Intelligentsia conservatism and intelligentsia radicalism in Russia were similar in that both were responses to the ominous advance of modernization in the specific forms it was taking in the most developed nations of western Europe. Both camps feared and vilified the egoism and acquisitiveness and the specialization and mechanism that they identified with Western bourgeois society. Their own political and social objectives were shaped to a marked degree by the characteristics of Western life that they opposed. They directed their efforts to halting the atomization of Russian society and to reinforcing the moral bonds between the individual and the community. At the same time, they wished to preserve the free activity of the integrated personality as the primary creative force in society and culture. The whole endeavour was profoundly humanistic. In their opposition to the spread of liberal bourgeois values in Russia intelligentsia of the right and left discovered common ground on a significant number of humanitarian social and political aims. The pochvenniki shared many of these aims. It is not, therefore, surprising that names and ideas usually associated with the radicals appeared in Vremia, or that the journal sided with the radicals on several important issues. With their commitment to the idea of reconciliation, the editors of Vremia, especially Dostoevsky, were anxious to forge links among the rival factions in Russian journalism. Such agreement on specific matters, though it initially appeared to foster reconciliation, could not for long conceal the larger philosophical and ideological issues that divided the right and left.

The transitional nature of the Emancipation period was particularly favourable to the pochvenniki. It was a time when the gentry uneasily contemplated a future of diminished social and economic status, when the peasantry hovered near the brink of full citizenship, and when the more open society promised by the reforms held out to the intelligentsia previously unheard of opportunities for social and state service. The endemic uncertainty about the direction the reforms were leading enabled the pochvenniki to draw believable links between their visionary hopes and the practical, everyday concerns of a society in flux. They were able to project a semblance of realism that eluded them only when the new elements created by the reforms settled down and solidified into new social arrangements. The heyday of pochvennichesstvo was the fluid era of the early 1860s when everything was yet to be settled.

No blueprint for the future of Russia appeared in Vremia. Although there was no lack of hints about what the editors hoped the country would become, much more was said about what it should not become. The pochvenniki did, however, suggest concrete ways by which Russians should go about building their future. They also took it upon themselves to criticize and oppose the 'abstract' plans proposed for Russia by the 'theoreticians.' The tactic naturally involved them in all the important debates of their day, and it is from their involvement that their social and political philosophy must be pieced together.

One of the memoirists of the period, a man who had been an ardent supporter of Grigor'ev, recalled that another name sometimes applied to the pochvenniki by their contemporaries was the postepenovtsy (gradualists). The name was appropriate because it signified the conviction of the pochvenniki that a sudden and rapid transformation of the life of the country would inevitably lead to the eradication of everything that was quintessentially Russian. They believed, on the contrary, that the national ideal needed scope to unfold naturally, step by step along an unhurried and normal path. 'Every society,' Dostoevsky wrote, 'can accommodate only the level of progress to which it has developed and which it has begun to understand.' As the Emancipation reforms went forward, the ideal, which was gradually attaining consciousness in the collective mind of society, would progressively find more perfect embodiment in the concrete forms of the social and political organization of the country, thus slowly closing the gap between the ideal and the real.

The pochvenniki did not oppose change. Progress and life, they avowed, were preferable to stagnation and sleep. But revolutionary change was anathema to them because it imposed ideas and institutions on a society unprepared to receive them. Revolutions invariably destroyed more than their results justified. They found in unreasoning opposition to legitimate change one of the principal sources of revolution. As a living organism, society generated within itself the
forces necessary for its own measured transformation. To thwart this evolution was to court the catastrophe of revolution. 'Therefore, God grant,' Dostoevsky implored, 'that this force be given some legal and normal outlet.' The safe course of politics lay somewhere in the vast expanse between reaction and revolution.

Contemporaries were understandably confused about the political complexion of Vremia. On many issues, it took its place in the camp of the progressive journals. Apart from its enthusiasm for the changes being brought about by the autocracy, a fact which in the circumstances of the times betrayed little about its political coloration, Vremia embraced an impressive list of progressive causes. It advocated the abolition of corporal punishment, agitated for sweeping hospital and prison reform, and recommended that Jews be granted the full rights of citizens. The editors entered a lively debate with the conservative journals Russkii vestnik and Vek over the woman question and joined the radical organs Sovremennik and Russkoe slovo on the side of female emancipation. During the demonstrations at St Petersburg University in 1861, Vremia supported the protestors, and a beef dinner complete with wine was sent from the editorial offices to some of the students imprisoned by the authorities. In the summer of 1862, when St Petersburg was swept by an epidemic of fires, the journal undertook a stout defence of the nihilists against official and semi-official charges that they had turned to arson.

Dostoevsky genuinely believed that pochvennichество was a progressive force. When in October 1862, Nekrasov, the editor of Sovremennik, declined to make further literary contributions to Vremia because he feared to compromise himself in the eyes of his radical supporters, Dostoevsky was stunned and sent off the agonized reply: 'Is our journal really retrograde ...? But I am convinced that the public does not consider us to be retrograde.' Yet Nekrasov's reluctance was understandable. In spite of a wide area of agreement on specific issues, stemming from a shared humanitarianism, the pochvenniki and the nihilists were poles apart in their analysis of the contemporary Russian scene and the needs of state and society. As the discussion about the Emancipation reforms dragged on, the differences between the two sides became more pronounced.

The reading public was not deterred from subscribing to Vremia, whatever it may have thought of its tendency. In 1863 the police compiled the circulation statistics of the major journals. The number of subscribers to Vremia was set at 4,000, a figure roughly corresponding to Dostoevsky's own account of 4,200. Sovremennik and Russkoe slovo were assigned 7,000 and 4,000 subscribers respectively and Katkov's Russkii vestnik 5,700. Although the police attributed some 7,750 postal subscribers to the Slavophile journal Den', the editor, I.S. Aksakov, privately estimated that Den' had 3,500 subscribers from October 1861 to October 1862 and only 2,500 in the next subscription year. In comparison to its rivals, therefore, Vremia enjoyed a more than respectable following. Much of its appeal lay no doubt in Dostoevsky's own literary contributions. Both the Notes from the House of the Dead and the Insulted and Injured were serialized in Vremia. But only two years later, in 1864, even the intriguing Notes from the Underground failed to bolster either the appeal or the subscription list of Epokha. There can, therefore, be little doubt that the journal was read for its program; it probably exercised considerable influence on its readers.

Pochvennichество was in part a product of the enthusiasm generated among the intelligentsia by the abolition of serfdom. For the pochvenniki, Emancipation represented an event greater than the reforms of Peter the Great and was equivalent in significance to the conversion of Russians to Christianity. The end of serfdom signalled the beginning of the gradual unification of the nation into a self-conscious, harmonious, and organic whole and made possible the moral rebirth of Russian man on a higher plane of integrated national consciousness. Peter's reforms and Emancipation represented two facets of the same process. The pochvenniki believed, as has been seen, that the reforms liberated the service class from the narrow ideal of Muscovy and placed it in the mainstream of Western civilization. Having mastered Western ideals and Western knowledge, the educated had recognized the inadequacy of those ideals not only for Russia but also for civilization itself. They experienced a profound need to admit their 'Russianness,' to return to the roots of Russian organic life and seek there the key to the future advancement of humanity.

The educated had, however, exhausted their spiritual reserves in attaining their present level of consciousness; they were impotent to go forward without unleashing and tapping the native resources still slumbering in the unconscious mind of the common people. At this critical juncture, the young tsar destroyed serfdom, which had posed the last political obstacle to the peaceful union of the educated and the people. With his act, he released the national principle of fraternity, which was best exemplified in the institutions of peasant association. The reconciliation of the educated with the national principle and the transformation of the peasants into citizens, as well as their introduction...
Neither side need relinquish the ideals that formerly had guided it. The end of the process was the ‘merging of the principles of education and their representatives with the national principle and the participation of the whole of our great Russian people in all the events of our current life.’

The pochvenniki did not view class rivalry as an obstacle to concord within Russian society. They believed that in Russia there was no class stratification in the Western sense. The position of the individual on the social scale was defined instead by his educational level and general moral qualities. Russian nationality transcended class interests and hostilities. Dostoevsky wrote: ‘Let us grant that we have rather well-defined social strata. But in all of our strata there are many more points of unity than of disunity, and that is the essential. It is the guarantee of our universal peace, tranquillity, brotherly love, and prosperity. Every Russian is first of all a Russian and after that he belongs to a class.’

Besides facilitating the reconciliation of the educated and uneducated, Emancipation had cleared the way for the intellectual and moral development of the people. ‘Our new Rus!’ Dostoevsky proclaimed, ‘understands that there is only one cement, one link, one soil on which everything will come together and be reconciled -that is universal, spiritual reconciliation, the source of which lies in education (obrazovanie).’

Like Svetoch, Vremia championed education as the solution to most of Russia’s problems. There was in the attitude of the pochvenniki towards the lower classes a hint of repentance and of debt to the people, characteristic of the intelligentsia in the 1860s and 1870s. As the most advanced segment of the population, the educated were obligated to take the initiative in going to the people and educating them. The responsibility for the ignorance of the common people rested squarely on the educated who had failed in the past to plead for their development. But the educated had a better reason than guilt for helping the masses to overcome their ignorance. They, themselves, could advance no further without the resources of the people behind them. The instrument for the release of these resources was education. The educated had everything to gain by the enlightenment of their ignorant brothers because the spread of education in an intensified form and as soon as possible is the main task of our time, the first step to any activity.

The gradualist and humanistic approach of Vremia to social change was typified in its attitude to education. The first step towards universal education was, in its view, literacy (gramotnost’): ‘For our part we are completely convinced that literacy will improve the people morally and give them a sense of their own worth which in its turn will eliminate many abuses and disruptions, will eliminate even their possibility.’ Apart from the moral maturity with which only education could endow the people, the dissemination of enlightenment also held the key to economic and social progress in Russia. In October 1862, a paean of praise to the salutary effects of education appeared in the home affairs section of the journal:

The question of the level of the moral development of a particular segment of the public leads directly to the question of education, of enlightenment, of intellectual development. We must now take decisive action to advance education. This is essential for economic reasons as well. Our interest, quite apart from our worth as human beings, demands it. The transformation of the judicial sector requires lawyers in enormous quantity; agriculture has been so placed by the force of circumstances that it must take anew, national direction ...; in various mills and factories there is an extreme need for chemists, technologists, mechanics and mineralogists; the universal shortcomings of the roads require engineers; finally the spirit of the times demands honest and morally developed citizens, and who can control the spirit of the times? Let no one even try: it cannot be controlled.

In the eyes of the pochvenniki, the function of education was to develop the moral independence of the individual fully. They were especially critical of the Slavophile view that education should aim at subsuming the individual personality in the immutable values of the community. Grigor’ev complained as early as 1858 that the ‘idea of the annihilation of the individual in the communalism of our Russian soul is precisely the weak side of Slavophilism.’ Vremia’s defence of the autonomous personality was consistent with the understanding of the pochvenniki of nationality. Since nationality was not a static entity but an evolutionary process involving the whole nation, the national ideal could achieve its complete expression only when every member of the nation contributed to it. Only education could release the full moral potential of each individual.

With the establishment of complete moral equality through education, there would remain in Russia neither classes, nor rich and poor, but only citizens. This was, for the pochvenniki, the true meaning of democracy: a society of educated moral equals, individually motivated by a common national purpose. Grigor’ev captured the essence of the idea, especially its apolitical character, when he wrote to Strakhov in 1861 that he was neither a conservative nor a revolutionary but wished only to be a citizen.
In nationality the *pochvenniki* discerned a bulwark against the devaluation of moral and cultural standards threatened by mass democracy. "The idea of nationality (natsional'nost')," Dostoevsky wrote, 'is a new form of democracy.'

The *pochvenniki* neither doubted the eagerness or capacity of the peasant to learn, nor feared that civilization would be degraded or diluted by exposure to him. Like the Slavophiles, they believed that although science (nauka) was general and its laws were universally applicable, its forms were always national. Science, according to the *pochvenniki*, had so far been imitative in Russia because learning had not yet been integrated into the national principle. The reconciliation of the educated with the people would result not in the destruction of science in Russia, as some of the critics feared, but in its flowering. The people were not merely to accept civilization passively but were to judge it, to discard whatever was false in it, and to invest its useful and true products with a new legitimacy and purpose. In so doing they would not only revitalize civilization but also give new life to the exhausted intellectual world of western Europe.

Since the *pochvenniki* attached so much importance to education, it was to be expected that they would have a great deal to say about how it should be conducted. In this area, at least, they were modernists. They rejected outright the traditional Russian school system which, they argued, suppressed individuality by forcing students into a common mould and subjecting them to preconceived rules of action. Under the existing regime, they pointed out, a student was taught to live life exactly as his father had lived it. The school authorities regarded innovation with suspicion and even horror. Church schools were not spared either. Although the *pochvenniki* agreed, despite reservations about the morals of the Russian clergy, that the spiritual upbringing (vospitanie) of the people was the responsibility of the church, they emphatically denied that literacy and, more broadly, education (obrazovanie) were also the exclusive province of the clergy. Freedom of conscience in Russia was too precious to be squandered by the establishment of a clerical monopoly on education.

If the *pochvenniki* repudiated the traditionalist modes of education they were equally critical of the more up-to-date utilitarian approach. The utilitarians, in their view, did not require a student to develop the human side of his character but only asked of him that he grow up a practical person performing a task useful to society. Such functionalism in education, in the opinion of the *pochvenniki*, stunted the natural human development of the student. It also hindered progress because what was considered useful for the future was always defined in terms of the present needs of society. The circumstances of life altered too rapidly, however, to make such prediction practicable.

The *pochvenniki* discovered their ideal of education in Lev Tolstoy's pedagogical journal, *lasnaia-Poliana*, which Tolstoy published briefly in the early 1860s. Tolstoy's articles were reviewed enthusiastically in *Vremia* and his ideas were adopted by the journal as its own. Tolstoy's philosophy of education was based on the idea of the removal of all constraint on the student. Since every human being naturally sought knowledge, Tolstoy argued, no external motivation was required. It was only necessary to provide the facilities needed for learning and to permit the student the time and liberty to develop his unique abilities. Creativity and imagination were not to be curbed but, on the contrary, encouraged to flower. Only in an atmosphere of complete educational freedom would the people be able to select a curriculum entirely natural to it. It was for this reason that the *pochvenniki* opposed a major reform in the curriculum of the universities, which was being debated at the time, as premature. Only when a fully national curriculum had been worked out on the initiative of the people, at the lower levels of the educational structure, they believed, should the form and content of university education adjust itself accordingly. Given their views on the importance of personality in the making of nationality, it is understandable that they embraced an educational philosophy based on individualism and freedom.

Of more immediate concern than the education of children was the question of literacy for the adult peasantry. For this purpose, the *pochvenniki* regarded the newly founded Sunday schools as particularly effective. The Sunday schools were established by young intellectuals and social activists, as well as by some of the more progressive members of the gentry, to teach reading, writing, and arithmetic to any peasants willing to devote part of their free time to learning. Dostoevsky was impressed by the large number of peasants who attended the schools. He interpreted their dedication as a sign of the innate instinct of the peasant for truth and his respect for learning and looked forward to the day when the Sunday schools extended to every corner of the nation.

Since literacy was the primary element of education, the *pochvenniki* were anxious to attract the peasants to reading. They were not alone in their concern. Popular education became a vogue after Emancipation, and books for the masses were rushed into circulation. Dostoevsky disapproved of most of the new textbooks for popular reading. In their crude efforts to teach the peasants the rudiments of civilized behaviour,
these works, in his estimation, succeeded only in patronizing their readers. Their authors treated adult peasants like small children with vacant minds. The textbooks contained not what the peasants wanted to know but what their educated benefactors supposed they should know. Dostoevsky believed that education should be linked to the soil and to life and not to the latest, Western pedagogical theory. He deemed special readers for the peasants to be useless. The peasant, who was quick to realize that he was being treated as an object for moral improvement, was almost certain to reject the readers in order to preserve his autonomy and dignity. All that was required was to give the peasants good books that interested them. Once the taste for reading was acquired, more concentrated teaching methods would be feasible. Love for the people, Dostoevsky concluded, if manifested in a spirit of guardianship and not in an exchange of ideas in mutual respect, would not be reciprocated. Each side had to learn from the other before their final reconciliation was possible.30

The intense humanism of the pochvenniki was never so evident as in the means they proposed to effect social change in Russia. They advocated neither severe social constraint nor revolutionary licence. Rather, they placed their faith in the individual, in the moral worth of the autonomous personality. In their view, social cohesiveness and historical continuity were the products of the free creativity of individuals, standing in an organic relationship to their own time and place. It was the individual who, breathing the air around him, to use Grigor'ev's metaphor, created the values of society, and not society that imposed its conventional values on the individual. Here was the essence, for the pochvenniki, of moral progress and so, too, of nationality. For nationality (natsional'nost') was the reflection in art, social attitudes, and political and social institutions of the conscious moral level of a nation at a given time.

Dostoevsky's humanism was a strange amalgam of that abstract, but deeply felt, humanitarianism of his youthful period of utopian socialism and the almost irrational, but very real, love he felt towards his ignorant tormentors in prison. It reached out not abstractly to the aggregate but concretely to real persons. Grigor'ev, who in poverty and dissipation had plumbed the lower depths of St Petersburg life, was no less sensitive to his own humanism. In 1861 he wrote to Strakhov, 'But you know I am really creating a whole world for myself, a world in which I live as a kind of prophet and champion of humanism.'31 And it was as the champions of humanism that the pochvenniki turned to questions of society and politics.

The political theory of Slavophilism was indelibly imprinted on pochvennichestvo. In a letter to Strakhov in 1861, Grigor'ev stated: 'In my politics, as you know, I was and remain a Slavophile. The narod, the zemskii sobor ...that is what I believe in.'32 The foundation of Slavophile politics was the sharp distinction between the state (vlast'), or the sphere of politics, and the land (zemlia), or the sphere of society. The Slavophiles regarded political authority as a necessary evil which guaranteed the nation from external force and threats. At most, the state was an outward symbol of the inner unity of the nation. The proper activity of the land was with internal order and moral perfection. Relations between the state and the land were governed by independence, respect, and mutual non-intervention. The land represented the sphere of public opinion embodied in a zemskii sobor, which the state was morally, but not legally, obligated to consult. Since the Slavophiles considered the participation of the land in the exercise of political power to be an evil, they rejected any form of constitutional or representative government. The best form of government, they believed, was hereditary and unlimited monarchy. Although the land was protected neither by constitutional nor legal guarantees against tyranny, the right to interfere in the independent life of the land was not among the prerogatives of the autocrat.33

Given the clear separation of state and society, of the political sphere and the moral sphere, that the Slavophiles envisaged, it was quite possible to see no contradiction between autocracy on the one hand and the most sweeping social and humanitarian progressivism on the other. The pochvenniki at least evidently failed to see any incompatibility. The state remained, for them, a constant, the symbol of external order and unity, whereas the land, in their view, continued to grow organically in the form of an autonomous and increasingly more perfect moral and social order. Consequently, they set politics aside and turned to the ethical restructuring of society.

The integrity of society, the pochvenniki believed, lay in its capacity to control its own fate. Society had to take responsibility not only for its own administration but also for its moral self-improvement. During the debate on education the pochvenniki consistently opposed state control of the schools. The schooling of the people was the duty of society and not of the state. The forceful intervention of the state in education, or in any other sphere of social competency, served only to undermine the moral commitment of the society.34 The extension of bureaucratic authority into local affairs, which had reached its zenith during the reign of Nicholas I, was detestable to them for the same reason.

The pochvenniki did not suppose that society could manage its own affairs spontaneously; it required institutions for discussion and control.
The commune, which was the traditional body of peasant self-administration, was the institutional embodiment of the Russian principle of fraternity and best met the real spiritual and material needs of Russians. The free commune has from time immemorial been the Russian people's preferred form of community, and its restoration in its original guise will not in practice be a difficult or unrealizable task. Freed by Emancipation from bureaucratic controls and the interference of the former serf-owners, the commune could resume its traditional role in local self-government and re-establish the spontaneous, free, and fraternal relations that had distinguished Russian life in earlier times.

If the pochvenniki looked backward to Russian tradition for one institution of social control, they looked forward for another to the newly planned district councils or zemstva, which came into existence only in 1864. They maintained that the zemstvo should be democratically elected and operate completely free of bureaucratic interference. Local officials, too, should be elected by unrestricted universal suffrage, since elected officials enjoyed a goodwill and authority generally denied to state appointees. Dostoevsky and his supporters were well aware that Emancipation had abolished serfdom only legally. Psychologically its effects and the habits instilled by centuries of bureaucratic caprice would linger on in society for many years. Nevertheless, they were confident that the full participation of the peasantry in local administration as well as in such prerogatives of the citizen as jury duty would in time overcome the ill effects of landlord and bureaucratic tyranny.

The separation of the commune and the zemstvo from the central state authority served, in the opinion of the pochvenniki, not only to guarantee the independence of society but also to preserve local diversity. The idea of localism (mestnost') was particularly dear to Grigor'ev who, as has been seen, had waged a struggle against the subordination of the life of the regions to the centralized Moscow ideal of the Slavophiles since the beginning of his career. Grigor'ev's localism was a reflection of the romantic's love for colour and diversity and was dictated more by aesthetic than by political considerations. Grigor'ev directed his arguments both against S.M. Solov'ev and the statist school of history and against the Slavophiles whom he suspected of wishing to turn all Russia into Moscow. For some time, he was able to carry the rest of the pochvenniki with him. When in 1861 A.P. Shchapov, the Siberian historian of the Raskol, developed his conception of regionalism (oblastnost'), Grigor'ev, ever on the lookout for allies, insisted that Vremia open its pages to him. Shchapov argued that the history of Russia was not one of a central idea or region, but one of a wide variety of local groups. He interpreted the schism as a democratic defence of the 'lands' or regions against Muscovite centralization. Dostoevsky appears to have been intrigued by the idea, and several other articles which viewed the Raskol as the rejection by the common people of Muscovite life were printed. Grigor'ev also admired the works of the Ukrainian historian N.I. Kostomarov, who asserted the existence of a separate Ukrainian cultural-historical tradition.

Traces of Grigor'ev's localism lingered on in Vremia and in its successor, Epokha. But Dostoevsky gradually grew suspicious of regionalism, which he feared would culminate in separatism. As the Polish crisis deepened in 1862 and 1863, his dislike of Kostomarov and other advocates of regional diversity increased, and articles defending local diversity appeared less frequently in his journals.

The political theory of pochvenniches'tvo was most succinctly encapsulated by Strakhov. In his memoirs of Dostoevsky he wrote of the pochvenniki:

In the practical field, we stopped at pure liberalism, that is, at that doctrine which least of all agrees with the idea of forcible upheaval and, if it insists on any changes in the social order, seeks to secure these changes by means of conviction and persuasion only. Pure liberalism, as is known, is the faith that the absence of compulsory measures leads to the best results in social authority, that under these conditions the interests of all are more correctly understood and mutually balanced. In a word, it is those principles which the advocates of freedom of thought, freedom of speech, freedom of trade, etc. support, principles which, it is obvious, may far from attain their objectives but which must be supported in the majority of cases where there are no clear foundations for other forms of action. Therefore, the liberal message is feasible and useful under any form of government although it does not provide a complete and defined theory of society. Other principles, which have greater force and urgency, should rule over these [liberal] principles.

Strakhov's conception of liberalism represented the extreme application of the idea of laissez-faire to social development. The pochvenniki viewed life as a process of the free realization of ideals. Their rejection of state intervention to preserve or revolutionary compulsion to transform society reflected their desire to secure the individual and society from the interference of reactionary authoritarian governments on the one hand and the ravages of revolutionary theory and practice on the other. Since they believed that legitimate progress resulted from the unimpeaded unfolding of the national ideal in the consciousness of the people,
publicity (глоссность), by which they meant freedom of speech, of the press, and of conscience, was essential.\footnote{41}

The 'pure liberalism' of the похвеннонки was far removed from liberalism as it was generally understood in the nineteenth century. The похвеннонки were harsh critics of Russia's own liberals whom they accused of trying to impose alien, Western forms of government on the Russian people. Dostoevsky once observed in his notebooks: 'We have always hated the vulgar liberal because he leads nowhere.'\footnote{42} Russian liberalism in the 1860s was, in fact, a model of moderation. Early Russian liberals such as B.N. Chicherin, K.D. Kavelin, and E.F. Korsh were endowed with a lively sense of the organic nature of political development. They believed that Russia was not yet ready for a constitutional order but looked forward to the day when a truly Russian form of constitutionalism, based on the historical traditions of the nation, would emerge. They hoped at best to lay the foundations for liberal constitutionalism in Russia. To this end, they advocated the creation of a corporate social structure and the gradual establishment of the rule of law. In particular, they opposed the communal system of land tenure, which hindered the growth of private property. Even on this point, however, their position was moderate. Kavelin wrote to Herzen in 1862 that he personally was opposed to private property as an exclusive form of landholding and preferred to see communal and private property coexist in Russia. He went on, however, to say that the absence of private property, its abolition, is the greatest nonsense, the truest path to Orientalism and to the sacrifice of the principle of individuality and freedom.\footnote{43}

Chicherin led the liberal attack on the peasant commune. He contended that the commune was not an ancient institution as the Slavophiles maintained but an innovation introduced by Peter the Great for administrative and fiscal reasons. The implication was that since the state had brought the commune into existence it had every right to abolish it and replace it by a system of small, private landholding. And since the commune was a relatively recent creation, it could be dispensed with without fear of violating Russian tradition.

The похвеннонки opposed the liberals on every point. The major failing of liberalism, according to the похвеннонки, was its tendency to confuse the sphere of the land with the sphere of the state. The liberals held that society had a political as well as a moral nature. The похвеннонки, like the Slavophiles, were convinced, on the contrary, that the Russian character was profoundly apolitical. The involvement of society in political affairs through the introduction of constitutionalism violated the very nature of Russians and deflected society from its proper ethical goals.

Since the похвеннонки regarded society as a voluntary moral union, they rejected the liberal conception of law as the basis of social relations. Reconciliation, for the похвеннонки, constituted a moral revolution, the voluntary rejection of class prejudices and egoism and the intermingling of the social strata on the basis of the innate capacity of Russians for brotherhood. A regulatory society was the antithesis of their conception.

The intrusion of law into social relations resulted, in their view, in the mechanical organization of society which was characteristic of the bourgeois West. Such a society deprived social life of its dynamism because change could no longer be incorporated without first breaking down the rigid forms that legalism imposed on the political and social organisms.\footnote{44} Law was for the похвеннонки, as for the Slavophiles, merely custom, the formal expression of traditional social arrangements, which had no autonomous status or validity but was subordinate to morality. Correct civil relations were, therefore, the result not of correct laws but of, correct human relations.\footnote{45}

The похвеннонки found a working example of their conception of law and the courts in the arbitration courts set up after the Emancipation edict to mediate disputes between landlords and peasants over the allocation of the land and the conditions of sale. The courts were composed of members of the contending sides themselves. Their decisions were not binding but depended on the mutual goodwill of the parties involved. The похвеннонки maintained that such courts set a precedent for voluntary agreements between former lords and serfs, helped to advance class co-operation and trust, and familiarized the peasants with the finer points of civil affairs.\footnote{46}

The похвеннонки opposed a legal order also because it threatened to legitimize the very class structure that they hoped to overcome. Wherever they encountered it, the похвеннонки repudiated the corporate mode of social organization. During the debate about the future of the universities in Russia in the early 1860s, Kavelin and Chicherin advocated turning the universities into corporate bodies. Dostoevsky strongly opposed such a scheme on the grounds that it would set the universities apart from the people. 'The corporate mode of life,' he argued, sounding for all the world like Rousseau, 'always leads to the diminution and suffocation of life. In every corporation there is a particular sphere of honoured ideas and accepted points of view on subjects. In such a milieu, the individual has difficulty in preserving himself intact: he is despotically required to look out for corporate interests only because chance has thrown him into a corporation.\footnote{47}

Opposition to the corporate ordering of society brought the похвеннонки
also into the debate over the future of the Russian gentry. Deprived at least in part by the Emancipation reforms of their economic and social privileges, many members of the gentry began to search for a new, distinctive role to play. The most extreme expression of gentry unrest originated in Tver where the local assembly of the nobility petitioned the tsar for a kind of gentry constitutionalism. The government squelched the movement by exiling the petitioners to their estates. But the idea of a special place for the gentry died hard. For a time in the early 1860s, M.N. Katkov, editor of the Russkii vestnik, advocated special rights and functions for the Russian gentry akin to those enjoyed by the English gentry. Chicherin and Kavelin, too, considered it essential that the gentry consolidate and expand its corporate structure. In the absence of a strong middle class, the guarantee of legal rights to the gentry, in Chicherin's view, was a necessary prerequisite for the preservation and extension of a legal order in Russia.

To the proponents of a separate status for the gentry, the pochvenniki replied that there was no foundation for a distinct gentry class either in Russia's present condition or in its history. The gentry did not now and never had enjoyed rights exclusively its own except the right to own serfs, a right that the Emancipation had swept away. To Chicherin's argument that the gentry had, since receiving corporate status in the reign of Catherine the Great, acquired the habit of legal authority, the pochvenniki retorted that it had, in fact, learned only the taste for personal authority that rested not on law but on caprice. The entire history of Russia had militated against the formation of separate estates in the Western sense.

And there was no need to create artificially a separate gentry class that would serve only to stratify society and render it immobile. As there was no basis, either historical or legal, for the separate existence of the gentry class, and as its creation from nothing would endanger the integrity of the social fabric, the pochvenniki maintained that the gentry should cease to think of itself as an independent caste with rights and privileges distinct from those of other Russian citizens. Reconciliation meant the complete obliteration of class lines: There is no hidden meaning in our words about union. One must understand them literally, yes literally, and we are still sure that we have expressed ourselves clearly. We have said frankly and we say again that it is necessary to unite fully with the people morally and as closely as possible; that it is necessary to merge with them completely and to become as one with them morally.

Dostoevsky's protestations notwithstanding it is not dear exactly what the union of the gentry with the people entailed. The pochvenniki believed communalism, as the social expression of Russian fraternity, to be the mode of existence most natural to Russians. They objected also to the patriarchal nature of Slavophilism, which was intended, in their view, to preserve a distinction, though not one of privilege, between the gentry and the peasantry. It is not obvious, however, that moral union with the people meant for them the communalization of all property. There is even some suggestion that they expected a sphere of private property to continue in their new ideal order.

It is clear that the pochvenniki required that separate gentry institutions be merged with the zemstva. The gentry was to enjoy neither legal nor institutional distinctions. It could, however, for some time exercise a special moral influence, not as a class but as a group of individuals. As the group most favoured in the past, the gentry was morally obligated to take the initiative in breaking down class barriers, to further the education of the masses, and, most importantly, to reject the arrogance of learning. As the educated part of the zemstvo, Dostoevsky wrote, the gentry will stand at the head of the people, not in the capacity of an unacknowledged estate but as the acknowledged best men, the people's elders (narodnye stantsy).

The idea of the gentry as the best men' was a powerful one for Dostoevsky. Later it reappeared in 1876 in his novel A Raw youth. The main character, Versilov, repeats Dostoevsky's idea from more than ten years before:

Our gentry, having lost its rights, could now regain the highest estate in the guise of the preserver of honour, light, science and the highest idea, and, here is the main point, not shutting itself up as a separate caste, which would be the death of the idea. On the contrary, the gates to the estate were opened a long time ago; now the time has come to open them completely. Let any feat of honour, science and valor among us give anyone the right to join this high rank of people. In this way, the estate will of itself turn into a meeting of the best men only... and not a privileged caste.

What Dostoevsky had in mind was a moral order, composed of men of intellectual distinction and special virtue from all backgrounds. They would represent the most advanced and most self-conscious segment of society and the most complete expression of nationality at its latest stage of development.

The pochvenniki were warm advocates of the autocratic ideal. Autocracy, they believed, best answered the real needs of the national character
and guaranteed the separation of state and society. They did not, however, accept the bureaucratic form autocracy had taken in Russia during the reign of Nicholas I. The strength of the autocracy, in their view, rested neither on the bureaucracy nor on the gentry but on the peasants, who constituted the only truly conservative force in the nation. The direct union of the tsar with the whole of the people, united in the name of the Russian ideal, represented to the pochvenniki a bulwark against revolution. The autocracy, consequently, should seek to become more national by sinking its roots in the people and its traditions. A government based on an abstract idea was inevitably non-national, whereas a 'living, organic state is always national.'

The conservatism of pochvennichestvo by no means forced its advocates into a static mould. In an interesting article that first appeared in Nachala in 1899, P. B. Struve suggested that Russian conservatism of the nineteenth century was divided into two camps. He differentiated the idealistic and mystical conservative romantic, who demanded the full realization of his cultural-social ideal in life, from the realistic conservative formalist, who conceived of life in its particulars and tried to work from its practical data. Struve placed the Slavophiles in the first category and Katkov in the second. The pochvenniki, too, belonged in the first camp. They were guided by the belief that the proper way to 'conserve' the national essence was to remove all obstacles to its free and natural development. Dostoevsky's assertion, therefore, that the pochvenniki believed in the fullest possible development for what already existed was an expression of what Grigor'ev called 'conservatism in the best possible sense.' Dostoevsky himself deplored that conservatism which ignored the pressing demands of life, blindly adhered to outmoded forms, and defended injustice in society simply because it was old. Such conservatism only hastened social disintegration and fostered revolutionary discontent. In March 1862, he defined true conservatism as fidelity to the spirit of the nation: 'The state needs the kind of conservatism which is based on national traditions, which defends everything reasonable in the past—the spirit of the people and its interest, which examines and criticizes every new need in social life. This conservatism will be a truly conserving force.' True conservatism for the pochvenniki was the perfect balance between change and continuity. Change was inevitable and desirable but was legitimate only when it took place within the constraints of tradition.

The economic expression of Russian fraternity, the pochvenniki maintained, was associationism. The common people had preserved the principle of association in the commune and artel', but were themselves unable to build a viable economic or social system on it. Such a system would emerge only when the educated classes infused the forms of association with knowledge and the highest goals. Here in the most practical terms was what Dostoevsky meant by the reconciliation of civilization with the national principles. The result of the union would be the flowering of Russian science and technology, the establishment of an individualistic, yet equal and federated, society, and the relative prosperity of all. Here also was the justification for the idealism of pochvennichestvo. If the real spiritual needs of Russians were first met and their traditions honoured, their material well-being was also assured.

The spirit of anti-capitalism was common to both socialists and conservatives in Russia in the second half of the nineteenth century. Often in the case of conservatives, Grigor'ev and Konstantin Leon'tev are good examples, anti-capitalism was sponsored by an aesthetic impulse, a revulsion for poshlost', an untranslatable word that conveys banality, vulgarity, coarseness, drabness, and monotony with overtones of corruption and decay. Russian conservative romantics despised capitalism as much for its bourgeois values and life-style as for the suffering it visited on the working man in the West. Most of the pochvenniki shared this impulse, and a number of articles were published in Vremia which deplored the egoism and narrowness of the bourgeois ideal.

The antipathy felt by the pochvenniki for capitalism arose from the conviction that not only capitalism but also the socialism which, in their view, it inevitably spawned were based on mechanistic, exploitative principles that were antithetical to the organic principles governing Russian life. This attitude derived less from their perfunctory acquaintance with the West and its ways than from a study of Western socialist writings. Although the pochvenniki were certain that some socialists had correctly analysed the roots of the Western malaise and had recognized the need for association in their social organization, they were inherently incapable of realizing it except in a mechanistic and theoretical way.

The pochvenniki were particularly attracted by the individualist libertarianism of P.-J. Proudhon. His 'philosophy of misery' served as the apologia, at least in part, for their own economic analysis. Their sympathy for Proudhon was not unnatural. He was an idealist, though an atheist, who spumed idle dreams of untold wealth in an earthly paradise and advocated an ethic of work and moderation. He emphasized the need for spontaneity in social organization, a view that accorded well with Dostoevsky's faith that Russian social life would evolve naturally and immediately from its own internal sources. In his La Guerre et La paix, Proudhon argued that man's destiny on earth was purely spiritual and moral. Men were condemned to daily labour but also to perpetual
poverty since their labour could never do more than satisfy their needs. But man, trapped by his idealism and seduced by tantalizing wealth, refused to recognize the law of poverty, and his efforts to overcome it ended in gross inequality, wars, and revolutions. It was imperative that men seek their glory elsewhere than in the satisfaction provided by the accumulation of luxuries. 'Work, sobriety and moderation; the liberation of the feelings and of the ideal: this is our law.'

A lengthy review of *La Guerre et la paix* by P. Bibikov appeared in *Vremia* in December 1861 and a translation of part of Proudhon's *Theorie de l'impot* in January 1862. Most of the political review section for October 1861 was devoted to an exposition of Proudhon's ideas and their application to Russia. Man, the anonymous commentator began, was fated to work. But the majority of men produced only enough to satisfy their barest physical and spiritual needs. The experience of the industrial nations, where increased labour resulted in ever-growing poverty, proved that poverty was a law of nature. It was characteristic of man to work no more than he need to meet his wants. This, the commentator hastily added, did not imply that Russia need not increase the amount of its labour. As the moral level of individuals increased so did their fundamental physical needs. Thus the Englishman, who was more advanced than his Russian counterpart, needed money for newspapers and books whereas the Russian felt no equivalent need. An increase in the amount of labour was indispensable not only for the moral well-being of the people, but also for the security and standing of Russia internationally. The author drew a distinction already made by Proudhon between poverty (bednost'), which was natural, and destitution (nishcheta), which was unnatural and destructive. Russians should not be charmed by the allure of wealth but devote themselves to quiet industry and voluntarily submit to the law of poverty. 'If humanity could live in such tranquil poverty, then perfect order would reign on earth. There would be no vices, no crimes, people would comprise a society of sages. But now this cannot be and never will be because of the infraction of the two great laws, poverty and moderation.'

The inevitable result of transgressing these laws was war, revolution, and destitution. The lesson for Russia was that the proper end of man was spiritual satisfaction and not material prosperity.

The best instrument for the equitable distribution of the products of labour, according to the *pochvenniki*, was the Russian commune. Since in the commune every peasant possessed a plot of land, he was secured against the pauperization that had overtaken the proletariat in the industrialized nations of western Europe. The commune was not to remain in its backward condition. The *pochvenniki* advocated the application of the latest scientific advances to agricultural production in order to increase the overall productivity of the land and supplement the meagre share of each individual. Like the populists of the next decade, they did not believe that capitalism was the indispensable vehicle of scientific and technical progress. They understood, of course, that the gentry was in a better position to take advantage of science in agriculture, but the *pochvenniki* did not despair of its eventual extension to the communal lands.

In spite of their hostility to capitalism, the *pochvenniki* wished to encourage the industrialization of Russia:

> Without industry which changes the condition and form of raw materials and adapts them to the satisfaction of various needs, without industry which meets all the most important demands, the country will always be purely agricultural and will forever remain poor, and consequently, ignorant. These two qualities, gradually enforcing one another, will eventually reduce the country to a state of sheer savagery in comparison with the progress which in the meantime will inevitably be made by other, more naturally developed countries.

This attitude reflected, in part, the fear of the realist that without industry Russia could not survive the pressures of the modern world and would be reduced to a colony of Europe. In keeping with their emphasis on roots, the *pochvenniki* were drawn to the historical school of German political economy, the chief contemporary exponent of which was Bruno Hildebrand. Hildebrand argued basically that the economic organization of a nation could not be divorced from its historical origins or rationalized on the basis of purely abstract formulas. On Hildebrand's authority the *pochvenniki* argued that since the historical form of production in Russia was association, the natural form for Russian industrialization was the *artel*. In order to assist the formation of the *artel*, they came out flatly against the determination of the government to tie the peasants to the land by the terms of the Emancipation settlement. Instead, they argued for the introduction of the principle of the free movement of labour in order to release workers from agriculture to work in communal industrial enterprises. The *pochvenniki*, therefore, did not insist that all factories should necessarily be industrial adjuncts to the agricultural commune. They were confident that the co-operative character of the new city-based, industrial enterprises would compensate the workers for their displacement from the land and spare them the misery that dislocation entailed under capitalism.

In order to protect nascent Russian industry from world competition,
the pochvenniki, again drawing on contemporary German economic theory, opposed free trade and opted for moderate tariff protection.\textsuperscript{69} They were also acutely aware of the pressing need for improved communications in Russia and were leading advocates of an accelerated program of railway construction to facilitate exports.\textsuperscript{70} These policies, along with the advocacy of other modern innovations such as universal fire insurance, suggest that the pochvenniki were the exponents of a far-reaching economic modernism. Apart from industrialization by means of the after, the pochvenniki also supported the growth of cottage industry. Cottage industry was an economical form of production because it required little machinery and a minimum of tools. And, as a secondary activity of the worker, it did not detract from his primary economic function, agricultural production. Cottage production was particularly useful at a time when there was little capital available for investment in factories. The pochvenniki rejected the view that cottage production represented the lowest level of industrial development and would inevitably be replaced by the highest - factory production. They maintained that the two forms should coexist. Improved means of communication would provide direct access to the market for the home producers. This would result in the elimination of the middleman who made excessive profits at the expense of the peasants and secured monopolies on distribution. \textit{Vremia} urged the government to extend credit to cottage enterprises and to encourage the co-operative purchasing of raw materials and distribution of finished products through village associations.\textsuperscript{71}

\textit{Vremia} was not primarily an economic journal, and the pochvenniki made no effort to detail a comprehensive scheme for Russian economic development. They were more concerned with the ethical implications of economic organization than with practical economic planning. The contributions on economic matters were submitted by a variety of authors and were not always consistent. Nevertheless, the general tenor of their economic ideas was clearly discernible. They rejected both industrial capitalism and industrial socialism in favour of more libertarian forms of associationism, and co-operativism in agriculture and industry. In these forms they believed they had found the means for the democratic sharing of production in a world where men were destined for honourable impoverishment. While other countries longed for association, as. The strivings of Western socialists proved, but lacked the means to attain it, associationism was an innate article of faith in Russia. There were no Luddites among the pochvenniki. Science and technology were positive values if harnessed to the correct forms of social and economic organization. It was here that their foresight failed them, however. Although they had discerned that the economic needs of men would grow more complex with the advance of civilization, they, along with most of their contemporaries, could not envisage the incredible degree of technological and human specialization that was required to meet those needs. It was this complexity of demand that ultimately shaped modern industrial society and not the potencies of national character.

In retrospect, pochvennichestvo appears naive and even woolly minded. The pochvenniki had hoped to take advantage of the special features of Russian economic and social development, which they interpreted as national originality, to infuse the traditional forms of social cohesiveness with the latest advances of science and technology. They believed that the best way to conserve the values of the nation was to give them the fullest scope for expression and development both in the present and the future. They also recognized that the politicization of society threatened social disorganization and sought, by idealizing autocracy, to exclude politics from what was to them the essentially moral activity of society.

The attempt was destined to fail. Like the Slavophiles earlier and the populists later, the pochvenniki mistook backwardness for originality. This misapprehension prevented them from understanding the true significance of the Emancipation reforms. Rather than fostering the organic unity of society, as the pochvenniki believed, these reforms were a symptom of the breakdown of medieval corporate social forms that had begun with the reforms of Peter the Great. The organic model of social organization was inadequate in a world where functionalism, professionalization, and increasing social heterogeneity were the prerequisites of national survival. The primitive forms of association, on which the pochvenniki wagered the future of Russia, did not prove to be an adequate defence against the universally dehumanizing potential of industrial technology and organization. The scientific and technological civilization that they welcomed served only to sap the remaining sources of Russian originality from within.

The endeavour to shield society from the demoralizing effects of politics proved equally futile. Society could not pursue its independent ends separately from the state, and the state could not function in the modern world without organizing society to respond to its needs. The tension in Russia between the autocratic state and an increasingly complex society could be resolved only when society was sufficiently organized politically to seize control of the direction of the state. Such a solution was too slow in coming, and the pochvenniki, in fostering the chimera of a conservative-autocratic utopia, significantly contributed to its delay.