

250

**The Russian Revolutionary Movement of the
Nineteenth Century as Contemporary History**

by Alfred E. Senn

Alfred E. Senn is Professor of History at the University of Wisconsin, Madison. Professor Senn was a Short-term Scholar at the Kennan Institute in the 1980-81 and 1991-92 program years. His most recent book is *Lithuania Awakening* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1990).

Among Dr. Senn's other published works on the Russian revolutionary movement are: *The Russian Revolution in Switzerland, 1914-1917* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1971); *Nicholas Rubakin: A Life for Books* (Newtonville: Oriental Research Partners, 1977); and *Assassination in Switzerland: The Murder of Vatslav Vorovsky* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1981).

Copyright March 1993 by the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars
Edited by Peggy McNerny

**The Kennan Institute for Advanced Russian Studies
The Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars**

The Kennan Institute for Advanced Russian Studies is a division of the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars. Through its program of fellowships, meetings, and publications, the Institute encourages scholarship on Russia and the former Soviet Union, embracing a broad range of fields in the social sciences and the humanities. The Kennan Institute is supported by contributions from foundations, corporations, individuals, and the United States Government.

Kennan Institute Occasional Papers

The Kennan Institute makes Occasional Papers available to all those interested in Russian and Soviet Studies. Occasional Papers are submitted by Kennan Institute scholars and visiting speakers, particularly those who wish to receive timely feedback on their work. Copies of Occasional Papers and a list of papers currently available can be obtained free of charge by contacting:

**Occasional Papers
Kennan Institute for Advanced Russian Studies
370 L'Enfant Promenade, SW, Suite 704
Washington, D.C. 20024-2518
(202) 287-3400**

This Occasional Paper has been produced with support provided by the Russian, Eurasian, and East European Research and Training Program of the U.S. Department of State. (This program is funded by the Soviet and East European Research and Training Act of 1983, or Title VIII). We are most grateful to this sponsor.

The views expressed in Kennan Institute Occasional Papers are those of the authors.

**THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT
OF THE
NINETEENTH CENTURY AS CONTEMPORARY HISTORY**

by Alfred E. Senn

Television news and talk shows have given Americans the feeling of participating in the rapidly developing events in Russia and in the aftermath of the August 1991 coup, many witnesses have tried their hand in describing the dramatic course of events. Contemporary history, however, poses problems and opportunities that writing about the dead does not. There are advantages in sharing the atmosphere, in being able to interview principals, even in participating in the events. The disadvantages include the danger of being overly influenced by certain sources, the possibility of overemphasizing the role of certain individuals, and the difficulties in perceiving the constituencies and forces that these individuals represent.

Problems also develop from the involvement of the author. Is the author *engagé*? Can he or she recognize the full spectrum of the forces at work? Is the author affected by some need to predict the future, to be "estimative," as government agencies put it? One may argue that no history is really "objective," but it is clearly more difficult to find a "balanced" approach in describing the background of current events than in, say, analyzing nineteenth-century history.

As new as "contemporary history" may seem, its practice in Russian and Soviet history goes far back, even predating John Reed's classic *Ten Days That Shook the World*. From the time of the first sprouts of revolutionary organization in the reign of Tsar Alexander II, thoughts arose of documenting and describing the personalities and events of the day. Novelists such as Ivan Turgenev, Fëdor Dostoevsky, and Nikolai Chernyshevsky led the way by producing fictionalized models of revolutionary behavior. Novelists may indeed have an advantage in capturing the spirit of revolution,¹ but others, including revolutionaries and government agents, want to write and read histories that hew more closely to documentary evidence.

The historiography of the Russian revolutionary movement obviously evolved from the confluence of interests of those who wanted to read the history (the "market") and those who wanted to write it (the "producers"). One can distinguish three markets for "contemporary history" of the Russian revolutionary movement during the nineteenth century—government, revolutionaries, and the general reading public—each with its own distinctive set

of demands. The tsarist authorities wanted to build files and evidence for the pursuit and prosecution of revolutionaries; the revolutionaries needed a sense of the historical process in which they were participating—of the significance and value of their sacrifices and endeavors; and last, but not least, the western reading public, at least for a time, wanted information about the spectacular development of Russian "terrorism" in the late 1870s and early 1880s.

The markets interacted with authors in different ways. The government could commission the works it wanted. Authors from among the ranks of the revolutionaries depended on donations and volunteer work. The western commercial market was the obvious outlet for those wanting to earn an independent franc or shilling, as tsarist censorship did not look kindly on works sympathetic to the revolutionaries. For readers in western Europe, stories of assassinations in Russia were probably on par with the stories from the American Wild West in providing exotic, vicarious excitement; the thought of tapping the wealth of the western public evoked dreams of literary fame even in the minds of dedicated revolutionaries.

When Vera Zasulich took her celebrated shot at General Fëdor Trepov in January 1878, she made the historiography of the Russian revolutionary movement a growth industry. As the terrorist campaign unfolded, the western press sent its own correspondents to Russia. In May 1879, when the would-be regicide Aleksandr Soloviev met his executioner, two French newspapermen witnessed the event. When the terrorist group *Narodnaia Volia* (People's Will) finally killed Tsar Alexander II, a German periodical declared that the assassination marked the conclusion of "only one act of the great drama the development of which Europe is following with breathless anticipation."²

Up until this time, historiography of the revolutionary movement had made only a lurching start. Although Alexander Herzen set the standard of literary success for future generations—his remarkable memoir, *My Past and Thoughts*, and challenges to the official court histories of Russia notwithstanding—his works contributed little to contemporary revolutionary history. The revolutionary movement had not yet matured enough to merit its own history, and in any case Herzen's dislike for the representatives of the "Young Emigration" hindered his appreciation of their historic role. In the 1860s, some of his would-be heirs, such as Mikhail Elpidin, thought they could make money by writing about revolution, but their efforts suffered from shortages of material, talent, backing, and a market. In fact, tsarist

"disinformation" seemed to dominate the production of this sort of contemporary history in the 1860s.³

Even in the 1870s, the revolutionaries had trouble in learning how to record information about ongoing revolutionary activity. In a well-known episode, editors of the émigré journal *Rabotnik* learned that a worker had talked back to a tsarist court. One exclaimed, "The working masses are speaking!" and another produced an article quoting his hero as saying, "It is not true; I had no intention of killing the Tsar. The Tsar is not responsible for the people's suffering." When asked where he had gotten his material, the author admitted that he had made up the quotation, but he exclaimed, "How else could he have spoken?" Despite misgivings the editorial board approved the article. Two weeks later came a protest from a correspondent in Berlin: "Were you all drunk in the editorial office or were all of you simultaneously struck by an attack of insanity when you printed ... a whole speech in Malinovsky's name?" The worker had actually only said "Yes" in answer to the court's question as to whether or not he was a revolutionary. The editorial board then had to recognize that it had embarrassed itself.⁴

Responding to the west's thirst for knowledge about the revolutionary process, the revolutionaries found the job was, in fact, very difficult. They resented the picture of the revolution as presented by Turgenev or Dostoevsky, but even those Russians who had studied at Swiss universities still experienced trouble expressing themselves in German or French. Speaking out, moreover, bore the risk of compromising their political asylum in the west, thereby prompting reactions from western governments, as witnessed by Switzerland's expulsion of Sergei Nechaev and Pëtr Kropotkin.⁵ In the 1870s, therefore, they could only gaze longingly at the western commercial market.

In 1880 the most popular book on the revolutionary movement available in the west seems to have been *Nihilism and the Nihilists*, by J. B. Arnaudo. At the time, the book had just been translated into French from the original Italian. The French edition appended letters by Turgenev and Alexander Herzen *fils*, both dated August 1879, testifying to its usefulness. Turgenev called the work "the best thought-out and the best written" of all recent works on "nihilism." Herzen had some objections to the picture of his father presented in the work, but he praised it as "one of the best studies published on the subject," although, to be sure, it did not pay enough attention to "governmental nihilism." Émigrés, on the other hand, objected to Arnaudo's

image of "bloody nihilism" and to the sympathy shown by the author for the targets of assassinations.⁶

The revolutionaries had to come to grips with their history to their own satisfaction before they could open up to the west. The first serious effort by revolutionaries to formulate the history of the revolutionary movement for their own benefit came in the mid-1870s. Pëtr Tkachev, after his celebrated break with Pëtr Lavrov, established himself in Geneva as a publisher and announced plans for a history of the revolutionary movement to be carried out in cooperation with Nikolai Zhukovsky. Declaring that Russian society knew only the "official, state version" of Russian history, the two men claimed they wanted to recount "the history of protests against the authorities, the history of the fifty-year struggle against them, the history of the martyrs for Russian freedom, a history unknown in the west and unknown to Russian society." Zhukovsky, however, soon withdrew, insisting that he wanted nothing to do with the project. Tkachev scornfully responded that Zhukovsky had been unable to comply with the work's "strictly historical character" and had not wanted to observe the condition that no partisan views be introduced. The project died on the drawing board.⁷

In the winter of 1879-80, another revolutionary, Nikolai Morozov, arrived in Switzerland with visions of writing a history concentrating especially on the years 1873-75 (the period of the flowering of the Chaikovtsy in Russia). He asked Pëtr Lavrov for documents, especially concerning the latter's periodical *Vperëd*. Lavrov responded that he had "no written materials." Morozov nevertheless tried to continue his project, but he soon tired of such quiet activity and returned to Russia, where he was arrested on the border. He "sat" in tsarist prisons for the rest of the century and his history remained unfinished.⁸

While the revolutionaries struggled with their conceptions of their history, tsarist authorities pursued their own purposes in this arena. Until the end of the 1860s, the authorities compiled annual summaries of revolutionary disturbances, but in the 1870s they had trouble following the proliferation of activity—things were happening too rapidly. They decided that they needed a history—a reference work—and assigned the task to one of their workers, Arkady M. Malshinsky, a man who had studied in Heidelberg and had personally known Alexander Herzen and Nikolai Ogarev. Malshinsky proceeded to carve out his own small place in the history of the Russian revolution.

When completed, Malshinsky's work, *A Survey of the Social-Revolutionary Movement in Russia*, concentrated on the intellectual history of the revolutionary movement. Relying more on literary sources than on police reports, Malshinsky paid special attention to émigré publishing activities, which he saw as embodying the efforts of people abroad to influence and direct the revolutionary movement at home. Although almost all were "poorly educated," these émigrés were supporting "the system of agitation by means of book propaganda on the soil of the fatherland." In conclusion, Malshinsky argued that the revolutionary movement had sprung from Russia's internal problems and was not a product of foreign influences. He warned that repressive measures by themselves constituted an ineffective response—the government had to deal directly with the roots of Russia's social problems.

First printed in a limited edition of just 150 copies, Malshinsky's work soon became public and in 1880 it was reprinted commercially in St. Petersburg. The revolutionaries naturally scorned this effort by a representative of the government to study the revolutionary movement, but some nevertheless approved of his conclusions.⁹

In 1881 Malshinsky went on to other work. Dispatched to Switzerland by the so-called Holy Brotherhood, an unofficial conservative group, he joined the émigré community in Geneva, choosing the Ukrainian Mikhail Dragomanov as his gateway. Dragomanov, under fire from fellow émigrés for his opposition to terrorism and his outspoken Ukrainian sentiments, seemed particularly vulnerable at this point. Malshinsky helped him to publish a liberal newspaper, *Vol'noe slovo*, which criticized terrorist tactics. Dragomanov was so taken with the newcomer that he even gave him a letter of recommendation to Pëtr Lavrov.¹⁰

Malshinsky tried to avoid attention, but critics quickly learned of his background. At considerable cost to his own credibility, Dragomanov defended him, insisting that Malshinsky had simply been an employee of the archive of the Third Section of the Imperial Chancery (the tsarist police), not an officer of the organization.¹¹ This answer only frustrated and angered Dragomanov's critics; Mikhail Elpidin wrote, "he did not want to believe that [*Vol'noe slovo*] was an organ of Minister of Internal Affairs Ignatiev."¹² Eventually the writer Varlaam Cherkezov declared that Dragomanov had fully earned the title of "scoundrel" (*podlets*).¹³

Through it all Malshinsky tried to keep Dragomanov's spirits up. "I am very happy at the news that the *narodovoltsy* [i.e. members of Narodnaia Volia] have opened a campaign against *Vol'noe slovo*," he wrote to Dragomanov. "I did not start it; but if they want to fight, let's do it!"¹⁴ Although Dragomanov made the newspaper an informative publication—having obtained the papers of Herzen and his printer Stanislaw Tchorzewski, he recounted the story of how Nechaev had obtained control of the Bakhmetev fund—he could not keep the newspaper going after the Holy Brotherhood ended its secret subsidy in the spring of 1883. The head of the Holy Brotherhood, Peter Shuvalov, personally promised Dragomanov that he would provide material help for other literary ventures, but Dragomanov now withdrew from newspaper editing and Malshinsky's personal intervention into the writing of contemporary history ended.¹⁵

In St. Petersburg, the tsarist authorities, unhappy with the Malshinsky's history of the revolutionary movement, decided to make another try and commissioned Prince N. N. Golitsyn to do the job. When he finally concluded his manuscript, the authorities chose to print the tenth chapter, which considered the period 1870-74, as a sample of the work. Produced in a limited edition of fifty copies, Golitsyn's work stuck closely to the police reports that he had been given. Beginning with the death of Herzen in 1870, his account followed the activities of Nechaev, Lavrov, and Mikhail Bakunin in emigration. He tended to emphasize scandals, and his account abounded in factual errors and contradictions. Some fifty percent of the volume consisted of an alphabetical listing of biographies of leading émigrés.¹⁶ Golitsyn's effort apparently did not pass muster; nothing more of his history ever appeared in print.

To some extent, Golitsyn's effort may have been overtaken by the authorities' success in arresting and interrogating terrorists. In the fall of 1881, Iurii Stefanovich, one of the founders of the group *Chernyi peredel* (Black Repartition), fell into the hands of the police. Under questioning, Stefanovich produced his own history of the "Russian revolutionary emigration." Structuring his account around major publications, he explained that Lavrov's *Vperëd* had folded after the breakup of the Chaikovtsy circle; that Tkachev's newspaper *Nabat* had the support only of a few women; and that Elpidin's newspaper *Obshchee delo* was a "commercial" enterprise from which Elpidin was making a profit.¹⁷ In 1880 and 1881, tsarist policy decided in favor of summarizing and distributing all such information in a new series of reports

that soon became an annual publication. These annual reports recounted events and police documents in a narrative fashion.¹⁸

At the same time, Sergei Kravchinsky, using the *nom de plume* of Stepniak, became the first revolutionary to tap the western market for information about the Russian revolutionary movement when his memoir, *Underground Russia, A Gallery of Revolutionary Portraits*, was published in 1881. Kravchinsky was then living in hiding, having fled to the west after killing a police official in 1878. He had undertaken the project as a means of supporting himself while awaiting an opportunity to return to Russia. He wanted to bring "the real truth about the 'nihilists'" to the European public and contracted with the newspaper *Il Pungolo* in Milan, Italy for a series of ten to sixteen articles about the revolutionary movement.

Kravchinsky wanted to characterize "the movement in persons and images." The result was startlingly successful. Upon reading the first installment, an essay on "Dmitro" (Stepniak's fictionalization of Stefanovich), *Il Pungolo's* editor was full of compliments. Naturally, the newspaper did not share all of the author's views, wrote the editor, but would be happy to have the "letters" decorate its columns. (Kravchinsky used the form of letters, ostensibly written in Switzerland, in hopes of confusing tsarist agents as to his actual whereabouts.) The author was delighted with the reception of his work: "I will write a semi-revolutionary thing," he explained to his wife, "and this is very pleasant after all that censored nonsense."¹⁹

Kravchinsky decided to write a total of thirteen essays: two historical studies, eight biographies (four men and four women), and three anecdotes about episodes in the revolutionary movement. In his dreams he envisioned that the work would have a long life: "All these together will constitute very good material for a future historian or a novelist."²⁰ He also looked forward to earning a little money.

The job of writing, however, was not easy. Kravchinsky composed his essays in Italian—he had reportedly learned the language while sitting in an Italian prison a few years earlier. He did not, however, have a good memory for dates and details; he repeatedly had to ask his wife, who had remained in Geneva, to inquire among friends, consult books in a library, and send him publications. In order to get the reaction of his friends, he translated the first two essays into Russian and sent them to his wife to pass around for

comments. Everything had to be done quietly, without arousing attention, lest the police discover his whereabouts.

There being no tradition among the revolutionaries for writing about living comrades, Kravchinsky had to expect criticism, and it came quickly. Some complained that he was making things up; others complained that he was not displaying proper revolutionary enthusiasm. Responding to complaints that he had been too cool in his comments about Stefanovich, who was then sitting in a tsarist prison, Kravchinsky exclaimed, "They want to picture him in gold. His face should shine like Moses's on Mt. Sinai—as Byzantine painters portrayed the saints."

Vera Zasulich exemplified the historian's problem of writing about the living, including friends. She complained to Kravchinsky that memoirs about people should be written only after their deaths and objected to a statement that she had wandered "about the mountains alone at night."²¹ Kravchinsky explained that he had to write at the given moment, whether or not a person was living. The public wanted to read about notable, living persons. As for his account of her meanderings, he declared, "I would not say 'with Dmitri [Stefanovich] or Zhenia [Lev Deich] or just with an amico,' just as I would not say that I rushed in on Annie when she was in bed and that I sat on her bed, etc., because foreigners would not understand this in the Russian way—or else this would necessitate lengthy explanations about the character of our relations within our group, which would be altogether superfluous and indelicate."²² On the other hand, he abandoned his essay about another revolutionary, Olga Liubatovich, when he heard of her arrest in Russia.²³

The first installment of the thirteen essays appeared in *Il Pungolo* on November 8, 1881. The author, designated simply as "Stepniak," instantly became a celebrity, albeit a disguised one. The newspaper trimmed the essays to fit the space in its columns, but Kravchinsky already looked ahead to the separate publication of his full manuscript as a book. He now had a new sense of mission and refused an opportunity to return to Russia, saying that his writing was more important. (Considering Stefanovich's cooperation with the authorities and Morozov's arrest, Kravchinsky probably made a wise choice.) An Italian publisher agreed to print the book in an edition of 1,200 copies, and in order to impress the public with the credentials of the mysterious "Stepniak," Kravchinsky persuaded Pëtr Lavrov to write a short introduction, explaining

that the author was indeed "a person who had directly taken part in the movement he is describing."²⁴

By the spring of 1882, with *La Russia sotterranea* on the market, Kravchinsky was already negotiating for translations in Paris, Vienna, and London. As succeeding editions came out in different languages over the next dozen years, he tinkered with the text to keep it up to date. The profile of Stefanovich, for example, was successively toned down. In the original Italian edition, he spoke of Stefanovich as "amico carissimo," but the English edition of 1883 modified this to "dear friend," and the French edition of 1885 spoke of "mon ami." When the opportunity to publish a Russian edition finally came in the 1890s, Kravchinsky dropped all references to personal friendship with Stefanovich and instead added a page criticizing the man's revolutionary activity.²⁵

The success of his book finally led Kravchinsky to shed his anonymity. As a literary lion he no longer had to fear the long arm of the Tsar, although at times he worried about the reactions of his genteel western friends to the revelation that he had assassinated a government official. Russian diplomats and police agents abroad could only gnash their teeth in frustration as this "bloodthirsty" person was acclaimed a fascinating new literary talent.

Stepniak's romantic, idealistic image of Russian revolutionaries was in turn very influential in winning western public support and sympathy for the revolutionary cause. To be sure, there was criticism—Dragomanov complained about the "encomium, the fervid dithyramb" to the terrorists²⁶—but Kravchinsky had a growing public that wanted more. When the English translation of *Underground Russia* opened up a new market, he began studying English and soon moved to London in order to better exploit his opportunities and fame there.²⁷

However popular Kravchinsky's vignettes were among western readers, the revolutionaries themselves still wanted a history. In 1882, Alphons Thun, a German professor, filled the void. A native of Aachen, Thun had become Ordinarius for History at the University of Basel in 1881. Upon coming across some Russian publications in a local book store, he decided to study events in Russia; when he announced that he would lecture on the Russian revolutionary movement, he drew enough students to fill the largest auditorium in the university. In the summer of 1882, having decided to write

a book, Thun went to Geneva to meet and interview the revolutionary emigration.

It being summertime, Thun found only Elpidin and Dragomanov in residence. Neither of these men enjoyed high standing in the émigré community at the time, but Thun was able to recognize their shortcomings as sources. Although Thun, himself a "liberal," was ready to accept *Vol'noe slovo's* program as the "only relatively correct" one for Russia, he rejected Dragomanov's request that he not mention the fact that Malshinsky had worked for the Third Section of the tsarist police. In response to Dragomanov's insistence that Malshinsky had only been an employee of the agency, Thun declared, "I gainsay to note that the difference is not a great one." Malshinsky, he asserted, had written an essay for the use of the emperor and had received "an appropriate honorarium."²⁸

Other émigrés feared the worst about how Thun might have been influenced and when the professor began the new semester in the fall of 1882, he received some unexpected and unsolicited help in the person of Lev Deich, one of the founders of Russian Marxism. Having learned of Thun's meetings with Elpidin and Dragomanov, Deich, who was living in Basel under an assumed name, visited the historian and struck up a friendship, eventually agreeing to comment on the professor's manuscript.

Since Deich was an illegal alien in Switzerland, he dared not reveal his true identity to the professor. This created an awkward situation when Thun criticized the deceit practiced by revolutionaries in the "Chigirin affair," which had involved misleading the Russian peasantry. Thun commented that the leader of that escapade—who happened to be Deich—had "unfortunately" escaped. Deich, now uncomfortable about his anonymity, thereupon thought it best to reduce the frequency of his visits.

Thun finished his manuscript in January 1883. When his book appeared in the summer, Russian émigrés were not entirely happy with the result. Comparing the Chigirin affair to Nechaevist mystification, Thun criticized the leaders of Chernyi peredel for not having disavowed the use of deceit, especially in calling upon the peasantry to swear a false oath. In attributing terrorism to the activists' frustration, he showed the influence of Deich: "Centralized political terror was rather a direct product of the uncompromising struggle between the despotic government and the

revolutionary youth driven to desperation, in which neither side would shy away from any means."

On the other hand, the émigrés welcomed Thun's understanding of the general development of the revolutionary movement and especially the distinction he made between nihilism and socialism. Nihilism had negative connotations in the west, while socialism was becoming an increasingly acceptable theory. The nihilists, Thun declared, had the personal, individualistic values of an "honorable bourgeois;" they were materialists, arguing that bureaucrats should not take bribes, doctors should heal their patients, etc. These values allowed them, in some cases, to make sizable incomes for themselves. In the 1860s, only a few leaders had a socialist consciousness, but as Thun saw it, socialism had replaced nihilism as the dominant world view after 1869, mainly due to the Geneva émigré publication *Narodnoe delo* and the Paris Commune.²⁹

Once in print, Thun's book developed a life of its own. Appearing in an edition of 1,000 copies, it had little success in western Europe and was not reprinted or translated into any other west European language. Thun had hoped to put out further editions (he asked Dragomanov to read it "with pencil in hand," ready to mark errors), but he unexpectedly died, leaving no other studies of the revolutionary movement save for a few articles in the German periodical press. Russians nevertheless read the book avidly; they criticized it, at times condemned it, but kept on reading it. The book went through a remarkable series of reprintings in eastern Europe up until the time of the 1917 revolution in Russia.

A Polish edition of Thun's history appeared in 1893 which appended Georgii Plekhanov's memories of the development of social democratic thought among the Russians as well as a list of corrections compiled by Lavrov. At the beginning of the twentieth century, both major revolutionary groups in Russia, the Socialist Revolutionaries and the Social Democrats, published their own translations of the work into Russian, together with extensive commentaries. (Translations of sections had already appeared in hectograph.*) In both cases, the editors complained about details and even the tone of Thun's study, but they had to confess that no Russian had yet written anything better, or even comparable.

* A nineteenth-century duplicating apparatus which produced copies on a gelatin surface.
—Ed.

The Socialist Revolutionaries called Thun's study "the only narrative of the Russian revolutionary movement." His effort to collect facts, they declared, made up for his ignorance of the conditions of Russian life. Noting the work's "errors and omissions," the editor of the translation, Leonid Shishko, added his own commentary at the end of each chapter. In the case of the first chapter, this meant an appendix of twenty-seven pages grafted onto Thun's original fourteen pages. Overall, Shishko's commentaries equalled Thun's work, splitting the 342 pages of the tome. On occasion Shishko also censored Thun's text: he eliminated, for example, the account of Alexander Herzen's negative views of the "Young Emigration" of the 1860s and altered the account of the founding of *Vperëd*. He approved, however, of Thun's criticisms of Nechaev.³⁰

When the Social Democrats published a translation by Vera Zasulich in 1903, Deich prefaced it with an account of his own role in the writing of the work. Plekhanov added a critical introduction, stating that the work had no outstanding qualities, original thoughts or insights, and that a more talented and a more sympathetic writer than Thun would have done a better job in capturing and delineating "our revolutionary history." The majesty of the topic itself was responsible for whatever worth the book possessed, having forced Thun, however unwillingly, to recognize the "heroism, self-denial, and sometimes, perhaps, the conspiratorial talent of the Russian revolutionaries." Since, however, no better writer had yet dealt with the topic, Plekhanov concluded apologetically, "we have decided to publish Thun's book, which, despite all its obvious shortcomings, at least has the no less obvious virtue of honesty."

In a rambling but detailed essay that ran to over sixty pages, Plekhanov offered his own version of revolutionary history, criticizing Thun's account of Lavrovism, praising the description of the populist movement of the 1870s, and even taking himself to task for some of his own earlier, pre-Marxist writings. He also had to respond to the specter of the Chigirin affair, explaining that the majority of activists in the movement at the time had approved of the revolutionaries' tactic, although he himself had viewed it negatively. The translation closed with an essay by Stefanovich explaining the Chigirin affair and an account of the revolutionary movement in the 1880s written by D. Koltsov.³¹

In the midst of the revolutionary turmoil of 1905-1906 in Russia, both Russian versions of Thun's work appeared legally in St. Petersburg. The

books now had nostalgic as well as educational value. As one reviewer sighed, "Many people paid for this book with prison and exile." The reviewer complained that Thun had paid too much attention to émigré publications and had not fully understood what was going on within Russia; he criticized the book as having no contemporary significance and claimed it was outdated, superficial, and generally unsatisfactory. Yet he concluded: "Nevertheless, up to now it is the only complete outline of the history of the revolutionary movement of the 1860s, 1870s, and 1880s."³²

When Russia experienced revolution in 1917, Thun's book still served as the basic text for studying the history of the early phases of the revolutionary movement. Both Shishko's and Zasluch's translations were again reprinted in 1917. One reviewer marvelled at how the work had survived the years despite its obvious shortcomings: "Who of us in the days of youth did not read Thun, printed with some blue hectograph ink?" It was now time, the reviewer declared, to replace the work with a scientific, collective study: "But even so, they will not forget Thun. They will remember him as a person, in truth alien to us in spirit and outlook, but as the sincere academic who first related to us the history of the revolutionary movement in Russia, perhaps even involuntarily teaching us to live in struggle and by struggle to justify our own place in history."³³

Thun could hardly have expected his work to survive in this way. He did not live long enough even to experience the first reactions of the Russians. But together with Stepniak's *Underground Russia*, his book constructed the foundations for the study of the revolutionary movement by future generations. In the latter 1880s, a German author who had no special connection with Russian revolutionaries paid special tribute to both authors: "Stepniak not only wields a very skilled pen, but through his artistic form and literary refinement, he knows how to draw a colorful and interesting picture that undoubtedly has its agitational purpose but still, despite all embellishment, contains a mass of concrete features that the impartial historian values." Thun's work was referred to by the same writer as "the first and only, what can be called in a certain sense exhaustive, historical description of nihilism."³⁴

These classic works by Stepniak and Thun sprang from a common root. The Russian revolutionary movement had come of age: it had reached the western public and had even penetrated the halls of academe. Its leaders became celebrities about whom the western public wanted to read, and their new adherents wanted to know what had gone on before. Stepniak, the

Russian, offered entranced western readers an idealized image of Russian revolutionaries. Thun, the German, provided Russians with the basic history they wanted and needed, but which they themselves did not yet have the perspective to write. Interestingly enough, Stepniak's fictionalized version has outlived Thun's more academic volume.

In the mid- and late 1880s, contemporary history of the Russian revolutionary movement languished as a field of activity. Although the assassination of Tsar Alexander II seemed a victory for Narodnaia Volia, it turned out to be a pyrrhic one. The group had no program with which to follow up the assassination, and tsarist repression soon reduced revolutionaries in Russia to performing "small deeds." In the absence of new developments, moreover, the police seemed satisfied with their system of annual summaries of their investigations and undertook no new initiatives to study the history and development of the revolutionary movement. There was no commercial market for such writings in Russia and the western public no longer seemed so intrigued, being satisfied with stories of "human interest."

The revolutionaries themselves seemed confused during this period. Traditionally, literary activity among émigrés flourished at times when the revolutionary movement at home ebbed, and vice-versa. The flurry of activity by Narodnaia Volia in 1878-81 had undermined émigré writing at just the time the western public had become interested. In the wake of the tsarist regime's repressions, many intellectual revolutionaries fled to the west, but they found that the interest of the western public had waned. Now seeking refuge, erstwhile terrorists were further shorn of their immunity from criticism by fellow Russians, while at the same time they themselves were unsure of their purposes and programs. As one prominent *narodovolets*, Lev Tikhomirov, later put it, "I went abroad not to influence Russia, not for any other reason but that I was defeated."³⁵ Terrorism had produced controversial results, and the terrorists had no strong ideology to fall back on. As a result they produced little themselves.

Following Kravchinsky's example, Tikhomirov wanted to write biographies of his revolutionary comrades: "I would write essays about the events and people of 1870-80. I loved these comrades very much. To save their memory from oblivion seemed to me something of a holy task." As a general work on revolutionary history, he published a *Calendar of Narodnaia Volia for 1883*, offering a morsel of revolutionary history for each day of the year, together with a literary section, a reference section, and a number of

appendices. Lavrov contributed a sizeable essay on the intellectual history of Russian socialism. Tikhomirov calculated that he had made a little money on the publication, and looked forward to making more, but failed in his hope of making it an annual publication.³⁶

For all his literary talent, Tikhomirov typified the problem of participant as historian. (It can be argued that Kravchinsky by this time was more a writer than a revolutionary.) He felt the need to protect both himself and his operations—he could not tell all. In the summer of 1883 Sergei Degaev, a minor but well-known figure on the revolutionary scene, arrived in Geneva and confessed to Tikhomirov that he was an undercover police spy. Tikhomirov took it upon himself to send Degaev back to Russia to kill the tsarist police chief, Sudeikin, but kept the secret to himself. When Degaev's intrigues became known, Tikhomirov came under fire for his "dictatorial" practices: the historian/participant loses credibility when he is discovered to be covering his own trail.

Tikhomirov was atypical, however, in the course he finally chose to follow. His efforts to find a western reading public à la Kravchinsky failed, especially after 1887, when France and Russia began edging toward a diplomatic rapprochement. Distraught about his personal financial problems in emigration and crushed at learning that few in Russia were reading his writings, he succumbed to the pressure of tsarist police agents.

Now directed by the *Zagranichnaia agentura*, the "Foreign Agency" ensconced in the basement of the Russian embassy in Paris,³⁷ the police recognized their prey's vulnerability. "Writing Russian revolutionary works abroad pays poorly," wrote one police report, "and Tikhomirov constantly lacked even the basic essentials."³⁸ The head of the Foreign Agency, P. I. Rachkovsky, said that Tikhomirov "in general has the appearance of a wretched and psychologically ill coward," and resolved to pursue his prey "literally to insanity." When Tikhomirov finally yielded and wrote a book *Why I Ceased to be a Revolutionary*, tsarist agents arranged its publication. The former revolutionary soon returned to Russia where his son eventually became a high-ranking official of the Orthodox church.³⁹

Tikhomirov's defection had little effect on his compatriots. Stepniak-Kravchinsky wrote of him, "Well, he is dead and buried. Much can be said about his treason (in my opinion, made not for money but out of despicable flaccidity of temper and utter absence of love for freedom as such,

which is not uncommon among the feckless Russians of a certain class to which Tikhomirov always belonged), but the less said of it the better."⁴⁰ Other émigrés, just as impoverished as Tikhomirov, chose to continue their struggles.

The search for an ideological framework into which one could fit the revolutionary struggle resulted eventually in the victory of Marxism, but the struggle was long and slow. The doctrine seemed irrelevant to contemporary Russia, and émigrés living in London, from Alexander Herzen through Pëtr Lavrov to Kravchinsky, seemed immune to the teachings of their neighbors Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels. When a group of Russian intellectuals in Switzerland banded together in 1883 under the leadership of Georgii Plekhanov to form a Marxist group under the name "The Liberation of Labor," they commanded little respect. Even Friedrich Engels was reserved in his first reactions to this group.⁴¹

"The Liberation of Labor" announced its existence when it purchased a print shop in Geneva in September 1883. For the moment, however, the group concentrated more on adapting Marxist theory to Russian conditions than publishing any kind of historical work. Plekhanov's *Sotsializm i politicheskaia bor'ba* (Socialism and the Political Struggle), the group's first original publication, like Plekhanov's later works such as *Nashe raznogiassia* (Our Differences), was more a polemic with the revolutionaries than a history. Most émigrés were at first scornful of the group's work. Nikolai Zhukovsky reportedly joked, "You are not revolutionaries! You are students of sociology!"⁴²

In the mid-1880s, Kravchinsky's work still dominated the western market. His writings, emphasizing human interest stories, served as a beacon for contemporary historians of the Russian revolution. Living in London after 1884, he made a comfortable living from his royalties—to other émigrés he appeared rich—and made a point of keeping good relations with all wings of the Russian émigré community, as well as with foreigners interested in the Russian scene. He became a friend of Friedrich Engels and in 1889 even helped Plekhanov to come to London to meet the socialist patriarch. Foreigners studying Russian affairs came to consider it *de rigueur* to visit Kravchinsky, or at least to respond to his writings.

Among the pilgrims to Kravchinsky's quarters in London was the American George Kennan, who had burst onto the literary scene in the fall of 1866 with a series of articles in the American periodical *The Century Magazine*

which featured graphic and vivid accounts of life among the political exiles in Siberia. Russian émigrés welcomed his work, although they complained that he made his subjects look more like liberals than socialists. As quickly as his essays appeared, émigrés translated and reproduced them.⁴³

In 1885, at the time of his departure for Russia to study the prison system, Kennan had been a respected but unspectacular journalist in the United States, holding the post of night manager of the Washington office of the Associated Press. He had visited Russia before, in the 1860s, and had published a book entitled *Tent Life in Siberia* that had brought him modest note. After his trip in 1885-86, however, he became a celebrity; flooded with invitations to lecture, he resigned from his post with the Associated Press and became a free-lancer, calculating that he could clear twenty thousand dollars annually, after expenses, just by lecturing.⁴⁴

From the start Kennan intended to write a book, but his magazine articles constituted his means to the end. His contract with the Century Company, signed on May 1, 1885, spoke of a "graphic, picturesque account of exile life." Kennan proposed "to collect materials for a more vivid and striking picture, and at the same time, a truer picture of the lives of the exiles during their journey to Siberia." He promised the magazine "twelve papers upon the subject hereinbefore indicated of Siberian exile life," and these would contain "the choicest and ripest fruits of the expedition herein set forth." The magazine agreed to pay a total of six thousand dollars for the work.⁴⁵

In the past Kennan had publicly discounted stories of the exiles' suffering, so he had little trouble in obtaining the cooperation of the tsarist authorities for his expedition. He expected that the Russians might try to guide his investigation "into safe channels," and he explained, "That is all right. I have no fault to find with their precautions. They have been so much misrepresented that they naturally feel a little afraid of foreign writers." Nevertheless he would not allow himself to be led: "I shall find out what I wish to know all the same. The official string is by no means the only string to my Siberian bow."⁴⁶ In contrast to many other foreign visitors to Russia at this time, Kennan spoke the language.

Kennan's conversion to an advocate of the exiles' cause began with his arrival in Siberia. Writing from Tiumen' in June 1885 he declared, "The forwarding prison is, I must frankly say, the worst prison I have ever seen, and if the places where they keep the exiles generally further on in Siberia are as

bad as this one, I shall have to take back some things that I have said and written about the exile system." In Semipalatinsk he first spoke with prisoners: "The revolutionaries whose acquaintance I have made here are not at all such people as I expected to see. They are more reasonable, better educated, less fanatical, and have far more character than the Nihilists I had pictured to myself." In the middle of August he declared, "I defy the Government to prevent me from making a thorough study not only of the life of the political exiles, but of the inner history of the whole Russian revolutionary movement." A month later he wrote, "I should like now to put on leg-fetters and the exile dress and march two or three days with a party."⁴⁷

In July 1886 Kennan made a brief trip to London, where he met Kravchinsky and Pëtr Kropotkin. Kravchinsky was delighted to hear the American's account of having made "more friends than ever before in his entire life." Kennan, Kravchinsky declared, "has now radically changed his views and fully confirms everything we have written in our books. Only his facts are newer and more copious than what we can command." When Kennan pledged to continue to expose the evils of the Russian prison system, Kravchinsky exclaimed, "Seeing what an impression the Russians made on this good but strongly prejudiced man, I felt pride for my people, for my country."⁴⁸

Once his series of articles began to appear in *The Century Magazine*, Kennan had a new career. His lecture topics included descriptions of camp life in Siberia and the operation of a convict mine: "The Great Siberian Road" and "Vagabond Life." He illustrated his talks with lantern slides, on occasion donning prison garb and irons and singing camp songs. His lecture tours ranged up and down the east coast of the United States, from Boston to Washington, and stretched into the Middle West, reaching Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Iowa. Inspired by his stories, audiences invariably wanted to know how they could help the unfortunate exiles and contribute to the revolutionary movement.

Kravchinsky took great pains to nurture this entry into the minds of the American public, and he carefully responded to Kennan's criticisms of revolutionary activities. After the abortive assassination attempt against the Tsar in March 1887, the American expressed regret that "the Russian revolutionists have resorted again to the 'terroristic' form of activity." Kravchinsky cautiously declared, "We disagree of course upon theoretical matters, i.e., upon the use of violent means," and then went on to declare, "I'll

confess to you that had I some disposable funds of my own personal property, I would never give it to the Russian dynamiters."

Appealing to what he considered the natural leanings of a western liberal, Kravchinsky instead emphasized the printed word, speaking of "creating a free Russian press abroad" and declaring that just £500 a year could make émigré publishing "a powerful factor in the struggle and there is no limit to its extension." Arguing that "the whole of the Russian revolutionary party is united nowadays upon the sole question of political freedom," he particularly recommended *Svobodnaia Rossiia*, a liberal newspaper published in Switzerland, for Kennan's consideration. This newspaper, he opined, "should not be too radical for Americans to support, but if needs be we could create a more moderate one."⁴⁹

Both Kravchinsky and Kennan had to respond to opponents who challenged their good faith and their judgment. Prominent among Kennan's American critics was Colonel Charles A. de Arnaud, who wrote, "Generally speaking when such a hardened criminal, after some years' residence in Siberia, falls in with a certain class of magazine writers, he calls himself a 'political prisoner,' and the magazine writer immediately heralds it to the American world that here is another suffering patriot." He called Kennan an "imitator and disciple" of Stepniak, and had no better words for the Russian: "The magazine writer and the platform lecturer on 'Siberian horrors' laud Mr. Stepniak as a patriot, but his sole claim to that title in their judgment is his past criminal conduct and his supplying them at present with details of manufactured Russian outrages." Stepniak, de Arnaud declared, should follow Tikhomirov's example and repent.⁵⁰ After Kennan had sent him one of de Arnaud's articles, Kravchinsky commented, "I read with much amusement de Arnaud's rubbish, wondering at the same time at his impudence. He must have been drunk when he wrote it, or he is a downright scoundrel to lie that way."⁵¹

Echoing de Arnaud for the British reading public was an English geographer, Harry de Windt, Fellow of the Royal Botanic Society, who had previously published a travelogue *From Peking to Calais by Land* (London, 1887). When Kennan's articles began to arouse discussion in England, de Windt, aided by sympathetic Russian officials, carried out his own investigation of life in Siberia. His book on the topic appeared at the beginning of 1892 and, notwithstanding his disclaimers that he was not "entering into a paper war with Mr. Kennan," there could be no doubt of his intentions. "The credulity

of the English," a Russian official reportedly exclaimed, "has always amused me. They will believe an American journalist but not their own countryman." Charging that the Russian revolutionaries "were currently maintaining their headquarters in Geneva and other European cities," de Windt suggested that the prisoners, who in any case deserved their punishment, were perhaps better off than the so-called free population in the eastern reaches of the Russian Empire.⁵²

Behind de Windt stood the formidable figure of Madame Olga Novikova, or Novikoff, whom the noted English journalist Wickham Steed called "the MP for Russia." Madame Novikoff served as something of a lobbyist for the tsarist regime in London, and she pursued her work vigorously. "That damn Stepniak," she wrote to Tikhomirov, "is stirring up everyone, and everyone in England is against everything that is dear to Russia. It is just a shame, a shame." The British, she complained, should not allow "very young people, even children," to "discuss and twaddle on politics instead of studying their grammars and their geography." Deploring British ignorance of Russia—"I once said, and I believe it to be true, that as a rule the only thing known in England about Russians is that they take lemon with their tea"—she did the best she could to combat Kravchinsky's influence.⁵³

Despite their personal good relations, Kravchinsky was in the long run disappointed with Kennan. Although the American helped him in arranging an American lecture tour in 1889-90, Kravchinsky felt that Kennan first of all was concerned with exploiting the Russian situation for his own commercial interests. Kennan was undoubtedly cool to some of the projects that Kravchinsky's camp suggested. He backed away hastily, for example, from Feliks Volkhovsky's suggestion that he use his contacts within the American mission in St. Petersburg to smuggle revolutionary literature into Russia. "Only you and I, Sergei, our trusted agent in Petersburg, and those diplomats who have decided to help you would know about it," wrote Volkhovsky. Kennan's cooperation with Kravchinsky was sincere but limited.⁵⁴

Kravchinsky's efforts to balance the contradictory worlds of western liberalism and Russian revolutionism more than once led him into trouble. In contrast to his suggestion to Kennan that émigrés could found a publication suitable to American sensitivities, he assured Lavrov that he understood the inherent problems in taking money from westerners for Russian revolutionary publications.⁵⁵ Yet, eager to assure the western public of the unity of the revolutionaries, he told an audience that "as a supplement to social democracy,

anarchism is a beautiful thing"—to which a Russian exclaimed, "There is an expansive Russian nature!"⁵⁶ On the other hand, he scolded Volkhovsky when the latter wore a convict's uniform while speaking to an English audience; such behavior, he declared, might be acceptable for an American like Kennan, who did not understand the Russian sense of dignity, but it was unworthy of a Russian.⁵⁷

Russian revolutionaries also looked warily at Kravchinsky's drift toward constitutionalism and away from any justification of revolutionary violence. They objected strongly when he called assassination a contradiction of the principle of majority rule.⁵⁸ In origin, revolutionary violence had been considered "political" action, perhaps even constitutionalism, as opposed to the "social" revolution that looked to change the social and economic relationships in society. Probably influenced by the western liberals to whom he was appealing, Kravchinsky seemed to have broadened his understanding of "political" action, but at the same time he clouded his insight into the thinking of contemporary revolutionaries in Russia.

By the 1890s Kravchinsky had left the writing of contemporary history for more practical tasks.⁵⁹ He had long argued that the periodical press and its utmost expression, the daily newspaper, constituted the major propaganda innovation of the latter part of the nineteenth century. The growth of the European reading public made the periodical press an awesome weapon for carrying one's message to the people and educating the public; he was sure that a periodical appealing to opposition elements in Russia could yet achieve the popularity and significance once enjoyed by Herzen's *Kolokol*.⁶⁰ He therefore dedicated himself much more to propaganda and the dissemination of information than to writing what might be called history.

In the early 1890s social unrest in Russia grew as the result of bad weather and a crop failure. After a ten-year nap, the revolutionary movement began to revive. Arguments continued about the possibilities for reform or revolution, as well as over the models for revolution. In a way, these discussions contributed to historical study. The so-called Old Narodovoltsy, now located in Paris, insisted that their party's program was still valid: "We are sure that our comrades in Russia will organize a militant revolutionary party in accord with this program."

To explain their party's historical mission, the Old Narodovoltsy launched two series of publications. The first, entitled "Materials for the

History of the Russian Social-Revolutionary Movement," would consist of seventeen titles, and the other, "Principles of Theoretical Socialism and Their Application to Russia," would consist of six titles. Each title would be the work of a single author and would appear as soon as it was ready, regardless of where it stood in the original listing of the series.⁶¹

The series entitled "Materials" constituted a multi-volume history of the Russian revolutionary movement. Beginning with an introductory volume on "history, socialism, and the Russian movement," it was to include contributions on Russian society before the Decembrists as well as on the Decembrists, the period of Nicholas I, socialism and the era of reforms, Herzen, Chernyshevsky, Bakunin, the decade of 1863-73, the populists of the 1870s, *Zemlia i Volia* (Land and Freedom), Narodnaia Volia, workers' organizations in the early 1880s, nationalism and socialism, factions in 1885-92, the foreign press on the revolutionary movement, and finally, "Conclusions on the history of socialism in Russia."

According to one of the senior editors, the older generation of activists hoped that this series would educate the younger generation, especially "the good but naive people" who advocated "childish bombism."⁶² In all, only four titles, comprising five volumes of the "Materials," appeared, all printed in Geneva, and the Old Narodovoltsy added an irregular periodical, *S rodiny i na rodinu* (From the Motherland and to the Motherland), to each volume as it appeared. Apart from a lengthy essay by Lavrov, the volumes focused on specific aspects of the revolutionary past rather than providing an overall survey of the past and present of the revolutionary movement.⁶³

Financially, the series did modestly well. In the course of 1893 the group took in almost 2,300 francs and paid out 1,930. It made almost 400 francs on sales, and, including the money left on hand at the beginning of the year, the series showed a positive balance of almost 1,000 francs at the beginning of 1894. An account made in 1895 showed a continued surplus amounting to almost 1,150 francs. The bulk of the income, however, came through donations: sales represented only 587 francs of the 5,582 francs listed as income.⁶⁴

In the early 1890s, two streams of historical writing began to emerge among participants in the revolutionary process. One emphasized details, personalities, intrigues, and even anniversaries; the other concentrated on development, growth, and prediction. One sought to explain and elucidate

the past, the other to prepare for the future. They meshed in a teleological whole that could not, and would not, consider the prospect of the revolutionary process going awry and ending in anything but human happiness.

The model for the "predictive" or "estimative" historical ideas was the work of Georgii Plekhanov, who, after a decade of work, had completed his mission of adapting Marxist thought to Russia. His essay *On the Question of the Development of the Monistic View of History*, published under the pseudonym of Beltov, appeared legally in Russia during the winter of 1894-95. The work had a far greater impact on the revolutionary movement than any terrorist bomb had yet wrought. Commenting on the work's influence in Russia, Lenin later declared that it had "reared a whole generation of Russian Marxists;" an émigré observer exclaimed, "In the Oberstrasse [the Russian quarter of Zurich], the Beltov influenza has not yet abated." In the latter 1890s, Marxism was to exert ever growing influence on the Russian revolutionary movement, undermining the lingering strength of the populist ideas of the 1870s.⁶⁵

The model for historical writing which sought to elucidate the past of the revolutionary movement was the work of Vladimir L. Burtsev, a representative of the younger generation. Twenty-five or twenty-six years of age in 1888 and a member of the narodovoltsy, he had escaped from Siberia and come to Geneva where, in his words, his "responsible role in the revolutionary movement" began. Burtsev was to win considerable renown as a historian and editor with an ardent passion for ferreting out government spies inside the revolutionary movement. His politics were confused: he claimed to be a socialist advocating a broad coalition of anti-government forces, but many considered him a liberal reformer. When Plekhanov confronted him at the founding congress of the Second Socialist International in Paris in 1889, Burtsev tried to assure him that "I am also socialist," to which Plekhanov angrily responded, "I am not an also socialist. I am a socialist." Plekhanov even challenged Burtsev to a duel.⁶⁶

In a way, Burtsev could claim to be the heir to Kravchinsky's historical estate, as he had taken over a major historical project from the latter. In 1894 Egor Lazarev, a veteran of the populist movement, came to Europe from America with money in his pocket in hopes of financing a publication that would unite the disparate émigré forces. When that project failed, Lazarev turned to Kravchinsky with the idea of using the money to publish a revolutionary calendar in the style of Tikhomirov's calendar for 1883.

Kravchinsky instead used the funds for what he announced as an "anthology on the history of the political movements in Russia in the last century." Although Kravchinsky was nominally the editor of the publication, Burtsev, now working with Kravchinsky's Russian Free Press Fund in London, put the anthology together.⁶⁷ Published in two volumes, the work, entitled *In One Hundred Years*, documented the development of the revolutionary movement throughout the course of the nineteenth century, with the second volume offering a year-by-year (1801-89) chronicle of arrests, trials, executions, escapes, assassinations, obituaries, and literary monuments.⁶⁸

The title page of the publication testified to the intrigue which lay behind the book's publication, listing Burtsev as compiler, "with the editorial participation of S. M. Kravchinsky (Stepniak)." After Kravchinsky's death in December 1895, Burtsev claimed the work as his own, but the directors of the fund, due to personal disputes with him, refused to accept the anthology as an official part of their series. When Burtsev objected to this decision, they relented, but nevertheless insisted on adding an "editorial introduction." Burtsev again objected, arguing, "There can be no talk of editorial introductions since *only* Stepniak was an 'editor' for us; I agreed to his editorship and only to his." In the end the book appeared with a "publisher's introduction," explaining the collective effort behind the publication.⁶⁹

By this time the intrusion of tsarist authorities into the affairs of the emigration were so complicated and convoluted that tsarist funds had even helped publish Burtsev's anthology. A police agent whom the Foreign Agency had planted within Kravchinsky's group made a considerable contribution to the project; once in print, the police purchased at least thirty copies of the anthology for their own use, helping it to become one of the fund's bestsellers.

The year 1895 constituted a turning point in the history of the Russian revolutionary movement in a number of ways and thus provides a meaningful end point for this account. The historiography of the Russian revolutionary movement was leaving what might be called its *incunabula* stage; Plekhanov's Marxist ideas began to win wider and wider support, and in the spring of 1885, V. I. Lenin came west to Switzerland to meet him. The year also marked the passing of generations, witnessing a remarkable series of deaths: Nikolai Zhukovsky, Mikhail Dragomanov, Friedrich Engels, and then in December, Sergei Kravchinsky, who according to witnesses was hit by a train while walking and reading a book.

As the revolutionary movement changed, its historiography also necessarily changed, and in the freer atmosphere of Russia after 1905 there was finally a Russian market for the products of this historiography. Ideologues still fashioned history to fit their procrustean beds and government agents still pushed their rubles into the process, but a more thorough and balanced historiography now had a chance to grow. Oddly enough, Thun's history retained its value, be it nostalgic or inspirational. At the same, the popularity of his history gave rise to a desire on the part of the revolutionaries themselves to have a balanced history of their movement—one not necessarily committed to their goals.

Early historiography of the Russian revolutionary movement offers considerable food for thought. Stepniak and Thun stand out as the major authors of the period. Thun's study had the greater impact on the revolutionary movement itself, but Americans today still read and enjoy Stepniak-Kravchinsky's vignettes as an important source for the study of the 1870s, while Thun's study is all but forgotten. Thun's history lacks the style and intimacy of Stepniak's account and, while Stepniak's fictionalized insights into personalities enjoy a certain timeliness beyond questions of accuracy in detail, Thun's work is heavily burdened by the time and place of its writing.

On the other hand, the long life and popularity that Thun's work enjoyed among Russians raises other issues. People involved in the revolutionary movement could not free themselves of their passions and hopes; accordingly, they could not approve of a history that did not have a certain proto-socialist realist spirit in depicting the brilliant future that awaited their efforts. Until Plekhanov tamed Marxist theory, the Russians did not possess the intellectual framework within which to write the teleological history they wanted. Even then, they could not carry out the task, as Plekhanov indicated in his introduction to the Social Democrats' republication of Thun in 1903, perhaps because they were still unsure of where they were headed.

Thun's accomplishment consisted in having provided an implacable mirror that the revolutionaries disliked, but had to face in order to understand themselves. They wanted to appear differently from that which they saw in Thun's mirror, yet they recognized the truth in this reflection and could not look away. Ideally, perhaps, the contemporary historian who dreams of immortality should aim at a combination of Thun's balance and Stepniak's intimate acquaintance with his subject.

ENDNOTES*

1. Cf. Norman Mailer, *The Prisoner of Sex* (Boston: Little Brown & Co., 1971), p. 36: "It was always necessary to remind oneself that a series of such interviews with Lenin, Martov, Plekhanov, and Trotsky in the days of *Iskra* would have been likely to produce a set of stories about short stocky men in rumpled clothes and unhealthy beards who seemed to talk with a great deal of certainty in words which were hard to follow. Obviously no journalist could have done the job—it was work which called for a novelist.."

On the treatment of the revolutionary movement in contemporary Russian literature, see N. I. Prutskov, *Russkaia literatura XIX v. i revoliutsionnaia Rossiia* (Moscow, 1979). Alexander Solzhenitsyn's *Lenin in Zurich* (New York: Farrar, Strauss and Giroux, 1976) offers a more recent example of the novelist's craft in writing revolutionary history.

2. *Gegenwart*, 19: 273. For an example of foreign press coverage, see T. A. Zavalova, "Krizis rossiiskogo samoderzhavii v osveshchënii gazety 'Taims.' Fevral' 1880—mart 1881 gg.," in *Vtoraia revoliutsionnaia situatsiia v Rossii. Otkliki na stranitsakh pressy* (Moscow, 1981), pp. 100-22.

3. On Elpidin, see Alfred Erich Senn, "M. K. Elpidin: Revolutionary Printer," *The Russian Review*, 41: 11-23. For examples of "disinformation," see *Nyneshnee sostoianie Rossii i zagranichnye russkie deiateli* (Berlin: Behr, 1862); *Nashi bezobrazniki zagranitse* (Munich, Sept. 1872), handwritten brochure in the International Institute of Social History, PS-R 575/6a; *Moskovskie vedemosti*, nos. 12-14. January 15-18, 1873.

4. Nikolai Morozov, *Povesti moei zhizni*, 1:451-457. Adam Ulam used this incident in his *In the Name of the People* (New York, 1979), p. 256, to question just how much of the reportage in revolutionary literature was in fact fiction, but he did not complete the story about the editorial board's being forced to explain itself.

* Abbreviations used in these footnotes are as follows:

GE Sapir, Boris, ed., *Lavrov: Gody emigratsii*, 2 vols. (Dordrecht, 1974).

GOT *Gruppa "Osvobozhdenie truda,"* 6 vols. (Moscow-Leningrad, 1923-1928).

LNP *Literaturnoe nasledstvo Plekhanova*, 8 vols. (Moscow, 1934-1940).

MERR *K. Marks, F. Engel's i revoliutsionnaia Rossiia* (Moscow, 1967).

5. Cf. Philip Pomper, *Sergei Nechaev* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University, 1979), pp. 154-57.

6. J.B. Arnaudo, *Le nihilisme et les nihilistes* (Paris, n.d.); also Pierre Frede, *La Russie et le nihilisme* (Paris, 1880). Frede declared (p. 280) that "Le nihilisme est sorti de la Pologne" and that Russia was vindictive, ferocious, and cruel.

7. Nikolai Zhukovskii and Pëtr Tkachev, *Ob "iavleienie o knige "Politicheskie dvizheniia v Rossii s 1825-1875 gg."* (Geneva, 1875). See also *Katorga i ssylka*, 1933/11: 61-62, 74-76; and *Vperëd*, no. 25, stlb. 31-32; *Nabat*, no. 2-3, January/February 1876.

8. See Pëtr Lavrov's correspondence with Morozov, TsGAOR, 1762/3/79. In fact, Valerii Smirnov kept *Vperëd*'s files and the International Institute of Social History in Amsterdam eventually published them almost a century later. The segment of the history that Morozov completed appeared in Boris Itenberg, ed., *Revoliutsionnoe narodnichestvo 70-x godov XIX veka*, 2 vols. (Moscow, 1964), 1:202-40.

9. [Arkady M. Mal'shinskii], *Obzor sotsial'no-revoliutsionnogo dvizheniia v Rossii* (St. Petersburg, 1880). See also *Iz arkhiva P. B. Aksel'roda* (Berlin, 1925), p. 45.

10. TsGAOR, 1762/4/167. See also *Iz arkhiva P. B. Aksel'roda*, p. 25; V. Bogucharskii, *Iz istorii politicheskoi bor'by v 70-kh i 80-kh gg. XIX v.* (Moscow, 1912), pp. 394, 411.

11. See *Iz arkhiva Aksel'roda*, p. 46; Vera Zasulich, *Vospominaniia* (Moscow, 1931), p. 101; and also her "Vol'noe slovo i emigratsiia," *Sovremmenik*, 1913/6:182.

12. Elpidin to Zemfire Ralli, October 21, 1881, TsGALI, 1019/1/127.

13. V. A. Cherkezov, *Dragomanov iz Gadiacha v bor'be s russkimi sotsialistami* (Geneva, 1881); see also correspondence between Cherkezov and Dragomanov, in TsGALI, 1065/4/5, and *Iz arkhiva Aksel'roda*, pp. 59, 73-74.

14. Letter of June 11, 1882, TsGALI, 1065/4/5.

NC	Boris Nicolaevsky collection, Hoover Institution, Stanford University, Stanford, California.
OVD	<i>Obzor vazhneishikh doznanii po delam o gosudarstvennykh prestupleniakh proizvodivshikhsia v zhandarmskikh upravleniiaakh Imperii</i> , 25 volumes, covering the period from 1881-1900.
TsGALI	Moscow, Tsentral'nyi gosudarstvennyi arkhiv literatury i iskusstva.
TsGAOR	Moscow, Tsentral'nyi gosudarstvennyi arkhiv Oktiabr'skoi Revoliutsii.

15. See correspondence between Dragomanov and Malshinsky and Shuvalov in TsGALI, 1065/4/5.

16. N. N. Golitsyn, *Istoriia sotsial'no-revoliutsionnogo dvizheniia v Rossii 1861-1881 gg. Glava desiataia*. (St. Petersburg, 1887).

17. See GOT, 4: 280-92.

18. *Obzor vazhneishikh doznanii po delam o gosudarstvennykh prestupleniakh proizvodivshikhsia v zhandarmskikh upravleniakh Imperii* [OVD], 25 volumes, covering the period from 1881-1900. See also the peculiar *Khronika sotsialisticheskogo dvizheniia v Rossii 1878-1887, Ofitsial'nyi otchët* (Moscow, 1906), which purports to be a translation of a French book picked up in a Leipzig bookstore.

19. K. A. Taratuta, *Podpol'naia Rossiia. Sud'ba knigi S. M. Stepniak-Kravchinskogo* (Moscow, 1967), p. 54.

20. Ibid., pp. 48-49.

21. "All night long, often until sunrise, she wanders alone among the wild mountains of Switzerland, or rambles on the banks of its immense lakes." Stepniak, *Underground Russia*, 2d ed. (New York, 1883), p. 109.

22. GOT 1:228-30.

23. A student in Zurich in the early 1870s, Liubatovich had more recently become Morozov's wife and had borne him a child. See O. S. Liubatovich, *Dalekoe i nedavnee* (Moscow, 1930).

24. Kravchinsky to Lavrov, in TsGAOR, 1762/4/425.

25. Taratuta, *Podpol'naia Rossiia*, pp. 147-51.

26. *Vol'noe slovo*, August 1, 1882.

27. On émigré life in London, see James W. Hulse, *Revolutionists in London: A Study of Five Unorthodox Socialists* (Oxford, 1970), pp. 1-52.

28. Correspondence in TsGALI, 1065/4/5 (1).

29. A. Thun, *Geschichte der revolutionären Bewegungen in Rußland* (Basel, 1883). On the *Narodnoe delo* group, see Woodford McClellan, *Revolutionary Exiles: The Russians in the First International and the Paris Commune* (London, 1970).

- 1903).
30. A. Tun, *Istoriia revoliutsionnogo dvizheniia v Rossii*, L. E. Shishko, ed., (n.p., 1903).
31. A. Tun, *Istoriia revoliutsionnykh dvizhenii v Rossii* (n.p., 1903).
32. V. Vodovozov, in *Byloe*, 1906/7: 307.
33. Evgenii Kolosov in *Byloe*, 1917: 5-6: 354-65.
34. Karl Oldenberg, *Der russische Nihilismus von seinen Anfängen bis zur Gegenwart* (Leipzig, 1888).
35. Lev Tikhomirov, *Vospominaniia* (Moscow, 1925), p. 146.
36. See Lev Tikhomirov, et al., *Sof'ia L'vovna Perovskaia* (Geneva, 1882); Tikhomirov, *Vospominaniia*, p. 140; *Kalendar' Narodnoi voli na 1883 god* (Geneva, 1883). Elpidin, always seeking ways of making money himself, later reissued the calendar as *Kalendar' Narodnoi voli na 1898 god*.
37. See Tikhomirov, *Vospominaniia*, pp. 187-89; Abbott Gleason, "The Emigration and Apostasy of Lev Tikhomirov," *Slavic Review*, 26 (1967): 419-22.
38. OVD, 12:11.
39. I. S. Vakhrushev, "Russkie revoliutsionery i zagranichnaia agentura tsarizma v 79-80-kh g. XIX v.," in *Osvoboditel'noe dvizhenie v Rossii*, 8 (Saratov, 1978): 68-89; Lev Tikhomirov, *Pochemu ia perestal byt' revoliutsionerom* (Paris, 1888). See also Richard Wortman, *The Crisis of Russian Populism* (London, 1967), pp. 179-80.
40. Letter (in English) to George Kennan, November 9, 1988, Kennan papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. [hereinafter, the Kennan papers]. Tikhomirov, it might be noted, came from a long line of Orthodox priests; his father worked as a military doctor.
41. See MERR, 508-516. On the problem of incorporating non-Marxist émigrés like Kravchinsky into subsequent Marxist historiography, see Alfred Erich Senn, "Lighting the Road Behind: Soviet Historiography of the Russian Revolutionary Movement," in *Soviet Society & Culture: Essays in Honor of Vera S. Dunham*, Terry L. Thompson and Richard Sheldon, eds. (Boulder: Westview, 1988), pp. 195-205.
42. GOT, 1:11.
43. For an interesting account of Russian reactions, see E. I. Melamed, *Dzhordzh Kennan protiv tsarizma* (Moscow, 1981).

44. Based on the Kennan papers.

45. See Kennan's correspondence with R. W. Gilder, editor of *Century Magazine*, in the Kennan papers.

46. Letter of May 30, 1885, written in St. Petersburg, to Rosewell Smith, President of the Century Company, the Kennan papers.

47. See his letters to Smith, June 16/28, July 16, August 14, and September 14, 1865, the Kennan papers.

48. S. M. Stepniak-Kravchinskii, *V londonskoi emigratsii*, V. F. Zakharina, ed. (Moscow, 1968), pp. 200, 201. Donald Senese's assertions that Kravchinsky's friend Feliks Volkhovsky had played a special role in influencing Kennan to be sympathetic to the revolutionary movement and that the Russians in London had had "a hand not only in the writing of *Siberia and the Exile System* but in the promotion of the book and its author," would seem exaggerated. See Donald J. Senese, *S. M. Stepniak-Kravchinskii: The London Years* (Newtonville, Mass.: Oriental Research Partners, 1987), pp. 49, 93.

49. Kennan to Kravchinsky, April 5, 1887; Kravchinsky letters, all in English, of March 23, March 29, and November 9, 1888; Kennan papers. Symptomatic of the category into which Kravchinsky placed Kennan was his offer, "I will also put you in communication with Prof. Dragomanov, who is a great friend of mine and has followed with great interest and sympathy your work. He is a mine of information and the cleverest of all Russians whom you can meet abroad." Letter of November 9, 1888.

50. Charles A. de Arnaud, *The New Era in Russia* (New York, 1891). See also Wm. Jackson Armstrong, *Siberia and the Nihilists: Why Kennan Went to Siberia* (Oakland, 1890).

51. Kravchinsky to Kennan, February 1, 1889, Kennan papers.

52. See Harry de Windt, *Siberia as It Is* (London, 1892). For an interesting example of conservative English attitudes toward Russia a decade earlier, see D. Mackenzie Wallace, *Russia* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1881), p. 565: "Still smarting from the severe regime of Nicholas, men thought more about protecting the rights of the individual than about preserving public order, and under the influence of the socialistic ideas in vogue, malefactors were regarded as the unfortunate, involuntary victims of social inequality and injustice. Toward the end of the period all this had begun to change."

53. See Senese, *S. M. Stepniak-Kravchinskii*, pp. 93-94; Olga Novikoff, *The M.P. for Russia*, W. T. Stead, ed. (New York and London, 1909); Joseph O. Baylen, "Madame Olga Novikov, Propagandist," *American Slavic and East European Review*, 10: 255-71; Lev Tikhomirov, *Vospominaniia*, p. 384. In his *Truth about Russia* (London: Cassell, 1888), p. 229, on the other hand, Stead praised Kennan's "admirable papers."

54. See Volkhovskii to Kennan, April 1, 1890, Kennan papers; also Senese, S. M. *Stepniak-Kravchinskii*, pp. 50, 93.
55. Stepniak-Kravchinskii, *V londonskoi emigratsii*, pp. 270-273.
56. LNP, 1:247.
57. See LNP, 4:284.
58. In *Free Russia*, December 1890.
59. See Senese, S. M. *Stepniak-Kravchinskii*, p. 30: "He always felt his true metier was fiction."
60. Cf. his *Zagranichnaia agitatsiia* (London, 1892), pp. 14, 30-31.
61. See GE, 2: 456. The group repeated its announcement in each of its publications.
62. Nikolai Rusanov, *V emigratsii* (Moscow, 1929), pp. 192-201.
63. Published were: 1. P. L. Lavrov, *Istoriia, sotsializm i russkoe dvizhenie* (Paris/Geneva, 1893); 10. P. L. Lavrov, *Narodniki-Propagandisty 1873-1878 goda*, chapters 1-2 (Paris/Geneva, 1895), chapters 3-6 (Paris/Geneva, 1896); 11. Esper Serebriakov, *Obshchestvo "Zemlia i volia"* (Paris/Geneva, 1894); 16. I. A. Rubanovich, *Inostrannaia pressa i russkoe dvizhenie* (Paris/Geneva, 1893).
64. *S rodiny i na rodinu*, pp. 305, 527-28.
65. LNP, 4:286; N. Bel'tov [G. V. Plekhanov], *K voprosu o razvitii monisticheskogo vzgliada na istoriiu* (St. Petersburg, 1895).
66. Burtsev edited the newspaper *Svobodnaia Rossiia* that Kropotkin recommended to Kennan. See Burtsev archive, Hoover Institution, Stanford University. See also his memoirs, *Bor'ba za svobodnuiu Rossiiu* (Berlin, 1924). Some called Burtsev the "Sherlock Holmes" of the revolutionary movement. He had his critics too: Elpidin called him naive and complained that he took books from the shelves of Elpidin's store without first asking permission. Elpidin, *Bibliograficheskii katalog* (Geneva, 1906), pp. 22-24.
67. See *Letuchie listki* (London), no. 15 (February 9, 1895).
68. *Za sto let (1800-1896)* (London, 1897), no. 23 in the Free Russian Press Fund's series of publications.
69. See NC, 115/72.