides a brilliant expression of his attitude to beauty in his poetry. (Taking into account Khomyakov's character we can rest assured that the views and images which he present express his own genuine approach to the world.) In the poem *Yesterday's night was so bright* Khomyakov is observing the beauty of the natural world while thinking of the beauty of love and friendship, and human life. All his poems are penetrated by the idea of God's presence in the earthly world, and natural world is seen as the manifestation of divine glory. In his famous poem *To Russia* he concludes that if Russia were to courageously follow its calling in its mysterious glory it would obtain the highest place among other people, and its glory would be "Like this blue vault of heaven, the transparent cover of God."⁵⁵⁰ It is clear that for Khomyakov the divine *pravda* and beauty are inseparable, *pravda* cannot manifest itself in any other way. Like Tchaadayev and Kireyevskii he values inner beauty, which he regards as the manifestation of truth (*pravda*) and love. With this we approach the mystical dimension of Tchaadayev's and the Slavophiles' consciousness.

Referring to the understanding of mysticism presented in the corresponding chapter it is easy to demonstrate that the Slavophile approach is mystical. This can be concluded on the basis that for them the source of indubitable ultimate knowledge is beyond doubt revelation and intuition rather than empirical investigation. Moreover, the whole of history of the universe and humankind is for the Slavophiles the revelation of divine thought, and because of this human intuition in its effort to penetrate into this thought provides us with the most important knowledge. In general it can be stated that the consciousness of the permanent presence of the supernatural in the natural world imbues the writings of these thinkers. Tchaadayev wrote about the primacy of the intuition of moral law when compared with natural law. Obviously

⁵⁴⁹ Khomyakov *Sochineniya bogoslovskiy*, P. 100.

⁵⁵⁰ «Как этот синий свод небесный, Прозрачный высшего покров». *Russkaya poeziya XIX veka* (Russian poetry of the XIXth century). V. 1. Moscow, 1974. Pp. 496, 493.

this moral law cannot be observed in nature. For Kireyevskii, the 'wholeness' is delivered to us by intuition which, at the same time, he understood in the widest sense of the word as a necessary premise of human life. The particular concept of the loving unity of the universe found its clear expression in the writings of Kireyevskii and Khomyakov. At the same time it is quite obvious that the very endeavour towards unity cannot be rooted in any kind of material experience, because the material, the matter is always given as a multiple, consisting of numerous different parts. The concept of the relationship between visible and invisible churches in Khomyakov's works again emphasizes the same mystical approach.

Thus, by the second half of the XIXth century the possibility of the development of original Russian philosophy acquired its peculiar form. The elaborated reflection on national consciousness, presented by Karamzin and Pushkin, moulded the foundation and outlined the limits for further development. It was immediately brought into relation with the most painful political, social, and moral problem of the time: the existence of serfdom. In the course of time the earlier rationalistic approach transformed itself into negation of the value of Russian national development in view of its limited political and social achievements. This, however, was not done from outside, as it had been the case with the Masons, but from inside. This negation in its turn instantly led to the negation of itself from the side of traditionalists. Both positions of negation in a short course of time turned into the limits of Russian thought: the purely Westernized and traditionalistic. This happened through simplification and exclusive concentration on political and social problems. The living thought had to be and did develop within these limits inclining not to coincide with any of them. The Slavophiles found themselves in this middle position, and, moreover, they were forced from a political to a reflective position, a position beyond the battle.⁵⁵¹ This should not be understood as an assertion that they were politically indifferent. They took a middle position and, therefore, their approach was the continuation of the stream of national spiritual development not merging with the extremes presented by the firm Westernizers or by the traditionalists. Occupying this

⁵⁵¹ This explains why it is so difficult to characterize the evolution of their position, and completely different views can be found in this respect. However if we take into account their middle position it is obvious that they did not form the school of thought

position the Slavophiles formulated the core concepts which characterize national consciousness: *wholeness* and *sobornost'*, and presented them in the three-dimensional space formed by historicism, aestheticism and mysticism. These concepts formed the specific perspectives of further philosophical development.

With the Slavophiles we have approached the point when the foundation of Russian national philosophy can be and actually has been constructed. The concepts, which they elaborated, allow us to outline the principal features of the developing philosophical tradition. The aim of the next chapter is to depict these features in regard to the principal areas of philosophical research, including metaphysics, epistemology, and ethics.

but rather the living way of thinking which related to the specifics of Russian mentality.

Chapter 8

The frame and the principal themes of Russian philosophical development

In metaphysics the concept of a living dynamic *wholeness* which 1) embraces God, nature, and humankind in their mutual relations and 2) does not suppress any of its participants but provides the conditions for their interdependent complete development, i.e. linked with *sobornost'*, has to be elaborated. Being "living and dynamic" this *wholeness* is at the same time transcendent and immanent to the human consciousness, it is simultaneously the means and the goal, uniting historical, aesthetical, and mystical approaches to reality. This concept is intimately linked with the meaning of *pravda*: by nature *pravda* is integrity; it does not tolerate being split into small limited *pravda*-s which are always understood as insufficient fractions of the one *Pravda*. The concept of *volya* is complementary to the concept of *pravda*. The thesis that *pravda* forms an organic rather than a hierarchical wholeness means that every element of this wholeness should fully and freely realize and manifest itself. *Pravda* does not presuppose a unity where elements disappear as self-sufficient units, on the contrary, they can be fully self-sufficient only if they exist as essential parts of the highest *pravda*. And, *vice versa*: *pravda* is not complete if any of these parts is missing.

The traditional European concept of the identity between Being and Consciousness presupposes at the same time a strict differentiation between them, following Descartes' distinction between two substances: extensive (i.e. acquiring spatial and temporal dimensions) matter, and spiritual substance. This distinction leads, among others, to the 'mind-body' problem. Though it is known that Descartes himself tried to elaborate the concept of a quasi-substantial union between mind and body, the problem has not been resolved. On the contrary, the concept of wholeness presupposes that Being, as it is the highest organic unity, cannot be divided into two completely distinct isolated kingdoms. The concept of wholeness presupposed by the ideas of *pravda* and *volya* also does not coincide with the wholeness of Being which has been elaborated by classical German philosophy, Hegel in particular.

It is known that Hegel was eager to elaborate a doctrine which would re-establish the unity of the world after it was axed by Kant into *phenomena* and *noumena* in his *Critique of Pure Reason*. His system presents an omni-embracing structure which is the sole genuine reality. Moreover, for Hegel the reality of any distinct being is completely defined by the existence of the whole, which is permanently formed by dialectical development going from thesis to synthesis through antithesis. In this system every separateness being subordinated to the whole is not self-sufficient either in its aims or in its very existence. From the point of view of organic wholeness, this system violates the harmony of the whole: the spiritual aspect of the integrated wholeness is primary in relation to material as to secondary aspects of this wholeness.

With a presupposition of organic wholeness the problem shifts from the opposition between material and spiritual to the relationship between Being and Non-Being (Nothingness); another aspect of this problem is the relationship between the whole of the Universe and its Creator from nothing. With the conception of Nothingness we turn to the apophatic theology of Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite who relates to God as to Divine Darkness (which in principle cannot be penetrated by reason but approached exclusively through negation). If God is taken as Darkness and Nothingness a cluster of philosophical problems arises, in order to understand the ways by which God maintains the world and presents himself to all beings. Taking into account that God-Darkness is by definition absolutely estranged from Being and at the same time presents the very source of Being we have to presuppose the existence of mediators between God and Being. As the first step towards this understanding, the concept of Trinity (the way in which God reveals himself to the Christian mind) should be investigated. This image brings us the contradictory concept of One in Three and Three in One, which is taken for granted by theology but cannot be taken for granted by philosophy.

The concept of *sobornost'* (which, as has been demonstrated, is also closely linked with the meaning of *pravda* and *volya*) presupposes that the whole of the organic world consists of free personalities. The problem of ultimate freedom, including human freedom, forms a significant part of metaphysics as well as ethics. It is obvious that *sobornost'*, as well as *wholeness*, is an ideal rather than an actual state of the world, and because of this it presupposes a development towards this ideal. It

provides us with a dynamic rather than static picture of the world, and the corresponding metaphysical doctrines have to conform with this dynamics.

Given its meaning, it can be expected that *sobornost'* will lead philosophical development towards the kind of metaphysics elaborated by Leibniz, particularly his monadology with its infinite number of substances. Although this is definitely the case, there is an important limitation: according to Leibniz monads are not affected by each other because they "do not have windows", and genuine relationship between monads which is needed in order to establish an organic unity does not exist. Instead Leibniz introduced a hierarchy of monads with God as the dominant monad responsible for world harmony. However, this is an ultimate goal of every monad (if we use the Leibniz' term here), and should be achieved through the efforts of all living beings on the basis of love.

An example of all penetrating and conquering love is again found by Russian thought in the image of the Trinity. This ideal state is presented to the world in the form of the Church. However through participation in divine nature, the world acquires spatial and temporal dimensions, and, therefore, the Church, being supernatural, reveals itself in history in the form of historical churches. Here we can see the logic by which *historicism* influences the development of metaphysical categories, outlining the corresponding frame. It should be emphasized that the concept of the Church acquires an ultimate meaning expressing the concept of an ideal relationship between God, the world, and man. The historicism in the approach to this relationship leads to the idea of finiteness. The actual development of the world towards the all-embracing wholeness does not make sense if this process is understood as being unlimited. If this were the case it would mean that historical process goes nowhere, the ultimate wholeness is not gained in principle, and understanding of the wholeness embracing everything in space and time is ruined. Therefore, the Church should be understood as an actualization of the divine plan. (This logic clearly anticipates the appearance of such metaphysical concepts as God-Humankind or Sophia in Solovyov's writings.)

The idea of the wholeness of being as uniting all personalities leads directly to eschatology, because the beginning and the end of being are linked together. The past comprises present and future, therefore the development of any particular being is at the same time the development of the whole. History has its goal in the completed forthcoming unity. However at the same time each and every element of this unity,

being specific, fulfils its own goal forming the necessary part of the future wholeness. In relation to such personalities as nations (the highest cultural unities of people) the idea of wholeness leads to the messianic vision of history: every nation has its own aim and bears responsibility to other nations.

It is easy to demonstrate the essential dependence of the outlined metaphysical on the triad of historicism, aestheticism, and mysticism. It has already been mentioned that historicism does not tolerate infinity: the dynamic development towards the highest truth has to have a beginning and an end, otherwise it does not make sense. Aestheticism, and mysticism, reveal themselves in the concept of an organic wholeness, which is based on the divine harmony of self-sufficient elements (aestheticism) and manifests the unity of Being based on the divine plan (mysticism).

Epistemology, deeply linked with the metaphysical basis outlined, can be presented in the following postulates. It was mentioned earlier that the very concept of unity and wholeness cannot be derived from observation or from any form of interaction between man and nature. This concept relates to intuition. Khomyakov in this regard uses the word *vera* (belief). However he means something much more general. The word 'intuition' expresses his idea better than the word 'belief' because the latter is overloaded with unnecessary associations, which links it with the supernatural. The possibility of intuition in its turn relates to the permanent presence of the divine in our life. At the same time from the concept of wholeness it follows that other faculties of the human mind, including reason, are not subordinated to intuition. Together they form the higher unity. God, being Darkness, is principally beyond any sort of rational exploration. Intuition is guessing. It is delivering concepts and images, which in the course of cultural development have become the foundation of reasoning.

There is, however, a more original and interesting aspect of this interaction between intuition, reason, and sensation taken as a whole. Western philosophy bases its approach to cognition on the idea that sensual data relates exclusively to the physical appearance of the world (e.g. Locke's *Essay*). If we take human cognitive ability as an inseparably united whole (and not as a sum of added different abilities, like sensual ability, rational ability, will, and so on) it becomes impossible to look at sensation in Locke's way. The divine, being actually present in the world, reveals itself to the senses as well as to intuition and reason. This view does not coincide with Descartes' approach either. Descartes in his *Discourse on Method* stipulates the

existence of three sorts of ideas: innate, coming from outside, and invented. The intuition of clarity and distinctiveness, which forms the foundation of further development, does not bring the concept of unity, and so at the end the divine substance uniting matter and spirituality is of secondary importance. On the contrary, with the concept of wholeness the possibility of distinguishing between the knowledge associated with the physical world and the knowledge associated with the spiritual world is secondary to the primary knowledge of inseparable wholeness. From the very beginning the material aspect of the world is given in its unity with the spiritual one. The opposition arises from rational analysis, it is generated by reflection. This consideration brings new aims and perspectives to epistemological research. In addition, the criterion of true and false knowledge should be found not in the relationship established by thoughts and things and not in the logical consistency, but in the wholeness of expression.

In addition it should be mentioned that reason loses its supreme position leaving this place for the heart, a symbolic expression of the unity of all human abilities. The concept of the heart was elaborated in this respect by one of the most outstanding thinkers of the middle XIXth century Pamfil Yurkevich in his central work *Heart and Its Significance in Human Spiritual Life in Accordance with Scripture*, published in 1860. It is worth noting that V. Solovyov was Yurkevich's pupil at Moscow University.

Ethics, rooted in the same concepts of *wholeness* and *sobornost'* acquires specific features which distinguish it from Western ethical doctrines. It is optimistic rather than pessimistic; but this optimism arises not from the utilitarian striving for pleasure but rather from the postulate of the actual divine presence in the world and from the conviction of the possibility and necessity of transfiguring this world. Free human beings acquire their highest value exclusively through a loving interaction with the rest of humankind and with the world. This approach overcomes the opposition 'egoistic-altruistic', which is so characteristic of Western thought. Any utilitarian doctrines are rejected from the beginning. The principal goal of human development is directed towards the universal wholeness, based on love and, therefore, any relationship between people based on profit prevents them from achieving this goal. At the same time this is not an altruistic relationship because every human being as a necessary participant of the ideal wholeness should not be restricted by others. Freedom transforms the individual into a personality. Being

rooted in freedom, personality avoids any rational definition but at the same time in our life we are always able to immediately recognize personality. The value of personality is absolute because every personality (without any exception) is an essential participant in divine wholeness. At the same time the concept of personality should be applied much more widely. Taking historical dimension not as an accidental epiphenomenon of human everyday activity but as the manifestation of the divine plan, different nationalities, which are the essential forms of human collective life, should be regarded as personalities as well.

It is also obvious that for this kind of ethics the criterion for discriminating between good and evil is embodied in the human heart with this immediate divine presence. The problems arise only when the harmony of the whole of human personality is destroyed. Therefore, every human being is responsible for his/her inner wholeness and, therefore, for the harmony of the whole of humankind. Dostoevsky expressed this idea when he said "Everyone is guilty for everyone and for everything."

A philosophy built around *wholeness* runs the risk that is ever-present for mysticisms of any sort – any articulation in language artificially separates parts from a unified whole and thereby misrepresents that essential unity. Hence the unity is ineffable and what cannot be said must be passed over in silence. This implies that philosophy is impossible if philosophy is conceived as including pursuit of rational argumentation and follows the argument wherever it leads, however far from common sense. And so the problem arises: how did Russian philosophy with the concept of *wholeness* at its heart would evade this thread? It found its voice through a nexus of concepts which extract different aspects of an essential unity without losing the integrity of the whole from which these aspects can be felt. In their turn these concepts were strongly yet indirectly linked with those of Russian national consciousness including such concepts as *volya*, *svet*, *zakon*, *mir*.

Chapter 9

Vladimir Solovyov and the beginning of Russian national philosophy

In this chapter we propose to argue that the fundamental premises of Russian national philosophy relating to metaphysics, epistemology, and ethics coincide with those outlined in the previous chapter. In doing this we will focus our attention on the concepts of Vladimir Solovyov, the first Russian philosopher who appeared with a fully elaborated, original philosophical doctrine. In creating this doctrine Solovyov took a decisive step towards a new level of philosophizing, which challenged the basic axioms of Western philosophical thinking by a different yet consistently presented set of axioms.

However before we turn to Solovyov it is necessary to discuss two problems: 1) why did the national philosophical tradition began only in the second half of the XIXth century with Solovyov? and 2) what are, if any, the general characteristics of Russian philosophizing?

Let us recall the four features of philosophy which were formulated in the introductory chapter: 1) an individual search for understanding of the social position; 2) based on reason rather than on tradition, and at the same time limited by this tradition; 3) reflective and universal; 4) creating general terms which outline the new space for discussion. It can be demonstrated that only by the time of Solovyov did the conditions of Russian social life make space for all four of these features, taken as the criteria.

As it follows from previous analysis, 1) the signs of an active individual search for understanding of the social position can be traced from the second half of the XVIIIth century. 2) However, although this search is based on reason, it does not answer the criterion of tradition, because it is taken from outside and is external to national mentality; however further cultural development in such areas as history and literature (including poetry), in particular, have revealed the basic framework of the national tradition. 3) The position of reflection was formed in Russian cultural space because of the clash and the successive polarization of the Westernizer and traditionalist positions, leaving room for a position 'beyond the battle' which is

nevertheless based on national values. 4) The Romanticist movement inspired Russian intellectuals to clarify national values and concepts which shaped the framework for the subsequent discussions, and on this basis the terms which expressed the peculiarity of national consciousness were formulated in the middle of the XIXth century by the Slavophiles, and clearly expressed by great writers, Dostoevsky in particular.⁵⁵² These values and concepts, presented in such expressions as "Moscow - the Third Rome", "Holy Rus'", and such words as *pravda* and *volya*, typologically played the role of the mythological concepts of the Ancient Greeks. It can be stated with high probability that even if Solovyov had not formulated his doctrine, Russian national philosophy would still have acquired not the same yet very similar features.

The concept of nation had also acquired its mature forms. Though the most essential ideas were formulated much earlier, all the following statements were reformulated in the middle of the XIXth century by poets, writers, and religious thinkers: the Russian nation was taken as an eternal idea; this idea was linked with the Russian land and the people inhabiting this land; tsardom was taken as a legitimate and just earthly power on this land, relying strongly on the divine power of the One Almighty Orthodox Christian God.

The specific situation which was brought about by these preconditions came to be favourable for a reflection on national consciousness which directly initiated the development of distinctively Russian philosophical doctrines.

It is possible to demonstrate that there are some peculiar features of Russian philosophizing. The essentials of the Russian understanding of philosophy were expressed by the eminent philosopher, S. Frank, in his article "Russian philosophy, its peculiarity and task":

Philosophy is ... an absolutely specific area of human creativity where a pure and independent outlook onto being and its understanding as a wholeness is directly linked with the religious conception of life ...

⁵⁵² We should explain why there is no chapter on Dostoevsky in this thesis, particularly if take into account his great influence on subsequent philosophical development: almost every prominent philosopher, including Solovyov, Berdyayev, Lossky, Rozanov, Shestov, wrote about Dostoevsky's worldview. However Dostoevsky's most original works starting from *Notes from the Underground* (published in 1864, up to *The Brothers Karamazov*, published in 1880) for all intents and purposes coincided with the publications of philosophical works by Solovyov, who defended his thesis in philosophy in 1874. Dostoevsky and Solovyov basically worked in the same cultural space rather than holding positions of predecessor and successor.

Religiosity through mystical experience ... leads us to what is called "gnosis" or "theosophy". On the other hand, a pure cognition of the world leads towards understanding of an Absolute ... On the intersection of these two tendencies a unique event of the human spirit appears, "philosophy" in the classical meaning of this word, an all embracing worldview which ... is generated by the primary feeling of life.⁵⁵³

Although this understanding is considered by Frank as a general and by no means national definition of philosophy it emphasizes a very Russian approach to philosophizing, directed towards all-embracing being taken not as an abstract concept but as "givenness", as life itself. The following features reflect the peculiarity of this approach.

First, Russian philosophical doctrines appeared in relation to the entire content of human culture: religion, literature, music, fine arts, mythology, moral relations. This reflects not only the fact that Russian philosophy was shaped predominantly in such spheres as literary criticism and the religious search of laymen, but it is also understandable in the light of the striving for universal unity and wholeness. From the very beginning it was presupposed that the same basic principles should penetrate culture as a whole, including the human being who is a creator of this culture, and, therefore, the separation and isolation of any chosen aspect of being is purely artificial. For Russian thinkers philosophy is not the supplier of abstract doctrines but a dynamic knowledge which forms a necessary part of human striving for *wholeness* of being.

This endeavour to grasp everything in its totality, as the One, means that the reflective position of such a philosopher appears to be self-contradictory. On the one hand philosopher should take a position of an objective observer who finds himself beyond the actual current of life; and, on the other hand, it cannot be a position of a spectator beyond Being because the concept of wholeness means that no one can be excluded from the wholeness without destruction of the very meaning of this concept. This paradoxical situation leads to some difficulties in defining the actual position of the thinker. Solovyov himself did not care about overcoming this difficulty; he simply related to the so-called "free theosophy" amalgamating theology, philosophy, and science into an inseparable unity. Others, Sergei Bulgakov, for instance, seem to be aware of this problem. When Bulgakov defines philosophy as an insatiable love of

⁵⁵³ In: S. Frank *Russkoye Mirovozzreniye* (Russian Worldview). St. Petersburg, 1996. P. 207.

Sophia, he immediately encounters the problem of the relationship between religion and philosophy, which, contrary to what he says himself, he cannot resolve with satisfaction.⁵⁵⁴ (This uncertainty of position is characteristic of Russian philosophers. This is a reason why Russian philosophers are often put under "Religious studies" or "Literary criticism", etc. in the Western libraries.) In their striving for wholeness philosophers have to grasp reality not only as intelligible but also as sensible and spiritual, that is *concrete*. The notion of the *concreteness* of Being, the sense of its reality and actuality is extremely sharp in Russian philosophizing.

Second, Russian philosophers, such as Solovyov, Bulgakov, Florenskii, Berdyayev, and Frank, are always aware of the presence of the infinite in each and every finite being. Material being is imbued with the spiritual, which co-exists with the material and manifests itself through it. For instance, myth, religious myth in particular, is regarded as a true reality, as a transcendent being presenting itself in the immanent being. The philosophers are working in the same spiritual space as did Dostoevsky, trying to embrace everything in one principle and being unsatisfied by any isolated and local truth.⁵⁵⁵ Moreover, every actual act of cognition is possible exclusively as the expression of both modes of being, a united ideal being and an isolated one. To recognize "A" as the being identical to itself (law of identity in formal logic) means to reflect on "A" from "B" which is "other than A", and if "A" by definition is finite, "B" should be infinite. Therefore, these modes cannot be separated or isolated from each other. Bulgakov expressed this idea in the words: "A man is cognizing as an Eye of the World Soul."⁵⁵⁶ Florenskii declares in *The Pillar and Ground of Truth*: "Through the yawning splits of human intellect one can see an azure of eternity."⁵⁵⁷ The same relates, for instance, to ethics: the very perception of other beings is possible only on the basis of the inseparable unity of the material and spiritual.

Third, Russian philosophers are never afraid of the most radical conclusions, irrespective of how far they are from ordinary common sense or from known doctrines and accepted religious dogmas. In order to express the wholeness of a

⁵⁵⁴ S. Bulgakov *Svet nevechernii* (Non-evening light) Moscow, 1994. P. 70.

⁵⁵⁵ The logic expressing this attitude can be found in statement made by one of Dostoevsky's heroes: "If there is no God I cannot be a captain any more!"

⁵⁵⁶ S. Bulgakov *Filosofiya Khozyaistva* (Philosophy of economy) Moscow, 1912. P. 120.

⁵⁵⁷ P. Florenskii *Stolp i utverzheniye istiny* Moscow, 1990. V. 1. P. 489.

human being Solovyov elaborated the doctrine of love which was supposed to unite everything. According to him, the ultimate goal of sexual love, for instance, is not a physiological union designed for reproduction but a resurrection of the primeval wholeness of a human being: that is an androgen without external incorporation of material forms (which is ugliness) and at the same time lacking the inner separation of personality and life which is so characteristic of human beings.⁵⁵⁸ Berdyayev takes freedom as preceding God Himself and establishing limits for Him. On this basis he constructs an unorthodox theodicy: as evil is generated by freedom, God is not responsible for it, because He cannot be responsible for something which has not been created by Him. Bulgakov, an Orthodox priest, comes to conclusions which contradict many established Orthodox dogmas. He follows his own logic and demonstrates the validity of such statements as the impossibility of eternal tortures and, therefore, the ultimate salvation for everybody.⁵⁵⁹ He derives arguments in favour of the idea of Purgatory⁵⁶⁰ though in his work it is different from the Catholic one.

It is also necessary to emphasize that no philosophical schools were formed in Russia in the academic sense. The direct dependence of one philosopher on another one, or direct influence was usually an exclusion. For instance, Solovyov himself thought of Slavophiles as extremely superficial thinkers, and in his letter to Sofia Tolstaya he wrote: "I familiarized myself a bit with Polish philosophers: the general style and endeavours are very attractive, but there is not any positive content – just like our Slavophiles."⁵⁶¹ It is impossible to deny the Solovyov's strong influence on Bulgakov. However even in this case Bulgakov, prior to the time when he was influenced by Solovyov's doctrine, had come to concepts which were very close to those of Solovyov. Florenskii, although sharing a lot with Solovyov in his approaches and themes, alluded to Solovyov once in *The Pillar* stating that he was taking Solovyov's ideas only from the formal point of view, but without Solovyov's content.⁵⁶² However Bulgakov as well as Florenskii developed further the concept of

⁵⁵⁸ Complete edition, VII, P. 224.

⁵⁵⁹ Bulgakov comes to the same conclusion as did Origen, who was proclaimed to be heretic for similar views.

⁵⁶⁰ Orthodox teaching does not have a Purgatory, recognising only Paradise and Hell. However, in his book *Uteshitel'* (Comforter) Bulgakov stated that there was no eternal hell but a temporary Purgatory. (See: N. Losskii *Istoriya Russkoi Filosofii* (History of Russian philosophy) Moscow, 1994, P. 240.

⁵⁶¹ Quote from: Florenskii *Stolp*, V. 1. P. 331.

⁵⁶² Ibid. V. 2. P. 612.

Sophia which had been introduced by Solovyov into philosophical investigation. Being attracted by the Slavophiles Florenskii was at the same time one of the most passionate and even unjust critics of Khomyakov. Frank always listed Solovyov among other European philosophers, and emphasized that his own main source of inspiration was Nicholas of Cusa, because he was the only thinker who had achieved a unique synthesis which was never repeated.⁵⁶³ It is easy to multiply the examples, and the principal conclusion is that these philosophers worked in the same spiritual frame rather than forming any kind of philosophical school directly influenced by each other or dependent on one teacher. These relations between leading philosophers can be characterized rather as a sort of dialogue. Everyone remains independent and equal to others.

* * *

Now we turn to Solovyov and his doctrine.

Vladimir Solovyov (1853 – 1900) was born into a family of one of the greatest historians of Russia Sergei Mikhailovich Solovyov, who is well known for his enormous 29 volume *History of Russia*. Vladimir's grandfather Mikhail was a priest who blessed the eight year old boy to serve God, and Vladimir always remained a religious man, and even occasionally thought of becoming a monk.⁵⁶⁴ He completed simultaneously two courses at Moscow University, in natural sciences and in history and philology. He was an extraordinarily educated person and a prolific philosopher, literary critic, and publicist. He was also an eminent poet, who influenced future Russian poetry, particularly by his image of an eternal femininity and by his historiosophical visions. He published such books as *Crisis of Western Philosophy*, *Philosophical Foundation of an Integral Knowledge*, *Readings on God-Humankind*, *La Russe et l'Eglise universelle*, *The History and Future of Theocracy*, *The Justification of Good*, *Three Conversations*. Solovyov was always interested in the intellectual development of humankind, including Buddhism, Islam, Judaism, Gnosticism. Being an editor of the philosophical section for a publishing house he wrote widely for one of the best encyclopaedias (Brokhaus & Efron) on philosophy and the history of religion. One of his most important, yet unfortunately unfinished, projects was to translate the complete works of Plato. In relation to influences on

⁵⁶³ See: S.L.Frank "Nepostizhimoye" (Unfathomable) // *Sochineniya* (Works) Moscow, 1990. P. 183-184.

⁵⁶⁴ With only a short atheistic period between 13 and 18.

Solovyov an outstanding philosopher and historian of aesthetics, Alexei Losev, lists Plato, Neo-Platonism, Patristics (predominantly Origen and Augustine⁵⁶⁵), Theosophy, Mysticism and Gnosticism (Böhme, Cabbala, Svedenborg), Descartes, Spinoza, Kant, Shelling, Hegel, Comte, Schopenhauer, Hartmann.⁵⁶⁶ It can easily be seen from this list that Solovyov had no intention of dealing exclusively with national themes or relating only to Russian writers and thinkers. On the contrary, he was eager to find support for his views elsewhere in the history of world culture. It is well known that even now Solovyov is blamed for becoming a Catholic, because he sought for the union of Christian Churches in order to fulfill the theocratic utopia.⁵⁶⁷

Solovyov expressed his philosophical views with a strength and clarity comparable with those of Dostoevsky, Tolstoy, Tchaikovsky and Mendeleev in their works. What is most characteristic in his approach? A historian of Russian thought and an outstanding philosopher himself, Nikolai Lossky, stated that "Solovyov's works brightly reflected the peculiar feature of all original Russian philosophical writings: a search for an *integral* knowledge about *united* being, and because of this the *concreteness of worldview*."⁵⁶⁸ The commonly accepted name for Solovyov's philosophy is "philosophy of omni-unity". Solovyov came to this concept at the very beginning of his philosophical development and expressed it clearly in his first works, in particular in the *Crisis of Western Philosophy* and *Philosophical Foundations of an Integral Knowledge*.

It is not easy to prove that Solovyov's concept of omni-unity is linked with the *pravda* of Russian national consciousness. However this presupposition seems quite plausible if we take into account his use of the word *pravda* in different contexts including some of the most crucial ones which relate to the formulation of principal values and the goals of his research. For example, characterizing the works of the poet

⁵⁶⁵ A. Nikolskii even called Solovyov "Russian Origen" // *Vera i Razum* (Belief and Reason), 1902, □ 10, kniga 2, □ 24, kniga 2.)

⁵⁶⁶ A. Losev *V. S. Solovyov* Moscow, 1986.

⁵⁶⁷ In fact he remained an Orthodox all his life. A good example of this attitude to Solovyov can be found in: I. M. Kontsevich *Optina Pystun' i eya Vremya* (Optina monastery and its time) 1970, where the author, being fairly objective in regard to other matters, stated that Solovyov followed Kireyevskii only in his first works and later turned to Protestantism.

⁵⁶⁸ N.O.Lossky *Istoriya russkoi filosofii* (History of Russian philosophy). Moscow, 1994. P.105.

Alexei Tolstoy Solovyov praises his struggle for "the highest *pravda*, in the interests of unconditional and eternal dignity."⁵⁶⁹ Moreover, in Solovyov's eyes, this striving for *pravda* provided Tolstoy with the strength to overcome the polarity of Russian political life, and to occupy the reflective position of a compassionate observer. It was noted earlier that A. Tolstoy valued beauty and beauty was the principal goal of his life. Explaining this goal Solovyov states that the problem of the meaning of beauty should be viewed in the context of whether or not it is possible to have an absolute perfection. In other words, Solovyov asks whether or not beauty can ultimately manifest truth and love. By doing so he recognizes the search for wholeness to be the most notable feature of Tolstoy's poetry.⁵⁷⁰

In his article dedicated to another eminent Russian poet, Polonskii, Solovyov discovers the Christian foundation of his lyrical poetry. According to him Polonskii presumes that our world can be saved and renewed not by science but by the power of moral *pravda* and belief.⁵⁷¹ Concluding his article on Tyutchev, Solovyov uses the expression the "tsardom of *pravda* and mercy" in relation to the ideal Russia which manifests the loving union of the collective soul of humankind. Here again the word *pravda* appears when Solovyov discusses the ultimate unity and overcoming of chaos.⁵⁷² The understanding of *pravda* – "the unity of love and wrath" – contrasted to "simple forgiveness" appears in Solovyov's article on Pushkin's understanding of poetry.⁵⁷³ From these contexts it is clear that Solovyov understands *pravda* as an all-embracing and all-uniting principle which is intimately linked with love and contrasted to isolation and evil. One of the most notable uses of the word *pravda* can be found in the short article "In Memory of the Emperor Nicholas I": "... A clear understanding of the highest *pravda* and the Christian ideal was concealed in Nikolai Pavlovich, and this put him beyond the level of the contemporary as well as of current social consciousness."⁵⁷⁴ And this paragraph concludes with the words "Only good

⁵⁶⁹ "Poeziya gr. A.K.Tolstogo" (Poetry of count A.K.Tolstoy) // *Stikhotvoreniya. Estetika. Literaturnaya kritika* (Poems. Aesthetics. Literary criticism.) Moscow, 1990. P. 297.

⁵⁷⁰ Ibid. Pp. 303, 308.

⁵⁷¹ "Poeziya Ya.P.Polonskogo" // Ibid. P. 328.

⁵⁷² "F.I.Tyutchev" // Ibid. P. 296.

⁵⁷³ "Znachenie poezii v stikhotvoreniyakh Pushkina" (The meaning of poetry in Pushkin's poems). // Ibid. P. 436.

⁵⁷⁴ "Pamyati Imperatora Nikolaya I" (To the memory of the Emperor Nicholas I) // Complete edition, V. 7, P. 377.

and *pravda* linked with the highest nature of man are worthy of eternal memory.”⁵⁷⁵ The word *pravda* appears in Solovyov’s poetry, for instance, in such poems as “If wishes run like shadows” which concludes “Life is only a labour, and a living *pravda* Shines with immortality in the decayed coffins”⁵⁷⁶ or in “The Christmas night”: “Light has been born in the world, yet light has been thrown out by darkness However it shines in darkness, at the edge of good and evil. Not by external force but by *pravda* itself Has the Prince of Ages been condemned, and all his deeds.”⁵⁷⁷

In his programme for *Readings on God-Humankind* Solovyov declared that he would talk about the truths of positive religions, which (in contrast to the immediate interests of modern civilizations which relate exclusively to the present-day) were equally important for present, past, and future because of their connection with the unconditional foundation of every being. “By admitting this unconditional foundation we admit that all the points of the life circle are connected with it by equal rays. Only in this case the unity, wholeness, and agreement appears in human life and consciousness.”⁵⁷⁸

The wholeness of Being presupposes that there are no distinct substances isolated from the others. Solovyov wishes to overcome the one-sidedness of the empirical as well as of the rationalistic approaches. In doing this he turns to the image of the Trinity which manifests the absolute unity of three persons and at the same time retains the differences. In his *Philosophical Foundations of the Integrated Knowledge* Solovyov states that the Trinity consists of Spirit, “a subject of will and bearer of Good and ... therefore, a subject of the presentation of truth and of the sense of beauty”; Reason, which is “a subject of presentation and bearer of truth, and, as a result, is also a subject of will for good and of sense of beauty”; and Soul, “a subject of feeling and bearer of beauty, and, therefore, subject of will for good and of presentation of truth.”⁵⁷⁹ Thus, Goodness, Truth, and Beauty manifest different

⁵⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁷⁶ «Жизнь только подвиг, - и правда живая Светит бессмертьем в истлевших гробах».

⁵⁷⁷ «Родился в мире свет, и свет отвергнут тьмою, Но светит он во тьме, где грань добра и зла. Не властью внешнею, а правдою самою Князь века осужден и все его дела».

⁵⁷⁸ V. S. Solovyov “Chteniya o bogochelovechestve” (Lectures on God-Humankind) // *Sochineniya v dvukh tomakh* (Writings in two volumes). V. 2. Moscow, 1989. P. 5.

⁵⁷⁹ Complete edition, V. 1, P. 338.

aspects of the same integrated world, and only in this union can they express their own nature.

A sense of the everlasting participation in the unconditional divine wholeness is particularly characteristic of Solovyov. Probably, in the most striking way he expressed this sense in one of his best poems "My beloved friend, can you see That everything we observe Is only a reflection, a shadow Of the unseen by eyes?..."⁵⁸⁰ In his approach to man Solovyov begins not from the image of an isolated human individual with his senses which bring empirical data to his mind, but from the image of a man being a necessary part of eternal wholeness, a man who is at the same time finite and infinite. Solovyov states that only if this image is accepted do the two greatest truths, i.e. truth of freedom and truth of immortality which have been revealed to humankind, make sense.⁵⁸¹ All human moral life is based on these two great ideas.

The concept of *sobornost'* and Solovyov's understanding of freedom is clearly recognizable in the presupposition of the actuality of the wholeness of being and the wholeness of *pravda*. As it is expressed by E. Trubetskoi, "for Solovyov the subject of cognition in himself, i.e. outside unconditional Truth, is nothing."⁵⁸² In addition, Solovyov sought for the main task of ethics in what united one human being with others. In his voluminous, yet unfinished, *Justification of Good* Solovyov discriminates between three primary moral qualities: shame, pity, and reverence which stand in relation to lower nature, human nature and the highest nature. Man is ashamed of his animal nature; he feels solidarity with other living beings through pity and compassion; and through reverence he establishes a relationship with the highest principle.⁵⁸³ In order to fulfil *pravda* man has to maintain a corresponding relationship with all three natures. The moral limit for the egoism of an individual cannot be established by the egoism of the others, by their self-determining wills but by subordination to *pravda* which stands equally beyond any individual human being.⁵⁸⁴ Solovyov emphasizes that the true relationship between people should be based on freedom and on the subordination to the power which manifests *pravda*. Thus the

⁵⁸⁰ «Милый друг, иль ты не видишь, Что все видимое нами — Только отблеск, только тени От незримого очами?»

⁵⁸¹ Ibid. P. 119.

⁵⁸² Quote from: Zen'kovskii *Istoriya*, V.2, Part 1. P. 52.

⁵⁸³ Complete edition, V. VII, Pp. 189-190.

⁵⁸⁴ Solovyov "Chteniya", P. 12.

fulfillment of *pravda* which would lead to *sobornost'* is impossible exclusively on the level of nature but on the level of the divine grace.⁵⁸⁵ The concepts of *pravda* and *sobornost'* are presented by Solovyov as inseparable from each other and complementary.

Taking into account the outlined postulates we can demonstrate that in the principal areas of philosophical knowledge Solovyov's doctrine is based on the following concepts. In his metaphysics, Solovyov formulates the concept of omni-unity which brings finite and infinite, supernatural and natural, as well as past, present, and future into the integral wholeness. He expressed this in the words "We look directly from Time into Eternity."⁵⁸⁶ The concept of God-Humankind embraces the whole of the universe in its ultimate goal. All beings forming this unity were, are and will be developing as essential members united by the law of love. As it was stated in the previous chapter the ideas of wholeness and omni-unity lead to an optimistic eschatology. In his article "The Russian Idea" Solovyov declares: "The idea of nation is not what it is thinking about itself in the temporal life, but what God is thinking on it in eternity."⁵⁸⁷ National differences should remain up to the end of time, it is important that they are the separated members of the universal organism. The genuine future of humankind is "the universal brotherhood, which proceeds from universal fatherhood through permanent moral and social sonhood."⁵⁸⁸ In its striving for this ideal, yet necessary, future every nation has its own goal; and the goal of Russia is "To re-establish the true image of the divine Trinity on earth."⁵⁸⁹ This statement returns us to the core of Solovyov's philosophy including omni-unity and God-Humankind.

Because of these presuppositions the situation, typical for the Western thought taking art as alienated from philosophy, is impossible for Solovyov as well as for other Russian philosophers. For instance, Gibson begins his analysis of the relationship between philosopher and artist from the *Lamia* by Keats with the words:

Do not all charms fly
At the mere touch of cold philosophy?

⁵⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁸⁶ Ibid. P. 121.

⁵⁸⁷ In: *Sochineniya v dvukh tomakh*, P. 220.

⁵⁸⁸ Ibid. P. 242.

⁵⁸⁹ Ibid. P. 246.

There was an awful rainbow once in heaven;
 We know her woof, her texture; she is given
 In the dull catalogue of common things.
 Philosophy will clip an angel's wings...⁵⁹⁰

Gibson indicates that Keats confuses philosophy with science and then considers the relationship between art and philosophy as the point for discussion. At the end Gibson concludes that the worthy place for art criticism still exists. However it is obvious that with a Russian approach the situation is different: beauty is an essential aspect of Being, and so it is impossible even to begin with the question as whether the concept of Beauty relates to science or to philosophy.

In his epistemology Solovyov presents true knowledge as the balanced unity of empirical, rational, and mystical elements, with the goal to achieve a universal synthesis of science, philosophy, and religion. He is always emphasizing the fact that every image and every concept in our consciousness is linked with the unconditional basis, otherwise they are nothing, but accidentally disappearing states of mind. "Simple and obvious, even trivial discrimination between good and bad, true and false, beautiful and ugly presupposes by itself positive reception of an objective and unconditional foundation of all three spheres of spiritual life."⁵⁹¹ It is, therefore, understandable that epistemology, as well as metaphysics and ethics, cannot be developed in isolation.

Solovyov in the "Preface to the Second Edition" of *The Justification of Good* formulated the main goal of the work as "... to present good as *pravda*"⁵⁹², that is, as the sole right, true to itself, way of life in everything, and up to the very end, for all those who will decide to prefer it."⁵⁹³ Solovyov's ethical teaching presents Good as the all-penetrating force, manifesting a divine Absolute and being this Absolute at the same time. Because of this the problem of the choice between good and evil is understood from a completely different perspective compared, for instance, with that

⁵⁹⁰ Gibson *Muse and Thinker*, P. 3.

⁵⁹¹ Solovyov "Chteniya, P. 32.

⁵⁹² This expression was highlighted by Solovyov.

⁵⁹³ *Sochineniya v dvukh tomakh*, P. 79. It is extremely important that Solovyov in this context uses the word '*pravda*' indicating the unity of truth and justice in his approach to ethical problems. See also: D. Strémooukhoff *Vladimir Soloviev & His Messianic Work* Nordland, 1960. P. 261.

of the utilitarians. "Good causes my choice in its favour by all the infinity of its positive content and being, therefore, this choice is *infinitely* predetermined, necessity of this choice is absolute, and there is no place for any arbitrariness."⁵⁹⁴ This means that the possibility of evil has to find its basis in the being, rather than in the arbitrary choice of an individual. The source of evil is found in the isolation of individual beings. Taking into account the empirical fact that an egoistic feeling, being rejected in theory, at the same time firmly establishes itself in the course of everyday life, Solovyov declares that egoism is the vital evil of our nature, and we share it with the whole universe. On the one hand, nature and every being belonging to nature are the reflection of an omni-uniting idea, but, on the other hand, in its separation from others, in its isolated existence every creature appears strange and hostile to others.⁵⁹⁵ Egoism manifests itself 1) in the endeavour of an isolated being to replace everything by its own 'I' which means to abolish the rest of the world by itself; and 2) in suffering, because the actual impossibility of accomplishing this task leads to permanent non-satisfaction and, therefore, to suffering.

Because of this Solovyov constructs his ethics not on the basis of an isolated egoistic individual and his senses and preferences (a characteristic starting point of Western philosophizing) but on the basis of the senses which demonstrate the necessary connection of an individual with other individuals. Through *shame*, *pity*, and *reverence* man is intimately linked with the rest of the world; therefore this Good cannot be good exclusively for an isolated being but for the universal wholeness of being. *Pravda* manifests itself in a proper attitude of a man towards reality which demands to be ascetic in regard to lower nature, altruistic to other human beings, and religious – to the highest nature.⁵⁹⁶ Thus, for instance, the main goal of sexual love is not childbirth but the unity of human being, an androgen. As the principle goal is the loving wholeness of all beings Solovyov transfers personal relations into relations between nations. In doing this he re-formulated the basic Christian ethical rule in the following: "Love every nation as you love your own."⁵⁹⁷ The same is true in relation to Church. Strémoukhov quote from Solovyov's "Short Reply" which appeared in *Katolicki List* in 1886, "For us, neither the patriarchs nor the councils can assert

⁵⁹⁴ Ibid. P. 118.

⁵⁹⁵ Solovyov "Chiteniya, P. 122.

⁵⁹⁶ *Sochineniya v dvukh tomakh*, V.1. Pp. 202-204.

⁵⁹⁷ Complete edition, V. VII, P. 373.

anything in matters of faith; only the body of the Church, that is, the people, the guardians of the true faith, can do so."⁵⁹⁸ Members of the Church are represented here as a united body which reveals the divine truth only as a whole.

Probably the most mysterious concept which has been introduced by Solovyov into philosophical investigation is the concept of Sophia elaborated by him in one of the most notable doctrines of Russian national philosophy. The eminent Russian philosopher Ern wrote that "After Plato Solovyov is the first to make a new great *discovery* in metaphysics. In the sea of the intelligible light which opened itself to Plato as not bearing images Solovyov with the highest power of insight discovered *definite* blinding features of the eternal femininity."⁵⁹⁹ The concept of Sophia later in the first half of the XXth century was developed predominantly by Bulgakov and Florenskii. Bulgakov was right emphasizing continuity between Russian national consciousness and the concept of Sophia as it appeared in Solovyov's works.⁶⁰⁰

The time has come for us to sweep away the dust of ages and to decipher the sacred script, to reinstate the tradition of the Church, in this instance all but broken, as a *living* tradition. It is *holy tradition which lays such tasks upon us*.⁶⁰¹

Solovyov himself linked closely his understanding of Sophia with the old national tradition: "By dedicating the most ancient churches to Holy Sophia, to substantial Wisdom of God the Russian people gave the new expression to this idea unknown to Greeks (who identified Sophia with Logos)."⁶⁰² Trubetskoi in his book on Solovyov's philosophy deciphers the specifics of the Russian approach to Sophia as follows:

The deepest roots of the Solovyov's representation of "Sophia" lies in ... collective religious life. ... His doctrine of "Sophia the Divine Wisdom" ... takes us to the religious atmosphere of ancient Orthodox churches. The characteristic feature of these churches expresses itself in the surprisingly

⁵⁹⁸ Strémooukhoff *Vladimir Soloviev*, P. 337.

⁵⁹⁹ See: V. Ern "Gnoseology of Solovyov". Quote from Losev *Solovyov*, P. 88.

⁶⁰⁰ Sergei Bulgakov *Sophia. The Wisdom of God*. New York, 1993. Pp.3-9.

⁶⁰¹ Ibid. P. 5. In his foreword Christopher Bamford stated this in the following words: "Enthroned in icons and images, the center of deep popular devotion, Sophia always lived a dreamlife in the Russian heart. But it was not until the last century that she awoke into philosophy, entering and illuminating the light of consciousness itself." Ibid. P. vii.

⁶⁰² "Rossiya i vselenskaya tserkov'" // *Sobraniye Sochinenii*. Brussels, 1969. V. 11. P. 310.

bright representation of the *humanness* of the divine. In these churches a prayer does not meet the dead, empty, and abstract Absolute. This Divine world is filled with infinite powers and possibilities; it is densely inhabited with images. From all the sides it looks at man by myriads of *human* eyes. And it is impossible for Sophia to take other but central place amidst this divine-human world ... Eternal Wisdom of God which found its ultimate unconditional expression in man, and seat on the throne in human appearance, reigning upon heavenly and earthly, - this is the main idea of religious art and architecture, has inspired Solovyov.⁶⁰³

Sophia is an unconditional unity of the whole of creation. It is the reverse of the God - Logos. The idea of Sophia is needed logically if we recognize the unity of the universe. Sophia implies the possibility of the execution of human aims, including the human cognition. There must be the same essence in the distant and incomprehensible God and humankind for complete true unity could be established. Therefore, Sophia as a middle element guarantees the omni-unity. Notwithstanding some obscurities of the conception of Sophia in Solovyov's philosophy, it outlined the mainstream of Russian national philosophy in the writings of Florenskii, Bulgakov, Frank and others. This is the case because the conception of Sophia unifies all the main culturally pre-determined conveniences of the Russian mind. When Frank, for instance, talks about the 'Unfathomable' it is impossible for him to presuppose different laws for the Absolute and for the visible world (as Herbert Spencer does in his doctrine). Thus, from the point of view which has been presented in this thesis, the concept of Sophia had to be developed as an answer to the following question: What allows us to participate in the divine nature during our earthly life? In other words: What makes omni-unity to be the genuine omni-unity rather than an amalgamation of heterogeneous elements? And additionally: How can the conditional be inferred from the unconditional, if we take into account that they are completely distinct from each other by definition?

For Solovyov, Sophia is a reflection of the divine unity.⁶⁰⁴ With the Holy Trinity we have three peculiar subjects of being and along with this all of them acquire three principal modes of being which are will, representation, and feeling. There are also three ideas which correspond with each subject of being: a will which endeavours for Good, representation - for Truth, feeling - for Beauty. These are

⁶⁰³ E.N.Trubetskoi *Mirosozertsaniye V.S.Solovyova* (World-outlook of V.S.Solovyov) V.1. Moscow, 1995. Pp. 343-344

⁶⁰⁴ Solovyov concept is taken from: *Chteniya o Bogochelovechestve*.

different images and different modes of unity. As three subjects are united by love it is possible to say that Good, Truth, and Beauty are different images of Love. In correspondence with this divine unity in three, and three in one every life form presents two forms of unity: first, the unity of the active principle which unites the multiplicity of elements in itself, and second, the multiplicity taken as unity reflecting this active principle.⁶⁰⁵ These forms of unity are Christ who is the active uniting principle; God-Logos; an unconditional and uncreated unity. The created unity which reflects and expresses the first form is Sophia. Sophia is the God's body, the God's matter, penetrated by divine unity.⁶⁰⁶ The image of the divine wholeness seems to contradict to the image of multiplicity, it appears as the nature introduced into God. However, on the contrary, the specific eternal divine nature and eternal world should be recognized in God in order to discriminate completely between God and the world. Otherwise, our image of God appears to be more poor and more abstract than our image of the visible world. If the image of God does not represent the wholeness and integrity of being it bears exclusively negative meaning.⁶⁰⁷

Bulgakov clarifies the concept of the relationship between the Three and Sophia. He states:

Certainly, the Word, which contains in itself every word of God concerning creation, and the Spirit, who brings all to fulfillment, are equally persons in the Holy Trinity. It is quite obvious, however from the text, that it is precisely the Father in person who initiates this act of God, while Son and the Holy Spirit participate in creation only in virtue of their self-determination in Sophia, the words of the Word and the fulfillment of the Spirit.⁶⁰⁸

The most important formula which describes the relationship between the Holy Trinity and Sophia has been presented by Bulgakov as the following:

The Father, *Deus absconditus* (the hidden God), possesses her [Sophia] as his revelation in the dyad of hypostases which reveals him. The Son possesses her as his own revelation, which is fulfilled, and accomplished through the Holy Spirit. The Holy Trinity possesses her as her triune subject, as it exists in three different hypostases; and in its tri-unity has her as its one Ousia, which in its revelation is the divine Sophia.⁶⁰⁹

⁶⁰⁵ Ibid. P. 108.

⁶⁰⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁰⁷ Ibid. P. 109.

⁶⁰⁸ Bulgakov *Sophia*, P. 68.

⁶⁰⁹ Ibid. P. 53.

Thus, in relation to Holy Trinity Sophia is the reflection of an eternal wisdom and love presented as the united world of ideas. Bulgakov also discriminates between the divine and creaturely Sophia. It would lead us too far to go into details of this concept, but it is worth emphasizing the central place Sophia occupies in the middle of the divine and created worlds. In relation to the created world Sophia manifests itself as a necessary intermediate foundation towards the divine. Florenskii writes in the *Pillar*: "In relation to creature Sophia is a Guardian Angel of Creature, an Ideal Personality of the World. Being a formative mind in relation to the created world she is a produced content of God-Mind, His "psychic content"...⁶¹⁰ Through Sophia the eternal God exhibits Himself in the temporal world.

Participating in both divine and material worlds human being possesses a unique position in the universe. Sophia reveals herself in humanity because man is the unity of conditional and unconditional, the unity of the absolute eternal essence and the transient phenomena. Sophia is the ideal and perfect humankind, which is eternally existing in the divine wholeness.⁶¹¹ As it is necessary that God having actual existence manifests Himself in the other existence, it means that this 'other' existence is eternal as well. And we cannot think otherwise. The Divine Sophia is this eternal humankind. At the same time, being the revelation of Logos, Sophia "is the *all-embracing unity*, which contains within itself all the fullness of the world of ideas."⁶¹² Solovyov stated that "Humanity being united with God in the Virgin, in Christ, in the Church, is the manifestation of the essential Wisdom which is an absolute substance of God."⁶¹³ Sophia manifests itself in humanity in three ways. Trying to keep ourselves on the ground of philosophy (though the boundary between philosophy and theology in this case is not clear at all), we can outline at least three principal aspects of Sophia in relation to metaphysics, epistemology, and ethics. At the same time it is worth taking into account that with Solovyov's approach there are no boundaries between these areas of philosophical investigation, these are just different aspects of one indivisible knowledge about being as a wholeness.

⁶¹⁰ Florenskii *Stolp*, P. 326.

⁶¹¹ Solovyov, *Chteniya*. Pp. 113-114.

⁶¹² Bulgakov *Sophia*, P. 69.

⁶¹³ "Rossiya i vselenskaya tserkov'" P. 309.

It is also crucial for our work that the concept of Sophia as it has been elaborated by Solovyov and other Russian philosophers clearly reflects the historicism, aestheticism, and mysticism of Russian national consciousness. Sophia almost directly represents these dimensions, makes them alive, transforms them into the subject of philosophical search for *pravda* and *volya*.

In order to prove the influence of the historicism of the Russian mind on Solovyov's thought we can start with the quotation from his preparatory notes for his first lecture on God-Humankind:

Common state of modern culture. Breaking and disorder in life and knowledge. Absence of the unconditional principle and the center point. Socialism and positivism. Their real and imaginary meaning. Religion as the only realm of the unconditional. Catholicism of Rome, the truth of its aspirations and the untruth of its reality. Russia's religious calling...⁶¹⁴

As it can be seen from these notes it is quite obvious for Solovyov that philosophical problems are deeply rooted in culture, although he does not state this directly. He puts his arguments in the immense cultural universe where one can encounter all human cultures from India to Greece and modern West. His sense of history forces Solovyov to consider the proper place and, more significantly, the peculiar task of every culture in the history of humankind.

If the life of the world and of humankind is not entirely casual, i.e. without any sense or aim, we are compelled to recognize the existence of some content of the process of life. And this content can be nothing but an idea. It is absolutely pointless to debate whether idea or matter is more important for the wholeness of life, they are both of equal importance - the physical body and the spiritual abilities including will, reason and sense. At the same time they are both only instruments for manifesting of this principal idea which forms the content of cultural life. These three spiritual abilities determine the unity of the human being: a man needs to wish something, to think about something, and to feel something; and in all these spheres he is seeking for something unconditional, for an absolute Good, for an absolute Truth, and for an absolute Beauty. Yet man is not an isolated fragment of the universe, his life forms a necessary part of material, social, and heavenly life, therefore his material and spiritual development is intimately linked with those of other participants of the

⁶¹⁴ Solovyov, *Chteniya*. P. 117.

wholeness of life. This means that man is put into the centre of the process of evolution of the matter as well as into the process of historical development. Sophia, an ideal humankind, provides the basis for this development of humankind as a whole; every person along with every nation is included in this process. In the *Justification of Good* there is a special chapter "Good through the history of humankind" where Solovyov demonstrates and explains social evolution from the earliest periods to the origin of the national states. The pages dedicated to the problem of nationalities were considered by Trubetskoi to be the best in the whole work. Following the logic of a given wholeness Solovyov states that Christianity is not a cosmopolitan religion, because cosmopolitanism denies the actual historical development by taking society as a mechanical rather than an organic unity. On the contrary, Christianity by nature is super-national. Its ideal is *omni-humankind*, an organic wholeness which is formed in the actual history of humankind through the development of different nationalities.

It is worth noting that Solovyov passionately argues against the approach to the goals of national development presented by Danilevskii in his famous book *Russia and Europe* (1869). Danilevskii was the first historian who presented the so-called "theory of the cultural and historical types" (later a similar approach to the history of humankind was developed by such historians as Spengler and Toynbee). He denied the existence of human civilization as an integrated whole, and asserted that only isolated civilizations had grown in human history, such as the Egyptian, Chinese, or Greek. Each of these civilizations developed a specific idea. For instance, the Jewish civilization developed a religious idea, the Greek civilization - an artistic idea, the Roman and Germanic civilizations - political and scientific-industrial ideas. Danilevskii presented the Slavic civilization as the first complete type of civilization in human history which united religious, scientific-industrial, political, and communal-economic ideas. Thus, the future would belong to the Slavic people who would form a great state with a capital in Constantinople.

Solovyov criticizes Danilevskii's approach by emphasizing that to recognize a particular nationality as a goal of our activity means to decrease our moral demands.⁶¹⁵ He consistently follows the "golden rule" in relation to nations. Solovyov does not deny national specifics, however he does not think that these specifics can be

a ground for pride and arrogance. It is worth stressing the points which unite both thinkers and those which distinguishes Danilevskii from Solovyov. They both follow the same tradition regarding humankind as a group of relatively autonomous nationalities based on their own peculiar ideas, rather than as a series of nationalities representing different stages of the only possible social and cultural development (the picture characteristic of the Western theory of progress). However Solovyov always keeps in mind the ideal of the ultimate unity of humankind without loss of national character, because every nation forms a part of the whole humankind in time and space. According to Solovyov, every nation arises as the necessary part of an organic whole of humankind. Moreover, every nation brings its essential idea to the universal humankind in favour of this wholeness, and from this point of view the Jewish, or Egyptian, or Germanic, or Slavic contribution to history is different yet absolutely necessary. Therefore, they are all equally worthy and significant.

Another notable feature of Solovyov's attitude lies in its dynamic character. Danilevskii stated that the Slavic nationality expressed more ideas than any other nation and, therefore, should be in the fore of the development of humankind. In his doctrine this is presented in a way that the historical development of humankind can be completed by the full development of national ideas. This ideology is similar to any of chiliastic or like doctrines. However this is not the case with Solovyov, because he regards humankind as permanently developing. This development cannot be interrupted until the state of God-Humankind is reached. Solovyov's approach to the development of humankind brings us to his understanding of messianism. In fact, Solovyov, emphasizing the specifics of every nation, finds a nation's moral responsibility in the development of these specifics being regarded as an essential part of the universal ideal humankind. By no means does he understand these specifics as a matter of pride and national arrogance. On the contrary, he regards this to be a great moral burden, and it is extremely demanding of the subject of a specific national idea. This approach is clearly consistent with the understanding of Sophia, and at the same time with the approach which had been developed by such Slavophile thinkers as Khomyakov. This is a kind of universal, yet historical messianism, based on love.

Solovyov's thought is eschatological from the very beginning, he was convinced that Christianity forces us to achieve the ultimate salvation through

⁶¹⁵ Solovyov in his article on Danilevskii in the *Brokgauz & Efron Encyclopaedia* //

transfiguration of the nature. And this is a main goal of every personality and every nation in their inseparable unity. The omni-unity is completed historically through the free efforts of every participant. Solovyov concluded "Russia and Ecumenical Church" with the words: "The cycle of the universal life is completed by the resurrection of flesh, by the re-union of humankind in its integrity, and by the ultimate incarnation of the Divine Wisdom."⁶¹⁶

The concept of Sophia also provides Solovyov with a corresponding approach to Beauty. He chose Dostoevsky's words "Beauty will save the world" as an epigraph to his main work in aesthetics *Beauty in Nature*. For Solovyov, Beauty by manifesting itself in nature forms the ground for the philosophy of art.⁶¹⁷ From the very beginning he postulates that Beauty is a part of Being as such, rather than a function of any subjective approach. This does not mean that everything which exists should be regarded as beautiful. Beauty is an embodied, an animated idea. Owing to the fact that man belongs to both, physical and ideal, worlds, he can touch this ideal world by perceiving the radiant images of the divine world. Beauty as a manifestation of the ideal element in the physical world is, therefore, the path which leads to true knowledge. This understanding does not demand any proof from Solovyov: he is just absolutely confident in its relevance. Solovyov investigates this subject in details in other works, but he never doubts the reality and the saving power of Beauty.

Solovyov's doctrine can be presented as the following: a) Beauty is a "transfiguration of matter through the embodiment of another, super-material element."⁶¹⁸ b) Beauty is an embodied idea which by itself is a worthy kind of Being. It is "a complete freedom of constituents in the perfect unity of the whole."⁶¹⁹ c) The beauty of omni-unity is expressed through light, and, therefore, it is represented by the sun in its male aspect; by the moon in its female aspect; and in their synthesis by the starry night.⁶²⁰ The nature of the Sophianic approach is clear. The embodiment of an ideal being (Sophia) retains its dynamic character: light and life manifest themselves through different forms of natural beauty, and human creative self-consciousness is a

Sochineniya v dvukh tomakh, V.2. P. 411.

⁶¹⁶ "Rossiya i vselenskaya tserkov'" P. 348.

⁶¹⁷ "Krasota v prirode" // *Sochineniya v dvukh tomakh*, V.2. P. 353.

⁶¹⁸ Ibid. P. 358.

⁶¹⁹ Ibid. P. 361. Идея есть «полная свобода составных частей в совершенном единстве целого».

⁶²⁰ Ibid. Pp. 364-365.

continuation of this process. Moreover, human self-consciousness participates in the goals of divine creation and, therefore, fulfils a moral task. Dostoevsky's slogan "Beauty will save the world" implies that Beauty is the means, not the aim in itself (as for Schopenhauer, for example). This understanding evidently unites the historical, aesthetic, and mystical aspects of Being.

Solovyov presented his understanding of mysticism in one of his earlier works *The Philosophical Foundations of the Wholeness of Knowledge*. According to him, the true reality has its own being which is independent from the actuality of the external material being as well as from our mind. On the contrary, this absolute reality makes the external world real and brings an ideal content into our thought. Therefore, mysticism forms the third kind of cognition along with those of the empirical and the idealistic.⁶²¹ Truth cannot be found in the empirical content itself or in the logical form of knowledge. "The knowledge of truth is the only one which coincides with the will towards good and with the feeling of beauty."⁶²² However in relation to the concept of omni-unity mysticism does not exist in isolation from other forms of cognition, but is closely linked with them:

Mysticism being an absolute in its character is of the highest significance, defining the supreme ground and the ultimate goal of philosophical knowledge; empiricism in accordance with its nature serves as an external basis and at the same time as a crucial application or fulfillment of the highest elements; while ... the rational, a proper philosophical element, being predominantly formal in its character, appears to be the intermediate and the general connection of the whole system.⁶²³

Because wholeness of knowledge is one of the trends in the philosophical approach to reality, it can be achieved only through and in the course of the historical development of humankind. Philosophy develops through such stages as 1) the mystical, when all the elements, including the rational and the empirical, are represented by common mystical form. 2) The stage which is characterized by the separation of these three approaches into theology, abstract philosophy, and science. 3) The third stage presenting a free inner synthesis of these elements in what

⁶²¹ Solovyov *Sochineniya v dvukh tomakh*, V.2. P. 191.

⁶²² Ibid.

⁶²³ Ibid. P. 194.

Solovyov calls a "free theosophy."⁶²⁴ The picture of this development clearly demonstrates the dynamic character of Solovyov's doctrine.

Turning to mysticism we have to deal with the recognition of the unconditional principle and with the way which allows us to comprehend it. Solovyov distinguishes between two types of unconditionality: the negative and the positive. The former is the expression of the unsatisfactoriness by any pre-arranged content of knowledge. Because of this unsatisfactoriness the latter unconditionality appears dialectically by demanding the wholeness of the content. It comes to the very core of human being: does a man wish to consider himself to be a sole mechanism whose behaviour is subordinated to the laws of necessity, or does he not wish to be the singular event, the only fact of being? The very possibility of such a question is already hinted at by the existence of something more, something greater than pure mechanism. Solovyov answers:

The beginning of truth is the conviction that human personality is not only negatively unconditional (this is just a fact), i.e. it cannot be satisfied by any conventional and limited content, but a human personality can and desires to reach a positive unconditionality, i.e. is eager to possess the complete content, the wholeness of being, therefore this wholeness of being is not only a fantasy, a subjective phantom, but a real powerful virtuality. Thus the belief in yourself, in human personality is at the same time belief in God.⁶²⁵

This is an example of Solovyov's deduction of an ontological statement from its epistemological basis. And additionally, the conviction in the rightness of a mystical attitude to the world evidently presupposes this conclusion. We can decipher Solovyov's statement as follows. The very possibility to endeavour for truth, i.e. for principle which is beyond appearance, the instant contents of our consciousness 'here and now', by the meaning of the word 'truth' cannot be based on particular 'truths' included in these contents. Therefore it presupposes something outside these truths. However this 'something' cannot be a part of 'givenness', and so it comes from another source which points to the unity of "I", otherwise any particular content with its particular truth is impossible. At the same time this "I" is empty if it does not relate itself to the reality which is a) beyond the 'givenness' and b) presupposes the content of this 'givenness'. This is a reality which discloses itself through particular instant

⁶²⁴ Ibid. Pp. 194-195.

⁶²⁵ *Chteniya*. P. 26.

appearances, and this cannot be anything but a content which includes all actual contents as its parts and through this provides the wholeness of Being.

This inner feeling of unconditionality is what we call "mysticism" and it is easy to see that any contradiction between reason, rational ability and this mystical feeling is impossible for Solovyov. The facts delivered by human consciousness and the facts delivered by human psychology have objective meanings, because they bear an imprint of the unconditional element. Significantly, Solovyov does not specially demonstrate the wholeness of man, because he simply presupposes this wholeness to be the essential and crucial pre-requisite of the very existence of human beings.

Solovyov carefully examines the concept of *sobornost* (although he normally does not use Khomyakov's word.) He demonstrates the contradictoriness and incompleteness of the empirical realism. He says that "the unity of the physical organism, i.e. plurality of elements, presents itself in the experience only as a link, as a relation but not as a real unit."⁶²⁶ Moreover, "self-consciousness is only one of the acts of the psychical life"⁶²⁷. And so, in this case the unconditional unity cannot be observed either in the physical, or in the psychical life. A human being appears as the collection of the infinite number of physical and psychical elements. If this is the case we have to state that every human being as well as humankind is only an abstraction. We should take into account that every physical and psychical element can be divided further without any limit. The reality disappears. In order to avoid this conclusion we have to recognize the reality of the ideal beings which disclose themselves in these physical and psychical elements. And so when we talk about human being we talk about the ideal human being which stands beyond these elements. Solovyov concludes:

...All human elements create ... a complete, simultaneously universal and individual organism... So when we talk about the eternity of humankind, it implicitly implies the eternity of each particular individual, that comprises humankind. Without this eternity the whole of humankind would be illusory.⁶²⁸

The image of the eternal humankind, which is at the same time Sophia herself, as the goal for all the endeavours towards whole knowledge was always extremely important for Solovyov. He emphasized that the relationship between any particular

⁶²⁶ *Chteniya*. P. 115.

⁶²⁷ *Chteniya*. P. 116.

⁶²⁸ *Chteniya*. Pp. 118-119.

individual and this ideal humankind was personal by nature. In the paper "August Comte's Idea of Humankind", delivered two years before his death, Solovyov compared Comte's "Grand Etre" with Sophia indicating its personal character: "It is obvious that it is not a concept but an absolutely real being, and if not exactly personal compared with an empirical human being, it is nonetheless impersonal."⁶²⁹ This approach demonstrates an additional feature of Solovyov's mysticism: it is a striving to establish a personal relationship with Sophia. And through this relationship, coloured by aestheticism, the mystical approach allows the discovery of the ultimate goal for human historical development.

Different aspects of Sophia are, for instance, manifested by iconography. In his analysis Florenskii brings our attention to such Sophia's features as indication towards her cosmic power, towards her cosmocracy. Sophia is drawn as being alienated from the everyday worries in favour of contemplation. However people cannot live by abstractness and because of this they begin to seek for concrete images and found them in the Embodied Word, the Virgin, the Trinity, the Church, the 'Grand Être' (Comte). If we take these images as being exclusively abstract and rational concepts they are obviously incompatible, but as soon as we take them as metaphysical concepts (as a manifestation of being itself) we discover that they are strongly linked with each other.⁶³⁰ Thus, Sophia is the principle of unity, expressing the intimate link of the cognition with the core of life.

The ethical aspect of sophiology, as we could see earlier, has been presented by Solovyov in *Lectures on God-Humankind*. In his main book on ethics, *Justification of Good*, Sophia is mentioned only once when Solovyov discusses the Buddhist ethics: In the physical nature thinkers-poets recognized the manifestations of celestial wisdom: thus, visible light of our world was for them the smile of Sophia, remembering the unearthly shining of the abandoned Pleroma (the wholeness of the absolute being).⁶³¹ At the same time it is obvious that the whole concept of this book is the elaboration of the ideas presented earlier in relation to Sophia. Various aspects of the Sophianic ethics were explored by Lossky, Frank, Berdyayev, and other philosophers. In this ethics the ultimate goal of human life is the union with the wholeness of being. In order to make this possible there should be something which

⁶²⁹ *Sochineniya v dvukh tomakh*, V.2. P. 575.

⁶³⁰ Florenskii *Stolp*, P. 384-385.

⁶³¹ *Sochineniya v dvukh tomakh*, V. 1. P. 137.

would fill the gap between God and the world, that is Sophia. The participation in the wholeness of being is gained only through the creative life of every participant united by love. Therefore, this creative life forms a part of the integral whole, in other words, a part of life based on the principle of *sobornost'*. Only through participation in the divine whole, that is through Sophia, the self-realization of an individual is possible. This is by no means possible for an egoistic human being. Evil appears in the situation when an individual grounds himself in his isolation from other individuals, when he is becoming a monad.

Solovyov is also an ardent supporter of the view that social life forms the basis for the development of personality, including political relations, as well as other social relations. He maintained this view though it seems to stand in obvious contradiction to the emphasis on the individual salvation in Christian life. This is understandable only if we take into account the Sophianic approach which rely on the unity contrasted to isolation. For Solovyov, society is an added, expanded personality, and, vice versa, personality is a compact, concise society. However, it is definitely an ideal. A personality, being infinite, in the inner life is at the same time limited by actual circumstances, therefore it can gain the complete unity with society only in the infinite wholeness which is formed by the developing links between separated human beings and general forms of life. Society provides personality with the inseparable wholeness of common life.⁶³² The shared life has been achieved to some extent in the past, and the memory of this achievement is still kept through tradition; this life is partly fulfilled in the present by social duties; in the collective consciousness it partly predetermines a future through the social ideal. Taking this into consideration Solovyov discriminates between three stages of human consciousness and ways of life: 1) clan life, belonging to the past yet remaining in the form of family life; 2) state and national life which is predominant in the present; 3) all-human life as an ideal of the future. From these premises it follows that society as a whole and its particular institutions participate in moral life. The existence of social morality along with personal morality is a point which distinguishes human society from animal groups.

Solovyov defines the norm of this morality as the following. There is a question in relation to evil which has not been resolved satisfactorily: if the wholeness of being, the omni-unity, God-Humankind, Sophia, is the only goal of human

⁶³² *Sochineniya v dvukh tomakh*, V. 1. P. 295.

endeavour, isolation remains basically unexplained. If isolation, egoism, is part of being as such (which Solovyov assumes) there should be something outside being which causes this isolation. Frank and Berdyayev in their efforts to resolve this paradox turned to the mystical idea of Jacob Böhme about *ungrund*. This is a vague yet unavoidable and extremely significant image-concept of the chasm between God and Non-God. Berdyayev in this respect offers the idea of "uncreated freedom". This freedom causes evil, however God, as He did not create this freedom, cannot be responsible for what He has not created. In order to explain this approach the Pseudo-Dionysius Areopagites concept of God-Divine Darkness can and should be recalled. However this will lead us too far from the topic.

Though this problem remains unresolved, the very approach to ethics which takes into account the concept of Sophia uniting different aspects of individual and social life seems valuable and beneficial.

In the subsequent paragraphs we will examine the essential details of Solovyov's doctrine through comparison with some of the most outstanding philosophical doctrines presented by Western philosophers. This will allow us to emphasize the specifics of the Russian national philosophical approach as it is presented in this thesis. It should be clearly stipulated that this comparison is by no means arranged to prove the advantage or superiority of Solovyov's approach but to demonstrate the essential differences which follow from the outlined premises.

We begin from the metaphysical aspect of sophiology. Being the intelligible and at the same time sensible substance of the world Sophia forms what can be called 'the given omni-unity'. We can compare it with Spinoza's concept of divine substance (*God or Nature*⁶³³) which possesses an infinite number of attributes yet manifesting itself for human beings in two attributes - extensive and intelligible. Individual minds (or souls) and bodies are mere aspects of the divine substance. Therefore, freedom can be attributed exclusively to God, but it is impossible by definition to presuppose that it could be attributed to His aspects. Because of this the only possible freedom, which can be defined as an intellectual love of God, is, therefore, the form of necessity: the comprehended necessity. Spinoza, therefore, comes to an absolute determinism. Though Spinoza thought that love of God should hold the chief place in the mind, the

⁶³³ The famous Spinoza's expression.

very nature of the relationship between God and His aspect allows exclusively one-sided emotion: "He who loves God cannot endeavour that God should love him in return."⁶³⁴ By stating this Spinoza has excluded the personal relationship between God and man and, moreover, he has actually excluded the very possibility of a genuine religiosity based on love and fear, which makes this relationship so concrete and peculiar, when it touches heart rather than mind. The wholeness of being appearing in Spinoza's works is not a unity as such (if we understand 'unity' through the process of uniting,) but the unity of substance which manifests itself in different aspects.

On the contrary, Solovyov's omni-unity is the true unity of free personalities endeavouring, through participating intellectually as well as sensitively and willfully in Sophia, towards God. Sophia also manifests the female aspect of the universe. It is a specific question about the relationship between Sophia and God - the Holy Ghost, who is understood often as a female aspect of Trinity, the Bride of the Lamb, complementary to a male aspect expressed by God-Logos. Later this feature of Solovyov's approach was elaborated by Florenskii and particularly by Rozanov, who presupposed the sexual difference as the beginning of any development.⁶³⁵ Sophia is often associated with the Virgin. The dialectics of the female and male constituents thus appear in the very nature of the universe. This is again impossible in Spinoza's system.

In order to avoid the limitations put by Spinoza's absolute determinism Leibniz originated a monadology which presented the Spinoza's substance broken up into the infinite number of the perfectly isolated monads. However in this case the monads were unapproachable for each other - they "do not have windows" as it was expressed by Leibniz - and the interrelations, therefore, did not play any role in their inner development. There is again no true unity between the monads, because they are united exclusively by God's will. Their unity is based on the 'pre-established harmony' and there is no room for the genuine development. This is exactly the point which distinguishes Solovyov's doctrine from that of Leibniz. Filling the gap between the divine and the material Sophia brings the actual possibility for the omni-unity to

⁶³⁴ Quote from: B. Russell *History of Western Philosophy*, London, 1994. P. 558.

⁶³⁵ For instance, in relation to the calculus of infinitesimals as the possibility to describe the flowing as such in: "Lyudi lunnogo sveta. Metafizika khristianstva"

every and each participant of the world mystery. Frank presents this idea in the following words:

If the world in itself does not carry the ultimate *pravda*⁶³⁶ of its own being, and if *pravda* as such cannot be denied in relation to any reality, this *means* that the being of the world is defined by super-world *pravda* – *Pravda* as such.⁶³⁷

This means that every participant shares a common essence with other participants, otherwise the interaction is impossible, and each fulfils its own *pravda*. This idea was elaborated further by N. Lossky. Though he does not use the word "Sophia" in this respect, Lossky elaborated the doctrine in which every participant of the act of cognition (it does not matter whether it is even a subject or an object) should be considered as a '*substantial activist*', an actual or potential personality.⁶³⁸ There is an obvious similarity between a substantial activist and a monad, however there are at the same time differences of principle. The most significant difference is that monads are completely different while substantial activists in their essences are the same. Every monad possesses the copy of the whole world provided by God and behaves accordingly in relation to this copy while the world remains estranged from it. On the contrary, the substantial activists sharing the same essence are intimately linked with other activists and through this actually participate in the real world. Every substantial activist possesses infinite amount of qualities which distinguish him from the abstract ideas. The activists are concrete and ideal (non-material) at the same time. Through the concepts of *pravda* and substantial activist Frank and Lossky elaborate the concept of '*sobornost*' of being. However in his approach to the Unfathomable Frank mentions Solovyov only once. Solovyov's name appears when Frank characterizes Being as an ideal humanity when he presents Being in its sophianic aspect. He states that the World

...is *potentially human*, it is a potential humanity, because being grounded in God it is also linked with man and even coincides with him. All the

(People of moonlight. The metaphysics of Christianity) // *Uyedinennoye (Solitaria)* Moscow, 1998. P. 220.

⁶³⁶ In the context of our research it is indicative that Frank is using the word '*pravda*' in italics alluding to its ideal national meaning.

⁶³⁷ S.L. Frank "Nepostizhimoye" (Unfathomable) // *Sochineniya (Works.)* Moscow, 1990. P. 518.

⁶³⁸ N. Lossky *Creative Activity, Evolution and Ideal Being*. Prague, 1937. Also in: *Obshchedostupnoye vvedeniye v filosofiyu* (The popular introduction to philosophy). Frankfurt a. M., 1956.

creation including myself in God and in front of God is becoming a *sympathetic inner unity*. At the same time as a "world" Being here coincides in its nature with what I experience as the last being of my 'I', all the creation is becoming the great sacred "we", the "created" omni-unity, which is altogether *omni-unity-in-itself*.⁶³⁹

Frank's consideration of unity as being sympathetic reminds of the Stoic concept of the world sympathy which presupposes the actual attraction and interaction between every part of Cosmos. At the same time this picture is opposite to the one provided by Leibniz: the harmony is 'in becoming' and the ideal is to be reached, rather than it is 'pre-established' and the development is a mere visibility.

Turning to the Sophianic epistemology we have to begin with the confirmation that 1) Sophia is the pre-existing eternal thought about the world and each and every being which is presented in our life; because of this Sophia unites metaphysics and epistemology; 2) the infinite manifests itself in every act of reasoning.

The manifestation of the infinite in the finite being has been elaborated in details particularly by Frank and Lossky, though in different directions and independently from each other, and what is the most interesting, from Solovyov himself. However it can be demonstrated that their research follows the same direction which has led Solovyov to the image and concept of Sophia. The very possibility of making any positive statement is based on the assumption (conscious or unconscious) of the existence of the relationship between positive and negative which in its turn involves the relationship between finite and infinite, between being and nothing.

It is also implied by Solovyov's approach that laws of nature are discovered rather than invented. However truth in this case is not the truth of the syllogistic logic, it is *pravda* being at the same time truth, justice, beauty, and good. This follows from the concept of Sophia in which all these qualities are presented reflecting the essence of divinity. *Truth-pravda* certainly cannot be cognized by reason alone, but by the whole personality of the subject of cognition. This means that epistemology cannot be based on such isolated abilities as reasoning or sensation, but rather on all the abilities of human being. However the uniting ability is the ability to penetrate directly into being as such, and, therefore, cognition is based primarily on intuition (Khomyakov,

⁶³⁹ Frank "Nepostizhimoye", P. 527-528.

in order to present this approach, used the word 'belief' in the wide sense of the word).

Through intuition any object, even being a part of the external world, is given to the consciousness of the subject in its authentic form. The very possibility of this can be understood only in case that the world is an organic whole, rather than a set of monads impenetrable for each other. Thus, everything is united in Being and every act of cognition presents an aspect of this higher unity.

We can compare this approach with the so-called "causal theory" of cognition presented widely in the Western tradition and elaborated by Locke and others. According to this theory every person begins cognition from his peculiar psychological image of an object formed by the act of perception. This psychological image along with other images of the same kind allows to form the generic image of the object which in its turn can be presented by concept. This concept linked with other concepts leads to more and more general concepts, ultimately to the concept of Being. The allegedly insurmountable problem arises: how is it possible to compare these images and concepts if they are rooted in individual consciousness? No one possesses an ability to compare these concepts, as possessed by different people, because no one possesses an ability to reflect on them from outside. In order to be consistent we have to assume that images and concepts formed by different human beings are incomparable and, therefore, there is no such thing as a cognition belonging to the whole humanity, but rather separated individual cognitions. Berkeley pointed out this difficulty and tried to avoid it stating that everything ultimately existed in God's perception. However this conclusion is undermined from the very beginning by the postulate that the only given to us is our individual consciousness, and, therefore, the existence of the external world cannot be proved at all. If God is a part of every internal world, an object as such is presented in an individual mind from the beginning; on the other hand, if God is an external being, in accordance with the postulated approach He cannot penetrate the individual image, and, therefore, remains estranged from the act of perception and cognition.

On the contrary, the intuitive approach based on the presupposition of the omni-unity assumes that the object, though presented differently in different individuals, remains the same object, forming a part of Being as such. This means that every act of perception is an act overcoming the isolation of an individual being because of the fact that all individual beings are the one in their essence. This allows

the objects of the external world to penetrate this isolation and exhibit itself to human beings. At the same time the very possibility of this penetration is again based on the unity of Being and affinity of everything in the world. In other words, it is based on the presumption of the Sophianic manifestation.

If we take into account the history of Russian philosophical development in the XIXth century and, in particular, its apparent dependence on the German philosophy which has found its climax in the Hegel's all-embracing doctrine it seems useful to conclude this chapter with the comparison between Hegel and Solovyov.

Hegel presented the whole world as a developing Absolute Idea (thesis) being the substance of the development of Nature (anti-thesis) as well as the substance of the Subjective Spirit (synthesis) comprehending the Absolute Idea through Nature. On this basis Hegel has overcome the dualism of the matter and mind. There is an essential similarity between Hegel's absolute concept revealing itself in nature and cognition and the concept of Sophia: they both manifest the unity of the world; they both expose themselves in two aspects, potential and actual; they both provide the world with the goal which is the actual integrity of all the elements. In the famous chapter of the *Phenomenology of Spirit* Hegel argues that self-consciousness can only be based on the recognition of another consciousness, another ego, and acquires its identity exclusively through this recognition. This is exactly what differentiates his doctrine from monadology. State is regarded by Hegel as the goal in itself which is reached through the freedom of personalities in their unity. The Absolute Idea expresses itself in the history of humankind, and this approach allowed Hegel to construct one of the most consistent pictures of historical development. The same can be said about the history of philosophy, which, and this is a fact of great importance, included some Fathers of Church among commonly recognized philosophers. Also Hegel presented one of the most significant works in aesthetics. Solovyov thought that the most significant of Hegel's achievements was "the establishment of true and fruitful concepts of *process* and *development* in history as the consecutive manifestation of an ideal content".⁶⁴⁰ And this formula is close to the concept of Sophia, which is an ideal content of the development of the world and humankind. Solovyov also valued Hegel's idea of the unity of finite and infinite.

⁶⁴⁰ V. Solovyov "Hegel" // *Complete Works*, V. 10, St. Petersburg, 1907. P. 319.

However the analysis discloses the principal difference between two philosophers. Following his approach Hegel presents Nature and History not as the balanced integrity of autonomous and self-developing participants but rather as the pure manifestation of the concepts of the Absolute Idea. The Absolute Idea not only forms the ideal content which is revealed through Nature and History but it can reach its perfection exclusively through this manifestation. In order to fulfil and complete the process of self-development it requires the existence of Nature and appearance of human being. In this process of becoming the Conditional is disclosed as the Absolute, and, vice versa, the Absolute is disclosed as the Conditional. This limitation of the Absolute finds its expression in the central contradiction of Hegel's system: the contradiction between the infinite process of development and the actual completion of this process in time and space. The balance between the Absolute and the Conditional is violated in favour of the latter. Because of this Hegel presents Nature as well as human society not only being a manifestation but also as a completion of the Absolute Idea, and in doing this he thinks that he has found the perfect formula for their description. The ideal State, for instance, being an embodiment of human freedom, finds itself in the contemporary Prussia, and no further development is possible. It should also be mentioned that for the same reason Hegel's doctrine presented in his *Philosophy of Nature* became unacceptable for scientists.

Solovyov in his turn thinks that an Absolute which is the Trinity cannot find its complete manifestation in nature and/or in history and it always remains transcendent to the world. This approach outlines Sophia's position in between God and Nature, infinite and finite. Every being participates in Sophia and at the same time possesses its own freedom which allows and defines its development as an independent participant of the actual world's unity. The accent in this case is done on the inner freedom of self-realization through actual interaction with other participants. Thus, the difference between Solovyov and Hegel can be understood using the following model: we can take human "I" as completely coincided with the particular states of human consciousness and therefore is dissolved in these states (Hegel's case); or we can take human "I" as retaining self-identity through these states, and so in this case being included in every particular state it is beyond this state at the same time (Solovyov's case). In the first case the unity of "I" is provided from outside through the fulfillment of an external logic which is dialectically transformed into internal. The "I" of every particular state becomes a necessary participant of this

logical process. In the second case the unity of "I" is provided by its self-identity and the unity is provided by the interrelation of self-sufficient "I"-s and by their unity with the Absolute. The unity provided by the Absolute Idea is replaced by the omni-unity of independent participants united in their actual relationship and through Sophia by their actual relation to the Absolute. Solovyov highlights the difference between earthly and heavenly Sophia while such difference in Hegel's Absolute Idea is impossible. The history of humankind remains the genuine history rather than the exposition and completion of a pre-established content.

According to Solovyov's understanding of mysticism Hegel's philosophy is mystical in a sense that the world is a manifestation of an Absolute Idea. This means that we cannot disclose anything else but this Idea in any given fragment of reality. However this idea is considered to be purely rational and it is possible in principle to obtain the complete knowledge of the whole of Being. This possibility demystifies Hegel's approach: there is nothing in reality but an Absolute Idea which can be comprehended in its entirety.

Probably the closest affinity between Solovyov and Hegel can be found in aesthetics. According to Hegel Beauty in nature and in art is an expression of an Absolute Idea, congenial to the demonstration of spiritual freedom. The actual works of art at the same time manifest this Idea and possess independent self-sufficient value in themselves. This image is very close to that of Solovyov namely because the accent is done on the self-sufficiency of the work of art rather than on the dialectical transition from one concept to another.

Thus, the concepts of *omni-unity* and *sobornost'* which found its particular expression in the image of Sophia represent the core of Solovyov's, and through him, the Russian national approach to philosophizing emphasizing its specifics compared with the Western philosophical doctrines.

Conclusion

The main hypothesis of this thesis was formulated as the following: Russian philosophy in the unique form in which it appeared in the second half of the XIXth century is based on the concepts and approaches elaborated and manifested in Muscovite Russia by the second half of the XVIth century. This hypothesis appears to be plausible and allows to explain the specific features of Russian philosophizing which distinguish it from Western models.

Over the centuries *pravda* gradually relinquished its meaning of righteous legal relations to *zakon*. At the same time *pravda* was joined with the Christian concept of a merciful God and through this secured a position beyond *zakon*. In the course of this development *pravda* moved close to the concept of *svet* ('light' and 'world') acquiring the significance and image of the supreme ethical and aesthetic value. The value of *pravda* predetermined a strong anti-state feeling and a cultural preference for the unity of personalities compared with the unity of citizens. Through this development *pravda* became very close to the concept of *volya*. *Volya* in Russian consciousness means freedom from any sort of dependency and responsibility. It is also essential that *volya* bears the meaning of unrestricted inner freedom, freedom of soul, and through this the social connotations of the word were linked with individual connotation. From the old times *volya* was associated with *mir* ('community' and 'peace') and through this association it expressed united collective consciousness as opposed to a bondage brought about by political relations. Being allied with God's *pravda*, *volya* bypassed the legal relations and formed a direct link with the supreme secular power represented by the tsar. The specifics of this relation lies in its personal rather than its legal nature. This relation between people and sovereign is based on feeling rather than on reason, and because of this the heart, symbolizing love, as opposed to the mind, comes to the fore.

Being preserved for two centuries particularly among peasants the outlined concepts and values became the source for the search of national identity and corresponding reflection at a time when the great Russian literature was intensively developing. In the XIXth century the refined concepts linked with *pravda* and *volya* found their expression in the works of writers, poets, and thinkers. This expression allowed the thinkers of the second quarter of the XIXth century, the Slavophiles in

particular, to occupy the specific position of reflection and to formulate the concepts of *wholeness* and *sobornost*'. Their rigorous search for national identity resulted from the painful social problem of the abolition of serfdom which was taken not only in political but also in a strong ethical sense. The Slavophile approach linked these concepts with the crucial issues of Russian history and current life. In their turn Solovyov and other outstanding Russian thinkers following this line of intellectual development created a particular philosophical tradition where metaphysical, epistemological, and ethical concepts found their distinctive features. Their doctrines, Solovyov's in particular, unite historicism, aestheticism, and mysticism included in one system of coordinates inseparable from each other. The example of this kind of philosophizing can be found in the singular concept of Sophia which represents the ardent striving towards the concrete living knowledge. The aim was to provide not merely intellectual satisfaction but allows humankind to participate in God's goals. This participation in its turn is regarded by Russian philosophical tradition as both a moral activity and a moral obligation.

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