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"Peter I's Testament": A Reassessment

For over a century scholars have been intrigued by one of history's most famous apocryphal works, the "Political Testament of Peter the Great."[1] The central theme—a warning of the danger Russia represents to all her neighbors —has always been a relevant topic for discussion. However, a satisfactory explanation of the document's genesis is yet to be given. One thing is clear: the "testament" is a forgery, an attempt to "frame" Peter I. But who is the culprit? The question has aroused the instincts of the detective in many historians and set them on the miscreant's trail.

Suspects were not lacking. Initially, circumstantial evidence pointed to Napoleon as the author or inspirer of the fabrication, since it was in 1812 in France that the first published version of this document appeared.[2] Soon, however, suspicion fell on C. L. Lesur, one of the emperor's propagandists and the author of the work which contained the published text. In 1912, on the centennial of the publication of the document, the matter took a sensational turn. A descendant of a late eighteenth-century Polish émigré revealed that his ancestor General Michał Sokolnicki presented to the French Directory in 1797 a memorandum which included a text almost identical to the one published by Lesur during Napoleon's campaign against Russia. This was enough to convince many historians that the case was solved and the author of the fabrication was unmasked.[3] However, in the opinion of other, notably Soviet, scholars an even better candidate was the Chevalier Charles d'Éon, a colorful and scandalous courtier of Louis XV.[4] The provocative memoirs of this con-

1. The most recent of the numerous articles on this subject are Erwin Oberländer, "Zur Wirkungsgeschichte historischer Fälschungen: Das 'Testament' Peters des Grossen," *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas*, 21 (1973): 46–60; Simon Blanc, "Histoire d'une phobie: Le *Testament de Pierre le Grand*," *Cahiers du monde russe et soviétique*, 9 (1968): 265–93; L. R. Lewitter, "The Apocryphal Testament of Peter the Great," *Polish Review*, 6 (1961): 27–44. The last article contains an English translation of the apocryphal testament.

2. Harry Bresslau, "Das Testament Peter's des Grossen," *Historische Zeitschrift*, 41 (1879): 385–409.

3. Michel Sokolnicki, "Le Testament de Pierre le Grand," *Revue des sciences politiques*, 27 (1912): 88–98. The original is found in Archives du Ministère des Affaires Étrangères (henceforth AMAE), Mémoires et documents, Russie, vol. 35, fols. 149–54.

4. Cf. Frédéric Gaillardet, *Mémoires du chevalier d'Éon* (Paris, 1836). The most

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troversial figure contained a document, dated 1757, which was remarkably similar to the documents of Sokolnicki and Lesur. Some scholars felt that this represented the first appearance of the famous Petrine apocrypha; others pointed out that since the version of d'Éon's memoirs containing the document appeared only in 1836, the presence of the apocryphal document could be explained as a post-Sokolnicki and Lesur interpolation by the editor of d'Éon's memoirs, Frédéric Gaillardet. Thus, at this point, the question of who fabricated the "testament" still remains unresolved.

To begin with, there has been some terminological confusion in posing the question. Although the use of the term "testament" is widespread, it is not justified. Neither Lesur nor Sokolnicki nor d'Éon ever used the word "testament." They referred instead to "plans," "secret memoirs," or "projects" which were formulated during Peter I's reign and were recommended to his successors as a means of facilitating Russian expansion. It was only in 1824 that a German translation of Lesur's text introduced the use of the word "testament."[5] This point is significant, because in analyzing the origins of the "testament," several historians have supposed that the apocryphal document appeared after Peter's death (1725). Such an assumption, as we shall see, is not valid. Another mistake has been to assume that a single person fabricated the document. Every time research produced a more likely candidate, the other "suspects" were discarded. Thus researchers often missed possible interrelationships among all those implicated in the fabrication. With these pitfalls in mind, we will now commence our search for the author of the notorious "plans and schemes of Peter the Great" by turning to the tsar's own times.

The Hungarian Prototype

In 1703 the Hungarians, led by Ferenc Rákóczi II, rebelled against their king and Holy Roman Emperor, Leopold I. The rebels rose in the defense of their ancient rights, which were threatened by the absolutist, centralizing policies of Vienna. France, the archenemy of the Habsburgs, was quick to offer diplomatic and financial aid to the Hungarians. But in the course of the protracted struggle it became evident that sizable military support was necessary as well. An obvious source of such aid was the Ottoman Porte, another bitter rival of the Habsburgs. Therefore, early in 1706, Rákóczi dispatched a mission to the Porte, led by János Pápai, who was later joined in Constanti-

erudite of the many Soviet articles supporting the authorship of d'Éon is E. N. Danilova, "Zaveshchanie Petra Velikogo," *Trudy Istoriko-arkhivnogo instituta*, 2 (1946): 203–70.

5. Oberländer, "Wirkungsgeschichte," p. 48, n. 9.

nople by a veteran Hungarian émigré and specialist in Ottoman affairs, Ferenc Horváth.[6]

In his instructions Rákóczi ordered his agents to establish contact with Baron Charles de Ferriol, the French ambassador to the Porte. The predominant French influence in Constantinople could be counted on to help the Hungarians present their case effectively and gain a favorable reception. Not all of the Hungarians' arguments were directed against Vienna; a good part of them were aimed against Muscovy, which was an old and tried ally of the Habsburgs. Pápai and Horváth were ordered to make every attempt to embroil the Ottomans in a war with the tsar.[7] Rákóczi's reasoning probably was that if a war between Moscow and the Porte should break out (and this seemed likely at the time), it would inevitably involve the Habsburgs and thus accrue to the advantage of the Hungarians.

Upon their arrival in Constantinople, the Hungarians found Ferriol to be most helpful. He not only arranged several audiences for them with the grand vizir, but even provided his own services, as well as those of the experienced Venetian ambassador, in formulating the Hungarians' case. However, although the Porte lent a willing and sympathetic ear to what Pápai and Horváth had to say, it did not give them the aid they requested. Nevertheless, both P. A. Tolstoy and Leopold von Talmann, the respective envoys of the tsar and the emperor at the Porte, were deeply troubled by the Hungarian mission. They were especially irritated by two memorials which Pápai and Horváth presented to the grand vizir, Ali Pasha. Talmann obtained copies of these documents and sent them to his government in Vienna. Unfortunately, only summaries of these memorials are available to us, but even they make it evident that the documents contained some of the germinal ideas which were to appear in the later Petrine apocrypha.[8] The major themes of the memorials are (1) the coordination, by means of a secret or "intimate" alliance, of the tsar's and the emperor's offensive strategy both in Europe and against the Ottoman Empire, (2) Muscovy's intention of establishing herself in the Orient and founding there, on the ruins of the Ottoman Empire, an "oriental-muscovite monarchy," and (3) the Muscovite intention of using the Porte's Orthodox subjects against the Ottomans. These are some of the points which would appear in all the later versions of Peter I's "plan."

6. For biographical information concerning János Pápai (d. 1740) and Ferenc Horváth (d. 1723) see *Ráday Pál iratai, 1703–1706*, 2 vols. (Budapest, 1955), 1:444, 447.

7. Ibid., p. 446.

8. The summary of Leopold von Talmann's report may be found in Eudoxiu Hurmuzaki, *Fragmente zur Geschichte der Rumänen*, 5 vols. (Bucharest, 1878–86), 3–5:23–24. The report was entitled "Due Memoriale presentati li 23 di Marzo et li 23 d'Aprile 1706 dagli Agenti del Conte Ragozzi, Papay ed Horvath, al Supremo Viziro; progiettati pero

A few years later, another Hungarian elaborated on the themes which his colleagues had expounded in Constantinople. In 1708 Rákóczi found it in his interest to develop better relations with Peter I. Therefore, in the spring of that year he sent one of his diplomats, a certain Máté Talaba, to serve as his resident at the tsar's court.[9] However, during his two years' stay at the Russian court, Talaba was not especially successful in his dealings with the Russians. It seems that the Russians were suspicious of the contacts he maintained with the French, and specifically with the Comte Pierre des Alleurs, a former adviser to Rákóczi and Louis XIV's representative to Charles XII of Sweden. In the early months of 1710 the nature of Talaba's relationship with des Alleurs became evident. At this time, the Russians accused Talaba of spying for the French, especially in matters dealing with the tsar's plans against the Porte.[10] Because of these difficulties, Talaba was forced to leave Moscow on April 16, 1710.

Immediately thereafter, the Hungarian secretly made his way to Bender, an Ottoman border fortress in Moldavia, where Charles XII and the remnants of his forces were recuperating after their disastrous defeat at Poltava. It just so happened that Talaba had brought with him a document, complete with maps, which, he maintained, outlined Peter I's projected course of action against the Ottoman Porte. The Swedish king, who had been trying for some time to have the Ottomans declare war on Russia, sent copies of this document to the Tatar khan and to the sultan as proof of the tsar's aggressive intentions. This action apparently had some effect, because several weeks after Talaba's arrival in Bender (November 1710), the Porte declared war on Russia. In the meantime, Talaba had boarded a French ship and sailed to Constantinople, and from there to France.

Unfortunately only a fragment of Talaba's document has survived.[11] But

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dall' Ambassador di Francia col Cavagliere Ruzzini." See also S. M. Solov'ev, *Istoriia Rossii s drevneishikh vremen*, 15 vols. (Moscow, 1959–66), 8:167.

9. There is very little biographical information available about this Transylvanian nobleman. For a brief sketch of his activities during the Bender period see Aladár Ballagi, *XII Károly és a svédek átvonulása Magyarországon, 1709–1715* (Budapest, 1922), p. 115. The text of Rákóczi's instructions to Talaba may be found in *Ráday Pál iratai*, 2:51.

10. Des Alleurs to Louis XIV, Jan. 24, 1711, AMAE, Correspondance politique, vol. 49. In the spring of 1711, Sutton, the British ambassador to the Porte, wrote: "the former [des Alleurs] made use of one Thalaba, a Hungarian, who had been Prince Ragoczy's Agent at the Court of Moscow, to carry on the work in Poland and Muscovy." Akdes Nimet Kurat, *The Despatches of Sir Robert Sutton*, in Royal Historical Society, Camden Third Series, vol. 78 (London, 1953), p. 47. Also see E. S. Tengberg, *Från Poltava till Bender: En Studie i Karl XII:s turkiska Politik, 1709–1713* (Lund, 1953), p. 114. For a detailed treatment of des Alleurs's contacts with the Hungarians see Béla Köpeczi, *La France et la Hongrie au début du XVIII^e siècle: Étude d'histoire des relations diplomatiques et d'histoire des idées* (Budapest, 1971).

11. This document (dated 1710) bears the title "Summa capita sua momenta quae

two other sources—one Ukrainian and the other Swedish—have preserved summaries of the original version.[12] The former, the diary of Pylyp Orlyk, also recounts the circumstances in which the document appeared. According to this diary, Talaba had obtained the plan from the tsar's archive "in some secret manner" and, upon arriving in Bender, sold it to Charles XII for 10,000 talers. Orlyk's summary of the original version reads as follows:

> the project, formulated at the Viennese court, accepted and approved by the deceased Tsar [Peter I], was initiated then [1710] and is now [1732] beginning to take effect. It stated, among other matters, some of which I have already forgotten, that, before the Tsar completed the war with Sweden, he should be gentle with the Turks, express his friendship toward them, and spare no expense to keep them from going to war with him. He should occupy the forts on the Polish-Moldavian border with his troops under the pretext of protecting them against the Swedes. Stores of provisions should be gathered there. Taganrog and Azov should be strengthened with a large garrison, and a fleet, as strong as possible, should be brought into the Black Sea. The Ukraine should be filled with as many troops as it will hold, and the Cossacks should be consoled with hopes of liberty. The Poles should be accommodated in every matter in order to keep [Russian] troops in Poland under the pretext of aiding in the war against Sweden. After this war, he [Peter I] should take a firm grip of the Cossacks, destroy their liberties, establish forts along the Dnieper in the Ukraine. If they, the Cossacks, try to resist, he should expel them from their habitations and dispatch them beyond the Volga. Meanwhile, the Ukraine should be settled by the Muscovites. At this point, having his troops on all sides, in the Ukraine and in Poland, he should advance by land and by sea against the Crimea. After its conquest, it will be easy to take Georgia and thus open the way to Constantinople and mount an attack on the Ottoman Empire from Europe and Asia.[13]

This summary clearly represents the prototype of the alleged projects of Peter I which were to appear later in the eighteenth century. Moreover, it introduces a device which was to become the hallmark of the later versions—the claim

N.N. aulae moscoviticae, per modum consilii de rebus ad portam hac tempestate agendis insinuaverat." It was published by A. O. Bodiansky in the *Chteniia v Imperatorskom obshchestve istorii i drevnostei rossiiskikh,* no. 1 (Moscow, 1847), p. 56.

12. This summary appears in a letter which Orlyk wrote to his son, Hryhor, in 1732 and in which he described events which had occurred in 1710. A copy of this letter may be found in Orlyk's diary "Diariusz podróżny . . . ," located in AMAE, Mémoires et documents, Pologne, vols. 7–11. For a discussion of this interesting and valuable source see Orest Subtelny, "From the Diary of Pylyp Orlyk," *Ukrains'kyi istoryk,* 8 (1971): 95–104. The much briefer Swedish summary appears in Johann von Kochen, *Kansli-dagbok från Turkiet till största delen förd, 1709–1714* (Lund, 1908), p. 45. This source is vol. 4 of the *Karolinska Krigares Dagböker,* edited by A. Quennerstedt.

13. AMAE, "Diariusz podróżny," vol. 11, fol. 351.

that Peter I had a concrete and systematic plan for expansion and that the purported document had been obtained "in some secret manner" from his archives. This element of sensationalism helped to make the apocryphal work effective as an anti-Russian propaganda tool and notorious in historical literature.

The question now arises whether the Pápai-Horváth memorials could have had a direct bearing on the appearance and content of Talaba's document. Perhaps the Hungarian resident in Moscow was acquainted with what his colleagues in Constantinople had written about the tsar four years earlier. Such an assumption appears warranted. Talaba must certainly have been aware of the intricacies of Russo-Hungarian affairs before leaving for Moscow in 1708. Moreover, in the person of des Alleurs there existed a "French connection" for the Hungarians. This energetic French diplomat was in contact with Talaba in Moscow, Horváth and Pápai in Constantinople, and Charles XII in Bender.[14] It must have been a simple matter for des Alleurs to remind Talaba of the precedent his colleagues had set in 1706; the Frenchman had a notorious reputation for spreading anti-Russian rumors and intrigues.[15] Under his influence Talaba could easily have come upon the idea of "discovering" the tsar's aggressive plans in no less than Peter I's own archives.

But why, in 1710, should the Hungarians and Talaba have cooperated so willingly with the French? On the whole, they had little to lose and something to gain. By the fall of 1710 Rákóczi's position was deteriorating. The rebellion was failing; relations with Peter I had cooled; and the tsar and the Habsburg emperor seemed to be more closely allied than ever.[16] The Hungarian leader was already thinking of a place to seek asylum. In such an event, French mediation would have been necessary and cooperation with the French advisable. This is not to say that Rákóczi had specifically sanctioned Talaba's actions; but then, neither did he have any reason to disapprove of them. On the other hand, Talaba had his own interests, besides those of his masters and the French, to consider. As an adherent of a losing cause, he faced a most uncertain future. If he were able to ingratiate himself with des Alleurs and enter French service, his dilemma could be solved. For "services rendered" Talaba not only received a lump sum from Charles XII but was also aided by the French in leaving Bender for Constantinople and finally for France, where he did in fact attempt to enter the service of Louis XIV.[17]

14. Comte des Alleurs (d. 1748) was appointed French ambassador to the Porte in 1711. He remained at this post until his death.

15. Cf. Kurat, *Despatches of Sir Robert Sutton*, p. 34; Solov'ev, *Istoriia Rossii*, 8:84; and A. V. Florovsky, *Ot Poltavy do Pruta* (Prague, 1971), p. 94.

16. Florovsky, *Ot Poltavy do Pruta*, pp. 55–56.

17. Things did not go well for Talaba in France. Shortly after his arrival and interrogation by French officials he became involved in some misdemeanor as a result of

It would be hazardous to assume that Talaba's document is a complete fabrication. It was generally known among both the friends and the enemies of the tsar that he wanted Russia to expand at the expense of the Ottomans. There were even projects of cooperation or alliance between Moscow and Vienna.[18] But even if Talaba had managed to obtain notes about these, or similar, "designs," they could not have been written in the self-incriminating tone which characterizes his version and later ones. The point of the apocryphal creations was primarily to stress the deviousness and the unbridled ambition of the tsar. This was the theme that later imitators of Talaba's device would play upon.

The Ukrainian Elaboration

A striking aspect of Talaba's document is the emphasis placed on the Ukrainian issue.[19] Although the Ukraine was certainly an important international problem in the years immediately before and after Poltava, it is curious that Orlyk's summary dwells on the Ukraine to the point of making it the main issue, though in the Swedish summary it is hardly mentioned. Let us look more closely at the reasons for this discrepancy.

First of all, who was Pylyp Orlyk? A scion of an old Czech family which had emigrated to Poland during the Hussite wars, Orlyk (whose mother was Orthodox) came to Kiev in the final years of the seventeenth century to study at the Mohyla Academy.[20] His quick wit and facile pen attracted the attention of Hetman Mazepa. Soon afterwards, Orlyk married into the Cossack *starshyna*-aristocracy and quickly rose to the rank of chancellor (*heneral'nyi pysar*) of the Zaporozhian Host. After Poltava he followed Mazepa and

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which he was rejected from French service and, in September 1712, asked to leave the country. Cf. *Fontes Rerum Austriacarum*, 17: *Actenstücke zur Geschichte Franz Rakoczy*, ed. Joseph Fiedler (Vienna, 1858), p. 617. According to Ballagi (*XII Károly*, p. 115), Talaba then returned to the Ottoman Empire and requested Charles XII's chancellor to obtain a pardon for him from the Viennese court. This proved difficult because the Viennese court bore Talaba a special grudge. At this point we lose sight of this interesting Hungarian émigré.

18. Solov'ev, *Istoriia Rossii*, 9:84. In 1707 Peter I informed Mazepa of his plans to conquer Tatar and Ottoman territories as soon as the war with the Swedes was over. See *Ukrains'kyi arkheografichnyi zbirnyk*, 3 (Kiev, 1930): 29. Similar references appear in Eudoxiu Hurmuzaki, ed., *Documente privitóre la istoria Românilor*, suppl. 1 (Bucharest, 1886), p. 365, and in Kurat, *Despatches of Sir Robert Sutton*, p. 48.

19. For a discussion of this question see Józef Feldman, *Polska a sprawa wschodnia, 1709–1714* (Cracow, 1928), passim, and the Harvard University dissertation by Orest Subtelny, "The Relations of Pylyp Orlyk with the Crimean Khanate and the Ottoman Porte, 1710–1742" (1973).

20. A thorough study of Orlyk's political career is Borys Krupnyts'ky's *Hetman Pylyp Orlyk, 1672–1742*, vol. 42 of *Pratsi Ukrains'koho naukovoho instituta* (Warsaw, 1934).

Charles XII into exile, and when the old and dispirited hetman died in September 1709, Orlyk, supported by Charles XII, was elected his successor in the spring of 1710. He immediately joined the Swedish king in the attempt to recoup the losses of Poltava.

In the fall of 1710, while Charles XII worked to induce the Porte to declare war on Russia, Orlyk, in conjunction with the Polish supporters of Stanisław Leszczyński and with the Crimean Tatars, was planning an invasion of the Ukraine. In preparation for this offensive (launched from Bender one month after Talaba's arrival), the hetman-in-exile conducted an intensive propaganda campaign against the Russians in the Ukraine. Numerous manifestoes were issued to the populace urging them to throw off the "Muscovite yoke." In this context, Talaba's materials were a windfall for Orlyk. With the approval of Charles XII, he secretly sent copies of these texts and maps to the Cossack officers who had remained loyal to Peter I.[21] But, in order to make Talaba's materials more relevant to his Ukrainian correspondents, Orlyk edited them, making the Ukraine appear to be the imminent and principal victim of the tsar's voracious designs.

Proof of Orlyk's editorial tampering lies in the arguments and terminology he interpolated in the Talaba version. The threat that Peter I intended to remove the Cossacks from the Ukraine and settle the land with Muscovites and other foreigners was an old Mazepist rumor.[22] Just before he abandoned the tsar, Mazepa spread this rumor among his officers to justify his future actions. The stationing of more Muscovite troops in the Ukraine (a point Orlyk's version stresses) was sure to irritate Ukrainians even if they were loyal to the tsar.[23] Finally, the surviving fragment of one of these copies contains the phrase, "Ukraine and the Ruthenian [Ukrainian] people together with the Zaporozhian Host on both sides of the Dnieper."[24] This terminology was used exclusively by the chancellery of the hetmanate; foreigners never referred to the Ukraine and to Ukrainians in these terms. These points demon-

21. Rumors that Ivan Skoropadsky, the man Peter I appointed to succeed Mazepa, was secretly corresponding with Orlyk were quite widespread in the Ukraine and in Moscow. The Russian authorities, however, did not make an issue of this matter for fear that it might cause the remainder of the Ukrainian Cossack *starshyna* to join Orlyk on the eve of the war with the Ottomans. Cf. Solov'ev, *Istoriia Rossii*, 8:588–89, and *Pis'ma i bumagi imperatora Petra Velikago* (Moscow, 1962), 11 (1711): 346. Twenty years later (December 21, 1731) Orlyk's son, Hryhor, informed the French government that in 1711, "Mon Père par une secrète correspondance, engage les Cosaques de l'Ucraine de se déclarer pour luy . . . ," AMAE, Pologne, vol. 180, fol. 391.

22. Orlyk recounted this incident, and many others which took place in the dramatic months before Mazepa's final decision, in a long letter to his former patron and mentor, Stefan Iavorsky, which was written from exile in Poland on June 5, 1721. Cf. *Osnova* (St. Petersburg), 10 (1862): 1–15.

23. Ibid. See also Bohdan Kentrschynskyj, "Propagandakriget i Ukraina, 1708–1709," *Karolinska Förbundets Årsbok* (Stockholm), 48 (1958): 81–125, passim.

24. *Chteniia*, p. 56.

strate how Talaba's original version was changed to suit the needs of the Mazepist émigrés.

Despite the efforts of Charles XII and Orlyk, and their Ottoman, Crimean, and French supporters, the effects of Poltava were not reversed. In 1714, after many vicissitudes, the Swedish king finally returned to Sweden, followed by Orlyk, his family, and a small group of Ukrainian émigrés. It is likely that the entire Talaba episode would have been forgotten if it had not been for these Ukrainian émigrés. For almost thirty years Orlyk continued to shower European statesmen with dire warnings of the Russian menace to Europe and Asia. In 1720 he elaborated on this theme by specifying how Peter intended to conquer Persia and the areas around the Caspian Sea.[25] This, according to Orlyk, would give the tsar complete control of the major East-West trade routes and allow Russia to play a dominant commercial role in Europe. Eventually, after being hounded by the tsar's agents everywhere he turned, the hetman-in-exile returned in 1721 to the Ottoman Empire, where he was forcibly detained for over twelve years.

Orlyk's views, however, continued to be heard in the courts of Europe, for his role as the harbinger of the Russian menace was assumed by his son, Hryhor.[26] In 1730, when France was preparing another attempt to put Leszczyński on the Polish throne, the young Hryhor Orlyk was recruited into French service on the recommendation of the Swedish ambassador to Warsaw, Count Gustav Zülich. The Swedish diplomat noted that the Orlyks might be useful in mobilizing the Zaporozhian Cossacks and the Crimean Tatars in a diversion against the Russians, who would surely oppose the election of Leszczyński.[27] In the fall of 1730, Hryhor was sent to France to explain how his father's anti-Russian plans could be put into effect. Hryhor's credentials for this role were impressive: as the son of an émigré Ukrainian hetman, the godson of Mazepa, and a protégé of Charles XII, he was a dedicated Russophobe. During the next two years, by special order of Louis XV, he was sent on several secret missions to the Porte and to the Crimean khan.[28] It was in

25. *Sbornik statei i materialov po istorii Iugo-zapadnoi Rossii izdavaemyi Kievskoi kommissiei dlia rozbora drevnikh aktov*, vol. 2 (Kiev, 1916), p. 60. In this letter Orlyk also argued that Russia could be weakened by exploiting the discontent among her Muslim subjects just as the tsar was doing with the Christian subjects of the Porte.

26. A somewhat romanticized biography of Hryhor Orlyk (1702–59) is available in an English translation from Ukrainian: Élie Borschak, *Hryhor Orlyk: France's Cossack General* (Toronto, 1956). The Ukrainian version appeared under the title *Velykyi Mazepynets' Hryhor Orlyk* (Lviv, 1932).

27. Included with Gustav Zülich's letter of recommendation was a short summary of Mazepa's and Orlyk's reasons for struggling against the tsar. See AMAE, Pologne, vol. 184, fols. 261–63.

28. For this mission Hryhor was given Louis XV's personal letter of recommendation. AMAE, Turquie, vol. 83, fol. 285.

preparation for these missions that his father informed Hryhor about Talaba's document.[29]

The second attempt of Leszczyński to maintain himself on the Polish throne failed in 1734–35 because of Russian opposition. With it, the last realistic chances of the Orlyks to make good their claims to the hetmancy in the Ukraine faded. However, for the next twenty-five years Hryhor Orlyk remained in French service, where he was employed in a series of schemes designed to thwart Russian expansion. Very often it was Hryhor himself who suggested such projects to the French Foreign Ministry, and nearly every one of his proposals echoed the ideas found in the Talaba document.[30] He constantly wrote about the dangerous cooperation of Vienna and St. Petersburg and about the Russian use of the Ukraine as a staging area for the conquest of Sweden, Poland, and the Ottoman Empire. Almost every one of the memorials which Hryhor presented to the French foreign ministers during the 1730s and 1740s repeated the idea that Russia was following a preconceived plan of expansion. For example, in 1742, when the Russians had just completed a war with the Ottomans and again turned their attention to the Baltic, Hryhor wrote: "The Tsarina [Anna Ivanovna] did not want to destroy her father's [Peter I's] work and return to Sweden those provinces which her father had acquired, because possession of them allows Russia to maintain a foothold in Europe, to have supremacy in the North, and to be the terror of the neighboring states. Moreover, the history of Russia proves that even in times when barbarism was at its height in Muscovy, many tsars, especially Ivan Vasilievich, always aimed to broaden their gains in the areas of the Baltic, Black, and Caspian Seas. Thus, Peter I was only carrying out what his ancestors projected."[31] In this case, the origins of Peter's "plans" were traced as far back as the time of Ivan IV.

Other memorials dwelt on themes which would appear later in the Sokolnicki and Lesur versions. For instance, Hryhor constantly discussed Russia's need to cooperate with the maritime powers, England and Holland, but only insofar as it suited her interests. Also, Russia's desire to be involved in the affairs of the German states was often stressed. Like his father, the younger Orlyk paid much attention to Russian ambitions in the East, particularly in

29. See note 12.

30. For example, see the series of memorials delivered by Hryhor to the French Foreign Ministry in the 1730s. AMAE, Pologne, vol. 180, fol. 292. Borschak first noted the similarities between the writings of Hryhor Orlyk and the later versions of the apocryphal "testament"; however, he did not delve into this matter more deeply. See his *Velykyi Mazepynets' Hryhor Orlyk*, and "Zapovit Petra Velykoho," *Ukraina* (Paris), no. 3 (1950), p. 179.

31. "Mémoire présenté au Ministre par le Comte d'Orlick . . . ," Apr. 5, 1742, AMAE, Mémoires et documents, Pologne, vol. 2, fol. 204.

Persia, and in 1746 he urged France to mediate between the Ottomans and Persians: "With common effort, they might force Russia back to her old boundaries, making it impossible for her to gain supremacy in the North and dominate in the East. If the Porte squanders this opportunity, then one day it may suffer from the evil consequences of Peter I's and Tsarina Anna's system which aims to expand both in Persia and in the Ottoman Empire."[32]

Is this not a link between the warnings of Pápai and Horváth regarding Peter's plans for a "muscovite-oriental monarchy" and similar themes in the later versions of Sokolnicki and Lesur? However, since the situation in the Ukraine was hopeless, Hryhor felt that the most effective and the most threatened bastion against Russian expansion was Poland. Although during his career Hryhor worked against Russia in almost all the major capitals between Stockholm and Constantinople, he constantly emphasized to his French superiors that he could be most effective in Poland. It was here, he argued, that France should concentrate her efforts to block Russian expansion. In his request to Foreign Minister Puysieulx, in 1749, for an assignment in Poland, Hryhor included this characteristic comment: "May I not boast in Poland that the wise minister whose foresight encompasses all possibilities has deigned to take my warnings into account. . . . May I not expect that there is [in France] a desire to prepare the simplest and most direct means for a goal which is worthy of such a great king as His Majesty [Louis XV], worthy of the glorious French nation, and worthy of her ministers' unparalleled wisdom —to end the arrogance of a state which wishes to dominate others. [France] would thus forestall the disastrous fate which she [Russia], as absolute ruler and arbiter, is preparing for her northern neighbors and maybe for all of Europe."[33]

Hryhor Orlyk died in 1759 on the battlefield, fighting as a lieutenant-general in the French army against the forces of Frederick of Prussia. Soon after his death the French Foreign Ministry impounded a major part of his and his father's surviving papers and kept them in its archives.[34] If this material were summarized, it would, in essence, be an exposition of almost every theme which appears in the later versions of Peter's "plans," "projects," or "testaments." Moreover, the Orlyk papers preserved the memory of Talaba's device—the discovery of such "plans," "in some secret manner" in the tsar's own archives. Thus the materials for the final version of this apocryphal work were certainly available and even elaborated by the middle of the eighteenth century. Now the questions arise: what proof is there that it became the basis

32. "Mémoire pour M. le de Puysieulx, Ministre et secrétaire d'état des affaires étrangères," ibid., fol. 221.

33. "Mémoire présenté par le Comte d'Orlick," ibid., fol. 258.

34. AMAE, Restitutions de correspondance, 1661–1806, fol. 222.

for the later versions, and who could have added the finishing touches to this famous fabrication?

The Final Franco-Polish Product

We have reached, both in geographical and chronological terms, the point where the search for the apocryphal Petrine plan usually commences—that is, France in the latter part of the eighteenth century. To be more exact, the focus of attention falls on the *secret du roi*, Louis XV's personal agency for the conduct of foreign affairs. This, in the words of a recent article, is "the context and epoch in which the content of Peter's 'testament' began to unravel."[35] The members of the *secret du roi*, among whom Hryhor Orlyk was one of the oldest and most experienced in East European affairs, were known for their anti-Russian tendencies. It is no wonder that Chevalier d'Éon, who was one of the younger members of this body of diplomats and agents, is implicated in the final formulation of the forgery.

There is, as we have noted, some debate concerning d'Éon's "authorship." Circumstantial evidence certainly indicates that the Chevalier was implicated in the formulation of some sort of anti-Russian tracts. He might have easily taken the work of his older colleague, Hryhor Orlyk, as an example of this type of activity. Furthermore, the Chevalier is known to have written about Peter I, and his private library contained books which could have served as models for political projects and testaments. Finally, in one of his memorials to the French Foreign Ministry, d'Éon himself discussed a "favorite plan of Peter I."[36] Thus it seems that d'Éon contributed in disseminating the tales about Peter's "plans." But since there is no original version of his anti-Russian tracts, we must reserve judgment about d'Éon's authorship of the final version of the Petrine "plan."

The "plan of Peter I" was a topic which also interested other members of the *secret du roi*. Its leading figure, the Comte de Broglie, wrote several times about the deceased tsar's plans to conquer his neighbors.[37] Another individual associated with this milieu was Claude-Carloman de Rulhière, author of a famous French history of Poland. Like his colleagues, Rulhière noted Peter's plan, but in his version it grew to encompass the conquest of India.[38] Perhaps

35. See Blanc, "Histoire d'une phobie," p. 277.

36. According to Lewitter, d'Éon's library contained an *Histoire de Pierre le Grand* in which there was a reference to a "favorite plan of Peter the Great." There were also books which could have served as models for spurious "political testaments," such as those referring to the "testaments" of Richelieu and Colbert. Lewitter, "The Apocryphal Testament," p. 38. This author, however, rejects d'Éon as a possible formulator of the "plan."

37. Blanc, "Histoire d'une phobie," p. 276.

38. Cf. Claude Rulhière, *Histoire de l'anarchie de Pologne*, 4 vols. (Paris, 1807), 1:106, 162.

it was Hryhor Orlyk's influence that made these Frenchmen so conscious of the Russian "menace," although such sophisticated diplomats did not need Hryhor's aid to realize the implications of Russian expansion. Nevertheless, there are concrete indications that the Orlyks found a receptive audience in the French Foreign Ministry on this subject.

We mentioned above that immediately after Hryhor's death (1759) the Ministry transported a large part of the Orlyk papers to its own archives. These papers, as various marginal notations indicate, were often thoroughly perused. Those passages in the papers dealing with Russia and her foreign relations seem to have been especially interesting to the readers. For instance, the passage in Hryhor's memorial about Peter I's fulfilling the plans of his ancestors was underlined several times by an eighteenth-century reader, and a note was made about the "ambitions of Russia."[39] Even more significant is the attention that a reader in the 1770s paid to the part of the elder Orlyk's diary which describes the Talaba episode. Judging from the glosses, this reader found the "anecdote sur Talaban" (apparently he had some trouble reading the Polish text) to be very interesting.[40] Many other indications reveal that in the final decades of the eighteenth century the Orlyk papers were assiduously studied by those who had access to the archives of the French Foreign Ministry. In fact, every Frenchman associated with the final formulation of Peter's "plan," d'Éon and Lesur included, had access to these archives.

How, then, does one deal with the fact that it was not a Frenchman but a Pole—General Michał Sokolnicki—whose name appears on the earliest undisputed text of the Petrine plan?[41] This final version was submitted in 1797 to the Directory when Sokolnicki, a veteran of the Kościuszko uprising (and subsequently prisoner of the Russians), came to Paris to seek French support for the formation of a Polish legion. Like Horváth and Pápai, Charles XII, and the Orlyks, Sokolnicki also prefaced his request for aid with a warning against the Russians. He warned of a "plan, or rather, an entire codex of ambitious projects, a whole book of arrogant instructions, born in the fiery imagination of Peter I."[42] And he too mentioned that his information was based on the insights gained from an "unusual opportunity" of perusing the tsarist archives, as well as on facts garnered while conversing with his comrades, notably Ignacy Potocki.[43] Most Western scholars believe that

39. AMAE, Mémoires et documents, Pologne, vol. 2, fol. 205.

40. Ibid., fol. 351. It is difficult to establish who the readers of these documents were. Notations in the margins of the "Diariusz podróżny" indicate that they corresponded with such French specialists in East European affairs as Breteuil and Le Clerc.

41. Michał Sokolnicki, *Generał Michał Sokolnicki, 1760–1815* (Cracow and Warsaw, 1912).

42. Ibid., p. 221.

43. Ibid., pp. 64, 221.

Sokolnicki's real source was his own fertile imagination.[44] But it was certainly not necessary for Sokolnicki to resort to his imagination when so many precedents for his "discovery" already existed. In addition, other sources of inspiration were available to this Polish émigré. They again lead us to the Orlyks.

Back in 1734 the Porte had finally released the elder Orlyk from detention and sent him to the Polish-Moldavian-Russian border to agitate against the Russians. In that same year, Russian officials complained to their superiors in St. Petersburg that Orlyk "continues to spread his intrigues and malicious allegations against our empire."[45] The old hetman-in-exile not only directed his "malicious allegations" into Russian territories, but he also shared them with an old colleague, the crown hetman of Poland, Józef Potocki. Orlyk urged this old veteran of the Bender days to beware of Russian designs, for these, according to the plans of Peter I, called for an occupation of a part of Poland.[46]

The aging Orlyk was not the sole agitator in Poland against the Russians; he was aided by his son-in-law, Andrzej Dzierżanowski. This Polish nobleman was an inveterate anti-Russian and an activist in the struggle to preserve Poland from foreign, mainly Russian, intervention.[47] It is very likely that in Poland he disseminated the same views and allegations as his in-laws did in other parts of Europe. There are, moreover, indications that at the end of the eighteenth century not only was Orlyk the object of general Polish interest but his views were probably known to Sokolnicki in particular. Sometime in the final years of the century, the French allowed a Polish scribe to make a copy of Orlyk's voluminous diary and send it back to Poland, where it was stored in the famous library of Adam Czartoryski in Puławy.[48] Sokolnicki himself was one of the most enthusiastic supporters of this library, for he not only visited it but was also very active in collecting materials for it in Western Europe.[49] Surely he must have read as fascinating an item as the Cossack hetman's diary, with its numerous copies of both of the Orlyks' memorials to

44. For example, see Lewitter, "The Apocryphal Testament," p. 48.

45. *Sbornik Russkago istoricheskago obshchestva*, 108 (1900): 134, 348. At this same time, calendars caricaturing the Russian Empire and its ministers were smuggled into the Ukraine. Kochubinsky assumed, correctly in our opinion, that Orlyk was implicated in their formulation. See Alexander Kochubinsky, *Graf A. I. Osterman i razdel Turtsii: Iz istorii vostochnago voprosa, 1735–1739* (Odessa, 1899), p. xxxvii.

46. Władysław Konopczyński, *Polska a Szwecja* (Warsaw, 1924), p. 141.

47. See *Polski Słownik Biograficzny*, vol. 6 (Cracow, 1948), pp. 155–56. Hryhor also informed the French of his cooperation with his brother-in-law against the Russians in Poland. For example, see AMAE, Mémoires et documents, Pologne, vol. 2, fol. 206.

48. This copy is at present in Cracow in the Biblioteka Czartoryskich, no. 1977. In 1830, Adam Czartoryski wished to have this copy published and had already obtained permission of the censor when the project was interrupted by the events of 1830–31. Cf. Subtelny, "From the Diary," p. 95.

49. Sokolnicki, *Sokolnicki*, pp. 202–3.

European statesmen. This would explain why, in the memoranda which Sokolnicki submitted to Napoleon in 1811, he stressed the possibility of an uprising by the Cossacks in the Ukraine which would be "une diversion importante."[50]

Several scholars have noted that the final version of the Petrine apocrypha was probably the result of a joint effort by Polish émigrés and French political cognoscenti. Since this legend was deeply rooted in both France and Poland, such a conclusion appears to be valid. One might also expect that the first published version would surface at a time when Poland had just suffered at the hands of Russia, and France was about to confront the colossus in the East. Whether it was, as Szymon Aszkenazy states, a French expatriate in Warsaw by the name of N. de Tombeur who in 1794 drafted the final version of the "plan"[51] or, as many believe, Sokolnicki who formulated the version later published by Lesur, Frenchmen and Poles had every reason to cooperate in warning Europe of the Russian "menace." It would certainly be satisfying to establish definitely the identity of the person who added the finishing touches to the "plan." This, however, we cannot do. But such an identification is not essential for the solution to the mystery of the "plan," since it would merely add one more name to the long list of those who, since Peter I's victory at Poltava, used the apocryphal tale as a vehicle for their foreboding about Russia.

In summary, we list here the four points which are the basis for a re-evaluation of the prevailing views about the origins and evolution of Peter I's "plan": (1) the roots of the document reach into the beginning, rather than the end, of the eighteenth century; (2) instead of viewing the "plan" as a product of individual creativeness, we should acknowledge an evolutionary explanation for its appearance; (3) not only was this apocryphal device used to sway public opinion during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, it was also employed to influence court politics during the eighteenth century; and (4) the recurrent warnings against Russian expansion during the eighteenth century reveal a pattern: whenever East European political émigrés (whether Hungarian, Ukrainian, or Polish) and members of the French Foreign Ministry met, the specter of the apocryphal "plan of Peter I" raised its head.

50. Ibid., pp. 399, 407. The originals of these memorials are in AMAE, Mémoires et documents, Russie, 1811–12.

51. Ibid., p. x.

APPENDIX

The following list is a summary of the points included in the final (Sokolnicki-Lesur) version of Peter I's apocryphal "plan," with indications of the points that also appeared in the Pápai-Horváth (P-H) and Talaba-Orlyk (T-O) texts:

1. The Russian nation must be kept on a war footing. Aggrandizement is Russia's primary goal. (P-H, T-O)

2. European specialists should be invited to Russia, but Russian ones should remain at home.

3. No opportunity should be lost to take part in the affairs of Europe, especially those of Germany.

4. Poland must be kept as weak as possible. Russia should maintain a presence in that country. (T-O)

5. Sweden should be provoked into a war which will allow Russia to take her territory. Denmark and Sweden should be kept at odds. (P-H, T-O)

6. Consorts of Russian princes should always be chosen in Germany, in order to consolidate Russian influence there.

7. A commercial alliance with England should be maintained, since it is useful for Russia's development.

8. Russia must continue to expand her borders—northward along the Baltic Sea and southward along the Black Sea. (P-H, T-O)

9. Russia should push ahead toward Constantinople, India, and Persia. Control of the major trade routes will make Russia independent of English gold. (P-H, T-O)

10. An intimate union should be established with Austria, but simultaneously her power should be undermined. (P-H, T-O)

11. Austria should be made to desire the expulsion of the Turks from Europe. Russia, however, should conquer Constantinople. (P-H, T-O)

12. Russia should become the ecclesiastical leader of the Orthodox. Their support will pave the way to universal sovereignty. (P-H, T-O)

13. After achieving the subjugation of Sweden, Persia, Poland, and Turkey and the consolidation of control over the Black and Baltic Seas, Russia should begin to play off France and Austria against each other by siding with one and then the other.

14. Should this tactic fail, at the proper moment Russia should attack Europe by launching naval offensives from the Baltic and Black Seas.