In the present situation of economic, political and ideological crisis Russian intellectuals vigorously discuss problems of Russia's cultural identity and its geopolitical orientation. This compels scholars to re-examine the question of St. Petersburg's ambivalent identity in relation to the whole of Russia and to factors intrinsic to the city itself. Though in the past Petersburg's significance for Russia was obviously seen in its being the gateway to European civilization, some contradictions imbued in its natural environment, history of development, discriminative policy against the city during the Soviet period and a vision of Russia as a Eurasian state created the image of Petersburg's "Otherness" to Russia. This article focuses on Petersburg as the center where the national Russian culture built on the ideas of Enlightenment was born and demonstrates difficulties of its integration with the rest of Russia. For this purpose the example of rivalry between Petersburg and Moscow based on two different approaches to the country's development is examined. Special attention is given to the so-called "Leningrad Affair", a case when the whole city actually became a victim of the Stalin regime. As a result of purges the city was denigrated to the level of an industrial center with a regional status. This created a feeling of inferiority among its residents. It is suggested that because Petersburg is associated mainly with the Russian past, which at present has strong positive connotations for many people, new possibilities for the city to re-negotiate its identity with the country are opened. One perspective for this lies in the fact that many young representatives of the contemporary Russian political elite come from Petersburg and, supposedly, have inherited its best traditions. They may thus contribute to changes in the political culture of Russia still strongly connected with the Soviet period.

Introduction
I. City, Nature, Mythology
II. Petersburg and Europeanization
III. Petersburg and Moscow

IV. Stalin and Leningrad
Conclusion

The problem of a city as representation of a country's identity has not yet been studied extensively, though recently some publications on the topic have appeared (Driver 1999). Capital cities usually incorporate in themselves the image of the country and influence the way it is perceived from the outside. St. Petersburg, the former capital of the Russian Empire (1712–1917) and now the second largest city of Russia, may be seen as the embodiment of Russia's ambivalent identity — half European, half Asian — or as a paradigm for the country's identity search. This city is one of those places in the world which attracts the attention of numerous people from tourists to scholars of culture. While tourists are allured by its unique architectural design and world famous museums, many men of letters seem to be fascinated with the enigma of Petersburg. Dostoevsky called it "the most artificial and intentional city in the world". In the beginning of the 20th century Andrei Belyi predicted that "if Petersburg was not the capital, then [there would be] no Petersburg at all" (Belyi 1978: 24). A poet of the
post-war Soviet generation, Lev Ozerov, confirmed these bitter words by saying that Leningrad\textsuperscript{19}, was "the great city of provincial status". Perhaps, the enigma which surrounds St. Petersburg is first of all related to the way it came into being. It appeared not as the result of a natural growth of some settlement which might have existed in this place before, but under the order of the Russian tsar Peter the Great and a hundred years later turned into one of the most beautiful capitals of Europe. Some mystique may be attributed to its natural environment – floods occur nearly every year as if threatening the very existence of the city. The phenomenon of "white nights", which definitely take place at every place situated at the same latitude, has been "monopolized" by Petersburg and contributes to the image of the city as an illusion or mirage. The loss of the status of the capital in 1924, purges against Leningrad and its population carried out by Stalin, and the 900-day siege during the invasion of the USSR by the German army from 1941 to 1944 rendered it a tragic vision.

Literature on Petersburg is voluminous, covering topics as diverse as history, sociology, toponymy, architecture, and literature. Even a special term "Petersburg literature" exists, which, as demonstrated by Mochizuki, includes two streams – literature on the "soul of Petersburg" and studies of "Petersburg as a text" (Mochizuki 1994: 208). The return to the city of its original name in 1992 spurred a new boom in such studies which is still going on now.\textsuperscript{2}

However, most of the publications are confined mainly within the topic of Petersburg \textit{per se} and do not deal much with the problem of its identity as related to the whole of Russia. It seems that the phrase successfully coined by Alexander Pushkin in 1833 – "a window to Europe" – solved the problem of Petersburg's role for the country once and forever. Indeed, the city became the symbol of Russia's Westernization started by Peter the Great. Yet, the trend of development associated with this city has not been so easily accommodated to the psychology and mentality of the Russian people. Many of them, especially from the eastern part of the country, view Petersburg as alien to Russia.\textsuperscript{3} There is also a gap between the vision of Petersburg as the capital of the Russian Empire and that of Leningrad of the Soviet times, as if these are two different cities.

The question of Petersburg's identity and its role as the embodiment of Russia's Westernization requires a new interpretation in the present atmosphere of Russia's search for its new identity and geopolitical orientation, as many political and intellectual leaders of the day tend to see better prospects for the country not in the community of European states, but in its orientation towards Eurasia – "the familiar civilization niche" (Panarin 1996: 25). They emphasize the significance of Moscow as "the center of gravity and crystalization" of the Russian nation, the "essence of Russia" (Karlov 1997: 18) and thus denigrate the role of Petersburg. One of the philosophical foundations of this idea may be seen in the movement \textit{Evrasiistvo} (Eurasianism, 1920–30) which proclaimed that the time of the European civilization had come to its end and a new, different type of civilization with Russia as its leader would dominate the world henceforth.\textsuperscript{4}

The present article will address the question of Petersburg's identity in relation to the whole country and to factors intrinsic to its nature. For this purpose some vicissitudes of history and the ambivalent image of St. Petersburg will be examined. The article will focus on Petersburg as the center where the national Russian culture, built on the ideas of the Enlightenment, was created and demonstrate the difficulties of its integration with the rest of Russia. Special attention will be given to the so-called "Leningrad Affair" (1949–1952) and other instances of discrimination against the city during the Soviet period. The article will attempt to link the history of Leningrad with the history of Petersburg and make some suggestions about the future role of this city for Russia.

\section*{I. City, Nature, Mythology}

In May 1703, Tsar Peter the Great ordered the construction of a new city in the delta of the Neva River where it flows into the Finland Bay. The city was given the name of Saint Petersburg (in honor of the guardian saint of Peter the Great) and in 1711
was proclaimed the capital of the country. It is situated on 40-odd islands surrounded by 50 rivers and channels. The land here is marshy and flat, covered with only scant vegetation and is subject to flooding. When in autumn the western wind blows from the Finland Bay against the currents of the Neva, the water rises. After the banks of all the rivers and channels had been covered with granite, the water had to rise 150 cm to start flooding. But in the beginning of the 18th century a rise of 40 cm was enough to turn all the surroundings into one large swamp.

The history of Petersburg may be called the history of struggle with floods (Figure 1). There were 300 major ones. In 1824 the water reached the highest level of 410 cm, 462 buildings were ruined and 3,681 damaged. In 1924 the water rose to 369 cm and 19 bridges were swept away. Many people of the present generation remember the flood of 15 October 1955 when the water rose to 282 cm and communications between the central districts were cut off. In 1982 the construction of a dam across the Finland Bay began. The decision-making process was accompanied by a furious debate among ecologists, citizens and the Communist party committee. Many claimed that the natural balance in the Finland Bay and the Neva's delta would be ruined, thus bringing even more damage to the city. Nevertheless, the ambitious then first secretary of the Leningrad Communist party committee, Grigorii Romanov, a bearer of the same family name as the tsarist dynasty, wanted to immortalize himself as Peter the Great had done. However, the dam remains unfinished until now mainly because of a lack of financial resources. Quite recently on 30 November 1999 one more flood occurred. It was reported that the basement of the Hermitage Museum, the Menshikov Palace, one subway station and some buildings of minor importance were damaged by the water (Sankt-Peterburgskiye Vedomosti 1999).

Petersburg is notorious for its insalubrious climate. Autumns, winters and most of the spring time are chilly and humid, when snow melts into slush. Winter days are short with gray mist covering the city. By the beginning of the 20th century, Petersburg had become the least healthful capital in Europe. With a high rate of mortality even by urban Russian standards, the capital experienced fierce outbreaks of infectious diseases attributable in part to geography and climate and in part to municipal ineptitude. The city suffered from a high incidence of drunkenness, a soaring criminal rate, and abysmal housing conditions (Ruble 1990: 35–36). During the Soviet period, especially from the 1960s through 1980s social conditions significantly improved, but the weather, of course, did not change. People still suffer greatly from numerous respiratory diseases.
In his studies of semiotics of culture Lotman noted that a city like Petersburg situated on the sea shore, in a river delta symbolized the opposition between nature and culture. Such a kind of city created in defiance to and in struggle with nature bares, by definition, possibilities for a dual interpretation or attitude to it. It may be seen as the victory of reason over elements of nature, or as a violation of the natural process (Lotman 1992: 10). In the case of St. Petersburg, this opposition was reinforced by the fact that the city was designed as a sea-port in a hitherto continental country. It was built out of stone whereas houses in old Russia had always been made of wood. Moreover, the city seemed to be in opposition not only to nature, but to the rest of Russia itself. Reforms of Peter the Great, having the city as their locus, were aimed at destruction of the traditional Russian way of life, at an abrupt change of the country's course of development. They were met with resistance by the majority of the population. The tsar's numerous enemies cursed him and his city, calling Peter an Anti-Christ, the more so, as he ordered workers to destroy churches and bring their stones for the construction of Petersburg.

The absence of a previous history, openness to dual interpretations and the ambiguous attitudes of people to Petersburg gave birth to a mythology where the struggle between nature and the city, and between the city and the people became the main theme. These myths have been intertwined into the city folklore and literature (Antsyferov 1991; Rozhdestvenskii 1975; Unno 1988). The unique architectural ensemble of buildings in new classical, baroque and empire styles stretching over the banks of the Neva, wide and magnificent in its flow, also inspired many poets, writers and artists to glorify the beauty of the city (Gordin 1978; Rozhdestvenskii 1975). Delight, elation, even ecstasy dominated the literature of the 18th and the early 19th century, reflecting cheerful and optimistic spirits of the new Russia which believed in its great future and made others believe in it.

One of the best known eulogies to the city is Alexander Pushkin's poem *The Bronze Horseman*. Pushkin glorified St. Petersburg and its founder, confessing his love to the city.

I love thee, Peter's own creation;
I love thy stiff and stately sight,
Broad Neva's powerful fluxation,
Her great embankments' granite might ...

(Pushkin 1917: 111).

However, the poet also expressed anxiety over the future of Peter's deed. The poem contrasted the magnificent and harmonious image of the imperial city, symbolized in the statue of Peter the Great, to the wilds of raging water, in this case a metaphor for the Russian riot, "absurd and cruel", and a threat to civilization\(^3\). In general, Pushkin's vision of Russia's future was optimistic — he approved the policy of the great reformer and saw Russia as an essential part of European civilization.

Optimism about Russia's future began to wane in the middle of the 19th century and the attitude towards the city also changed. It came to be perceived as the embodiment of a despotic government and bureaucracy which oppressed the people. The myth of Petersburg as the city built on human bones and predictions that it would perish in water or would be sucked in by the swamp gained force. So, the theme of struggle between nature and culture was developed into the idea of the destruction of the city. The "dark" image of the capital was characteristic of the poetry of Odoevskii, Polonskii, Pechorin, Dmitriev and other poets of the time (Antsyferov 1922: 54–63). A philosopher and writer Alexander Herzen suggested that Bryullov, the author of the famous painting *Death of Pompeii*, was inspired for this picture by Petersburg, intuitively sensing its tragedy (Kagan 1996: 360). A poet Appolon Grigoriev named it the "city of suffering". Heroes of Dostoevsky's novels, poor people always shivering from the cold wind of the Baltic Sea, meditate and suffer, love and commit suicide in the city which seems very inhuman — wet and muggy, saturated with fog and fumes; windows of buildings seem to be chasing after people. Hiroshi Unno suggested that the dream to excavate the perished Greek city of Troy came into the head of the famous archeologist H. Shliman during his 20-year stay in Petersburg as the city itself resembled will-o'-the-wisp glowing over the marshy ground (Unno 1988: 16).
A new stage of adoration and worship of the city began in the so-called Silver Age of Russian culture — at the beginning of the 20th century. Poets and artists united in the group Mir Iskusstva demonstrated interest in the architecture of Petersburg in a desire to find through it the spirit of the city, its genius loci and — in a more practical way — to preserve its unique architectural heritage (Benua 1902). This interest in Petersburg was accommodated on a personal level through nostalgia for Petersburg expressed in poetry or through connecting the city to one’s own intimate emotional experience (Akhmatova 1976). However, perceptions were again contradictory. Whereas Benua saw it as the driving force of Russia, for Belyi, Petersburg was the concentration of evil, ominous, phantasmal and devilish forces which, he predicted, would ruin Russia (Belyi 1978).

When the revolution of 1905 was suppressed in violence, the attitude of hatred towards the city came to the forefront. “Your breath — decay and death ... The city to be damned, the enemy of God”, wrote Zinaida Gippius (Antsyferov 1922: 101), a leader of Russian symbolists. However, this hatred may not have necessarily been directed towards the city itself — in the social context of that time the curse acquired a more general providential meaning.

For example, Dobuzhinsky’s cycle of pictures Urban Dreams (created in 1905–1921) may be interpreted as “a variation on the Petersburg theme, updating it in ways characteristic of early twentieth century social thought and neatly capturing contemporary social, political, and economic realities and anxieties” (Mueller Sally 1998: 543). Mueller Sally identified the image of an abstract city drawn by the artist with Petersburg which was represented here as a place completely void of nature, as a prison for human beings and, thus, the antagonist of its inhabitants. This vision, indeed, may be called providential should Stalin’s repressive policy towards Leningrad be considered (this topic will be addressed below).

Antsyferov in his subtle, and now classic, analysis of literature devoted to the theme of Petersburg came to the conclusion that the constant repetition of the same image, i.e. the tragedy intertwined into the fate of the city, demonstrated not a lack of artistic imagination, but rather a certain objectivity of this image (Antsyferov 1922: 96).

II. Petersburg and Europeanization

The foundation of St. Petersburg was an important stage in the military campaign Russia waged against Sweden. It strengthened Russia’s position in the North-East of Europe, turned the country into a sea-power and opened possibilities for regular trade with European states. However, the foundation of the new capital went far beyond its military and commercial role. The new capital was designed with the purpose of giving Russia a new type of culture, i.e. a culture of the European type.

An outstanding Japanese philosopher Fukuzawa Yukichi (1835–1901) who set up for Japan the same goal as Peter the Great did for Russia distinguished between material and spiritual or moral aspects of European civilization. He attributed schools, industry, army and navy to material aspects and maintained that they were not so difficult to achieve. For this purpose one should only have a sufficient amount of money. “However”, continued Fukuzawa, “there are spiritual aspects as well. You cannot see them with your eyes or hear with your ears, you cannot buy or borrow them. Yet, their implication is of the utmost importance for all the people of the country. If this does not exist, there is no use in opening schools. This most important thing is called the spirit of civilization. But what is this spirit about? This is the independent energy of people” (Fukuzawa 1990: 48).

Peter’s activities resembled to a great extent reforms in early Meiji Japan and it can be argued that his policy laid the foundation for the new type of mentality, what Fukuzawa called “the spirit of civilization”, to appear in Russia, though at first only within a narrow stratum of society. In 1697 the Tsar went on a mission to Europe, realized how backward Russia was and drew a conclusion about the necessity of reforms. Not only did he carry out major administrative, military and financial reforms, but his innovations in the cultural sphere were extensive. He attributed great importance to raising young people.
who would become able to put his reforms into practice. Under the order of the Tsar, schools of practical knowledge for children of all social strata, as well as the Academy of Science, the University, the Naval Academy and the Chamber of Curiosities were established. A printing and a publishing house, a book-store and a public library, a botanical garden and a porcelain factory were opened. These and many other elements of a civilized European state first appeared in Petersburg. By 1727 the number of schools (including seminaries) reached 80 and 5,000 students studied there (Dohi 1992: 232).

Just as in Meiji Japan, young men chosen on the basis of their abilities, not their origins, were dispatched to study abroad. They became the first generation of “self-made men” in Russia who earned their income through service to the state. Many foreigners were also invited to live in Russia and they all settled down in St. Petersburg intermingling with Russians. In Moscow foreigners lived separately, in a place called Nemetskaya sloboda (German Village). The population of Petersburg spoke Dutch, German, Swedish, French and Finnish. The study of foreign languages, Japanese among them, was introduced in schools and the university.

Innovations which affected the majority concerned changes in everyday life, dress and etiquette. Men had to shave off their beards, women to wear hats instead of shawls, and traditional Russian kaftans and sarafans were replaced by European dresses and suits. Ways of entertainment also changed; theater performances and musical concerts became an essential part of the cultural life of the new capital. Famous social gatherings of the time (assemblies) impressed even Europeans by their grandeur and the refined manners of the participants.

The calendar reform was carried out; chronology began not with the creation of the world, but with the beginning of the Christian era. Thus, Peter demonstrated his wish to live “in the same time” as Europe did (Artem’eva 1998: 16–17). A new holiday, New Year, was introduced and Russia became 5,508 years younger. The alphabet which Russians and Bulgarians use now goes back to the 10th century and is considered to have been created by the monks Kirill and Methodius, hence, is called “Cyrillic”. However, the composition and inscription of letters was designed by Peter the Great (Dohi 1992: 237), so that in reality this alphabet may be called “Petrovskii”. It was Peter who acquainted Russians with the history of European and Asian countries, as under his order many books on geography and history were translated from Dutch and German into Russian. The Tsar also ordered the first history of Russia to be written. His meeting with a shipwrecked Japanese sailor Denbei symbolizes the beginning of Russo-Japanese contacts. Finally, the design of Petersburg itself, built of stone in a new architectural style, contrasted greatly to the old wooden Russia and was, probably, the main innovation. First designed as a replica of Amsterdam, it carried features of baroque and classicism, but transformed them into a style completely its own.

It is difficult to find any persistent philosophical system of thought behind these reforms. Peter the Great was a man of practical activity, not a philosopher. But he was not a mere technocrat. He rather believed that changes in the way of life would bring forth changes in the way of thinking. In one of his speeches delivered on the occasion of the victory over the Swedes at Gangut (1714) he emphasized cultural, but not only military and commercial significance of Petersburg and declared that from now on enlightenment will meet no hazards in our country ... I feel that somewhere in future, maybe even during our lifetime, Russians will put to shame the most enlightened people of Europe through their own achievements in science and diligence in work and will raise up their names to the summit of glory (Bashutskii 1834: 130–131).

One of the main features of the new type of culture which appeared in Russia, and mainly in Petersburg, was the replacement of a theological dominant by a secular one. Rationalism became the essence of culture with Europeanization of its form. The church was made subordinate to the state while education stopped being the monopoly of clergy and became directed at gaining practical knowledge.

A characteristic example of the new attitude towards the church was the role of buildings related
to religion in the architectural landscape of Petersburg. In contrast to Moscow (Figure 2) and other old Russian cities churches were not numerous in the new capital and the landscape was dominated by three buildings of a secular character: the Admiralty, the Academy of Science and the spire of Peter-and-Paul's Cathedral which belonged to the fortress, a military-political complex of buildings. The city of many foreigners also had to be tolerant towards differences in religion. Catholic and Lutheran churches were built even along the main street, Nevsky prospect.

The policy towards Westernization affected the system of values on the individual level. A new type of man came into being — active, with strong personality, able to build his own career and to evaluate his achievements. Two examples of biographies of such men are given by Lotman. One was Ivan Neplyuev, an ardent and active supporter of reforms, who built his career without any doubts about the rightness of Peter's deeds. Another, Mikhail Avramov, though he welcomed reforms, was critical of many their aspects and had enough courage to express his attitudes directly to Peter himself (Lotman 1994: 232–253). The growing interest in the individual was reflected in portrait painting which replaced icons and started to develop quickly first in Petersburg, then in Moscow and elsewhere.

A famous Russian historian V.S. Solov'iov saw the main significance of rapprochement with Europe in the fact that "through the European enlightenment the Russian intellect became open to such notions as dignity, human rights, freedom of consciousness" (Solov'iov 1989, 2: 578). It should be emphasized, though, that men of this type lived mainly in Petersburg or were employed in state service. Already at that early period some juridical rights were granted to women as well; for example, divorce, though difficult, became not impossible and men had to share their income with former spouses after divorce. This was absolutely incompatible with traditional Russian mores based on Orthodox religion.
Peter's reforms represented a changing of the world-view of Russians. From that point on not the nomads of Asia, but the advanced countries of Europe became "the Other" Russia compared itself with. The role of Petersburg can hardly be overestimated here. It was more than a "window to Europe". It was a door, a gateway for mutual communication between Russia and Europe. Some historians compare the significance of the foundation of St. Petersburg with adoption of Christianity by Russia in the 10th century. In the 10th century Russia turned to religion, dominant in Europe at that time, while in the 17th century it turned to the secular culture of the Enlightenment. Both of the events are landmarks in Russian history (Kantor 1999: 32; Kagan 1996: 9). Peter actually returned Russia into the European civilization, that it had become separated from because of the Tartar's invasion from the 13th till the end of the 15th century.

Some interest in Europe among Russian rulers emerged before Peter, but without his energy and independent spirit the rapprochement with Europe might have required another century or two, if it ever happened at all. At the same time his achievements became a reality only because due to the foundation of Petersburg he obtained the place, and with it the freedom, to carry out his reforms at a distance from the old center of power, Moscow.

The policy of civilization carried out by Peter the Great was continued by subsequent generations of Russian tsars. In this respect the reign of Catherine II (1762–1796) which is usually called "enlightened absolutism" was especially important. She further implemented Peter's educational policy and opened new schools and institutes, including one for women. Schools for common people in Petersburg numbered 486 and women made up one twelfth of students (Kagan 1996: 98). A woman, Duchess Dashkova, was appointed the head of the Russian Academy. Catherine was more attracted to the humanities than Peter. Interestingly, his hobby was carpentry, whereas she liked writing didactic comedies. Well known is the fact of her correspondence with progressive French philosophers (Voltaire and D'Alembert); she invited Diderot to visit Petersburg and employed a Swiss educator La Harpe to teach her grandson, future Emperor Alexander II. The works of French philosophers were translated into Russian, some translations being done by the empress herself. At the same time the first original Russian philosophical and sociopolitical treatises were written. For example, Alexander Radischev in his work "On a Human Being, His Death and Eternity" summarized the latest achievements of European philosophy, the theory of natural rights and the social contract among them. The Academy of Sciences began to publish various professional journals and books, including those in foreign languages such as German, French, even Chinese and Georgian. Private publishing houses also flourished and the first satirical magazines appeared, while the number of book-stores was growing. Catherine introduced the French salon culture in Russia, and French became the language of the aristocracy.

It was in Catherine's times that Petersburg acquired real features of a capital city. It was built as the embodiment of enlightened monarchy according to the canons of antique architecture. The new Russian capital expressed the idea of "regularity", i.e. of structural correlation to every part of the empire, to every prefectural city. The antique style of architecture seemed to transmit the importance of antique values — the perception of civic responsibilities and patriotism as the highest moral value, the close interaction of interests of the individual and the society, aestheticism of every form of human activity as a means for its comprehension and evaluation by citizens (Knabe 1996: 7–8). It may be assumed that architecture has some psychological impact on the people's mind. The strict, nearly geometric planning of Petersburg, total absence of hills, granite embankments, and austere colors of the north seemed to express symbolically the new type of Russian culture and may have contributed to the emergence of people of a special socio-psychological type which came to be known as peterburgskii (Petersburg-like) — laconic and reserved in speech, but rational, active and possessing self-respect.
According to Emmons, in some respects, as a consequence of the Petrine reforms, Russia on the eve of the French Revolution and before the onset of the industrial revolution in Britain resembled the West more than at any time since the late fifteenth century. Russia had a reasonably competent army, competitive technology and industrial output, and a Europeanized culture of the elite. The nobility had considerably advanced the concept of honor and had achieved definite rights; the cudgel had been put aside for the most part (Emmons 1995: 31).

The best confirmation of the spiritual growth of Russia started by Peter the Great and continued by his successors are Russian writers and poets from Pushkin to Dostoevsky, to Block. Their works demonstrated the main achievement of Peter’s policy, that is, Russia became able to create independently a culture of the European type. It is remarkable, though, that Pushkin, who is considered the national genius in Russia and is mostly venerated by Russians, is less known and appreciated outside the country in comparison, for example, with Tolstoy or Dostoevsky. It may be suggested that the latter two are considered to represent the enigma of the Russian soul. Westerners, in search of Russian nativism and exoticism, are less interested in Pushkin who is, probably, “too European” for them (Kantor 1999: 26).

However, the policy of “enlightenment and civilization” embraced only a small minority of Russian people, mainly those who lived in the capitals. The access to education was open only to nobles, gentry and some townpeople. The majority of the population, the peasants, lived under the system of serfdom and could hardly enjoy any fruits of Europeanization. Such rights as the nobility had were not guaranteed by a constitution or independent judiciary. A wide gap divided the society. Suffice it to mention that during the Napoleon invasion of Russia (1812) aristocrats of Petersburg had to study Russian as a foreign language. Realization of this gap and idealistic hopes to change the situation resulted in the revolt of the Decembrists. It took place in Petersburg on 14 December 1825, and its failure contributed to the vision of the city as the center of a despotic government and alien culture.

III. Petersburg and Moscow

From the very foundation of the city on the banks of the Neva differences and contradictions between the old and the new capitals came into being. They covered a wide range of aspects, from political and economic status to peculiarities of psychology, and from the mode of life to specific qualities of art. Many Russian writers of the 19th century (e.g. Pushkin, Hertsen, Belinskii) devoted their works to comparison of the two cities.

The first striking difference was in architecture: the straight streets of Petersburg, regular planning and flat landscape contrasted sharply with the curvy and winding streets of Moscow running up and down the hills. More importantly, Moscow was an economic and commercial center which supplied goods, especially textiles, to the rest of the country. Petersburg was a city of bureaucracy and government which needed goods from the country to supply it. Belinskii, an influential literary critic of the middle of the century, described Moscow as the city of “patriarchal families” where every family had its own house surrounded by a fence, its own cellar packed with foodstuffs and was, thus, separated from others, being able to live a life of its own (Belinskii 1991: 17–19). On the contrary, Petersburg was a public city where people socialized with each other in public places - from small cafes and confectioneries to gatherings of high society, thus comprising one single whole (Belinskii 1991: 24). According to Belinskii, the tempo of life in Moscow was slow, and everyone seemed to enjoy the daily pleasures, whereas in Petersburg people looked busy making their careers in a hurry. Fashions in Petersburg, of course, imitated those of Europe, while in Moscow one could still wear dresses of pre-Petrine Russia. At the same time Belinsky saw good points in Moscow as well. Sciences and arts at a distance from the central government were less subject to control and could enjoy more freedom in their development. However, even highly educated Muscovites could realize themselves only in Petersburg, entering the state service.
In fact, differences between Petersburg and Moscow reflected two principally different viewpoints about the course of political and cultural development of Russia and were represented by the famous discussion between Slavophiles and Westerners. Though representatives of each group could be found in both cities, nevertheless, Moscow was associated with Slavophiles, and Petersburg with Westerners. The main point of discussion between them revolved around the issue of whether or not to accept the policies initiated by Peter the Great.

Moscow became the locus of opposition against the policy of Europeanization already in the 18th century. For example, Prince Scherbatov (1733–90), one of the fanatic exponents of the idea of the superiority of traditional Russian culture, wrote a memorandum “On Deterioration of Morals in Russia” which, “from the viewpoint of a man brought up according to the old principles”, claimed that “the destruction of good morals and manners was imbued by a danger of collapse of the state” (Scherbatov 1898: 135). The blame for this deterioration was naturally put on Peter the Great and, thus, connected with Petersburg. Scherbatov appealed to Catherine II to transfer the capital back to Moscow in order “to reduce the evil influence of Europe”.

A well-known Russian writer and historian N. Karamzin (1766–1826) in his memorandum submitted to Alexander I also criticized Peter’s policy of “borrowing European customs” and nostalgically recalled “the medieval Russian norms of life”: “An Orthodox Russian is the most perfect citizen in the world, and Sacred Russia is the best state”. As if hesitating in the truth of his own words, Karamzin continued:

This may be a delusion. However, this delusion is beneficial for the love of the country and its moral power. Under Peter’s will we became citizens of the world, but stopped being citizens of Russia (Karamzin 1914: 30).

In fact, Karamzin delineated the problem which later became central not only for the Russian intellectuals, but, for example, for the Japanese as well: how to become civilized, but to retain, at the same time, national characteristics. In Karamzin’s sentimental novels “pure and emotional” girls were often portrayed as victims of “cold, prudent and egotistic” young men symbolizing respectively an opposition between Russian and Western values. It is significant that Karamzin’s novels were more popular in Moscow than in Petersburg.

The discussion between Westerners and Slavophiles gained force after the defeat of the Decembrists rebellion when Russian intellectuals, disillusioned by the failure of the attempt of Westernization offered by the Decembrists, were in desperate search of Russia’s own way of development. Slavophiles saw the original essence of Russia in Orthodox Christianity, idealized pre-Petrine Russia and stood for the supremacy of the Russian cultural tradition. In their criticism of Peter’s policy they emphasized two main points. They maintained that despotism in Russia started out with Peter the Great, and Petersburg was the locus of despotism. Thus, they ignored, for example, the cruel and no less despotic rule of Ivan the Terrible. But Slavophiles were right in the sense that Petersburg as the locus of power, bureaucracy, military and political police symbolized repression in its direct, brutal form, and in its indirect “scholarly” form. The other point of Slavophiles revolved around the issue that the West was evil and corrupt, that people suffered under the pressure of industrial development. This criticism of the policy of Westernization was sublimated in the belief that sooner or later Petersburg would disappear under the waters of the sea, Moscow would again become the capital and Russia would settle down in peace (Zhikharev 1989: 95–96).

Russian philosopher N. Berdiaev (1874–1948), who was rather sympathetic to the ideas of the Slavophiles, summarized the differences between the two groups in the following way:

The struggle between Russia and Europe, East and West is in reality the struggle between the spirit and spiritual hollowness, between religious culture and callous civilization. [Slavophiles] wanted to believe that Russia would not go along the road of [European - Y.M.] civilization, that it has its own way and destiny
and that only Russia can create culture on religious basis, the true spiritual culture (Berdiyaev 1990: 162).

Taking into consideration the fact that Moscow has always been considered the religious center of the country, while Petersburg was characterized by a rational mentality, the opposition between “the spirit and spiritual hollowness” also revealed the perception of differences between the two cities at that time.

If Slavophiles were ardent protagonists of Russia’s uniqueness, Westerners tended to be atheists, materialists, internationalists and advocates of Western political and scientific ideas. Not only did they also appraise highly Peter’s reforms and his city, but they emphasized the importance of science and rational thinking. A contemporary researcher of the cultural world of Westerners gives the following description of their system of values:

Westerners gave a special place to values associated with tolerance, always emphasized their internationalism; particularism and provinciality were alien to them ... They wholeheartedly supported the free exchange of ideas and appreciated cultural achievements of various people, including non-Europeans. This approach was in contrast to the trends in Russian culture which originated in the views of Protopope Avvakum (Schukin 1992: 77).

Slavophiles accused Westerners and Petersburg of toadyism, mere imitation of alien culture, but Westerners believed that outer forms of life would bring forth deeper changes in mentality. They were more balanced in their approach and tolerant to the opinion of others. One evidence of this may be found in the fact that Jewish pogroms never happened in Petersburg, but were more characteristic of the life in southern parts of Russia. In our own days Petersburg has become an important center of struggle against chauvinistic movements in Russia (Katerli 1998).

Gradually, however, distinctions between the two cities and different types of culture associated with each of them began to wane. One single national Russian culture was coming into being accelerated by the development of communications between the cities, especially by the railway. After the reforms of the early 1860s, many Slavophiles and Westerners joined hands in the same liberal camp.

It may be noted that the heated debate between Slavophiles and Westerners, between Petersburg and Moscow operated, to some extent, with speculative intellectual constructions. In this regards, Dostoevsky who attempted to apply the dialogic approach to cultures seems to be more insightful. In his famous speech dedicated to Pushkin on the occasion of opening a monument to the poet in Moscow, he spoke about the unique ability of Russian people to integrate the spirit of other peoples into their own national spirit, and concluded that “we [Russians] accepted with love and took to heart geniuses of other nations, all together, without making differences between people” (Dostoevsky 1984: 147).

IV. Stalin and Leningrad

In the official Soviet propaganda, Leningrad was glorified as “the cradle of revolution”, namely, of “the Great October Socialist Revolution of 1917” which laid the foundation for the new Soviet state. In reality the situation in the city was far from being glorious.

The Bolshevik seizure of power had unleashed a bloody civil war. By March 1918 Lenin had to transfer his government to Moscow. With the seat of government removed to Moscow and with the food supplies disrupted by fighting in the countryside, Petrograd residents began to leave the city. The gentry and merchant classes largely sought refuge abroad, while workers in many instances returned to their native villages or joined the Red Army. The city’s population decreased from 2,300,000 to only 720,000. The population began to grow again only towards the end of the 1920s when industrialization and collectivization began.

In the years of the Civil War and Military Communism (1918–20) Petrograd lost its previous grandeur — buildings and roads were not repaired and the grass sprang up from below the stones of the granite embankments. Many representatives of the
intelligentsia took to heart the tragic fate of the city exacerbated by their rejection of the revolution itself.

In reality the transfer of the capital to Moscow was quite reasonable in the circumstances of the Civil War as it granted economic and strategic security to the new government. At the same time because Petersburg had been so often perceived as alien to Russia, the location of the new government in Moscow made it psychologically more acceptable to Russians.

Moscow was also associated with the old idea of “the Russian mission”, though now not the Orthodox faith, but the idea of the world socialist revolution was propagated from the Soviet capital. If Petersburg was always associated with learning from the West (even the idea of socialism was introduced through this “window to Europe”), Moscow laid claim to be “the teacher” who could lead mankind “to the happy future of communism”.

It would be wrong to suggest that as soon as the Stalin regime took its hold over the country, Petersburg culture was demolished. On the contrary, as demonstrated by Clark (1995), Petrograd/Leningrad intellectuals of leftist persuasions were quite instrumental in building the new type of culture which soon came to be known as the “culture of socialist realism”. In this way they contributed to consolidation of the Stalin regime. Even when Stalin’s repressive policy towards culture began, it was first more visible in Moscow, the capital, than in Leningrad. However, the general ideological purports of the time — prioritizing physical labor over intellectual and creative activities, of proletariat over intelligentsia — could not but affect the cultural life of the city, as elsewhere in the country, in the worst possible ways.

There are, however, several examples in the long series of Stalin purges that singled out the city of Leningrad as a special case. Stalin experienced a particular hatred and fear towards this city as the source of real and possible opposition to his rule. The beginning of this hostility was laid down by the so called “New Opposition” headed by Grigori Zinoviev who became (after Lev Trotsky had been distanced) a viable candidate for the post of the leader of the party and the state (Zubok 1996: 112).

Indeed, the Leningrad Bolshevik Party organization was considered to be the most influential in the country and its majority supported Zinoviev, including Lenin’s wife Nadezhda Krupskaya.

Ironically, when the “New Opposition” was crushed, the next leader of the Leningrad party organization, Sergei Kirov, became more popular in the country than Stalin himself, probably because Kirov supported a more gradual policy of transition to socialism. According to some contemporary sources, at the 17th Party Congress in 1934 he received more votes by secret ballot than Stalin (Vert 1990: 230). Under Stalin’s order the results of the voting were falsified. Soon nearly all participants in the congress were purged and the mysterious assassination of Kirov on 1 December 1934 followed. Though the killer was immediately arrested, his real motives for assassination have puzzled the mind of researchers until now and Stalin is suspected to have orchestrated the event. Even if this was not the case, the fact remains that Stalin used the situation for his benefit: Kirov’s assassination spurred mass terror in the whole country. Authorities in Moscow immediately carried out “extraordinary measures” and on 4 December 37 “white officers” who allegedly penetrated into the country were arrested. On 22 December newspapers reported that the assassination was engineered by some “Leningrad center” consisting of the 30 former members of “New Opposition” (Vert 1990: 234–235). According to the words of a contemporary journalist, Nord, after 1 December 1934 thirty thousand Leningraders were either arrested or purged in some other way, so that “the cradle of revolution” became “clear of those who had engineered it” (Nord 1990).

The tragedy the city lived through during the Second World War (which is called the Great Patriotic War of 1941–1945 in Russia) may also be regarded as a continuation of Stalin’s policy aimed at destruction of the “spirit of Petersburg”. Within a few months after Hitler’s army rolled across the Soviet Union’s western frontier, the city came under a siege that was to last from 20 November 1941 till 27 January 1944. The siege was not only the result of the successful tactics of the German commanders, but also of the perfidy of the Soviet generalissimo,
Stalin, himself. Leningrad drew off German armies which could attack Moscow and then Stalingrad. Since the Soviet archives have been opened, Stalin's telegrams to the commander of the Leningrad front became known. He ordered the army to retreat to the east leaving the city to the enemy (Zherebov 1991: 2). Stalin also ordered several military operations which in reality could not protect the city from the German army, but incurred large human costs, especially of Leningraders. Salisbury in his famous book *The 900 Days. The Siege of Leningrad* suggested that Stalin did not want to save the city and that he was always afraid of it, because the city of the first revolution could carry out the second (Salisbury 1969).

The city was bombed everyday. Thousands of people were killed; buildings were ruined. But the hardest trial was the hunger. A day's ration of bread in the most critical time of November–December 1941 was only 125 grams. The location of the city on "the edge" of the country, clutched between the Finland Bay and Ladoga Lake, facilitated its separation from the country. An unusually cold winter, lack of food, electricity and fuel supply increased the suffering of the people. So, elements of struggle with nature may also be seen in the heroic defense of Leningrad from 1941 to 1944. By the end of the blockade's second winter Leningrad had shrunk to only 639,000 residents.

The fate of over 40% of the Leningrad prewar population is unknown and cannot be reconstructed from the official Soviet statistics. What is known is that, by early 1942, Leningrad's population had been cut by two thirds through war-related casualties, starvation and evacuation. To put these figures in comparative perspective, the number of Leningraders who perished in the siege approximately equals the total number of US armed forces personnel who died in all wars from the American revolution through the war in Vietnam (Ruble 1990: 49).

Soon after the war new waves of repression crashed upon the city's intelligentsia. In 1946 the Central Party Committee published a "resolution" about the activity of the literary magazines *Zvezda* and *Leningrad* criticizing a writer Mikhail Zoschenko and a famous poet Anna Akhmatova for their "'anti-Soviet spirit". The magazines were banned, and the two authors were forbidden to publish their works.

However, the most conspicuous in the series of purges against the city became "the Leningrad Affair" of 1949–1952 (Demidov 1989)\(^1\). The roots of the case may be found in the struggle among the top party leaders for their "right" to succeed Stalin after his death. When at the end of 1945 Stalin's health worsened, rumors appeared that he had named A. Zhdanov as his successor in the party and N. Voznesenskii as his successor in the state\(^2\). Both had previously lived and worked in Leningrad and the next Leningrad party leaders (A.A. Kuznetsov, Ya.F. Kapustin, P.S. Popkov) were their protégés. These rumors reached Stalin's closest collaborators L. Beriya and G. Malenkov who did not want to share their power with any "outsiders". So, they made up a case against Leningraders under several pretexts.

The first was the speech delivered on 16 January 1946 by A.A. Kuznetsov on the occasion of an election campaign in Leningrad. Fresh memories of the siege, pride in the heroic deeds of the people and real love for the city made his speech extraordinarily sincere for the Soviet time. Unfortunately, this sincerity had tragic consequences. It is worthwhile to cite his speech at some length. Kuznetsov said:

> Without any exaggeration we may say that Leningraders stand in the vanguard of Russian people. They are courageous, but modest, active, but not flashy. They underwent the most severe trial during this war... According to Hitler's plan, the main purpose of the German fascists was first to take over the Baltic region, then to seize Leningrad and annihilate its legacy, to raze the city to the ground and then pass it over to Germany's Finnish satellites. Now we can admire and appreciate the contribution of Leningraders to the defense of our socialist motherland.

Kuznetsov did not say anything about the suffering of the people, nor did he give numbers of the perished. His speech was optimistic and even pathetic in the best traditions of Soviet rhetoric:

> They say that we, Leningraders, are great patriots of our city. Yes, we are patriots, we love our city.
Because this is the cradle of our revolutionary movement. This is the city where the Soviet power has been proclaimed. The whole history of our socialist state, the history of the Red Army, of reconstruction and growth of the national economy are closely connected with our city. This city laid the foundation to the development of our nation, culture and science in the broadest sense of the word. It is the city of their Golden Age. We cannot, but love this city, where no enemy has ever stepped in ... We cannot but be the patriots of this city. How can we not be proud of it ?!... We are proud to be Leningraders, true patriots of our Soviet land. In future we must go on bringing up all citizens of this city in the spirit of love for it, it the spirit of love for the motherland, in the spirit of ardent and life-giving Soviet patriotism.

We should do our best for Leningrad to be able to disseminate its science and culture all over the country, as it used to be in the past. It should become famous as the center where new specialists in sciences, party cadre and Soviet leaders come from ... We should do our best for Leningrad to become the treasure house of talents. This is the most difficult task we ever had. Let me express, on behalf of the Leningrad communist party organization, my confidence that you, working people of Leningrad, will support us in realization of this difficult task.

We are often asked how you, Leningraders, can achieve such great results? What can I answer. Generally speaking, I may say — people in this city are very good (Deminov 1989: 137–138).

Kuznetsov did not even mean to say a single word against Stalin. However, in contrast to other speeches of the time, he sang glory not to Stalin, but to the city of Peter the Great. He referred to the former role of Petersburg when it had been the capital of Russia and the main center of Russian culture and sciences. He hinted that in contrast to Moscow which had been taken over by the Poles in the 16th century and left over to Napoleon in 1812, the city on the Neva had never been occupied by the enemies of Russia. All in all, he reminded his listeners about Petersburg’s valorous past when it had been the gateway to Europe. In the time of the Cold War confrontation with the West this was too much for the ambitious Soviet leaders from Moscow. Three years later the words of this speech translated into judicial jargon would be used for condemnation of Kuznetsov and other Leningrad leaders in an attempt to separate the city from the country and to spread its influence elsewhere.

One more “guilt” of the Leningrad leaders was attributed to their initiative to organize the All-Union Wholesale Fair in January 1949. The above mentioned speech and the fair were interpreted as an attempt to create a wide network of anti-Moscow organizations and even to establish a separate Russian Communist party. Of course, nothing of this was true, but under the order from Moscow in the middle of 1949, arrests, a farce trial, then execution or imprisonment in concentration camps followed. As a result of “the Leningrad Affair” many people — members of the party and Soviet activists, scientists, military leaders, intellectuals and mere members of families — were purged. Six top leaders were sentenced to death. The exact number of all victims still remains unknown, but it is likely that all those who worked in Leningrad in the 1940s were discriminated against in one way or another.

“The Leningrad Affair” defamed not only the party and Soviet leaders. It defamed and humiliated the whole city and its residents. It denigrated traditions of Petersburg culture and science, put to naught the heroic struggle against the fascists when many Leningraders sacrificed their lives for the sake of those traditions. Moreover, it deprived the people of the city of initiative and dignity. In Brezhnev’s time Leningrad was turned into a mere industrial and military center of regional status, though the rhetoric about its revolutionary past remained. It seemed that the worst predictions about the end of the city came true and the bitter words of Lev Ozerov cited in the beginning of the article came to symbolize the identity of its residents. However, the glory of the past lived in the memories of the people and in the buildings. Perestroika opened possibilities for the revision of the image of the city and its reality. On the one side, the revival of the culture of the Golden and Silver Ages began. Many architectural monuments were reconstructed, new museums and exhibitions were opened, books on Petersburg were written, and much money was invested in the preservation of
Russia's cultural legacy. Sometimes this fascination with the past even reached the level of a craze, as happened in the case of the reburial of the remains of the last Russian Tsar's family in Peter-and Paul's Cathedral in July 1998. On the other side, the opening of the Soviet archives creates new opportunities for finding out the truth about the repression of the Stalin period and its consequences. The return of the original name to the city is perceived as a symbol of purification from the Soviet past.

**Conclusion**

It has been demonstrated that various contradictions have been intertwined into the history of St. Petersburg from the time of its foundation. They could be seen in the symbolic and real struggle between nature and culture, ideas of reason and chaos, education and ignorance, despotism and freedom, national and alien, modernity and tradition. Its history is abundant with examples of intelligence, courage, optimism, tolerance, and possibility for a constructive dialogue. Many writers, poets and scientists of the city made their contribution to the progress of world civilization.

However, the significance of Petersburg remains in the fact that it was the city which set Russia upon the path of Westernization and opened the country to the European culture. The academician Dmitrii Likhachov, whose authority as a specialist in Russian culture can hardly be questioned, wrote:

> It is useless to argue whether Russia belongs to Europe or Asia. It has one single culture — from Leningrad to Vladivostok and this culture is of the European type ... Moreover, Russian culture is European because in its deepest base it has always been devoted to the idea of freedom of the individual (Likhachov 1991: 296–297).

In support of his viewpoint Likhachov cited examples of the Novgorod Veche (an assembly of free citizens similar to the one in the Greek polis), the escape of Russian people from serfdom to Siberia, numerous peasant rebellions and other similar trends.

Nowadays Petersburg, not to the least extent because of its opposition to Moscow during the Soviet period, is associated in the mind of most Russians with the pre-Soviet past which has positive connotations for the majority of people. Especially attractive seems the time of Peter the Great and Catherine II as this was the most glorious period in Russian history. It is at this point where the city founded by Peter the Great may negotiate its new identity with the country it belongs to and stop being obsessed only with its own past. The idea of Petersburg's "Otherness" to Russia is no more than a myth created under the pressure of the Soviet authorities and supported by the intelligentsia in its desperate attempt to stand for itself.

Recently, especially since Vladimir Putin, who moved to Moscow from Petersburg, has become first the Prime-Minister and then the President of the country, Russian mass media often raise the topic of the Petersburg political culture which is characterized by its allegiance to democracy and rule of law. Putin and other members of the contemporary Russian political elite of Petersburg extraction enjoy quite a large popularity among the people. It is only to be hoped that those qualities which have always been considered as characteristics of the Petersburger or European type of culture — rationalism, pragmatism, willingness to conduct reforms, openness to the world and respect for the dignity of the individual — will help them to conduct reforms and to build a contemporary civilized society in Russia.

**Notes**

1. In 1914 when World War I began the German name of Petersburg was changed into a Russian one — Petrograd ('grad' means in Russian 'city', 'burg'). In 1924 after Lenin's death the city was renamed Leningrad, but in the atmosphere of criticism of the Soviet past during perestroika the original name of St. Petersburg was restored in 1992 as the result of a referendum held among the citizens of the city.

2. For example, the catalogue of Russian books for November-December 1999 published by Nissa Information has a special rubric "St. Petersburg" which includes seven titles.

3. This is my personal observation based on talks with Russians whom I have been meeting during my ten years of residence outside Russia. I was shocked the
first time I heard: “Well, you are from Petersburg, but not from Russia”. However, I came across the same remark many times afterwards.

4. Eurasismo is a trend of thought developed among Russian intellectuals who lived in immigration in Europe after the 1917 Bolshevik revolution. Their political and cultural theory of Eurasianism was announced in the symposium, Exodus to the East, held in Sophia in 1921. Eurasianists included the great linguist, N.S. Trubetskov (1890–1938), the theologian, G.V. Florovsky (1893–1979); the historian G.V. Vernadsky (1887–1973) and others. They proclaimed the culturally independent character of the non-European world including Russia, saw foundations of the Russian state in the Mongolian Empire of Genghis Khan and maintained that the best features of the Russian civilization had appeared through its contacts with the people of Asia, such as Mongols and Chinese, including the contacts during the period of the “Mongol yoke” (13th to 15th centuries). Eurasians invented the term ‘Eurasian civilization’ which they applied to Russia. Their negative attitudes to Western civilization and belief that under the Bolsheviks a new type of Russian culture was coming into being brought them close to the Soviet authorities. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, New Eurasianism represented by Lev Gumiliov appeared. In his numerous publications he revised the history of Russia from the viewpoint of the history of Eurasia and endowed the Russian people with what he called passionarnost — an ability to generate a new civilization (Naganawa 1994: 1629).

5. According to another popular interpretation of The Bronze Horseman Pushkin contrasted here the despotic government and a poor clerk Evgenii who went crazy because his beloved girlfriend perished in the flood of 1824. A contemporary researcher V.K. Kantor, however, pointed to Pushkin’s words that Evgenii earned money with his own work and, though not rich, had “quite a decent life”. This “decent and self-supported life” could have been found in danger because of the elements of Russian riot (Kantor 1999: 36).

6. The Silver Age got its name by analogy and contrast with the Golden Age of Russian culture — at the beginning of the 19th century, when Alexander Pushkin (1799–1837) lived and worked.

7. For example, In Staraya Rusa, a town with 2,300 families, there were 21 churches, while in Petersburg there were only 16 churches for 6,000 families (Dohi 1992: 213).

8. On interconnection between the architecture of the capital city and the empire see Driver 1999.

9. Protopope Avvakum (1621–1682) — the head of the Russian schismatic movement. He was exiled several times, spent fifteen years in an underground prison, but till stubbornly defended his ideas. Avvakum was burned alive under the Tsar’s order.

10. “New Opposition” was a group in the Bolshevik party which denied the possibility of building socialism in one single country, a theory advanced by Stalin after the hopes for the world socialism revolution waned away. “New Opposition” stood for the export of agricultural products from Russia and import of industrial goods. It was denounced by the central party committee and later all its members were purged.

11. Many details of this affair remain unknown till the present, because no documents were found in the archives. Historians have had to rely on reminiscences of witnesses who are still alive, information published in official newspapers or reconstruct the reality.

12. A. Zhidanov was a member of Politburo and was responsible for the ideology. His son was married to Stalin’s daughter. He died in 1948 from a heart attack. N. Voznesenskii was the Vice-President of the Council of Ministers and an academician. He was considered to be the main architect of the Soviet planned economy. Voznesenskii was executed under the “Leningrad Affair”.

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