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978-0-521-11441-7 - Vladimir Akimov on the Dilemmas of Russian Marxism 1895-1903

Edited by Jonathan Frankel

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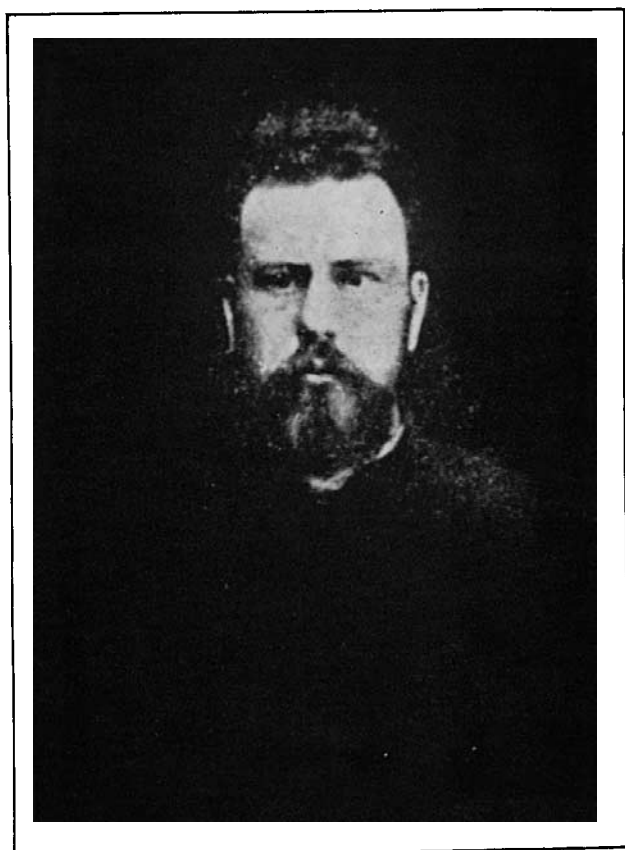
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V. P. Akimov

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VLADIMIR AKIMOV
ON THE DILEMMAS OF
RUSSIAN MARXISM
1895-1903

*The Second Congress of the Russian Social
Democratic Labour Party*

*A Short History of the Social Democratic
Movement in Russia*

TWO TEXTS IN TRANSLATION
EDITED AND INTRODUCED BY
JONATHAN FRANKEL



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‘The Russian Institute of Columbia University is pleased to support the publication of some of the research conducted under its auspices. While not necessarily endorsing its conclusions, the Institute believes that this volume in its *Studies of the Russian Institute* is a contribution to scholarly research and public understanding’

The frontispiece is reprinted from *Deiateli revoliutsionnogo dvizheniia v Rossii : Bio-bibliograficheskii slovar'*, v, 35

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PREFACE

The decision to publish a translation of Akimov's two major political tracts was taken some years ago, but, as is the way with such enterprises, the period between promise and fulfilment proved unexpectedly prolonged. Despite the work and time expended, I am not sorry that I made the effort if only because Akimov would seem to deserve a more substantial place in the history of Russian Marxism than has usually been assigned him hitherto. True, in the last few years there have been signs of a growing appreciation of Akimov's qualities as polemicist and historian—Dr J. H. L. Keep, for instance, in his study of early Party history certainly pays him and the 'Economists', in general, considerable attention. I hope that this trend will be sustained now that Akimov's two most important works are more accessible.

I received help from many quarters in preparing this edition. The enterprise would never have been possible if I had not received unflinching support from the faculty of the Russian Institute at Columbia University. Nearly all the work on the book was completed while I was a visiting Fellow of the Institute. The Directors—first Professor Henry L. Roberts and then Professor Alexander Dallin—encouraged and advised me throughout with great good will, in a spirit of real friendship. However, I feel that special thanks are due to Miss Louise E. Luke of the Institute (now Managing Editor of the *Slavic Review*) who devoted unlimited effort and innumerable hours to editing the manuscript in its early stages. What patience I now have for the laborious exactitudes of editing, I have learnt from her. I also received assistance from other past and present members of the Institute staff, particularly from Mrs Nora Beeson, Mrs Miriam Bergamini and Miss Constance Beezer. Last but not least, my deepest thanks are due to Miss Mirra Ginsburg, who made the first draft of the translation, an unrewarding task that was executed with great expedition and skill. It is hardly necessary to add that if despite all help given me at Columbia errors remain, then the responsibility is entirely mine.

In 1962, I visited the late Miss Lydiia Makhnovets at her home near Paris. She received me with warmth and interest, pleasantly

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surprised to hear that her brother's works were to be republished in English translation. She furnished me with new information about the personal and political life of the Makhnovets family. The Second Party Congress suddenly became very much alive as 'Bruker' rehearsed the events of sixty years before.

In addition, my thanks are due to Professor Ladis Kristoff, formerly Associate Director of the Inter-University Project on the History of the Menshevik Movement; Dr J. H. L. Keep of London University; Professor Allan Wildman of the State University of New York (Stony Brook); Professor Leopold Haimson of Columbia University; Mr H. Kempinsky of the Bund Archive; Mrs Iuliia Kammermacher-Kefali; and to my good friend Dr Israel Getzler of the University of Adelaide—all of whom came to my aid with advice, hospitality and information while I was in New York.

Although this is essentially a project conceived and carried through at Columbia, I would not want to leave unmentioned the help I received in England, where I am indebted to the Master and Fellows of Jesus College, who enabled me to retain my Research Fellowship at Cambridge while absent in New York; to my Cambridge teachers and friends, Mr E. H. Carr, Mr D. J. V. Fisher, Professor Charles Wilson, Mr Moses Finley, Mr Maurice Cowling and Miss Betty Behrens, whose advice and guidance have been a constant source of encouragement to me over the years; and to the Leverhulme Foundation, which financed my return visit to Columbia in order to complete this project.

Some technical details remain to be noted. Akimov's two booklets have been reproduced in complete form without any omissions. However, as was usual in works reproduced in the conditions of penurious exile, the originals are marked by an abundance of typographical and editorial errors—numbers are jumbled, names misspelt, quotations carelessly reproduced. I felt that it would be excessively pedantic to reproduce these errors only to correct them in parentheses or in the footnotes, and so I have corrected them without indicating the fact. It goes without saying that mistakes due to misinformation have been left as they are (and commented upon, when discovered, in the notes). Moreover, the report of the Union of the Russian Social Democrats Abroad which Akimov included in his booklet on the Second Party Congress has been reproduced here as an appendix. I felt that this somewhat bulky report tended to overshadow the trend of

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Akimov's argument and that it would therefore be legitimate to return to it the status of an independent document. I have indicated the place where this report was to be found in the original. In general, Akimov provided the titles and subtitles as reproduced here, but in some cases breaks were marked by asterisks only. Where it seemed necessary for the sake of clarity, I sometimes added explanatory titles at such points.

Capitalization has proved a troublesome problem. But, in principle, 'Party' has been used to describe formally constituted bodies (e.g. the RSDLP from its foundation in March 1898), 'party' to describe hypothetical organizations or those in the process of formation (e.g. the Russian Social Democratic movement prior to 1898). Again 'economism' refers to the economic agitation movement in its early stages (Akimov's 'second period') and 'Economism' or 'so-called Economism' to that movement in its later, more clearly defined forms (Akimov's 'third period'). In my Introduction and the 'Short History', 'Congress' is used to describe a Party's sovereign assembly but, to avoid excessive capitalization, the form 'congress' was preferred in the work devoted specifically to this subject ('The Second Congress of the RSDLP'). Finally, I should perhaps explain that in transliterating I followed the original of the Russian text. Thus, for instance, 'sotsial' demokratiia', 'sotsial-demokratiia' and even 'sotsial'-demokratiia' crop up from time to time.

JONATHAN FRANKEL

*Jerusalem,
December 1967*

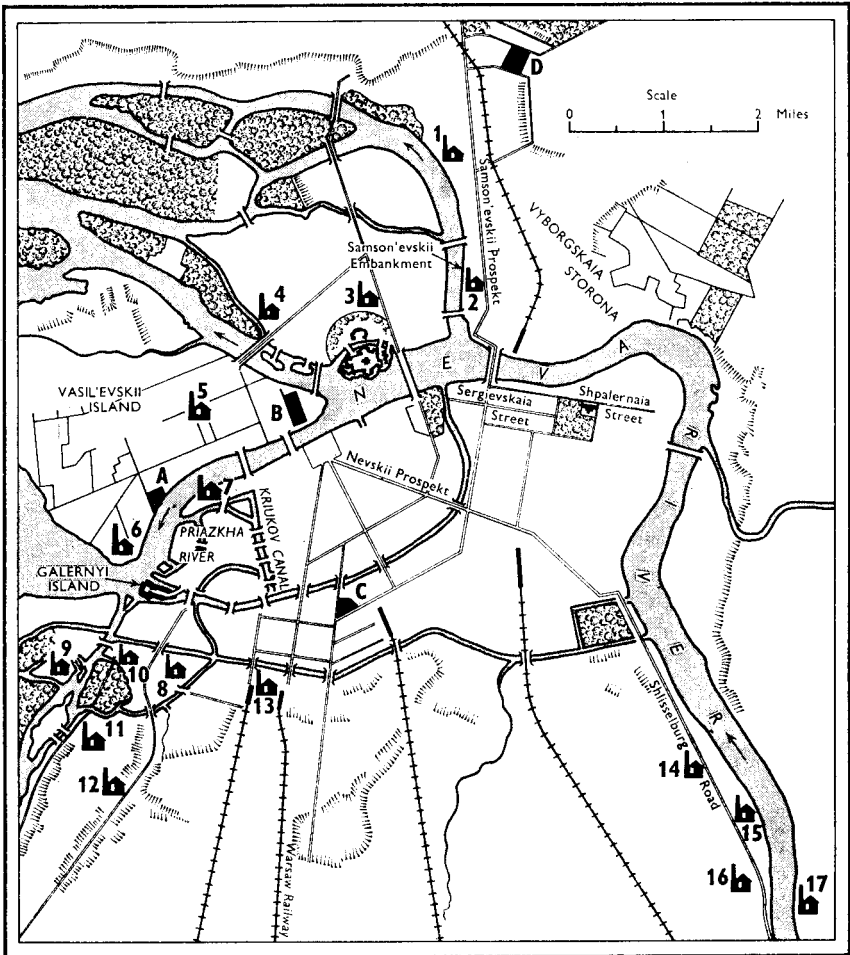
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**FACTORIES IN ST PETERSBURG,
1895-7**

- | | |
|------------------------|--------------------------------|
| A Mining Institute | 8 Russo-American Plant |
| B The University | 9 Voronin Rezvoostrovskii Mill |
| C Technology Institute | 10 Koenig Mill |
| D Forestry Institute | 11 Ekaterinhof Mill |
| 1 Voronin Mill | 12 Putilov Plant |
| 2 Lebedev Mill | 13 Warsaw Workshop |
| 3 Gol'darbeiter Mill | 14 Semiannikov Works |
| 4 Voronin Mill | 15 Pal' Mill |
| 5 'Laferm' Factory | 16 Aleksandrovsk Works |
| 6 Baltic Yard | 17 Thornton Factory |
| 7 New Admiralty Works | |