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Russian nationalism and Pamiat

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More than seventy years after the October Revolution a crisis in the Soviet Union has caused its citizens to suffer a loss of faith. This disillusionment seemingly stems from the lack of success in economic reform and the chaos of the democratization policy implemented since the rise to power of M. S. Gorbachev in March 1985. The following reaction has not merely condemned Gorbachev’s "experimentation" with the Pandora’s box of perestroika and glasnost; the first years of the 1990s have also seen the increasing tendency to blacken the whole of Soviet history, to trace the root of the ills of Soviet society not only to the Stalin era but also to the revolutionary events in Petrograd in 1917 and the introduction and misapplication of Marxist-Leninist theory. In 1989 V. Korotich, the liberal editor of the popular journal Ogonek, summed up this bitter mood: "Perhaps ours is one of the few European countries that never fully benefited from this revolution" (Mihajlov, 30).

In this statement Korotich betrays the present Soviet preoccupation with its own suffering, with the idea that the citizens of the Soviet Union (as opposed, for example, to those of the states of Eastern Europe) have carried the greater part of the burden imposed by Marxism-Leninism. Indeed, many ask, has anyone benefited from Soviet power? Discussions and arguments on this
theme often acquire nationalist tones; the dissipation of the myth of the new "Soviet citizen" presents the most serious threat to Gorbachev in the early 1990s.

The grievances of the minority nationalities in particular have received considerable coverage and close examination in the Western and Soviet press. The nationalist spokespersons of the various republics point to what they perceive as the virtual stripping of national treasures and resources for the good of Moscow. In addition, their call for autonomy represents their fears of Russification; not only have they endured harsh policies of mandatory Russian instruction in their schools, but under the Soviet regime they have witnessed a pace of Russian colonization of non-Russian areas which has far exceeded that of the tsars (Conquest 26).

From the national minorities' point of view, this indeed appears to be the case. Yet the nature of Soviet power, with its professed proletarian internationalism, seemingly undermines accusations of Russian imperialism. Alain Besancon, in his 1985 article "Nationalism and Bolshevism in the USSR," dispels this idea, explaining that the Soviet brand of internationalism does not necessarily contradict aggressive Russian nationalism. Besancon perceives the party of Lenin from the Civil War to the present as a Bolshevist-Great Russian alliance, whose anti-chauvinist campaigns only had mere pedagogical value. Besancon claims that the Soviet state, especially after the early 1930s, praised the attitudes of the most extreme Russian nationalists as "Soviet patriotism." thus providing the "moral force of the Soviet regime for its entire history" (Conquest 4-5).
Besancon concludes his essay with the conviction that the policy endorsed by the Soviet system, the alliance between Bolshevism and Great Russian nationalism, aspires "to unleash Great Russian nationalism--one measure is the spread of anti-Semitism--while simultaneously allowing some progress for the non-Russian nationalities" (Conquest 12). One year into the rule of Gorbachev, he correctly predicted that, once the magic of ideology loses its force, as it has with the policy of glasnost', only the colonial legitimacy of the Russian people could keep the Soviet empire from disintegrating (Conquest 11).

Hugh Seton-Watson, writing at the same time as Besancon, rejected the thesis that the Soviet experience, taken as a whole, has advanced the interests of ethnic Russians. He admitted that a degree of Russification has taken place, but mostly as a result of the political and economic centralization of the Soviet state. Seton-Watson emphasized that Russian nationalism has not inspired the Soviet leadership. The Soviet leaders, in particular Stalin during the war, have flattered the Russian nation to insure its loyalty, while subjecting the entire Russian cultural heritage to physical and ideological annihilation (Conquest 28).

Granting that all have suffered to some extent under the Soviet regime, citizens nevertheless choose to return to the proverbial Russian question: Who is to blame? (Kto vinovat?) Again the national theme enters the discussion, for someone, it seems, must be responsible for the crisis in the Soviet Union. In 1989 Korotich elaborated on this view of nationalism:

Strange as it may seem, in many Soviet regions and national republics they are trying to blame their
economic problems on Russians who, one is told, just came and grabbed everything. If there is no food, it is simply because it all goes to Russia and the Russians eat it. It is easier, in other words, for the local leaders to say that Russia is taking everything than to admit that they themselves are unable to run an efficient economy. And in Russia proper it is the Jews who are viewed as the "Russians"—i.e., the greedy outsiders who grab everything for themselves.

(Mihajlov 33)

In this response to a question on the nature of nationalism, Korotich in simple terms describes a basic tenet of all nationalist trends: perceived damage effected specifically by a foreign agent. The nationalities in the borderlands indeed have found a handy source of blame in Ivan, the stereotyped drunkard who regularly pillages their homelands for the good of Moscow.

Concerning the Russian republic, Korotich reveals the widespread belief, especially in the West, that Russian nationalism usually finds expression in anti-Semitism. In this generalization Korotich takes advantage of the notoriety of the Pamiat' society, a nationalist organization whose members almost without exception receive the classification of rabid Jew-haters in the Soviet and Western press. But modern Russian nationalism does not in all instances amount to the hatred of "alien" races (inorodtsy). John B. Dunlop, who has devoted a number of years to the study of Russian nationalism, thinks that the majority of the followers of the "Russian party" hold polycentric nationalist convictions, beliefs which support the right of all peoples to
grow within their own cultural and religious spheres (The New Russian Nationalism 10). Undoubtedly the strongly Orthodox variety of A. Solzhenitsyn's nationalism, for example, hardly fits into the seeming Black Hundred pogromist mentality of Pamiat'.

Contrary to L. I. Brezhnev's claim on the fiftieth anniversary of the establishment of the Soviet Union in 1972 (Pravda, 22 December 1972), the Soviets have not solved the "national question." The various nationalities of the Soviet Union do not merely vent their fury at the chaos of glasnost' and the failure of perestroika to produce concrete results, but they also come into conflict based on their differing interpretations of the nature of Soviet power. The Russians in particular have a disadvantage in this conflict, at least at the ideological level, for other national groups most often associate them with the Soviet regime and its capital Moscow.

Prelude: The Turn of the Decade

Repeatedly during the 1970s the Russian nationalists made known their utter refusal to equate the Soviet regime with the Russian people. In particular the samizdat journal Veche, edited by V. Osipov between 1971 and 1974, served this cause with its Slavophile themes and its criticism of the moral decline of Soviet society. In Veche Osipov thoroughly condemned Sovietization and warned against its continuing damage to Russian culture (Carter 104-105). The famed literary movement of the "village writers" (derevenshchiki), who showed concern for the environment and the rapidly vanishing values and way of life of the Russian countryside, also flourished at this time. The movement included
a number of figures destined to appear in the Russian nationalist
camp years later: V. Astaf'ev, V. Belov, V. Soloukhin, and V.
Rasputin.

In June 1978 the Moscow exhibit of four hundred paintings of
the artist I. Glazunov provided an indication of the degree to
which Russian nationalist ideology enjoyed support among the
general populace. The exhibit, held at the Manezh Exhibition
Hall, attracted from five hundred thousand to six hundred thousand
people, and a similar show in Leningrad in October 1979 drew one
million viewers (Dunlop, The Faces of Contemporary Russian
Nationalism 59-60). One canvas, "The Return of the Prodigal Son,"
drew the most attention at the exhibits with its strongly Russian
and Orthodox themes representative of the entire show. In the
painting Glazunov juxtaposes the misery of Soviet reality and the
greatness of Russia's Christian past, with the prodigal son,
Soviet Russia, facing the direction in which salvation lies.

The comment books of both exhibits provided a valuable
measure of the sympathy for Glazunov's paintings found among the
masses. V. Krasnov has analyzed the content of the more than two
thousand comments and concluded that 76.7 percent were positive,
with the "overwhelming majority" of these praising the Russian
theme of his work (Conquest 117). Comments such as "Thank you for
holy Russia. It's unbelievably difficult to be Russian in 1978,"
reverberated throughout the viewers' reactions (Shipler 14).

The early years of the 1980s witnessed the increased efforts
of the followers of the "Russian Party" (as John B. Dunlop has
aptly named modern Russophiles) to disseminate their ideas. The
centennial of the death of F. M. Dostoevskii in 1981 gave rise to
a number of articles in such journals as Sever and Nash sovremennik. In particular Nash sovremennik, the journal of the Writer's Union of the RSFSR, acquired a distinctly Russian nationalist bent, one which in the greater freedom of glasnost would lead to accusations of Great Russian chauvinism and anti-Semitism.

An indication of the nationalist orientation of Nash sovremennik appeared in issue No. 6 of 1981, when the editors added the motto "Russia--my homeland" ("Rossiia--rodina moia") and a picture of Russian birch trees to the inside cover. The Soviet Union's professed internationalism obviously did not occupy first place in the journal's list of priorities, a fact to which its articles of 1981-1982 attest. In these years a number of writers in Nash sovremennik tackled such issues as environmental pollution, the destruction of churches and historical monuments, the disintegration of the Russian family, the high rate of divorce in the Soviet Union, and alcoholism. In particular V. Soloukhin's "flirtation" with the idea of the existence of God on the pages of Nash sovremennik attracted attention, as did hinted criticism of the 1979 invasion of Afghanistan (Dunlop, The New Russian Nationalism 19-25).

What accounted for the freedom of expression enjoyed by Russian nationalists at the turn of the decade? John B. Dunlop attributes it to the protection of M. Suslov, the "chief ideologue" who shunned publicity yet perhaps wielded more power than Brezhnev himself (The New Russian Nationalism 12-13). R. A. Medvedev claims that Suslov had close ties during his last years with Glazunov (64), a relationship which explains the permission
he received to exhibit his paintings. Dunlop also points out that only days after the death of Suslov in January 1982 the authorities unleashed harsh criticism of the activity of Nash sovremennik and arrested a number of dissenting Russian nationalists (The New Russian Nationalism 14-15).

Nationalist Concerns

The concerns of Russian nationalists have validity considering the disastrous effects of forced collectivization, industrialization, and the urbanization, which left the Russian village in ruins. In addition, the antireligious campaigns conducted by virulent militant atheists and leaders such as N. S. Khrushchev in the eyes of nationalists amount to a war against the last bastion of Russian consciousness. The Russian nationalists, then, undoubtedly have basis for their worries concerning the continued survival of Russian culture. But beyond the sphere of culture they harbor another fear of tremendous proportions—the physical extinction of the Russian people.

This concern of the modern Russian nationalists finds support in demographic trends. M. Bernstam, in his study "The Demography of Soviet Ethnic Groups in World Perspective," projects the rapid depopulation of the Slavic nationalities in the Soviet Union. The Slavs, he writes, now experience the lowest fertility rate in the Soviet Union and "one of the lowest in the world and in the history of human populations" (Conquest 330). Of all the nationalities of the Soviet Union the Russians have the second lowest life expectancy (after the Moldavians), partly because of poor health care and chronic alcoholism (Conquest 328-329). The
Soviet Union, especially the Baltic and Slavic republics, suffers from the highest rate of increase of family disintegration in the world (Conquest 335). In addition, the damaging effects of the high level of induced abortions and the economic necessity of women to enter the work force, combined with lack of housing space for families, have negatively affected the demographics of the Slavic populations. Bernstam writes that "The Slavs, especially the Russians, are experiencing a rapid decline in total fertility and an even more rapid decline in net reproduction rates, to a level significantly below replacement" (Conquest 347).

Bernstam concludes that by the year 2050 the Slavs, who in 1917 constituted almost three-fourths of the population of the Russian empire, will no longer constitute a majority (Conquest 319). Bernstam also foresees a rapid increase in the populations of the highly fertile Turko-Muslim peoples of Soviet Central Asia; the Uzbeks alone, he predicts, will outnumber the Russians by 2105 to become the dominant nationality of the area encompassed by the present borders of the Soviet Union (Conquest 322-323). By 2200, if present trends continue, the peoples of Soviet Central Asia and the Muslims of the RSFSR will outnumber the Slavs by a ratio of three to one and the Russians by six to one (Conquest 322-323).

Thus the nationally conscious Russians do have reason to worry about the continued survival of their culture, wrenched by unprecedented social upheavals and subjected to the atheistic and internationalist policies of the Soviet state. Demographic trends, too, offer cause for alarm for those who fear that the Russian people may lose their role as a distinct nation in the historical process. John B. Dunlop considers the Russian
nationalists' grievances valid and notes that, compared with the Soviet period, "Imperial Russia does not look at all bad" (The New Russian Nationalism 59).

Vozrozhdentsy and National Bolsheviks

In siding with the Russian nationalists, Dunlop defines two main nationalist tendencies among ethnic Russians—the vozrozhdentsy and the National Bolsheviks. The vozrozhdentsy, whose classification comes from the Russian word for renaissance, base their beliefs on the Russian Orthodox religion. They believe that only the power of Orthodoxy can bring Russia out of the misery of Soviet reality; to them the crisis in the Soviet Union represents a spiritual one to which all other matters—political, economic, and social—are tied. They wholly reject Marxism-Leninism as a state ideology and its perceived feeble attempt to substitute the faith of Orthodoxy. Not all vozrozhdentsy agree on such matters as the amount of authority the state should have and the strength of Russia's ties with the West, but all stand firm in their Orthodox beliefs (The New Russian Nationalism, 89). According to Dunlop, most Russian nationalists belong to the camp of the vozrozhdentsy; A. Solzhenitsyn, V. Osipov, and I. Shafarevich (who, with Solzhenitsyn and others, added a number of essays to the 1974 collection From Under the Rubble and later went on to write extensively on the national question and in particular on the subject of "Russophobia") count among this group.

The second tendency, National Bolshevism, most likely enjoys little support among the populace, yet its followers have a
greater chance of obtaining power. The National Bolsheviks, according to the definition of M. Agurskii, hope to legitimize the present Soviet political system from "a Russian national point of view" (Conquest 87). Adherents of National Bolshevism prefer a strong Russian state based on the principles of the Bolshevik Revolution and hope to work out a practical compromise between Russian national values and Marxism-Leninism. Thus they wholly reject L. D. Trotsky's view of the Revolution as the "final break with Holy Russia" and support the "single stream" interpretation of Russian history (Dunlop, The New Russian Nationalism 90).

Dunlop comes to the conclusion that only the vozrozhdenets tendency offers a desirable and lasting Russian nationalist solution to the moral crisis now facing the Soviet Union. He admits, though, that the National Bolsheviks have a greater chance to assume power, probably with the assistance of the Soviet military (The New Russian Nationalism, 92). If we consider Besancon's claim that the Soviet system by its nature will eventually "unleash" Russian nationalism, perhaps in the form of a "pan-Russian military and police empire" (Conquest 11), Dunlop's conclusion seems all the more likely.

Both Dunlop and Besancon side with the nationalists, claiming that any nationalist accession and the adoption of a distinctly "Russian ideology" would benefit Soviet citizens of all nationalities. But their conclusions, however optimistic, taken together offer cause for alarm. Dunlop notes the many similarities between National Bolshevism and fascism:

... a strong impulse toward deification of the nation; the desire for a strong state, the stato totalitario; a
powerful leadership impulse (one thinks of the yearning among many contemporary National Bolsheviks for a "strong man"
[krepkii chelovek]); a belief in the necessity of an elite; a cult of discipline, particularly of the youth; heroic vitalism; an acceptance of military and industrial might, often combined with strong ecological and preservationist concerns; and a celebration of the glories of the past. (The New Russian Nationalism 90)

Thus rather than founding their beliefs on Orthodoxy, as do the vozrozhdenets, the National Bolsheviks rely on a deification of the Russian people that indeed resembles fascism in many respects. Despite Dunlop's faith in the salvation of Soviet Russia through a Russian nationalist revival, the National Bolshevik tendency should offer cause for alarm, especially considering Besancon's thesis that "the natural evolution of the Soviet world seems to point in that direction" (Conquest 11).

A. Ianov, writing in 1988, disputes Dunlop's "good guys--bad guys strategy" and claims that "The new mainstream of Russian nationalism has indeed crystallized into a protofascist protoparty" (47). Ianov describes the evolution of Russian nationalist ideology from its early nineteenth-century roots as an essentially Christian movement with an abundance of liberal elements to its final fascist orientation and opposition to reform in the early twentieth century. Ianov condemns Dunlop's emphasis on the "good guys" and his belief that historically Russian nationalism had a number of directions; Dunlop, writes Ianov, completely ignores the degeneration of liberal Russian nationalism into fascism (45).
Ianov makes one more historical comparison. He points out that following the Revolution of 1905 the fascist, counterreform tendency within the Russian nationalist camp acquired supremacy over all others. Gorbachev's revolution, explains Ianov, produced as great a change in Soviet Russia as that of 1905 and had a similar result: "the reactionaries appear since 1985 to have won the struggle within imperial [Russian] nationalism just as they did after 1905" (47). Ianov, then, warns of the essential counterreform nature of Russian nationalism which threatens Gorbachev's reforms as it did those of Stolypin after the Revolution of 1905.

Seemingly Ianov's conclusions find basis in reality. Organizations such as Pamiat' have indeed captured the Russian nationalist spotlight: both the Western and Soviet media accuse Pamiat' of fascism. The media, like Ianov, also have the tendency to portray Russian nationalism as a lunatic fringe with little mass support and often equate it with the pogromist "Union of the Russian People" of prerevolutionary years. What, then, are we to make of Dunlop's faith in the vozrozhdentsy and their noble vision of a society restructured according to Christian values? Indeed, can we place a figure such as Solzhenitsyn into the camp of a modern "Union of the Russian People"?

Before the Revolution the famous historian P. N. Miliukov recognized the intrinsic contradiction of the Slavophile doctrine, which encompassed both elements of nationalism and the Christian concept of universal mission (Laqueur 113). According to Ianov, the nationalist, or rather, the chauvinist elements have historically come to dominate the entire spectrum of Russian
nationalism. Even the highly religious V. Osipov supports this claim:

I am myself a religious person. Christ and his doctrines are to me in the last resort preferable to nationalism. But I know the soul of the contemporary Russian: the national element in him is at the present time more vital and evident than the religious one. (Laqueur 117)

If we reexamine the period during which Suslov provided the Russian nationalists protection, then another picture of the national revival appears, a picture not entirely free of chauvinist and anti-Semitic sentiments. According to Ianov, for example, anti-Semitic mail from readers often bombarded the liberal editors of the samizdat journal Veche (46). One anonymous message in the comment book of the Glazunov exhibit, undoubtedly representing a minority interpretation of Glazunov's art, offers a glimpse of such views: "After sixty years of the kike power (zhidovskoe zasilie), finally, one begins to smell Rus': Long live the Russian state!" (Krasnov 121)

One must also consider that under the same M. Suslov a Soviet policy of official anti-Semitism ("anti-Zionism") began in 1967 and, according to William Korey, took on "an official and all-pervasive character" by the beginning of 1971 (Soviet "Protocols", 1). Korey continues: "Tsarist fantasies about Jews, dressed up somewhat in contemporary verbiage, have become Soviet fantasies" (2). Among these fantasies counts the prerevolutionary forged document of The Protocols of the Elders of Zion, whose authors claimed that Zionists, with the aid of Masonic lodges, aspire to dominate the world. The anti-Jewish lecturer V.
Emel'ianov in 1977 distributed the ideas of the Protocols to the members of the Central Committee of the CPSU. Emel'ianov, after murdering his wife and spending a number of years in a psychiatric hospital, later went on to address the members of Pamiyat in Red Square in 1987 (Korey, "The Pamyat Phenomenon" 37) and even form his own wing of the organization (Pavlovskii).

How must we perceive the benign literary activity of the village writers? They lamented the sufferings of the homeland and longed for a return to holy Russia; the fever of the Zionist conspiracy theories has seemingly not afflicted them. Nevertheless in the late 1980s a number of these authors surprised many with statements of extremist nationalism. V. Rasputin has expressed his support of Pamiyat and blamed the Jews for the terror and repression of the Soviet regime:

I think today the Jews here should feel responsible for the sin of having carried out the Revolution, and for the shape that it took. They should feel responsible for the terror. For the terror that existed during the Revolution and especially after the Revolution. They played a large role, and their guilt is great. (Keller 48)

Then how can one explain V. Astaf'ev's belief that the Jewish victims of the concentration camps deserved their fate (Ianov 47)?

Thus far a number of conclusions rise from this examination of Russian nationalism. First, it seems as though the thesis of Ianov that all Russian nationalist tendencies eventually boil down to a single reactionary, fascist ideology may indeed hold true in modern times. Second, the new Russian nationalist camp constitutes much more than a "lunatic fringe," as the Western
press would have us believe: the activities of a number of influential members of the literary establishment hint that the phenomenon does not limit itself to the mentally ill. Finally, the new Russian nationalism at times contradicts itself. If, as Ianov claims, all nationalists indeed gravitate toward the camp of reactionary, counterreform forces, then how does one explain some nationalists' continued condemnation of the existing Soviet regime in the vozrozhdenets manner?

In effect the Russian nationalists are conducting a search for answers, a search that defies clear definition and hasty classification as one large "Union of the Russian People." All feel the encroachment of the "enemy"; in Solzhenitsyn's terms "the murky whirlwind of Progressive Ideology swept in on us from the West at the end of the last century, and has tormented and ravaged our soul quite enough . . . " (Letter to the Soviet Leaders 18). How do the Russian nationalists of the Gorbachev period define this "murky whirlwind," and do they have a realistic plan of battle?

Pamiat'

According to the most widespread account, the first organization carrying the name "Pamiat'" ("Memory") originated in the Ministry of Aviation Industry in Moscow in 1980 (Korey, "The Pamyat Phenomenon" 37). At this time the the members of the group showed no signs of the extremism of later years, and instead they mainly concerned themselves with the preservation of historical monuments in Moscow. Indeed, the group kept a low profile until 1985. Only in 1987 did the Soviet media begin to report the
activities of Pamiat' in detail.

The preservationist concerns of Pamiat' did not rise spontaneously, for a number of other organizations opposed to the cultural nihilism of the Soviet regime had already laid the groundwork. In 1965 the Council of Ministers of the RSFSR established the All-Russian Society for the Preservation of Historical and Cultural Monuments (V00PIK), whose members by 1977 numbered more than twelve million (Dunlop, The Faces of Contemporary Russian Nationalism 66). V. Osipov, the editor of the samizdat journal Vecher, also devoted himself to this cause. In his essay "The Last Day of Moscow" ("Poslednii den' Moskvy") of 1973, he urged readers to get a glimpse of Moscow before it disappears entirely. He placed the blame for the architectural nihilism of recent times on the Main Department of Architecture and Planning, whose architects ("vandals") have only one goal: "to wipe historic, 'nationalist' Moscow from the face of the earth and in its place raise a new Babylon according to the worst standards of Detroit and Chicago" (220). Osipov then fills his article with a number of striking figures concerning the degree of destruction that has taken place during the Soviet period. In the tradition of "Who is to blame?", he names the individual architects responsible and designates them as the indefatigable enemy.

From a similar atmosphere of preservationist zeal rose Pamiat'. Yet one question presents itself at this point: How did sincere preservationist concerns evolve into the extreme nationalism of Pamiat' notoriety? First, we must remember that for the first five years of its existence Pamiat' received minimal
coverage in the press, Western or Soviet, and therefore without eyewitness accounts we may only speculate about the true nature of its activities. Second, at this time the Soviet leadership had not yet unleashed glasnost', and consequently the group could hardly have openly professed any genuine orientation toward extreme nationalism which might have existed in its ranks.

The simplest, and most simplistic, explanation of the apparent "degeneration" of Pamiat' (to use the classification of Ianov) attributes the transformation to the introduction of new, less mentally stable members. Thus we find the "buffoon and semi-educated demagogue" (Laquer 138) Dmitrii Vasil'ev suddenly appearing in 1985 and warning of the threat to the world posed by The Protocols of the Elders of Zion. In similar fashion we find Emel'ianov, recently discharged from a mental institution for the murder of his wife, addressing a Pamiat' demonstration in May 1987 and then forming his own "World Anti-Zionist and Anti-Masonic Front" of Pamiat'. Thus according to this idea a few sick leaders diverted the mass popular support for cultural preservation into their own mental world in which battle against the sinister Zionist conspiracy takes precedence.

Yet such an assumption ignores the natural link between the preservationist tendency and Russian nationalism, especially the extreme varieties of Russian nationalism. Both fear what they perceive as a massive Soviet onslaught on Russian national consciousness. The members of voluntary preservationist societies fear the physical destruction of reminders of Russia's glory, but, if we examine their grievances more closely, we discover that only a small step separates the domain of the preservationist from that
of the Russian extremist.

If, for example, one chooses Osipov's article "The Last Day of Moscow," it offers potential material for the extremist in search of the "enemy." At the beginning of the article Osipov feels obliged to include an emotional note about the destruction of the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour, in the place of which was to be a new "Palace of Soviets"; today a large swimming pool occupies the cathedral's former grounds. Osipov points out that L. M. Kaganovich "personally pushed the button" to destroy the cathedral in November of 1933, and then delighted in the action, announcing: "We will lift up the skirts of Mother Russia!" (220) Kaganovich's Jewish origins, as well as the abundance of non-Russian names in Osipov's list of enemy architects at the end of the article, offer raw material for the anti-Semite in need of a conspiracy theory.

In the second half of the 1980s Pamiat' overtly made this small step and bridged the gap between the preservationist camp and that of the extremists obsessed with the plots of Zionists and Masons. In April 1987 Pamiat' took control of the All-Russian Society for the Preservation of Historical and Cultural Monuments (Carter 110). This action, of course, by no means reduced the supposed emphasis of Pamiat' on preservation, but rather the merging imbued (at least in the public's perception) the whole movement with extremist shades of nationalism, to the detriment of those preservationists with no interest whatsoever in the machinations of the "enemy."

Subsequent discussions of the need to protect the Russian architectural heritage increasingly focused not so much on the
restoration projects in process or the successes of the preservation movement; instead, at meetings of Pamiat' Russian patriots cursed the guilty members involved in the wrecking of monuments. For example, the approach to the problem of preservation did not include an explanation or examination of the nihilistic Genplan for the reconstruction of Moscow, the work, it is true, of Kaganovich (Dunlop, The Faces of Contemporary Russian Nationalism 80). At one meeting of Pamiat' enthusiasts, held in the Leninskiy raikom in Moscow in 1987, one speaker, O. Zhurin, announced the main criminal in the destruction of old Moscow as "Kaganovich, Lazar' Moiseevich" and produced a quote similar in style to that of Osipov to prove Kaganovich's dislike of old Russian architecture (Losoto). Zhurin also named in the capacity of "enemy" Emel'ian Iaroslavskii ("Gubel'man"), who, as leader of the League of Militant Atheists during the early 1930s, contributed to the wave of destruction and defilement of churches.

In other instances the speakers at Pamiat' meetings delight not only in pronouncing obviously Jewish surnames and patronymics but in finding symbolic proof of the machinations of the enemy. As, for example, following the observation that on Pushkin Square not a single structure of Pushkin's time remains, the speaker remarked that "they have turned Pushkin's back on Russia--symbolically!" Here the reference concerns the fact that the monument to Pushkin in the square stands in front of the cinema "Rossiya" (Losoto). Most likely the additional fact that now, a few years later, Pushkin faces a new McDonald's outlet across the street also fails to console Russian patriots.
This obsession with symbolism at times overshadows serious study of Russian history and the restoration of monuments, supposedly the original emphasis of Pamiat' at its conception. At one meeting a lecture by the archeologist Ianin, whom Pamiat' had invited to speak on his work at the Novgorod excavations, ended abruptly because of the intervention of "people who had not come to listen to speeches on such a distant and boring subject."

Similarly the academician D. Likhachev, chairman of the Association for the Preservation of Cultural Monuments, receives little praise from Pamiat' for his writings on the subject of the Russian national heritage; speakers instead refer to him as "that servant of Zionism" (Laqueur 136-137).

In addition to the protection of monuments, the nationalist interest in preservation includes environmental concerns. The "green movement" hopes to reverse the disastrous effects of the Soviet Union's crash modernization policies, which have sacrificed the ecological balance for the sake of "progress." In particular the preservationists place special emphasis on the destruction resulting from the exploitation of the resources of Siberia; the pollution of Lake Baikal, for example, produced enough preservationist sentiment for a youth movement in its defense to form in distant Leningrad (Gubankov).

On 9 October 1987 in Leningrad various institutions of higher education, including Leningrad State University, sponsored a conference devoted to this subject and its expression in literature. The conference, named "Siberia: Its Today and Tomorrow in Modern Russian Literature," featured speakers dealing with the ecological problems of Siberia, including the damage
effected on the Russian village and its population. Rasputin, S. P. Zalygin (chief editor of Novyi Mir), and Astaf'ev declined to participate in the conference for various reasons; D. D. Vasil'ev, however, traveled the distance from Moscow to make a dramatic appearance, complete with wig and false beard that later became the subject of much ridicule. The conference at first seemed to focus on the painful question posed by the village writer Shukshin, "What has become of us?" ("Chto c nami stalo?"), as speakers dealt with ecological problems, alcoholism, and the "spiritual disarmament of the nation." The speeches of many, though, acquired an indignant, almost militant tone, filled with, in the words of A. Gubankov, the enduring "terminology of the thirties" and an obsession with the enemy (Gubankov).

The Leningrad conference represents one example among many such meetings, officially sponsored and otherwise, which have ended in scarcely veiled threats against Jews and demagogic pronouncements praising the admirable qualities of the Russian people. How does one explain this tendency to move from well intentioned Russian "cultural evenings" to outbursts of negative emotion against the enemy, for the most part represented by Zionists and Masons? An early explanation offered attributes the phenomenon to the populace's inability to deal with the new atmosphere of glasnost'. Gubankov, describing the disintegration of order at the Leningrad conference, writes that a "temporary illness," a peculiar "syndrome of glasnost', . . . in the auditorium turns into a mass psychosis." In the future, he believes, after the public accustoms itself to the freedom of objective discussion characteristic of glasnost', it will receive
the loud phrases of demagoguery more discriminately (Gubankov).

Most observers would indeed admit that a "mass psychosis" characterized Pamiat' in the late 1980s. On 9 January 1989 a group of about seventy members of one Pamiat' organization, led by I. Sychev, charged into a meeting for the nomination of candidates to the Congress of People's Deputies, at which Korotich had received nomination. The members of Pamiat' attacked Korotich, calling him a Jew and a Mason and refusing the offer of civil discussion of their grievances; the meeting consequently disintegrated into physical confrontations (Remnick, "Korotich, Perestroika's Lightning Rod" and "Deti Sharikova"). A year later another group calling itself Pamiat', this time led by K. Smirnov-Ostashvili, broke into the constituent assembly of "April," a new organization of liberal writers who supported the reforms of perestroika (Malukhin, Latynina). The disruption of the assembly by Smirnov-Ostashvili and his group involved demands that all "aliens" leave the hall and threats of physical violence against the "Russophobes" ("Deti Sharikova god spustia").

Shortly after both of these incidents the liberal weekly magazine Ogonek came out with articles bearing the heading "Deti Sharikova" ("Children of Sharikov"). This designation alludes to Mikhail Bulgakov's story "Sobach' e serdtse" ("Tale of a Dog's Heart") of 1925, in which a dog, having received surgical implants of human organs, grows into a man who continues to exhibit the crude characteristics of his animal nature. Thus the new deti Sharikova of Pamiat', claims Ogonek, have a similar problem: they continue to betray their true beastly nature in the unfamiliar surroundings of glasnost' and democratization.
Here we encounter the first of three pitfalls which many journalists, both Soviet and Western, fail to see, and thus they avoid serious examination of the Pamiat' phenomenon. The first involves the immediate definition of Pamiat' adherents as deti Sharikova, blaming their disruptive appearances on their primitive upbringing and, at times, on their supposedly subhuman characters. This classification, however, only produces more misunderstanding and less chance of a real explanation, as the members of Pamiat' become a theoretical "they," distanced from the rest of humanity (i.e., "us") by their congenital animal passions and lack of reason.

The second distraction of journalists, and to a certain extent scholars, involves their attempt to retell, as thoroughly and exhaustingly as possible, all of the wild fantasies of the ideological leaders of Pamiat'. Undoubtedly D. D. Vasil'ev's perception of reality and interpretations of history could occupy one's attention for hours (e.g., Adolf Eichmann was a Jew who imported Zionist concepts of racialism into Nazi ideology, but he nevertheless "killed his own" [Karatnycky]; the Moscow metro lines are positioned in such a way that one could blow up all state institutions simultaneously [Gutiontov]; and architects are reconstructing Moscow to resemble a star of David . . . ). Yet the attraction to sensationalist journalism resembles Pamiat's own obsession with the conspiracies of Satan; while considering the ideological platform of Pamiat', we must also take care not to dismiss it as merely an item of curiosity.

The third pitfall, the belief that Pamiat' represents a "lunatic fringe" with little support, attracts many who find the
organization's activities and conduct disagreeable. D. Raskin, writing in the 12 August 1988 issue of Leningradskaja pravda on the weekly Pamiat' meetings in Rumiantsevskii Garden, disputes this idea. He notes that the "lunacy" (i.e., extremism) by no means confines itself to a fringe of Pamiat' sympathizers whose public polemics advertise their position; hundreds of people attend the meetings of Pamiat', and hundreds of leaflets circulate through the crowds ("Chto proiskhodit v Rumiantsevskom sadu?"). Other letters in Leningradskaja pravda point out the startling fact that in Leningrad schools Pamiat' finds enough support among teachers that groups of children are regularly brought to meetings ("Chto proiskhodit v Rumiantsevskom sadu?", "Kyda zovet Pamiat'?", "Neprotivlenie").

In addition, both specialists and mere observers who write on the subject of Pamiat' agree that the organization's ideas have a considerable following among young people. Following a sharp attack on Pamiat' by E. Losoto in Komsomol'skaia pravda in 1987, the newspaper printed a number of letters from readers, most of them expressing their disapproval of the organization. The only letter that the editors of Komsomol'skaia pravda chose to print in support of Pamiat' came from a seventeen-year old boy in Novosibirsk, who disagreed with Vasil'ev's definition of rock music as an "oath to Satan." Of course such talk borders on the ridiculous, but more startling was the boy's assertion that "the youth of our technical secondary school [tekhnikum] wholly supports the activity of Pamiat'" ("O chem zabyla Pamiat'").

A telephone poll of one thousand Muscovites in April 1989, administered by the Institute of Sociology of the USSR Academy of
Sciences, offers us convincing evidence of the popularity that Pamiat' enjoys outside of its most active membership. At that time, the poll reveals, of the 79 percent of Muscovites who had heard of Pamiat', 31 percent had at least partly positive attitudes toward it. If one considers such factors as the fear of right-wing sympathizers to express support for an officially condemned organization, writes Robert J. Brym, the fraction of Muscovites who sympathize with the ideas of Pamiat' reaches more than one third (Brym).

Within the establishment the leaders of the various movements of Pamiat' claim to have the support of the local militias and the KGB. When members of Pamiat' have appeared unexpectedly to disrupt official functions, the militia has repeatedly shown itself incapable of arriving in time to restrain the aggressions of the uninvited guests and prevent chaos (Gutiontov, Vigilianskii). One observer noted that at the "April" assembly in January 1990 two militiamen stood behind Smirnov-Ostashvili as the latter warned the writers to "get out to Israel." Why did they allow the disturbance, which quickly moved from anti-Semitic slogans to physical confrontations? According to a letter sent to the editors of Ogonek, one member of the militia remarked, apparently in the spirit of glasnost', "Why, we have pluralism and freedom of speech" (Vigilianskii).

Thus we must reject the myth that equates Pamiat' to a few deti Sharikova who parade their eccentric conspiracy theories and thus receive much undue attention. How, then, does one explain the Pamiat' phenomenon, which in the eyes of most observers has come to overshadow the rest of the spectrum of Russian
nationalism? One of the first serious attempts to classify the activity of Pamiat', that of E. Losoto in the 22 May 1987 issue of Komsomol'skaia pravda, condemned Pamiat' for its faulty interpretation of Leninism. Losoto produces a number of quotes from Pamiat' meetings in the Leninskiy raikom of Moscow which demonstrate the organization's faith in the authority of Lenin. One speaker, A. Gladkov, announced that after the death of Lenin Soviet power had perverted the Leninist concept of national culture (which Losoto criticizes as never having existed, for Lenin believed in the existence of two cultures, one progressive and the other reactionary). Another speaker, V. Shumskii, proclaimed the group's Leninist convictions ("We are for Leninism!") and at the same time denounced the forces of Satan (Losoto).

In this morass of Lenin quotations lies the main argument of Losoto: the misinterpretation of Leninism and the rejection of class analysis have produced the ideological monstrosity of Pamiat'. Thus, without a proper Marxist-Leninist approach to the study of society and history, Pamiat' searches for answers in medieval mysticism, since if "movements of the masses did not sweep from the face of the earth the signs and symbols of the tsar and god along with the old order, then someone must have done it, Satan, Zion, a mason ... " (Losoto).

Losoto then carries her ideological condemnation of Pamiat' one step further, drawing attention to the "petty-bourgeois" roots of nationalism in general. She explains that the small proprietor cherishes his private property to such an extent that, at the most elementary level, he may be considered a nationalist, for the
interest of his estate, i.e., fatherland, defines his thinking and his actions. This "petty-bourgeois patriotism" finally evolves into Pamiat' when one adds the "lit match of anti-Semitism." Thus Losoto defines the virulent nationalism of Pamiat' as a mix of faulty Leninism, mysticism, and petty-bourgeois interests requiring anti-Semitism as a catalyst (Losoto).

In this criticism of Pamiat' based on the organization's erroneous interpretations of Leninism we find a startling fact: Pamiat' leaders proclaimed support for an ideological system which, according to their nationalist convictions, has oppressed the Russian people for the greater part of Soviet rule. While conjuring up images of holy Russia (in the words of Losoto, "Orthodoxy as the fatherland"), leaders demanded that society be founded on "deep Communist morality" ("Anti-Semitic Group in Shadow of Kremlin"). In similar fashion Vasil'ev as late as 1988 claimed that the program of Pamiat' in no way differed from that of the Communist Party and that his Moscow organization wholly rejected the possibility of the establishment of a multiparty system (Shevchuk).

If we accept Agurskii's definition of National Bolshevism as an ideology which "legitimizes the existing political system from a Russian national point of view" (Conquest 87), then Pamiat' appears to represent this phenomenon. The pronouncements of Vasil'ev echo the call of the first National Bolsheviks in 1921 who, in the collection Smena vekh, advocated a reconciliation of the Bolshevik Revolution and the Russian state through the elimination of the internationalist elements introduced by the revolution (Dunlop 90). In accordance with National Bolshevik
thought, Pamiat' desires a strong state dominated by a single party. In addition, the phenomenon of Pamiat', with its calls for national unity and its tendency to deify the Russian people, closely follows John Dunlop's list of similarities between National Bolshevism and fascism; not surprisingly, then, the opponents of Pamiat' most often accuse that organization of fascism.

But by 1990 Pamiat' undoubtedly had altered its position, as it now openly denounced the party and no longer exhibited any desire for "deep Communist morality." As Vasil'ev explained in mid-1990: "'We shall destroy the entire world down to its foundations'--that is the Party anthem of the unjust who tried to substitute truths common to all humanity with their Party doctrines." Undoubtedly Vasil'ev had begun to doubt his strong Leninist convictions of just a few years earlier. At this time he also expressed his belief that if the Communists continued to have power, Russia would most certainly perish (Popov).

Pamiat' experienced a similar shift in its attitude toward Gorbachev's policy of perestroika. During its initial years Pamiat' expressed enthusiasm for the reform process, even carrying pro-perestroika banners at its May 1987 demonstration near the Kremlin. In 1988 Vasil'ev also claimed that his Moscow organization would support the decisions concerning political reform of the XIX Party Conference, in which the plan for the new Congress of People's Deputies took form (Shevchuk). By 1990, however, Pamiat' had achieved notoriety as one of the leading anti-perestroika forces, with Vasil'ev condemning Gorbachev's reforms as "cosmopolitanism" (Terekhov).
These changes within the ideological platform of Pamiat' require us to dismiss the idea of it as a manifestation of National Bolshevism. What nationalist tendency, then, does Pamiat' represent? One possible argument is that Pamiat' all along held anti-establishment beliefs, but that it waited until glasnost' had fully ripened to express them publicly. Thus the organization's leaders proclaimed a profound faith in Leninism until such time that Lenin ceased to be sacred (circa 1989), but then they condemned the pernicious doctrines of the founder of the Soviet state as the root of the misfortunes of the Russian people. In this same line of thinking we may consider the original support for perestroika a mere act of hypocrisy to gain political advantage; indeed, could Pamiat' have ever seriously wanted to liberalize and democratize society?

The change in attitude toward Leninism and perestroika seems to indicate a mere revelation of the true fascist nature of Pamiat'. Yet if we examine the constants in the ideology and pronouncements of its leaders, a new, more complex portrait of the belief system forms, one which helps us to understand the apparent contradictions in the development of Pamiat'. One constant, the aversion to political pluralism, explains the original support for the Communist Party and its leading role in society; one may also attribute the later disassociation of Pamiat' from perestroika to the increasing demands of reformers for a multiparty system. This belief, however, does not provide the key to a deeper understanding of Pamiat', for it only attests to the organization's nationalist character. As Vasil'ev has explained, pluralism simply cannot exist in the presence of true national
The professed anti-Zionism of Pamiat' constitutes one other common denominator in the development of this nationalist phenomenon. One declaration of the National Patriotic Front "Pamiat'" of 1988 explains the organization's position on the issue of the party responsible for the nation's woes:

Pamiat' considers the fundamental reason behind the well known widespread collapse in various areas of our life to be Zionism, which has long undermined the socialist foundations of our society with its insidious psychological methods. (Sidorov, "'Pamiat'" kak ona est'"

In accordance with this basic principle, which appears in virtually all reports and studies on Pamiat', the leaders of Pamiat' evaluate historical and social developments in relation to the amount of Zionist influence involved. Thus those who condemn the internationalist nature of the October Revolution produce facts, often from their own research, of the mass participation of Jews (and Masons) in revolutionary movements and specifically in the Bolshevik ascension to power. Similarly documents from Pamiat' claim that the execution of Tsar Nicholas II and his family took the form of a ritual Jewish killing (Sidorov). The mass media of most countries, in particular the United States, also supposedly lie in the hands of Zionists, as does over four fifths of the world's capital. In the mid-1980s Pamiat' joined Gorbachev in his battle against the burdensome Soviet bureaucracy, but for different motives, as Vasil'ev defined the bureaucracy as "that hydra of world Masonry, Zionism, and imperialism" (Losoto).
Does the professed anti-Zionism of Pamyat' in reality serve as an official mask for anti-Semitism? Indeed, such an anti-Zionist platform in the first years of glasnost' could hardly incriminate the organization in the eyes of the authorities, as the regime itself had conducted a propaganda campaign against Zionism for almost two decades prior to the rise of Gorbachev (Korey, "The Pamyat Phenomenon" 38). Yet the leaders of Pamyat' repeatedly used terms that produced a certain degree of ambiguity concerning their definition of the Zionist who so desires the ruin of the Russian nation. The supposed mafia controlling the Soviet mass media has been variously labeled Jewish, Zionist, and pro-Zionist; the ideologues and brothers in spirit of Pamyat', from Vasil'ev to Rasputin, often refer in harsh terms to the Jewish nation as a whole rather than to its specifically Zionist component.

Evidence indicates that much of Pamyat' ideology rests on secular anti-Semitism. At a meeting in 1987 Vasil'ev announced, "Before it was difficult for the Jews to penetrate the church, but now it's too easy. It's too easy for the Jews to become baptized" ("Anti-Semitic Group in Shadow of Kremlin"). Such a statement from Vasil'ev, who has claimed that his Moscow organization even has Jewish members (Sidorov), can only result from a racial or ethnic definition of Jewishness, a definition which discounts the possibility of religious conversion. Leningratskaya pravda in 1988 printed another quotation demonstrating the racist basis of the accusations of Pamyat':

The propaganda of inter-national marriages brings only harm to all the peoples of the USSR. The frivolous
attitude toward the main wealth of the Triune Russian People (Great Russians, Ukrainians, Belorussians)--the purity of the Slavic Gene Pool (Genofond)--toward the Blood of the Slavs is criminal. Long live Russia! (Sidorov, "'Pamiat'" kark ona est'"

If indeed secular anti-Semitism lies behind the anti-Zionist proclamations of Pamiat', then we cannot avoid examining its role in the development of the organization's ideology. We have already established that during the first years of glasnost' the leaders of Pamiat' claimed to adhere to the teachings of Lenin, but for many observers this ideological strand represented a cover for the organization's true convictions or merely an item of curiosity. Recognition of the anti-Semitic element of Pamiat', however, leads to a possible explanation of the original Leninist convictions of Pamiat' leaders.

In his work Christianity and Anti-Semitism N. Berdiaev, the famous Russian philosopher of the first half of the twentieth century, divides secular anti-Semites into two camps based on the nature of their accusations against Jews. According to Berdiaev, one group accuses Jews of creating capitalism. They have at their disposal Karl Marx's puzzling article "On the Jewish Question," in which Marx, himself a Jew, maintains that the Jews have effected the capitalist exploitation of the world. The second group accuses Jews of inventing socialism and participating in revolutionary socialist movements; Russian anti-Semites of this group find ready material for their condemnation of the Bolshevik Revolution (qtd. in Ogonek, 16).
The notorious anti-Semitism of Marx provides the basis for the arguments of those anti-Semites of the first group. In his article "Marxism vs. the Jews" Paul Johnson examines the relation between Marx's opinion of the Jews and his development of socialist theory. Johnson excerpts this passage from the essay of Marx: "What is the profane basis of Judaism? Practical need, self-interest. . . . the god of practical need and self-interest is money. Money is the jealous god of Israel, beside which no other god may exist. . . . " (29). Marx thus defines the Jew not in a religious sense but rather as an entity wholly motivated by "practical need and egoism."

Johnson then continues to elaborate on Marx's emphasis on the evil god of money and its worshipers the Jews, which, claims Johnson, provided the basis for Marx's later militant socialism. Thus Marx in effect performed an ideological transfer of his hatred from the Jew-usurer (at that time the term "usurer" in practical terms meant "Jew") to the bourgeois-capitalist class in general. In this line of thinking, writes Johnson, "The mature man, the socialist, has grasped the point that the Jews are only the symptoms of the disease, not the disease itself. The disease is the religion of money, and its modern form is capitalism" (30).

Nevertheless, claims Johnson, the spirit of anti-Semitism continues in the doctrines of Marx. As an example he cites Marx's description of the capitalist monster in Das Kapital, a "weird personification of inhumanity" insanely driven by the desire to acquire more capital and destroy any number of human beings to that end. This definition of the capitalist monster differs little in tone from Marx's earlier treatise on the Jews; Johnson also
draws attention to the footnote to the passage, in which Marx defines the usurer as the traditional manifestation of the capitalist. Thus Johnson concludes that Marx, perhaps unknowingly, "saw the capitalist archetype as essentially the Jewish archetype" (31).

The original Marxist-Leninist convictions of Pamiat', then, do not necessarily contradict its secular anti-Semitism; such anti-capitalist ideological conformism may in fact complement anti-Semitic sentiment. The leaders of Pamiat' could then, in the spirit of traditional anti-Semitism, fire accusations at any individual who belonged to the condemned group, which in public declarations received the label "bourgeois," "capitalist," or "imperialist." Perhaps such a mentality explains the particularly virulent Leninism of Vasil'ev, who long admired Lenin sufficiently to adorn his apartment with a portrait of the founder of the Soviet state. Johnson makes an even more daring analogy on this theme:

An intellectual like Lenin, who clearly perceived the irrationality of anti-Semitism, and would have been ashamed to be heard defending a pogrom, let alone conducting one, nevertheless fully accepted its spirit once the target was generalized into the capitalist class as a whole—and went on to conduct pogroms against the bourgeoisie on an infinitely greater scale, murdering hundreds of thousands not on the basis of individual guilt, but merely membership in a condemned group. (30)
Thus the leaders of Pamiat' may have believed to have discovered an ideological companion who, despite his attacks on the inconsistencies and barbarity of anti-Semitism and Great Russian chauvinism, shared with them the obsession with the nonhuman enemy. Yet the attitude of Pamiat' toward Marxism in general and toward the Bolshevik attempt to implement it on Russian soil has changed. Vasil'ev explained this view of Marxism to a group of Komsomol members in 1990, calling it a "Zionist teaching . . . proceeding from Talmudic postulates." He then elaborated on the new findings of research conducted by his Moscow organization:

Pamiat' gives great importance to the theoretical legacy of Marxism-Leninism. We are studying this question very seriously, trying to find the similarity in conceptual evaluations. We have come to the subject of the teacher of Marx, Moses Hess, and his theoretical works, about which Marxism-Leninism for some reason prefers to keep quiet; we have come to recognize Talmudic concepts by means of the concepts of Marxism. (Terekhov 11)

According to Berdiaev's division of secular anti-Semitism, such views would correspond to the second group, which accuses the Jews of creating socialism. In this line of thinking the theories of Marx, who nevertheless expressed extreme hostility toward his own Jewish background and Jewry as a whole, form a part of the Jewish-Masonic conspiracy for world domination. Thus we find in Pamiat' an ideological shift from the condemnation of the "bourgeois-Jew" (and the support for "socialism without Jews" [Sidorov]) to that of the rootless "Marxist-Leninist Jew" whose
doctrines have ravaged the Russian homeland since the establishment of Soviet power.

Conclusions

The rapid development of Russian nationalism since the rise of Gorbachev has captured the attention of observers both within and outside the Soviet Union. Its role in the political future of the Soviet Union holds no less importance than the movements of the minority nationalities; yet Russian nationalism presents more problems for the serious student of the expression of Russian national consciousness, for it defies simple definition as a Moscow-borderland conflict between Russian "colonists" and oppressed peoples. Like the minority nationalities, the Russians indeed have real grievances, but Russian nationalists encounter considerably more difficulty in expressing their concerns: Are they to blame the Soviet state, numerically dominated by Russians? In accordance with the generally accepted definition of nationalism, which requires that foreigners hold responsibility for the injustices and crimes committed against the given nation, Russian nationalists have recently intensified their search for "alien" influences to explain the crises facing them.

The most visible Russian nationalist phenomenon, Pamiat', has confused many, who erroneously dismiss it as a mere curiosity, a band of deti Sharikova types, or a lunatic fringe. The first serious attempts to analyse Pamiat' revealed its two main ideological supports: Marxism-Leninism and an especially virulent anti-Zionism. Such characteristics did not distinguish Pamiat' ideologically from the actual Soviet regime before the years of
glaşnost': thus available evidence indicated a possible manifestation of National Bolshevism. But the later divergence of Pamiat' ideologues from Marxism-Leninism and their condemnation of the Communist Party refuted this classification.

Examination of the declarations of Pamiat' indicates that its professed anti-Zionism in reality constituted anti-Semitism. Having answered the question "Who is to blame?" in this way, Pamiat' leaders then exhibited some confusion with respect to the focus of their anti-Semitic sentiment. They possessed at their disposal two ideological heritages from which to choose the elements of their own anti-Semitic platform. The first, that of Marxism directed against the bourgeois Jew-exploiter and supported by years of Soviet anti-Zionist propaganda, offers an explanation for the organization's original ideological conformity with the Soviet regime. The second, that of the world conspiracy theory supported by the tsarist forgery The Protocols of the Elders of Zion, increasingly influenced Pamiat' ideologues to the point that the October Revolution and the Soviet regime, which the nationalist organization had previously supported in its proclamations, became anathema.

This shift in the focus of the anti-Semitism of Pamiat' accounts for the inconsistencies of its brand of extreme Russian nationalism. This by no means, however, makes Pamiat' any more predictable, as further changes in Russian society may demand a redefinition of the cunning and indefatigable enemy. This definition of the enemy undoubtedly will affect the future not only of Russian nationalism but of the Soviet Union as a whole.
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