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Count Adam Gurowski: An Intellectual between the Ambition to Globally Transform the World and Service to Russian Propaganda, 1849–1866. A Selection of Documents*

Zarys treści: Prezentowany wybór dokumentów z archiwów rosyjskich i amerykańskich stanowi przykład działań rosyjskiej propagandy w Stanach Zjednoczonych w połowie XIX w., w epoce wojny krymskiej i wojny secesyjnej. Ukazuje charakterystyczne mechanizmy i narracje wykorzystywane do wpływania na demokratyczną opinię publiczną. Przedstawia to na przykładzie działalności intelektualisty i politycznego myśliciela hr. Adama Gurowskiego, który w imię własnych uniwersalnych wizji oddał się na służbę Imperium Rosyjskiemu i jego tajnych operacji. W ten sposób stał się jednym z najważniejszych rosyjskich agentów wpływu w Ameryce w tej epoce.

Outline of content: A selection of documents from Russian and American archives, with examples of Russian propaganda in the United States in the mid-nineteenth century, during the Crimean War and the Civil War. It demonstrates characteristic mechanisms and narratives used to influence the democratic public opinion. The example used in the article is that of Count Adam Gurowski, an intellectual and political thinker who, in the name of his own universal visions, devoted himself to serving the Russian Empire and its secret operations. In this way, he became one of the most important Russian agents of influence in America in that period.

Słowa kluczowe: Gurowski, Rosja, Ameryka, operacje wpływu, propaganda, panslawizm, Manifest Destiny

Keywords: Gurowski, Russia, America, influence operations, propaganda, pan-Slavism, Manifest Destiny

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Introduction¹

One hundred and seventy years ago, a great conflict between Western European powers and Nicholas I's Russia over the control of the East, known as the Crimean War (1853–1856), reached its climax. Like in the 2020s, the eyes of the world were focused on Crimea and the besieged Sevastopol, on the Balkans, the Black Sea coast, and the Caucasus. Isolated, Nicholas I's empire could count on only one ally, and in the western hemisphere at that, the young democratic American republic.² In this situation, it became important to win over public opinion in the United States, which was opposed to tsarist autocracy and its imperial expansion.

The Russian diplomatic mission, led by the energetic new ambassador, Eduard Stoeckl (1804–1892), a German in Russian service (he would later negotiate the sale of Russian Alaska), sought to draw America into a confrontation with a common geopolitical adversary – the British Empire. Stoeckl even tried to recruit American buccaneers in California for a planned attack on the coasts of Australia and New Zealand, also fuelling American interest in Canada. Proposals to form military units for a war with Russia, units made up of Polish political émigrés, prompted a press discussion about the possibility of forming an 'Irish legion' to fight Britain. However, what became much more important than similar initiatives was a propaganda campaign that, via the increasingly powerful press, exerted its influence on democratically elected politicians. The idea was to prevent Russia's enemies from exploiting negative opinions about tsarist despotism.

The global propaganda warfare was facilitated by technological innovations such as the railway, the telegraph, and the first cables laid on the seabed. The plan was to build a telegraph line connecting Russia with America via Alaska. Thanks to the spread of news, the Crimean War became the first modern global conflict.

The propaganda campaign of the day paved the way for closer economic and diplomatic cooperation between Russia and America after 1856. The phenomenon manifested itself in intensified trade, particularly in contracts for the construction of Russian warships in US shipyards, where the Russian fleet destroyed in the previous war was reconstructed. American technology and specialists were

¹ The introduction is based on the author's previous studies on Gurowski, including: H. Głębocki, *'Diabeł Asmodeusz' w niebieskich binoklach i kraj przyszłości. Hr. Adam Gurowski i Rosja* (Kraków, 2012). See also the edition of his writings: Adam Gurowski, *Wybór pism*, vol. 1: *Filozofia historii i cywilizacji*, select., introd., and ed. H. Głębocki (Warszawa, 2022); id., vol. 2: *Pisma polityczne, memoriały i publicystyka* (Warszawa, 2024). Cf. Count Adam de Gurowski, 'Manifest: Destiny of America and Russia, 1849–1866', select. and ed. H. Głębocki, *Kronos Philosophical Journal*, 3 (2014), pp. 188–211. The letters included in this article will be published in volume 3 of Gurowski's writings by the Count August Cieszkowski Foundation.

² For more on this, see N. Saul, *Distant Friends: the United States and Russia, 1763–1867* (Lawrence, 1991); A. Dowty, *The Limits of American Isolation: The United States and the Crimean War* (New York, 1971); F.A. Golder, 'Russian-American Relations During the Crimean War', *American Historical Review*, 31, no. 3 (1926); V.N. Ponomarev, *Krymskaya voyna i russko-amierikanskiye otnosheniya* (Moscow, 1993).

increasingly used in Russia.³ This fruitful cooperation was continued during the Civil War (1861–1865). At that time, the situation from the Crimean War period was reversed. With the Union isolated, Russia became its closest partner in international relations. In 1863, the Russian Empire, following the outbreak of another Polish uprising, called the January Uprising, a decade after its defeat in Crimea, was preparing for a new global conflict with Britain and France. The two powers provided diplomatic support to the Polish uprising and, at the same time, supported the confederated states of the South.⁴ Fearing a repeat of the scenario of an international anti-Russian coalition and blockade of Russian fleet, in 1863 Tsar Alexander II sent a large part of it to the Pacific and the Atlantic, to prepare oceanic sabotage operations. The Russian squadrons' visit to the ports of California and East Coast was viewed as a gesture of support for the Union at a critical moment in the Civil War. At the same time it was the most emphatic demonstration of the Russo-American *entente cordiale* of the era. It would culminate four years later, in 1867, in the sale of Russian Alaska to the United States. Even then, during the revival of the Russo-British Great Game in Central Asia, of key importance was the geopolitical argument to ensure that this most remote periphery of Alexander II's empire would not fall into the hands of the common adversary, the British.

At that time the most famous works, published between 1854 and 1855, and seeking to convince the American public and, through it, the US intellectual and political elites, of shared geopolitical interests with autocratic Russia, included the journalistic writings and books by Count Adam Gurowski.⁵ He came to America in 1849, after the fall of the Spring of Nations in Europe, like many other political émigrés, the so-called 'Forty-Eighters'.

Researchers studying US-Russian relations agree that his writings were among the most important works shaping the knowledge of Russia, Slavdom, and Eastern Europe. These publications, first appearing in the biggest American newspaper of that era, *New York Daily Tribune* (about 200,000 copies with supplements), contributed to a change in the American public's anti-Russian attitude. All the more so given that during the Crimean War Gurowski became the unofficial head of the newspaper's foreign desk. His pro-Russian stance prompted complaints by Karl Marx himself, one of European contributors of *Tribune*, who would send reports across the Atlantic, warning of the expansion of Nicholas I's 'empire of evil' and accusing Gurowski of working for the Russian embassy.

The 'Red Count' responded to such accusations by saying that his Russophile and pan-Slavist views were the results of his own reflection. Indeed, the American

³ For more on this, see Saul, *Distant Friends*.

⁴ For more, see A.A. Woldman, *Lincoln and the Russians* (Cleveland – New York, 1952); M.M. Mal'kin, *Grazhdanskaya voyna v SSzA i tsarskaya Rossiya* (Moscow, 1939); *The Limits of American Isolation. The United States and the Crimean War* (New York, 1971); Saul, *Distant Friends*.

⁵ See Głębocki, 'Diabeł Asmodeusz'; and my other studies on Gurowski. Cf. F. Stasik, *Adam Gurowski, 1805–1866* (Warszawa, 1977); LeRoy H. Fischer, *Lincoln's Gadfly, Adam Gurowski* (Norman, 1967).

period in the intellectual biography of Gurowski, a former student of Hegel, had the characteristics of a synthesis of the previous stages of his political philosophy and work, in line with the Hegelian pattern of historical development, through thesis, antithesis, and synthesis. In the first stage of his life Gurowski was a representative of a radical left-wing political formation of the Romantic era, a formation opposing autocratic Russia, the mainstay of the Holy Alliance system established in post-Napoleonic Europe. Initially a member of the parliamentary opposition and participant in anti-tsarist conspiracies in the Kingdom of Poland, governed by Russia at the time (1815–1830), he later became one of the political leaders of the democratic left during the November Uprising (1815–1830) and after its fall, as an émigré in France, also when joining the intellectual salons of Europe.

Influenced by radical philosophy, especially early socialism, in 1834 he lost faith in the chances for Poland's rebirth and mission of his own homeland in the service of universal progress. He found an alternative in Russia, against which he had hitherto fought. He formulated the theory of political pan-Slavism, justifying Russia's mission in the unification of humankind for the 'good of humankind', as Charles Fourier and Henri Saint-Simon, whose disciple he considered himself to be, believed. The Russian potential and the strength of tsarist autocracy we to be used, in his opinion, to transform the whole of Eurasia.

With this mission, although sentenced to death in absentia by the tsar, in 1835 he surrendered himself to him. He hoped that after an amnesty he would become a 'philosopher at the throne', as it were, one of those intellectuals whom Stalin would call a century later 'engineers of human souls'. He wanted to change Nicholas I's backward state into a Russian-Slavic empire in the spirit of pan-Slavism. The price for this was to be paid by his own homeland and his compatriots, now deemed no longer necessary in the context of global reconstruction.

However, he failed to fulfil his grand ambitions, fought as he was by tsarist dignitaries, who did not believe a former tsarocide and Jacobin. After a decade of exile in Russia, then in the service of the secret police and the propaganda organised by it, he managed to escape. Like many later intellectuals fascinated in the twentieth century with communist Russia, he preferred to serve it outside its border and out of reach of the secret police, though he did not change his views and continued to send letters and pan-Slavist proposals to the tsar. When, after the fall of the Spring of Nations, the Old World became too small for him, he found refuge in the New World.

Gurowski came to America with a unique knowledge of Russia. He was able to use it thanks to the Crimean War of 1853–1856 and the growing interest in the tsarist empire. Soon, he became a well-known specialist on Russia and Eastern Europe. In his studies, *The Turkish Question* (1854), *A Year of the War, by Citizen of the USA* (1855), and, especially, *Russia as it is* (1854), excerpts from which have been included in this selection, he expounded on the idea of Manifest Destiny of the United States and Russia.

He presented his visions from the perspective of global transformations. However, he replaced his fascination with tsarist autocracy with a belief in the Russian people and in the possibility of reforming Russia through a top-down *perestroika* or a peasants' revolt. He argued that the two young, non-European countries, with such diverse political systems, should cooperate for the sake of universal progress and the good of humanity. In fact, he was referring to Alexis de Tocqueville's well-known comparison of Russia and America, pointing to the former's mission in Asia and the latter's in the western hemisphere. The following century, the twentieth, would belong to these young powers. In addition, Gurowski sought to introduce Russians to the achievements of the American civilisation and democratic system in his reports for Russian newspapers.

According to no less a figure than Ambassador Stoeckl, Gurowski's writings published during the Crimean War changed the American public's attitude toward Russia. In order to persuade the Americans, Gurowski, in addition to citing geopolitical and economic arguments pointing to America and Russia's shared interests vis-à-vis European powers, also resorted to a perverse dialectic, arguing that Nicholas I's victory was necessary for the sake of progress. This version of the 'Russia first' slogan justified Russia's right to seize Constantinople and the Black Sea straits, which was to bring closer the expected transformations within Russia itself and in the world. This would have sparked a chain reaction in Nicholas I's empire. It would have strengthened its contacts with Europe, accelerating modernisation through top-down reforms or, in the events of the authorities' resistance, through a bloody popular revolution, comparable to the ongoing Taiping Rebellion in China.

Gurowski's arguments align with the strong pro-Russian tendency among American elites, especially diplomats, to seek cooperation. It was manifested, for example, by the American ambassador to St. Petersburg in 1863–1869, Cassius Marcellus Clay, who was sent there in the spring of 1861. This statesman – a Protestant, democrat, and planter – was prejudiced against Catholics, sympathised with liberal Russia, and was critical of 'reactionary Catholic and despotic Poland', which in that same year, 1861, again began to claim its rights, first in the form of peaceful demonstrations, and from January 1863 in the form of an armed uprising.

In that period, Gurowski argued in his writings to the Americans and the Russians that the synergy of their actions, in the form of a geopolitical alliance and economic cooperation between the two 'countries of the future', would make it possible to launch global change. The new, non-European powers were to shake hands across the Pacific for the good of humanity. It was there, on the coasts, on both sides of the boundless ocean, along the railway lines that were being laid out at the time, that the centres of humanity were to shift in the future, to California and Oregon on the one hand, and, in Russia, towards the mouth of the Amur on the other. The Pacific Ocean, hitherto separating the two young civilisations, American and Russian-Slavic, was now to become a bridge for fruitful cooperation.

It should be noted that while preaching the apotheosis of American democratic civilisation, Gurowski also participated in heated political debates during that period, tearing America apart. Associated with the abolitionist movement as he was, he vehemently attacked slavery, which compromised the values of the democratic republic. As a representative of the radical wing of the Republican Party, he even attacked Abraham Lincoln for his lack of decisiveness in dealing with the South's secession and demanded speedy liberation of African Americans, out of whom black regiments were to be formed.

During the Civil War of 1861–1865, to prove the shared nature not only of geopolitical interests but also of the professed values of Russia and the United States, he compared Alexander II, the 'liberating tsar' of the Russian peasants, with Lincoln, who liberated the slaves. On the other hand, he fought against the natural expressions of solidarity of the American public with the Poles fighting for freedom in 1863. In particular, Gurowski questioned the Poles' moral right to independence.⁶ He used a narrative similar to the arguments of Russian propaganda in Europe, addressed to liberal and democratic circles. He claimed, contrary to the facts, that the Polish uprising was merely a revolt of the reactionary nobility, comparing it to the revolt of the Southern planters, and the situation of the Polish peasants to that of African Americans. The arguments of the former insurgent and democrat, now questioning the sense of rebuilding his own homeland, had a significant impact on the perpetuation of the stereotype of Poland,⁷ spread by Russian propaganda at the time, as a 'country of the past', a country of reactionary attitudes, social oppression, and Catholic religious fanaticism, a country incapable of independent existence. Elements of the propaganda picture persisted even in the twentieth century.

However, Karl Marx's and Alexander Herzen's accusations of being a Russian agent of influence continued to hang over Gurowski. This suspicion can be explained today by the nineteenth-century archives of the tsarist secret police. The document I have been able to find in Russia leaves no doubt that Gurowski, despite his earnest beliefs, was financed by the Russian embassy in Washington and operated as one of the most important Russian agents of influence in the United States in the mid-nineteenth century. He would often address Alexander II directly, who personally ordered that financial support be paid to him. In his reports to St Petersburg, the tsarist ambassador to Washington, Eduard Stoeckl, boasted about winning over such an outstanding political writer during the Crimean War period, when Gurowski had financial problems. Stoeckl described Gurowski's pamphlets, which

⁶ G.J. Lerski, 'The United States and the January Insurrection. A Polish Chapter in Civil War America: The Effects of the January Insurrection on American Opinion and Diplomacy', *Polish American Studies*, 30, no. 1 (1973), pp. 45–53; H.E. Blinn, 'Seward and the Polish Rebellion of 1863', *American Historical Review*, 45, no. 4 (1940), pp. 828–833.

⁷ For more on this, see J. Wiczerzak, *A Polish Chapter in Civil War America. The Effects of the January Insurrection on American Opinion and Diplomacy* (New York, 1967).

he ordered as part of the propaganda campaign during the Crimean War, as being written by “the hand of a master”.⁸

That is why the official works of the ‘Red Count’, proclaiming the Russian and American Manifest Destiny, and calling for their alliance and joint rule of the world in the twentieth century should be read today along with unofficial letters sent to the tsar himself, letters that contain a genuine pan-Slavist *confession de foi*. To this end documents found in Russian archives have been juxtaposed in the present collection with Gurowski’s journalistic pieces.

The subsidies he received meant that his Russian patrons probably treated the ideas in Gurowski’s works as a rhetorical device. In fact, the count was clearly playing his own game with his Russian patrons and American readers, just as other intellectuals later did, mesmerised by the possibilities of the totalitarian Soviet empire in the twentieth century. Gurowski would not have been himself if he had remained the man whom the Russian *chinovniki* wanted him to be, paying him the gold half-imperials he kept asking for. They wanted to see in him only the most talented agent of influence shaping the views of the American public and political elite in a spirit favourable to the empire. Gurowski’s ambition, meanwhile, was to use Russia in his own global game, according to the logic of historical processes he had come to know and wanted to serve. This ambition may best be illustrated by an unknown, laconic letter to his friend Senator Charles Sumner, chair of the US Senate Foreign Relations Committee, of November 1861. In it, Gurowski recommended providing assistance in getting to Europe to Mikhail Bakunin, who, after escaping Siberia via Japan, California, arrived in the USA in 1861.

* * *

Count Gurowski’s views and intellectual activity are part of a long tradition of seeking a ‘blank page’ in Russia and of attempts to harness its immense potential for various utopian projects. This idea had two extremes. The first was determined by the Enlightenment philosophers’ belief in the role of the tsarist empire as a social ‘laboratory of progress’. It found its continuation in the views of the radical left in the twentieth century, following the successful Bolshevik revolution of 1917. At the other extreme, this belief was reversed and, since the French Revolution, Russia had been viewed, following Count Joseph de Maistre, as the counter-revolutionary ‘Catechon’ and ‘executioner’ of the European revolution that was threatening Christian civilisation in Europe. This hope is revived today in some conservatives’ views on Putin’s Russia. Russian propaganda and diplomacy have often used similar illusions to pursue Russia’s imperial interests and to manipulate public opinion and political elites in the West. Regardless of his own ambitions, Gurowski was treated as a tool in this strategy.

⁸ See Arkhiv Vneshney Politiki Rossiyskoy Impierii in Moscow (AVPRI), fond 170, op. 512/2, no. 52, Stoeckl to Karl Nesselrode, Washington, 10/22 Feb. 1855, fols 46v–47.

There is no doubt that Gurowski strengthened the US's interest in Russia as a geopolitical partner, consolidating the belief in its right to rule Eastern Europe, the Intermarium, and most of Eurasia. He provided geopolitical arguments for American political 'realists' as well as 'idealists', prompting them to accept 'Russia as it is', in the form of tsarist authoritarianism or the prophesied bloody Russian revolution as a brutal yet effective tool for universal progress. In particular, the idea of a global division of the spheres of influence at the price of giving Russia control over Central and Eastern Europe was to recur again and again in the United States, especially during the First and Second World Wars, in the Yalta era of 1945, as well as in the *détente* period, during the Cold War and even during successive diplomatic 'resets' with Russia in the twenty-first century.

Editor's note

The publication features fifteen documents from Russian archives (State Archive of the Russian Federation, GARF; Russian State Archive of Ancient Acts, RGADA), American archives (Library of Congress, LC), as well as excerpts from Gurowski's published political writings. The basis for the printed materials presented here is provided by the first editions of Gurowski's works, in the case of the letters – surviving manuscript versions from Russian and American archives. The archival sources used can be found in volume three of a selection of Gurowski's writings prepared for publication by the Count August Cieszkowski Foundation, a selection that will comprise memoirs, diaries, letters, as well as *inedita*.

In editing the documents, an attempt was made to maintain the original division into paragraphs and chapters as far as possible. In cases of doubt, the original wording of the text has been provided. Grammatical forms have been corrected in archival French sources, mainly letters, published in a translation based on manuscripts. In the case of original English texts published in Gurowski's time, an attempt was made to correct spelling errors, modernising the spelling and punctuation where possible. However, archaic grammatical forms as well as words characteristic of the period have been preserved.

Phrases that have been impossible to read and doubtful variants of words have been marked by footnotes. The critical apparatus in the form of substantive footnotes has been kept to a minimum. However, an attempt has been made to clarify, as much as possible, the circumstances in which the documents originated, the figures they contain, and their entanglement in the events of the day, which may be incomprehensible to the modern reader. An attempt has also been made to decipher references to matters that are clear only to Gurowski's generation, matters whose context has been blurred by the passage of time.

Each document is preceded by a number and a brief description of its contents and date. All documents are accompanied by information on the place of storage or origin, along with a detailed archive reference.

No. 1

8/21 February 1851, Cambridge, Mass. – Adam Gurowski's letter to Nicholas I, expressing Gurowski's views and will to further serve the tsar as well as the cause of pan-Slavism in America

21 March 1851

Sire,

The step I am about to take might be considered unheard of, were it not for the absolute confidence I have in this pure sense of justice that inspires Your Imperial Majesty.

Looking back on the best part of my life, spent until 1849 in the direct service of Your Majesty or in the service of the ideas which you have sanctified, I can proudly say that I have accomplished a difficult and painful journey with a selflessness that I have the right to say is unparalleled.

The current approach is no different. Deprived of all means, having to overcome countless material difficulties in the new life I must create for myself here, I find myself forced to recalculate my past like a merchant, learning, albeit late, that selflessness and self-denial are almost madness.

The most vigorous years of my life as well as my meagre material resources were devoted to the publication of a number of works on the interests and glory of Your Majesty and that of Russia. I did so with faith and deep conviction – without ulterior motives – at my own expense.

I do not touch upon the moral and scholarly aspects of my works. Great and almighty as you are, Sire, it is beyond even Your Majesty's power to do me justice and reward me.

The amount in the attached note, made out to Your Majesty, represents the calculation of manual labour of many years. The evaluation is based on the most ordinary rate for a labourer's time, and no particular person to whom I would have devoted so many years – with less ardour, and losses of all kinds suffered in this work; no particular person would [refuse] to settle this account. Any tribunal would recognise my rights, which are indisputable – that of Your Majesty, to which I appeal for the first time and submit the matter, would not refuse it.

Sire, this is not a reward that I dare hope to obtain. This is impossible by all accounts. It is a debt to be paid that I present to the sense of justice and fairness of Your Imperial Majesty.

He who, in all his writings without exception, was able to predict and outline the destiny of Russia, of Your empire to which the late King of Prussia,¹ the men who surround Your Imperial Majesty's throne; and men of knowledge, science

¹ The reference is to Frederick William III (1770–1840) from the House of Hohenzollern, King of Prussia from 1779.

and thought in all countries, have been obliged to render the above justice time and time again.²

He who has been able to predict the supreme thoughts of Your Majesty, and to draw Your supreme attention to government projects later sanctioned by Your Imperial will – all of which have proved to be beneficial.

That errant expatriate, Sire, proscribed by slander, outraged, and disillusioned in his most sacred beliefs by manual labour, is forced today to fight for his daily bread every day.

[...]

I have conveyed, to the best of my ability, the truth to Your Majesty's future historian. He will find an independent and impartial testimony [in my writings]. He will be able to discern that all good came exclusively from the highest reason and truly generous sentiments of Your Majesty – and that evil was the work of your advisers. He will be convinced of the justice of my assessment, in that their insignificance for any good did not qualify them to be mentioned alongside the name of Your Majesty.

My silence on them contains the secrets of my persecution and disgrace. [...]

And on the other hand, Sire, if my work *Civilisation and Russia* had been taken as the basis for the teaching of public law in Your Empire, as I suggested to Count Uvarov, at least two generations of Your young subjects would have less gloomy predictions for the future.

Sire, everything has been taken from me, but no one can take away the glory of having, as Your minister once said, lifted a corner of the veil covering the destiny of Russia, of having, so to speak, traced its path and greatness in advance, and of being the only one who for years has understood the great and providential mission of Your august reign.

If Your Majesty refuses to pay the attached note – or worse still, if the trusting man who delivers it is persecuted or harmed in his affairs for this reason, Your Majesty will not be any richer and I will gain further experience of the justice and fairness of men.

[...]

And now, Sir, I beg you, I implore you, do not personally set foot on German soil anywhere. Trust, Sire, this warning from a man whom Your Majesty cannot refuse to call a man of honour.

Your Imperial Majesty's most humble servant
Count Adam Gurowski

United States of America

Cambridge Mass., 8/21 February 1851.

Source: Gosudarstvennyi Archiv Rossiyskoy Federatsii (GARF), fond 109, expedition 1830, no. 448, part 320, fols 399–402v, original, manuscript, letter in French.

² Perhaps 'à maintes fois', meaning many times.

No. 2

6/19 October 1851, New York – Letter from Adam Gurowski to Nicholas I, forwarded through Prince Alexander Suvorov, outlining a vision of a great future and destiny facing Russia, and declaring his readiness to serve its mission

Sire,

Led by Your Imperial Majesty, Russia, with the year knocking at the door of time, is entering an era without precedent in terms of duration: in history, in the chronology of the empires of the world. It is entering this era initiated by You, Sire, as a glorious young nation: full of life and aspirations for a great future. It is beginning a new millennium there – where other states, without an existence of equal duration, seem to be sinking, aged and exhausted.

A new, immense destiny unheard of in the history of humanity lies ahead of Russia in this new arena. Infinity seems to be making way for her, lifting its impenetrable veil for her. She, in turn, calls upon and spurs into action the entire Slavic race, many branches of which have until now been seized by a heavy numbness. Thanks to Russia, a new world and a new creation are saving the entire race. A shining star burns on the horizon of history. Your great reign, Sire, was the fulfilment of one phase; be the initiator of another one! It closes and opens an entire new era. This alone would make it immortal.

He, whom wicked men have deprived of his homeland, separated from it today by an insurmountable abyss, he who was among the first to welcome, understand, and explain the greatness of your reign, Sire, and who found only petty but powerful persecutions. He who for fifteen years has been fed with humiliating defiance, and has drunk bitterness – that one, Sire, has forgotten all evil, calmed the heart-rending pains, and, as a Slav in the depths of his heart and soul, from the depths of a distant hemisphere, from the depths of unspeakable misfortune, dares to lay down – as a Slav and as a man – his warm congratulations at the august feet of Your Imperial Majesty.

Count Adam Gurowski

United States, New York
6/19 December 1851

Source: GARF, fonds 109, exp. 1830, no. 448, part 320, fols 410–411v, original, manuscript, letter in French.

No. 3

5/18 January 1854, New York – Letter from Adam Gurowski to Prince Alexei Orlov, head of the Third Section of His Imperial Majesty’s Own Chancellery (secret political police), inquiring about the possibility of returning to Russia

[^a]

Count,

Europe has entered a period of crisis: the whole world is arming itself against the holy cause of Slavs and Russia.

My ardent wishes and all the aspirations of my soul are with the interests of my great homeland. With its glory and, above all, with its dangers.

What would happen to me, Count, if, by the mercy of the Sovereign, I, a poor and lost fugitive, broken by age and misfortune, dared to return to Russia?

United States of America

5 Carole Place

New York

5/18 January 1854

Your Excellency’s most devoted servant

Count Adam Gurowski

To Count Orlov

Adjutant General of His Majesty etc., etc., etc.

Source: GARF, fond 109, exp. 1830, no. 448, part 320, fols 412–412v, original, manuscript, letter in French.

^a *Annotation by another hand in Russian: ‘ne otvechat’ [do not reply].*

No. 4

**1855 – Excerpts from the book *A Year of the War on the Crimean War*,
with the author arguing to the American public that Russia has
a right to its expansion**

[...] Russia is no apostle of constitutional institutions. no one supposed she is. But it was still Russia alone that procured for, and secured to the Principalities as well as Serbia, their privileges, their constitutions, with emancipation from Turkish misrule, and the abolition of serfdom in Moldavia and Wallachia. And Russia did this at a time when no one in Europe had any thought of ameliorating their condition. [...]

Since the fall of Napoleon, America, or rather the United States, on the sea, and Russia on the land, have formed the most serious obstacles to the realization of these ambitious English schemes. *Inde irae!*¹[...]

How very different are the relations between Russia and the United States.² No jealousy, no bone of contest whatever exists between them. Russia alone has no reason now, and never can have any, to interfere, or to envy the progress and the extension of the United States. Russia alone will sincerely hail the federation, if it absorbs the Gulf of Mexico, the Antilles, the Sandwich³ or Polynesian Islands, whether it reaches the line or the poles. As Russia will never attempt to step beyond the boundaries of the ancient Eastern Asiatic world, her relation with America for centuries to come, can only be that of a friendly intercourse. Russia will never attempt to transform the globe and its inmates into day-laborers for her account and benefit. Russia will never attempt herself, or aid others, to establish a balance of power on this hemisphere. [...]

[...] In relation to this right of neutrals, America for nearly a century has been going hand in hand with Russia, and she is still doing so. Russia was the first nation which asserted the rights of neutrals, and took measures to defend them. The mission, the duty of America is henceforth to protect and to emancipate general commerce, and to redeem the weaker nations from oppression.

[...] Very likely the wresting of the Crimea from Russia will prove an impossibility. The Crimea is by nature a part of Russia, as Florida⁴ is of the United States. If Sebastopol is a stronghold menacing Turkey, are not Portsmouth and Plymouth equally menacing to France, – Gibraltar⁵ and Malta⁶ to the borders

¹ Latin *Inde irae* – hence the anger!

² That is, unlike the relations between the USA and Britain.

³ Sandwich Islands, today Hawaii.

⁴ Florida was seized by Spain in 1513. In 1810 and 1813 its western part was incorporated into the USA. In 1819 all of Florida found itself within the USA, from 1821 as a territory, from 1845 as a state.

⁵ Gibraltar was given to Britain after the Peace of Utrecht of 1713. In 1830 it was granted the status of a British colony.

⁶ Malta – between 1530 and 1798 owned by the Knights of St John (Knights of Malta), occupied by the English from 1800; in 1815 it became a British domain.

of the Mediterranean, – and above all, are not Bermuda⁷ and other spots in the Antilles⁸ exclusively directed against the United States ?

[...] America and Russia now represent most strikingly the harmony of contrasts. America and Russia are progressive, albeit by an opposite method and by a different law. There exists no reason whatever why they should not stretch out their hands and mutually assist each other in working out their respective destinies, not only now, but for years and centuries. There lies nowhere between them a single bone of contention, and thousands and thousands of threads of interest extend between the two countries. [...]

A breach is made between England and Russia. The war will widen it, and whatever may be its result, peace will not heal it. England will be deprived of the monopoly of the Russian export trade, into the possession of which she quietly came more than a century ago. [...]

The American may teach and initiate the Russian in this great business. It was the interest of the English to maintain the Russians, in this respect, as far as possible in a state of dependence.

Russia's internal industry grows continually, without, however, being able to satisfy all the domestic demands and those of the immense and constantly increasing trade of Asia. Thus, American industry and enterprise can find a large market in Russia. She will increase her demand for raw cotton, and receive it hence direct in American vessels, and no longer at second-hand from Liverpool in English bottoms. The greater the prosperity of Russia, the larger must become the demand.

England, on the other hand, threatens America that she will emancipate herself before long from buying this important American staple. Railroads and canals will facilitate internal communication in the East India. Once this is done, cotton will easily be brought to the ports. Cotton can, and will be produced, and far cheaper than in this country. England stimulates the culture of cotton in Africa, as France does in Algeria⁹ – both with the wish to find there their supplies, and so cripple the wealth of this country. Russia alone can never become a large cotton producer.

The republican principles of the Americans do not oblige them to stiffen, fall back, and keep aloof from a friendly intercourse and interchange of mutual products with Russia. A wide and immense field will be thrown open to American activity, enterprise and intellectual productions. Engineers, mechanics, manufacturers, artisans, ship-builders, and ship-owners, will find in the wants and in the increasing demands of Russia, incalculable resources to promote, to nourish, and lucratively extend their diversified occupations. In one word, the relations between America and Russia, based on mutual advantage, will increase continually for the

⁷ Bermuda – islands in the Atlantic Ocean, under the administration of an English trading company from 1612, as a royal colony from 1684.

⁸ Antilles – islands in Central America, at that time belonging to Spain.

⁹ Algeria – dependent on Turkey from the sixteenth century. Conquered by France from 1830, it became its colony in the mid-nineteenth century and then its overseas department.

benefit of both countries; nature and reason do not protest against these countries extending to each other the hand of fellowship. [...]

Russia can stand all this. The coalition of Europe she can meet with the coalition of the Slavi and of the oppressed Eastern Christians. Beckoning them on sincerely, Russia will have the hearty aid of an armed brotherhood of hundreds of thousands rushing into the strife boiling with wrath, eager to avenge bloody wrongs accumulated for centuries.

Should she be driven to an extremity Russia must be prepared for the worst rather than lay down the sword. Should she lose Sebastopol, then, logically, Russia must sacrifice everything to take Constantinople, for her own future security. She ought not again to become exposed to having the Black Sea invaded, her cities and harbors destroyed, her shores devastated, her trade annihilated or injured. Her natural and necessary expansion ought not to be arrested. All the other states of Europe have made their final geographical outlines, and can extend no farther; Russia alone has still to complete her map, to reach her natural limits.

Death or life depends upon her mastering the great outlet; her great canal of respiration. That outlet is the Bosphorus. The prosperity of America would become endangered without the possession of the mouth of the Mississippi, and the command over the Gulf of Mexico. Would she suffer the presence of a powerful enemy there, ready to attack her navy, to injure her commerce in a thousand ways? The possession of Cuba is a necessity resulting from geographical position. 'Who has the house must possess the key', I once heard an American statesman (Crittenden)¹⁰ say, and every American feels its truth. The definitive possession of the Bosphorus is, perhaps, of much more consequence to Russia.

The spirit of war once let loose, Russia ought only to follow a Russian policy. Her interests are paramount to the interests of the West.

Neither Christianity nor the further progress and development of the human race can be promoted by the fall of Russia, or by her being crippled and weakened. The countries surrounding her, and over which she has extended or may extend her dominion, never were her superiors in culture or civilization. She introduced order where anarchy prevailed; to others she secured prosperity. This was the case with Finland, and above all with Poland, in the South with Bessarabia, the Crimea, and the Trans-Caucasian regions; this is the case in the immensities of Asia to the mouth of the Amoor, to the northern and Pacific shores. The existence, the strength of Russia, are one of the conditions and agencies of civilization. Take away the dominion of Russia, Poland will fall back into a state of traditional anarchy,

¹⁰ John Jordan Crittenden (1787–1863) – American politician, senator, member of the House of Representatives. Between 1817 and 1861 he served intermittently in the Senate. 1841 and 1850–1853 US Attorney General. 1848–1850 Governor of Kentucky. Successively – in the Wig Party, the American Party, the Know Nothing Party, the Constitutional Union Party. He took a conciliatory stance on the issue of slavery, in an attempt to preserve compromise and prevent conflict.

and become covered with rags. Bessarabia, the Crimea, cultivated now, will bristle with Bohemians, with unruly Tartars, with idlers, marauders and robbers. In Georgia blood will flow daily – Christian blood shed by Mohammedan invaders. Asia will again become a waste, a beehive of vagrants, killing and destroying each other. Instead of towns and villages, camps and wagons of nomads will cover her, weeds will grow on furrows now opened for cultivation.

Thus prepared and armed Russia meets the new year. Russia cannot fall! The genius of history, the future of a race, stands at her side. [...]

New York, January 1855.

Source: Adam Gurowski, *A Year of the War, by..., Citizen of the USA* (New York – London, 1855).

No. 5

1855 – Excerpts from the book *Russia as It Is*, portraying the Russia of Nicholas I and seeking to prove the historical mission of a democratic America and an autocratic Russia, as well as the need for them to work together for the good of humanity

[...] The present book aims to show how in the future, the Slavi may harmonize with the eternal laws of nature and the general destinies of mankind.

[...] The emancipation of Russia is an absolute condition of the emancipation of Europe, and thus of the future harmonious and progressive activity of the European or Christian world.

[...] Slavic race must participate more generally in the European movement than it does now, being represented there by partial and weak and insignificant branches. Without its adhesion, the universal wheelwork can never turn with ease and security. Russia alone cannot only facilitate but decide the peaceful union of the whole race.

[...] This social commotion will crush to atoms the artificial structure now pressing on the people; despotism, privilege, Czar and nobility will be overrun by the same destructive lava; and with them will disappear their accessories. Nothing will be done by halves, that mode being repulsive to the national character, and nowhere known in the history of Russia. [...]

Manifest Destiny¹

This Slavic and Russian colossus soldiers Northern and Central Asia with Europe; it is a channel to convey in the future, an easy, peaceable intercourse, furthering the final ends of civilization.

[...] Manifest Destiny of a Nation, a lift of the curtain veiling its future !

[...] The Russian people are now in this isolated position; if therefore a purer light is to beam over the West, and evoke there a new and fresh life, the Russians and Slavi must likewise be penetrated and warmed by its rays. It has become very common of late to compare the growth of America with that of Russia; to look for a similitude in their development and progress; and finally, to divide the future of the two hemispheres between these two ascending states.

[...] America is the light, and Russia the darkness; the one is life, the other inertia, depending on the will of one. Russia is saddled by despotism, that old

¹ *Divine Destiny* – also translated as *Manifest Destiny*, an idea justifying the expansion of the United States, its control over the lands between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, “the continent given to us by Providence”, as the historical destiny of Americans. From the 1840s onwards, it became an extremely popular idea. Formulated by the editor of *Democratic Review*, John L. O’Sullivan, who in 1845 sought to justify the United States’ right to take over Oregon in its conflict with Britain.

inheritance of the East and of heathenism; America initiates history and humanity into a new era which a century ago was looked on as an Utopia constructing a social order on the foundations of equality and liberty, realizing in a broad manner the sole principle of social truth. The one raises the broken-down, the degraded by oppression and misery, restoring to him the enjoyment of right and the dignity of man; the other, if she does not introduce slavery and serfdom in her conquests, subjects them to an all-crushing, all-levelling despotism; both being accursed twin brothers. In America real progress rules; in Russia there prevails a sham-imitation of progress.

[...] America's manifest destiny, as felt and proclaimed by her people, is to extend around her the reinvigorating institutions of which she is the focus; to teach and implant farther and farther the principle of self-government with the free and alone supreme action of law; in one word to continue the work of the emancipation of man, restoring him every where to his inborn rights and dignity.

[...] America should attract by the power of example, and, daily extending the gulf which separates her from the past, she should no more recur to, or use, violence and invasion as means of propaganda. If unprovoked, America ought for ever to renounce brutal force.

[...] Russia represents an ancient historical and social element, still prevailing in the territorial divisions, in the formation of states, in one word in the whole national economy of the old world; that is, as before stated, the element of race. Russia moves on the old track, and her destinies whatever they may be must run and be partly, at least, fulfilled under the pressure of the imperious laws of war like force. Slavic and Russian destinies point towards Asia, to the East. For their realization Russia will be obliged to appeal to the old law of force; but in her future relations with the West, Russia, emancipated from despotism, must contribute to fix the emancipation of Europe on a firm and civilized basis.

[...] The Slavi and the Russians are now in darkness, and under the freezing action of despotism and caste: but the nations of western Europe were for centuries troddon down by kings, priests and nobles, and how far even now are they emancipated?

[...] In Russia despotism is preparing, nay, facilitating the ways for a new era. The stronger the compression, the more vigorous will be the reaction, as in fountains the height of the jet is regulated by the volume and the pressure of the water.

[...] Having re-established the true balance in Europe, the Slavic and Russian current will undoubtedly turn towards Asia. There, in those vast spaces, is the immense field opening for their action. And no other nation or race can fulfil this mission.

[...] Very likely Czarism may fulfil this work. But Czar and Czarism are tools used by the genius of history, who will break and shatter them after their task shall have been done. In the foregoing drama the Czar, wrapped in his toga of despotism, is after all an agent of the national tendencies. He hews out the path

for the future, loading on his shoulders the malediction of the moment, and is thus the sin-offering of the nation.

[...] The conquest of Constantinople will be the satisfaction of an old and in the feelings not only of the Russians but of all the southern Slavi, of a pious covetousness.

[...] For Russia, for the present or any future Czar, the complication will really begin with the possession of Constantinople and its Turkish dependencies. The destinies of the nation, of Czarism, and of Europe, will then enter a new phasis.

[...] The annexation of Turkey, and the possession of Constantinople, will influence the destinies of the Russian people in a manner directly opposed to that in which it must affect the autocracy. Constantinople will become a mighty opening valve for Russia, a channel connecting and uniting her, really for the first time, with the European nations. A great mart will be opened, not only for the exchange of goods but likewise for that of ideas. Through Constantinople the Russian people will mix freely, not only with the few foreign merchants and speculators visiting or established in St. Petersburg, but with the world at large.

[...] The nation will thus rise to the level, feel the impulses, claim the advancing rights of civilized humanity, and share in the ebb and flow of the European social tide. Through this Hellespontic gate way the people shall enter the scene of the world, and no longer be represented there by the autocracy and its hire lings.

[...] It will become a galvanic spark, applied to the combustible and explosive elements, accumulated in Russia for centuries. Whatever may be the ambitious purpose of the Czars, and their hostility to the triumph of the principles of liberty and democracy, the enterprise set on foot against the world's welfare will turn against them. Emancipation and the destruction of autocracy will rise from the dreaded conflagration. [...]

New-York, March 1854

The Political Testament of Peter the Great²

Throwing a glance on the continual expanse of Russia, on all points of her extensive frontiers, witnessing the arrogant manner with which she comes forth

² Testament of Peter the Great – a record of Peter I's alleged political recommendations to his successors, circulated in copies and published in the early nineteenth century. Its authorship and origin have not been established. It was popularised for his own purposes by Napoleon and later by Polish émigrés in an attempt to warn Europe against Russian expansion plans. The man most often credited as its author was the Chevalier d'Eon (Charles de Beaumont), a diplomatic agent of Louis XV. The testament of Peter I was written down in fourteen points outlining the strategy of Russian expansion in Europe, a strategy allegedly recommended by this ruler.

in her recent attack on Turkey,³ considering the haughty attitude assumed by the Czar in the affairs of the world, one easily is inclined to perceive or to try to detect in this mounting tide of Russian ascendancy, deeply laid schemes for enslaving at least the ancient hemisphere. It is not only supposed, but positively asserted that this world-embracing activity is the fulfilment of a hereditary legacy inspiring and directing the wide-spread actions of one Czar after another.

Thus at present Russian horses quench their thirst in the Danube, Russia incites, as it is said, her nominal vassal the Khan of Persia,⁴ to attack Herat,⁵ and form a Russian vanguard towards Afghanistan, and in due time towards the British possessions. Russian steamers disturb the waters of the Lake Aral, navigate the Oxus⁶ and Jaxartes,⁷ and it is rumored that armed corps are ready to land towards Khiva,⁸ Bokhara,⁹ Khokand;¹⁰ Russian Engineers survey the table-land between Altai and Thibet, and raise forts along the skirts of the salt lakes of the grand steppe of Tartary;¹¹ Russian armed battalions and Cossacks gather along the frontier of China, menacing on the west the little Bucharia,¹² and Mantchouria¹³ on the northeast; Russian fleets begin to appear in the Pacific, and the flag with the two-headed eagle will soon make its appearance among the diplomats in the Sandwich Islands; Russian colonists and merchants navigate from Ochotsk,¹⁴ Kamtschatka or Sitka¹⁵ down to the shores of Japan, founding cities

³ This refers to the first phase of the Crimean War (1853–1856), during which Gurowski's book was written.

⁴ After its defeat in the 1826–1828 war with Russia, Persia was regarded as being effectively subordinated to Nicholas I. Its expansion towards Herat and Afghanistan was, therefore, often viewed as a pursuit of Russian policies.

⁵ This refers to Herat, a city and oasis in north-western Afghanistan, regarded as a geopolitical gate to India. Persia captured Herat only in 1856, which sparked a war with Britain that lasted until 1857.

⁶ Oxus (from Latin) – Amu Darya.

⁷ Jaxartes, the ancient Greek name of Syr Darya.

⁸ Khanate of Khiva – a Muslim state located on the Amu Darya River, subordinated to Russia in 1873.

⁹ Emirate of Bukhara, conquered by Russia in 1868, transformed into its protectorate.

¹⁰ Khanate of Khokand – a Muslim state in Central Asia, located in the fertile Fergana Valley. In 1865 it became a Russian protectorate. In 1876 the khanate was incorporated directly into Russia as the Fergana Oblast in the Turkestan Governorate-General.

¹¹ This refers to the intensification of Russian expansion in the steppe regions of the northern part of Central Asia, in today's Kazakhstan, threatening the British domain in India.

¹² Gurowski may have been referring to one of the Chinese provinces bordering Central Asia, East Turkestan or Kashgaria.

¹³ Manchuria – a historical region in north-eastern China; in 1644–1911 China was ruled by the Manchurian dynasty.

¹⁴ Okhotsk – a town and port on the sea of the same name, from the seventeenth century to the first half of the nineteenth century the main Russian port in the region.

¹⁵ Sitka – Alexander Baranov, a Russian merchant, coloniser, and governor of Alaska, established a fort here in 1799, as well as the city of Novoarkhangelsk, the capital of the Russian colonies

on the Ainos¹⁶ on the edge of the Mantchou-land. From the Euxine to the Pacific opposite to Yesso, extends an uninterrupted chain of armed vanguards, forerunners of a storm ready to hurl on the more conspicuous points of this immeasurable line. [...]

If there exist such a legatee, it is the whole nation. This we shall show. The Czars are only carrying out that which, rising upwards from the bottomless depth of national aspirations, becomes a fact by itself. The encroachments of Russia cannot be contested. But the movements of affairs around, play rather her game, clearing up the way to her ascendancy. If finally the nature of the source is to be ascertained, it is not an apocryphal and imaginary command, but deeper, larger, and inexhaustible, and thus more dangerous for the moment than any individual hereditary ambition. It runs powerfully through all strata of the nation. Men rising from nothingness have in the last 150 years embodied these ambitious incitements, and the sovereigns have acted under the national impulse. [...]

Source: *Russia as It Is*, by Count A. de Gurowski, New York, 1855.

in America, in 1804. After Alaska was sold to the United States in 1867, it became known as Sitka. Until 1906, the capital of Alaska.

¹⁶ Ainu – a people of the Paleo-Asiatic language group, living in that period on the island of Hokkaido in Japan, earlier also in southern Sakhalin, the Kuril Islands, north-eastern Honshu, and Kamchatka.

No. 6

**1858 – Report for the Russian journal *Vestnik Promyshlennosti*
on the prospects for cooperation in global trade between America
and Russia, which seek to meet on the Pacific coast**

On the large global market the United States and Russia have so far occupied almost the same place. Both these countries export primarily raw materials, raw produce, and a limited number of industrial products. We are saying all this with reference to Europe, for both Russia and the United States export some of their manufactured goods, the former to Asia, the latter to South America and China. [...]

With each passing year California is becoming increasingly important in the trade relations of Asian Russia, and the port of San Francisco is developing direct relations with the Amur estuary and the Russian domains on the American continent. As America's trade with Japan grows, that trade will move ever closer to the Amur. [...]

Siberia already has direct relations with the United States in the Californian port of San Francisco and has thus moved closer to the industrial world of Europe and America. In any case, since the US states on the Pacific Ocean, namely California, Oregon,¹ and Washington,² will remain agricultural and mining states for a long time, their relations with Siberia cannot be particularly advantageous to the latter. The Pacific Ocean railway,³ bringing the civilised world, that is Europe and the Atlantic coast of the United States, closer to the places that are still to be developed, where the land needs to be cleared, built up, that is the territories of south-eastern Siberia, by facilitating communication and transport, will indirectly have an impact on these countries as well. As the railway reaches the Pacific Ocean, St. Petersburg and Moscow will get closer to Kamchatka, the Sea of Okhotsk, and all the other places at the other end of the tsarist empire, that is, as we can say without much exaggeration, at the end of the world, much closer than they are now, with the internal transport lines. [...]

Source: *Vestnik Promyshlennosti*, no. 1 (1858), pp. 19, 37–38.

¹ Oregon – in 1790 and 1819 Spain and, between 1824 and 1825, Russia relinquished claims to the region to Britain and the US. In 1818 the two countries concluded a joint occupation agreement. In 1846 Oregon was divided between Britain and the United States. In 1848 the Oregon Territory was created within the US. In 1853 the Washington Territory was separated from it, and in 1859 the State of Oregon was created in the south-western part of the region.

² The Washington Territory – located in the north-western part of the US, on the Pacific Ocean, on the border with the Canadian province of Colombia, sectioned off from the Oregon Territory in 1853.

³ This is a reference to projects to build a railway line, the First Transcontinental Railroad, from the Atlantic Ocean to the Pacific Ocean. It was completed in 1869.

No. 7

**24 October 1858, New York – Letter from Adam Gurowski
to Alexander II, requesting financial assistance and providing
information about a work on Tsar Nicholas I and Poland
being prepared at the time**

[^a]

Sire,

The magnanimity of Your Imperial Majesty is my only refuge.

Sick, I am reduced to the most complete destitution.

I feel that, having lost the privilege of being Your subject, I have no right to appeal to Your Majesty's magnanimous soul.

But Sire, I have devoted 25 years and all my intellectual and other means to explaining Russia, always continuing to defend its honour and interests.

About 18 months ago the imperial minister in Washington gave me 100 ducats on the orders of Your Imperial Majesty.

I was filled with gratitude for this unexpected help. But Sire, during the terrible Crimean War, I spent several times that amount on various publications, produced in order to enlighten public opinion on Russia's rights, to neutralise and break down the then all-powerful influences of France, England, as well as Hungarian revolutionaries, and to exert pressure on the nation, the press, and the Government.

Subsequent events proved that my efforts and dedication were crowned with complete success. I brought the Confederacy back to the cause of Your Empire, while others reaped the rewards.

Love for Russia and for the sanctity of its cause were my only motivators.

The reign of Your Majesty's august predecessor belongs to the realm of history, which is best placed to pass impartial judgement, separating truth from the passions of the moment: each specific phase of this reign must be explained separately. To this end, I have spent several months writing a work presenting in a true light the broad and sincere policy pursued by Emperor Nicholas towards Poland, on which I have worked to some extent as well.

The manuscript has been sent to a publisher in Paris.¹

This conscientious work took up all my time, making it impossible to earn a living in any other way. As a day labourer, I devoted to it all my modest resources,

^a *Date in Russian in upper right corner: 13 November 1858. On the upper left margin information about the tsar's order to give Gurowski 100 'chervontsy' in gold, that is gold roubles.*

¹ The reference is to an unpublished historiosophical treatise entitled *Dix chapitres sur la Pologne depuis 1814–1849*, [Ten chapters on Poland from 1814–1849] devoted to Nicholas I's policy towards Poland. See Library of Congress (hereinafter: LC), Gurowski's Papers 1848–1898, box I.

already reduced to almost nothing by the effects of the latest crisis. These are, Sire, the reasons for my devotion. If I could arrive at the foot of Your Imperial throne, grace and justice would await me there.

I prostrate myself at the feet of Your Imperial Majesty.
Count Adam Gurowski

New York, United States
24 October 1858.

Source: GARF, fonds 109, exp. 1830, no. 448, part 320, fols 420–421v, original, manuscript, letter in French.

No. 8

**1859 – Report for the Russian journal *Vestnik Promyshlennosti*
on the Pacific as the meeting place of American
and Russian civilisations**

The large towns on the Pacific coast and facing Asia are now taking on an individual character. States that used to be frontier regions have now become independent states of the Federation. Following California during the last winter, a new state, Oregon, has been created,¹ next winter it will probably be Washington's turn, and then the entire Pacific coast owned by the Federation will be divided into three states.[...]

The Pacific coast within the Federation will serve American trade as a place for storing domestic manufactured products, colonial and other products, from where they will be transported to the Russian domains on the Amur. On both sides of the Pacific Ocean there are still virgin lands that need to be cultivated; they need to be transformed; they are areas of wilderness in need of population. As their products are nearly identical, it makes no sense to think about their direct exchange between these countries; they will compete in supplying agricultural products and construction wood to China, Japan, and other countries. The Americans, who will be supplying the Amur countries with raw materials and manufactured products, with machinery, tools, and other goods, are likely to take very little in return for raw materials, probably with the exception of furs and rawhides. The vast steppes of Tartary² are competing in this respect with the pampas³ of South America, but the trade balance of the American merchant will in this case be improved thanks to payment in gold. The development of agriculture in the states washed by the waters of the Pacific Ocean is faster than on the Amur. [...]

These lands on the Pacific may soon become the granary of the Amur and all of Siberia, and in this respect they will undoubtedly contribute to Siberia's relative, if not full, growth, because thanks to them the prices of flour and grain should fall significantly. The railway that is to cross the Federation from the Atlantic Ocean to the Pacific Ocean, together with lines to the north and south, will speed up transport; but even if time is gained by this, the cost of transporting goods by rail will still be higher for a long time to come than when they are transported by sea and across the Isthmus of Panama. That is why the belief here is that this railway would not have a simple and direct impact on trade with Asia in general and, consequently, trade with the Amur.

Source: *Vestnik Promyshlennosti*, no. 4 (1859), pp. 131–140.

¹ The State of Oregon was created on the territory bearing the same name in 1859.

² Tartary – a former name for the territories that once belong to the Mongol Empire.

³ Pampas – steppes with tall grass in South America, especially in Argentina and Chile.

No. 9**November 1861 – Letter from Adam Gurowski
to Senator Charles Sumner with a suggestion to issue
a passport to Mikhail Bakunin to travel to Canada**

Dear Senator,

We need to help Bakunin¹ without compromising ourselves. Please try to secretly obtain a passport to Canada for him from Seward, just to cross the border. From there, he can make arrangements with the English.

Good day
Gurowski

Monday

Source: Library of Congress (LC), Charles Sumner Correspondence (no pagination), original, manuscript, letter in French.

¹ Mikhail A. Bakunin (1814–1876) – Russian revolutionary, founder of anarchism. Sentenced to death and handed over to Russia during the Spring of Nations, imprisoned in the Petropavlovsk Fortress in 1851–1854. Exiled to Siberia, he escaped and through Japan, California, and Panama reached the East Coast, where he stayed from October till December 1861. He visited New York, Boston, and Cambridge, where he was welcomed by Gurowski's friends, radical republicans and abolitionists. Finally, in 1861 he joined Alexander Herzen in London to prepare another Slavic revolt, seeking to use for the purpose the Polish uprising of 1863. There is no evidence of a meeting between Bakunin and Gurowski in the US. In late 1860 and early 1861 Gurowski was already in Washington, although he often travelled from there, mainly to New York. The letter shows that Gurowski knew about Bakunin's visit and was involved in the efforts to enable him to travel to England. This sheds interesting light on the double game Gurowski was playing with the tsar and the Russian embassy, taking subsidies from it.

No. 10**[n.d.] – Letter from Adam Gurowski to Senator Charles Sumner
with a proposal to use his talents and knowledge of the press
to work for the Union in Europe**

If you have another opportunity, tell Seward that if he were to put the question of making use of me to the people at large, the people in the free states who know me, and even the press, would certainly vote in my favour. As for Gerald's fears, they are childish.

Please, think about me.

You know that I quite literally have nothing to live on. I am writing to you because I would not dare ask you [for money] or anyone else in the world without dying of shame.

I am not being [boastful?] to say that many others who are not as intellectually capable as I am and who could never be as useful as I am to the cause, especially in Europe, have friends, whereas I have none.

Gurowski

Charles Sumner

Source: Library of Congress (LC), Charles Sumner Correspondence (no pagination), original, manuscript, letter in French.

No. 11

1863 – Extracts from a diary kept by Adam Gurowski during the Civil War, published on an ongoing basis, in which he called for cooperation between America and Russia

[1863]

April 21. – England plays as false in Europe as she does here. England makes a noise about Poland, and after a few speeches will give up Poland. More than forty years of experience satisfied me about England's political honesty. In 1831, Englishmen made speeches, the Russian fought and finally overpowered us. England hates Russia as it hates this country, and fears them both. I hope a time will come when America and Russia joining hands will throttle that perfidious England. Were only Russia represented here in her tendencies, convictions and aspirations! What a brilliant, elevated, dominating position could have been that of a Russian diplomat here, during this civil war. England and France would have been always in his *ante-chambre*. [...]

September 11: New York. – Prince Gortschakoff's answer to the demonstration of lying, hypocritical, official diplomatic sympathies made in favor of the Poles by the cabinets of France, of England, and of Austria. The Gortschakoff notes¹ are masterpieces for their clear, quiet, but bold and decided exposition and argument, and in the records of diplomacy those notes will occupy the most prominent place. O, why cannot Mr. Seward learn from Gortschakoff how not to put gas in such weighty documents? Could Seward learn how to be earnest, precise and clear, without spread-eagleism? The greater and stronger a nation, the less empty phraseology is needed when one speaks in the nation's name. [...]

October 4. – The Russian fleet evokes an unparalleled enthusiasm in New York, and all over the country.² *Attrapez*³ treacherous England and France! The Russian Emperor, the Russian Statesman Gortschakoff, and the whole Russian people held steadfast and nobly to the North, to the cause of right and of freedom. Diplomatic bickerings here could not destroy the genuine sympathy between the two nations.

Source: A. Gurowski, *Diary from November 18, 1862, to October 18, 1863* (New York, 1864).

¹ Alexander Gorchakov, prince (1798–1883) – Russian politician and diplomat. 1856–1882 Minister of Foreign Affairs. He supported the Union as Russia's partner in the western hemisphere. The reference is to Gorchakov's reply to the powers' notes concerning the January Uprising.

² A reference to Russian squadrons arriving in New York in 1863. They were enthusiastically welcomed as a show of Russian support for the struggling Union, threatened by the prospect of intervention by European powers on the side of the Confederacy.

³ French *attrapez* – catch.

No. 12

**13 June 1863, Washington – Letter from Adam Gurowski
to Countess Antonina Bludov, expressing his willingness
to serve the idea of cooperation between America and Russia**

Countess,

Please kindly accept a tribute and warm and sincere congratulations of one who always takes the most grateful interest in the name of Bludov.¹ Please also graciously convey my regards to His Excellency the Count, your father,² and express my deepest respect.

Oh, how I wish I could think of the Russians and Russia with joy and tranquility! But the final stages of such a stormy, turbulent, broken existence are passing through a bloody conflagration, and here I am witnessing events that painfully tear at my soul, both in person and in my heart in Europe. Today, as an American, I still consider myself a devoted Russian; and so I abhor those who, in such a sad, ungrateful, and stupid manner, undermine, neutralise, and nullify the noble and generous intentions of a Sovereign whose name will shine in history, surrounded by an unparalleled and unprecedented halo.

In Europe, as here, France and England are treacherously stirring up the most vile passions, violent attempts of criminal conspirators. But I have not lost faith in providential and historical justice, so I firmly believe that Russia, like North America, despite the vicissitudes that these two homelands of mine are going through, will both emerge victorious, great, and strengthened. My adopted country is struggling under the spell that an evil genius seems to have cast on its destiny. The noblest efforts and the most sublime devotion of a people are neutralised and paralysed by the unprecedented incompetence and impotence of a leader whom chance and a whim of fate elevated to the highest position in the country.

This is the puzzle of all our disgraces and disasters. And as like attracts like, the advisers and military leaders who surround the President are of the same ilk as him.

¹ Dmitry Bludov, count (1785–1864) – Russian statesman, state activist, diplomat, writer, influential dignitary under Nicholas I and Alexander II. 1861–1864, head of the Committee of Ministers. 1862–1864, chair of the Council of State. During his exile in Russia, Gurowski was under Bludov's protection. After his death, Gurowski devoted a tribute to him, which he sent to his daughter, Antonina Bludov, with a request that it be published (it was not). See, Rossiyskiy Gosudarstvennyi Archiv Drevnikh Aktov (RGADA), fol. 1274, op. 1, no. 1950, fols 10–38, A. Gurowski, 'Hommes et caractères de mon temps (Extrait d'un ouvrage à être publié). Le comte Bludoff, Washington, États-Unis, octobre 1864' ['Men and Characters of My Time' (Extract from a forthcoming work). Count Bludoff, Washington, United States, October 1864']. Cf. copy of this sketch: LC, Gurowski's Papers.

² E.g. to Dmitry Bludov.

But even the fatal influence of an evil genius will come to an end. The spell will be broken and North America will crush its enemies from within, and then woe betide those who would attack Russia, the only government and nation that has shown this people genuine sympathy. Then, too, I hope that the august and great Sovereign who presides over the destiny of the Russian nation will find true representatives of his intentions for the American people.

Gurowski

Washington, 13 June 1863

Countess Antonina Bludov³

Source: Rossiyskiy Gosudarstvennyi Archiv Drevnikh Aktov (RGADA), fol. 1, opis' 1, no. 1950, fols 3–4v, manuscript, letter in French.

³ Countess Antonina Bludova (1813–1891) – lady-in-waiting to Alexandra Feodorovna, wife of Alexander II, daughter of an influential dignitary under Nicholas I, Dmitry Bludov, Gurowski's patron. She was known for her tendency towards exaltation and her fervent pan-Slavic feelings. Her well-known salon in St Petersburg brought together influential figures from the tsarist court, pan-Slavist intellectuals and Russian Slavophiles. In 1862, she became the patron of Margrave Aleksander Wielopolski. After the outbreak of the January Uprising, she expressed anti-Polish views in the spirit of Russian nationalism and pan-Slavism. She later became known for her philanthropic activities, supporting Orthodox institutions in the Lithuanian-Ruthenian lands that were to combat Polishness. Among others, as the founder of the Orthodox confraternity in Ostroh, associated with the Orthodox monastery in Pochaiv.

No. 13

**7/20 June 1863, Washington – Letter from Adam Gurowski
to Alexander II assuring him he was making efforts to influence
American public opinion in a spirit favourable to Russia,
and requesting financial assistance**

Sire,

Events are overwhelming me, and I have no one in the world but Your August Imperial Majesty to trust.

I am in the greatest misery, Sire, lend me, please, Your helping hand. I know that the state of affairs in Russia precludes any generosity in general, but I also know that the magnanimity of Your Imperial Majesty is inexhaustible.

Sire, if the truth were to reach the foot of Your throne, Your Imperial Majesty would find that, far from Russia, I have served and continue to serve with devotion the great interests of Your Empire, and that I have done so by sacrificing all my own interests. I dare to call upon the testimony of all Russians who visit America, as well as that of His Highness Prince Alexander Suvorov, Governor General of Saint Petersburg.

At this moment, with all my intellectual strength, I am fighting against the English and French influences and those of other European conspirators who have done everything in their power to mislead and poison the opinion of the American people and turn them in favour of those who, with sacrilegious hands, are setting fire to and destroying the country where I was born.

I am denying myself the necessities of life and sacrificing everything to influence the press, all-powerful in this country, as it is also in Europe.

Sire, hear my request; I can be more useful here than if I returned to Europe to fight the rebellion.

Sire,

I remain Your Imperial Majesty's most respectful, most obedient and most devoted servant

Count Adam Gurowski

Washington, 7/20 June 1863.

Source: GARF, fonds 109, exp. 1830, no. 448, part 320, fols 444–445, original, manuscript, letter in French.

No. 14

**15/28 March 1865 – Letter from Adam Gurowski to Alexander II
reiterating his recommendations on the policy of Russification
towards Poles and asking for help**

His Imperial Majesty
Alexander II

[^a]

Sire,

My entire family has been ruined by the terrible events in Poland. I, too, am penniless, I who have always remained loyal to Russia, and who, for this loyalty, have suffered every misfortune and every hardship.

And yet the misfortunes that are overwhelming Poland and are influencing Russia might perhaps have been avoided if my weak and faithful voice had not been stifled twice, in 1858 and 1861,¹ and if the advisers leading the Government of Your Imperial Majesty astray, if those advisers and their advice, had been set aside.

Sire, help me to live.

I remain Your Imperial Majesty's most loyal and most devoted servant

Count Adam Gurowski

Washington, USA
15/28 March 1865.

Source: GARF, fonds 109, exp. 1830, no. 448, part 320, fol. 465, original, manuscript, letter in French.

^a *Date of receipt in the upper margin: 5 April.*

¹ This is a reference to Gurowski's letters to Alexander II preserved in his police *dossier* at the GARF: a letter requesting financial assistance and information on a work on Tsar Nicholas I and Poland, in preparation at the time, New York, 24 October 1858; a letter sent by the tsar to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Prince Alexander Gorchakov, repeating the recommendations on the Russification of Poles, in view of the 'moral revolution' that had begun in Warsaw, Washington, 3 April 1861.

No. 15

**4 February 1866, Washington – Letter from Adam Gurowski
to Alexander II, with attached extract from his diaries
celebrating the liberation of the peasants in Russia**[^a]

Sire,

Your Imperial Majesty rules over men and events, and as a humble individual I should not dare to remind you of my existence.

But, broken by misfortune, age, and illness, and approaching the grave, I am determined to preserve my character and my opinions intact until the end. I am determined to prove that criticisms do not prevent me from recognising and speaking the truth.

It may be that my writings have come to the attention of Your Imperial Majesty, in a distorted form. Last year, a newspaper published in Warsaw attributed to me tendencies that made me appear perverse or foolish.

For the sake of my conscience as a man of honour and a writer, I dare to submit to Your Imperial Majesty a passage from a work I am in the process of publishing, a work on the recent events that have taken place in this country.

I prostrate myself at the feet of Your Imperial Majesty.

Count Adam Gurowski

Washington, United States

4 February 1866

Source: GARF, fonds 109, exp. 1830, no. 448, part 320, fols 482–483, original, manuscript, letter in French.

^a *Annotation in Russian in the right margin:* The Min[ister] deign[ed] to read it on 12 Feb[ruary].

Translated by Anna Kijak

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