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TURGENEV AND CONRAD'S EUROPEANISM

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The impact of Turgenev on European literature and the European reading public was largely due to the Russian's attitude to his art and life which were generally more acceptable and comprehensible to European sensibilities and fitted him more closely than his great contemporaries Tolstoy and Dostoevsky into the European literary tradition. A representative of the new Russian intelligentsia, as much at home in Paris or Berlin as in Moscow or St Petersburg, a man of noble birth, liberal inclinations and cultivated tastes, extraordinarily gifted and well-read, Turgenev was a man of convinced Westernist views, whose leisurely prose evokes faultlessly both a period and a people. Professionally generous "European" Turgenev was one of the most popular members of the French literary circle, a friend of the Brothers Goncourt, Prosper Mérimée and Gustave Flaubert. Turgenev also had English connections, principally through his translator, William Ralston. The idea for his novel *Fathers and Sons* was conceived during a visit to the Isle of Wight, and in 1879 he was awarded an Honorary Doctorate by the University of Oxford. His influence on Anglo-American literature came through Henry James, who looked up to him as a master. Yet for all Turgenev's cosmopolitanism, he was deeply concerned with Russian issues. According to Patrick Waddington, the novelist's long residence outside Russia "had blunted his feelings, no doubt; but it had also broadened the scope of his observation" [Waddington 1995: 19].

Like Turgenev, Conrad was an outsider who valued Western civilization and culture a lot. Although perceived by some English people as a "bloody furriner" as Conrad was aware, and identified as a "Slav" [Conrad 1983-2008 vol. 3: 492], Conrad nonetheless insists that Poland is a part of the West, contrary to Russian imperialism and his identification of the latter with the East. He endorses the aesthetic and

cultural values of the Western canon and marginalizes non-Western and non-canonical works, for example, of Dostoevsky. It comes as no surprise that Turgenev, a Russian who adhered to Western beliefs and European principles appealed to Conrad. The universal attributes, as they were expressed in Turgenev's works, as well as his literary preferences and masters, appealed to Conrad. The great Russian novelists of the nineteenth century aroused mixed feelings in Conrad. Although Lev Tolstoy was considered by Conrad "perhaps [...] worthy" [Conrad 1983-2008 vol. 5: 71] of Constance Garnett's translation, he was treated with reserved respect and suspicion as being too mystical for Conrad's taste. His chief antipathy was reserved for Dostoevsky – "the grimacing, haunted creature, who is under a curse" [Jean-Aubry 1927 vol. 2: 290] – in contrast to the civilized, liberal and humane Turgenev, who was one of Conrad's literary predecessors and masters, next to Flaubert, Maupassant and James¹. The contrast is crucial for it shows how Conrad viewed Turgenev as a pure artist tragically caught between his apollonian gifts and the mire of the world, while he viewed Dostoevsky as a grim, graceless writer who lacked all that Turgenev possessed. We may also agree that avoiding being accused of rejecting all "things Russian" and all Russian writers, Conrad found it easiest to praise Turgenev, who combined in himself and in his writing national and universal values in a satisfactory balance.

Conrad's unreserved admiration for Turgenev dated from his childhood. "As a boy", Conrad wrote to Garnett on 2 May 1917, "I remember reading *Smoke* in Polish translation"² and "*Gentlefolks* in French" [Jean-Aubry 1927 vol. 2: 192]. Edward Garnett, for whom Turgenev was "a great poet and artist", in his introduction to *On the Eve* writes: "If Tolstoy is a purer native expression of Russia's force, Turgenev is the personification of Russian aspiration working with the instruments of wide cosmopolitan culture" [Garnett 1995: 131]. It should be stressed that Constance Garnett's translations of Turgenev's novels, which appeared between 1894 and 1899, consolidated Conrad's knowledge of Turgenev, and contributed to Edward Garnett's persistent insistence upon reading Conrad as a second Turgenev.

Undoubtedly, the most eloquent tribute to Constance Garnett's translations of Turgenev's works comes in a letter to her husband Edward written by Conrad in May 1917: "Turgeniev for me is Constance Garnett and Constance Garnett is Turgeniev. She has done that marvellous thing of placing the man's work inside English literature and it is there that I see it – or rather that I *feel* it" [Jean-Aubry 1927 vol. 2: 192].

Acknowledging that Turgenev was a great artist "whole-souledly national", Conrad saw his created world as "universal", declaring that "for non-Russian readers, Turgenev's Russia is but a canvas on which the incomparable artist of humanity lays his colours and his forms in the great light and the free air of the world" [Conrad

¹ Conrad was twenty-six years old when Turgenev died in 1883. *Almayer's Folly* – his first novel was published twelve years later in 1895.

² On Polish translations of Turgenev's works, see Trochimiak J., *Turgieniew*, Lublin 1985, pp. 155-159. The first Polish translation of *Smoke* (*Dym*) (1867) by A. Wiślicki was published in 1871. *On the Eve* (1860) in Polish translation appeared in 1871, 1873 and 1874; *Fathers and Sons* (*Ojcowie i dzieci*) (1862) in 1871; *A Nest of Gentlefolk* (*Szlacheckie gniazdo*) (1859) in 1876 and 1886; *Rudin* (*Rudin*) (1856) in 1886; *A Sportsman's Sketches* (*Zapiski myśliwego*) (1852) in 1880 and 1897; *King Lear of the Steppes* (*Stepowy król Lear*) (1870) in 1876, 1878 and 1879.

1921: 46]. In the preface he contributed to Edward Garnett's study on Turgenev, Conrad praises the Russian writer for his "penetrating insight and unfailing generosity of judgement, an exquisite perception of the visible world and an unerring instinct for the significant" [Conrad 1921: 48] which "should make [him] sympathetic and welcome to the English-speaking world" [Conrad 1921: 47]. He adds that:

All his creations, fortunate and unfortunate, oppressed and oppressors are human beings, not strange beasts in a menagerie or damned souls knocking themselves to pieces in the stuffy darkness of mystical contradictions. They are human beings, fit to live, fit to suffer, fit to struggle, fit to win, fit to lose, in the endless and inspiring game of pursuing from day to day the ever-receding future [Conrad 1921: 47].

Turgenev, the man of whom it was said, "to dine with Turgenev is to dine with Europe" [Lloyd 1942: 221], on many occasions openly voiced his pro-Western and pro-European preferences and commitment to Western ideas and institutions. In his letter to Alexander Herzen dated 25th November 1862, Turgenev declared: "I'm all the same a European – and I love the banner and believe in the banner under which I have taken my stand since my youth" [Turgenev 1983 vol. 1: 236-237]³. In his *Literary Reminiscences* Turgenev went further and explained: "I do not think that the fact that I am a Westerner deprived me of any sympathy for Russian life or of any understanding of its idiosyncrasies and needs" [*Turgenev's...* 1958: 93]⁴. What is more, he admired, as superior to other political systems, the liberal democracies of France and England, and was sure that "Russians belong to the European family, 'genus Europaeum' – and consequently, by virtue of the most invariable laws of physiology [...] must follow the same path" and serve "revolution and European ideals" [Turgenev 1983 vol. 1: 223]⁵. In his novels Turgenev justified his pro-European convictions and devotion to European principles which he expressed in his letters.

Turgenev's major novels are deeply concerned with the political and cultural development of Russia. The conflict between Bazarov and Paul Petrovich in *Fathers and Sons* carries on the argument of the 1840's and 1850's between Westernisers and Slavophiles – an argument which in itself had been initiated by Chaadaev, with his negation of the values of Russian history, culture and native genius. In the novel echoes of Chaadaevian pessimism are clearly discernible in the ostensible dispute over new, destructive nihilism. Turgenev writes:

"He is a Nihilist," Arcady repeated.

"A Nihilist," his father said slowly. "As far as I can judge, that must be a word derived from the Latin *nihil* – *nothing*; the term must therefore signify a man who... will admit nothing?"

³ "Я все-таки европеус – и люблю знамя, верую в знамя, под которое я стал с молодости" [Тургенев 1986, vol. 1: 236-237].

⁴ "Я не думаю, чтобы мое западничество лишило меня всякого сочувствия к русской жизни, всякого понимания ее особенностей и нужд" [Тургенев 1956, vol. 10: 261].

⁵ Letter to Alexander Herzen, 8 November 1862: "мы, русские, принадлежим и по языку и по породе к европейской семье, «» и, следовательно, по самым неизменным законам физиологии, должны идти по той же дороге. [...] служи[ть] революции, европейским идеалам" [Тургенев 1986, vol. 1: 234-235].

“Better still – a man who will respect nothing,” Paul Petrovich interjected, and then resumed his buttering.

“Who looks at everything critically,” Arcady remarked.

“And what is the difference?” his uncle inquired.

“There is a difference. A Nihilist is a man who admits no established authorities, who takes principles for granted, however much they may be respected” [Turgenev 1997: 29]⁶.

In Russia, Westerners lamented the country’s backwardness and isolation and wanted it to catch up with Europe as fast as possible: the reactionary government first of all wanted Western efficiency, liberals looked to the political freedom of England and France, and radicals found inspiration in anarchism. Westerners (V. Belinsky, T. Granovsky, A. Herzen, K. Kavelin, V. Botkin and others) shared the will to import ideas to overcome the menace of the ‘lost’ past centuries. They postulated the abolition of serfdom, establishing a constitutional monarchy, and, in the future, a parliamentary republic, securing civil liberties. They also demanded social changes: the abolition of the peasant commune and legally sanctioned class inequalities. The first Euro-centric conception of the philosophy of history was created by P. Chaadaev. Its character was conservative. The ideal was best reflected, according to the thinker, by medieval Christian Europe. It was found completely unsatisfactory by the Westernisers of the 1840’s, who followed the liberal and the rationalist tradition of the eighteenth century. When, in 1839, Slavophiles adopted Chaadaev’s conservative hierarchy of values, rejecting his pessimistic view of Russia’s future, Westernisers associated with Belinsky criticised it openly. But soon nationalist reactions to the admiration of the West set in. The Slavophiles praised the uniqueness of the Russian national spirit and called Russia a world of its own. There was a deep historical and cultural gulf between Russia and the West so it would be detrimental for Russia to blindly imitate the West. The denunciation of the West was primarily a critique of present-day European society in all its materialist degeneration. The common roots of Russia and Europe in Greek culture were stressed, and often Russia was accorded a messianic role as ‘saviour’ of Europe.

In *Fathers and Sons* there are also ideas present deriving from the Slavophiles themselves. In particular the championship of native Russian institutions such as the peasant village-commune, the bonds of the family and the Orthodox faith of the peasantry. Yet there is no representative of Slavophilism, as such, in the novel. The argument is carried on between two different types of Westerniser, each of

⁶ “– Он нигилист, – повторил Аркадий.

– Нигилист, – повторил Николай Петрович. – Это от латинского *nihil, ничего*, сколько я могу судить; стало быть, это слово означает человека, который [...] который ничего не признает?

– Скажи: который ничего не уважает, – подхватил Павел Петрович и снова принялся за масло.

– Который ко всему относится с критической точки зрения, – заметил Аркадий.

– А это не все равно? – спросил Павел Петрович.

– Нет, не все равно. Нигилист, это человек, который не склоняется ни перед какими авторитетами, который не принимает ни одного принципа на веру, каким бы уважением ни был окружен этот принцип” [Тургенев 1949b: 146].

whom appears to make concessions to Slavophile viewpoints. Ideologically the most obvious of these are to be seen in Paul Petrovich who, for all his insistence on Western dress and Western values, is nevertheless prepared to champion the *obshchina* and the traditional values of the Russian peasant. This contradiction is even more acute at the end of the novel: Paul Petrovich has exiled himself to the West, where he mixes with Englishmen, who consider him a perfect gentleman, but he holds fashionable Slavophile views, goes to the Russian church, and although “[h]e reads nothing Russian, but keeps on his writing-desk an ashtray in the form of a peasant bast-shoe” [Turgenev 1997: 205]⁷.

There is an apparent ambiguity in Bazarov's position, too. He is a follower of the Western scientific spirit of enquiry, yet in dress, origins and attitudes proclaims himself to be closer to the Russian peasant than Paul Petrovich. The argument between Bazarov and Paul Petrovich, which in more than one respect touches on the nature of Russian nationality, is conducted between two apparently different, but nevertheless ambivalent Westernisers. It suggests a debate going on within Turgenev himself – an argument projected into the novel as the struggle between two extreme positions. In chapter ten Bazarov dismissively refers to a local landowner as “a petty aristocrat” [Turgenev 1997: 54]⁸. Paul Petrovich takes offence at what he interprets as a slur on his class, but his defense of aristocracy quickly moves into the area of nationality and the question of Western values and institutions. He particularly praises the English aristocracy for championing the cause of freedom, and it must be remembered that freedom, and in particular the role to be played by the Russian landowning classes in the emancipation of the serfs were very much issues of the day. This, though not openly stated, lurks behind Paul Petrovich's spirited defense of aristocracy.

Smoke (1867), in particular, was Turgenev's contribution to the great controversy between the Slavophiles and Westerners in Russia. In the novel Potugin is a man with the same background as the younger generation of radicals of the 1860's. His views appeal to neither of the two Russian circles in Baden-Baden: the Russians from the higher class of society and the would-be political activists and émigrés. Ratmirov dismissively brands him a republican, and his Westernism is at odds with the teachings of Gubarev's circle. Potugin, Turgenev's mouthpiece in *Smoke*, declares: “I am a Westerner, I am devoted to Europe. [...] I am devoted to culture – the culture at which they make fun so wittily among us just now – and to civilization [...] and I love it with all my heart and believe in it, and I have no other belief, and never shall have” [Turgenev 1995: 35]⁹. Potugin loved the “word, ci-vi-li-sa-tion” because it is “intelligible, and pure, and holy, and all the other ideals, nationality, glory... smell of blood. [...] Away with them” [Turgenev 1995: 35]¹⁰. Potugin is

⁷ “Он ничего русского не читает, но на письменном столе у него находится серебряная пепельница в виде мужицкого лаптя” [Тургенев 1949b: 289].

⁸ “аристократишки” [Тургенев 1949b: 166].

⁹ “Да-с, да-с, я западник, я предан Европе; [...]я предан образованности, той самой образованности, над которую так мило у нас теперь потешаются, – цивилизации [...] и я люблю ее всем сердцем, и верю в нее, и другой веры у меня нет и не будет” [Тургенев 1949a: 27].

¹⁰ “ци...ви...ли...за...ция [...] и понятно, и чисто, и свято, а другие все, народность там, что ли, слава, кровью пахнут [...] Бог с ними!!” [Тургенев 1949a: 27].

sure that there is no need for any neurotic fear of Europe. The Russians must be selective in borrowing, but must realise that the Europe which they should respect is the Europe of “civilization”, not the Europe of gambling houses and prostitutes. Turgenev, who remained true to his ideal of European civilization, is clearly speaking here. When in Paris, Turgenev would constantly speak of Russia, of Russian literature, of Russian women and of the Slavonic spirit. On the contrary, in Russia he was inclined to dwell on the peculiarities of foreign nations.

One of the central issues in the arguments between Westernisers and Slavophiles was the role of the eighteenth-century reforming tsar, Peter the Great. It should be underlined that from the time of Peter the Great (1672-1725), Russian leaders made serious efforts to shape the Russian state in a European way [see Chojnacka 1998]. Potugin, as a Westerniser, wholeheartedly welcomes Peter the Great’s reforms, but rather than stressing the more material aspects of his reforms, puts forward the enrichment of the Russian language through the forcible introduction of a multitude of Western words and concepts. Turgenev-Potugin predicts: “[w]hat has happened with the language”, which absorbed thousands of foreign words to express “ideas with which the Russian people had to be familiarised”, one must hope “will happen in other departments” [Turgenev 1995: 33]¹¹. It must be admitted that Potugin’s views on Russia and the Russian character are largely critical. Yet, in these criticisms Turgenev offers us the most valuable insights into the Russian national character.

Litvinov, a rather quiet, ordinary young man, who has travelled over Europe studying technology and scientific farming, is the kind of man that Turgenev passionately believes Russia to need. But at the same time the author has concentrated his most bitter attack upon those Russian young men who have come to Europe and absorbed a mass of undigested European ideas and theories. While laughing bitterly at his young intellectual countrymen, Turgenev understands them; they, like himself, are creatures of the environment and heredity. But he pours his contempt upon the aristocrats of St. Petersburg, who are only cruel and corrupt. During his first conversation with Litvinov, Potugin dwells on two problems which are important for an understanding of the Russian character. The first is the Russian need to be led, to have a master or exemplar to look up to. The second problem, closely related to the first, is the Russian’s attitude to the West. In *Smoke* Potugin states that the West “beats” Russia “at every point”, but yet the Russians “declare that it’s rotten” [Turgenev 1995: 29]¹². A revulsion against the West as “rotten” or “depraved” and an admiration of the West, even in the very act of hating it, because the West is the source of the ideas which the Russians will ask to come and rule over them. If the Russians need to be led, spiritually as well as politically, let them look to their “elder brothers”, to Europe, of which they are an invisible part, and not to the Russian peasantry which was the source of salvation advocated by the left-wing intelligentsia.

Turgenev was an outspoken critic of the Slavophile nationalism which was founded on a void of ignorance, prejudice and greed. He knew that Russia and the

¹¹ “Понятия привились и усвоились: чужие формы постепенно испарились, язык в собственных недрах нашел, чем их заменить... Что произошло с языком, то, должно надеяться, произойдет и в дркгих сферах” [Тургенев 1949а: 25-26].

¹² “бьет он нас на всех пунктах, этот Запад – а гнил” [Тургенев 1949а: 22].

Russians must learn from the culture, history and traditions of Western Europe and as Potugin puts it: “borrow from our elder brothers what they have invented already before us and better than us” [Turgenev 1995: 32]¹³ But Turgenev also knew Russia must preserve its “national roots”. Lezhnev in *Rudin* says: “cosmopolitanism is rubbish, and the cosmopolitan is a nonentity, worse than a nonentity; outside of national roots there is neither art, nor truth, nor life, nothing” [Turgenev 1999: 108]¹⁴.

Although Turgenev in his books, as no other writer, examines the choice between the West and the East over which Russia hesitates today; civilization meaning the civilization of the West, was the ideal of civilization Turgenev remained faithful to all his life. This conviction parallels Conrad's lifelong adherence to Western principles and values. His formative influences, Conrad argues, were “purely Western”, as Poland, contrary to Russia, “has absorbed Western ideas, adopted Western culture, sympathised with Western ideals and tendencies” [Jean-Aubry 1927 vol. 2: 336]. Eloise Knapp Hay argues that Conrad's tendency to identify himself and his native land as “Western” and non-Slavonic was “because of ‘the literary world's’ insistence on associating all Slavs with Russia” [Knapp Hay 1993: 37].

Conrad, who stressed the importance of the national element and whose vision of culture and literature was not cosmopolitan at all, felt the need to emphasise in Turgenev his general “humanity”.

Wiesław Krajka writes that Conrad's conception of Europe “was largely determined by his Polish legacy, especially by his view upon the partitions of Poland in 1772, 1793 and 1795, which resulted in annexation of Polish territory by Russia (which took the greatest part), Prussia and Austria, and annihilation of Polish state until its rebirth in 1918” [Krajka 2004: 19]. Although in his political essay “Autocracy and War” Conrad described Russia after 1815 as a nation “difficult to understand by Europe” and gave her no right “to give her voice on a single question touching the future of humanity” [Conrad 1921: 98-99], the “European” Turgenev, though belonging not to Conrad's own, but to his father's generation, appeared to Conrad a spiritual contemporary, “a symbol of moderation as opposed to extremism and of humanity as opposed to chauvinism” [Wheeler 1979: 35]. Conrad also seems sympathetic to Turgenev's model of patriotism involving self-commitment to his country as well as an objective evaluation of Russia and the West. What Conrad praised in Turgenev was his “essential humanity” [Conrad 1921: 47]. It cannot be doubted, that in Conrad's eyes, it was a positive merit that Turgenev was the least purely national, the most cosmopolitan and Westernised of the Russian “Big Three”.

According to Zdzisław Najder Conrad may be considered a European writer on the grounds of what he himself thought and wrote [Najder 1997: 171]. Ian Watt adds that “Conrad's basic literary and intellectual outlook was European; his moral and social character remained largely Polish” [Watt 1979: 8]. He is a writer of three different European cultural spheres, spanning East-Central and Western Europe, the settings of his novels and stories take place in many European countries, he is the

¹³ “попризаянть у старших братьев, что они придумали – и лучше нас и прежде нас!” [Тургенев 1949а: 25].

¹⁴ “Космополитизм – чепуха, космополит – нуль, хуже нуля; вне народности ни художества, ни истины, ни жизни, ничего нет” [Тургенев 1949с: 91].

author of novels on European themes, the writer who concerned with the most important issues of European history, a thinker using the concept of a European and political solidarity and a writer versed in several major European literatures [Najder 1997: 170-171]. Conrad's European multiculturalism made him particularly sensitive to cultural differences. It is a recurrent motif in his fiction: from *Almayer's Folly* and *An Outcast of the Islands* to *Suspense*. He also notices the distinctions and differences between European national spirits, as shown in *The Sisters*, *A Personal Record*, *Under Western Eyes* and *The Rover*. Adam Gillon draws attention to the fact that Conrad was "against the 'illusion' of international fraternity" [Gillon 1966: 95]. In his letter to Cunninghame Graham (8th February 1899) Conrad declares: "I cannot admit the idea of fraternity, not so much because I believe it impracticable, but because its propaganda (the only thing really tangible about it) tends to weaken the national sentiment, the preservation of which is my concern" [Conrad 1983-2008 vol. 1: 71]. Zdzisław Najder argues that political theories "intending to change this world seemed to endanger the national spirit (which he [Conrad] cherished) and threaten to upset this precarious structure we call human civilization" [Najder 1997: 197]. The Europe of 1905 was also contrary to his vision of European solidarity. In "Autocracy and War" Conrad contends that the inherent irrationality of autocracy, whose Russian incarnation he alternatively imagines as a monster or ghoul, necessitates its eventual demise and a consequent crisis in the European balance of power. Urgently warning against the emergence of an aggressively expansionist Germany in the wake of Russia's collapse and as a result of its economic strength, Conrad pessimistically foresees a divided Europe engaged in competition for "material interests" and, in the absence of any ideological cohesiveness, doomed to war. His scepticism about the innate inability of democratic governments, "without other ancestry but the sudden shout of a multitude" [Conrad 1921: 105], to combat these problems forms a significant sub-theme. Adolphe Thiers's cry "*Il n'y a plus d'Europe*" was a warning which Conrad used to present the reasons of Europe's weaknesses. "*Il n'y a plus d'Europe* – there is only an armed and trading continent, the home of slowly maturing economical contests for life and death and of loudly proclaimed worldwide ambitions" [Conrad 1921: 107]. Nevertheless, in "Autocracy and War" Conrad was "for the solidarity of Europeanism, which must be the next step towards the advent of Concord and Justice" which "has been, and remains, the only possible goal of our progress" [Conrad 1921: 97]. In Conrad's idea of Europe, in which "there will be no frontiers" [Conrad 1921: 103], there was place for the national spirit as the most reliable element in international politics. Being a product of several cultural influences (Polish, English, French and European in general), Conrad was also aware of the fact that the coexistence of so many nations and cultures results in immense difficulties. Zdzisław Najder claims that Conrad perceived Europe as a potential and desired unity created from separate parts [Najder 2001: 181]. Conrad's idea of Europe as a potential entity based on shared elements of civilization and culture is very close to the contemporary perception of the European Union. He perceived Europe, in political categories, as a great project, demanding immense effort and vigilance, as a commitment imposed by the past and future, and as a constant challenge: to preserve, continue and unite all European values [Najder 2001: 192-194].

But Conrad's vision of Europe was not cosmopolitan and he did not intend to combine the elements of his cultural heritage and create a homogeneous entity with no distinct elements [Najder 2001: 183] Conrad also knew that European unity had to be built "on less perishable foundations than those of material interests" [Conrad 1921: 107] – a motif that predominates in *Nostramo*.

In "Autocracy and War" Conrad describes Russia as "a yawning chasm open between East and West; a bottomless abyss that has swallowed up every hope of mercy, every aspiration towards personal dignity, towards freedom, towards knowledge" [Conrad 1921: 100] In the country, depicted as "an abyss of mental darkness" [Conrad 1921: 88], autocracy "has moulded her institutions [...] and drugged the national temperament into the apathy of hopeless fatalism" [Conrad 1921: 98]. Russia embodies complete lawlessness, negation and degeneration of moral and human values such as dignity, truth, rectitude. For Conrad, such construction of the national character turned Russia into a moral aberration, with inhuman tyranny constituting the only historical-political essence of her identity. Hence, contrary to "Western peoples and leaders" praised by Conrad for their "ethical conduct in political matters" [Krajka 2004: 19], rulers of Russia were never true, democratic leaders of their nation [Krajka 2004: 22]. The tsarist inhuman despotism brought oppression to the Russians. It deprived them of their identity and isolated them from the world, turned them into the "people who had never seen face to face either law, order, justice, right, truth about itself or the rest of the world" [Conrad 1921: 102]. Russian autocracy was outside any conceivable categories of history and politics. It succeeded in nothing and there was no historical future for Russian autocracy. Hence a "brand of hopeless mental and moral inferiority is set upon Russian achievements" [Conrad 1921: 102]. Autocratic Russia posed a danger to Europe, manifesting contempt for Western ideas and values and a sense of superiority over the West. Therefore Conrad concluded that Russia should be excluded from European and world politics. Thus, "Joseph Conrad's conception of Europe consisted in commending the Western (West European and Polish) political traditions and ethos and condemning those of Germany and Russia" [Krajka 2004: 23]. In "Autocracy and War" he expressed his indictment and hatred of Russia's senseless tyranny and oppression:

A glance back at the last hundred years shows the invariable, one may say the logical, powerlessness of Russia. As a military power it has never achieved by itself a single great thing. [...] In its attacks upon its specially selected victim this giant always struck as if with a withered right hand. All the campaigns against Turkey prove this, from Potemkin's time to the last Eastern war in 1878, entered upon with every advantage of a well-nursed prestige and a carefully fostered fanaticism. Even the half-armed were always too much for the might of Russia, or, rather, of the Tsardom. It was victorious only against the practically disarmed, as, in regard to its ideal of territorial expansion, a glance at a map will prove sufficiently [Conrad 1921: 92-93].

Conrad also appealed to Western politicians to stop all alliances with Russia because as an ally, Russia had been "unprofitable, taking her share in the defeats rather than in the victories of her friends" [Conrad 1921: 93]. Consequently, as Wiesław Krajka states, Conrad's "perception of Russian mentality and tradition made many Western intellectuals and politicians aware of its true nature" [Krajka 2004: 22].

What awoke in Conrad a sense of kinship with Turgenev was the fact that although Turgenev had always been outspoken in his deep commitment to his native country, he was no chauvinist. Both writers should be read as international artists who transcended national boundaries and ethnic origins. On the other hand, Conrad admits that Turgenev still needs to be understood in the distinctively Russian context of his times. But, unlike Turgenev, who believed that Russians belong to the European family and must serve European ideals, Conrad was sure that there was no place in Europe for Russia. What unites Turgenev and Conrad is their intense and lasting abomination of all political movements. Both writers loathed autocracy, violent revolution and barbarism. They saw tendencies and political attitudes as functions of individuals, not individuals as functions of social tendencies. Art, literature, ideas were expressions of individuals, and the reduction of men to the function of being primarily carriers or agents of impersonal forces was deeply repellent to them.

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Summary

Turgenev and Conrad's Europeanism

Turgenev and Conrad should be read as international artists who transcended national boundaries and ethnic origins. Both writers were outsiders who valued Western civilization and culture a lot. On the other hand, Conrad admits that Turgenev still needs to be understood in the distinctively Russian context of his times. What awoke in Conrad a sense of kinship with Turgenev was the fact that although Turgenev had always been outspoken in his deep commitment to his native country, he was no chauvinist. But, unlike Turgenev, who believed that Russians belong to the European family and must serve European ideals, Conrad was sure that there was no place in Europe for Russia. What unites Turgenev and Conrad is their intense and lasting abomination of all political movements. Both writers loathed autocracy, violent revolution and barbarism.

Key words: *Turgenev, Conrad, international artists, Western civilization and culture, European ideals and writers*