

Zapadnichestvo, *западничество* (Russian). In the 19th century Russian intellectual life *zapadnichestvo* connoted a worldview which would emphasize the relative superiority of the Western-European life-style, Western social and political values. *Zapadniki* (i.e., those who identified themselves with this particular cultural orientation) were generally opposed to the *slavophiles*, a loose group of writers, philosophers and cultural figures rejecting any Western cultural imports in favor of the traditional Russian values.

Even though a number of organized attempts to incorporate into Russian reality certain traits of the Western life-style can be traced to the time of Peter the Great (1672-1725), the first theoretical justification of the radical West-oriented worldview appeared in 1836 in the writings of Peter Chaadaev (1794-1856), with his unadulterated admiration of the Western history and the disparagement of the Russian cultural heritage. The subsequent development of *zapadnichestvo* is characterized by a more balanced approach to the Russian history, but always with the assumption that the future historical development of the Russian state and society should be modeled on the historical examples of the European countries.

Zapadniki would normally embrace the values of a liberal republic, belittling the significance of religion and ethnic traditions, and often adopting the ideal of a cosmopolitan citizen, who is not psychologically tied to a particular ethnic group or state. The most prominent Russian cultural and literary figures who openly identified themselves with the philosophy of ‘westerners’ include Vissarion Belinsky (1811-1848), Alexander Herzen (1812-1870), Ivan Turgenev (1818-1883), and Nikolay Nekrasov (1821-1878).

(See also: *slavyanofilstvo*)

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