The Russian Revolutionary Emigres, 1825-1870

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With the death of Alexander Serno-Solov'evich in 1869, the Russian émigré community stood on the eve of an entirely new phase in its evolution. The work of the Heidelberg colony, of the Kel'siev brothers, and especially that of Serno had clearly established the framework for radical collective action abroad and had ended the search for a solution to Russia's political problems by isolated individuals like Nikolai Turgenev, Golovin, Sazonov, and Dolgorukov. As the 1870s dawned, bringing with it a whole new world of social and political protest, the Russian émigrés in Western Europe were swept into a maelstrom of ideological currents and political groups. Collective action became affiliated with charismatic leaders, mass organizations, and ideological commitments. In the process, a certain measure of independence and unpredictability, which Serno, for example, had cherished, was lost. Even before the advent of the Zurich Russian colony in 1872 and the dominance of Bakunin and Lavrov among the Russian émigrés at that time, it became increasingly difficult for autonomous collective activity to survive. As the theory and practice of engineering a revolutionary transformation in Russia from the vantage point of Western Europe grew stronger and more sophisticated, the spectrum of alternatives to the tsarist order narrowed.

Although the historical moment of this change can be identified, the reasons for it remain difficult to pinpoint. Herzen's death in 1870 was more of an anticlimax than a direct factor in causing the shift. By this time, Herzen's ideas, his position of authority in the opposition movement, and the influence of his pioneering and inspiring newspaper Kolokol had all been shattered and transcended by new forces abroad. The populist movement cannot explain the change either, since the émigrés had already been divided by the
new political forces before Lavrov and Bakunin began to attract and influence Russian followers in the early 1870s. In many respects, the new politics that was to take hold of the Russian emigration emerged from the European milieu in which the émigrés lived and worked. Though they refused to assimilate and continued to function in a transported world of Russian culture, they could not help but be influenced by certain developments abroad. Thus, while the Nechaev trial—a very Russian event—was dominating the lives of the emerging populist revolutionaries at home,¹ the International—a very European event—was playing a similar role in the lives of the Russian revolutionaries abroad.

Before turning to the relationship between the International and the Russian emigration at the turn of the decade, and to the individual who epitomized this new trend, we must first briefly examine the careers of several émigrés whose activities and ideas formed the foundation for this new current.

N. V. Sokolov

The career of Nikolai Vasilevich Sokolov (1835–89) in many respects is a microcosmic reflection of the evolution of the Russian emigration as a whole. A prominent figure of the 1860s and 1870s, and the author of two books and several interesting articles on rebellion, Sokolov today has been almost completely forgotten by historians of this period.² Sokolov was born into an established military family and along with his brothers was educated for a military career.³ He served as a military officer in the 1850s and was sent on a diplomatic mission to Peking in 1859. For reasons that are unclear even from his own autobiography, Sokolov went to London in 1860 after his return to St. Petersburg from China. It is possible that the intellectual ferment of the time surrounding the impending emancipation of the peasants affected Sokolov as it did so many other Russians of his generation, but there is no concrete evidence for the dramatic and rapid change that took place at this point in his life.⁴

In London, Sokolov contacted Herzen, who gave him a letter of introduction to Proudhon. Sokolov then journeyed to Brussels to see Proudhon and met with him on a daily basis for what appears to be a two-month period.⁵ In the fall of 1860, Sokolov returned to St. Petersburg to work in the Statistical Bureau of the General Staff. In 1862 he resigned from military service and became the economic editor for Russkoe slovo. This transition was facilitated by several of
his friends in the military who had become followers of Chernyshevskii. Sokolov's articles in *Russkoe slovo* were unabashedly Proudhonian, highly critical of capitalism, and full of information on the exploitation of the agricultural and industrial labor force. In the summer of 1863, Sokolov again went to Europe, living mainly in Dresden and Paris. He remained on cordial terms with Herzen (whom he visited in February 1865) and received 100 francs "from the fund"—presumably the contested Bakhmetov fund—to carry on his work. In January 1865, Sokolov was with Proudhon when the French anarchist died. He delivered one of the eulogies at Proudhon's funeral, confessing his own adherence to the ideology of anarchism. Then, in July 1865, he returned to St. Petersburg, where he worked on the two books for which he deserves to be best known. In April 1866, during the "white terror" that followed Karakozov's attempt on the tsar's life, Sokolov was arrested for his involvement with the Nozhin circle.

Sokolov's *The Social Revolution*, which he wrote in German, was published in Bern in 1868, but the date on the final page of the book (25 October 1864) indicates that it may have been completed by the author while he was still abroad. This book, perhaps the most explicitly revolutionary study ever written by a Russian before the advent of populism in the 1870s, is, as one historian has correctly noted, "without parallel in the contemporary Russian press, whether official or illegal." The book clearly shows not only Sokolov's acceptance of Proudhonian ideology but also his familiarity with Lassalle's writings and with Engels' *Condition of the Working Class*. Just as scholars have failed to recognize Sazonov as the first Russian to embrace Marx's early political writings, they have neglected to point out that Sokolov was the first Russian to become a disciple of Proudhon. Interestingly, Sokolov's anarchism, as expressed for the first time in *The Social Revolution*, appears to have developed entirely apart from the influence of Bakunin.

In *The Social Revolution*, Sokolov argues that the central problem facing the Western world is "the social question." By this he means the increasing exploitation of the fourth estate—the proletariat—by the ruling forces of bourgeois Europe and the resulting threat of civil war and revolution. He speaks in Proudhonian terms of property ownership as the forceful theft of the possessions of workers by the ruling class, and defines capital as the new religion of contemporary society. It is too late, Sokolov states, for a peaceful
resolution of the social question. Ruling-class entrenchment, with all its attendant privileges, is too long-standing on the one hand, while on the other the situation of misery and hopelessness among the workers is irreversible under the existing capitalist economic system. Sokolov views the state as the institutionalization of the oppressive organs of power used by the European bourgeoisie to maintain its position of authority. The state, therefore, is the organization of exploitation for the ruling class as well as the means of demoralizing society. Since no solution is possible under existing conditions, Sokolov predicts that there will be a violent social revolution by the workers of Europe to usher in a wholly new form of society. According to Sokolov, the postrevolutionary order will not resemble any previous situation. He discusses Lassalle’s theory of “state communism” as merely a shift from one form of state exploitation to another. Property in the hands of the state remains property, government in the name of the people remains government. Political freedom and equality will remain illusions so long as human relations, social values, and economic processes are not themselves fundamentally altered: “Under contemporary political conditions, every political constitution is a veiled form of slavery and social murder against which the poor worker is unable to defend himself. A state constitution leaves him the freedom of choice—to gradually die of hunger or to more quickly commit suicide.”

In attempting to clarify the nature of the revolution that would finally transcend these difficulties, Sokolov wrote: “I am preaching revolution, yes, but what kind of revolution? It is a revolution of ideas, i.e., an intellectual transformation, a transition to a form of thinking, conceptualizations, and convictions on the basis of science and conscience.” Thus he distinguished previous political upheavals from the more general, comprehensive, and transcendent social revolution of the future: “We stand on the eve of a general revolution by comparison with which the French Revolution of the eighteenth century and also 1848 will appear as child’s games. . . . The time for purely political movements has passed. If in the last century one estate of the people rose up against the state, then now there is a class which thinks about the overturning of society. This is why the coming revolution can only be a social one.” Sokolov chose his words carefully here. Whereas previous political revolutions had involved only minority sectors of the people (estates) directed against the controlling center of the government (the state) in order to form a new political government, the social revolution would
involve all the people (social classes) and would create change in the widest possible sphere (society), making future governments unnecessary.

The last component of Sokolov’s vision of social transformation has been referred to by commentators as “evangelical socialism” or “Christian communism.” Although this theme was developed in greater depth in Sokolov’s next book, Otshchepentsy (Heretics), he began in The Social Revolution to trace the origins of modern revolutionary movements back to Biblical and medieval religious rebels. In particular, he interpreted Jesus Christ “not only as a communist but moreover as an anarchist.” The essence of Christ’s rebellion was not directed against the existing government in order to establish a new government; rather, his teachings eroded the power of the state’s institutions and laws in order to transcend political authority completely and to approach a new moral basis for society. This, for Sokolov, was the primal revolutionary act from which all modern radical activity had evolved.

In Otshchepentsy, Sokolov developed a theoretical prototype of the historical rebel, the man who stands against the institutions and values of his time, inspires others to follow him toward a better future, and in many cases sacrifices himself in the process. Sokolov concentrated on the rebellious actions of the early Christians and on the Anabaptist Thomas Müntzer in the premodern era, and he devoted chapters to the utopian socialists of the nineteenth century. He reserved his greatest example for the book’s end, where he described Proudhon as the ancestor of these earlier rebel-apostles and the harbinger of the coming social revolution that would abolish governments, politics, and class oppression forever.

Sokolov was first arrested on 28 April 1866 as a result of his connection with the members of Nikolai Nozhin’s circle who were involved in translating Proudhon’s writings. He was freed but later rearrested in 1867. After a period of Siberian exile, he managed to escape abroad in 1872 with the help of some members of the Chaikovskii circle. The rest of Sokolov’s career extends beyond our framework, but it should be noted that he joined the Bakuninist camp in 1874 amid the Bakunin-Lavrov conflict in Zurich, after his meeting with the Russian anarchist leader. In the 1880s he was active in the Geneva Russian émigré community. During the 1870s and 1880s, Sokolov helped establish a Russian library in Paris, but in his last years he sank into destitution and demoralization, accord-
ing to contemporary accounts. Nevertheless, after his death on 5 March 1889, he attracted the largest crowd ever to attend a Russian émigré funeral in Paris—a tribute to his reputation among his comrades.

L. I. Mechnikov

Although the dominant trend in the late 1860s in the Russian émigré community was toward ideological commitment, as we have already seen with Sokolov this was by no means the exclusive trend. One of the more significant members of the Russian émigré community who tried at this time to remain above partisan involvements was Lev Il'ich Mechnikov. That he ultimately failed in this effort is itself a comment on the contemporary political atmosphere. Mechnikov was on friendly terms with Herzen and Bakunin at various times, but he nevertheless remained at a critical distance from both men. He maintained ties with editors of the legal press in Russia while he was abroad working in revolutionary movements, and at one time his writing was published simultaneously by Katkov and Chernyshevskii. An individualist who traversed most of the known world on personal missions before the age of forty-five, he was also involved in the collective activities of radical organizations in Western Europe at the rank-and-file level. Mechnikov was, after his years in the émigré underground, a geographer-orientalist with an outstanding reputation as a scholar and teacher who was fluent in ten languages. In spite of all these achievements, however, Mechnikov has never been the subject of a serious biography, and he remains virtually unknown to students of revolutionary Russia.

Mechnikov was born on 18 (30) May 1838 in St. Petersburg, where his father served in an Imperial Guard regiment. In 1852 Mechnikov was admitted to the Kharkov gymnasium, and in 1856 he entered the medical faculty at Kharkov University. After only seven months, however, he was expelled from the university for reasons that have not been clarified. According to one account, he was expelled because of his "liberal orientation." This may be an oblique reference to the likelihood that he was a member of the secret student organization that was formed in 1856 at Kharkov University. In any event, Mechnikov then returned to St. Petersburg, where he enrolled in the Medical-Surgical Academy and also studied foreign languages in the evenings. He eventually trans-
ferred to St. Petersburg University and graduated in 1859 in the physical mathematics faculty with a specialization in the natural sciences. Immediately after graduation, because of his linguistic skills in Turkish and Arabic (and his father’s connections with St. Petersburg officialdom), Mechnikov was selected to serve as a government translator on an official diplomatic mission to the Middle East. The mission, led by Gen. B. P. Mansurov, was designed to counter French and British influence there. However, Mechnikov was dismissed from this post for reasons of disobedience. He then abruptly abandoned state service and traveled to Venice, where he joined the struggle for the liberation of Venice and Lombardy from Austrian control. Mechnikov became more involved with the Italian struggle in the summer of 1860 when he joined the Italian volunteer army formed in Florence under Garibaldi. The reasons for this seeming lurch from state service to nationalistic revolutionary service have not been convincingly explained. Perhaps he was captivated by Garibaldi’s charismatic appeal; perhaps for him the Italian war of independence served as a model for the Russian upheaval he wished to see in the future. In any case, temporarily without a cause, rootless, adventurous, and somewhat confused as to his political orientation, Mechnikov threw himself into the Italian struggle. Appointed to an artillery officer’s post, he commanded troops at the front before being seriously wounded.

In 1861 Mechnikov began his career as a publicist. From abroad he submitted articles about the Italian independence struggle, and these were published, usually under a nom de plume, in some of Russia’s leading journals. In 1864 Mechnikov moved from Italy to Geneva, where he became involved in the growing conflict between Herzen and the younger émigrés. The motive for this shift had emerged during the fall of 1863, when Herzen attended a banquet held in his honor in Florence. Mechnikov was present at the banquet, and he discussed with Herzen the various ways in which the London-based Russian émigré literature could be transported to Russia. For a while, at least, Mechnikov organized a clandestine route for Herzen’s publications via Constantinople to Odessa and then to the Russian interior.

Mechnikov was also present at the December 1864 congress of émigrés in Geneva at which Herzen was confronted directly by the opposition and resentment harbored against him by the younger émigrés. Mechnikov’s position at the congress is not clear, a fact that distinguishes him from all the others present. Certainly Mech-
nikov was not an uncritical supporter of Herzen (as was Kasatkin, whom the émigrés named “Herzen’s watchdog”), in spite of his willingness to contribute articles to *Kolokol*. Similarly, Herzen had mixed feelings about Mechnikov, whom he both criticized and praised in private letters.

In 1868 Mechnikov again went off in an unorthodox direction. He managed to obtain an assignment from the editors of the *St. Petersburg Vedomosti* to be their correspondent in Spain. However, while in Barcelona and Madrid, he spent much of his time establishing ties between the Russian émigrés and Spanish revolutionaries. Also in 1868, Mechnikov, in collaboration with N. Ia. Nikoladze, launched a new émigré periodical that was intended to remain independent of the growing factionalism in the émigré communities. The journal, *Sovremennost*', survived for seven issues before closing down. We have already noted how one of the articles in *Sovremennost'* provoked Serno-Solov'evich to write his denunciatory pamphlet *Niko/lka-Publitsist*, and we shall return to Mechnikov’s journal in the discussion of émigré journalism during the 1860s.

Mechnikov’s career does not end here, although his later activities fall outside the scope of this study. He continued to maintain a life-style that permitted him to do serious geographical research and teaching without renouncing his deep commitment to social change in Russia. He accepted teaching positions in Japan and later in Switzerland, collaborated with Elisee Reclus, the anarchist geographer, on a major study, and at the time of his death on 30 June 1888 was writing his memoirs. He also worked closely with Plekhanov, Zasulich, Aksel’rod, and Kravchinskii abroad, while corresponding with G. E. Blagosvetlov and K. M. Staniukovich about the political orientation of the liberal St. Petersburg journal *De/o*. Mechnikov clearly was an individualist who refused to adopt the reigning political currents of his time as many of his contemporaries did. He remains a fascinating figure in the Russian emigration, and his contributions merit a definitive study in their own right.

*N. I. Zhukovskii*

Another influential émigré of the 1860s who represents the turning toward ideology at this time is Nikolai Ivanovich Zhukovskii. Although a revolutionary of the next generation who knew Zhukovskii called him “one of the most original individual types among the
very little is available in any language on Zhukovskii's career. He was born in 1842 to a gentry family and was given a traditional aristocratic education. He attended the exclusive Corps of Pages in St. Petersburg, spoke French fluently, was talented on the forte-piano, and was a habitué of the lavish balls given by the upper class during his formative years. After graduating from Moscow University, Zhukovskii worked in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for a few years. He came of age during the emancipation of the peasantry and the ensuing response in society. Following the lead of his two older brothers, he joined the student upheaval of 1861 and was arrested in connection with his involvement with an underground printing press organized by the radical student P. D. Ballo. Zhukovskii escaped arrest by fleeing the country, and in 1862 he arrived in London, where he met Herzen and began a lifelong career as a revolutionary émigré. Herzen received Zhukovskii warmly, and immediately gave him the job of ensuring the clandestine transportation of the publications of the Free Russian Press into Russia. To accomplish this, Zhukovskii moved to Dresden, where he could monitor the smuggling of the literature across the Russian border. It is highly likely that Zhukovskii contributed pseudonymously to *Kolokol* at this time, given his later work on a number of émigré journals, but apart from a letter to the editor, no concrete evidence has been found of any other contributions.

In 1864 Zhukovskii became a legal émigré when he was sentenced *in absentia* by the Russian Senate “to eternal exile outside the borders of Russia” and was deprived of his rights as a citizen of the empire. That same year he moved to Switzerland, joined the anti-Herzen “young émigrés,” and began to associate with Bakunin's supporters. He was present at the 1864–65 émigré congress in Geneva, but did not break off relations entirely with *Kolokol*, even though he voted with the majority seeking a change in the editorial policy of Herzen's publication. Zhukovskii corresponded with Ogarev through the remainder of the 1860s, and together with Mechnikov and Utin, prodded him to change the orientation of *Poliarnaia zvezda*. In the fall of 1867, Zhukovskii wrote Ogarev a long letter in which he discussed in some detail his differences with Ogarev. The letter is also important because it reveals the evolution in Zhukovskii's thinking from an undefined radical outlook to a convinced Bakuninist orientation.

In his letter, Zhukovskii elaborated on a number of themes of concern to the emigration, including an evaluation of the possibility
of a future peasant revolution in Russia and the roles to be played by the participants in that struggle. Zhukovskii argued that the coming revolution in Russia would have to be a peasant upheaval: "In this there is not, nor can there be, the slightest doubt." Predictably he ruled out any hope for a government-initiated reform program that would resolve the profound inequities in rural Russia, citing the recent experience of the terms of the Emancipation Decree. More interesting and less expected, however, is his belief that the age of peasant leadership in rural rebellions had ended and that a new leadership from the masses would have to be found to ensure a successful revolution in the future. Razin and Pugachev could not translate their temporary military victories into a permanent social triumph because they could not bring the elements of science and politics—crucial tools in the modern world—to their constituencies. Without these elements, a new social structure could not be maintained. From what segment of society, then, would the new leadership of the masses emerge? Zhukovskii's answer, unique in the theoretical debates among the émigrés, was that the successors to the traditional peasant leaders would come from "the urban intelligentsia-proletariat, who are accumulating more and more in Petersburg and Moscow." These people would not be aristocrats or graduates of higher educational institutions as Ogarev had presumed. They would be the new raznochintsy, radicalized seminary students joining with representatives of the gentry, the officialdom, and the workers in the cities to, in turn, fuse with the discontented masses in the countryside. Zhukovskii stated that attention must be turned to the proletariat, whose members form the country's urban artisanal associations and manufacturing artels. Their discontent must be channeled into constructive revolutionary activities. They must learn about socialist theory and practice, and then take these lessons back to the countryside.

Zhukovskii tried to convince Ogarev that his journal "Poliarnaia zvezda" should be transformed into an organ propagating these concepts. He gave specific advice. The journal would contain three sections, the first of which would expound in a readable manner the historical development of socialism in the West. The second section would then relate this Western socialist theory (by which he had in mind mainly the writings of socialists like Fourier, Considérant, Proudhon and Saint-Simon) directly to Russian conditions—to the urban artels and rural communes of Russia. The third section of Ogarev's journal, according to Zhukovskii, ought to be devoted to
the actual experiments in the West with socialist institutions (Fourier's phalansteries, Owen's farms, etc.). Zhukovskii was convinced that “only the émigré press” could accomplish these tasks of bringing socialism to the urban proletariat for eventual transmission to the peasantry. 42

Although Zhukovskii failed to convince Ogarev to alter the format of Poliarnaia zvezda along the lines suggested in his letter, some of his ideas did find their way into a series of articles written by Ogarev for Kolokol. 43 After this, Zhukovskii, with the collaboration of Mechnikov, negotiated with Herzen to create a new émigré journal. Ogarev was sympathetic, but Herzen refused to finance the venture. 44 Meanwhile, at the end of 1867, Zhukovskii met Bakunin, and the anarchist made a great impression on him. Working with Bakunin and Utin, Zhukovskii at last realized his dream of establishing a journal in which he could express his point of view on the Russian political situation. The new émigré journal Narodnoe delo began to appear in 1868. 45 Zhukovskii’s commitment to Bakuninism deepened as he joined and became a leading member of Bakunin’s Alliance for Socialist Democracy. Later, during the 1870s, Zhukovskii continued to propagate Bakunin’s ideology through his work on the editorial boards of Rabotnik and Obshchina. Still later, in the 1880s, Zhukovskii strenuously opposed the formation of the Osvobozhdenie truda group, seeing in this the revival of the battle between the ideas of Marx and those of Bakunin in the First International.

In one of the few extant personal reminiscences of Zhukovskii, the Bakuninist is described as a man capable of endless conversation on the “burning questions of the day,” but one who is at the same time incapable of being systematic and thorough. He virtually lived in the cafés of Geneva, talking far into the night over large quantities of alcohol with whoever would stay to listen and argue with him. He prepared his lectures for meetings and his journal articles at these cafés, but often he squandered his time and left most of his work unfinished as he collapsed in the night hours. When asked to lecture to groups of émigrés or workers, he could not be relied upon either to appear or, if he did come, to finish his assigned topic (usually on the International or the Paris Commune). He was a brilliant polemicist, full of sarcasm and wit. When he did appear before an émigré audience, he was so impressive that few people would attempt to stand up to him. However, in his last years, he came to be regarded as a “living relic of a past age.” 46 His deterioration, the result of his
pessimism about Russia and his despair over the obsolescence of his own role in the emigration, led him to absinthe addiction, a factor that contributed to his death in 1895.

V. A. Zaitsev

Yet another influential émigré from this period is Varfolomei Zaitsev. In spite of the fact that Zaitsev was one of Russia's most prolific and interesting journalists both before and during the period of his emigration, it is extremely difficult to find information about him.47

Zaitsev was born on 30 August 1842 in Kostroma. His father, a minor government official, was frequently transferred from one service post to another, and as a child, Zaitsev was periodically uprooted as the family moved from Kostroma to Warsaw, then to Riazan and Zhitomir. These frequent moves meant that young Zaitsev was never in a place long enough to attend the local gymnasium. Consequently, he was educated at home, where it became evident that he was extraordinarily gifted, particularly in reading and in languages, from an early age. When he was sixteen, with a reading knowledge of six languages, he applied for admission to Moscow University, but was refused because he was too young. With the help of his father, however, he succeeded in being admitted to the juridical faculty of St. Petersburg University. Then, one year later, he had to interrupt his studies, at the request of his family. Further moves rapidly followed, almost in imitation of his father's service-post transfers. Zaitsev studied for a brief period at the medical faculty of Moscow University, but in 1862 his father abandoned the family, and Zaitsev, now twenty, was forced to seek ways of supporting his mother and sister. In December 1862 he returned to the capital, earning money by translating and editing on a freelance basis while trying to continue his medical studies at the Medical-Surgical Academy.48

It was at this time, apparently through his sister's connections to the literary world in St. Petersburg, that Zaitsev met Dmitrii Pisarev and began an entirely new career.49 Between 1863 and 1866 Zaitsev published a series of articles on literature and society for Russkoe slovo; these articles were widely read by followers of the "thick journals." With the closing of Sovremennik and the arrest of Chernyshevskii, Russkoe slovo became the most influential journal of its time for the Russian intelligentsia. On Zaitsev's articles for
Russkoe slovo, we have Shelgunov's statement that Zaitsev's work was “vibrant, passionate, combative, written with the blood of his heart and the juice of his nerves. Each separate review contains in itself a whole, conclusive thought, and all these separate thoughts compose one conclusive overarching, penetrating idea.” At the end of 1865, Zaitsev and Nikolai Sokolov left Russkoe slovo after an irreconcilable argument with the journal's publisher, G. E. Blagosvetlov. Zaitsev worked closely with Sokolov on the writing of Otshchepetsy (which we have already discussed), and was involved with the circle that formed around Nikolai Nozhin in 1866, after Nozhin's return from abroad.

Zaitsev was arrested in May 1866 in the aftermath of the Karakozov affair, and was kept in the dungeons of the notorious Peter and Paul Fortress for over four months while his case was reviewed by the authorities. He was finally released when no evidence was found linking him to Karakozov, but he was kept under close surveillance and was forbidden to publish his writings. Worse, he developed rheumatism, heart trouble, and poor eyesight as a result of his imprisonment. The period of his incarceration left him depressed about politics. In a letter to his sister, he wrote that he had “ceased to dream about social reforms and political transformations.” Realizing that his career as a radical journalist was at an end in Russia, he applied for permission to leave the country. According to his wife, whom he married in 1867, the main reason it took nearly two years for him to receive permission to go abroad was the persistent opposition of the former chief of police Mezentsev, who vowed that he would never allow Zaitsev to get a passport. Only after the intervention of Professor S. P. Botkin, who testified to Zaitsev's critical need to go abroad for his health, did the authorities permit Zaitsev to leave. On 9 March 1869, forced to leave his wife and young daughter behind, Zaitsev went directly to Paris.

Zaitsev experienced both emotional and material difficulties in coping with his new environment. From his wife's memoir we have evidence of Zaitsev's personal feelings during his adjustment and we can speak with more certainty about his problems. However, much of what Zaitsev went through after his arrival abroad was experienced by most of his émigré comrades as well. In letters to his wife, whom he had been forced to leave behind against his will in order to get his passport, Zaitsev continually complained about his financial problems. For the first few months, he was barely able to eat because of his lack of money. He finally managed to earn a modest income.
by doing original translations in Russian for two Russian publishers of the works of Lassalle, Voltaire, Diderot, Hobbes, and others. He also became a regular contributor to Otechestvennye zapiski in the 1870s after working out an arrangement with N. A. Nekrasov, the journal’s editor.\textsuperscript{56}

Worse than the financial problems was the emotional crisis Zaitsev underwent. He wrote to his wife of the sense of utter despair he felt as he realized, more so with each passing day, that he was irreparably cut off from all that he had known and loved. He began to realize what it meant to know that there was no hope of returning to his homeland, his culture, and his friends. He was not even certain, at this point in 1869, if or when he would see his wife and child again. He admitted that he felt “complete powerlessness,” cut off as he was from the roots of his existence—“the heavy soil,” as he put it, of Russia.\textsuperscript{57} He suffered from migraine headaches, one of which lasted for two terrifying days without relief about a month after he left Russia. Of that transition into emigration, he wrote his wife: “I think that if I have to go through again what I did this February, I will ultimately go insane.”\textsuperscript{58} He felt trapped, caught between two worlds—one from which he had essentially been banished, and the other which he feared because his survival depended on an accommodation he was not certain he could make. Perhaps his most desperate moment came when, in a masochistic mood, he fantasized that only his wife, who was impossibly removed from him back in Russia, could save him from his fears. “If you do not rescue me in the course of this week, I’m telling you, you may never see me again; I am rotting away here now, which is not hard to do so long as one wishes it.”\textsuperscript{59}

Ironically, one of the sources of his anxiety became a factor of support and strength upon which he began to build a new vision. Paris was exploding into political and social chaos literally directly outside his apartment. In one of his letters, he wrote: “Paris is up in arms; every day brings the barricades and the slaughters. The people cry ‘Down with Napoleon’ and ‘Long live the Republic.’ We live in the most aroused quarter, St. Jacques, where barricades are being erected beneath our window. Napoleon sent in fierce troops and there was violence.”\textsuperscript{60}

Although he did not at first understand the emerging battle that was in fact to lead to the outbreak of the Paris Commune, Zaitsev soon turned his attention to comprehending the nature of the struggle. As he made interpretive sense of the turmoil on the streets of
Paris, he conquered some of his fears in the process. One means of accomplishing this was to write about the events he was witnessing. He was given this opportunity by Nekrasov, who invited him to write an article on the politics of the Second Empire for *Otechestvenye zapiski*.61

In the winter of 1870, Zaitsev’s situation began to improve. Not only did he reap the material benefits of more translating and writing, but he was reunited with his wife and daughter. After traveling through Europe, he settled in Geneva and became intimately involved with the affairs of the Russian émigré community there. Meeting Zhukovskii, Mechnikov, and the other members of the Russian emigration who were then in Geneva, Zaitsev realized he had to make a choice between ideological positions. The debate between followers of both Marx and Bakunin for control of the International had superseded the other important issue, control of *Kolokol*. Zaitsev gravitated to the Bakuninists, but left Geneva for Turin to live more economically with his sister and her husband, P. I. Iakobi.

Although Zaitsev was soon to become much closer to Bakunin himself, it is a measure of his effort to remain committed to a broader radicalism that he was interested in writing an article on Marx at this time. Collaborating with his brother-in-law, Iakobi, Zaitsev composed and managed to publish in a legal journal in Russia an article based on material from Marx’s first volume of *Kapital*.62 However, Zaitsev’s ideological shift toward Bakunin was the more pronounced trend. While in Turin during 1870–71, he participated in the organization of the Italian section of the International, which was more sympathetic to Bakunin than to Marx.63 More important, in November 1871 Zaitsev went to visit Bakunin. He returned again in the fall of the following year, and this time he lived in Bakunin’s house and spent many evenings writing notes as the anarchist patriarch dictated to him.64

There is a large lacuna in Zaitsev’s biographical materials between this point and the end of the 1870s. The omission is especially glaring since when the details of his life resume, Zaitsev has abandoned Bakuninism and has begun yet another shift in his career. During his last years, Zaitsev returned to journalism. He became a regular contributor to the liberal émigré newspaper *Obshchee delo*, edited by A. Kh. Khristoforov and N. Belogolovyi. More than eighty of his articles appeared in virtually every issue of the paper
between 1877 and 1882. Indeed, on the occasion of Zaitsev’s death on 20 January 1882, the editors of the paper devoted the front page and a series of commemorative articles to him. Elsewhere, little notice was taken of his death.