

RICHARD PIPES

Foreword

HIGH ON THE LIST of surprises the twentieth century has brought us stands the unexpected growth in numbers and importance of two social and cultural groups, the bureaucracy and the intelligentsia. In the classical period of liberal and socialist thought these groups were not generally considered of critical importance for the course of human progress. Attention then was focused on the institution of property, and the future was seen either in terms of the growth and spread of that institution or in terms of its abolition. For that reason social thought in the nineteenth century was to a large extent dominated by the problem of the relationship between the propertied and nonpropertied classes, and the habit of viewing social events in this light still prevails in many parts of the world to this day, even though the conditions which gave rise to it are rapidly disappearing.

In our century the place of property is taken by knowledge, because our political and economic well-being depend to an ever increasing degree on science, technology, and administrative technique. Large-scale organization, characteristic of modern activity, further reduces the importance of private ownership. More and more, it is not the possession of material property, decisive in landed and commercial economies, but the possession of scientific insight, technical skill, and experience that determines one's place in society. In this connection there arise two groups, the bureaucrats and intellectuals, who as repositories of knowledge acquire a position of leadership in society. The relations between them—sometimes friendly and accommodating, more often bitterly hostile—constitute one of the most critical problems of our time.

The following group of essays deals with one aspect of this problem, namely, the condition and prospects of a body of intellectuals known in Russia, pre-Revolutionary and Soviet, as the intelligentsia. In Russia the question of the social function and historic

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mission of the intellectuals always had and still has a particular urgency, first of all, because the early and rapid Westernization of the country produced an extraordinarily large, virile, and self-conscious body of intellectuals, and, second, because there modernization has been carried out with greater intensity and single-mindedness than anywhere else in the world. The intellectuals' reactions to modern changes, their successes and failures in accommodating themselves to the new order, their relations with the other groups of the population, and in particular the technical and administrative bureaucracy—all these are matters of interest not only to the Russian specialist but also to others, because they emerge in one form or another in every modern or “modernizing” country.

I think I speak for all the contributors to this volume when I say that we entertain no illusions of having solved, exhausted, or even fully outlined the problem to which we are addressing ourselves. There are two main reasons why this should be so. In the first place, the problem itself, real though it is, cannot be formulated in a precise and universally acceptable manner. What is the “Russian intelligentsia,” or, for that matter, an “intellectual” or *intelligent* anywhere? As the passage quoted by Leopold Labedz at the beginning of his essay suggests, these terms can mean all sorts of things to all sorts of people. Some use the term intelligentsia to refer to anyone engaged in nonphysical labor, whether he be a lyric poet or a veterinarian (such, for example, is the official Soviet definition); others apply it to a person with a liberal education regardless of the nature of his employment; yet others confine it to persons critically disposed to the existing economic and political order, and ready to sacrifice themselves in order to change it fundamentally in accord with some higher (but secular) ideal. Ultimately, the criterion turns out to be a subjective one, and to define the term “intelligentsia” with any degree of accuracy it would be necessary to have free access to all the groups which could possibly come within the meaning of the term. But this, for obvious reasons, is not possible. The lack of direct access to the Russian intelligentsia of today constitutes the second great difficulty facing the authors of this volume. It has compelled us to rely far more than we would have wished on fragmentary evidence, on inference, and on historical and sociological analogy.

The nature of the problem and of the evidence has helped to shape the format of this volume. Rather than seek a comprehensive treatment of the intelligentsia in Russia, it has seemed preferable to concentrate on several crucial aspects of the problem. To begin with,

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there is the question of the character of the pre-Revolutionary intelligentsia, in particular, its attitude toward civic responsibility. The first of these topics is treated by Martin Malia, the second, from different standpoints, by Leonard Schapiro and Boris Elkin.

The middle part of this volume is devoted to the Soviet intelligentsia. My own paper endeavors to find in Russian history and in the experience of intellectuals in other modern societies clues to developments within the Soviet Union. Mr. Labeledz seeks to define the term "intelligentsia," as it is officially used in the Soviet Union, by analyzing the social groups included in this category by Soviet statisticians. The other essays in this section deal with particular social or professional groups in which one may expect to find attitudes broadly defined as intellectual. David Burg describes, on the basis of extensive personal experience and a close study of Soviet printed sources, the social and political attitudes of students at higher educational institutions in the Soviet Union. Leopold H. Haimson traces the conflict between generations of intellectuals, in particular, that between the present-day younger generation and the one that came of age in the heyday of Stalinism. Max Hayward takes a look at professional Soviet writers. Finally, David Joravsky and Gustav Wetter discuss the relationship between the natural scientists and official ideology in the Soviet Union in the first two decades of the Communist regime, and since the death of Stalin, respectively.

The third and last part tries, by means of two essays dealing with intellectuals in two other non-democratic countries, to give the discussion a certain amount of comparative depth. This section consists of essays dealing with intellectuals in contemporary Spain by Julián Marías, and with intellectuals in Communist China (with some allusions to their Russian counterparts) by Benjamin Schwartz. Appended to this volume are translations of two important Soviet documents which touch directly on matters raised in several of the essays. One is a letter sent to Boris Pasternak by the editorial office of the journal *Novyi Mir*, explaining the reasons for its rejection of *Dr. Zhivago*, and spelling out its dissatisfaction with Pasternak's treatment of the intelligentsia. The other represents the record of a conference held in October 1958 on the critical subject of the philosophic implications of modern science.

It is hoped that from these diverse papers the readers will obtain a somewhat clearer picture of a problem which, although perhaps especially acute in the Soviet Union, in some measure affects everyone concerned with the survival of liberal values and critical attitudes.

