The other Europe developed late too, almost as late as America, but on the continent of Europe itself and therefore cemented to the West. This other Europe was Russia, the Muscovy of early days, which became the USSR, and then the CIS. What we shall look at is: its origins and its long, long past; its adoption of Marxism after the Revolution of 1917; and its situation after years of Communism — its entelechy, as philosophers might say.

And all the time, of course, the subject is the same. A subject whose prestige derives in part from its political Revolution, but also from the speed with which it accomplished its admittedly imperfect industrial revolution. Barely industrialized in 1917, by 1962 it had become a counter-weight to the powerful United States. That spectacular success seemed to hold out hope to the less developed countries. Could they too make a similar Great Leap Forward? Did it depend, or not, on Communism to make it possible?

It is not at all easy to summarize in a few pages, in reasonable fashion, a past as long as that of Russia, marked as it is by violent disasters on a scale almost unmatched by the many vicissitudes suffered by Western Europe.

The first difficulty is the sheer immensity of the area in which this complex and many-sided history evolved. Its 'planetary' size also makes it very diverse. The second difficulty is that the Slav peoples came only late on a scene where they were never absolutely alone. The cradle of the Slavs, the ancestors of the Russians, was in the Carpathians and what is now Poland — the only country whose Slav inheritance is really unmixed. So the actor in question is not the first to enter: but when he does he dominates the stage.

Kiev

This vast area, so long virtually denuded of people, recalls the wide open, empty spaces of the American continent. In such immensity, human beings shrink to nothing. Endless plains, giant rivers, regions monotonously unchanging, mile after mile of crushing distance, interminable carrying of boats over land from one river to another: this is Nature on an Asian scale.

To the North of an imaginary line between Kiev and Perm, huge forests continue those of Northern Europe, linking them
with the mainly coniferous Siberian taiga on the far side of the Urals. This ancient mountain chain, running from North to South, is a minor barrier rather like the Vosges, but it acts as the conventional Eastern limit of Europe, the frontier between Russia-in-Europe and Russia-in-Asia.

To the South stretches the treeless expanse of the steppes (the word is of Russian origin): the black steppes with their fertile chernozem or 'black soil'; the grey or chestnut-coloured steppes with their tall grasses, which in the dry season grow almost as high as a rider on horseback; the white steppes with their patches of saline soil, along the banks of the Caspian Sea.

Russia is made up of these great low-lying lands between the White Sea, the Arctic Ocean, and the Baltic in the North and the Black Sea and the Caspian in the South. The Baltic and the Black Sea are the busiest and most welcoming of these seaways, and essential to Russia, whose vocation, it would seem, is to link them, using them as doors and windows through which to communicate with the West and the Mediterranean, i.e. with European civilization.

But Russia also opens out on to the troubled Asia of the steppes — the Asia of those nomads whose quarrels, wars and incursions we have already traced, threatening invasion as late as the sixteenth century. If these nomads from the East overran Iran and headed for Baghdad, that was no problem: the storm was diverted, and Russia could only profit from the result. But because there was no room for everyone under the Middle Eastern sun, many of these Asian visitors had no alternative but to move on towards the Russian steppes, from the Volga to the Don, the Dnieper, the Dniester and even further. These invasions struck at Muscovy many times.

So Russian territory acted as an enormous frontier zone between Europe, which it protected, and Asia, whose violent blows it painfully absorbed.

Russia could not really exist unless it filled the whole isthmus between the Baltic and the southern seas, and controlled any links between them. For this reason among others, Russian history begins with the Kiev principality in the ninth to thirteenth centuries AD.

The Eastern Slavs, of Aryan origin like all Slavs, brought their tribes and clans, after many adventures, as far as the towns, fields and plains of the Dnieper Basin. This migration, begun in the early years of the Christian era, was completed in about the seventh century AD. In the East, these Slavs found a number of peoples already settled: Finns who had come down from the distant Urals; survivors of the Scythians, Sarmatians and Kama River Bulgarians, all of whom had come from Central Asia; Goths from the Vistula and Niemen Rivers; Alans and Khazars (the latter subsequent converts to Judaism) from the shores of the Caspian and the Don.

This early Russia, a mixture of peoples from Europe and Asia, was that of the so-called 'Little Russians'. The intermingling of races and the prosperity of the towns — that whole burgeoning of life between Great Novgorod in the North and Kiev in the South — depended on the flourishing trade routes that stretched from the Baltic to the Black Sea and beyond. They went as far as Byzantium, whose wealth and luxury dazzled the inhabitants of Kiev, tempting them into foolhardy expeditions against it, and even to Baghdad, then just entering its heyday. From North to South along these routes came amber, furs, wax and slaves; from South to North went fabrics, rich silks, and gold coins. These last have been unearthed by archaeologists all along the trade-routes — a line of golden dots to prove how prosperous they were. Prosperity, indeed, was the key. It supported cities far too big to live off the rudimentary farmland around them: cities which joined hands across great distances, from Novgorod to Kiev, exchanging their goods, their quarrels and their princes.

The Russia of Kiev constantly had to defend itself, especially against attacks from the South. But the far Scandinavian North was always willing to supply it with useful mercenaries — servants one day, masters the next, but always warriors. These 'Normans',
or rather 'Varangians' came mostly from Sweden, still rustic and primitive, but sometimes also from Denmark. They were readily attracted by the Dnieper road that linked the Russian towns and led 'toward the Greeks' across this whole wealthy area which they significantly called the Gardaziki, 'the kingdom of cities'. One family of these soldier-adventurers founded the Rurik dynasty. Its origins are obscure, but in the tenth century it dominated Kiev and the other towns. The Russia of Kiev goes under various names: one is 'the Principality'. Another is Rurikovich – the dynasty of Rurik.

The splendours of this early Russia can be understood if one looks at their historical context. At that time, the Western Mediterranean had long been closed by the Islamic conquest of the seventh and eighth centuries: so the overland route between Novgorod and Kiev was an alternative link between the countries of the North and the rich lands of the South. When in the eleventh and twelfth centuries Muslim supremacy at sea came to an end and the Western Mediterranean was open again, there was less reason to take the interminable land route, which involved not only river travel but also portage, carrying the merchandise from one waterway to another. The Latin occupation of Constantinople in 1204 put an end to it altogether: the sea had conquered the land.

Even before that date, the Kiev princes found it more and more difficult to defend their frontiers and to reach the Balkans and the Black Sea. An old saying alleged: 'When it comes to eating and drinking, people go to Kiev, but when Kiev has to be defended, there is suddenly no one there.' This was certainly true. The nomads from the South continually hurled their mounted warriors against the lands and cities of the Principality: after the Pechenegs came the 'Turk', and later the Kipchaks or Kumans, whom Russian chroniclers called Polovcians.

In the eleventh century, some of the people of Kiev moved – one might almost say fled – to the North-West, settling in clearings that the peasants made in the vast forests near Rostov (Rostovlarslavski, a small Northern town, not to be confused with today's Rostov-on-Don). There, a new Russia took shape, and a new mixture of Slavs and Finns. The latter, of Mongoloid origin, made up the bulk of the population; together, they formed the group known as the Great Russians. This new Russia, barbaric but robust, had already emerged before the lights of Kiev were extinguished. In fact, the powerful Mongol attack which overcame Kiev on 6 December 1241, destroyed a State that had long been losing ground. Five years later, a traveller saw only 200 poverty-stricken houses where the great city had once stood.

The old Russian cities were Western cities. For centuries, the Russia of Kiev was renowned for its material success and the splendour of its cities. There was no trace then of any difference or time-lag between Eastern and West Europe.

Comparative historians have nevertheless noted that the cities of the Kiev Principality differed in some respects from their contemporaries in the West. The latter were surrounded by a sprinkling of small towns, often almost villages, which shared the tasks of their big neighbour. The Russian cities were not. Nor, more especially, were they sharply cut off from the surrounding countryside. Thus, the lords of the land round Great Novgorod sat in its assembly, the Veche, whose decisions were law in the city and in its vast hinterland. They were its masters, together with the Council (Soviet) of leading merchants. And in Kiev, pride of place went also to the lords or boyars who made up the druizhina or guard of the Prince. These, then, were 'open' towns like those of antiquity, such as Athens, open to the patrician eunuchs of Attica, and not at all like the towns of the West in the Middle Ages, closed in upon themselves, jealously guarding the privileges of their citizens.

The Russian Orthodox Church

Through its conversion to Orthodox Christianity, the Kiev Principality determined Russia's future for centuries to come.
Kiev's trade routes, in fact, carried not only merchandise but also the preaching of missionaries. The Principality's Christian conversion resulted from the policy of Vladimir I also known as St Vladimir or Sunny Vladimir. For a time he had thought of adopting Judaism for himself and his subjects, but he was dazzled by the beauty of Byzantine ritual. In about 988, he officially converted the whole population: the people of Kiev were Christened *en masse* in the waters of the Dnieper. But in fact the new religion had been spreading, especially in the South and in Kiev itself, for more than a hundred years. This had been part of the general movement that had followed St Basil's decisive mission to the Khazars in 861, the conversion of the Moravians in 862, the Bulgars in 864 and the Serbs in 879. The conversion of Russia, therefore, was only one event among several. It was a further proof of the exceptional influence enjoyed by the old Byzantine Church, after the iconoclast dispute had at last been settled at the Council of Nicaea in 787 - a sign of return to health in a Church whose preaching then reached out to the heart of distant Asia.

But it took some time before Christianity thoroughly penetrated first Little Russia and then Great Russia. Its great successes came later. The cathedral of Santa Sophia in Kiev was built between 1025 and 1037, and Santa Sophia in Novgorod between 1045 and 1052, while one of the first monasteries, the Monastery of Caves, was founded in Kiev in 1051.

The fact is that town and country dwellers in Russia were attached to their pagan cults, and that these were eradicated none too rapidly and none too well. Pre-Christian beliefs and habits of mind survived in some cases into the twentieth century, especially as regards marriage, death and healing. They permanently coloured Russian Christianity, whose special contribution to Orthodox liturgy, like its cult of icons and its emphasis on Easter celebrations, has often been underlined.

The fact that the world and civilization of Russia were sucked into the orbit of Byzantium from the tenth century onwards helped to distinguish Eastern from Western Europe.

The differences between Catholics and Greek Orthodox Christians, often explained in various different ways, pose a major problem which it is more important to formulate (if possible) than to resolve. From our viewpoint, those differences are mainly historical.

Western Christianity has been subjected to particular ordeals. It was in part the heir of the Roman Empire. It had conquered that Empire, but its victory had coincided with 'Christian imperialism'. This bore fruit in the West when, after the fall of the Empire in the fifth century, Christianity inherited its tasks and its 'universal structure'. The Western Church was ecumenical: it transcended nations and States; it used its language, Latin, which everyone shared, as a way of maintaining unity. Finally, it retained the Empire's hierarchies, its centralization, and its ancient, august capital, Rome. Even more, the Church in the West confronted all the political and social problems that were so numerous and pressing in the first Dark Ages of Western civilization. It was the great community that could meet all needs, spiritual or physical: it could preach to the heathen, educate the faithful, and even clear new arable land.

The Byzantine Church, in the tenth century, was part of a solid and still surviving Empire which gave it neither the duties nor the dangers of expansion into the temporal sphere. The Byzantine Empire dominated it and confined it to its spiritual tasks. The Orthodox Church which became that of Russia was less distinct from the laity than was the Roman Church, and half indifferent to political affairs. It was ready to accept whatever national framework it was offered, and little concerned with organization or hierarchy. Its only aim was to impart the spiritual tradition it had imbibed from tenth-century Greek thought.

As the language of the liturgy, the Greek Church jealously preserved Greek, 'regarding it as an elite language of which barbarians were not worthy'. In Slav countries, therefore, the liturgical language was Slavonic, into which Sts Cyril and Methodius (between 858 and 862) had translated the sacred texts, for use by
the various Slav peoples they had undertaken to convert. They had had to invent an alphabet for it, since the Thessalonian Slavonic into which they were turning the Scriptures was only a spoken language. Hence the importance of liturgical Slavonic, that first written language, in the cultural history of the Slav peoples.

The difference between the spiritual traditions of the two Churches can be seen in several ways. Thus, for instance, the word for ‘truth’, in Greek and still more in Slavonic, means ‘that which is eternal and constant, really existing, outside the created world’ as our reason perceives it. So the word pravda means both ‘truth’ and ‘justice’, as distinguished from istina or ‘earthly truth’. ‘The Indo-European root var has given the Slav languages the word vera, meaning “faith”’ – not truth. In Latin, on the other hand, the word veritas (verité in French, verità in Italian, verdad in Spanish), in its legal, philosophical or scientific sense always means ‘a certainty, a reality for our reason’. Likewise the word sacrament, in the West, involves the religious hierarchy which alone can administer it; whereas in the East it means above all a ‘mystery’ – ‘that which transcends our senses and comes from on high’ directly from God.

Certain liturgical details also reveal profound differences. The Holy Week before Easter is marked in the West by mourning, concerned with the passion, suffering and death of Christ the man. In the East, it is full of joy, with songs that celebrate the resurrection of Christ as Son of God. Russian crucifixes, too, show Christ at peace in death rather than the suffering Saviour more familiar in the West.

This may well be because Christianity in the West was confronted from the start with human, collective, social and even legal problems, while religious thought in the East remained more circumscribed, more individual and purely spiritual, easily becoming mystical. Some see in this the origin of the general cultural differences that Alexis Khomiakov described in terms of ‘mystical Orthodox and rationalist Westerners’. Is Western Christianity thus partly responsible for the characteristically European spirit of rationalism, which so quickly developed into free-thinking criticism, and against which Christianity defended itself before finally adapting to it?

Russian Orthodoxy, by contrast, has not faced such perilous battles, at least until recent years. But it had to choose, in the seventeenth century, between a purified official religion (purged, for instance, of the habit of making the sign of the cross with two fingers of the right hand, contrary to Greek Orthodox practice) and a popular, conventional, moralizing religion which soon became mutely rebellious. The popular reformers were excommunicated, and there was Schism, Raskol. From then on there was a continual campaign against the Raskolniki. And these, of course, were only internal struggles. Attacks from outside, by free-thinkers, scarcely began before the last century of Tsarist Russia. Then after the Revolution of 1917, the Orthodox Church had to fight for its life, for its very existence, by surreptitious actions and the acceptance of compromise. Has it won from this all-out combat some hope of renewal? Is it willing to try new paths, parallel to Social Democracy, such as twentieth-century Catholicism has deliberately explored over the past fifty or more years?

Greater Russia

The second Russia, the Russia of the forests, reached maturity when it too spanned the isthmus between the Northern and Southern seas. This was when Ivan the Terrible (or rather ‘Grozny’, the Fearsome, 1530–84) managed to subdue Kazan (1551) and then Astrakhan (1556), and control the great Volga River, from its sources all the way to the Caspian Sea.

He secured this double success by use of the cannon and the harquebus. The invaders from Asia, whose horses had carried them ‘into the flank of the West’, finally fell back when faced with gunpowder. Ivan could not reach the Black Sea, which had been in the hands of the Turks since the fifteenth century, and
which they kept jealously and powerfully defended. But the Caspian, which he did reach, was on the way to Persia and India.

So a new Russia slowly took shape and triumphed, starting from another latitude and in difficult circumstances, very different from the favourable conditions in which the Russia of Kiev had begun life. Here, by contrast, there were poverty, serfdom and feudal fragmentation.

Even before the fall of Kiev in 1241, the whole of Southern Russia – the steppes – had been occupied by the Mongols – the Tatars, as the Russians called them. They had then formed a great independent Mongol State, adding to its vast homeland in the steppes those Northern Russian States and cities that recognized its authority. This State, the Khanate of the Golden Horde, had its capital at Sarai on the banks of the lower Volga.

The establishment and maintenance of the Khanate depended not only on its army, but also on its tax-gatherers and its wealth. This lasted a long time, at least as long as the 'Mongol route' to India and China remained open, until about 1340. It was used mainly by Italian merchants, chiefly from Venice and Genoa. After its closure, although the Golden Horde survived in the South, it gradually lost its hold on the forest country in the North.

It was there that the Principality of Moscow had grown up, in

22. The expansion of Russia

At the beginning of the eleventh century Kiev, on the Dnieper, dominated the Southern part of what is now Russia (some sixty principalities). Its princes became converts to the Greek Orthodox Church. Kiev was an important staging-post between the Slav countries and Byzantium, between the West and the Far East. At the end of the twelfth century, it lost its importance, and then was overrun by the Mongols. In the fourteenth century Moscow, sheltered by its forests, for a time escaped invasion. Daniel, a son of Alexander Nevsky (Prince of Novgorod the Great), guided the first steps of the Muscovite State. Ivan the Great (1462–1505) was the first great enlarger of Russian territory. Under his rule, Muscovite warriors crossed the Urals and established a foothold in Siberia. Peter the Great (1672–1725) was the legendary founder of Russian power, conqueror of the Swedes and the Turks, great reformer and the founder of St Petersburg (1703). The towns of Bulghar and Itil were destroyed by the Mongols in the thirteenth century.
the midst of obscure struggles among many small feudal domains. Founded in the thirteenth century, it gradually 'reassembled' Russian territory (rather as the Capetian kings had recovered French territory to add to the Ile-de-France), and finally threw off the Tatar yoke in 1480. With that, the 'Tsar' of Moscow replaced the Khan of the Golden Horde. The remains of the Horde, mainly the Tartars of the Crimea, between the Volga and the Black Sea, survived until the eighteenth century, owing to support from the Ottoman Turks, whose more or less docile vassals they were.

But this whole process had taken three centuries; and during this time, while Russians and Tartars had very often fought and opposed each other, they had even more frequently been at peace, trading with each other and sometimes helping each other too. The leaders of the Golden Horde had in general favoured and supported the rise of Moscow. Being late, lax converts to Islam, they were largely tolerant, letting the peoples they conquered believe and worship as they wished. At Sarai, there was actually an Orthodox church.

Between rulers and ruled, moreover, many marriages took place — so much so that there was talk in Muscovy of a 'semi-oriental' aristocracy. In the fifteenth century, too, when the decline of Tatar power was already evident, many Muslims settled in Russian States, became Christian converts, and entered the service of the princes, arousing jealousy on the part of native Russians. Several great families, such as the Godunovs and the Saburovs, are of Tatar origin.

The Mongols imposed their prestige on the Muscovite princes for a long time. They came from a more civilized society, a better organized State (on which the Muscovites modelled their own), and a money economy unrivalled in the North. The Russian language today still retains some characteristic words of Mongol origin: kazna, the fisc; tanjina, the customs; tan, a postal station; dengui, money; kaznachey, a treasurer. This more advanced civilization left a certain Asian imprint on manners and customs in Muscovy, which behaved a little like a barbarian society subjugated and enlightened by its betters. The situation was a little like the coexistence of Christians and their brilliant Muslim invaders in Spain, but with less violent mutual clashes. The Tsar of Moscow began to dominate the Muslim Khan, incidentally, in about 1480 — at the very time when the Spanish Reconquista was about to culminate in the taking of Granada in 1492.

Moscow's predominance was the outcome of countless minor struggles with its neighbouring principalities. It was not assured until the reign of Ivan III (1462–1505), whom some Russian historians have compared and even preferred to Peter the Great. In 1469, soon after coming to the throne, Ivan married Sophia, the heiress of the Palaeologi, the last Greek Emperors of Constantinople. So Moscow, shortly after the fall of Constantinople (Czarigrad), captured by the Turks in 1453, could have become the Third Rome, 'dominating and saving the world'. But this long-term and largely historic success (the title of 'Tsar', perhaps a corruption of 'Caesar' being adopted by Moscow hereditary princes only in 1492) was less important than victory over the Lithuanians, the Golden Horde (whose tutelage was thrown off in 1480) and the great trading city of Novgorod.

The struggle with Novgorod was long, hard-fought and dramatic. In 1475, Moscow waged a 'cold war' and entered the city peacefully; in 1477–8, Ivan had the bell of the Vechе removed; in 1480, he exiled a hundred noble families; in 1487, he drove 7,000 inhabitants out of the city. It was the end of what had been called Gospodin Velikiy Novgorod — My Lord Novgorod the Great.

As much as the idea of being a Third Rome, or the adoption of the new title 'Tsar', what made clear Moscow's ascendency was the arrival there of Italian artists: Ridolfo Fiorentini, nicknamed 'Aristote', from Bologna; Marco Ruffio and Pietro Solario, builders of palaces and churches. 'It was then that the Kremlin took its present shape.' The cannon-maker who gave Ivan III's army its powerful artillery was also an Italian, Paolo Debossis. So, almost a century before Ivan the Terrible and the decisive victories in Kazan
The Other Europe: Muscovy, Russia, the USSR, and the CIS.

and Astrakhan, Muscovite power was making its first forceful mark, and this already involved, undoubtedly, renewed contact with the West.

All these successes and innovations demanded an immense effort by the State. Ivan Peresvetov, an ideologue from the time of Ivan the Terrible, worked out a political theory based on terror. And we know that the oprichnina, the police system set up by Ivan the Terrible, enabled him to crush the opposition of the princes and the boyars and strengthen the centralization of the Russian State.

Russia turned more and more towards Europe. That was the crucial fact in its history in modern times, until 1917 and even beyond. By this policy, which it pursued with tenacity, Russia acquired modern technology, which itself was rapidly improving. The industrial age gave it an early revenge on Asia, which had threatened it for so many centuries. Later, it also stole a march on Europe.

Did Asia play some part in the rise of Russia? Two historians, the Kulishch brothers, believe that it did. In their view, the peoples of Asia, over the centuries, have tilted this way and that: sometimes towards Europe and the Mediterranean, sometimes towards the Far East and especially China. Russia’s situation, they believe, has been partly determined by this process, which from the fifteenth century onwards led the nomads to move Eastward. This relieved the Asian pressure on Southern Russia. Tatar Islam lost some of its strength in its Far Eastern adventure; and when the balance tilted back again towards Europe in the eighteenth century, it was too late. The Westward advance of the Kirghiz and Bokhori nomads, caused by pressure from the Chinese in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, was halted by a solidly built barrier, which even the semi-Asiatic revolt by Pugachev in 1773-4 was unable to break.

This no doubt over-simplification needs to be corrected. Clearly, while there was less pressure from Asia, Russia was also better able to resist it, on account of the superior technology it had acquired from the West and begun to deploy. The Russian economy was improving too, if only because of contact with

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more and more active European trade in the Baltic outlets. Nothing is more typical, either, than the temporary Russian occupation of the Baltic port of Narva in the sixteenth century. That outlet was shut again almost immediately, but it was not long before Russia had its revenge.

The dialogue between Muscovy and the West, which as we have seen began at least as early as the reign of Ivan III, continued and intensified. A traveller from Germany, Baron von Herberstein, was held to have ‘discovered’ Moscow in 1517, rather as Christopher Columbus ‘discovered’ America. At all events, more and more people — merchants, adventurers of every kind, vendors of advice or plans, architects and painters — went to this other New World. This was long before Peter the Great, as a child, made friends with the foreigners in the suburb of Sloboda, whom he later appointed as counsellors. In 1571, the Duke of Alba, then Governor of the Spanish Low Countries, warned the German Reichstag that all Christendom was in danger from the smuggling of arms to Muscovy, which might well become its enemy. Twenty years earlier, in 1553, the English navigator Richard Chancellor, having lost his other ships in a storm, reached St-Nicholas-of- Archangel on the White Sea. From there the Muscovy Company, founded by London merchants, traded for a number of years across the breadth of the country as far as Persia.

Closer ties between Russia and the West, already subdued, multiplied and loomed larger, like a close-up in the cinema, with the bold, brutally hairy measures taken by Peter the Great (1689–1725) and the long, outwardly glorious reign of Catherine II. Catherine the Great (1762–96). As a result, the founders and the external shape of modern Russia vis-à-vis Europe were greatly changed. In the eighteenth century, in fact, it continually sought to dominate and extend its own territory, if necessary at others’ expense. The main link with the West was organized from St Petersburg (later Leningrad), the new capital built from scratch on the Neva, starting in 1703. With more and more British and Dutch ships calling there, its trade continually grew. Russia was
becoming more and more European. Most European countries
assisted in the process, but especially the Balts and the Germans.
Russia's neighbours had the front seats.

The definitive conquest of the South (begun but not completed
by Peter the Great) and the colonization of the Crimea in 1792
took place in a relative vacuum. Hence the 'Potemkin villages'—
collapsible façades— which Catherine the Great's favourite,
General G. A. Potemkin, had erected and dismantled in the course
of her famous journey to the South. Here, there was still no
proper link with the Black Sea; it was not fully established until
the beginning of the nineteenth century and the development
of Odessa by the Duke de Richelieu. It was 1803 before the first
wheat from the Ukraine reached the ports of the Western Medi-
terranean, to the alarm of landowners in Italy and later in France.

Altogether, then, both in general and in the detail of its many
devour, the history of Russia in the eighteenth and nineteenth
centuries is one of all-absorbing 'cultural contact', with its illusions,
its errors, its absurdities and snobbery, but also its positive results.
'Scratch a Russian and you will find a Muscovite': the saying may
have come from Russia, but it was very popular in the West. But
why should the Muscovite not remain a Muscovite, with his own
tastes, his own peculiarities and his own qualities? In Moscow today,
one can visit the Ostankino Palace (now also a museum), which
Prince Sheremetyev had had built by his serfs in the eighteenth
century in the purest classical style. Visitors are often surprised at
the freshness of the internal painting, with its gild, its decorations
and trompe-l'œil ceilings, much of it scarcely retouched. The guide
explains that the whole building, whose thick walls seem to be of
masonry, is in fact made of wood, which resists humidity. The
prince had declared, not without reason, that nothing equalled
the comfort of Russia's wooden houses, to which he had always
been accustomed. So he had kept to wood but dressed it à la
française.

That was rather typical of eighteenth-century Russia, which
called in countless Westerners to help it, even to build its industry

- or what industry there was at that time. Crowds of engineers,
architects, painters, artisans, musicians, singing teachers and govern-
eses descended on a country eager to learn and ready to tolerate
anything in order to do so. The mass of buildings in a city like St
Petersburg; or - a small symbolic detail - Voltaire's library, still
intact; or, still more, the enormous numbers of documents in
French in the public archives: all these bare eloquent witness to the
great apprenticeship which the Russian intelligentsia underwent,
and with rather good grace at that.

France, in fact, played a privileged part in this cultural process.
In return, it was somewhat dazzled by 'the Russian mirage'. The
autocratic Catherine was thought liberal in France because she had
The Marriage of Figaro staged in Russia before it was authorized by
Louis XVI. We should be less gullible. In reality, Catherine II's
Government was socially retrograde: it consolidated the power of
the nobility and worsened the condition of the serfs.

Only aristocratic culture was readily influenced by Paris and
Versailles. It contained small seeds of revolution, and spread to
intellectuals and students, who could hardly fail to watch with
envy the events of 1789, which shook the old Europe even if they
failed to transform it. But it was against the Russian colossus that
the French Revolution (or Napoleon's Empire, which was its
sequel) came to grief—a fact that deserves to be remembered.

In the background, out of sight but sometimes surfacing, revolu-
tion nevertheless ran like a thread throughout the history of
modern Russia, from the sixteenth century to the explosion of
October 1917.

After the brilliance of the Kiev Principality, which itself
concealed many disturbances and social tensions, in the Middle
Ages Russia remained backward. Feudalism took root there just
when it was waning in the West. From the fifteenth century to the
twentieth, Russia became more and more European: but only a
small part of the population was involved in the process: a few
great aristocrats, some landowners, intellectuals and politicians.
What was more, the growth of trade with the West, in Russia as
in Central Europe, turned the aristocracy into wheat producers and merchants. A ‘second wave of serfdom’ was the obvious result, from the Elbe to the Volga. Peasants’ liberties lost their meaning. Until then, serfs had had the right, unless they were in debt, to change masters every year on St George’s Day. Now they lost it. A ukase by Ivan IV (Ivan the Terrible) in 1581 forbade any further move. At the same time, rent and forced labour weighed ever more heavily on their shoulders.

Admittedly, they could and did still flee to Siberia or to the great rivers of the South. They could even cross the frontier and join the outlaw Cossacks. In this way, the Moscow region lost half its peasants, eager for liberty and adventure. But as soon as the Government established in these distant regions either its own control or that of a nominee, the liberty they had won in practice was contested in law. It was the old, old story of Russian liberties, perpetually won and perpetually lost again. Was it not always the lord’s right to seize a fugitive? The Code of 1649 even abolished any time-limit on that right.

Undoubtedly there were huge, widespread and fearsome revolts. In 1669, for example, 200,000 rebels – Cossacks, peasants and natives of Asia – seized Astrakhan, Saratov and Samara; over-running the lower Volga, they killed landowners and members of the prosperous middle class. Their leader Stenka Razin was not captured until 1671, when he was executed and quartered in Moscow, on Red Square. A century later, in the same regions, Pugachev’s uprising had equally massive initial success. Cossacks from the Don and the Ural Rivers, Bakhtirs, Khirgiz, serfs from seignorial domains and from the great iron and copper foundries in the Ural Mountains, all joined the revolt, known as the Pugachevina. The rebels advanced as far as Nijni-Novgorod, hanging landowners as they went and promising everyone land and liberty. They took Kazan, but did not immediately march on Moscow. Pugachev was captured and beheaded in 1775. Order seemed to have been restored.

These facts are very well known. Soviet historians have been glad to make much of them, and with good reason. The more time passed, the worse the plight of Russian peasants became. For when the ‘second wave of serfdom’ began, there was also ‘a second wave of aristocracy’. The boyars of the time of Ivan the Terrible were no longer the boyars of the Kiev Principality, similar to lords of the manor in the West, masters of their own land. Ivan had systematically crushed these independent noblemen: he had executed them by the thousand; he had confiscated their estates and given them to his own men, the oprichniki – noble officials who held their lands, or as we might say their ‘benefices’, only for their lifetime. This being so, the very retrograde reform carried out by Peter the Great was the Entailment Law of 1714, which gave these officials and their heirs, in perpetuity, full possession of the lands they held. So the ‘second aristocracy’ was confirmed in its privileges, with its ranks fixed for good by the imperial court. Menchikov, Peter the Great’s favourite, thus received 100,000 serfs. This showed the double face of Russia in all its contradictions: modernity vis-à-vis Europe, medieval backwardness at home.

From that time onwards, a kind of pact united Tsarism with aristocracy that surrounded and served it, always submissive and fearful in face of the master’s caprice. The peasants suffered in consequence: they were trapped in insoluble difficulties. Even mass emancipation, in 1858, 1861 and 1864, did little to help. Half the collective constraints imposed on the village, the mir, remained in place. Lands recovered from the lords could be bought back. What was more, the landowners still kept part of their domains. The question was not dealt with until 1917, when there was the greatest agrarian explosion in Russian history, a profound and practical reason for the Revolution. Even then, it found no permanent solution: for no sooner had the peasants thrown off their old fetters than collectivization began. Peasants in Russia had a very brief experience of owning their own land.

The explosive rural situation had created revolutionary tension throughout Russian life. It explained the immense and immediate response to the French Revolution of 1789, commented on day
after day in all the newspapers, not only in St Petersburg and Moscow, but as far away as Tobolsk in Siberia. The Revolution in France was followed passionately by liberal aristocrats, by bourgeois merchants and by intellectuals and publicists, many of them of humble stock. (See the short study by Michael Strange, *The French Revolution and Russian Society*, which appeared in French translation in Moscow in 1960.) The Declaration of the Rights of Man, the news of riots in France, the spread of the Terror ‘touched immediately on the most burning questions in a regime of autocracy and serfdom’: they expressed the feelings which, according to one contemporary, could be read in Russia ‘in the face of every peasant’.

Other tensions arose alongside this essential peasant problem as industrialization began in the mid-nineteenth century. It was a time when, in the reign of Nicholas I (1825–55), but certainly not at his bidding, Russian literature took giant strides, with Pushkin (1799–1837), Lermontov (1814–41), Gogol (1809–52), Turgenev (1818–83), Dostoyevsky (1821–81) and Tolstoy (1828–1910). All in all, this was an immense period of Russian self-discovery.

New types of revolution or revolutionary unrest soon began and proliferated. There was the limited movement of the ‘Decabrist’ or ‘Decembrists’ in 1825; there was the shooting in front of the Winter Palace in 1905; there were the Nihilists in the 1860s; there was the founding in Minsk in 1898, of the Russian Social-Democratic Party, the first Marxist party; there were the Slavophiles (sometimes chauvinist revolutionaries); there were extreme ‘Occidentals’. Above all it was students, together with intellectuals, young people generally and exiles, who bore the torch of the revolution that was to come. All of Russian history had been kindling its flame.

25. The USSR after 1917

Since we have already glanced at the political, economic, and social antecedents of the Russian Revolution of 1917 and its aftermath, this chapter will be concerned with the more general problems of Soviet civilization: How was Marxism involved in the Russian Revolution? What influence does it have on the Soviet Union in a human sense, quite apart from the plans and statistics, important as they are? Amid all the vicissitudes, constraints and shocks, what are we to make of the present and future of Soviet, now CIS, civilization?

*From Marx to Lenin*

Karl Marx's thought fairly quickly caught the attention of intellectual and revolutionary circles in Russia, which were favourable to the West and therefore at odds with the Slavophile traditionalists. Thus Marxism very soon won converts among economists and historians at the University of St Petersburg – partly, it was said, in opposition to its conservative counterpart in Moscow.

Marxism was the fruit of collaboration between Marx (1818–83), the key figure, and Friedrich Engels (1820–95) who worked with him for forty years and survived him for twelve. With its elaborate doctrine, it marked an essential turning-point in revolutionary thought and action in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, arguing that revolution was a natural and inevitable
outcome of modern industrialized capitalist society. It seemed to offer an overall view of the world which closely linked social analysis and economic explanation.

Marx's dialectic (the search for truth through contradictions or statement and counter-statement) was inspired by Hegel, although it spurned his philosophy. For Hegel, things of the spirit dominated the material world ("mind over matter"), and consciousness was humanity's essential trait. For Marx, by contrast, the material world dominated things of the spirit. "The Hegelian system," he wrote, "stood on its head; we have set it on its feet." This did not prevent Marx's dialectic taking over the terms or successive stages of Hegel's: (1) the thesis or statement; (2) the antithesis or negation; (3) the synthesis or negation of the negation, i.e. the statement of an evolving truth taking account of both thesis and antithesis, and reconciling them.

This way of reasoning was always in the background of Marx's arguments. As the Russian revolutionary Alexander Herzen put it, 'Dialectic is the algebra of revolution.' It was certainly the language of Karl Marx, a device for identifying and defining contradictions, once they were 'scientifically' recognized, and then overcoming them. Marxism has been defined as dialectical materialism. The phrase is not inaccurate, although Marx himself never used it and, as Lenin remarked, he emphasized the dialectic far more than the materialism. Following Lenin, others made the same remark about historical materialism, a rather unhappy expression devised by Engels: Marx, it was said, had emphasized the history far more than the materialism. He undoubtedly drew the dialectical arguments for his revolutionary doctrine from an historical analysis of society. That was one of the major innovations in his work.

Western society in the mid-nineteenth century seemed to him to be suffering from a major contradiction, dialectical analysis of which was the basis of Marxist thought. To summarize it briefly: work, for humanity, was a way of being freed from Nature, of mastering it. By working, people became aware of their own nature, which was to be part of a society, as workers among other things. In society, which meant both work and freedom, there was both 'human naturalism' and 'natural humanism'. This was the thesis, the statement about the value and purpose of human work.

Then came the antithesis, the negation. In the society that Marx was studying, work did not free people: it enslaved them. They were not allowed to own the means of production (the land or the factory) and its profits. They were obliged to sell their work, to part with it while others enjoyed its fruits. Modern society had made work a means of enslavement.

So what was the synthesis, the negation of the negation, the way out of that contradiction? When capitalist society (which entailed the selling of people's labour) reached the stage of industrialization, with mass production and mass manpower, it led to the formation of a growing class of wage-slaves, the proletariat. This automatically sharpened the class struggle or class war, and therefore soon provoked revolution.

Industrial capitalism, Marx believed, was the last stage of a long historical process that had brought human society from slavery to feudalism and then to capitalism, first commercial and finally industrial. The world of the nineteenth century had thus simultaneously reached the stage of industrialization and that of revolution, which would abolish private property. The next step would be communism.

But communism would not replace capitalist society overnight. ('Capitalist', incidentally, was a word that Marx used, at least from 1846 onwards: 'capitalism', although very useful, he did not.) As he explained in 1875, there would be 'an inferior stage of communism' during which the new society would emerge as best it could from the old. This stage was known as Socialism: its slogan was 'To each according to his work'. The next and higher stage was Communism proper. It was rather like the promised land. With it, society could proclaim on its banners: 'From each according to his ability (at the production stage), to each (at the consumption stage) according to his needs.' Manifestly, Marx's dialectic was optimistic: it was an 'ascendant' philosophy, as Georges Gurvitch has written.
To Russian revolutionaries, however, Marx's message may well have seemed pessimistic. For the moment, after all, he had concluded that revolution in Russia was theoretically impossible, although he had second thoughts on the subject around 1880, when revolutionary unrest there was once more in the news. In Russia, he thought, the industrial proletariat had not yet fully developed: it would take years for the new conditions created by capitalism's productive power to operate to the full. Only then would there be 'a period of social revolution'. As yet, the time was not ripe.

Marx and Engels pondered, explored and debated this problem, using Britain as an example. When the first volume of *Das Kapital* was published in 1867, Britain was already in the midst of her Industrial Revolution -- or, more precisely, in the midst of the difficulties it had caused without as yet providing ways of overcoming them. Marx and Engels also considered the examples of France and Germany, the latter by now only slightly behind the former and rapidly gaining ground. All such examples, of course, were very far removed from conditions in Tsarist Russia.

That being so, how could one expect a social revolution in the name of Marxist principles in Russia at the end of the nineteenth century, where industrialization had made very little headway and where the peasants made up 80 per cent of the population, and industrial workers only 5 per cent?

Lenin was well aware of this contradiction, from the time when he published *The Development of Capitalism in Russia* in 1899, and still more just before and after the Revolution of 1905. Admittedly, as a disciple of Marx, Lenin was the prisoner of doctrines he admired and in which he felt at home. He had very few ideas not already to be found in Marx's writings. On the other hand, although his real talent was for planning revolutionary action, he was far more original, even as a thinker, than is often said.

He came, in fact, from the minor Russian aristocracy, as his voice and accent showed. He was not, therefore, simply a 'representative of the Russian people', its simplicity and its 'practical intelligence'. Nor was he solely a man of action. In fact, when he was accorded 'the honour of cleaning the Second International's Augean Stable', it was because he had already produced original and concrete analyses of its problems and searching criticisms of its practice. When he went into action, it was always after passionate and lucid thought. Wherever he differed from Marx, therefore, it was where disagreement was to be expected: on revolutionary strategy and tactics, which he saw in a Russian context and in terms of relations between the 'proletariat' and the 'Revolutionary Party'.

In a word, Lenin gave politics systematic priority over economic and social matters, and the 'Party' priority over the proletarian mass. He was in favour, one might almost say, of 'politics first'. For Marx, revolution was the result of social explosions that were almost natural events, occurring in their own good time under the pressure of industrialization and the class struggle. The proletariat, herded into the towns as a result of industrialization, was explosive and revolutionary by its very nature. Alongside it, part of the bourgeoisie had been the forcing-house of the new ideologies; but now it had already fulfilled its revolutionary role. On occasion, perhaps, the help of the democratic and liberal middle classes might still be useful: but for a long time Marx and Engels were very hesitant to use it. And after 1848, not without reason, they especially mistrusted the reactionary potential of the French peasants, whom they saw as 'false proletarians' deeply attached to their parcels of land.

 Debates about what form revolutionary action should take continued long after Marx's death in 1883. Rosa Luxemburg (1870–1919), from Germany, shared Marx's views. For her, only the industrial proletariat was to be trusted: it must be the sole driving force of revolution, since all the other classes were its enemies. The 'Party', therefore, must belong to the proletariat, which must watch it closely from within and control it. That, she believed, was the only way to prevent its being bureaucratized.

Lenin took a different tack. Like some reformists, he doubted
whether the proletariat ('under imperialism') was naturally and spontaneously revolutionary: and in any case spontaneity horrified him. The time had come, he thought, to emphasize the Party and possible alliances which might rally to the proletariat's cause any other oppressed social groups, whoever they might be. In 1902, in *What is to be Done?*, he maintained that, without the leadership of a centralized party of professional revolutionaries, the proletariat would opt not for revolution, but for reformism and trade-unionism, dreaming perhaps of a utopian working-class aristocracy. Was it not the case that in Britain at that time, the up-and-coming Labour Party was having to oppose the Trade Unions' hesitant conservatism, as in France, where the unions were more anti-Socialist than is often thought. Contradicting Rosa Luxemburg and some others, Lenin added that the age of national wars was not yet over, and that there had to be alliances with the liberal bourgeoisie. Furthermore, and still in disagreement with Rosa Luxemburg and 'Luxemburgism', he called for a programme of agrarian reform, and refused in any case to regard the peasants as reactionary. On that crucial point, he was surely influenced by Russia's revolutionary Socialists. Like them, he saw the enslaved peasantry as the essential driving-force of revolution, and did not intend to ignore its immense explosive power. In the event, it ensured success for the 1917 Revolution. As regards Russia, Lenin had been right.

This is not the place to examine in detail the ideological discussions and declarations that marked and in some cases influenced the development of the Soviet Union after 1917. Suffice it to say that there was a cultural shift, from Marxism to Leninism. The latter was a revised form of Marxism 'reinterpreted', as anthropologists might say, to adapt it to the under-industrialized, still mainly agrarian Russia of the Tsars at the beginning of the twentieth century — so near in time still, and yet so far. 'The proletariat,' declared Lucien Goldmann, 'was too small in numbers, and therefore too unimportant, economically, socially and politically, to spark off by itself a revolution which would at once have ranged the rest of society against it.'

The Russian Social-Democratic Party, later the Communist Party, was founded in 1898 by the second generation of Russian Marxists (Lenin, Julius Martov and Fyodor Ilich Dan) with the agreement of the first generation (Georgy Plekhanov, Pavel Axelrod, Vera Zasulich, Lev Deutsch), who while abroad had formed the Group for the Liberation of Work (Gruppa Osvoobojdeniya Trouda).

During the Social-Democratic Party's second congress, in 1903 in London, a deep split occurred. On one side were the Bolsheviks (Russian for 'the majority', although in this case it was by one vote); on the other were the Mensheviks ('the minority'), including Plekhanov himself. Why the dispute? Because of Article 1 in the Party's statutes, into which Lenin had introduced measures that went by the name of 'democratic centralism'. They provided for:

- a preponderant role for 'professional revolutionaries', i.e. technicians;
- strict, indeed iron discipline by the Party;
- wider and dictatorial power for the Central Committee over the whole of the Party, and especially its grass-roots organizations;
- if need be, a small Bureau to take over all the Party's powers.

Was that clear enough? It made the Party an autonomous war machine, which the Mensheviks accused of dictatorship and disregard for democratic principles. (Trotsky predicted that Lenin's measures would end in the dictatorship of one man, the Chairman of the Central Committee.)

All the same, there is plenty of evidence that this tactical approach was made necessary by the state of social and industrial development in Russia at the time. In 1905, Lenin attacked the argument advanced by a small number of Socialists who believed, he said, 'that a Socialist (i.e. proletarian) revolution was possible, as if the productive forces of the country were sufficiently developed for such a revolution to take place'. More revealing still is the last-minute argument between Lenin and Georgy Plekhanov, the founder of Russian Marxism, on the eve of the seizure of power.
by the revolutionaries in 1917. Lenin denied planning to take power: if he took it, he said, it would simply be in the hope of support from the Socialist revolution that was about to break out in the advanced capitalist countries — a hope which the Russian Revolution would soon have to abandon, condemned as it quickly was to stand alone. Plekhanov, reverting to basic Marxist arguments — the weakness of the industrial proletariat, the backwardness of Russian capitalism, the huge majority of the peasant population — warned Lenin that if he seized power he would be forced, whether he liked it or not, to impose dictatorship and terrorist methods of government. Lenin retorted that to talk like that was to insult him. But he seized power, and he unleashed the agrarian revolution, just like Mao Tse-tung thirty years later.

Even so, these problems continued to worry him. When in 1921, with the New Economic Policy (NEP), he for a short time put the machine into reverse, his public statements characteristically echoed the same line of thought that had run through earlier polemics. 'We were mistaken,' he declared. 'We acted as if one could build Socialism in a country where capitalism scarcely existed. Before we can achieve a Socialist society, we must rebuild capitalism.' In the event, the New Economic Policy barely survived Lenin's death. From 1928–9 onwards, Stalin espoused industrialization, which was pursued with whatever means lay to hand. Its difficulties and its achievements are a matter of history.

But let us return to 1881, the date of Marx's death, to illustrate the debate more clearly. Georgy Plekhanov, imagining a case in which the revolutionaries seized power 'by accident' or 'by conspiracy', wrote that 'in those circumstances all they would be able to build would be a Socialism like the Empire of the Incas', i.e. with an authoritarian regime. In saying this, Plekhanov was echoing a remark of Marx's own. Discussing a similar eventuality, Marx had spoken of 'convert Socialism' or the 'Socialism of the barracks'.

To recall these words and these debates, as has often been done, is not to condemn the events of October 1917 and their consequences in the name of some 'pure Marxism' which history has somehow swept aside or scorned. The point is that, by chance, the Socialist revolution occurred in the least industrialized country in Europe at the time. So it was impossible for it to take place in accordance with the Marxist scenario of a seizure of power by the proletariat. Power was seized by the Communist Party (as the Social-Democratic Party became) — i.e. by a tiny minority of the vast Russian population, perhaps some 100,000 people all told. This highly organized minority took advantage of the appalling stampede of 10 or 12 million peasants, escaping from the army and flooding back to their villages. On the way, some of them fought and killed each other; when they arrived home, they began to commandeer the estates of aristocrats, the rich bourgeoisie, the Church, the convents, the Crown and the State.

Lenin is said to have asked: 'If Tsarism could last for centuries thanks to 130,000 aristocratic feudal landowners with police powers in their regions, why should I not be able to hold out for a few decades with a party of 130,000 devoted militants?' He is also said to have remarked, in Napoleonic fashion: 'We'll attack, and then we'll see.'

'To hold out for a few decades' until Russia had reached a degree of development and industrialization that might have allowed a 'reasonable' revolution: that, for years, seemed to be the crucial problem. It was also the motivation for an implacable dictatorship which was never the 'dictatorship of the proletariat' but that of the communist leaders — in the name of a proletariat that did not yet exist. 'Under Stalin, the dictatorship of the leaders even became that of one single man.' The historical example that those sombre and dramatic years in the life of Russia cannot fail to evoke is that of the Committee of Public Safety in 1793–4: but in this case dictatorship did not so quickly fall. The reason was undoubtedly the iron discipline of a single Party which prevented any lasting rebellion: quite the reverse of what happened in Paris in 1794.

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Marxism and Soviet civilization

For many years the USSR had lived under a political dictatorship, without freedom of the press, freedom of speech, freedom of association or freedom to strike, with a single, disciplined, 'monolithic' Party in which underlying conflicts only came to the surface now and then as dramatic personal confrontations. After the death of Stalin in 1953 there was a certain liberalization - or rather, humanization, since 'liberalization' was then for Communists a dirty word. It was a slow process, but apparently irreversible. And was not the reason for this 'de-Stalinization', as some called it, the fact that the dramatic, emergency days of the Committee of Public Safety were long past? The USSR had not emerged from all its internal difficulties, by any means, but it had joined the ranks of the major industrialized countries, the privileged nations. It had won its place by the sweat of its brow, but it was there. At the same time it had built, whether knowingly or not, some of the structures necessary to a mass civilization. For the first time, perhaps, it had the chance to choose its own road, its own revolution, internally at least - since its role in world politics as a leader of the other Communist countries placed other constraints upon it, from the outside.

Even by then, Marxism had already changed. Fifty years of effort and conflict on all fronts had been a long ordeal. No wonder that during that time Marxism-Leninism, as a State doctrine, while maintaining its cherished themes and doctrines, evolved a great deal. It would have been a wonder had it not.

Official speeches went on repeating the sacrosanct clichés: the class struggle, *praxis*, slavery, feudalism, capitalism, relative pauperization, dialectical materialism, the material base or the coming of a wonderfully happy classless society. But that did not mean that the whole massive ideology of Marxism, like all ideologies and religions, had not by virtue of its own position been obliged to come to terms with real life. In any case, the revolutionaries, like the Russian intelligentsia of the turn of the century before them, had always held that an idea was valid only if it took shape in practical life, in praxis. As a system of tightly-knit ideas, Marxism could therefore be valid only if it were embodied in the actual experience of millions of people. And if it 'became concrete' in this way, bringing itself 'up-to-date', experience was bound to rub off on it. Its disciples claimed that 'Marxism was a conception of the world that overtook itself'. Sympathetic observers made the same point. "Twentieth-century Communism," they said, 'underwent transformations comparable to those of Christianity in the first to the fourth century.'

One would have to be a casuist to count all the changes, infidelities and heresies of which Marxism accused itself and Marxists accused each other. To catalogue them would not be without interest, so long as no particular detail were allowed to take precedence, however significant it might seem. A catalogue of that sort would make sense only against the practical background that would explain it and be explained by it. Nor is it the clearest or most important way of appraising the Soviet experiment.

In fact, if the years since 1917 seem a long time to those who have lived through their vicissitudes, they are still not long enough to reveal how deeply or otherwise that brutal break with the past, and the ordeals and further revolutions that followed it, have affected the nation's underlying ideological, social and cultural evolution. We should need to distinguish what in all that experience was an aberration (especially but not exclusively in the early transitional years before 1930) and what was not. Only then could we hope to determine what relationship there has been between an ideology imposed by force and a society sucked into an experiment which it had not chosen and which it neither fully accepted nor even fully understood.

How far, for example, was the re-establishment of widely differing wage-rates, already planned by Lenin, an accident, a decision expressing Stalin's all-powerful will, a social necessity or an inevitable economic trend? The result, in any case, was a social hierarchy,
with obvious privileges for those in its higher ranks. A Soviet university teacher remarked with a laugh: 'We are the Soviet bourgeoisie.' Of course, such a hierarchy can re-establish a class system only if its privileges, which go with office, can be passed on to the next generation, so that the children gain advantages (education, money or jobs) from their parents' social position. This tendency is natural in every society with a strong family life, and Communism in the Soviet Union has in no way destroyed it. Stalin even strengthened it.

A further basic problem has been agriculture. Soviet attempts to organize it on collective lines were failures, and were resisted by the peasantry, with long memories of their maltreatment by Stalin. But this peasant discontent, so often echoed in muffled form by Russian novels, is surely also a normal and almost inevitable reaction on the part of any traditional culture suddenly torn from its ancient habits by rapid economic modernization. The problem would seem to arise in all countries seeking to modernize at speed, irrespective of the solutions adopted.

It is by no means clear, meanwhile, that the last word has been spoken in the more or less tense dialogue between Soviet ideology and the Orthodox Church — if, indeed, there is such a thing as a last word. In the face of 'religious alienation', the regime adopted militant materialism, aggressive rationalism — not denying God but vehemently affirming human concerns. The Second World War helped to revive orthodox belief, and led to a compromise between the Church and Stalin, who re-established the Patriarchate of Moscow, abolished by Peter the Great. Stalin even made reference, in a speech on 7 November 1951, to Alexander Nevsky, prince and saint of the Orthodox Church. No doubt the majority of the practising faithful are of the older generation. But what are the real attitudes of most people when it comes to baptism, marriage and funerals? The pomp and circumstance with which the State tried to surround civil weddings may be a proof that it had a fight on its hands, or at least had to fill a vacuum.

Finally, with successive generations, the dramas of the past have begun to recede in people's memories. Marxism-Leninism has now moved into the background, rather as Western Cartesian thinking, though still pervasive, has become less conscious as a philosophy. This need not imply that the ultimate ideals of Communism have been totally abandoned: but they are no longer burning issues, to be discussed every moment of the day. Even in the 1960s, out of 220 million Soviet citizens, only 9 million were members of the Party. Marxism-Leninism was their trademark, their watchword, their everyday language. But what about everybody else?

The biggest change that Communism brought to life in the USSR, however, was rapid industrialization, and the hope of successfully completing it by building on its successes, overcoming its difficulties and repairing its failures.

In human terms, the change cost Soviet citizens dear. The leaders of the Revolution in 1917 did not inherit an industrial infrastructure ready-made, 'supplied in advance by capitalism'. They had to build it; and this in part explains the particular nature of Stalinist dictatorship. It took on the basic task 'that elsewhere was performed by nineteenth-century capitalism'. The cruelties of Stalin's regime are not wholly to be explained either as the whims of a power-mad dictator or as the stern necessities of Socialism or Communism. They were also in part a response to underdevelopment, a ruthless State policy devised to invest human labour in the race to industrialize a backward and mainly agrarian country.

How far that goal was attained will be debated by specialists for a long time to come. Statistics are a fertile ground for controversy. Their language is international, so peoples compare themselves with each other like children comparing their height. It is important of course, to use the same units of measurement. Official figures, for example, show industrial production in France to have increased by 7.7 per cent a year between 1953 and 1959 (1953 = 100, 1959 = 156), by 8.3 per cent in Germany (1953 = 100, 1959 = 169), and by 11.3 per cent in the USSR (1953 = 100, 1959 = 190). But these official statistics are not directly comparable. The
West calculates its indices in net value, the Soviets in gross value. The Soviet economist Stralin showed that industrial production in 1956, calculated in gross value, was 22.9 times that in 1928, but only 14.7 times that if calculated net. With discrepancies on that scale, it was easy to imagine how long the USSR’s critics and its apologists could be locked in debate.

However, while the Soviet Union’s economic goals remained beyond its grasp in the 1960s they were not entirely out of sight. Immense progress had been made, with quite extraordinary achievements in a number of places, not excluding Siberia.

Great social changes followed the 1917 Revolution. In all the Soviet Republics, industrialization began to change people’s lives; and this fact in its turn affected the life of the Union. Everywhere, new structures began to emerge.

A first major change was the influx of peasants into the towns. The USSR imposed the growth-rate of an American boom on a people traditionally stolid and in 1917 still essentially peasant. Everywhere, tension arose between pace and peace, between the ubiquitous pressure for change and the solidity which often became stubborn resistance to it. In the Central Asian Republics, the coexistence of Americanism and Orientalism was more extraordinary still.

The figures show the scale of the change. In 1917, 80 per cent of the Russian population were peasants, and only 5 per cent were industrial workers. By 1962, the peasants were barely in the majority, with 52 per cent, while the proportion of industrial workers and managers had risen to 35 per cent. Over the same period, the number of bureaucrats had been multiplied by 10, and the number of intellectuals by at least 100. Altogether, there had been a huge drift from the land and into the cities.

The results could be seen almost everywhere. With the exception of the former capital, Leningrad, which retained the metropolitan air it had always had, cities old and new, including Moscow (which had become a sort of gigantic Chicago), took on a peasant appearance. Their life became curiously rural. Intellectuals and students were no exception. ‘A new race was created in Russia’, invading every sphere of life, from the humblest job to heights of scientific research – the summit of the social scale. Stalin’s double programme of industrialization in the cities and collectivization on the land created urban jobs and rural jobless, forcing peasants to seek work in the towns whether they liked it or not – all this in only a few years.

In 1947, peasants were still recognizable in the towns they had invaded: they wore rustic clothes; they moved slowly; they shouted as they scrambled on to buses and trams. Already by 1956 a change was visible. The peasants had become more urbanized, and with a higher standard of living they were better dressed. By 1958, one no longer saw women and children walking barefoot; behaviour in theatres and cinemas was exemplary; peasant boorishness was on the wane. And yet people’s rural origins, still so recent, showed in a myriad tiny ways. That is perhaps why in Leningrad, by contrast, everything seemed more urbane, the women more elegant, the language spoken more correct. Thanks also to its physical appearance, admirably restored after 1945, the place gives the impression of an old European city, quick, attractive and cultivated, linked by its busy port to the wider world. It has not been swamped by the countryside. Yet perhaps, despite its industrial suburbs, it still remains a little cut off from the extraordinary bustle of life – that very feature that makes Moscow so clearly a capital.

The influx of labour from the countryside quickly outnumbered the skilled workers of the past. Peasants filled the factories, ignorant, ill-trained, clumsy and, like all peasants, suspicious of machinery. Turned overnight into factory-hands, they at first achieved only low productivity. So, to make up the lack of production, more of them were drafted in.

There was a similar influx of peasants, or at least of their children, into the schools and universities. In 1917, at least 75 per cent of the population was illiterate. By the 1960s, it was claimed, illiteracy had been totally eradicated. This would certainly explain the growing numbers of libraries, reading-rooms and popular
editions of Russian classics (although not of Dostoyevsky or Sergey Yesenin until 1955). These, as well as selected foreign translations, were often printed in enormous numbers — on occasion, as many as 10 million. True, the price of books, on mediocre paper, was derisory. Was this why the classics were so popular? Or was it because contemporary authors seemed tame, and the press was dull and difficult? At all events, radio, television and records were also extensively devoted to further education.

What O. Rosenfeld has called 'this cultural revolution' in itself encouraged a genuine social revolution — an immense desire for emancipation, a hunger to learn and rise in the social scale. 'Crazy over-ambition', a harsh observer might say. Let us call it rather an eagerness for culture, the key to both money and prestige. Whatever their motive, there were more and more students at universities and technical schools, or taking correspondence courses and evening classes. Often, the children of peasants had the best results. In this way, the USSR was training the intellectual elite it needed — engineers, research workers, officers, professors — out of its inexhaustible human resources. What happened in France after Jules Ferry’s educational reforms, and then with free education in secondary schools and universities, was organized by the Soviet authorities at vertiginous speed — and therefore not always without mishaps. It still seems astonishing, for instance, that from 1947 to 1956, secondary education in the Soviet Union was free-paying, not free.

By the 1960s, however, the level of education was generally said to have fallen.

Once made, that statement calls for qualification. The Russian spoken today, it is true, is no longer the refined language of the past. The education so widely offered is utilitarian, mass-producing the specialists needed by modern society, from the schoolteacher to the engineer or even the university professor. 'Semi-intellectual', said one observer, not normally so unkind.

Unkind or not, was the remark fair? Was this mass semi-culture simply a normal feature in a new country, as is often suggested, or
more simply still characteristic of an emerging mass civilization? In all the highly industrialized countries in the world, in Europe or America, universal education tends to produce more specialists, and a lower level of general culture. Yet the number of people forming a true intellectual élite has not diminished: at the very worst, it has remained the same. Instead of the very small intellectual élite and the very large mass of illiterates that traditional civilizations maintained, modern civilizations present a more complex picture: a small élite, a very small number of illiterates and a mass of people for whom education is mainly vocational, not a form of higher intellectual training.

In fact, at this higher level, Soviet or CIS intellectuals, scholars and teachers are in our view (and taking account of ideological differences) comparable with those in Europe or the United States. They are also the heirs of the same culture. For a Parisian intellectual, for example, to go from French universities to the Moscow Academy of Sciences is to feel at home, to enjoy immediate mutual comprehension in any discussion or jest. The first impression is that the USSR's total isolation since the Revolution - the physical isolation that cut it off from uninterrupted relations with Europe - had no effect at this academic level. At first sight, this seems surprising. But on second thoughts, one recalls that at the beginning of the twentieth century Europe and Russia were steeped in the same civilization. And in the life of a civilization, the time since then is relatively short. Despite all the fantastic upheavals that have shaken so many social and political structures in the former Soviet Union, it still largely belongs to the same civilization as that of Russia in 1917, i.e. our own.

True, literature and the arts seem to contradict this assertion.

Indeed, if we look in them, as usual, for the best portrait of the society that supports them, in the case of the Soviet Union that portrait looks decidedly pale. But were the pious official works, so absurdly unrealistic, to be regarded as truly representative of Soviet writers and artists, and even of Soviet society and daily life? They were of course the fruit of exceptional circumstance.

Their unconvincing tone was absent from the works of Marx, Engels and even Lenin. It emerged only at the beginning of Stalin's ascendancy, around 1930. Then, the authorities attacked any intellectuals who questioned or rejected Stalin's iron discipline and the mobilization of 'the artistic and literary front' in pursuit of the five-year plan. The first victim was the Association of Proletarian Writers, the RAPP: it was dissolved in 1932, together with similar organizations for music and the fine arts. In their place a single body was formed, under the direct control of the Communist Party.

At the same time, artists and writers were ordered to become 'engineers of human souls'. In 1934 Andrei Zhdanov, the Party Secretary, defined their dogma, 'the method of Socialist Realism'. What artists and writers must do was to describe with 'veracity' the 'historically concrete character' of Socialist reality, and in particular the conditions of production, thus contributing to 'the ideological transformation and the education of workers in the spirit of Socialism'. Their duty, as Zhdanov himself put it, was to be 'tendentious', to produce 'edifying' works, in which people were clearly divided into 'positive heroes', the true Communists, and 'negative characters' - all the rest. The avant-garde movements that had flourished in all the arts at the beginning of the Revolution, and which in the Soviet Union continued to be called 'left-wing art', were now condemned as 'formalist' and suppressed. A number of writers and theatre directors were arrested, and mysteriously disappeared. Most writers took refuge in silence or semi-silence. Mikhail Sholokhov, the author of Quiet Flows the Don, whose first three volumes were published between 1925 and 1933, and the fourth in 1940, wrote nothing more until the death of Stalin.

After the Second World War, to counteract the influence of 'the corrupt West', the 'Zhdanov line' was even more strongly enforced. Literature, theatre and the cinema were all kept under close surveillance; the slightest deviation was denounced and punished. In 1948, the great composers Sergei Prokofiev, Dmitri Shostakovich and Aram Khachaturian were violently attacked for writing 'hermetic' music and misusing dissonance.
In other words, throughout Stalin's dictatorship, artists were brought to heel like the rest of the Soviet population. All the products of that period were conformist and mediocre.

Did the death of Stalin change everything? Yes and no. There was certainly an immediate reaction, and a sudden slackening of tension: but the liberal explosion was thought dangerous, and at that time it was very soon damped down.

The end of 1953 and the following year saw a profusion of plays satirizing the faults of Soviet society; and an article by a young critic on 'sincerity in literature', published in the magazine Novy Mir, ridiculed the official distinction between 'positive' and 'negative' characters. Although the authors of these squibs were punished for their boldness, de-Stalinization and the attack on the 'cult of personality' encouraged further outspokenness. Hundreds of thousands of deportees returned, and assurance was given that severe sanctions would no longer be applied. This sparked off intense intellectual excitement, and what might be called a literary changing of the guard: those writers who had made their names under Stalin now fell silent, and those of his former victims who were still alive reappeared in print. So great was the effervescence that the authorities were worried. In 1957, they were advised and warned to avoid 'revisionism' and systematically blackening Soviet reality in the guise of a refusal to 'embellish and varnish it'. This reaction was a clear expression of the policy pursued by Nikita Khrushchev.

He certainly condemned Stalin's methods. Even defeated political opponents were no longer executed or subjected to physical violence; and there was some liberalization in cultural matters and relations with other countries. But to open the floodgates to a violently critical campaign, at the very moment when the revelation of Stalin's crimes had deeply shaken a generation of his young and faithful admirers, would have looked like endangering the regime and the USSR's position as leader of the world's Communist countries, as well as perhaps weakening its international power. So the Government reacted — forcefully.

Was the public, then, concerned by that struggle? Huge popular audiences enjoyed the classic plays of the Russian or foreign repertoire; they liked folklore, 'pure, stylized or adapted'; they flocked to classical operas that were a revelation to people until recently still peasants. Hence the success of Faust, La Traviata or Carmen, rivaling the Red Army dancers or Tchaikovsky's ballet Swan Lake. But it would still be a mistake to believe that in these matters there was a sharp distinction between 'lowbrows' and 'highbrows', the general public and the intellectual elite. The freedom of expression that Soviet writers and artists were seeking was in fact a crucial problem, then and in the future.

The problems that beset art and literature hardly affected mathematics and the natural sciences. These, for the most part, were in a very flourishing state. There were many reasons for this. The sciences, as an intellectual discipline, have usually been subject to little detailed control. Very often, they have no relevance to political or ideological debates, and can avoid them. At the same time, the Russians have always been exceptional mathematicians. Furthermore, the Government has not been sparing with either cash or encouragement; and there is something inspiring about building a new world or imagining others as yet undreamed of. Finally, it has to be admitted that in the field of research there is something to be said for authoritarianism. In the capitalist countries, research tends to be dispersed among the different branches of industry, and is partly determined by industry's needs. In the USSR, it has been concentrated on Government priorities. Industry has lost out; so, still more, have consumer comforts, for so long disdained. But research has benefited, as has the organization of scientific teams. And today, success in research depends more on teams than on brilliant individuals. So there may be homage due to the Academy of Sciences of the USSR.

What conclusion can we draw? That in the years after the Second World War, the Soviet Union was still emerging from immense difficulties; and that it had the potential for great material success. Some things it had already achieved. But the establishment
of a new structure was far from completed. It was haunted by tragic memories, as well as, paradoxically, by its own world reputation. At a time when it could almost be free to choose its own future, it had to take account of what international repercussions its choice might have.

This somewhat limited its freedom—a limitation that continued long after de-Stalinization. It also limited its own superstructures of art and literature, those means of escape without which no civilization can fully explore itself or express itself. Let us hope that before long the arts will spring into sudden life, like the apple trees in Bolshoi Square in Moscow in the first warm sunshine in May.

The Congress of October 1961

The dramatic 22nd Congress of the Communist Party, in October 1961, threw a fantastic light on the then situation of the USSR.

There is no point now, of course, in recalling the dramatic clash of personalities, the lists of condemnations, of reeducations, of the ‘living dead’ or the ‘walking corpses’. Nor is there any need to analyse in detail a turmoil that so much recalls a Dostoyevsky novel—perhaps the tormented and tormenting characters of The Brothers Karamazov.

What mattered, and what was first clearly shown at that time, was Soviet civilization itself, confronted with its difficult tasks and choices, in both domestic and foreign affairs. The future depends on how they are tackled. There are three major problems. The first concerns the non-Russian nationalities, the people of other races and civilizations within the union of federated Republics. The second is the economic and material situation (but is it only material?) of ex-Soviet civilization as a whole. The third is the fate of international Communism, which already in 1961 was ceasing to be monolithic and becoming ‘polycentric’, a kind of ‘Communism of the States’.

As regards the first problem, what is at stake is the Union itself. The USSR, as its name implies, regarded itself as a federation of Republics, or States that were in principle independent, but bound together. In the CIS, can their mutual relations be improved in such a way as to produce a powerful and united civilization?

The Union was first formed by the Empire of the Tsars, and even before 1917 it had already suffered many misadventures. Divided, restored, consolidated, then called in question again, it continued to pose a difficult problem with no perfect solution. While clearly autonomous, none of the Republics was truly independent, since its defence, its policing and its communications were under control by the central authorities, represented by delegates on the Central Committee of each Republic. There was local nationalism—‘chauvinism’—and it was condemned. Clashes occurred. Georgia had to be brought back in the Union in 1921; forty years later, de-Stalinization offended its fidelity to its most famous son. The Baltic States, freed in 1918, annexed in 1940 and reoccupied in 1945, had had privileged status under the Tsars but the Soviet Union long refused to renew it. There was a crisis in Georgia in 1949–51, when the Soviet authorities banned the national epic poem, Me az. And in 1958 the Supreme Soviet announced its intention to recognize Azei as the only language of Azerbaijan.

Local interests and cultures, traditional languages and historical memories, fidelity or otherwise to Communism, and the immigration or intrusion of Russians or Ukrainians into other Republics: all these gave rise to problems, and sometimes to tensions, of a colonial type. To take one example, after the reclamation of virgin land in Kazakhstan, there were more Russians there than Kazakhs.

The only policy of which the USSR was capable came as no surprise: it sought to maintain and safeguard the life and ‘harmony’ of the Union. This it did by making reasonable and even very generous concessions to the non-Russian Republics—especially since they represented, all told, only a very small part of the USSR’s strength. This was the policy that emerged at the 20th
Congress of the Party in 1956. The result was a series of measures to give them greater autonomy – an avowed return to Lenin’s nationality policy. To a Westerner, all this was reminiscent of the traditional problems of colonization and decolonization – but with one importance difference. In the case of the USSR, the ‘colonies’ and the ‘mother country’ were geographically and physically in direct contact. On the agenda of the 21st Congress of the Communist Party there was explicit mention of the word ‘assimilation’ – a highly charged and evocative term. Was it possible? And would the USSR be able to achieve it, when the West had so often failed?

In 1959, the Secretary of the Kazakhstan Communist Party declared: ‘Lenin’s thesis that nations can merge by growing economically and doing more and more together has been confirmed by experience.’ This is perfectly possible. There have been examples of successful assimilation in the past. A common policy, mutual concessions and the need to live together can be powerful influences; so can the building of new structures, political, economic and social, which both sides share as a result of so many years’ experience of Communism. Nevertheless, civilizations are tenacious. This can be seen in the matter of language alone: the Republics of the USSR defended theirs with stubborn success. They were not prepared to renounce their local civilizations. At the time of writing, the debate was still going on – as it is today. It may well have been that the fight against illiteracy, and the spread of education, actually helped to intensify national awareness among the peoples of Central Asia.

Prosperity or ‘bourgeois’ civilization: the announcement of a twenty-year plan to lead the USSR to the delights of Communist society did not seem a vain project in 1962.

So long as such and such a condition was met, said the experts, the USSR should be able to make its ‘Great Leap Forward’ into prosperity. They never agreed on what the conditions were. But the Soviet public passionately wanted peace and longed for material progress, which it believed was possible. That is why in the 1960s so many younger people eagerly took part in the active running of the country. An immense change seemed to be imminent, whatever form it might take and whatever label it might later receive.

In 1962, Soviet life was dominated by the hope of rapidly advancing towards the final stages of the Industrial Revolution. The Khrushchev revolution seemed to open the way to such progress, since the seven-year plan of 1958 had stressed the new industries by a ‘sophisticated’ consumer society – electronics, electro-mechanics, nuclear energy, plastics, chemicals. All of these were industries which, even before they called forth a new generation of consumers, required and would have to train ‘a new type of working class’ – white-coated technicians, technologists, scientific and industrial research workers, and so on. The pressure of these new social forces would sooner or later make the democratization of the USSR inevitable and irreversible, concluded the sociologist from whom we gleaned these details.

But that pressure, of course, had to make its way through both the live and the inert counter-pressures of Communist society and the Party itself. It was logical, moreover, for the Party to try to control and apportion any new prosperity and comfort, so as to make the success its own.

That might have been possible, but only if the USSR could have proved that its years of Communism had radically changed it: that, if the Russia of 1917 was still part of Western civilization, the Soviet Union could achieve prosperity along lines different from the ‘bourgeois’ West, where it had been the best way of staving off revolution.

On this point, at the time of writing, it was impossible to make predictions. The future remained entirely open. It did, however, still seem possible that the former USSR might invent its own solution, copying neither the American nor the European model.

International Communism? There too, the future remained open, with few hints of what was to come. Western commentators on the October 1961 Congress tended to see it as marking the end
of the monolithic International Communist Party. It seemed to them that the USSR was consciously abandoning its leadership and the sacrifices that implied, in order to concentrate on its own 'Great Leap Forward' and become the only Communist country to achieve Communist perfection, thanks to material prosperity. It seemed, in a word, as if the USSR was accepting 'bicentrism' for itself and China, or even polycentrism - 'Communism of the States', leaving everyone to their own problems and their own fate.

It seemed rash to be so categorical. Even in the great Communist family, politics follows its ordinary rules. Anger, quarrels, even threats, are often followed by reconciliation and compromise (which is not only an Anglo-American idea). Soviet mistrust of China is nothing new: it has roots in centuries of history, and also in the nineteenth-century conflicts in which Russia was one of the great powers that shared the spoils of China's wealth. But Soviet mistrust of the United States was no less deep-rooted at the time of the Cold War. The same reasons that obliged the United States to emerge from isolationism make it impossible for the USSR, like it or not, to concern itself only with its own economic problems. It has to see its internal policy in the context of international reality.

Nevertheless, in the 1960s, there seemed to be signs of differentiation among the various Communist parties in the world, gravitating round the USSR, like planets around a sun, and many of them quite unlike each other.

In outer orbit were the national Communist parties. Some were in the hostile environment of prosperous Western countries like France or Italy, or even virtually non-existent, as in the Anglo-Saxon countries or West Germany. Others, at that time, were living underground lives in Western countries politically hostile to them but economically weak: this was the case in Spain, Portugal and Latin America. Others again were fighting their political battles in the open, in less developed countries still fascinated by the Soviet and Chinese experiments, and still living on hope.

Closer, but none the less distant, were the satellite Communist countries. Those of the 'glacis' facing the West had protected Soviet territory, like buffer states, since the Second World War: Eastern Germany, Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Romania and Bulgaria. In all of them, great economic and social changes were under way. All except Bulgaria, perhaps, were rapidly industrializing; both Eastern Germany and Czechoslovakia, moreover, had inherited viable industrial economies from pre-Communist days. Outside the 'glacis', finally, were Albania's eccentric Communist system and the equally individual Yugoslavia.

The position of these countries at that time was complex. On the one hand, they could not stray far from the Soviet Union; on the other, some of the structural reforms on which they staked their future (agrarian reform, the break-up of huge estates in Poland and Hungary, and industrialization) would not have been possible, or would certainly have been much harder, without the brutal intrusion of Communism. In fact, their relations with the USSR and with Communism itself differed from country to country, more or less confident, free and fruitful according to their various economies and the different civilizations from which they sprang.

Finally, in the far distance, weighed down by its difficulties but upheld by its pride, there was Communist China, the largest less-developed country in the world. It was certainly the least docile and the most dangerous of the USSR's partners.

This rapid sketch-map reflects not only political positions as they then were, but also economic situations which change less rapidly. These do not determine the future, but they influence it in advance. The former USSR, whose decades of effort put it in some ways in the lead, may well have to suffer the solitude its efforts have earned.
Enlarged Edition

From Within the Soviet Union
A History of Socialist Society

The First

Geoffrey Hosking