Avant-Garde Museology
CONTENTS

Acknowledgments ............................................ 13
Arseny Zhilyaev

Preface ......................................................... 15
Julieta Aranda, Brian Kuan Wood, Anton Vidokle

Introduction
AVANT-GARDE MUSEOLOGY: Toward a History
of a Pilot Experiment .................................... 21
Arseny Zhilyaev

I
Museum as Common Task

THE MUSEUM, ITS MEANING AND MISSION
(c. 1880s) ..................................................... 59
Nikolai Fedorov

THE ART OF RESEMBLANCE (of False Artistic
Regeneration) AND THE ART OF REALITY
(Real Resurrection): Ptolemaic and Copernican Art
(c. 1890s) ..................................................... 143
Nikolai Fedorov

THE VORONEZH MUSEUM IN 1998 (1898) .......... 149
Nikolai Fedorov
THE CATHRINE THE GREAT EXHIBITION AT THE VORONEZH REGIONAL MUSEUM (1896) .............................. 165
Nikolai Fedorov and Nikolai Peterson

ON THE CATHEDRAL OF THE RESURRECTING MUSEUM (1921) ................................. 171
Vasily Chekrygin

THE CHURCH RITUAL AS A SYNTHESIS OF THE ARTS (1918) ................................. 197
Pavel Florensky

ON THE CREATION OF A PANTHEON IN THE USSR: A Proposal (1927) .................. 215
Vladimir Bekhterev

MATERIALS ON THE INSTITUTE OF BIOGRAPHY (1920) ................................. 223
Nikolai Rybnikov

THE REVOLUTION MEMORIAL RESERVATION, AN EXCERPT FROM THE NOVEL CHEVENGUR (1926–28) ................................. 233
Andrey Platonov

THE ASTRONOMICAL OBSERVATORY AT THE PERM REGIONAL MUSEUM (1935) ................. 249
V. I. Karmilov

THE MUSEUM OF ART, AN EXCERPT FROM THE NOVEL RED STAR (1908) ................. 255
Aleksandr Bogdanov

ON THE MUSEUM (1919) ............................... 267
Kazimir Malevich

THE MUSEUM NEWSPAPER: Suggestions for Regional Museums and Community Centers (1931) ................................. 275
V. Karpov

AVALANCHE EXHIBITIONS: The Experience of the Leningrad Organization of Worker-Artists (1933) ................................. 279
Leonid Chetyrkin

ON THE QUESTION OF MUSEUMS: Record of the Discussion of Problems and Objectives of Fine Art Museums at the Art and Industry Board (1919) ................................. 281
Moscow Department of Museum Affairs

THE MUSEUM AND PROLETARIAN CULTURE: Speech at the Meeting of the First All-Russian Museum Commission (1919) ................. 289
Osip Brik
ON THE RESULTS OF THE MUSEUM CONFERENCE (1919) ................................. 293
Nikolai Punin

ON THE MUSEUM BUREAU (1920–21) .................. 299
Aleksandr Rodchenko

THE MUSEUM OF PAINTING CULTURE AT ROZHDESTVENKA STREET, 11 (1926) ............... 307
From *Museums and Places of Interest in Moscow*

III

The Materialistic Museum

LENIN’S ATTITUDE TOWARD MUSEUMS (1931) ........................................ 315
Nadezhda Krupskaya

DIALECTICAL MATERIALISM AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE MUSEUM (1931) .......... 319
Ivan Luppol

MARXIST EXHIBITION METHODS FOR NATURAL SCIENCE MUSEUMS (1931) ............ 341
Boris Zavadovsky

PERMANENT COLLECTIONS OF FINE ART MUSEUMS: Joint Report (1931) ............ 351
Aleksey Fedorov-Davydov

AN EXPERIMENT IN MARXIST EXHIBITION-MAKING AT THE STATE TRETYAKOV GALLERY (1931) .................................................................................................................. 363
Natalya Kovalenskaya

EVERYDAY LIFE OF THE WORKING CLASS FROM 1900 TO 1930 EXHIBITION: History and Everyday Life Department of the State Russian Museum (1931) .................. 377
Valentin Koltsov

ON A MUSEUM OF INDUSTRY AND ART (1931) ........................................ 389
David Arkin

A MUSEUM EXHIBITION OR A THEATRICAL PERFORMANCE? (1932) .................. 399
N. A. Shneerson

ON THE QUESTION OF THE PRINCIPLES OF EXHIBITION: Central Park of Culture and Leisure Exhibitions (1932) ................................. 411
I. M. Zykov

—

PLATES

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IV
The Museum Outside of the Museum

MUSEUMS IN INDUSTRIAL ENTERPRISES (1931) .............................................. 443
K. I. Vorobyov

THE EXPERIENCE OF DEVELOPING MOBILE EXHIBITIONS (1931) ............. 453
Yuri Samarin

MUSEUM IN THE STREET (1931) ......................... 469
P. N. Khrapov

BRINGING THE AGITPROP-TRUCK TO THE SERVICE OF CULTURAL CONSTRUCTION (1932) .......................... 481
M. S. Ilkovsky

THE MOBILE MODEL OF THE INSTRUCTIVE LABORATORY HUT AND ITS OPERATION (1935) ................................. 489
I. F. Sheremet

V
Museum of the History of the Revolution

MARXISM-LENINISM IN EXHIBITIONS IN THE MUSEUMS OF REVOLUTION (1931) .... 499
Andrey Shestakov

MUSEUMS OF THE REVOLUTION (1931) ............. 509
Nikolai Druzhinin

A NEW EXHIBITION AT THE LENINGRAD MUSEUM OF THE REVOLUTION (1931) ........ 533
Vera Leykina

THE MUSEUM AS A WEAPON OF CLASS STRUGGLE: Here and Abroad (1934) ............. 543
Roza Frumkina

VI
The Atheists’ Museum

AN EXHIBITION AND PANORAMA OF THE MOSCOW CREMATORIUM (1931) ............. 553
A. F. Levitsky
I couldn’t visit the museums of revolution in Soviet times. But luckily, and paradoxically, Soviet history museums fully conserved their exhibitions following the end of the Eighties. The revolution—even the word is basically forbidden and marked as pure evil in contemporary Russia—has continued its quiet life in glass cases in the hidden but still beating heart of our present ideological constructs.

We must admit that this duplicity is not radically new. From the beginning of the 1930s, Soviet museums hardly allowed any open discussion of the revolution outside the canon upheld by Stalin’s *History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union*. But something very deep, something connected to the very physical organization of exhibitions—namely, the very idea of the Museum of the Revolution—continued to access the avant-garde impulse that museologists shared with the artists of the Great October Socialist Revolution, with the Bolsheviks, and with the people who believed that the miracle of the proletarian revolution was possible. It’s probably similar to the way minerals hidden in the depths of the Earth, helping to sustain life on the planet, testify to the Earth’s origin and its future.

This publication is a result of five years of research. Its goal is to direct attention to incredible but nearly unknown material on the exhibition experiments and radical rethinking of museums that occurred in Russia and the USSR at the end of the nineteenth century and during the first third of the twentieth. These various projects may, at first glance, seem isolated from each other, but in fact they have...
deep-rooted commonalities in their fostering of what I call avant-garde museology.

It is important to note that this publication doesn’t pretend to fully cover this subject or circumscribe it on a theoretical level. Born of my own artistic interest, this exploration of the exhibition and museum projects carried out by the Russian Cosmists, avant-garde artists, and Marxist museologists is more literary than academic in its selection and organization of works. But this doesn’t negate my hope that the subject of avant-garde museology will garner public interest as well as the interest of discourses surrounding current artistic production.

I would like to heartily thank Teresa Mavica, Anton Vidokle, and Kadist Art Foundation for their limitless trust in the project; Dmitry Potemkin for his comprehensive support for the idea of this publication from the very beginning and for helping to organize the material included in it; Anastasia Gacheva, Maria Chehonadskih, and Vlad Sofronov for their valuable advice and commentary; Boris Groys and Claire Bishop for their support of this book, and those without whom Avant-Garde Museology would never have seen the light.

— Arseny Zhilyaev
of contradictions that arose when ideas of progress came into contact with brute historical realities. And yet, the richness and character of the art and thinking that grew from a confrontation with these very contradictions is often flattened under the weight of grand historical or art historical narratives applied to explain them from a distance. The early Russian avant-gardes, for instance, have been mainly understood in the English-speaking art historical and museum fields in formalist terms as abstract geometric experimentation, or subjected to analysis through a Cold War political lens fetishizing the otherness of communism. A collection such as *Avant-Garde Museology* should hopefully inspire a reader to forget all that immediately before reading further.

Still, it is important to bear in mind that the history written by that very English-language art history and museum complex remains a primary source for our knowledge and awareness of not only the early Russian avant-gardes, but of art history in general in the period of contemporary art. While many rich histories of art exist, language barriers have limited their availability to audiences beyond the contexts where they originated. Which is to say that this historical canon has already shown itself to be irrelevant at the same time as it is being upheld as the only de facto historical record available.

*e-flux classics* would like to take this as a historical contradiction of our own time by asking what an artistic canon for the period of contemporary art might be. Rather than resurrect the old order or invent a new king, the approach might be more similar to what Zhilyaev proposes: to rewind the tape to resurrect in memory all that deserves life.

— Julieta Aranda, Brian Kuan Wood, Anton Vidokle
Dedicated to the sweet memory
of my beloved grandmother
Anna Kirsanovna Golysheva
The idea of the museum as a staging ground for transcending the social and physical limitations imposed on mankind can be traced back to the works of Nikolai Fedorov, one of the most prominent exponents of religious philosophy, originator of the philosophy of the “common task,” and founding father of the Russian cosmist movement, which in large part inspired the Soviet space program. The idea of space colonization was a natural consequence of Fedorov’s conception of man as a transformative force in the universe—a kind of universal artist.

But what exactly is this recording device? The answer is simple: the museum of contemporary art. Naturally, the museum as we know it today will not do. Its scope is incomplete, and the unspoken rules dictated by its format do not allow it the same degree of freedom that drives the winds of artistic progress, desperately gunning for salvation. But sooner or later its turn will come, and then the freedom of the artist will be equal to the freedom of the curator, who chooses the angle of perspective and rewinds the tape to resurrect in memory all that deserves life.

If we closely examine the history of this particular struggle for freedom, we will find many courageous experiments in bringing the project of the avant-garde museum to life. Moreover, we will see that these experiments yielded positive results. But the laboratory where these experiments were staged was destroyed before the truth about the art of the future could be made public. All that was left were ruins and scraps of notes in a laboratory journal, on the cover of which we can just barely make out the title, effaced by the passage of time: “Avant-Garde Museology.”
The ethical radicalism of the idea of indebtedness became the driving force behind Fedorov’s futuristic constructs. The creative transformation of the universe and its planets by means of space travel, the regulation of natural phenomena on Earth and beyond, the transcendence of humanity—presently the pinnacle of evolution, but subject to improvement—these are but some of the more striking corollaries of the idea that mankind must assume an active position with respect to the debt it owes its forebears. One of the central places in this activist agenda is occupied by the museum, understood in the broadest sense of the word as an institution that can subsume virtually all of man’s activities in the service of the “common task.”

Needless to say, the museum as it existed toward the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth centuries could not accommodate such an ambitious project. With an ideal institution of the future in mind, Fedorov thus mounts a strident critique of traditional museum practices. He notes that the museum had often been used to enshrine mankind’s poverty, strife, and misconceptions concerning its own destiny. The museum of the future, on the other hand, must be construed as a place of reconciliation—an institution that, like the church, will register every new life and every new death. The church, which proffers an important—but so far illusory—vision of immortality (one that, moreover, does not extend to the physical body and is withheld from the sinner), must be supplemented by the museum, and reimagined, in turn, as a research facility for the preservation and resurrection of every individual in his physical and mental totality. Hence Fedorov espouses the need to combine the museum with a scientific laboratory, library, and church-school.

At the same time, Fedorov denounces the functional organization of the museum, which has effectively turned it into a “dead archive.” The situation demands a radical reconsideration of the very conception of man’s creative life. To this end, Fedorov introduces the distinction between Ptolemaic and Copernican art. The former entails the creation of “false likenesses,” and thus refers to virtually all of mimetic art, or more broadly, to art as a distinct practice, constrained by institutional boundaries, that must, moreover, be content with merely imaginary solutions to the conflicts it purports to address. Copernican art implies an active, creative transformation of reality, aimed, ultimately, at physical resurrection:

The transition from the art of resemblance to the art of reality, from Ptolemaic art to Copernican art, must be served by the museum of all sciences, unified in astronomy. This museum should have a tower, and be connected to a church-school—the tower would serve for observing the falling stars, that is, for observing the continuous construction and disintegration of the world, and likewise for meteorological observation, which transitions to experiment, to action; through transformation of military art into the art of natural sciences.1

The call for an art that transcended its own boundaries resonated with the ideas put forward in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries by Russian religious philosophers such as V. S. Solovyev and N. A. Berdyaev, as well as the Symbolist poets, and also prefigured the paths of the avant-garde aspirations of Marxist-leaning artists. But in contrast to the Soviet Constructivists-Industrialists—whose

1. Nikolai Fedorov, “The Art of Resemblance (of False Artistic Regeneration) and the Art of Reality (Real Resurrection),” written c. 1890s. Reproduced on p. 143–147 of this volume.
In the second half of the 1890s, Fedorov traveled regularly to Voronezh to visit with his friend and former pupil Nikolai Peterson. There he became acquainted with the founder of the Voronezh Regional Museum, S. E. Zverev, a priest and regional ethnographer, and was subsequently instrumental in organizing several of the Museum’s exhibitions:

Since 1896, at Fedorov's initiative, the Museum has mounted a number of theme-based exhibitions devoted to the most significant events of the year, which practice later became a tradition. Between 1896 and 1899 we organized six such exhibitions: on the subject of the Coronation (May 1896) and on the rule of Catherine (November 1896); an exhibition of engravings bearing religious themes (May 1897); an exhibition devoted to St. Mitrophan of Voronezh (Nov.–Dec. 1897); an exhibition commemorating one hundred years of the printing trade in Voronezh (May 1898); and an exhibition titled The nativity of Jesus Christ and Conciliation (Dec. 1898–Jan. 1899).

Fedorov was directly involved in each case: he chose the theme and participated in the selection of materials, some of which were either brought to Voronezh by him personally or delivered from Moscow at his request. He also wrote the introductory articles for three of the exhibitions: (on Catherine, on the printing trade and on the Nativity).

Voronezh also became the site of the first incarnation of the Resurrecting Museum, created by the local artist and

disciple of Fedorov, Lev Solovyev. A widower, Solovyev was determined to resurrect the memory of his lost wife by turning his home and garden into a prototype of the museum of the future. To this end he created several studies for murals that would decorate the walls of the Resurrecting Museum; he also opened a free painting school. Fedorov highly valued the project, devoting several articles to it and including his literary description of the museum of the future in an article titled “The Voronezh Museum in 1998” (Don no. 64, June 14, 1898 — reproduced on p. 149 – 163 of this volume).

The second attempt to realize the Resurrecting Museum project was made in the early 1920s by the avant-garde artist Vasilii Chekrygin. Chekrygin was twenty-three when he first encountered Fedorov’s ideas. By that time he had already served on the front lines of World War I (albeit not by choice), had befriended Vladimir Mayakovsky, and was instrumental in founding the artistic movement “Makovetz.” The philosophical doctrine of the “common task” had so impressed the young artist that he devoted the final years of his all-too-brief life to making sketches for the monumental fresco that would grace the walls of the Resurrecting Museum, and to writing a long prose poem of the same name. The poem was completed, but Chekrygin’s artistic vision was never realized. The surviving correspondence between Chekrygin and Nikolai Punin (one of the theorists of Left Art, closely associated with Futurism) contains a discussion of the idea of synthetic art and the Resurrecting Museum project. Unfortunately these two leaders of the Cultural Revolution were unable to reconcile their ideas: in 1922, Chekrygin was killed in a train accident. He was twenty-five. His Resurrecting Museum remained confined to paper.

Toward the end of the 1920s, another version of the avant-garde museum appeared in the writings of one of the greatest Soviet authors, Andrey Platonov. The novel Chevengur, unpublished in the author’s lifetime, became a critical reflection on the fate of mankind’s dreams of social transformation as they collide with reality. The novel is set in the small Russian town of Chevengur during the Civil War, in the years 1917–21. Despite the war and the ongoing struggle for control of the territory, the local residents believe that communism has already come, and consequently all the aspirations of a liberated mankind must be realized in everyday life. The world described by Platonov sheds light on the ambivalent challenges facing Soviet society in the immediate aftermath of the first years after the revolution. At the close of the novel the communist commune is attacked and destroyed.

To a certain extent the isolation of Chevengur and its residents from the realities of life under civil war transforms the town into a kind of open-air museum. Indeed, the citizens of Chevengur embody in their manner of life and physical presence a unique—if somewhat grotesque—social formation, hurtling toward collapse. Moreover, one could argue that Platonov’s novel also presents an allegory of the art museum. The residents of Chevengur not only collect things, but also create or re-create them collectively. The tragic image of the open-air museum as a metaphor for the establishment of communism in a single society is made concrete in “The Revolution Memorial Reservation” (translated

truly encyclopedic scope: among them is a study of optical perspective, a scientific paper on the methods of extracting iodine, and one on construction techniques in permafrost conditions (the latter due in part to his arrest and exile to Siberia). Despite his status as a priest, Florensky continued to lecture widely in the early years of rambly anticlerical Soviet rule, and was involved in some of the most important artistic debates in the years of the historical avant-garde. His texts on church ritual were delivered before a commission for the preservation of artistic and historical monuments. Its immediate goal was to preserve a unique cultural institution—the Trinity-Sergius Lavra—from distortion and possible destruction. Florensky points to the frequently overlooked artistic aspects of the church ritual, which lose their meaning and cultural significance as soon as they go through the process of museification. In contemporary terms, we may see this text as one of the first attempts to critique the museum as a secularizing institution, incapable of fulfilling its mission without a forcible decontextualization of its subject matter. At the same time, Florensky’s report was part of the unfolding debate on the role of the cultural heritage of religion in the USSR.

Another project that may be considered alongside Fedorov’s ideas on the museum is the “Pantheon of the USSR.” The project belongs to the renowned Soviet neuropathologist and psychiatrist Vladimir Bekhterev, one of the pioneers of reflexology. In the final years of his life, Bekhterev became convinced of the need to create an institution that would study the brains of leading Soviet citizens with the aim of finding connections between the physiological features of the cerebral cortex and the individual’s mental abilities. Bekhterev called for a special legislative act requiring the brains of all prominent Soviet citizens to be extracted at their deaths and delivered by a special commission to the

In addition to its research activities, the Pantheon of the USSR would also house an exhibition hall, showcasing actual brain specimens, plaster casts, and molds, as well as products of the individuals' creative activities, biographical information, and psychological profiles based on (questionable) data from close relatives and associates of the deceased.

A similar project had been conceived earlier, between 1918 and 19. The psychiatrist Nikolai Rybnikov proposed the establishment of a “Biographical Institute,” whose mission would be to collect, archive, and study the biographies of every single Soviet citizen (and eventually every human being). Rybnikov did not possess the administrative resources necessary for such a project, and it never advanced beyond a few generalized thematic studies. Bekhterev, on the other hand, was a prominent figure, occupying the influential position of Director of the Leningrad Institute for Reflexology, and his proposals received far greater attention at the highest level. Bekhterev’s remarks calling for the creation of the Pantheon of the USSR were printed in Izvestiya, one of the most widely read papers of the time. The launch of the project was timed, moreover, to mark the ten-year anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution. But before his plans could be realized, Bekhterev died unexpectedly under circumstances that remain unclear to this day. A special commission then ceded the project’s mission to the already existing Institute for the Study of the Brain, which at that point already possessed Lenin’s brain and would soon receive Bekhterev’s own brain and remains as well. This marks the beginning of the history of the successor project to the Pantheon, which continues to this day. We know that the collection of the Institute for the Study of the Brain was significantly enlarged in the 1920s–30s, receiving, among others, the brains of the following citizens: the poet Andrei Bely; prominent party activist, scientist, and writer Aleksandr Bogdanov; psychologist and Marxist philosopher Lev Vygotsky; writer Maksim Gorky; Nadezhda Krupskaya, fellow revolutionary and wife of Lenin; prominent party and cultural leader Anatoly Lunacharsky; poet Vladimir Mayakovsky; physiologist Ivan Pavlov; leader of the international communist movement, Clara Zetkin; and, finally, one of the founding fathers of the Soviet space program, Konstantin Tsiolkovsky.7

Although Fedorov’s philosophical legacy was never published in systematic form during his lifetime,8 the ideas of cosmism lived on in the works of his pupils and disciples. The foundations of the Soviet space program laid out by Tsiolkovsky, the writings of the Proletkult poets under Aleksandr Bogdanov’s guidance, and the general awareness of momentous social changes all contributed to making the theme of space exploration one of the major components of Soviet cultural production. Accordingly, without any overt reference to the “common task” or the role it ascribed to the museum, Soviet museums began organizing observation decks for astronomical observation and measurement. At the same time, the idea of the rational exploitation of natural resources and agriculture became an integral component of exhibitions-laboratories that traveled to distant villages to spread scientific knowledge.

7. For more on Bekhterev’s project, see Monika Spivak, Mozg otpravte po adresu … (Deliver the Brain to the Following Address …) (Moscow: Astrel, 2010).
8. Only two volumes appeared in print, the first in 1906, the second in 1913; a third volume, prepared by Fedorov’s pupils, was never published. An edition of complete works, including correspondence and commentary, appeared only in the late Nineties, thanks to the efforts of A. G. Gacheva and S. G. Semenova.
Contemporary life has invented crematoria for the dead, but each dead man is more alive than a weakly painted portrait. In burning a corpse we obtain one gram of powder: accordingly, thousands of graveyards could be accommodated on one chemist’s shelf.9

So wrote Kazimir Malevich in his article “On the Museum” (1919). The article was printed in the Russian paper Art of the Commune (then well-nigh the official media outlet of the avant-garde art movement), in the issue preceding the first major museological conference to take place after the revolution. Malevich was unequivocal: the museum is a relic of a dusty past, and must be destroyed. Others expressed similar opinions. The majority of artists associated with the historical avant-garde were sharply critical of the museum as an institution. Those who did not clamor for the incineration of the past in the crematoria of the present nevertheless spoke of the need to take control of the institution and reorganize it with a view of creating conditions that would be more favorable for the new art. If the museum were to survive in a post-revolutionary future, it had to become highly mobile; it had to be made to keep pace with the transformations of reality as it sped toward socialism. “Collections in art museums are archives that can be be freely used by anyone,” insisted one of the contributors to The Art of the Commune, Nikolai Punin. “Let the paintings be hung and rehung without any interruption. Ideally, the museum must be made entirely of moving parts. Any tendency toward the stasis of the church icon must be eradicated.”10 In a related statement, he opined: “The contemporary museum is a scholarly institute. To produce contemporary European art museums from any kind of kunstkammer or cabinet of curiosities is to produce the modern state directly out of the feudal order.”11 In essence, the idea was to create a museum that could answer to the professional demands of pioneering artists, i.e. a museum of the avant-garde. The demands, however, focused principally on access to exhibition facilities and changes in the purchasing policy that would benefit innovative art. There was no talk of transforming the very role of the museum beyond a more active approach to exhibition and a greater emphasis on the museum’s undoubtedly important educational function.

At its core, this thinking was inspired by the Marxist interpretation of artistic creation under the conditions of capitalist production and its potential transformations once the latter was eradicated under socialism. On that account, following the proletarian revolution, the emphasis on the artistic creation of a liberated mankind must gradually shift from the museum to life and production. This interpretation of art received its most coherent expression in the writings of Boris Arvatov, the theorist of Productionism, and in the activities of the Constructivist artists. If society has overcome the social contradictions associated with class struggle and inequality, then the artist, as a distinct


professional occupation, must gradually give way to the engineer—be it an engineer of industrial machines or social interactions. At the same time, this state of affairs could not be brought about under the dictatorship of the proletariat, with its ongoing struggle against enemy classes (and, in the case of the Soviet Union, its struggle for the formation of an industrial proletariat as such). Arvatov was aware of this, pointing to the need for a gradual transition to an industrial art that presupposes the total convergence of art and life in labor. Accordingly, one could not expect an instantaneous reconciliation of mechanical and artistic labor under the conditions of accelerated industrialization. Therefore the work of Productionist artists principally amounted to the production of artistic prototypes for industry, rather than in collaborating directly with mechanical laborers to creatively reimagining their labor. Moreover, Arvatov believed that there would still be a place for traditional media even in a highly advanced communist society. After all, even after the social contradictions are resolved, man will be left with the indelible remainder of reality: the materiality of his body and its principal affects—death and love.12 In this way Arvatov was theorizing the potential boundaries of the avant-garde interpretation of postrevolutionary art, drawing them precisely at the point where the museum of Fedorov and his disciples was to begin.

A literary account of the museum in communist society first appeared in the 1908 science-fiction novel Red Star by Aleksandr Bogdanov. “I imagined there would be no

museums in a developed communist society,”13 exclaims Bogdanov’s astonished protagonist upon his arrival on Mars, home to a highly advanced communist civilization. As it happens, the museum has survived. Its function, however, has been modified. In the communist future, art and the museum have shed their role of being a bourgeois ghetto, the repository of all the delusional hopes for the resolution of social contradictions. These are resolved by the liberating force of proletarian revolution and the ensuing dissolution of class divisions as such. Accordingly, art, once an autonomous professional sphere, is integrated into the everyday life and work of humanity liberated with respect to its artistic formation.

What role could the museum play in such a society? “The museum showcases distinct specimens of art conducive to the upbringing of new generations,” replies the Martian communist in a rather platonic fashion. The model described by Bogdanov—one of the closest associates, and subsequently fiercest opponents, of Lenin—sets out a basic outline of the attitudes toward the museum held by the then-contemporary Marxist avant-garde. Later, when internal party divisions forced the author of Red Star to move from politics into science and cultural activities, his theories would inspire autodidact artists of the Proletkult to invent their own less conventional variations on the museum exhibition, such as “avalanche exhibitions,” i.e. worker-organized and continually augmented exhibitions at factories—a variation on the “museum of moving parts” described by Punin in 1919.14 An extension of the idea of the materialist-dialectical museum would appear in the 1930s in the form of the museum newspaper, where the image-based exhibition changed daily in

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12. See Boris Arvatov, Iskusstvo i proizvodstvo (Art and Industry), (Moscow: Gos. izd-vo, 1927).
The professional museum created by and for avant-garde artists did not survive long. But its torch was taken up by museums of modern art outside the Soviet Union—institutions that told the story of a rupture in the history of art, whose mission was to demonstrate its independence within the space allotted to it by the capitalist means of production. Inside the USSR the museum of modern art had no place. The presence of the industrial avant-garde and the materialist-dialectical museum made its existence impossible. An equivalent of the modernist museum was perhaps the museum of the revolution, an institution that told the story of a rupture in social history.

“Vladimir Ilyich [Lenin] was no lover of museums,” wrote Nadezhda Krupskaya in her article “Lenin’s Attitude Toward Museums.” It was not so much that the leader of the international proletariat, like the avant-garde artists, wanted to incinerate all the achievements of past history in a crematorium. Krupskaya recalls that Lenin was simply bored by the unsystematic collections of armor and other useless accouterments of the ruling classes. At the same time, an exhibition at a biological museum that showed the comparative stages of development of man and the hominid ape fascinated him. So did the Museum of the French Revolution, which offered practical value for a future liberation struggle.

But what was wrong with the old-guard museum? And what had to happen before it could inspire real-life interest in a practicing revolutionary such as Lenin? To answer
this question we have to reconstruct the institution of the museum from the perspective of an adherent to a materialist doctrine, whose work, moreover, is revolutionary struggle: i.e. we must imagine the kind of museum that conforms to Marxist method and philosophy. What method and what philosophy are these? Once, when Lenin was asked if there was a particular work that summed up the principles of Marxist philosophy, he replied, just as Engels had before him: Capital, suggesting that Marxism is not a philosophical dogma that could be packaged into an instruction manual. Marxism is a method that allows one to analyze and act in any new situation without recourse to previously imposed guidelines or metaphysical categories. Lenin called dialectical materialism the backbone of Marxist method. Moreover, Lenin advised that anyone who wished to get at the core of this method would do well to familiarize himself intimately with Hegel’s Logic and Phenomenology of Spirit, which described the dialectic as a special mode of reasoning, and only then proceed to Marxist analysis, which purged from Hegelian constructs such unnecessary idealistic elements as the world spirit, and which added economic analysis, i.e. analysis of social relations, which form the necessary materialist basis of the dialectic development of history. Accordingly, the materialist dialectic of Marx was a distinct form of logic, different from formal logic: it was the logic of human reasoning that allowed one to analyze the historical development and formation of various social forms as a result of interactions within the framework of materialist industrial relations.

Let us get back to the museum. What does this institution represent in its most general form? The museum is an expedient collection of elements, extracted from reality and arranged in a particular manner, presupposing the exposition of said collection for the general public. If we remove from this definition its final term concerning exhibition, we will be left with a definition of the archive, or even more broadly, of any repository, such as a library, warehouse, information center, virtual server, and even, to a certain extent, a prison and a hospital. Consequently, the specific nature of the museum, which distinguishes it from the rest of these institutions, is first and foremost its exhibitional or expositional aspect. It reveals the specific character of the museum, transforming its collection into an utterance.

Every exhibition is composed of discrete elements, i.e. museum exhibits, drawn from the collection of a given museum, or of other museums, or from everyday life. Moreover, an important characteristic of the museum exhibit is its partial abstraction or idealization. This has to do with its being necessarily severed from its natural interconnections in reality and placed in the abstract context of interaction within the museum exhibition. Even in the case of a fragment of reality, it too has been in some way selected, differentiated, and thus bears the stamp of rational activity. Accordingly, the elements of a museum always contain some aspect of artificiality: none belongs to primary reality in its pure form, which we encounter in everyday life. This can be readily ascertained in the case of the visual arts museum, which gathers artistic expressions, images of reality, arranged in a particular manner.

But it would not be enough simply to extract certain elements from reality to produce an exhibition. These elements must also be arranged in space with respect to one another. Typically, such an arrangement reflects the development and transformation of the principal subject of the exhibition, as represented by the exhibits. For example, the subject may be the succession of styles or artistic movements in
By the late 1920s and early 1930s, a certain consensus emerged in the Soviet Union concerning the role of the museum in a society bound for communism. This took the form of a series of resolutions passed by members of the First National Museological Congress, as well as the establishment of the journal *Soviet Museum*, the official publication of Soviet museologists, wherein these resolutions were elaborated. Accordingly, dialectical materialism was named the principal method of museum activity. In general, this meant that, in contrast to the bourgeois museum of the past, its Soviet counterpart must treat natural history, social history, and the cultural sphere not as alienated and antagonistic to man, but as products of his conscious effort. The *kunstkammer*, i.e. the vulgar materialist or idealistic museum so despised by museologists, would be replaced by the museum as an integral aspect of the artistic transformation of life. Passivity, neutrality, the pseudo-positivist or metaphysical stance of the museum with respect to the phenomena within its purview would become a thing of the past. Political engagement, partisanship, direct participation in industrial processes in the ongoing class struggle, critique of ideological superstitions, critique of fetishism—these were the new guiding principles and slogans of Soviet museology in the Twenties and Thirties.

The First National Museological Congress was an important milestone in the drive toward the achievements and ideals of new museology. However, there was no tried-and-true procedure whereby the museum was expected to put the principles of dialectical materialism into practice. This, in turn, opened the doors for experimental ideas. One
must invariably enter into commercial relations and eventually become a petit-bourgeois, and that consequently capitalism leaves virtually no room for the formation of a truly free art, since it will inevitably be taken over by commodity fetishism.

The Soviet Union of the 1930s was free from the capitalist commodity fetishism of the art market, but most of the art production of the past nevertheless bore its stamp. The Experimental Complex Marxist Exhibition proposed by Fedorov-Davydov at the Congress and subsequently mounted at the State Tretyakov Gallery was supposed to invent a new method of exhibition that applied the dialectically materialist approach to visual arts museums.

The exhibition was structured around class-based interpretations of artworks and was comprehensive insofar as it comprised a selection of characteristic artworks that reconstructed the hypothetical living spaces of their commissioner or potential buyer. In addition to old-guard artworks, admitted by the bourgeois museum, the exhibition also introduced works that were not granted such status, including folk art, street design, political slogans, and banners. Finally, the exhibition included economic information, diagrams, eyewitness accounts, literary fragments, and so on, meant to substantiate the various aesthetic interpretations of the artworks on display. Those amateur viewers who were interested specifically in the historical development of a particular art form were invited to visit a special study room, where they could familiarize themselves with historical materials tracing this development in a manner similar to the presentation at the Museum of Painting Culture.

The principles of dialectical materialism were to be adopted not only by all types of existing museums, but by new types of museums as well. As an example of museological
innovation, we can point to the industrial museum project, presented before the Congress by David Arkin. The project largely echoed the ideas of the industrial avant-garde, developed by Boris Arvatov, but implemented them at the institutional rather than individual level. The industrial museum is a laboratory-museum, tasked with preserving and developing creative prototypes for subsequent implementation in production. The scope of this project concerned first of all handcrafts and design-based industries such as textiles, ceramics, and so forth.

An area of particular interest to the new museum, built on the dialectical materialist principle, was everyday life. Naturally, this concerned first and foremost the living conditions of the social classes previously excluded from official historical and museological practices. Exhibitions of the living conditions of the working class constituted a new form of creative museology. One example of this may be seen in the works of another contributor to *Soviet Museum*, Valentin Kholtsov. New types of exhibitions, the complexity of the historical period, and the need to continuously maintain the balance between the exhibits and the logic of their interpretation, i.e. to apply the Marxist method, demanded from Soviet museologists the highest level of professionalism. In this they were not always successful, especially if we consider that former industrial workers were then actively recruited into museum work. The pages of *Soviet Museum* bristle with critical reviews, including a series of remarks on the characteristic excesses of artistic expressivity in articles written by I. M. Zykov and N. A. Shneerson.

An important innovation of Soviet museology was the museums of the Revolution, the very idea of which seems contradictory in and of itself. Indeed, the Revolution is an event that, in its scale, transcends any traditional methods of representation or archiving. And yet the works in the museums of the Revolution became one of the most important artistic discoveries of twentieth-century museology.

And if the museum of the avant-garde, effectively the prototype of the museum of modern and contemporary art, was a museum of the ongoing rupture in the history of art, the museum of the Revolution served the same function with respect to social history, and in doing so it often pushed the boundaries of traditional media even further than the most radical artists of the times. The very structure of the exhibition in a revolutionary museum is a collage of varying types of artistic media and auxiliary nonartistic information, facilitating their analysis. It may be said that such a museum was built on principles closely related to those elaborated in the realism of Bertolt Brecht, aimed at the “estrangement” of the literary narrative. In the Soviet museum, the critique of spectacle through estrangement was meant to awaken in the viewer a conscious stance, grounded in the understanding of historical processes. This was the principal distinction between the Soviet and the fascist museum, which used similar means to achieve opposite ends.

One of the outcomes of the dialectical approach to the museum was the apparent need to bring the institution into everyday life, i.e. for the museum to transcend its own boundaries. In this respect, Soviet museologists were very much in accord with avant-garde artists. At the same time, their engagement with respect to industrial production and agriculture had a more systemic character and was, moreover, materially supported by the state. In the pages of *Soviet Museum* we find numerous reviews of so-called “mobile exhibitions” that traveled to locations far beyond the reaches of traditional institutions. Museum agit-trucks and mobile museums housed inside vehicles were organized...
as part of the campaign aimed at the successful completion of the Five-Year Plan.

One of the more striking examples of this practice was the “mobile laboratory hut” i.e. a combination of an exhibition and a small agricultural laboratory, mounted on wheels. These mobile museums used experimental exhibitions to persuade farmers to adapt new strains of crops. There were experiments of other kinds as well, such as partnerships between museums and schools and other educational facilities to create exhibitions of living plants, as described in P. N. Khrapov’s project “Museum in the Street.” Another logical extension was the workplace museum. Museums located directly on factory premises were meant to be used as research centers for the development of new technological solutions, as well as to instruct newly hired workers in the history and organization of the industrial process.

Finally, a peculiar variation on the dialectical-materialist museum was the atheist museum. The original materialist critique of religion as a refuge for irreconcilable social contradictions belongs to Ludwig Feuerbach. In the visual arts, however, one had to wait for the iconoclastic impulse of the historical avant-garde to mount an artistic critique of religion as a kind of camouflage for exploitation and social inequality. The Soviet years saw the rise of the Union of Militant Atheists, numbering several million members at one point. Many of the major church compounds were expropriated for the use of various kinds of antireligious institutions. Modest museums of atheism were organized in schools and workplaces. The fervor of antireligious propaganda often matched that of any religious fanaticism.

The opposing tendencies—on the one hand, calling for the preservation and study of religious art (be it iconic painting or the church ritual as a whole, a “synthetic work of art,”

to borrow Pavel Florensky’s term), and on the other, for the total rejection of an alien and dangerous ideological delusion—determined the specific character of antireligious museums and, at the same time, served as the driving force of their development in the Soviet Union. Thus, oftentimes the critical aspect of an exhibit differed considerably from what is generally thought of as the more temperate museum presentation within the context of a functioning house of worship, which treats religious attributes strictly as cultural artifacts. Indeed, to be persuasive, exhibitions and expositions in the atheist museum had to transcend the effect of a typical church ritual, while at the same time “estranging” it by providing analytical information that lay bare the inner workings of its mechanisms.

* * *

But the dialectical-materialist museum in its avant-garde form was not fated to last long. Beginning in the 1930s, alongside the intensifying political crackdowns directed against museum workers, among many others, we witness a reorientation of dialectical materialism from Lenin’s original conception to a new interpretation promulgated by Stalin. The new Soviet leader had evidently personally written the text on philosophical method for the introductory course on Bolshevism. At the time, mounting political persecutions precluded virtually any possibility of a polemic against the highest authorities. Accordingly, despite the fact that the official name of the philosophical method—essentially the official philosophy of the USSR—did not change (both before and after the mid-1930s dialectical materialism remained the intellectual mainstream, admitting no alternatives),
progress of the forces of production and of historical consciousness expressed in human thought, but as the laws of the progress of matter and nature in and of themselves, with their subsequent realization in human activity, including production and philosophy. Accordingly, in the Soviet version of dialectical materialism, the dialectic acquired a metaphysical quality and began to resemble an abstract science, whose principles governed all other natural sciences and, in their application to the laws of social progress, engendered their own doppelganger, i.e. historical materialism. This interpretation effectively rejected Marxist analysis, which derives the materialist dialectic from the economic analysis of the dialectical progress of the spirit as posited by Hegel, and reduced materialism to its pre-Marxist mechanistic, reductive interpretations. Accordingly, the establishment of the official philosophical Marxist doctrine transformed Soviet dialectical materialism into an ontology, and dialectics proper into abstract principles, typically superimposed over the phenomena under consideration.

The outcome for experimental museologists was that, beginning in the mid-Thirties, they were subject to virulent criticism for erroneous interpretations of dialectical materialism. For many, these attacks spelled the end of their professional career; for many others, it amounted to an arrest warrant or a death sentence. Built on the application of Marxist critical rhetoric, Stalinism did not and could not accept the dialectical-materialist museum in its Marxist-Leninist form. And so the museum, which had begun dialectically to overflow its banks, was forcibly re-confined within its narrow course, to remain there as a kind of doppelgänger of the church, touting the illusory triumph of the revolutionary idea and the ultimate coming of communism.

Had Nikolai Fedorov’s resurrection project ever come to life, Krupskaya might have posted her quip that “Lenin was no lover of museums” to Facebook and Twitter. The trouble was not that the leader of the international proletariat, like the conservatively minded realist artists of the post-Soviet academies, despised everything “Western” and modern. Lenin was equally bored by the conveyor belt of artistic innovation, with its vulgar materialist obsession with object fetishism, and the giant factories for knowledge production, with their faith in reason as the ultimate aim of mankind’s development. But he would be absolutely fascinated by exhibitions of Conceptualist art. He would find there much useful material for ruminations on revolutionary practice under the conditions of late-stage capitalism. And while these specimens still fell short of progressive dialectical materialism, Lenin found in them that essential quality that pointed the way to the future progress of art and museology.

What was so special about Conceptualist practices? To answer this question we would have to reconstruct the mindset of a practicing revolutionary and Marxist thinker with respect to the practices of contemporary art. Conceptualism was built around the analysis of the conditions of art production, the analysis of the medium that serves as the vehicle for artistic utterance, and consequently presupposed the examination of objective material relations underlying all forms of the aesthetic experience.

At the same time, its groundwork was laid a short while beforehand by the theorist of medium-specific art Clement Greenberg. This former radical Left Trotskyite defined all avant-garde art as the artistic reflection of elements of reality that had previously been processed by art—as art, for art, and about art. In this he came close to the Soviet museum in its use of the method of dialectical materialism, as in the experiments of Fedorov-Davydov. But unlike the latter, Greenberg was more of a Hegelian, inasmuch as he was able to give a faithful account of the development of the art of the past and outline its potential future, but failed to take note of the materialist basis of this development, subordinating it to the abstract idea of medium-specific art for art’s sake. It fell to the Conceptualists to take the next step in the history of contemporary art.

In other words, conceptualism was an example of materialist analysis. Moreover, like the Soviet museum, Conceptualist artworks transcended the naive attachment to one particular medium, characteristic of Greenberg and the postwar American avant-garde. In contrast to the museums, however, Conceptualist art could become dialectical only in the context of a curatorial installation, which estranged its subversive potential by inscribing it into the social framework of bourgeois democracy.  

The Soviet dialectical-materialist museum, on the other hand, was a form of conceptualism in its movement, its self-evolution, aimed at its own dialectical sublation without any limitations. Perhaps this was what the Soviet post-avant-garde artists dreamt about in the Twenties when they tried to invent a special conceptual form of realism, capable of transcending the stasis of the materialist (albeit analytical) image. And had they been able to get hold of the journal titled Avant-Garde Museology, history might have followed a different course.

was always reflexive with respect to its own foundations and was directed against the possible fetishization of the critical method as such.

Although the museological projects that emerged in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries did not coalesce into a uniform whole—indeed, they were often in conflict, supplementing and critiquing one another—we can nevertheless argue that they embodied a common tendency. On the one hand, all expressed dissatisfaction with the old-guard museum, i.e. an institution that enshrined a “non-brotherly,” “exploitative,” “ethically erroneous” state of affairs that sustained the perception of art and culture as “alienated” from human life; on the other hand, all displayed a tendency toward a conception of the museum as a progressive institution, progressing through self-development toward the sublation of alienation and convergence with life and human artistic activity in the broadest sense of the word.

If the historical avant-garde artists’ struggle against the old, alienated, vulgar materialist or vulgar idealistic museum could be construed as a first-order critique, then the experiments of the late Twenties and early Thirties aimed at creating a museum consistent with the Marxist method, one that took the next step by proposing a series of practical solutions to the problem of the reorganization and reinterpretation of the museum as an inalienable part of the development of human cultural production—namely, as a museum progressing in its dialectical development toward the transcendence of its own boundaries and, simultaneously, of class contradictions. Finally, the ultimate horizon in the evolution of the museum was set out in Fedorov’s project, which added to the sublation of social contradictions the transformation of man by means of a museum, which will eventually bring about the artistic transformation of the universe.
The creators and theorists of avant-garde museological projects did not, as a rule, consider themselves to be artists in the traditional sense of the word, and did not refer to what they were doing as art. In that respect they once more resembled the exponents of the industrial avant-garde, who also rejected the attachment to art, at least in its traditional form. Accordingly, the problem of the attribution of the work of Soviet museologists, as well as of the industrial avant-garde, cannot be resolved within the context of the existing social and aesthetic precepts. The history of contemporary art, which traces its origins to the modernist and emancipatory projects of the late nineteenth century, despite the long list of its artistic innovations, cannot by definition transcend its boundaries without formally abandoning its subject. Still, based on our analysis of the potential future genealogy of the avant-garde museology project (which seems reasonable, considering that we are speaking of a phenomenon that presumably runs ahead of its time), we can at the very least retrospectively position this project alongside related artistic practices similar to it in their formal and substantive tenets. That means that Stalinist purges and the branding of the museological experiments of the Twenties and Thirties as “leftist errors” were not able to destroy it entirely. The discoveries, made at one time in the laboratories of avant-garde museologists, reappear in Conceptualist and post-Conceptualist art, in the practices of institutional critique, in artistic gestures that construe the exhibition and the museum as a distinct medium of artistic expression, as well as in innovative curatorial practices and experimental institutions. If the journal with the title Avant-Garde Museology never existed, then perhaps we ought to create it. After all, if one believes the imaginary history of the future of this ambitious project, we still have a great deal of work ahead of us.
Our age is proud and self-loving (i.e. “civilized” and “cultured”)—when it wishes to express disdain for some work, it knows no more disdainful an expression than “put it in an archive, in a museum ...” By this alone one can judge the sincerity of the gratitude of posterity, for example, to genius inventors, and generally to ancestors, to whom contemporaries are often so cruel. In any case, the respect expressed in “museum-quality,” in the contemporary sense of this phrase, is not devoid of hypocrisy and contains an ambiguity. Thus the museum, in the sense of disdain, and the museum, in the sense of respect, is such a contradiction that it requires a resolution.1

One must, however, remark that disdain for the archives is completely baseless, and originates from the fact that our age is completely incapable of recognizing its own defects. If it were not deprived of this capability, then of course it would recognize not as disgraceful, but as truly honorable, a
donation to the museum of, for example, the first steamship, which, until this donation, was perhaps used for transporting Africans or for transporting manufactured junk and then became useless for this purpose. And is it possible to think of any use for this steamship, or generally for any other creation besides this steamship, the forced cessation of which would cause regret? Such use would be undoubtedly higher, and not lower, than inactivity, which is the fate of everything that is donated to a museum! The transportation or earning of bread, for example! But bread is transported from the village to the city; it is the trade of the city with the village—it is not a brotherly exchange, service to which would be honorable. Just as the transport of an army is not a brotherly task! ... Nonetheless, if a museum is just a depository, even in a respectable sense, then donations to the museum, as with donations to the grave, cannot contain anything good, even if accompanied by artistic or “learned,” i.e. dead, rehabilitation. And in this case the destructive meaning that is ascribed to it has a basis. But if a donation to the archive, as if to a depository, is worthy of disdain as dead resurrection and does not satisfy living beings, then leaving the donation in life as it is is also not respectable. Rest and death, eternal discord and struggle, are equally evil. Hypocrisy is inevitable as long as the museum is only a depository—only dead rehabilitation—and life is only struggle.

In the meantime the scope of preservation grows larger and larger as the struggle becomes more energetic. The intensification of the struggle is beyond doubt. It is understood that an age that calls itself progressive will be as abundant, as rich in its donations to the museum, as it is true to its name as the age of progress. Progress, or, more accurately, struggle offering so many sacrifices to the museum, saving what is donated to it from unbrotherly activity, could not be
The second contradiction of the contemporary museum is the fact that the age that values only what is useful ends up collecting and preserving what is useless. Museums serve as justification for the nineteenth century; their existence in our iron age demonstrates that conscience has not completely disappeared. Otherwise it is impossible to understand preservation in our crudely utilitarian world where everything is for sale, just as it is impossible to understand the high sales value of objects that are useless and outdated. By preserving things despite its exploitative tendencies, our age, in spite of self-contradiction, still serves the unknown God. But will this respect for monuments of the past be preserved during further progress, during an increase in artificial needs, deemed necessary at the time of intensified concern for the present? Egyptians entombed the mummies of their ancestors out of need, despite the fact that according to their beliefs, such entombing was equal to worsening their fate; our time, with future progress, can completely abandon everything related to our ancestors, all monuments to them; but at the same time man, having lost the very sense and concept of kinship, already ceases to be a moral being, i.e. will attain complete Buddhist impassivity; for him there will be nothing dear, and society will truly become an anthill, which, however, is also capable of “progress!”

However, one cannot annihilate the museum; like a shadow, it accompanies life, like a grave, it is behind all the considered as causing pain and being deadly, if each work did not have its author-creator and if progress were not crowding out the living. But progress is precisely the production of dead things, accompanied by the extrusion of living people. Progress can be called a true, real hell, whereas the museum, if it be paradise, is only in planning, because now it is collecting, under the guise of old tatters, the departed souls of the dead. But these souls reveal themselves only to those who have a soul. For the museum, man is infinitely higher than an object; for the installation, for factory civilization and culture, the object is higher than man. The museum is the last remnant of the cult of ancestors; it is a special type of that cult, which while being expelled from religion, as we see with Protestants, is reestablished in the form of the museum. The only thing that is higher than the old tatters preserved in museums is the very dust itself, the very remains of the dead; just as the only thing higher than the museum would be the grave, unless the museum itself does not become the transposition of the dust to the city, or the transformation of a cemetery into a museum.

Our age deeply reveres progress and its full expression—the exhibition, i.e. the struggle, the extrusion—and of course would wish eternal existence for this extrusion, which it calls progress, this perfecting, which will become so perfected as to annihilate that pain which necessarily accompanies this perfecting, as it does all struggle. And our age in no way dares to imagine that progress itself would ever become the achievement of history, and this grave, this museum, becomes the reconstruction of all of progress’s victims at the time when struggle will be supplanted by accord, and unity in the purpose of reconstruction, only in which parties of progressives and conservatives can be reconciled—parties that have been warring since the beginning of history.

2. Those who fancy seeming fresh call things that go out of use “a rag,” forgetting that if what goes out of use becomes a rag, it’s only because during use, it was already in tatters to begin with. The only thing that will not be in tatters is that which has the power to withstand the transformation into rags and rot, and at the same time also has the ability, i.e. a power arising from the mind, to always restore freshness. Only restoration contains within itself the power to counteract destruction; while progress only provides splendor to decay.
living. Each man bears a museum within himself, bears it even against his personal wish, as a dead appendage, as a corpse, as reproaches of conscience; for conservation is a basic law, preceding man, having been in force before him. Conservation is a characteristic not only of organic, but of inorganic nature; and especially of human nature. People lived, i.e. ate, drank, judged, decided cases, and put those that were settled into the archives, not even thinking at the time of death and losses; in reality it turned out that putting matters into the archive and transferring all the remains of life to the museum was a transfer to a higher order, to a domain of investigation, to the hands of descendants, to one or several generations, depending on the position and the state in which the investigation is found, also depending on how widespread this investigation has become. Its highest degree will be attained when those who settle affairs are also their investigators, i.e. make themselves members of the museum; in other words, when investigation becomes self-study and in this way leads to the point at which resurrection immediately follows death. This level is not a court, for everything that is deposited in a museum is there for rehabilitating and redeeming life, not for judging everyone. The museum is the collection of everything outlived, dead, unsuitable for use; but precisely because of this it is the hope of the century, for the existence of a museum shows that there are no finished matters. That is why the museum provides consolation to everyone who is afflicted, because it is the highest level of development for judicial-economic society. For the museum, death itself is not the end but only the beginning; an underground kingdom that was considered hell is even a special department within the museum. For the museum, there is nothing hopeless, “sung out,” i.e. something that is impossible to revive and resurrect. Only those who wish revenge will find no consolation in it, for it is not a power, and containing a reconstructing force within itself, it is powerless to punish—for only life can resurrect, not death, not deprivation of life, not murder! The museum is the highest instantiation that can and must return life, not take it.

The Kremlin, transformed into a museum, is the expression of the whole soul, the completeness and agreement of all capabilities, the absence of internal discord, the expression of unity, of spiritual peace and happiness, i.e. of all that is lacking in our progressive era; a museum is indeed the “higher world.” When the museum was a temple, i.e. a regulatory force, supporting the life of ancestors (at least in people's understanding), then will, expressed in this (i.e. in the temple), even if it was an imaginary action, was in agreement with reason that justified it and acknowledged this imaginary action as real. At that time reason too was not separated from memory, and the act of commemoration, nowadays just a ceremony, had a real meaning; at that time memory was not just preservation, but a restoration, even though only imaginary and conceptual, of course, but all the same serving as a real guarantee of preserving the fatherland, the common origin, brotherhood. When reason is separated from the memory of the fathers, it becomes an abstract exploration of causes of phenomena, i.e. philosophy. When not separated from the memory of the departed, it is not the seeking-out of abstract principles, but of fathers; reason, directed in this way, becomes the project of resurrection. Linguistic investigation supports this original unity of capabilities: one and the same root appears in words (of Aryan, or perhaps other languages too) that express memory (moreover, memory specifically

3. Or the remnants of life, of activity, themselves become the content of museums, for example, like kitchen scraps from prehistoric times that end up in museums.
of fathers, of the dead) and reason, and soul in general, and finally the human as a whole. Psychological investigation of the positivists also supports the unity of memory and reason, attributing the processes of knowledge to the law of memory, of association, turning will into the regulator of action. And thus we can say that muses and museums were born from memory, i.e. from the whole man. In other words, linguistic as well as psychological investigation convinces us that museums and the muse are contemporary with man himself, they were born together with his consciousness. Consequently, the purpose of the museum can be nothing other than the purpose of the circle dance and the ancestral temple, into which the round dance was transformed, i.e. the sun-path, returning the sun for the summer, awakening life in all that had faded in winter. The difference here is only in the means of action that had no real power in the round dance and temple; the action of a museum must have power that really returns, gives. This will be, when the museum returns to ashes itself and creates tools that regulate the destructive lethal forces of nature that control it.

We would not exaggerate, of course, if we said that the museum, as an expression of the entire soul, will return to us spiritual peace, internal accord, will give us happiness like the father feels upon the return of his prodigal son. The sickness of the age consists exactly in the renunciation of the past, the renunciation of a common purpose for all generations. This sickness has deprived our life of meaning and purpose, and in literature has created Fausts, Don Juans, Cains, and generally restive types, while in philosophy it has created subjectivism and solipsism. When there was no discord between capabilities, there was no separation between religion (as the cult of ancestors) and science and art (being celestial and terrestrial, as well as subterranean). As man himself was then
it has no right to consider itself knowledge for knowledge’s sake and to free itself from the obligation to serve a common purpose. Even though such a demand, such an encroachment on the freedom of the individual, would seem shocking to a contemporary man, this comes from a habit of thinking that the freedom of an individual is absolute, in a century that does not accept anything as absolute. The right to such freedom is only the right to live according to one’s whims, turning life into the trivial and empty, and then in despair asking, “Life, why were you given to me?”

This is why, based on the unity of knowledge and action, astronomy specialists have no right to avoid an obligation to serve, a duty given to man at birth; likewise, all natural-science investigators do not have that right either, whose science is only a split-off from the celestial science, a diversion from the science of the universe. Based on the same principle, the observatory is the same kind of necessary feature of an all-science museum as external senses—the organs of perception—are necessary to every man for his internal feeling and memory. By “observatory” we mean not an agency of abstract science, but of physical astronomy, of a chemical science of every substance, organic and inorganic, vegetable, animal, and human, such that humanity (which can constitute a museum only in its entirety) observes the whole universe from the observatory—from the outside, and observes man himself from the anthropological side. An observatory observes the world that, one might say, is merged with the memory of the dead, of the past. The past is the subject of history. The beginning of the observatory was the gnomon, the invention of which we credit to the Ionian sages. Primordial man probably told time using his own shadow; in later times, in urban life, the gnomon replaced this way of telling time; it was an instrument for measuring one’s actions and one’s life experience; that is why clocks (predominantly hourglasses) became an attribute of death. With the help of the gnomon, man also created a calendar in which he marked off not only the times of nature’s rebirth (holidays) and fading, but also the days of the passing of fathers, i.e. the days of commemorating ancestors. That is why a museum, as a formation of memory of the fathers and of everything that is connected with them and with the past, is inseparable from the observatory. Astronomical calendars were thermal, optic, and generally physical and chemical, for the forces of nature—especially the biological, organic force—change according to the time of day and the time of year.

The educational significance of observatories as schools demands that idle gazing be turned into obligatory observation, so that the sky has as many observers as there are stars in it. Platonizing Christianity tried to hold thought “on high,” but to prevent thought from falling “down low,” one must raise one’s eyes to the sky, one must turn contemplation into observation.

Thus, the observatory is related to the museum as the external senses (the aggregate of which, i.e. of all means of observation and organs of perception, is actually an observatory) are related to reason, but to reason in the widest, or more accurately, in its actual, real meaning and significance: to reason that cannot be separated from the memory of the fathers, and contains within it one indivisible whole; to such reason that only the son of man possesses,
happening independently of man. This organism (a museum with an observatory) will remain without hands if the city and the village remain separated, in which case the natural-historical museum will remain outside of the natural process of nature, will not be its reason, those memories preserved in the museum will not be a true, material resurrection, nor will they be a regulator of nature. It is due to this separation of city and village, and to this concentration of all mental life in the former, that nature seems elusive to us; while we blame nature for hiding from us. Wouldn’t it be fair to say that we do not discover it for lack of time, occupied with manufacturing and everything connected with it? Due to our busyness we cannot prepare observers and investigators, because from childhood we enslave them in the factory in order to satisfy our most trivial desires. It is equally unfair to say that nature gives us no way, and having attached us to Earth, makes us powerless to establish control. All of these complaints are equally justified, as would be an earlier complaint that nature deprived us of the opportunity to sail across the oceans, until Columbus managed it. And at present, in, for example, photographic images of the Sun, we have, one must suppose, everything that we need to grasp the concept of what the Sun is, and it is our fault that up to this point we have not used all this available data and have not interpreted it.

Astronomy, once it has reunited with the sciences which have been unnaturally detached and unlawfully separated from it, which have forgotten their origin, like physics and the chemistry of inorganic and organic substances (for there can be a physics and a chemistry of the Earth or planets, suns, interplanetary or intersolar spaces, but the only people who can defend the independence and separation of these sciences are those who do not acknowledge the common task of the human race), astronomy will be transformed.
concept of the top with the center of the Earth; it became necessary to create a whole new physics, a new concept of falling bodies. Anaximenes considered air as the foundation of the world and as its first element, which he considered the soul of the cosmos and of man. Pythagoras had already become the Copernicus of the ancient world, but in this world the triumph was left for Ptolemy’s system. However, the Copernican system will not hold in the new worldview, unless it acquires practical value.

The detachment of philosophy from astronomy rendered incomprehensible the very problem of basis, foundation, reason. Philosophy, searching for the meaning of everything, did not know its own origin, its raison d’etre, and lost the meaning of its existence. The fear of the destruction of the world, doubts about its stability, caused the appearance of a new science of the conditions of Earth’s stability, its preservation, and its reconstruction from the primary element. Astronomy sought the indestructible, from which everything could be reconstructed. But astronomy itself was born from the decline of religion, which always considers itself the possessor of the means for the preservation and reconstruction of the world. In the question of maintenance and reconstruction, physics, chemistry, and philosophy itself became understandable.

Constant discord gave the question of the world and society a primary place, and overshadowed the fundamental, universal question. History, having as its subject the eternal discords, separated into an individual science; but as long as it speaks of man as creator of discord, as long as it looks at the life of the human race as it is now, only as a fact, not asking the question of what it must be, i.e. a project of future life, humanity will not discover either in astronomy, or in cosmic art, or in world regulation, its common purpose.

5. It is not possible for man to not create resemblances; resemblances are necessary for analyzing the idea and partially for proof; and if a secularized and secularizing church is a museum, then the armillary spheres, the globes (states), were also the beginning of the museum.
In order to have internal peace and spiritual accord, without which external peace is impossible, we must not be enemies to our ancestors, but really be their grateful descendants; it is not sufficient to limit ourselves to only internal commemoration—merely a cult of the dead—it is necessary that all the living, having united as brothers in the temple of ancestors, or the museum, which has as its elements not just the observatory, but also the astronomical regulator, this would transform the blind force of nature into one that is directed by reason. Then the insensible would not prevail, it would not take the life of the sentient, then all that is sentient would be restored, and all worlds would be united in resurrected generations, and an infinite area would open for their conjunctive activity, and this alone would make internal discord unnecessary and impossible.

Astronomy, taken separately from physics and the natural sciences, can have application only in defining places on Earth, especially in the art of navigation. Separately, physics has application in industry, in a synthetic task. And only physics in a meteorological sense, as the physics of planet Earth and other heavenly worlds, i.e. astronomical physics and physical astronomy, can have practical application to meteorological regulation. One can, of course, unite natural science with physics as well, as the knowledge of nature, of what was born, but such a unification would be a complete renunciation of any application of natural science to practical life. In such a case, natural science would come to serve only to increase pleasure and, consequently, not only would it not serve universal good and everyone, for it would exclude the dead, but it would not even embrace all the living, in that, in increasing material pleasures, it at the same time would intensify internal sufferings and would bring a deep discord to life. Natural science in the form of astronomy cannot be applicable to selfish goals, neither for the majority nor for the minority, it can only be a regulator of falling, i.e. can only become the foundation of the world. Instead of being an external support and scaffolding, it can become an internal regulator, counteracting disintegration and destruction, it can become a link, i.e. it can introduce the interrelationship of heavenly worlds and thus restore life, for cosmic dissociation alone is the root cause of death, of the change of generations. Only simultaneously can two goals begin, in essence composing one purpose: on the one hand, natural sciences must unite in the form of astronomy so that their common investigation becomes the revelation of the means and the plan of world regulation; on the other hand, we must begin the collection of all forces of all people for the realization of the plan of regulation, we must begin the transformation of urban conscription intended for struggle against one’s own kin into a village that has the task of transforming the lethal force of nature into a life-giving one.

The museum as the ancients meant it (from whom we have borrowed this enterprise) is a congregation of the learned; its task is investigation. But in this definition, the powerlessness of the museum is apparent; by this definition it set itself limits for expansion. Thus the museum in the Christian world too remained pagan: it likewise limited itself in scope and content, such that the investigation became abstract, scholastic, and the museum-congregation itself remained a closed school, a social class. The museum-congregation will be filled and collecting will become universal only when self-consciousness is not simply investigation, but the study of reasons for the disunion between scholars and non-scholars, the precise reason that all are not members of museums, which, of course, falls under the question of universal kinship. Then knowledge will be just...
as limitless as universal collecting, i.e. the communion will be truly universal, and knowledge at its highest level will annihilate the disunion of worlds through the restoration of all past generations.

The museum is not an aggregate of objects, but a congregation of persons; its activity consists not in accumulating dead things, but in restoring life to the remains of the dead, in reestablishing the dead through their works, via living agents. Abstract knowledge cannot be a universal obligation, knowledge of what makes us enemies cannot be but a duty for all, in that it cannot remain only knowledge, but must become a purpose, a religion reconciled with science. Dissociation and disintegration is a fact not only of human, but of physical nature; and disintegration in the latter is completely understandable, inevitable, necessary, if dissociation exists in the former. Disintegration is determined by the blindness of natural force and is explained by laziness, the inactivity of rational beings who, due to some misconception, exist in blindness. However, dissociation cannot be absolute and omnipotent merely because we already feel in ourselves the urge and force of communication, collecting, restoring. Religion, science, art, all of these are collecting forces, but taken separately they are powerless, while in the present they exist only in separation! Religion assumed the parting prayer, the sign of the cross, presumed to take place before a purpose, as the actual purpose; but the prayer, intended to be the expression of all religion, not being supported by the common purpose, transformed from a prayer emanating from the heart, from the whole soul, into a prayer pronounced by the lips alone. The heart, troubled by the present, the concerns of the day, became far from God, and would not approach Him, until the purpose itself became the purpose of God, the universal, the investigation and elimination of reasons for the unbrotherly state, i.e. of those same reasons that force us to abandon the purpose of the fatherland, the goal of the Heavenly Father. Only the goal gives religion life, soul, otherwise it will be word only, and moreover, a vain word, and not God’s goal. One must pay attention to why religion, producing an uplift of the spirit, can never retain people at the height to which it raised them.

Science, investigation, in its turn, wishes to live either for itself or only for the present. But what right does it have to refuse the human goal, being itself the goal of the people, or to narrow, limit its activity to only the present, when it itself is not just the goal of the living? Can such a position be called normal, one in which investigation, quality, and the directing of reason are made the domain of one class, and not of all rational beings? What right have we, for the sake of the well-being of production, satisfying not our needs but only our whims, to cease the instruction of the majority at the age when reason has just come into force? Do we have the right to leave the museum, according to the ancient definition, as a congregation of only the learned, a feast only for famous people of the whole Earth—as it was described by the author of the life of Oedipus Tryannus—instead of being a universal Eucharist of knowledge? According to Christianity, a museum, obviously, is not a congregation only of the learned, but a communion of all; the vocation of the museum is to be the “catcher of men.” Investigation, i.e. science, can no longer remain just abstract knowledge; it must become the investigation of reasons which prevent all of us from being members of the museum, investigators, and from uniting as one in the purpose of the fatherland. Christianity has not yet touched the museum, the universal collective has not yet been accepted as its obligation. The museum in its present state is not even related to human nature, which
makes reason a common characteristic of all people, while investigation is still considered a domain of only one class, the intelligentsia, while the majority are left only with a lower power—reasoning, guile, of which not even animals are bereft. Presently, the museum is not even a congregation of scholars, for societies of scholars constitute different agencies, or at least their dissociation from the museum is not yet considered a necessity. Museums do not constitute even one Museum, they have not attained unity even in this regard, even though this unity is necessary for the museum, in order not to contradict its essence, for present museums as collections of only material objects are only random collections. What significance can the transfer of things have, the handover of finished affairs, the construction of monuments, if all this takes place not according to a concrete plan, not as a way to achieve a concrete goal, but according to some law of fate, which was disregarded, apparently, by human reason, and which, after all, it did not even make a subject of investigation or knowledge? Human thought has not created a project of collecting, in terms of attaining its completeness, in order to rescue future generations from the necessity of looking for what must have been preserved, and what, however, disappeared, even though we feel the difficulty of these searches daily. It’s still a mystery why one thing is preserved and another thing disappears, although in blind nature itself there is, apparently, an urge for preservation. Museums are mostly born, rather than created, for there is hardly an awareness of what governs the creation of museums. Thus, museums in their nature are random, not ubiquitous; the growth of each of them is nonlinear, inconsistent, not discontinuous, and the internal arrangement of objects in them represents more a random pile than orderly collecting. So the definition that one can give of the present-day museum would be more ideal than corresponding to reality, although this ideal definition as well is far from corresponding to what the museum must be.

The passive museum, the museum as representation, as a likeness of imaginary resurrection, as only a depository, is an ideal museum only in the sense that for it, perfection is impossible. On the one hand, the museum is an image of the world, the universe visible and invisible, dying and yet living, past and present, natural, produced by blind force, and likewise artificial, produced by the half-conscious power of the people. On the other hand, the museum is a creation of the learned classes, the intelligentsia, of mental labor with the help of the physical labor of the people. This labor, however, is not history itself, but only its likeness. The present museum, ideally represented, can be called a book, a library, illustrated by picture and sculpture galleries and generally by any physical work of art from the Eolithic period to ours, the new iron or steel age, we could call it. The present museum is like a book, explained by demonstrations of physics offices and chemical laboratories, expanded to whole special institutes.6 The zoological and botanical gardens, as the image of the flora and fauna of the whole Earth, with idealized

6. Painting and sculpture galleries are the same thing to libraries as are pictures appended to the end of a book, for the same thing that is expressed in a book—the work of a thinker, in abstract formulas—is expressed for an artist in pictorial and sculptural images. The unification of the library with artistic collections expresses not just simple neighborly relation, but serves as an expression of the connection that exists between the abstract formulas of thinkers and works by artists. Axes, blades, potsherds of prehistoric times, the explosives of chemical laboratories, the tools of physics labs, and so forth, have a relation not just to books of purely archaeological content, or to physics books, or chemistry books, but to the most abstract metaphysical systems, for chemical and physics tools have the same influence on the thought of the newest philosophers as the invention of the most ancient instruments had on the thought of the ancients.
It is necessary to mention that the museum can place only historical emphasis on new books, and the museum itself cannot be truth or the expression of it, but only the transition toward it. Preserving the old and collecting the new, the museum will possess completeness only when it is not just all-science, all-arts, polytechnic, not just a collection of everything that remains from the past, but also of everything that is produced today, and not only according to one branch of knowledge, and not just in one region, but in all branches and everywhere. The museum that remains a depository not only cannot attain ideal completeness; it also will correspond less to the ideal notion of a museum the more life develops. And this is understandable! The further man moves on the path of present industrial progress, the more objects he will donate to museums, and the more space, strength, and means for preservation will be necessary; while at the same time, less of it will be donated to museums. 8 Not accepting something, destroying something, even if just a store sign, an geological cross sections, are also vivid objects, without which the book is incomprehensible, as these objects themselves are incomprehensible without a book. This, however, does not mean that for zoological and other gardens you need only zoological writings, this means that zoological gardens and writings constitute only part of the history of the knowledge and action of humankind. Astronomical and meteorological observatories, combining everything within themselves, complete the clarification of the book. This book is history itself, but this means that one must not see in the book just personal, subjective opinions; in it, the author himself is expressed, behind the book stands the one who wrote it, i.e. humankind. He who does not see the author behind the book, whose thought does not transition from the work to the one who produced it, he does not act normally in either the mental or moral sense, he does not act in a filial way. From the material side, a museum too (the aggregate of persons) is humanity itself as it is expressed through books and other objects, i.e. a museum is the congregation of living sons with scholars at the helm, collecting works of dead people, fathers. The purpose of the museum is, naturally, the restoration of the latter by means of the former. 7

7. Journalism, in contrast to the museum as a “communion,” must be called “discord,” because journalism fractures the academic class, dispersing it among organs (journals) of unbrotherly, hostile conditions. Thus the academic class, instead of unification, turns to disunion; scholars peddle their services to different unbrotherly conditions that need bullshitters, and therefore, this class, to the extent that it participates in journalism, can be nothing other than “reptilian.” Journalism is a product of a trading center, the city, it is the hand-maiden of women; if a journal puts fashion pictures only at the end, or doesn’t include them at all, this doesn’t mean (as at an exhibition) that a woman occupies a primary position. If one surveys all journalism as one journal, then specialized fashion journals for both sexes and all ages, for furniture, for wallpaper, and so on, would have to occupy the first place.

8. It’s well known that neither the British Museum nor the Bibliothèque nationale de France can for all their efforts attain comprehensiveness even when it comes to books, i.e. they cannot receive all books in print; they could not attain this even if the ruling powers paid better attention to complaints by curators, and didn’t consider donating to a museum as something of least importance. Of course, memory in man is more tightly connected with the organs of activity and knowledge than a museum (which corresponds to memory in a social organism) is connected to the organs of activity of this organism; but just as reason doesn’t pay attention to everything, so memory doesn’t receive everything from what was even in the mind, and even less from what was perceived by external senses; besides, much of what’s perceived by memory is registered in rather vague and pale outlines, and the social organism only exaggerates these defects of man. However, for contemporary man, the existence of social memory, of a museum, is rather difficult to understand, and we can be amazed that museum have not been turned into stores for toiletries, for example. The mind of contemporary man is no longer occupied with education; there is too much “of a real thing,” and moreover, according to...
announcement, an advertisement, would mean renouncing the most essential characteristic of the museum, namely, to contemporary self-perception, perfecting himself every day, becoming accomplished in selflessness and loving thy neighbor, contemporary man has no need to recover old things, to remember a time when he himself and people in general were, of course, much worse. Friends of humanity assure contemporary man that progress occurs when man does not even think about it; they assure him of this, worried, of course, that man will channel all his energy into this task; assuring him of this, these friends of humanity point to nature, which doesn’t think at all, while at the same time seems to be approaching perfection. Man is heading toward the same perfection as nature, making lace and other similar things that he does not perceive as luxuries; but as a result of this perfecting, many consider the museum a luxury, i.e. an unnecessary thing, as well. However, if the museum wishes to become a true representation of the age (which is the only thing demanded of the museum), it must seem to the original itself to be a useless double, an unnecessary luxury; if it is only a depository, then neither our century, nor any other, will consider the preservation of its image, of its shadow, for the future as being of great importance. Achilles would rather have been a slave on Earth than a tsar in the kingdom of shadows; and Achilles would think the same thing of depositing things in a museum, but this does not mean that slavery is good, it just means that the kingdom of shadows is even worse. And our generation would rather “live” than have the honor of ending up in a museum (or what’s worse, in a school textbook). Ecclesiastes said that it is better to be a living dog than a dead lion, i.e. better to live like a dog than enjoy any honors after death!

9. Our age created a new literary genre known as advertising. The output of this sort of literature is amazing, and no other type of literature has such a wide range of readers. The nineteenth century takes pride in not composing obsequious odes to people of high statue, as happened in previous eras, but then it writes odes to objects. Being a total lie in their content, these odes—advertisements serve as a real expression of the nineteenth century, and if this type of lyrical outpouring has not yet received a proper place in literary theories, that is because the nineteenth century has not yet reached full self-awareness. When history happens for this century, there will appear a proper evaluation of this characteristic feature of our times. Political economy, the predominant science of the nineteenth century, which has supplanted religious economy, the economy of salvation, even if it evaluates this type of literature, it does so only one-sidedly ... The nineteenth century is represented not only by advertisements: similar to advertisements in literature, in painting and sculpture, store signs, and in architecture, the architecture of stores and small shops, represent new branches in art created by this century. The purpose of the artist in these new types of art is not easy: with his work, he has to attract, to draw attention, attention that is both very sparse and very focused; he has to captivate, to draw people, so to say, to the store. Crude forgetting, prevalent in the Orient, and partially here, turns into peddling that is more refined and much more powerful. A store sign follows you everywhere, is an eyesore, as they say. Bright colors, gilding, size, symbolism, weight, even live pictures, lives signs, even live performance posters all have to be employed by the artist of the present day to achieve his purpose. This art is the “—cratia,” i.e. the power, that rules the contemporary world. Those who think that the nineteenth century did not produce its own original artwork are, of course, mistaken: art did not die, it just transformed, i.e. became perverted into the literature of advertisements and the art of store signs.

10. If industrialism, with the help of its humblest handmaiden, science, brings labor to a minimum and leisure to a maximum, then the whole society will use what is now accessible only to those who are free from labor, who have leisure. The Paris beau monde that is imitated by capitals and provincial cities of the so-called civilized world can serve as an example of what the current society wants to achieve, of that which can be called the kingdom of this world. Based on the
even having turned all producers into curators, the museum would not be able to hold all the products of this sad manufacture, of this disgrace of humanity.

On the impossibility of unity for a museum of resemblance, a museum of ideals, a museum of knowledge, and not of activity. The museum has an even smaller opportunity to bring its collection into order, to give it unity. If it is a true representation of the past and the present, the museum will be a depiction not of unity, but of discord. A strict classification is impossible in the museum for the same reason that it is impossible in science, both natural as well as social—it’s impossible because of the lack in the world (more accurately, because of the loss) of rational unity, of unity in which peace (мир) is not different from the world (мир), in the sense of the Universe. And mankind would really be one race, brotherhood, and kin, and moreover, the psychic classification would be more easily understood the more intensively

description of this beau monde, we can make a calendar, both yearly and daily. Years and days are divided not into tending and harvesting periods, but take their division from changes in dress. Changing one’s dress is also armor that captivates and takes prisoner, if not the internal senses then the external ones. Days and years are divided into changes in dress, for one type of clothing is worn in Paris, another in the country, at the sanatorium, at the seaside, in Italy, another during morning walks, and at dinners. The ideal of this society is the type of plant that blooms year round. This is a new stage for theology, anthropology, zoology; it is phytology. Those who don’t see in female beauty a divine gift, and in the art of dressing the highest of the free arts, are frivolous (folâtre), says a Parisian philosopher, or something along these lines. And he is right, in the sense that treating art, the art of dressing, with disdain is very frivolous, for this evil is so entrenched in and connected with the whole contemporary worldview that the philosopher does not even see any evil in it.

11. In prerevolutionary orthography in Russia, there were two words—мир, meaning peace, and мир, meaning world. After the revolution and the language reforms, there was only мир left, which meant both things. —Trans. note
the contemporary world, is the image of discord and hostility; but the very creation of a museum, the very collecting of objects of hostility, already indicates the necessity of accord, already indicates the goal of unification.

The museum cannot be a congregation of only scholars and artists; it does not exclude itself from the Kingdom of God—on the contrary, it is the instrument of God’s law. What Christianity produced internally, ideally, spiritually, the museum will produce physically. Museum knowledge is the investigation of reasons for the unbrotherly condition, reasons near as well as far, secondary and fundamental, social and natural, i.e. the museum contains all the science of man and nature, as an expression of God’s will and as a realization of the project of fatherland and brotherhood. Thus, the museum does not curtail the limits of knowledge, but only abolishes the gap between knowledge for knowledge’s sake, as it now is, and morality, which is limited at the present time to being a personal and temporal goal. Investigating reasons for the unbrotherly condition is indeed the discovery of reasons for the suffering and death that prevent people of different classes and nations from comprising a museum-congregation. This is the investigation of reasons for the separation between the “specialists”—experts—and the people, i.e. between scholars and the uneducated. This is not sociology, not social mechanics or physics; this is the science of the unbrotherly condition as fact; the task of the universe is to collect by means of investigating reasons for the unbrotherly condition; and this is also not sociology, but the brotherly goal, not res publica, but res fratria, the realization of brotherhood.

Scientific collection, according to which science does not separate itself from morality, i.e. collecting by means of investigating reasons for the unbrotherly condition, is the simplest, the natural, and the only possible path to the realization of brotherhood, the path which to this point has not even been attempted, while faith in the realization of brotherhood, no matter how strange it is, has somehow been lost. Even though we are born brothers, for the preservation and still more for the restoration of brotherhood, for the elimination of reasons that destroy the brotherly feeling, what is necessary is knowledge, the directing of the natural, birthing force; what is necessary is mutual knowledge. 

Brotherhood, like life, is a gift of birth, but for the restoration, as for the preservation, of both, work is necessary, such that brotherhood and immortality can only be the result of work. It is known how easily brotherly love transforms into brotherly hatred, and the latter can be even stronger than the former. The most brutal wars are waged between peoples most closely related by blood, and internecine wars are the cruelest. Upon hearing sermons on brotherhood, people are enraptured, weep, and meanwhile continue to live as before; some give away their goods, offer themselves up for punishment, and many others are prepared to do the same; but meanwhile, the same order, the same discord, continues to dominate. How do we not ask about the reasons for such phenomena? … Humanity, one might say, constantly mourns its discord, and meanwhile not one sect has lived even a couple of days in brotherly accord; even the very preachers of brotherhood cannot refrain from disputes. 12 For the realization of brotherhood, all science is

12. As long as the unbrotherly condition exists, there will appear prophets of brotherhood, and they will tempt many. And thus, some think, brotherhood will finally be established: officers will retire, judges will leave their chambers, and so on. But so that others do not appear in the places of those leaving their posts, we must suppose that there will be people who wish to consciously destroy the order; we must suppose that habits, acquired through the centuries, would be instantly abandoned! … However, just pointing out this difficulty would be
arguments between them might continue in perpetuity, in that each of them has its reasons for existing and not one of them contains the full good, as not one of the philosophical schools contains the whole truth. Only kinship (brotherhood) excludes both aristocracy and democracy, and resurrection (fatherland) unites spiritualism and idealism with empiricism and materialism. Parties of all kinds lack the historical grounding to understand their false position. The museum, as a creation of history, and moreover history, for which the fact of struggle is not holy, not an idol, for which, on the contrary, the reconciliation of the fighters is the aim and project—such a museum corresponds to the demands of all possible parties, which consists in being able to understand one’s false position, reconcile, and thus eliminate the separation into parties, cease the discord and struggle which lead to suffering and death.

Faith in and hope for the possibility of like-mindedness and unanimity is long lost in humankind; the impossibility of unity is considered an indisputable truth, while in the meantime its necessity becomes more obvious with every passing day, the demand for it is felt ever more strongly. However, in spite of this, there has not been the slightest attempt to realize unity through the path of knowledge, through the path of investigating reasons for discord; moreover, measures are even taken to encourage dissidence. In order to have the right to despair, one would have had to try all possible means of attaining unity, while in reality, all attempts at attaining it have been limited to the realm of feeling, i.e. to religious attempts. Reason and its incarnation—science—consider as their goal the comprehending of unity, and only abstractly, not the accomplishing of it; education, equally, does not approach it seriously, while art does not even set such a goal. The museum is the first scientific and artistic attempt at

necessary, i.e. the organized entirety of the mental efforts of all people. Brotherhood consists not just only in a brotherly feeling, but in brotherly knowing (mutual knowledge) and in brotherly action-resurrection. Making investigations into reasons for the unbrotherly condition the subject of the knowledge of mankind; making the restoration of brotherhood the goal of art is to create a goal for all life.

Investigating reasons for this discord makes unnecessary the assemblies that were created for arguments over reconciliation. Dogmatic and ritual disputes, if they could lead to peace, would only make a kind of peace that excludes neither hostility, nor war between co-religionist nations, and consequently, that would have no meaning. In these arguments, what is especially clearly expressed is the necessity for investigating to true, real reasons for hostility, for the topics of exclusively “religious arguments” (e.g. on the origin of the Holy Spirit, on crossing oneself, and so on) in themselves do not explain the hostility. The contemporary mind has so matured, apparently, that it becomes hard to understand how there can still continue arguments between philosophical schools, between, for example, spiritualists and materialists, between idealists and empiricists. It would not be hard, apparently, to agree that each of these schools has its reasons to exist. We can say the same about political arguments, for example, between the aristocratic and democratic party: the

considered a crime in the eyes of the enthusiasts; just as afterward, when the fascination passes, any reminder of brotherhood will be considered a crime. But where would the officers go after they leave military service? Into the civil or trade service ... ? But can there possibly be brotherhood in civil service and in trade activities? If they go to the village, then villagers will be brothers only after they fulfill the filial duty, while they associate knowledge and action with centers of resurrection—fatherly science that investigates not reasons for events, but reasons for the unbrotherly condition that leads to suffering and death.
communion or education in unity, and thus this attempt is a religious, holy task; this is a call to serve the fatherland, a universal call, to all without exception, beginning in childhood; the examination of those called is transformed into a multiyear course of investigation, connected with education in the Kremlin as in the original museum, reestablished and equipped for the education of those called to take part not in the struggle with one’s neighbors, which is the last resort, but chiefly in the reconciliation of the two halves of the world, the continental and the oceanic. There exist different specialized educational institutions—military, commercial, and so forth—but does there also exist a common educational institution, which would unify the specialized institutions, which would be higher relative to them? For common education it is considered sufficient to just have secondary schools, while in order to maintain unity after completing this course of study it is not deemed necessary to offer some kind of higher education institute. It is only for certain specializations that it is considered necessary to have a higher degree; for universal unity no sort of higher degree is proposed.

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The city is the agglomeration of unbrotherly conditions, contained by unbrotherly ties. The progress of the city or the urban organism consists in the constant increase of the number of unbrotherly conditions (new aspects of industrialism, and so on). In so-called learned, i.e. unbrotherly language, this is called differentiation of activity. Along with it, unbrotherly relations are differentiated, as are anti-brotherly relations; new means of theft, counterfeit, and so on are devised. To “integration” (according to the terminology of the same science) that separates moral from intellectual, we must add the intensification of surveillance (the police are like the nervous system of the city). A city is a civilian-police organism, and not a union of persons considered brothers. The city is the way it is because it does not have the purpose of the fatherland; its memory is a depository (museum) that has neither unity nor completeness. That which should be a museum is replaced by special institutions, which don’t even suspect the possibility of, or more accurately, the necessity of, unity.

Agricultural life, known to us today only insofar as it has been changed by the influence of the city, also cannot be called brotherly. Even though agricultural life does continue to serve fathers, it does not do so in actuality, because it does not have the means of a museum, the tools of memory, by which to understand both the means of communication and generally all tools of action, besides those that create discord and that cannot be repurposed. Knowing the village only to the extent to which it has been changed—only in its ignorant form—we don’t at all know the village as a revelation of knowledge and, first of all, natural science.

The problem of external reasons for hostility, consequently, amounts to the problem of the transformation of nomad and urban conditions into an agricultural condition, i.e. the one that is necessary for the completion of the purpose of the fatherland, for natural science combined with agriculture becomes resurrection. The annihilation of external reasons for hostility and the restoration of internal accord leads to one and the same purpose. The question of the city, in spite of the fact that the city is the root of evil, is not yet fully understood, and not yet put in the proper way. Even that country that is obviously worn out, and is already conscious that the reason it is growing thin is urban life, has not decided to address the urban problem in all its significance.
In this country, various measures are proposed for minimizing the influx of village populations into cities, but they dare not doubt the dignity of city life, of its ideal: *maximum* luxury and *minimum* labor, or in a word: “*otium cum dignitate*.” France knows that the temptations of city life are on the one side, and on the other—phyloxera, drought, flood, spring frosts that kill first flowers on the trees, which force the village populations into the cities; and nonetheless France does not acknowledge the temptations of the city as evil, and droughts, floods, and so forth—all this fundamental evil that threatens the destruction not only of villages, but of the city itself—are not considered serious enough to make these agricultural plagues a problem for, at least, natural science, not to mention the obligation of the city to feel the trouble of the village to its full extent, to make it the subject of all its thoughts, of all knowledge, and not only of natural science, for the death of the village, undoubtedly, will be the death of the city as well. And what would the efforts of one or two botanists or one or two entomologists who are currently dispatched from the city to investigate villages mean before such evil! Transforming natural science, at least, from the attention of the city to the village. The army and the very highest district authorities took part in the defense of the land from the terrible invasion of locusts, while science did not falter in its modesty and stayed on the sidelines. It is necessary to remark that using the army in situations such as the eradication of locusts, and in similar situations, will give the army another mission besides war, and if this latter exceeds the former, then this will be an indication that the army is capable of transitioning from fighting its neighbors, from the condition of antibrotherhood, to truly brotherly conditions, to fighting the forces that threaten the human race with hunger, illnesses, and death.

13. If by leisure we mean the time that remains after the satisfaction of basic needs, and satisfaction that is well-equipped, then humankind has not had such leisure. Just the possibility of a poor harvest proves that there has never been a complete provision of necessities; therefore, there could not have been leisure, lawful leisure, which we could have used to produce something useless. We are not even talking about the insecurities of life in general and of the existence of death, even though we have no right to limit security to just having enough harvest and to assuring ourselves of the impossibility of security against death in order to occupy ourselves with something useless.

14. Recently, the appearance of the Hessian fly forced the city to pay attention to the village, by sending several botanists and zoologists there; and now the attack of locusts from the same steppe that at one time sent the nomadic hordes, and the exodus of the village population—reminding us of the Great Migration Period—has turned...
uncontrollable. But if a Western city can discover its rural origins from its museums, then we, from our museums, will discover that our cities are not built from natural necessity, but are created artificially and even violently, and moreover, they are of very recent origin; around here, the urban problem, one may say, is almost united with the problem of seasonal work. Although there are the same reasons for our city problem as there are in the West, and here the same reasons drive villagers into the cities (in other words, temptations on one side and natural disasters on the other), our peasants are not yet becoming permanent dwellers of the city, and only constitute a temporary population, and the problem of seasonal work would be congruent with the problem of the city if the temporary population did not turn into a permanent one.

Thus, when the city begins to realize its guilt before the village and to reduce the production of temptations, no longer devoting its whole life to present-day concerns, then the creation of a true museum or a unification of existing ones begins, i.e. the restoration of ancestors that are common to both the city and the village. When the thought of the city turns to those natural disasters from which the village suffers, and which generally are the reason for death, then the museum of natural science too will be unified with the historical museum in all the comprehensiveness of the latter. When the principles of the unbrotherly condition are revealed through investigation, then the city too will become brotherhood itself, and personal habitats will be turned into services of the museum.

Investigation is not a new matter, while the realization of the unbrotherly condition of the world is even older; in their unification, both of these terms acquire a completely specific meaning. Investigation, when it is focused on reasons for the unbrotherly condition, ceases to be indictment; it calls no one to judgment, it is the complete opposite of the investigation that created reformation and revolution; it is opposite to it in the impulse that creates it, in its means and its goal; it is distinct from it in its very essence, because it is not an abstract investigation, but one armed with all the museum's tools of memory, not separable from reason; moreover, this investigation cannot be personal, solitary, it is realizable only through the collective efforts of men, in other words: the investigation of the principles of the unbrotherly condition can only be brotherly. It arises from repentance, from the consciousness of the schism between men, the break in mind, in feeling, in action—in a word, in the soul, as a consequence of which we do not form a society for all-encompassing knowledge, acting according to a single plan.

Investigation, as something universal, is a refocusing to a single, higher religious and moral goal, of those thoughts, ideas, and dreams about exclusively personal minutiae that are common to every man, and without which no man can manage, but which lack a stated purpose, and therefore remain merely a fruitless and useless waste of energy. Investigation gives sacred direction to human thought and sets a goal of congregating all people in a common house of the fatherland, in a museum, in a home of the Heavenly Father, the God of all earthly fathers, in a house which, being a museum, is at the same time a temple. A museum, as we have seen, cannot only be a depository; it must also be investigation; this is the communion of all learned societies. On the other hand, the museum can be neither a reading room nor a spectacle; it must not serve degraded, so-called “popular” education.
In this manner, the museum comes between scholars, those producing constant systematic work by investigation, and all scholarly enterprises; by means of these it collects everything unscholarly and the whole younger generation, in order to introduce them to the domain of investigation produced by scholars. To put it another way, the museum is investigation, produced by the younger generation under the guidance of the older one. It can be revealed for all only by means of learning; access to it passes through institutions of learning, only through which can the congregation be produced, for *education is congregation itself.* If a museum is not the *highest,* final institution for all primary and secondary institutions, and the *common* institution for all specialized institutions (specialized educational institutions in themselves, due to their insulation, cannot be considered the culmination of primary and secondary educational institutions), it will belong neither to the fatherland, nor to the public; it will remain “closed.” And thus the museum, conscious of its closed nature, isolation, and separation, is not indifferent to the narrow paths that lead to it. On the other hand, even specialists, conscious of their disconnection while at the same time striving to communicate, to achieve completeness, cannot be indifferent to the condition of the museum. Each profession has its own higher educational institute; why should common unity not have a higher institute? Here’s the extent to

15. The museum cannot be the site of debates, arguments, polemics between religious sects, political and economic parties, and philosophical schools; in this it differs from parliaments, demonstrations, and even church assemblies, for investigation consists in the discovery of reasons for arguments, which does not exclude, however, arguments whose causes are rooted in the theoretical, and not the practical, domain; and since reasons for arguments are rooted in the latter, then they too will cease as soon as the common purpose has been found; they will cease to be, at least relative to the most essential.

16. In essence, “common” not only does not have a higher agency, it has no lower or middle one. This common does not exist at all, for what is presently called common contains an outrageous contradiction within itself: between the Scripture and all secular subjects there exists such an utter contradiction, as there is between the secular and the spiritual in general. What kind of educational significance can the teaching of subjects have when ones says something completely different from the other? (This has been pointed out multiple times before.)
unbrotherly enterprises, like those conditions and classes for which they are preparatory institutions; if these unbrotherly conditions themselves do not at all feel the need to transition to the brotherly, then the museum too will not be unity and fatherland. Nonetheless, as long as family exists, it is not possible to not feel this demand. While it exists, there exist, more or less, fatherly and brotherly relations; therefore, as long as it exists, there will exist the contradiction between the position of a man within a family and his position outside of it (i.e. in civil, political, and economic society), and such a contradiction will demand a solution. In reciting “Our Father” (i.e. God of our fathers, of the dead, and our God, i.e. us, the living) we ask for the coming of exactly this Kingdom of God, of the common family. The church too will become this kingdom, if it acknowledges investigation, i.e. if it does not reject reason for the purpose of reconstructing brotherhood. The museum too will become this kingdom, if it sets fatherland and brotherhood as the goal of its investigation.

Since presently there is no solution provided, there is no path open to brotherhood, then one cannot blame those classes, those estates which have wholly devoted themselves to their specific, special, unbrotherly matters. In order to be museum members-investigators, one must have some preparation; present educational institutions cannot provide this, because they do not have this goal in sight (however, they in general don’t devote themselves to any goal, which explains the low level at which they remain). The requisite preparation will be possible when investigating reasons for the unbrotherly condition and the attainment of brotherhood will be set as the universal goal of all people, i.e. not just of students, but of all people of all callings and professions, of all presently unbrotherly conditions. Only by establishing this goal will the contradiction between the position of man inside the family and his position outside the family be resolved, between his striving for brotherhood and the unbrotherly condition of the world. If the museum consists of people from all callings and professions (for now just the intelligentsia) who, as members of the museum, will investigate, from the point of view of family, the same things they are compelled and obligated to do outside the museum, i.e. if they collectively search, based on the data received from their experience, for reasons that stimulate unbrotherly actions, for example: being a judge of one’s brothers, being merchants and haggling with your own kin, and so on—in this case the museum will satisfy this natural need of any man who realizes the abnormality of his unbrotherly condition and wants to leave it. The museum even provides a way out of this contradiction, one that was not created by it, but rather has always existed and constantly intensifies more and more. Is it not natural for the convicted, or for the one who is forced to always convict, to wish to leave this state, to find a real solution where you do not have to transfer this unbrotherly task to anyone else, but where the whole need in this conviction and punishment is diminished? The plan of eliminating reasons that produce the necessity of judicial relations is not only holy in the moral respect, but it is also deep and wide in the mental respect, in the sphere of knowledge. The court has a crude, immediate relationship to events of reality, taken individually; while the aforementioned plan embraces individual events in their totality, on a wide scale in time and space, accessing the deepest reasons for events of a

17. Family and kinship have an enemy that grows with each day, this enemy is socialism, which can be called the last word and an unavoidable conclusion of the West; and this last word is the denial of the family. The only means of escape from this rejection of kinship is a true admission of kinship, i.e. acceptance, participation in solving the question of unkinship and of the means of restoring kinship.
judicial, unbrotherly nature. When the plan is implemented, the contradiction between what is in a museum and what is outside of it will be annihilated …

Instead of trying to forget the realization of this abnormal condition—faintly felt more or less by all—by playing cards or other games, by trying to drown it in wine, in morphine, or even in art, in dialogue with books (which is likewise not a real occupation), isn’t it better to have a goal in mind, namely, the elimination of all this abnormality? The latter could be resolved only by annihilating the family (socialism) or by the complete restoration of kinship. The donation of any matter to a museum constitutes its survey in a fatherly and brotherly spirit, in its final instance. The museum is a church, but one that offers no peace from the disturbances of life, as Platonizing Christianity does, and not Nirvana, as Buddhism does, but makes everyone a participant in reconciliation. If a museum, on the one hand, accepts people of all responsibilities and professions of the intelligentsia, and on the other hand scholars of the museum accept responsibilities and professions corresponding to their sciences—in that case the museum will come into a new relation with society, and the intelligentsia, concentrated on this, will cease to be only a thinking class; it will become a teaching and leading social class, and not just self-professed, but by right.

The museum, as a transfer of the city to the village. When scholars become an active, serving social class, and servants of all degrees become investigators, then the goal of the museum will become a state goal, or more accurately, the goal of transforming the state into a fatherland. When public figures together with scholars become investigators of the state as an unbrotherly society, and the “scholarly” investigators together with the public figures become investigators of the project of brotherhood, then the museum will become a common place for the investigation of the state, for now it is unbrotherly and unfatherly; the state will begin implementing the project of brotherhood, will start becoming a fatherland, i.e. what it is called at present, but of which it has no features. The content of the goal will be the solution of the all-encompassing question of transitioning from the city to the village. What was said about the city in general is what the museums of the whole system of cities are doing, both district cities under the control of the provincial ones, and the latter ones under the control of the central ones. Inspired by the unanimous wish to eliminate urban and manufacture temptations, and wishing for liberation from natural disasters, these cities, museums, or the single museum, enter into a union of agriculturists-natural experimenters, of sons. A museum, indivisible from a temple, is the force transforming society from the judicial and economic regime to the kin and moral regime. Transforming the forces wasted in the civic-economic struggle into the common purpose, and from remnants saved from this struggle, reconstructing models of what was lost in it, a museum reproduces the dead physically, in reality, by way of regulating nature.18

18. Easter is not a holiday, but the purpose of a museum, its work, its, one might say, outset, function, sacred activity. But this is not the kind of work which we would want to diminish, for it is what only exists as a thought in the current holiday, but realized in action. This is not a holiday, and not quotidian work; it is a transferal from the urban purpose to the village purpose, and by calling this purpose Easter, we translate, we propose this word, not as a “transition” where there is the concept of unconscious movement, but “transferal,” signifying conscious activity. (Transition relates to transferral, as resurrecting to resurrection.) We call this transferal of the urban purpose to the village purpose “Easter” because our holiday of Easter, as opposed to the Jewish Pesach, consists in returning from the capital, and the city in general, to the village, to working the fields, to the graves of our ancestors, because this holiday is the holiday of kinship, fatherland, brotherhood, which has to replace the judicial-economic state.
In essence, this is not new, for even now scientists transform into public figures, and public figures write investigations, but such phenomena are not universal and are random; they are performed completed separately, and yet even the investigators themselves do not achieve the required depth; the investigated phenomena (judicial and economic) are not seen as products of unbrotherly discord, and this is because public figures and scholars have neither a common place for activity, nor a common plan; the patriarchal house (museum) gives us that place, and the goal of fatherland, demanding brotherhood, gives us a project of investigation and a plan of action.

If the city is a combination of unbrotherly relations and conditions, if it uses reason to destroy brotherhood, and the village, feeding the city and giving it extra power, could not use reason for the preservation of brotherhood and fatherland, then obviously the question of reasons for the unbrotherly condition is identified as the question of the origin of the city, and the restoration of brotherhood is a question of reconciling the city with the village in the purpose of the fatherland. The museum, in the aforementioned sense, i.e. in connection to it being the temple, as a force, transforming the world from an unbrotherly condition into the opposite, brotherly state, is history itself, which is transforming from an unconscious flow into conscious activity; this is the transition of humankind into maturity, and thus it is impossible to stop this movement, one could

19. Actually this transferal or transition signifies the transformation of that which is done randomly, i.e. somewhere, sometime, by someone, into what is obligatory for all actors and for all scholars. For the former it makes investigation obligatory, and for the latter, activity is obligatory, and the one and the other are required to converge with the requirements of the unscholars, i.e. what is demanded is investigation not of cases generally, but of causes of unbrotherly phenomena.
international public figures, as the latter must become members of the museum. Thus the International Museum in its composition, besides scholars, taking on themselves this or that activity, will include (a) all diplomatic agents, having become investigators, (b) merchants of international trade, whom education must turn into investigators and whose research interests will unite in a museum, and (c) military, whose transition into a museum should be through a congress on the problem of introducing meteorological observations and experiments in artillery fire, especially cannon fire. In its collection of objects, the museum is (a) a trade cabinet, filled according to the progress of investigation, with items that were considered harmful because of their luxury, (b) an archive of international diplomacy, i.e. an archive of all ministers of foreign affairs as expressions of the greatest unbrotherhood, and (c) a military arsenal (an international armory), the purpose of which is the application of military weapons to the problem of regulating the common force of nature and the donation to the museum of those weapons which are not capable of such primary application or of dual use.

The museum, in an international sense, is the transition from a legal order, which is inseparable from the international and universal-trade discord, into brotherly agreement. Turning the forces wasted in wars and international trade struggle toward a common purpose of the fatherland, and, based on remnants of all weapons (trophies) of struggle, mentally reconstructing images of the fallen, the museum will reconstruct the fallen corporeally, really, by the path of the regulation of nature.

The immediate problem of universal communion and an all-science museum is the question of the transition or transferal of urban and nomad conditions into agricultural existence; this is the problem of the unifying Byzantium, the
of International Law! … One needs to say that this law is less unbrotherly than all the others, because it, having no external military force, cannot be called judicial in the sense of law alone; it is an illusion.

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Journalism, if it wishes to be the fifth great estate, must transform from international abuse, igniting hostility between the peoples (what journalism is today), to explaining the conditions of universal peace or creating a project for the transformation of Constantinople and Pamir (that is, Constantinople in connection with Pamir) into an international museum. In conjunction with this, journalism must transform from interclass abuse, igniting class hostility, which is what journalism does today in the agencies of the red, black, and gold “international,” preaching under the guise of international peace a war between the people (a revolution)—journalism needs to turn itself into a project of the people’s museum. The goal and sacred duty of journalism is to unite in the common goal of the fatherland; in the meantime, today each journal would rather be a large capitalist in isolation, or even be an tool of large capitalism, than together be a great estate, even an estate over estates. They suppose that it is better to be a chief of a sect or a social class in isolation, than together be the soul of the whole human race.

Interclass peace is just as impossible without international peace as is the reconciliation of nations without the reconciliation of classes. Human brotherhood will be actualized only when there are no unbrotherly conditions. Until the triumph of one nation over another, one class over another, that delights our century, is not substituted with a universal
transition, completed all on its own, belongs to the period of the childhood of man, of unconscious history, whereas transferal is an expression of maturity, of history as activity; this is not yet the fulfillment of God’s Law. This transition is an historical law, according to which, despite human will, i.e. due to discord and the inactivity of the will of the entirety of humankind, and not, of course, by Divine design, but due to personal imperfection, all things, all agencies become unsatisfactory, unfit for use, and thus are either abandoned (due to human carelessness) or destroyed (due to human malice), even if they are then preserved (due to inactivity of thought) without any initial plan. This transition, fatal and blind, is accompanied by pain, to the regret of some (the older generation) and the happiness of others (the younger generation), and they call it progress. Transition refers not just to things, but to people; it is the extolment and the expulsion of the old by the young, it is unconscious birth and death, in a word, it is glorified contemporary “progress.” Birth, while it exists, cannot but be accompanied by pain, but never have the pains of giving birth to the new and the pains of the old been as sharp as they are in our time. Even though progress does follow some laws, at any rate, it is done unconsciously and irrationally. Human development consists in, as it is clear for every adult, making everything that has been happening today by itself happen consciously and independently. Historical, unconscious transition is accompanied by a break, destruction, whereas the transferal of judicial and economic life to the archive, to the museum, consists not only in preservation, but also in reconstruction based on the object as a work of art, even if the makers of those objects, their authors, are hostile.

Transferal creates a museum of objects, but transferal is at the same time the congregation of scholars, having become teachers, and teachers, having become investigators. By this
given proper satisfaction. By real desires we mean not only
the satisfaction of necessary material needs, supporting the
forces of the body and the vitality of the spirit, but also the
satisfaction of mental and spiritual needs, i.e. the need for a
museum, as a society “for one’s soul,” for realizing the pur-
pose of the fatherland.

* * *

The museum of physical objects will be created when intelli-
gent society, pursuing a real goal and satisfying serious needs,
becomes, on the one hand, conscious of the infantile, effem-
inate nature of its urban life, and on the other, sees under
this external, imaginary beauty that arises from a childish
and sensual aspiration all the hostility and squalor of the
majority. In this way, the museum of objects will be created
from velvet and other rags and tatters, while the production
of luxury objects will be transformed into the production of
necessary objects; in place of weapons of struggle will be cre-
ated weapons of investigation and even regulation. Prisons
and guard booths, these necessary accessories of luxury and
tools of external, sentry surveillance, will turn into monu-
ments and will be replaced by self-observation. The present
tools of exchange will form the last period of the numismatic
phase, being replaced by the mutual knowledge of needs. In
a word, all material expressions of the unbrotherly city will
transform into the creation (a composition, so to speak) of
a museum; moreover, this production will not only be the
representation of the city and its life, but will be a negation
of non-brotherhood, and will be the project of brotherhood.

The museum-temple is a force, which leads from the judi-
cicial and economic urban discord to village, moral, and kin
harmony, a force that turns energy lost in struggle into the
purpose of fatherland. The natural path toward this transi-
tion consists in a city realizing the artificiality of its existence,
the unlawfulness of its origin, in realizing that at its basis
lie imaginary, false, artificial (even if they’ve become second
nature) desires, and not real needs; in realizing that from
these imaginary desires arise unbrotherly production and
unbrotherly distribution, creating all the urban discord,
and this discord explains the necessity of supervision, and
of courts, and of the military; a state is a cluster of cities. To
eradicate imaginary desires it would be enough to just be
conscious of their imaginary nature, if only real desires were
word (“transferal”) we also mean the transformation of the
actors of judicial and economic society into investigators,
and lecturers and scholars into actors of this society; so that
transferal is investigation too, completed by the younger gen-
eration under the direction of the older inside the museum,
and a realization, completed outside of the museum by the
sons (i.e. the younger generation) under the direction of the
fathers (i.e. the same older generation). Inside, the museum
is a project, and outside, it is its realization, the project of exo-
dus and the changing of a thinking city into an active village,
the transforming of a lethal force into a life-giving one. Thus,
transferal is the complete opposite of progress, under which the
young eliminate the old (when the student considers himself
above the professor, when boldness becomes the highest vir-
tue and the leader begins to fear his subordinates.) Transferal
is return, the transferring force is a unifying and resurrecting
force. Transferal or Easter is the common triumph, the triumph
of triumphs over nature, instead of the triumph of classes over
classes, peoples over peoples.

The museum-temple is a force, which leads from the judi-
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eradicate imaginary desires it would be enough to just be
conscious of their imaginary nature, if only real desires were
on a false theory, even though aesthetics considers it an absolute truth that a work of art is only a depiction of its time. This is the kind of false idea on which we base the museum. However, the present museum is only urban: it is only a faithful depiction of urban difference and discord, taken as a normal condition, and thus unnoticed, while the rest of the world is represented here as the city sees it. One only has to open the systematic catalogue of any library to see that in its categories and subcategories it reflects the division of society into unbrotherly classes and conditions, the division into parties and sects, in such a way that the catalogue is a real representation or resemblance of the world disunited and disintegrated. But these dissociations and separations, this absence of unity, this break, do not produce an impression of pain; we do not notice them, because of course the transformation from something living and kindred to something dead-civic does not seem either abnormal or difficult to us; meanwhile, if a museum gave such an impression it would not be a simple depiction of a disintegrating world but would already contain in itself, even in an embryonic state, the project of the unification of the world. Regrettably, the present age, living in a world of disintegration and being used to it, does not demand unity from a whole slew of scientific and artistic works (libraries, art galleries, and from the whole museum, in general); this unity is just as unnecessary in this regard to our century, just as unimportant, as there is no need for (already having higher specialized institutions for separate sciences) a higher educational institution for general education, for teaching unity. Our age, even though it experiences an inconvenience from disintegration, does not realize the source of these inconveniences, from where they arise.

Thus, according to contemporary aesthetic theory, the museum is only a representation; however, the great works of art on which this theory is presumably based, while depicting the world, have tried to give it their own image; thus, reflecting the world in themselves, these artworks deny it. There is no real work of art that does not produce some sort of action, some change in life; in great epic poems there is a plan for such change, or better yet, a work of art is a project of new life. In Homer’s epic poems there was a project for the unification of Greece, and only because the epics correctly reflected the disagreements between the Greeks; there was even a project for the unity of East and West, as represented by the Athenians and the Trojans! A true admirer of Homer, Alexander, also wished to realize this project, but met with opposition from his insincere admirers, the Macedonians, the Greeks, and especially philosophers. In Dante’s poem there is a project for the unification of Western Europe, just as in the works of Goethe and other German writers there is a project for a great separation between Christianity and paganism, between the spiritual and the secular, between Medieval Europe and New Europe, the new, as the imitator of the ancient but not the Homeric, not the truly Classical, for the truly classical contained nothing contradictory to Christianity because it lamented discord and therefore strove for reconciliation. If in antiquity they perceived the blind forces of nature as immortal in the form of gods, they acknowledged them with regret. Christianity, the Gospels, even though modern scholars consider it only a work of literature, is in reality, in essence, a project of reconciliation.21

21. The French “encyclopédie” of the last century, in the special attention it paid to craft, might be called the project of an industrial museum, the project of tolerance, the projects of those reforms which Catherine, Friedrich, and others introduced, and especially the project of creating or strengthening the third order of people and the demolition of people of the first two orders. In the works of Rousseau, one might say, the project of Deism is contained—this unnatural religion,
German philosophy at the end of the eighteenth century outlined the theory of the museum of that time, which collected artifacts of language, beliefs, and law; in comparing them they revealed the unity of the origin of languages, beliefs, and so forth. But this museum was not a project for the internal unification of even its own peoples; it was, in essence, even a strengthening of the disunion between the artificial and the natural, between reason and will, between theory and practice, between past and present. The museum gave not to the people, but to the intelligentsia class of all Germany, not common saints, as happens in religious congregation, but common poets and philosophers. Rejecting the French poets, Germany became closer to England, absorbing Shakespeare. Germany treated the latter not critically but with adoration; Shakespeare was placed outside of history; for the Germans he was not a product of time and age, as were other poets. German science and philosophy distinguished artificial works of literature from national, natural works, as you would distinguish national language from literary language, as they distinguished natural law (according to kinship) from artificial lawmaking. But such a distinction, even though it really exists, is not as absolute as German scholars suppose, who have not paid attention to the other side of the issue, i.e. to similarity. If national epic poems are the products of the whole nation, then each nation also consists of individuals; it is a collection of individuals, with the difference that in this collection there is presenting itself as natural, and the project of artificial virtue, realized by Robespierre, and especially the project of a return to nature, whose burden Rousseau, as a city dweller, never felt. There could also never be a real feeling with Rousseau; there was only sentimentality, i.e. simulated feeling, according to which city dwellers were allowed to envy the peasants, imagining them as shepherdesses and paysannes.

22. German aesthetics, which discovered the distinction between artificial literature and natural or folk literature, chose to disregard the similarities between the two. Praising folk literature, German literature remains with its defects, and does not perceive as necessary the unification of individual efforts for the creation of a common purpose, and this is so because nowhere has there been such a contradiction between knowledge and action as in Germany. German literature did not recognize a divine meaning in its works, and even based on its content it was not divine; on the contrary, it was the rejection of everything holy. Germany (and Western Europe in general), while preaching socialism in the production of objects, dealt only briefly with word production, with works of art.

23. Not only the history of literature, but the history of all physical works of art has as its subject the revelation and restoration of those producing, laboring, and working on it—in the majority of cases, of course, anonymously.
law itself allows a violation of what it itself recognizes as literary property. In any case, it is a moral obligation to search for a solution to this abnormal position, and this solution, one might say, reveals itself: if a nation creates one work, and even if between two works of the most distant nations there are similarities, then this proves that all humankind is one kin; and if it had greater means for preservation, better memory, better strength than it has at present, in this case it would have one poem, lamenting its disintegration in time and space. And if humankind, before its disintegration, had the same means of communication as we have now, then perhaps it would not have disintegrated, at least not in space, and its unity would not have been what it is now.

People live an urban life; the forefather tells his children about their ancestors, without demanding an honorarium for this of course; the descendants continue to carry the tradition—an epic—so that its authors will be sons speaking about fathers and feeling, recognizing themselves as brothers. Such literature is a sacred task, kinship by content and by authors, and the transformation of such a system into property would, of course, be sacrilege. All sciences, all works of literature, were formed as a result of the disintegration of this epic, because people themselves disintegrated; forgetting their kinship, they became citizens, and formed all the unbrotherly conditions, all the professions. But now these unbrotherly conditions, these professions, have their dedicated agencies and journals, the absence of which for a different good goal was the reason for disintegration. It is possible to have such agencies, and it is even our primary

24. Secular literature is only a distortion, a perversion, and a disintegration of the literature of the people. The literary expression of unbrotherhood and the oblivion of the fathers are preceded by the real unbrotherhood: citizenship.
science and action, which makes teachers teach, not knowing why, because they take no part in investigation—makes them teach without knowing what for, because they likewise do not participate in the reality for which they prepare? Because it's unnatural, the separation of these three functions occurs either accidentally, unconsciously, and elementally—as popular faith, and so on, was created—or arbitrarily—like the palaces of deputies, various present-day commissions, and so forth; and thus even if a museum can be called a commission, a congregation, as defined above, then it's only that sort of commission, that sort of congregation, at the creation of which randomness and arbitrariness are eliminated; moreover, the elimination of both is necessary not only in the case of staff, but also in the case of the main subject, goal, path. A museum is created by a natural force and not by a blind one, by one that has arrived at consciousness. If we allow ourselves to curtail the fields of study of a museum, to limit its staff, to generally allow ourselves arbitrariness upon its creation, the museum will turn into a legislative body or something similar. Similarly, if we were to eliminate all the arbitrariness and randomness from legislative bodies, councils, and parliaments, then such councils and communions would turn into museums. Even lawyers, notaries, and representatives of the commercial-industrial classes, of whom legislative bodies are primarily composed, could form a museum, but only on the condition that they acknowledge the temporality of all their professions and strive to make them short-lived. In the meantime, legislative bodies will legalize the existence of these professions and parties, and with them the debates themselves, so that judging by the belligerency of the latter, we can see the severity of the hostility that is tearing up the people that are supposedly represented by such assemblies. Thus, legislative bodies lead in a completely opposite

Thus, a museum, as was mentioned, is a commission on the matter of the uprising of sons against fathers, on the matter of the unbrotherly condition of the world; it consists too of scholars who’ve become actors and teachers, and of actors who’ve transformed into investigators and teachers, and also of teachers who must also make themselves actors and investigators. In other words, in a museum, all these three functions are united: investigation, teaching, and acting, and thus those defects that originate from their separateness, which are completely unnatural, are annihilated. Can there be anything more unnatural than the separation of science, i.e. thought, from action, or the separation of teaching from
direction to the one that could lead them to a museum. They can get to it only when they set as their goal the investigation of reasons why they themselves have split into parties; in this case the parties could reconcile, form a real union, and not a random congregation of people, differing from each other in almost everything. However, couldn’t members of legislative bodies, after violent arguments in a palace, having gathered in a museum, discuss these questions philosophically—we would say, if these philosophers did not belong to these same parties—or discuss them scientifically, if science had not elevated chance and blind development into law? And thus we must say: members of legislative bodies can, after arguing in a palace, discuss these same questions in a museum not philosophically, not scientifically, but from the point of view of universal humanity, for which there can be no parties. How to realize this, how to come to such a union, that’s the question that needs a solution.

The history of all legislative bodies, from the ancient to the newest (American), despite the historian’s wish to diminish their hideousness, indicates (and cannot but indicate, for their hideousness is not in the fact that they are the extreme, but that they are a normal state of things), that all these chambers would become empty if only there appeared a new way for arranging human affairs, which human souls crave, strive for, finding it even in otherworldly existence, like Plato and contemporary spiritualists. Plato and the spiritualists were seeking in the other world what this world should have provided; a museum is indeed a path to the realization of a worldwide idea in the present world. Anyone who is capable of self-accusation can become a member of a museum, anyone who is capable of doubting their worth, anyone who can evaluate their actions from the point of view of brotherhood, which is the essence of the world. A call to this communion, which can be heard in the New Testament, comes from inner consciousness, from the depth of conscience, from dissatisfaction that is felt, even if faintly, by every human being who performs or has to perform an unbrotherly task of a judicial or economic nature.

The scholarly class and journalism. Firstly, this is a question of unifying journals, and secondly, of liberating journalism from the yoke of capital, which subordinates mental tasks to the laws of factory production, i.e. to produce competition and work falsification, which in turn corrupts journalism, a mental task. This is the question of transforming journalism from immaturity, from discord, to maturity, to unity, from secular to religious, Christian.

If each social class, in each separate location, had an agency, then the unification of journals would be the unification of kin; but journalism is an agency of cities and of city classes, which live in discord. That is why, in journalism, there is both external and internal discord. The lowest stratum of the human race, the village, which doesn’t read or write, which speaks differently, but which thinks almost the same way, but which does not have a common purpose of fatherland, even though it honors its fathers as one—the village class has no means of expressing its thoughts, its thoughts of fathers as One Father. Only after unifying itself, and unifying the quarreling classes of the city, can journalism become an agency for and a leader of the village class, in other words, of all humankind. Current journalism, while infiltrating the village with its advertisements, can only be an agent of urban temptation and a portent of unkinly and unbrotherly relations; it can only destroy kinship and set sons against fathers.

Journalism could be a new type of missionary work, a new stage or phase of unification, if only it could unite itself. Unification is the goal of the press, of print; it is its religion. As a
result of expanding literacy, there opens a possibility for even the most distant regions to hear what is said in the center of faith and knowledge; literacy, so understood, so posited, is the new means of unification, through the fulfillment of the command “go, and teach”; in this sense it has a moral-religious meaning.

Our time, in a certain sense, is much more receptive to the purpose of fatherland, to unification, than it was eighteen centuries ago, when the question of brotherhood was first raised. Christianity in our time can deal not just with individuals but with classes, or unbrotherly conditions, with whole classes of individuals who have their own agencies in the form of journals and newspapers. To convert one journal to Christianity, i.e. to repentance for discord, to preparedness for unification in the common purpose of fatherland, this does not yet mean, of course, to convert a whole class that is served by this journal as an agency, it is not to convert it from an unbrotherly to a brotherly state; but this already means to attain the mission. Journalism has a missionary meaning for the museum as well, for through journals one can create a museum, though journals the class of scholars can turn into a commission or communion on the question of immaturity. Journalism is the voice, speaking in all languages of the world, preaching to all tribes and peoples of all the ends of the Earth. Journalism has been called the expression of social opinion; it would be more correct to call it the expression of opinions of different unbrotherly conditions, of which society is composed, or of parties, also unbrotherly, into which society is split. Journalism is also called the leader of public opinion; this means that journalism is not only an agency of reason, forming opinion, but also an agency of will, of action (not of all of society, but of separate parties and classes); reason, in its essence, demands unity, and cannot stop at an opinion or at opinions, and the same must be said of the will: in it, too, there is a demand for union, therefore it follows that the goal of journalism too is to attain unity and, instead of opinion, to establish truth, instead of class advantage and party interest, to establish a common good. Expressing the opinion of the unbrotherly condition, leading the unbrotherly task, can be excusable for a head (i.e. for a journal) that receives its sustenance from the body that is materially dependent on the unbrotherly class, the manifestation of which is this journal, and which itself cannot escape its unbrotherly condition, because it can only realize it in its head, i.e. in a journal, in which is concentrated (at least the journal serves as such a concentration) the intelligentsia of the class. If the head gains some independence from the body, as it must, i.e. if the head guides and directs it, not corrupts it with perverted taste, then the transition from opinions to truth will be possible, from class interest to universal good; then the difference of opinions, imposed by class differences, will disappear, and the very obstacles to reconciliation, to the unification of the journal, will disappear.\(^{25}\)

25. Present-day journalism can be considered as one part of a disintegrated museum, whereas from journalism that has been liberated from the influence of hostile classes and even controls them, can be created a museum, or a universal editorial board of a journal, which would be a museum. We can say that a museum preexisted in those communities where there was no distinction between thought and action, between thinkers, actors, and teachers, where every father and every grown son were teachers of a younger generation. But in such a community a museum existed in an original, embryonic state, and not as it is supposed to exist, when created by a mind and conscious human action. Present-day journalism is in opposition to the museum: journalism, while constituting a greater force, is wasted on present-day issues, when a real, all-national museum having as its foundation an all-national purpose remains neglected due to its powerlessness, due to journalism wasting these powers on a matter that is foreign to the fatherland, or to the true good. When journalism realizes its defects there will appear a project for a museum, a roadmap for it, because, as was mentioned, journalism itself can be viewed as...
But in reality, instead of investigating causes for the unbrotherly condition, journalism still intensifies hostility, occupies itself with exposures, with “public disclosure,” and its whole activity is limited to creating ephemeral creatures which, having appeared in the morning, and having stung, disappear in the evening, and on the next day preserve themselves in a museum. However, even though the activity of journalism is ephemeral, the hostility that it creates leaves deep marks.26 Journalism is more harmful the more it pulls in and practically absorbs literature, and subordinates science and art to its influence. Journalism is supported by painting with its pictures, by theaters with their productions, and even by music in the feelings it arouses, so journalism operates with all artistic means. **Journalism is a force, and a great force, but it is wasted on ephemeral tasks**—on front-page articles in which the spirit of the parties is expressed, on the communicating of piquant news and sensational rumors which arouse worry and sometimes terror, and often on types of speculation, on gossip plus advertisement, and most of all on chatter (“feuilleton”). Being the complete opposite of the museum, journalism is the fullest expression of our age; and those who treat small cities with disdain, where there is no censure of gossip, at the same time admire large cities, where bigger gossip has full freedom. The intense struggle between the parties, not shy to use any means, enraptures the same kind of people who treat the same struggle in a small city with disdain. Why, however, is one and the same phenomenon ugly on a small scale, but appears majestic in a large?

**Journalism is an unbrotherly task precisely because it is unfatherly; it only knows the present, only deals with issues of the day and forgets the past.** When literature too turns into journalism, then it too produces only ephemeral, short-lived works. **Journalism is the expression of “men of the hour”; what else could it produce other than ephemeral, one-day wonders?** Literature, becoming feuilleton, is not more long-lived than leaves, withered, fallen, and carried off by the wind. A museum does the same service to the literature of day-laborers as it does to newspapers, that the public does not remember and uses as wrappers, if not for something even less dignified. And science becomes journalism, serves the ephemeral, when it is preoccupied with applying industry to military.

Journal literature, the literature of personal and ephemeral writing, is a product of the same mind, the same soul that produced agriculture, the natural agricultural religion connected to it, and national epics, even though they were created in the course of many centuries and by many generations, but nonetheless preserved unity, in the form of one poem. And in the city, the same mind, having forgotten its origin, became the denial of agricultural religion, not the denial of what is unreal, imaginary in it, but the whole goal of it, the obligation of every general to live for all. The agricultural, kindred, communal life was the basis of such unity, whereas in the city, where existence depends on separate, personal, quotidian efforts, even literature could not maintain unity. Only habit prevents us from seeing all the unnaturalness of this literary disintegration, in which not only do the works of separate persons strive to differentiate part of a disintegrated museum, even though it considers and makes itself a complete, independent being. In a museum, the older generation supervises research performed by the younger generation when journalism assumes the role of a teacher of the older generation; and that is because educational organizations, elementary and secondary as well as specialized, without having a higher-level course, which can only be provided by a museum, produce ignoramuses that are easily susceptible to journalists’ control.

26. True journalism produces not just hostility, but also love. But what kind? Sexual, of course, with its novels, tales, and such things. Arousal of such love also leaves traces.
and writing of the scientific and literary class, will give it a common purpose and theme for a common work, and this subject is so vast, the problem is so great, that more than one generation is necessary for its realization. The problem consists in the unification of unbrotherly conditions (classes, parties) of the city and in the transferal from the city to the village, or in their reconciliation; the project of the unification of the unbrotherly conditions of the city with the village for a common filial purpose is possible only for a union of journals, and not for each journal separately. For disunited journalism, it was only possible to create a project of constitutional government, of which this journalism itself would be a necessary member; through it, parliamentary hostility would become, so to speak, the hostility of the entire state. It is hard to say whether it is the struggle between parties that is reflected in journalism or the other way around. In any case, disunion is not an accidental characteristic, and discords are not random phenomena; they are just as necessary an accessory of present-day journalism as opposition is to parliament. The foundation for the union of journals could only be the realization that political passions and debates that originate in them cannot create anything durable, cannot create a really human, brotherly society, and that the foundation for a brotherly society can only be a fatherly goal. Journals, like all industrial enterprises, defend their right to exist, but producing only ephemeral beings, they cannot be immortal, for they lack the first necessary condition for immortality: agreement. After being donated to museums, journals begin an after-death existence; they are subjected

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If in folk poems individuality was lost and unity was preserved, then in urban works unity is lost and individuality is preserved; however, it is preserved only insofar as unity was preserved in folk poems, for there was no real unity in them either. The realization that all the discord between parties and classes and the separation of literary intellectual forces arises from the conditions of urban life—this is the realization that will lead to the return to village life, if mind and conscience still have any value in life and if the conditions of material existence do not impede it.

But will journalism deal with the problem of the conditions for disunity and the reasons for unification? Connected with all sides of life, with the religious and the secular, with the civic and the military, and especially with universal military conscription, the question of unification cannot but demand attention. Just the realization of the reasons and conditions of disunion will bring unity into the thinking

27. In fact, editorial boards of many journals are not just industrial enterprises, but Pharisee-industrial, because they, under the guise of serving a common goal, under the guise of disinterest, protect only their own interests, often not stopping short any tactic whatsoever.
reconciliation. With self-investigation, journalism will transform from an inflamer of hostility into a peace-builder, or at the very least a museum that is developing the project of a peace-building agency. Until journals have matured, i.e. reached self-investigation, they deserve reproach, directed at book scholars, Pharisees, and Sadducees, for they have taken the “key of understanding” and themselves do not enter the kingdom of self-investigation, the international, interclass, intersectorian kingdom, or simply the Orthodox kingdom; they should lead, but they don’t even enter themselves! The museum, where journalistic works are delivered, stands before the creators of these works, before their eyes, but this work that they could complete themselves they impose on the shoulders of our descendants; unfaithful to the past, they are hostile to the future, for awaiting the arrival of history and not to be self-historians means to slow the course of history.

The museum’s investigation is not only harmless, it is not nonjudgmental and solely restorative. A museum is an expression of our duty to the fathers, our dutiful obligation, which we aren’t even paying off; we are even increasing our debt. In present-day journals, as enemy-mongers, there is neither goodness, nor truth, nor anything beautiful, for the beautiful without truth is only deception. This unification of those who express different unbrotherly conditions and different aspects of unbrotherly relations must occur in the common effort of congregation, in creating a project for the Kingdom of God, of an epic poem of exodus from the kingdom of discord and common destruction. And as soon as this natural goal is established, literature will cease to be the depiction of disparate events, of separate types; it will lose its episodic, random character and out of works of literature there will be born on God’s Earth one epic poem, one drama, unified in direction, uniting authors of different locations as
does not just contain moral greatness, but a new world for the mind. Denying freedom only to personal opinion, only to personal activity, freedom of the individual, denying all because of the absence in such individuals of brotherhood, we will find in brotherly union an action plan of such vastness that each individual, having renounced the right to live according to his whims, will become a universal-historical actor. And it is such a world that will open for those who have defended the freedom of the individual, if they consider their system critically; this is what self-criticism is, self-accusation, repentance—words that are unbearable for our century to hear, but which are salvific!

Those who have defended the congregation, the choral principle emanating from the peoples’ instinct, will agree with those demanding a rational plan instead of instinctive strivings and indefinite dreaming. And if the first trend acknowledges evil in all unbrotherly conditions—the ensemble of which constitutes the city—and acknowledges the necessity of unity and completeness through unilateralism, then the second trend will agree with it, because in its demand for completeness, unity, and fullness, the first trend will contain what the second trend desires only vaguely.

ADDENDUM TO THE “MUSEUM” ARTICLE

The antagonism between labor and capital will end only when the object of production will not be luxury, but the satisfaction only of necessary needs, and not artificial desires. The question of real and imaginary, artificial needs is the question of sanitation and provisions that solve the problem of physical and mental needs. To this also relates the question of labor that medicine knows in the form of postprandial walks, exercises—this false, imitative labor (which, of course,
is necessary for those who don’t perform real, agricultural labor). This demonstrates that medicine is an urban science and, in its strictest sense, is not social; for even though there is social hygiene, it is subservient to the city and, acknowledging that the urban lifestyle does not adhere to hygienic requirements, does not dare to advise the urban class based on truth and what is really good for humankind. Instead, it is inventive only in creating ways for alleviating diseases that arise from urban living conditions and which demand, therefore, for their treatment, a change in peoples’ lifestyle, a transformation of a city into a village, or more precisely, the reconciliation of the city and the village. Medicine is neither true, nor moral in essence; it is not religious, and is not spiritual, because it serves not for redemption, not God, but only the whims of the city.

The silence of the grave, the stillness of a cemetery, is the main feature of the present-day museum, which is the total opposite of the lively, production-trade city, where it is generally located. The archeological dissociation of a museum, with its fragments, its objects covered in rust, and its skulls and bones in the anthropology department—these descendants from the grave—is also a cemetery, but with open graves. A museum, we could say, is a cemetery that has been transported and placed in the center of the city, if a museum was not one step above the cemetery, for here we see a kind of protest against death, a struggle against destructive forces, and as long as museums exist, the victory of death is not yet fully decided. That’s why a museum is not just a cemetery, because it holds not only decayed bodies, but also souls! For the curator of a museum library, the museum is a book depository, while for a reader the museum also becomes a soul depository, for while reading, it is impossible not to envision the author; a reader unwillingly paints in his imagination the author’s portrait, hears his voice, enters his feelings and thoughts; but he does not do all this on purpose, independent of will, only because he cannot not do it, even though reading is not yet action. It is necessary, following an involuntary impulse, to purposefully restore, through the work, the book, its creator, its author, and then it will no longer be reading, but analysis, investigation. Criticism is not yet investigation, for criticism, even accepting the dead as the living, does to them what is against the law of brotherhood to do to the living—it judges and punishes them, when the task should be restoration. Criticism as judgment is an abomination. And investigation—a judicial term—responds with barbarity to the living, which is already completely unacceptable to do to the dead: to strike the dead, to tie them to the whipping post, as poet-denunciators say—these expressions give the century in which they are used a lowly position. Essentially, investigation is a holy task of restoration, which has not yet begun and which only approaches what has passed. For prehistoric times, history is just the beginning, while for the recently dead, restoration, i.e. history, should have begun immediately upon their death, their passing. And if restoration were not only mental, then after death there would follow a return to life; for those who, during their lifetime, become their own historians, there would be no death at all.

Reading, as a pastime, as entertainment, is a profanation of the book, and the library does not perform its function when it becomes only a reading room and is guilty of the same sin as its readers. Reading rooms commit the sin of selling holy objects; this is, of course, a sin common to

28. A museum is above and below a cemetery; if brotherhood were not the foal of a museum, then touching the ashes of the dead would be sacrilege.
author. Formal education, in which literature plays such an important part, will remain without application unless there is included in the purpose of life work on constructing libraries, on turning them into collections of biographies. Essay review that is limited to analysis without any connection to the life of the author has only formal meaning, and only works on developing the mind, separated from other abilities; but it could acquire a real meaning, could develop a person as a whole, if it were supplemented with synthesis, with compiling an image of the author from his works. In this case, a library, which is not a collection of books that don’t agree in their content, that are alien and hostile to one another, would become a single book about internal accord, for alienation and hostility is not contained in books themselves, not in the creators of those books, but in external necessity. In order to change this part of teaching, we need to put a person in a totally different position in relation to books, as well as to a painting and other works of art. A person is first and foremost an actor, while reading and writing are only means; but even reading needs to be taught through writing, i.e. writing should precede reading, as drawing should be preferred to studying through painting; generally, something active should be preferred to something passive, because a museum is neither a reading room nor a spectacle: a museum creates a project and prepares its executors. A word is an expression of faith, writing is an expression of investigation, and if reading becomes investigation, it will be reflected in writing; investigation is the transition toward action. Writing cannot be a purpose; it is only a means for action according to a common plan.

29. Libraries and books can probably give images of only those generations for which, as for foggy places, you need strong tools in order to arrange them into separate individuals.

30. Literature cannot be acknowledged as its own science, for doing so would separate word from deed.
When writing becomes a purpose, then it becomes a work of art, an illusion. Writing is a remedy for oblivion and a manual for creating an action plan of restoration. What cannot be expressed in this plan in writing has to be supplemented with a sketch, a drawing (painting in its current sense is an illusion). Where a sketch or drawing is not enough, a model should be added. The whole of literature and art is just a means for creating a plan of resurrection. But for the plan of resurrection, neither models—as stereometrical images, as mere skeletons—nor any means of literature and art in general are enough; physical and chemical experiments are also supplementary means, materials for the creation of the plan of resurrection. Art for art’s sake and science for science’s sake, manias, latrias, bibliomania, and bibliolatria.

Until now writing has served an amoral, ungodly purpose, for only with the help of a pen could the current judicial-economic system have been created. Using writing to build a Godly Kingdom means making it a moral weapon. Literacy, in its active form, in writing perceived as an aid to memory in its obligation to the fathers, as an aid to the mind in fulfilling this obligation, is the complete, concrete question. Notes, like fortresses, once served, as they do now, as a means against oblivion; they were left behind by our forebears in their obligation to us; like a testament, a note is a guarantee against our own weaknesses, and the whole church-museum, with its departments, is the architectural, all-artistic expression of our obligation to our fathers; that is why the museum, with its departments, cannot just be limited to being a church; there has to be outside-of-church, outside-of-museum action.

Wouldn’t this restoration be the privilege of the few, wouldn’t it only be the fate of those whose works made it into the museum? And would restoration as an action be the responsibility of all? In order to answer these questions we need to, firstly, not forget that under “museum” we understand the aggregate of all local and church museums, which are united in a central communion-museum—for which churches serve as the origin, as a foundation, so that nothing human, no born and mortal being, will pass unnoticed, for every human being has to pass through school in order to get to the museum, the function of which is restoration. And that is why it is necessary that schools are everywhere where people are born, and that museums are where people die. Moreover, the possibility of self-restoration is contained in the restoration of others: the more energy from his soul that the restorer dedicates to the subject, to the work of restoration, the more he is expressed in this work, so that there is more kinship between a restorer and the restored than between a father and son. We can even ask: what better reflects, what better reproduces, your own individuality—an autobiography or the biography of another? In the latter case, wouldn’t intellectual, scientific demands agree with moral demands, which, of course, give preference to the biography of another, or more precisely, patrobiography over autobiography? Every biography, illustrated by painting and all other museum tools, elevates, glorifies an individual, but not to the detriment of the universal. A Universal Museum will be an aggregate not only of local church museums, but also of personal museums that are deeply united not so much in a central museum, as in their general reciprocity. This reciprocity would be the realization of the Holy Trinity—of the fatherland and brotherhood.

A museum as a congregation of investigators, using a museum as a collection of books with extensive illustrations, recreates from every work their creators and at the same time makes copies—written, pictorial (portraits), and many others—from originals that go back generations, recruiting for
However, they will return to the museum not to remain on the shelves, but in order to be accepted into the souls of the living and to be returned, restored bodies, for the essence of the museum is activity and the action of restoration; the cessation of this activity is the fall and death. The historical museum is a restoration only in memory, a simple remembrance, if it is not united with the natural science museum, the purpose of which is material restoration, a real resurrection. If there can be no brotherhood without restoration, which is the purpose of the sons, then there can be no restoration without brotherhood.

The subject of discord between the bourgeoisie and the workers, between the liberal and socialist parties, even though it does not have a real name, is urban luxury. This luxury, the production of which is considered to be a task worthy of humans, prevents the party that is called agrarian to understand its real position; it keeps all sciences separate and makes them work for the whims of the city. When the great purpose of the fatherland reveals itself to the thought that has understood the reasons for discord, the thought in which all sciences can be united, and not artificially but naturally, then the sciences that are forcefully separated one from another and enslaved by the city will be freed from that slavery and will return part for part to their own strength. All sciences that have recognized in all their special agencies that they serve the unbrotherly purpose will represent a picture of the reunification of all sciences and the reunification of all their members, i.e. of scholars into one congregation. And this is what will constitute the all-science museum.

31. We need to mention that not only ancient poems were works of not just one author, but our new books are works of many and even sometimes of whole generations.

32. Pamphlets, what people used to call “little souls” (souls of the departed, which were depicted as newborns), seem a sentimental expression to us, even though the expression belongs to the people, which stand above the suspicion of sentimentality; “little souls” is an expression of love toward the dead and of the realization of the incompleteness of their life; it is not souls, but precisely just “little souls.”
Thought that investigates discord within the means of unification for a common purpose will unite artists of all movements, of all places, into one poem, illustrated, dramatized, never-ending, even with the death of the whole generation, in such a way that the work of one generation will just be one act of a drama. Thought that uses all artistic means, not disassociated by space, not torn by time, acting educationally, will unite art and will collect all artists into one congregation. And this will be an all-artistic congregation-museum. Drama, as a result of the investigation of reasons for dissociation in space and time, as a result of the investigation of reasons that prevent it from becoming a unified action across all locations and many generations, will unite all our movements into a single human action. It is impossible to not have unity if the work emanates from writers, artists, and editorial boards that have come to an agreement; it is impossible to not have unity when it, this work, is the result of their communal creativity. The three notorious unities of drama, which were demanded by classical antiquity and which were rejected by the Romantics, could be accepted by the former and the latter if at their base were the unity of reality itself; because the unity of location—despite the expanse of space—embraced by action, will happen in reality if local forces act in accord with central ones. There will be unity of time if the works of subsequent generations are a continuation of the works of previous generations, so that no matter how enduring the time that embraces the action is, the unity cannot disappear as a result of it. So, this will be a museum of three unities: unity of action will be expressed by the unified direction; unity of space will be expressed by the unity of all locations in the center; finally, the unity of time will be expressed by a succession in which younger generations act under the leadership of older generations.
The feeling of beauty, an aesthetic feeling, is only possible for the rational and moral being, and the object of an aesthetic feeling can only be something animate, i.e. something that is also a rational and moral being; for even if one finds beauty, one does so only after ascribing it a soul, a feeling. If there is beauty in works of art it is only because one sees something animate in them. Only society can be beautiful, i.e. the union of animate beings. To ascribe beauty only to society does not mean to limit beauty, for art is a reminder, and resurrection as a realization of what was stored in memory is the expansion of society throughout all generations, which becomes the soul creation; i.e. nature, when it is ruled by the mind, becomes an expression of human thought and feeling and becomes, therefore, really beautiful.

These three qualities of God and man—good, truth, and beauty—are indivisible; they are also inseparable from the one to whom they belong. They cannot become features of individual classes—truth cannot belong to scholars, and beauty to artists. Beauty cannot belong to things without a soul, not even to persons taken in their hostility or submission. All these qualities belong only to a triune God and to a multiune human.
Art as resemblance—the resemblance of all that is in heaven and on Earth—is the reproduction of the world as it appears to the external senses. It is the reproduction of heaven and Earth, not of heaven and Earth as the expression of the divine will, but as the activity of the blind forces of nature. It is not just as if the blind forces are uncontrollable by rational beings, but rather as if they are acknowledged by men as gods (Uranus, Cronus). The art of resemblance is the depiction of heaven that deprives us of life, and of Earth that devours the living. That is why this art is indeed denounced by divine commandment as paganism, as idol-worship or idolatry (that is, the worshipping of idols that represent the blind forces, rather than controlling them) and ideolatry (worshipping the thought that does not become deed; worshipping knowledge that is without goal, without soul, without deed; worshipping the knowledge of scholars). The reproduction of the world as it appears to the external senses and which is either interpreted by the internal senses of the sons of man who have preserved their love for their fathers, or by the internal senses of the sons who have forgotten their fathers, prodigal sons—is in both cases an art of resemblances; but in the former case it will be a holy, religious art, while in the latter case it will be a worldly, secular art. Sacred art is the reproduction of the world in the form of the temple, which unites in itself all arts. Moreover, the temple as a work of architecture, painting, and sculpture becomes a depiction of Earth, yielding up all its dead, and of heaven (the vault of the temple and iconostasis), populated by the resurrected generations; and as the place of singing, or more precisely of requiem, the temple is the voice with whose sounds the ashes are resurrected from the cemetery that is Earth, and heaven becomes the dwelling of the resurrected.

By singing, or the requiem mass, we understand the whole of divine service; it is liturgy as the work of God, accomplished through the sons of man; it is the vigil for the dead or for their depictions, with corresponding wailing, calling for resurrection; and then, the diurnal union (unification) and teaching (preaching), preparation of the faithful for liturgy, fathers faithful to God, which is the liturgy of the transformation of bread and wine, which have come from the dust of the Earth, into the living body and blood.

The art of sons who have forgotten the fathers will be a reproduction of the world in the form of a universal exhibition, in which industry is united with all arts. The exhibition itself is an image of a woman, to whose service the men who have forgotten their fathers wish to focus all the forces of nature on, in order to intensify the charm of sexual attraction, and they think to find life in this attraction, but only find instead death and the hope of returning to life through their children.

Sacred art only violates the commandment when the image is mistaken for reality, for real resurrection, and when singing—that is, the temple liturgy—is mistaken for the extra-temple act of resurrecting. Secular art in the form of the universal exhibition violates all ten commandments and, committing sin against the faith, sins even more against reason in that it subordinates it to the blind force of nature, forcing one to serve it rather than control it.

In its proper definition, art is neither separated from science, nor from morality and religion, and is represented as it is in the real life of the human race, in history. Beginning with man’s first standing, or his vertical position, the pain of losing the creatures that were closest to him made man bearing the loss lift his face, and turn all his being to heaven; and
such a position is already an expression of religious feeling and awakened thought, impressed by art. (Orthodoxy, which demands standing and permits sitting only as condescension, is by this external expression—that is, standing—most substantially distinguished from Catholicism and especially from Protestantism.)

The transition from the art of resemblance to the art of reality, from Ptolemaic art to Copernican art, must be served by the museum of all sciences, unified in astronomy. This museum should have a tower, and be connected to a church-school—the tower would serve for observing the falling stars, that is, for observing the continuous construction and disintegration of the world, and likewise for meteorological observation, which transitions to experiment, to action; through transformation of military art into the art of natural science.

Aesthetics is the science of re-creating all those rational beings who have been on this little Earth (this drop of water which reflected itself in the whole Universe, and reflected the whole Universe in itself) for their vivification (and control) of all the huge heavenly worlds that have no rational beings. In this re-creation is the beginning of eternal bliss.

The manifestion of power in powerlessness is the law of terrestrial and extraterrestrial history, and also the essence of Christianity as opposed to Buddhism and as salvation from it. The Earth is a cemetery, and in its possession of history it contains greater content than all the worlds that have no such history. Heretofore, consciousness, reason, and morality were localized on planet Earth. Through resurrecting all the generations that have lived on Earth, consciousness will be spread to all the worlds of the Universe. Resurrection is the transformation of the Universe from the chaos toward which it is heading, into cosmos, that is, the splendor of incorruptibility and indestructibility.

In nothing else is the depth and wealth of wisdom so expressed as in the salvation of the limitless Universe, in the salvation that comes from such a negligible mote as the Earth. The habitability of one Earth and the inhabitability of other worlds is the demand of the highest moral law. If the world is not the product of blind chance, then between the multitude of dead generations and the plurality of worlds a possible rational relation exists, where all the inhabitants of all the worlds were created from earthly dust alone, from blood alone. But even if the world were a product of chance, then a rational and sensate being could not but employ the plurality of forces to revive the many generations deprived of life. On Earth itself we have the resemblance of localization in negligible space and then the expansion of that localization throughout the Earth. Palestine and Hellas are examples of such a localization: arts and sciences in Greece, and religion in Palestine, whence it then expanded throughout the whole Earth. But only with the unification of religion and science is the further expansion of the influence of rational beings beyond our Earth possible. Palestine and Hellas are the representations of East and West, the struggle between which constitutes history.
THE VORONEZH MUSEUM IN 1998
(1798 – 1998)

NIKOLAI FEDOROV
As far back as 1898, when the jubilee of the printing trade was celebrated, it was acknowledged that the foundation of the Voronezh Museum was laid at the same time as the beginning of book printing in Voronezh; therefore, in 1998 they celebrated the jubilee of not just the printing trade as a specific part, but the whole museum. Comparing the museum of 1998 and the museum of one hundred years ago, it turned out that the science of the nineteenth century was a deduction produced at some place, some time, by someone, while the science of the twentieth century had become a deduction from observations produced everywhere, always, by everyone. The goal set for the museum back in the nineteenth century—“the study of the Voronezh region in the past and present in all respects”—was fully realized at the end of the twentieth century: the central museum of the Voronezh region has branches in all populated areas of the region, for (local) museums are already everywhere that there are people dying (and they still die in the twentieth century, although with incomparably greater hope of revolt, than in the unfortunate nineteenth century), just as there are schools everywhere there are people being born. In the twentieth century, everyone became learners and all became the object of knowledge; and something else occurred that no one would have believed in the nineteenth century: crude peasant plowmen proved much more capable of fruitful knowledge than did the perverted city folk, possessors of the serpent’s wisdom. It turned out—an amazing feat—that no special leisure was required for knowledge in the villages. In the villages, the work itself turned into an investigation of nature, such that every agricultural year is a new experiment, an experiment to ascertain under which meteorological and even solar conditions the most reliable harvest might be retained. It must be noted that no one talks about the largest yield from the earth any longer. The trade and mercantile (commercial) view of the earth has disappeared: now one does not look at the earth as goods, as capital, but rather as something sacred; and the view of agriculture as a specific enterprise would be considered immoral in the highest degree at the end of the twentieth century. In the cities at the beginning of the twentieth century, the division of labor had progressed to the point that for factory workers, reason became a luxury and their head a cap, which they put on only on holidays. True, the shortening of the workday to eight hours would seem to have given the workers the possibility and right to put that cap on even on weekdays; but almost no one took advantage of this right, because even after just one eight-hour day of amazingly monotonous labor, in which only one part of the body is occupied, all effort is devoted to maintaining all the other parts of the body in inactivity. After such labor one must reset the parts of one’s body; there have to be amusements and orgies, not mental activities. In urban leisure there is nothing that would make this leisure transform into knowledge, and not into something else, whereas village work itself requires knowledge, knowledge that is all the more profound, and all the more extensive, knowledge that is definitive and all-encompassing, knowledge of the Earth and all that determines the condition and existence of plants, animals, and man himself, knowledge of metrological, solar, and so on, condition. Man himself, as he was taken from the Earth, and so he goes down to the Earth again, having given, or better yet, having passed on life to his children, as souls bound by an inherited vow, and being able to be resurrected from the Earth, does not exit the wide circle of
built an amusement park instead of the promised temple and museum on the island destined for it. In fact, Voronezh had this sin—the construction of amusement parks—in common with others cites, i.e. fortresses.

At one time, the whole Russian land stood constantly on guard against the attacks of steppe nomads; in almost every village there was a guard station; in every small city, a bastion; and in cities, stone fortresses. The Ivan the Great Bell Tower was itself a guard tower.

When disarmament started, the fortresses’ earthen approaches, watered with the blood of the ancestors, were turned into leisure walkways, into boulevards, and the guard towers were turned into belvederes. Historians of the nineteenth century and previous centuries saw an obvious improvement in such clear malfeasance—the transformation of the military into the civil, into something peaceful.

But being a son (filitude) is higher than citizenship. For the sons of man, for truly intelligent descendants, the places watered with the blood of the ancestors must be transformed, of course, but into memorials to the fathers, into sacred museums. Generally, disarmament was premature, not to mention the fact that the enemy was only contained, not destroyed. We still have enemies: Central Asia doesn’t just launch hordes on us, but also drying winds, which inflict even greater damage than the hordes themselves; and the West constantly threatens us with floods—thus disarmament was premature. The ubiquitous construction of museums is the reestablishment of the fortresses, and bastions, and guard stations, as an expression of the guard position, but not versus our own kind, but rather against the blind force which engenders both too much rain, and drought, the failure of the wheat harvest, and the yield of the sickening microbe. This reestablishment shows that what is necessary
is not the destruction but only the transformation of the military-guardian into the peace-guardian stance.

It should be noted, however, that the museum and the temple for the fifty-year jubilee of the revelation of the relics of St. Mitrofan (1932) were built not on the island, as was earlier proposed, but in another, more appropriate place, corresponding to the wide dimensions in which it was realized. The very first beginning of the Voronezh Museum in its renovated form was laid in 1922, the year of the celebration of the five-hundred-year jubilee of the revelation of the relics of Most Holy Sergei, which preceded by ten years the celebration of the centenary jubilee of the revelation of the relics of St. Mitrofan (1932). It became known that someone named S. S., even before the five-hundred-year anniversary of the death of Most Holy Sergei (1892), made a proposal to construct on the ancient Russian example a temple in one day, like the one that was built by Most Holy Sergei with his brother (Moskovskie vedomosti [Moscow News], September 13, 1892, no. 254). The idea of constructing the one-day temple, which is usually erected in days of national calamity, penetrated the people. And at that time there was a great plague in Voronezh. The people gathered and decided as a whole community, with the blessing of the spiritual and the permission of the secular powers that be, to build a temple for the fifty-year anniversary day. Due to a lack of wood, they decided to use old railroad ties for the construction of the temple (“Dobry pochin,” [Good Initiative], Russkoe slovo [Russian Word], 1895, no. 62); at that time they were replacing iron ties with steel ones on the railroad, so there was no lack of material (i.e. old railroad ties). The construction of the temple began on Friday evening, i.e. on the day of His suffering, and turning the day of rest, the Sabbath, into one of labor, finished it on Sunday, so that this temple could be
into the temple-museum. The museum, understood in this sense, is intended to unite the people (narod) with the intelligentsia, in that the museum to this end is first of all a temple, in which all church antiquities preserved in Voronezh churches are collected, all the archives of the spiritual hierarchy are collected, and a special society is established for the study of church archaeology and church history.

Then all secular archive memorials as well, i.e. the archives of the civil and military hierarchy, are collected at the temple-museum, and such a unification of the spiritual and secular makes the museum both local government (guberniya) and diocesan. Which it was, in fact, at its very beginning, for in the very beginning the Voronezh Museum contained both icons, church instruments, and objects from secular-civil and military everyday life. For studying everything collected in the temple-museum, an archive commission is established, or a unification of all the workers who work on the study of archive matters. The goal of studying the source of the juridico-economic archives is not theoretical, but rather purely practical: to study the conditions under which on a year-to-year basis we will see a decrease in crimes and all misunderstandings which require judicial and administrative handling, and this study would lead to a significant decrease in cases in the 1998 jubilee year; so that at the present time, neither on the judicial nor the administrative enterprise does there any longer lie the curse to eternally judge, eternally sort things out and never reason things out, never to close one’s case. There is still the hope that there will, finally, come a time when the pugnacious citizens will be transformed into sons, united not only by common origin, but in common service to the God of the fathers in a temple-museum hallowed to him, and more, there will be no need of surveillance, nor of threats of punishment. The participation of all in the paternal task, in the task of knowledge and the direction of the blind force of nature, serves, as all are now convinced, as the very first and most necessary condition of universal peacemaking.

Everything is educational to the highest degree in the temple-museum, where under the roof of the God of the father there is both a museum of the fathers and a school of the sons. The internal and external inscriptions on the temple are so full of content that explaining them would take up a large book. The plan of this temple, as it is proposed, was illustrated by L. G. Solovyev, an artist well known in Voronezh. But the external form of this building, amazing in its grandeur, has in view not just beauty, but follows educational goals, such that in the museum itself the plan of the top area, or roof, occupied by the observatory, where the students under the leadership of the teachers recognize the visible movement of the heavenly spheres, is transformed into a mosaic map view of Voronezh. The place of the middle area, where meteorological and astronomical observatories are produced, is transformed into a mosaic map view of the Voronezh region, and the courtyard itself of the museum, embedded with stones, presents a mosaic map view of all Russia, and all these maps are the work of the students under the guidance of the teachers. The shapes of the hall on which the whole building is built are transformed into geological crosscut views of the length of all Russia, from the year-round [non-freezing] port at Murmansk, on the border of two oceans, to the year-round port on the Pacific Ocean, at the Yellow Sea. Around it is arranged a botanical and zoological garden for the visual, practical study of botany and zoology … The museum became a common asset for all institutes, both spiritual and secular, civil and military, male and female, for the study of local history, i.e. the role of the region
with the universal naval empire, after which, as they say, an alliance is concluded with it, directed no longer against ones like ourselves, but against the enemy, who must also be called only a temporary enemy, but an eternal friend, against nature, a lethal force, on the eve, perhaps, of transforming it into a life-giving force. The traveler who amassed this collection was a native of the next province over; he held a prominent government service position in Voronezh for a long time. The Voronezh steamship from the volunteer fleet also considered it its duty as its eponym to give the museum of the city, along with Paschal and New Year’s greetings, some especially characteristic objects to acquaint the students with the Far East, which grows ever closer to us. And in the museum we see the depiction of the steamship itself, which was of the cruiser class, and portraits of all active and past duty officer and men on it.

The museum became, of course, and first of all, a unification of teachers of all educational institutions in the form of teaching circles in all branches of knowledge; it attracts amateurs too, especially from young people who have just finished their courses, so that the knowledge they acquired did not remain sterile, and so that the provinces eliminated the imprecation that in the provinces they just forget what has been invented in capitals and university towns like it was in the twentieth century.

Having collected as many depictions of the workers of the old times as it could, the museum collected in-house the portraits of all those serving at the time of its establishment in its new form (i.e. in 1932); and there was no innovation in this, because at the exhibition as far back as one hundred years ago, in 1898, there was a portrait of a staff printer, distinguished only in that he had served forty-five years; from that point, i.e. from 1932, a portrait of each person coming...
The museum comprises the likeness of the Triune God as the model of unanimity and agreement.

The alliance with China, concluded at the time of the last struggle with England, became a holy union, a spiritual union, and not just the kind which is based on a commonality of interests. The West from that time lost its authoritative significance, and Russia in the twentieth century became, finally, the true Rus, became itself, and the fifth estate, the peasantry of all the world’s countries, turned out everywhere Russian in spirit, like to the Chinese, and the name of China became a synonym for “living” and “great.” Europe’s fear that she would be inundated by legendarily cheap Chinese workers turned out to be groundless—Chinese immigration was directed to the tropics, to the equator, to warm climates, where Europeans aren’t fit for any work at all.

Nationalism was a dream in the nineteenth century, but in the twentieth century it became a reality. The spirit of kinship crowded out all the opposite forces—everything judicial and economic. In China, where every family has its ancestral temple (museum), all science, in all its fullness, came into the service of the fathers—the service of the fathers, as one father, and not to each one’s father in isolation. History was transformed into commemoration, and all natural science became the path to resurrecting the fathers. The science of the nineteenth century, having detected that “everywhere in nature a ceaseless struggle persists, which always culminates in the destruction of the weaker,” and bowing before the fact, has elevated this fact to Law and engraved on the pediment of its temple: “Death to the weak, to the adapted! Hail the unceasing bloody struggle!” Now, at the end of the twentieth century, they think that nature does not set the rules for man, they think that man does not have to obey nature, but nature ought to serve man. Psychology has revealed the
Such a relation to the fundamental question—of the meaning of life and the goal of knowledge, on the resolution of which the very stimulus of life depends—by a writer who was then recognized as famous, to whose voice many listened, attests to the moral depth to which people at the end of the nineteenth century had fallen.

The interrelationship between external and internal characteristics, has revealed the internal relation and, having laid it as the foundation of society, has eliminated what in the nineteenth century was called sociology: in the twentieth century, the very word fell into disuse, being replaced by “fratropolgy,” or more accurately, “delphiturgy” (brother-creation); psychocracy, the same thing as brother-creation, became the applied science of psychology. Souls ceased to be darknesses, and exteriors ceased to be deceptions; mutual knowledge [vzaimoznanie, intersubjectivity] was laid as the base of society, which was no longer maintained by external law, not by surveillance, and not by threats of punishments, unlike those judicial societies from which feeling is expelled and the soul is torn out. Classical and foreign languages in general have been replaced by the science of the roots of all languages, having revealed the kinship of all nations, and promising in the near future a common natural language, not an artificial one, like Volapük. Everything related to religion and agriculture, i.e. to regulation, to the task common to all, even now, at the end of the twentieth century, bears one and the same name over all the Earth. The twentieth century is the age of museums, i.e. places not for the commemoration of the dead, but rather for their enlivenment, via the path of the investigation of the lethal forces of nature. In this, the meaning of life and the goal of knowledge is revealed to the sons of the dead father, whereas the nineteenth century was the age of critical philosophy, having lost both the meaning of life and the goal of knowledge. The loss of the meaning of life and the goal of knowledge was noted already in the last quarter of the previous, i.e. nineteenth, century by the writer Zola, who was then enjoying great glory. And this confers great honor on Zola, which, however, is reduced in that, having noted the fact, he bowed before it, acknowledging that this was how it must be.
THE CATHERINE THE GREAT EXHIBITION AT THE VORONEZH REGIONAL MUSEUM

NIKOLAI FEDOROV
AND NIKOLAI PETERSON
In the article “On the Question of the Karazin Meteorological Station in Moscow” published in Nauka i Zhizn’ magazine (Science and life, issue no. 44, November 6, 1893), which includes a proposal for constructing a meteorological station at the Moscow Rumyantsev Museum in memory of Karazin, it is mentioned in passing that “a museum is fundamentally a book depository,” and it is suggested that everything that is collected in a museum is merely supplementary material, necessary for the study of what is written in books, although the material only visually represents what is expressed in books with words. Developing this idea, one may say that a museum without books, without a library, is absurd, and a library without a museum is an incomplete enterprise, one that is highly insufficient. The relationship of a library to a museum is like the relationship between a soul and a body—the separation of these enterprises is death for the museum. A museum cannot completely exist without books, and while this is not a total loss (it is well known that libraries without museums exist), what kind of life would this be? … In any case, even those who do not agree with the idea expressed above will not deny that libraries and museums are of the same genus, and thus their structures should have a lot in common. As proof to justify this idea, we will allow ourselves to mention the Voronezh Museum, which has organized two particularly interesting exhibitions: in May of this year, the Coronation, and in November, the Catherine Exhibition. Concerning the organization of public libraries, there is a belief that they should be arranged in calendar order. Similar to how a church daily commemorates and presents its saints who participated in its creation, the agencies of science should remember the workers of knowledge, inviting people to not just read their works, but also to study the creators themselves. To “study” does not mean to reproach or to praise, but to restore life … such a study is possible only in libraries that are open to all. The library in its present organization, where only a small collection of books is in circulation, while the majority of the books remain constantly in their places and collect dust, must be called a closed book. The only library that can be called an open book is one that is arranged in calendar order, by the days of writers’ deaths, because inherent in calendar order is the demand for commemoration, i.e. the rehabilitation of the author himself through his works. With this form of organization, the library will not be a simple depository of books—not a single book in the library will remain forgotten. With this form of organization, there will come a turn for every book—a time for study will be assigned, assigned for the very calendar day of the author’s death. The Voronezh Museum has proven with its two exhibitions that for museums too and the arrangement of objects contained therein—the remnants of the past—that calendar order is the most animated way of organizing the museum, “animated” in the actual sense of the word, because this form of organization leads to study, i.e. to the restoration of life, in agreement with the definition mentioned above. From November 6th to the 10th, during the Coronation exhibition, we saw the museum overflowing with visitors who looked at the displayed objects, for which the caretaker of the museum, I. Uspensky, provided the most interesting explanations. This exhibition also increased the influx of donations to the museum.

One must note with special gratitude that the Voronezh Museum was not limited to exhibiting solely the objects from the museum collection alone. Everything related to the
Catherine era that could possibly be found in the Voronezh region was collected: thus for the duration of the exhibition they borrowed from the Voronezh Nobility Assembly the charter of the nobility from April 21, 1785, the velvet-bound on the genealogy of the nobility from the period of Catherine the Great (six parts); from the city administration we have the book, *The Foundations of Governing the Province*, from 1775, in a velvet binding with a silver edge, and a small silver bell, both sent for the inauguration of the city’s administration based on the aforementioned foundations; the seminary provided an autograph from Saint Tikhon, Catherine’s contemporary (an autograph from a letter); the public library lent busts of Catherine II, Peter III, and Paul I, and statues of the order of St. George and St. Vladimir.

And private collectors who are involved in collecting antiques exhibited their own collections in the museum for the duration of the exhibition. K. I. Bukhonov exhibited around 150 coins of Catherine II, and a significant collection of medals and tokens from her reign. M. P. Parenago exhibited books and engravings, among them a portrait of Catherine engraved by Utkin; an engraving of a painting titled *Reverie* dedicated to Catherine, “Le paralitique, servi par ses enfants” from 1767; an engraving depicting Voltaire leaning on his cane (Paris, 1778); P. G. Belyaev exhibited manuscripts, books, and icons in casings from the period of Catherine the Great; by the way, among the books there are: *Prayers*, which was carried by a sixty-seven-year-old (Count Aleksey Bestuzhev-Ryumin) when he was under arrest (on February 14, 1758), and *Grace* of the same Count Bestuzhev-Ryumin on the occasion of his release from prison and reinstatement at court on July 3, 1762. This book is accompanied by a foreword by Count Bestuzhev-Ryumin, and at the end of the book a decree from August 31, 1762, is attached which reinstated Count Bestuzhev-Ryumin in his rank, honors, and pension. M. I. Uspensky exhibited textbooks on arithmetic and geography from the time, and a well-known encyclopedia from the eighteenth century as well.

Thus the Voronezh Museum is not just a collection and depository of anachronistic remnants, but rather a living agency, uniting those who study the past. And museums should not solely be depositories of objects remaining of life of the past as libraries should not only be depositories for books; libraries should not serve for amusement and for light reading, just as museums should not serve to satisfy idle curiosity. Museums and libraries are schools for adults, i.e. higher schools, and ought to be centers of research, obligatory for every rational being—everything must be the object of knowledge, and everyone must be a learner. However, research should not be directed toward the destruction of faith, but toward its affirmation, and not just in words, but in action, the action of restoring life. Only such research can be the goal of constructing libraries and museums, the need for widespread construction of which is felt so acutely. The most natural thing, of course, would be to make it obligatory to open libraries in every church, and in every church a museum would also be created as the necessary condition of enlightenment, because a museum is only the clarification, by all possible means, of the book, of the library. The creation of a library and a museum in every church would only be the realization of the church’s mission, of its obligation to teach.

We hope that the Voronezh Museum does not limit itself to these two exhibitions. The museum honored Catherine II with the exhibition, even though she doesn’t have any special connection to Voronezh, the museum is just obliged to organize an exhibition in memory of Peter the Great, whose actions enabled Voronezh, two hundred years ago,
THE CATHOLINE THE GREAT EXHIBITION

to acquire the status that it has today. The museum should also organize exhibitions for Saint Mitrofan of Voronezh and Saint Tikhon Zadonsk; and these exhibitions must have special significance as well. They must show the appropriate direction for research, must show the kind of science that leaves a great many people in complete darkness and does not connect the expansion of enlightenment with the expansion of knowledge itself, that allows neither students nor teachers to participate in the expansion of the domain of knowledge (as described in the article “On the Question of the V. N. Karazin Monument,” Nauka i Zhizn’ [Science and Life], no. 15–16, 1894)—such a science is not the true light, enlightening every man coming into the world. Science can become this only through the union with the church, upon which also lies, per the duty of discipleship, the duty of enlightenment.

Therefore only the church can and must connect investigation and observation with primordial national enlightenment through hands-on instruction in all national school, those are the church schools and the regional schools, the strange and regrettable separation of which is, apparently, the result of secular fanaticism. Let us hope that this separation is not permanent, for there should be no antagonism between secular and religious, regional administration and church (cf. “Chteniya imperatorskogo obschestva istorii i drevnostii” [“Working Papers of the Imperial Society of History and Antiquity”], 1893, no. 3, foreword to the tale of the construction of the every-day church in Vologda). Thus, let the exhibitions on Saint Mitrofan and Saint Tikhon at the Voronezh Regional Museum serve to eliminate this antagonism, for even though the museum is a secular institution, it is no stranger to the sacred.

ON THE CATHEDRAL OF THE RESURRECTING MUSEUM

VASILIY CHEKRYGIN
redemption, an unmoving likeness of his being, a way of resurrecting the dead. Man unites with man for the struggle with dead strength and its unenlightened bearers; the son has learned the religion of action, interconnection, seeing in unity a salvation from death. In building unity, man perceives the brotherhood of all bloodlines. In the rational, brotherly union of sons, cemeteries become communal; graves and tombstones made in the likenesses of resurrected fathers are united. And together mourning the connection to their fathers that death has ruined, sons have mentally resurrected their fathers in the name of universal salvation, in images resembling the dead. In performing the funeral mass, the temple has found its voice, its quickening music (which stirs the ashes of the dead like music from the future), imagining fathers and their forebears coexisting (an icon), the notional uplift of the fathers (iconostasis) into the heavenly fatherland, devising a plan for victory over the unmoving strength of death through the sum total of all living arts. So the mind created the sacrament of the Eucharist, the map of the Exodus, of the resurrection of dead fathers, serving in ash as man’s sustenance, completing the construction of a temple in their own image. Like the gathering and the unity, man now sees beauty and force and follows their covenant into a pure gathering. But he sees that beauty today has become incomplete, and shines only in sparse flashes of all men’s future unity.

1. The totality of the arts in their indivisibility.

2. In this way the temple is created, by which I mean the way of the being-son who resurrects his father.
form of a school in the performance of the Eucharist outside the temple.

“From a technical perspective, the temple offers a supplement to terrestrial mechanics, the distilled effect of which is the constraint of bodies from falling.” The earthly architecture of both temple and man is a resistance to falling, an elevation, a maintenance, a kind of triumph over the falling of bodies, supporting them, building on the law of gravity.

Not perfectly alive is the temple, and yet not dead; it is, and is not; it exists and it does not; bounded by time and space, riven by stale force. An image of the Universe’s majesty, it is lower than the Universe, though higher in meaning.

“The meaning resides in its being a project of the universe bustling with all who have perished, and in which those who bustle have turned to an awareness and stewardship of existence, no longer blind.”

**EXODUS**

“But think of it: there is no road to immortality but the limitation imposed by the grave.”

—Filaret

“In pondering the relationship between rational beings and the irrational senselessness of nature, man, or the son of man, must devote himself wholly and freely to physical toil. He must be a laborer— neither slave nor master, a mere duplicator, and neither Creator nor Maker.”

—N. F. Fedorov

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3. Every image, whether of a constellation or a flower, a horse or a man, bird or beetle—each of these is an intimation of perfection.

4. N. F. Fedorov. The Ptolemaic model of the universe, forged in the belief that the sky is the limit of upward motion and the Earth that of downward motion, that man was placed at the center of the Universe.

5. The Copernican model, cognizant that there exists only the sky and the Earth, but no limits of motion upward nor downward.
He learned to trample with his own feet the dust of rotten fathers, that beyond his own borders were legions of the dead, and that their death had come from the blind world.

Maturing, he noticed time moving to renew the Sun, to build a new heaven, impervious.

He saw souls dwindle like moisture in the gyre of matter, bearing the imprimatur of muteness, and that the best destroyed death, a good canceling the living.

Constructing his mind, he learned that energy untransmitted is deadly, devouring the living, and that extreme cold destroys perfection.

He saw that the savage will of the vortex—the evil and stillness of air—runs to pestilence and plague.

He saw that the lights of heaven like fruit wither in their ripeness, doubling the Earth.

He learned that man burns out in the vortex of his race preserved in time like a pillar of flame, and that kingdoms go limp in the turmoil.

Exhausting themselves in savage meaninglessness, man’s arts today are a play of dreams; he who is awake looks with a shudder on the art of a mind indulged with wandering, the fruit of a lifeless imagination.

The individual, rational artist today is a son of man, compassionate toward the dead, who wanders artists’ studios, is terrified of the savagery in creating images of man and the dying world, is ignorant of art’s elevation, its significance, goes drunk on images.

6. Of the simulations of art.
ON THE CATHEDRAL OF THE RESURRECTING MUSEUM

But he knows that artists infuse a secret coexistence with nature into the meaning of rising up, and of the gathering of the world, they scent the secret nature of form (the plan of resurrection) and are sensitive to the silent portent of a liberation in progress.

A teacher calls the artist-scholars with the force of the united arts to be fathers’ fathers, to be architects, to erect the past in an ineffable today, to pacify the spirit in eternal fullness, in ungaping death.

The meaning and purpose of a rational man-son’s labor is the summoning of a Cathedral, resurrecting the museum, and becoming an artist-astronomer-regulator who never cleaves science from art or true religion, from reverence for the fathers.7

The Resurrecting Museum—a temple, an organ that perceives the ongoing structure of the world, and at the same time its downfall, its demise—draws the strength of an earthly army into a heavenly one—an instrument of the museum-regulator’s actions (a meteoric and cosmic process).

Having come into sense, man unifies his spiritual forces, joining them in Brotherhood. Creating the implements and trying the actions of bodies’ tension in a single experience, a labor-knowledge, he establishes, with the first case of universal labor, the abolition of discord, storms, the thunder of creation, shapeless forces erupting into the material of a new architecture,8 uniting the living with the primordial, constructing bodies out of flaming kernels,9 for the purpose of the man’s arts is the restoration in the authentic of history in perfection.

7.  This will be a transition from the simulated arts (the Ptolemaic model of the universe) to actual art (the Copernican model).
8.  Copernican: it holds the celestial bodies from falling.

THE TIME HAS PASSED FOR MAN TO LIVE IN CHAOTIC DREAMS; THE ARTIST-MAN-SON IS CALLED TO CREATE NOT DREAMS BUT INTERRELATIONS OF BODIES—A VITAL WORLD. With the museum, man frees great constraining forces; with the cathedral that gathers many races into a single one for the real creation of a model of perfection and a total organic state, bringing the world to its highest level through the unified will of the museum, collecting the fading light.

Dividing the work of knowing the tenseness of bodies into forms that occupy the daytime and the night, building under an unexpendable sentry, an instrument of reason, observing the tension of solar energy in darkness and light; going, in the unified plan of a shared concern, toward the domestication of raging heavenly elements, defanging thunderstorms with the unification of science and art, the Resurrecting Museum—the artist—inflicts a secret stroke of death, seizing the progress of forces.

So it is not in somnolent dreams but actually in shared labor that the son-man, having learned what forces are subject to Brotherhood, unifies the arts in the matter of creating a living, heavenly architecture, establishing, like every true artist, reality as the goal of his labor.

And so men, having become thinkers in earnest, stand before one another as the workers of divine mystery, preparing the way toward a meeting with the dead, resurrecting them into the flames of life.

Embodying the divine image of matter’s enlightenment. The Resurrecting Museum establishes peace in the world, turning down the unrestricted forces of chaos and inexhaustible power, introducing consciousness into nature as

7.  This will be a transition from the simulated arts (the Ptolemaic model of the universe) to actual art (the Copernican model).
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a regulator of acts (of will), perishing in internecine conflict, and recreating flesh, pure, eternally bright, and immortal.

The Resurrecting Museum’s goal, as an organ of the muses, is a true circle dance, a genuine sundance (clockwise), with the strength to take control of the motions of Earth and heavenly bodies alike, to return life to the dead.

APPEASEMENT OF THE ELEMENTS:
The START OF AN ACTION OUTSIDE THE TEMPLE
(Regulation of a Meteorological Process)

“Astronomy will address itself to astroregulation, and the human race will become one of astronomer-regulators, which is its innate purpose. The tools man has created for mutual destruction will become the means of salvation from the consequences of the iniquity with which he plunders nature.”

—N. F. Fedorov

Man’s true enemy is not man, but blind force, bearing thunder and storm, coldness in spring, hail and bitter cold, disease, every weakness, and death to all that lives.

Great plagues and droughts bring death to many millions of children, men, the elderly, and women, blasting lands rich with color into deserts.

As the sign of a matter that ought to be public, hunger teaches us to unite into a unified army, a heavenly host, to set aside internal conflicts (an involuntary reflection of the cosmic war, unconscious of the life of nature), to turn as a

unified force against the true enemy: the blind elements that bring death to man.

The point of an army is to rise up against the enemy, the enemy of a rational being in irrational nature.

Uniting against oppressive forces, man created society, which today serves him as an instrument for the eradication of his own kind, the bearers of reason.

High too is the purpose of his armaments—the defense and protection of life.

The son of man calls for the protection of life, for the use of arms to give life to the hungry, mastering the course of a meteorological process, sending rain, calling forth thunder, setting down a bucket to answer the poverty of lands and nations, cultivating bread—the ash of fathers—for human sustenance.

To safeguard the harvest from the tyranny of blind forces, to feed the hungry on the world—this is man’s duty, replacing what is given with what is earned; demoting solar power (electricity) from the higher levels of the atmosphere, disarming thunder and storms, finding the key to their path.

So, bringing structure into phenomena, man rids himself of weakness and disease, revives and gathers his strength for the highest endeavor, resolving class contradictions: cities and villages, individuals and communities (states), fixing the exodus from chaos into cosmos, turning the course of history from unconscious to conscious, rational.

The first true concern for the future man of this new history is meteorology, the apparent labor of the Resurrecting Museum.

10. “The army that has an ideal for itself, or, more precisely, has a plan in heaven, will be made heavenly when it implements this plan on Earth.” —N. F. Fedorov

11. “Not for limitations on the supply of food imposed by the whim of the harvest.” —N. F. Fedorov

12. The regulation of meteorological processes represents a transition to Copernican art.
It is time for man to learn the wickedness of cities, disordering the course of the meteorological process, the evil of groupings of factories and industrial plants, exhausting the Earth’s supply of solar power, razing forests, poisoning and drying up rivers, and in the process creating hunger, poisoning the air with fetor and rot, producing empty things that augment the charm of sexual attraction.

Time for him to learn the wickedness of armies acting in blindness to protect markets and the production of simulacra, decay.

For is it not wickedness, the treatment of the peasant, the factory slave, wickedness in the cities that divide man-sons into slave and master (the slaves’ slave)?

It is time to learn the chaos of society and its force that acts in blindness—the army (slave of the master, the slaves’ slave).

By means of this shared matter of fathers—art—the village rids itself of the oppression and violence of the city (neither reaper nor sower).

Man has only one way out: to transfigure the village that guards his fathers’ graves, having connected it to the city (to knowledge).

Coming to his senses, the son is called by his teacher to the villages, to the work of liberating the land from the yoke of blind forces; he is the new man of future history, and has transformed into a museum and school of resurrection the cities that create instrumentalities, that occlude vision, sound, and the instrumentalities of movement, inciting the

13. The man of the future will have no need of metals extracted from inside the Earth through hard labor: metals of meteoric and cosmic origin will replace them, drawn from the celestial expanse of the regulation of the attractive force of the Earth and processed in cities (as articles of workmanship).

and lightning, an unbroken ring of storms, interrupted in the temperate zones and extending to the aurora borealis in the cold regions of the globe. All life in the Universe is a continuous thunderstorm of varying intensity, because the force of the Universe remains an unregulated one. To study nature thus means seeking a means of stripping the power of thunder, converting it from one that destroys to one that recreates, resurrects.

The Universe is a meteorological process, accompanied by unceasing thunder and storms. If the force producing this thunder and these storms is itself a force of thunder, then its study will amount to a search for ways of taming this destructive force by regulating it, a search for ways of turning it from a thundering, destructive force into one of re-creation. In the absence of such treatment, this force, destroying everything, will ultimately devour itself; the very Sun, and all suns, are clouds of thunder that collapse with the dispensation of their final bolts. This force can be controlled only through the collective knowledge and labor of all men.¹⁵

THE TRANSFIGURATION OF THE WORLD
(Religion of the Cosmic Process)

“In the Transfiguration, Christ was revealed, and two great figures were united: the organizer of relation and the controller of nature, Moses and Elijah, who had been the right and left hands of the Resurrector.”

—N. F. Fedorov

¹⁵. N. F. Fedorov
Earth from prime elements, a dance of abolition, of separation, of the change of birth and death, a great dance that grants immortality, abolishing the blind law of repression and death.

Attracting solar forces, charging the Earth with forces of attraction and repulsion, bringing the mood of a light summer and laying the way for meteoric flame-trails, immortal sons arise on nearby planets, dispersing the reason-key, the structure that controls the celestial spheres’ courses, engulfing the force of storms provoked by the sun on the planet-spheres. In the flowing motions they are recreated by the magnificent dance, new suns ignite in the celestial scatter, renewing the heavens.

And so the sons avert the end of the Universe, transfiguring the law of blind bodies’ decline into a law of love, into the force that restores and drives worlds.

Oh, how mighty are my children, and brothers, and sisters, liberated in unified labor, on a liberated Earth, dancing the divine dance of the start of transfiguration; they are creating perfection, not in dream and not in life-devouring abstraction, but in reality, with love for the living and the dead, redeeming imperfection with the force of the matter of love, which is to say, with art.

The sons and daughters of man listen in keen sympathy to the pulse and quiver of particles, of the swirl on hills and in lowlands of the ashes of the dead and, as artists penetrating with sensation the hidden essence of coexistence, establish the relatedness of living harmonies and discover the unity of the sonic force of resurrection and the vivid, numerical, plastic one (Constructivism), having learned that the force of the arts brings resurrection and that true art is an enactment exists in apparent dependence on two motions of the Earth: rotation on its axis, and revolution around the Sun.

16. The contemporary art of dance is an image of the dance of the Resurrected Dead, a shifting of support beams accomplished through the museum-reason.
17. The cellular life of plants and animals (biological processes)
18. Binding a man to the mortal Earth.
of the Eucharist outside the temple, the transformation of bread and wine into the body and blood of the father, that art (as an enterprise) is a redemption, the Resurrection of the Dead Fathers.

Dead are our teachers, beaten with rocks in blindness; dead is my teacher, and my brothers and friends, and I shall be dead too, and sustain a son with my body for a high concern. Our bodies will be scattered over sacred ground that swallows fathers, fills its womb with beauty. But the day will come when our ashes quake in the dance of Resurrection, when every particle of our bodies blesses the light of reason, thirsting for redemption and rebirth, taking in the living music of choirs of son-resurrectors, venerating the fathers who gave them life.

THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD FATHERS
(A Eucharist Outside the Temple)

_The synthesis of the living arts is the resurrection of the dead._

“Thine own of Thine own we offer unto Thee, in behalf of all and for all!”
—The Mystery of the Eucharist

“Consumed, you will be resurrected as that which consumes.”
—Basil of Caesarea

The dead fathers have gone into the Earth, their bodies in ash—food for the sons.

And after his death, a father supports and sustains his son, anticipating from his mind the highest concern.

Cultivating bread with intellectual labor, a man liberated from the blindness of nature’s warring forces comes to the father as to truth, bringing life into a connection death cannot shake.

The Earth is heavy with the dead, but a son begets a son in darkness, and in darkness the sons live, creating phantoms that look real, and in the blindness of abuse having forgotten the father, they die, destroyed by the unrestrained forces of death.

The son sleeps, creating the likeness of a perfect world, as weak on the images he’s drunk as if they were wine, deceiving himself with a sheen of strength and peace, beneath which lurks a terror of the truth of the world, slashed and mortal.

With word and dance glorifying marital conjunction, intoxication by wine, the flow of time, and the spring, a fleeting celebration of power of birth, the son with his eyes wide open does not see the damnation of the successors to the imperfect rising up of life.

The new man, having emerged from the chaos of blind forces, is sober with the memory of the father and the inspiration of the son as his form and breath, in the unity of which they live, having taken control of the motions of the celestial spheres and the forces of new suns, kindled by them with the discourse of reason, and having brought them into new bodies, glittering like snow in daylight, having attained through hard labor the power of immortality, not imagining the oblivion of the dead, for the wise know that man, and the Universe, and thought, and all mankind’s affairs are all but the likeness of resurrection, resurrection uncompleted.

Having learned in wisdom that the concern of a man’s art is the recreation of father-causes, and having invested the force of the arts into the labor of resurrection, in deep

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19. Paganism, a tragic worldview.
morality and love, in full knowledge to approach the human race unified in will, feeling, and thought—the cathedral Resurrecting, in reverence to the miraculous wonder of life, to the Eucharist performed outside the temple, the force of the animating arts of music, dance, and shape awakening the dead from their graves.

The choirs of artist-sons will be heard over the oceans, and the thunderbolts sent into the depths of the Earth will make it quake, and water from the Earth will surge forth, bearing the ashes of the fathers.

The souls and bodies of the living will be heard over the music, over its heart-rendering harmonies, and the perfected heavenly music of the God-man being born is one with the image of the fathers, woven perfectly by the God-man as rays of vital, redolent light.

The creator-like force of celestial music rings out, like a secret essence of living, in tune with the stirring of the father’s dust particles, by the blessed will of his son the father’s scattered ashes cycling skyward through a vortex of uprisings, and the image of the world is fulfilled through the power of music, and the father shudders and returns to life in fresh skin, luminous with color, his brow, resurrected, comes into focus, and the dead arise, returned to the fullness of life, true beauty, and inexhaustible, immortal force.

And the relation between son and father will be perfect, for the son will be as a father to the father, and the father as a son to the son.

And the mystery of man’s redemption and victory over death will be perfected, his escape from imperfection through the power of the unified arts into the kingdom of permanence, immortality, and completeness.

20. A celestial iconostasis.
The forces that have been revived and risen up will recoil from the Earth, soaring into the vastness of the Universe, and animate the celestial spheres, knocking them from the orbits set for them in accord with the torpid law of gravitation. In a divine movement-dance, man remakes his flesh, and the redolent bodies of the Universe will burn with a new light, the abode of rational spirits.

Taking control over the celestial worlds, here is man, like the Sun moving the stars, illuminating silent expanses of the Universe with the pulse of illuminated life, wielding blessed forces.

Having become the endeavor of the God-man, the father-son—founder of heaven, architect of the Universe, dwelling place of wisdom—creates a single, eternal, living temple of worlds, without seeking supports, for it is the perfected love-law that serves as his support. Having conceived the luminous creation of a reinvention alive with undiminished youth, the perfect mind gives permanent form to the enlightened flesh of the world, that it may live in eternity.

Mighty comets are ignited by the father-son and soar through the sky, rich with sound, reverberating with the sweetest of all music.

Its play is a part of the structure of the Universe; the gathering comets are sealed into force, as are mighty suns, like flashes of brilliant color woven from logic (higher than flesh) and music.

Overcome is time by resurrection, by the sons who have risen up; overcome is space by their ascent and command over worlds.

And eternity shall be known by the son in the fullness of life, the depth of knowledge.
ON THE CATHEDRAL OF THE RESURRECTING MUSEUM

The falling world will be held up, and the world will exist in perfect love—the Secret of the Father, the son, and the spirit, in the duskless morning, the enduring spring.22
Living beauty gathered into force has harnessed and burns with thousands of sparking rays, pouring the sweetness of life to spirit-sons made one with creation.
The Universe dancing in its circle.23
The milky ways, ignited by the son out of cosmic dust, the stuff of celestial architecture, of the temple that moves in eternity, filled beyond holding with the voices of darkness of the themes that have arisen, enfolding a victorious song to the sense-carpen ter.
Embodying in glory the perfected arts as the Word.
Never hearing the unheard, never seeing the unseen.
The aspiration of my soul brings forth what weakly I can say of eternity and the perfection of love and of light.
Where in a man abides what he can say of perfection?
My ears knocked awake by the power of the all-pervading sands of the Word in glory.
Can one even speak of eternity?
If I had a polysyllabic intellect and a thousand mouths to sing every thought into a single, harmonious whole, still then I could never address the highest of subjects, eternity.
For man’s tongue is impoverished, bound up by time, man’s word is weighed down, frail and fatal, igniting not life but its mere likeness.
My eyes sparkle with joy for the hope of seeing an unextinguished gathering of worlds that swarm with life.
What turmoil it will be, to see indestructible, inspired suns, to hear the noise of eternity’s flaming wheels.

22. Trinity Sunday.
23. A country dance, clockwise motion, religious processions in the city—all reflections of Copernican architecture.

VASSILY CHEKRYGIN

My faculty of speech has been exhausted, and I, heeding the voices of wisdom, reverently bow my head and bless the triumph of my spirit, ripping it into perfect love that knows no fatigue, no death.
All my family—father and mother, brothers, sisters, the wives and children of my brothers—I await your resurrection into our eternal coincidence, the revelation of the Word for perfect Love.
In that Love, our meeting is interpenetratory, giving form to an eternal glory, all-loving, the pulse of a life welling with fragrant light.
We will live one inside the other, while celestial forces reveal the secret of their being and we at last can look upon the Father face to face.
And the innermost cedars quiver in harmony, revealing and enlightening the masses of sons of who have risen up, giving form to the reverence of the Blessed Trinity.

AFTERWORD

“Architecture, Construction, the Harmonization of worlds—these result not from conscious knowledge, but only from the mastery of worlds.”
—N. F. Fedorov

The son who has forgotten his fathers will be tormented by melancholy in his laborious wanderings; he finds no place under the Sun, seeking to establish his own existence through murder and in meaninglessness sharpening the scythe for his own death. He deludes himself with mirages, never seeing them fade out, never laboring for them to erupt, knowing life only through dream, but tumbling through reality.
He is terrified of death, yet remains consigned to it helplessly.
Living in perplexity, he saps his spirit of strength, and soon enough despises his own life and the Father who gave it to him. He hates his brother and his friend. Having forgotten the father, he damns himself, his heart being as stone.
No comfort to him in the plush colors of today—tomorrow is coming on like fate.
The slave stirs with tasks into the new morning.
He laughs out. Glances about. He is joyful, but does not trust his own joy.
Light, he moves like an apparition, burns straw, but in murders he is first—for he seeks his own strength, his own gravity.
He loves novelty like a woman, is deceived, and seeks anew.
A transferal from that which is depleted to that which is empty, altering its form—this is what we have chosen to call art.
A sensible son, loving the fathers, knows the business of life: he is simple and gentle as a dove, seeks not happiness but labor, heeding the call to restore man and the crumbling Universe.
Pure in his simplicity, he reconciles and unites enemies at a shared table, to create out of persons a resurrecting temple-museum for the societal task before him: to nourish the hungry by the force of arms turned to the good of life, and to transform the village that houses a graveyard to a village that resurrects fathers.
For the wise know that the arts—the mystery of the Eucharist, the Resurrection of the Dead—are the true task at hand. And the wise as well pursue truth in the matters of life, to recreate in the unity of the human race a life renewed in the renewed heavens.
I would like to share with you some thoughts of a rather general nature. Once ideas are taken out of the vital context that produced them, however, they are easily misinterpreted. Think of my remarks as “just in case” thoughts—speculation both theoretical and concrete on what may well be the single most important living museum of Russian culture in general, and of Russian art in particular. While on the other hand, we can only arrive at a systematic solution to the problems which historical reality has bequeathed to us by properly exposing their general principles—and most importantly, only after we have arrived at a consensus in defining the basic characteristics of cultural, as well as more specifically artistic, activity. It is absolutely essential that colleagues involved in the same project develop their practical work hand in hand while paying close attention to theoretical refinement and elaborating theoretical questions about art on site, at the very heart of artistic production. It must be admitted, moreover, that in the area that concerns us—namely, religious art, conceived as the highest synthesis of heterogeneous artistic activities—

theoretical questions remain virtually untouched. If it were permissible to leave our immediate tasks aside and allow our imagination to stray into the realm of possibilities—and not particularly remote ones—I would have entertained an idea about the need to create a network of scientific and educational institutions at the Trinity-Sergius Lavra—an archetypal monument and a historically existing attempt to achieve the higher synthesis of arts—which has been the source of dreams for the new aesthetic for so long.

I imagine the Lavra as a type of experimental center, a laboratory for the study of fundamental problems in contemporary aesthetics, a kind of contemporary Athens, for example, where the theoretical discussion of the problems of religious art would occur, not in isolation from the actual realization of these artistic goals, but in the presence of the very aesthetic phenomenon that controls and nurtures such discourse. In the ensuing discussion it will perhaps become apparent that a museum—to bring my idea to its conclusion—a museum that functions autonomously is false and essentially pernicious to art, because even though the subject matter of art is classified as an object, it is in no sense merely an object. It is not an immobile, stagnant, dead mummy of artistic creation/activity. It should be understood as an unquenchable, eternally beating flow of creativity itself, as the creator’s living, pulsating activity. Even though it is removed from the artist in time and space, it remains inseparable from him. It still radiates and plays with the colors of life, it still flows with the excitement of the spirit.

A work of art is a living entity and requires special conditions in which to live and particularly in which to flourish. Detached from these concrete conditions of its existence, specifically its artistic existence, it dies, or at least enters a state of anabiosis, where it ceases to be perceived, and at times even ceases to exist as a work of art. And yet the museum’s aim is precisely to isolate the piece of art, which it misrepresents as an object that can be removed or transported on a whim from place to place and installed anywhere, and ultimately to destroy it as a living entity (I am taking this idea to the extreme). Metaphorically speaking, the museum substitutes a mere outline for the finished painting, and we can count ourselves lucky if even that is not distorted.

What would we say of an ornithologist who, instead of observing birds wherever possible in their natural habitat, concerned himself exclusively with collecting beautiful
plumage? The natural scientists of our day have clearly understood the importance of studying nature as much as possible under concrete natural conditions. Wherever feasible, the actual museums of natural history are being transformed into zoological and botanical gardens equipped, as far as possible, with natural living conditions, instead of cages, as far as this can be achieved. The famous zoological garden in Hamburg comes to mind here. But for some reason this same concept, which is of infinitely greater importance for the study of mankind’s spiritual activity, has hardly been put into practice by the disciplines in question. A few museum rags or a shaman’s tambourine are essentially just that—rags and a tambourine—and have as little value for the study of shamanism as Napoleon’s spur for modern military history. The loftier the human activity and the more definitively it involves an element of value, the more prominent does a functional method of comprehension and study become and the more futile the homegrown collecting of rarities and freaks. These ideas are as incontrovertible as they are rarely mentioned when the time comes to apply them. I realize that I am trying your patience with these overly simple truths, but I feel compelled to do so in view of a far from rare inability or unwillingness to grapple with them that is encountered all too frequently—that elementary artistic and archaeological predatoriness, that rabies museica, that seems prepared to carve off a piece of a painting, all for the sake of installing it in one particular building on one particular street, called a museum. Verily, lucus a non lucendo.

But the Muses cannot be forced to wear flounces. In the interests of culture a protest should be made against attempts to tear a few rays from the Sun of creativity, stick a label on them, and put them under a bell glass. This protest, it must be hoped, will not be without repercussions—if not now, then in the future—because museum affairs are clearly moving in the direction of concretization, of saturating the work of art’s environment with life and the plenitude of life’s wholeness. In the writings of Pavel Muratov I find some pages that I am ready to include in a legislative codex on museum aesthetics. The author of Obrazy Italii (Images of Italy) writes:

Perhaps it is not in the light of the museums at all that one must seek the source of a genuine enthusiasm for the ancients. Who would be prepared to claim that he/she truly appreciated Greece within the four walls of the British Museum and retained its image in his/her soul once he/she had gone out into the eternally wet Strand, or down to the dreamy, romantic, smoky groves of Hyde Park, so typical of the North? The genius loci of London is clearly alien to the genius of those places where the marbles of the Parthenon and of Demeter of Cnidus first saw the light of day; nor is it any more like the air on which these beings of the ancient world sustained their invisible life, the air that each one of us breathes in the spacious courtyard of the Museo delle Terme, despite its lack of first rate objects… As he/she inspects the ancient reliefs here, the visitor can sometimes hear an overripe pear fall to the ground, or the paw-shaped leaves of a fig tree tapping on the window as it sways in the wind. Among the old cypress trees in the middle of the yard, a fountain plays, and ivy entwines the sacrificial white bulls. The abundance of fragments and sarcophagi that have been placed here are flooded with sunlight that turns the travertine blue and transparent, the marble warm and alive. Give me the splendid existence of...
these objects any day, rather than the perfection of a masterpiece carefully preserved in a stuffy room. The scattered rose petals that have become lodged in the folds of a woman’s dress, sculpted who knows when and by whom, are a far greater adornment than all the connoisseurs’ opinions and scholars’ arguments. These petals, these shadows cast by leaves and branches across the marble, these lizards scurrying among the fragments, are as it were a link between the ancient world and our own, the only way in which our heart can come to know it and believe in its life.

Further on, Muratov writes of a superb idea on the part of the keepers of the National Museum to display part of its ancient collections out of doors in the sunlight:

A museum is more destructive to antique sculpture than a picture gallery to the paintings of the Renaissance … Sculpture needs light and shade, the expanse of the sky and the tonal contrast of vegetation, perhaps even spots of rain and the movement of life flowing past nearby. For this form of art the museum will always be a prison or a cemetery … A profound emotion grips the traveler in a quiet corner of the Forum near the spring of Iuturna, where the Dioscuri watered their horses.

But, we ask ourselves, would the stones from this same spring be as precious if they were transplanted to the Berlin Museum and arranged on shelves along the walls, however well-dried those walls might be? Is it not the way life goes on around these stones, the functional contemplation of them, that disquiets and ennobles our soul? What frightens me most about the activity of our Commission and all other commissions and societies alike, regardless of their country of origin, is the potential for transgressing against life, for sliding onto the oversimplified, easiest path of stifling and soul-destroying collecting. For isn’t that what happens when an aesthete or archaeologist regards the signs of life in some organism, a functionally unified whole, as self-sufficient, severed from the living spirit, outside of their functional relationship to the whole.

In the Inventory of the Lavra sacristy we are already encountering attempts at such stifling. Thus, in discussing the famous chalice of reddish-yellow marble donated by Grand Duke Vasily Vasilevich Temnyi, the compiler of the Inventory has made this note: “And the marble weighs this many pounds at so much per pound, a total of 3 rubles 50 kopeks.” Let’s not be deceived by the naive candor of this note: *nomine mutato de te fabula narratur.* Even when it appears in a more complex and refined form, the formula “marble valued at 3 rubles 50 kopeks” may be considered canonical for those who support the abstract collecting of things that have no, or almost no, meaning outside the totality of specific conditions of life. In the words of Pavel Muratov,

We can only dream that some day all the reliefs and statues that have been found in the Forum and on the Palatine will be returned here from the museums of Rome and Naples. Some day we will understand that, for an ancient, an honorable dying at the hands of time and nature is better than lethargic slumber in a museum.

Decentralizing the museums, bringing the museum out into life and bringing life into the museum, creating a living...
museum for the people that on a daily basis would educate
the masses that streamed about it (and not the collecting of
rarities for art gourmets only); a thorough assimilation of
human creativity into life, for all the people, not for isolated
pockets of one or two specialists, who often have a weaker
understanding of the artistic whole—these are the slogans
of museum reform that should be set against what was worst
in the culture of the past, against what truly deserved the
title “bourgeois.”

But let us return to our theoretical discussion.

In one of his lectures, Yurii Olsuf’ev defines style as the
result of amassing homogeneous artistic perceptions (I
would add to this our own creative reactions) from a given
epoch. “Therefore,” he says, “the pledge of true artistic worth,
that the art of that period is genuine, lies in the harmony
between style and content.” In this way the vitality of art
depends on the degree of unity between impressions and
the means by which they are expressed. True art is a unity
of content and the means of expressing that content, but these
means of expression can easily be understood simplistically,
by excising some single facet from the content-laden func-
tion of embodiment. Then just one side of an organic unity,
one side alone, is taken as something self-sufficient, exist-
ing in seclusion from the other facets of embodiment, even
though it is really a fiction that has no reality outside of the
whole, just as paint scraped off a painting or the sounds of
an entire symphony played all together are not an aesthetic
reality. And if on the basis of this simplistic insensitivity the
aesthete attempts to sever the threads, or more accurately,
the bloodbearing arteries linking that facet of the work of art
under examination to those other facets which the aesthete
fails to notice, then he destroys the unity between the con-
tent and the means of expression, he annihilates the style of
the art object or distorts it, and in distorting or annihilating
style, in de-styling that work, he thereby deprives it of genu-
ine artistic content.

Let me repeat that a piece of art is artistic precisely by
virtue of the completeness of the conditions essential for its
existence, on the basis of which and in which it was engen-
dered. By removing a part of these conditions, by rejecting
or replacing some of them, the piece of art is deprived of
its vital play, it is distorted and even made anti-artistic. The
traits of heterogeneous styles introduced into a piece with
a specific style are often repulsive, unless a new creative
synthesis is effected. Aphrodite in a farthingale would be
as insupportable as a seventeenth-century marquise in an
airplane. But if the wholeness of a work of art expressed in
this primitive form is generally acknowledged, the general
necessity and the scope of this precondition for artistic con-
tent is by no means so clear to everyone. Of course, every-
one knows that the aesthetic phenomenon of a painting
or statue needs light, that music needs silence, and archi-
tecture space. But not everyone remembers with an equal
degree of clarity that these general conditions should have
in addition several qualitative determinants and that these
determinants in no way constitute a service beyond the call
of duty, or an act of charity on the viewer’s part. Rather,
they become a constitutive part of the actual organism of
the work of art and, having been foreseen by its creator,
they form its continuation, although that too lies beyond
the bounds of what we call, for the sake of brevity and sim-
plectic, the work of art proper.

A painting, for example, should be illuminated by some
specific sort of light, diffuse, white, sufficiently bright,
uniform, and not colored or mottled, etc. Outside of this
required illumination it does not live as a work of art, i.e. as
an aesthetic phenomenon. If a picture was painted for white lighting, then illuminating it with red light means killing the aesthetic phenomenon as such, for the frame, canvas, and paint are in no way the work of art. Similarly, placing a piece of architecture in a foggy space or listening to a piece of music in an auditorium with poor acoustics also means distorting or destroying the aesthetic phenomenon.

But more than that, there are conditions for perceiving works of art that are, so to speak, negative. One cannot, for instance, listen to a symphony or look at a painting in a setting filled with unbearably stinking gases. These negative conditions, if not kept within certain tolerable bounds, burrow their way into the style of the work, annihilating the unity of form and content, and thereby destroying the work as such. For better or worse, the work of art is the center of an entire cluster of conditions, which alone make possible its existence as something artistic; outside of its constitutive conditions it simply does not exist as art. In the case of easel painting, we choose the frame and background; for a statue, it is the drapery; for a building, the totality of color patches and airy spaces; for music, the overall character of the impressions simultaneously experienced with it. The more complex the conditions in which a particular work lives, the easier it is to distort its style, to make a wrong move that would imperceptibly lead away from the plane of genuine artistry toward absence of style.

This general condition applies particularly to religious art. In the recent past, upholders of aesthetic standards felt justified in looking down on the Russian icon. Now the eyes of the aesthetes have been opened to this aspect of religious art. But this first step, unfortunately, is so far only the first, and one frequently finds an aesthetic shallowness and insensitivity that perceives the icon as an independent object usually found in a church, located by chance in a church, but capable of being successfully transferred to an auditorium, museum, salon, or who knows where else. I permit myself to label as shallowness this isolation of one of the aspects of religious art from the whole organism of church ritual as a synthesis of the arts, that artistic environment in which alone the icon possesses its true artistic meaning and can be contemplated in its true artistic nature. Even the briefest analysis of any one of the aspects of religious art will show that this aspect is connected to others—I am personally convinced, to them all, but for the moment it is enough to point out just a few interdependent facets of religious art, selected almost at random.

Let us take, for example, this same icon. Of course, the way it is lit is by no means irrelevant and, of course, for the icon’s artistic existence its illumination should be exactly that under which it was painted. In this instance, the illumination is quite unlike the dispersed light of the artist’s studio or the museum gallery; rather it is the uneven and irregular flickering, one might almost say winking, light of the icon lamp. Calculated to be seen in the play of a flickering flame that moves with every breath of wind, making allowance ahead of time for the effects of colored reflections from the bundles of light passing through colored, sometimes faceted glass, the icon can be contemplated as such only in the presence of this current, only in this flood of light, fragmenting, uneven, seeming to pulsate, rich in warm prismatic rays—a light which all perceive as alive, warming the soul, emitting a warm fragrance. Painted under more or less the same conditions, in a half-darkened cell with a narrow window, lit with several kinds of artificial lighting, the icon comes to life only in corresponding conditions. Conversely, it grows numb and distorted in conditions
But let us go further, and move from the art of fire, an
indispensable component of the synthesis of church ritual,
to the art of smoke, without which once again this synthesis
does not exist. Need we point out that the finest blue veil
of incense dissolved in the air brings to the contemplation
of icons and frescoes a softening and deepening of aerial
perspective, such as the museum neither knows nor can
dream of. Need we recall that, through this constantly mov-
ing atmosphere, this materialized atmosphere, this atmo-
sphere visible to the gaze, like some very fine granularity,
absolutely new achievements in the art of air are introduced
into icons and frescoes? They are new, however, only for
secular art that is abstracted and isolated, not for religious
art, whose creators took them into account ahead of time,
and consequently without them their works cannot help
but be distorted.

No one will deny that electric light kills color and destroys
the balance of color masses. If I say that icons should not
be looked at in electric light, with its wealth of dark blue
and violet rays, few people would argue with me. Everyone
knows that, like a burn, electric light also destroys psychic
receptivity. This is an example of a negative condition for
the artistic content of religious art. But if there are negative
conditions, there are even more positive ones, which in their
totality define not only church ritual as something whole,
but also each aspect of it as organically coordinated with
all the others. Style requires that the circle of conditions be
in some degree complete, that the special world that is the
artistic whole be in some sense self-contained. Its infiltration
by alien elements leads to the distortion of both the whole
and the separate parts that have their center and source of
equilibrium in the whole. Generally speaking, in a church
everything is interlinked: church architecture, for example,
vocal component of the liturgy be preserved, referring particularly to the distinctive local chants preserved by Lavra tradition, then to be sure I would shake his hand. But I would find it difficult to refrain from bitterness in reproaching him: “Is it really all the same to you that the vaults of outstanding architectural achievements are going to ruin, that frescoes are flaking off and that icons are being repainted or plundered?” Similarly, I could not but contrast to the lover of singing and also the connoisseur of the visual arts my own concern about the preservation of works of ancient church poetry, which up to now has preserved the characteristics of the ancient chanting manner of singing and ancient scanning, and about the preservation of manuscripts from bygone centuries, full of historical significance, which have brought to perfection the composition of the book as a total object. I could not help reminding all these connoisseurs of the arts that have been forgotten or half-forgotten by the modern world, those arts that are even more auxiliary and yet are absolutely essential to the organization of this ritual as an artistic whole: the art of fire, the art of smell, the art of smoke, the art of dress, and so forth, up to and including the utterly unique Trinity holy bread [pmifora], with its mysterious and secret recipe, the distinctive choreography that emerges in the measured movements of the priests as they come in and out, in the converging and diverging of their countenances, in their circling around the throne and the church, and in the church processions. He who has tasted the charm of antiquity knows well how ancient all this is, how it lives as an inheritance and the only direct branch of the ancient world have survived, particularly of the sacred tragedy of the Hellenes. Even such details as the specific, light touching of various surfaces, of holy objects made of various materials, of the icons anointed and saturated with oil, fragrances, and
incense—and touching besides with the most sensitive parts of our body, the lips—become part of this total ritual, as a special art, special artistic spheres, as for example the art of touch, the art of smell, and so on. In eliminating them we would deprive ourselves of the fullness and completeness of the artistic whole.

I will not discuss the occult element that is characteristic of any work of art in general, and of church ritual in particular. This would take us into a realm that is too complex. Nor can I talk here about the symbolism that is inevitably present in any art, particularly the art of organic cultures. For us, even the external, we might say the superficial, consideration of style as a totality of all means of expression is enough to speak of the Lavra as an entire artistic and historical monument that is unique anywhere in the world and that requires infinite attention and care. The Lavra, considered in a cultural and artistic context, should, like a single entity, be a continuous “museum” without losing a single drop of the precious liquid of culture that has been gathered here with such style, in the very midst of the stylistic multiplicity of epochs, throughout the Moscow and Saint Petersburg periods of our history. As a monument and a center of high culture, the Lavra is infinitely necessary for Russia, and in its entirety, what’s more, with its day-to-day existence, its very special life that has long since disappeared into the realm of the distant past. The whole distinctive organization of this vanished life, this island of the fourteenth to seventeenth centuries, should be protected by the state with at the very least no less care than the last bison were protected in the Belovezh Forest. If an institution for Muslims or Lamas comparable to the Lavra came within the state’s purview, even if it was alien to our culture and remote from our history, could the state resist the idea of supporting and protecting such an institution? How much more attentive, then, should the state be toward this embryo and center of our own history, our own culture, both scholarly and artistic?

For all that, I consider the idea of transferring use of the Lavra from the monks to parochial societies to be thoroughly lacking in empathy and aesthetic sensitivity. Anyone who has thoroughly investigated the incommensurability and qualitative difference between the lifestyle, the psychology, and finally the liturgical style of monks—even bad monks—and people who live outside the monastery—even though they be extremely virtuous—cannot but agree with me that it would be a great breach of style to grant service in the Lavra to the white priesthood. Even in terms of color, the patches of color in the churches or on the grounds of the Lavra, the substitution of black figures, with their distinctive monastic gait, with any others, whether different in style or entirely lacking in style, would immediately destroy the totality of the Lavra’s artistic impression and would transform it from a monument to life and creativity into a dead storehouse for more or less random objects.

I could understand a fanatical demand to destroy the Lavra and leave not a stone standing, made in the name of the religion of socialism. But I absolutely refuse to understand a Kulturträger who, on the basis of nothing more than a fortuitous overabundance of specialists in the visual arts in our day, fervently protects the icons, the frescoes, and the walls themselves, and remains indifferent to other, no less valuable achievements of ancient art. But most importantly, he doesn’t take into account the highest goal of the arts, their ultimate synthesis, so successfully and distinctively resolved in the church ritual of the Trinity-Sergius Lavra, and sought with such insatiable thirst by the late Skriabin.
THE CHURCH RITUAL

It is not to the arts but to Art that our age aspires, to the very core of Art as a primordial activity. And for our ages it is no secret, where not only the text but the entire artistic embodiment of the Prefatory Action is concealed.

—Sergiev-Posad, October 24, 1918
evrology, is making headway in understanding the anatomical foundations of genius and talent—but for now, only on the basis of chanced-upon research materials.

It has long been established that genius has no direct correlation with the weight of the brain, since the brains of extraordinary individuals vary in weight. On the other hand, the brains of extraordinary individuals demonstrate characteristic developments of small furrows and wrinkles in the left and right hemispheres, with a predominance in the former. This and several other characteristics were discovered by myself while studying the brain of the brilliant Mendeleev, which was made possible by the sober mindset of his widow.\footnote{The study was published as a brochure in German titled Gehirn d. Chemiker Mendeleeff.}

While performing this research, I realized the necessity of comparing Mendeleev’s brain (which is now in the anatomical museum of the State Institute for Medical Science) with the brain of the famous composer and musician Rubinstein (which resides in the collection of the anatomical museum of the Academy for Military Medicine). I found that the latter’s brain had a highly developed auditory cortex in the temporal lobe and the same was true of another brain belonging to a wonderful singer and musician, which was also in the collection of the same museum.

A contemporaneous anatomical study performed abroad demonstrated similar characteristics in the brain of the famous composer Bach. In light of this, we may consider it an established fact that musical genius is, by all appearances, physically manifested in the particular development of the auditory cortex in the temporal lobe (and in the adjacent Heschl’s gyri) of both hemispheres.
allowing it to be preserved and analyzed by scientists? As an example, I will note that the brain of the famous Rubinstein was preserved for posthumous research and posterity because an autopsy was performed without his relatives’ knowledge. Mendeleev’s brain was saved thanks to the efforts of Egorov, a professor of physics and Mendeleev’s close friend, and the chemist’s widow’s enlightened position on autopsy. The brain of L. N. Tolstoy was allowed to be devoured by worms as the consequence of the criminal attitudes toward the legacy of the great writer exhibited by his loved ones. I will mention that my request to perform an autopsy, expressed in a telegram sent to Yasnaya Polyana addressed to Dr. Makovetsky, who was inseparable from Tolstoy in the period leading up to the latter’s death, was left unanswered. As a result, we are bereft of the opportunity to not only preserve a precious relic—the brain of the brilliant author of War and Peace—we are also left unable to address the question of how the brain of a great Russian writer compares to the brains of other great men.

It is very unfortunate that the precious brains of great individuals die with them not only because of superstitious attitudes toward autopsy, but also because their loved ones don’t realize how precious a relic—the brain of the brilliant author of War and Peace—we are also left unable to address the question of how the brain of a great Russian writer compares to the brains of other great men.

It goes without saying that these are merely the preliminary findings in the search for the physical locus of talent. The question demands careful, meticulous analysis and detailed investigation of the structures of the cerebral cortex (the architectonics), the basal ganglia, and the blood vessels of the brain, as well as the endocrine glands.

But how can we move forward with these investigations into one of the greatest questions of science when we dispose of the brains of deceased great people along with their bodies, lowering them into the dirt to rot and be devoured by worms? Would it not be more proper for science to have rights over the brains of great individuals instead of coming up against the indifference and antagonism of the loved ones standing at a deceased genius’s graveside, concerned first and foremost with burial rites and not at all worried about saving the brain of the great man as a precious relic for science and posterity,
without saying that the brains of great figures kept in this museum and pantheon should be accessible to all interested parties, displayed in small glass cases with corresponding scientific illustrations, photographs of the cultural figures, their signatures, and short descriptions of the characteristics of their brains and their biographies with lists of their accomplishments. The All-Soviet pantheon will serve as both a scientifically valuable institution for the advancement of the study of genius and talent and also a center for education, especially if it becomes a lecture hall.

In order to create such an institution there needs to be a decree regarding the creation of a committee that would have the right to prescribe and perform autopsies and preserve the brains of distinguished figures in the fields of politics, science, art, and society from all over the USSR, with the aim of eventually creating a science museum and archive of the brains of these individuals.

The initiative to create this committee, which should include neurologists from all major Soviet cities, should be led by the State Reflexology Institute for the Study of the Brain, which I am the director of, because this institute has all of the necessary conditions for the creation of a pantheon.

It would be so fantastic if, by the tenth anniversary of the great October Revolution, this question could be resolved and with this, the foundations for the future All-Soviet pantheon could be laid. In our turbulent age of furious labor directed toward building the USSR, people burn out quickly. Almost every month brings news of the death of one or another prominent cultural figure, the decomposing remains of whom are buried in the dirt. The time has come to say to everyone who is close to such individuals, “Let go of your silly superstitions about dissecting human corpses.”
ON THE CREATION OF A PANTHEON

We must tell everyone who stands at the graveside of talented figures that they should be aware that they are committing crimes against science and society when they allow an acknowledged talent’s creative brain to be tossed into a grave, to be devoured by worms and putrefactive bacteria.
that the first attempt at a scientific approach to biographical material was made. The new biographical method of studying spiritual life is taking shape. For a psychologist, the systematic study of a large number of biographies will first of all help to understand the human individual as a whole, because experimental study generally deals with one separate side of a given individual. Still, based on those fragmentary data which experimental psychology receives by studying various sides of the psyche, it is powerless to re-create the individual, because in the spiritual world, the whole is not equal to the sum of its parts. “The aroma of individuality” is lost during this artificial consolidation into one whole of something that needs to be examined in a particular context, against the backdrop of the integral experience of a person as a whole. Furthermore, experienced study of a person deals with only one side of a given person, in his so-called “dynamic state.” Biographical material gives us an opportunity to examine this person in his final, completed state.

* * *

If the study of biography is of such essential importance, then this study must be given an organized systematic character. There needs to be an organization which would assume control as a collector, a systematician of biographical material on a large scale. This type of organization is envisioned as a special Biographical Institute which will have to assume two important functions—firstly, the systematic, comprehensive scientific study of human biographies. In conjunction, the institute must set a goal of preserving for future generations the biographies of famous people from the past.
and the present. To fulfill these two goals, the institute collects various documents pertaining to the lives of figures in different fields (from the past as well as the present). These documents could be biographies, autobiographies, diaries, family archives, notes, memoirs, letters, obituaries, curriculum vitae, photographs, handwriting samples, phonograms, creative objects, and so on. A comprehensive study of such materials will provide an opportunity to re-create the character of people of the past, and preserve them for posterity. Most importantly, the scientific processing of a large amount of collected biographical and autobiographical material would enrich a large number of disciplines, with very valuable conclusions pertaining to human individuals. A discipline that could benefit the most from such a type of study is the discipline that studies the spiritual world of a person, in other words, psychology, both as a general field, and in the numerous fields of special psychology: the study of character, genetic psychology, ethnic psychology, applied psychology, and the psychology of creativity, and so forth. Together with psychology, the study of a large number of people from different periods, peoples, classes, positions can turn out to be of great value to history, economic science, pedagogy, the history of everyday life, culture, trade, technology, and the history of sciences in general. In this field one could also find a considerable amount of instructive material for solving the problem of inheritance and genius in pathology. The work of the institute could also be of practical importance: studying lives of various figures in different fields can help to take their life experience into account for future generations. The preservation of as large a number of biographies as possible will aid in accumulating this life experience for the future. The institute should represent a graphic memory of humankind, passing from generation to generation the accumulated life experience and knowledge of all people. In conjunction, the institute must be an international registry office, where anyone who has distinguished himself in life in one way or another would be documented. The Biographical Institute, if it were successfully created, would be a worthy monument to eminent people of the past, to those who have made their “valiant, grateful journey.” Its creation would show that society has begun to appreciate the realization of the necessity for a more careful, diligent attitude toward human individuality, and would promote the idea that we are not people of yesterday, that we have a past. The underestimation of this past, its influence on the present, is characteristic for us Russians. “We are so positive,” wrote Pushkin, “that the past does not exist for us. We are on our knees before real chance, success, but not the charm of antiquity, gratefulness to the past, and respect for moral qualities in us.” The experience of our time compels us to diligently examine our past; we are only now beginning to discover our antiquity, our Russian antiquity. That is why the past years are marked with a strong interest in memoirs, notes, chronicles, letters, etc., of any kind. All this abundant material can and must be studied from the point of view of different disciplines, for which it can provide a lot of valuable observations, comparisons, and so on.

Given that science is interested in the most typical things, it is no less important to bring to life and preserve the lives of common people, about whom, as Reskin remarks, “the world has not thought and has not heard, but who are now performing most of its tasks and who could better teach us how to perform them.”

In accordance with the aforementioned goals, the work of the institute should have a three-fold character:
The psychological department will visually present the technology and methodology of the biographic study of spiritual life (psychograms).

The pedagogical department will visually present how familiar students of various countries are with the great people of their motherland; it will also present the most important results of the study of childhood using the biographic method.

The historical and literary department, and other departments in different fields that pertain in one way or another to the study of human identity, will also visually present the most important results of studying biographies.

The institute must have its own library where, in a comprehensive and systematic way, the entirety of biographic literature, both Russian and foreign, must be presented. The primary task of the institute should be recording and systematizing all Russian biographical literature. As a result of work in this direction, a systematic index of biographical literature should be published. In conjunction with this, the work on collecting and studying “human documents” has begun. As this work progresses, the institute plans to publish its work under the name The Library of the Biographical Institute.

AN EXAMPLE OF AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

Nadezhina Anastasia

I remember myself from seven years old and find my childhood not right. We lived in Poland, in Vilen district. Our
family was seven people: father, mother, and five children. I was eldest. Father was a worker for a landowner, made five roubles a month. We had need in everything. I’ve had enough hunger and cold. I have not seen a child’s life. From smallest age I was oppressed by work. Dad and Mom left for work, they left from five in morning and until evening. At this time I, left with four children, had to make some kind of gruel, to feed children. At lunch I had to bring the small baby to the field, to Mother, for breast feeding. I take one child and all the rest run after me. The field is far, we are dead tired, all of us crying. I am crying because it is hard carry a child. The rest are crying so that I carry them too. They sit and don’t go, I start to hit them from anger, they cry even more. And then I understand: let me carry them all a bit separately and they stop crying. I take one child, carry it a little, sit a little, then another one. I take and carry them all one by one. When I carry them all, I had positively no strength left. That’s how I lived my childhood. I remember, how not once and not twice, in fall, we fell asleep on the street, on pile of earth by our house, waiting for mom to come home. Mom and dad came home at dark. Our hut was big, wet, with low ceiling, with leaking roof. When it rained, in our hut—wet, damp, puddles. The hut was without floor, floor was from soil. Windows are small, it is dark in hut and eerie. And then they said that we have a bogeyman in our hut, and when mom and dad are not there, he takes children and disappears with them. I never played with anything. I did not have time. I worked, and I was really sorry for mom. I prayed to God, cried, and said, Dear God! When you give us everything, when my mom not go to work, and stays with children! But God did not hear my prayer and did not see my tears. My works continued in same way. I remember, it was fall and there was this drizzle, mom was at work, picking potatoes in field, it became dark, it is very eerie in hut and it seems that bogeyman will climb from behind a stove any minute. I imagined that he was scary. From fright I hear noise, I am scared, I can’t stay in hut, I’m afraid, I take the kids and go to the yard. It is cold there, it drizzles, it is dark.

We had a mound of earth behind house and under this mound there was pit, they took yellow sand from there for children, for their pies and pastries. This pit looked like a cave, it was dry and warm there. I take children and put them there and climb there myself. We settle, how warm were we, we snuggle, and we are warm. Mom return from work, finds us in yard, hungry and cold, and starts petting us and curse her fate and says, My dear children when will you grow up, my God! Here God abandoned my mom, and hurt her. Two kids died, one after another. Mom is crying. The landowner’s wife comes and says: don’t cry, dear, that’s their fate. As long as God gave them to live, they lived, and secondly, God, loving you took the children to holy will. What will, when we are barefoot, undressed, hungry and cold, and this will punishes us. I was nine years old, dad was old, sick, and he did not have any working power, he could not work. Landowner ordered us to leave, since he takes up room for free—in his spot there are enough healthy people. We had to leave. We left to the city. I started work at matchstick factory. Work was hard: always in smoke, in dust and in heavy air, sulfur, paraffin, and other compounds are all in my eyes, it was hard to breathe: dust, windows and timber did not let me breathe, all these factory compounds lay on my child body; I worked for six years and my wage was paid very low. To make 30 kopecks in a day you need to make 3,000 matchstick boxes, they roped us into piecwork so that each worker sat in his own spot without moving. And really we were as if chained to our table, without straightening our backs from morning
to evening, without break. This was my childhood. Working at factory I get a lung disease and I quit. I started treatment, got better and started work for upstairs, where I still saw no joy: during the day I made dinner, went to market, cleaned rooms, and in evening after supper, they made me wash or iron all night; I was the only servant, the family was twelve people, had to help all. I spent two years there and then got married. So, comrades, my wrong childhood served as proof to every peasant and worker. I will, in fact, prove to them in my proletariat language and hope that every worker, and pauper will understand me and will agree with me. In childhood I had lot of desire to learn, but I could not because of my hopeless state, then I very much envied bourgeois childhood and bourgies that they are so happy and live such good life, and our pauper worker died from cold and hunger, and work; worked day and night and died in work. Oh, comrades, what a wrong darkness it was! Our poor woker saw that his neighbor died suffering from such hardship. But, thank God, he died and will now rest in another world, they thought, that it is bad for pauper here, and the other world would be good. While for the rich it was good in this world and will be bad in another. Comrades, let’s not save kindness for other world, let us save it for everyone in this world. And I hope that life of pauper be better.
The modest Great-Russian sky shone over the Soviet land with as much habit and monotony as if the Soviets had existed since time immemorial and the sky corresponded to them perfectly. Within Dvanov there had already taken shape an immaculate conviction: that before the Revolution, the sky and all other spaces had been different, less dear.

Like an end to the world lay a quiet, distant horizon where the sky touched the earth and man touched man. The mounted wanderers were riding into the remote depth of their motherland. Now and again the road wound round the top of a ravine and an unhappy village could be seen in a far-off hollow. Dvanov would feel pity for this unknown lonely settlement and he would want to turn off toward it, so as to start the happiness of mutual life there without delay, but Kopyonkin would not agree to this. First of all, he would say, it was necessary to deal with Chornya Kalitva. After that, they could return.

The day continued, dismal and unpeopled. The armed riders did not happen upon a single bandit.

“They’re lying low!” exclaimed Kopyonkin—and felt inside him a heavy, oppressive force. “In the name of universal security,” he went on, “we would have struck them hard. They’re hiding away in corners, the bastards, guzzling beef.”

Leading straight onto the road was an alley of birch trees. It had not yet been felled, but the peasants had been thinning it out. It seemed there was a manor house not far from the road.

At the end of the alley stood two low stone pillars. On one hung a handwritten newspaper; on the other a tin signboard with an inscription now half washed away by atmospheric precipitations: “Comrade Pashintsev’s Revolution Memorial Reservation in Honor of World Communism. Welcome to Friends and Death to Enemies.”

Some enemy hand had torn away half of the newspaper, and what remained was repeatedly being bared by the wind. Dvanov caught hold of it and read it aloud and in full, so that Kopyonkin could hear.

The newspaper was called *The Good of the Poor*, being the official organ of the Velikoye Mesto Village Soviet and the Executive District Revolutionary Committee for the Maintenance of Security in the southeastern zone of the Pososhansk Region.

All that remained in the newspaper was an article about the “Tasks of the World Revolution” and half of a note that began, “Preserve Snow on Fields—Increase the Productivity of the Harvest of Labor.”1 Halfway through, the note lost track of its meaning: “Plough the Snow—and we shall have nothing to fear from thousands of Kronstadts that have overshot the mark.”

What were these overshooting Kronstadts?2 All this troubled Dvanov and set him thinking.

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1. The first words of this exhortation are not as senseless as one might imagine. Rudimentary fences were, in fact often put up on fields so that the snow would drift against them instead of being blown away by the wind. This snow would then help to blanket winter crops against extremes of cold. —Trans. note

2. Kronstadt was an important Russian naval base near Petrograd. The sailors based there had long been firm supporters of the Bolsheviks, but in March 1921 they rebelled. This rebellion was brutally suppressed by the Red Army. —Trans. note
Etched into one of the columns was a white engraving—the name of the landowner, who was also the building’s architect, and his face in profile. Below the engraving, in relief, was a verse in Latin:

The universe is a running woman.
Her legs make the Earth turn;
Her body trembles in the ether;
In her eyes are the beginnings of stars.

Dvanov sighed sadly amid the silence of feudalism and examined the colonnade once again: six shapely legs of three chaste women. Peace and hope entered into him, as they always did at the sight of art, that distant necessity.

His only regret was that these legs, so full of the tension of youth, were not a part of his life, but it was good that the young woman carried by these legs had turned her life into charm, not into reproduction. She had been nourished by life, but life for her had been only a raw material, not meaning, and this raw material had been refashioned into something beautiful and without feeling.

Kopyonkin also grew more serious before the columns; he respected magnificence if it was beautiful and made no sense. If there was meaning and purpose in something magnificent—as, for example, in a large machine—Kopyonkin saw it as an instrument for oppression of the masses and despised it with cruelty of soul. Standing before what was senseless, like this colonnade, he felt pity for himself and hatred for tsarism. Kopyonkin considered it the fault of tsarism that he was not excited by these immense women’s legs, and, but for Dvanov’s sad face, he would not have known that he too should be feeling sadness.
“If only,” said Dvanov, “if only we too could build something universal and remarkable, putting the everyday to one side.”

“You won’t build anything like that in a day,” doubted Kopyonkin. “Until now the bourgeoisie was blocking off the whole world from us. Soon we’ll be putting up pillars that are still taller and more excellent, not shameful legs.”

To the left, like graves in a country churchyard, lay the remains of outbuildings and small houses. The columns were standing guard over an empty, buried world. Noble, ornamental trees held up their fine torsos over this level ruin.

“But we’ll do better still,” said Dvanov, “and across the entire territory of the world, not only in nooks and crannies.” Dvanov gestured at all and everything, but from the depth inside him he heard “Watch out!” Something incorruptible, something that did not spare itself, was warning him from within.

“Oh course, we’ll build,” Kopyonkin confirmed out of his own inspired hope. “That’s a slogan and fact on the ground. Our cause is inexhaustible.”

Kopyonkin then happened on some footprints, left by huge human feet, and set his horse to follow them.

“What on Earth has the inhabitant of this place got on his feet?” Kopyonkin kept wondering with surprise. And he bared his saber: what if some giant guardian of the old order were to appear? The old landowners, after all, had had some well-nourished stooges who could, without warning, give you a clout that would snap your tendons.

Kopyonkin was fond of tendons; he saw them as power cables and was afraid of tearing them.

The horsemen rode up to a massive eternal door that led to the half-basement of the destroyed building. The inhuman tracks went that way; it was apparent that the idol had stamped up and down there, tormenting the ground into nakedness.

“Who can it be?” Kopyonkin asked in astonishment. “A wild and fierce man, no doubt about it. Any minute now he’ll attack us—be prepared, comrade Dvanov!”

Somehow Kopyonkin now felt more cheerful. He felt the same agitated delight that children know at night in a forest; their terror goes halves with a curiosity that is being answered.

“Comrade Pashintsev!” shouted Dvanov. “Anyone here?”

No one. And the grass, in the absence of wind, was silent. The day was fading.

“Comrade Pashintsev!”

“Huh!” came a vast and distant sound, echoing from the earth’s damp entrails.

“Come out here, hermit fellow!” Kopyonkin commanded loudly.

“Huh!” came the somber, resonant response from the womb of the basement.

But there was no hint in this sound of either fear or any wish to come out. It sounded as if the respondent was lying on his back.

Kopyonkin and Dvanov waited, then felt angered.

“We’re telling you to come out here!” Kopyonkin called noisily.

“I don’t feel like it,” the unknown man replied slowly. “Go to the central building. You’ll find there’s bread and moonshine in the kitchen.”

Kopyonkin dismounted and struck the door loudly with his saber.

“Come out—or I’ll be throwing a grenade!”

The man said nothing, perhaps waiting with interest for the grenades and what would follow. But then he said, “Come
immediate understanding, but here before him a man had appeared in full while preserving all of his mystery.

Through the gaping door stepped a short man, all encased in a cuirass and an entire suit of armor, with a helmet and a heavy sword, wearing powerful metal boots and with gaiters—each made of three connected bronze pipes—that crushed the grass to death.

The man’s face, and especially his chin and brow, was defended by the flaps of the helmet, while on top of everything lay a lowered visor. All this defended the knight against any blows from an opponent.

But the man himself was short and not especially terrifying.

“Where’s your grenade?” the apparition asked in a thin hoarse voice. Only from a distance, reflected by things of metal and in the emptiness of his dwelling, had his voice possessed resonance; left to itself, the sound was pitiful.

“You swine!” exclaimed Kopyonkin, without anger but also without respect, watching the knight with interest.

Dvanov laughed openly. He had understood at once whose oversize outfit this man had appropriated for himself. But what made him laugh was the sight of a red Army star, bolted onto the ancient helmet and secured with a nut.

“So-o!” Kopyonkin uttered strangely. “Well, come out then and receive a missive from comrade Trotsky.”

The man said nothing. He thought for a moment.

“How can he be a comrade to me if he takes command over everyone? Commanders of the Revolution are no comrades of mine. Why not just throw your bomb? That’ll be interesting!”

Kopyonkin kicked free a brick that had sunk into the earth, then hurled it against the door. The door let out an iron howl and returned to its rest.

“The dumb blockhead!” determined Kopyonkin. “It’s a dud. The substance in it must have gone numb.”

“Mine are mute too,” gravely replied the unknown man. “You did pull the pin, did you? What make is it? Let me come and look.”

Then came a rhythmic sound of swaying metal; someone truly was approaching with an iron tread. Kopyonkin waited with his saber sheathed, curiosity in him overcoming prudence. Dvanov remained on horseback.

By now the unknown man was rumbling close by, but he did not speed up his gradual step, only with difficulty overcoming the weight of his own powers.

The door opened swiftly; it was not bolted.

Kopyonkin was silenced by the spectacle he saw. He took two steps back. He had been expecting horror or an
But anyway, just who are you?” Kopyonkin inquired with irritated interest.

“A personal human being,” Pashintsev informed Kopyonkin. “I passed myself a resolution stating that everything we once had here came to an end in 1919. Yet again it was armies, authorities, laws of all kinds. And as for the people, it was ‘Fall into rank and obey! Starting next Monday!’ Well I say, to hell with all this.”

Pashintsev concisely formulated the entire current moment with a single gesture.

Dvanov stopped thinking and listened slowly to the man reasoning aloud.

“Do you remember 1918 and 1919?” Pashintsev asked with tears of joy. Those days now lost forever called up ferocious memories in him: in mid-story he was hammering his fist against the table and threatening the entire milieu of his basement. “Now nothing’s ever going to happening again,” Pashintsev said with hatred, wanting to convince Kopyonkin, who was blinking. “We’ve come to the end of everything. Law has got going again. Difference has come between people. It’s as if some devil has been weighing man on scales. Take me, for example—can you ever know just what breathes here?”

Pashintsev rapped himself on his low skull, where the brain must be compressed to make room for mind. “yes, brother, there is room here for spaces of every kind. And so it is with everyone else too. And people want to reign over me. Well, what do you think? Is that a swindle or not?”

“It’s a swindle,” Kopyonkin agreed, with simplicity of soul.

“So here we are,” Pashintsev concluded with satisfaction. “And now I burn separately, away from the general bonfire.”

Sensing that Kopyonkin was as much an orphan of the terrestrial globe as he himself, Pashintsev begged him with heartfelt words to remain forever.

The knight’s dwelling was the half-basement of one of the manor’s outbuildings. There he had one large room, lit by the half-black light of an oil lamp. In a far corner lay a mountain of armor and cold steel; in another, more central spot stood a pyramid of hand grenades. There was also a table in the room, with a stool beside it. On the table stood a bottle of some unknown liquid, or maybe poison. Glued to the bottle by means of moistened bread was a paper on which was written, in indelible ink:

DEATH TO THE BOURGEOISIE!

“Free me for the night!” asked the knight.

Kopyonkin spent a long time unharnessing him from his immortal garb, giving much thought to its cleverest bits. Finally the knight fell apart and from the bronze husk appeared an ordinary comrade Pashintsev—a brownish fellow about thirty-seven years of age, lacking one intransigent eye, while the other remained still more attentive.

“Let’s all have a glass!” said Pashintsev.

But vodka, even in the old days, had had no effect on Kopyonkin. He chose consciously not to drink it, considering it purposeless for one’s feelings.

Dvanov too did not understand drinking, and so Pashintsev drank alone. He took the bottle with the inscription “DEATH TO THE BOURGEOISIE!” and poured directly into his throat.

“Vicious stuff!” he said, emptying the bottle. And he sat down, a benign look on his face.

“Good?” asked Kopyonkin.

“Beetroot liqueur,” Pashintsev explained. “There’s an unmarried girl who makes it with her own clean hands. An immaculate drink, fragrant, a real dear.”
“What more do you want?” said Pashintsev, forgetting himself in his joy at sensing a friendly human being. “Live here. Eat and drink—I’ve marinated five barrels of apples and dried two sacks of tobacco. We’ll live among the trees as friends, we’ll sing songs on the grass. People come to me in their thousands—here in my commune every beggar rejoices. Where else can they find easy shelter? In the village the Soviets keep them under observation, the commissars are like watchdogs, the requisitioning committee searches even their bellies for grain—but officialdom daren’t show its face here.”

“They’re afraid of you,” deduced Kopyonkin. “You go about all covered in iron. You sleep on a bomb.”

“They certainly are afraid,” Pashintsev agreed. “They made out like they wanted to be neighborly, to do an inventory of the domain, but I appeared before the commissar in full harness and brandished one of my bombs: Long live the commune! And then there was the time they came round to requisition grain. I say to their commissar: ‘You can eat here and drink here, you son of a bitch—but if you take anything more than you should, there’ll be nothing left of you but a nasty stink.’ The commissar drank a cup of moonshine and rode off: ‘Thank you, comrade Pashintsev!’ I gave him a handful of sunflower seeds and a prod in the back with that there iron poker and sent him on his way back to official regions.”

“And now?” asked Kopyonkin.

“Nothing. I live entirely without leadership—and the result is excellent. I declared this a Revolution Memorial Reservation so the authorities wouldn’t disapprove, and I preserve the Revolution in its most intact and heroic category.”

Dvanov glimpsed some charcoal inscription on the wall, traced by a trembling hand unused to writing. Holding up an oil lamp, he read the wall annals of the Revolution Memorial Reservation.

“Read, read away,” Pashintsev encouraged him. “There are times you don’t say a word. You don’t say a word for so long you can’t bear it. Then you start talking on the wall. If I go a long time without seeing anyone, my mind goes all cloudy.”

Dvanov read the verses on the wall:

No bourgeoisie—but labor’s back again.
The yoke of labor bows the peasant’s neck.
Believe me, plodding peasant laborer—
Flowers in the fields have fatter lives than you.
Let all the soil now bear self-seeded fruit
While you yourself live full and merrily.
Remember you have one, not twenty, lives
To live—and so, with all our holy commune,
Take hold of other strong and honest hands
And sing both loud and clear, so all can hear:
Enough of poverty, enough of sorrow!
Time now to live and feast, to feast and live!
 Enough of poor and plodding earthly labor!
The Earth herself will feed us now for free!

Someone knocked on the door with an even, proprietorial knock.

“Huh?” answered Pashintsev. Having given out all the fumes of his moonshine, he had fallen silent.

“Maxim Stepanych!” came a voice from outside. “I need a pole to make into a shaft. Let me look for one in the wood. Otherwise I’ll be stuck here all winter—the old shaft snapped when I was halfway back home.”

“Out of the question,” retorted Pashintsev. “How long must I go on teaching you? I’ve posted a decree on the barn wall: the Earth is self-made and therefore belongs to no one.
THE REVOLUTION MEMORIAL RESERVATION

ANDREY PLATONOV

If you’d taken without asking, then I’d have gladly allowed you.”

Almost hoarse with joy, the man outside said, “Well then, thank you! I won’t touch the pole now I’ve gone and asked for it. I’ll give myself something else as a gift.”

Pashintsev said freely, “Never ask—that’s the psychology of slaves. Just give yourself gifts. You were born for free. It wasn’t your own strength that gave birth to you—so live life without keeping accounts!”

“Certainly, Maxim Stepanych!” confirmed the petitioner outside the door, with absolute seriousness. “What you seize without license is what keeps you alive. If it weren’t for the estate, half our village would be dead by now. This is the fifth year we’ve been carting off goods—the Bolsheviks are fair and just! Thank you, Maxim Stepanych!”

This angered Pashintsev: “There you go again—Thank you! Don’t you go taking anything from here, you grey devil!”

“What’s got into you, Maxim Stepanych? Why did I shed blood for three years, in combat on the front line? My mate and I came with a cart and two horses to pick up an iron tub—and now you forbid it!”

“O fatherland, fatherland!” Pashintsev said to himself and to Kopyonkin. Then he addressed the door again: “But didn’t you say you were after a shaft? And now you tell me what you want is a tub!”

The petitioner showed no surprise: “Who cares? As long as I take something! Sometimes all I take is a chicken—and then I see an iron axle lying about on the road. I can’t carry it on my own, so the lazy bugger just goes on lying there. No wonder things are so out of hand everywhere.”

“If you’ve come with a cart and two horses,” Pashintsev said in conclusion, “then take a woman’s leg with you, from out of the white columns. It’s bound to come in handy one way or another.”

“All right,” said the now-satisfied petitioner. “We can tow it back with us easily enough. Then we can hew tiles from it.”

The petitioner went off to do a preliminary inspection—so as to make light work of carrying off the leg.

As night began, Dvanov suggested to Pashintsev that, instead of carting the whole estate to the village, he should move the village to the estate.

“It would be less labor,” said Dvanov. “And the estate is high up—the land’s more productive.”

Pashintsev could not agree to this: “Come spring, the tramps and vagabonds from all over the province gather here. The very purest proletariat. Where would they all go? No, I will not accept kulak domination here.”

Dvanov saw that the peasants and the vagabonds would, indeed, not get on together. But rich earth was being wasted. The inhabitants of the Revolution Memorial Reservation were not sowing anything themselves but just living off the remains of an orchard and whatever was self-seeded by nature; their cabbage soup, no doubt, was made from nettles and goosefoot.

“I know,” said Dvanov, hitting the nail on the head, to his own surprise. “You must swap the estate for the village. Give the estate to the peasants and set up your memorial reservation in the village. It’ll make no difference to you—what’s important is not the place but the people. As it is, everyone’s languishing in the gully—while you live alone on your hill.”

Pashintsev looked at Dvanov with happy astonishment. “That’s brilliant! I’ll do just that. Tomorrow I’ll go and mobilize the peasants.”

“Will they come?” asked Kopyonkin.
“They’ll all be here within a day and a night,” Pashintsev exclaimed with fierce conviction, his whole body stirred by impatience. “No,” he continued, with a change of mind. “I’ll go to the village right now!”
Museums should deservedly play a significant role in shaping the scientific worldview of the new man. The achievements of museums in explicating the history of the development of our planet, as well as of our society, are well known. Yet there is one subject where the museum’s principal explicatory tool—visual evidence—remains limited to drawings and diagrams: the origin and formation of the solar system. At the same time, whoever has passed through an exhibition on the history of Earth’s development and familiarized himself or herself with its scientific facts will naturally want to know: Where did the Earth come from? What are the size, makeup, and environmental conditions of the Sun, the Moon, and the stars? In answering these fundamental questions, the museum is obliged to shift from its standard of “object-based” evidence and content itself with illustrations (topographical maps, the nebular hypothesis of Kant-Laplace, and so forth).

One way for museums to strengthen the role of direct observation in this field is by building their own astronomical deck. In this brief note we would like to share our experiences in organizing and operating such a facility at the Perm Regional Museum.

The astronomical deck at the Perm Museum dates back to 1923. Its initial setup in the converted bell tower of a defunct church required only minimal effort. We simply put down sturdy flooring and fencing, ran electrical cables, and turned one of the landings into an auditorium capable of accommodating up to forty people. Two student-grade astronomical cylinders [telescopes] were used for observing the night sky.

The deck is open on clear nights during the warm months and staffed by our researchers and students from the local teachers college.

Visitors are first brought into the auditorium, where with the aid of a slide projector they are familiarized with the scientific theory of the formation of the solar system. Emphasis is put on the discrepancies between the scientific and religious explanations; numerous instances of religious attacks on science are rehearsed; the antisocial nature of all religious beliefs is demonstrated, and their origins are revealed. Particular attention is paid to celestial bodies that are most readily observable that night (the Moon, Jupiter, Saturn). This is the preliminary stage of our tour. Visitors are then invited to go out onto the deck to view those celestial bodies that are especially well positioned for observation.

Cylinder attendants (principally students) explain to the visitors what they are seeing. The more complex questions arising from these observations are resolved back in the auditorium by the director of the facility.

In twenty-eight working evenings the deck was attended by a total of 1,088 visitors. So much for the operational aspect of the astronomical deck.

We are aware of similar astronomical decks that have recently opened at the Sverdlovsk Museum and in Solikamsk. Supposing that the trend may well extend to other museums across the Soviet Union, we have compiled a list of instruments and visual aids requisite for a deck’s operations:

1. Astronomical cylinder. This can be found in any school that is well supplied with scientific instruments. However, we must advocate for the speedy production of low-magnification astronomical cylinders by domestic optics manufacturers.
2. Projection lantern [projector] with a selection of astronomical transparencies (obtainable from the Diafoto Factory, Moscow, 40 Kalyavskaya Street).

3. Celestial globe.

4. Drawings and diagrams (sufficiently large for group viewing), depicting: (a) The relative sizes of the Sun and the planets. (b) The Copernican system. (c) Earth’s movement around the Sun and the seasons. (d) Phases of the Moon. (e) Lunar and solar eclipses. (f) How distances to celestial bodies are calculated (parallax shift). (g) The lunar surface. (h) The solar surface (sunspots, flares, protuberances). (i) The surface of Mars. (j) A map of the night sky (focusing on the Milky Way, nebulae, and star clusters). (k) Spiral nebulae. (l) The Kant-Laplace hypothesis. (m) Planet formation according to Jeans. (n) The Milky Way.

It is highly desirable to have an exhibition of popular books on various aspects of astronomy.
“I must say I never even imagined that you might have special museums for works of art,” I said to Enno on our way to the museum. “I thought that sculpture and picture galleries were peculiar to capitalism, with its ostentatious luxury and crass ambition to hoard treasures. I assumed that in a socialist order art would be found disseminated throughout society so as to enrich life everywhere.”

“Quite correct,” replied Enno. “Most of our works of art are intended for the public buildings in which we decide matters of common interest, study and do research, and spend our leisure time. We adorn our factories and plants much less often. Powerful machines and their precise movements are aesthetically pleasing to us in and of themselves, and there are very few works of art which would fully harmonize with them without somehow weakening or dissipating their impact. Least decorated of all are our homes, in which most of us spend very little time. As for our art museums, they are scientific research institutes, schools at which we study the development of art or, more precisely, the development of mankind through artistic activity.”

The museum was located on a little island, in the middle of a lake, connected to the shore by a narrow bridge. The building itself, a rectangular structure surrounded by a garden full of fountains and beds of blue, white, black, and green flowers, was lavishly adorned outside and flooded with light inside. It contained none of that jumbled accumulation of statues and paintings that clutters the major museums of Earth. Several hundred pictures depicted the evolution of the plastic arts from the first primitive works of the prehistorical period to the technically perfect creations of the previous century. Throughout, one could sense the presence of that living inner wholeness that people call “genius.” Obviously, these were the best works from all periods.

In order fully to understand the beauty of another world, one must be intimately acquainted with life there, and in order to convey an idea of that beauty to others one must be an organic part of that life. For that reason I cannot possibly describe what I saw, but will limit myself to hints and fragmentary references to that which impressed me most strongly.

The basic motif of sculpture on both Earth and Mars is the marvelous human body. Most of the physical differences between us and them are not very great. If we disregard the considerable differences in the size of their eyes, and thus also to an extent the shape of their skulls, these distinctions are not greater than those between the various races on Earth. I am not well versed in anatomy and cannot give any accurate explanation of the divergencies, but I will note that my eye easily became accustomed to them and that they struck me almost immediately as original rather than ugly.

I noticed that men and women are more alike in build than is the case among most races on Earth. The women have relatively broad shoulders, while the narrow pelvis and a certain tendency to plumpness in the men make their muscles less prominent and tend to neutralize the physical differences between the sexes. This, however, is mainly true of the most recent epoch, the era of free human evolution, for in the statues dating from as late as the capitalist period, the distinctions are much more obvious. It is evidently the enslavement of women in the home and the feverish struggle for survival on the part of the men which ultimately account for the physical discrepancies between them.
beauty of the Middle Ages and Renaissance reflected the unquenchable thirst for mystical or romantic love, then the ideal of this other world in advance of our own was Love incarnate—pure, radiant, all—triumphant Love, serenely and proudly aware of itself. Like the most ancient Martian works of art, the most modern ones were characterized by extreme simplicity and thematic unity. Their heroes were complex human beings with a rich and harmonious variety of experiences. The works chose to portray those moments of the subject’s existence when all of life was concentrated in a single emotion or aspiration. Favorite contemporary themes included the ecstasy of creative thought, the ecstasy of love, and ecstatic delight in nature. Such themes provided a profound insight into the soul of a great people who had learned to live life in its fullness and intensity and to accept death consciously and with dignity.

The painting and sculpture section took up half the museum, while the other half was devoted entirely to architecture. By architecture the Martians mean not only buildings and great works of engineering but also the artistic designing of furniture, tools, machines, and all other useful objects and materials. The immense significance of this art in their lives may be judged by the particular care and thoroughness with which this collection was arranged. In the form of pictures, drawings, models, and especially stereograms viewed in large stereoscopes which reproduced reality in the smallest detail, the exhibition contained examples of all representative types of architecture, from the most primitive cave dwellings, with their crudely embellished utensils, to luxurious apartment buildings, decorated within by the best artists, to giant factories, with their awesomely beautiful machines, to great canals, with their granite embankments and suspension bridges. A special section was devoted to the landscaping of

I was constantly conscious—now clearly, now more vaguely—that I was contemplating forms from an alien world, and this awareness somehow rendered my impressions strange and almost unreal. Even the beautiful female bodies depicted by the statues and paintings evoked in me an obscure sensation that was quite unlike the admiring aesthetic attraction I was accustomed to feeling. It resembled instead the vague premonitions that troubled me long ago as I crossed the border between childhood and adolescence. The statues from the early periods were of a single color, as on Earth, whereas the later ones were natural. This did not surprise me. I have always thought that deviations from reality cannot be a necessary element of art; they are even anti-aesthetic when they impoverish the viewer's reception of the work. This is the case with uniformly colored sculpture, as the concentrated idealization that constitutes the essence of art is lessened rather than heightened by such a lack of realism. Like our antique sculpture, the statues and pictures of the ancient periods were infused with a majestic tranquility, a serene harmony, an absence of tension. In the intermediate, transitional epochs, elements of a different order begin to appear: impulses, passions, an agitated drive which is sometimes mellowed in the form of erotic or religious fantasies but which sometimes bursts forth under the pressure of the enormous strain generated by an imbalance between spiritual and corporeal forces. In the socialist epoch the fundamental nature of art changed once again into harmonious movement, a tranquil and confident manifestation of strength, action free from morbid exertion, aspiration free from agitation, vigorous activity imbued with an awareness of its well-proportioned unity and invincible rationality.

If the ideal of feminine beauty expressed the infinite potential of love in the ancient art of Earth, and if the ideal
I could not fully appreciate the inherent beauty of poetry in a language that was still foreign to me, but the idea in Enno’s verses was lucid, the rhythm was flowing, and the rhyme rich and sonorous. This suggested a new train of thought.

“Ah,” I said, “so your poetry still uses strict meter and rhyme?”

“Of course,” said Enno, slightly surprised. “Do you mean that you find it ugly?”

“Not at all,” I explained. “It’s just that it is commonly thought among us that such form was generated by the tastes of the ruling classes of our society, and that it reflects their fastidiousness and predilection for conventions which restrict the freedom of artistic expression. Whence the conclusion that the poetry of the future, the poetry of the socialist epoch, should abandon and forget such inhibiting rules."

“Nothing could be further from the truth,” Enno retorted vigorously. “regular rhythmicality seems beautiful to us not at all because of any liking for conventions, but because it is in profound harmony with the rhythmical regularity of our processes of life and thought. As for rhyme, which resolves a series of dissimilarities in uniform final chords, it is intimately related to that vital bond between people which crowns their inherent diversity with the unity of the delights of love, the unity that comes from a rational goal in work, and the unity of feeling in a work of art. Without rhythm there is no artistic form at all. If there is no rhythm of sounds, it is all the more essential that there be a rhythm of images or ideas. And if rhyme really is of feudal provenance, then the same may be said of many other good and beautiful things."

“But does not rhyme in fact restrict and obstruct the expression of the poetic idea?”
“Well, what if it does? Such constraints, after all, arise from the goal which the artist has freely chosen to set himself. They not only obstruct but also perfect the expression of the poetic idea, and that is their only raison d’être. The more complicated the goal, the more difficult the path leading to it, and, consequently, the more obstacles there are on the path. If you want to build a beautiful building, just think how many rules of technology and harmony are going to determine, that is, ‘restrict’ your world. You are free to choose your goal, and that is the one and only human freedom. Once you have chosen it, however, you have also selected the means to attain it.”

We went out into the garden to rest for a moment after all the new impressions of the day. It was evening already, a clear and mild spring evening. The flowers were beginning to furl up their blossoms and leaves for the night. All the plants on Mars share this feature, for it becomes very cold there after sunset. I resumed our conversation.

“Tell me, what sort of literature is most popular here?”

“The drama, especially tragedy, and nature poetry,” replied Enno.

“What are the themes of your tragedy? Where in your happy, peaceful existence is there any material for it?”

“Happy? Peaceful? Where did you get that impression? True, peace reigns among men, but there cannot be peace with the natural elements. Even a victory over such a foe can pose a new threat. During the most recent period of our history we have intensified the exploitation of the planet tenfold, our population is growing, and our needs are increasing even faster. The danger of exhausting our natural resources and energy has repeatedly confronted various branches of our industry. Thus far we have overcome it without having to resort to what we regard to be the repugnant alternative of shortening the life span of present and coming generations, but at this very moment the struggle has become particularly acute.”

“I could never have imagined that such dangers were possible, given the power of your technology and science. You said that such things have already happened?”

“Only seventy years ago, when our coal reserves were exhausted and the transition to hydroelectric power was still far from complete, we were forced to destroy a considerable portion of our beloved forests in order to give us time to redesign our machines. This disfigured the planet and worsened our climate for decades. Then, when we had recovered from that crisis, about twenty years ago it was discovered that our deposits of iron ore were nearly depleted. Intense research was begun on hard aluminum alloys, and a huge portion of our available technical resources was diverted to obtaining aluminum from the soil. Now our statisticians reckon that unless we succeed in developing synthetic proteins from inorganic matter, in thirty years we will be faced with a food shortage.”

“What of other planets?” I objected. “Surely you can find something there to replenish the shortage.”

“Where? Venus is obviously still inaccessible. Earth? Earth is inhabited, and it is otherwise uncertain how much we would be able to exploit her resources. Each trip there requires enormous energy, and according to what Menni told me recently about his latest research project, the Martian reserves of the radioactive substances necessary for such voyages are very modest. No, there are considerable difficulties everywhere, and the tighter our humanity closes ranks to conquer nature, the tighter the elements close theirs to avenge the victory.”

“But wouldn’t a simple reduction of the birth rate suffice to rectify the situation?”
idea of the whole and the happiness and suffering implied by the notion. I have seen your world, and I would not be able to tolerate a fraction of the insanity in which your fellow creatures live. For that reason I would not presume to decide which of us is closer to tranquil happiness: the more perfectly ordered and harmonious life is, the more painful are its inevitable dissonances …

"But tell me now, Enno, aren’t you happy? You have your youth, your science, your poetry, and doubtless you have love. What possible experience of yours has been so severe as to make you speak so passionately about the tragedy of life?"

"How very nicely you put it," Enno said with a strange laugh. "You do not know that at one time jolly old Enno had made up his mind to die. And if Menni had been but a single day later in sending him an invitation to travel to Earth, I am afraid your good-natured companion would not be sitting here talking to you today. Just now, however, I cannot explain all of this to you. You will see for yourself later that if there is any happiness among us, then it is not the tranquil bliss you were talking about."

I hesitated to pursue this line of questioning any further. We got up and returned to the museum. I was no longer able to examine the exhibits systematically, however, for my attention strayed and I found it difficult to organize my thoughts. In the sculpture section I stopped in front of a statue depicting a beautiful young boy. His face reminded me of Netti, but I was struck most deeply of all by the skill with which the artist had managed to infuse incipient genius into the undeveloped body, the incomplete features, and the anxious, inquisitive gaze of the child. I stood motionless before the statue for a long while, my mind blank to everything else. Enno’s voice brought me out of my reverie.
THE MUSEUM OF ART

“This is you,” he said, pointing at the boy. “This is your world. It will be a marvelous world, but it is still in its infancy. Look at the hazy dreams and disturbing images troubling his mind. He is half asleep, but some day he will awaken. I feel it, I sincerely believe in it!”

The joyous sensation these words evoked in me was mixed with a strange regret: why was it not Netti who said that!
The center of political life has moved to Russia. Here has been formed the breast against which the entire power of the old-established states smashes itself. Hence goes forth and shines in all corners of the Earth the new comprehension of the essence of things, and hither to the center representatives of old culture crawl out of their cracks and come with their worn-out old teeth to gnaw themselves a piece from the hem of the new coat. A similar center must be formed for art and creativity. Here is the rotating creative axis and race, and it is here that a new contemporary culture must arise, with no room for alms from the old one. Hitherto to the new pole of life and excitement all innovators must surely stream in order to take part in creation on a world scale. The innovators in contemporary life must create a new epoch—such that not one rib of it will touch the old one. We must recognize “short duration” as being the sharp distinction between our epoch and the past—the moment of creative impetus, the speedy displacement in forms; there is no stagnation—only tempestuous movement. As a result, treasures do not exist in our epoch and nothing is created on the foundation of an age-old fortress. The stronger the hope, the more hopeless the position of our will, which in conjunction with time strives to destroy what reason has for years kept in chains. We still cannot overcome the Egyptian pyramids. The baggage of antiquity sticks out in every one like a splinter of old wisdom, and our anxiety to preserve it is a waste of time and laughable for those who float in the vortex of winds beyond the clouds in the blue lampshade of the sky. Our wisdom hastens and strives toward the uncharted abysses of space, seeking a shelter for the night in its guls. The flexible body of the propeller with difficulty tears itself from the old Earth’s embraces, and the weight of our grandmothers’ and grandfathers’ luggage weighs down the shoulders of its wings. Do we need Rubens or the Cheops Pyramid? Is a depraved Venus necessary to the pilot in the heights of our new comprehension? Do we need old copies of clay towns, supported on the crutches of Greek columns? Do we need the confirmatory signature of the dead old woman of Greco-Roman architecture, in order to turn contemporary metals and concretes into squat almshouses? Do we need temples to Christ, when life has long since left the droning of vaults and candle soot, and when the church dome is insignificant by comparison with any depot with millions of ferro-concrete beams? Does he who will break through the blue lampshade and remain hidden forever on the eternally new path, does he need the wisdom of our contemporary life? Is the Roman pope’s cap necessary to a two-six-four engine racing like lightning over the globe and trying to take off from its back? Do we need the wardrobe of braids from the clothes of ancient times, when new tailors sew contemporary clothes from metals? Do we need the wax tapers of the past when on my head I wear electric lamps and telescopes? Contemporary life needs nothing other than what belongs to it; and only that which grows on its shoulders belongs to it.
If we take tractors or motor cars to the backward villages, and set up corresponding schools, then teaching about carts will hardly be necessary.

If with contemporary techniques we can in the space of three weeks set up and equip a three-story house, then we will hardly need to use the old form of building.

The villages will prefer to go for ready-made houses rather than into the forest or the wood.

Accordingly, it is essential that what is living is inseparably linked with life and with a museum of this sort of art.

A living form of life, when it becomes worn out, reincarnates itself in another; or else its worn out part is replaced by a living one.

We could not preserve the old structure of Moscow, under a glass cap; they drew sketches but life did not wish things to be that way and continues to build more and more new skyscrapers, and will continue to build until the roof joins up with the Moon.

What are Godunov’s hut or Marfa’s chambers, by comparison?

One could feel more sorry about a screw breaking off than about the destruction of St. Basil’s Cathedral.

Is it worth worrying about what is dead?

In our contemporary life there are people who are alive and there are conservatives. Two opposite poles: but although in nature unlike poles attract, this is not a law for us.

The living must break up this friendship and do what is best for our creative life; they must be as merciless as time and life itself.

Life has torn life and what they were not conserving from the hands of the museum keepers. We can collect it whilst it is alive and link it directly to life, without giving it to be conserved.
from its axes will come forth artists of living forms rather than dead representations of objectivity.

Let the conservatives go to the provinces with their dead baggage—the depraved cupids of the former debauched houses of Rubens and the Greeks.

We will bring I-beams, electricity, and the lights of colors.

What do we need with the Baranovs’ manufactory when we have Textile, which swallows up, like a crematorium, all the services and qualities of the old manufactories?

And I am not sure that this generation will lament the old manufactory.

The path of the arts’ section lies through volume and color, through the material and the nonmaterial, and both combinations will compose the life of form.

In the street and in the house, in oneself and on oneself—this is where the living comes from, and where our living museum lies.

I see no point in setting up sarcophagi of treasure or Meccas for worship.

What we need is creativity and the factory to produce the parts to carry it over the world as rails.

Any hoarding of old things brings harm. I am convinced that if the Russian style had been done away with in good time, instead of the almshouse of Kazan station that has been put up, there would have arisen a truly contemporary structure.

The conservatives worry about what is old, and are not averse to adapting some old rag to contemporary life, or, in other words, to adapt the back of today to what is alien.

We must not allow our backs to be platforms for the old days.

Our job is to always move toward what is new, not to live in museums. Our path lies in space, and not in the suitcase of what has been outlived.

And if we do not have collections it will be easier to fly away with the whirlwind of life.

Our job is not to photograph remains—that is what photographs are for.

Instead of collecting all sorts of old stuff we must form laboratories of a worldwide creative building apparatus, and
THE MUSEUM NEWSPAPER:
Suggestions for Regional Museums
and Community Centers

V. KARPOV
The “Museum Newspaper” must meet these three criteria:

1. succinctly and clearly depict the most significant moments of each day;
2. be exceptionally adaptable, not cumbersome, and completely dynamic; and
3. not be just a newspaper on the wall.

First and foremost, if possible, the Museum Newspaper should not be text-heavy. Rather, it should consist predominantly of images, with the text only serving to clarify each display. In addition, it is imperative that all photos and diagrams be supplemented with physical exhibits. We must not forget that physical exhibits, even those that appear to be mostly decorative, attract attention. They compel audiences to notice the accompanying text, photos, and diagrams that serve to emphasize the physical exhibit itself.

Any museum can easily create such exhibits and will find a multitude of materials already present in their collections to use as illustrations. Similar Museum Newspaper exhibitions can be realized in community centers. However, because these centers have limited material resources at their disposal, their exhibits will consist almost entirely of images.
AVALANCHE EXHIBITIONS:
The Experience of the
Leningrad Organization of
Worker-Artists

LEONID CHETYRKIN
Amateur art groups were by no means the only type of art production organized by the proletariat masses. In the year 1931, Leningrad’s enterprises featured some quite unusual amateur art exhibitions—the so-called Avalanche Exhibitions. These included hand-drawn wall posters, placards relating to various industrial departments, caricatures, galleries of outstanding employees, as well as drawings and paintings by worker-artists. The exhibitions traveled from factory to factory, plant to plant, and along the way were replenished with new artwork from local worker-artists, thus constantly growing and expanding.

These so-called Avalanche Exhibitions became striking examples of propaganda, using fine arts as a means of highlighting the main goals of socialist construction. Simultaneously, these exhibitions introduced new groups of industry workers to the fine arts. The so-called Avalanche Exhibitions model was devised by the Leningrad Organization of Worker Artists. In 1931, the organization grew to 630 members. Out of them, 95 percent were factory workers and about 50 percent were members of the Communist Party and the Komsomol [Union of Communist Youth].

Factions of the Leningrad Organization of Worker Artists were present at individual plants and factories. These factions were tied to their plant’s press—both in terms of organization and artistic production—and were a part of their plant’s organization of worker correspondents. Each faction’s educational work was geared toward the realization of the state’s financial and industrial plan and carrying out the current tasks of the socialist construction. However, neither the methodologies nor the long-term goals of the Leningrad Organization of Worker Artists were sufficiently developed, and to this day, the impact of this organization is not well known.
During the January 16th meeting of the collegium on artistic affairs and art production, the question of the objectives and organization of art museums was discussed. The State Commissar on Museums and the Preservation of Artistic Monuments and Antiquity G. S. Yatmanov gave a lengthy speech. Comrade Yatmanov reported on nearly a year of the work of the Museum Department, indicating the difficulties in this field, including the shortage of museum personnel with a socialist worldview, which stands in the way of museum reform.

Having illuminated the state of museums today, the speaker came to the conclusion that there were many shortcomings in contemporary museology. The spirit of artistic revolution must usher an entirely new life into the mortified mausoleums that are our museums. The restructured art museums must be taken out of the hands of professional museum workers and handed over to artists. Professional museum workers have created fetishes of the artistic artifacts of the past; these must be disposed of, which can only happen with the transfer of the control over museums to artists. Throwing the art of the past off the pedestal that it has heretofore stood on is all the more necessary because it will create the possibility of eliminating its influence on new proletarian art and definitively liberate new, young art from the eternal burden of “the art of the past” looming over it. Therefore, past artistic achievements should neither serve as models nor materials for creating proletarian art. The art of the past must be put in its proper place where it may serve its rightful function of being a primary historical source, and nothing more. In this sense, the preservation of artistic artifacts will be useful and necessary to the creative work of the proletariat. But the proletariat, armed with the accumulated knowledge and experience of humanity, must regard the artistic past as an accomplished achievement, as a road already traveled, and that is why the proletariat will create museums not for the purpose of bowing down to past masters or otherwise propagandizing this past. In order to meet these demands that stand before existing museums, a new breed of state museums must be created that would, in their scope and conception, serve these ends.

The Department proposes two kinds of new museums:

1. Central museums that strive after strictly scholarly aims as well as function for artistic purposes. This kind of museum must be created in collaboration with specialized scholarly and educational art institutions. These museums should include well-equipped: (a) laboratories for studying artworks; these laboratories should include (b) special storage facilities for artistic artifacts; as well as archives that can guarantee objects’ preservation and also be easily accessible for researchers; (c) be equipped with large auditoriums for holding lectures on art history and finally, (d) the collection on display must be a living thing, constantly changing in pursuit of exclusively artistic goals. The galleries must always be filled with examples of new artistic achievement.

2. Regional, gubernia, and uyezd museums that function as exhibition spaces in places where there is large-scale artisan production. These museums must be centers uniting all artistic production in
Finally, the third type are state art museums of a historical bent, that is, museums whose purpose is to present strictly scholarly or at least highly systematically developed materials as visual aids for studying the history of art. This kind of museum would be under the jurisdiction of specialists and cannot have claim to artistic influence.

Museums of the first as well as of the second kind expand their collections by acquiring artworks through special committees, on the one hand, and choosing from already acquired works collected in stores and storage spaces, on the other, with the right to the first choice of works going to the second kind of museums, as they are the ones tasked with the complex and serious duty of presenting artistic culture to the public.

In his conclusion, the speaker pointed to the necessity of all museums adjusting how works are displayed, and making their collections more fluid. Collections in art museums are archives that can be freely used by anyone. Works should be arranged and rearranged continuously; the ideal museum would have all the works on moveable panels; the tendency toward immobile iconostasis must be rooted out.

The third speaker was the architect Ilin.

Comrade Ilin pointed to a number of defects in contemporary museum culture. He proposed provisional efforts to ease the burden on the scope of museums’ work; Comrade Ilin proposed the destruction of museum galleries and making them stricter in terms of their collections of artworks. Comrade Ilin also pointed to the necessity of greater mobility in museum collections.

A long and lively exchange of opinions followed these speeches. In response to Comrade Yatmanov’s report on the activities of the Museum Department, Comrade Shterenberg stated that despite the allocated time and resources, almost
specific works of art. Museums must be organized such that the paintings can be used like the books of a public library.”

Comrade Brik was countered by Comrades Shterenberg and Punin, who said that for an artist, each painting will always be a unique work of art. Punin also strongly criticized Comrade Yatmanov’s speech saying that the speaker, despite his revolutionary phraseology, was deeply conservative when it came to museum reform. In attempting to renew and revive museum life, Comrade Yatmanov sought to resurrect the old art. We don’t need to renew the museums, we need to finish killing them off and make them strictly the storehouses for visual aids for the study of the history of art. The main force behind the crisis in museology was the combination of the two sides of all artistic activity: the art historical and the creative. If these were separated out, and examples of so-called visual culture were sent to special museums, we would be left with collections of high art-historical value that would be incapable of directly influencing contemporary artistic production. This is the only task of museology today.

Comrade Yatmanov countered with a response to Comrades Shterenberg and Punin, saying that if the Department of Museum Affairs hadn’t accomplished much, especially in terms of reforming the museums, it is because the Department had been focusing on collecting and safeguarding artistic artifacts and antiques. He said that the decision to reorganize the museums should only be made after thoroughly discussing this question at a conference organized especially for this purpose. In this sense, the support and participation of the Department of Visual Art would be warmly welcomed, especially in connection with the upcoming conference. If the main points of the speech were acceptable to the collegium, it would be good to come to a decision on the form that this support should take.
ON THE QUESTION OF MUSEUMS

Comrade Shterenberg said that there’s no cooperation and support to speak of for the conference; first of all, because the speech did not contain sufficiently concrete propositions; secondly, because there is no one to support, seeing as the Department of Museum Affairs did not have a coherent line; instead, there’s just a permanent conflict. There could only be support insofar as the Department would be willing to take on the specific collaborative project of creating a new kind of museum of visual culture with the Department of Visual Art. In light of this, Comrade Shterenberg voiced a proposition to create such a museum together with the Department of Museum Affairs. The proposition was approved unanimously.

THE MUSEUM AND PROLETARIAN CULTURE:
Speech at the Meeting of the First All-Russian Museum Commission

OSIP BRIK
growing the collection is not the purview of the museum, but should be decided by the state. There is talk here of the museum’s initiative, about a loan for purchasing—these are old habits. Under the new state system, the problem of allocation is dealt with in accordance with centralization, to which museums must adapt, since they cannot conduct their own housekeeping within the larger state economy.

Turning to the question of the cultural role of museums, the orator notes that there is often talk of popularization, of the need to convince people that the museum has good things. The people understand this themselves; we need not add cultural-educational work to the museum’s responsibilities. Let the museums concern themselves with scientific work; this will not alienate the proletariat. It is evident that there is no struggle between museum and artist, but this is not a bad thing. [The painter] Repin said that what’s good about the academy is that there’s always someone to argue with. Artistic work flows beyond the walls of the museum, but the old canons are alive in the museum. If you go along with the Muscovites who say that past and present are acceptable, this is aestheticism. We are convinced that contemporary art should dominate, but people must be prepared for it; they must start with the alphabet, but not with Adam. You cannot assume that The Wanderers (Peredvizhniki) are less sophisticated than the Impressionists. You must not think that by gaining insight into one movement, you can understand another. The museum can play a negative role in terms of preparing the masses for the comprehension of contemporary art. It is the exhibit that educates, and not the museum, which is only the place of scholarship. From museums people form false aesthetic views, and therefore see no need to rebuild the
factory in order to make the techniques of production or the work process more easily apprehended by visitors. All educational responsibilities should be transferred to the creators of contemporary art; museums should remain for research purposes. Initially, museums of different kinds should be preserved—as many kinds as there are approaches. In the end, a unified science of art and culture will be found and we will have a scientific institution where cultural issues are studied by one specific method. Thus, control over all education and aesthetic impact must be transferred to the artists, while the museum will be a scientific institution created to further the study of art and culture.

Theses: (a) the proletarian revolution demands a radical reorganization of all forms of cultural life and cannot be limited to piecemeal reforms or simple popularizing of existing foundations; (b) two main issues in museum affairs are still waiting to be addressed: the unification of all museum valuables into a single state fund and the question of the cultural role of museums; (c) the unified state fund should be decreed as a principle; no casual, everyday, amateur, and other such collections can claim immunity; scientific collections can be preserved according to the viability of their organizational idea; (d) the work of cultural enlightenment and artistic instruction should be removed from museum jurisdiction and entirely handed over to the creators of contemporary art; it is not the museum that educates but the gallery exhibition and this guarantees the unimpeded development of art; (e) the museum must become a scholarly institution, building a unified study of art.
exceedingly adult, for the very reason that they have internalized an economic theory that surpasses all the economic "sciences" of the bourgeoisie. The proletarian is not a rioter and not a usurper of power, and he will come to demonstrate his cultural superiority; there is nothing to teach him for it is he who shall teach. That being said, if in actuality the "common masses" are uneducated and crude, well, after all, they are the "common masses."

The masses are always the masses, and there is still a ways to go before they get out from under their own economic oppression and rise to at least an average level of culture, but it is for this reason, first and foremost, that we must overcome this economic oppression. Change the material conditions of existence, but don’t concern yourself with that bourgeois utopian philanthropy à la Saint-Simon or Ruskin. That’s number two. And third of all, it is entirely unproven that the advanced part of the proletariat (not the masses) is not in a state to be able to perceive the latest achievements of science and art. Of course if we demand from them a history of art starting with Adam or a point-by-point inventory of all the errors of science, starting with Chaldean astronomy, or medieval botany, then we might not get very far. But I am convinced that to the intelligent and, more importantly, interested worker, it is entirely unnecessary to know Rafael in order to understand contemporary artistic work or Linnaean systems in order to grasp contemporary mathematics. What’s more, science and especially art should finally stop serving the consumer; they should become a part of the general creative process and should serve the producer—in fact, they have already begun to do so. The time has long since passed to throw away any judgments about what’s yours and what’s ours. Already rotten, even dead, is the notion that science and art are here, in the temple, and

The question of the educational role of museums was rather minutely unpacked at the close of the February 18th museum conference, but the papers given on this topic were as feeble and timid as the discussions. Childish prattle.

First and foremost, the question was raised in the most ridiculous manner. Neither museum workers nor scholars could turn away from the widespread fallacy that the masses (they went on at all times about the masses, and not the proletariat—and this is already significant) cannot at present become collaborators in the great work of the arts and sciences, but need first to acquaint themselves with the arts and sciences through the purgatory of workshops and diletantism. In this vein, much was said at the conference about model exhibitions at museums, explanatory lectures, and so on. What nonsense!

In the first place, this kind of chatter is no longer justified historically. We know this from the Ruskin Museum in Sheffield and other folk museums of Western Europe, which showed that the common masses are just as likely to yawn, or even to sleep, in this kind of specialized museum as in the larger, authentically scientific museums.

Secondly, the very thought of constructing a specialized museum and isolating the business of public education always flows from the following entirely unproven notions which fall apart under the slightest scrutiny: the people are children, and we the scientists, the bourgeoisie, are adults; thus it follows that we ought to teach them, if it so happens that they want to be taught. Wrong. The masses, especially the proletariat, are not children, but rather they are
out there is a drove of swine with crumbs from the master’s brunch. We don’t want more masters, be they scientists or artists. Incidentally, the scientists and artists themselves no longer lay claim to mastery.

The desire to propagate quasi-science and art at any cost, by way of popularization and any other means, came into conflict with those aspirations and views which on this occasion were found among the more serious and competent part of the conference. The best scientists in Petersburg have always pointed out the professional character of science and its self-sustaining economic value. Any kind of demagogic slogans, whatever philanthropic motives they may come from, were not met sympathetically. And this is understandable, since we were dealing here with scientists and their long-standing heroic tradition. However, the fact that some members of communist culture did not share the same opinion was a surprise. For some of them, the popularity level of this or that museum is very nearly the reason for its existence. Without a doubt, the cultural intensity of this or that country may be measured by the amount of museum attendees but it doesn’t follow from this that artificial popularization guarantees the growth of culture. Indeed, this would mean deceit and self-deception—using decorations to cover up an internal emptiness. This is exactly the behavior of any bourgeoisie, past and future, for what is the bourgeoisie in terms of culture if not a total decoration? There’s no reason for us to follow in its footsteps. The contemporary museum is a scholarly institute. To produce contemporary European museums from any kind of kunstkammer or cabinet of curiosities is to produce the modern state directly out of the feudal order. Once, museums were cabinets of curiosities but they long ago acquired a different character—that of a supporting scholarly apparatus.
The Department of Visual Art’s principles of museum building are based on a scientific, professional-material approach to art.

The new museum building is based on the principle of a museum showing the stages of development of artistic form, and not on the creation of a museum of a historical nature, which has evolved in its particularly static forms under the capitalist system.

The historic museum of the past is an ARCHIVE; it is a museum that preserves works, and not a museum as a cultural factor.

It is built for serving the ethnographer, the specialist, and the amateur.

According to its purpose, even the building technology of old historical museums differs sharply from the principles of the new museum technology.

In a historical museum, the selection of works occurs by chance; the criteria are the subjectively aesthetic recognition of each individual master’s history, without any analysis of his goals and achievements.

The overloading of museum walls with works of one and the same master is not taken into account, since the final task of the historical museum is the desire to take everything without considered evaluation and differentiation among works.

The new museum is being built, above all, of works, and not of artists.

The product of production stands in first place. The selection criteria are the presence of movement or the painterly achievement of the work, on the one hand, and skill on the other.

The first of these criteria might be termed the issue of inventiveness.
Hence the gaps and jumps on the wall that do not allow [one to follow] the developmental path of art’s methods.

Maintaining the character of an ARCHIVE quite precisely, the historical museum created the habit of carpeting the entire wall from top to bottom with paintings. Even the physiological impossibility of seeing the artwork wasn’t reckoned with.

Those works that were considered secondary ended up high or in the darkest areas of the space.

Economy of space was given priority. The possibility of seeing the work was dependent on the utilization of the space’s walls.

The gap between paintings was reduced to a minimum—works were hung right up next to one another as far as the similarity of their size permitted.

The most cultured attitude toward installation went no further than DECOrATlON of the walls with works, that is, the paintings served to fill the walls in accordance with the general decor of the space.

Here the symmetrical distribution of paintings on the wall, with proximity determined by size, was taken for a system.

The new museum, as a creative principle, is being built of LIVING works that do not yet possess the quality of “historical treasures” (in the narrow sense of the word).

The second issue—the issue of skill—places the work of art on a scientifically professional level.

It limits that bacchanalia of groundless evaluations based on subjective taste, which makes the work kin to a spiritual delicacy, thereby developing a refined connoisseurship in the consumer, who demands only the satisfaction of his desires.

The museum, as an organized form of art’s exposure, i.e. its promulgation, should be constructed according to the development of artistic form and skill.

We have dealt with the system of selection for the old and new museum, but one other important technical issue of museum building remains—the INSTALLATION of the works.

In museums truest to the historical method, the installation, no less than the selection, of the paintings emphasizes the museum’s characteristic profile—that of an ARCHIVE.

Starting with the principle of individually evaluating the master, the installation of works was resolved very simply—the most recognized artist was placed in the most advantageous location, while the proximity of another artist was defined by historical logic.

It is the dynamic principle that moves art ahead, that prevents it from decomposing and stagnating, which cultivates feeble imitations.

The concepts of inviolable DOGMAS and classical CANONS are exploded by this issue, and the existence of ETERNAL BEAUTY in art is killed.

Everything lives in time and space, and so does the work of art. Dying off, it clears the path and becomes the soil for the next achievements.

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methods, and not be based on the chronological order in which a given work was painted.

During the installation, the value of a given stage in art is taken into consideration, along with the quality and skill of the given work, not the status of the given master.

The work is hung on the wall with the interval necessary to allow each work to be seen on its own.

In determining the height of the installation required for a given work, the eye level of the viewer and the nature of the work are strictly taken into account, that is, its greater or lesser decorativeness or the diminutive size of the picture.

The proximity of authors as well as works should correspond to the stages of development of artistic form, excluding any intuitive, taste-based approach in the combining of works on the wall.

In placing [the picture] on the wall, the calmest and most neutral position will be sought for the picture, without subjecting it to any special tasks of wall placement.

REPORT ON THE FACTUAL ACTIVITIES OF THE MUSEUM BUREAU

The Museum Bureau was organized in 1918. In the first months of its existence, its activity consisted of developing theoretical questions of museum building and acquisition through materials purchased for the organization of museums. Then it undertook the organization of an experimental Museum of Painting Culture in Moscow, which at present is located at 14 Volkhonka St., Apt. 10.

Local museums began to be organized beginning in August 1919.

Organizational principles: to present as fully as possible the stages of development in artistic form, beginning with Realism up to the latest achievements in art, without overburdening the museum by repeating artists and individual stages in an artist’s work.

Furthermore, local conditions were taken into consideration, i.e. the presence of State [Art] Studios and the significance of a given place, and likewise independent initiative from the localities.

During the 1919–20 period, the Museum Bureau organized thirty museums in the following towns: Yelets, Vitebsk, Samara, Astrakhan, Slobodskoy, Penza, Simbirsk, Petrograd, Smolensk, Nizhny Novgorod, Voronezh, Kazan, Ivanovo-Voznesensk, Shuia, Ekaterinburg, Kosmodemiansk, Moscow, Lugansk, Bakhmut, Kostroma, Tula, Ufa, Kishtym, Tsaritsyn, Barnaul, Tobolsk, and Perm.

A total of 1,211 works have been distributed to the above-mentioned museums, in the following types of art:

- Painting—952
- Sculpture and spatial forms—29
- Prints and drawings—230

The average number of works per newly organized museum is between thirty and forty-five, not including drawings.

At the present time, the Museum Bureau has sixteen requests from localities to organize museums, of which six are feasible.

Between 1918 and 1920 the acquisition staff of the Museum Bureau acquired 1,907 works, which break down into the following types of art:
Paintings—1,415
Sculptures and spatial forms—65
Drawings—305
Prints—122

The indicated works were acquired from 384 painters and printmakers, and twenty-nine sculptors.

The paintings acquired represent the following art movements:

rightist—210 artists
centrist—236 artists
leftist—twenty-five artists

Sculptors:

rightist—ten artists
centrist—twelve artists
leftist—seven artists

November 29, 1920. Rodchenko
decorative object, *Still Life with Fruit*, which stops the viewer in his tracks with the originality of its composition. The artist simplifies and partially deforms the object. Even more volume can be found in the paintings of Konchalovsky and Kuprin, the latter distinguishing himself with the restraint of his color palette. In his spatial constructions (through the alternation of volumes), which are taken from Cezanne, Konchalovsky does not reject vibrant colors, often creating paintings out of contrasting color relationships (*Self-Portrait* and *Landscape*). His *Portrait of Yakulov* is stylized, painted in restrained tones. It’s important to note that all of these artists are interested in purely formal tasks that allow them to simplify and transform objects.

**ROOM B**

Konchalovsky, Rozhdestvensky, Falk, Osmerkin, and Lentulov provide examples of another interpretation of reality, with different technical and formal methods. They not only transform the object by emphasizing its most characteristic features; they deform it completely. The object is simplified, losing its individual characteristics. The artists demonstrate its main forms, representing volume with geometricized planes. Through the shifts in the planes, the viewer is able to see the composition sequentially, that is, in time. Paintings that do this include Rozhdestvensky’s *Urban Landscape*, as well as Lentulov’s *Psychological Portrait*. The vibrant color palette and rich transitions in Rozhdestvensky and Lentulov’s works speak of their liberated approach to representing objects using methods not yet seen in the works of French Cubists. It bears mentioning Konchalovsky’s *Still Life*, in which we also see shifted planes. Osmerkin’s *Portrait*...
of a Woman is unique in its compositional tasks and distinguished by the interplay of warm and cold tones with a dynamically resolved background. We should also touch on Falk’s monumental portraits, including Portrait of a Woman in Red, whose conception is reminiscent of Cezanne’s Portrait of a Lady in Blue, but marked with greater dynamism.

ROOM C

Further development of the principles put forth by the artists above can be found in Malevich’s Harvesters and Popova’s Portrait of a Woman, where the object is deformed, simplified, but has not lost its organic unity. The latter is completely lost in the works of Rozanova, Popova, Ekster, and Malevich in his “Cubism.” The object is broken down into geometric planes and the juxtaposition of these planes creates the spatial construction of the composition. The artist leaves the world of reality behind; his task is shaped by purely formal pursuits. In order to broadly demonstrate spatial relationships, the artist introduces a graphic element—for Popova, it’s letters or cut-outs from a newspaper in Ekster’s work, the latter also doing this for texture. These artists are close to the Cubist group whose main principles (spatial constructions through the juxtaposition of geometric planes and lines) were first advanced by Picasso and Braque in France.

ROOM D

The next three rooms contain artists from the so-called “planar group.” This term is provisional, because the works of Shevchenko and Goncharova are not planar. In this group (excluding the Nonobjectivists) we will see a tendency toward ornamentality.

The works of Pavel Kuznetsov, which maintain a single color scheme (blue and green tones), are distinguished by the sparseness of their composition and the unity of the rhythm of movement. Their pictorial simplicity represents a stylized version of reality. We find another manner of stylization in the work of Goncharova. In her Bathing the Horses, we see much simplification, only the most important forms set off by lines, but with this typical scene from folk life, the artist is also borrowing from folk art (the lubok). The forms are simple and convincing, the relationships are vivid and clear.

ROOM E

The works of Goncharova, Larionov, Shevchenko, and Tatlin exhibit a liberated sense of perception in how the artists reconfigure impressions of the world. Each has a dramatically expressed individuality. Thus Larionov’s Chansonette and The Soldier are distinguished by their marked crudeness of form and dull colors. His painting is similar to poster art in its simplicity and the certitude of its effect. We will also note Tatlin’s Fishmonger, a painting with a light-brown color palette. The artist does not create deep space; following from the composition, he freely places the objects over the surface of the canvas.

ROOM F

In this room, we find the representatives of radical leftist movements. Shternberg’s works demonstrate a particular
interest in the material, which he characterizes with emphatic realism. The introduction of foreign materials is related to the artist’s interest in textures. We note his *Still Life with a Pastry* and *Still Life with a Glass*.

We find a total rupture with realistic representation in the works of the Suprematists: Malevich, Rozanova, Klyun, and Rodchenko. These artists draw the logical conclusion from the principles laid out in their Cubist works (see Room C). If in those paintings the artists’ spatial explorations concerned the object translated into geometric planes, here they reject objectivity entirely and operate using solely line, color, and planes. Their paintings are experimental studies of color, the surface of the canvas, and the construction of space through the juxtaposition of geometric planes of varying colors. The main task is studying the movement of planes and their interrelations.

Alongside the purely rational quests of the Suprematists, Kandinsky’s non-objective paintings appeal to the emotional side of the viewer, forcing him to sympathize with the artist’s feelings. The expressiveness in Kandinsky’s paintings is achieved through the tension of the color combinations and the dynamism of his line. Each color is intended to inspire a particular feeling in the viewer, which mutates in accordance with the effect of variously shaped and interrelated dabs of paint.
LENIN'S ATTITUDE TOWARD MUSEUMS

NADEZHDA KRUPSKAYA
Vladimir Ilyich was no lover of museums. Granted, those museums we had occasion to visit abroad were primarily of historical interest, selected according to a spirit quite foreign to historical materialism and devoid of vibrant Marxist thought. We were unable to visit technical museums, for example, or those reflecting the history of manufacture and the like. Ilyich would immediately grow tired of casting indifferent glances upon innumerable suits of heraldic armor.

In London once, he and I went to the Kensington Museum, and I remember how he was pleased by a particular vitrine displaying the parallel development of embryos in an egg, a monkey embryo alongside a human one. He enjoyed as well an exhibit displaying the skulls of a monkey, a prehistoric man, and a modern one. Ilyich belonged to a generation educated when the teaching of biology was prohibited in elementary and secondary schools, a generation immersed in the writings of Pisarev that took in all the revolutionary developments in biology, in evolutionary theory. It was a matter by which he could not but have been fascinated. When I visited the Museum of Natural History at Sverdlov University organized by Comrade Zavadovsky and his team, I thought how Ilyich would have welcomed the construction of such museums on kolkhozes and in houses of socialist culture.

He would as well have welcomed the construction of museums of revolution. In Paris once an exhibition of the revolution of 1848 was mounted. The exhibition was a paragon of modesty, arranged in two modest rooms. As I recall, it was not discussed in the papers; when we visited, there were but two workers attending to it. There were no exhibition guides. Yet the exhibition had been mounted with the greatest of care and deliberation. And Ilyich became transfixed by it. Every detail fascinated him utterly. The exhibition became, for him, a piece of the living struggle.

There is another conversation with Ilyich that I remember. A question had arisen concerning the construction in factories of polytechnic exhibitions. This was the enterprise of a certain Latvian tour guide. He had even attempted to construct such an exhibition in a factory in Kolomna. I at the time was completely consumed with the work of envisioning an exhibition of factory museums, contemplated in connection with the propaganda around production of which Ilyich so approved. The plan was this: to display in an exhibition the work of the factory, to show what departments it housed, what was done in each department, and how the product changed as it moved from department to department. In this way we would have provided a complete picture of the working of the factory. It would be necessary too to show the sources of raw materials, those places where they were extracted for delivery to the factory. Thereafter, it would likewise be necessary to show where the factory’s equipment was fabricated, where and how manufactured goods flowed. It was a time when Ilyich was reiterating with special vigor the need to broaden the political outlook of the proletarian masses. It was shortly after the Eighth Party Congress, when Ilyich was particularly troubled over the question of a unified economic plan, thinking through how he might pull the proletarian masses into working over it, and he wanted propaganda around production to be expanded in order to develop the mental outlook of workers. I remember with what close attention Ilyich listened to what I had to say about polytechnic museums in factories.

That is the little I can recall of how Lenin regarded museum work.
DIALECTICAL MATERIALISM
AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF
THE MUSEUM

IVAN LUPPOL
I think we should start by stating the fact that at present none of the experiences thus far in the construction of museums can be endorsed as well-defined and fully acceptable in methodological terms. We have no one to whom we can give the patent for consistent Marxism in museum affairs. Such canonization, such dogmatization would now be very dangerous. I would like it if all co-rapporteurs would respect this point, because though we all try to apply the most consistent method of dialectical materialism to one type of museum or another, we still have an ultimate goal that has not been achieved. Undoubtedly, we have some differences on certain issues. In order to avoid these differences in the future, we should discuss them in full detail here, at our first museum congress. We must leave here with a clear idea. We must come to terms and exhaust all of our doubts and questions like comrades.

First of all, we must categorically emphasize that there is not and cannot be any discrepancy between, on the one hand, Comrade Epstein’s opening speech, with its sharp political content, and the political greetings that were uttered here, and on the other, the content of those reports that we shall be hearing forthwith. It would be quite wrong to present any matter, after the political nature of the greetings and opening speech given by Comrade Epstein, by moving on to something philosophical or methodological. For us, there is not and cannot be any discrepancy between the two sides of a single matter.

A few years ago, it’s true, in another region, such voices were heard in relation to some individual workers or groups...
of workers: “They accepted Soviet construction, but they were still neutral toward socialist construction.” This formulation is absolutely wrong, because Soviet construction is socialist construction. Equally, we must not think that one can put a museum into the service of socialist construction while remaining neutral toward the requirement of creating a Marxist museum, because the Soviet museum is, or at least should be, a Marxist-Leninist museum. We shall accept only one philosophy: philosophy in the service of revolution. We understand dialectical materialism as the only scientific method, which is the basis of all the processes of our revolution, of socialist construction, including its museum component. On the contrary, it is impossible to accept the slogan of the founding of a Marxist museum and to be neutral toward socialist construction. This, in the best case, would be “academic Marxism.” Academic Marxism, to put it simply, is a sort of gibberish to us. For us, there is no “academic Marxism.” For us, there is only Marxism in revolutionary action.

We live and act in the era of proletarian revolution. We have already entered the period of socialist reconstruction of the entire national economy. We are conducting the industrialization of the nation, but for us the process of the industrialization of the nation is not just a simple technical process. The process of the industrialization of the nation for us is at the same time the process of uprooting the roots of capitalism, a process that creates new socialist relations of production—those that characterize a qualitatively different social formation, which is already socialist. We are carrying out the collectivization of agriculture, but the process of the collectivization of agriculture is not only a technical process, it is an equally profound sociopolitical process. With complete collectivization as our foundation, we eliminate the kulaks as a class, and in the process of completing collectivization we create new socialist relations of production.

This decisive offensive by the socialist sector provokes, quite naturally, a furious resistance from the once-ruling classes. Because of this, there is an extraordinary intensification of the class struggle. The remnants of the bourgeoisie and the adjacent circles of the bourgeois technical intelligentsia have realized that the question of “who will overtake whom?” has been placed in sharp focus and posed for the last time. Therefore, the current forms of class resistance and new forms of class struggle are obvious, and are only possible in the era of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

If, immediately after October 1917, we experienced sabotage from some quarters of the technical intelligentsia, then, of course, it characterized a certain worldview, a kind of theoretical attitude of those circles of the technical intelligentsia that believed that they were the salt of the Earth and that if they had refused to work, the workers would not have been able to cope with the challenges facing the state. Sabotage is represented undoubtedly in the shape of the class struggle of the bourgeoisie and its intelligentsia, a shape that is generally unthinkable in the bourgeois state, in a capitalist society. Now a new kind of class resistance and class struggle is manifesting itself: sabotage, with all its evolution from “the small craftsman” to the systematic, to intervention, to the espionage services of the imperialist states. This is undoubtedly one of the last and most peculiar forms of the class struggle of the bourgeoisie, a form, flowing out of our greatest successes on the front of socialist construction, conceivable only on this stretch of our victorious path.

But while this form of bourgeois class struggle is new, the content is old: a desire to return to political and economic domination at the hands of the deposed exploiting class, and
to destroy the dictatorship of the proletariat. After all, the Soviet Union is not just a thorn in the side of capitalists, but also a bright shining beacon for all working people, and a socialist fatherland, an eternal threat to capitalist society.

Hence our policy objectives are clearly within the bounds of one common task—the task of building a socialist society in the shortest historical period possible. This task of the overall construction of a socialist society in the shortest historical period synthesizes a whole series of slogans that have been paraded before us in recent years, and which have already been partially implemented and are being partially implemented: the slogan “to catch up and overtake” advanced capitalist countries in technical and economical terms, the slogan about the industrialization of the country, the slogan about the Five-Year Plan in four years, and so forth.

All these political problems can be resolved only under certain conditions: only with a general mobilization of resources and efforts to perform the substance of these problems; only with a single direction of effort by all organizations, institutions, including cultural institutions, including museums; and only with a certain ideological orientation. This ideological setting can only be Marxism-Leninism, and the only revolutionary method can be dialectical materialism. This method is forged by the development of a revolutionary workers’ movement, and under such a banner, under such an emblem, this method can form, evolve, and develop Marxism further. This method was victorious in the days of the October Revolution, and now it is the nervous system of the entire socialist edifice.

Dialectical materialism represents at the same time both the acceptance of explanations about natural and social phenomena and also guidelines for action, guidelines for the subordination of nature to man, and guidelines for the revolutionary transformation of society. We are guided by dialectical materialism on a large scale and a small scale, in socialist construction as a whole, and in the building of museums in particular. Based on this method, we will reconstruct museums “externally,” in the sense of their network, in the sense of types of museums, and “internally,” in the sense of the exhibiting of material that characterizes and identifies a particular museum.

Of course, one may ask, is it necessary to reconstruct altogether, to break down our old museums? Maybe they will gradually grow into socialism, gradually become socialist museums because everything around them is moving toward socialism? This peculiar use of the familiar theory of “growing into socialism” is completely unacceptable to us. To hope for a spontaneous kind of “socialist rebirth” of our museums—and this applies not only to the museum, but also to a number of other senior-level academic institutions—is not necessary. Such a view would be opportunistic. We should not only contribute to the transformation of a museum into another kind of museum; we need to remake our museums, transform them from the old museums into new museums built on the principles of dialectical materialism.

Whether we want to or not, we will certainly participate in the class struggle that goes on in our museums, against the backdrop of all of the political events. We have both reactionary attempts to return old museums to obsolete ways, and the well-known conservative trends that seek to continue, preserve, academicize museums into the form in which many of them exist today. We have both active and passive resistance in the reorganization of our museums. Therefore, we cannot avoid an active restructuring and perhaps even a surgical operation in this creative work. And all this work should be performed on the basis of dialectical materialism.
idealistic or vulgar materialist), the dialectical unity of material reality.

Material objects are interconnected in certain respects, and this relationship between material objects is material, but it is not objective. Take the production relationship in a capitalist society between capitalists and workers. This is a material relationship, but it is impossible to grasp directly, in any visual representation. We cannot perceive this relationship without theory, without analysis.

The differences between material objects in various material relations bring great difficulties to the work of our museums. After all, our museums are collections of material objects, things, and yet we have to show not only these objects, not only these things, but also the relationships between these objects and things. But these relations are very complex, just as the relationships between those objects that we refer to as human beings.

Movement is characteristic of material reality, and it is in this motion, in this universal category of material reality, that we find the clue to all the variety of phenomena we see. Various forms and motions of matter cause different types, different categories, different complexes of phenomena. This is also a difficulty in the work of museums.

If we want to build a museum in accordance with the provisions of dialectical materialism, the museum, as a collection of items, must at the same time show the movement of these items, and all the sets of their phenomena. Of course, it would be a screaming vulgarization to think that if we make our individual exhibitions move themselves, we will reveal them as a specific category of motion characteristic of material existence. The discussion here is not about the
mechanical movement of individual exhibitions, but about
the motion of the historic, which is undoubtedly much more
difficult to reveal in museum exhibitions.

So, it is the relationship between material objects and
various forms of material motion that we should establish
as the foundation of museum building. This last statement
offers an idea of, firstly, how to construct the “external,” that
is, the network of museums, and also how to build the “internal,” that is, the structure of each individual museum.

Turning to the problem of the network of museums in
terms of a possible plan, we encounter the general question
of the classification of museums. If material reality is one, and
if this unity is a tangible unity, if all objects and phenomena
are related, fused together, can we build separate branches
of museums, with each branch involved in the identification
of only certain aspects of reality, in isolation from other, adja-
cent aspects? The first task of science—the first but not the
ultimate—is to come to know objects, to reflect on them, and
to show items accordingly in the use of the museum. If this
is the first task of the museum, then there should be various
types of museums, or should there be only one, so to speak,
single, general, comprehensive museum? I think any dogmat-
ism here, any rigid decree-making, would be dangerous—
as it would be evidence of a metaphysical point of view.
The answer to this general question should be as follows: in
addition to comprehensive museums, separate museums—
museums dedicated to individual branches of material
reality—can, must, and should have the right to exist.

Material reality is one, but in its depths, we distinguish,
as I have already said, physical-chemical phenomena, bi-
ological phenomena, and social phenomena arising due to the
various forms of motion of a single material. And we have to
distinguish between these groups of phenomena if we want
to know reality. After all, within the same social reality, in
the process of coming to know it, we use analysis, although
we are mindful of the fact that in reality all of these different
aspects of social formation exist within a concrete unity.

We distinguish between the economy—the forces of
production and industrial relations—as basis, as a certain
foundation for society; we distinguish between the political
superstructure and a number of ideological superstructures,
such as religion, art, and so forth. Therefore, we do not sin
against the objective materialistic point of view if we say that
various types of museums accord with the different aspects,
elements, regions, and sectors of reality, ever mindful that
in reality all these aspects exist in a fused form, in a specific
unity. Therefore, the comprehensive museum will be only
one of the possible variants, one of the types of museums. In
practical terms, we are building, for example, regional muse-
ums as comprehensive museums.

The problem of the system, the problem of the classifica-
tion of museums, is not an idle question. If anyone thinks
otherwise, he or she should think that the problem of the
classification of the sciences, the problem of the classification
of branches of knowledge, is also an idle question. We know,
however, that for hundreds of thousands of years, people
have considered this latter problem. Famous subjective clas-
sifications of the sciences rest upon pseudoscientific notions
of the faculties of the soul. Suffice it to recall the classification
of Francis Bacon, who derived it from three faculties of the
mind, dogmatically postulated thus: firstly, the imagination,
and from it, the arts; secondly, memory, and from it, history;
and thirdly, reason, and from it, philosophy. However, fur-
ther theoretical developments rejected this subjective, ide-
alistic point of view on the question of the classification of
the sciences. Also, there was a moment in history when there
was an objective attempt to construct a system of sciences, an objective-formal system—for example, Comte’s postulation of the simple to the complex and the general to the particular, or in Spencer, from the abstract to the concrete.

There are some analogous formal taxonomies in museums, for example, in the old divisions (which in some cases persist to this day) between scientific, educational, and political museums. A scientific museum, you see, is not an instructive museum, but a museum just for scientists; political and educational museums are just that—museums without science, for the masses, like the old tea temperance societies.

In order to approach this question correctly, we must start from the object itself. This will be the only scientific, materialistic position to take. And here a question arises, over which we must pause, because some of our comrades in museums follow the path of least resistance. Is a materialistic point of view needed to resolve the problem of classifying museums? Everyone agrees that it is. Fine. But what is collected in a museum? Things. So let’s classify the museum, let’s build a system of museums, a museum network, starting from the object, from the material substance that is collected in museums. Such is often our understanding, and also the understanding of the West, when it comes to the requirement of constructing a museum network according to content. And what is the result? Allow me briefly to tell you about one such attempt in America (as printed in one leading European magazine dedicated to the museum business) relating to 1929, about the experience of classification and types of museums.

The requirement is put forward of the necessity of the classification of museums according to their content. In such a general formulation, this seems materialist and it may be accepted. Hence, this system: art museums, historical museums, science museums. These are the main groups, followed by a whole series of sub-units. However, if you think about it, it is easy to see that we have here a pseudoscientific, pseudo-materialistic foundation for the building of a museum system. In practice, it turns out that it is a very minor refurbishing of the subjective classification of Bacon, which dates back to the early seventeenth century. A museum of art, the arts—this refers to mental capacity, which at that time was called a cultural objection; the museum of history, history itself, is something that, at the time, belonged to memory. For history, it is alleged, especially needs memory; the science museum is what before, in the seventeenth century, referred to reasoning, because in science we must reason. Such is the last word of the bourgeois classification of the museum in the West.

We have the same thing when the classification of museums is delivered not according to its content but according to its form. We, in Moscow, undertook a project not so long ago to divide art museums according to form: sculpture, painting, drawing. Thus, a single area of the fine arts was artificially torn. In implementing such a system, we would have a kind of “materialism” not from the word “matter” but from the word “material,” that is, it is not materialism, but thing-ism or technolog-ism in the classification of art museums. It goes without saying that in this example I’m referring to art/ideological museums, rather than art/industrial museums. In the latter, a division of material is necessary—for example, the former Stieglitz Museum in Leningrad, with its focus on textiles, ceramics, wood, and metal. From the aforementioned it is clear that the problem of the classification of museums is not an idle theoretical question, but a question that is also practical, because if we accept a certain system, we will need to implement it practically.
So, I repeat, in orienting itself, it would seem, with the material element, i.e. with those exhibits that are in its collection, a museum thinks that it is expressing a materialistic point of view. In fact, this doesn’t result in dialectical materialism but in a vulgar materialist point of view. You must not orient yourself using the subjective faculties of the mind or some other formal designations, but rather using the object itself, from the object that is perceived and recognized by knowledge, and then revealed in the specific language of the museum. Therefore, the classification of museums can only be based on the same point of view from which we proceed with the classification of the sciences and the objects of reality or, in more abstract terms, according to the forms of matter in motion.

With these underlying principles, if only marked as an outline, we will have a group of natural science museums, but if we take the separate sciences, then we will have a group of special museums, such as ones for mechanics, physics, chemistry, and biology, and these museums will speak in their own museum language about the physical form of the motion of matter, the chemical form of the motion of matter, the biological form, and so on. Then we will have a group of technical and economic museums that will display the forces of production and industrial relations of society, economy, and economic construction; next, a group of sociohistorical museums where we should include ethnology and identify problems of social formations in all their aspects, the history of forms of class struggle, the history of the revolutionary movement, and so on. Next we will confront the group of “superstructure” museums, where we include art, the antireligious, the superstructure-comprehensive types. Such is a general underpinning of starting points for building the museum network, but not in the sense of the geographical-political or the geographical distribution of them, but in terms of the basis for separate types of museums. This methodological underpinning, of course, requires further elaboration and development.

A single dialectical materialist point of view must penetrate all the inner content of the museum. There must be specified starting points and supporting principles only in order to determine certain limits beyond which would mean a departure from dialectical materialism. First, an initial, decisive, crushing blow should be directed toward idealism, which veils itself within the museum, and sometimes appears in the form of dualism and dualistic eclecticism. We can say that in its pure form we no longer have such museums, but still the danger of dualism and the throwback of idealism is extremely strong, and I do not know if you can say that we are freed from the remnants of all of these “virtues” and qualities in our museums. The material of the museum cannot give any guarantees in this regard.

A technical museum may be equipped nicely and located in a new, special building with some wonderful exhibitions, but the ideological orientation may be wrong and unacceptable. Let me give an example or two. In Leipzig, in the summer of 1930, though it was not in the museum but at an exhibition of the fur and hunting industries, the latest technical achievements were shown, and they were extremely interesting, valuable museum exhibitions that we urgently needed. And right there, in the German Pavilion, on an entire wall, hung a gigantic panel, artistically hung and somehow dominating all the other exhibits; on this panel were depicted Adam and Eve, whom an angel, on the orders of God, if I am not mistaken, expels from paradise. Under the picture, an inscription corresponding to the scene: “The Lord God made Adam and Eve fur garments and clothed them”
I will not say, of course, that in our museums we often encounter such installations in such an obvious form. But I think that each museum worker, digging in his memory, can recall a few examples that follow along the same lines.

I turn to the question of what practical methods we need to build a museum on the basis of dialectical materialism. I am sure that every museum worker can recall examples of a time when, with such a purpose, the center of gravity tended toward labeling. It was believed that nothing else was as important as the Marxist explanation in the form of a label—this was everything or almost everything. I agree that the editing of labels, the text of the inscriptions, should be approached very carefully and cautiously. More consistent Marxist formulations need, of course, to be provided. But we must bear in mind that, although labeling is a necessary element of our museums and must be organically linked with the exhibition, not just externally attached to it, it is all the same a secondary museum resource, and not the specific language of the museum. Therefore, to seek refuge from a failed anti-materialist exhibition in “decent” Marxist labeling would be completely wrong.

One could say that the great task lies with the museum guide. We now introduce a new workforce for that purpose. Needless to say, the guide should give the Marxist interpretation of everything that is available in the museum. Again, it is undoubtedly true that a bad guide can ruin a good exhibition, but we must bear in mind that a good guide can do little with a poor exhibition. It will disturb him, but he cannot change it. The guide, of course, is not an outsider to our museum. There is no doubt that he must be organically linked to it. Still, even a very lively story from a guide—this is not museum-specific language, and when we talk about a Marxist exhibition in a museum, the presence of a wonderful

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1. An inexact quotation and inexact reference. In the original: “Unto Adam also and to his wife did the LORD God make coats of skins, and clothed them” (Gen: 3:21). —Ed. note [1931]
Marxist guide does not eliminate the problem of the construction of a relevant exhibition. The same is true for brochures, leaflets, and so forth.

For the museum, the most significant part is the exhibition, as it is its language, its specificum. The exhibition cannot be dissolved in descriptions and explanatory text, which, although necessary, cannot veil and cover the failings of the exhibition. Just as if 60–70 percent of a film was taken up only by names, descriptions, and explanatory text, we undoubtedly would have said that such a composition of film does not attain its goal and target, and that because of this, it is not worthy of making an unnecessary cinematic fuss over it.

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I did not speak without some irony when I said that the museum was a collection of things. In fact, the museum should show relationships through things. Of course, the museum ostensibly, at first sight, is a collection of things arranged in a certain order. However, our goal is that the museum should not even be a system of things, a system in the true classical sense of the word, that is, made up of many parts of a whole. The museum should rather provide a certain system of ideas, and here again lies the difficulty for the museum.

A museum conjures particular visual representations, acting on our external physical senses. This is inevitable and this is not bad. In this, if you will, there is merit and the positive aspect of the museum as an educational and cultural institution. But with such visual representations, the museum should conjure also a particular formation of concepts. It should inspire a particular understanding, a particular worldview, so to speak, a historical and political concept. How is this done? I said that the museum conjures particular visual representations, and I also said that this is not bad, because visual representations are bright and direct; indeed, they are brighter than abstract concepts. Such representations are more widely accessible to our as yet underqualified masses. However, the matter is not just one of visual representation. Here you can make a certain analogy between the artistic and the photographic portrait. Photography, maybe, can be extremely accurate in transmitting all the details of its object, but at the same time it will be, so to speak, an exterior portrait, it will be the transfer of some external marks and the smallest details. If we have a truly artistic portrait made—we can talk about a single-subject portrait or a group portrait—then we see the transfer, so to speak, of interior moments of essence. We see how an artistic portrait, while not reproducing in minute detail, penetrates deeper, in a sense, and gives more toward the understanding of its object.

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I have said that we may have museums of different types and various branches, but they should all be dialectical materialist museums.

The task of subsequent reports includes giving concrete expression to this general position. As an example, we can say that the sociohistorical museum should reveal the whole arsenal of categories of historical materialism, and not in their abstract isolation, but in their concrete unity. They should identify socioeconomic formations and their productive forces in their technical aspects, as well as referring to the most revolutionary productive force—the human—and
Indeed, man is not abstract but concrete. Likewise museums should identify industrial relations, that is, the relationships among classes: they must show the class struggle, its forms, including those forms of class struggle such as the proletarian revolution; the changes of some forms of class struggle into other forms; and history, understood as the history of the struggle of classes. These same categories in a particular museum’s language should be presented not only in socio-historical museums, but also in technical, economic, art, and antireligious museums. Such a specificity of separate types of museums corresponds to the separate aspects of reality that Marxism does not deny.

We should not be limited to giving an explanation of the patterns of natural and social phenomena in the material and media of a museum, and to helping to comprehend certain aspects of reality. Though the primary task of science is to know, and the primary task of the museum is fundamentally to show, the business of knowing and displaying are not exclusive. Just like science, the museum has a second task, in unity with the primary, composed of, so to speak, the soul of the museum.

Dialectical materialism teaches partisanship, teaches on the basis of knowing how to determine, from a revolutionary point of view, everything that is for or against this or that phenomenon. And museums should, with all their exhibitions, not only objectively reflect the exchange of phenomena or that same class struggle, but they must at the same time guide visitors to an evaluation. This requirement is part of the arsenal of dialectical materialism. The museum visitor should be “political” if he looks at the exhibition carefully, “political” in the sense in which Lenin spoke about it philosophically, that is, he must speak either for it or against. With regard to social phenomena, for example, it is necessary that

our museum be built so that the visitor speaks against when different forms and aspects of capitalist society are demonstrated, and for when certain aspects and processes of socialist construction are shown in the museum.

In delivering their specific media of visual representation that are more powerful and accessible than abstract concepts and abstract language, museums should bring us close to the action, should summon in us the will of the toiling masses on the basis of dialectical materialism, on the basis of the theory of revolutionary communism. Our theory—it is not dogma, but a guide to action, a guide to revolutionary action. The requirement that the museum on the basis of knowledge not only reveals and shows, but also brings us close to the action, organizing a person’s will to revolutionary action—these are the challenges facing us, and they require the method of dialectical materialism. A museum constructed in this way will thus give workers a new additional jolt in their struggle against capitalism, for communist society, and, at the same, the museum, built in such a way, in its own specific form, is itself included in this fight for communist society.
MARXIST EXHIBITION METHODS
FOR NATURAL SCIENCE MUSEUMS

BORIS ZAVADOVSKY
1. Marxism is a monistic worldview that encompasses all aspects and phenomena of the world around us. It is within its goals, therefore, to consider the entire sum of facts and conclusions of the natural sciences and technology. The revolutionary transformation and socialist reconstruction of the Land of Soviets, reflective of the revolutionary praxis of Marxist theory, inevitably demands a reconsideration and reevaluation of the entire structure and organizational principles of the museums of our Union.

2. A key point in the transformation of the entire inner structure of natural science museums is the reorganization of rigidly outdated prerevolutionary museum exhibitions (which have not been completely eradicated from the majority of Soviet museums) according to Marxist methods of exhibition. These methods will allow us to restore a connection between museums and contemporary life, and will grant the museum its proper place as an active weapon of militant Marxism on the field of theoretical struggle, as well as in the praxis of socialist construction.

3. These are the main traits that characterize the metaphysical profile and the structure of a prerevolutionary museum:

   1) The mechanical mix of a cabinet of curiosities with an attempt at the formal and systematic collection of disparate items treated as “things in themselves,” severed from their inner relation with other similar museum items and the context in which they were found naturally.
   2) Combining the tactics of the dogmatic assertion of certain ideas (which the exhibition in question takes as its conscious or unconscious foundation) with the “democratic liberalism” that allows interpretation of displayed facts in a materialist, as well as idealist, sense.
   3) Abstracting displayed items from their historical context, class, and social content, as well as from the productive relations that made them and which they reflect.
   4) The appearance of political neutrality that conceals the clear class-character of such exhibitions and the service that they render to bourgeois capitalist society. This is expressed in (a) a prevailing naked empiricism and formulaic technical presentation of industrial themes, and in careful avoidance of general topics and problems of the natural sciences as something that clearly reinforces a revolutionary materialist worldview of the working masses; (b) the rather crafty use of the “language of things,” displayed in
a museum to inspire subservient, militaristic, and chauvinistic feelings in its visitors.

Prerevolutionary museum exhibiting methods were characterized by:

1) The stagnancy of the exhibition, expressed in the lifelessness and immobility of each separate object, as well as in the sanctity of the object’s placement, calibrated for nothing “less than eternity.”

2) Solipsistic aristocratism, the self-isolation of the museum exhibition from the viewer, unwillingness to make exhibitions understandable to the mass visitor.

3) Lack of coordination between the museum and other parallel educational approaches and methods (publications, lectures, guided tours).

4) The monotone systematic continuity of the placement of material, meant to reflect the lifeless and immobile character of nature, as understood by a museum worker.

4. Against all this Marxist exhibition principles require:

1) The unity and coherence of the museum exhibition’s content, doing away with the isolation of objects from each other. The items in Marxist museums are not to be approached as metaphysical “things in themselves.” Rather, they are significant to the extent that their individual content reveals the workings of the universal laws of nature. The principles and responsibilities of the thematic placement of museum materials develop in correspondence with this.

2) The unambiguous reflection and assertion of a consistent dialectical-material worldview that is founded in the natural sciences and that corresponds to an understanding of the objectively existing world.

3) To counter the analytical dissection of a phenomenon into separate parts and spheres that correspond to the formal separation of sciences into discrete disciplines (anatomy, zoology, botany, and so on), we need a complex, cross-disciplinary, and synthetic grasp of any given subject.

4) Contrary to the static historicism of prerevolutionary museums, all the efforts of which were directed toward the past and saw monumentalizing this past as their main goal, Marxist exhibition demands true historicism in its scientific dialectical understanding. For a Marxist exhibition, the history of an object is a necessary condition for understanding its present and for predicting its future development. Out of this develops an understanding of a museum not as an archival collection of antiques, but as a living and vibrant organism that is connected in multiple ways with contemporary everyday life and that is oriented toward the future. Such a museum guides its visitors toward new struggles and victories, instead of doggedly...
following the tail of history, trying to monumentalize its conquests.

5) Contrary to the static character of a prerevolutionary museum, we demand dynamism via the following means:

(1) Disrupting the dead peace of the museum, this “temple of science,” by introducing live things (plants and animals), which would allow us to study the laws of nature in their dynamism, in the very process of living.

(2) Maximal flexibility of the thematic design of a museum, which would allow us to rearrange its exhibition space in response to changes in the tempo of life and the demands of socialist construction, as well as of the task of deepening the dialectical understanding of our surrounding reality.

6) Against the old museum’s dogmatism and scholasticism we propose exhibiting not only empirical facts and scientific achievements, but also the methods by which these facts were uncovered. We ask to make it the museum’s responsibility to fully reveal the methods and technologies of scientific research.

7) To counter self-centered artistocratism, we will provide thorough and detailed explanatory accompanying texts that will be written in clear language and be understandable to a mass audience.

8) As part of destroying old museum traditions, we demand maximal use of all available technologies and materials brought from outside the museum, necessary for rendering exhibitions more effective and enhancing their educational and pedagogical effect. (Some possible auxiliary methods include: organizing reading rooms inside a museum; using posters, photographs, drawings, models, and other visual media.)

9) Against monotonous systematic display, we propose to implement a principle of interrupted continuity by breaking the single unified ideological and thematic direction of a museum into a series of sections, each of which would have its own clearly defined theme or subtheme. The subdividing of the major themes must reflect the logical structure of a phenomenon, to emphasize the crucial problems of the natural sciences and, at the same time, to ensure maximal tactical flexibility in the use of museum materials by individual visitors and by tour groups.

10) Museum exhibition must reveal the principal dialectical laws behind the process of development: the law of the unity of opposites, negation of the negation, and the transformation of quantity into quality.

11) To overcome the distance of the museum from the praxis of real life, we demand its politicization by all available means: bringing museum display methods out onto the street and into workplaces, introducing
1. We require that all museums observe the principle of the unity of theory and praxis in the organization of the exhibition space. Their task is not only to give sufficient explanation of the theoretical foundations behind displayed phenomena, but also to address how they are used practically in the socialist reconstruction of our country and in the exploitation of its productive forces.

2. However, such principles of the unity of form and content in the museum, and of the rational organization of its thematic sections, require that we distinguish between two main types of museums: (a) those focused on broader theoretical questions and that address the subject of the practical and industrial use of natural resources only tangentially and insofar as they help to illustrate the theory; and (b) museums of a primarily industrial orientation, which, nevertheless, address theoretical foundations behind this or that particular technical problem. The first type of museum is almost without precedent in the history of prerevolutionary museums, both here and abroad. This is not surprising, since the capitalist order was not at all interested in broadening and deepening the scientific and materialistic education of the masses. While developing museums and museum sections of this type, it is necessary to clearly identify and give special attention to the issues that may serve as keys for understanding dialectical principles. This should be done despite the difficulties that may arise when translating such principles into the format of museum display. Among these crucial issues we count the following:

As part of the reorganization of natural science museums according to Marxist exhibition methods, museum workers and planners face an obligation to include the exhibition elements that most fully and vividly concretize main dialectical postulates.
1) The history of the natural sciences and their interaction with the development of productive resources, as well as class relations at different stages of human society’s development. (To be represented in the Communist Academy Museum of Natural History);

2) The structure of matter and the principal laws of physics and chemistry (not presented anywhere);

3) The history and structure of the universe (cosmos) (some promise of addressing this topic is given by the organization of planetariums);

4) The dynamics and history of the Earth’s core; its connection to and interaction with the development of life on Earth;

5) The origins of life. Addressing this subject should involve a dialectical analysis of the characteristics of life as a special form of the movement of matter. This includes the presentation of the correspondence between living and dead matter and an analysis of the lowest limit of life separating it from the nonorganic nature. (This is not offered anywhere, but included in the program of the State Biological Museum.)
revealing the psyche of different social classes in pictorial form. The visuality of art is what drastically distinguishes it from other human ideologies.

Of course, this does not mean that visual thinking is a special kind of thinking, as related to other types of thinking, and of course the theses that were read at the previous meeting about “chemical thinking” force us to make this correction. We would have assumed incorrect positions, which some other art historians assume, like Pereverzev, who maintains that visual thinking even happens in an individual artist regardless of philosophy, politics, or religious life. We say that the field of ideology is uniform, but the forms, methods, practice, methods of understanding of classes, their class position, and methods of self-affirmation and agitation of this class can be completely different, and we need to find out the qualitative identity of art as a kind of human activity and visual thinking that the import of class ideology expresses in its own ways. The particularities of this process and the demonstration of it is the main purpose of fine art museums. This is easiest to understand when you compare them to museums of a different kind, especially natural history and historical museums. Art expresses and reflects reality, and its subjectivity of text is at the same time the objectivity of recording facts, which is what needs to be shown in museums of the revolution by means of art. It is, first and foremost, art as a document, as a portrait of reality, for art, as an emotional irritant, is the strongest method of influence, and magnifies that revolutionary charge which the observer receives from nonartistic material in this museum. In a historical museum, since only the full scope of a historical process should be shown there—i.e. not only a socioeconomic or sociopolitical process, but also a socio-ideological process—and since for a full picture and full understanding of the historical process...
it is necessary to understand all of its aspects and influences and the reverse influence of the superstructure on the base, then this artistic superstructure needs to be present in this museum. However, there is a colossal difference between displaying art in a historical museum and displaying it in a fine art museum: In a historical museum, the display of art, along with other ideologies, must demonstrate what is common in these different forms, qualities, and methods of demonstrating one and the same thing. In an art museum, we need to reveal art in such a specificity as to show what differentiates this ideology from other ideologies, i.e. to show the forms of this process, to show not only how art reflects life, but how it reveals class content, to show its special, specific nature, its methodology of organizing its own material, be it real material (stone, tree, and so on) or the material of human psychic experience. This task—to show the specificity of art, to show how the artistic process happens, in what ways and with what methods this class, in this stage of its development, demonstrates in specific forms, its own ideas of class—is dictated by those tasks that stand before the fine art museum in general. This task consists first and foremost in teaching the proletariat to use art as its class weapon; and in order for the proletariat to know how to use art as its class weapon in the modern era, it is necessary for it to know what the weapon was and how it was used by other classes that came before it. Then, by way of mastering the whole former artistic culture, the fine art museum must help the proletariat to facilitate the birth of proletariat amateur and professional art. And finally, taking into account the huge emotional power of art’s influence, we need to put forth a goal, a common goal for our time, a common goal of constructing socialism and class struggle in our country, i.e. the goal of influencing by means of art, as the most effective means, in an emotional sense.
museums can be built based on different types of art—museums of architecture, sculpture, painting, furniture, ceramics, and so forth.

We have to show the development of class-based visual thinking. That is why the feature of complexity, i.e. the amalgamation of such different types of special arts, is for us a deliberate postulate. The principle of division by nationality and the principle of identity should be subordinated to the principle of showing the struggle of styles within a particular class struggle during various stages of the economic development of society. It is completely clear that socioeconomic formations and class struggle happen under concrete historical circumstances, and one or another historical formation or class struggle happens differently, depending on concrete historical circumstances: we have one kind of capitalism in Russia and a completely different kind in England. It would be absurd to blur governmental and national differences, but they should not obscure common characteristics of equal economic stages, and even if there is a big difference between the art of French and Russian capitalism, the two have more in common than, say, the art of Russian capitalism and the art of Russian feudalism. We cannot deny identity, but we should abandon the old principle of grouping paintings by painter, as it is in the hall of Rembrandt and so on. It is ludicrous to think that a painter painting for forty or fifty years reflects the ideology of only one class group during those years. This practically never happens and it is barely present in societies that are just emerging from feudalism, when the speed of life was completely different, and afterward the artist, in his evolution, goes through many different styles.

Of course, we are not supposed to discover this in a painter’s biography, as it would be rather absurd, being a Marxist, to talk about discovering something in a biography, but rather from those socioeconomic shifts that happened during the time when he was active, from which it is clear that the artist’s identity is also subjected to this principle of stylistic display. We need to juxtapose this with socioeconomic processes and economic struggle, but we can understand this life as a particular life of art within its specific stylistic character, and that is why we need to show not only the change in class relations, not only how it is refracted in the subject matter, theme, and treatment of this theme, but we need to show the dialectic shift of art as a particular socioeconomic process, and as one of the forms of human labor—in other words, we need to provide the dialectic for the shift in the actual kinds of art. We know that in feudal society, which has closed farmstead at its core, when exchange is not yet fully developed, we have different systems of art, which are synthetic in their nature, where art is monumental, where architecture is the leading art form, where painting exists only as wall decoration, where there is no independent sculpture, where sculpture is part of the whole art complex—let’s say Egypt, ancient Greece, Europe from the eleventh to the twelfth centuries, and so on. The further the process of trade and financial relations develops, the more and more heterogeneous and differentiated art becomes. Painting stands out independently first, then sculpture stands out, which at first exists in the shape of monuments in squares. The forms of art become smaller: giant frescoes disappear, and small easel paintings appear, etchings acquire more importance. Here, by showing the general process of art development, we have to show this change in forms of human labor, forms of art, the change in types of art, to show if it was synthetic and monumental or if it was isolated and differentiated, and served the needs of a bourgeois individual and his living room. In this way, as
our base, we have the complex permanent collection, and then we arrange it according to artistic styles. By complex we mean, first of all, the general complex of art, and in no way a complex of art and not art. We have to draw attention to this because such kinks have been quite common. One such kink is the attempt to unify art and to dilute it, to show so-called ideological art, i.e. painting and sculpture, and to combine it with furniture and architecture, in order to, in this way, reconstruct the former picture of this art. For example, if you have a rococo-period painting, which very frequently hung in an alcove, then you would need to build an alcove and hang this rococo painting there. This transformation of art museums into interiors would have been a grave mistake, because these interiors don’t even show a real way of life. If someone thinks that from the halls of Peterhof Palace you can learn about everyday life of the seventeenth century, then this notion does not correspond with reality, because only the grand side of life is shown there. Generally, the study of everyday life can be called a science in its own right. This manner of displaying art would have erased the organizing power of art, would have erased its class content. Even more so, it would have been wrong to deny the necessity of showing art separately from the process of materialistic culture.

Another kink is the urge to dilute art in other objects of culture. This shows a lack of understanding of the difference between materialistic and utilitarian objects and what ideological processes are happening within objects. Even though art is an object which can be touched with your hands, which costs a particular amount of money and has a particular weight, which is made from a particular material—i.e. even though art has all of the characteristics of an object—it is only an object in quotes, because the meaning of this object, the content of it, is not material and utilitarian in the general sense of the words, for a painting does not have anything material or utilitarian. Its essence is not in what it has (weight and length, that it is painted with paint …). That’s not the issue. The essence is purely dialectic—it is the essence of the artistic. That is why by “a complex” we mean the complex of objects of art. The main purpose of this complex is to show whether this art was monumental or differentiated, what type of art was the leading type for a given era; a comparison with the industry of that era would even better show the unity of style and the creative artistic difference—was it art for this given class at this or that stage in its development?

This is the principal understanding of a complex.

Moving toward a technical understanding of it, we need to introduce additional auxiliary materials. First of all, this additional material is so-called secondary art. If we can show the class struggle of styles, then it is absurd to think that someone like Rembrandt was the only exponent of seventeenth-century culture, that all French art is only Poussin, and that Russian fine art culture of the capitalist period is only Vereshchagin, Surikov, Vasnetsov, Benois, and so on. This is the art of the ruling class, and the only reason that exclusively aristocratic and bourgeois art was on display in museums is that museums were an organ of the ruling class. We need to show the bourgeoisie along with the aristocracy during the time of feudalism; peasant art in the era of capitalism; the way in which the city influenced the village, showing some paintings of Benois or Vasnetsov; and along with them the primitive pictures, which went to the village; and the art of the city bourgeoisie—only this gives the real picture of the state of art. This art, which does not represent the full picture, only serves a small portion of the population, and along with showing the accomplishments of the ruling classes, there is great barbarity in
being introduced there. Next, we will introduce, and already have been introducing, tables that display the economics of the time. Then, we envision étiquetage as freestanding, on particular monuments.

Finally, another type of étiquetage, the most difficult, which has to overcome the most obstacles, especially aesthetic ones: this is slogan étiquetage. It is important to provide a visual image, to immediately provide a strong impression—in other words, when you are showing the imperial and aristocratic portraits of the eighteenth century, you need to also provide political slogans for these things, for a visitor often does not like to read in museums. He comes to see, not to read. Therefore, you need to make him look. Here, Comrade Milonov rightly talked about a museum slogan. The creation of this museum slogan is possible not only in historical museums, zoological museums, technical museums, and so on, but is possible in art museums. For this you need once and for all to abandon the beauty of hanging paintings and you need to know how to unite the general composition; you need to build walls in such a way that the slogan material does not appear as just étiquetage, but is a unifying bridge between different things, so that paintings plus slogans, writings, and posters make up the unified composition of a wall. Then you will not have to be afraid of all of this étiquetage.

Finally, I would like to finish with one point. This is the question of the so-called introductory hall, a question that has still not died out in our art museum. It needs to be said that the introductory hall was born as a subconscious desire to give Marxism one room in a museum, so that it would not get in the way of other work. They thought in this way: we will provide a room for it, put quotes from Lenin there, as well as socioeconomic tables, the class struggle, and geographical maps, and whatever else—we will even put a live elephant
there, but we do not want it in a museum. No matter how we tried to change or reconstruct this introductory hall, everything remained the same.

If we want to show class struggle and to trace it through the whole collection of the museum, we will no longer need the introductory hall.

However, art museums need halls of a different order. We can show the history of art in museums, but in conjunction with this we need to show the theory of art. We need to teach the viewer to discern what art forms are—space, color, air, and so on, with which esteemed museum workers in their general mass are as unfamiliar as I am unfamiliar with sociological things. We need to teach the analysis of artistic forms and, on the other hand, provide it with Marxist theoretical sociology. For this we need to build one kind of exhibition in one hall, one that constantly changes, for example, showing how the human body can be expressed in pictorial representation, how you can show its size, and further, how, by using concrete physical material, you can provide the framework for a Marxist sociology of art. This is the problem of showing with real objects.

As far as the room is concerned, we need to create what our museums are still not providing—consultation and information for people who want to study art in more depth.
The State Tretyakov Gallery, together with the rest of the Soviet museums, faces the task of reorganizing its operations according to the principles of dialectical materialism. A radical transformation of the exhibition space is required to abolish the old system, founded on the principle of pure aestheticism. The new museum should reveal the class nature of art and its significance as a mighty weapon of class war. Such exhibitions will cultivate a Marxist worldview and help the proletariat learn how to employ art in its struggle. Finally, the new museum will have immediate significance as propaganda, since it will reveal all historically formed class contradictions, reflected one way or another in an exhibition.

Since the new exhibition methods had not yet been fully discovered, in 1929–30 we arranged an experimental show in order to facilitate their study and further development. On December 8, 1930 the State Tretyakov Gallery opened an exhibition of Russian art from the period of the decay of feudalism (the end of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth) that was organized according to the Marxist methodology of display. The experience of this show will be taken into consideration during the upcoming general reorganization of the Gallery.

Among the central goals of the exhibition was developing methods of selection, grouping, and interpretation of material. The task of external decoration, which was immensely more difficult in this case as compared to a regular museum exhibition, was only partially outlined; its full realization was hindered by the lack of necessary funding and time: although the scientific planning of the exhibition lasted about a year, the physical implementation happened in a month and a half, because the exhibition was planned for a museum convention.

The main principles behind the organization of this show were those approved by an artistic section of the museum conference after the discussion of Aleksey Fedorov-Davydov’s presentation.1

Our first task was to select materials. It was absolutely clear that our collections alone were insufficient, since up until then the Gallery displayed only the art of the ruling classes and was focused almost exclusively on easel painting.

First of all we had to juxtapose the art of the ruling classes with the art of the oppressed (within the temporal scope of our exhibition, that meant the art of peasants). It is only possible to fully understand the ideological character of the art of the landowners when the entire system of exploitation that produced it is exposed. Within an art museum we can show the effects of oppression in the sphere of art. It is precisely exploitation that caused the extreme backwardness of peasant art of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, as well as its strong bond with feudal or even pre-feudal culture. The exhibition showed just such conservatism in peasant art.

At the same time, it was necessary to show the shift toward realism and nascent social satire, which began to develop within peasant art as its ties to the cities, commerce, and crafts of the regional centers began to grow. (Such changes can be seen in toys, weaving instruments, and primitive popular prints [lubok].)

1. A. Fedorov-Davydov is directing the current reorganization of the State Tretyakov Gallery. The Experimental Complex Marxist Exhibition was directed by N. Kovalevskaya with the participation of Z. Zonov, M. Kolpachka, and S. Velikanov.
The question of the influence of the art of the ruling class on the art of peasants—our third important issue—could not be properly addressed in the show for the lack of materials supplied by the History Museum. Until the mid-nineteenth century, the merchant class was progressively suppressed by the aristocracy. For this reason its eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century art never gained the status of “big” and “real,” and thus deserving of the viewer’s attention. At the same time, establishing the roots of bourgeois art is of high importance. In particular, it is absolutely necessary to emphasize the difference between merchants and industrial traders. This distinction is very often omitted, which results in the crude vulgarization and the forgetting of the positions stated by Marx on this subject in the third volume of *Capital*.

The art of the merchant class is represented in our exhibition by several portraits. We must stress that selection of these artworks was not based on the class affiliation of the people depicted in them—after all, not every portrait of a merchant belongs to merchant art—but solely on its style, understood as an expression of class ideology and class interests. We must acknowledge that most merchant portraits possess a coherent style, the specificity of which cannot be explained by a mere lack of artistic skill. Rather, the emergence of this style should be understood as an expression of the psychology, ideology, and the deep-seated conservatism of the merchants. And its roots may be traced to feudalism with its icons and early primitive portraiture.

Unfortunately, we must admit that the exhibition only hinted at the existence of this style. We did not have the means to fully represent its development or, for that matter, the development of the art of the industrial merchants up to the mid-nineteenth century. This section of the exhibition had to be built entirely with “borrowed” material, and the Museum of History, the main trove of such art, did not show sufficient generosity to the State Tretyakov Gallery, lending us only two merchant portraits. We were obliged to build our exhibition with materials offered by the Crafts Museum, whose collection was created in a very specialized way (costumes) and thus is not sufficiently thorough.

The situation is much better with the primitive popular prints (lubok), an art form in which we see the emergence of social satire and bourgeois protest against aristocracy. These materials were received from the Museum of Fine Arts.

We must once again admit that even the art of the ruling classes had not been sufficiently represented in the State Tretyakov Gallery until recently. Established during the capitalist epoch, it is only natural that the Gallery’s collections contain primarily easel painting, which was the dominant art form of capitalism. Decorative and architectural art of the precapitalist period, art that rejected all studio forms, was not represented. It is clear that to display an eighteenth-century painting, taken off the wall and torn away from the sculptural context that usually surrounded it, seems to be an act of violence toward its artistic essence. Moreover, to suggest that painting was the sole art form of a period, when it did not truly play a leading role, means to directly misrepresent the real state of art. It is impossible to understand style as an expression of class ideology through such an artificial dissection of the material. However, if we do display a painting in a museum, and not in a palace for which it was made, we should still explain what place it used to occupy there within a broader decorative ensemble. Only completely revealing the boundless sway of decorative imagination allows us to fully understand the hedonistic ideology born out of the parasitic existence of the slaver class that gained such prominence at the height of their rule.
significant to show how different the functions of etching were in different periods: ranging from utilitarian scientific illustrations of the bourgeoisie during the time of Peter the Great, to court propaganda in the eighteenth century, and finally, to bourgeois satirizing of feudalism in the mid-nineteenth century.

To fulfill these tasks, we must first of all show our visitors the palace architecture, its interior and exterior decoration. This was not done in our exhibition in a satisfactory manner, once again for lack of money and space. We could show only few photographs and two models, one of which was rather poorly made. Certainly, this section needs to acquire significantly more models, drafts, plans, etchings, and so forth. To recreate a real palace interior in its entirety is neither possible for the Gallery, nor is it one of its aims.

What is absolutely necessary, however, is to display samples of decorative arts—first of all, of furniture, the art most closely related to architecture. Our exhibition contains examples of rococo and classicism, the two most contrasting styles, representing two deeply divergent stages in the development of Russian aristocracy.

To fully expose the pleasure-centered character of rococo, we displayed ceramic miniatures that make the decorative orientation of this style very clear. Bronze objects, coins, and medals, on the other hand, express the strictness of classicism, a style that developed in the period when class energy was directed toward reinforcing the “dictatorship of slave-owners.” It goes without saying that these auxiliary art forms were treated precisely as art; the purpose of the exhibition had nothing in common with wanting to show the everyday—this remains the prerogative of history museums.

The inclusion of graphic arts seems especially important. They are most closely related to painting, yet are more flexible and more responsive to all social changes. It is extremely
Documentary materials were displayed in our exhibition in the following ways: the economy was presented primarily through diagrams and maps; the characterization of classes, through quotations from contemporaries and excerpts of governmental decrees and publications, which were particularly revealing for their class ideology interests. For example, the exhibition showed the struggle of early nineteenth-century conservative landowners to preserve serfdom, a struggle that found its expression in the paintings of Venetsianov. Finally, much attention was given to various articles that contained the central ideals that each given class held about art at the specific moment of their development. It was often the case that people living through a specific historical period formulated their class attitude toward art no less critically than any Marxist. (For instance, testaments from eighteenth-century writers tell us that “masters used the labor of artists to render their rule pleasant to the subjugated; wishing to make people bear their burden patiently, they offered pleasant distracting celebrations that would attract all their attention.”)

Citations of this sort allow vivid illustration of the significance of art in class struggle, which functions in a dual role, as both propaganda directed to sway the lower classes and as an educational tool for a ruling class to maintain its morale and promote the qualities most needed at the moment. For instance, art offered the aristocracy a feeling of class superiority during the apex of its rule in the mid-eighteenth century, the self-discipline needed for the preservation of the dictatorship of landowners in the period of its decline, and finally real class consciousness during their transformation into the bourgeoisie in the second quarter of the nineteenth century. Such citations allow us to uncover the class orientation within art itself. By these means we establish the nature of art as a unity between ideological and social processes, and eliminate the automatic parallelism between art as a superstructure and art as a social basis, which is retained even in “Marxist” interpretations in instances when the outline is not filled with any particular content.

At the same time, documentary material allows us to expose with the utmost clarity the exploitative nature of landowner art and to counter its “indulgent” splendor, its mendacious idealization of peasant life, with the picture of true conditions the peasants were in—to counter peasant portrayals by Venetsianov, filled with beauty and spiritual clarity, with real documents on the serf trade or permission slips for “exemplary whippings” (from the Museum of the Revolution).

Finally, we employed samples from literature and poetry as the last type of supplementary material to provide stylistic counterpoints to the artworks. For example, Lomonosov’s ode was displayed side by side with folk art of the mid-eighteenth century, and passages from Pushkin and Ryleev next to the Romantic style of the early nineteenth century, and so on.

Such were the novel materials included in the exhibition. With the new tasks placed before museums, the principles of display and presentation must change accordingly. Instead of grouping artworks by their authors, we decided to organize them according to their style, the latter understood as an expression of a particular class ideology. This form of presentation allowed us to show the dialectical development of styles. In the cases where, in the span of an individual artist’s life, he or she created works of different styles, they were divided accordingly. For instance, most of Levitsky’s paintings express the ideology of the court and aristocracy (his portrait of Catherine the Great as Felicia); however, among them we find a small group of paintings which betray an entirely different ideological
By uniting the artworks expressive of the same class ideology at the same stage of development and juxtaposing them with the art of other classes, we built our exhibition around a set of oppositions. Next to the art of exploitative landowners we displayed the art of exploited peasants. Impressions from the contradictions made apparent by this placement were reinforced by supplementary materials about the nature of serfdom.

A tremendous gap separated peasants as a class from the landowners. Since their struggle against the latter very rarely assumed the form of open rebellion (such as the Pugachev uprising), it is very rare that we find in their art traces of interaction with the art of the ruling class. The art of peasants developed almost entirely autonomously from the art of their masters. That’s why, despite placing the two strains of art together in the same hall, we almost did not emphasize the connection of peasant art to that of the landowners’. On the contrary, the middle strata of the aristocracy that, in 1770–80, began to cultivate its own art forms (dominated by sentimentalism) did so in close interaction with the art of the ruling class. It was, therefore, displayed as a subcategory of the art of the most dominant class. We must admit though that we did not find all the solutions to the problem of displaying art from different classes together. We managed to avoid making the mistake of insisting on a mechanical parallel between the development of the class of serf-owners and the increasingly bourgeois aristocracy. But, unfortunately, we failed to clearly present all the stages of development of the latter. In the mid-eighteenth century, the bourgeois aristocracy was aligned with rococo, and in the early nineteenth, with classicism. It would have been better to display the development of the two social groups on opposing walls in the same hall. With the lack of physical space in our gallery,
Our experience of a Marxist exhibition prompted a series of other objections among museum workers. One of the common criticisms was that when displayed according to our methods, art lost its emotional meaning and became a mere “illustration” of history. This objection has a double meaning. It is dictated in part by fear that the focus would shift from art to the “base” and that art would be seen merely as a direct reflection of the socioeconomic process. To this we reply that the base was invoked only to the extent to which it helped to understand the meaning of a given artwork. If at times one may have felt that citations printed on the walls “crowded” and distracted from the artworks, this shortcoming was solely due to a lack of space, and would not be an issue in a larger museum where the ratio of text to images will be more proportionate. However, there is yet another dimension to this question. Indeed, what can be said for the emotional impact of art that belongs to the classes hostile to ours? Art of course has to have some kind of emotional effect in order to be understood, but is it really fair to expose our visitors to the poisonous, infectious influence of the hedonistic and sensual art of the eighteenth century? It is clear that we must unmask its serfdom character. And if its immediate affective power is lessened as the result, than we can only welcome such an outcome. Only a critical attitude to our cultural heritage allows us to use it now.

The final objection to the exhibition was that it came off as too difficult and too inaccessible to a mass audience. We must admit that some serious work to popularize these shows is still needed to make Marxist exhibitions maximally legible to broad swaths of visitors. It must be stressed, though, that an exhibition like ours was necessarily more difficult and demanding than the usual presentation of art according to artists, which does not require an understanding of

such a maneuver was impossible. However, a large exhibition space would not resolve all these problems, for then one would have to display the simultaneous and interdependent development not only of two but of several classes and subgroups. Finding a solution to this challenging problem will require long and persistent work.

There is no need to deny that an exhibition based on classes and their styles presents many difficulties. In this manner, the necessity of displaying one or another work of art in a particular group and therefore in a particular spot on the wall often contradicts the decorative requirements. It is very hard to hang paintings in a way that would satisfy the main objective of the class-based exhibition and at the same time not unnecessarily and harshly violate the museum and aesthetic rules.

For instance, the need to display “high” art of the ruling classes side by side with the “low” art of the peasants contradicts many of the rules of museum aesthetics.

The latter should be displayed with the utmost courage, for it is impossible to demonstrate the whole depth of difference between arts of different classes in any other way. Here we must add one correction though. Despite their apparent “backwardness,” neither peasant nor merchant art should be regarded as merely lacking talent (which is what is really meant by “low quality”); they just represent a separate style. Therefore, one cannot talk about “low quality” in the common sense of the word; rather, one has to talk about different “aspects” of the philosophical meaning of the word.

Matters stand differently with copies, reproductions, and photographs, which in the absence of originals we occasionally have to resort to. The presence of these objects of low artistic value is really unfortunate, although, at times, necessary.
artistic process as a whole. The new mode of exhibition must reveal the ideological meaning of art, and this is a very difficult and philosophical task. But, of course, such exhibitions must also be popular. In essence we face two different goals: to make our exhibitions more scientific, and also more popular. Naturally, this is very challenging. It is necessary to note, however, that each exhibition must be multifaceted and engaging for the least prepared as well as to the most sophisticated visitor who strives for a deeper familiarity with art. The trick is to satisfy the latter category while at the same time offering essential educational information to our first-time visitors. We are already installing explanatory plaques and accompanying texts with this purpose in mind, but it is clear that we will have to keep searching for more solutions. Inventing new display methods, which will help to entrench in our visitors the far-reaching goals of the Marxist understanding of art, requires our most serious efforts.
The History and Everyday Life Department at the State Russian Museum, which appeared after the revolution (its foundation goes back to 1918), set out to create an exhibition in which the whole historical process of the eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth centuries would be reflected; in other words, of both prerevolutionary Russia and the Soviet Republic, up until the present moment, and in which the everyday life of all classes during this time—landowners, bourgeoisie, peasantry, and the working class—would be represented in their interaction and struggle. The enormity and difficulty of this problem is apparent, and completely new paths should be laid while resolving this problem, without the option of relying on the experience of either prerevolutionary museums, or the achievements of contemporary European museums, because the setting of such a goal is, clearly, only possible in our times and in our country. That’s why the History and Everyday Life Department approached the task very carefully and, so to speak, in stages, first finishing the smaller and then, gradually, bigger and bigger exhibition complexes, which pertained to one or another side of the problem, and which should have culminated in the general picture described above. Among the large number of temporary and permanent exhibitions which were curated by the History and Everyday Life Department, two are the most important and to a certain extent summarize the work of the department; these are the currently open exhibitions *Everyday Life of Merchants from the Eighteenth to the Beginning of the Twentieth Century*, and the exhibition dedicated to the everyday life of the working class, which is the main topic of this report.
The everyday life of a textile worker at the factory has a different character. Mechanization is apparent here as well, and the exhibition shows us a number of developed and complicated machines, but in addition to this, this way of yarn processing is characterized by extreme refinement, which limits the participation of the worker in the process to just one habitual movement. This work does not require special qualification, or even physical strength, which may explain the widespread use of female labor at textile factories and the low pay, which the visitor can see displayed in the table of daily wages. The rest of the material further elaborates on working conditions at the textile factories of that time (the system of fines, deductions from pay for goods taken by workers, practically nonexistent labor protection, and so forth).

In the second hall, we move from workers’ labor life to their domestic life, which is represented by two interiors that portray a room occupied by a textile worker, and a room in an apartment of a steel worker. The objects for these interiors were collected by the History and Everyday Life Department while surveying workers’ living quarters. However, due to the fact that these surveys were carried out after the revolution, the survey takers had to examine each object while also incorporating workers’ memories, documents, and so on, in order to be sure that the collected material really characterized the everyday life of workers before the revolution.

The textile worker’s interior is a room shared with other tenants, since the low wages of textile workers did not allow for renting a separate room. We see that there are different types of life in every corner, depending on the salary of the tenant. Directly opposite us is a bed, which is occupied by two working girls who have just arrived from the village. All of their possessions consist of a small trunk and a dress that hangs on the wall. To the left we see the next level of...
of the interior, to the left and to the right, is information on the living conditions of low- and high-level workers. The living conditions of the former are naturally worse than those of a mid-level worker, however, they are better than those of textile workers. As far as the high-level worker is concerned, here we see plush furniture, a gramophone, a sideboard, and other luxury items.

In this hall we also pass material on the everyday life of rope makers, which demonstrates the highly primitive nature of this production in the prerevolutionary period, due to which the labor conditions for the workers were harsh and the wages were extremely low.

Let’s turn to the exhibition on the everyday life of gold diggers, with which this hall ends. Workers in the gold industry of this period are a very particular group of the proletariat: on the one hand, the gold trade widely used highly developed machinery that needed specially qualified labor, along with primitive forms of production; and on the other hand, the specific labor conditions of gold diggers define the same forms of everyday life that are characterized by the absence of basic comfort. These conditions include the fact that gold mines are located far from city centers, and for months they are cut off from the rest of the world, and result in the dependency of the mine workers on the tyranny of the businessmen.

Material presented at the exhibition illustrates the aforementioned. Here we predominantly see photographs and separate objects that relate to both primitive and developed machines. Further, we see materials on the everyday life of gold diggers, in this case photographs showing gold diggers in full attire for a long journey to their work site; showing their means of transportation across wild and deserted land (predominantly by water, on rafts or boats); and finally,
showing us their living quarters. Images depict several types of gold digger huts. The most common is the one that is built in our exhibition. It is a log house built on bare ground, without a floor, and with flat boards instead of a roof. Inside the hut there is a black stove that looks like a pile of stones, the smoke from which escapes through an opening in the ceiling. Bunk beds along the walls and a board attached to the wall to make a table are the only other furniture in the room. During harsh Siberian winters, this construction would of course be weak protection from the cold, and when the stone stove was fired, the whole hut would fill with smoke. However, sometimes (and especially at large gold mines) workers settled not in huts but in barracks, which were a bit more comfortable. However, stuffy air, overcrowded conditions, and a lack of the simplest comforts were the rule there.

In the hut there are clothes, utensils, and other things used by gold mine workers.

The passage between the halls is occupied by material on the imperialist war.

The conditions of the war are illustrated here by a freight car with two militiamen who are being sent to the theater of war, and also by a booth and the figure of a telephone operator (the use of a skilled worker at the front), and a trench and a tent with a soldier standing next to it wearing a gas mask and a protective suit.

The display board shows an official depiction of the war, useful to the ruling class of that time, who tried to stir up patriotic feelings in the soldiers by all possible means; we see primitive patriotic pictures, matching literature, Georgian crosses, and so on. The opposite display board shows the real face of war: colossal numbers of killed and wounded, refugees, destroyed buildings, and so on. Finally, the third board familiarizes us with economic consequences of the war, which resulted in the complete impoverishment of the country and a drastic worsening of conditions for the working masses.

The small anteroom is dedicated to the period from February to October of 1917. Here, a number of photographs and drawings depict the February Revolution; the creation of the Provisional Government and the Union of Workers’ and Soldiers’ Deputies; the arrival of V. I. Lenin and the beginning of preparations for the proletariat revolution, carried out under the slogan “All power to the Soviets”; the imperialist politics of Kerensky and the first major demonstration in Leningrad against the Provisional Government on July 3–5; its suppression and bourgeois reaction; Bolsheviks working underground; the military revolt under the leadership of Kornilov; and finally the agony and the toppling of the Provisional Government.

Two big panels here depict the storming of the Winter Palace, and V. I. Lenin delivering a speech in front of the Smolny Institute.

This ends the historical part of the exhibition.

The last hall, dedicated to Soviet everyday life, portrays only the life of today, and, as was mentioned above, not thoroughly, but as a first attempt to reveal the new life brought about by the October Revolution.

The first part of the hall shows material on the new socialist industry, which served as the real basis for reconstructing life. Here, power plants are presented as the basis of our production; in addition, there are models and photographs of new plants, which are of interest for their improved technology, their new appearance, and their technical and hygienic advances, which are aimed at improving working conditions for laborers. Also, in this part we have presented everyday life at the new factories, the defining factor of which is the fact
that the worker now owns the plant. From here several facts emerge: workers participate in managing the plant through the plant “triangle”; workers are promoted to management from the shop floor; they attend production meetings, and so on. Because of this there are also completely different conditions compared to past labor: a transition to a seven-hour workday, an increase in wages, labor protections, medical assistance, sanatoriums and health centers for workers, and protections for working mothers and children. Finally, there is material (photographic, diagrammatic, and physical) on social competition, shock work, worker inventions, and so on.

The second part of the hall is dedicated to the communal and private life of a Soviet Union worker. The material pertaining to this shows the defining role a worker has in the government, in the Party, and in unions. Further, we see material on the assistance the worker provides to his government (industrialization loans, donations to the industrialization fund, to the collectivization fund, and so forth). The same idea is reflected in the material on cooperative construction—which gradually develops a new way of life—and on housing construction: here we see the exteriors of new houses and the interiors of new dwellings with abundant light, air, and so on. We see elements of the new way of life in old houses as well, starting with a radio, a library, and red corners in the Society for Renting and Living Cooperation (SRLC), and ending with social work and the greater inclusion of workers in the managing of the SRLCs.

The reconstruction of life based on the new socialist principles puts forth the creation of the “new man” as its main goal, an active fighter and builder of socialism. This idea is reflected in a theme dedicated to the new ways of child rearing and education, club and excursion work, and also physical education, for which the worker government does not spare any expenses. In conjunction, there is material on the fight against the old way of life (alcoholism, religion, and so on) and the external enemy—world capitalism—which has not abandoned its desire to bring our country back to the old bourgeois way of life; related to this are pre-conscription and reserve military training, the greater inclusion of workers in the army and its leadership, and so on.

Finally, we see material that depicts the growth of the level of activity and amateur activities of the working class, which manifests itself in the form of volunteer societies, worker correspondents, the participation of workers in purges carried out in Soviet institutions, patronage, and so forth. The theme of “assisting the new village,” which points to the leading role of the proletariat in the task of the socialist reconstruction of agriculture, is particularly important. Material pertaining to this topic primarily stresses the whole technical base—namely, the production of agricultural machinery—without which the socialist reconstruction of the village cannot succeed, and the general participation of workers in the process of collectivization (worker brigades sent to collective farms, preparatory courses for workers in the village, and so on).

The exhibition ends with an electrical map of the Five-Year Plan, which demonstrates the Soviet Union’s grand industrialization plan and reveals the specific characteristics of this “great works plan”: the close connection between factories and feeding centers, the development of new types of production that barely existed or did not exist at all in pre-revolutionary Russia, the creation of numerous engineering plants, the construction of several power plants—all this positions the new worker government on the same level as the leading capitalist governments and turns the country of the Soviets from agriculturally industrial into industrially agricultural. The powerful industrial development that will
occur as a result of accomplishing the Five-Year Plan will serve as a mighty factor in the task of creating completely new living conditions for the working class.

The exhibition does not, of course, exhaust all the material on the everyday life of the working class that has been and still is being collected by the History and Everyday Life Department, which organizes special expeditions for this purpose. All this material will merge into the main collection of the department, which was mentioned at the beginning of this note and which will present the everyday life of the proletariat as not disjointed from the everyday life of other classes, but rather in their cooperation and struggle.
It must be said that the preference for traditional art, more often than not, results in the incorporation of non-easel types of art (for example, posters and photo-collage) into productivism. I stress that I do not consider these to be industrial art, as they are of the type where aesthetic content is fully identical to the original goal. The poster does not have a utilitarian significance in everyday life. It’s a different story when it comes to a table or a chair, where the thing itself is right up against its own utility; it is not easy to come to the ideological interpretation of a chair.

Our goal is to specifically demonstrate how to stress, to reveal, to show the ideological content of material forms that have specific, utilitarian functions in everyday life. It is the era of reconstruction that presents the problem of everyday objects with ever-increasing urgency. To address this emerging problem, holding to the position of the dualism of the applied, or the duality of art and mass production, would be a needless vacillation between technology and art.

We must approach the art of material objects and demonstrate the dialectic connection between machinery and the ideological content of material form. The assessment of what we consider to be artistic production and its aesthetic and ideological nature is precisely what the study of artistic production is.

If studying the artistic and manufacturing technology of any age must have its necessary volume, then studying the relationships to objects—which are form, in turn, under the influence of relations of production—characterizes objects’ role in the given societal formation. Analyzing relationships to the realm of everyday objects allows us to envision the entire history of artistic production as the history of struggle and shows us the development of the class struggle underpinning this development. From the point of view...
of such important general assumptions, we need to admit that we have not seriously approached productivism in our museum work. In building the edifice of our artistic culture, we have not yet gotten through the inventory of objects left behind from the previous era. The historical study of industrial art started and ended with handicrafts. It did not follow the development of mass production that we’ve seen in recent years. The artistic portrayal of industrial art stopped with manual labor. It is as though it was forgotten that in the course of the past few years, the chief artistic supplier has been plant and factory manufacturing, responsible for the design of everyday life for the various classes of society. How and where the artistic forms of mass-produced objects were created, what aesthetic factors went into their design, the path of their contemporary production—none of these questions interest either economic or artistic scholarship.

At the same time, today, anyone can see the relevance of this problem—the problem of reevaluating the material inventory. This is being presented as an artistic problem. We see not only the appearance of obsolete forms and complex forms connected with old influences, with the moribund systems of gentility, landowner nobility, the merchant class, and other such obsolete forms, which were reflected in works of art. Alongside these virtually dead forms we must also look at a number of objects from our own era that develop and reflect our reality.

It is manifestly clear that in light of these issues, the research activity of art museums should proceed on two fronts. First of all, toward the end of influencing mass manufacturing, production, and new design; secondly, toward a different kind of influence: an impact on everyday life itself, consumption, and shaping the aspects of everyday life that constitute contemporary material culture. I am of the opinion that in both of these realms museum research should be thoroughly constructed and reconstructed. As one of its principal tasks, museum-directed research should strive to have an impact on the artistic quality of mass-manufactured everyday objects, the construction of new homes, new workers’ clubs, and new public buildings of every stripe, and it should exert this influence specifically on their design.

Stemming from the foundational principle—that is, our refusal to see an object as a purely technical form and the insistence on our ability to see the ideological content in everyday objects—we reach further and discover the dialectic connection between the technological side of mass production and the artistic, that is, the ideological content in the form of any given object.

If we follow the first line of argument from the ones I have specified above—in other words, the argument about influencing production—then the proposal will be the following.

First and foremost, manufacturing that creates everyday objects and not the tools of production should find in museums a center that would aid in, and sometimes even direct, production in terms of guiding the design approach.

What would this entail? First of all, in the manufacturing sectors where the artistic design of the product is one of the most important elements of its quality (for instance, in glassware and china production; woodworking, including furniture-making; printing; sewing; textiles; and so on), the museum needs to become the center of artistic quality control in the full sense of the word, and, moreover, needs to have influence over the design of these objects. Museums would fight the vestiges of traditional models and blueprints that have been collected at our factories where the artistic direction is remarkably weak and in sharp contradiction with the
1850s, since the introduction of concrete. In all related sectors we see utter chaos, a yawning chasm in this broad sphere of everyday design, but I am not, dear comrades, saying that we need to create special architectural museums. This initiative may be proposed by construction organizations. We can only address this upon reconstructing museums as modular complexes. We need materials on contemporary architecture, up to and including the issues under discussion today (in general, I believe that the concept of “the past” is itself from the past; the past is regarded as everything that’s five or six decades before the present day and onward; in reality, we should consider the province of the museum to be all of time up to the very last hour).

It seems to me that even the questions of the construction of new cities and villages, the design of workers’ housing, municipal complexes (parks and so on), should all find their place in the museum. The museum should fight for the creation of corresponding organizations addressing the needs of the mass-manufacturing of everyday objects. Maximal attention should be devoted to developing approaches in individual sectors in order to render them as capable of addressing public needs as possible when it comes to constructing workers’ housing, workers’ clubs, public cafeterias, villages, green cities, and so on. These museums should exhibit not only the best projects and blueprints but also all relevant designs and historical materials, displayed for informational and education purposes.

Thus, the museums will strike out against the archaic elements in today’s production complex, which releases an unbelievable quantity of disgusting things into the mass market, vestiges of bourgeois culture, tchotchkes that litter the living space and that also have a tangible effect not only on manufacturing, but also on the organizations charged
with constructing the new way of life, that is, on the housing construction cooperative, the unions, and so on.

* * *

Some of our museums, especially the Museum of Handicraft and the Museum of Oriental Cultures in Moscow, have already had a significant impact on enterprises manufacturing artistic objects: they are already doing what I am proposing should be done in all sectors, namely, presenting manufacturers with models. They are providing manufacturers with specific instructions. Still, there is a lot of inertia in this field and, I would say, aloofness. This is not only related to the work of the museums; it’s also due to the relative stodginess on the part of craftsmen and this realm of our artistic production overall. The production of art objects in our country is, for the most part, for export. Ideas such as the foreign market always demanding originality from the Russian craftsman are too deeply entrenched and we forget that the products of this so-called originality more often than not disgust us, and that the foreign market is actually sick of them, too—take, for instance the outmoded grace cups that were once in style and, similarly, carved objects.

New things are needed from the original craftsmen of the Soviet Union, but our artistic organs that deal with handicraft are too little concerned with this fact; the same goes for our museum workers. They’ve attempted to protect the craftsman from industry. Exhibitions play a huge role in artistic production; meanwhile, many of the relevant organizations consider them to practically be acts of violence against the integrity of handicraft.

* * *

All of this demands accepting the basic premise of fostering close relationships between our art museums—especially their scholarly and research cells—and the organs of manufacturing and a number of other artistic organizations.

Here I put forth the idea that the People’s Commissariat for Education, which is in charge of museums, should come to a general agreement with the Supreme Council of the National Economy to use museums for the needs of domestic construction. This agreement would not free individual museums from having to propose independent initiatives to strengthen ties with manufacturers and from making their own contracts with various enterprises. Museums must take all necessary measures to attract workers from a given sector to museum work. These connections between museums on the one hand, and research and scholarly production institutes on the other, are especially crucial seeing as many of the materials that will come out of art museums will need to go through the corresponding technical processing performed at the research and scholarly institutes of a given sector of manufacturing before being put into production.

These are all of the major tasks presented in brief, but which first of all demand that museums turn their attention and efforts toward the sector of artistic production that remains underrepresented as museum material, and under-researched in terms of how it should be handled. Today, all work with our industrial art legacy is based on outdated applied art practices, on the materials of handicraft labor, the labor of handmade objects, and completely excludes industrial art from its sphere of interest, as though it doesn’t exist, simply because it was born of mass production.
We must have a clear conception of each complex feature of everyday design and remind all museums of the existing materials, insisting that museums not only be filled with these artifacts, but also influence their design in manufacturing and in everyday life.
Soviet museums are working intensely on new types of museum exhibition, striving to build a museum upon the foundation of Marxism-Leninism, while providing a vivid narrative of our past and present day in order to rally the working masses into action in the fight for socialism.

By abandoning the academic display of objects, it becomes apparent that the museum value of particular objects was determined relative to their antiquity, and not to their class. The museums have set this difficult task for themselves: to use examples of material culture as documentary monuments that provide a vast opportunity to visually show that “The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles,” that we will only achieve a class-free society as a result of a fierce class struggle.

*  *  *

We strongly believe that in present-day RSFSR, there is no museum that does not participate, in one way or another, in the study of the national economy and the productive forces of its corner of the world, does not represent the construction of socialism in its halls, does not organize both permanent and mobile exhibitions based on contemporary political and economic issues, and so on.

We have achieved remarkable success in this sphere of museum activity, in museums of all types. However, we have not yet made any significant strides in the sphere of re-exhibition in either central or provincial museums. Several exhibits organized by museums of history and everyday life, especially by the State Historical Museum, were recognized by reputable institutions as not meeting the requirements of Marxism-Leninism, and were therefore closed. Art museums can’t boast any particular achievements either: they have not yet resolved the problem of building Marxist exhibitions, even though several experimental exhibitions are worthy of serious attention and study.

The situation is even worse in provincial museums, which are only just now embarking on the process of re-exhibition. The only exception consists of a few dozen museums (out of 250) that are working on the task of building local history museums according to Marxist principles. In general, the situation is rather unsatisfactory: cabinets of curiosities are far from being abolished.

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The absolute political significance of this national problem is so apparent at this stage of socialist construction that there is no need to explain to the reader why we must devote special attention and apply rigorous standards to its new portrayals in our museums.

Two such shows are drawing the attention of museum workers: the Central Museum of Ethnography’s *Peoples of the Urals and the Volga Region*, and the Moscow Regional Museum’s *Socialist Construction and Ethnic Minorities of the Moscow Region*. 

First published in 1932
Translated by Margarita Shalina
needed. The main condition is a detailed reworking of the structure of a museum’s entire layout and every individual topic. It is completely normal that the greater the scope and the depth of the main topic of an exhibition, the more difficult it is to organize the study and the collection of all the material that is vital for a museum to acquire.

*      *      *

It goes without saying that by making a conscious decision to refrain from simply foraging for objects that might be interesting to include in the exhibition, from automatically using the ethnographic collection passed on to us as an inheritance, we are essentially bringing to light the question of establishing a new museum; moreover, it can be said in advance that a significant portion of the property previously accumulated by the museum will remain behind the scenes of our exhibition. After all, in refusing to chase after “interesting” objects, we must expose class relations with the assistance of objects in the broad sense of the word—we must show the social nature of the depicted era, its base and its superstructure. The experience of many museums has already sufficiently demonstrated that while establishing such goals, the museums cannot find relevant artifacts within their archives. This is an inheritance of the past!

*      *      *

First, we are faced with the fact that in resolving the issue of museum exhibition, an extreme dumbing-down has occurred by way of presenting an assortment of flashy
exhibits instead of those that are relevant in terms of social relations and class struggles, which can only come about as a result of performing research. Next is the transition in museum methods of display toward the bookish: there are posters hanging on the walls (and—the latest fad in museum technique—from the ceilings), quotations from Marxist classics, photographs, and other related materials. By using these “exhibiting” methods, they supplant the real nature of museum work, forgetting that the museum operates with objects, which are its main, prevalent exhibits, while everything else is only secondary, explanatory, and is necessary only as far as the various types of labels and illustrations aid in a gradual understanding of the foundation of the exhibition based on physical materials. Refusal to make physical objects the foundation of the exhibition is a refusal to build the museum.

A visitor does not go to the museum to read quotations from books hung on walls, but in order to find in a museum what he can’t find in books and what is needed to round out his knowledge: he goes to see tangible monuments of the past, the most varied scientific exhibitions that an informed exhibition has to offer, machinery, and so on. Our goal is for the exhibition to help him gain a type of knowledge that would give him a solid foundation for a dialectical-materialistic worldview, one that would equip him for the enduring revolutionary struggle for the work of socialism.

It goes without saying that it is much easier to adorn the walls with hundreds of posters on class struggle than it is for a museum to portray at least one historic moment of class struggle in such a way that the visitor would clearly understand, for instance, that in the hands of the ruling classes, religion was and remains an instrument of oppression of the working masses; or using the materials from the natural history department to show the influence of geographical conditions on the everyday lives of the peoples of the Ural and the Volga Region, and so on.

However, elucidating relations by means of objects, we must, with the help of museum labels, and most importantly illustrated material, provide the supplemental material that will help the visitor to master our exhibition in the light of a dialectical-materialistic worldview. In the same way, while portraying some key elements of class struggle we have to resort to using original documents, the exhibiting of which without explanatory text will not achieve the desired goal. An original document attracts the visitor’s attention, but the visitor won’t read it if he’s already familiar with that distant era. Moreover, he’ll rarely read it in its entirety—while it is vital for us that he becomes familiar with the basic meaning demonstrated by the document. Here is where the museum label comes to the rescue—better yet if it is accompanied by an illustration, an artistic rendering that depicts the content of the document.

No less important is the question of aesthetic arrangement in the exhibition, especially in regard to the depiction of everyday life.

In order to avoid mistakes in building the exhibition, we must first conduct a study of the scene to be depicted from a Marxist point of view, and then acquire a selection of assorted, timely materials to be exhibited based on this foundation. It is not for the artist to decide what is displayed, but for the researcher, while questions about the arrangement must be decided collectively. Moreover, the last word belongs to the researcher, who must demand from the artist a kind of arrangement where exhibits are not overshadowed by the aesthetic arrangement, but exactly the opposite—the aesthetic arrangement must help the visitor to better understand the museum exhibit.
We must present this demand even more strongly when a museum devotes wall space to displays in which the role of the artist is of major significance. The experiences of the Museum of Ethnography and the Moscow Regional Museum have vividly demonstrated that a museum that yields the managing role in the exhibition to the artist invariably devolves into spectacular methods of display, where the deciding factor is the external effect rather than a well founded, scientifically based demonstration of class relations. We must consider the rejection of the latter as a refusal to build a Marxist museum, which should use various exhibiting methods, but regardless of the form of the exhibition, its content should be justified by information received as a result of studying the exhibited event. As far as the arrangement is concerned, we must exclude anything that is arbitrary: every detail, every stroke must be precisely justified regardless of whether they satisfy the artist.

What is allowed and understood in a theatrical setting cannot be tolerated in a scientific one, which is what a museum is; there can be no artificiality: objects missing from one era substituted with objects from another cannot occupy space of equal value in the museum exhibition, whether the conversation pertains to dioramas on the natural sciences or everyday life.

Using these founding principles to analyze the current exhibition organized by the Museum of Ethnography, titled *People of the Urals and the Volga Region*, we have to mention a slew of gross mistakes that are of essential significance. We know that its exhibitions are not complete—the directors of the museum have warned us about this—however, if we were just talking about a few missing exhibits then this warning would have a mitigating effect. But the sad fact is that it is missing its *fundamental* material—its depiction of class struggle in the past is extremely weak, while we don’t see it at all in the Soviet period; it does not show cultural construction among the people of the Urals and the Volga region at all, which, it is known, had a colossal role in the national politics of the SCP(b); it is extremely naive in its depiction of the industrial strength of the Urals and the Volga regions with their Soviet powerhouses; finally, though the Volga itself was of great significance in tsarist colonial politics, which in turn had a strong impact on the everyday life and economics of the people of the Volga region—in an exhibit dedicated to the people of the Volga region—*there is no Volga*!

None of these significant gaps are accidental. They have appeared as a result of the fact that the museum, having set a goal for itself of depicting the lives of peoples of a vast territory, extremely diverse in its economic and national makeup, having not done research and, as a result, having not acquired through analysis the materials vital for the exhibition, the museum picks and chooses from what it happens to find in its old reserves, uses already available printed materials from various researchers on other peoples of the Ural and the Volga regions, and to the weakest possible extent uses this material in its own short-run exhibitions. These inadequate materials are too weak to allow for the possibility of laying a sound foundation for building the exhibition; without these necessary items, the museum tries to fill the gaping hole with labels, posters, and diagrams hung on walls and even, sometimes, from the ceiling. At the same time, all this graphic material cannot convey to the visitor a visual understanding of class struggle in its various manifestations, which is rather complex—especially in the national regions—and which is often disguised as a form of protecting the interests of “the whole nation,” while in its class content it is directed purely at protecting the proprietary interests of the propertied classes.
No matter how artistically arranged the dioramas may be, their museum value will be determined first and foremost based on their scientific relevance, which means that the entire arrangement of the diorama cannot be the arbitrary product of a museum worker’s unfettered creative endeavors, but must be a realistic depiction of that true class struggle which occupied a place in the past and occupies a place in the present. In order to provide such a depiction, both that past and this present must be studied. It can’t be achieved by way of accidental, haphazard collecting, or by selecting flashy artifacts chosen at the personal discretion of the museum worker, but exclusively as a result of scientific research, which lays the foundation for the entire exhibition, which brings to light the driving force of today’s society, with all of its interconnectedness and facilitation. Only under these conditions will the museum know what must be included at the forefront of the exhibition, what needs to be at the center of visitor’s attention, and what concrete task should be given to the artist, while directing his work along a path that is in full accordance with the entire exhibition.

In this regard things are essentially no better at the Moscow Regional Museum. Take for instance the composition of the exhibit Socialist Construction. Here the dominant role of the artist over the whole exhibition is particularly apparent: the arrangement overshadows the exhibits, particularly the graphics. And can you really call a section where 95 percent of the exhibits are captions, photographs, posters, slogans, and so on a “museum”? Museum exhibits are supposed to stand out from precisely this kind of a background, for the exhibits themselves are intended to show the socialist construction of nationalities populating the Moscow region.

Switching over to dioramas exhibited by the Central Museum for Ethnography, their very content raises a series of serious objections. For example, there is a scene depicting, according to author’s intent, the parasitic role of monks. How is this moment conveyed? Two monks with icons in their hands walk into a peasant hut and beg for alms. And that’s it. The monks are crudely portrayed; the scale is in complete discord with the setting (with a low ceiling). The first question is: Why has this particular moment been chosen? Is the depiction of begging for alms really the most striking expression of the parasitic nature of clerics, of their exploitive role in regard to the working people representative of all nationalities? Drunkenness, depravity in the “houses of the holy,” faithful servility to the monarchy, ruthless exploitation of peasants and workers—would the depiction of this “everyday life” of church officials, in real surroundings, be less vivid and convincing? Especially if these dioramas are surrounded by genuine documents proving how beneath the mask of godliness and sermons on “Christ’s” teachings lies hidden parasitism, depravity, and service to the exploiters?! An incompetent and incorrect use of dioramas in museum exhibitions can undeservedly discredit this relatively appropriate technique of depicting various scenes of the past and present.

In order to prevent museums from transforming from the former cabinets of curiosities into theatrical set design, we must decisively speak out against any sort of simplification and primitivism, and just as decisively we must demand from museums that dioramas of domestic arts are scientifically based. This is why we are of the opinion that the artist must perform the tasks that the researcher gives him. The creative impulse of the museum artist must be directed toward a better realization of these tasks, which are strictly defined by the present, and by information received as a result of research into one or another event.
If these conditions were observed by the Museum of Ethnography and the Moscow Regional Museum, if the researcher directed the artist in these museums, we would not be eyewitnesses pointing out the significant gaps in recently opened and ongoing exhibitions.
were extremely extensive, stretching across a combined distance of two kilometers.

The Park deserves praise for the very fact of organizing exhibitions, and for the genuinely effective strategy of staging them outdoors along a walkway, with exhibits and viewers in immediate proximity. Yet the 1931 exhibitions, though broad in extent, fell short. Just like some of the Park’s other undertakings, they suffered from inferior quality, despite their engagement with pressing questions, their broad scope, and their externally lavish presentation.

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The plethora of meaning-distorting errors, the unbalanced arrangement of the exhibits, the lack of explanatory captions and labels—all this amounted to a major deficiency in its own right. But the limitations of the exhibition did not stop there. The problem stemmed from the exhibition’s very character.

It’s a revealing fact that neither the comments book nor the questionnaires—of which, incidentally, too few were collected in comparison with the immense foot traffic at the exhibition—featured remarks concerning errors identified by visitors, even though spotting most of them required no specialized knowledge but merely a good dollop of common sense, the inconsistencies being an affront to the eye. Which augurs ill: the viewer failed to notice the errors, and therefore also failed to absorb the content of the exhibition.

The Foundations exhibition, its seventy areas encompassing every major branch of manufacturing, was arranged outdoors along a central walkway, with visitors inevitably traversing its entire length, at a distance of a few meters from the exhibits. Foot traffic ran into the millions. Yet a
considerable percentage of visitors simply walked past, their apprehension of the exhibition passive in nature. It was only in a handful of the most interesting areas that these "passersby" became spectators.

Day after day, without fail, you could observe groups of spectators gathering at the exhibition zones dedicated to non-ferrous metallurgy, ore minerals, and (to a somewhat lesser extent) crude oil, rubber, and peat. These were constructed along different lines. The reason they enjoyed so much attention is this: the non-ferrous metallurgy, ore minerals, crude oil, and peat zones of the exhibition were set up by the exhibitors themselves, with its other areas put together by the Park’s administration.

The non-ferrous metallurgy zone comprised a true exhibition—in other words, a vivid display of objects underpinned by an elucidation of their nature. The zone offered a more comprehensive assessment of its branch of manufacture than did other zones, and provided the viewer with a host of fresh insights—something other zones failed to achieve.

The information offered in other areas of the exhibition was scant, exclusively numerical, and of a scope inferior to what might be gleaned from newspapers. The zones focusing on aspects of the national economy each featured two or three statistics and a few uncaptioned, nonsensically ordered photographs.

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The Giants of the Five-Year Plan and Socialist Construction in the Moscow Oblast exhibitions featured fewer reality-distorting errors, but were by no means better in terms of their general level. If the Foundations exhibition was a profoundly tiresome sequence of measly numbers that provided absolutely no insight into the various branches of the national economy, then Giants of the Five-Year Plan was all construction-themed decorativeness. Granted, the task of presenting and visualizing new construction developments isn’t an easy one—since it’s impossible to incorporate actual components of the building work directly into the exhibition space, it becomes necessary to resort to schematism and image—but this difficulty does not excuse the exhibition’s weaknesses.

The park’s exhibitions were flawed not only in the sense of being riddled with minor errors and misrepresentations, but by dint of their very nature or character. Despite their colossal scale and externally lavish execution, they were too lightweight and dry in terms of content, providing insufficient insight into the objects on display, failing to penetrate into the significance of the phenomena in question, and dealing not so much in facts as in a decorativeness of execution bogged down in the potholes of formalistic excess.

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The reasons for the inferior quality of the Park’s exhibitions stem from a fundamental distortion of the methods of putting on exhibitions, as well as from the implementation of techniques alien and principally incongruous with the specificity of exhibitions serving as instruments of political enlightenment.

In part, these reasons stem from an unsound legacy. The Park’s exhibitions have their roots in the advertising displays of the ad agency Dvigatel’ (Engine). Exhibitions as conceived by the Park’s exhibition administrator are tantamount to advertising and must be constructed according to principles...
tested in practice and conforming to the advertising methods of 1907, complemented by all the newest achievements of the bourgeois system of Western Europe.

“Exhibitions = advertisements.” This equation has two corollaries: an idiosyncratic means of putting on exhibitions and an idiosyncratic system of exhibit arrangement. Exhibition practice comes to be regarded as a commercial endeavor whose primary concern is the maximization of profit. The cart is put before the horse and the entire exhibition process is muddled.

If the exhibition organizer serves merely to receive and execute orders from advertisers, then, of course, concerns about content and its execution may be absent; the exhibition administration may consist of agents whose role is to attract exhibitors and artists of all ranks and abilities. Although, under present-day conditions, the Park’s endeavors are being steered away from the sphere of advertising, its attitude to exhibitions and the system for organizing them have remained the same, as has its administration. The fundamental element of the administration is absent—those working on content and those working on the arrangement of exhibits.

Conscious distortion consists of the introduction of professional artistic tendencies, the emasculation of content, and the displacement of the appropriate ratio between fact and image.

Fine art is a domain of particularly steadfast traditions. At the same time, in no other domain is tradition as inimical to the objectives of the present day as in that of fine art. Not
measures, viewers may be interested in the industrial process as a whole. Agitation that fails to elucidate the concepts it is based on will never fulfill its goals. If the viewer is informed that blooming mills and cracking plants are under construction in the USSR, he'll want to know what these are, what they’re for, and how they work.

There is a profound and fundamental distinction to be made between agitation and bourgeois advertising: the focus of agitation is not the same, and neither are its aims; the set of conditions in which it takes place is different, as, indeed, are the people it targets. The techniques of bourgeois advertising, developed in the ultra-individualistic conditions of a Spenglerian Europe, a Europe of dead ends and crisis, serve predominantly to exert pressure on the emotions, to shift them beyond the domain of conscious control. The psychotechnics of advertising are predicated in no small part on Freudian psychoanalysis. Its purpose is to blind and deafen, to liberate desire from the control of the intellect.

Under the conditions of our culture, wherein man is being liberated from the anarchy of his fragmented emotional complexes and disjointed appetites, and is acquiring an integral unity of intellect and organizing will, advertising of this kind is unnecessary and ineffective. The popularity of our program of socialist construction can be based only on a deep understanding thereof. This program can be based only on a clear awareness of the goal. The program’s realization requires the triumph of the intellectual faculty over biological appetites.

Exhibitions focused on the problems and prospects of our country’s industrialization must impart knowledge, and lots of it. The more knowledge is imparted, the more the viewer’s interest is piqued. The most convincing way to exhibit the program of our development cannot be limited to brief informational snippets and bare statistical tables—it must
When organizing museum exhibits—especially in art and historico-cultural museums—it is necessary to proceed from the self-sufficient concretism of individual objects to an elucidation of their meaning and to an unveiling of their interrelationships. At the same time, it is necessary to overcome the vestiges of the recent immanentism of facts, to combat the vestiges of the era of cultural disintegration, when the study of art, striving to put time out of joint, did not even want to be a history of art, and strove to limit itself to a scrutiny of individual monuments, unwilling to know when objects were produced, what conditions spawned their production, and what social shifts they epitomized. The most consistent expression of time being “out of joint” was the call to remove captions in museums (Fritz Burger).

Today, the focus of our attention has naturally shifted from individual monuments to the unveiling of their meaning and interdependence. Our gaze is directed at the monument, beyond the monument, and between monuments. A new element in the exhibitional system is therefore perfectly appropriate, even indispensable—text as the condensation of conclusions abstracted from the exhibitional corpus.

If, in a museum context, the monument represents the given quantity and its meaning represents the unknown, the reverse is true when conceptualizing an exhibition on current affairs: the task here is to find concrete incarnations of ideas, problems, and goals directly perceivable by us. Frequently these ideas are still in the process of being realized and reified. The task of putting on an exhibition on current affairs means finding the visual material necessary for a complete and convincing perception of the ideas that represent the object of agitation. Museum exhibition proceeds by way of abstraction, exhibitions by way of concretization. The shortcomings of museum exhibition manifest themselves

Exhibitions dealing with questions of current affairs must, of course, have a different fate. They must not become wall newspapers. Concrete, viewable facts are most convincing. They constitute a condition for intensive apprehension and must form the keystone of the exhibitional complex. It goes without saying that the role of concrete facts in the exhibitional orchestra must not be limited to their external shells—it must shed light on all its prerequisites and corollaries. An exhibition is, by its nature, a subvariety of a museum, typified by a strong centrality of purpose and a singularity of theme.

The process of organizing a political exhibition is antithetical to the work being done in museums—made up as they are of monuments of the past—and to the changes in which the task of reconstructing the system of museum exhibition consists. The given and the unknown stand in inverse relation here.

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2. This sentence is circular in the original —Trans. note
in the hegemony of isolated self-sufficient objects; those of political exhibitions, conversely, in an abstract presentation of material and an excess of text. Battle must be waged on two fronts.

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An exhibition must offer a well-orchestrated, sequentially unfurling corpus of insights into the object under scrutiny. The abstraction of isolated aspects of the object’s nature is permissible only to a certain extent. The exhibition must penetrate as deeply as possible into the character of the object—the deeper it penetrates, the greater the interest elicited in the viewer. It is futile to pin one’s hopes on brevity and superficial popularization. It is imperative that each and every notion invoked in the exhibition is properly elucidated. “Showing” must take precedence over “telling.” Text is indispensable in the form of labeling, captioning, and commentary, but it is scarcely capable of being the exhibition’s central focus, and external effects and tricks are of little help for it in this impossible role.

Facts have the right to hegemonic status in the expository system. Images may merely stand in for facts when there are lacunas in the chain of facts. The reverse is absolutely unacceptable. Decorativeness and schematism must not enter into conflict with facts and must not drown out their voice.
THE MUSEUM AS COMMON TASK

View of The First World Exhibition of Interplanetary Spacecrafts and Mechanisms, 1927, Moscow.

View of *The First World Exhibition of Interplanetary Spacecrafts and Mechanisms*, 1927 Moscow.
III
THE MATERIALISTIC MUSEUM

View of Art of the Industrial Bourgeoisie, 1931. State Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow. The exhibition was curated by Aleksey Fedorov-Davydov. The caption “Bourgeois art in the blind alley of formalism and self-negation” appears on the wall.


A model of a boxcar with militia being sent to the frontline displayed in the exhibition *Everyday Life of the Working Class from 1900 to 1930*. State Russian Museum, Leningrad. This image originally accompanied Valentin Kholtsov’s text “*Everyday Life of the Working Class from 1900 to 1930* Exhibition: History and Everyday Life Department of the State Russian Museum” in *Soviet Museum* no. 3, (1931).

“Young Naturalists Protect Medicinal Plants against Aphids,” as referenced in P. N. Khrapov’s text “Museum in the Street,” Soviet Museum no. 4 (1931).

From left to right: “Agitprop-truck on the go; Agitprop-truck functioning as a radio, library, and an information point; Agitprop-truck functioning as an outdoor cinema; Agitprop-truck adapted to present an exhibition; Agitprop-truck transformed into a stage; Agitprop-truck serving as a library,” from M. S. Ilkovsky’s text “Bringing the Agitprop-truck to the Service of Cultural Construction,” Soviet Museum no. 3, (1932).


The Museum Outside of the Museum

MUSEUMS IN INDUSTRIAL ENTERPRISES

K. I. VOROBYOV
I would like to make it absolutely clear that what I have in mind here does not involve natural history museums in industrial plants, or indeed “mini-Hermitages.” I intend to discuss museums in plants like Krasny Putilovets, Krasny Gvozdilshik, Krasnoye Sormovo, Dnieprostrooi, Magnitogorsk, Svirstroy, and the Stalingrad Tractor Plant, i.e. museums associated with the giants of socialist construction that are emerging in ever-increasing numbers on our Soviet soil.\(^1\)

The question of studying industrial enterprises was raised at the Fourth All-Russian Conference on Local-lore

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1. The Putilov Company was founded in 1848 and produced rolling stock for the railways; then, in 1917, after the revolution, the plant was renamed Krasny Putilovets and was responsible for manufacturing the first Soviet tractors.

Krasny Gvozdilshik was built on the site of an old steel-rolling factory on Vasilievsky Island, Saint Petersburg. The water tower, which was built between 1930 and 1931, is regarded as a landmark of constructivist architecture.

The Nizhny Novgorod Machine Factory, founded in 1849, was one of Russia’s oldest shipbuilding companies. After the Civil War (1918–1920), the Krasnoye Sormovo plant became one of the Soviet Union’s most progressive and distinguished shipbuilding yards.

Dnieprostrooi (the Dnieper Hydroelectric Station), was designed during the 1920s as part of the Soviet drive toward industrialization. Work on it began in 1927 and it was producing electricity by the end of 1932.

Magnitogorsk is an industrial city in the province of Chelyabinsk. It became a steel-producing center and was crucial to Stalin’s Five-Year Plan during the 1930s. It went on to play an important part in the production of machinery used during the Second World War.

Construction on the Lower Svir Hydroelectric Station in the province of Leningrad began in 1927 and it opened in 1933. The settlement, which was economically dependent on the hydroelectric station, was known as Svirstroy. —Trans. note

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2. Kraevedenie is variously translated as “local-lore,” “local studies,” or sometimes simply transliterated as “kraevedenie.” The conservation societies came under attack for their opposition to the new Soviet construction programs, but there was no overt rejection of conservation issues per se at the Fourth All-Russian Conference on Local-lore. —Trans. note
Now if we take as our example a plant from the period of economic collapse in which lighters were manufactured for the private market and a plant where work is in step with the required socialist tempo, then the difference is necessarily so huge that the representation of this timespan, although insignificant in the grander scheme of things, is of colossal importance for educational policy makers.

A museum in an industrial enterprise has before it a very precise set of goals. These include the necessary support for the development of the plant as well as the struggle to implement an industrial and financial plan (*Promfinplan*), to adhere to the socialist tempo required for production, to collectivize the daily routine, and to register the shortcomings and achievements in terms of factory production as well as the day-to-day running and socioeconomic conditions representative of the plant in both the past and the present.

The first goal involves the factory museum as a point of reference for scientific research and the study of local-lore in a given plant and as a repository for material of particular value concerning different sides of life in that plant. In my opinion, the organization of local-lore sections and museums in industrial enterprises will force the TsBK out from its current state of impasse. Without a point of reference for local-lore in industrial enterprises, there can be no discussion concerning the large-scale involvement of the workforce in matters relating to it. If you wish to interest that workforce in local-lore through the study of the flora and fauna of a given area, you will automatically fail. But if you encourage the workforce to study the factory where it is currently living and working, it will clearly react more swiftly and purposefully than if it were studying a branch of botany. We must also bear in mind that, since the creation of these museums is important not only for a particular plant, the foundations...
MUSEUMS IN INDUSTRIAL ENTERPRISES

will also be laid for the development of large-scale museums of technology and economics to act as repositories for all manner of material.

So, who will manage this task? Special research groups will only capture life in a plant during a given period—let us say from June to August—but we would need to ensure a continual collection so that the museum, a small study-group in fact, would therefore be able to justify its existence as part of an industrial enterprise. It would act as a continual source of propaganda promoting the industrial and financial plan (Promfinplan), the Five-Year Plan, and the socialist reconstruction of each particular factory. Its visual representation would be of considerable use for the plant’s sociopolitical organizations.

Training campaigns are indeed being conducted in the factories. Let us suppose that a ten-day civil defense training campaign is conducted and then put on one side, or a campaign to eradicate any potential hold-ups is carried out and also put on one side. These campaigns are conducted by sociopolitical organizations at the factory, but there is no continual, detailed visual repository available to anyone who wishes to familiarize himself with the matter in hand. This is precisely the responsibility of factory museums and all the material relating to the different campaigns should be housed there, including of course other main issues facing the museum itself.

The museum would, thenceforth, introduce new teams of workers fresh from the country and collective farms (kolkhoz) to life in a factory. As there is a significant percentage of workers of peasant origin in these plants—workers as yet unfamiliar with factory life—it is only natural that, since a museum is somewhere where questions surrounding the economic and political development of a given factory either before or after the October Revolution might be answered, it is also the place where groups of incoming workers would be able to familiarize themselves with the workings of the plant of which they are the masters. Of course, this would not be a museum’s only function. Its principal task is to help sociopolitical organizations resolve questions concerning the process of familiarization of these new teams of workers. We know very well that in large industrial plants and new construction sites, the familiarization of workers, newly arrived from the country, is of critical importance.

You are only too aware that there are a vast number of outside visitors to a factory, including workers from other industrial enterprises, collective farmers, students, and tourists. They become acquainted with a plant and what it produces, but fail to see the dynamics behind its development and inner workings because the guide in charge of conducting the visit has scarcely enough time to conduct a lightning museum tour, paying attention only to the technical side and failing to elaborate on the history of a particular department or factory shop. In a museum, these issues are represented in a nutshell.

The character of the work undertaken by these museums is not limited to the foregoing: there is a whole range of other areas in which their importance is enormous. In organizational terms, this was solved by a resolution made by the Fourth All-Russian Conference on Local-lore as follows: “Museums come under the jurisdiction of the local-lore section of the cultural branch under the aegis of the factory committee.” I believe that their place has now been correctly defined, but in my view, in addition to the majority of workers from the factory floor, we need to interest engineering and technical personnel, students, the school affiliated with a given enterprise, and students studying...
at the technical college for the associated discipline in the museum’s work.

Community work undertaken by students at a plant can be divided into two groups: work at the plant in the true sense of the word and work undertaken for the local-lore section involved in studying a particular factory or plant. Students at the factory school should be involved in this work because, with a view to permanent work in the future, they will undoubtedly be more closely involved with production than anyone for whom a detailed knowledge of the material associated with the factory to which they are attached is impossible.

What, then, is the fundamental difference between a factory museum and a museum of technology and economics? The latter is devoted to the technology behind production, whereas in the former, this is not paramount. It is, in fact, paramount, but only generally speaking, with additional areas being interpreted in relation to the factory to which a particular museum is affiliated. Neither should its goals be the same as a museum of technology and economics.

In my opinion, this is what a factory museum should be and, in its essential form, it should include:

1. The economic and political history of the factory up until the October Revolution.

2. The economic and political history of the factory after the October Revolution. Here, the October Revolution is perceived as a line of demarcation. We would also need to refer to the civil war, the famine, and the periods of recovery and reconstruction.

3. The role of the factory within the general economic system and district. Here, we should bear in mind the supply of raw materials, distribution points, and recruitment of labor.

4. The factory in practice: the Five-Year Plan, the Five-Year Plan achieved in four years, the industrial and financial plan (Promfinplan), the counter-industrial and financial plan (vstrechnyi promfinplan), and the socialist methods of working to include socialist competition, shock work, and production (the question of export is included here). This material is constantly changing, being added to, and developing. Numerous diagrams would be included in this section.

5. Enemies of socialist construction and the battle against them, sabotage, sacerdotalism, sectarianism, illiteracy, drunkenness, and the struggle against absentees and anti-Semites. These issues would not receive attention in an ordinary museum. A museum of technology and economics would feature sabotage generally and sabotage by the Industrial Party (Prompartiya). Individual cases of sabotage might also feature in the museum affiliated with a particular enterprise.

6. The day-to-day routine of the workforce. This is an unsatisfactory area as we are on the periphery.

3. The Prompartiya, or Industrial Party, Show Trial took place between November 25 and December 7, 1930. A number of prominent engineers and economists were accused of forming the party in order to wreck Soviet industry and transport and, ultimately, overthrow the government. —Trans. note
between the old and the new. There is a wealth of matters relating to the socialist way of life, which is receiving scarcely any attention. Individual attempts to summarize it are currently under way, however, and the City Museum in Leningrad is taking steps in that direction, but again of a general nature. Displays would play a key role here. There could be diagrams and cuttings on view as well as miniature models of rooms, communal flats, and hostels.

7. Finally, ideas for the development of a factory should be included as well as any campaign work—the shock brigades’ ten-day period of civil-defense training and the battle against illiteracy, and so forth.

This is, in brief, how I imagine the organization of factory museums in industrial enterprises.
to have more in number, without really thinking about the existing connections between one object and another.

The state of other museums (including national, regional, and district museums) is different. These museums, which were founded only after the October Revolution, in practice could not yet select objects that were necessary for an orderly and thematic installation. Here we see another extreme, but unfortunately, the results in the first and in the second case are equally unsatisfactory. Therefore we have to assert in earnest that despite the fact that there is a wide network of museums within the Soviet Union, despite the massive and intensive work that is being done in some of them to bring them closer to their viewers, museums, to speak generally speaking, remain unpopular among all levels of the working class in the city, and especially in the village. Museums are generally visited by students. The percentage of working-class visitors is comparatively low. The peasant masses are unfamiliar with museums, and take up the last position in statistics of museum visits. This sad fact is apparent not only in central museums, but also in museums in smaller towns and more remote locations. Meanwhile, the plan for the cultural restructuring of our entire country dictates the necessity and urgency of including museums in the first ranks of forces moving culture into the masses. The work must be reorganized in such a way that all museums, without exception, become cultural centers, closely connected in their work with production groups, schools, collective farms, clubs, and so forth. We need to reach a point where this connection would not have an accidental, sporadic character of visits and “nice gestures,” which are good while they are happening but soon get forgotten. We need to reach a point where this connection is organic in character and where the museum becomes a connecting center, a niche for every working person who lives in a given area.
THE EXPERIENCE OF DEVELOPING MOBILE EXHIBITIONS

Every museum practitioner knows that it is not always easy to entice a visitor into a museum, who goes there driven not by mere curiosity but rather with a realization that he is going to a museum to increase his knowledge, to learn. This kind of visitor, whether an industrial worker, peasant, or collective farm worker, will not only learn what is interesting to him when he comes to a museum, but will also teach a museum worker himself—will help him with practical instructions and advice. Creating such a core group of patrons attached to every museum is a very important and vital task. But the most efficient and the most convenient way to actualize this connection between a museum and the masses is organizing mobile exhibitions.

If a worker or a peasant occupied with their daily work neither has time to attend a museum, nor has yet acquired the habit of going to museums, the museum has to come to them. A museum has to call to them and provoke in them a desire to develop their cultural standing. We need to admit that workers and peasants have been attending museums rarely up until now because our museums, for the most part, could not assume a position necessary to satisfy visitor demands. In this direction, museums should not fall behind other cultural organizations, and a mobile exhibit should become one of the most impactful and central areas of contemporary museum work. However, bare words and appeals are going to help here less than the language of objects that are successfully and consciously selected.

Mobile exhibitions must hit the road to factories and factory clubs, cultural parks, and reading huts in collective farms, to schools and other similar places that workers are accustomed to visiting without considerable strain of will or desire to see something or hear something. A mobile exhibition, accompanied by an accessible discussion, set up in such a place of cultural recreation, undoubtedly will be a convenient conduit for scientific knowledge and an agitating factor for attracting a conscious and interested visitor to a museum. In its content, the mobile exhibition must answer pertinent sociopolitical questions to a much greater extent than the internal collection of a museum.

In conjunction, an exhibition organized outside the walls of a museum should strive not to be thematically disjointed from the actual museum and its main goals and principles. Very successful and desirable exhibitions would be those that represent some kind of social conclusion or report from the museum, or from some department of the museum, on the work performed in a given field, presented in a popular manner.

While preparing the exhibition for any particular group of people (peasantry, craftsmen, a particular group of workers) a particular theme can be selected, one that is closest to this category of laborers, so that they get a substantial benefit from visiting the exhibition (for example, an exhibition on the development of agricultural tools for the peasantry, an exhibition on the history of spinning and weaving for textile workers, and so on). While leaving it to the museum worker to select the theme of a planned mobile exhibition, we would only summarize some industrial sectors to which mobile exhibitions can be dedicated. These sectors would be: (a) agriculture (in any of its various fields); (b) artisanal industry; (c) questions related to various technical and industrial advances, medicine, and generally, to various areas of applied knowledge. It ought to be noted that a very representative and convenient method for the agitation factor, which should always predominate, is the juxtaposition of the old and the new. Such a concurrent contrasting display is more lively and is the best way to increase a viewer’s interest in new
scientific and technological achievements, and to provoke the desire to learn how to use them; revealing and explaining various “nonscientific” ways of working would force them to abandon them faster.

In relation to social and historical sciences—setting educational tasks as their main goal—mobile exhibitions must try, in popular form, to acquaint the viewer with the history of labor processes, socioeconomic formations, class struggle, and so on. In relation to the natural sciences, mobile exhibitions must open the viewer’s eyes to the surrounding nature, in accordance with the principles of a materialistic worldview that are to be imprinted upon his mind. It is imperative (especially for national and ethnographic museums) that mobile exhibits respond to the main problems of political and economic life in the area—problems of national emancipation, separate agricultural problems, problems connected with the Five-Year Plan for that area. If at all possible, it is highly desirable to time mobile exhibitions according to various dates of local historical-revolutionary significance. For example, an exhibit dedicated to the labor and everyday life of a woman on March 8, antireligious exhibitions during antireligious and anti-Easter campaigns, and so on.

In addition, mobile exhibitions must relate to general problems of the day, such as: the fulfillment of the industrial-financial plan, the struggle for skilled workers, socialist competitions, agitation, government lending, and so on.

Moving on to the question of how to build a mobile exhibition, we need to point out that when developing a plan for the exhibition, one should select a clear and well-defined theme. The experience of organizing mobile exhibitions shows that diverting into different subthemes and complicating the exhibition is impractical and unnecessary. It is also completely unnecessary to agglomerate a lot of objects, illustrations, and diagrams. Abundance and overloading the exhibition will only spoil it and will turn visitors away. It is necessary to have a very clear and precise selection, choosing only what is necessary for the main idea demanded by the exhibition.

While in the process of developing the plan and organizing the actual exhibition, the cooperation of specialists from different scientific fields (for example, a historian, an economist, an ethnographer, and an industrial worker) is very important. Moreover—and we underscore this—the cooperation between a theoretician and a practitioner in the field is very important. With this collective work, a theoretician—a historian, for example—reveals the connection that various stages of production have to socioeconomic formations; speaking about the tasks of the current moment, he points out the dialectic development of various phenomena, progressive and viable many years ago and completely useless under contemporary conditions. A specialist in practical knowledge popularizes the results of scientific advances and provides concrete conclusions and ways in which they can be used.

Mobile exhibitions pertaining to one particular scientific area should not, if possible, be limited to it; on the contrary, they must try to show some generalizing and complimenting facts from other areas of knowledge.

Large numbers of people should be incorporated into exhibition planning, those for whom the exhibition is intended as well as, for example, workers for exhibitions going to the village, and peasants and collective farmers for exhibitions intended for the cities.

We envision the exhibits within the mobile exhibition as follows: firstly, real objects taken from museum collections; secondly, models and replicas if real objects are not meant for travel or are the only one of their kind at the museum.
When introducing models, one should try to make them resemble the original as closely as possible and make them to the same scale, so that there is not a false impression.

The next and very important part of the exhibition should be illustration material, in the form of photographs, drawings, paintings, and posters. Keeping in mind a clear and strict selection, it is necessary to choose only what is most relevant to the theme, providing photographs that are maybe bigger, and if possible, of standard size, trying to avoid photographs that are hard to understand, and if possible, trying to show in photographs what cannot be shown in the exhibits (the process of work, living conditions, and so on). Schematic drawings and plans should be kept to a minimum, because they are badly and reluctantly accepted by visitors who are not used to museums. What makes any exhibit livelier (even one that is not specifically dedicated to the problems of art) is the addition of artistically rendered sketches of paintings by famous masters or their reproductions. These materials, being vivid and bright, decorate the exhibit very well and draw attention to it. It is possible to use both artistically agitating material and separate posters but again, in moderate quantities, not overloading the main composition.

Material that is very useful to almost any exhibition, but at the same time very complicated to present, is statistical material: diagrammatic and cartographic. Following the same principal that only what is most necessary should be presented, every museum worker building an exhibition must make a trial exhibition, checking the impression created by it on various groups of visitors. Only then should he or she begin to create any diagrams or cartograms. We would like to point out, by way of practice-based advice, that it is necessary to try to deviate as much as possible from clichéd types of diagrams and cartograms—cubes, circles, curves, and so on; instead, replace them with vivid markers, for example, coal (show a piece of coal or its replica), grain (show a pile of grain), and so forth.

A diagram should be interesting and accessible not only to the person who is leading the excursion; it needs to be composed and executed so vividly and satisfactorily that every independent visitor stops at it. A diagram must not be an appendix to the theme of the exhibition, but must predominantly form a composite and necessary part of the whole plan. If it is possible in local conditions, it is very desirable to use light effects in the exhibition, in the form of glowing diagrams, slides, geographic maps, and so on. The exhibition would only benefit if some aspects presented could illustrate the exhibited theme and its various independent episodes, for example, a replica of a tractor including people and the whole everyday environment. A replica must replace and reproduce what cannot be shown in reality. If it is not possible to make a good artistic replica, then you should abandon the idea rather than providing something that is not artistic and does not represent real life.

Explanatory labeling is of great importance at the mobile exhibition and in every museum exhibition. First of all, the organizers of the exhibition must create a general introductory label, where, in a clear, intelligible form, the content of the exhibition must be provided—its purpose, and those conclusions that it is trying to make. This introductory label should be accessible to everyone who visits the exhibition and must, at the same time, serve as a list of main theses, on which a discussion about the exhibition can be based.

If there are separate sections of the exhibition, they should also be furnished with similar labels. A very brief text label must accompany every object and illustration—the
During discussions, if possible under local conditions, it is sometimes very appropriate to accompany these discussions with film screenings or slide shows that are thematically connected to the exhibition and that can supplement it. Photographs and other types of illustrative materials must be as standardized as possible, or combined into one or several common groups of the same size and with the same mounting or frames. Diagrams and cartograms must not bring discord into the uniform artistic composition, and must be as unified as possible. If it is not possible to provide labels that are professionally printed, then they should be written on durable material (cardboard, tin, ply board), in clear and relatively large handwriting, with titles and section titles emphasized by a different font or a bigger size. Labels typed on a typewriter should be excluded, as they fade quickly and disappear.

As it is meant to be transferred from place to place, the whole mobile exhibition must be constructed in such a way that it is easy to take it apart and put it back together in a short period of time. In this case, labels and other flat materials can be permanently attached during setup—and this would be useful later, because it would help anyone to quickly orient himself during the process of hanging the exhibits. It is highly desirable that an exhibition that has been at a given place for a long time is not forgotten afterward by local organizations and visitors; therefore, it is desirable to have a small brochure, even one that is typed on a typewriter or a hectograph, so that it can be distributed as a reminder of the exhibition.

Undoubtedly, the ideal method of showing the exhibition is when the person who is very familiar with it guides the exhibition from beginning to end and can lead discussions when it is being shown. If this is not possible, it is necessary to accompany the exhibition with detailed instructions on how to show it—in other words, to make the exhibition talk for itself, to include the plan of the exhibits’ locations, to mark the route of guided tours with arrows, to attach a list of popular literature on the topic of the exhibit (and for the most important books to provide hard copies of). It is necessary to include a notebook for recording impressions and instructions that would arise during the visit. From our experience we can assert that this kind of notebook contains extremely valuable material, which can teach a great deal. It is also possible to create a small questionnaire for the viewers, with separate questions connected to the exhibit.

Values that are further animated by the inclusion of elements of oral folklore and written literary work. To demonstrate the theme, a small number of proverbs, riddles, sayings, songs, and poems presented in an abridged format. This material, which reveals the theme more fully, can sometimes serve as auxiliary material for revealing social, class, and other important topics that are sometimes not fully shown in the exhibitions themselves.

It is necessary to provide a small number of slogans for each exhibition (but under no circumstances overloading it with them). Slogans must address political problems that appear in connection to the exhibition; moreover, it is good to provide a source from which this or that slogan is taken, if it is taken from a written work, newspaper, appeal, and so on.

While organizing a mobile exhibition, organizers must always connect their enlightenment work to some extent with the general popularizing work of the museum. And while showing the exhibition, they must try to promote
their museum with the goal of increasing attendance and creating a pool of regular patrons from the working and peasant classes.

To further demonstrate and practically assist museum workers in constructing mobile exhibitions, we provide here a general description of typical exhibitions, which were organized by the East Slavic Department of the State Central Ethnographic Museum in 1930.

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**FALSE AND SCIENTIFIC AGRICULTURE**

The purpose of the exhibition is to demonstrate the connection between religious beliefs and backward forms of agriculture; the main task of the exhibition is to demonstrate the connection between production and ideology and to reveal the class essence of religious beliefs. The antireligious importance of the exhibition is based on comparing elements of agricultural magic, or “false agriculture,” with new, scientific methods of agriculture. The organizing principle of the exhibition: for greater contrast, all material pertaining to the old way of life is exhibited against a dark-gray background; material pertaining to the new way of life, against a red background.

An introductory label on the topic of “Agricultural Cults,” which introduces the exhibition’s theme and enhances the viewer’s comprehension.

1. **Ceremonial cookies that are baked and eaten, or buried in the ground during planting, with the magical purpose of increasing crop yields:** “a plow,” “a harrow,” “molding,” “a sickle,” “a lark,” “a cross and a tail bone” (cookie replicas). Proverbs and popular sayings connected with them.

2. **Primitive agricultural tools, with which the previously discussed rituals were carried out.** Models of a plow, a harrow, a sickle, a scythe, with photographs of the labor process.

3. **Objects related to spring rituals connected with agricultural works:** (a) photographs of the cooking process of traditional “fried eggs,” which were fried during the female spring holiday of “Margoski”; (b) photographs of a ritual female “Turnip” game; (c) a wreath of birch branches, which was used to tell fortunes during the days of green branches, the so-called Trinity Day.

4. **Objects related to summer rituals.** A cuckoo coffin, pertaining to the ritual titled “The Cuckoo Funeral,” performed in the days of so-called Peter’s Lent. This ritual is connected to the myth of a dying and resurrected god of vegetation.

5. **Objects related to autumnal preharvest rituals.** Photographs showing the ritual of “weaving the beard,” performed in the final moments of the harvest, which has as its basis a sacrifice to the god of
vegetation and a transfer of vegetative power to the Earth for future harvests. A bunch of ears—the “flower,” which was blessed in church, and the grains from which were used during winter sowing. The ritual cookie known as “Ilyinskaya snake,” which was eaten as protection against magic.

6. **“Holy” patrons of the land.** The icons of Christian “saints” who acted as patrons of agriculture for common people are demonstrated in the exhibition, and their pre-Christian origin is revealed. “Saint Nicholas”—the patron saint of agriculture and the “Savior from all Troubles” (one icon). “Saint George”—the saint of farming and cattle breeding (one icon). “The Virgin Mary”—“the grower of bread” (one icon).

7. **The cult of cattle breeding and magic.** Ritual cookies that are baked and given to cattle to increase the size of the offspring: “horses,” “cows,” “pigs.” “Saint Vlasius”—cattle protector (an icon). “Saint” Modest, “Medost” in folklore—the protector of cattle rearing and beekeeping (icon). “Saint” Flor and Lavr—protectors of horses (icon). A clay smoking pipe, used to smoke cows during calving. A clay pitcher, in which holy water was brought to the fields for blessing the cattle during the first grazing in the spring. A photograph depicting the ritual of “plowing the village” during mass cattle epidemics. “Chicken god”—a stone with a hole, which was hung in a chicken coop and was considered to be the protector of chickens.
MUSEUM IN THE STREET

P. N. KHRAPOV
The experience of having working mobile museums and museums in public passageways has fully justified itself; a visitor, upon entering such open museums, sometimes ending up there by chance, draws knowledge on various topics that interest him, widening his intellectual ken and then, after increasing his curiosity, goes into closed scientific-educational museums, where he satisfies his cultural-political inquiries. And finally, we have two years of experience in organizing a biological corner on the square of the Miusskaya Public Garden in Moscow—this is the first step in the realization of the idea to “take the museum into the street.”

The Miusskaya Public Garden, after a three-year-long negotiation with Moscow Communal Services, became part of the Kliment Timiryazev Biomuseum, and it was here that the initiative on organizing a biological corner of a museum started; after further negotiations with the department of municipal improvement of the Krasnopresnensky Council, we provided management, while the department provided everything else—tools, workers, seeds, planting material, and so forth.

The whole production plan was composed of several sequences or steps, contingent upon material capabilities and the financial support on which the museum could depend.

The first step or phase of our work—the minimum program—amounted to us asking the department of municipal improvement to leave the park to us without any changes in the layout of its lawns, taking upon ourselves the management of the work that was being done by the department of municipal improvement to leave the park to us without any changes in the layout of its lawns.

Needless to say, a museum could be the best propagandist of scientific-historical knowledge, of science and technology; and a museum in the street represents the most efficient method of mass cultural enlightenment for the general public. Is our society, and are our cultural budgets, ready to adequately meet the idea—museums in the street, museums without fences? We can answer confidently and strongly: yes, we are ready. We already have experience in organizing museums, mobile exhibitions on health education (National Commissary on Health), and antireligious and agricultural displays (Kliment Timiryazev Biomuseum). We also have made several attempts to bring the museum out to our inner public alleyways (Kliment Timiryazev Biomuseum).

1. Biological corners were green spaces organized by the nearby Kliment Timiryazev Biomuseum to demonstrate mostly to school students the growth process of the most valuable technological medicinal herbs and seed cultures; and also to demonstrate a technique of artificial pollination and plant vaccination. —Ed. note
technical cultures at the Chemical Department of Moscow State University, (b) 2nd Chemical and Pharmaceutical University, (c) the experimental forestry project of Losino-Pogonniy Island, (d) the corporation for the processing of edible fats, and (e) the agricultural laboratory of the newspaper The Poor (the latter for the direct participation in the work on the park); and also a number of other organizations and consulting foundations. These connections with the aforementioned organizations provided us with seeds and seedlings, and also with consultation; this assistance was given readily and for free.

The second stage of the organizational work, and the most important one, which would guarantee the success of the whole enterprise, was the creation of a group of “friends of the garden”—daily assistants to perform the work to be carried out in the space. The best people for this job were young naturalists from district schools. With this purpose, the Biomuseum, at one of the assemblies of teachers-natural scientists of the Krasnopresnensky district, presented a report on the proposed work in the garden, the projected plan for further development of the idea of bringing the museum into the street, and the role that students could play in this.

As to be expected, the teachers of the district unanimously accepted the idea of a collective use of the garden for cultural purposes.

One of the main jobs in the garden was a working Sunday dedicated to cleaning up the park for the planting of municipal improvements in the park, without any additional expenses. We wanted to give the green spaces of the park, which are generally planted with regular grass, a character of scientific-educational illustrations, revealing a number of common biological themes through plants, paving the way for the practice of agriculture.

In the second phase of our production we envisioned the creation of a pool in one of the central parts of the garden, which would allow us to show the water and swamp fauna by means of populating the pool with common freshwater animals, and in this way to introduce into the biological corner both elements of zoological themes and methods of combating the larvae of malarial mosquitoes.

In the third phase of our work, we intended to put caged enclosures in different parts of the garden. Additionally, we thought it rational to select the dwellers of these cages based on practical themes, like “friends and enemies of agriculture,” an insectarium for the biological study of human enemies, revealing ways to combat them.

And finally, if it were possible to construct, in one part of the garden, big glass cases, then the museum could commit to creating periodic exhibitions of its collections on various topics in them, or, to put it differently, to becoming a museum in the street.

Exclusively working with museum employees was not part of the museum’s plan, and contradicted the principal goals of the whole museum. Therefore, it was necessary to firstly include in this work various scientific and research organizations, which are connected in their daily activities with a number of themes that we were projecting on the garden. Through negotiation we were able to find the support and willingness to participate in the work on the park from the following agencies: (a) the nursery of medicinal and
work they carried out; they knew what was required of them. It was a different case with visitors to the public garden: the regulars—Aunts, mothers, and children—were ignorant; they were surprised by everything that was going on. As they observed, outsiders asked work leaders why this was necessary and why Moscow Communal Services wasn’t doing the work. The students, not fully understanding our goals, were confused by these questions. We had to react accordingly to such ignorance from visitors. Two students, who were the most active, organized an ad hoc rally in the public gardens, where they quickly and clearly informed the visitors of the present work being done and the prospective development of the plan for the biological corner on the grounds of the Miusskaya Public Garden. Rallies, similar to this one, have been repeatedly organized by students with children in the garden, in order to prevent looting and damage to the plants in the future.

The next step of our work in the garden was a sowing campaign. Here, as to be expected, there were skeptics and detractors: “Planting cabbage, tomatoes, and other things will spoil the whole garden,” some people said—representatives of the “higher circle,” the aesthetes. Other “sensible” individuals feared that the edible plants would be stolen, and as a result, the whole garden would be damaged. To counteract this we needed to intensify with ever more energy our everyday work among the population—the visitors of the garden—and to display a number of warning labels; we put most hope in the latter. Labels appeared in the garden three days after we began work, and they contained warnings like: “Don’t walk on the grass,” “Children, respect your comrades’ labor,” and so on. Additionally, there were several large labels, which pointed out who organized the work, who handled it, and what was being done in the garden.
Every theme of our plan had its caretaker in the form of two or three responsible persons from each school. We received seeds and planting material for free from various organizations that were interested in our work, and also from the department of municipal improvements, which has always been very helpful to us in this respect.

We were provided with working power for tillage and for the daily care of the plants: the department of municipal improvements provided us with one qualified worker—a gardener-horticulturalist—for the duration of the vegetation period and, depending on the need, provided the workforce for seasonal agricultural work.

The work of schools and their representatives consisted in executing the main tasks at hand for each theme and in keeping a diary. The person in charge needed to create étiquetage, manage all the information, work to communicate with departments and specialists to buy seeds and seedlings, plant and sow under the direction of people competent in this field, and perform the collection and registration of crops.

In addition, the responsibilities of those in charge of a theme included protecting the plants by creating and displaying warning labels for them in a timely manner, carrying out daily cultural educational work with residents of the district, and organizing activities for children in order to make these young regulars true friends of the garden. One to three days before any plant-based work that exhibited clear educational value, those in charge of themes had to create short, colorful labels that would show the time of the proposed work in order to always keep visitors informed about the work being done in the garden. Caretakers of the themes, in addition to the étiquetage of course, had to be prepared to provide visitors with explanations for any questions they might have in connection with the theme; this work demanded ongoing learning and preparation from the one doing the explaining, requiring him to keep his knowledge on the given topic current. For visitor questions outside the docent’s purview, a protocol was created to guide them to the appropriate organization for more comprehensive answers.

In order for a school and its students, responsible for a given theme, to get acquainted with the content of their theme in a timely manner, they were provided a list of literature, including addresses of organizations where they could get full information on the theme. The majority of literature on various themes in our plan can be found in the library of the Biomuseum.

We have carried out our minimum program as follows:

1. Using over one hundred plants—medicinal and technical—we illustrated the meaning of their cultivation in the USSR and the importance of each plant for export.

2. In one big area of the garden, we demonstrated crop rotation, with the grain areas of various crops, in order to acquaint the city population with those measures that are the basis of the contemporary goal for developing agriculture.

3. A forest school was organized, where technology for maintaining and developing forests in the USSR was demonstrated. In the same vein, willow and poplar plantations were erected to demonstrate a method for battling deforestation and dune sand, as well as fortifying ravines.
4. Experiments in hybridization: there were more than ten types of poppy, petunia, and peas.

5. Experiments in grafting on grass plants. We sowed: flowering tobacco, potatoes, and tomatoes. Students from the second category school are working on grafting and hybridization.

Initially, before working in the public garden, students had a short practicum on hybridization and grafting in the Biomuseum’s greenhouses. It is hard to imagine the excitement of the students when they managed, by means of grafting, to get tobacco and potatoes on a tomato, tomatoes and potatoes on tobacco, and tomatoes on potatoes. All works on this theme were carried out in the evenings, in view of garden visitors. In these cases, a crowd of curious people surrounded the students; the majority of them asked with interest, “Will something come from this?” And the answer was the assurance, “Yes, of course.” The answers were assured because the students already had results from grafting greenhouse plants, and now they had faith in the success of their work in the garden.

It is hard to say who was awaiting the grafting results more, the visitors or the workers; apparently they were all interested. After a week, the bag cap was removed from the place of grafting, and a label with the words “grafting” and an arrow to the place of grafting was installed.

Every day, caps were removed, and there were more than twenty or forty successful grafts; it needs to be mentioned that they all avoided being damaged or stolen until the end of the vegetation period. Frequently, you could see a visiting worker explaining the “magic” of grafting to his acquaintances.
MUSEUM IN THE STREET

In conclusion, the two-year experience was rather successful; for some themes there were instances of going beyond the plan—various goals of the second project of our program for the future have been completed. The main accomplishments of the first year: (a) skeptical doubts about this project’s success have been destroyed; (b) residents of the district are prepared to accept a new, until now unheard-of movement in Moscow—“take the museum into the street”—even more; it has become a laboratory.

So, in this first attempt at creating a museum in the street, the Biomuseum can can finally and boldly claim: we are not alone. Now we are being helped by the district, a gardening trust, and the district department of municipal improvement, and they help us in such a way that beginning in 1931, we can provide payment for two or three specialists in agricultural gardening and a zoologist for organizing bio-corners in various districts of Moscow—bio-corners realizing the third phase of our work on museums in the street.
Not such a long time has passed since the emergence of the first agitprop-vans, charged with the responsibility of delivering cultural propaganda to remote, distant regions—especially those cut off from cities—where cultural centers or clubs, reading huts, and so forth, either did not exist at all, or existed in only their most rudimentary forms.

Indeed, it should be noted that the time has not yet come for us to consign to history the attempts of many organizations to put cultural work on wheels and thus triumph over those huge expanses that lie between important cultural centers and our state farms, collective farms (sovkhозes and kolkho zes), and villages. Such efforts have continued into our age, and have led to the appearance of agitprop-vans, agitprop-train wagons, and even agitprop-trucks—but, feebly equipped, and transporting mobile works in only an ad-hoc manner, these have been unable to carry out any consistent, widespread, mobile cultural-educational work. Yet it should not go unnoticed that the desired results of these mobile endeavors have been achieved—even surpassed—and that there are agitprop-vans nowadays. These must now make way for powerful, high-speed, fully equipped agitprop-trucks. The pace of cultural revolution demands this.

Modern agitprop-trucks can bring culture to the masses, swiftly covering those vast expanses that extend across one sixth of the globe’s surface, encompassing numerous factories, industrial plants, collective farms, tractor stations, coal mines, metal ore mines, and sawmills—amongst others. It is at these points that it is not always possible to provide cultural facilities. And this is where the agitprop-truck must play its part. We need it to access the most remote corners of the country, wherever there are roads, and to support the thousands of troops of our cultural army as battle intensifies on the front lines of culture, against those fiercest enemies of socialism: illiteracy and cultural ignorance.

This support could be channeled through hundreds of agitprop-trucks, which can quickly arm our cultural soldiers—teachers, museum workers, cultural-educational administrators—with every refinement of technical knowledge. The trucks will be able to travel quickly from place to place, offering support along the way to clubs, houses of culture, communal farm support institutions, reading huts, schools, and museums, and also engaging directly with workers as they work, be it in the field, the forest, or lumber mills.

With the agitprop-truck and all of its equipment, the cultural brigade is also able to organize a team of cultural activists from workers and collective farmers (kolhozniks). It will also be entirely possible for it to provide exhibitions on a variety of subjects—and to provide other forms of cultural facilities—for village meetings, industrial and collective farm conferences, regional congresses, and more.

These are the objectives that should stand before the new agitprop-truck, and our trucks, technically well equipped, will meet them with ease.

The truck can be fitted with auxiliary technical equipment (film and image projectors, photography equipment, a radio, a gramophone, an electricity generator, and a whole host of other appliances), and should be manned by a well-trained cultural brigade of three, each assigned strict responsibilities for their hours of work and travel. Such an enterprise could with confidence be termed a “mobile cultural complex,” and, because of its speed of movement, its technical enhancements—which enable displays on the exterior of the vehicle—and the clear, well-planned work of
the brigade itself, this cultural complex can travel swiftly from place to place, thereby achieving a wide reach, while offering services to numerous workers and collective farmers, and extending support to local cultural institutions—all in a short space of time.

How should the agitprop-truck be constructed? Above all, the truck should serve as a well-equipped base, fitted with all the latest technology, such as radio, film, and photography equipment, and so forth; it should make possible the use of photography, to instantaneously capture the different forms of work going on in fields, tractor stations, and repair shops, and breakthroughs in the fulfillment of an enterprise’s industrial-financial plan; it should also enable the swift organization of illuminated photographic displays, exhibiting such photographs as vivid local material. In the agitprop-truck there will also be a gramophone, musical instruments (a bayan, a piano accordion, balalaikas, guitars, dombras, bugles, and so forth), an exhibition of posters, mobile charts, and various plans, and collections of diapositives on different themes (on glass and film, or for projection on a collapsible cinema screen).

The cultural brigade would align their work closely with the united cultural plan, and make efficient use of all auxiliary equipment available on the agitprop-truck. One person must be a skilled driver, projectionist, radio technician, and electrician; the second will read reports, lectures, and discussions, answer inquiries and provide consultations, and oversee the reading hut and other larger-scale operations; the third will lead cultural activities: in each location he will nominate entertainers and performers from within the team of cultural activists, gather local material for performance, develop this material with the performers, and organize musical groups. He must also be able to play a musical instrument himself. One of the crew must know how to use the camera and record each individual event, and they must also know how to edit a photomontage, to make it accessible for the viewer.

The truck’s electricity generator is of great importance. A dynamo is located within the truck’s body, driven by a small, five horsepower engine. Under no circumstance is it recommended to use the car’s motor to set the dynamo in motion, as this will lead to an inefficient use of both the powerful motor, and of fuel. A small, five horsepower kerosene engine set up alongside the dynamo is the most economical means of driving the latter, with a discharge pipe for exhaust gases directed down under the floor, itself thoroughly insulated with asbestos or klingerit.

The agitprop-truck in its entirety consists of a one-and-a-half metric ton cab and chassis, of the Ford or AMO brand. A body with double walls and a double floor will be mounted onto the chassis. The upper floor (approximately 2 meters) can be pulled out in order to serve as a platform for entertainment. The lower floor (approximately 76 cm) is fixed; the dynamo and kerosene engine are secured to it. The body’s rear doors open outwards from the center; two radio masts (made of small metal tubes) are installed on the body’s roof and held up by collapsible supports secured at their base by sockets and bolts; these masts are raised to a vertical position during broadcasts, and a wire dipole antenna is suspended between the mast tips. When the truck is in motion the antenna is lowered, and the masts are stowed on the roof and held in place with appropriate strapping.

The truck during a working session: the radio masts are lifted, the radio antenna is suspended between the masts, while at the rear of the truck’s body, two windows are opened; one opens outward, supported on both sides by straps or...
inner side walls of the body are used to display two-dimensional materials (posters, diagrams, and other pictorial art). On the rear side of the body, a collapsible book display case is assembled, where literature illustrating the themes of the exhibition is presented.

The agitprop-truck’s stage (fig. 5): the rear doors are opened on both sides, the floor is moved out of the rear and supported by special scaffolding. The door opening into the body is concealed by special curtains on either side.

The work of the agitprop-truck in conjunction with the local reading hut (fig. 6): reading huts without electric lighting can source electricity from the agitprop-truck. The radio set, film, and image projectors can be transported inside, and the truck itself can now serve as an auxiliary base, supplying all auxiliary accessories to the reading hut or club, based on the planned structure of each event at a given establishment.

These new trucks must be brought to the service of cultural construction, as they will play an enormous role in the realization of economic and political campaigns, and could also carry out the work of mobile museums, becoming mobile centers of mass culture, through which the decisions of party conventions and the decrees of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) can be brought swiftly to each and every worker, collective farmer, and individual farmer, and through which all questions regarding social construction can be illuminated.
THE MOBILE MODEL OF THE INSTRUCTIVE LABORATORY HUT AND ITS OPERATION

I. F. SHEREMET
The Ukrainian Museum of Agriculture in Kiev has extensive experience in constructing and equipping special load-trucks (one-and-a-half to two-and-a-half tons) for the transportation of agricultural exhibitions. Since 1929, the Museum of Agriculture has brought its mobile exhibitions to almost 5,000 collective farms (kolkhoz) in the Kiev, Vinnytsia, and Chernigov regions of the Ukrainian SSR.

Each year our experience brought new changes in the construction of the car trunk to increase the square footage of the exhibition. In order to help the collective farms in the organization of laboratory huts, and also in improving their operation, it was decided to equip a special car trunk to house a model of a laboratory for a collective farm. The task was to install demonstrative lab equipment according to the list approved by the People’s Land Committee so that it would be possible to conduct all the necessary chemical tests right there in the car. Among the goals of organizing the work of a mobile instructive laboratory hut was to demonstrate to the collective farm workers how and with what to equip the kolkhoz laboratory hut.

Our task was to educate the collective farm workers on how to handle and use the laboratory equipment and how to conduct scientific tests to study the soils, fertilizers, parasites and plant diseases, grain quality and its by-products. In the area of livestock farming these tests will permit the study of the amelioration of stock, improving the quality of their food stock and expanding its range. In addition, we must teach kolkhoz workers how to use chemical equipment and reagents, and how to conduct chemical tests in the laboratory hut, and so forth.

All of this required the construction of a new and improved type of car trunk. As a result, we built a special trunk designed by the director of the Museum of Agriculture, T. P. Shirokosharov.

The main goals and requirements of a mobile instructive laboratory hut dictated the following program for its equipment:

**Introductory part.** On a board in front of the car there is to be an artistic rendering of the process of radically restructuring a village (old and new villages compared) according to the speech given by Comrade Stalin at the 17th Congress of the Bolshevik Communist Party; the process of the reconstruction of agriculture presented in a historical perspective.

**Instructors and leaders of the laboratory huts.** An artistic montage with a portrait of Comrade Postyshev in the foreground and the lead organizers of the laboratory huts along with citations from the early speeches of P. P. Postyshev.

**Experience of organizing and equipping the best model laboratory huts of the Ukrainian SSR** (a photo of the external and inner organization, a model of the inner arrangement, programs and work plans, activities of special sections, and so on).

**General Farming corner:** (a) soil and fertilizers samples; (b) map of soils; (c) devices for the taking of samples and determining the quality of fertilizers, and so forth.
Agricultural technology and grain laboratory corner: (a) herbarium samples and grains of standard agricultural cultures; (b) devices for the analysis of the sprouting of grain; (c) schemes for crop rotation; (d) agricultural machines and their use for specific farming tasks.

Principal pests and plant diseases corner: (a) collections of pests and diseases; (b) main ways to fight them; (c) devices and apparatuses for the study of pests and diseases of agrarian cultures.

Meteorological station: (a) main devices; (b) methods and technology of observations.

Fruit and vegetable production corner: (a) reproductions of the standard strains of fruit and vegetables; (b) seeds of fruit and vegetable cultures; (c) tools and equipment for garden and agrarian work.

A fodder corner: (a) samples and the main characteristics of different types of fodder; (b) study of the fodder with the goal of its rational use (liming, protein enrichment, ensilage, damping, and so forth); (c) models for the preparation of fodder.

Animal-farming corner: (a) bas-reliefs of the planned breeds; (b) schema of the various ways of improving local livestock with low productivity (i.e. crossbreeding) (c) schema for the studying of different rations for large cattle, swine, and work horses.

Laboratory of prophylactic zoo-hygiene: (a) collections of livestock diseases and methods of fighting them (infectious and skin diseases, parasites, and so on); (b) disease prevention (keeping the animals clean, taking care of their skin, quality feeding and rations, and so on).

Chemical agrarian laboratory: (a) a complete set of lab equipment recommended by the People’s Land Commissariat of the Ukrainian SSR (scales, drying cabinet, primus stove, vials, reagents, and so on); (b) all instruments and reagents for soil analysis (fertilizers, poisons, milk, and so on).

Equipment for mass tours/events: (a) a projection lamp with transparencies; (b) film projector; (c) equipment and instruments for excursions. For this activity a special brigade must be formed that will include: (a) a brigadier (also an agrochemist); (b) an agronomist manager of mass entertainment; (c) a chauffeur-mechanic (to drive the car, run the film projection booth, and so forth).

During each trip to a collective farm, the work of the brigade consists of the following:

Presenting the theory behind the general questions of the social reorganization of agriculture and the tasks of the laboratory huts. Lecture—one hour.

Chemistry at the service of socialist agriculture. Lecture—one hour; practical lab workshop—five hours.
Field-crop cultivation. Lecture—two hours; lab workshop—four hours.

Animal husbandry. Lecture—two hours; lab workshop—four hours.

In total: nine lecture hours, thirteen hours of practical lab workshops, demonstrations via slide transparencies, and a film projection at the end of each work day.

Often we have had to arrange seminars for the active lab hut working groups from three to five collective farms all in the same place. In a majority of cases we had to travel from one collective farm to another according to a previously developed and planned program.

Of special interest is the method of practical demonstration of the chemical equipment and the analysis of milk, poisons, fertilizers, and so forth. Many collective farm workers left positive reviews of the mobile instructive laboratory hut. For example, an activist farmer from the Red October collective farm of the Semypolky village in the Kiev region writes:

I am still a young farmer, but the management of our collective farm has sent me to attend a seminar held at a mobile instructive laboratory hut. Until then I had no idea what a laboratory hut was and what its tasks were, but the agronomist brigade of the mobile laboratory hut gave me an excellent introduction to its goals and the work methods necessary to increase our harvest levels through the study of our farms, fertilizers, soils, and pests. Such seminars should be held more often, because many of us are new to our business and it is hard for us to manage without a specialist. My fiery greetings to
Museum of the History of the Revolution
MARXISM-LENINISM IN EXHIBITIONS IN THE MUSEUMS OF REVOLUTION

ANDREY SHESTAKOV
My presentation is titled “Marxism and Leninism in Exhibitions in the Museums of Revolution.” I would like to make a transition from general statements, which you heard in several previous presentations, to concrete problems concerning the application of the theory of dialectical materialism and Leninism in the exhibition practice of the museums of revolution. These museums are born out of the October Revolution and do not exist anywhere else in the world. Therefore, in constructing our historical revolutionary museums there is no past experience to rely on besides our own. When we started to build the museums of revolution we faced a series of general questions, among which the most important one was about the goals of these museums. It was absolutely clear that museums of revolution must be primarily political establishments, carrying out the work of political enlightenment. Such museums must not only educate people about social relations, but also give them an emotional charge.

Museums of revolution face the task of creating exhibitions, which, on the one hand, will promote an understanding of social relations, and on the other, will have a strong emotional impact.

Our main suggestions for the organizational principles of the museums of revolution emerge from these premises. But first of all, we must clarify our position regarding the emotional influence that we would like these exhibitions to have on our visitors. This problem of communicating an emotional charge is specific to the museums of revolution. With labels, accompanying texts, and citations from Marx and Lenin, we are providing material for the formation of logical notions, but these remain rather difficult to grasp for an average museum visitor. This is because our typical visitor is still relatively poorly developed culturally, and lacks the necessary elements in his consciousness for understanding logical notions and forming associative connections, which make these concepts easier for comprehension.

That is why while organizing its exhibitions, a museum of revolution must use the most accessible language—the language of images. We must present logical structures about the complex set of relations behind social conflicts by conjoining them with visual materials, by accompanying them with visually formed impressions, and by amalgamating rational thinking with thinking through images.

We are resolving this question by selecting and gathering materials which belong to the sphere of art. We are using sculpture, painting, graphic arts, representations of different concepts in formal artistic achievement, colorful stains and other artistic means, which can help us present logical notions in such a fashion that they would form a unified stream of consciousness for each visitor. The amplification of emotional and artistic impact is the current task of the museums of revolution. Trying to have museums of revolution organize their exhibitions in a strictly logical and informative manner, and only afterward adding material for visual thinking, is wrong. Recently, Narkompros (The Commissariat of People’s Enlightenment) raised the question of gathering all the most valuable artworks and relocating them from the museums of revolution to specialized art museums. We think that this approach is principally and practically misguided. Artworks within the museums of revolution play as important a role in reawakening consciousness as the rest of the elements of our exhibitions that provide material for logical concepts: labels, signs, proclamations, and various material relics. Sovnarkom
I am now moving onto the question regarding the content and thematic scope required for the museums of revolution. I find the position expressed in Comrade Luppol’s presentation to be entirely correct—all museums must be founded on the principles of materialist dialectics, and this problematic must be especially emphasized in the museums of revolution. The dialectical development of the historical process must be shown in the museums of revolution most vividly and thoroughly. Starting from this foundation, we must invent a special form for the exhibition. It is particularly important to reveal the dialectics of the revolutionary movement, to stress the example of the culminating moments of revolutionary events and the inherent contradictions in the development of social phenomena, to bring attention to the dialectics of these processes. We cannot build our exhibition without approaching the history of revolutionary movement dialectically. We already have some experience in this area, which makes this quite feasible. Our task is made relatively easy, since Marxism and Leninism have already conquered a sufficient place in the history of revolutions. However, our achievements in the theoretical field often run into difficult obstacles when it comes to practical implementation. We own a very scarce collection of physical materials for our museum exhibitions, many details of revolutionary events are insufficiently mined, we lack statistical data, and so forth. Our exhibition work is made difficult by the insufficient work done in the stated directions by Marxist historians.

I will now move on to the question of the thematics of the exhibitions at the museums of revolution. They must, first of all, represent the revolutionary struggle of class society in a given country or in several states. When one approaches this task practically it becomes obvious how much is still left unclear. We are still...
constructing the exhibitions of our museums exclusively on the materials pertaining to old tsarist Russia, while not working with materials that lie beyond the borders of that Russia. I set forth a proposal for the museums of revolution to portray our revolutionary movement in tandem with the revolutionary movement in Western Europe and in the East, and so on. That is why in the future the museums of revolution should acquire materials not only from our country, but also from abroad.

We must address the revolutionary movement in Western Europe and America, as well as in the Eastern countries, and so on, in order to gain an impression of a complex historical process.

We must also reconsider the system of periodization, as the moments required to illuminate the revolutionary process cannot be found, and provided solely, on the materials from a single country or a small group of neighboring countries.

The following themes must become a red thread drawn through all museums of revolution—provincial as well as central ones. The first one is that of revolutionary peasant uprisings in the feudal societies of Russia and the West. Usually, whenever we present peasant wars, we focus solely on Razin or Pugachev’s uprisings and treat them as disconnected from the revolutionary process in the feudal society at large; we isolate the viewer’s attention from similar phenomena that have taken place in Western Europe. We narrow our viewer’s worldview instead of broadening it.

Our second topic should be bourgeois revolutions in Russia and the West. Right now, European bourgeois revolutions are almost entirely excluded from our exhibitions. For instance, our Central Museum of Revolution lacks a thorough representation of either the German or French revolution.

Including materials relevant to these themes should offer a complex impression of the bourgeois revolutions in the West as well as in Russia.

Now, passing on to the subject of proletarian revolutions. I think that here we have to present, even if only in a general outline, the Paris Commune and the October Revolution in Russia. These thematic exhibitions are extremely important, for through them we may formulate a perspective on the international revolution—a point of view which has not been tied together until now and which we offer only through a thematic representation of the October revolution, and even that in a rather one-dimensional manner.

Our museums of revolution should also affirm revolutionary achievements in the USSR and represent contemporary revolutionary movements in the East and in the West. These issues lead us to the current political tasks and sharply set before the visitor questions about the goals and the role of the Communist International, about the worldwide revolution, about our own position. These questions will provide a political focus that is for the most part lacking in our museums, especially in the provinces. Our shortcoming with regard to this must be promptly fixed.

With regard to use of local materials in local museums of revolution, we must state that they should certainly be most prominently displayed. However, this does not mean that these items should be set separately and be taken out of the broader process. I think that such local material adds to the general exhibition and attracts visitors’ attention to the specifics of local daily life, relating them to general processes, which we want our visitors to understand.

The question regarding the installation of this or that exhibition must be formulated in such a way that we should
carefully select the most important and the most interesting items. Our approach to the exhibition materials may be called a “crawling empiricism” (polzuchim empirizmom). A view that many different kinds of materials must be displayed is popular among us. I find that this chasing after quantity could cause us to fail to meet the tasks set by the exhibition. It is necessary to select only the most important and valuable material in order to teach the observer how to understand not only revolutionary processes, but also the very mechanics of these processes, and how to be able to make the necessary conclusions.

It is necessary to get museum workers to pay special attention to this task. In constructing the museums of revolution we face the challenge of refracting the theory of revolutions through the lens of historical materialism.

If we show productive relations and class war through the lens of historical materialism, our presentation of the development of productive forces, then these instances must be absolutely clear and legible to the exhibition visitor. Historical-materialist postulates about contradictions in the development of productive forces and productive relations must be axiomatic for the representation of the revolutionary process.

In our contemporary exhibitions, the elements of the development of productive forces and productive relations are often overshadowed by iconography. We must fight against this. Until now, portraiture—a depiction of one or another revolutionary or theoretician of revolutionary struggle—was placed in the foreground of the museums of revolutions, but this does not provide the desired effect. We need to select the iconographic elements more thoroughly, in order to display only those portraits that solve the tasks that we set before them on their own.

Within our Museum of the Revolution of the USSR we have one such iconographic exhibition in the popular movements section.

It is necessary to shrink it and offer only the minimally necessary number of portraits.

Then a series of principles of historical materialism would be advanced as special problems to be represented in the museums of revolution. Such problems as the transition of the bourgeois-democratic revolution into a socialist one, the problem of the dictatorship of the proletariat, the problem of base and superstructure, and so forth—all this can be presented in a museum, and this task must be thoroughly resolved.

In addition, the goals of museum exhibitions must be tightly bound to the present-day political struggle. However, this does not mean that exhibitions of the museums of revolution, saturated with the principles of Marxism and Leninism, must necessarily be linked to contemporary issues with each and every piece. This must be done in accordance with expediency and opportunity. Some contemporary problems may be included as addenda to the already existing exhibitions.

In general, we should not regard the museum of revolution as a place where all exhibitions should remain permanent and unchanged for a very long time. The museums of revolution should be organized so that all exhibits remain flexible to a certain degree, so that there is always a chance to replace corresponding materials with new, more relevant ones.

Such goals often get forgotten, and for this reason exhibitions get outdated and lose touch with life. As an example we can mention the theme of Party history, which is extremely important today. This history calls for entirely new ways of addressing the current times, and museums
of revolution must discover how to instantly present and emphasize these themes.

In general, exhibits within the museums of revolution must be presented exclusively in a class light. They must be easily understandable to the masses, mobile, and relevant, and they must perform the tasks and functions that characterize the work of political enlightenment today.

Museums have to solve all of the same questions that stand before the Party and the working class. There can be no objective and loving contemplation of things, paintings, and so on, in the museums of revolution. Everything has to be built according to specific class requirements, taking into consideration concrete problems and aiming to assist the proletariat in its task of building socialism. The museums of revolution must help the masses to comprehend the construction of socialism, class warfare, and their own place in history. All exhibitions at the museums of revolution must be dedicated to these tasks.

[Applause.]
There are over one hundred museum collections of a historical and revolutionary nature in the Soviet Union today. They differ among themselves not only in their size and method, but also in the core composition of their material. Some museums roll out a general picture of our revolutionary movement for their viewers (such as the revolutionary museums of Moscow and Leningrad); others prefer to emphasize the characteristics of localized events (such as local heritage sites of a provincial or regional scope). There exist some surviving installations of living revolutionary history (The Peter and Paul Fortress in Leningrad, the underground Bolshevik printing press in Moscow). There are purely commemorative museums, dedicated to some or other revolutionary figure (the museums of V. I. Lenin, P. A. Kropotkin, N. G. Chernyshevsky). There are specialized museums showing prisons, labor camps, and places of exile. And finally, there are museums that strive to show the origin and evolution of Western revolutions (the Museum of the Institute of Marx and Engels).

Historical and revolutionary museums have won themselves a lasting place in the general system of museum construction. They command an incomparable edge over every other museum’s collection: they speak to museumgoers in the concrete and accessible “language of things”—the direct remnants of real life. In this materiality lies their most compelling strength, the source of their interest, and their greatest affect. But the historical and revolutionary museum (like any other museum) must not be just a chaotic assemblage of “rarities,” but an orderly and complete whole—one that provides a selection of museum-objects in a strictly scientific sequence and according to a particular political point of view. The collection at the Parisian Carnavalet Museum undoubtedly surpasses our museums in the wealth of their historical and revolutionary relics, but they lack those distinctive particularities that distinguish the exhibits that make up the construction of our museum collections. The task of any Soviet museum is not only to mirror the past and the real, but also to effectively bear upon the transformation of life by focusing the attention of its viewer on the current tasks of modernity. The Soviet museum, in its particular way, educates the masses in the name of a systematic and robust construction of socialism. Museums of a historical and revolutionary nature achieve this goal with the help of specific materials and idiosyncratic methods of exhibition; in contrast to museums of popular culture or art, they put before themselves the task of laying bare for the masses the natural course of revolutionary history in a visual and strictly systematic form.

To further flesh out this general evaluation, we must equally contrast two incorrect points of view: on the one hand, there is the tendency to limit the task of the historical and revolutionary museum and reduce it to that of a museum of revolutionary life. Adherents of this belief point out the paucity and fragmentation of historical and revolutionary materials. They say that any surviving remnants of the struggle don’t afford us the opportunity to expose the ideology of opposing movements and retrace the successive stages of the revolutionary process. On the other hand, some museologists formulate the tasks of the historical and revolutionary museum too broadly and assert that the object of its investigative and expository labor is the occurrence of class struggle. The error in these
two beliefs becomes apparent in light of the last ten years’ worth of experience and contemporary theories of museology. Depictions of revolutionary life don’t hold any absolute meaning for us. We search for answers to deeper and more important issues—those of social antagonisms. But the portrayal of class struggle is not the task of historic-revolutionary museums alone: today, exhibitions showing collections of artifacts from everyday life, art, and technology are built according to its principle. However, this doesn’t preclude each category of social-science museum from possessing its own distinguishing properties. The particularity of the historical and revolutionary museum lies first and foremost in the object of its exhibition: as distinguished from museums of lifestyle and culture (more precisely, sociohistorical) museums, the historical and revolutionary museum exposes not just the history of socioeconomic systems, but the history of the transitions between these systems—those periods of escalated struggle for new sociopolitical forms. The historical and revolutionary museum’s object of examination and exhibition isn’t class struggle as a whole—it permeates the entire history of mankind—but class struggle at its most lucid and intensive, at the moment of its conscious destruction of an outmoded sociopolitical order.

Museums that investigate the natural evolution of our revolution face three fundamental issues: (a) the struggle against feudalism (that is, the struggle against its surviving autocratic political superstructure and the oppression of the serf), (b) the struggle against capitalism (beginning with its origins and ending with the Russian Civil War, 1917–21), and finally, and (c) the struggle over the construction of a new socialist society (in periods of reconstruction and reparation). In other words, the historical and revolutionary museum mirrors the fraught academic fields and focuses on them the especial attention of the museumgoer. Such specialization is not dictated by the rules of museum “logic,” but by the foremost aims of our political moment. We live and struggle in a revolutionary era. To prove the natural necessity of struggle and lay bare its captivating, creative pathos is the primary, pressing concern of political enlightenment. The museum can achieve this goal through the powerful means of the visual image, which is why the idea of the historical and revolutionary museum is inextricably tied to our victories in February and October: museums of this nature emerged not merely as monuments to the triumphs of the revolution, and not merely as instruments of the revolution’s ideological impregnation in society, but also as vehicles of the revolutionary ideology’s ultimate evolution. The period of reconstruction brought with it significant new ambitions. It forced historic-revolutionary museums to step out from the incipient frames of the historical past and sharpen their focus on the critical, contemporary issues: the October Revolution and the Russian Civil War found in themselves the natural continuation of the class antagonisms endured during the preceding era of “peace.”

In showing the history of the revolutionary movement, the museum cannot be limited by a chronological depiction of facts: this sort of historical narrative would contradict both the principles of historical materialism and the goals of political enlightenment. The museumgoer must grasp for himself the facts of the revolutionary process in addition to the endogenous correlation between individual, factual elements. This is why the arrangement of historical and revolutionary materials must be subordinated to two guiding principles: the revolutionary movement must be shown as a dialectical process, one that passes through particular stages and is characterized by the struggle of antagonistic
especially, printed—relics were exterminated by sovereign authorities. That is why surviving, original artifacts from the revolutionary struggle are so few and far between. The most valuable of those that do exist are physical relics: remnants of the armed struggle (like weapons, bombs, and so on), the symbols of agitation (banners, medals, political gifts, graveside offerings), objects of a revolutionary life (weapons technology, apartment furnishings, goods manufactured by state prisoners, and others), and lastly, the personal belongings of individual revolutionaries. But these three-dimensional, corporeal museum-objects are evidently desultory fragments, accidentally spared and incapable of offering a complete picture of the developments represented at an exhibition. Much prized are handwritten documents (draft proclamations, meeting resolutions, assembly protocols, military edicts, dispatches, handwritten letters and diaries, and so on), but they are rare and subject to special protective custody, which cannot always be reconciled with the conditions of a public exhibition. Printed publications (leaflets, books, brochures, broadsides, and so on) emerge as characteristic memorials of their era, but they are uniform in appearance and difficult for the mass audience to perceive. No less uniform in their appearance are historical, revolutionary photographs; they tend to document individual figures rather than events. Works of art (like paintings, sculptures, and others) are a great deal more vivid and affective, but such exhibition items—assuming they are genuinely artifacts of their era—reflect less the objective events, and more subjective perceptions and estimations. The facts of the matter appear transformed in them under the influence of private sympathies and the creative inspiration of the artist. But for all the variety and diversity of its original artifacts, the historic-revolutionary museum cannot construct from
them a full and complete exhibition. In the reconstruction of the natural historical process there will remain inevitable gaps—broken elements that can’t be fixed by the exhibition’s goals. On the basis of that fact, outmoded museologists propose to capitulate before the arising hardships: to abandon the vast ambitions of the historical and revolutionary museum and limit the museum to displaying the appearances of revolutionary life.

But the museum experience and principles of Soviet museology propose another solution for the given situation. Without abandoning a vigorous search for historical and revolutionary relics, they suggest that it’s necessary for historical and revolutionary museums to bridge any lacunae that appear with specially prepared reproductions: to exhibit copies of artworks housed in other Soviet museums, to display photographic prints of rare archival material, and finally to order models of physical monuments—striving to approximate the original as closely as possible. That being said, these reproductions will also prove to be in short supply. To more soundly connect disparate exhibition elements and demonstrably show the causality of events, the wide use of auxiliary aids is essential. With the help of graphic materials (diagrams, maps, and charts), the architects of the historical and revolutionary museum will contrive to shed light on the era’s means of production, and provide essential explanations for defining events. Works of art—assuming they are themselves not original artifacts from the revolutionary era, but after-the-fact illustrations of events long past—will acquire the same auxiliary value, as will setting arrangements (manikins, dummies, replicas), which will help to more clearly and vividly present reality as it was. Nevertheless, it’s necessary to remember that reproductions and copies are unavoidable surrogates for missing originals: they must not overshadow genuine artifacts of the revolutionary past. Its essential to say this, even more vehemently, about auxiliary museum aids: they are due not a primary but a secondary position in the museum exhibit. By their number and by the reception of their design, they must not upstage the exhibit’s principal and authentic historical and revolutionary material.

The proper construction of a system of placards acquires particular significance in a historical and revolutionary museum. A verbal explanation must not only reveal the essence of the exhibited object, but also offer a political evaluation of the corresponding historical event. Often, the historical and revolutionary artifact cannot on its own hint at the scientific and political inference essential to the museum visitor. In order to manage the reception of the masses, it’s necessary to provide a concise yet emphatic annotation that will instill in the visitor one or another interpretation. Quotations and slogans, in addition to the brief labels identifying artifacts, are essential tools of a historical and revolutionary collection. Of course, here too, it’s necessary to observe a sense of moderation so that the visual and corporeal language of the museum isn’t drowned out by uniform and tiresome texts.

The deficiency of original materials and the unavoidable abundance of texts are the historical and revolutionary museum’s inescapable shortcomings. There’s no doubt that they dampen the interest of the mass audience and hamper the ambitions of the historical and revolutionary museum. To offset the effects of this element, it’s necessary to direct persistent attention to arranging museum artifacts artistically. An expressive and vivid method of exhibition becomes the historical and revolutionary museum’s most important reserve, one that is necessary to exercise broadly and skillfully. The artist and the art historian must come to the
assistance of the research fellow. By selecting appropriate paints, they will strengthen lines and forms and render the impressions of the designed exhibit more profound. The viewer, intrigued and captivated by the exhibit’s artistic configuration, will be better and faster able to dive into the contents of the material on display. The experience of a particular background will serve as the psychological foundation for the intellect’s autonomous work. The fewer original revolutionary artifacts there are and the more textual and photographic material on display, the more important and pressing the problem of artistic design.

The ambitions of the historical and revolutionary museum are clear to us, and the limits and character of its exhibited material are known. So, how can one represent class struggle in its greatest and most intensive forms by means of these exhibitionary methods? If the exhibit of the historical and revolutionary museum must be shot through with the ideas of dialectical development, then from there follow certain requirements for the arrangement of material: the revolutionary movement must be shown as an uninterrupted and accrescent process. In other words, the museum exhibit must be dominated by the chronological principle of construction. Before the viewers must develop not static depictions of a “frozen” revolution, but the vigorous propulsion of a persistent struggle. The fundamental stages of this societal course are composed of elements pivotal to the exhibit’s narrative.

The professional museologist will not need to invent his own frameworks here. He can adopt one ready-made from the conclusions of seminal Marxist literature. According to this point of view, the museum exhibit can be broken up into three sequential categories in keeping with three fundamental concerns of historical and revolutionary movements:

(a) the revolutionary collapse of feudalism, (b) the revolutionary dissolution of capitalism, and (c) the revolutionary struggle over the construction of socialism. Every one of these categories can be further broken down, corresponding to distinct periods in which each respective movement occurs. In the ambit of the first category are the following: (a) peasant uprisings against feudalism in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, (b) the patrician movement of the Decemberists—the earliest manifestation of the emerging capitalist system, (c) the petit-bourgeois populist movement reflecting the ideology of the oppressed peasant class, (d) the rise and development of the proletariat movement (1880–1904), (e) the first mass revolution (1905–07), and (f) the fall of the autocratic regime and the immediate antecedents of this event (the progression of the era of financial capital).

The events of this great three-hundred-year period are tremendously varied and intrinsically heterogeneous. Here proceed various classes of first feudal and then capitalist society: the peasants, the upper bourgeoisie, the petit-bourgeois intelligentsia, and finally, the industrial proletariat. In the period of emerging capitalism, the struggle acquires a more complex character: it’s directed not only against the feudal superstructures—namely, the autocratic regime—but also against the foundations of the capitalist system. In that entanglement of two revolutionary movements, an idiosyncrasy of the Russian historical narrative begins to show: the fusion of a newly advanced capitalist system with imperious feudal holdovers. But this conspicuous intermingling doesn’t interfere with the thoroughness of the historical and revolutionary museum’s formulation: the revolutionary dominance of the entire three-hundred-year period manifests itself in the continuous struggle of the working masses against the political dictatorship of the
landed gentry. Unifying all the moments of this struggle, we get the opportunity to expose its inherent dialectic, to show the powerlessness of the isolated peasant class, the political futility of noble efforts, the political helplessness of the petit-bourgeois intelligentsia, and finally, the leading significance of the proletariat, having organized and directed the victorious movements of the revolution.

The second category of the historical and revolutionary museum (“the struggle to dissolve the capitalist system”) is composed of three exhibitionary subcategories: (a) February–October 1917 (the escalation from a bourgeois revolution to a proletariat revolution), (b) the October Revolution, and (c) the Russian Civil War (1917–21). Judging by the sweep of its chronology, this category would appear to be inferior to the one preceding it. But judged by the wealth of its historical events and its political impact, it carries not less, but more significance in the historical narrative. The struggle of this period is uniform at its core, but is still no less complex. Here various classes in society come to the fore, and the fate of the former Russian empire becomes inseparably entwined with world historical events. The predominant revolution of this period: the struggle for rule by the proletariat without regard for the borders of any one nation.

The third category (“the struggle over the construction of socialism) is composed of two exhibitionary subcategories: (a) a period of recovery, and (b) a period of reconstruction. The substance of this category is comprised of class struggle between the proletariat, led by the Communist Party, and old societal classes, the bearers of enduring capitalist tendencies. The entire exhibit and all representations of economic achievement and new sociocultural formations must be subordinated to this essential, predominant idea—class struggle over socialism. The academic and politically enlightening significance of this category is no less important than that of the preceding category: the exhibit couples the events of the past with contemporary facts precisely here. Here, the preceding course of the historical and revolutionary process discovers its final purpose. Our museums have arrived at the construction of this consummate category, “socialist construction,” relatively late. All too often it remains covered only in a rudimentary capacity. Methods of exhibiting its emergence are yet primitive and vague. But there is no doubt that this category is due a bright future, and that this category is comparable, both in its quantity and quality, to the history of the period leading up the October Revolution and to the period of the socialist revolution.

On the basis of this chronological division of material, installations must be built on themes more narrowly defined. The task of a more granular composition is to focus the attention of the viewer on particular irreducible moments in the revolutionary movement, to ascertain their causality, and to expose the identities of the classes involved. Factoring in the many years of experience of historical and revolutionary museums, we can observe here several fundamental, repeating themes. Elements typically represented at exhibits are: (a) the revolutionary event (a strike, demonstration, revolt, and so on), (b) the revolutionary organization (a circle, group, collective, party, and so on), (c) the revolutionary ideological schools of thought (social instruction, a programmatic direction, a sectarian platform, and so on.), (d) the feature of the revolutionary lifestyle (the technical work involved, incarceration in prison, a stint in exile, and so on.); and finally, (e) the revolutionary figure (an important theorist, the Party leader, and others). Along with these essential installations, we can identify two other repeating themes: the combined theme “Party conventions (and conferences),”
event displayed must be introduced by the socioeconomic processes that had determined the event’s genesis and the direction according to which it developed.

An installation called The October Revolution in Moscow (The Museum of the Revolution of the USSR) can serve an example of a similar exhibitionary presentation of revolutionary events. At the center of this nook were placed physical relics of the struggle in the streets: rifles and machine guns belonging to the Red Guards, exploded weapons casings, various objects perforated by bullets and deformed by gunfire. Upon looking at the original remnants of those arduous battles, museum viewers immediately feel the acuteness of that particular moment and the general character of those armed encounters. The expressive but fragmented artifacts can convey the specificity of documentation and a vivid artistic whole. Beforehand, the viewer passes a whole series of photographs that show street trenches and barricades, artillery equipment brought forward, and the manifold destruction from armed weapons fire. Paintings by Yuon and Kotov depict the final stage of the struggle: a massive assault on the Kremlin by squadrons of soldiers and civilian-laborers. An explanatory diagram conveys the principal moments of the six-day battle, the principal and quickly vacillating military victories and defeats. So, the main part of the exhibit paints a picture of the October revolution from within. Surrounding this central nucleus are positioned photographs and illustrations depicting the typical actors from each of the warring sides. On one side there were laborers, Red Guards, soldiers from support units, representatives of revolutionary working youth. And on the other there are cadets, officers, university and grammar-school students. This sphere showing the faces of those living and fighting is accompanied by a picture of leading organizations. Enormous murals put up on

which includes all the events occurring there, the organizations and ideological schools of thought; and, on the other hand, the introductory theme, “Socioeconomic factors,” the primary reference point in the explication of historic-revolutionary material from a particular period. If we look closely at the composition of a major historical and revolutionary museum, we will see that its entire exhibition is comprised of these recurring thematic elements. In order to build a proper and complete exhibit, it’s necessary to provide a clear account of the content of each installation. Each theme must be developed with respect to class struggle, but each must also possess its own particular idiosyncrasies, which must have been hitherto considered by museum staff.

There is no doubt that revolutionary events are the commanding theme of the historical and revolutionary museum. The process of revolutionary struggle is composed of separate events, and through those very events the active dynamism immanent to the struggle is revealed. That is why these events must set out in the forefront and illuminated from all points of view. It’s essential that a central position in the exhibit be assigned to show the appearance of class struggle, attempting to display it as an active and dynamic phenomenon, by way of its successive stages. It’s also necessary to underscore the movement’s social foundation using particular artifacts: the struggling classes must be shown in an expressive manner and thrown into relief in the faces of their leaders and their representatives. Here, it’s essential to roll out the materials that introduce the ideologies of the struggling classes and express their interests and goals. With each particular instance, it’s necessary to shed light on a question concerning the struggle’s organization: to deduce the degree to which each camp was organized and identify the character of their main offices. Every major revolutionary
backboards illustrate the military-revolutionary committees and the five Party leaders. Photographs of the participants and photographic prints of the facilities used by revolutionary bodies provide a bountiful supplement of documentary materials. Handwritten resolutions, printed leaflets, and quotes from speeches delivered convey the ideology of the struggle that took place, its motifs, immediate objectives, and ultimate societal goals. The whole time, the viewer sees and feels the two camps of the opposing classes. Events unfold before his eyes not just in the dramatic encounters on city streets, but in the preliminary preparation of the classes, the programs of their platforms, and their final outcomes. That said, it should be noted that the revolutionary side was pulled out into the foreground. The human archetype helps to incite the feelings of the mass movement, and portraits and speeches of Party leaders underscore the organizing role of the Party’s work. The events are perceived to make up a process advancing and continuously evolving. The exhibit is closely tied together by primary and secondary elements: at the front is the October Revolution in Petrograd, and following it are the armed uprisings in the provinces. Socioeconomic antecedents can be seen in a previous hall, and form a general expository introduction to the events of the period of the October Uprising. In this fashion, the exhibit of revolutionary events is developed in the remaining rooms of The Museum of the Revolution of the USSR. With some or other variations, disparate elements of the installation recur on a backboard dated March 1, 1881, on a wall dated January 9, 1905, in a representation of the Decembrist revolt, and in the artifacts from the February Revolution of 1917.

The theme “The Revolutionary Organization” is being planned on the basis of the same methodological principles. The historical and revolutionary museum must provide, before all else, a concrete depiction of the members belonging to a political association, but, at the same time, it must underscore the class nature of this collective entity. It must familiarize the viewer with the ideology of the group represented, focus our attention on its revolutionary activities, and, if at all possible, reveal the group’s internal social and political stratifications (the warring factions and objectives). The organization must be opposed to those class forces against which it stands and struggles. The moment of class struggle must be paramount. The organization must take shape as an active, evolving, continuously advancing presence. An installation called *The St. Petersburg Soviet of Working Delegates, 1905* (at The Museum of the Revolution of the USSR) can serve an example of a similar exhibit. A series of photo portraits frame a backboard consecrated to this one purpose. Before us pass images of the working men who, with their entire physiognomy, bespeak their membership in the proletariat. Photographs are grouped together by their subject’s political allegiance (Bolsheviks, Mensheviks, SRs, nonpartisans), and simultaneously help to shed light on the inner composition of the Soviet organization. At the top of this backboard hangs an additional diagram, which shows the massive proletarian makeup of the Petersburg Soviet. At the center, material depicting the militant, revolutionary purpose of the new organ is concentrated: decisions made for strikes, “a financial manifesto” aimed against the autocratic regime, a collection of news clippings printed in an engrossing style, and a revolver belonging to a member of the executive committee.

Looking closely at these exhibit items, we can discern distinct stages in the activities of the Soviet, beginning with the organization of the October strike and ending with the call for an armed uprising. Large portraits, placed a bit
artifacts of attendant literature—books, brochures, leaflets, and handwritten documents. He must find the exact yet concise expression of the given ideological position in the material. Before his eyes must pass active vehicles of the schools of thought presented. Finally, and most importantly, he must witness political theory in action, in active conflict with other competing schools of thought. More so here than anywhere else, a political assessment is necessary in the form of an attendant quote or museum placard. An installation on the theme “Legal Marxism” (The Museum of the Revolution of the USSR) can serve as an example of such an exhibit. Censored publications from the 1890s, which were put out under the banner of Marxist ideologies, are positioned at the center of a large display. Above them are a group of portraits of “legal Marxists” from that period. The class nature of this movement is shown by “human archetypes”—a few group photographs depicting the bourgeois intelligentsia, the agents of this new movement. The bourgeois, antirevolutionary nature of this entity, “legal Marxism,” is emphasized in eloquent and vivid quotes, positioned in the gaps between the artifacts on display. Nearby, as a counterweight to this right-wing, opportunistic school of thought, another revolutionary school of thought is shown in the faces of Plekhanov, Lenin, and other orthodox Marxists. Polemical quotes reveal the principal difference between true followers of Marxism and unfortunate Russian Bernstein-ians.

A neighboring display presents, in photographs and print artifacts, the most important manifestations of Marxism in legal literature, the sociopolitical stratifications in the ranks of the Marxists, and the inner ideological struggle between the orthodox and the opportunists.

A peculiar place in the historical and revolutionary museum is held by the exhibit’s treatment of the facts higher, above the backboard, provide an understanding of the Soviet’s leaders and, moreover, of the schools of thought they represented. The Soviet was a populist and nonpartisan organization, but it was led by the Social Democratic Party. Opposing declarations, one written by the Bolshevik Knunyants and the other by the Menshevik Trotsky, underscore the existence of a sectarian conflict within the Soviet. Certain artifacts (drawings, portraits, executive orders) throw light on the orders of the executive camp. The viewer can grasp the reciprocal dealings between the organs of the revolutionary proletariat and the wavering, but not yet wholly overpowered, tsarist regime. The material, in characterizing the activities of the Soviet, clearly speaks to the Soviet’s chosen path. Large quotes from Lenin summarize the Soviet’s militant intentions and encapsulate the whole collection of evidence presented. Analogous themes—one on a group called “Liberated laborers,” one on a collective, “Earth and will,” and another on the editorial body called “Sparks,” among others—are presented in the same fashion.

The thematic installation “Revolutionary-Ideological Schools of Thought” lends itself with more difficulty to the apparent influence of the museum: the divergent principles of the Party’s program can’t be displayed with the same visual expression with which are drawn distinct historical events or the dramatic activities of revolutionary organizations. Here there is an inescapable abundance of textual material and the limiting role of the concrete image. But the political significance of this theme is so essential that the historical and revolutionary museum must seek out all possible measures for a vivid demonstration. It’s necessary to focus the attention of the viewer on the fundamentals of class ideology, in sharp relief against the ideology of another opposing class. The viewer must see before him the original
of revolutionary life. This is where the museum worker arranges some of the most prized and meaningful original material: the protracted use of various artifacts under the conditions of clandestine work and especially imprisonment behind bars ensured the objects would be better preserved than other relics from the revolutionary past. The furnishings of prison cells, clothes, and utensils from labor camps, goods manufactured by political prisoners, and the remains of clandestine practices often enrich the collections of historical and revolutionary museums. Some of those who actively participated in the revolution and who would be able to depict, with precision and detail, the conditions of clandestine work are still alive. By their direction and under their supervision, the museums create models of workshops, underground printing presses, and the apartments of conspirators. But the exhibition of these lifestyle installations presents an obvious difficulty: the objects of revolutionary life are significantly harder to connect with the entire system of historical and revolutionary material. Ordinarily, they break away from the whole and form their own subcategories: “Underground Equipment,” “The Prison, Labor Camp, and Life in Exile,” and others. This kind of compartmentalization possesses a few advantages. These objects of revolutionary life are concentrated by their thematic attributes and thus acquire greater affect. The abundance of corporeal relics evokes greater interest in the viewer. Such scenes, like that of a prison, a labor camp, or a life in exile, can be examined just by looking at them and can beget a strong, agitating reaction. And finally, the concentration of household artifacts can curiously also stimulate a desire to collect items among employees and visitors of the historical and revolutionary museum. However, the development of exhibit categories specializing in the day-to-day

Two solutions are possible for such a situation: either departments on day-to-day revolutionary life will expand the scope of their material to include a broad picture of revolutionary struggle and become, for all intents and purposes, clones of the principal exhibit, or the departments on day-to-day life will be liquidated and its material will dissolve into the general mass of the museum’s primary artifacts. The latter solution appears to be, on principle, the right one. The appearance of a revolutionary life in and of itself lacks scientific or politically enlightened meaning. It is interesting and significant only insofar as it reflects the attitudes of the era in question. Evidence of revolutionary life must be considered as just the incidental garb of the unceasing revolutionary struggle within the conditions of a particular place and time. And if that’s so, there is no reason to isolate representations of revolutionary life. In fact, quite the opposite. It’s necessary to incorporate them into the general system of a chronological exhibition and artfully weave them in with other artifacts of their period. The underground publication Working Papers (1897) will find an appropriate place for itself near the Kiev Social-Democratic Congress as the nearest antecedent for the Party’s first convention there. The Military Technical
Bureau of the RSDWP\(^1\) of 1906 would make up one of the elements part of the first mass revolution, an instance of the militant operations of the Social-Democratic Party. The prison, labor camp, and exile will be allocated to different categories and acquire a proper interpretation as instances of revolutionary class struggle between the autocratic regime as ruled by the landed gentry and the revolutionary avant-garde of the struggling classes. Every period will find itself illuminated from many sides. The revolutionary struggle will achieve its natural complement in its freedom, but the struggle is no less indomitable and no less grueling from within cell walls. The core principle of the presentation of daily revolutionary life will reveal itself against the general background of the social relations of production and the class conflicts of a particular era.

The historical and revolutionary museum cannot and must not strike out the characteristics of particular individuals from its exhibition’s program. The activity of one revolutionary constitutes a legitimate subject of depiction for an academic biographical construction and for a visual museum exhibition. But that particular individual must be shown not as an autonomous and omnipotent force, but as a representative of particular class factions. This individual’s views and actions must be derived from the social conditions of the corresponding period. The individual must be presented before the viewer as a direct participant in class struggle, in the key stages of his own inner development and his manifest political activities. Even here, one shouldn’t break loose this thematic installation from the general mass of the historical and revolutionary material. Yet it’s possible to form permanent commemorative sections (or halls) for the portraits of the most significant revolutionary leaders, e.g. Lenin. As a general rule, a biographic theme must unfold against the exhibition’s general background and in seamless connection to revolutionary events. So, the biographical theme “V. I. Ulyanov” must be included in the general exhibit *The People’s Will* and the biographic theme “N. E. Bauman” in the general exhibit *1905*, and so forth.

The enormous significance of the Communist Party as the leading organization, and the head of a mass proletariat movement, raises an important question concerning an exhibition’s portrayal of Party congresses. Congresses—the principle milestones in the history of the Party—are also the turning points of the Party’s inner development. Here, revolutionary ideology emerged most vividly. Here, schools of thought paramount to the future aims of the mass revolutionary movement were determined. From here, the importance of the space occupied by the thematic installation *Party Congress* is readily apparent.

Significant challenges arise here for the museum employee. How to convey the political content of congressional work as visually and vibrantly as possible? There’s no doubt that the core of the difficulty lies in that internal ideological struggle that precedes the admission of final orders. That’s why it’s necessary to arrange the artifacts that best characterize the conflicts of various ideological schools of thought—namely the drafts of resolutions, political brochures, and speeches delivered by delegates, among others—at the very center of the entire exhibition. Warring Party factions must be presented in the photographs of their participants. The class basis for each departure from the correct Party line must be shown not only in verbal accounts (quotes from Lenin, and so on), but also in the surviving documents (for example, in the characteristics of the class

\(^1\) Russian Social-Democratic Worker’s Party — Trans. note
enemies of the Party), and in visual representations (for example, in photographic stills of pre-congressional assemblies with a particular class makeup). The Party congress must not be perceived as an isolated event—the museum exhibition must draw a visible narrative thread between the principal struggle at the congress and class antagonisms beyond Party lines. For every political faction, the museum-goer must be able to witness the class sphere that would have informed the faction’s conforming interpretations. The museum placard here acquires an important political significance, but it’s also important to remember that an excessive abundance of text will burden the exhibit and repulse the mass visitor. And in them, as everywhere and always, it’s necessary to use concrete language and graphic descriptions to introduce enlivening artistic representations (paintings, drawings, caricatures on a few of the themes represented), and to stir up the texts with arrangements of group photographs and especially with lively reproductions of mob scenes (the demonstrations of orators, the presentation of gifts, and so on).
Stemming from its primary purpose—to thoroughly lay out the history of class struggle—the museum uses everyday materials to frame its economic foundations. The thorough illumination of economics is among the museum’s accomplishments in this realm.

The main condition for the comprehensibility of any given collection of materials is the accessibility of the guiding labels. In this case, the labels consist of thesis texts covering entire wall-lengths naming the larger topic, which is an improvement compared to the commonly accepted system of simply cataloguing topics or using slogans. The greater simplicity and elementariness of the thesis summary is geared toward the masses and intended to be maximally comprehensible. Of course, certain success, that is, satisfactory results, cannot be achieved without some experimentation, and this approach is being used on a trial basis.

In addition to the main guiding labels (which are constructed from cut-out letters), the class characteristics of the acting forces in each depicted event are laid out in descriptive labels with quotations from contemporary sources. The aim of these labels is to provide examples of the style and mood of the time. With a colorful background, they are like their own museum pieces. The third kind of labels are evaluative, providing Marxist analysis or assessment of historical phenomena in accordance with the tasks of the proletarian revolution. Finally, there are descriptive labels under each artifact. These range from simple “naming” texts to political analysis necessitated by insufficiently intelligible objects or those from a foreign class, and occasionally explanatory quantitative information that helps develop the theme of the given object.

The exhibition begins with the thesis “The Serf Order Was Based in the Forced Labor Exploitation of the Peasant by the Aristocrat and Landowner.” The central themes are
were the first division in the bourgeois revolution.” the introduction to this subject is a small, partitioned interior with antique furniture, paintings, engravings, and plaques depicting the social origins of the decembrists, diagrams of their agrarian and political programs, and the social composition of secret societies. the three walls behind the interior present the december 14 uprising. at the center of the room, the most prominent spot is devoted to the chernigov regiment revolt. in order to analyze the tactics in these revolts side by side, the museum created additional materials including a specially commissioned painting by rudolph frentz, the positions of the soldiers on senate square (painted in 1925), and a map of the positions of the chernigov regiment and the activities of the “slavs” from a bird’s eye view. bright yellow walls, a dark blue interior, and a velvet wall hanging with masonic symbols reflect the age of nobility. silhouettes of the statue of peter the great and the peter and paul fortress serve as its emblems.

the topic of the reaction under nikolai, “the agrarian crisis temporarily strengthens serfdom,” is presented with original luboks and lithographs reflecting the ideology of “autocracy, orthodoxy, and nationality” as well as the political machine of nikolai i’s monarchy: the army, the gendarmerie, and the bureaucracy. models of cavalry and foot soldiers from original romanov collections help illustrate the presentation of the tsarist military; these include a contemporary statuette of nikolai ii on a marble column in a soldier’s overcoat and a general’s helmet. the third room addresses the battle for bourgeois reform. a wall labeled “emerging capitalism requires ‘free workers’” provides

1. term signifying a hardy (male) russian peasant—trans. note

2. woodcut prints popular in russia beginning in the late seventeenth century, usually depicting folk, literary, and religious stories.

—trans. note
Sovremennik. Additional materials on the peasant revolts of the 1860s include specially commissioned paintings by Ivan Vladimirov on the Berdyansk Execution. The display also includes little-known political caricatures about the reaction from the 1860s.

The presentation of the economic underpinnings of narodnichestvo—the vestiges of feudalism in the provinces combined with the simultaneous growth of capitalist elements—is clustered around a large diagram titled “The Development of Capitalism Following the Reform,” where numerical graphs are displayed alongside original railroad, bank, and manufacturing shares from the 1860s and 1870s. The foreground of the diagram features a model of the comparative growth of coal, raw iron, oil, cotton, railroads, and grain exports.

The next wall is titled “Revolutionary Intellectuals Seek Ways to Connect with the People” (on the first clubs and revolutionary organizations of the 1860s and ’70s), and leads into the room dedicated to narodnichestvo.

This room opens with a statement from Lenin: “Narodnichestvo is the protest against serfdom and the bourgeois way of life from the perspective of the peasant and the small producer.” Land and Liberty (Zemlya i Volya), the first revolutionary party, is presented through selected materials related to geography, terror, and party organization. Plywood covering the fireplace creates two “windows” that are illuminated from the inside by electric light. The central artifact for “February 19, 1861—the Beginning of Bourgeois Russia” is a model of a “freed” serf. It is created using acute “defamiliarization” and the externalization of verbal material. In the model, (a) A rider sits atop a serf, and (b) The rider has gotten off, having received a redemption payment to do so while the serf now lies under the press of government tributies that has a policeman standing on it. Above this scene, there is a bas-relief of the tsar’s manifesto announcement under the cover of cannon fire.

The labels on the fourth wall illuminate the peasant revolution and its spokesman Chernyshevsky, who railed against the landowners and nobility of Russia with the question, “Through Revolution or Through Reform?” Materials on Chernyshevsky are thrust into the wall at sharp angles, presented against the background of a blown-up title page of the

3. A fine serfs were forced to pay if absent from their villages.
—Trans. note
a flower on the windowsill—a sign of safety—and is used as a frame for the original documents arranged behind it from the “bureaucracy in the sky” (false stationary, stamps, fake passports, and so on). All of this comprises the topic “The Revolutionary Conspiracy.”

Next is the wall on the workers’ movement of the 1870s, titled “The Only Real Force is the Strike Movement of the Workers.” The fracture of Land and Liberty, under the thematic heading “The Narodnaya Volya Party Takes a Step Forward, Crossing Over Into Political Battle,” is illustrated by a crack that goes through the entire wall, with materials on the Black Repartition and The People’s Will on either side. The text above the materials on the assassination of the tsar reads, “March 1st—the Most Powerful Blow Against Autocracy. This Wasn’t the Storm Yet, The Storm Would be the Movement of the Masses.” Alexander II’s carriage is placed on a slant, underlining its bad luck, and behind it there is a transparency of an exploding bomb that lights up.

The next small room focuses on the decline of The People’s Will and summarizes its achievements. Next to it, last year, the museum installed models of the equipment in Pribylev and Grachevsky’s dynamite-making studio as it would have looked in the early 1880s, with two life-sized figures intended to show the original technology of hand-to-hand combat with autocracy. The same subject is addressed by the museum’s replica of the basement of the Winter Palace where Khalturin lived, the walls and layout of which are reconstructed based on archival research. The defeat of the People’s Will party is also represented in the model of a jail cell from the Shlisselburg People’s Will Prison (with original details), which was constructed in 1922 and served as the prototype for all such models currently on view in museums.

Two additional small rooms illustrate Alexander III’s reaction. An interesting artifact here is an emblem of a municipal police chief created with elements of a police uniform mounted on the wall and an expressive hand gesture created by its white gloves.

The workers’ movement that developed in the years of Alexander’s Reaction, which determined the course of the Russian Revolution, are to be covered in the second half of the section, entitled “The 1890s through the 1900s.”
THE MUSEUM AS A WEAPON OF CLASS STRUGGLE:
Here and Abroad

ROZA FRUMKINA
When the Soviet tourist happens into one of the museums of Berlin, Paris, Vienna, or another city, he is struck most immediately by the relative paucity of fellow visitors. Only in those that the Baedeker guide marks with an asterisk will you find tour groups, particularly foreign ones. These groups race through the halls of the Louvre, hurrying to see—or, more accurately, not to see so much as to be able to say they have seen—the *Venus de Milo*, the *Mona Lisa*, and a handful of other masterpieces and attractions of worldwide repute. It is the same in every world capital. In Berlin, Englishmen and Americans throng before Pergamon—but merely press a few blocks further to the richest of ethnographic museums, and you will not encounter a soul. On a Sunday, perhaps, a school trip will amble about. Five or six hundred visitors, at the most, may stop by the ethnographic museum in a day.

Prewar capitalism treated the museum as a weapon of class struggle and influence, with more than a touch of condescension. The art museum satisfied the bourgeoisie’s need for aesthetic snobbery, the technical museum prepared the qualified laborer-engineer, and museums of sociopolitical development were with rare exception completely inaccessible to the masses.

After the war, when a proletariat that could enjoy the shining example of the October Revolution attempted to restore to itself those material and spiritual values that the bourgeoisie had been plundering by the day and by the hour, a question arose sharply. The bourgeoisie took shelter behind its right to surplus value, employing all the means at its disposal, from gun and gallows to church and social-democratic envelopment. Its class enemy—the proletariat—had to be
idea: the war was imposed on Germany and prosecuted by her entire populace, the soldiers and officers on the front constituting a unified whole that went undefeated, and the rear suffering its blockade, cornering the front into surrender. Revolutionary progress reflected nothing but the machinations of the Triple Entente. The death of Karl Liebknecht was declared in this notice, which had run in the *Berliner Tageblatt*:

“I bring to the attention of friends and acquaintances news of the passing of my companion in juridical consultation, Doctor of Laws Karl Liebknecht.” Signed—Doctor of Laws So-and-So.

The war had just ended, leaving thousands of cripples. But oh, don’t worry about them! Let this row of photographs show you what marvelous prostheses they received, what a variety of crafts they were taught—in the end, you may even regret not having been crippled yourself, or blinded. And if you should chance to recall that five minutes before you encountered a legless invalid begging alms on the streetcar, then surely you were dreaming. And so it goes: long live war.

But for the fifteen years before the war in a series of countries, the Second International and all its parties in fact enjoyed tremendous influence. The Second International fought for the soul of the workers, and, in the guise of the German Party, the Labor-Party, and the Austrian S(ocial)-D(emocrat) Party, was periodically in power. How did it register its intentions? The answer is clear and simple: it did not. The very house where Karl Marx was born was in the hands of the Social-Democrat Party. But in 1933 Hitler rose to power and hoisted his fascist flag over it. The only exhibition of Social-Democrat materials that I was able to see was in Cologne, consisting of printed matter from the German Social-Democrats. In a small pavilion several newspapers lay dully together, graying and hardly distinguishable from one another. Nothing more. I had the opportunity to speak with the administrators of the pavilion,

Denmark, coffee and eggs from Holland, and Australian lamb. Every few minutes, some German bank notes flutter by in the window. The other interior shows us how a “patriot” of his fatherland takes breakfast: on his table sit ersatz coffee made from acorns, margarine in place of butter, and so forth, all of it made from domestic products, so that money stays in the country, in the pockets of the fatherland’s capitalists. Another display uses a mechanized, electric train to show graphically how much capital is being carted out of Germany.

You can walk the full length of the museum’s ten halls without seeing even the slightest tract of class struggle represented. In another section dedicated to the force of the workers, which is horribly poor and meager by comparison, only two things are shown: the rationalization and choice of a profession based on a battery of tests. The entire function is to ensure that a man best suited to working with a paintbrush is not instead placed before a lathe, and that the table and instruments are arranged to ensure minimal loss of time. As though the fulfillment of these two principles could somehow ensure a shining future …

It should be no surprise, then, that among the friends of this museum who sit on its advisory board we see such names as Thyssen and other leaders of German heavy industry. There is only one problem: workers never visit this museum.

But the bourgeoisie must make its preparations for war at an ever faster pace. A new generation has arisen. One that did not fight in the trenches, that must be shown war from its most appealing angle. How can this be done? One need only look to the Stuttgart Museum of World War, or to Paris’s Legionnaires’ Museum, to find out. In Stuttgart, the entire museum consists of a selection of newspaper clippings and photographs. There are hardly any actual artifacts. The museum’s ten halls follow, in obstinate sequence, an uncomplicated
and to my puzzled inquiries they answered simply, “Here in Cologne there is an exhibition of printed materials, and so we are displaying ours.” I held forth to them that the utility of print derives from its contents, and here these could not be discerned, but this proved quite incomprehensible to them. The sole Social-Democrat museum worthy of this appellation is the Commune Museum in Vienna. The entire museum consists of charts made according to Professor Neurath’s system, which has been dispersed widely across the USSR through the Institute of Representational Statistics. In this, it is typical of the refined methods of Social-Democratic envelopment. Thus, for example, in the chart titled “How Many Votes Did the Workers’ Parties Receive in the Elections?,” the votes of communists and socialists are tallied together. The museum is founded on glorifying the virtues of the municipality of Vienna. Every mention and notion of class struggle has been chiseled from the memorial to Otto Bauer.

Far more work has been done by fascism in the realm of museum displays. In Italy, the fascists have created a great archive and unveiled an exhibition of photographs, posters, and ephemera to commemorate the tenth anniversary of the March on Rome. We may judge this exhibition by its photographs, which are mounted on a series of discrete boards. Taken together, they clearly show how great an influence has been exerted by our own methods of display. Certain of the boards directly duplicate particular models from the Museum of the Soviet Revolution of 1925–26. A tremendous amount of space is devoted to materials praising Mussolini, with especial stress on the struggle against communism. A special display titled “Weapons Confiscated from the Communists of Bibiena’s City,” in which we see but a few rifles and revolvers, speaks eloquently to how meagerly armed were our comrades. Another display titled “Communist Insignias Seized by the Fascists” unwittingly fills the soul with bitterness, and serves as a reminder that the hour is not far yet when these insignias will be removed to their rightful place: the Museum of the Italian Revolution.

The German fascists, copying their Italian predecessors to the fullest extent possible, have from the very first given careful thought to the matter of exhibitions. First off, immediately upon rising to power, they razed from the face of the Earth the small Museum of the Great War, showing its horrors. The museum was located in a small house. Now the fascists have opened a giant exhibition of war memorials in the center of Unter den Linden, extending the tradition of the Stuttgart Museum. By displaying cutaways of trenches, mock-ups of cannons, soldiers’ encampments, and the like, it lavishes upon slaughter untold glories. For what does Germany need war? In truth, only to restore its colonies. The German people need colonies, and under this slogan a great exhibition was unveiled in Berlin, showing the beneficences conferred by Germans on the natives of their colonies. Nor will the matter of exhibitions be pushed aside in the provinces. Votes are needed in Pomerania, and suddenly, just like that, an exhibition is mounted: What the fascists have done for Pomerania. All words and pictures, with no facts.

For our article, we also stopped by a few typically bourgeois museums, but in other countries one finds the same. The exhibition of colonization in Berlin is the direct progeny of a tremendous and similar one in Paris, the Museum of the Empire in London, and so forth.

In brief, we may say that the museum and exhibition are, in capitalist countries, widely used as intoxicants of the toiling masses.

What distinguishes our friends from them? Our friends are distinguished by making visible the construction of...
socialism in the fatherland of all laborers. The USSR appears in all international exhibitions and fairs, and the pavilions demonstrating the achievements of workers and peasants invariably swell with visitors. Over the past few years, the Society of Friends of the USSR has often employed the method of mounting small, traveling exhibitions on the various subjects that arise in the construction of socialism. They arouse lively responses in the toiling masses; the visitors’ books have amounted to a kind of mass rally. “Lenin’s dream lives—what has become of Masaryk’s?” wrote one Czech worker, a visitor at an exhibition on socialist construction in the USSR. This leitmotif runs through all the comments. The last great exhibition, mounted abroad, commemorated the fifteenth anniversary of the Soviet Union. Even today, this exhibition remains open in Scandinavia, to great success. Our foreign friends have discovered yet one more striking way of utilizing exhibition materials—publishing the exhibition, in whole or in part. Recent years have seen part of an exhibition on the construction of socialism published under the title *The Filippov Family* as a special number of *AIJS*; it went on to circle the globe. An exhibition of the fifteenth anniversary of the USSR was published in its own edition in German, under the title *Fifteen Iron Paces*, and in the near future a Dutch house will be following suit. These exhibitions have done their job: unmistakably standing up against bourgeois terror and global crisis to achieve our Five-Year Plan. The same struggle has been fought on this front as on the others. That struggle continues, and we have the duty of marshaling all our strength into a contribution to the work of the great struggle for the majority of the working class, for the propaganda of communism, for the shock brigade of the world proletariat—our socialist fatherland.
AN EXHIBITION AND PANORAMA OF THE MOSCOW CREMATORIUM

A. F. LEVITSKY
An exhibition and panorama of Moscow crematoriums has been up for three months already in Kharkov (1 Sverdlov St.). Since there is no museum or permanent exhibit on antireligious matters in the Ukrainian SSR, combined with the construction of a crematorium in Kharkov for the popularization of the idea of cremation and the education of the public in the materialist worldview, this exhibit is more than welcome.

The exhibit and the panorama are housed in two moderately sized rooms within a shabby, newly built plywood structure. In the first room: installation materials, historical information on burials, buried remains, cremation machinery, and “testimonials of cremation.” In the second: a burial and cremation panorama, cremated remains, projection slides of contemporary crematoriums. There are a good number of slogans at the exhibit, with sufficient explanatory labels, tables, and photographs. The projection slides and the panorama are relatively effective. The exhibition attendance rates are high even today. Guides provide additional information to organized tours and small groups of visitors.

At the same time, it is necessary to note the drawbacks of this particular exhibit: the organizing principle of this mobile exhibit is unclear; the layout of the exhibit and even a schematic diagram indicating the principles according to which materials are arranged are missing; themes aren’t made clear to exhibit tours; there is no guidebook or catalog available; no much-needed agitprop leaflets; all captions and annotations for visitors are written only in Russian, while the exhibit sign is written out in improper Ukrainian; some of the photographs on display are terribly old; the projection slides are duplicates (the crematoriums in Australia); captions are sometimes grammatically incorrect (the dimensions of Moscow’s cemeteries are measured in “square hectares”); there is no literature or bibliography provided on matters concerning burial and especially cremation. There is one ill-considered caption labeling a section “Testimonials of Cremation,” but actually, in addition to testimonials, there is information on the period when cremation was legalized by the state (in 1918, for us) and photographs of those who had been cremated, for example: Durov, Tsiurupa, Solovyov, Skvortsov-Stepanov, the scholar Bekhterev, and Vladimir Mayakovsky. Indeed, for such a serious and important exhibition, one must be a wunderkind of a guide in order to be able to briefly outline, over the course of a mere four or six minutes, the installation and its materials to adult visitors or a group of schoolchildren—all this is done according to one manual. A disclosure made on the part of the tour guide (and possibly according to outlined instructions given to him) included the assertion that our oldest relics were those of Theodosius Uglich, “preserved in the Kiev-Pechersk Lavra” (right away, there is an inaccuracy—one of chronology and fact). The guide’s inability to relate his explanations with the exhibition’s location in Ukraine is somewhat surprising. For example, with respect to relics, even to this day there are relics in the former Kiev-Pechersk Lavra, while at Kharkov’s cultural museum, Artyom, there is a mummified corpse. Because all the materials in the exhibition are so thoughtless, it is possible to leave it confused: Is cremation at all needed, or is it better to abide by the age-old custom of burying the dead? In one ill-fated place in the exhibition—on the eastern wall in the first room—appears the following thesis caption: “The enormous work of liberating Earth from rotten plant-matter
and the corpses of animals and people is performed by bacteria. Due to their efforts, all major categories of organic substances decompose into simpler compounds until they become completely mineralized. This renders them again fit for plant consumption, in order to once more enter a new cycle of life.” This is not just a technical error, but a crude ideological blunder on the part of the exhibition’s organizers. It is crucial that significant corrections be made to the material and operation of this exhibit as soon as possible.
First I’d like to talk about the principles of installation with which we approached the challenge of organizing the Antireligious Combine in Leningrad. We did not name it the Antireligious Museum, but the Combine, and here’s why: we have come to the conclusion that this manner of antireligious work must be conducted by all museums, since all museums are built on Marxist methodology. Each of these museums must conduct systematic propaganda around the Marxist worldview, and the Antireligious Combine occupies a definite place in this plan.

Today, when the question of antireligious work becomes a political actuality, there is a need to create a particular Combine that would conduct systematic antireligious work, linking it to other departments. There must be fundamental themes included in the Antireligious Combine, linked to religion, the role of class struggle, and the role of religion in contemporary society; in addition, a department of natural sciences must be organized in all of the museums so that a different worldview is provided in place of the religious worldview that we are erasing. These are the two sides that we were faced with during the organization of the Antireligious Combine. We consider it to be temporary. It will exist for fifteen to twenty years, and with time the need for it will decrease, but the propaganda opposing a religious worldview to a materialistic worldview and promoting the education of youth taking their first steps toward Marxist appreciation will be passed on to another museum. This compels us to approach the organization of the Combine with particular care.

Work on antireligious exhibitions began to develop only after the October Revolution, and as our workers stepped up to the job—that is, the exhibition—they found themselves completely at the mercy of the old workers and patterns of exhibition derived from the old museums. Faced with these new challenges to antireligious museums, the old method of museum exhibition could not be taken into consideration. The challenge of new forms and methods of exhibition had arisen. However, strange as it may seem, no new methods had been created, and in terms of exhibition today the antireligious museum falls behind all other museums. I’ll repeat, the reason is that these new antireligious workers have not developed the techniques they had in their own hands.

The experience of constructing the Antireligious Combine in what was formerly St. Isaac’s Cathedral creates the challenge of attempting to build the kind of form that is most effectively expressive and provides maximum thematic clarity in the museum’s presentations, all so that the viewer does not think he is entering the Kunstkamera, but instead has no illusions that he is viewing the Combine.

On the other hand, the following must be taken into account about the work: when you view shows that are antireligious in nature, it’s hard not to notice that to a large degree this work is in line with cultural redistribution. The most prominent show in Leningrad, open in the halls of the Winter Palace, satisfies all aspects of antireligious work and appears to be a purely culturally redistributive show. The gist of the show is the history of religion, except the history of religion is parallel to ethnographic studies and while viewing the exhibition an excursionist might come to the following conclusion: every nation and every group had their own gods. A materialist explanation of religion is not provided. This practice must be categorically condemned, because it merely provides elements of cultural redistribution without
and fully explaining the material. Sometimes this results in connections being automatically made in the material.

With regard to the distribution of objects in the theme: things are distributed according to how they pertain to the current issue. Very often (this can be found in any museum) objects that are secondary from the point of view of the fundamental theme overshadow the primary target, as they are superficially more effective, thereby focusing the viewer’s attention on secondary objects to the detriment of the entire exhibition.

Themes are severely overloaded. This is a vice which we must struggle against. Quite often, having arrived at the museum, the viewer gets bored. Museums are in competition with each other over who can shove the most material onto a wall. The appreciation desired of the viewer will not be achieved this way. Flashy objects attract the most attention, followed by everything else being viewed “after the fact.” Attempting to present fewer exhibitions gives more favorable results, and rightly so. Those who arrive for the tour will view the whole exhibition with the utmost attention.

The experience of curiosity at the Tolstoy Museum in Leningrad: they conduct this experience to its fullest there. Sometimes on a wall, very large in size, only one exhibit is displayed, and the excursionist will survey it with scrutiny. This smaller quantity of material expresses the idea presented by the exhibition best of all. In many instances the following conclusion may be drawn: it is possible to include a large number of exhibits that convey the spirit of the chosen theme. However, the material must be displayed in a way that elicits the greatest response.

At the antireligious museum we overload the material with photographs which are variations of one and the same theme from different perspectives. Intriguing things happen...
Typically, so that the theme can in some way be uniform, materials that are either diagram, slogan, or schematically oriented are included. How is this material applied? Most times it is unsatisfactory. Every one of us has—we got this from the old museums—held on to the idea that the schematic, the diagram, and the cartogram are supplemental materials in the museum that have no right to be equal to showpieces on display. This leads to our diagrams and schematics being made in a way that it is unpleasant to look at. This is a careless making of two-dimensional objects, and a place should be allocated for them the same as for supplemental materials. This is why a large part of the role that they must play in explaining the exhibition is lost, even though it’s we who employ them for the purpose of providing a materialist, Marxist explanation to a whole series of questions. The explanation falls away as a result, because we do not have a definite viewpoint on this material as material of importance.

It is the same with museum labels. The problem of museum labels in all the museums in Moscow is the loss of, to put it simply, the slogan. This leads to the slogan being understood, formally, in and of itself but not as an explanation of the object. Faced with this system of museum labeling, a person arriving at the museum gets confused, reads slogans, and views displayed showpieces like the objects at the Kunstkamera, but the theme is not expressed in an integrated way to him. Even if guidebook materials were provided, to make him follow a red line through the entire network of museum labels, provided as more than just slogans—all this could never be applied and could never be applicable, and rightly so. It’s necessary to direct your attention here to the experience of Leningrad, via the accomplishments made at the Peterhof Museum, one of the best museums at organizing
Here is the fundamental route that we are taking in regard to exposing the church. It’s the kind of exhibition that must kill the church, show alien themes. Occasionally we include whole chunks of the current cathedral in our exhibitions. I acknowledge that this is the primary route which the organization of the museum must follow.

Now, regarding the general principles of our exhibition. It is constructed on thematic principles so that the theme will be clearly recognized and definitively concluded, and the rather difficult task of organizing the cathedral is done in a way that is designed to make it possible to mount any antireligious tour at the museum based on its themes and materials, while the Antireligious Combine provides an opportunity to broadly establish antireligious work so that each and every student may be shown the museum from different angles. It’s not necessary to discuss the principles of Marxist construction. They are evident in and of themselves.

The fundamental goal is to direct the exhibition and distributing materials according to place and theme. What follows is our fundamental criteria. Our principle is: the theme cannot be overloaded with exhibits and priority should be given to exhibits that reveal the core of the theme. In regard to secondary materials, however sad it may be (I’m a museum lover too, and sometimes it’s painful to throw things away), we have to go ahead and throw out secondary material. This is the fundamental principle that must govern the entire exhibition.

The enormous advantage of thematic materials is that we have the ability to change the material during the thematic exhibition. When we have a grand communal theme, we display the material with precision, particularly within each theme. The elements of rearrangement in the exhibition, along with contemporaneity, will become an inner part of the exhibition.
The principles of thematic exhibition are revealed foremost in the successful delivery of the exhibition. The theme may be in the form of a stationary exhibition, but it grabs hold of the fundamental material—the essence of the current theme. When we display material about the history of religion, we display the elements of production in the General Department, showing how it all came together. This provides the economic base that it grew out of. The same applies to contemporary religion as well. Construction remains ongoing, but the material may be changed daily. It is vital that exhibit design is used totally for the purpose of accentuating this material, and we’re accomplishing much in this regard. Secondary objects are excluded. Exhibition design accentuates slight objects which are interesting for our purposes and places them center stage. We proceed in this way, so that exhibition design remains a dutiful apparatus in our hands. This method conforms to the design of departments. Departments with beautiful materials will reveal themselves to be exactly that, and we will apply exhibition design to departments that are lacking.

On diagrams and cartograms: this material is just as important as any other material. The diagram schematic must be included in the conversation and should be just as aesthetically pleasing as all other exhibitions. The viewer must look at the diagram schematic in the same way that he looks at the exhibition—that is what we must strive for. We plan to introduce electrical lighting and maneuverable maps. The introduction of all these things will compel the viewer to look at the exhibition.

The question of museum labels: the museum label must, in my opinion, be presented in three parts.

If the thesis has been artistically realized, then it will be displayed as a whole of all its parts, including the theme. A thesis that is presented not only through slogans linked in with the current theme, but materials explaining that theme as well, becomes a part of the systematic construction of the current theme. Secondary material: supplemental, allowing for the story behind the current theme to be told; and tertiary material: allowing for the organization of its construction. The method of building a system of museum labels in such a manner produces favorable results. The principal guiding theme stands out sharply.

What themes should be included in the composition of the Antireligious Combine: it is impossible to permanently decide this for every Combine, since it is necessary to take all regional material into consideration. For this reason, I, for instance, cannot recommend the plan for executing exhibitions at the former St. Isaac’s Cathedral for other Combines. The question must be decided in every respective instance, basing it, of course, on your respective installations.
Alongside museums of the history of the Revolution, antireligious museums are the true children of October.

The October Revolution wrested one-sixth of the planet from the hands of the exploiters who “require filling two social functions in order to defend their dominance: the role of the executioner and the role of the priest” (Lenin). “Our Revolution … presented the greatest challenge to religious thought, the greatest criticism of the religious worldview and the societal forces that constrain religion” (Yaroslavsky). After the October Revolution, the mass departure from religion took off, and the antireligious movement keeps growing. Our battle to liberate the working class from religion is closely intertwined with our fight for socialism. “The war against religion is the war for socialism.” This is the motto of the millions-strong League of Militant Atheists.

The League of Militant Atheists (LMA) fights religion in every way, using all possible approaches. Museum-related methods are an extremely powerful weapon in our arsenal. At the Antireligious Museum, we use visual aids to demonstrate our principles, debunking the class-exploitative essence of religion using archival materials, documents, photos, painting, sculpture, and so on. This can achieve great results, especially amongst the religious and other categories of working people for whom the exhibition of original documents and artifacts debunking religion in a museum are often much more persuasive than even the most well-argued lecture. For this reason, from its very first efforts, the LMA has set out to establish antireligious museums and strongly censure the failures that often occur in this area, especially in relation to so-called historical churches and monasteries.
organized in 1926 at the Military Engineering Academy in Moscow. This exhibition featured a large number of documents revealing the class significance of religion and was met with great success. Two years later, on the foundation of the materials collected for the exhibition, the Antireligious Museum was opened in an ill-equipped basement space.

To counter the aforementioned monastery museums and the several antireligious institutions infected with kulturnichestvo,2 the Moscow Museum's objective was to be an instrument for exposing the class-exploitative essence of religion. The museum illustrated the relationship between religious organizations and organs of the tsarist government, the counterrevolutionary activities of religious organizations in 1905 in the reactionary years, and how these organizations supported imperialist massacre; their resistance to the October Revolution; their relationship with the White Guard.

The basement space where the museum was located was not conducive to the expansion of its activities. All efforts were made to find a different location, and finally, when, after great difficulty, the museum was granted use of a cathedral church of the former Strastnoy Monastery, it took a great deal of work to reclaim this (incidentally ill-suited) space. The museum was completed in the beginning of 1929, and thus, the anti-Easter campaign was inaugurated in the very center of Moscow, in a former stronghold of the religious opiate, at the museum of atheism. Two months later, the museum in the former Strastnoy Monastery was graced by delegates from the Second All-Soviet Congress of Militant Atheists. From November 1929 to November 1930, the museum saw 234,716 visitors.
cover a far greater scope, not to mention its methodological and pedagogical elements, which are currently very weak. CAM participates in public museum life, with various public museum shows, is on the museum methods commission of the Academic Sector of the People’s Commissariat for Education, the Central Bureau on Local History, and other organizations. In the near future, the CAM is poised to become a true all-Soviet and even international museum center for proletarian atheism.

Over time, antireligious museum construction came to be more plan-oriented, and started following the path for achieving the objective of creating many antireligious museum locations around the country. The antireligious museum is not a haphazard institution emerging from favorable conditions; it’s a powerful lever of our antireligious propaganda machine as important as the other forms and methods of battling religion that have gained currency concurrently.

The turning point in the development of this plan for the antireligious museum inarguably came with the First All-Russian Museum Congress (December 1–6, 1930), which called for the overall reconstruction of the entire museum complex of the cultural front with a view to socialist construction, and turning museums into “instruments of the cultural revolution.”

In his opening address, Comrade Bubnov declared that museum work “remained contaminated with significant vestiges of backwardness, and [was] far from reaching the objectives in the struggle and construction of socialism relevant today.” This was an irrefutably fair assessment of museums in general and how museums approach antireligious propaganda in particular. In most museums, the latter seems to have stalled in its often-haphazard application, which, more often than not, was abandoned. At the same time, the socialist
reeducation of the working masses, in which our museums are called to play a prominent role, that is, the introduction of the materialist Marxist-Leninist worldview into their consciousness, is unthinkable without atheist propaganda.

Rich and varied materials were provided by the antireligious panel of the congress, which worked in conjunction with the League of Militant Atheists. The question of antireligious propaganda in local history museums inspired heated discussion. The argument centered on whether local history museums should have discrete antireligious exhibitions or whether antireligious materials should be placed throughout their collections. Noting the tendency of the majority of local history museums to have scant antireligious materials scattered throughout their exhibition, the panel concluded that in light of the meagerness of antireligious materials in the provinces and the necessity of mobilizing the attention of the masses, turning it to the battle with religion, special antireligious wings are needed in local history museums, which does not, of course, preclude but rather further emphasizes the necessity of adding antireligious elements throughout their permanent collections. In its conclusion, the panel emphasized that antireligious exhibitions in local history museums should provide in-depth examinations of the counterrevolutionary class role of religion. Unfortunately, we must acknowledge that the recommendations set forth in this resolution have yet to be thoroughly implemented.


Nonetheless, the First All-Russian Museum Congress has led to the rising profile of the antireligious front. Antireligious work in museums have become the subject of serious inquiry from the wider museum community. These successes should not only be appreciated from the standpoint of the progress of antireligious propaganda: the expansion of antireligious activity in museums is one of the expressions of the museum front turning toward the great construction of socialism.

For the past three years, especially during the First All-Russian Museum Congress, there has been an appreciable increase in the number of antireligious museums as well as antireligious wings in local history museums. Across the RSFSR, there are nearly one hundred antireligious museum locations, although the exhibition quality in the majority of them is rather pitiful.

In Moscow, in addition to the CAM, there’s the Antireligious Museum of Art (formerly the Donskoy Monastery), which breaks down the class essence of religion in art. Using materials found in the monastery, the museum presents an exhibition on Religion and War; the tombstones and memorials in the cemetery are incorporated into the Class Significance of Burial exhibition. An incomparably less successful museum in Moscow is the Museum of the Emancipated Woman, where the role of religion in the enslavement of working women and the struggle to liberate them from the opiate of religion are among the topics explored.

Leningrad follows in Moscow’s footsteps in developing its antireligious museums. Here we find the antireligious museum (LGAM) in the former St. Isaac’s Cathedral, and the broadly conceived Museums of the History of Religion and Atheism currently under construction in the Kazan Cathedral. Incidentally, the LGAM’s collection includes the first Foucault’s pendulum in the USSR, which is also the world’s largest.
The class enemy, seeing the might of the antireligious propaganda in our museums, attempts to sabotage us. There have been acts of sabotage and agitation at the LGAM.

Following the example of the large museums, smaller museums outside of major cities demonstrate an increasing aptitude for adopting the correct political orientation, and their “toothless,” often apolitical museums are steadily transforming into true centers for militant atheism. Of course, we will endure many pitfalls here yet, but there have still been some successes. In particular, it bears mentioning the Bryansk Antireligious Museum, which has been around for several years. It has seven galleries and five thousand artifacts; it has organized twenty-four mobile exhibitions and outfitted an antireligious museum unit in a train car. This location sees a widespread development of socialist competition, organizes a great deal of community service works, and facilitates scholarly research. The Central Museum in Tatarstan is also the site of notable ongoing antireligious activity.

The opposite can be seen in, for instance, in the Volga region, in the Urals, in the Ivanovsk Oblast. Inspections have revealed thoroughly inadequate paces of construction and reconstruction of antireligious museums and departments in those areas. Local materials are not being used, exhibitions are far from politically acute, efforts to work with the masses are weak, and no attention is paid to the techniques of exhibition. The situation with funding and staff is pathetic, the administration in the center has not been a stable entity, and regional museums are completely divorced from municipal ones. Finally, there is no dialogue—the examples of the work of our finest antireligious museums are not reaching these regions. The network of antireligious museums is by no means satisfactory: we see dozens of antireligious museums, when the number of centers of antireligious museum operations should be in the hundreds and even thousands.

The majority of the progress made so far has been in the realm of collecting the materials necessary for antireligious museums and galleries. This is of course of great importance, but today, it is overshadowed by the tasks of significantly intensifying our antireligious activity and raising it to a high ideological level.

On the eve of the second Five-Year Plan, our country must triumph over the remains of capitalism in the consciousness of our people. This historical goal lends a special importance to antireligious propaganda, which must go deeper and reach the largest possible number of religious working people; it must become more convincing. The museum as a locus for antireligious activity will allow it to meet all of these objectives and for this reason, it demands to be a higher priority.

In the coming years, we aim to expand antireligious work in museums, build antireligious museums or galleries in every region and every city, and fill every museum with antireligious information throughout its galleries, first and foremost, at local history museums.

The second decisive element is cadres. The antireligious museum workforce suffers from an almost complete lack of personnel. They would need to be prepared and educated on a broad range of subjects, and fast. Today, there are no qualified antireligious museum workers to serve even the specialized antireligious museums, not to mention the local history museums. Meanwhile, antireligious work needs to be raised to a higher level: the network of antireligious museums needs to be expanded—which means that we must first make considerable advances in the direction of training personnel.

4. Another reference to kulturnichesctvo—Trans. note
The recently held Second All-Soviet Conference on Antireligious Work of the League of Militant Atheists outlined practicable pathways in this direction, namely: creating training and education facilities at CAM, LGAM, and the Museum of the History of Religion and Atheism; holding correspondence courses; and creating methodical and educational textbooks for antireligious museum work, among other things.

We have made little progress in developing the methods for curating antireligious exhibitions. Here, we find a lot of amateurism and no set guidelines. The research work necessary for resolving certain theoretical issues connected to antireligious propaganda in museums must take its rightful place in the corresponding institutions as well as becoming a part of the absolutely crucial research institute for methods and means of antireligious propaganda.

The successful development of our museum-exhibition work is closely related to the expansion of the research work of the League of Militant Atheists. The task lies in studying local materials, studying the enemy, and studying the process of the emancipation of the workers from religion. This work must involve low-level local history organizations and follow through on arrangements made between the Central Bureau of Local History and the LMA. It’s critical to mobilize the forces of Soviet art so that our antireligious museums can be filled with artistically powerful artifacts to take the place of innumerable photos. Finally, the Central Antireligious Museum must become the true administrative center for all antireligious museum activity. The CAM needs to be provided with the best possible conditions for making the development of its work possible in the future. Following these paths, we will ensure that our museums, first and foremost the antireligious ones, will become powerful weapons in the battle against religion and for socialism.
Additionally, there are all kinds of examples of predatory behavior, parasitism, and so on. In this way the organization of antireligious subsections within existing sections supplements and intensifies antireligious work.

Moreover, entire sections can be organized around an antireligious core. The Timiryazev Biomuseum has a section of physiological demonstrations focused around the topic “Does man have a soul?” We would like to use this section as an example of how museums are bound not only to demonstrate finalized conclusions, but also the methods of scientific study themselves, the methods used in laboratory experiments. Demonstrations of individual organs and experiments on living animals are performed in this section, and all of the labeling, indeed the whole stance of the section, is of a purely antireligious character.

We believe that the material in science museums should be necessarily used for all kinds of courses, seminars, political education work, and teachers’ retraining courses, courses for workers and for workers promoted to administrative work. These courses are held at biomuseums using this scientific material. The Timiryazev Biomuseum has been doing this work for six years already, and the courses we hold for rural reading-room managers, political education workers, and pedagogues have been tremendously fruitful, because we maintain our connection with them afterward as well. The fruitfulness of our work is even evident in the fact that small museums are being organized in far-flung areas; these museums constantly have dealings with us and make use of our guidance. Furthermore, we believe that museums’ materials should be brought out into workers’ clubs, kolkhozi, into parks, public gardens, onto boulevards, public squares, and so forth. I can point to what we are currently organizing at two major workers’ enterprises, the Aviakhim factory...
and the brake equipment factory, where there are constantly changing mobile exhibitions on the following topics: “Science and Religion,” “The Origin of Man and Animals,” and “Does Man Have a Soul?” They are exhibited in workers’ clubs and always accompanied by museum guides, who not only provide explanations but also conduct guided tours. We organized the same kind of work in the Park of Culture and Leisure, and the carrying capacity of the scientific pavilion there is tens of times higher than the number of visitors that come through our museum.

Science museums should also represent themselves in printed matter: the publication of small brochures, perhaps illustrated with fresh new photographs from the museums’ exhibits; the publication of small-format antireligious albums based around a drawn photographic image with additional text, which is tremendously useful for low-level audiences; and so on. After this follows the publication of photographs of various wall diagrams, which we are in the process of doing right now. Several brochure series under the heading “The Brain and the Soul” and “The Structure and Work of the Body” were taken from our museum’s exhibition materials. Thus the printed representation of biological museums’ scientific materials should be tremendously varied and extensive.

All of the antireligious work in biological and scientific museums should, of course, be conducted in close contact with social organizations. In this sense we are connected to the central and regional Soviets of the Militant Atheists Union; we meet their specifications in the form of guest lectures and the like. I mean that the Biomuseum not only puts on mobile exhibitions in workers’ auditoriums, but also lectures, and our lectures differ from those of other organizations in that the museum’s method of demonstration is for the most part inserted into the lectures themselves. We endeavor to display experiments, slides, and a whole selection of exhibits that we borrow from the museum, as we have extra specimens for this purpose. Our lectures are a huge success. We have been told directly that all it takes is to bring a single little frog and use it to demonstrate a few experiments in relation to the slackening of its neuromuscular apparatus, that this will most likely guarantee the success of the lecture—the audience is that hungry for the use of visual methods and for factual material. Leading up to the anti-Christmas campaign, we start getting orders for lecturers a month and a half in advance.

Further, we wish to indicate that our fundamental work with scientific material should nevertheless not be self-contained. Our aim is not only to develop the materialist worldview but also to reveal the class-based essence of religion using this material, and this should be dominant. I offer the following examples. Take the question: “Does man have a soul?” We endeavor through a whole series of experiments to show the material basis of life processes and to show, at the beginning and the end of the lecture, whether man has a soul from the class point of view, in order to show that belief in the soul has been used in fashioning a tool of oppression.
CHURCH PAINTING AND ITS HISTORY AS AN OBJECT OF ANTIRELIGIOUS PROPAGANDA

IVAN SKULENKO
Amid the general successes of socialist construction, the process of cultural revolution is unfolding in our country at an unprecedented rate. The victorious proletariat of one-sixth of the Earth is not only refashioning the economy in a socialist direction, but also retuning their worldview in terms of the materialist dialectic, of Marxism-Leninism, educating the laboring masses in the spirit of class hatred and uncompromising resistance to the oppressors. “Everywhere and at all times, every manifestation of religion was the ruling classes’ most powerful and versatile tool of oppression and enslavement of the laborers, ever affirming faith in the ‘divine’ origin of the oppressors” (Lenin).

In exposing the class nature of religion and the church, antireligious propaganda naturally constitutes a powerful factor in the cultural revolution. Thus the task of the antireligious propagandist is to seize absolutely all available opportunities and the slightest occasions for antireligious propaganda work. In particular, religious painting in churches offers incredibly rich material for antireligious propaganda. The oppressors saw in church painting a powerful means of influencing the laboring masses, and for this reason everyone—from the shabbiest local priest to the “autocrat”—worked to develop and support the necessary artworks, paying particular attention to the selection of artists as well.

The October Revolution declared a great number of churches and monasteries of the former Russian Empire cultural-historical preserves; many of them are now museums, mostly antireligious, and many are used as institutions of cultural education. Antireligious museums housed in former monasteries and churches are already visited by hundreds of thousands of industrial and kolkhoz workers. Sometimes these monasteries and churches are many centuries old and thus in and of themselves represent great cultural-historical value, which we are bound to protect—not for the sake of the churches themselves, but for the usefulness that we can extract from them in reeducating the laboring masses in Marxism-Leninism and thus atheism.

With its many and varied churches and “shrines,” Kiev was a center for Russian Orthodoxy and autocracy, not only of the area once known as the southwestern territory, but for the entire Russian Empire. Because of this, the ecclesiastical and secular authorities paid particular attention to Kiev when building and outfitting churches and “holy places.” On the other hand, the presence of a great quantity of churches, monasteries, and various “holy places” in Kiev makes for an extremely favorable atmosphere for antireligious propaganda, with the necessary condition that these monuments be used comprehensively in the light of the materialist dialectic and Marxism-Leninism.

We have yet made little use of church painting—or, more precisely, we have made no use of it—in antireligious propaganda. Meanwhile, in Kiev the All-Ukrainian museum complex is housed in a former monastery (the Kiev-Pechersk Lavra), and the All-Ukrainian antireligious museum is housed in the former Vladimir Cathedral. In 1931 these museums were visited by around 300,000 sightseers. All of them in one way or another encountered and viewed the churches’ paintings. Our task is to expose the class essence and history of religious art, to lay bare its foundations, and

1. Now more commonly written as “Kyiv.” Here and elsewhere I use the standard “Russian-English” spelling for Ukrainian place-names to reflect the time the article was written—Trans. note
2. Now known as the Volodymyr Cathedral—Trans. note
we are commencing by taking as our main object the former Kiev-Pechersk Lavra and Vladimir Cathedral, the paintings of which were made nearly at the same time.

When examining church art, one must first and foremost attend to the way in which its project was developed and confirmed. At a session of the Ecclesiastical Council of the Kiev-Pechersk Lavra held on May 22, 1893, it was resolved to “replace the main church’s existing paintings with new ones better suited to church traditions, in particular, paintings in the style of tenth- to twelfth-century Byzantium, according to the plans of Bishop Sergii of Umansk.” The plan for these new paintings was confirmed by the Metropolitan of Kiev and Galicia Joanicius, and subsequently by the Synod; later the project was examined and confirmed by the imperial archaeological commission and finally, on May 14, 1894, it was presented for the “most high” examination of Tsar Alexander III. The latter scribbled by hand on the project: “Approved. I hope they won’t get too fanciful.” This resolution of the tsar would be the primary guidance for the church’s new frescoes. That is, what was painted on the church’s walls had to correspond to what the Lavra administration saw fit, and there was to be no fantasizing. The Lavra typography would later print a brochure declaring: “The Kiev-Pechersk Lavra understood these sovereign words to mean that its new wallpaintings should hold strictly to church traditions and not deviate in the direction of new-fangled trends in contemporary religious painting, avoiding the realism and individualism of contemporary secular art.”

And indeed, it is difficult to find any realism or individualism in these paintings, for not only were the artists selected with great thoroughness, but “prior to being transferred to the walls, the sketches and cartoons of all images had to be presented for the inspection and approval of the Lavra Ecclesiastical Council and its holy archimandrite.”

As a result of such strict control over the artists, Savenko (quoted above) declared: “This is icon-painting, not mere painting” (20). But it would be naive to think that these are just icons. After all, before installing the new frescoes, the old ones had to be destroyed, and this caused some serious difficulties for the Lavra. The fact of the matter is that voices were raised in the press—if not the most decisive—on the part of the nationalist-inclined Ukrainian intelligentsia, favoring the preservation of the old paintings in light of their historical significance.

The Lavra mobilized its ecclesiastical and secular scribblers and, backed by the authorities, got out of its difficulties by proving “scientifically” that the old paintings were “of no historical significance” and that they moreover needed to be completely destroyed rather than just painted over; toward this end they referred to the need for a total architectural renovation of the main church building.

We will not go into the details of the artistic value of the old paintings here, but we can say definitely that these paintings date from the eighteenth century and doubtless presented historical interest as a monument of that era. The churchmen themselves did not deny this fact, saying that the “Lavra images … present a certain historical interest.” Consequently, in destroying these paintings in order to accommodate religious and great-power interests, the monks

3. A. I. Savenko, Velikaia tserkov Kievo-Pecherskaya lavra (The great Kiev-Pechersk Lavra) (Kiev, 1901), 20. Italics added—Trans. note

4. Ibid., 15.
on the Vladimir Cathedral frescoes was drawing to a close, and the contractor who had been in charge of the project—A. V. Prakhov—offered his services to the Lavra, including the whole team of artists who had worked on the cathedral. But the Lavra declined his offer, informing the contractor: “You think we want Vasnetsov to paint us angels drawn from streetwalkers, like in the Vladimir Cathedral!” An offer from Brusnikov was also declined; the academic painting expert Vasiliev refused to work for the Lavra for some reason; and then they settled on V. P. Vereshchagin, because the “name of Professor V. P. Vereshchagin can serve as adequate guarantee that the paintings will be carried out entirely conscientiously.” What the churchmen understood as “conscientious” we will see later on, but for now let us have a look at how generously the church remunerated its servants for “conscientious work.”

According to his contract, Vereshchagin committed to painting 280 images of saints, for which the Lavra would pay him “more than 200,000 rubles.” In addition, Vereshchagin painted two icons separately: Deposition of the Most Holy Theotokos and Entry of the Most Holy Theotokos into the Temple, for which he received an additional 10,000 rubles. Carvings were done by academician Fartusov, who received “more than 40,000 rubles.” Vereshchagin also had ten assistants, led by Popov. And yet, despite all of Vereshchagin’s “trustworthiness” and the close supervision of the Lavra administration, there arose a concern that the artists might paint “something untoward,” and for this reason a special consultant was called in. For his “work,” the Lavra paid the consultant, academician Lazarev-Stanishchev, 20,000 rubles. All told, the Lavra paid around 400,000 rubles for its new paintings, which meanwhile constituted less than half of the sum squeezed annually out of its pilgrims and donors.

committed an act that can only be called vandalism, once again proving the enmity of religion toward culture. In order to repel the attacks mentioned above, the Lavra arranged matters entirely “scientifically,” assigning a special commission (composed exclusively of priests, of course) to assess the old paintings. In the commission’s report we learn the reason why the Lavra could not reconcile itself to the old paintings, as well as the reason the paintings were defended by some of the Ukrainian nationalists. First and foremost: “The remains of the eighteenth-century paintings strongly demonstrate the stamp of the art of the previous century with its predominant features of the late Renaissance, the so-called Baroque”; “This is one of the most glaring and undesirable traces of the Latin influence on the great Orthodox shrine of Kiev.” Further in the report we read: “Four rows of non-sacred images of various people”—there follows a list of every imaginable prince of Polish-Lithuanian origin and, finally, the very worst: “on the same side, an image of the Little Russian leader, presumably Hetman Mazepa … A Little Russian leader in typical Southern Russian national costume.” Here is why the Lavra could no longer tolerate the presence of these paintings in the church and why, on the other hand, the Ukrainian nationalists insisted on their preservation.

When the necessity of destroying the old paintings had been proved in this way and the new project had been approved, the selection of artists began. At this time work

6. Akt komissii (Commission report) / Trudy Kievskoi dukhovnoi akademii (Proceedings on the Kiev Theological Academy) (1899), III. 7. “Little Russia” was an imperial-era synonym for Ukraine. Hetman Mazepa (Ivan Stepanovich) was a military and political leader active in late seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century Ukraine. Because of his controversial politics and affiliation with the Roman Catholic Church, the Russian Orthodox Church laid an anathema on Mazepa in the early eighteenth century that is still in place today—Trans. note
However, despite the meticulous selection of the artists, the approval process of the new paintings (once again, by a selectively composed commission) involved a number of misunderstandings. Three members of the commission—Archimandrite Nikolaev and the artists Seleznev and Pimonenko—signed a separate report in which they declared that “the new paintings are largely monotonous and there is a significant lack of variety in the depiction of the saints.” The Lavra had to wage war yet again in order to save the new paintings, since the Kiev Newspaper wrote openly: “the paintings are so bad they need to be completely redone.” But the Lavra had arguments and people capable of standing up for its interests. Professor Petrov of the Kiev Theological Academy wrote: “The Kiev-Pechersk Lavra fears the artistic individuality, trueness to type and expression required by Professor Vereshchagine's artists’ report, and its fears are not unfounded.”

At this point the Vladimir Cathedral enters the scene, with its paintings that many considered better than those of the Lavra; this is what Petrov was hinting at with “fears not unfounded.” But even earlier than Petrov, Ertel—president of the Kiev Insurance Society and an independent correspondent of the Kiev Theological Academy (there’s some real pluralism!)—wrote:

and we declare that in the future this great church, though it may not dazzle the eye with the extravagance and effects of the newly opened cathedral of St. Vladimir, will nevertheless be a temple comprehensible to the people, as a church should be.  

Those “simple” people needed their paintings to be more simple and stern so that, during sermons on the universal equality of all before God, the art did not give rise to confusion over what was seen on the walls of the church; and so that its earthly sensuality and beauty not distract the pilgrims from the heavenly and otherworldly, for individual sensual beauty is not always appropriate in houses of God, where the overall atmosphere should incline the pilgrim to an elevated and prayerful mood and at the very least not sway his attention in the direction of sensual, corporeal beauty.

Petrov goes on to reassure any doubters with historical examples, and relates how one artist working on the frescoes at the Novgorod Cathedral “depicted Archdeacon Stefan in a sketch as a fat, squat village deacon with a red meaty nose, swinging his censer far too freely”; thus one should keep strictly to church traditions and not deviate in the direction of new-fangled, sometimes sharply tendentious trends in contemporary religious painting that are capable of disturbing the religious feeling of the pilgrims.

As we can see, particular fervor was devoted to defending the religious feeling of the simple pilgrims, whom the clergy were ready to tear away entirely from all things earthly, real, and beautiful (such as give pleasure to others) and to carry over into the next world.
The wall paintings of the great Lavra church, designed for the simple people, must have a strictly religious character, denoting the very least to avoid tempting contact with real, living beauty and every imaginable affectation and preciosity.12

But that’s not all. The Lavra paintings were also intended to play a certain missionary-like role among the sectarians. It wasn’t enough for the Lavra that its monks worked as missionaries in every corner of the globe; it also needed to make church paintings that would

not offend or disturb the religious feeling of our so-called Old Believers and not turn still further from the church our new iconoclast-Shtundists, who reject sensual, realist depictions of God and his saints.

Here we see the full range of demands made of church painting, designed to dupe the pilgrim and deaden the class sense of the working man. These demands were developed together by the ruling heights of both the secular and theological authorities.

The paintings in the Vladimir Cathedral represent no less gratifying material for antireligious propaganda than the paintings in the Lavra. Much higher in artistic significance, the former paintings were from beginning (that is, from the selection of artists) to end directed toward a single goal: to put the visitor into a mystical mood and to cultivate his sense of “sovereignty and Orthodoxy.” And the fact that the Vladimir Cathedral paintings are of very high artistic

Imperial Academy of the Arts, who received the contract for the Vladimir Cathedral frescoes. He was responsible for making the plans and selecting the artists and general management, in return for 10 percent of the total sum to be spent on the cathedral’s paintings and decorations.

Prakhov himself, a very religious man who believed in miracles, began looking for artists who were also “sincere” believers. And he was thoroughly lucky. In a letter to the Umansk bishop dated October 30, 1882, he wrote obsequiously:

I hurry to inform you with particular pleasure that Fate, it seems, wishes to smile upon the endeavor to which you were so kind as to invite me as well. In passing through Moscow I managed to see a few of our best artists, and two of them agreed to participate in the work on the Vladimir Cathedral frescoes. The first of them, V. M. Vasnetsov, is a man with brilliant gifts, and furthermore, as is so important in this case, deeply Russian gifts, and, finally, a sincerely religious man … But in addition to Vasnetsov I also got the assent of Surikov, who participated in painting the frescoes in the Church of Christ the Savior in Moscow.13

We don’t know why Surikov, the artist mentioned by Prakhov, did not participate in work on the Vladimir paintings, but instead of him Prakhov got the extraordinarily sugary mystic artist Nesterov. Besides Vasnetsov and Nesterov, the Vladimir Cathedral frescoes were painted by Kotarbinsky, Svedomsky, and many other artists. Vrubel, who in the context of his religious-mystical work also demonstrated a certain striving toward some kind of demonic expression, was not allowed to participate; when he painted *The Second Day of Creation* (1898) on the right-hand plafond, Svedomsky even repainted the entire plafond. This clearly shows how carefully the churchmen selected the artists they needed; and still they faced accusations that inadequate attention had been paid to the question of artist selection. Both the Lavra and the Kiev Theological Academy pilloried Prakhov for the fact that he included artists “of non-Russian origin,” which in the opinion of the monks had led to misunderstandings like the resemblance between “angels” and “streetwalkers.” Professor Petrov wrote unequivocally:

the question of to what extent individual themes in the Vladimir Cathedral paintings correspond to the iconographic traditions of the Byzantine and Russian Orthodox churches was predetermined by the selection of the four main artists slated to work on the project, i.e. Vasnetsov, Nesterov, Svedomsky, and Kotarbinsky, nearly none of whom, with the possible exception of Nesterov, had previously worked on church paintings; Svedomsky and Kotarbinsky were not only entirely unschooled in religious painting but had had no Russian art education at all. To judge by his name (Wilhelm), Kotarbinsky belongs to those non-Orthodox Christians about whom was once written: “icons such as have been wrought of infidel hands, shall not be accepted, and sacred icons into infidel hands not passed; it does not do for Orthodox Christians to accept icon images from infidel foreign Romans and Armenians.”14

13. Prakhov’s italics—I.S.

14. The quote within Petrov’s quote comes from Old Church Slavonic theological writings—Trans. note
And a complete scandal: “In the icons on the iconostasis, many of the saints have been given artificial poses, and some of their faces are portraits or likenesses of individuals still walking among us today.”

Nesterov was singled out for particular criticism, since despite his religiosity and practice he had mixed up the Mother of God with an ordinary woman. In the right-hand gallery of the iconostasis, Nesterov painted a “Birth of Christ” icon, “in which the Virgin is presented with a suffering and pained expression like that of ordinary birthing mothers, which contradicts the Orthodox Church’s teaching on the innocence and painlessness of the Virgin’s birthing of Christ.” How could Nesterov have dared to present a Virgin who could even slightly recall an ordinary woman? The defamation of Nesterov for this ill-fated Virgin took on such grandiose dimensions that there were even discussions of the icon being repainted.

Soon, when the formal artistic features of the Vladimir Cathedral paintings had been properly appreciated, all of the attacks ceased—as if they had never been. And at bottom there was nothing to argue about. After all, none of those who had reproached the Vladimir Cathedral paintings had recalled the fact that Nicholas I, during whose reign discussions of the building of a cathedral in honor of Prince Vladimir had begun, had for some reason seen in Vladimir his predecessor; consequently, the Vladimir Cathedral was to have been a monument less to Prince Vladimir (whom no one really remembered) than to Russian autocracy, which most certainly existed at that time. This circumstance left its mark in the selection of saints to be depicted in the paintings; let us...
in their enslavement and oppression of the laborers. Every church and every monastery has doubtless preserved documents relating to its paintings and frescoes, and these must be used to demonstrate through concrete, documentary facts how the church and political authorities, working together closely, developed the methods and devices of religious influence over the laborers.

At the present stage of the antireligious movement, words will convince but few. The masses of industrial and kolkhoz workers demand from antireligious workers varied and convincing arguments that reveal the class essence of religion and the church. In this case, church paintings represent exceptionally gratifying material for the antireligious worker.

Thus we have briefly sorted out the history of two churches’ religious paintings and frescoes. As the exploiters’ most effective means of influencing the feelings of religious people, these paintings were supposed to act as a tool for the oppression of the laboring masses. By revealing the class roots of religious painting, the methods and aims of its production, we will force it to speak the language of atheism and to serve the task of the reeducation of the laboring masses on a socialist basis.

We should avoid general statements about these paintings being indisputably and significantly useful to the exploiters

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19. The “Black Hundreds” encompasses a number of Russian nationalist-chauvinist monarchist groups (the Union of the Archangel Michael was one) devoted to the ideas of national purity and autocracy. Known also for anti-Semitism and incitement to pogroms, these groups experienced a heyday in the decade-plus between the 1905 and 1917 revolutions—Trans. note
Authors’ Biographies
Makovetz group of avant-garde artists (1921–1927). He was a follower of the philosophy of Nikolai Fedorov and shared Fedorov’s idea of the universal resurrection and the moral perfection of human beings through art, which was reflected in his works.

LEONID OSIPOVICH CHETYRKIN (?–1942) was a journalist who graduated from the All-Union Communist Institute of Journalism at the Central Executive Committee of the USSR. He later worked for the art publishing house known as Iskusstvo.

NIKOLAI MIKHAILOVICH DRUZHININ (1886–1986) was a historian, museum specialist, and a member of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR. After the revolution of 1917, he organized educational work within the central state organs. From 1924 to 1934 he worked at the Museum of the revolution of the USSR as a research secretary, and then was put in charge of the exhibition department, where he created vivid and memorable exhibitions on the history of the revolutionary movement. Druzhinin was an author of, among others, a number of theoretical papers on museum work and museology.

NIKOLAI FEDOROVICH FEDOROV (1829–1903) was a thinker, an advocate of Russian religious philosophy, and aponent of Russian cosmism. From 1874 to 1898 he worked at the Rumyantsev Museum in Moscow. He formed the philosophical doctrine of the “common task,” which implied universal resurrection and immortality. The museum was to be the platform for this doctrine. His philosophical ideas are most fully reflected in his articles “The Museum, Its Meaning and Mission” and “Exhibition of 1889.” Fedorov participated in the organization of a regional museum in Voronezh (founded in 1894), where he initiated and actively participated in the preparation of a series of experimental exhibitions.

Aleksey Aleksandrovich Fedorov-Davydov (1900–1969) was a Soviet art historian, museum worker, and art consultant for the General Directorate of scientific,
scientific-artistic, and museum institutions of the People’s Commissariat for Education. From 1929 to 1934, he headed the department of new Russian art at the State Tretyakov Gallery in Moscow, where he was one of the creators of the Experimental Complex Marxist Exhibition; later, he was criticized for a “vulgar sociological approach to art,” which forced him to leave his job. His museological works are mainly related to the development of the principles of museum construction and the organization of exhibitions. He participated in the First All-Russian Museum Congress in 1930, and was the author of numerous exhibition reviews and pieces of criticism.

PAVEL ALEKSANDROVICH FLORENSKY (1882–1937) was a theologian, mathematician, physicist, art historian, and museum worker. In 1911 he entered the ministry and from 1912 to 1917 he was the main editor of the Theological Journal. From 1917 to 1919 he was the keeper of the sacristy of the Trinity-Sergius Lavra, and was a member of the commission for the protection of monuments of art and antiquities of the Trinity-Sergius Lavra. He was an active participant in discussions around rethinking the role of art. He taught “Analysis of Space in Fine Art Pieces” at VHUTEMAS (The Higher Art and Technical Studios), where he worked together with many avant-garde artists like Kazimir Malevich, Aleksandr Rodchenko, Vasily Kandinsky, and El Lissitzky, among others. Florensky conducted museological research related to the problem of the preservation and museumification of Orthodox cultural and historical heritage. He was persecuted in the USSR and died in exile.

ROZA FRUMKINA was an officer of the People’s Commissariat for Education, an assistant to Nadezhda Krupskaya, and her co-reporter at the First All-Russian Museum Congress in 1930. Frumkina was a member of the editorial board of the journal Soviet Museum launched in 1931.

M. S. ILKOVSKY—biography unknown—was a contributor to the journal Soviet Museum.

V. KARMILOV (probably V. I. Karmilov) was a physicist and the dean from 1933 to 1934 of the Physics and Mathematics Department at the Perm State University.

V. KARPOV—biography unknown—was a contributor to Soviet Museum.

VALENTIN BORISOVICH KHOLTSOV (1889–1942) was a staff member at the Russian State Museum in Leningrad. He worked on historical collections within the institution, which in 1941 were transferred to the Hermitage Museum. Together with M. Z. Krutikov, Kholtsov developed concepts for exhibition projects. In the mid-1930s, he also worked at the Museum of the Revolution in Leningrad.

P. N. KRHAPOV was a staff member of the State Biological Museum in Moscow, which was named after the botanist and physiologist Kliment Timiryazev.

YURIY YAKOVLEVICH KOGAN was a prominent specialist in the field of the history of religion who worked for the Central Antireligious Museum in Moscow in the 1920s. He participated in the activities of the Union of Militant Atheists and was the author of numerous scientific works.

NATALYA NIKALAYEVNA KOVALENSKAYA (1892–1969) was an art critic and historian of Russian art. In the 1920s, Kovalenskaya developed a basic methodology for museum work with A. V. Bakushinskiy. From 1929 to 1935, Kovalenskaya worked at the State Tretyakov Gallery in Moscow, where under the leadership of Aleksey Fedorov-Davydov she worked on the Experimental Complex Marxist Exhibition. From 1942 to 1955, Kovalenskaya was a professor at the State Moscow University. She was also the author of several works on the history of Russian art.

NADEZHDA KONSTANTINOVNA KRUPSKAYA (1869–1939) was a revolutionary, a Party and state leader, and the wife of Vladimir Ulyanov (Lenin). From 1917 Krupskaya was...
October Revolution Malevich held several leadership positions in various cultural commissions and institutions. From 1923 to 1926 he was the director of the Institute of Artistic Culture. From 1932 to 1933 he headed the experimental laboratory at the State Russian Museum in St. Petersburg. In addition to his well-known paintings, set design, and other graphic works, Malevich was the author of several texts on philosophy and art theory, including his 1919 On New Systems of Art.

NIKOLAI PAVLOVICH PETERSON (1844–1919) was a teacher, a follower, and promoter of Nikolai Fedorov’s teachings, as well as an editor and publisher (with V.A. Kozhevnikov) of Fedorov’s posthumous collection of works. Peterson first met Nikolai Fedorov in 1864 in the town of Bogorodsk, and became interested in his ideas. As a result, Peterson became his assistant and co-author. In 1866 Peterson was involved in the investigation as a former active member of a revolutionary group and sentenced to eight months in prison. Due to his acquaintance with Peterson, Nikolai Fedorov was also arrested for a brief period.

ANDREY PLATONOVICH PLATONOV (1899–1951) was a prominent fiction writer and playwright. In his early work he was closely aligned with the Proletkult (Proletarian Cultural and Educational Organization), and worked as an engineer in the town of Voronezh, where he lived. In the late Twenties and early Thirties, Platonov wrote the most significant fiction works of the era: the novels Chevengur and The Foundation Pit. Platonov was persecuted in Soviet Russia and much of his work, including these two novels, remained unpublished until the second half of 1980s.

NIKOLAI NIKOLAEVICH PUNIN (1888–1953) was an art historian, art critic, professor, and museum worker. Punin was close to avant-garde circles, and from 1918 to 1919 he worked in the Department of Fine Arts of the People’s Commissariat for Education, where he became one of the founding members of The Art of the Commune newspaper. From 1913 to 1934...
Many of his museum colleagues were sent to various prison camps, where some were executed.

I. F. SHEREMET—biography unknown—was a staff member at the Agricultural Museum in Kiev.

ANDREY VASILYEVICH SHESTAKOV (1877–1941) was a historian, a member of the revolutionary movement, and a corresponding member of the USSR Academy of Sciences (1939). A teacher and the author of the main elementary school textbook on the history of the Soviet Union, he was also one of the organizers of the Society of Marxist Historians. Shestakov was the Deputy Director for Science from 1930 to 1935 and then the Director of the Museum of the Revolution of the USSR in Moscow.

N. A. SCHNEERSON (1881–1937) was a museum worker and administrator. He was the director of a pilot local History Museum of the Moscow region, established in the former Resurrection New Jerusalem Monastery in Istra, near Moscow. This museum was an experimental platform for Soviet exhibitions in local regional museums. He participated in the First All-Russian Museum Congress in 1930, and was an active contributor to the journal *Soviet Museum*, as well as a member of its editorial board.

IVAN MIKHAILOVICH SKULENKO (1901–1990) was a museum worker and a guide at the Ukrainian State Historical reserve, opened in 1926 in the Kiev-Pechersk Lavra. From 1934 to 1937, he was the first Director of the Sofia Reserve, which consisted of the Cathedral of St. Sofia and the adjacent eighteenth-century monastery in Kiev (now the National Reserve “Sophia of Kiev”).

K. I. VOROBOYOV participated in the First All-Russian Museum Congress of 1930, where he delivered a report outlining his vision for the creation of socialist factory museums that would directly involve workers and students of the factory schools in museum work.
VORONTSOVSKY participated in the First All-Russian Museum Congress of 1930, where he delivered a report on the antireligious work of the Kliment Timiryazev Biomuseum in Moscow. Voronstovsky was probably a staff member there, and his report describes the museum’s alignment with the Militant Atheists Union.

BORIS MIKHAILOVICH ZAVADOVSKY (1895–1951) was a biologist, museum worker, and a theorist of museum administration. He was the founder of the Kliment Timiryazev Biomuseum in Moscow, where he served as director from its inception in 1922 to 1948. Zavadovsky was one of the organizers of the First All-Russian Museum Congress. He engaged in museological research related to the design of a new typology for biology museums.

I. M. ZYKOV—biography unknown—was a contributor to Soviet Museum.
Notes on the Original Publications

1. Art of the Commune Newspaper


On June 21, 1918, Kazimir Malevich, Vladimir Tatlin, and sculptor Boris Korolyov were elected to be a part of the museum committee of the art board of the Narkompros Department of Fine Arts. It was a unique moment when representatives of the artistic avant-garde became government officials. In February 1919, Kazimir Malevich participated in the First Fine Arts Department Conference about museum work in Petrograd (now St. Petersburg), where it was decided to establish a Museum for Painting Culture. Kazimir Malevich’s article “On the Museum,” written from a futuristic and nihilistic position, was associated with this conference, and it was first published in the daily newspaper Art of the Commune. The newspaper was published in Petrograd by the Department of Fine Arts Commissariat of Education from December 1918 until April 1919, and served as the organ of the Petrograd Futurists. Its editorial board included Osip Brik, Nikolai Punin, and Nathan Altman, and until March 1919 Vladimir Mayakovsky was closely associated with the newspaper. In its nineteen issues, the periodical vigorously attacked the art of the past, which was declared to be bourgeois. The publication took issue with Proletkult (the Proletarian Cultural and Educational Organization which arose in conjunction with the Russian Revolution of 1917) and proclaimed futurism to be the only direction for proletarian art.

2. Association of Print Artists Journal


3. Chevengur


Platonov wrote the novel Chevengur between 1926 and 1928, which in its first manuscript form was called “The Builders of Spring” (1927). The final text was sent to Georgy Litvin-Molotov, the chief editor of the Young Guard publishing house, and on September 18, 1929 the novel was also separately sent via post to Maxim Gorky. The latter, despite liking the work, expressed serious doubts about the publication prospects of the book, which in fact was to remain unpublished in its entirety during Platonov’s lifetime.

In 1928 the Moscow-based journal Red Virgin Soil published excerpts titled “The Origin of the Master” and “The Descendant of a Fisherman.” The next year, the journal New World published an excerpt called “Adventure.” On October 6, 1971 a fragment of the novel titled “Traveling with an Open Heart” was published in The Literary Newspaper, and in the same year, the journal Kuban published another fragment titled “Kopenkin’s Death.” In 1972, a French translation of the full novel titled Les herbes folles de Tchevengour (Chevengur’s weeds) was published in Paris. An Italian translation published the same year titled Villaggio della nuova vita (The village of new life) received high praise from Pier Paolo Pasolini.

The first complete publication of the novel was released in London in 1978. In the USSR the publication of the novel was only possible during perestroika years; thus in 1988 Friendship of Peoples journal published the full novel over two
NOTES ON THE ORIGINAL PUBLICATIONS

issues. The excerpt in this volume appeared on pages 133–138 in the third issue.

4.
DON NEWSPAPER


Don was a Voronezh-based economic, juridical, and literary newspaper, running from 1868 until 1915. Don is one of the oldest provincial newspapers, and its mission was to function as a mediator between the capital and the czarist empire’s provinces as well as promote local interests. The daily periodical was aimed at the industrial and agricultural bourgeoisie. Issues like agricultural trade, industrial development, the growth of private and public credit, roads, and Zemstvo meetings and councils were discussed in its pages. The paper almost never commented on the most important social and political events in Russia, like the revolutions of 1905 and 1907, or the First World War, and usually confined itself to reprinting the official government statements on those matters.

See also note 14: The Philosophy of the Common Task: Articles, Thoughts, and Letters of Nikolai Fedorov

NOTES ON THE ORIGINAL PUBLICATIONS

5.
N. F. FEDOROV: COLLECTED WORKS IN FOUR VOLUMES


6.
N. F. FEDOROV: PRO ET CONTRA


The anthology N. F. Fedorov: Pro et Contra was published in 2008 in commemoration of the 175th anniversary of the birth and the hundredth anniversary of the death of Fedorov. The second volume contains the original publication of Vasily Chekrygin’s text “On the Cathedral of the Resurrecting Museum,” written in 1921 on Fedorov’s relationship with contemporaries such as Leo Tolstoy and Vladimir Solovyov. It also introduces previously unpublished materials on Fyodor Dostoyevsky’s acquaintance with Fedorov and the latter’s criticism of Nietzsche’s philosophy.

7.
THE FIRST ALL-RUSSIAN CONFERENCE ON MUSEUMS, 1919

Brik, Osip. “The Museum and Proletarian Culture: Speech at the Meeting of the First All-Russian Conference on Museums” archival material stored at the Department of Written Sources of the State History Museum, part of a shorthand report of the First All-Russian Conference on
NOTES ON THE ORIGINAL PUBLICATIONS

Museums, typed text with hand corrections by an unidentified person, 1919, 4–61.


The First All-Russian Conference on Museums was held on February 11–17, 1919 in Petrograd. The People’s Commissar of Education Anatoly Lunacharsky, prominent scientists, museum figures, art critics, and artists were in attendance. It was deemed necessary to create a program for museum development in the new historical conditions brought by the October revolution of 1917. Urgent measures were taken to protect and preserve the cultural heritage of the country, and to unite the efforts of the scientific and artistic intelligentsia in the implementation of this program. Some continuity in the issues debated can be traced back to the Preliminary Congress for the First All-Russian Conference on Museums in 1912. The conference brought together all existing museums into a single network, focusing the institution on scientific research and on broader public outreach in relation to the cultural heritage in the various collections. Reports by Alexander Miller, Igor Grabar, Osip Brik, and Nikolai Romanov reflect the views of different groups the government sought to attract in the process of institution building.

—Adapted from Museological Thought in Russia in the Eighteenth–Twentieth Centuries: Collection of Documents and Materials, collective of authors, ed. Eleonora Shulepova (Moscow: Eterna, 2010).
This movement implied a creative, reconciling, spiritual approach based on the continuity of cultural tradition that was expressed in the name of the group. The name was taken from Makovetz hill, on which the Trinity-Sergius Lavra stood in the town of Sergyev-Posad, and where Pavel Florensky lived during most of his lifetime.

The founders of the group were Vasily Chekrygin and Pyotr Bromirsky. In 1922 the journal Makovetz was created, edited by the poet Aleksey Chernyshev. The first issue of the journal contained Pavel Florensky’s text “The Church Ritual as a Synthesis of Arts,” as well as poems and texts by Boris Pasternak, Konstantine Bolschakov, and Velimir Khlebnikov, among others. Only two issues of the journal were published, as the third issue was stopped due to censorship in 1923. The journal ceased to exist, and the Makovetz art group fell apart in 1926.

11. THE MUSEUM BUREAU


Between 1918 and 1921 Aleksandr Rodchenko worked in the Department of Fine Arts of the People’s Commissariat, and was the head of the Museum Bureau. The Museum Bureau opened in 1918, and aimed to theoretically develop questions of museum building and amass an art collection large enough to organize several Museums of Painting Culture in the USSR. A procurement commission of six people was created for that purpose, including Robert Falk, Vasily Kandinsky, and Aleksandr Rodchenko. At their first session the commission decided to found a Museum of Painting Culture first in Moscow, then in Petrograd, followed by other cities across the USSR. From 1918 to 1920 about two thousand paintings by Kazimir Malevich, Marc Chagall, Vasily Kandinsky, Nathan Altman, El Lissitzky, and others were purchased, worth nearly
NOTES ON THE ORIGINAL PUBLICATIONS

twenty-seven million rubles (at that time). The general price of four thousand rubles per painting was established, and in many cases artists were personally invited for the sale. During a one-year period from 1919 until 1920, the Museum Bureau established thirty new museums in twenty-seven different cities across the USSR including Vitebsk, Samara, Penza, Voronezh with a total of 1,211 artworks distributed to these newly organized museums. In early 1922 the Museum Bureau was closed due to the economic difficulties and famine in the country. Many of the artworks that were sent to the provincial museums deteriorated in the museum’s cellars or were burned.

12. MUSEUMS AND PLACES OF INTEREST IN MOSCOW


The Museum of Painting Culture was founded in Moscow in 1919 by the order of the Department of Fine Arts of the People’s Commissariat of RSFSR as both an exhibition and educational museum of modern art. Its purpose was to exhibit developments in painting, as well as to acquaint the masses with modern art. The museum was headed by Vasily Kandinsky (1919–1920), Aleksandr Rodchenko (1921–1922), and its collection contained works by Kazimir Malevich, Vladimir Tatlin, Luybov Popova, Pablo Picasso, and André Derain, among others. Similar museums were opened in Petrograd, Smolensk, Penza, Ufa, Vitebsk, Orenburg, and Ryazan. Initially, exhibitions were installed not by the painting schools represented, but rather based on the principle of contrast between forms and painting techniques. In 1923, there was an attempt to create a new type of museum: the museum-laboratory. In 1923–1924, the museum was reorganized into a branch of the State Tretyakov Gallery.

NOTES ON THE ORIGINAL PUBLICATIONS

13. OGIZ—IZOGIZ


IZOGIZ (State Art Book and Journal publisher) was created in July 1930 by the order of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union as a part of OGIZ (the Association of State Book and Journal Publishers). IZOGIZ published monographs, textbooks, and fine arts manuals, some of which were based on the work of the USSR Academy of Arts.

14. THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE COMMON TASK: ARTICLES, THOUGHTS, AND LETTERS OF NIKOLAI FEDOROV


Fedorov wrote “The Museum, Its Meaning and Mission” during the mid-1880s, but the text was not published as such within his lifetime. The Philosophy of the Common Task: Articles, Thoughts, and Letters of Nikolai Fedorov was originally published only after Fedorov’s death, in the town of Verniy (now Alma-Ata) in 1906 in an edition of 480 copies, each marked “not for sale.” Part of this edition was sent to major libraries and scientific societies in Russia, and anyone could order a free copy. It was later reprinted in Moscow in
NOTES ON THE ORIGINAL PUBLICATIONS

1913 at A. Snegireva’s Printing House. Fedorov was remembered by his contemporaries as a shy and private person, who would speak and write anonymously or using an alias. During his lifetime, Fedorov was a pacifist who advocated for knowledge and education in the public domain, and fought against copyright laws. All of the reasons above didn’t allow him to publish a systematic edition of all his writings during his lifetime; the full publication of all of his writing was released only in the 1990s.

15. RYBNIKOV’S BIOGRAPHICAL INSTITUTE

Rybnikov, Nikolai. “Materials on the Biographical Institute,” Biographies and Their Study (Moscow, 1920), 3–47.


Nikolai Rybnikov only received a primary education, and subsequently studied high school courses on his own. He began working in psychology at the age of twenty-seven, as an assistant to Georgy Chelpanov, who established the first psychology laboratory at Moscow University in 1907.

In 1918 Rybnikov began to work closely on one of the themes that interested him most, the biographical method and its application in psychology. In 1920, Rybnikov’s book Materials on the Biographical Institute was published, and in 1923, a collection of articles he edited titled The Contemporary Child were also released. In 1926 Rybnikov published several books such as The Professional Choice and a School, Child’s Language, The Interests of a Contemporary School Pupil and Children’s Drawings and Their Studies. In 1930 he published three more books titled Peasant Child, An Example of an Autobiography, and Memory, Its Psychology and Pedagogy.
NOTES ON THE ORIGINAL PUBLICATIONS


The *Soviet Museum* journal was an outcome of the First All-Russian Museum Congress in 1930. It was a scientific journal, and functioned as the major periodical in the field of museology. The first issue came out in 1931. From 1931 until 1940, the journal was published by Narkompros (People’s Commissariat for Education), first as a part of Science Sector department (1931–1933), then as a part of the Department of Museums (1933–1938), and subsequently as a part of the Local History Museums Department (1938–1940). Its publication was interrupted from 1940 until 1983. In 1993, after the fall of the Soviet Union, the journal was renamed *The Museum World*, and has since been in circulation in Russia.
COLOPHON

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