Conclusion

The origins of *pochvennichestvo* reached back well into the early years of Russian romanticism when writers and critics began to search for the marks of originality in Russian art and literature. It was here that the links of the native soil movement with aesthetic theory were forged and that its central metaphor, Russia and the West, was first formulated. *Pochvennichestvo* was not an isolated phenomenon. It was profoundly influenced by western European conservative organic philosophies and was part of a general European response to the new challenges to tradition posed by materialism and positivism. The *pochvenniki* owed most to Belinsky, of their many Russian predecessors. Grigor'ev laid no claim to originality and always stressed his debt to the great critic. In his organic criticism he perpetuated and elaborated one current of Belinsky's thought and furnished Dostoevsky with a framework into which to fit the vague thoughts about Russian nationality that he had formed during his term of exile.

Dostoevsky's debt to Grigor'ev was large and largely unacknowledged. His journalistic activity from 1860 to 1865 and later in his career, especially his views about nationality and its relationship to literature and criticism, was rooted in Grigor'ev's organic criticism. But Dostoevsky was both broader and shallower in his formulations. His notion, which he held until his death, that Russia was destined to reconcile the thought of East and West turned out to be a jingoistic parody of Grigor'ev's original, more modest conception that in the new Russian nationality the ancient tradition of Russian fraternity would be reconciled with the new, Western elements of Russian life, which had entered the country from the time of Peter the Great, and so overcome the nation's divisions. The triumphant culmination of Dostoevsky's nationalistic literary criticism, the Pushkin speech, was little more than an oversimplified and heated summary of Grigor'ev's major critical articles of the late 1850s.

In the periodization of Dostoevsky's creative evolution the significance of the years 1860 to 1864 has been too often underestimated. Although the novelist's conversion, or reversion, to a Christian perspective took place during his exile, he did not return to St Petersburg late in 1859 with the religious-nationalist views of his later years already in place. The intervening years constituted a middle period in his evolution, when under the influence of Grigor'ev's organic criticism and goaded by the clash with the nihilists, he moved from a still largely unexamined humanitarianism to a profoundly Christian humanism, complicated by his nationalistic hopes for the Russian people.

In keeping with its eclectic nature, *pochvennichestvo* was as intimately linked to early Slavophilism as it was to Belinsky's criticism; but it also differed significantly from the thought of Kireevsky or Khomiakov. The *pochvenniki*, who like other conservative intelligentsy were separated from the land and were urban in their preoccupations and outlook, turned their backs on the aristocratic patriarchalism of the Slavophiles. They widened the definition of Russian nationality to embrace not just the peasantry but the entire spectrum of society. The almost democratic pathos of *pochvennichestvo* derived from the very inclusiveness of its conception of the 'people.' The *pochvenniki* transformed the idea of Russian nationality from a static entity that had to be retrieved by a quasi-religious act of contrition, as the Slavophiles understood it, into a dynamic and evolutionary principle of organic change. Whereas the early Slavophiles located the ideal in the past, the *pochvenniki* pinned their hopes on the future. In their view, the Russian ideal was naturally being realized in the gradual creation of a self-conscious *natsional'nost' or obshchestvo*. On this point at least the later Slavophile Ivan Aksakov, and Leont'ev in his early career followed the *pochvenniki*. Moreover, the emphasis on the need for ethical and spiritual education as the prerequisite of the self-conscious nation, united in its pursuit of a moral ideal, has become the hallmark of Russian conservatives from Struve to Solzhenitsyn.

The young editors and the *pochvenniki* reflect many of the characteristics of intelligentsia conservatism in nineteenth-century Russia. Intelligentsia conservatism was less a reaction to intelligentsia radicalism than it was its paired opposite. Both arose more or less simultaneously as two
related responses from within a single group, the socially unattached intelligentsia, to the same social, cultural, and personal experiences and needs. The socially unattached intelligentsia, which was largely the product of the intensification of urban culture in the closing years of the reign of Nicholas I, addressed itself to the tensions in Russian thought and life that were generated by the slow process of modernization. These tensions were encapsulated in the metaphor Russia and the West. The outlook of both radicals and conservatives among the intelle
gency was shaped not only by their common intellectual roots in romanticism and utopian socialism, but also by their vehement rejection of the individualistic values and mechanical social arrangements that they believed characterized life in the bourgeois West. Both sides, consequently, ended by advocating remarkably similar collectivist or communalist social objectives.

The Weltanschauung of the socially unattached intelligentsia was formed by its experience and not as the product of its class of origin. Seeking to overcome their own feelings of displacement and disorientation in a society that had little room for them and a state that oppressed them, members of the socially unattached intelligentsia usually pursued one of two possible routes. The radicals, for the most part, advocated peasant revolution in order to emancipate the primitive forms of Russian peasant communalism from state and gentry domination and the bonds of a traditionalist peasant mentality and translate them into the advanced socialism of the Western theorists. The conservatives, in contrast, attempted to reconcile class divisions through the agency of a higher, self-conscious form of Russian nationality in which the cultural and technological achievements of the West, contained in the educated classes, were infused with the communalism and Christian fraternity preserved in the peasant class. The routes chosen by the intelle
gency reflected personal preference and life experiences and cannot with any certainty be related to social origins.

The conservative intelligentsia in Russia borrowed extensively from the European conservative tradition, especially from German romanticism and idealism, and its story constitutes a distinctive chapter in the history of European conservatism. It viewed history as an organic process of the growing consciousness of innate ideals that were contained and, in time, were consciously expressed in the lives of nations. Its members were antirationalists who sought to reintegrate reason with intuition and faith and to ground thought in the experience of concrete reality. They persistently warned the Russian intelligentsia against the dangers of excessive abstractionism.

In keeping with their organic view of history, the intelligentsia conservatives were gradualists, who deplored revolutionary change or reforms inspired by foreign or abstract models. They looked instead to the particularist tradition of Russia. There they found the principles of autocracy and communalism which, they believed, secured Russians from the corrupting influence of politics and the social atomization and impersonal legalism of the liberal, contractual state and assured them a communal life inspired by Christian fraternity.

In spite of the stress that most Russian conservatives placed on historical experience as the only reliable guide to action, the conservative conception of Russian nationality rested far less on an objective reading of European and Russian history than it did on a reason of spiritual types. These types, which were contained in the metaphor Russia and the West, were rooted both in Russia's religious experience and in the literary formulations of the Russian romantics. They had early become entrenched in Slavophilism. The pochvenniki, who professed to have discovered in literature the ideal essence of living types, tended to reinforce the basically non-historical character of conservative thinking about Russian nationality and to encourage an even greater reliance on a typology. The whole idea of spiritual types almost inevitably fostered thoughts of national exclusiveness and fuelled not only nationalism but also the politically more explosive pan-Slavism as well. In his last years, Dostoevsky carried the idea of national types to militancy. And it was not by chance that Danilevsky's theory of cultural-historical types should first have seen the light of day in Strakhov's Zaria, a journal professing to perpetuate in some measure the spirit of Vremia and Epokha but which had already abandoned much of that spirit for a more nationalistic and exclusive approach to Russia and the West.

By perpetuating the myth of the apolitical nature of Russians, the conservative members of the intelligentsia formed an unwitting alliance with the radicals. The defence of the autocratic principle gave ideological sustenance to the autocracy at a time when its traditional bases of legitimacy were steadily being eroded by the forces of social and economic change. Although the conservative intelligentsia, particularly the pochvenniki, emphasized individual moral responsibility as the basis of social life, the sharp distinction they drew between the internal life of the land and the external life of the state, their critique of liberal constitutionalism, and their indifference to legal order contributed
significantly to retarding the growth of a strong liberal consciousness among the Russian public. Linked as they were by a complex of internal psychological and intellectual affinities and predilections, the conservative and radical intelligentsia inadvertently conspired to polarize Russian political and social thought at the extremes and to prejudice a moderate outcome to the political strivings of their century.