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## THE SOCIALIST-REVOLUTIONARY EMIGRATION IN EUROPE IN 1907–1914: THE MORAL-PSYCHOLOGICAL ATMOSPHERE AND CENTRIFUGAL PROCESSES

Before the 1905–1907 revolution, the Russian Party of Socialists-Revolutionaries (PSR) was fairly small but active, and its centre was in Geneva. After the outbreak of the revolution, almost all of the socialist-revolutionary (S-R) emigrants left for Russia. After the defeat of the revolution and increased repression, the S-R emigration wave returned to Europe, but it was already significantly different from the previous one in terms of both quantity and quality. As the number of the party in Russia grew to 60,000–65,000, the number of emigrants was significantly greater than in the preceding period.

S-R groups and organisations in Russia and outside at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries had a conspiratorial and elitist character (using the term of the German researcher of the PSR history Manfred Hildermeier and supplementing it), which had already become traditional since the 1860s. As a rule, these were small groups of like-minded people, often linked by friendly relations. Leadership in these groups was defined by a high personal status. Elitism, insularity, and conspiracy were absolutely necessary qualities which enabled them to exist (at least for a while) in conditions of complete absence of legality and police persecution. Out of the association of such groups emerged the PSR, the nature of which was determined, on the one hand, by the generic properties of these groups and the complete absence of legality in Russia (the parties were therefore inherently conspiratorial and elitist organisations); on the other hand, the concept of the organisational construction of the PSR sought to lay the

ideas and structures of a mass political party in line with the goals and objectives of the party, which later joined the Second International. It seems that the most authoritative party of the Second International, the German Social-Democratic Party, which at that time had made considerable progress in defending the interests of the German workers and had succeeded in rallying a large part of them around itself in one form or another, thus enabling it to become a parliamentary party, was a clear example and benchmark for most of the leaders of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party (RSDLP) and the PSR.

Naturally, neither the S-R nor the Social Democrats, in their right minds and solid memory, intended to build a mass party in Russia along the organisational lines of the German Social-Democratic Party. But they regarded it as a model, an example to be emulated, which could only be put into practice if political freedoms were achieved. Nevertheless, some organisational and tactical principles and features of such a party were still used. In our view, there was a symbiotic combination of the features of a traditional “conspiracy-elitist” organisation and those of a mass political party, which sought to rally certain classes around itself and lead them in pursuit of their interests and rights. Such a symbiosis can be characterised as an embryo of a party or proto-party. In this context, Mark A. Nathanson’s answer to a question of the Judicial-Investigation Commission on the Yevno Azef affair in 1910 about the order of admission to the party in the initial period of its existence is remarkable: “How were members accepted? Who was considered to be a good man, that one was accepted?”<sup>1</sup>

During the 1905–1907 revolution, the PSR absorbed tens of thousands of new members, created a more or less definite party structure, whose organisational strengthening and crystallisation process took place in the conditions of the parties’ illegal existence and was not definitively completed during the years of the revolution. Quite soon the RSDLP and the PSR, whose character at that time can be conventionally defined as that of mass illegal parties, began to experience a profound crisis, which they themselves called an organisational crisis. The mass destruction of local party organisations of various levels and the weakening of horizontal and vertical organisational ties meant that by the end of 1910 not even a trace of a more or less coherent system was left. These processes were very similar in the RSDLP and the PSR, but in the latter the organisational disintegration took particularly acute forms because of the provocative phobia that had gripped the Party after the exposure of Azef and the sharply deteriorating moral and psychological atmosphere.

It appears that one of the main reasons for the collapse of the mass illegal party, which the PSR and the RSDLP became in 1905–1907, and for the crisis of the S-R emigration, was an erroneous organisational concept in which the leaders of these parties tried to combine the unconnected – the subculture of the Russian revolutionary and the principles of the mass party.

The low level of political culture within the main mass of the population, who suddenly “woke up” and “opened up” to politics and parties, made this mass not the most

<sup>1</sup> Государственный архив Российской Федерации (ГАРФ), Фонд 1699, Опись 1, Дело 123, Лист 4.

suitable material for party organisational building. This sudden move to politics and parties, unlike the gradual, slow involvement of the German workers in the German Social-Democratic Party, was not conducive to the formation of party discipline and political consciousness, nor to the building of a strong organisation with the basis of autonomous party cells.

The result of forming a mass organisation from such “raw” and unsuitable material could only be one: a low level of political consciousness among its members, low discipline, a disastrous lack of self-governance skills and able party organisers, weakness in all horizontal and vertical organisational structures, and so on. Features such as low executive discipline, the chasm between the party centre and the periphery, the inability of local organisations to finance themselves (including because their members were unwilling to pay dues), dependence on financial and personnel assistance from the centre, and strained relations between local committee leaders and the party masses – all these were characteristic of many Russian parties. But it could not be otherwise. Even the right-wing and liberal parties, which were in incomparably more favourable conditions than the PSR or RSDLP, experienced serious organisational difficulties during the Revolution and its aftermath. But the main problem that the Social Democrats and Socialist-Revolutionaries faced was that the main figure of the “conspiratorial-elitist organisations” and “proto-parties” – the “professional revolutionary” (who, as a rule, was recruited from the intelligentsia, and who was quite strict about following that code of written and unwritten rules and regulations that had been developed through decades of revolutionary practice) – was inundated and partly suppressed by the “new people”.

And the influx of casuals had by no means only organisational aspects. Just as important, or maybe even more important, was the fact that these people, alien to the subculture of the Russian revolutionary, not only violated all of its norms, but also diluted it, and discredited the revolutionaries themselves with their own behaviour. The hope of quickly “deepening the consciousness” of thousands of people involved in the Party, and even in illegal conditions, turned out to be an idealistic illusion. Alas, it turned out to be the other way round. All sides of the Party organism were affected, but this was most clearly seen in emigre communities because of its inherent peculiarities.

As it has already been noted, with the outbreak of the revolution almost all of the S-R emigrants left for Russia, and therefore after the defeat of the revolution the organisational structures of the S-R emigre groups were created virtually anew, although taking into account previous experience. An important role in the life of the S-R emigration was played by the Заграничная организация (Федерация) (Zagranichnaya Organizatsia (Federatsia); Foreign Organisation (Federation)) of the PSR Assistance Groups. The first PSR assistance groups started to form in European countries at the end of 1907, when, after the defeat of the revolution, a great number of party workers went into exile. At the same time, the first congress of the S-R’s foreign organisation was held, and in January 1908 the second congress was held. The Statutes of the Foreign Party Organisation, being the basis of its further activity, were adopted. In April 1911 (by the IV Conference of the Foreign Party Federation) it was amended with two paragraphs (12 and 14) concerning the functions of the Central Bureau of the Foreign Federation.

The Statutes of the S-R Foreign Organisation stated that all foreign groups formed a federation and that group members were persons who accepted the programme and tactics of the S-R and obeyed its directives. The foreign organisation was subject to the general party statutes and its highest authority was the congress of group representatives.

The Central Committee's representative at the congress was vested by the statutes with the right to veto matters of a general party nature. The executive and liaison body of the Foreign Organisation was the Областной (Oblastnoy, Regional) Committee (later the Central Bureau of the Foreign Federation). The functions and tasks of the Regional Committee of the Foreign Organisation were seriously modified in May 1909, when the Foreign Delegation of the Central Committee of the PSR was created. The Statutes provided for financial contributions from group budgets: 15% to the Regional Committee of the Foreign Federation and 20% to the Central Committee of the PSR. Groups and their unions which failed to submit reports and make contributions within three months were deemed to have dropped out of the Foreign Organisation.

At the end of 1907 Parisian S-R group split into two: the opposition to the Central Committee, the Paris Group of the S-R, and the more numerous and influential "Paris Group of Assistance to the PSR". Within the "Paris Group of S-R", which absorbed the most heterogeneous elements of the dissatisfied by the Central Committee of the PSR, a "Conspiratorial Commission" was organised at the beginning of 1908 to search for provocateurs in the leadership of the Party. Besides, some leaders of this group, which detached into a special "Paris group of the S-R initiative minority", in April, 1908, set up an independent organ, "Революционная Мысль" (Revolutionnaya Mysl, Revolutionary Thought), which demanded a radical review of the program and tactics of the Party, and its radical reorganisation. In the spring of 1909, the proposals of the Paris Group of the S-R about radical reorganisation of the PSR in connection with the exposure of Azef were rejected by the 3rd Conference of the Foreign Federation, which entailed its withdrawal from the Foreign Federation. The Party leadership demanded that group members wishing to remain members of the Party submit applications to the Central Committee of the PSR for withdrawal from the group. Characteristically, only three members of the group who wished to "remain with the Party" submitted such applications.<sup>2</sup>

In August 1908, the foreign S-R organisation consisted of 24 groups, with 300–350 members, of whom only 150–160 were Party members. It was a non-party organisation, uniting autonomous groups on a federative basis. Despite numerous attempts to obtain rights for the Russian regional committees of the PSR, the Regional committee of the foreign organisation did not have them. The program tasks of the groups were as follows: to prepare its members for revolutionary work in Russia, first of all as agitators and propagandists; to acquaint the public in Western Europe with the situation in Russia and the tasks of the Party; to organise public protests against the persecution of revolutionaries by the Russian government; to provide comradely mutual aid.

In practice, as a representative of the Foreign Organisation pointed out at the First All-Party Conference, because of the plight of the emigrants "the latter work absorbs all

<sup>2</sup> ГАРФ, Фонд 6212, Опись 1, Дело 95, Лист 26, 27.

the rest ...”<sup>3</sup> Nevertheless, the Regional Foreign Committee sent nine people to Russia during a year (from the middle of 1907 to the middle of 1908), individual groups sent eight people, and in addition, 25 people went to work with the help of the Regional Foreign Committee through groups.

In April 1911, the IV Foreign Conference of the S-R was held, attended by delegates from 10 groups: Brussels, Berne, Liège, Lausanne, London, Munich, Nancy, Toulouse, Zurich and the Paris PSR assistance group. In the two years since the 3rd conference, eight groups have broken up (one of the groups was not part of the Federation in 1909, but its representative was present at the conference): Lvov, Vienna, Baden Union (Freiburg and Heidelberg), Constance, Montpellier, Antwerpen, Neapolitan, and Parisian groups of the PSR.

The reasons for the dissolution of the groups, according to the representative of the Regional Foreign Committee, were manifold: a reaction to the Azef affair, general political reaction in Russia and the decline of the party work, the move of some emigrants to Paris, and the departure of students upon completion of their education to their home countries (Freiburg and Heidelberg, Constance). The group in Vienna was dissolved by the Regional Foreign Committee representative in the summer of 1910 on formal grounds.

By the spring of 1911, 13 organisations remained in the Foreign Federation – in Brussels, Liège, Lausanne, Zurich, Geneva, Bern, Karlsruhe, Berlin, Munich, London, Paris, Nancy and Toulouse. All the groups, with the exception of the Paris PSR assistance group, consisted by this time of party elements. The total number of members of the Foreign Federation was approximately 300. According to a representative of the Regional Foreign Committee, “a great number of S-R abroad, especially in Paris, are not part of the organisation”<sup>4</sup> The German and provincial French groups consisted almost exclusively of legal student youth, while the groups in Paris, Geneva and London were predominantly émigré.

The annual budget of the Foreign Organisation at this time reached 5,000–6,000 roubles. In the summer of 1908, the Regional Foreign Committee pointed out that its financial situation was becoming more difficult, since its expenses were increasing due to the continuing influx of emigrants on the one hand, and the general complication of affairs on the other (the cost of Party literature had risen), and called “for raising the fees and allocations and sending them quite properly”<sup>5</sup> But the financial situation deteriorated further and further.

According to a decision of the Organisational Bureau of the Central Committee of the PSR, published in March 1908, the status of the foreign groups was defined as follows: “In view of the fact that the system of admission to foreign S-R groups, owing to the special conditions and nature of their work, is incapable of guaranteeing the unconditional party stability of all the countrymen included in these groups, therefore they are not considered as party groups, but are recognised by the Central Committee as assisting the party only”<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> *Протоколы I Общепартийной конференции ПСР* (Minutes of the 1st All-Party Conference of the PSR), Paris, 1908, p. 55.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 11–12.

<sup>5</sup> “Известия Областного комитета Заграничной Организации” (Newsletter of the Regional Committee of the Foreign Organisation), July 1908, p. 15.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibidem*, 25th April, 1908, p. 14.

However, there was no unanimous opinion about the status of the groups neither among them, nor between the leadership of the Foreign Organisation (Federation) and the Central Committee of the PSR. In 1910, a number of Federation groups expressed their opinion on the reasons for the “unsatisfactory” work of the groups. But if the Bern group saw them in a principle of non-partyness, the Berlin group as their main reason gaved “the oppression and dejection” of emigrants by “the general conditions of the moment”, almost full political passivity and retreat into private life. The Berlin group supported the Bern group’s proposal to reorganise the Foreign Federation, to give the groups the status of party organisations and the Foreign Federation the status of a regional organisation, giving it the same rights as the regional organisations had in Russia.<sup>7</sup> The Nancy and Munich groups opposed these proposals, interpreting them as an attempt “to violate the rights of the Russian Party organisations” and stating “complete inactivity of the foreign groups”.<sup>8</sup>

The Regional Foreign Committee pointed out that the issue raised by the Bern group had been repeatedly rejected at the Foreign Federation conferences. Initially it was decided, and then repeatedly confirmed, that the Federation groups, “in their internal composition remaining Party, will be organisationally outside the Party, because, bearing no responsibility and duties, they naturally cannot enjoy the rights granted to the Russian Party organisation...”. The Regional Foreign Committee shared the former decision, noting that “almost all S-R groups” consisted of Party members and that a change of status would not lead to a revival of work, as it depended “not on the formal title of the foreign groups, but on the degree of efficiency of the members of these groups...”. The Regional Foreign Committee stated that “the foreign organisation at the moment is functioning extremely poorly and brings minimal assistance and aid to the party”.<sup>9</sup>

Research attention to the atmosphere of the S-R emigrat community is important not only as an integral part of life, but also because it actually had a significant impact on factional processes, on the decline of work, the withdrawal of many emigrants from any activity and the emergence of friction between the foreign organisations and the Party leadership. On the one hand, quite objectively, this atmosphere (as for all emigrants) was created by homesickness, detachment from the homeland, the difficulty of applying oneself. For example, Lev A. Liebermann recalled: “In 1909, after sitting in Kresty [the “Crosses”, famous prison in St. Petersburg. – K.M.] I lived in Paris. I lived a hard, dreary and tedious life as an emigrant. Life as an emigrant is worse than exile. Exile is, after all, Russia. You hear Russian speech, live the Russian way of life. In exile, there are vast fields and vast forests. In emigration – the horror of a foreign speech, of a foreign order. And worst of all, separation from everything native, separation *forever*. For if there is a time limit to exile, there is no limit to refuge...”.<sup>10</sup> Vladimir M. Zenzinov, having escaped from Siberia and arrived in Paris in December 1907, recalled: “I have spent a whole year in

<sup>7</sup> See: *Циркулярное письмо № 6 Областного комитета Заграничной организации с.-р.* (Letter No 6 of the Regional Committee of Foreign S.-R. Organisations), July 1910, pp. 1–3.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 3–4.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 6.

<sup>10</sup> “Воля Народа” (Peoples Will), 15 August 1917, p. 2.

Paris, and I consider this year of all my revolutionary trials the hardest. There is nothing harder than refuge. I cannot even compare it to the exile in Siberia, which I later had to suffer, and which was exceptionally hard in its conditions. To long for my homeland, to dream of giving it all my strength, and to languish in idleness, unable to help it and work for it...<sup>11</sup>.

On the other hand, the change in the intra-party moral-psychological atmosphere in the PSR, and above all in the wider emigration, was seriously affected by the expansion of provocation within the Party and the “provocateur-phobia” and “spy mania” that engulfed the Party. The years of the revolution were not in vain for the police, either; they successfully “self-trained” and acquired precious experience in combating illegal organisations. The level of professionalism of gendarmes and security guards significantly increased. Moreover, the contamination of revolutionary parties with random, unstable people who joined them during the revolution served as an inexhaustible source from which the police to recruit secret collaborators among them.

As a derivative, and this had even more important consequences for the Party, “spy-comania” and “provocateur-phobia” developed in the Party, paralysing the will of many Party workers.

But apart from the organisational aspects, the “provocateur-phobia” had an important and demoralising aspect, which was revealed with maximum force after the revelation of the provocative role of Azef.

The exposure of Azef, who was both a secret police officer and one of the leaders of the Social Revolutionary Party and the head of its Fighting Organisation in 1903–1908, shocked Russia and had profound and far-reaching consequences for the PSR (more serious and distant than is usually assumed).

The public reaction to the Azef affair is well known. We are less aware of how this affair affected the Socialist-Revolutionary Party itself and what consequences it had for the S-R. Both contemporaries and researchers were unanimous in their assessments of the enormous damage suffered by the Social Revolutionary Party because of Azef, but it is only sketchily known how this damage manifested itself and what specific consequences it had.

Now it is difficult even to imagine in its entirety what the unmasking and flight of Azef meant for the S-R. On the one hand, their efforts to improve the organisational structure of the Party and strengthen Party work were paralysed, and on the other hand, a new moral-political crisis was added to the organisational crisis. In the words of Andrei A. Argunov, who made a report on behalf of the Central Committee of the PSR in the Fifth Party Council, after the exposure of Azef by Alexey A. Lopukhin “we had to abandon the work we had been doing and begin to eliminate almost everything that had already been established...”.<sup>12</sup> Viktor M. Chernov’s statement seems fair: “The bite of the snake of provocation, which had nestled in its bosom, cost the Party dearly. The epiphany itself has also cost it dearly. It is difficult for anyone who has not lived through those days to imagine the daze and sense of moral catastrophe that overtook

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<sup>11</sup> В.М. Зензинов, *Их жизни революционера* (From the life of a revolutionary), Paris, 1919, p. 56.

<sup>12</sup> International Institute for Social History, Amsterdam (IISH), PSR Archive, 146.

the party”.<sup>13</sup> In February 1909 the “Russian board of the Central Committee of the PSR” was forced to issue a notice refuting the false report “about the dissolution of the Party and its local organisations, spread by both the rightist and part of the leftist press [...] The rumour which the newspapers are spreading intensively about the disappearance together with Azef of ‘four participants in the trial’ is false”.<sup>14</sup>

According to Zenzinov, the period after the exposure of Azef was “the darkest, perhaps, period in the history of the Party, when for many not only its enemies, but also its friends, it seemed that the Socialist-Revolutionary Party was in agony. [...] The exposure of Azef’s provocative role was a huge political and moral blow to the Party. Its power is beyond the imagination of those who at that time had not personally experienced it. [...] The revelation of Azef’s provocation was, for many members of our Party, tantamount to the political and moral collapse of the Party”.<sup>15</sup>

These words are by no means an exaggeration and are easily corroborated by vivid examples from the life of the Party at that time. According to Ilya A. Rubanovich, on the eve of the last enlarged meeting, where Chernov declared the incontrovertible evidence against Azef, he was visited by Nathanson, who, crying, said that it is almost proved that Azef was a provocateur”.<sup>16</sup> In January 1909 Nathanson wrote in one of his letters: “My dear friend! A terrible misfortune has befallen the Party: Party investigation (during the trial) has proved that Толстый (Tolstyĭ, The Fat – Azef’s nickname. – K.M.) played a double game [...] I’ll write in detail one of these days. Now I can not”.<sup>17</sup> In February 1909, he, referring to “case of Azef”, exclaimed in one of his letters: “Yes, it is hard to go through that in your old age”.<sup>18</sup>

Chernov was probably right when in his memoirs he stated that in the decisive days on the eve of Azef’s escape “...old Mark Nathanson himself was confused. But confused to the point of panic, to complete paralysis of will, to the inability to stick to any decision”. But he was not the only one who was confused as the “paralysis of will” affected most of the S-Rs, who decided the fate of the provocateur, which gave him the opportunity to escape. This circumstance exploded the already heated party atmosphere. According to Chernov, “there was an explosion of émigré passions which reached the boiling point, a bacchanalia of general confusion and chaos”.<sup>19</sup> German A. Lopatin wrote to Chernov in late March 1909: “This is the second time I have been forced to give, almost under oath, an affidavit of what I said and what I did not say in this or that private conversation. Am I now forced to be a witness to the grave when dealing with émigré gossip?”<sup>20</sup>

Mikhail M. Chernavsky, a member of the PSR Fighting Organisation in 1907–1908, described his condition after Azef’s escape as follows: “Vague and dark at heart. Personal

<sup>13</sup> В.М. Чернов, *Перед бурей* (Before the Storm), Moscow, 1992, p. 279.

<sup>14</sup> ИИИ, PSR Archive, 154.

<sup>15</sup> В.М. Зензинов, “Из недавнего прошлого” (From the recent past), *Дело Народа*, 13 August 1917, p. 2.

<sup>16</sup> ГАРФ, Фонд 1699, Опись 1, Дело 129, Лист 36.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibidem*, Дело 41, Лист 7.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibidem*, Лист 6.

<sup>19</sup> В.М. Чернов, *Перед бурей...*, pp. 279, 280.

<sup>20</sup> ГАРФ, Фонд 6212, Опись 1, Дело 95, Лист 7–7 об.



humiliation and shame are compounded and exacerbated by the humiliation and shame of the Party. What is going to happen now? What to do? Total confusion. My thoughts wander from subject to subject, powerless to stop at one thing and think it through to the end”.<sup>21</sup>

Many years later, wondering which side Azef “did the most harm”, Chernavsky believed that “we have to admit that the sad advantage is undoubtedly on the side of the party. It is enough to assess the effect of his exposure for the Government and for the Party to be convinced of the correctness of our thought. For the government the revelation came off, one might say, ‘like water off a duck’s back’, while in the Party it dealt a crushing blow to its entire organisation from top to bottom, and, what is even worse, brought confusion into the hearts of its workers and undermined mutual trust”.<sup>22</sup>

According to Zenzinov, “Azef’s betrayal made a staggering impression on many, many people lost confidence in life, in people, in the Party – there were even several cases of suicide in connection with this event”.<sup>23</sup> At a time when everything that had given them faith in the rightness of their cause and themselves was collapsing, the S-R were deprived even of the saving straw in the form of arguments about the impossibility of exposing Azef. Chernavsky recalled: “If Azef had indeed turned out to be a devil or a genius of evil, intrigue, etc., it would have been easier for all those duped by him. Unfortunately, we are deprived of even this small consolation. Azef was far from being a genius”.<sup>24</sup>

But most precise of all is Zenzinov’s opinion, expressed by him at the end of his life: “The revelation of Azef for all our generation who had any kind of relation to the revolutionary movement, close or distant, was a sharp edge which divided one part of our life from the other. It was as if we had lost the right to naivety. Each of us was now forced to reconsider our relationship to people, especially those closest to us. The person we trusted as ourselves turned out to be a deceiver, a traitor, a villain who had desecrated what we held most dear in the world, what we held most dear in our own lives, a person who had dishonoured and vilified our holy of holies. He made us look at the world, at people, at life, now with different eyes. After the disclosure of Azef and everything we have experienced in connection with this, we ourselves were already different – our naive trust in people had disappeared, our love had cooled down – harsh, often merciless life was now looking at us with halted cold eyes”.<sup>25</sup>

In this context, Boris V. Savinkov’s statement to members of the Judicial-Investigation Commission on Yevno Azef affair in 1910 is telling: “I only want to point out our disagreement: you want to see guilt in the way the case was set up, while I see personal responsibility here. I say that with the same conditions, with the same positive and negative aspects in the system, people who think more critically would not have allowed a provocation. I will say about myself: at this time, after all I have been through, I am

<sup>21</sup> М.М. Чернавский, “В Боевой Организации” (In Fighting Organisation), *Каторга и ссылка*, 1930, Book 7, p. 35.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 39.

<sup>23</sup> В.М. Зензинов, *Из жизни революционера...*, pp. 56–57.

<sup>24</sup> М.М. Чернавский, “В Боевой Организации...”, pp. 39.

<sup>25</sup> В.М. Зензинов, *Пережитое* (Survived), Нью-Йорк, 1953, p. 414.

absolutely convinced that such a provocation is absolutely unthinkable, unthinkable, at least for me. I can no longer imagine that I could have been so deceived by a provocateur”.<sup>26</sup>

The blow that fell on the Party leadership was enormous. It was accused of all sins, to the point that Azef was not the single provocateur in the Central Committee. According to Chernov, “this was generally a time of panic, and at that time any rumour that anyone let in was given credence to, and then whole streams of the dirtiest slander were poured on the heads of the central institutions of the Party”.<sup>27</sup> Vladimir L. Burtsev said at a meeting of the Judicial-Investigation Commission in 1910 that he always believed that Azef had no accomplices in the party and did not share the rumours that Azef “acted on behalf of the party or at least with the consent of some of its members. This was at one time a fairly widespread opinion, and I still hear such rumours. But from no one from whom I have heard such rumours have I been able to obtain an argument in favour of such an opinion...”.<sup>28</sup>

In 1910. Feliks V. Volkhovsky assessed the consequences of the Azef affair as follows: “For the Party this was one of those ‘underfoot’ blows which are considered vile in any struggle, for they cannot be foreseen in time and are almost impossible to resist. This blow did not ruin the party, did not pull the ground out from under it, but it knocked it down at that moment, deprived it of many friends, shattered its charm and, worst of all, planted distrust, ‘that monster with green eyes’, in its own ranks. The distrust was two-fold: distrust, suspicion of one another, and distrust, doubt about the ways of fighting, about the very ways in which the fight was being waged. What could be more terrible for the organisation and the ranks of the people’s ‘great army’ led by it, whose entire activity was built on faith in an idea, in a certain method, and on mutual comradely trust in each other!”<sup>29</sup>

Already in the spring of 1909, the prominent member of the PSR Lapina (Bella) fell under suspicion and shot herself, mistaken for another provocateur, soon to be exposed, Zinaida F. Zhuchenko. In the spring of the same year, Tatyana M. Tseytlin and Mikhail I. Deyev, who had nominated their candidates for the new Fighting Organisation, were exposed, and a prominent militant “Nikolai” was also taken under suspicion (which was never cleared). In the middle of 1910, Jan F. Berdo, a member of the Fighting Organisation, fell under suspicion and shot himself in November of the same year. It should be noted that such incidents created an atmosphere of widespread suspicion, generated gossip and complicated relationships. Very revealing are the debates at the 5th Party Council around the cases of Lapina, Tseytlin and Deyev, when part of the Council delegates protested against the methods of surveillance of party members, considering them morally unacceptable and leading to destruction of trust. They were equally vehemently opposed, pointing to the need to defend the Party by all possible means against the machinations of the guards

<sup>26</sup> ГАРФ, Фонд 1699, Описание 1, Дело 133, Лист 82.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibidem*, Дело 130, Лист 178.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibidem*, Дело 129, Лист 147.

<sup>29</sup> *Памяти Леонида Эммануиловича Шишко* (In memory of Leonid Emmanuilovich Shishko), [Paris], 1910, p. 42.

and provocateurs”<sup>30</sup> Lapina’s death also stained the conscience of the members of the Fifth Party Council, who discussed the erroneous suspicions against her and failed to take the correct position.<sup>31</sup>

The extent to which provocateur-phobia was established in the party atmosphere at this time can be seen from an episode in the life of the PSR Fighting Organisation, narrated by Chernavsky. He recalled an evening on the eve of his trip to Russia to Anna V. Yakimova and the Smirnov family with a proposal to join the Fighting Organisation: “Business talk is over, instructions have been given, the conversation did not go well. Savinkov suggested: ‘Let’s put together a story from the lives of revolutionaries’. Someone responded to this suggestion. The subject: a regional party conference takes place in a provincial town. What should we call the town? Провокань (Provocany, Provocateur-town). It is located on the Филерка (Filerka, Detective) river. The conference meets at the Гостиница Золотая подметка (Hotel Zolotaya Podmetka, Golden Underground Hotel), etc., of that sort. At each especially ‘good’ detail we laughed, though, to tell the truth, there was little amusement in this laughter. The plot of the story unfolded rather quickly, but [...] Ма (as they called Prokofyeva, connecting two initials) cried out, asked to stop the fun. It was stopped, of course. The story was not over”<sup>32</sup>

Passions boiled over in the emigrant community. It is well known that any emigration contains complex relationships, endless rumours and gossip. Thus, for example, in the draft sketches of Chernov there is a curious phrase: “The atmosphere abroad is one of endless and unnecessary discussions”<sup>33</sup>

But all these phenomena, which probably exist in any political emigration, acquired a completely new quality in the S-R’s environment after the exposure of Azef. Here is how Lieberman described in his memoirs the state of the Social Revolutionary colony in Paris after Azef’s escape: “The colony was boiling like a cauldron. There were arguments, accusing each other, indignation.... Meetings were organised... The necessity of active action was argued... And...with the exception of the group mentioned by Zenzinov (Dmitry Donskoy, Boris Y. Nesterovsky, Zenzinov – K.M.), all were sitting happily in Paris. I did not go to rallies much, I did not want to listen [...] I did not want to see...”<sup>34</sup> Notable is the confession of Vadim V. Rudnev, who studied on the eve of World War I at the University of Basel: “I have not kept in touch with S-R emigrant circles, living for about a year in Basel. This was not part of my plans in any way, and from two or three old comrades with whom I corresponded and occasionally saw one of them when passing through Basel, I knew about the state of extreme degradation in which the SiR emigration was. I was in Russia in my thoughts and plans, and I felt myself alien to the psychology of emigration”<sup>35</sup>

The wave of mutual mistrust and suspicion which gripped the Socialist Revolutionary milieu at this time also seriously affected the moral and psychological atmosphere,

<sup>30</sup> IISH, PSR Archive, 146.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>32</sup> М.М. Чернавский, *В Боевой Организации...*, pp. 54–55.

<sup>33</sup> ГАРФ, Фонд 5847, Опись 1, Дело 65, Лист 112.

<sup>34</sup> “Воля Народа”, 19 August 1917, p. 2.

<sup>35</sup> В. Руднев, “Двадцать лет тому назад”, *Современные записки*, Paris, 1934, кн. 56, pp. 379–380.

plunging the emigrant community into an abyss of all kinds of rumours, mutual grievances and endless arbitrations. “Russian emigration continued in a state of frustration and prostration... – Mark V. Vishnyak recalled the Parisian émigré atmosphere in mid-1911. – The hardy and resilient moved away from the revolution, and some joined the enemy camp. Schisms, splits, breakdowns in personal relations and arbitration courts did not stop”.<sup>36</sup>

It might seem that “uncomradely” behaviour, such as clashes, conflicts, slander, etc., among revolutionaries, would not have any significance for the moral-psychological atmosphere. But at times, they agitated the public opinion of the revolutionary community more than loud provocative stories, because they destroyed their fragile peace, breaking faith in the feasibility of creating ideal human relations, even within their own closed community, not to mention society as a whole.

All such cases were particularly sensitive to the emigrant community, where all these scandals became immediately known, grew into rumours and gossip, and caused new people to quarrel with each other, etc. The latter point is worth emphasising. A large part of these conflicts and quarrels did not remain a purely personal matter of the quarrels, but became a “common property”, becoming a fact of émigré life. In Russia clashes and conflicts also often occurred. However these manifestations of “unfriendly” behavior in a situation of illegal existence of parties and isolation of local organisations from each other, stirring up members of the organisation, where this conflict broke out, were rarely known to the S-Rs of other regions. Secondly, the atmosphere of emigration itself, where the majority was deprived of a living cause and involuntarily engaged only in imitation of it, gave a very abundant harvest. Finally, thirdly (last but not least), materials and testimonies about the life of the local party organisations are much less well known. In later memoirs, witnesses to such stories did not like to talk about them, sometimes only mentioning them, and documentary materials of investigations (their recording in illegal conditions was very dangerous from a conspiracy point of view), even if they were kept, many of them were probably destroyed before searches, scattered in the archives of Police and security departments, etc., and in fact are not available.

The reasons for bringing an offender to arbitration were sometimes anecdotal. For example, in February 1911 V. Arbatsky asked Ilya I. Fondaminsky to be the judge on his side in order to dismiss the accusation of Vigdorichik-Zhakov of “uncomradely behaviour”. The essence of the case was that Arbatsky recommended Vigdorichik-Zhakov for work with Russian emigrants to one of the Central Committee Commissions. Vigdorichik-Zhakov resented the fact that the “recommender” himself refused this work, as the Commission could not pay for it. However, after a month, “the case disappeared by itself”.<sup>37</sup> Two years earlier (June 1909) the same Arbatsky complained to Fondaminsky that T.I. Schreuder and N.N. Shreterfeld accused him for taking Russian excursionists to Maxim Gorky that he “as an S-R had no right to take teachers to the camp of the ‘enemies’, i.e. to the camp

<sup>36</sup> M.V. Вишняк, *Дань прошлому* (Tribute to the Past), Нью-Йорк, 1954, p. 195.

<sup>37</sup> ГАРФ, Фонд, 6212, Опись 1, Дело 96, Лист 84, 86.

of the Social-Democrats”.<sup>38</sup> Also noteworthy is the appeal to Fondaminsky of a certain M.G. to look into the “case of X”, who had tried to seduce a woman who was intimate with another man (all three of them were Party members).<sup>39</sup>

But in February 1909, Fondaminsky himself was drawn into arbitration proceedings as an accused himself by A. Kuzmin, who for his part put forward Valerian K. Agafonov and Anton D. Gnatovsky (prominent members of the Paris group of the S-R-“initiative minority”) as judges. The essence of the case was that amidst the circulating rumors that Kuzmin demanded money from the Central Committee and behaved unworthily during the Kronstadt rebellion (ran away) and was expelled from the organisation, Fondaminsky in a conversation with Agafonov questioned the “political honesty” of Kuzmin and stated that a secret investigation was already underway. It was mentioned that Fondaminsky warned that if Agafonov disclosed the contents of their conversation to Kuzmin, he would retract his words.<sup>40</sup>

It is interesting to note also the request of Evgeniy E. Kolosov to Burtsev in the autumn of 1912 to find a correspondent from Paris who “bombarded Kavi with letters about my dissolute behaviour. He says God knows what about me. [...] In his last letter he says something about the name of Comrade Shornikova. I do not know what he has against her, but I wonder if he wants to ‘feel’ her up. If this is true, you will quickly find the mysterious correspondent and give him a good thrashing for spreading deliberately false information”.<sup>41</sup> Equally remarkable in this context is the exclamation of Inna I. Rakitnikova in the spring of 1912 in a letter to Chernov: “Oh, those rumors, and even those of Kavi. There’s always some confusion with them”.<sup>42</sup>

But there were also extremely scandalous cases which agitated and even split the S-R emigrant community. The most striking and unusual among them was the case of the kidnapping of the children of the prominent S-R member Nikolay S. Tyutchev (the folder with this case kept in the PSR Archive was signed: “Kidnapping of Tyutchev’s Children”).<sup>43</sup> This case, unique in perhaps the entire history of the Russian revolutionary movement, took place in August 1910 in Italy, when the wife of Tyutchev incited two Social Revolutionaries – Andrei Kollegaev (later one of the leaders of the Left Socialist Revolutionary Party) and Zinaida Klapina (a member of the well-known terrorist socialist structure – the Northern combat flying unit of Karl Trauberg and the wife of Valentin A. Fabrikant, member of the Foreign Delegation of the Central Committee of the PSR), to take part in the abduction of two children. The documents do not explain why this

<sup>38</sup> *Ibidem*, List 17, 17 vol. 18.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibidem*, List 108.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibidem*, List 3–6.

<sup>41</sup> ГАРФ, Фонд 5802, Опись 2, Дело 656, Лист 13.

<sup>42</sup> ГАРФ, Фонд 5847, Дело 1, 97, Лист 825, об.-826.

<sup>43</sup> See in detail: К.Н. Морозов, А.Ю. Морозова, “Обращения социалистов-эмигрантов в правоохранительные органы как отражение кризиса «партийного правосудия» и специфики правосознания эмигрантской революционной среды в 1907–1914 гг.” (The appeals of socialists-emigrants in law-enforcement bodies as a reflection of crisis of “party justice” and specificity of legal consciousness of the emigrant revolutionary environment in 1907–1914), *Известия высших учебных заведений. Поволжский регион*, 2004, № 4, pp. 45–54.

domestic situation arose and why the Tyutchevs could not come to an amicable agreement. But it is known that Nikolai S. Tyutchev, who discovered the disappearance of the children, together with his neighbour Kolosov (who left the PSR in April 1909), having got on the trail of Kolegaev, appealed to the Italian police. Here is how Tyutchev has described these events in the statement from August, 30th, 1910 to Foreign Delegation of Central Committee of PSR: "On 25 August by the evening, it has appeared, that two my children – a boy of 8 years and girl of 4 years have disappeared somewhere. A search began, which led to the firm conviction that the children had been kidnapped by S-R. Andrey Kolegayev, former student from Kharkov, now exiled abroad for 4 years. At 11 o'clock Kolegayev came to us in Kavi; he got off the train not in Kavi but in Lavanya (2 km from Kavi) and tried to sneak home, but was found on the way. When asked about my children by Comrade Kolosov, he refused to answer and scolded Kolosov. Shortly thereafter, another comrade [...] came to me and told me literally the following on behalf of Kolegaev: 'Tell T[yutchev] not to bother me today. I won't tell him anything, I'm tired and I'm going to bed'. Since the only way to find out where the children are and return them was to obtain the necessary information from Kolegaev, in order to force him to tell the truth, I turned to the police and accused Kolegaev of stealing my children, demanding his interrogation. He immediately told the Carabinieri that yes, he had taken my children away, but where they were, he did not know: he had given them to their mother. The Carabinieri arrested him, and when we asked them why they answered that they were obliged to arrest the criminal after his confession.

The next day, during interrogation, Kolegayev, learned that he was facing a serious charge (four or five years in prison), gave up the whereabouts of my ex-wife and children, confessed that she had sent him to take the children, for which purpose he had come from Paris to Cavi over a month previously. Here, too, he secretly gave my son Shura a letter from his mother.

The children and their mother were arrested in Pontebby (at the Austrian border) after the telegrams had been sent out everywhere and were finally brought back to me. This arrest could only happen because Kolegayev revealed my ex-wife's address during questioning.

A former member of the Northern combat flying unit of Karl Trauberg – Klapina (Fabrikantova) – later confessed in complicity and knowledge of the impending kidnapping of children in writing to me<sup>44</sup>

The accusations by a number of emigrants of Tyutchev and Kolosov that they denounced their Party comrade to the police gave an entirely unexpected turn to the case. A large part of his letter to the Foreign Delegation of the Central Committee of the PSR dated 28 August 1910 Kolosov devoted to this question: "I hasten to tell at once, that my participation in these events, i.e. in search of the children of N.S. Tyutchev, stolen from him by Andrey Kolegayev with the help of Zin. Klapina, [...] in the search for the children and in applying to the local police for this purpose, was fully conscious of my will and for each step in this direction I am carrying, or am ready to carry, full respon-

<sup>44</sup> IISH, PSR Archive, 557.

sibility [...]. Indeed, it is difficult to imagine a more shameful affair than the one that played out recently in Kavi, but it is not shameful for me [...] it is not a private affair, it is a PARTY affair, hurting directly not only the honour of the party itself, but hurting you, the members of the Delegation personally.

[...] You must, without missing a single minute, send here at least one or even two of the most authoritative members of the extended delegation of the Central Committee, instructing them to carry out the most thorough questioning of all those involved in the case on the ground. [...] I will put a number of questions to this commission and, first of all, demand that it investigate by whose tactlessness and stupidity the name of the Central Committee of the Socialist-Revolutionary Party is now dragged in the mud of émigré gossip in Kavi. [...] I am here accused of calling the police to arrest another Socialist-Revolutionary, even though I am not now an official party member, but share the whole party programme. I do not know whether Kolegayev was formerly a member of our Party – I flatter myself with the hope that he was not – but in my eyes he is not a socialist, although there are naive people who still dare to call him so, but scoundrel and bastard, an agent of theft of others' children, an outlaw, against whom I have the right to seek help even from the police, since I have no other means to influence him and to fight against him. [...] I consider myself morally entitled to deal like this with the scoundrel because it was the ONLY way to find out where the children are, and the results justified my behaviour”<sup>45</sup>

A number of emigrants, in particular Inna Rakitnikova (pseudonym – Ritina, the wife of eminent social revolutionary Nikolai I. Rakitnikov), was inclined if not directly to support actions of Tyutcheva, Klapina and Kollegaev, then at any rate sharply to condemn the behaviour of Tyutchev and Kolosov, even boycotting the latter. The Foreign Delegation was persistently dragged into the conflict, demanding that it take one side. On the one hand, it was required to condemn Tyutchev and Kolosov for denunciation and, on the other hand, to condemn all those who had taken part in the abduction of the children. Sending via Kolosov copies of his application to Foreign Delegation of the Central Committee of PSR to the representative of PSR in the II International Ilya A. Rubanovich, to the most authoritative revolutionary Lopatin, Tyutchev and I. Rakitnikova testified his readiness to arrange a grand scandal to the Foreign Delegation, in case it sided with the abductors. The party leadership found itself in a very delicate position, essentially caught between two fires.

This is why the reply of Foreign Delegation of the PSR Central Committee to Kolosov, signed by Boris N. Moiseenko, does not contain the most important thing – its position with regard to the theft of children, but only reproaches against Kolosov. Unfortunately, we can judge about the Foreign Delegation letter only from the 7 September response of Kolosov, who wrote to the Foreign Delegation: “In all of your four points you, to my surprise, do not address the most important thing. You do not tell me what your attitude to the essence of what I have written to you is. The issue is clear: on the one hand we have the fact that children were stolen from a Party comrade by Party members, and on the other hand we have a complaint to the police by Party people. What is

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<sup>45</sup> *Ibidem*.

your position on this matter? I believe that the fact of theft is greater than the fact of arrest, Inna I. Ritina, on the contrary, apparently found that arrest is greater than theft, and acted against me together with those who were stealing children. Which of us is right? It is not an academic question as I am not a Party member but I am dealing with purely Party matters and am I admissible if you find me in the wrong in dealing with police, all negative sides of which I am well aware myself. I await your answer to THIS question and allow me to think that in answering it you will, in any doubtful case, not refuse to ask me for references beforehand, but will not make judgment without hearing me out...<sup>46</sup>

In the end, the Foreign Delegation of the Central Committee of the PSR, in its "Notification" on the case, decided to take a purely formal position, and thus not to take sides in this conflict. This was only possible because it turned out that, for the time being, Kollegayev, Klapina and Kolosov were not members of the PSR and, consequently, the conflict between them had to be resolved independently.

On 18 September, Tyutchev answered to this decision of Foreign Delegation: "I have received notification of Delegation from 15 September this year and I hasten to answer, that I patiently will wait for the decision on my 'actions to be made publicly and become generally known' or, in other words, the party decision of a question: has the father, the party member from whom children have been stolen, the right to address to authorities for assistance in returning to him these stolen children? The solution, therefore, is a particular case of the general situation: which means may and can a socialist living under bourgeois conditions use to protect his personal or material interests and, if they are violated, to ensure that they are restored?"

[...] Everyone living here (with the exception of the Kolosovs, Lopatin and four or five other comrades, and one neutral company) came down on me not for going to the police in general, but because the kidnapper was my comrade in their eyes – a socialist-revolutionary. I have no doubt that if the kidnapper had been a mere hired thug or even a mere gallant knight-errant, it would not have occurred to anyone to condemn me for going to the police.

Therefore the Delegation, I think, must also decide the following questions as a matter of principle: Is it acceptable for a socialist to turn to the police against another socialist who has interfered in the former's private life and even stolen his children? And is this kind of interference by a second socialist compatible with the name of a socialist and, in particular, with the name of a party member, as it seems to be allowed by some persons calling themselves socialists-revolutionaries?

My second point of bewilderment is the phrase 'acts committed publicly and made generally known'. What does it mean? Could it mean that my actions, if they had not been made public, would not have been debated by the Delegation? I am used to being responsible for every word I say and every action I take, as *they are in themselves* and not by the nature of their publicity or not<sup>47</sup>.

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<sup>46</sup> *Ibidem.*

<sup>47</sup> *Ibidem.*



Why did the PSR leadership avoid discussing a matter of principle, but rather stuck to formal details? Because this was the only way to put the case on the back burner. A matter fraught with very serious consequences. In fact, not only Tyutchev and Kolosov pressurised the Foreign Delegation of the Central Committee of PSR, demanding to condemn the opponents, but they pressurised from the other side as well – Klapina (her husband Fabrikant was a member of the Foreign Delegation of the Central Committee of PSR), Rakitnikova (she and her husband were members of the Foreign Delegation of the Central Committee of PSR). If to add to this that it is not yet known, on whose side would have sided S-R emigrant public opinion with (in fact, according to Tyutchev, a Kavian colony with a small exception condemned his appeal to police), the party leaders, by taking Tyutchev's side, risked to run into discontent not only among emigrants, but also in the Foreign Delegation of the Central Committee of PSR itself. It seems that this was largely responsible for the failure to condemn the theft of children as a way of resolving the family conflict. On the other hand, covering up child abductors was no less fraught with scandal. Kolosov's readiness to appeal to public opinion was expressed already by sending copies of his statement to the Foreign Delegation of the Central Committee of the PSR to Rubanovich and Lopatin. Had the Party leadership strongly condemned the actions of Tyutchev and Kolosov, there is no doubt that they would have announced a "crusade" by the Foreign Delegation of the Central Committee of the PSR.

The purely familial conflict between the Tyutchevs, who, for reasons unknown to us, failed to reach a solution acceptable to both on the issue of children and who dragged several members of the party into this conflict, presented the Foreign Delegation of the Central Committee of the PSR with a difficult choice.

A kind of stalemate situation was created for the party leadership, when each side had its "truth" and its "Achilles' heel", and whichever side it took, it would be sure to lose. The avoidance of a principled assessment of the situation helped the Foreign Delegation of the Central Committee of the PSR not to get bogged down in a grand scandal, but of course it did not satisfy any of the conflicting parties, and consequently it fed both them and the emigre community as a whole with dissatisfaction with the position of the Foreign Delegation of the Central Committee of the PSR, which sought to avoid acute situations.

No less revealing in the context of characterising the moral atmosphere of the S-R emigrant community is the conflict between Kolosov and Chernov, which is a rather bizarre interweaving of three conflict situations, all of which in their time received quite scandalous and high-profile publicity. The first is connected to the circumstances of Kolosov's resignation from the PSR in the spring of 1909, the second with Chernov's petition to the Foreign Delegation of the Central Committee of the PSR about restoration of Kolosov in the Party, and quite scandalous conflict arisen between them. And the last conflict arose between Kolosov and the Foreign Delegation of the Central Committee of the PSR (which, in his words, should have been taken to the party court), however this conflict, although became a sensational scandal, did not develop further, and, in fact, completed all this "complicated" history.

The history of Kolosov's withdrawal from the party in April 1909 (known to us in the retelling by Chernov, interceding for him before Foreign Delegation of Central Committee

of the PSR in November 1911) is remarkable already in itself. According to Chernov, at one of the party meetings discussing the guilt of a Fighting Organisation member “Nikolay”, suspected of provocation in the spring of 1909, Kolosov stated that despite the lack of “sufficient evidence”, in his opinion, “the duty of every party member is to eliminate Nikolay”, implying by this his murder. To which Savinkov, who was present at the meeting, pointed out to Kolosov that he too was a Party member and if he thought so, then “what was the point”. According to Chernov, Kolosov, “believing that Savinkov reasoned correctly and without eliminating Nikolay, he, Kolosov, believed that he could not remain in the Party”.<sup>48</sup> Kolosov himself wrote on 17 April 1909 a short statement to the Central Committee of the PSR: “For reasons of a personal nature, which I do not consider necessary to explain, I declare to the Central Committee that I am leaving the Party. Eugene Kolosov”.<sup>49</sup> There is no doubt that had such an “interesting” situation and no less extravagant reaction of Kolosov received publicity at that time, he would have been most likely dissuaded from taking such a serious step based on such a strange logic. However, if we consider this logic of Kolosov, the reason for his secrecy becomes clear at once. After all, Kolosov was faced with a choice: either to insist and kill “Nikolay” or admit that his reasoning was hasty and ill-considered. Instead he finds an entirely different way out, lying on a different plane. Not wishing to admit his wrongness and rightness of Savinkov, Kolosov in fact declares – I am right, I do not renounce my words and I really in this situation, “as a member of the party” should kill “Nikolay”, but as I do not have enough spirit to kill a man, I better leave the party, than to admit my wrongness. Of course, Kolosov did not show off such an outstanding ego and egocentrism, for having persuaded himself (and, of course, there would be enough willing people) to stay in the Party, he would have become ridiculous. This story emerged two years later and was told by Kolosov himself to Chernov. Later, Chernov categorically claimed that Kolosov had authorised him to settle his relations with the Party, while the latter denied this no less categorically.

It is not difficult to imagine the reaction of the members of the S-R leadership, caught like a “hen in a pluck”, having done a good deed “at the request of a man”, they received very serious and scandalous accusations in their address instead of gratitude. Naturally, they did not hesitate to turn to the person in charge of the whole affair – Chernov – and ask whether Kolosov had done this or not. Chernov, who received a perplexing letter from Moiseenko, a member of the Foreign Delegation of the Central Committee of the PSR, in his turn demanded from Kolosov explanations on his statements about the amateurism of Chernov. The latter wrote to Kolosov (his letter is available on file in two copies, one sent to the Foreign Delegation of the Central Committee of PSR by Chernov himself, the other by his addressee<sup>50</sup>).

In the answer letter to Chernov (a copy of which together with a copy of the letter of Chernov he sent to the Foreign Delegation of Central Committee of the PSR) Kolosov accused him that he had exceeded his authority.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> *Ibidem*, 154.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibidem*, 551.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibidem*.

At last, on 3 January 1912 the meeting of the Foreign Delegation of the Central Committee of the PSR took place, and Moiseenko put the last document that put an end to this history at last: “At the session of the Delegation 3/I 1912 it was decided to stop the correspondence on the Kolosov case and to consider the incident resolved”.<sup>52</sup>

But the apotheosis of the degradation of the S-R’s environment and an indicator of the specific moral atmosphere of the emigration are the two “Zurich brawls” between several Russian émigrés – S-Rs and Social-Democrats – on 28 and 29 September 1912.

This story is interesting not so much as another illustration of the fact that by no means all strata of the political emigres were distinguished by conduct which was dignified from the point of view of a socialist, or indeed simply a decent person, but rather by the correspondence they generated, which uncovered the background to these events. The archive has preserved materials from the two opposing sides, which, on the one hand, gives us a clear picture of their positions and, on the other, allows us to make our own little investigation on the basis of the surviving documents in order to understand what is true and what is fictitious.

The events of 28 and 29 September 1912, in Zurich are summarised as follows. At a party on 28 September there was “the usual drunken brawl” between members of the local émigré colony, in which the S-Rs Lomov and Semenovskiy took part. The next day, there was another clash in Culmanstrasse involving the S-Rs Lomov and “Malyutka” (Troshchilov), who engaged in a number of unequivocally anti-Semitic acts, i.e. shouting “Beat the Jews!” during the beating.<sup>53</sup>

Naturally, these events became “the subject of the colony’s speculation”, and the fight in the street was also “interpreted as a Jewish pogrom”. The elected board of inquiry, which questioned the witnesses and people directly involved in the fight, issued a resolution in which it “denied the vindictive nature and ideological connection” of the two fights, stated that Lomov’s “participation in the second fight was not anti-Semitic,” while Malyutka “that day allowed himself anti-Semitic shouts,” and “rejected in the strongest terms the pogrom character of the fight”.<sup>54</sup>

This resolution was cited in an extensive letter from Madridov, the Secretary of the Central Bureau of the Foreign Federation of the groups of assistance for PSR to the Central Bureau of the Foreign Groups of the RSDLP on 26 January 1913, which set out the S-R’s version of what had happened in Zurich. Madridov not only tried in every way to obscure the anti-Semitic nature of the fight, but also accused the Social-Democrats I. Schrag and E. Goldstein of an act unacceptable from his point of view – going to the police to punish those responsible for the beating. In his portrayal this looked as follows: “When the fight on Culmanstrasse took place, the secretary of the Zurich group of the RSDLP, Schrag, became aware of it. Although he was not present, he was only informed by an acquaintance that a pogrom was supposedly taking place and felt it necessary to phone the police, in order to summon the police to the place of the incident”. Having met

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<sup>52</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>53</sup> Российский государственный архив социально-политической истории (РГАСПИ), Фонд 332, Опис 1, Дело 54, Лист 18.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibidem*, Лист 7.

the police on the scene, Schrag and Goldstein “suggested that the police search the flat of political émigré Helena Brodsky [...], where they thought those whom they thought were the pogromists were hiding”.<sup>55</sup>

In conclusion, Madridov believed that “the qualification of the actions of Schrag and E. Goldstein and the consequences arising from their actions should be a matter for the RSDLP Central Foreign Bureau to judge” and expressed confidence that “it will find it necessary to investigate the case”.<sup>56</sup>

At the same time, the excerpts from the minutes of the commission of inquiry attached to Madridov’s letter, containing a record of Shrag’s testimony, show that the matter was as follows: on 29 September “the wounded Krakhmalnik was brought to Shrag and it was announced that a Jewish pogrom had taken place. In view of this, the witness found it necessary to call in the police for help. The witness met policemen on the way to the police and went with them to Brodsky’s house to look for the beaters. Brodskaja stated that Lomov was not with her, that he had just left. Yefim spoke to her in Russian several times. Brodskaya was indignant that the social-democrats went to the police. «Have mercy, they are pogromists,» said Yefim, to which the reply followed: «Jews like you should be beaten»”.<sup>57</sup>

Having received Madridov’s letter, the Central Bureau of the Foreign Groups asked the Zurich group of the RSDLP to make an enquiry about the events of 28–29 September 1912. The response of the bureau of the Zurich group not only details its position in this conflict, but also outlines the atmosphere in which the clashes themselves and the subsequent proceedings took place. First of all, the report of the Secretary of the Central Bureau of the Foreign Federation of PSR groups is described as “inaccurate and incorrect”, because it is based on “totally incorrect data”. In particular, the inaccurate quotation completely distorts the meaning of the speech of Mr. Martynov, who spoke in defence of the actions of Schrag and Goldstein: “Lomov and Co. showed themselves to be thugs, everyone agrees with this, however the question of the degree of anti-Semitism in the motives of their behaviour is not treated. As for the treatment of comrades Shrag and Yefim to the police, it was caused by the fact that Shrag and Yefim concluded from their first impressions that Lomov and Co. wanted to organise a Jewish pogrom, and under such conditions any social-democrat and any decent person in general would not hesitate and should even have asked the police for help”.<sup>58</sup>

The delegates’ assembly expressed its attitude to the events of 28–29 September in its address “To the Russian Colony”: “The delegates’ assembly of representatives of political and socio-cultural organisations, having discussed the events of 28–29 September and their consequences, concluded that a colonial assembly should be convened which would express its attitude to the direct and indirect perpetrators of the recent events and thereby prevent the recurrence of such phenomena in the future. The delegates’ meeting states that

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<sup>55</sup> *Ibidem*, Лист 2–3.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibidem*, Лист 8.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibidem*, Лист 9.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibidem*, Лист 32–32об.

the main cause of the fight on the evening of 28 September in the Stadthalle was a phenomenon that has been common in some emigrant circles in recent years – drunkenness.

Although the events of that evening were by no means of a national confrontation, neither at the beginning of the fight nor at its end, when one of the injured Russians had been given the assistance possible at that place and time, these events nevertheless constitute an extremely reprehensible phenomenon.

It is even more reprehensible and it is the direct and mediocre perpetrators of the infamous beating in Culmannstrasse in front of the Russian reading room, when those who started it have shown the most boundless and shameless fistic instincts and allowed in a number of actions that were undoubtedly and unambiguously anti-Semitic tricks.

Such phenomena must cause unanimous and most resolute repulsion from all, without distinction of socio-political views of the members of the Russian colony, which must sharply and definitely disassociate itself from the heroes of wild street and anti-Semitic antics[...].<sup>59</sup>

As an addition to the testimony of Shrag, Goldstein also sent a statement to the Central Bureau of Foreign Groups in which he noted: “[...] I believe that the task of the police is to protect citizens from any hooligans, especially those who beat up under the slogan ‘beat the Jews’. This is a task that the Swiss police do well, which is why I have turned to them for help. I did not need to wait for the results of the investigation or for the nature of the fight to be established: they were beating me and shouting ‘beat the Jews’. Whether it was anti-Semitism based on hooliganism or hooliganism based on anti-Semitism, it seems completely indifferent to me.”<sup>60</sup>

Finally, one cannot ignore the position of the representatives of the S-R Party in this whole affair. The local Socialists-Revolutionaries, represented by Lomov and Co. and the Brodsky spouses, demonstrated openly anti-Semitic views, and members of the local group covered them up, and the Secretary of the Central Bureau of the Foreign Federation of the PSR Assistance Groups Madridov tried to obscure this side of the conflict, stressing the inadmissibility for a social-democrat to contact the police of a bourgeois state, even for protection from hooliganism. One of the leaders of the PSR, Chernov, in a letter to the Social-Democrat Krahmalnik, expressed himself clearly and distinctly: “The participants in the wild scenes of the fist-fight, in my opinion, are undoubtedly liable for the trial of their comrades. I do not care about the participants ‘on the other side’. But on one side the participants were people calling themselves Socialists-Revolutionaries. The S-R group must deal with their behavior *with due severity, even ruthlessness*, without referring to the fact that the participants ‘on the other side’ remain unpunished. If this is the case, so much the worse for their comrades on the ‘other side’. But for me these scenes of fighting, which started with some party, and apparently even just a ‘drunken affair’, are not even that important. More important to me are those hectograph sheets signed with the names of the two brawlers, which are certainly unworthy not only of socialists, but also of mere ideological people. Some

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<sup>59</sup> *Ibidem*, Лист 42.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibidem*, Лист 26.

passages in these pamphlets, like the expression 'Judaisers of Judaism', breathe with unmistakable anti-Semitism. I have written on this subject that if I had been a member of the Zurich group, I would have insisted on an immediate meeting of the group to expel the authors of these leaflets (if they belong to it) and to submit their behaviour to the higher party instances. For, in my opinion, it is not possible for a group to take a vague or confused stand in such matters without losing its moral prestige and authority. This is my opinion, which I have no reason to hide from anyone, and you can show this part of my letter to you to whomever you like".<sup>61</sup>

In this case too, we see that some of the participants in the conflict were eager to obscure the fact of the unworthy behaviour of the two Zurich S-Rs and to concentrate all their pathos on denouncing the Social-Democrats who were turning socialists over to the police. It seems that this position was adopted by Madridov and the Zurich S-Rs out of a peculiar corporate ethic and an unwillingness to admit the inadmissibility of the actions of their comrades. The position of Chernov is considerably more interesting. On the one hand, he takes an absolutely tough stance on the S-Rs who allowed anti-Semitic manifestations and demands their expulsion from the S-R emigrant group. In fact, it was precisely this position of Chernov that put a stop to the development of the conflict. But on the other hand, Chernov completely sidesteps the question of the admissibility of the Socialists' complaint to the police by stating: "[...] The participants 'from the other side' are of no concern to me" and not accepting the Zurich S-R's references "[...] that the participants 'from the other side' remain unpunished. If this is so, so much the worse for their comrades on the 'other side'".

From all this we can conclude that although the admissibility of the very fact of the social-democrats turning to the police is apparently not indisputable for Chernov, but he emphasises that it is the business of their comrades, and he himself does not want to enter into a discussion of this issue, which can lead away from the most important thing – the unacceptable behaviour of his co-parties.

The need to resist the erosion and degradation of the revolutionary subculture and the degradation of the party and the emigres as the only way of self-preservation and self-purification is perceived by revolutionaries already in the years of the revolution, and especially acutely since the beginning of 1909.

Apart from attempts to restore the old comradesly relations within the party and in emigres and to suppress the centrifugal processes, all kinds of investigative and judicial structures became an important means of saving their world and subculture. On the one hand, they tried to surgically cut off everything gangrenous, while on the other, they repeatedly reminded the revolutionaries about the expected standards of behavior.

One should not underestimate the impact of the negative processes on strengthening the centrifugal processes, on the deterioration of the moral atmosphere in the emigre community and even on the fate of these parties. Thus, for example, the betrayal of Azef, a member of the Central Committee of the PSR, and the report on his case by the Judicial-Investigation Committee of the Central Committee of the PSR in March 1911

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<sup>61</sup> *Ibidem*, Лист 4.

fatally divided the party leadership (for the first time in the history of the PSR it split irreversibly) and launched the flywheel of factional building, which had disastrous consequences for the party and for Russia in 1917.

It was then that the PSR, having become the largest and most influential party – in fact, the only party with any real claim to the title of ruling party, found itself ungovernable due to the severe disunity and split in the party leadership. It appears that one of its leaders, Chernov, was largely right when he stated in 1920: “solely because the PSR did not prove united and resolute enough to lead in the second half of 1917 the revolution was increasingly taking power which itself was going into its hands – therefore, the revolutionary wave rolled over its head and carried on its crest the Bolshevik Party, which, according to the logic of events, stole the most important slogans constituting its strength, only to mutilate and distort them in practice, thus preparing for its imminent fall”<sup>62</sup>.

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<sup>62</sup> РГАСПИ, Фонд 274, Опись 1, Дело 1, Лист 50.

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## **The Socialist-Revolutionary Emigration in Europe in 1907–1914: the Moral-Psychological Atmosphere and Centrifugal Processes**

This article deals with the moral-psychological atmosphere in the Socialist-Revolutionary (S-R) emigration and the centrifugal processes in the S-R party. The article examines why these processes emerged after the defeat of the 1905–1907 revolution, how they progressed and how they were affected by the exposure of Yevno Azef. The author, using the documents of the Party commissions of inquiry and courts, provides numerous examples of deviant behaviour within the S-R Party and attempts to create a system of norms and mechanisms for countering the processes of disintegration of the Party organism and violation of the unwritten rules of behaviour of Party members.

**KEYWORDS**

Party of socialists-revolutionaries (PSR), Russian 1905–1907 revolution, Foreign Organisation (Federation) of PSR Assistance Groups, exposure of Yevno Azef, moral and psychological atmosphere among emigres

## **Emigracja socjalistów-rewolucjonistów w Europie w latach 1907–1914: atmosfera moralno-psychologiczna i procesy odśrodkowe**

Niniejszy artykuł dotyczy atmosfery moralno-psychologicznej w środowisku emigracji socjalistów-rewolucjonistów oraz procesów odśrodkowych w ich partii. Autor artykułu bada, dlaczego procesy te pojawiły się po klęsce rewolucji lat 1905–1907 i jak postępowały, a także jak wpłynęło na nie ujawnienie roli Jewno Azefa. Korzystając z dokumentów partyjnych komisji śledczych i sądów, autor podaje liczne przykłady niewłaściwych zachowań



w Partii Socjalistów-Rewolucjonistów oraz podejmuje próbę odtworzenia systemu norm i mechanizmów mających na celu przeciwdziałanie procesom dezintegracji organizmu partyjnego i łamaniu niepisanych zasad postępowania obowiązujących w środowisku członków partii.

#### SŁOWA KLUCZOWE

Partia Socjalistów-Rewolucjonistów (PSR), rewolucja 1905–1907 w Rosji, Organizacja Zagraniczna (Federacja) Grup Pomocy PSR, zdemaskowanie Jewno Azefa, atmosfera moralna i psychologiczna na emigracji

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