

The First Marxist Party's Birth of Russia

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Abstract

Russia in the 19th century is an age of change in which political and economic reform, burst of democracy thought, spread of revolutionary action has become the theme of The Times. At this time, the Russian society is full of all sorts of ideological trend, especially the radical Populism. The Marxism as a kind of "import" has experienced a process of taking root in Russia. Russian intellectuals in this process are also experiencing an ideological test, most people finally chose Marxism, and they believe that Marxism can lead the Russian people to a new historical beginning. By the lead of them, having the common guiding ideology of Marxism, many labour organizations work together to promote the establishment of the Russian social democratic labor party (RSDLP).

Key words: Russia; Marxism; Social Democratic Movement

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INTRODUCTION

It has often been remarked that many of the problems besetting the emergent nations today may be understood more clearly in the light of the history of Russia during the late nineteenth century. At that time, rapid industrialization, the development of modern communications, and the spread of education undermined

popular respect for established authority. Millions of men and women in town and country were shocked into an awareness of the opportunities that existed for a radical transformation of their way of life. As the movement of protest grew stronger, intellectuals familiar with advanced Western thought strove to bring it under their own control and use it to overthrow the existing regime. And then, the Russian intellectuals who had gradually accepted the Marxism plan to found a unity party to promote the Social Democratic movement of Russia.

1. RUSSIAN EXPLORATION IN 19TH CENTURY

From the noble liberal reform of Russian tsar Alexander I to Alexander ii — serf system reform, it can be seen that in 19th century, the Russian is guided by the ruling class tried to free of existing social and system, and to seek a road to catch up with the modernization of western countries. Especially, serfdom reform in 1861 is of epoch-making significance in the modern history of Russia: farmers out of the serfs attached identity and personal freedom, this to the development of Russian capitalism provides the necessary free labor; Farmers through foreclosure get the way to break the feudal system of production relations; Allowing the introduction of western books on education, accelerate the incoming of western bourgeois ideology.

Reforms make Russia turn up a great change of old social relations and social structure. A part of poor farmers, getting rid of the serfs personal adhere relation and become free farmers, move into cities, into the factory. They, with "serfs of state-owned and hereditary domain, manual factory workers, the craftsmen of bankruptcy, bankrupt farmers in the process of rural differentiation" (Yao, 2013, p.36) consist of the emerging industrial proletariat. After reform, industrial strength further growth of industrial strength of the capitalist class, especially the embourgeoisement of noble bourgeoisie

expanded the Russian bourgeoisie team. At the same time as the landlord towards intensive phase of economic development, improving farming, expanding the scale of production, to a certain extent, also contributed to the forward development of capitalism. To the 1870s, Russia's four main grain (wheat, rye, or barley, and oats), yield up to "more than 629,300,000 quintal". The improvement of agricultural production also makes the farmers' purchasing power increase and this increasing further stimulate the development of the industry, in particular, textile industry. To 1861," all Russian textile factories have processed 30,951 tons of cotton, but in 1881 the cotton processing capacity has reached 147,494 tons, 171,994 tons in 1891." Capitalism also led to the development of handicraft industry of railway transportation, "before the serf emancipation, Russia's railway is only 1,060 km "and to the early 70s, Russia's railway "has reached 10,668 kilometers... the early 9th up to 28,803 km." (Pokrovski, 1978, pp. 152-153). The development of the railway network help Russian metallurgical industry to grow, and the ability of the Russian smelting iron from 327,671 tons in 1861 grows to 992,210 tons in 1891. To see, on the end of the 20th century Russia has entered the stage of the development of industrial capitalism countries.

Also like the mysterious death of Alexander I, Alexander ii was assassinated in 1881, which highlights a variety of complex and sharp contradictions of Russia which is walking on the rugged path. In fact, by the fierce collision between west road and domestic reality, Russia in the pursuit of western road, as its national emblem, shows a kind of approximate "splitting" of the "double-headed eagle" features: one east, one west. It suggests that Russia on the issue of go east or west is "struggle", and the problem which was called as the riddle of the sphinx of Russian history by philosopher Herzen, has not yet been find out, but it really affected the historical process of Russian society.

When the things of "new" and "old", "advanced" and "backward" game with each other, there will always be "rebel" trend of thought for change. Russian society is no exception. Serf system reform is not complete, and emerging capitalism which squeezes on the working people aroused the people to revolt. Before Marxism was introduced into Russia, upholding and faith "people" as the main characteristics of "populist" replace the liberalism trend. From the early 19th century it is beginning of "confession" of nobles and intellectuals and gradually become throughout the 19th century Russian social as a powerful social and political thought. So Lenin thought "populism "is long-standing. And People recognized Chernyshevsky and Herzen as the founder of the populism." (*Collected Works of Lenin [Vol. 22]*, 1990, p.326) From Narodnaya Volya in the 1880s to the early 20th century of Russia's largest political party—the social revolutionary party, that marked the populist as a powerful

social ideological trend has completely become the far-reaching influence of the social and political movement. For Lenin and his Bolshevik party in such aspects as the founding theory and the revolutionary strategy it has had a profound impact.

In 19th century Russia's reform is beginning of serfdom crisis deepened, capitalism emerging. From 30s, there is all kinds of secret groups of progress and revolution, the 40s Slavophiles claiming rural communes and orthodox as Russia's unique development road and Westernizers advocating to take the path of western European countries, rather than sent back to the past. And until 1861, the formation of Land and Liberty Group as the main representative of populism can reflect an exploration and pursuit of Russia's "elite" to the state and national development path. Saying it is a "movement of elite", because at this time the social and political movement still stays in the nobles, progressive intellectuals, and as the main character of Russian society reform and revolution, workers and peasants has not been really aroused. Numbers are not on working-class team, revolutionary ideas has not deeply rooted in the hearts of the people and farmers "loyal" thought is still deeply rooted in the group, the Czar still is a "good" Czar. So, may say that "after 1861 the only intensified relationship lies in landlords and peasants rather than farmers and tsar. Russian intellectuals of opposition ... launching the movement to the folk was touched a rebuff." (Ma & Liu, 2013, p.1149) Dramatic change affects the interests of all parties, so conservative faction on behalf of the Czar group, liberals defending bourgeois interests, "radical democratic" (populist) representing the interests of the farmers and the Marxists on behalf of the interests of the proletariat which appear at the end of the 19th century around Russia's two major social and political crisis: One is the farmers land issues; another is the political reform, will open a new scene of the Russian history.

2. THE SPREAD OF MARXISM IN RUSSIA

Since the 1870s, with the forward development of Russian capitalism, working-class team makes further development, thus Marxism as a weapon of science thought to guide the struggle of the working class will inevitably link with the Russian social democratic movement. Plekhanov, Georgii Valentinovich (1856-1918) was the first to spread Marxism theorist in Russia, who is known as the "father of Russian Marxism". In 1856 he was born in a hereditary noble family of Russia, and early years by populism he became a populist. The failure of the movement — "to the folk", makes populists doubt to populism including himself. "Plekhanov feels urgently to figure out in theory about the ideological confusion and the contradiction of the revolutionary task and inclination of Russia." (Chuck, 1980, p.52) In the early 1880s Plekhanov began its 37 years (1880-1917) of exile abroad,

he met in Paris at the end of 1880 the French workers' movement leader Jules Guesde and the German social Democrats Karl Kautsky. He researched the European workers movement and the social Democrats' activities at that time, and reflected on the experience for the Russian revolutionary activities. At last with the spread of scientific socialism in Europe, Plekhanov eventually from populism become to Marxism. On September 25, 1883, Plekhanov and his like-minded people Pavel Blisovich Axelrod (1850-1928), Vera Ivanovna Zasulich (1849-1919), Lev Grigorievich Deutsch (1855-1941) and Vasily Nicholas Ignatov (1854-1995) Together in Geneva, Switzerland, founded the earliest organization of Marxism of Russia—Emancipation of Labour Group.

It is interesting to note that the founder of Emancipation of Labour Group has been positive populists. Plekhanov translation in 1882 the Communist Manifesto, that marks he has become the champion of Marxism and preliminary from populism to Marxism. Thus Plekhanov wrote in 1910: "I am not into Marxist in 1884, but in 1882." (Ibid., p.77) While discussing the name of Marxist group, Plekhanov tend to call it "the Russian social democratic club", but given the Russian domestic revolutionaries is not very understanding the social democracy, in order to get more allies, Emancipation of Labour Group as a name of "neutrality" is used. Then in effect as the Emancipation of Labour Group declaration: About Modern Socialist Publishing Books in its task boils down to two things: "First, through translating the most important books of Marx and Engels into Russian to spread scientific socialism thought. Second, from the perspective of scientific socialism and Russian working peoples' rights and interests, criticize the dominant among the Russian revolutionary theories, and further study important problems of Russian social life (Gao, 1983).

Since its founding, its members first begin to make Marx and Engels's works selectively to translate and spread to Russia. Deutsch translated the Marx's *Wage Labor and Capital*"; Zasulich translation Marx's *The Philosophy of Poverty*, "To the Motherland Chronicle Magazine Editorial Letter and Engels *The Development of Socialism from Utopia to Science, The Tsarist Russia's Foreign Policy, About Russia's Social Problems* and other works. Engels in 1894 made a statement to authorize Vera Zasulich to translate all his works into Russian. Secondly, in accordance with the tasks of the Emancipation of Labour Group, when it was founded there is to criticize the dominant theory among the Russian revolutionaries, in fact is to criticize populist ideas. In 1885, Plekhanov wrote a book of *Our Differences of Opinion*, and in his book he analyzes the theory of Herzen, Chernyshevsky, Bakunin, and Tkachev, thinking that "since Chernyshevsky, raised of revolutionary question in terms of the theory, there is not only making good progress but also retreating in many ways withdrawing to half of Slavophiles of Herzen."

(Plekhanov, 1962, p.186) Plekhanov's book points out the social status quo that the Russia is making progress of capitalism, and forming the industrial proletariat, and critically analyze the theory of populism, beginning to make the Marxism link with the concrete social and historical conditions of Russian society.

Before the foundation of Emancipation of Labour Group actually in 1883, Plekhanov had written a pamphlet named *Socialism and Political Struggle*, which was called "the first proclamation of the Russian social democracy" (*Collected Works of Lenin [Vol. 4]*, 1984) and make a criticism of populism thought for the first time in Russia. It expounds the relations between scientific socialism and struggle of the working class and criticizes the Bakuninism which abandons the practice of political struggle. Plekhanov use Marx's point of view that "all the class struggle is a political struggle" to tell the Russians "political struggle is a kind of tool to change the society and its value has been confirmed by social history." (Zhang, 2010, p.48) But populism destined to political struggle and socialism is the tower of Babel. Plekhanov foreseen the Russian working class will become the main force of revolution, and he borrowed from Marx's words in the Communist Manifesto: "As long as the bourgeois revolution take action", we will go with it against absolute monarchy, the feudal land ownership and the petty bourgeoisie". At the same time, "don't waste a minute to educate workers as clearly aware of the bourgeoisie and the proletariat hostile confrontation" (*Marx's Collected Work [Vol. 1]*, 2012, p.434). Plekhanov distinguishes between the bourgeois revolution to overthrow the autocracy bourgeois and socialist revolution in essence, but also thinks that it is possible by speeding up the cultivation of working class to shorten the time between the bourgeois revolution and socialist revolution, making bourgeois revolution to be the directional scene of proletariat revolution.

Although members of Emancipation of Labour Group had been in the exile for a long time, and to a certain extent, untethered from working-class political activities of Russia, especially Deutsch who engaged in printing and transporting the Marxist books to Russia was arrested in Germany in 1884, that made the frequent communication of Emancipation of Labour Group with Russia's domestic be interrupted. But there is no denying the fact that Emancipation of Labour Group first among Russians has set up the banner of Marxism. It has cleared the thinking obstacles through criticizing the populism, for the spread of Marxism in the working class. At the same time, Emancipation of Labour Group on behalf of the members of the Russian proletariat take an active part in the activities of the Second International, strengthening the communications between Russian domestic struggle of the working class and the workers' movement of the world. They with their own actions affect and educate large quantities of the Russian domestic revolutionaries.

Under the influence of Emancipation of Labour Group, starting in the 1880s a series of groups successively developed which support the Marxism. Although most of these groups were destroyed by the Czar government, but it did not prevent the Russian social democratic movement from moving forward and the further spread of Marxism. In order to strive for more like-minded people to join the social democratic movement, in November 1895, under Lenin's positive initiative, Petersburg Marxist group jointly established the "Working Class struggle Association for Liberation". Its founding began to combine Marxism with the workers' movement, and on the basis of Emancipation of Labour Group it further promoted the development of the social democratic organization of Marxism, being ready for the establishment of the Russian Social Democratic Labor Party from the ideological and organizational ways.

In the 19th century the transformation of Russian social ideological trend from Populism to Marxism, is not an accidental phenomenon. Compared with farmers, the working class showed its strong revolutionary force, and Marxism as guidance for ideological weapon in the struggle of political workers, was accepted by Russian advanced revolutionaries. Many famous leaders of Russian Social Democratic Labor Party have finished thought transformation during this period.

This is determined by a certain historical conditions that Russian movement for the original emancipation consisted of democracy and socialism, and this two big historical development tendency eventually parted ways, and the movement developed from the civilian intellectual revolution stage to the proletarian socialist development stage. (Ma. & Liu, 2013, p.242)

Marxism is based on the western philosophy, with the further development of European capitalism and the proletariat boarding the stage of history in the social and historical background, in German for media communication. But, its object is the Russian people who are under the control of Czar authoritarian rule, affected by the Slavism and Orthodox. And except language barrier, there are thousands years of cultural difference, therefore the spread of Marxism in Russia will be inevitably with "Russia" color, and if truthfully move it to Russia, Marxism would seem to be "doctrine" and be somewhat acclimatized. This also gradually evolved into two different routes of the development of Marxism in Russia: Bolshevism and Menshevism.

3. THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY AND OTHER POLITICAL FORCES

The end of the 19th century, Marxism was further combining with the working class movement, strengthening the desire that the social democracy groups hope to setting up a unity party. On 1 March 1898 solstice 3, from the "Working Class Struggle Association" of

Petersburg, Moscow Ekaterinoslav and Kiev (each 1 delegate), Kiev "Rabochaya Gazeta" (2 delegates) and the Bund (3 delegates), the nine representatives in Minsk held the inaugural meeting of the Russian Social Democratic Labor Party. The Bund was admitted to the Party as an autonomous organization independent solely in matters of particular concern to the Jewish proletariat—an ingenious formula that was to provoke much recrimination later. The congress appointed the émigré League of Russian Social Democrats Abroad as the Party's foreign agency and the Kiev "Rabochaya Gazeta" as its official organ. Radchenko, Eydelman, and Kremer were appointed to the Central Committee. The congress published the declaration of the Russian Social Democratic Labor Party, called for "the Russian working class should with his strong shoulder the responsibility for the cause of political freedom" (Central Compilation and Translation Bureau, 1964, p.5). The idea can be seen from the declaration that the proletariat is the only liberator class. The establishment of the Russian Social Democratic Labor Party declared the Russian proletarian historical mission: they will "get rid of the shackles of autocracy, with greater determination to continue to struggle against capitalism and the bourgeoisie, until struggle to socialism wins" (Ibid., p.6). But the conference did not formulate unified platform and the Party Constitution, there is no unified leadership of the local organization. It is in the form to complete the establishment of the Russian social democratic labor party and essentially the really founding mission is held in the summer of 1903—the Russian Social Democratic Labor Party congress for the second time.

Around the first congress closing soon, the infant fell prey to the watchful Zubatov, and party organization had been destroyed. "Some 500 arrests were made, including 175 in Kiev and over 50 in Moscow. By January 1899 the police claimed that they had seized eight of the nine delegates to the congress. Rabochaya Gazeta ceased publication. The Central Committee was paralysed." "The arrests appeared to vindicate Cherevanin and others who had warned that it was still too early to consider calling a Party congress." (Keep, 1963, pp.53-54) After the congress organizers haven't seen them expected effect, and local organizations still fragmented, the Central Committee lacked of authority and leadership skills. The conference also accelerated the spread of "economic nationalism", so that the next few years, it has become the most important issue between the Marxists and Economists in the Russian Social Democratic Labor Party. In 1902 Lenin published a pamphlet, *What Is To Be Done?* Where he made the history of Russian Social Democratic Labor Party into three periods, 1898 as the beginning of the third period, and considered that "in the spring of 1898, the party's establishment is the most prominent affair of Social Democrats in this period, and it is the last thing." Perhaps seeing the phenomenon of the Russian social democratic

movement such as chaotic and poorly organized after the congress, Lenin considered that on the problem of "What Is To Be Done" the simplest answer is: "ending of the third period." (*Collected Works of Lenin [Vol .6]*, 1986, pp. 172-173).

Objectively, the holding of the first congress of Russian Social Democratic Labor Party is not hasty and untimely, although it has no unified platform and the party constitution, but its declaration was agreed by Plekhanov, Lenin, Martov and they said, in the name of editorial of *Iskra*: "We admit that we are the member of this party, and we completely agree with the basic idea of 'declaration'" (Central Compilation and Translation Bureau, 1964, p.5). At the same time, it has completed the desire of the network of Russian social democratic group questing to establish a unified party. In spite of the fact that central committee was quickly destroyed and social democracy movement was suppressed, but the congress reflected from the side it promotes the development of the Russian social democratic movement, because motivation and reactionary resistance tends to be the same. And arguing with economic ideology is to lay the theory of Marxism in the party's position. Jumping out of the historical framework, the symbolism of the first congress is undeniable, and it opens the way for "the second".

The end of the 19th century to the beginning of the 20th century, there are hundreds of political organization actively on the political stage in Russia. The Kadets set up in 1905, with reformist to take the capitalist road, the Social Revolutionary Party in 1905, inheriting and developing the old Populism, founded in 1905 representing the interests of the bourgeoisie and the aristocracy, the union of October 17 and represented by Kropotkin, Anarchist groups, which has relative influence on the Russian people. Moreover, there is a special political organization, the "General Jewish Workers' Union in Lithuania, Poland and Russia", often also referred to as the Bund, which was founded in Vilnius on October 7, 1897.

The Bund who don't want to destroy the Jewish worker's common cultural heritage, and in fact, they finally started to consider Jewish culture development as a positive goal. As a result, they have to face a dilemma: How to make Jewish workers isolate from their environment, and urge them to enter a new world view, without destroy on their cultural life which they hope to save. In order to maintain the Jewish worker's right to exist as a Jewish, the Bundists were forced to design a kind of national culture autonomy plan to maintain a balance between assimilation and exclusive - at the same time it can coexist with Marxist faith.

The Bundists sincerely believe that the vision of Marxism will be right in Russia, and in their eyes, the establishment of the socialist society is the most far-reaching significance, also the most distant. Due to

the Tsar events involved in Narodnaya Volya Party in 1881, the Czar government adopted a hostile attitude to the Jews, especially the establishment of the "Fence" system, breaking their illusion of integrating into Russian society. So, like many of their contemporaries, the Bund is inclined to channel energy into a more practical task, destroying the Tsarist regime. The Czars is regarded as the main obstacle to the progress of revolutionary movement and symbols of oppression in everywhere.

The Bund played a very important role on the convoking of the Russian Social Democratic Labor Party of the first congress. The social democracy movement of Jews has always been the part of the Russian social democratic movement. "At the end of 1894, as soon as the League of Russian Social-Democrats Abroad was founded Jewish organization has established contact with it." (Tobias, 1972, p.60) After the founding of Bund, "it owns the more real support of the working class than any other social democracy in Russia. By 1900, it has had 1,400 members in Vilna, in Minsk and Bialystok each having 1,000 members, also in many other cities in Belarus and Poland having hundreds of members." (Keep, 1963, p.44) Thus the Bund as an autonomous organization joined the Russian social democratic labor party, not only strengthening the social democracy movement, but also laying a solid relationship with the Russian social democratic labor party in the future. From its birth until the day of its dissolution, 1921, separating and joining with the Russian Social Democratic Labor Party have profound impacts on the development of the Russian revolution, especially the debates between Bolshevik and Menshevik.

CONCLUSION

To sum up, the Russian Social Democratic Labor Party as Russia's first unified Marxist political party, its establishment has a profound impact on the Russian social democracy movement and the following revolution. It is a composite result of the reform of Czar government in 19th century, the development of capitalism, the growing mass movement and the collision of the different social thoughts. Its guidelines for the working class greatly liberated the thought of Russian workers, improving their political consciousness. Especially in the process of guiding workers' movement, the Russian democrats realized that complete freedom was the basic condition for the free and successful development of the struggle for specific improvements and for final emancipation. And in this process, the spreading of Marxism, found a kind of spiritual weapon to the Russian social democratic movement and finally made the Marxism as an "import" take root in the Russian, forming the Leninism with Russian characteristic.

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