

The lead articles in this issue of *Slavic Review* are studies of imagined community: the greater Polish state described by the National Democracy movement and ethnically defined nation inscribed in the constitutions of the formerly Yugoslav republics. We are acutely aware that such ethnographic texts are multivocal. Such exchanges show how, in politically charged contexts, imagination may combine with a totalizing will to render singular and sometimes brutal what are plural and always subtle—people and the linguistic cultures they shape. The Research Notes that follow dissect imagined cultural totalities, American and Russian, intentionally dispelling an historical isolation of Russian studies from our own cultural studies.

That isolation is often attributed to the cold war. It stems, however, from earlier attitudes toward linguistically foreign cultures, captured for example in F. Scott Fitzgerald's "college" novel, *This Side of Paradise* (1920). Fitzgerald's intellectual adolescent asserts, "'Whitman's tremendous—like Tolstoi. They both look things in the face, and, somehow, different as they are, stand for somewhat the same things.'" Such was Whitman's own and the prevailing nineteenth century view. But Amory, one of "a new generation dedicated more than the last to the fear of poverty and the worship of success," counters: "'You have me stumped, Burne. I've read *Anna Karenina* and *The Kreutzer Sonata* of course, but Tolstoi is mostly in the original Russian as far as I'm concerned.'" Language difference was the first ideological curtain drawn between Russians and Americans, and Russian was marked alien.

The west long maintained a fiction of Russia as primitive. Nowhere is this more evident than in Freud's 1914 study of infantile neurosis, "The Case of the Wolf-Man," the wealthy Russian landowner Sergius Pankejeff. "Ambivalence of emotion is the vestige of a primitive soul," Freud wrote Stefan Zweig in 1920, "much better preserved in the Russian people than elsewhere, more readily manifest in their present-day awareness, as I demonstrated just a few years ago in the detailed case history of a typical Russian." Freud is quite open in his elevation of patient history to cultural and national totality: the Wolf-Man's "phantasies correspond exactly to the legends by means of which a nation that has become great and proud tries to conceal the insignificance and failure of its beginnings." Freud took as the subject of his study of childhood trauma and adult hysteria the Russian soul; in that guise it served for decades as the episteme of neurosis.

At the other margin of Europe a different awareness took the name "soul," one borne of a population immobilized, denied national, familial and individual identity, permitted a furtive culture at best: in the lyricism of blues, African America transcended the isolating consciousness of enslavement. A similar lyricism gives contemporary

meaning to the Russian “soul” in Boris Pasternak’s poem so titled, “Dusha” (1956):

Душа моя, печальница
О всех в кругу моем!
Ты стала усыпальницей
Замученных живьем.

My mournful soul, you, sorrowing
For all my friends around,
You have become the burial vault
Of all those hounded down.

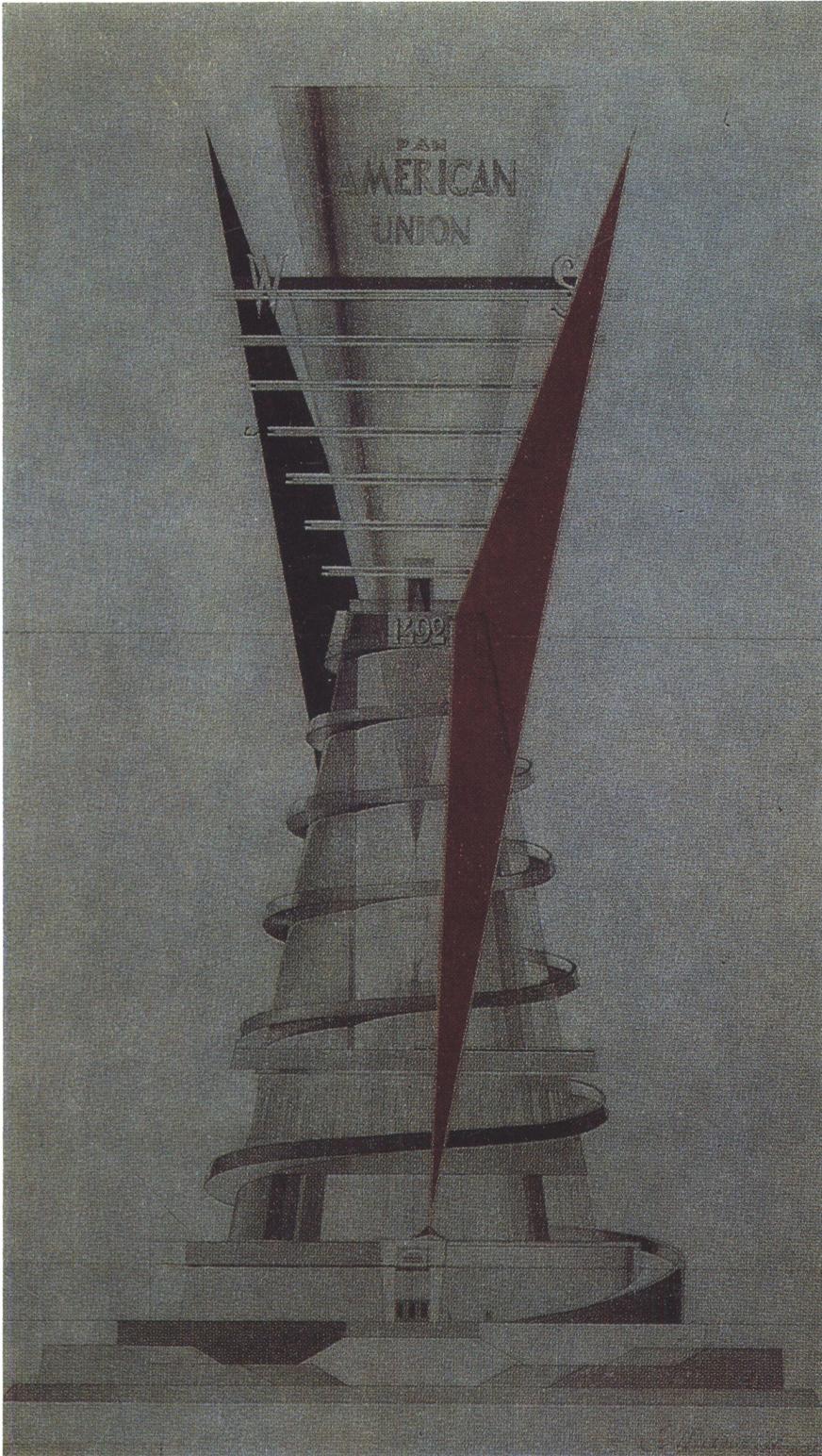
The internal colonization that was stalinism—its disenfranchisement, ideological domination, cultural and psychic denigration and isolation—constituted conditions that give rise to ethical and political resistance, the *locus communis* of modern self-awareness:

The hounded slave that flags in the race and leans by the fence,
blowing and covered with sweat,
The twinges that sting like needles his legs and neck,
The murderous buckshot and the bullets,
All these I feel or am.
I am the hounded slave. . . .

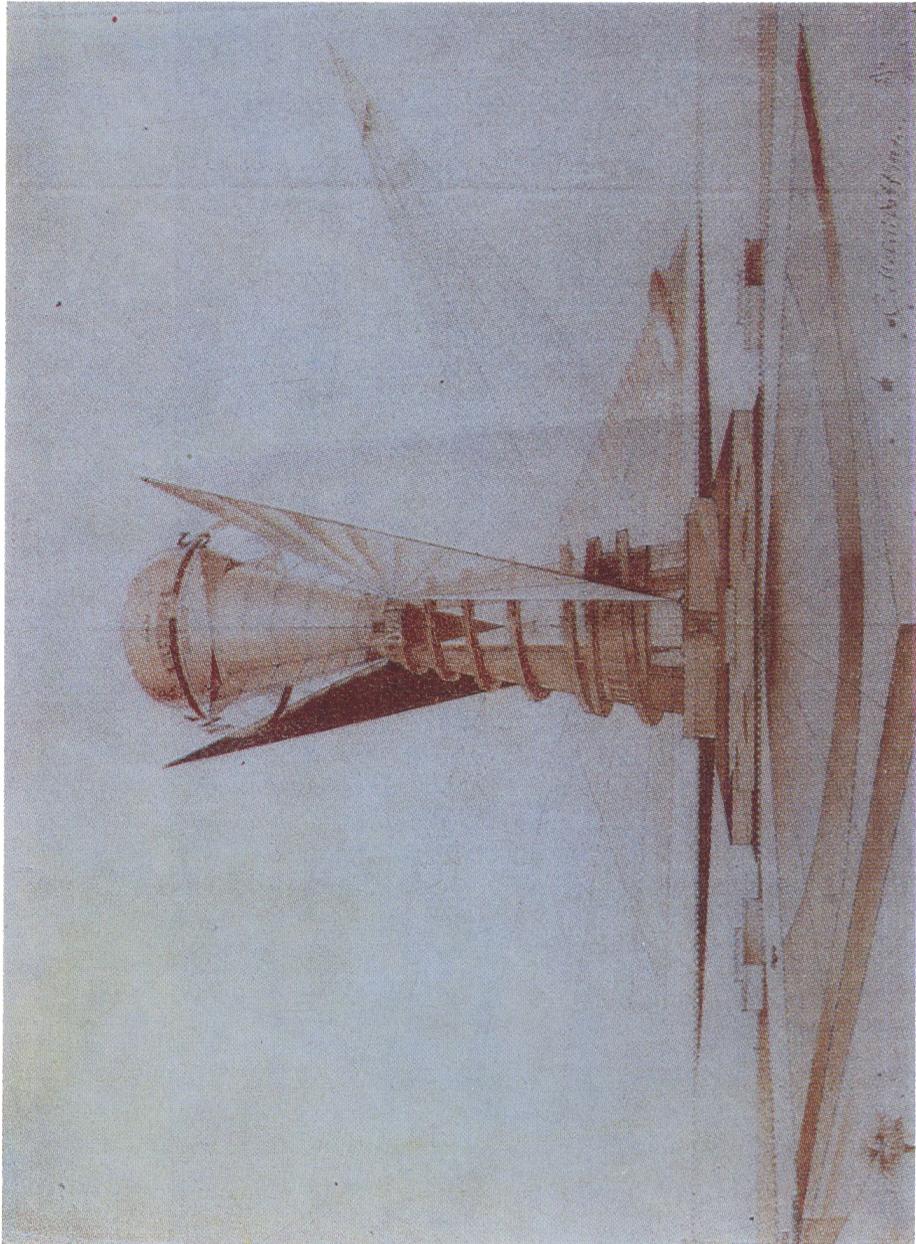
Leaves of Grass

As between this year’s anniversaries the one that tells most about the plurality of culture and peoples is the centenary of Walt Whitman, 1819–1892.

E.D.M.



Monument to Columbus
Competition Project: Santo Domingo 1929
Konstantin Mel'nikov



Monument to Columbus, Perspective View. Konstantin Mel'nikov