

trample it under the heel of our boots. This is the meaning of the war." So it was.

The sort of destruction laid upon Southerners can be sold to the public only if the targets of that destruction are demonized to the point of having their humanity stripped away. They thus become nonpersons against whom the most vile depredations can be righteously excused. Both public and private organs in the North perpetrated a false image of Southern "savagery": the murder of Union prisoners on the battlefield; the unique horrors of Andersonville prison; and the complicity of Jefferson Davis in the assassination of Abraham Lincoln. By such lies and distortions, the War Department and the Congressional Joint Committee on the Conduct of the War place the mark of infamy upon the South. Northerners who took a less emotional view of the South also had ulterior, mercenary motives: the restoration of the former Confederate states to the Union as markets for Northern goods and capital. They hoped that through contact with the North the region could be morally regenerated and brought to see the benefits of Republican Party rule.

The South's defeat in 1865, as Thornwell predicted, cleared the way for the triumph of a Jacobin worldview in a consolidated American Empire. Wasted by war and military occupation and swindled by crooked Carpetbag and Scalawag "entrepreneurs," the Southern people could do nothing to halt the

centralizers' juggernaut. One would think the demonizers' work done at this point. But after a truce of sorts prevailed for several decades, especially during times of war when the American nation needed the services of Southern manhood, the demonization of all things traditionally Southern resumed apace in the 1950's and 1960's during the civil rights movement.

The ongoing assault on the South is reminiscent of the Abolitionist campaign of the mid-19th century in that it seeks to vilify an entire people on the basis of lies and half-truths perpetrated by men with little knowledge of the subject about which they write. I could give countless examples, but I shall limit myself to a rather recent one from popular culture. In the early 1970's, Canadian singer Neil Young wrote and recorded a neo-Abolitionist tune called "Southern Man," in which he whines: "I heard screaming, bullwhips cracking, how long, how long?" Young's musical diatribe was quickly answered by a group of battleflag-waving, good ol' boys known collectively as Lynyrd Skynyrd, whose "Sweet Home Alabama" remains the favorite of many an unreconstructed Southron. Lead singer Ronnie Van Zandt growled a challenge to Young and his ilk: "I heard Mr. Young sing about her, well I heard ol' Neil put her down. I hope Neil Young will remember, Southern man don't need him around anyhow." Van Zandt's lyrics may lack a certain eloquence, but they say simply and directly what demonized Southerners have been thinking for the last 160 years. ©

With Loss of Eden

by *Harold McCurdy*

When honeybees were humming round the flowers
And bluebirds tenderly vocal in the trees,
This earth was sweet, this blessed earth of ours,
With modest hopes and quiet ecstasies.

That was before the last of the old wagons
Rolled into town from farms on market days;
That was before the wings of metal dragons
Crowded the open heaven's broad highways.

What has become of them, humming and singing,
The bees and bluebirds old men can recall?
They have been driven off by Progress bringing
Equality and liberty for all.

Decline and Fall

by *Harold McCurdy*

Rome cluttered up its streets with foreign litters,
Erected temples to Victory and Luck,
Relaxed its borders to strange hairy critters,
Forgot the wolf that gave its founders suck.

Turned on itself, and in that inward turning
Discovered a secret rot brought on by germs
Transmitted to its vestals from the burning
Bisexual loins of virile Grecian herms.

It was too late to change. Its Eagle's talons
Had gathered up more prey than it could tame
Or otherwise employ except as felons
To spread abroad and foul the Roman name.

It was a time needing regeneration
Beyond the scope of any power of Rome's.
It had to cease to be an imperial nation
And rise from the dead out of the catacombs.

The Russian Demon

by Wayne Allensworth



In the year 1818, Aleksandr Pushkin penned these lines in his well-known verse “To Chaadaev,” addressed to his friend Peter Chaadaev, one of the leading Russian liberals of the period:

Comrade, believe: joy’s star will leap
Upon our sight, a radiant token;
Russia will rouse from her long sleep;
And where autocracy lies, broken,
Our names shall yet be graven deep.

Though associated in his youth with the clandestine reformist organizations that came to be called the “Decembrists” after the failed anti-Czarist revolt of December 1825, Chaadaev came to doubt that Russia would ever “rouse from her long sleep.” He became profoundly pessimistic about the future of his country, so pessimistic that he would one day write in his *Philosophical Letters* that Russia had “given nothing to the world.” Russia, he thought in the late 1820’s and early 30’s, had “contributed nothing to the progress of the human spirit. And we have disfigured everything we have touched of that progress.”

From the pessimism of the early Chaadaev, the radical intelligentsia of 19th-century Russia moved to outright Russophobia, a hatred and fear of all things distinctly Russian. In fact, V.S. Pecherin, a Moscow University professor whose views were quite similar to Chaadaev’s (he left Russia for good in 1836), wrote this bit of verse that foreshadowed the development of

Russophobia within Russia itself:

How sweet it is to hate one’s country
And eagerly await her destruction
And to see in the destruction of one’s country
The dawn of a world reborn.

Russian liberalism and radicalism had grown from the seeds planted by the Petrine reforms of the late 17th and early 18th centuries. Peter, Czar of Russia from 1682 to 1725 (he took the more Western-sounding title “Emperor” in 1721), had recognized that “Westernization,” in this case the centralization of political power and a modernization of the military, as well as of trade, industry, and education, was necessary if Russia were not to be either dominated by the Western powers or isolated and left out of the Great Game of European imperialism. His opening of a “window to the West,” however, opened up Russia to an intellectual and ideological ferment that the “revolutionary Czar” had not intended. Like Peter himself, the nascent Russian intelligentsia traveled to Europe (Chaadaev had sojourned there for three years, 1823-1826), borrowing especially the intellectual framework of the German Romantic Idealists, among whom Hegel eventually became the most important for Russian thinkers of the first half of the 19th century. It is this intellectual, cultural, and sociopolitical “Westernization” that the conservative historian Nikolai Karamzin had in mind when he wrote, disapprovingly, that during Peter’s reign “We began to be citizens of the world, but we ceased in some measure to be citizens of Russia.”

The intellectual encounter with the German romantics, as

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