

## CHAPTER III

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### Ideology and Organization

The brethren's *Weltanschauung* consisted largely of the then-common Romantic view of life, although some of their beliefs came from the era of Enlightenment. Apparent in the second half of the eighteenth century in Russia was "the emergence of something like an independent public opinion that differed from the views held in enlightened court circles."<sup>1</sup> This opinion was permeated by the ideas of Western European Enlightenment (human omniscience, harmonious body of knowledge, emancipation from prejudice and convention) and was expressed through satirical journals like Novikov's *Truten* (Drone), Radishchev's famous account of his journey from St. Petersburg to Moscow (1790) and the Freemasons. The Freemasons' belief in the universal brotherhood of man, moral self-improvement, and a future golden age is of special interest to those who seek the deeper roots of the Brotherhood.

Freemasons formed various secret lodges in Ukraine, and there is no doubt that that brand of Masonry which brought people back to religion was part of the spiritual ancestry of the Brotherhood. Freemasonry in Ukraine dates back to 1742, when a Masonic lodge was formed by the Polish *szlachta* in Vyshnivka, Volhynia. Masons later began to organize in the Left-Bank Ukraine, especially during the reign of the Hetman Kyrylo Rozumovsky, who was himself a member of the "Three Brothers" lodge. In the second half of the eighteenth century, many descendants of the Cossack *starshyna* were Masons (the Kochubeis, the Lomykovskys, the Lukashevyches, the Martoses, the Skopadskys, the Hamaliias, and many others). Many Ukrainian Masons had studied abroad in their youth. At the end of the eighteenth century, Masonic lodges existed in Kiev, Zhytomyr, Kharkiv, Odessa, Kremen-chuk, Nemyriv, and Dubno. The movement intensified in the nineteenth century. In 1818 a lodge called "United Slavs" was organized in

Kiev, and another, "Love of Truth," in Poltava. Vasyl Lukashevych was a member of the former, Ivan Kotliarevsky, the noted Ukrainian writer, of the latter. Both lodges had links with the Decembrists and, despite a strong mystical element, favoured passive opposition to the regime. The lodge in Poltava was disbanded in 1819, but it continued to act clandestinely. However, many incidents—Novikov's fall from grace; the tragic arrest, exile, and suicide of Alexander Radishchev (who, although never a member of the lodge, was strongly influenced by the Masons); and, finally, the ban on Masonic lodges in 1822—were all constant reminders that the fruits of the Enlightenment were still forbidden in Russia.

Among Russian intellectuals, the post-Enlightenment trends manifested themselves in philosophical Romanticism. The Society of Wisdom Lovers, founded in 1823, the interest in German idealist philosophy, particularly Schelling, and Peter Chaadaev's *Filosoficheskie pisma* (Philosophical Letters, 1831) were all signs of turning inwards to search for native answers to old problems. Coupled with these was the discovery of *narodnost* (nationality) by Russian and Ukrainian pre-Romantics who were educated in the spirit of Herder. To Herder, the national spirit (*Volksggeist*) was the determinant of social and individual existence. His philosophy of history reserved a special place for the Slavs. Unlike Hegel, who dismissed the Slavic peoples as "unhistoric," Herder believed that Slavic languages and folk cultures showed great richness and therefore had a place in future historical development. "Ukraine," he wrote, "will become a new Greece; the beautiful sky, the gay spirit of the people, their national musical gifts and fertile land will awaken one day."<sup>2</sup> This electrifying promise fell on fertile soil indeed. It was translated by Ukrainian Romantic intellectuals into an effort to collect this rich folklore, to discover the glorious history of the Cossacks, and to provide themselves with a new ideology of nationalism. At first this nationalism had no political overtones. Indeed, it was, one could say, partly sponsored by official Russian policy, enunciated in 1833 by Count Uvarov, who proclaimed "autocracy, orthodoxy and nationality" as its principles. Both Russians and Ukrainians were encouraged to delve into their *narodnost* and to utilize it in their literature and cultural lives.

Uvarov was also responsible for the development of Slavic studies in Russia by establishing university chairs at various places and by sending eminent scholars abroad for extended study tours of Slavic countries. He also subsidized some Czech enterprises and spread Russian influence westwards. His efforts at home were directed against the Poles, and his was a successful campaign of Russification. Ukrainians (Bodiansky and to a lesser extent Kulish) were earmarked for Uvarov's Slavic projects, and the establishment of the University of Kiev in 1834, with Maksymovych as rector, was aimed in the same, anti-Polish direction. However, true as it was, Uvarov's policy involved