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Steven G. Marks: How Russia Shaped the Modern World

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CHAPTER 1

Organizing Revolution: The Russian Terrorists

ANARCHISM was the first Russian intellectual movement to have a significant international impact. Its glorious promises for society's future electrified followers around the world, and the organizational and killing methods developed by its Russian revolutionary adherents to fight the tsarist regime marked the birth of modern terrorism.

Anarchism was a branch of socialism that arose in mid-nineteenth-century France and England as a combined legacy of the Enlightenment belief in the perfectibility of humankind and the Romantic fervor for noble savages and stormy rebelliousness. It stood against the European state, whose powers had grown tremendously in recent decades, and against bourgeois industrialism, the ills of which were often, in the beginning, more apparent than the benefits.¹

Given the overbearing power of the tsarist state and the sudden encroachments of capitalism, Russia's intellectuals were naturally receptive to European ideas like anarchism, and in fact Russians became the acknowledged leaders of the international anarchist movement as it developed after the 1860s. These radicals transformed anarchist thought from a philosophy dreamed up by a few eccentric western Europeans into a strategy of revolutionary action. Their anarchism was a form of underground political warfare that battled to destroy the existing political-economic system and prepare the ground for a new egalitarian era in human existence.

The methods they devised were imitated and adapted around the world, making Russian revolutionary practice a global phenomenon well before the appearance of Bolshevism.

“The passion for destruction”

The most internationally prominent Russian revolutionary was the anarchist leader and rival of Karl Marx, Mikhail Bakunin (1814–1876), who should be regarded as one of the fathers of modern terrorism, as he was known at the turn of the nineteenth century.² As a young man, this wealthy nobleman had renounced his elevated status and devoted his life to the cause of revolution. From the 1840s to the 1870s, when not detained in the dungeons of eastern Europe, Bakunin exhorted zealously radical audiences to action in France, the Germanies, Italy, Poland, and Switzerland. He threw himself into their uprisings, often fighting on the barricades himself in Breslau (1848), Prague (1848), Dresden (1849), Chemnitz (1849), Lyons (1871), and Bologna (1874).

Or that was the image he cultivated. The reality was somewhat different. An unscrupulous egotist, Bakunin wanted to be considered the sole leader of world revolution and fantasized wildly about his revolutionary activity. This “Romantic dilettante” egged on the street fighters and was quick to preach revolutionary violence, but flitting from revolt to revolt, he fired only a few shots at best.³ He was more a radical celebrity than an active participant. And his theoretical tracts were illogical, clichéd, and semicoherent. Full of “fire and imagination, violence and poetry,” their mood was more important than their philosophical content, which was far inferior to the prodigious work of his nemesis Marx.⁴

Bakunin and most Russian anarchists were atheists. Yet Russian revolutionary ideas were infused with spiritual yearning and secular ideological substitutes for religiosity. It is not surprising that these elements should have remained so strong, given the emphases of contemporaneous European Romanticism and the centrality of Orthodox Christianity in Russian culture. Religious messianism was transferred to the revolutionary movement, a process Bakunin

embodied. Philosophy was for him a substitute for religion, and never in his career did he refrain from speaking of the Absolute or from using quasi-mystical language. His whole life was a search for inner harmony and what he supposed to be the lost unity of mankind. He was convinced that his own existence was part of a cosmic plan, that he was destined to remake the earth along the lines of the Kingdom of Heaven.

Like many of his intelligentsia contemporaries, Bakunin believed that Russia would be the salvation of the world. Russia to him was the guiding star for all mankind: "In Moscow from a sea of blood and flame the constellation of the revolution will rise, high and beautiful, and will become the guiding star for the good of all liber-



1. Mikhail Bakunin. From Bakunin, *God and the State* (New York, 1970).

ated mankind.”⁵ Portraying himself as a barbarian from the savage East fighting for the liberation of humanity, he preached Russia’s radical mission in Europe, where the number of proselytes grew steadily larger: in the age of Romantic-inspired exoticism and Orientalism, his appeal was enormous.

Bakunin’s messianism was centered on the peasantry. Like many of his Russian intelligentsia contemporaries, Bakunin worshiped the peasant masses as the vessels of the Absolute. Having absorbed European Romantic notions of the noble savage and the rebellious spirit, he was convinced that in Russia and elsewhere they were ripe for revolt against contemporary civilization. He also saw bloodthirsty bandits as subconscious revolutionaries and assumed that urban riffraff and economically threatened craftsmen would play a large role in the coming revolution. They would all be led by the *déclassé* intellectuals of preindustrial nations, who were, unlike their comfortable Western counterparts, “unwashed” and full of revolutionary vigor.

Bakunin’s call for violent peasant uprising was a far cry from Marxism, which by and large focused on the urban working class and expected that the revolution would come first in the advanced industrial regions of Europe. Bakunin had a prophetic understanding that the great revolutions of the modern era would come from the lower depths of what we would call underdeveloped, but proto-capitalist societies. His emphases on the revolutionary spontaneity of peasants and the urban rabble gained him a large following in the agrarian southern periphery of western Europe as well as throughout Latin America.

Everywhere, though, the non-Marxist left was attracted to Bakunin’s attacks on government in defense of freedom. In his apocalyptic anarchist vision, once the destruction of the modern state took place, paradise would appear on the ruins, “a new heaven and a new earth, a young and magnificent world in which all our present discords will resolve themselves. . . . Let us . . . trust the eternal Spirit which destroys and annihilates only because it is the unfathomable and eternally creative source of all life. The passion for destruction is a creative passion, too.”⁶ With these expectations he declared war against all centralized governments, whether de-

mocracies or monarchies. And he vilified Marx's concept of a dictatorship of the proletariat "because it concentrates the strength of society in the state, . . . whereas my principle is the abolition of the state, which has perpetually enslaved, exploited, and depraved mankind under the pretext of making it moral and civilized."⁷

Curiously, Bakunin, whose fame as an anarchist rests on his struggle to shield the freedom of the individual from the depredations of big government, was a closet authoritarian. Bakunin talked extensively about "absolute liberty" and the rejection of all authority, but this meant all authority except the one he wanted to create. At the same time that he wrote *Statism and Anarchy*, an unfinished work on the philosophy of liberty, he was writing private letters arguing for the necessity of a dictatorship to organize the future anarchist communal society.

How do we reconcile the apparent contradictions in Bakunin, the defense of individualism and liberty on the one hand and the belief in the necessity of dictatorship on the other? By "freedom" Bakunin meant not what Western liberals understood it to be—the condition resulting from legal limits that curtailed the intrusiveness of government—but rather something akin to spiritual freedom and universal wholeness. This was a mystical notion derived from both Russian Orthodox metaphysics and the Romantic-era assumption that all men partook of the Absolute. It required not the *preservation* of individualism but rather its *total dissolution* in a collective form of unity that would free humankind from the suffering brought on by the selfish competitiveness of the capitalist bourgeoisie. In his vision, human liberation would come about only after a revolutionary elite seized power through its secret organization and established a dictatorship to force people to accept a new egalitarian social order.

He developed these conspiratorial notions in the second phase of his career. For his participation in the 1848 revolutions, he spent more than ten years in captivity in Saxony, Austria, and, finally, Russia. But in 1861 he escaped from Siberian exile, crossed the United States, and returned to Europe. Living as a fugitive in Switzerland, he came into contact with young Russian radicals, among them Sergei Nechaev, with whom between 1869 and 1871 he devel-

oped behavioral guidelines for the professional revolutionary cell. These had a major impact on modern politics, by providing rudimentary principles for the world's first organized terrorist movements.

Nechaev was born in 1847, the son of a house-painter.⁸ He cultivated a resentment of cultured society in his provincial town and was inspired by Bakunin's writings to enter the growing Russian radical movement. He became a fanatical ascetic, living on bread and milk and sleeping on the bare floor. He developed conspiratorial ideas drawing on Russian and French revolutionary sources, including the theories of the Russian Jacobin, Pyotr Tkachëv. On a visit to Switzerland, Nechaev conned Bakunin into believing that he was the head of a revolutionary organization with hundreds of members. To impress Nechaev, Bakunin boasted of leading the World Revolutionary Alliance, which despite Bakunin's intimations had at the time exactly two members—Bakunin and Nechaev.

Nechaev returned to Russia as an agent of this "organization" with instructions to form a Moscow branch. There he encountered a student named Ivanov who expressed doubts about Nechaev's credentials. To exact the total obedience he expected of the other



2. Sergei Nechaev. From *Katorga i ssylka*, no. 14 (1925).

members he had recruited, Nechaev induced them to collaborate in Ivanov's murder, falsely claiming he was a police spy. The deed was done in November 1869, and the body was dumped into an ice-covered pond, the whole episode forming the basis for Dostoevsky's antirevolutionary novel, *Devils*. All of the perpetrators were caught but Nechaev, who escaped back to Switzerland. In 1872, he was arrested there and deported back to Russia, where ten years later he died of scurvy in prison.

In tandem with Bakunin, Nechaev has left a mark on history through the fruit of their collaboration, the "Catechism of a Revolutionary." The Catechism was written by the two of them in Geneva in the summer of 1869. It consists of twenty-six commands on revolutionary organization, behavior, and commitment. According to its commands, members of the conspiracy are grouped in cells and are to carry out assigned tasks obediently. An adherent must sacrifice traditional morality, family ties, and, if need be, his own life for the revolution. "He is not a revolutionary if he feels compassion for something in this world." He assumes a normal existence to conceal his true identity, but he must be dedicated to the total destruction of corrupt, civilized society. "Day and night he should have only a single thought, a single aim: pitiless destruction."⁹

Although some of these elements were evident in earlier nineteenth-century Russian, French, and Italian revolutionary thought, the Catechism marked a step toward the systematization of revolutionary conspiracy. Together, Bakunin and Nechaev established the terrorists' creed and suggested the organizational means to kill in the name of a cause. Partly stimulated by Bakunin and Nechaev, terrorism was given its specific modern forms as a portion of the next generation of Russian radicals became converts to revolutionary conspiracy.

If Bakunin and Nechaev provided the ultra-radicals with the Catechism, Nikolai Chernyshevsky's novel, *What Is to Be Done?*, written in 1863, served as their Bible.¹⁰ Chernyshevsky (1828–1889) was the son of a parish priest in Saratov on the Volga River and a graduate of a theological seminary. Attracted to socialism, he ended his theological studies and moved to St. Petersburg, where

by the late 1850s he had become a prominent literary critic and revolutionary publicist. He was arrested in 1862 for his connection to radical organizations and spent seven years at hard labor and thirteen additional years in exile in Siberia, all of which lent him the aura of a martyr. In the words of the terrorist Nikolai Ishutin, “there have been three great men in the world: Jesus Christ, Paul the Apostle, and Chernyshevsky.”¹¹

While he saw himself primarily as a social and literary critic, he also earned his reputation from *What Is to Be Done?*, written while he was incarcerated. The novel featured heroes Vera Pavlovna and Rakhmetov, who came to be seen as prototypes of the new man and new woman. Although recent scholarship shows that Rakhmetov was intended as a minor, negative character, through him the book unintentionally provided a model of a disciplined, fanatical revolutionary. Rakhmetov sleeps on a bed of nails and renounces relations with women. He disdains good manners and male dominance as products of an artificial civilization. Many readers thought Rakhmetov peculiar, as the author meant him to appear, but some extremists admired him as the ideal revolutionary, who lives in a commune, is morally perfect, and offers devotion not to God but to science, equality, and socialism. More central to the novel was the female protagonist, Vera Pavlovna, who escapes her oppressive life by means of a fictitious marriage, then establishes a sewing co-op and becomes a political activist. She is a Nihilist who stands for wiping the slate of culture and politics clean and is dedicated to working for social improvement, but she also has room for personal fulfillment through love.

The effect was the opposite of what Chernyshevsky expected from a book that ridiculed utopianism. *What Is to Be Done?* had a dramatic impact on the Russian intelligentsia. Whether they called themselves Nihilists, Populists (Narodniki—from *narod*, Russian for “the people”), anarchists, or Marxists, succeeding generations of radical youth attempted to conform with their perceptions of Chernyshevsky’s characters. A newspaper in 1864 described female Nihilists: “Most [of them] . . . dress in impossibly filthy fashion, rarely wash their hands, . . . always cut their hair, and sometimes even shave it off. . . . They read [materialist philosophers]

exclusively, . . . live either alone or in [communes], and talk most of all about the exploitation of labor . . . [and] the silliness of marriage and family.”¹²

Because of the impression it made on countless numbers of young Russians, it has been asserted that *What Is to be Done?* was the single most influential nineteenth-century Russian novel.¹³ But its impact was not felt in Russia alone. It appeared in most European languages and was first translated into English in 1886 by the American anarchist Benjamin Tucker. It was kept alive in the United States and England by Jewish immigrants, many of whom were sympathetic to the revolutionary movement and some of whom accepted the book as sacred scripture. Two famous American radicals of Russian-Jewish origin, Emma Goldman and Alexander Berkman, were reared on it. Berkman assumed the name Rakhmetov when he stabbed the antiunion steel magnate Henry Clay Frick in Pittsburgh during the 1892 Homestead strike.¹⁴ Those radicals in America, Europe, and elsewhere who affected Russian intelligentsia style were in part patterning themselves after the characters in Chernyshevsky’s novel. That group includes subsequent female revolutionaries of the world, who emulated prototypes from the Russian radical movements.¹⁵

The writings of Chernyshevsky might have attracted less international attention if not for the concrete actions of Russian revolutionaries. As a result of growing impatience with ineffectual propaganda efforts to incite mass revolt, a segment of the Russian intelligentsia began to advocate terrorism. Assassinations and attacks had taken place in the late 1870s, including some spectacular but unsuccessful attempts on the life of Tsar Alexander II, but they were carried out by individuals operating as a minority faction within the main Populist party, Land and Freedom, many of whose members opposed terrorism. Neither that revolutionary group nor any of the others of the day was tightly run. But that began to change with the formation of the People’s Will.

The People’s Will (*Narodnaia Volia*) was the first professional terrorist-revolutionary organization of any size in Russia. It was formed in 1879 after some members of Land and Freedom became aware that assassination required rather sophisticated preparation.

Experience convinced them that tighter organization was necessary to enable them to make a more concerted fight against the government, which had cracked down in response to the spate of recent terrorist acts.

“Sheer Nechaev” was the way Vera Figner described the People’s Will.¹⁶ It was a militant, centralized, underground organization, the prototype of virtually all subsequent terrorist groups in the world. The party consisted of roughly twenty members at the apex of the pyramidal organization in an executive committee or “military organization” that soon came to be led by Andrei Zheliabov, and at most three to four hundred rank-and-file members. The executive committee was designed to be highly secretive, invisible, and inaccessible to the membership so as to prevent police infiltration. Members were supposed to be divided into cells and to be kept ignorant of the workings of the party outside of those cells—only the executive committee was aware of the activities of all of its component parts. Special sections were established for the military, the provinces, the intelligentsia, and youth. In practice, the organization maintained neither secrecy nor a clearly defined cell structure, and the professionalization to which it aspired remained lacking. But the ideal was an inspiration to future revolutionaries.

The People’s Will was more successful at experimenting with killing devices, advancing the methods of political murder through new bombing technologies. Technical experts in its ranks, such as Nikolai Kibalchich—son of a priest, former engineering student, and early theoretician of jet propulsion—quickly adopted the recent discoveries of Alfred Nobel for their own ends. Nobel had spent much of his youth in Russia and, for commercial purposes unconnected to his distaste for the Russian autocracy, developed nitroglycerine and dynamite. The People’s Will was the first terrorist organization to deploy such weapons.¹⁷ This was the fruit of modernization and the government’s sponsorship of technological training—sometimes a dangerous proposition in repressive regimes.

Armed with its new “high-tech” weaponry, the People’s Will issued a death sentence against Tsar Alexander II. The party’s first attempts to carry out the sentence failed: they involved elaborate

but mistimed preparations for mining the railroad tracks over which the tsar's train would travel from his summer palace in the Crimea back to the capital. The hunt for the "crowned game" finally succeeded on March 1, 1881, when Nikolai Rysakov and Ignat Hryniewicki lobbed handheld bombs at the emperor as the royal carriage passed over the Catherine Quay in the heart of St. Petersburg.¹⁸ This tiny party with a handful of active members for a short time paralyzed one of the most powerful states in the world. But the assassination of the tsar backfired, as it initiated a period of reaction and an expanded police state during the reigns of Alexander III and Nicholas II.

Although the government crushed the People's Will, its legacy survived in Russia. For one, Lenin's Bolshevik Party drew on some of the organizational innovations of the People's Will.¹⁹ To an even greater extent, so did the Socialist Revolutionary Party, which was responsible for numerous terrorist attacks in the first decade of the twentieth century. The SR Party was founded by People's Will survivors and divided into a mass organization and a terrorist organization, the former semiopen, the latter underground. Here the division of responsibilities was even more precisely delineated than in the People's Will. The SRs, as they were known, achieved a complete separation of functions, with the job of committing political murder left to professional assassins in the terrorist wing. But these "combatants" were difficult for the party leadership to manage, and their head, the infamous Evno Azev, was exposed in 1909 as a secret-police agent. Some were criminals who conveniently wrapped their activities in the cloak of revolution, and for many of the hit men, terror became a craft disconnected from political or moral concerns.²⁰

The "Russian Method" Abroad

Russian revolutionary radicalism from Bakunin to the SR Party was the main origination point for world terrorism as well as various strains of anarchism in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. This is not to say that it was

the *cause* of terrorist activity abroad, but that the Russians inspired the adoption of new organizational forms and new methodologies of terrorism. What were the lines of transmission between Russian anarcho-terrorism and the world? The exploits of Bakunin, the People's Will, and their Socialist Revolutionary successors after 1902 were made known globally by means of Russian exiles, newspaper accounts, and popular books.

Firsthand knowledge of the Russian revolutionary movement spread with the thousands of people leaving Russia for abroad. Active revolutionaries fleeing from the law, members of the intelligentsia seeking political refuge, Jewish emigrants, and aristocrats on tour all spread word of Russian developments to the European continent, England, and the United States.²¹ And also to Japan, its proximity to the penal colony of Siberia making it a common destination for radicals escaping exile. Russian Populists passed through Japan from the 1870s on, eventually establishing a colony in Nagasaki. Numerous revolutionary conspirators landed there, among them the assassin Grigory Gershuni and the future leader of independent Poland, Jozef Pilsudski. Those who sojourned in Japan helped to stimulate a contingent of Japanese radicals to opt for political violence.²²

Newspapers spread the word farther afield. Numerous depictions of Russian terrorist attempts in the 1880s appeared in the *Illustrated London News* and elsewhere. The spectacular successes of the SRs, including the assassinations of the government ministers in charge of the hated secret police, D. S. Sipiagin and V. K. von Plehve, in 1902 and 1904, respectively, gained worldwide newspaper coverage.²³ French anarchist publications began to give instructions on bomb making along with editorial approbation.²⁴ Spanish terrorists responded to newspaper reports on the SR assassinations of 1904 with their own murder campaign.²⁵ In China, radical papers "told and retold" the story of the assassination of Alexander II for years.²⁶

In India there was endless treatment in the English press, semi-official Anglo-Indian newspapers, and Indian nationalist publications, each with a different reason for justifying Russian terrorism. The British press was anti-Russian because of the rivalry between

England and Russia for control of Central Asia, and it praised the Populists and SRs as heroes fighting for a just cause against a tyrannical autocracy. Little did English journalists in India comprehend the lessons they were helping to teach: the nationalist press gave what it called the “Russian method” extensive attention and began to urge its application against the tyranny of the Raj. Beyond this, the newspaper accounts prepared the ground for widespread sympathy on the part of Indians toward anti-Western ideas emanating from Russia.²⁷

Books were the main medium for the spread of knowledge about Russian terrorism. The violence of the Russian Populists spawned a whole subgenre of literature, which expressed the fascination and fear of the public and also publicized terrorist techniques and organizational configurations. The first Russian writer to enjoy an international reputation was Ivan Turgenev (1818–1883), who lived in Europe much of his life and became intimate with Flaubert and other European cultural figures. Turgenev’s novels—among them *Fathers and Sons* (1862) and *Virgin Soil* (1877)—were among the earliest literary treatments of the Russian left intelligentsia and were well known abroad.

The revolutionaries themselves wrote some of the books, like the analysis of the intelligentsia written by Lev Tikhomirov, a founder of the People’s Will who had recanted and joined the ranks of anti-Semitic monarchists. His volume *La Russie politique et sociale* was published in Paris in 1886 to great acclaim and helped form the French image of the Russian radical movement.²⁸ The most widely read and influential work by a revolutionary, though, was Stepniak’s *Underground Russia*, a hagiography of the People’s Will first published in Italian in 1882, then in English in 1883, and thereafter in the major European languages and Japanese. Stepniak (pseudonym of Sergei Kravchinsky), as the son of a military doctor and graduate of an artillery academy, was slated to become an officer in the tsar’s army. His revolutionary credentials were impeccable. In 1876, at the age of twenty-four, he joined a Bosnian uprising against the Turks and on the basis of his experiences wrote a manual of guerrilla warfare. In 1877 he joined Italian Bakuninists in a revolutionary uprising near Naples. A year later in St. Petersburg,

he stabbed to death General Nikolai Mezentsev, the chief of the Russian secret police. After that Stepniak escaped abroad and settled in London, where he publicized the cause of Russian dissent by cofounding an organization to promote sympathy for the Russian “freedom fighters.” He wrote a novel about the revolutionaries, *Career of a Nihilist* (1889), contributed to the English press, and earned celebrity as a socialist socialite. He was hit by a train and died in 1895.²⁹

From the 1880s on, publishers in the West and Asia followed Stepniak’s lead. *Underground Russia* was one of the first Russian books to appear in translation in Japan, for instance, where it was a best-seller. Newspapers there gave full coverage to the activities of the Russian Populists, and between 1881 and 1883 alone sixty-five books dealing with Russian Nihilists were published in Japan; given the small size of the reading public, this indicates very strong interest in a society fascinated with Russia as a supposedly kindred nation that both emulated and resisted Westernization. Many of the Japanese books on the subject had a local twist, mistakenly equating Nihilism with the Buddhist or Taoist concepts of “nothingness.” Others were sensationalized in the manner of a modern Gothic romance. Sophia Perovskaya and the terrorist Vera Zasulich were especially big heroes, dolled up to look aristocratic in illustrations for such titles as Tajima Shoji’s *Stories from Europe about Women with a Purpose in Life* (!) or Somada Sakutarō’s *Strange News from Russia about the Criminal Case of a Heroine*.³⁰

In China the huge popularity of Russian terrorists was reflected in the productions of cheap popular fiction and nonfiction. Chinese fiction canonized Sophia Perovskaya, and an entire section of *Fiction Monthly* was for a time dedicated to stories of Russian radicals. Most Chinese books on Russia dealt with this topic, as in Japan, with little knowledge of the subject and with a Buddhist slant. One Chinese author had his Russian revolutionary character speak the following: “Nihilists, Nihilists! I love you, I worship you. Your undertakings are brilliant and glorious. You never fail to startle heaven and earth with your ability to kill those emperors (the damned bastards), to rescue the multitudes of your suffering brothers and sisters. The comrades of your party are diverse indeed—

beautiful women in disguise, young boys, and the most unusual stalwart men—but all are Bodhisattva redeemers.”³¹ Chinese works on the topic were romanticized, escapist fantasies infused with a fascination for Western technology that was to become an obsession for Third World elites later in the century: all the revolutionaries were scientists, and all of them used the latest technological gadgetry to rescue damsels in distress as much as to fight the autocracy.

This popular literature inspired some individual revolutionaries and helped to prepare public opinion to accept the attitude that violence could produce positive political change in China as well as remain morally pure—as it was supposed to have done among Russian revolutionaries. Even as late as the 1920s and 1930s, similar characters and themes appeared in China, most prominently in the works of the radical author Ba Jin, a pseudonym derived from a contraction of the names of the two revolutionaries he admired most, *Bakunin* and *Kropotkin*. His immensely popular novels about Russian Populist terrorists provided young radical idealists in China with role models.³²

In English and French, too, the terrorist theme was popular in fiction at the turn of the century, directly or indirectly referring to the example introduced by Russians. In France anarchist doctrine was known as much through fictional representation as through philosophical writings.³³ Russian radicals appeared in late-nineteenth-century French novels such as Émile Zola’s *Germinal*, in which the terrorist is the Russian Souvarine, or in the work of Alphonse Daudet, the most widely read French author of the day. Daudet’s most popular character was the comical Tartarin de Tarascon, the Provençal Don Quixote, Sancho Panza, and Schweik combined in one. In *Tartarin in the Alps* (1885), a satire on tourism to Switzerland, spice and suspense are provided when a female member of a group of murderous Russian Nihilists in exile seduces the bumbling southern French hero.

In English-speaking nations the sentiment was summed up by a reviewer for the October 1881 issue of the *Atlantic*: “Nihilism is so terrible and tremendous a fact in these days” that any novel on it will be found “breathless and melodramatic.”³⁴ Books now

forgotten featuring Russian revolutionary adventures included *Condemned as a Nihilist: A Story of Escape from Siberia* (1893) by George Alfred Henty, a popular and jingoistic British children's book writer; the American Kathleen O'Meara's *Narka the Nihilist* (1888); and Oscar Wilde's immature play, *Vera; or, The Nihilist* (1881), anachronistically set in 1800 Moscow, where a young tsar falls in love with the terrorist heroine. More enduring has been Arthur Conan Doyle's "The Adventure of the Golden Pince-Nez," in which Sherlock Holmes solves a mystery involving murderous, chain-smoking, but still tragically gallant Russian "reformers-revolutionists-Nihilists."³⁵

All of these minor works have been overshadowed by such international anarchist classics as Henry James's *The Princess Casamassima* (1886) and Joseph Conrad's *The Secret Agent* (1907) and *Under Western Eyes* (1911). *The Princess Casamassima* is a tragic novel centered on the character Hyacinth, in whom ascetic revolutionary commitment and plebeian resentments conflict with love and refined taste. James based this psychological and political study on Turgenev's *Virgin Soil*, and, like its model, the book features a Nechaevist revolutionary circle although the terrorists are English, French, and German and no Russians appear in the work.³⁶ More directly concerned with the problems presented by terrorism and Russia in the contemporary world was Conrad, who, as the son of a Polish nationalist exiled by the tsarist government for his political views, despised Russians. *The Secret Agent* is a riveting tale—coincidentally close to reality—of tsarist Russian secret police encouraging an agent provocateur to commit an anarchist bombing in order to induce the British police to fight Russian anarchists. *Under Western Eyes* is a study of Russian terrorists in which Conrad expresses his disdain for the Russian autocracy and revolutionaries alike.

Newspapers and novels thus informed the world about the extremist actions of Russian Populist radicals. At the same time, in Mediterranean western Europe, mass movements that were partly shaped by Bakuninism created an atmosphere conducive to the global embrace of violent political techniques originating in Russia.

In Italy and Spain, Bakunin seemed to speak to local conditions, and a devoted following that lasted several generations emerged there. What was true of Russia also applied to these two developing nations of the West: as contact with the outside world increased, a sense of deprivation and frustration grew in the face of oppressive taxation, overcrowded urban slums, the stubborn persistence of mass poverty, and the threat posed by modern industrial production to traditional artisans. In northern Europe, the impact of Russian anarchism was largely restricted to intellectuals. In the south, Russian influence was more pervasive as social and political systems were more retrograde, and native radicalism was antitechnological and anarchic by inclination.

Italian conditions reminded Bakunin of Russia with its large peasantry, and his views seemed compatible with native revolutionary traditions associated with Mazzini, Garibaldi, and the secret societies.³⁷ A devoted Bakuninist following emerged in Italy, first in Naples, then in the Romagna, both regions long known for their political violence. In the early 1870s Bakunin's contacts with Italian anarchists were organized by young students and admirers such as Errico Malatesta (1853–1932), important in radical politics until his death; Andrea Costa (1851–1910), who became the moderate leader of parliamentary Italian socialism after his revolutionary youth; and Carlo Cafiero (1846–1892), who gave up his wealth in support of Bakunin.

Bakuninist anarchism became an important rejectionist force in Italian politics from the 1870s into the 1920s. Although uprisings inspired by Bakunin's ideas between 1874 and 1877 failed for lack of organization, he was the first to offer a left-wing alternative to republicanism in Italy, which satisfied very few at the time because of the compromise its leaders had made with Italy's elites and its resulting weak social program. Bakuninism was the first socialist movement in Italy, the first of many subversive movements to fight against the national government, and the first to introduce the idea of social revolution—as opposed to narrow political revolution. Well after the 1890s, when Marxism was on the rise, Bakuninism retained strong support throughout central and northern Italy. It played an integral role in the antimilitarist campaigns during World

War I and remained strong in the radical syndicalist unions. In 1914, 1919, and 1920, anarchist shock troops were active in strikes, demonstrations, and revolutionary agitation. Mussolini's father was a lifelong devotee of Bakunin and raised his son in a family atmosphere accepting of revolutionary extremism; what better example of the way Bakuninism encouraged the violent mood among Italian radicals, helped to lay the groundwork for antiauthoritarian and antiliberal revolutionary movements, and undermined stability in general?

With his influence in Italy consolidated by the early 1870s and growing among émigré Russian and European radicals, Bakunin was prepared to convert Spain.³⁸ Here he achieved his greatest success (much of it posthumous), with the creation of an extensive and long-lasting anarchist movement. Under the auspices of the International Alliance of Social Democracy—Bakunin's secret society within the Socialist International, one of the means by which he hoped to wrest control of the movement from Marx—Giuseppe Fanelli was sent to Spain in 1868 to form the *Federación Regional Española*, the Spanish section of the First International. Fanelli (1829–1877) was a former architect and engineer from Italy who had forsaken his profession to become a revolutionary and agent of Bakunin. He spoke no Spanish but received a warm welcome and, along with a French disciple, Elie Reclus (1827–1904), had great success in setting up a Bakuninist movement that would be a major force in Spanish politics for sixty years.

The situation in Spain was in some ways similar to that of Italy and Russia—a developing European country ever conscious of northwestern Europe's power and prosperity, a sharp contrast to its own poverty and tumult in the midst of the disruptive transition to a modern urban industrial economy. Fanelli and Reclus brought word of Bakuninism to people already familiar with French utopian socialism, eager to rebel against the traditional powers of church and state, and receptive to Bakunin's pronouncements that provincial autonomy would be the essential precondition for a future anarchist Spain. The Bakuninists emphasized the primacy of the local unit, federalism, autonomy, and decentralization; they

therefore struck home in the Spanish regions, especially in Catalonia, which was perpetually at odds with the central government.

These issues were of concern mostly to the intelligentsia of the country, but the backing Spanish Bakuninism gained among the masses had largely to do with local factors, especially when exacerbated by encroaching modernization. In feudal, latifundist Andalusia, where the anarchist word was spread by itinerant “missionaries,” it had concrete political application for peasants, rural laborers, and artisans, whose livelihoods seemed threatened by capitalism in the form of mechanization, new market relations, and the liberalization of property, employment, and tax laws. Anarchism gave them an outlet for their gripes against the large-scale capitalist grain producers and the centralized, seemingly rapacious Bourbon state. In Barcelona, meanwhile, Bakuninist anarchism also grew strong, but for reasons that stemmed from circumstances unique to this industrial Catalanian port city: the numerous immigrants streaming in from the south were strongly attracted to it, as were small-enterprise workers who felt threatened by big business. The overcrowding of proletarian neighborhoods, the presence of large numbers of Italian immigrants, and the brutality of police and factory owners all helped to generate further support.

By the end of the nineteenth century, the movement had fragmented into terrorist and labor-union wings. Although there was some overlap between them, to a large extent this, too, reflected regional divisions. The Andalusian agrarian anarchists tended to be the more violent and ready to adopt terrorism; the more industrialized northeast was inclined toward the militant industrial strike of the syndicalists, whose movement had some of its own roots in anarchism.

Syndicalism was born in France in the early twentieth century but was quickly exported around the world.³⁹ It was a form of belligerent trade unionism that fought against the central state and the reformism of mainstream socialism. Tellingly, it was also known as anarcho-syndicalism. Its French theoreticians were Georges Sorel (1847–1922), who warned against Bakuninism but nevertheless reflected his influence, and Émile Pouget (1860–1931), who was an anarchist outright. Many other leaders of the move-

ment, such as Fernand Pelloutier (1867–1901) and Paul Delesalle (1870–1948), had also come out of French anarchism but critiqued it for its indifference to labor organization. What they imparted to the syndicalist trade unions from Bakuninism was its spirit of revolutionary activism and hostility toward moderation, capitalism, and the democratic system—which explains why anarchism and syndicalism were also breeding grounds for French protofascism. In Spain, too, anarcho-syndicalists played a violent role in trade unions and politics, from 1917 well into the 1930s. During the Spanish Civil War of 1936–1939 they controlled large sections of the country and attempted experiments in rural and urban collectivization before the Francoist victory wiped them out.

Politically significant as they were at home in the early twentieth century, Italian and Spanish followers of Bakunin were equally important as emigrants lugging his ideas around the world. Italian anarchist “missionaries” of revolution were to be found wherever there were large Italian communities. In Argentina, Brazil, Egypt, England, France, Switzerland, Tunisia, the United States, and elsewhere, Italian immigrants introduced the notions of Bakunin in pure form or alloyed with other ideas. For their part, Spanish as well as Italian and Portuguese anarchists spread syndicalist ideas to Latin America. Anarcho-syndicalist strikes and violence were common in Argentina and Brazil from 1900 to the mid-1930s, in Cuba into the 1920s, and in Mexico until the movement was crushed after World War I. Introduced by Spanish, Portuguese, and Italian emigrants who saw themselves as followers of Bakunin, it was stridently anticapitalist and anticommunist at the same time. Of course, these ideas coexisted with other radical opinions. They colored some of the patterns in the kaleidoscopic revolutionary movements active in these societies. Nonetheless, for an entire era anarcho-syndicalism was the chief form of labor protest for workers whose peasant backgrounds had not fully receded, and this speaks to the international diffusion of Bakuninism and the relevance of Russian extremist ideas for developing nations even at this early date.⁴⁰

If syndicalism was a crossbreed of radical Russian and non-Russian origins, political terrorism was purebred, and from Spain to

India and Japan to New Jersey, it became known as the “Russian method.” Beginning in the late nineteenth century, systematic terrorist movements proliferated around the world. Each fought for a different cause, but their mind-sets were almost identical, as were their techniques, which could be mastered and applied regardless of ideological affiliation. Almost all in one way or another took guidance from Russia’s vast pantheon of terrorists and revolutionaries, however remote their specific goals may have been from those of the Russian intelligentsia.⁴¹ The Populist revolutionaries contributed the methods that typified political murder in the twentieth century: deadly innovations in explosives; reliance on the mass media for publicity; the belief that a few bold violent acts would provoke a wider popular revolution; and clandestine, centralized organizational principles.

The turn of the nineteenth century coincided with a rash of anarchist bombings and assassinations in western Europe and the United States (more on which in the next chapter). But these murders committed by lone operators cannot be considered systematic terrorism of the Russian Populist variety. The Russian method proliferated not so much in the West as in politically oppressed eastern Europe, the seething ethnic regions of the Ottoman Empire, the British colony of India, and rapidly changing Japan. In some of these places, conditions were similar to those in Russia at the time: newly industrializing yet rife with ambivalence, if not hostility, toward Westernization. In others, these issues were bound up with nationalism; indeed, some of the early-twentieth-century imitators of Russian terrorism were the first of many national liberation movements for which the formulations of Russian Populism seemed relevant and effective. Whatever the precise reasons, in Poland and Serbia, Armenia and Macedonia, India and Japan, Russian terrorism exerted a magnetic pull on the politically enraged.

Russian Populism and the Russian method radiated out to the eastern European and Caucasian borderlands of the Russian Empire, at first as part of the ethnic-nationalist struggle against tsarist rule, then against neighboring oppressors. In Poland, perpetually bucking under Russian rule, radicals inclined toward the People’s Will once it came onto the scene. It was a Polish member of the

party, Hryniewicki, who threw the bomb that killed Alexander II. Jozef Pilsudski (1867–1935), later nationalist dictator of independent Poland, and Tomasz Arciszewski (1877–1955), future Polish legislator and statesman, emerged as socialist terrorists between 1881 and 1905 as, in Pilsudski's words, "hatred for the Russian regime grew within [us] from year to year."⁴² Implicated in the same plot to assassinate Tsar Alexander III as Lenin's brother, Pilsudski was exiled to eastern Siberia for five years after 1887. After his release in 1892 he played a major role in the Polish Socialist Party (PPS), which stood for full independence from Russia and was organized in cells and fighting groups, following the example of the People's Will. The PPS can be seen as a revival of earlier insurgencies against Russian dominion, but it also shared in the legacy and spirit of the multiethnic Russian terrorist movement.⁴³

The same is true of terrorism in Turkish Armenia, where the radical Dashnak Party (or Armenian Revolutionary Federation) of the 1890s had close organizational and personal ties to Russian Armenia, and whose weapons were supplied by the underground in Tblisi, capital of Russian Georgia. Partly inspired by the example of the Greeks and Bulgarians who had used force to gain independence from Turkey, the party was founded in 1890 with the prominent participation of two former members of the People's Will, Christopher Mikaelian and Simon Zavarian. The Dashnaks were organized into terrorist cells along the lines of the People's Will. The purpose was to fight the Ottoman regime, which had tolerated or itself carried out massacres of hundreds of thousands of Armenians in a series of incidents dating back to 1860. In the first two decades of the twentieth century, its members moved constantly throughout the Ottoman Empire, the Transcaucasus, Russia, Persia, Europe, and the United States, often conspiring with terrorists of other nationalities and sharing Russian-derived revolutionary ideas and techniques with them wherever the message was welcome.⁴⁴

The Armenian terrorists of the Dashnak Party had close ties to Macedonian revolutionaries, whose movement was active for nearly five decades. Macedonia, a centuries-old ethnic and political

tangle, has a convoluted history reflected in the complexity of the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Movement (IMRO). IMRO's roots go back to 1893–1894 with the founding of various revolutionary organizations in Macedonia proper, and in Bulgaria by Macedonian exiles under the sponsorship of the Bulgarian and Russian governments. These closely related, although often rival, organizations arose as a reaction to Turkish persecution; they were in competition with Serbian guerrilla units fighting in Macedonia on behalf of Serbian interests. The Bulgaro-Macedonian groups eventually unified under the name IMRO, whose goal was to achieve Macedonian independence from, at various times, Turkey, Bulgaria, Greece, or Yugoslavia.

Like so many other movements over the century to be touched by Russian radicalism, this, too, was an organization of educated intellectuals in an agrarian society founded to fight against a repressive state. The means by which Russian influences were transmitted varied: through a former member of the Russian Socialist Revolutionary party who had joined IMRO, and through two of its leaders, Boris Sarafov and Giorche Petrov, who held meetings with the Dashnaks and took lessons in bomb making from these Armenian students of the Russians. But beyond these personal links, all of the IMRO terrorists absorbed the mood of their Russian counterparts by reading the novels of Chernyshevsky, Stepniak, or Turgenev and the philosophical works of the Russian Populists. Among many others, this was true of Gotse Delchev, the founder of IMRO who died in a Turkish ambush in 1903, and Svetoslav Merdzhanov, who read these authors and then sought contact with Russian radicals in Geneva.

IMRO was divided into fighting cells, *chetas*, sometimes called armed committees, with the leadership asserting—if often not achieving—strict centralized control over members, including the right to have them shot for transgressions. The organizational pattern was reminiscent of old Balkan outlaw gangs and partly modeled on the Italian Carbonari, but borrowings from the Russian revolutionary movement are evident in IMRO statutes. Relying on the publicity its terrorism brought it, it recruited assassins and

raised funds in the slums of Skopje and Sofia. Finally crushed by the Bulgarian police in 1934, IMRO was clearly a child of the Balkans, but nourished by the Russian terrorist tradition.⁴⁵

If Macedonian extremists terrorized the Balkans, Serbian terrorists shook the entire world. Here, too, in a land with a long tradition of political violence conducted by clans and secret societies, the Russian method reinvigorated old ways of fighting ethnic enemies and waging dynastic feuds. Serbian ultranationalists—among them Gavrilo Princip of Young Bosnia—fed on Russian conspiratorial-revolutionary literature by Bakunin, Chernyshevsky, and Dostoevsky, glorified Russian revolutionaries of old, followed the dictates of the “Catechism of a Revolutionary,” organized themselves after the People’s Will, and made contact with SRs in Europe. They were intoxicated with the success of violence in the 1905 Russian revolution, as their fathers had been with the Pan-Slav saber rattling of Dostoevsky’s Balkan journalism. Ironically, Serb nationalists, who adopted Russian left-wing terrorist techniques, operated with the connivance of the imperial Russian government. From the 1870s on, the Russian tsars had taken Serbia under their wing as they sought geopolitical advantage against the expansionist Habsburg empire. Russia’s encouragement of Serbia through its guarantee of assistance against Austria “unsettled the unbalanced minds” of Serb youths ready to assassinate Austrian Archduke Franz Ferdinand at Sarajevo in 1914.⁴⁶ The Serbs and Montenegrins seriously believed that they were a force of 160 million, so certain were they of the support of their Russian brethren. Serb terrorism in Sarajevo exemplifies the potency of nationalism, revolutionary conspiracy, and terrorism combined. This is a convergence that would surface time and again in the years ahead, with no small contribution from Russian quarters.⁴⁷

Poles, Armenians, Macedonians, and Serbs formed the earliest organized terrorist movements outside Russia to serve the cause of national liberation—a logical development considering these people’s proximity to and familiarity with Russian affairs. Less obvious connections but just as important ones existed linking Russia with India and Japan.

The political and economic transformation of Japan in the late nineteenth century was accompanied by anger and dismay over disrupted traditional hierarchies and ways of life. Change undermined the preeminence of the old warrior class, some members of which fought back by turning to radical rejectionist politics. In Japan, terrorism was partly the result of an effort to revive the samurai fighting tradition, but it also borrowed consciously from the Russian method. Populist exiles taught in Japanese universities and inspired some leftist revolts before the turn of the century. But for the most part Japanese terrorism was the domain of the nationalists, who adopted Russian techniques even though their hostility to the socialist left wing in Japan grew as the latter became more strident in the wake of the Russian Revolution. That notwithstanding, there was always overlap in the joint hostility of the radical right and left toward the West.

Not all of the paramilitary and terrorist groups that flourished in Japan in the first decades of the twentieth century had a Russian connection. But the most powerful and influential one did. The godfather of Japanese organized crime and founder of an early right-extremist and gangster association, the Genyosha, was Toyama Mitsuru (1855–1944). In 1901, he and his protégé, Uchida Ryohei (1874–1937), established the ultra-nationalist Amur River Society (Kokoryukai, also known as the Black Dragons). Uchida had been a student in St. Petersburg, knew Russian, and was in contact with Russian revolutionaries in Nagasaki, whose violent politics he admired. Although his society's aim was to encourage Japanese domination of Manchuria and the entire Far East, in 1917 he called for an anti-Western alliance of Japan, Russia, and China, which he considered superior Asian civilizations. The assassination of moderate politicians was also a specialty of the organization, whose leaders were disillusioned with the existing parliamentary order and opposed the government's domestic authority just as much as they urged its military expansion abroad.⁴⁸

The impact of Russian terrorism at the time was perhaps nowhere as deep as in India, where both pro-British and Indian nationalist newspapers publicized Russian affairs and sympathized

with the terrorists' fight against autocracy. An armed militant wing of the Indian nationalist movement lauded Russian terrorists, corresponded with them, and imitated them. Although ideologically closer to Italian nationalism, anti-British Indian extremists took over the entire inventory of Russian terrorist methodology. Among the figures in this wing of the movement at the turn of the century were Bal Gangadhar Tilak (1856–1920), Har Dayal (1884–1939), Aurobindo Ghose (1872–1950), and Vinayak Savarkar (1883–1966). Despite their different organizational affiliations, regional bases, and philosophical leanings, each stood for armed resistance on behalf of *swaraj* (home rule) and generally opposed Western civilization. Tilak—Brahmin, Sanskrit scholar, journalist, anti-Western Hindu nationalist—urged Indians to adopt “Russian methods of agitation in fighting with their rulers.”⁴⁹

They did just that after 1905, forming secret societies on the model of the Russian SR organization in the belief that this was the only way to fight the despotism of the British, whom the Indians perceived as more tyrannical than the Russian government. The nationalist Marathi paper, *Kal*, praised the SR assassination of the arch-reactionary Russian minister of the interior, von Plehve, whom it compared favorably with Lord Curzon, viceroy of India. British intelligence reports indicate a concern about the ties between Indian and Russian revolutionaries,⁵⁰ and police raids on Indian terrorists uncovered extensive materials on Russian terrorist activities, organization, and philosophies. One such pamphlet in the possession of Savarkar's brother Ganesh when he was arrested in 1908 was titled *How the Russians Organize a Revolution*. Russian terrorists also taught the Indians the financial and propaganda benefits of robbing banks and bomb-making principles: Hem Chandra Das and P. M. Bapat traveled to Paris in 1907 specifically to learn about explosives from Russian revolutionary exiles. They brought back to India a manual on bombs, given them by Nikolai Safransky of the SR Party, which was reproduced around the country.⁵¹

The main center of terrorist activity in India was Bengal. Bengali terrorists considered themselves the disciples of Nechaev and Bakunin and expected that terrorism would set off mass revolt. In 1908 a bombing campaign began in the region, encouraged by the

1905 Russian revolution; it continued sporadically over the next ten years. As late as 1931, the memory of the Populist war against tsardom remained inspirational. In that year, two teenage girls assassinated a British district magistrate in eastern Bengal; according to a police agent, “the object of sending two girls to murder Mr. Stevens was to set up an Indian record of female heroism to emulate that of some Russian girl in the time of the Tsar. This would encourage other girls in Bengal to become terrorists.”⁵²

After independence the Indian heirs of Nechaevist methodology claimed their most famous victim, Mahatma Gandhi. Vinayak Savarkar, the dominant personality among Indian terrorists in the first half of the twentieth century, had become leader of an anti-Muslim Hindu nationalist party. He was idolized by Gandhi’s assassins, and they visited him just before murdering the man who resisted the violence in India by espousing Tolstoyan pacifism.⁵³

The Indian example shows us that Russian-style terrorism would have the best chance of gaining a foothold in agitated, largely agrarian nations similar to Russia where radicals had little or no hope of working within the system and nothing to lose. One nation that might have been expected to look toward Russia was Ireland, but the Fenian movement that arose against English rule developed a homegrown variety of terrorism. The cell structure of the Irish Republican Brotherhood did owe something to the Russians, but it is clear that traditional Irish gangs were far more the prototypes. Irish terrorists admired their Russian counterparts, whom they read about in the European press of the 1870s and 1880s, and took lessons on homemade dynamite from Russian experts in America, but they preferred to plan for armed insurrection and never warmed to the People’s Will strategy of assassinating leading officials. The Irish, with a long-standing tradition of political violence of their own, paid little attention to the new modes of terrorist action emanating from Russia. This, of course, changed with the advent of the Provisional Irish Republican Army, which broke with Irish traditions and conformed to universal terrorist standards in the 1970s.⁵⁴

After the 1917 Bolshevik revolution, the attention of the world was focused on communism, and the anarchist movement with-

ered. Once the last bastion of anarchism was defeated in the Spanish Civil War of the 1930s, it seemed to have died, only to be revived by the New Left in the 1960s. A minority of its adherents turned to violence, forming revolutionary parties or terrorist cells. And one conduit of Russian terrorist ideas was again literature: the mass-consumed work of the contemporary French *philosophe* and Nobel laureate, Albert Camus.

Camus wrote three major, popular books dealing with Russian terrorism: *The Just* (1950), an original play; *The Possessed* (1959), a dramatic adaptation of Dostoevsky's novel of that name (more accurately translated as *Devils*); and *The Rebel* (1951), a book-length philosophical essay with sections on Bakunin, Nechaev, and Russian Populist terrorism.⁵⁵ Camus's writings on the subject are penetrating psychological studies of the problem of revolutionary violence—the terrorist mentality, its hesitations and motivations, the moral relativism and the subordination of human feelings to a higher good, the willingness to die for the cause. Camus praises revolutionary murder if it is for a justified, specific cause rather than for an abstract ideal, and if it is carried out after deep moral searching, with great reluctance, within carefully controlled limits, and with self-sacrifice. For instance, in *The Just*, the hero is Ivan Kaliaev, the SR assassin of Grand Duke Sergei in 1905. Kaliaev delays throwing his bomb at Sergei to avoid killing innocent children-bystanders, bringing on himself the scorn of his fellow terrorists. Only when his royal target is alone does he finally carry out his assignment.

But Camus was himself troubled by the murderous inclinations of rebels and publicly condemned the violence of the far left and the far right. Indeed, over this issue he and the French existentialist philosopher Jean-Paul Sartre broke off relations—Sartre being a lifelong apologist for Bakunin-like revolt, which he saw as having a regenerative effect on humanity. Camus critiqued Bakunin and Nechaev for their advocacy of indiscriminate murder, their thirst for power, and their tendency toward authoritarianism, all characteristics he depicts in both *The Rebel* and *The Possessed*. By contrast, he had a more positive—and idealistic—view of the People's

Will and the Socialist Revolutionaries, whom he presumed to have been acting only with restraint and the noblest of motives.

Camus was not the only icon of the New Left in the 1960s to popularize ideas deriving from Bakunin and the Russian Populist-terrorists, whom radical intellectuals knew either directly or from familiarity with the internecine disputes within European socialism a century earlier. Leftists turned to Bakuninism because of their growing disillusionment with the repressive bureaucratic regimes of the Soviet bloc, and because Bakunin's theories seemed more applicable than classic Marxism to contemporary revolutionary conditions. In such works as *One-Dimensional Man* (1964) and *An Essay on Liberation* (1969), the Freudian-Marxist Herbert Marcuse (1898–1979) expanded Bakunin's conception of the revolutionary alliance of déclassé intellectuals and criminals to encompass all outsiders opposed to Western industrial society—rebellious students, dropouts, oppressed minorities in the slums of the United States, the Third World masses, and Third World dictators. Marcuse does not discuss Bakunin in his published writings, but his ideas and terminology of the 1960s suggest a strong influence. The same is true of Frantz Fanon (1925–1961), a Martinique-born, French-trained psychiatrist and the author of a classic of the Third World revolution, *The Wretched of the Earth* (1961). Fanon's call for spontaneous insurrection by the Algerian and African peasantry, whom he glorifies in the fashion of a Russian Populist, owes its essence to Bakunin. Writing in connection with the Algerian revolution, but intending his ideas for application anywhere imperialism and oppression existed, Fanon, like Sartre, espoused the liberating and redemptive effects of violence.⁵⁶ His writings were especially popular among Arab intellectuals and ideologists of the Iranian Islamic revolution of the 1970s like Ali Shari'ati, who rejected Marxism and urged a return to his country's religious roots to combat "Westoxication."⁵⁷

In Latin America, too, underneath the veneer of Marxism-Leninism or Maoism, a vestigial Bakuninism was apparent—not surprisingly, considering the spread of anarcho-syndicalist ideas earlier in the century and some of the similarities between Russia and this

region. It was on the cultural fringe of Europe; underdeveloped but modernizing; starkly divided into rich and poor; and riven by a vast gulf between the Europeanized elite and the native Indian peasantry. Régis Debray (1940–), the French apologist for Fidel Castro and associate of Che Guevara (1928–1967) in his failed Bolivian insurgency, was a widely read theoretician of radical violence. In Debray's *Revolution in the Revolution?* (1967), a manual for Latin American *guerrilleros*, some observers have noticed undertones of Bakunin and Nechaev alongside Lenin, Mao, Ho, Castro, and Guevara. As for Guevara, although not an advocate of urban terrorism, his life of fighting, disdain for Soviet bureaucratism, and belief in the revolutionary potential of underdeveloped nations echoed the spirit of Russian anarchism. Indeed, he relished East-bloc criticism of him as a “new Bakunin.”⁵⁸ Whether consciously or unconsciously, this modern Hispanic rebel who was one of the main sources of the New Left cult of the guerrilla, passed on Bakuninist ideals to revolutionaries of Latin America and the world.⁵⁹

While Marcuse, Fanon, Debray, and Guevara to different degrees suggest the Bakunin-Nechaev legacy, it was more explicit among other Western radicals of the 1960s, who rediscovered Bakunin's rhetoric and found that it matched their own rebellious mood. In May 1968 during the student riots in Paris, Bakuninist aphorisms like “The passion to destroy is a creative passion” were scrawled on the walls of the Sorbonne. German terrorists regarded the Catechism as scripture, and the Bewegung 2. Juni (June 2nd Movement) published the works of Bakunin.⁶⁰ In Italy, the Red Brigades, an organization responsible for thousands of terrorist incidents between 1969 and 1980 resulting in hundreds of dead and wounded, consciously applied Bakuninist and Nechaevist tactics and recruited disaffected intellectuals, students, and petty criminals to assault the central government.⁶¹ In the United States, the Black Panthers published the “Catechism of a Revolutionary,” and Eldridge Cleaver in the early days of his revolt patterned himself after its revolutionary persona. In *Soul on Ice*, he writes that he “fell in love” with the Catechism: “I took the Catechism for my bible and . . . I began consciously incorporating these principles into my daily life, to employ tactics of ruthlessness in my dealings with everyone

with whom I came into contact. And I began to look at white America through those new eyes.”⁶²

Outside the Western world, too, a new phase of political violence emerged. International terrorism from the 1960s into the early twenty-first century continued the tradition of its turn-of-the-century forebears. Modern-day terrorist groups have become more sophisticated, are better financed, have the logistical support of established governments, and are far more deadly than the revolutionary pioneers throwing primitive homemade bombs. But in order to survive underground, terrorists must follow the organizational patterns first established by the Russians (without necessarily being aware of their provenance). This was the case with the Italian Red Brigades and is also true of Hamas, the Islamic-fundamentalist, Palestinian terrorist group first active in the 1990s, which has a highly centralized cell structure and is divided into open political and secret operations sections.⁶³ The cell structure of Osama bin Laden’s al-Qaeda organization has complicated efforts by Western governments to uproot and destroy it in the wake of the September 11, 2001, attacks on New York and Washington.⁶⁴ In the words of a former colonel attached to the GRU, the Main Intelligence Directorate of the Soviet army, which oversaw East-bloc terrorist training camps during the Cold War, “the methods and ideology of training terrorists . . . have remained substantially unchanged [over the century].”⁶⁵

The nineteenth-century practitioners and theoreticians of Russian radicalism were the first to formulate the terrorist practices that have been in use ever since. It is important to note, however, that very different strains of Russian anarchism and Populism co-existed with terrorism. One of those strains, which also had a far-reaching influence, is associated with the name Peter Kropotkin.