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**Louis Napoleon as Russo-Asiatic Agent.
Marx's Revision of *The 18th Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*
in *Herr Vogt***

Introduction: Napoleon III's Russia Connections:

Origins of the Russo-French Alliance, the alliance Cossacque

Essential for grasping ideas such as class, revolution and democracy – indeed essential for grasping Marx's concept of state and politics as a whole – is the often-discussed, never-understood theory of Bonapartism in Marx's work. Marx's definitive treatment of Bonapartism in the lengthy 1860 polemic *Herr Vogt* is almost universally ignored in favor of *The 18th Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* of 1852.¹ Methodologically, *The 18th Brumaire* and *Herr Vogt* might appear to have been written by different authors. *The 18th Brumaire* one-sidedly stresses French domestic class struggle between 1848 and 1852, while *Herr Vogt* embodies what has been termed a "scientifico-internationalist"² approach to state and politics, focusing on the two key aspects of the modern European state system since the Reformation, namely French-inspired pan-European oppression of Germans and dilution of Western culture via tendential Russification. The stress on diplomacy, cultural issues and ethnic conflict in *Herr Vogt* is quite distinct from the stress on class struggle, political economy and sociology in *The 18th Brumaire* and the following paper will suggest that Marx's considered, mature judgement on Bonapartism in 1860 was much better than his 1852 version.

**I. In Bed with the Russians – Louis Bonaparte's Mother
and the Russian Czar**

In his September 1851 summary of the state of German 'morcellization' (*Zerstückelung*), i.e., pan-European maintenance of German particularism, Engels

¹ The entry *Bonapartismus* in the „Historisch-Kritisches Wörterbuch des Marxismus“, Band II, 1995, contains no discussion of *Herr Vogt*.

² See William Fr. Drischler: Bismarck – Russian Agent in the Tartar Troika. In: Marx und Engels. Konvergenzen – Divergenzen (Beiträge zur Marx-Engels-Forschung. NF 1997), Hamburg 1998, p. 193.

wittily noted that Germany could be satisfied since it by that point was divided into only three independent powers ‘instead of thirty-six as before’ (*statt wie vorher in sechsundsechzig*) (*Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Germany*).³ But the Anglo-German businessman ominously added that (*ibid*):

The unchecked hegemony (*unumschränkten Oberhoheit*) of the Russian Czar from the year 1814 hasn’t changed itself at all as a result.

Whether one renders *unumschränkten Oberhoheit* as ‘unchecked hegemony’ or ‘unlimited sovereignty’, the result is the same. The transition from Europe to Russo-Europe brought about in the seminal year 1814 was to reinforce a structure still dominant in September of 1851, i.e., throughout Louis Bonaparte’s formative years as a political leader. But pinnacle-level Russian influence came closer to home to Louis Napoleon than merely determining the overall European political structure of his formative years; Russian influence came *into* his home, the very household where he resided.

J. Bierman’s Narrative of the Czar Alexander I/Hortense de Beauharnais Relation. Many Louis Bonaparte biographies evade discussion of the relation of Louis’ mother Hortense de Beauharnais and Czar Alexander I in 1814, thereby often losing sight of the indispensable Russo-Asiatic aspect of Bonapartism. But no such over-developed sense of discretion and good taste troubled veteran *Toronto Sun* journalist John Bierman when writing his 1988 biography of Louis Bonaparte, *Napoleon III and his Carnival Empire*,⁴ and full coverage of the affair is provided. Prior to her last dalliance with her stepfather Napoleon I (the protraction of which led to the Corsican’s capture by the British and exile to St. Helena) Hortense entered into a relation with the Czar of all the Russias in April of 1814, the Czar honoring her request to be placed under his protection. Though Louis Bonaparte’s mother was clearly associated with the Napoleonic camp, the smitten Alexander I leaned on the restored Bourbon monarch Louis XVIII to give the fat-waisted Hortense the title of duchesse de Saint-Leu and a fat pension of 400,000 francs a year as well. As Bierman sums up, “Thus spared the horrors of peace, Hortense and her two young sons survived the fall of the Empire in considerable comfort.”⁵ Such magnanimity as the Czar displayed during his sojourns in Louis Bonaparte’s household in 1814 was more than an abject lesson concerning

³ Karl Marx/Friedrich Engels. *Staatstheorie*, E. Hennig et al, eds., 1974, p. 635. Though they parted ways concerning Russia after the Emancipation of the Serfs of 1861, Engels and Marx were of one mind so far as Russo-Bonapartism in 1859 went. See discussion to follow.

⁴ John Bierman: *Napoleon III and His Carnival Empire*, 1988, p. 9.

⁵ *Ibid*.

where real power lay; if Marx's *Herr Vogt* is any guide, said sojourn may have led to a permanent Russo- de Beauharnais league.

The Leuchtenberg Plot for Russian Takeover in Italy, 1843–1844. At the center of the Leuchtenberg plot for Russian takeover of Northern Italy in 1843 uncovered in *Herr Vogt* was Duke Leuchtenberg (1817–1852), a French Italian-affairs specialist. The plan was defeated by the Mazzini party and the Vatican, neither of which wanted any part of a Russification of Italy, according to Marx.⁶ But Hortense de Beauharnais' nephew Maximilien de Beauharnais (Louis' "Cousin Max"), son-in-law of Czar Nicholas I of Russia, had done his best, and the plot of 1843 might plausibly be seen as an outgrowth of the special relation between Romanovs and de Beauharnais' which blossomed in 1814.

II. Marx's Guilt-by-Association-with-Palmerston Test for Russian Operatives: The Case of Louis Bonaparte

Palmerston is apparently Louis Bonaparte's most intimate friend.

(Marx, "The Invasion Panic in England", *NYDT*, 9 December 1859, MEGA² I/18, p. 23)

On the 16th of September, 1859, the account of the repulse of the Peiho was received in England. Instead of summoning Parliament, Lord Palmerston addressed himself to Louis Bonaparte, and conversed with the autocrat on a new Anglo-French expedition against China.

(Marx, "English Politics", *NYDT*, 14 February 1860, MEGA², I/18, p. 38)

Louis Napoleon, supported in his imposture by bottle-holder Palmerston, had [...] to present *Prussian proposals* to Franz Joseph at Villafranca *that he himself had forged*.

(Marx, *Herr Vogt*, 1860, MEGA² I/18, p. 192)

Marx's reference to Maximilien de Beauharnais, Duke Leuchtenberg, in the context of a reconstruction of the Leuchtenberg Plot is intriguing and suggestive of further research in 19th-century Italian history. But dynastic history was never Old Moor's key criterion for identifying Russian operatives in European politics. The key criterion was association with the Right Honorable Henry John Temple, 3rd Viscount Palmerston, Palmerston of Palmerston, HM Victoria's most loyal Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs in several cabinets and eventually two-time Prime Minister of the British Empire. Said Palmerston had, following Marx, distinguished himself as "the unflinch-

⁶ Marx: *Herr Vogt*. In: MEGA² I/18, p. 167. The New Park Publishers (London) English translation of *Herr Vogt* by Archer has been consulted.

ing and persevering advocate of Russian interests”, indeed was bound “in vassalage to Russia”,⁷ and was moreover “responsible for the whole foreign policy England has pursued from the Revolution of 1830 to December, 1851”.⁸

Palmerston’s association with Louis Napoleon spanned more than a quarter of a century, beginning with the first of the Frenchman’s three London asylums in 1838⁹ and continuing until the expiry of “Lord Pumicestone” in 1865. But it was Palmerston’s willingness to risk dismissal from the British cabinet and the ruin of his own political career to support Louis Napoleon in December of 1851 which is the best evidence of extraordinarily strong bonds between the global Russifier Palmerston and the father of “Bonapartism”.

Palmerston’s Dismissal from the English Cabinet in 1851. As recounted by Palmerston biographer Jaspas Ridley,¹⁰ the noble Viscount reacted to Louis Bonaparte’s coup d’etat of December 2, 1851 swiftly and decisively, indeed so swiftly and decisively as to suggest the British Foreign Secretary had foreknowledge of the plans. On December 3, 1851 he met the French ambassador to England, Louis’ Polish cousin Count Walewski and - in Ridley’s words “congratulated Louis Napoleon on the coup d’etat”,¹¹ news which was quickly spread about Europe by the Bonapartists. Palmerston’s course was in fact risky - he had a traditional duty to moot the question of recognition of a new government in Europe with the Parliament before extending recognition, and strict constitutional duties to obtain approval in writing from the cabinet and the crown before doing so. When the perplexed British Ambassador at Paris Lord Normanby requested a clarification of policy, the cavalier Palmerston fired off a note saying he was only giving Walewski his personal opinion, and sent the note without the requisite counter-signature of Queen Victoria. The outraged Victoria demanded Palmerston’s head from Lord John Russell, and Palmerston was promptly dismissed from the cabinet. Though two terms as prime minister lay ahead of him, the precipitous recognition of Bonapartism had led to the biggest defeat of Palmerston’s career. But of special solidarity between the Russian advocate Palmerston and Louis Bonaparte there could no longer be any doubt; indeed, Palmerston was to put his career

⁷ Marx: Secret Diplomatic History of the 18th Century And The Story of the Life of Lord Palmerston, 1969, p. 174; MEGA² I/18, p. 159.

⁸ Marx: Secret Diplomatic History, p.168.

⁹ See Bierman: Napoleon III and His Carnival Empire, p. 50.

¹⁰ Jaspas Ridley: Lord Palmerston, 1971, pp. 398–399.

¹¹ Ibid, p. 399.

on the line for Louis once again in 1858.¹² The peculiarity of the situation, so far as a theory of Bonapartism is concerned, is the time lag between Marx's awareness of Palmerston's Bonapartism in 1851 and Marx's expose of Palmerston as a Russian operative in 1853 on the one hand, and the belated recognition that Bonaparte was also a Russian operative in 1859 on the other. In retrospect Palmerston's comraderie with the French emperor and simultaneous diehard loyalty to the Russo-Asiatics point straight to the real anatomy of Bonapartism. Marx however was fated to articulate a detailed model of Bonapartism in 1852 and then be forced to revise it virtually in toto in 1859 when Russian diplomacy (in lock-step with the City of London) ordered the hapless Louis to attack Austria in order to place a Russian general (Constantine) on the throne of Hungary, promote Pan-Slavism, finalize the absorption of Poland and facilitate the building of new Russian strategic fortifications in the Vistula region.¹³ A review of Marx's two versions of Bonapartism – National (French) Bonapartism and International (Russo-Mongol) Bonapartism is now in order.

Two Models of Bonapartism

National Bonapartism: The 18th Brumaire

Marx's 1852 analysis of the pre-history, nature and results of the coup d'état of December 2, 1851 in France has six key points, four consisting of assertions about the course of events giving birth to Bonapartism and two (quite unexamined) assumptions about French politics overall.

1) France subject to French Executive Branch Domination

The reduction of the legislative branch of the French government to a rubber stamp for the imperial executive and the reduction of the judicial branch to a mouthpiece for the imperial executive has two sets of causes, according to *The 18th Brumaire*:¹⁴ fatigue, fear of the left or indifference to affairs of state on the part of the bourgeoisie; and a kind of equipoise, a state of quasi-lability amongst classes¹⁵ which creates a vacuum best filled by the executive branch. Thus the imperial executive (embodied by Louis Bonaparte) both accepts

¹² MEGA² I/18, p. 179. In 1858 Palmerston introduced the Conspiracy Bill to end asylum for political refugees in Britain, this to aid Louis Napoleon in harassing anti-Bonapartists abroad. The uproar occasioned by the bill led to Palmerston's resignation from office.

¹³ MEGA² I/18, Chapter IX, esp. pp. 169-175.

¹⁴ Marx: Der achtzehnte Brumaire des Louis Bonaparte. In: K. Marx u. F. Engels: Ausgewählte Werke, Wien 1983 p. 136.

¹⁵ Ibid, p. 182.

power handed over by a frightened bourgeoisie and seizes it from a lethargic bourgeoisie at the same time.

2) Accession to Power with the Aid of the Urban Lumpenproletariat

This factor, also adverted to in *Herr Vogt*,¹⁶ refers to the social flotsam functioning as shock troops – in Paris and provincial cities¹⁷ as well – for the counter-revolution. The mechanics of takeover of the state apparatus in 1851 included an important element of extra-legal street violence readily purchasable from social detritus.

3) Maintenance of Hegemony via Alliance with the Inert Peasant Majority of France

Re-cognition of the state of affairs that France in 1851 was not fully industrial is attained through review of the politics of the peasant majority of France. This largely-illiterate two thirds majority of the subject populace wanted no modernization of its living conditions and no part of Parisian urbanity either, and got what it wanted from Bonapartism, voting for Louis *en masse*¹⁸ while elections (of a sort) were still being held.

4) Maintenance of Regime Stability through Regular Military Adventures

Above all manifested in military intervention in Italy, this factor ultimately lent an element of instability to Bonapartism according to Marx in 1852, since the spectre of an unpopular war (whether protracted, indecisively concluded or lost) could never be exorcized. Following Marx (and Engels), this factor – so far as regime stabilizing goes – was in decline after “the Russian war” (the Crimean War, 1854-56), since Louis Bonaparte had collaborated with Palmerston to ensure the Russians picked up all the chips at the post-Crimean war peace negotiations, i.e., ensured that the Russians ultimately won the conflict and French public cognizance of minimal dividends for Frenchmen from the war was high.

5) French National Parameters of Classic Bonapartism

Though merely implicit, this factor turned out to be the decisive one in National Bonapartism when Marx (and Engels) realized Louis was a tool of extra-French forces in the course of the Northern Italian War of 1859. All the major actors in *The 18th Brumaire* are French, while in the analysis of *Herr Vogt* the French head of state was subject to removal by Mother Russia, indeed was the pawn of an international network. In *Herr Vogt* when Marx notes Bonapartism was allied to Russianism during the Crimean War (1854-

¹⁶ MEGA² I/18, pp. 64–65

¹⁷ Marx: *Der achzehnte Brumaire*, p. 142.

¹⁸ *Ibid*, p. 182.

56), he implicitly concedes the tardiness of his recognition of the nature of said Bonapartism.

6) Assumption of Significant Transparency in French State Policy

Another merely implicit (and later abandoned) but none the less important aspect of the analysis in *The 18th Brumaire* is the assumption of significant transparency in French state policy. Proclamations of leaders, popular notions, journalistic accounts and overt ploys of public authorities are treated as adequate sources of information about state policy. Within a year of publishing *The 18th Brumaire* however Marx had discovered the Anglo-Russian secret diplomacy state in the context of his anti-Palmerston polemics, and within two years began publishing *The Secret Diplomatic History of the 18th Century*. By 1860 Louis Bonaparte was an agent of a “secret” Pan-European coalition. *The 18th Brumaire* may fairly be characterized as the end of Marx’s pre – secret diplomacy phase, i.e., the last period before the development of Moor’s decisive concept of the state.

SUMMARY OF NATIONAL BONAPARTISM. Marx’s first model of Bonapartism departs from the assumption the decisive elements in French politics were domestic. Common to most elements of the French bourgeoisie in 1851, whether in banking, manufacture, the professions or commercial information management (the press) was a disinclination to exercise power and an inclination to delegate (or surrender) authority to the most anti-democratic branch of government, the executive. The dirty business of conducting the takeover of December 2nd required an alliance with the lumpenproletariat, only too happy to play a role for a modest consideration; but the long-term base of the Bonapartist regime was the backward peasantry majority of France. International relations and secret diplomacy played, for practical purposes, no role.

International Bonapartism (Russo-Bonapartism): Herr Vogt

In *Herr Vogt*, the four key elements of the scheme of things in *The 18th Brumaire* – executive branch hegemony based on surrender of authority from the bourgeoisie coupled with demobilization of potential class opposition; support for the imperial executive from declassé urban strata; alliance with the rural majority of Frenchmen; and maintenance of regime stability through military adventures – all reappear, and *The 18th Brumaire*’s analysis of the French lumpenproletariat is favorably quoted (if in modified form) at length.¹⁹ This establishes continuity of the two volumes, i.e., shows the same political

¹⁹ MEGA² I/18, pp. 64–67.

structure is under analysis in both cases. However, with the chief operant assumption of *The 18th Brumaire* – national framework of analysis – tossed out the window by 1860, and another major assumption – largely transparent (i.e., not secret) government – discarded too, utterly novel factors of French politics vis-à-vis the 1852 volume were bound to appear. These new factors turn out to be nothing less than the twin pillars of the modern state system, on Marx's version of things.

The Twin Pillars of the Modern European State System

Pillar I - French-Initiated Pan-European Oppression of Germans. From Francis I to Louis Napoleon

The diplomacy-centered state theory of *Herr Vogt* asserts the twin pillars of the modern European state system have been French-initiated Pan-European Oppression of Germans from Frances I (1494–1547) to Louis Napoleon on the one hand, and the dilution of Western culture through tendential Russification (the development of the Anglo-Russian secret diplomacy state) on the other. Also important are the joining of the two pillars during the 1714–1716 “Russo-Rampage” of George I of Hannover in the Baltic Theatre as well as the “Tartar Yoke” (1241–1480) transmission of (ultimately) archaic Chinese (Kara-Khitay and Song) administrative mores to Russia by the Mongols, both analysed in Marx's *Revelations of the Diplomatic History of the 18th Century* (1854–1856).²⁰ But chronologically - to say the least - Gallic oppression of Germans comes first in Marx's state theory.

Marx's discussion of Gallic oppression of Germans in *Herr Vogt* takes place in a specific context, i.e., the contradiction between Louis Bonaparte's assignment to start and win the Northern Italian War of 1859 and his duty to localize the war so as to prevent a Pan-European revolution which would threaten the international structure of the reaction. But there were specifically French reasons for Bonapartism to localize the conflict as well. Marx writes:²¹

Austria had to make Prussia's modest claim to the military leadership of Germany the pretext for a treaty that Louis Bonaparte had to excuse to

²⁰ On George I of Hannover's “Russo-Rampage” of 1714-1716 see Marx's *Secret Diplomatic History of the 18th Century* (Reference 7) and William Fr. Drischler: G.W. Leibniz, Chief Design Engineer and Chief Ideologue of the Modern State. The Asiatic Mode of Production in the Great Northern War. In: NIHIL SINE RATIONE, VII. International Leibniz-Kongress. Vortraege 1. Teil, Hans Poser, Ursula Goldenbaum et al., eds., Berlin/Hanover, 2001. On the archaic administrative mores transmitted to Russia during the Tartar Yoke (1241-1480), see Karl A. Wittfogel and Chia-Sheng Feng, et al.: *History of Chinese Society*, Liao 1949.

²¹ MEGA² I/18, pp. 192–193.

France by saying that the Italian War threatened to turn into a general war which would have realized German unity and thus accomplished a work which ever since the time of Francis I it has been the object of French policy to prevent.

In the time-honored manner of stressing a particular point by repeating it, Marx immediately thereafter quotes a contemporary source as follows:

The Parisian '*Galignani's Messenger*', which only carries lead articles by way of exception and on specific official instructions, says in its issue of July 22, 1859: "To give another province to the King of Piedmont, it would not only have been necessary to support a war against two-thirds of Europe, but *German unity would have been realized*, and a work thus accomplished which ever since the time of Frances I it has been the object of French policy to prevent."

The reference to Frances I is a refence to the articulation of the Teuto-French antagonism in the era of Charles V, Habsburg (1500–1558). Charles V, Habsburg found himself subjected to war by France no less than five times, four times by Frances I and then again by Frances' son, Henry II. To defeat the Germans Frances I even entered into a league with Oriental forces led by Sultan Suleiman and Barbarossa, the latter introducing mosques and Muslim slave markets onto French soil,²² this Franco-Oriental policy constituting an anticipation of Louis XIV's practice of encouraging the Ottoman Empire to attack Austria from the east. What is decisive for understanding Marx's concept of Bonapartism is the stress on the institutional continuity – over the centuries – of French efforts to block German attainment of the unification and centralization largely achieved by France in the 16th century. This authentic constant (indeed, at times – as in the Thirty Years' War – obsession) of French state policy never appeared in the national Bonapartism concept of *The 18th Brumaire* and incorporation of it in *Herr Vogt* constitutes a novelty of Marx's International Bonapartism concept. In Chapter IX of *Herr Vogt* Marx even accuses Louis Bonaparte of the ultimate anti-German political crime of attempting to uphold the Thirty Years' War "in permanence" (*in Permanenz*) (MEGA² I/18, p. 188).

²² Regarding the scandal of the de-Occidentalization of Toulon of August 1543 by Frances I, see R.J. Knecht: *French Renaissance Monarchy: Francis I and Henry II*, 2nd Edition, 1996, p. 42. On the Franco-Oriental alliance of Frances I and Sultan Suleiman against Charles V, Habsburg and Europe see Chapter 5, "Karl V. und der Teufelspakt Frankreichs mit den Türken" of Ferenc Majoros' *Karl V. Habsburg als Weltmacht*, 2000.

Pillar 2 - Dilution of Western Culture Through Tendentia Russification. The Anglo-Russian Secret Diplomacy state

Never has Russian policy encountered a more suitable man than Louis Napoleon.

(Engels, *Savoyen, Nizza u. der Rhein* (1860), MEGA² I/18, p. 382)

Louis Napoleon is forced – both by the nature of his personality and the situation in which he finds himself - to serve the purposes of Russia.

(Engels, *Savoyen, Nizza u. der Rhein*, *ibid.*)

The “secretive man”, so frightening to the German philistine, has reduced himself to a tool with which Russian diplomacy plays.

(Engels, *Savoyen, Nizza u. der Rhein*, *ibid.*)

If Russia had had no further need of Louis Bonaparte [...] then Louis Bonaparte would have been overthrown.

(Marx, *Herr Vogt*, MEGA² I/18, p. 180)

Between Louis Napoleon and Russia *la cordialite la plus parfaite* reigns [...]

(Marx, *Herr Vogt*, *ibid.*, p. 163)

It is evident that the Autocrat of France and the Autocrat of Russia [...] act in common concert.

(Marx, “Events in Syria”, etc., *NYDT*, Nr. 6021, MEGA² I/18, p. 476)

The essential aspect of Marx’s mature concept of Bonapartism – namely Louis Napoleon’s status as a Russo-Asiatic agent – comes out clearly in *Herr Vogt* (and Marx and Engels’s other polemics surrounding the Northern Italian War of 1859 as well). In *Herr Vogt* Louis Bonaparte is excoriated as the godfather of “the Russo-Napoleonic Plan” and co-creator of “Russo-Decembrism” (Decembristo-Russianism) also. At the outset of the pivotal chapter of *Herr Vogt*, “Da-Da Vogt and His Studies” (Chapter IX), Marx bids *adieu* to the national Bonapartism concept of *The 18th Brumaire*. In the context of a reconstruction of Karl Vogt’s *Studien zur gegenwärtigen Lage Europas* (“Studies on the Current Situation in Europe”, 1859) Marx describes the events as the Russo-Decembrist plotters foresaw them – and largely carried them out:²³

Louis Bonaparte will wage the Italian War, as earlier the Russian [Crimean] War, with the permission of higher authority, to a certain extent as the secret general of a European coalition.

The “higher authority” governing the “European coalition” is a reference to the Anglo-Russian secret diplomacy state analysed at length in *NYDT* articles

²³ MEGA² I/18, p. 165.

of the 1850s collected in Marx's *The Eastern Question*.²⁴ Perpetually operating in "secret", said Anglo-Russian state directs a European coalition which filters marching orders to the likes of Louis and Palmerston; how the merely national leaders deal with their national subjects is their problem, never the problem of the transnational network or the coalitions of national states it sets to overriding the individual states. Likely present from the start, Louis Bonaparte's "Russianism" came out into the open in 1859 (in the form of – among other things - advocating the Russian General Constantine to be named King of Hungary) because it served the self-perceived interests of the Anglo-Russian secret diplomacy state at the time. Authentic Bonapartism (Russo-Bonapartism) then, may best be seen as a merger of the executive branch of the French state with *extra-European* (Russo-Asiatic) elements, the creation of a Russo-executive branch of government inside a European state, accompanied by a partial "going public" of the merger. The Russo-executive branch of the French government then serves as a downward conduit for the policy preferences of the Anglo-Russian secret diplomacy state, never to exert policy influence from France "upward". Thus the bourgeoisie is quite willing to delegate (or surrender) authority to the imperial executive, then have that same executive bond (in an appropriately subordinate manner) not just with extra-French but with extra-European elements. Important to understanding the internationalist aspect of real Bonapartism is the Extra-European or "cultural dilution" aspect of it, and to this we now turn. *Russian Agrandisement and its Relation to Higher Cultures in Bonapartism*. Perhaps the most detailed scrutiny of any aspect of secret diplomacy in *Herr Vogt* falls to the practice of Russian territorial agrandisement, always the leading priority of the City of London - directed Anglo-Russian secret diplomacy state. Conspicuous to this agrandisement method is its insidiousness – the *gradual* nature of the take-over of non-Russian nations. As Marx noted "Before Russia absorbed the Crimea, she proclaimed its independence",²⁵ and Chapter IX of *Herr Vogt* contains an extended chronicle of Russian expansionism in the Balkans and above all a narrative of the never-ceasing Russian efforts to break the back of Polish resistance to absorption from the East. But why the gradual character? In *Savoyen, Nizza u. der Rhein* Engels renders explicit the answer:²⁶

²⁴ Marx: *The Eastern Question*. E.M. and E. Averling, eds., London 1897.

²⁵ MEGA² I/18, p. 165.

²⁶ MEGA² I/18, p. 380, lines 33–35.

Russia does not operate like the first Napoleon. Particularly against the West – where it runs up against heavy populations with a level of civilization superior to its own people – it can only go slowly.

Viewed “from the East,” Russian agrandisement in Europe must proceed slowly since overall Russian cultural inferiority might readily translate into organizational and technological inferiority, resulting in catastrophic defeats. But viewed *from the West*, successful Russian agrandisement appears as relentless *dilution* of European culture, the decline of what Engels terms European *Ueberlegenheit* (“superiority”). That such dilution was the actual intent of the Anglo-Russian diplomatic network in general and Russo-Bonapartism in particular can scarcely be doubted, and so de-Occidentalization in the specific form of Russification might well be seen as a leading counter-revolutionary strategem of the Western bourgeoisie, a ready career opening as it were, for Louis Napoleon as a Russo-Asiatic agent.

Conclusion

The practice of considering “Bonapartism” without reference to Russian infiltration of the West should be given the burial it so richly deserves, as should the practice of considering Bonapartism without reference to Marx’s chief statement on the concept, *Herr Vogt*. Rather than proceeding from French social conditions to an analysis of Louis Bonaparte’s movement (*Primat der Innenpolitik* [“primacy of domestic policy”]) as in *The 18th Brumaire*, in *Herr Vogt* Marx departs from the overarching secret international structure of Asiatico-bourgeois reaction and then moves down to Louis Napoleon’s Bonapartism (*Primat der Aussenpolitik* [“primacy of foreign policy”]), thus attaining scientifico-internationalism.

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