The Russian Revolutionary Emigres, 1825-1870

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The career of Petr Vladimirovich Dolgorukov is filled with so many exceptions to the established modalities of Russian émigré life in this period as to make efforts to set up such generalizations almost futile. He emigrated not once but twice; unlike all other first-generation émigrés, he actually returned from Europe when summoned by Nicholas I before leaving Russia forever. He was the most committed émigré journalist of his generation, with the pardonable exception of Herzen; while his émigré compatriots concentrated on publishing books, brochures, and articles, Dolgorukov established a periodical press that functioned alongside Herzen's more prominent Russian Free Press. Dolgorukov's ancestry was not only so princely that he stood above his aristocratic émigré comrades, but so ancient that his family lineage far antedated that of the ruling Romanovs. As he wrote on one occasion to Alexander II, "You know, sovereign, that my ancestors were Grand Princes and rulers of Russia at a time when the ancestors of your Majesty were not yet Counts of Oldenburg."

Unlike Turgenev, Golovin, or Sazonov, Dolgorukov had a consistent political program, which he reiterated in his numerous writings. Other aspects of his life are quite unique among the émigrés. Dolgorukov may have been responsible for the death of Pushkin, albeit indirectly and doubtlessly unintentionally; nevertheless, no other émigré had to defend himself against allegations of involvement in a dual that was fatal to Russia's greatest poet. In terms of careers prior to emigration, no other émigré had achieved so prominent a reputation as a scholar as Dolgorukov did with his distinguished publications in the field of genealogy. Once abroad, he achieved a more unsavory notoriety in several scandals, one of which was actually brought before a Paris courtroom, causing embarrassment for many Russians abroad. Despite this, he was, iron-
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ically, the only Russian political critic abroad whom Herzen pub-

licly defended and celebrated.

Nevertheless, Dolgorukov is not mentioned in Herzen's memo-

oir, primarily because he came to Herzen's attention after the book

was completed. As a result, Dolgorukov has suffered the identical

fate of the other Russian émigrés of his generation who have been

ignored by historians; his contributions to the antitsarist opposition

abroad and his place in the Russian emigration have gone largely

unrecorded and unevaluated.²

Petr Dolgorukov was born on 27 December 1816 (8 January

1817) to an illustrious family whose origins stretched continuously

back to Mikhail Chernigovskii, one of Russia's ancient rulers in the

thirteenth century.³ He was orphaned very young as his mother died
giving birth to him, and his father, a major general in the army, died
before he was a year old. He was raised by his grandmother until he
was ten. When she died in 1827, young Dolgorukov was sent to the
elite Imperial Corps of Pages school. He performed brilliantly at the
school, achieving the title of page d'chambre, an honor given to the
top student in the junior year class. Dolgorukov was soon stripped of
this title for some offense he committed, the nature of which has
never been made clear. Although he might still have recovered his
loss and gone on to a career in the top ranks of the government had
he so desired later on, there is no doubt that this dark event severely
limited his chances for such a post.⁴

Dolgorukov then accepted a minor job in the Ministry of Edu-
cation, but he was clearly dissatisfied with his situation. Moreover,
he was mocked not only for his dishonorable loss of title at the Corps
of Pages, but also for his limping, bowlegged gait. He soon dropped
out of service entirely and began associating with a group notorious
at the time for "insolent debauchery."⁵ The patron of the group was
the Dutch diplomat Baron Heeckeren, who devised pranks and
schemes for his aimless disciples. One of these mischievous intrigues
for which Dolgorukov was personally responsible was the composi-
tion of an insulting lampoon in 1836 at the expense of Alexander
Pushkin. The lampoon, anonymously written, identified an alleged
lover of Pushkin's wife. As a result of the lampoon, the outraged poet
challenged the man he suspected, Georges Dantes, to a duel and lost
his life in February 1837. Although Dolgorukov argued for the rest
of his life that he was not the author of the insulting and provocative
Pushkin lampoon, he was hounded periodically by charges that he
was in fact responsible for the death of the renowned poet.⁶

Apparently unable to overcome the depression of his shattered


hopes by continuing this dissolute life-style, Dolgorukov shifted his attention in the late 1830s to serious scholarly research in the field of Russian genealogy. He completed a four-volume study of Russian aristocratic genealogy at the end of the decade which was very favorably received when it was published. At this critical moment, when he was on the edge of recovering his reputation and respect, he went abroad and published a book which decisively altered the future course of his life. There is no concrete evidence to indicate why the sharp change occurred, but clearly Dolgorukov was at a crossroads. He certainly enjoyed the easy acceptance into intellectual circles in Paris which his aristocratic background and his newly acquired reputation as a genealogist won for him. This access to French intellectual life and rapid recognition of his work with respect there contrasted sharply with his failures in Russia, where he found ridicule far more often than admiration. Whether out of revenge against his real and imagined enemies from the aristocracy, or for other, unknown reasons, Dolgorukov published the provocative *Notice sur les principales familles de la Russie* under the pseudonym “Count d’Amagro” early in 1843.

The critical nature of the book and the real identity of its author were the subjects of a long letter by Iakov Tolstoi, the tsarist police agent in Paris, to the head of the Third Section in St. Petersburg. Although the book had produced, according to Tolstoi, a “disagreeable impression on the small number of people who might be interested in such a subject,” he felt it his duty to bring this work to the government’s attention. The book is dominated by “irreverent descriptions of people in high positions.” Dolgorukov, Tolstoi went on, was attacking men of long and eminent service, whose loyalty to Russia “has been recognized by their sovereign and their fatherland.” The aristocracy is presented “in the most odious of colors, like a band of traitors and assassins.” The book is “completely inimical to the interests of my government,” and will provide ammunition to Russia’s enemies against which it will be difficult to defend if Dolgorukov continues to publish such writings. Thus, Tolstoi concludes, Dolgorukov is a man with “an impetuous and confused character” who is dangerous to Russia so long as he is free to attack his country from abroad.

The Russian government, on orders from Nicholas I, took immediate action. Dolgorukov was ordered home without delay and the Russian ambassador in Paris, Count Kiselev, was instructed to speak to the French administration about helping them extradite
Dolgorukov in the event that he refused to comply. To the surprise of the Russian authorities, Dolgorukov left Paris on 21 March 1843 to return home as requested. Kiselev nevertheless did speak to Guizot, the French prime minister, who was reportedly relieved that Dolgorukov had gone voluntarily and that further moves against him were thus unnecessary.

On his way to Russia, Dolgorukov wrote personally to the tsar in an effort to explain his actions and intentions. He said that he had written the truth about Russia in his book, however unpleasant it was to admit. There was a time in the grim past “when tsaricide was [ingrained] in the mores and habits of Russians,” and when succession to the throne was determined by “night rebellions and bloodshed.” But the horrors of the past, the oligarchic excesses and aristocratic intrigues, were eradicable. Dolgorukov ended his letter with a plea to Nicholas I to learn from the past for the benefit of the country’s future. Exposure of the truth leads to a hastening of the success of Russia’s “intellectual and moral development,” he concluded.

If Dolgorukov was hoping to have some influence on Nicholas and the running of the Russian government by leaving the safety of France, he miscalculated completely. Neither his family connections in government nor his reputation as a respected genealogist could save him from Nicholas’s wrath. On 2 May 1843 he was arrested upon his arrival at Kronstadt and all of his possessions were confiscated. After a hearing in St. Petersburg, he was sentenced to administrative exile in Viatka, where Herzen earlier had been exiled. The Third Section archives contain a number of reports on the books, letters, papers, and visiting cards taken from Dolgorukov at the time of his arrest. The books included such unsubversive items as works by Thierry and Chateaubriand, histories of Europe, royal almanacs, travel guides, and a book on the English peerage. Dolgorukov was processed like a common criminal. Not since the arrest of the Decembrists had a member of one of Russia’s most distinguished families been imprisoned and exiled in such a manner.

Dolgorukov’s exile, however, was commuted a year later when he was permitted to live anywhere in the empire with the exception of St. Petersburg. Upon his release, he composed an obsequious letter to Benckendorff, asking that he “carry to the foot of the throne the expression of my profound gratitude” for the clemency granted by Nicholas. It was Dolgorukov’s most ardent wish to “consecrate my entire life in service to the Emperor,” he wrote. Exactly how he
was to do this was not clear to him though. He had no desire to enter the ranks of the civil service at the ninth level, which was where he was entitled to begin. The only other possibility was to be selected for some advisory position close to the seat of power, which was doubtful.

In any event, Dolgorukov spent the next fifteen years relatively quietly, marrying, becoming a father, and living mainly at his Tula estate with frequent trips to Moscow. During this period he again turned to genealogical research. In 1853 he published the first part of his Rossisskaia rodoslovnaia kniģa, which the government censor found entirely acceptable and commendable. As a result, the ban against his residing in the capital was lifted. In 1857 a second edition of his Notice was issued in Berlin, but Dolgorukov wrote to a relative who now headed the Third Section that this publication occurred “without my consent and against my wishes. The brochure of Count Amagro was a sin of [my] youth. Who has not been young?” He also managed to gain both government cooperation for information and a personal endorsement from the new tsar, Alexander II, to produce a biographical dictionary of the Russian aristocracy. The commissioned project was completed on schedule and the book was published in 1858. It is likely that Alexander II approved of this book, which was published only in French, in the hope that it would counteract the negative impressions left by Dolgorukov’s Notice.

Through family contacts and his own experience, Dolgorukov was on personal terms with a number of influential Russian statesmen during the 1850s. Those he knew included his cousin, V. A. Dolgorukov (head of the Third Section), A. M. Gorchakov (foreign minister), A. V. Golovnin (minister of education), and D. N. Bludov (president of the State Council). Dolgorukov was later to utilize his association with these individuals in positions of authority by writing highly critical essays about them. At this time, however, he was more interested in them as a means of having some input into policy decisions regarding the reforms announced by Alexander II after his coronation.

In November 1857 Dolgorukov composed a long memorandum, “On the Internal Condition of Russia,” which he presented to Grand Duke Konstantin on 2 December for consideration by the government. The memorandum’s stated purpose was to alert the government to what Dolgorukov considered an alarming situation developing in the country which could be reversed only by enacting
bold reforms. Dolgorukov warned the government that without a rapid and appropriate resolution of the peasant question, Russia would face popular discontent that could result in a massive peasant *bunt*, an upheaval directed against the state and the nobility of the proportions of the late-eighteenth-century "Pugachevshchina." Most fundamental and critical of all reforms, therefore, was the abolition of serfdom. Dolgorukov favored peasant emancipation with land, and with provisions for compensating the gentry landowners. In addition to making specific proposals on emancipation, he also outlined a number of political reforms that went well beyond what the government was prepared to permit. In the words of a historian who has recently examined Dolgorukov's memorandum,

He proposed reform of the courts, the table of ranks, budgetary procedures and the granting of titles; he recommended that the corporate institutions of the nobility, renamed *zemskiye*, be thrown open to all landowners and given a vastly enhanced role in provincial administration. He also recommended the formation of a committee of ministers to coordinate the government's activities. In regard to the censorship, Dolgorukov argued for *glasnost*, or latitude for the press; he argued that the existing censorship system was harmful, since it depended on information provided by self-seeking police spies, and also pointless, since the government was powerless to stop the influx of Russian publications from England and Germany.

During the next year and a half, Dolgorukov continued to involve himself in the reform process, but began to exhibit signs of discontent with the existing legal channels. In 1858 he refused an appointment as one of the government representatives on the Tula provincial committee because he feared these committees would not be free enough of bureaucratic restraint to be effective. His letter of rejection to the Tula governor, with its criticism of the government's procedures, was passed around and read "in large quantities" according to Third Section officials, who were cautiously keeping Dolgorukov's activities under surveillance. Dolgorukov also criticized the government commissions as absurd because "the majority of the members do not live in the countryside and are utterly unfamiliar with the conditions, desires, and necessities of rural life." At the same time, he published a statement with his redemption plans for the emancipation of the peasantry in the December issue of *Sovremennik* and circulated a more detailed version of his plan; the latter was blocked by the government before Dolgorukov could have it published. The problem of censorship was the most unset-
ting aspect of the government’s policies for Dolgorukov personally. He wrote in 1859 that “literature had passed into the jurisdiction of the Third Section,” and was convinced that the government had “a deep, inveterate hatred . . . for anyone who writes and thinks. Now doubt is as impossible as hope; the present situation is at an impasse and the future is ominous.”

No clearer statement could possibly reflect Dolgorukov’s own situation. With little hope that his reform plans would be accepted by the government, and confronted with the specter of life-long censorship of his future writings on politics and reform, Dolgorukov decided to go abroad for a second time—this time permanently, as an émigré. In May 1859 he left Russia clandestinely, abandoning his wife and young son. Some scholars believe that Dolgorukov’s main reason for leaving Russia was his realization that he would not be offered a high post in government, which he had coveted for years. A more convincing case has demonstrated that Dolgorukov’s motives for emigrating had far more to do with his desire to escape from the constraints of censorship and that both his writings and his activities in the period 1857–59 indicate he “had no basis for expecting an important government post.”

After his flight from Russia, Dolgorukov traveled through Italy, where he had discussions with Count Camille Cavour and other Italian political figures before settling in Paris. He immediately plunged into the writing of a new book on Russia, *La Vérité sur la Russie*, which was published in April 1860. Dolgorukov’s purpose in publishing this book, as one historian has put it, was “to open Europe’s eyes to the horrible situation in his country and, in this way, to induce the Russian government to embark decisively on a path of fundamental reforms.” This had also been the motivation for Nikolai Turgenev and Ivan Golovin in publishing their books on Russia abroad, but Dolgorukov’s critique of the Russian state was at once different in content from theirs and a more devastating attack. The book was, in addition, an extension and elaboration of the ideas Dolgorukov first developed in his 1857 memorandum, now free of restrictive censorship.

*La Vérité sur la Russie* won considerable popularity for Dolgorukov in Western Europe. Not only was it acclaimed by Herzen in the pages of *Kolokol*, but it was widely and favorably reviewed in European newspapers and journals. The official Russian response was quite the reverse, however, and Dolgorukov’s portraits of corruption and venality in administrative and aristocratic circles were
strongly condemned.  P. D. Kiselev, the Russian ambassador in Paris, wrote an alarmed letter to the Third Section in St. Petersburg about Dolgorukov’s book, which he called “a scandalous work.” He also noted the potential impact of the book, given Dolgorukov’s background. “Under the pretext of healing by means of publicity, the book exposes all the weak sides of our position. While these have been discussed by foreign writers, their lack of sound knowledge fundamentally undermined the authority of their judgments in the eyes of foreign governments and of society. But from the pen of a Russian author, and one, moreover, with a high social position, these disclosures of weakness acquire a serious importance and give the entire work a significance it undoubtedly does not possess, but which is imparted to it by these exceptional circumstances.”

Under orders from the Russian government, Kiselev requested Dolgorukov to withdraw the book from circulation and demanded his return to St. Petersburg under penalty of losing his civil rights and facing a sentence of exile to Siberia. Faced with almost the identical situation he had confronted in 1843 when he published his Notice, Dolgorukov this time responded quite differently. He rejected the ultimatum in defiant and mocking terms. “My emigration,” he wrote to Kiselev, “is not the result of momentary passion. . . . It is the outcome of a plan, of deep conviction, worked out over many years with the greatest caution . . . so that I might speak the truth about my fatherland.” Since this cannot be done inside Russia, it must be accomplished abroad. He says his intention is not to criticize individuals but to attack an entire system built on “personal caprice and the abuse of legality.” He is writing critically “as a free man, a true patriot”; this is his duty and that is why he continues to regard himself while living abroad “as a Russian citizen.”

Concerning the Russian government’s demands that he return to defend himself, he said he could not because he had no respect for the legal system in Russia, where courts are “a caricature of justice.” Sentencing him to Siberian exile was useless, he continued, as useless as sentencing him “to exile on the moon.” He offered to send, in place of himself, his photograph, which the Third Section could send “to Viatka or Nerchinsk or any place [of exile] of your choice; I myself, forgive me, will not be caught in the clutches of your police force.”

After receiving Dolgorukov’s sardonic reply, the Russian authorities promptly sequestered his estates in Russia, and on 5 June 1861 the tsar confirmed the government’s decision to deprive Dol-
Dolgorukov of his title and rights and sentenced him to "eternal exile." Dolgorukov thus legally became an émigré on this date.

At the same time that he was combatting the tsarist government, Dolgorukov was brought to trial in Paris by Prince Semyon Vorontsov, who sued him for defamation of Vorontsov's father's character. The evidence brought against Dolgorukov to support the charge included private letters as well as his books. Vorontsov won his court case in January 1861, but Dolgorukov managed to emerge from the scandal with the continued support of Herzen when he claimed that the entire trial was a conspiracy of the Russian and French governments to silence his critical voice. The writer Ivan Turgenev, however, came away from the trial with a different view. He wrote to Herzen that Dolgorukov was "a morally dead man" and advised Herzen to stay away from Dolgorukov's "damaging tendencies."

With the trial behind him, Dolgorukov plunged into a series of journalistic enterprises designed to spread more widely his criticism of Russia and also his reform proposals. *Budushchnost'* (The future), the first journal he wrote and edited, began to appear in September 1860. The journal was dedicated to "the denunciation of administrative procedures in Russia and to the propaganda of moderate constitutionalism." A change at the head of the Leipzig press that published his journal forced him to close down *Budushchnost'* at the end of 1861; the new publisher was opposed to printing material critical of Russia. Dolgorukov then created another journal, *Pravdivyi* (The truthful, or The just) which was published in Brussels; a companion version in French, *Le Veridique*, was printed simultaneously with the Russian edition. This journal was superseded in November 1862 by *Listok* (The sheet), which was printed at first in Brussels (the first five numbers) and then in London, where Dolgorukov moved in the spring of 1863 to continue his campaign against Russia; *Listok* survived until July 1865.

Dolgorukov also published several books during this period which expanded his criticism of Russia. In 1862 his *Des reformes en Russie* appeared, which was an elaboration of the attack on the Russian political system which he had presented in *La Vérité sur la Russie*. He also published a collection of political essays in 1862, *O peremene obraza pravleniia v Rossii* (On change in the form of government in Russia), a two-volume study of France under Napoleon III in 1864, and a volume of sketches of Russian historical personalities in 1867. In addition he published many smaller essays and brochures, and contributed occasionally to *Kolokol*.
Although Dolgorukov did not experience any difficulties in finding publishers abroad willing to print his books, he did encounter serious problems in trying to publish his journals. As obstacles to these ventures mounted, Dolgorukov began to assume the role of a militant combatant in what he saw as a war for freedom of expression. He also developed the sense of political paranoia that was characteristic of the émigré mentality of his time. He was outraged when the French authorities announced that they were prohibiting publication of any further editions of his two critical books on Russia in France—La Vérité and Des reformes. Convinced that the Russian government was behind this move, Dolgorukov wrote a letter of protest to an official in the French administration. He warned the French government that if his Brussels-based journal Le Véridique was prohibited in France, he would place on the masthead of each issue the following line: “This review has the honor of being banned in France.”

Both France and Dolgorukov held firm to their announced intentions and carried out their threats: Le Véridique was prohibited in France, and Dolgorukov did put the promised phrase on the masthead of the journal.

Dolgorukov also wrote directly to some of the highest officials in the Russian government about these matters. He accused the Russians of having primary responsibility for the change of editors at the Leipzig firm which led to the closing of his earlier journal Budushchnost'. At the same time, he boldly proclaimed to the Russian vice-chancellor that he would never be “reduced to silence” by censorship or coercion. If he was halted from publishing in Brussels by Russian pressure, he would move to London and continue his struggle there against the autocracy and its dominating “Petersburg camarilla.” Indeed, he threatened the Russian administration with a form of blackmail in reverse: “Moreover, if I am compelled to relocate in London, I will publish in French the biographies of the members of the imperial family and their entourage.”

By announcing his intention to publish in French, he was saying, of course, that his attacks would reach a far wider European audience than if he were to write in Russian. This was no idle threat, for Dolgorukov had a good deal of privileged information on the royal family and its court appointees. Again, both sides carried out their threats: Dolgorukov was forced to leave Brussels for London because of publishing problems, and he did publish a series of damaging biographical portraits in his journal as promised.

In a revealing correspondence with Iurii Gagarin, who had emigrated from Russia for religious reasons, Dolgorukov discussed
in some detail his plans to fight Russia from afar. He spoke at one point of forming an émigré committee “composed of trusted people like you, Nikolai Turgenev, A. Golitsyn, myself, and others,” specifically to expose Russian attempts at censoring émigré publications in Europe. It was absolutely vital, he believed, to have free access to published organs abroad.43 "My banner still remains," he continued, "a constitutional monarchy on republican foundations." He also proclaimed to Gagarin that his journals and his entire career as an émigré were principally devoted to the establishment of this form of government in Russia.44

Dolgorukov’s letters to Gagarin are also full of disturbing information received from Russia—the increase in the number of arrests and exiles to Siberia, the closing of Chernyshevskii’s Sovremennik, and rumors of threats to the university faculties in the wake of an outbreak of fires in St. Petersburg in the summer of 1862. He wrote, in addition, about his contacts with recent, younger émigrés such as Leonid Bliummer, who was publishing a new journal in Berlin called Svobodnoe slovo (The Free Word), as well as about his meetings with more prominent émigrés like Herzen, Kel’siev (“horrible fanatic”), and Bakunin (“hero of the barricades”).45 Dolgorukov was also informed about the Russian student colony in Heidelberg, with which Herzen was in contact to raise support for Bakunin and for his own London press.46 Surveying the overall situation in another and particularly perceptive letter to Gagarin, Dolgorukov wrote that “Russia is now in the mire, and in several years will surely be in blood.” He feared this bloodshed would erupt because of the widening gulf between the Russian government and the increasingly radicalized youth. Russian students in Heidelberg and in St. Petersburg were an indication of frightening new currents of revolt at home and abroad, reflections of the substitution of radical politics for the more traditional values of church and state that were being eroded by the government’s persistent refusal to embrace necessary reforms. He saw a process of evolution from the Decembrist uprising of 1825, from which there emerged “the youth of our pathetic generation, cowed, trembling, and groveling, for whom the Anichkov palace balls formed the purpose of life.” The frivolity and idleness of his own generation, now in positions of power, had finally reached its zenith; Dolgorukov predicted the rise of a new generation that was already beginning to oppose the previous generation’s “horrible nonsense” and irresponsibility, and that would continue to do so with increasing violence.47
In 1863, shortly before preparing to leave London for Switzerland, Dolgorukov was accused in a book of having been the author of the anonymous lampoon that led to Pushkin's death, an accusation that involved him in yet another public scandal. Once again he escaped with only minimal damage to his reputation. In 1865, when Herzen left London for Geneva, Dolgorukov followed him and lived out his last years there in luxurious splendor. He turned away from his journalistic enterprises and gradually began to fall into episodes of bizarre behavior. He published a brochure gratuitously attacking Bakunin, argued frequently with Herzen while claiming he could trust no one else, and even made several conciliatory gestures toward the Russian government he had condemned so furiously in the past. He also refused a request for financial support from a recent émigré, Mikhail Elpidin, who wanted to establish an émigré journal in Switzerland. Dolgorukov saw this as an effort “to preach assassination.” One of his strangest outbreaks occurred when he was visited in Bern by his son, Vladimir, whom he had abandoned in Russia a decade before. In a state of heightened anxiety and already gravely ill with dropsy, he denounced his son as a Russian police agent who had been sent to seize his papers. This fear was especially irrational in view of the fact that Dolgorukov had just written to his cousin in the Third Section to assure the Russian government that his son had no political intentions and gave his word that his son would not emigrate during his stay abroad. Dolgorukov sent for Herzen to rescue him once his son arrived, and appointed Herzen as his executor for the safekeeping of his papers. In his letters to Ogarev, Herzen poignantly described Dolgorukov's terrible condition and his agony as he awaited death in alternating moments of clarity and hysteria. Death finally came on 6 (18) August 1868.

Dolgorukov's political orientation, as presented with great consistency in his books on Russia and in his journals, was centered on the demand for a constitutional government to succeed the autocratic tsarist administration. His critique was rooted in a historical context in which he argued that Russian rulers had permitted centuries of abuse and privilege exercised originally by Russia's leading aristocratic families and, more recently, by the court bureaucracy that had been built up since the time of Peter the Great. Government had been corrupted because of the tyranny of these ruling elites. In the course of his critique, Dolgorukov tried to demythologize the nature of autocratic authority and aristocratic power in Russia. It is a
serious error, he wrote, to believe that the Russian emperor is an omnipotent autocrat, since in reality "the emperor reigns, the bureaucracy governs." The emperor has been unable to exercise the authority that is vested in him because of the encroachment into the political process by members of the high-ranking officialdom, who are often ill-trained and are motivated more by self-interest than by national concerns. Similarly, the Russian aristocracy long ago ceased to be a ruling class in any legal sense of the term. Instead of evolving into a class with rights and duties defined and protected by law, Russia's aristocracy became "serfs of the tsars." Russia has no real aristocracy; "we are only slaves who may, by whim of a master, be deprived of our fortune, our liberty, our life." The void left by the demoralization of the aristocracy has been filled by the "court camarilla" and the despised bureaucracy of self-serving officials. Without a press independent of the government, the information on which the tsar bases his decisions on national problems comes almost exclusively from these functionaries. Without an independent judiciary, justice itself is defined solely in terms of the ideas and values of whatever individuals are in power at a given time period.

What choices did Russia have to alter this despotic state of affairs? Dolgorukov foresaw the possibility of a revolutionary situation similar to 1789 in France if the gap continued to widen between the frustrated hopes of the population and the abuses of the privileged elite. The only realistic solution was the establishment of a constitutional government. As he indicated in a long, open letter to Alexander II in the initial issue of Pravdivyi, without a constitutional structure of rule, the Romanov dynasty was doomed "to destruction and exile." He called on Alexander II to enact the bold legislation required to save the country from revolutionary upheaval. The emancipation of the peasantry with land was the sine qua non of Dolgorukov's reform proposals. Together with this, he also demanded an end to corporal punishment, recognition of the equality of all citizens before the law, freedom of religious belief, freedom of the press, and the creation of an elected legislature to govern the country by law. Dolgorukov was as strongly opposed to socialist solutions as he was to oligarchy and autocracy. He also was not interested in a rapid transition to a republican government. Thus, he favored a gradual evolution from autocracy to republicanism via a constitutional monarchy.

Dolgorukov's sense of urgency about this situation was repeated many times. To Alexander II, he pleaded, as Russia stumbled
closer to its 1789, “In God’s name, save us from a 1793.” In his journal, he wrote that “without state freedom, without a constitution, there is no possibility of a peaceful way out of the confusion, out of the chaos into which Russia is now plunged.”

Dolgorukov was particularly concerned about the terms of the emancipation because he was convinced that the way in which serfdom was abolished would directly affect future constitutional reforms. In his discussion of the process of peasant emancipation, he reemphasized the two factors he had argued for in his 1857 memorandum: the peasants should be freed with land, and the landowners should be adequately compensated. Without land, the peasantry threatened to develop into a rootless proletariat capable of bringing to Russia the problems of mass unrest and social dislocation already experienced in Western Europe. Without appropriate compensation, the former rural landowning class would lose its economic power base and thus be unable to play a responsible role in the transition to constitutional government; this would in turn create a lacuna of authority which could endanger the entire structure of local administration that Dolgorukov believed was so crucial to the success of any constitutional regime.

Although his ideas of emancipation linked him to leading advocates of peasant liberation in Russia such as B. N. Chicherin, N. A. Mel’gunov, and D. K. Kavelin, Dolgorukov’s stress on political decentralization and constitutional guarantees separated him entirely from these contemporaries. Dolgorukov saw Russia as an empire in the throes of rapid “administrative disorganization”: the political, economic, and social conditions of the country were in disarray—“in a word, anarchy was gaining ground.” To reverse this trend, Russia must promulgate a constitutional charter, convocate a “chamber of deputies” and create a “chamber of boyars”—in short, it must form a government that will legislate for the nation with the concurrence of the sovereign. In order to prevent a revival of despotic central authority in any form, Dolgorukov argued strongly for a comprehensive program of provincial autonomy and decentralization. The Chamber of Deputies, or Zemskia Duma, would be composed of representatives of the nation, its members freely elected by the entire population on a regional basis. Dolgorukov envisioned this legislative body as being directly linked to numerous elected provincial assemblies, which were to be responsible for running the affairs of the countryside. The Chamber of Boyars, or Boiarskaia Duma, was conceived of as a kind of Russian House of Lords, which
would be composed of members of the country's hereditary aristocracy and representatives of all religions in Russia.\textsuperscript{63}

To ensure that regional self-government would not be overwhelmed by the two-house legislature in the central administration, Dolgorukov proposed that Russia be divided into twenty-five provinces, with districts to be established within each province, cantons within each district, and communes within each canton. A complex and elaborate system of self-governing institutions would be set up from the communal level up through the provincial level. The entire network of local institutions would also have a parallel court system for both civil and criminal cases and would cooperate with the legislature in the capital. Dolgorukov devised a complicated voting system for each of the two chambers, and there was to be a restricted franchise based on age and property, although provisions were to be made for the participation of professionals with higher education who did not possess property.\textsuperscript{64}

Dolgorukov's proposals have been criticized by Soviet scholars for being largely in the interests of the gentry landowners,\textsuperscript{65} and also for the maintenance of aristocratic authority through the power of the Chamber of Boyars.\textsuperscript{66} An American historian has charged that Dolgorukov's plan for regional self-government is "greedy borrowing" from two French theorists of provincial autonomy.\textsuperscript{67} While it may be difficult for us to see how Dolgorukov could have been influenced so completely by both Russian and European currents in his formulations, he himself had no such problem. Just as Russia was for him "an immense edifice with a European façade, but with Asiatic furniture and administration inside,"\textsuperscript{68} he saw no difficulty resolving specifically Russian problems with proposals informed by both European and Russian historical experiences. His proposal for a national legislature was an example of this fusion: he traced the existence of a duma back to the seventeenth century, before Peter the Great abolished the traditional Boyar Duma, while at the same time he redefined the institution in light of modern parliamentary structures in Europe. His ideas on self-government were indeed affected by the notions of contemporary European theorists, but they were also rooted in the pre-Romanov structure of the Russian state, according to which separate states governed their own citizens prior to the consolidation of the empire under Muscovy. Here Dolgorukov disagreed openly with Nikolai Turgenev over the issue of self-government as well as on the interconnection between emancipation and constitutionalism.\textsuperscript{69}
Dolgorukov's political program, which he considered to be a plan for the introduction of "a monarchical-constitutional regime" in Russia, was accompanied in his writings by a series of critical sketches of many leading Russian statesmen. In this realm of criticism, Dolgorukov had unique talents among the Russian émigrés of his time. In addition to a sharp and witty tone set in an ornate vocabulary, these biographical portraits possess a convincing power born of Dolgorukov's familiarity with the ruling elite of his country. Because he personally knew (or knew of, through family connections) so many influential families, no one in government was safe or immune from being attacked—from within, so to speak—by Dolgorukov's pen. Ministers, senators, and even the emperor himself and his immediate relatives were all subjected to Dolgorukov's at times savage, but usually knowing, assault.

Dolgorukov's political writings have been placed in the shadows of his more visible and dramatic public scandals. His career as an émigré journalist has been overlooked in favor of Herzen's more influential opposition organs abroad. In reality, however, Dolgorukov represents far more than another "romantic exile" who "flits" momentarily "across the pages of Herzen's life." This man, for whom Ivan Turgenev aptly coined the term "republican prince," carved out a distinct constitutionalist ideology in the specific context of his position as an anti-autocratic force in exile. He firmly believed he was contributing to a growing "literature of émigrés" which "proclaims the truth" and "is in harmony with the aspirations and desires of the Russian people."

In one of his last letters before his death, where he reviewed his original reasons for emigrating, he found he had not changed his mind about the high value he placed on freedom. "I came abroad to seek free activities, ideas, and the possibility to write in a way which was forbidden to me in my native land." This was the credo with which Dolgorukov wanted to have his name associated.