
P. N. Tkachev (1844-1886) is a figure in the Russian revolutionary movement of the 1860's and 1870's about whom very little is known outside Russia. Even in Russian historiography his importance in the history of Russian political thought and the revolutionary movement was not recognized until after 1917.

In the 1860's Tkachev enjoyed considerable fame as a critic of the radical journal *Russkoe slovo* and its successor, the less radical *Delo*, and as an active participant in the revolutionary movement of 1869. In the 1870's his reputation as a revolutionary was enhanced by his polemic with Engels (1874) and by his short-lived editorship of the journal *Nabat* (published irregularly in Geneva and London, 1875-1881). In the history of Russian political thought Tkachev is recognized as the foremost theoretician of Russian Jacobinism (or Blanquism)—an orientation in Russian revolutionary thought which had its origin to a larger extent in the ideas of European radicalism and the ideals of the French Revolution than in Russian history or in the idealization of the *narod* and the institution of the *obshchina*, so characteristic of Russian Populism. While some aspects of Tkachev's political thought may be regarded as falling within the mainstream of *narodnichesstvo* and others may be placed on its fringes, the basic thrust and ultimate tendency of his political ideas falls outside the Populist tradition.

The present volume by Professor Weeks is the first book-length study of Tkachev to appear in a Western language. It contains a cursory discussion of the "development of the Russian revolutionary spirit before Tkachev," a brief biography of Tkachev, an analysis of his "view of the state and revolution," and an examination of "Tkachev's sociology, economics, and psychology." The final chapter deals with "problems in Tkachevism" and includes a discussion of Soviet historiography of Tkachev. Professor Weeks's central thesis—viz. that Tkachev was an early Leninist, the "first Bolshevik," and, conversely, that Lenin was a "disciple of Tkachev's revolutionism" (p. 3)—is interwoven throughout the book.

Among the various orientations in the Russian revolutionary movement of the nineteenth century the Russian Jacobins have perhaps suffered most at the hands of both Soviet and Western historians. It is unfortunate that the study by Professor Weeks is no exception. Highly questionable methodology and factual inaccuracy detract greatly from what could have been a thought-provoking study and an important contribution to our knowledge of the political thought and the revolutionary movement of nineteenth century Russia.

The author moves with apparent ease from Tkachev to Lenin, Stalin, Trotsky, Ernesto ("Che") Guevara, and Mao-Tse-tung. Leaving aside the serious methodological questions involved here—which the author acknowledges in two sentences (p. 72) and then ignores throughout his book—the weakness of Professor Weeks's study lies in its superficiality, its lack of attention to detail, its failure to utilize essential source materials, and its heavy reliance on secondary (and frequently incorrect!) sources.

In the introductory part of the book, the Russian intelligentsia of the last century is neatly divided into conservative, liberal, and radical strains, the latter being viewed as growing steadily more dominant until in 1917 it "overcame the other two and at last engulfed the past, present, and future of Russia." Surely, our knowledge of the complexity of the phenomenon of the Russian intelligentsia has sufficiently progressed for us to realize the hazards involved in the unqualified application of such categories as conservative and liberal. The book deals equally superficially with the rather intricate question of the

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antecedents of Tkachev's political ideas. While the author tacitly acknowledges the existence of antecedents other than Chernyshevskii, Dobroliubov, and Pisarov (pp. 17-19), he does not discuss them or tell us what they are.

The all-too short biography of Tkachev presented by Professor Weeks is, unfortunately, very unreliable. (E.g.: The proclamation whose publication resulted in Tkachev's arrest in 1869 was entitled K obshchestvu [p. 50]. The famous Katekhizis revoliutionera was not published in the Programma revoliutcionnykh deistvi [pp. 47-48]—the two are in fact separate documents. In 1869 A. D. Dement'eva was neither “wealthy” nor Tkachev's wife [p. 50]—she had received a small inheritance and they were married in 1873. Tkachev's escape abroad at the end of 1873 did not result in their life-long separation [p. 51 and note to Tkachev's letter from Koenigsberg, pp. 66-67]—Dement'eva-Tkacheva joined her husband in exile abroad and did not return to Russia until 1903. Nabat, the journal which Tkachev helped edit until 1879, was published from 1875-1881, not from 1876-1886 [p. 44]. Use of the Gregorian calendar does not change the year of Tkachev's birth but the year of his death and his day of birth [pp. xi, 40]. Contrary to what Professor Weeks maintains [p. 57], there is information on the Obshchestvo narodnogo osvobozhdeniya and Soviet historians have not been “silent about its very existence.” As a matter of fact, this Jacobin organization, which counted Tkachev among its members, was the subject of an extensive debate in Soviet historical literature [Cf., e.g., E. Kusheva, “Iz istorii Obshchestva Narodnego Osvobozhdeniya,” Katorga i ssylka no. 4 (77) (1931), pp. 31-62, and M. Frolenko, “Obshchestvo Narodnego Osvobozhdeniya,” ibid., no. 3 (88) (1932), pp. 81-100]. Etc., etc.)

Professor Weeks states that his book “is about the kinship between the ideas of Tkachev and Lenin” and “about the total outlook of 'the first Bolshevik.'” (p. ix). In actual fact, the present volume deals with only a limited number of aspects of Tkachev's Weltanschauung and is based on a small portion of Tkachev's total literary output. The author, for example, does not examine the genesis of Tkachev's political thought in the early 1860's and fails to explore any of Tkachev's writings not published in the Soviet edition of Tkachev's Izbrannye sochineniya. Moreover, in several instances Professor Weeks's interpretation of Tkachev is open to question. From Tkachev's rejection of Hegel it does not follow that Tkachev adhered to a “largely non-deterministic view of history.” (p. 114) In a sense, Tkachev's theory of “historical leaps” (istoricheskie skachki) is grounded in a deterministic view of history. The author fails to recognize this and, generally speaking, does not succeed in elucidating the peculiar fusion of determinism and voluntarism in Tkachev. And, contrary to the position taken by Professor Weeks (p. 132), Tkachev did argue for a perfectly egalitarian society, as both Koz'min and Venturi have pointed out. (The latter, incidentally, does not “completely ignore” the Obshchestvo Narodnogo Osvobozhdeniya, as charged by Professor Weeks [p. 70, no. 46]. Cf. Roots of Revolution, pp. 423, 782).

The central thesis of the book—that Tkachev can be and should be regarded as a forerunner of Lenin—was first argued in English by the late M. Karpovich. In the opinion of this writer, the passionate, but unconvincing argument of this thesis by Professor Weeks does justice neither to the breadth and depth of Tkachev nor to the complexity of Lenin. Moreover, as argued by Professor Weeks, the thesis is internally inconsistent. He emphasizes the influence of Nechaev on Tkachev and the general similarity of their views (pp. 47-49), but tells us (p. 66) that Nechaev cannot be regarded as one of the spiritual forefathers of Bolshevism. In the judgment of this writer, a much stronger case can be made for the affinity and kinship of ideas of Lenin and Chernyshevskii (who influenced both Tkachev and Lenin!). And perhaps an equally convincing case can be made for the argument that in his concept of politics by propaganda,