

University of East Anglia

**Crisis and Decline: The Radical Right Movement in the Russian Empire, 1900-1914**

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## **Abstract**

This thesis examines the radical right movement in the Russian Empire between 1900 and 1914. Eschewing an exclusively ‘high political’ focus, it considers the right-wing interaction with Russian society in what rightist activists widely considered to be an era of crisis. It examines the construction of social and political identities by rightists, and also their practical projects in what was part of a wider effort to renovate and transform Russia, and arrest what were perceived as negative developments in politics and society. In so doing, leaders and activists tested the effectiveness of a developing popular monarchist ideology in the age of mass politics, during and after the 1905 revolution.

Examining several major right-wing groups, the Russian Assembly, Russian Monarchist Party, Union of Russian Men, Union of Russian People, and Union of the Archangel Mikhail, this work presents an argument that rightists were becoming increasingly radical in the final years of the Russian Empire, as they enthusiastically engaged with the challenges presented in post-1905 Russia, yet were still drawing on conservative precepts. The creation of a populist appeal was part of a wider process of political mobilization on the part of rightists, yet the construction of both positive and negative images of the people was a complex process. This thesis considers right-wing engagement with diverse bases of social support; an attempt to create a broad based counter-revolutionary social movement. It contributes to an understanding of the right’s place in the wider context of social and political life in late imperial Russia, and examines the inter-action between ideology and practice. The ultimate implication of the rise of a spontaneous right-wing movement that developed away from the regime and even in conflict with it was to deepen the crisis of autocratic power in late imperial Russia.

## Table of Contents

Acknowledgements .....	i
Note on Transliteration, Dates and Translation .....	iii
List of Maps and Illustrations .....	iv
Abbreviations .....	v
Introduction .....	1
Part One: Rise .....	
<i>Chapter One</i> The Origins of the Russian Right.....	18
Nineteenth-Century Influences .....	19
The Russian Assembly .....	35
Towards Crisis: A New Time of Troubles .....	46
Part Two: Peak .....	
<i>Chapter Two</i> In Reaction to Revolution .....	58
The Development of Populist Nationalism .....	58
Violence and Radicalization.....	78
<i>Chapter Three</i> Across the Empire .....	93
Odessa: Violence and Militancy on the Imperial Periphery .....	93
Kiev: Right-Wing Interests and Criticism of the Status Quo .....	112
Astrakhan': The People's Monarchists and Right-Wing Populism .....	121
Part Three: Decline .....	
<i>Chapter Four</i> The Responses of the Authorities and Popular Mobilization.....	129
Rightists and the Authorities .....	130
Rituals, Symbols and Popular Mobilization.....	145
<i>Chapter Five</i> Russia Renewed – Right-Wing Visions of Civic Society .....	178
Cultural Campaigns .....	180
Education and Society .....	196
<i>Chapter Six</i> Towards Catastrophe – Internal Crises and Division.....	219
Schisms in the Right.....	221
People and Nation .....	232
The Beilis Affair.....	246
Conclusion.....	258
Appendices .....	268
Bibliography.....	271

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### **Note on Transliteration, Dates and Translation**

In transliterating Russian titles, quotations and names, I have used the Library of Congress system and have partially modified old-style orthography to conform to modern usage. Dates before February 1918 are given in accordance with the Julian calendar, thirteen days behind the Gregorian (Western) calendar in the twentieth century. Dates thereafter follow the Gregorian calendar.

I have transliterated names from the original Russian, with the exception of widely familiar figures, e.g., Nicholas II and Leo Tolstoy. Document titles have been transliterated in the footnotes, though I have translated all dates into English. With the exception of archival abbreviations, I have translated *tom* into volume, *kniga* into book, and *chast'* into part. All translations are my own unless stated otherwise.

## **List of Maps and Illustrations**

Figure 1 Pale of Settlement in the Russian Empire circa 1900.	<b>28</b>
Figure 2 Badge of the Russian Monarchist Party.      Error! Bookmark not defined.	
Figure 3 Badge of the Union of Russian People.	<b>60</b>
Figure 4 Map of central Odessa circa 1895.	<b>96</b>
Figure 5 Southwest region in the Russian Empire circa 1900.	<b>115</b>
Figure 6 Astrakhan in 1914.	<b>121</b>
Figure 7 Academists meet with Nicholas II.	<b>132</b>
Figure 8 An interior view of the Church in Memory of Russia's Sorrows, 1909.	<b>149</b>
Figure 9 Crowds gather in Moscow for Gringmut's funeral, 1 October 1907.	<b>151</b>
Figure 10 Gringmut's funeral procession, 1 October 1907.	<b>152</b>
Figure 11 Gringmut's monument unveiled in Mogilev, 25 April 1910.	<b>157</b>
Figure 12 Gringmut monument unveiled to crowds of monarchists, 30 April 1910.	<b>158</b>
Figure 13 Bessarabia in 1883.	<b>165</b>
Figure 14 Academists outside the Akkerman gymnasium, December-January 1911/1912.	<b>204</b>
Figure 15 Academists outside the Akkerman gymnasium, December-January 1911/1912.	<b>206</b>
Figure 16 Kadets and Jewish 'equal rights', January 1910.	<b>250</b>

## Abbreviations

### *i. Archives*

GARF	Gosudarstvennyi arkhiv Rossiiskoi Federatsii
RGADA	Rossiiskii gosudarstvennyi arkhiv drevnykh aktov
f.	fond (collection)
op.	opis' (inventory)
d.	delo (file)
ch.	chast' (part)
t.	tom (volume)
l., ll.	list, listy (folio, folios)
ob.	oborot (verso)

### *ii. Parties, organizations, departments*

APMP	Astrakhan' People's Monarchist Party
ARDURP	All-Russian Dubrovinist Union of Russian People
DHE	Double-Headed Eagle
DP	Departament politsii
MVD	Ministerstvo vnutrennykh del
OO	Osobyi otdel
RMP	Russian Monarchist Party
RSDWP	Russian Social Democratic Workers' Party
SMU	Southern Monarchist Union
SR	Socialist Revolutionaries
SRL	Soiuz russkikh liudei
SRN	Soiuz russkogo naroda
UAM	Union of the Archangel Mikhael
URM	Union of Russian Men
URP	Union of Russian People
URWM	Union of Russian Working Men

### *iii. Reference materials*

<i>CSIE</i>	Chernaia sotnia. Istoricheskaiia entsiklopediia
<i>RKE</i>	Russkii konservatizm. Entsiklopediia



## Introduction

In recent years, historical interest in Russia has shifted from how the revolutionaries gained power to why the regime, after centuries of rule, managed to lose it. The Russian autocracy collapsed swiftly in 1917, and all attempts to revive it afterwards met with failure.<sup>1</sup> Throughout the civil war period and beyond, the autocracy's supporters could not agree on the measures or indeed goals necessary for a potential revival of the Tsarist regime. Both before and after the revolutions of 1917, Russian conservatism was a broad, discordant and often unhappy church. Whilst conservatives agreed on the need to preserve the autocracy, they could not agree on the means by which to unite, and promote that goal. The future development of the autocracy haunted the policy-makers of the empire, in what were to be its final years. Whether Tsarist Russia was to become a state based on the rule of law and civil rights, or else a police state based on repression, was one question that especially vexed educated society.<sup>2</sup> However, the autocracy did not altogether lack support; many groups rose up to defend it in the face of the revolutionary challenge. This thesis is about one particular set of these defenders: the radical right movement that emerged in the last years of the Russian Empire.

The final years of tsarism saw a wave of crises unlike any that had been encountered before. The revolution of 1905 was a direct challenge to leaders and activists from the right, which saw in society's transformation the seeds of a new crisis. The right's political leaders, statesmen and their adherents opposed Russian modernity; they were obsessed with decline and the emergence of a new 'time of troubles', caused by foreign and domestic enemies, such as revolutionaries, Jews and bureaucrats. The resulting images of people and society were mixed: positive, in the case of the peasantry; compromised, like workers; and negative, regarding Russia's

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<sup>1</sup> For general works on Tsarist Russia, see R. Pipes, *Russia Under the Old Regime* (2<sup>nd</sup> edition, London, 1995); P. Waldron, *Governing Tsarist Russia* (Palgrave, 2007); D. C. B. Lieven, *Empire: The Russian Empire and its Rivals* (London, 2000).

<sup>2</sup> For an insightful discussion of this issue, see C. Read, 'In Search of Liberal Tsarism: The Historiography of Autocratic Decline', *Historical Journal*, 45, 1 (2001), pp. 195-210. Pipes saw the key years in the creation of a police state as 1880 and 1881. See Pipes, *Russia Under the Old Regime*, pp. 281-318.

Jews and national minorities. To counter such developments, rightists organized and mobilized, engaging with problems of mass politics following the 1905 revolution. These activities raise many questions. What did the right appear to be like to contemporary observers? Was right-wing ideology populist? Why were rightists able to mobilize elements of the Russian population? What were their drawbacks? Were any of these successes or failures inherent in the ideas or political culture of the right, or were they the result of tactical, ideological or practical problems? And what did these issues mean for the fate of late imperial Russia? This thesis addresses the creation of these social visions, and the development of an illiberal populist monarchism.<sup>3</sup>

This work is part of a live argument, as interest in the Russian right, and conservatism more generally, has grown exponentially in recent years. Much of the earliest serious work on Russian conservatism and the Russian right was carried out in the West. Some of the pioneering studies include Hans Rogger's exceptional studies on the Russian extreme right, including the Union of Russian People (URP),<sup>4</sup> and Robert Edelman's work on the Nationalist Party.<sup>5</sup> Heinz-Dietrich Löwe's monograph on the 'reactionary utopia' was a particularly searching analysis of Russian anti-Semitism.<sup>6</sup> More recently, a monograph by Don C. Rawson examined the activity of rightists during the revolution of 1905, and particularly in elections to

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<sup>3</sup> Social history of the right has frequently been overlooked in favour of political and bureaucratic perspectives. For two assessments of the lacunae in the historiography, see S. K. Morrissey, 'Review of D. C. Rawson, *Russian Rightists and the Revolution of 1905*', *Russian History*, 24, 3 (1997), pp. 350-351; I. V. Narskii, 'The Right-Wing Parties: Historiographical Limitations and Perspectives', *Kritika*, 5, 1 (2004), pp. 179-184.

<sup>4</sup> H. Rogger, 'Was There a Russian Fascism? The Union of Russian People', *Journal of Modern History*, 36, 4 (1964), pp. 398-415; 'The Formation of the Russian Right, 1900-1906', *California Slavic Studies*, 3 (1964), pp. 66-94; 'Russia', in E. J. Weber and H. Rogger (eds.), *The European Right: A Historical Profile* (Berkeley, 1966), pp. 443-500; the first two of which have been reprinted in Rogger's *Jewish Policies and Right-Wing Politics in Imperial Russia* (London, 1986), pp. 118-211 and pp. 212-232.

<sup>5</sup> R. Edelman, *Gentry Politics on the Eve of the Revolution: The Nationalist Party, 1907-1917* (New Brunswick, 1980); 'The Elections to the Third Duma: The Roots of the Nationalist Party', in L. H. Haimson (ed.), *The Politics of Rural Russia, 1905-1914* (Bloomington, 1979), pp. 94-122.

<sup>6</sup> H.-D. Löwe, *Antisemitismus und reaktionäre Utopie: Russ. Konservatismus im Kampf gegen d. Wandel von Staat u. Gesellschaft, 1890-1917* (Hamburg, 1978); *The Tsars and the Jews: Reform, Reaction and Anti-Semitism in Imperial Russia, 1772-1917* (Oxford, 1992); see also his 'Political Symbols and Rituals of the Russian Radical Right, 1900-1914', *Slavonic and East European Review*, 76, 3 (1998), pp. 441-466.

the First and Second Dumas.<sup>7</sup> An excellent recent work by Faith Hillis focusing on the issue of Russian nationalism and the highly important Ukrainian question does necessarily include analysis of several rightist groups, such as the Double-Headed Eagle in Kiev, and of course many nationalist groups, one of which was the Kiev Club of Russian Nationalists.<sup>8</sup> One recent thesis has examined the issue of corruption amongst the extreme right – or ‘black hundred’ groups.<sup>9</sup>

But it is in Russia itself where there is now the most intense interest. Since 1991 historians, freed from the ideological constraints of Soviet scholarship, have examined a wide range of right-leaning ideologies, from liberal conservatives through to the Russian extreme right. This has resulted in scores of monographs, many published document collections, the establishment of a journal called *Russian Conservatism*, creation of websites, and convening of a number of conferences for the study of the phenomena.<sup>10</sup> There has even been the establishment of a research centre in Perm for the history of Russian conservatism.<sup>11</sup> Different types of conservative ideologies as well as different periods have been recently engaged with.<sup>12</sup> To highlight a few examples, some of the most notable contributions are the

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<sup>7</sup> D. C. Rawson, *Russian Rightists and the Revolution of 1905* (Cambridge, 1995).

<sup>8</sup> F. Hillis, *Children of Rus’: Right-Bank Ukraine and the Invention of a Russian Nation* (Ithaca, NY, 2013).

<sup>9</sup> J. Langer, ‘Corruption and the Counterrevolution: The Rise and Fall of the Black Hundred’ (Ph.D. diss., Duke University, 2007).

<sup>10</sup> Several of the proceeds from such conferences have been released as edited collections. Two are Iu. I. Kir’ianov (ed.), *Konservatizm v sovremennom mire: materialy mezhdunarodnoi nauchnoi konferentsii, Perm. 27-28 May 1993* (Perm, 1994); P. Iu. Rakhshmir (ed.), *Konservatizm i tsivilizatsionnye vyzovy sovremennosti: materialy mezhdunarodnoi nauchno-prakticheskoi konferentsii, Perm. 29 February-1 March 2000* (Perm, 2000).

<sup>11</sup> Recent republications of the works of conservatives and monarchists give an idea of the trend. The series, *Paths of Russian Imperial Consciousness (Puti russkogo imperskogo soznaniia)*, edited by M. B. Smolin, includes works by Lev Tikhomirov, Petr Kazanskii, Mikhail Men’shikov and others.

<sup>12</sup> On the nineteenth century, see V. Ia. Grosul (ed.), *Russkii konservatizm XIX stoletia: ideologiia i praktika* (Moscow, 2000). For comprehensive overviews of recent Russian scholarship, see A. Iu. Minakov, ‘Russian Conservatism in Contemporary Russian Historiography: New Approaches and Research Trends’, and A. V. Repnikov, ‘The Contemporary Historiography of Russian Conservatism’, *Russian Studies in History*, 48, 2 (2009), pp. 8-28 and pp. 29-55. A recent article translated into English is A. I. Bokhanov, ‘Hopeless Symbiosis: Power and Right-Wing Radicalism at the Beginning of the Twentieth Century’, in A. Geifman (ed.), *Russia Under the Last Tsar: Opposition and Subversion, 1894-1917* (Oxford, 1999), pp. 199-213.

monographs by Iu. I. Kir'ianov that examine the right-wing parties.<sup>13</sup> Kir'ianov was also active in publishing many collections of documents on the right that have appeared in several scholarly journals.<sup>14</sup> The work of Mikhail Luk'ianov has assessed the approach of different types of conservatives to renewing Russia.<sup>15</sup> Similarly, Aleksandr Repnikov's recent work considers conservative approaches to issues of religion, nationality and economics.<sup>16</sup> The proliferation of such studies reflects a revival of public interest in Russia's national heritage, and how a nation imagines (and re-imagines) its own history, especially those elements that were hidden from view for many years.<sup>17</sup> Such questions also have a contemporary resonance by fitting in with the educational projects of the Putin regime.

This recent wave of scholarship, however, invites fresh challenges. Whilst Russian conservatism and rightist movements have now attracted much attention, several aspects remain poorly understood. One of the main problems, even concerning high quality contributions, is a tendency to equate more moderate conservatives with right-wing thinkers, statesmen and groups that held very different views.<sup>18</sup> One example is a recent encyclopedia on Russian conservatism, which includes figures that were to many intents and purposes polar opposites. Entries on Russia's first Prime Minister, Sergei Witte, and the leader of the URP, Aleksandr Dubrovin, are both included in this volume.<sup>19</sup> Both men claimed to support the

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<sup>13</sup> Iu. I. Kir'ianov, *Pravye partii v Rossii, 1911-1917* (Moscow, 2001); *Russkoe sobranie: 1900-1917* (Moscow, 2003).

<sup>14</sup> The most significant of which is *Pravye partii. Dokumenty i materialy*, 2 Vols. (Moscow, 1998). Several other collections appear in the journals *Voprosy istorii* (Questions of History) and *Istoricheskii arkhiv* (Historical Archive).

<sup>15</sup> See in particular the work of Mikhail Luk'ianov (sometimes appearing as Loukianov in English-language publications), which considers broader conceptual issues such as support for the monarchy and views of the national question. M. N. Luk'ianov, *Rossiiskii konservatizm i reforma, 1907-1914* (2<sup>nd</sup> edition, Stuttgart, 2006); "Conservatives and "Renewed Russia," 1907-1914', *Slavic Review*, 61, 4 (2002), pp. 762-786; "Russian for Russians" or "Russia for Russian Subjects"? Conservatives and the Nationality Question on the Eve of World War One', *Russian Studies in History*, 46, 4 (2008), pp. 77-92.

<sup>16</sup> A. V. Repnikov, *Konservativnye kontseptsii pereustroistva Rossii* (Moscow, 2007).

<sup>17</sup> Reflecting this interest, during my own research for this thesis in Moscow, there were two stalls displaying titles from the 'history of Russian conservatism' in the Russian State Library.

<sup>18</sup> For an example of this debate, see M. Loukianov and M. Suslov, 'Defenders of the Motherland or Defenders of the Autocracy?' *Kritika*, 13, 1 (2012), pp. 217-231.

<sup>19</sup> V. V. Shelokhaev (ed.), *Russkii konservatizm serediny XVIII-nachala XX veka. Entsiklopediia* (hereafter *RKE*) (Moscow, 2010), pp. 158-164 and pp. 90-93.

autocracy, and yet the latter's organization carried out an assassination attempt on the former, such was their hatred of Witte – seen by these extreme right-wingers as a liberal, not a conservative.<sup>20</sup> Richard Pipes' straightforward definition that Russian conservatives were those who supported the autocracy obscures as much as it clarifies, for a large number of different groups and statesmen did so; those loyal to the regime such as Witte, and some increasingly unlikely fellow travellers.<sup>21</sup>

Among these were the extreme right that also supported the autocracy. These have sometimes been described as 'black hundreds' in the scholarship, and some called themselves this at the time.<sup>22</sup> Yet elsewhere during 1906, large numbers of the Kadets (Constitutional Democratic Party, formed in 1905) came to accept the principle of a constitutional monarchy, shedding their earlier radicalism. By Pipes' definition, there were conservatives amongst the Kadets, but many on Russia's extreme right totally opposed this group.<sup>23</sup> An entirely separate issue with some, by no means all, recent scholarship is the level of political engagement. Certain contributions are openly polemical, whilst others are more tacit attempts at the rehabilitation of figures now re-imagined as heroes to some observers.<sup>24</sup> These arguments show that one of the initial problems in the study of both Russian conservatism and the right is how to define such tendencies.

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<sup>20</sup> For more on this attempted assassination, see I. Lauchlan, 'The accidental terrorist: Okhrana connections to the extreme-right and the attempt to assassinate Sergei Witte in 1907', *Revolutionary Russia*, 14, 2 (2001), pp. 1-32.

<sup>21</sup> R. Pipes, *Russian Conservatism and its Critics: A Study in Political Culture* (New Haven, CT, 2005), p. 184.

<sup>22</sup> See S. A. Stepanov, *Chernaia sotnia v Rossii. 1905-1914 gg.* (Moscow, 1992); and revised edition (Moscow, 2005). In early Soviet-era scholarship, 'black hundreds' meant the combat arms of the far right, mostly the 'fighting brotherhoods' of the URP. However, it should be noted that this appellation is no longer used exclusively as a pejorative label, and recent work has used it to describe a much wider set of right-wing interests.

<sup>23</sup> For work on the Kadets see V. V. Shelokhaev, *Kadety–glavnaia partiia liberal'noi burzhuazii v bor'be s revoliutsiei, 1905-1907 gg.* (Moscow, 1988); S. Galai, *The Liberation Movement in Russia, 1900-1905* (Cambridge, 1973).

<sup>24</sup> I am not the first to note such trends. Gary Hamburg writes how 'the cross-fertilization of scholarship and current politics has yielded predictably mixed results: politically salient scholarship of high calibre, dubious scholarship in the service of the latest political fad, self-serving political preening, and disreputable politics in search of academic legitimation'. G. M. Hamburg, 'The Revival of Russian Conservatism', *Kritika*, 6, 1 (2005), p. 121.

*What was 'the right'? What is 'rightist'?*

Russian rightists have been characterized as many things by a range of authors and observers with a wide variety of viewpoints, some of whom are openly politically engaged, others less so, in Russia, the West and elsewhere. What they represented has proved controversial. Authoritarians, nationalists, defenders of law and order, conservatives, monarchists, reactionaries, radicals, prophets, protectors, fascists, proto-fascists, revolutionaries, both for *and* against the status quo are just some of the labels applied to this diverse and dynamic tendency that emerged in the earliest years of the new century.<sup>25</sup> Therefore, is it appropriate to use terms such as 'rightist' and 'conservative' as synonyms? Many agree, either implicitly or explicitly, that the Russian right in the late imperial era was somehow different to older conservative forces, but the precise nature of the difference between old and new right has often been imperfectly sketched, and usually absent from studies that examine fascism and conservatism in European or even global perspective.<sup>26</sup> A contribution from Bertram D. Wolfe captures this complexity. During the revolution of 1905:

...the reaction began to organize extra-legal armed forces as shock troops for the impending struggle, forces that were the precursors of the secret military groupings, the Blackshirts, Brownshirts, and Storm Troopers of Italy and Germany in the twenties. Under the banner of Holy Russia was gathered together a most unholy and variegated band...To the familiar compound of rabid nationalism and national antipathies and social demagogy was added the peculiar component of the Orthodox religious banners and the deep susceptibility to legendary rumour of an illiterate and credulous people...<sup>27</sup>

Wolfe describes the similarity of the right to later fascism, though adding that the peculiar social conditions present in the Russian Empire were crucial to

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<sup>25</sup> The URP is mentioned in one overview of fascism in world history, described as 'authoritarian nationalists' moving in the direction of later fascisms. S. G. Payne, *A History of Fascism, 1914-1945* (London, 1995), p. 69.

<sup>26</sup> See M. Blinkhorn (ed.), *Fascists and Conservatives* (London, 1990). Russia has often been excluded from a pan-European perspective on the relationship between the traditional and radical right, and, tellingly, this volume does not include an essay on Russia.

<sup>27</sup> B. D. Wolfe, *Three Who Made a Revolution*, Vol. 1 (2<sup>nd</sup> edition, New York, 1964), pp. 407-408.

understanding the movement. Historians have often described nineteenth-century Russia as the most backward major power. Did its right-wing movement reflect this; was it modern, was it reactionary, or did it contain elements of both?<sup>28</sup> The unique estate structure of the Russian Empire makes comparisons with Western Europe problematic; consequently, the ‘Russian fascism’ appellation may be inaccurate. Moreover, to search for a one or two sentence working definition of the Russian right fulfilling a set number of factors, in much the same way that many scholars have looked for a ‘fascist minimum’ may eventually prove to be a futile exercise.<sup>29</sup> Yet to speak of a ‘right’ is far from meaningless, as in certain parties and groups there was a collective aggregate of features that represented ‘right-wing’ ideas and action, and were interpreted as such by observers.<sup>30</sup>

The main features of these associations were: an idea of the supremacy of Russian religion, the Russian people and the Russian nation, or ‘great Russian’ chauvinism; a desire for a mass basis, structured around a wide variety of social groups, including working-class and peasant support; spoken or direct opposition, to a greater or lesser extent, to parliament and politics, including that of the Tsarist regime’s attempts to create new legislative institutions, such as the State Duma (parliament); a pronounced sense of pessimism and dissatisfaction with the status quo; and appeals to and more infrequently use of violence. This is not to suggest that all of these essential features were active at the same time, or that all members of a particular group believed in them. Rather, it is to state that such features were part of the group’s rationale and action, and many members believed in them. Five of the most significant groups that showed these principles, in chronological order of establishment, were: the Russian Assembly (*Russkoe sobranie*); the Russian Monarchist Party (*Russkaia monarkhicheskaia partiia*); the Union of Russian Men (*Soiuz russkikh liudei*); the Union of Russian People (*Soiuz russkogo naroda*); and the Union of Archangel Mikhail (*Russkii narodnyi soiuz imeni Mikhaila*

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<sup>28</sup> See J. Herf, *Reactionary Modernism: Technology, Culture, and Politics in Weimar and the Third Reich* (Cambridge, 1984), pp. 12-17.

<sup>29</sup> See for example R. O. Paxton, *The Anatomy of Fascism* (London, 2004), pp. 14, 120, 206.

<sup>30</sup> Rogger, ‘Was There a Russian Fascism?’ pp. 398-400; see also R. Griffin, *The Nature of Fascism* (New York, 1991), pp. 1-19.

*Arkhangela*). Many smaller groups appeared across the empire during and after 1905 that copied such principles.<sup>31</sup>

But do such features distinguish a ‘right’ from other ‘conservatives’? Certainly all Russian conservatives supported the Uvarov triad of Orthodoxy, autocracy and nationality in different ways, and many felt pessimistic about Russia’s present and future, though generally less so about its past.<sup>32</sup> But this set of features clarifies some key differences. Others who saw themselves as Tsarists, including a number of Kadets and the Octobrists, did not share the right’s pronounced opposition to politics, parliament and in particular the State Duma.<sup>33</sup> Social differences distinguished the rightists from interest groups such as the United Nobility, which also proclaimed support for the Uvarov triad and had many ideological similarities with the extremist URP. However, this group was by its own self-definition not aiming to create a mass basis for support, and instead operated more narrowly as a pressure group, hoping to influence the Tsar by directly communicating with him.<sup>34</sup>

Less clear are the distinctions between rightists and the myriad of other nationalist groups, which sat on the boundary between more moderate conservatives and the far right. The Nationalist Party (or All-Russian National Union) created in the spring of 1909 was a socially elitist group, using populist ideas in a different way to existing right-wing associations such as the Union of Russian Men (URM) or URP. But it did include similar elements, such as an appeal to ‘true Russians’ and the supremacy of Russian Orthodoxy, and was also attracted to the problem of mass politics, being deeply involved in political activity, in Kiev and elsewhere.

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<sup>31</sup> An extensive list of these smaller groups can be found in Iu. I. Kir’ianov (ed.), *Pravye partii. Dokumenty i materialy*, Vol. 1 (Moscow, 1998), pp. 6-7.

<sup>32</sup> An interesting work on pessimism is E. Newstad, ‘Components of Pessimism in Russian Conservative Thought, 1881-1905’, (Ph.D diss., University of Oklahoma, 1991).

<sup>33</sup> D. B. Pavlov, ‘The Union of October 17’, in Geifman (ed.), *Russia Under the Last Tsar*, pp. 179-198.

<sup>34</sup> On the United Nobility, see G. A. Hosking and R. T. Manning, ‘What was the United Nobility?’ in L. H. Haimson (ed.), *The Politics of Rural Russia, 1905-14* (Bloomington, 1979), pp. 142-183; much useful material can be found in A. P. Korelin (ed.), *Ob”edinennoe dvorianstvo: s”ezdy upolnomochennykh gubernskikh dvorianskikh obshchestv*. 3 Vols. (Moscow, 2001).



Additionally, members of the Nationalists and right-wing groups often worked and communicated with each other.<sup>35</sup> The offshoots of the Nationalist Party, one of which was the Kiev Club of Russian Nationalists, a group that also lacked the social demagoguery of the URP, developed ideas at least as extreme as any from the rightist fraction.<sup>36</sup> The nationalists, like the radical right, anchored their appeal in an idea of an established order, and its values and aspirations.

However, the differences between the groups were based on more than just social demagoguery and populism. The Nationalist Party, like the Kiev Club of Russian Nationalists and the United Nobility, may have been conservatives or even reactionaries, but they were not counter-revolutionaries. They did not seek to exploit social tensions to the same extent as the URP and later versions of the Russian Assembly; they did not have the same level of attraction to social dynamism, or a vision of unity across horizontal class divides. This reflected the different social bases of the nationalists and the ‘new’ right. A central event distinguishing the two tendencies was the revolution of 1905: consider that the URP appeared late in this year, whereas the Nationalist Party only in 1909. The former was established primarily to fight revolution: counter-revolutionary struggle, not a vision of social conservatism, was at the heart of this association. The revolutionary experience was central not only to the URP, but to all other major right-wing parties.<sup>37</sup> Therefore, in accordance with the parlance of contemporary observers, and taking into account the temporal and practical distinctions between the groups, this analysis will consider the rightists separately from the nationalists. However, given that there were strong similarities as well as contrasts between rightists and nationalists, the thesis will make reference to the Nationalist Party when appropriate.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> For discussion of the Nationalist Party, see D. A. Kotsiubinskii, *Russkii natsionalizm v nachale XX stoletiiia. Rozhdenie i gibel' ideologii vserossiiskogo natsional'nogo soiuzna* (Moscow, 2001).

<sup>36</sup> For an assessment of the Kiev Club of Russian Nationalists, see Hillis, *Children of Rus'*, pp. 217-230.

<sup>37</sup> On the distinction between conservatives, reactionaries and counter-revolutionaries, see E. Weber, ‘Revolution, Counter-revolution, What Revolution?’ in W. Laqueur (ed.), *Fascism: A Reader's Guide* (Harmondsworth, 1976), p. 499.

<sup>38</sup> The overlap is reflected by the sometime inclusion of the Nationalist Party and its offshoots in scholarship that explicitly addresses ‘right-wing’ parties. Susanne Hohler’s article on ‘radical right civil society’ includes the Kiev Club of Russian Nationalists, unlike Kir’ianov’s work. See S. Hohler,

### *Approach of the project*

This thesis considers a primary problem in the study of the right to be one of society and social factors, rather than clear distinctions between ‘left’ and ‘right’ politics. The estate (*soslovie*) system was evolving towards recognizable class divides in the West European sense in late nineteenth-century Russia, but this process was uncertain and imprecise.<sup>39</sup> An emerging theme for the right was class struggle; this work will add to the current understanding of the rightist phenomenon by highlighting the nature of its social radicalism in reaction to a series of emerging crises, rather than the problems of party formation or activity in the State Duma, both of which have already been covered in great detail.<sup>40</sup> Assessing a social crisis as perceived by rightists has wider implications for the understanding of the movement; it fed into almost every aspect of their wider political and cultural activity. Examining the practical activity of rightists, their crafting of a popular appeal, and implications for the lived experience of everyday life can show elements of the rightist presence not previously considered. Though they agreed on the necessity of the Uvarov triad, like the autocracy, an intransigent rejection of Russian modernity developed. Themes such as anti-Semitism, hatred of the ‘other’, and class struggle mutually reinforced one another.<sup>41</sup>

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‘Radical Right Civil Society’, in F. Fischer von Weikersthal et al. (eds.), *The Russian Revolution of 1905 in Transcultural Perspective: Identities, Peripheries, and the Flow of Ideas* (Bloomington, IN, 2013), pp. 93-104; and Kir’ianov, *Pravye partii v Rossii*.

<sup>39</sup> An excellent analysis of why ‘class’ and ‘estate’ cannot be (quite) treated as synonyms is in G. Freeze, ‘The *Soslovie* (Estate) Paradigm and Russian Social History’, *American Historical Review*, 91, 1 (1986), pp. 11-36.

<sup>40</sup> For overviews of the right’s activity in the State Duma, see Rawson, *Russian Rightists*, pp. 152-224; and also A. Levin, *The Third Duma, Election and Profile* (London, 1973); A. Ia. Avrekh, *Stolypin i tret’iia Duma* (Moscow, 1968); *Tsarizm v IV Duma, 1912-1914 gg.* (Moscow, 1981); V. S. Diakin, *Samoderzhavie, burzhuaziia i dvorianstvo v 1907-1911 gg.* (Leningrad, 1978); *Burzhuaziia, dvoriantsvo i tsarizm v 1911-1914 gg.* (Leningrad, 1988); G. A. Hosking, *The Russian Constitutional Experiment: Government and Duma, 1907-1914* (Cambridge, 1973); A. A. Ivanov, *Poslednie zashchitniki monarkhii: fraktsiia pravyykh IV gosudarstvennoi dumy v gody pervoi mirovoi voiny (1914-fevral’ 1917)* (St. Petersburg, 2006); Z. Vydra, *Život za Cara? Krajní pravice v předrevolučním Rusku* (Prague, 2010), pp. 357-424.

<sup>41</sup> Rogger, ‘Was There a Russian Fascism?’ pp. 412-414.

However, despite the unpleasantness and ideological banality of much right-wing discourse, we need to consider that rightists were not just fantasists, but reacted to real social and political conditions in Russian society, politics and culture, although they twisted these developments to increasingly divisive, bizarre and often negative ends.<sup>42</sup> Rightists were faced with a paradoxical challenge: to preserve the autocracy, and yet show that they were members of an independent movement, generating their own avenues of popular support in an era of mass politics.<sup>43</sup> Could rightists agree on a shared goal? What means were acceptable to defend the autocracy? Should the right always be loyal to the monarchy or, in instances of disagreement, could it become an increasingly spontaneous movement? Could monarchism become a viable ideology in the late imperial period, supported by the use of political parties, newspapers, and backed by the masses?<sup>44</sup> Such questions would vex the movement throughout its existence.

A key feature distinguishing extremists from moderates on all parts of the political spectrum was the question of violence and also terrorist activity.<sup>45</sup> For instance, though all the Socialist Revolutionaries (SRs) wished for revolution, there were deep divisions within the group over the efficacy and indeed desirability of the use of terror. The Popular Socialist faction was opposed by the SR maximalists: activists from the latter group declared that politically motivated violence was an acceptable means to reach the same revolutionary ends.<sup>46</sup> Disputes on whether violence could be used to achieve social and political change were also common on

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<sup>42</sup> Much as in the same way that anti-Semites, in Russia and elsewhere, twisted existing social conditions to fit their own extreme and exaggerated views. See A. S. Lindemann, *The Jew Accused: Three Anti-Semitic Affairs. Dreyfus, Beilis, Frank, 1894-1915* (Cambridge, 1991), pp. 8-9.

<sup>43</sup> Generally, it was agreed upon by right-wingers that Uvarov was an acceptable starting point. See a report in the Kadet newspaper *Vestnik narodnoi svobody*, 17 August 1906, 23-24, cols. 1379-1380.

<sup>44</sup> Congresses from the right frequently met to debate such issues, as seen in a report of a 1906 rightist congress in Moscow, *Vestnik narodnoi svobody*, 26 October 1906, 33-34, col. 1767.

<sup>45</sup> An enlightening recent discussion can be found in S. K. Morrissey, 'The "Apparel of Innocence": Toward a Moral Economy of Terrorism in Late Imperial Russia', *Journal of Modern History*, 84, 3 (2012), pp. 607-642.

<sup>46</sup> On the SRs, see A. Geifman, *Thou Shalt Kill: Revolutionary Terrorism in Russia, 1894-1917* (Princeton, 1993), pp. 45-83; M. Hildermeier, *Die Sozialrevolutionaere Partei Russlands: Agrarsozialismus und Modernisierung im Zarenreich (1900-1914)* (Cologne, 1978), pp. 35-57.

the right.<sup>47</sup> Though the aims were different, the basic question was the same; did the ends justify the means? Vladimir Gringmut, the leader of the Russian Monarchist Party (RMP) from 1905 to 1907, publicly disowned such tactics, but many URP activists openly committed violence. Yet both groups were united by profound dissatisfaction with the status quo and a desire to enact a counter-revolution. The problem of violence was more than an academic debate: it shows in a broader sense how central violence was to rightist ideas and action, and not only in the most extreme factions.<sup>48</sup> Therefore, this study will emphasize the problem of violence in rightist political culture.<sup>49</sup>

Reflecting ideology and practice, this study will generally eschew the use of the term ‘conservative’ and instead describe the main subjects as rightist, right-wing, monarchist, the Russian term for right, *pravye*, or the ‘black hundreds’, whilst recognizing that the difference between ‘old’ and ‘new’ right was not clear cut in many instances. Indeed, there were pronounced limits to the radicalism of the new right. Unlike later fascists, right-wingers did not desire to fundamentally change the long-established ethos and structure of Russian governance. Quite the reverse; they often yearned for its fortification. This is not to deny that there were profound and myriad differences between several right-wing associations; as will be seen, rightists often disagreed with each other as vehemently as they did with their left and liberal rivals, which in itself had no small effect on the successes and failures of the movement. To show this, the study will examine not only high politics and the pronouncements of leaders on the right, but what activists and those on the ground said and felt, and will consider the formation of individual and group identities within the right.

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<sup>47</sup> In particular, the Russian Assembly was less prone to launch an appeal for violent struggle than the URP or URM. Whether a large proportion of the Assembly’s members committed acts of violence is not entirely clear. However, some of the most important members of the group, such as Pavel Krushevan, did appeal to violence, and struggle against the revolutionary foe was indeed part of the ideology of some, though by no means all, of the group’s members. Krushevan’s role in instigating the Kishinev pogrom of 1903 is recounted in S. D. Urusov, *Memoirs of a Russian Governor* (London, 1908), pp. 45-49.

<sup>48</sup> Morrissey, ‘Review of D. C. Rawson’, pp. 350-351.

<sup>49</sup> Some recent work has played down the role of the right in actually committing violence. See I. V. Omel’ianchuk, *Chernosotnoe dvizhenie v Rossiiskoi imperii, 1901-1914* (Kiev, 2007), pp. 570-621.

### *The significance of the Russian right*

The Russian right was no minor trend, and study of the right can shed light on central aspects of politics and society in the late imperial period.<sup>50</sup> Firstly, there are numbers to consider; the right was at one stage a very sizeable presence. It grew from the small-scale cultural groups that initially comprised the movement around 1900-1901, to several hundred groups with many thousands of members after 1905. Whilst the right eventually declined in influence, it did not die out quickly after the revolution of 1905, but survived as a substantial and increasingly independent force into a later period. This was long after its revolutionary opponents had been suppressed by the autocracy.

Study of the right also sheds light on the fragility of the autocracy. The right presented a challenge not just to the revolutionary left, but more crucially, to the regime that it claimed to support. The presence of a large, spontaneous right was an obvious problem for the policy makers who ruled Russia, as well as the revolutionary challenge. Could such a phenomenon be a reliable supporter for the autocracy that it claimed to defend? Rightists had the ability to impede the policy-making process of the regime, as seen in 1911 by the arguments between conservatives and rightists over the Western borderlands crisis.<sup>51</sup> More widely, a large and independent right divided the possible base of public support for the autocracy, far outside of the ruling elites. Could one be in favour of an organization like the URP, and yet still, in principle, of the Tsarist status quo?<sup>52</sup> Whether the right could be relied upon to shore up the uncertain public support of the autocracy after 1905 had important implications for the long-term sustainability of tsarism.

Additionally, study of the right not only highlights the frequent lack of clear distinctions between moderates and extremists within the movement, but, more

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<sup>50</sup> Kir'ianov, *Pravye partii v Rossii*, pp. 388-424.

<sup>51</sup> For further analysis, see T. Weeks, *Nation and State in Late Imperial Russia: Nationalism and Russification on the Western Frontier, 1863-1914* (DeKalb, 1996), pp. 131-151.

<sup>52</sup> The relationship of the rightists and more moderate conservatives to the status quo is considered in Luk'ianov's article, 'Conservatives and "Renewed Russia"', pp. 762-786.

surprisingly, the overlap between rightists and apparently unrelated social and political groups. Rightists were able to gain a degree of support precisely because they used appeals that had a degree of resonance elsewhere. For instance, right-wing civic groups appealed to Russian patriotism, as did many other civil society associations. Uniting elements of modernity such as science and technology with visions of civic pride shows how rightists were beginning to use ideas with wider social traction. Ideas of ‘civic patriotism’ were used by societies completely unrelated in practical terms; one example was the Russian Technical Society (founded in St. Petersburg in 1866) that praised the potential of science and technology to transform education. Study of the right can shed light on significant and powerful questions of identity, nationalism and state formation, and the challenge posed by a crisis of modernity to right-wing ideas and discourse is a central element to explaining their rise and fall.<sup>53</sup>

### *Source material*

This thesis has drawn on a wide range of unpublished archival material. Most significant are the following collections (*fondy*) from the Russian State Archive (GARF): the secret police archive, including the special section (*osobyi otdel*), consisting of police reports and a variety of newspaper cuttings that have been annotated by the censors (*fond* number 102);<sup>54</sup> the collections of the right-wing groups, the Union of Russian People (116), and the Union of the Archangel Mikhail (117); the United Nobility collection (434); the repositories of Nicholas II (601), Lev Tikhomirov (634), as well as Boris Nikol’skii (588); and finally, records from the protocols of the Provisional Government commission of enquiry into the unlawful activities of the old regime before 1917 (1467). The thesis will present a range of fresh findings from the archives, consisting of both the words of rightists themselves, and a wide variety of observers.

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<sup>53</sup> J. Bradley, *Voluntary Associations in Tsarist Russia: Science, Patriotism and Civil Society* (Cambridge, MA, 2009); N. G. Filippov, *Nauchno-tekhnicheskie obshchestva v Rossii, 1866-1917* (Moscow, 1976).

<sup>54</sup> A thorough overview of the history of the special section is in Z. I. Peregudova, *Politicheskii sysk Rossii (1880-1917)* (2<sup>nd</sup> edition, Moscow, 2013), pp. 73-123.

The second main source base is contemporary newspapers, journals, and serial publications. These include contemporary ‘thick’ journals, monthly publications that contained poetry and literature, as well as political commentary. Not only are right-wing and liberal publications an excellent resource on which to draw for commentary on the right, these documents complement archival records and can be used to corroborate controversial incidents. Police reports from the Russian State Archive contain accounts of disputed activity such as right-wing violence. Certainly, one should read these reports with a critical eye, as officials were, like all others, prone to human whims, sometimes playing up to their superiors by writing reports that would please them, and either exaggerating or dismissing the impact of the right in their district to show their effectiveness in controlling the movement. A technique of cross-referencing the same incidents by using both newspapers and police records can highlight inconsistencies in the sources, as well as showing the diversity of interpretations of the right.

This thesis has also engaged with a range of published primary material, including memoirs, diaries and correspondence from right-wingers and government and parliamentary figures. These sources include many recent document collections on the right, not least those compiled by Kir’ianov. Even many collections that have been published in the last twenty years reflect the fashions of Soviet historiographical tradition, focusing on questions of high politics; these include problems of party formation, and activities in the State Duma.<sup>55</sup> However, rightists were not idle in their views of how to fight a social crisis: they posed practical answers to these problems. Questions of the right’s social obligations, such as charity work, temperance drives, education, and the formation and activity of civic groups, all central aims of this thesis, are less thoroughly addressed in these collections. To satisfactorily answer these issues, the personal insights of right-wingers can be used in conjunction with archival material, which includes letters and records from activists. A view of the right ‘from below’ as well as ‘from above’ will

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<sup>55</sup> Narskii, ‘The Right-Wing Parties: Historiographical Limitations and Perspectives’, pp. 183-184.

be constructed, in order to see these social projects from the original perspective that they were viewed, and to understand how these affected wider society.

Finally, a range of secondary material has been consulted. Much recent Russian scholarship has been assessed, in addition to the few studies on the Russian right that exist in English. As well as literature on the right in the Russian Empire, studies on rightist groups in contemporary Europe have been examined to illustrate how study of the right can highlight trends in the wider European experience.

### *Framework*

This thesis will follow a mixed chronological and thematic approach, and consists of three parts with six chapters. The first considers the rise of the Russian right, including an examination of nineteenth century influences, and an analysis of one early right-wing group, the Russian Assembly (officially established in 1901). It discusses a series of crises including the Kishinev pogrom, Bloody Sunday, and the Russo-Japanese War, and how these laid the groundwork for a surge in a new radicalism arising during the revolutionary period of 1905-1907, inextricably linked to the increased scale of the right.

The challenge posed by right-wing radicalism to the Tsarist status quo will be assessed in the second part of the work, consisting of two chapters examining the right's changing ideas and activities between 1905 and 1908. This was the phase in which the influence of the right-wing movements peaked. The second chapter will consider the rise of populist nationalism, an ideology that distinguished the right from other conservatives, shown by the creation of groups during the revolutionary period, including the URM and the URP. In particular, the violence and radicalism of these groups will be analyzed. The third chapter will examine examples of rightists extending their reach away from the capitals and across the empire, considering three case studies of Odessa, Kiev and Astrakhan'. This led to a new set of centre-periphery tensions between the right and the imperial regime.



After the revolution of 1905, rightists were divided between waging an anti-revolutionary war and developing concepts of renovating Russia. The third and final part will examine the activity of the right between 1907 and 1914, a period in which the right was in general decline. However, this decline was not straightforward, and the three chapters will consider examples of success, power and influence from the right as well as failures. The fourth chapter will examine the relationship of the right with Russia's police, assessing how a collision with authority imposed limits on their power. The second section will reflect on the form and content of right-wing attempts at popular mobilization, considering rituals, symbols and identity commemoration; all central elements in right-wing desires to connect with a mass audience. The fifth chapter will discuss right-wing attempts to construct an independent civic society, including two themes that intrigued many activists: cultural campaigns and a growing interest in education. The sixth and final chapter will consider important reasons for right-wing decline, including extended assessments of corruption and factionalism, the thorny problem of coping with the national question, and the controversial Beilis affair and its fall-out.

The conclusion will place the right in a broader context. After a brief note on the fate of the right after 1914, the relationship of the right-wing parties to other contemporary movements in Europe and later fascism will be considered. The final part of the conclusion will assess what the right can tell us about developments in contemporary Russia. Though the people of the pre-1905 rightist movement have long since died out, elements of their ideas and appeals have proved remarkably durable.<sup>56</sup> As well as in Russia, this can be seen from the renaissance of the right across Europe in the early twenty-first century. Overall, this thesis will contribute to a wider understanding of the Russian right, and provide a fresh perspective on a lively, provocative and often controversial debate.

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<sup>56</sup> See W. Laqueur, *Black Hundred: The Rise of the Extreme Right in Russia* (New York, 1993). A recent analysis has described right-wing influences on later Nazism. M. Kellogg, *The Russian Roots of Nazism: White Émigrés and the Making of National Socialism, 1917-1945* (Cambridge, 2005).

## The Origins of the Russian Right

This chapter will consider the nineteenth-century influences on the right, and subsequently the first stages of the movement's development in the early twentieth century. Processes of modernization and change in Russia meant this was a crucial stage in the development of autonomous conservatism. Rightists adopted several principles of nineteenth-century Russian conservatism, including: distinctiveness from Europe; sanctity of the Tsar's divinely ordained power; belief in the estate (*soslovie*) system as a basis for social hierarchy; the peasant commune as the unit around which to arrange economic development; and criticisms of liberalism, parliamentarianism, and socialism.<sup>1</sup> Yet conservatives were not all the same. From the outset, there were different exponents of this unstable ideology. The challenges of modernity in the Russian Empire threatened the above precepts, and a series of crises at the outset of the twentieth century created a pessimistic mood, providing the background for a surge in right-wing group formation. The right's obsession with moral ruin was closely connected to earlier changes in Russian society, culture and politics. Rightists in the twentieth century placed great emphasis on what they saw as Russian tradition, and their adoption of older conservative ideas is central to understanding their activity, as well as to understand what exactly were the negative changes in society that the rightists were reacting against.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> On generic models of Russian conservatism, see for example 'Russkii konservatizm: problemy, podkhody, mneniia. "Kruglyi stol"', *Otechestvennaia istoriia*, 3 (2001), pp. 103-133; A. Iu. Minakov, A. V. Repnikov and M. Iu. Chernavskii, 'Konservatizm', in V. V. Shelokhaev et al. (eds.), *Obshchestvennaia mysl' Rossii XVIII-nachala XX veka. Entsiklopediia* (Moscow, 2005), pp. 217-220.

<sup>2</sup> Some significant studies on nineteenth-century Russian conservative nationalism are Grosul (ed.), *Russkii konservatizm*; E. C. Thaden, *Conservative Nationalism in Nineteenth-Century Russia* (Seattle, 1964); and A. M. Martin, *Romantics, Reformers, Reactionaries: Russian Conservative Thought and Politics in the Reign of Alexander I* (DeKalb, 1997).

## Nineteenth-Century Influences

Conservatism in Russia developed in reaction to events at home and abroad. Loose elements of the ideology had existed in Russia long before the nineteenth century, but it was during this period that it became an organized body of doctrine under the banner that we would recognize today, with principal exponents in high society expounding a 'conservative' vision. It was in reaction to the materialism and rationalism of the enlightenment period that modern European conservatism first took shape; in particular, it was in response to the French Revolution that Russian conservatism became more organized. Russian conservatism emerged as a romantic nationalist movement, stimulated principally by the growth of state power, cultural change in the Russian Empire, and fear of *foreign* revolution. One of the leading figures in the literary and cultural world of nineteenth-century conservatism was Nikolai Karamzin (1766-1826). His seminal political work, the *Memoir on Ancient and Modern Russia*, first appeared in Russia in 1810, and was presented to Alexander I in 1811.<sup>3</sup> In writing that 'an old nation has no need of new laws' Karamzin pre-empted later rightist criticisms of the Russian state and bureaucracy copying Western modes of development.<sup>4</sup> Temperamentally, Karamzin was quite unlike any right-wingers that appeared later, but they had something in common – a view that a revolutionary crisis was threatening civilization; and both saw that the roots of this crisis lay in Europe. His criticisms of the main ideals of the French Revolution – liberalism and equality – were much the same as later rightists, who shared his anti-revolutionary consciousness.

Fears of revolution would further stimulate conservative ideology. This was driven by the rise of a Russian intelligentsia, pro-Western and anti-state, amongst educated society. The Decembrist Revolt of 1825 stimulated a desire to explicitly formulate an ideology that recognized rulers, state and subjects. However,

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<sup>3</sup> Karamzin developed his conservative views elsewhere in his incomplete 12-volume *History of the Russian State (Istoriia gosudarstva rossiiskogo)*, published 1818-1829. See D. Saunders, 'The Political Ideas of Russian Historians', *Historical Journal*, 27, 3 (1984), pp. 757-771.

<sup>4</sup> N. M. Karamzin, *Memoir on Ancient and Modern Russia* (translated and edited by R. Pipes) (Harvard, 1959), p. 187.

conservatives were beginning to respond to thinkers such as Petr Chaadaev, who criticized Russia's social and intellectual heritage. One figure with a direct influence on later right-wingers was the Minister of Education under Nicholas I, Sergei Uvarov (1786-1855) who in 1831 promulgated the doctrine of 'official nationality', or the Uvarov triad. This became the guiding doctrine of the Russian state and conservative elite during the nineteenth century. It presented as ideals the centrality of Russian religion, the necessity of strong centralized autocratic government to maintain the power of the state, and the idea of Russian nationhood as exemplified by the strength of the people: in short, Orthodoxy, autocracy and nationality.<sup>5</sup> Temperamentally and ideologically, Uvarov was a moderate, increasingly out of touch with the romanticism and mysticism that began to permeate the highest echelons of the imperial regime under Nicholas I. His greatest legacy to the right was his formulation of the triad; like all other conservative groups in the early twentieth century, Russian rightists would not deviate from these central principles. However, though they were never jettisoned entirely, conservatives in the early twentieth century were divided over how to interpret Uvarov's principles. A great irony of not only the right's adoption of the concept of nationality (*narodnost'*) in a later era but also the regime's use of it under Alexander III was how different their interpretations were from the original conception. In the 1830s, *narodnost'* was an attempt to provide an ideological formula uniting a diverse set of peoples in a country where autocracy was paramount; it did not yet have the more reactionary, negative connotations of later years.<sup>6</sup>

One of the most important features of the twentieth-century right was its spontaneity and independence from the ethos of tsarism. A crucial stage in the development of autonomous conservative groups was the appearance of the

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<sup>5</sup> On Uvarov, see C. H. Whittaker, *The Origins of Modern Russian Education: An Intellectual Biography of Count Sergei Uvarov, 1786-1855* (DeKalb, 1984); P. Waldron, 'The Legacy of Count Sergei Uvarov', in M. Branch (ed.), *Defining Self: Essays on Emergent Identities in Russia, 17<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> Centuries* (Helsinki, 2009), pp. 211-23.

<sup>6</sup> See N. Knight, 'Narodnost' and Modernity in Imperial Russia', in D. L. Hoffman and Y. Kotsonis (eds.), *Russian Modernity: Politics, Knowledge, Practices* (Basingstoke, 2000), pp. 54-60; D. Saunders, 'Historians and Concepts of Nationality in Early Nineteenth-Century Russia', *Slavonic and East European Review*, 60, 1 (1982), pp. 44-62.

Slavophiles in the 1830s and 1840s.<sup>7</sup> They were quite different from later rightists, but paved the way for the development of conservative groups outside of the regime, and the language, symbolism and ideals of the Slavophiles would be adopted by later right-wingers. Thinkers such as Ivan Kireevskii (1806-1856) and Aleksei Khomiakov (1804-1860) followed the ideals of Karamzin and Uvarov, including the inapplicability of Western systems of rule to Russia. Religion was particularly important to the Slavophiles; these thinkers emphasized Russian Orthodoxy as the principle around which to organize the nation's socio-economic development. This entailed increasing criticism of 'the West'. Though Western Europe and Russia had Christianity in common, thinkers such as Kireevskii perceived a growing distinction between their own version and Western Christianity, described as superficial and nihilistic, and associated in a pejorative sense with Roman Catholicism. This can be clearly seen in Ivan Kireevskii's *Reply to A. S. Khomyakov* [sic] (1839), describing the superiority of Russian Orthodoxy over Roman Catholicism. 'What a rich culture we might assume among our lower orders...this culture might not be superficially brilliant, but it is profound...it is inner and spiritual'.<sup>8</sup> The Russian people (*narod*) were given an elevated role in Kireevskii's writings, pre-empting the populists of the 1860s. We can see an idealistic, romantic view of the Russian land, people and state developing amongst these Slavophile groups in the first half of the nineteenth century. The idea that the 'inner' life, as Kireevskii wrote, should be celebrated over modern, Western political conceptions such as civil rights, the rule of law, and an enhanced administrative structure (developments in the external life) had clear echoes amongst rightists in a later era.

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<sup>7</sup> For literature on the Slavophiles, see N. V. Riasanovsky, *Russia and the West in the Teaching of the Slavophiles: A Study of Romantic Ideology* (Harvard, 1952); A. Walicki, *The Slavophile Controversy: History of a Conservative Utopia in Nineteenth-Century Russian Thought* (Oxford, 1975); *A History of Russian Thought: From the Enlightenment to Marxism* (Oxford, 1980), pp. 92-114; A. Gleason, *European and Muscovite: Ivan Kireevsky and the Origins of Slavophilism* (Cambridge, MA, 1972); and the series of biographies by P. Christoff, *An Introduction to Nineteenth Century Russian Slavophilism: A Study in Ideas*, 4 Vols. (The Hague, 1961-1991).

<sup>8</sup> I. V. Kireevskii, 'A Reply to A. S. Khomyakov' [sic], in W. J. Leatherbarrow and D. C. Offord (eds.), *A Documentary History of Russian Thought: From the Enlightenment to Marxism* (Ann Arbor, 1987), pp. 79-88.

The story of the Slavophiles cannot be understood without reference to the ‘Westerners’: thinkers such as Aleksandr Herzen, Nikolai Chernshevskii and Nikolai Dobroliubov. Curiously, both groups desired change in Russia, albeit different sorts and at different rates.<sup>9</sup> Prominent Slavophiles such as the historian Mikhail Pogodin (1800-1875) and the poet Fedor Tiutchev (1803-1873) were deeply attached to the romantic ideals of Karamzin. Nicholas I, despite his own conservatism, accurately perceived a difference between these autonomous groups and his own precepts. The most important parallel between such thinkers and later rightists – who, incidentally, rarely quoted the first wave of Slavophile thinkers – was increasing criticism of the practices of the Russian state. Pogodin wrote directly to the Tsar to criticize the institution of serfdom, and demanded the liberation of the Russian people to allow them to enact their spiritual mission of spreading the Orthodox Christian message around the world. Understandably, the regime of Nicholas I was deeply alarmed by such criticism, and ‘denied these groups the positive role that they sought in society’. In the Nicholavean era, views separate to those of the government were not readily tolerated. The Decembrist Rebellion had demonstrated the danger of autonomous activity, and criticism of the status quo emanating from conservative thinkers was also dangerous. The regime understood that autonomous groups wanting to change the structure of society were emerging on both the left and the right.<sup>10</sup>

Though the Slavophiles accepted the autocratic principle, these autonomous groups increasingly protested against the existing conditions of Russian society. Thinkers such as Kireevskii and Tiutchev were social critics who viewed Russian serfdom with great dismay. However, they were different from the later rightists in that they saw the possibility of preserving the autocracy whilst instituting widespread social reform. The publicist Konstantin Aksakov (1817-1860) wrote to Alexander II in 1855 that autocracy would lead to the strengthening of the Russian people. ‘For the Russian, absolute monarchical government is not an enemy, not

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<sup>9</sup> For the rise of left in this era, see F. Venturi, *Roots of Revolution: A History of the Populist and Socialist Movements in Nineteenth Century Russia* (New York, 1963).

<sup>10</sup> W. B. Lincoln, *Nicholas I: Emperor and Autocrat of all the Russias* (London, 1978), pp. 263-268.

something to be opposed, but a friend and a defender of freedom – of that true, spiritual freedom’.<sup>11</sup> Aksakov’s focus on the ‘Russian people’ in his writings shows the populist potential in his thought. Like many right-wingers after 1900, he championed the idea of an assembly of the land (*zemskii sobor*), which could provide a bond between the Russian people, their native soil and the regime. In focusing on the people and a return to the land, he had much in common with the left-wing populists (*narodniki*), despite his conservative inclinations. In spite of his support for untrammelled autocracy, he also attributed a clear role for the people as a consultative voice.<sup>12</sup> This tribute to the people would become deeply problematic for the regime in a later era.

There were therefore strong traditions of protest, criticism and dissent amongst Russian conservatives prior to the emergence of an organized right. However, the changing wider context would radicalize some of these demands. Russian failure in the Crimean War, the Emancipation Manifesto of 1861, peasant risings of 1861 and 1862 and the Great Reforms of the 1860s would challenge the conservative ethos established thirty years earlier. The emergence of thinkers such as Herzen and figures such as Mikhail Bakunin and Petr Lavrov who criticized serfdom and the autocracy showed how demands for change were becoming not just more radical, but revolutionary: and the next wave of Slavophiles would become more reactionary in response. A central figure was Mikhail Katkov (1818-1887) an influential journalist who became editor of the newspaper *Moskovskie vedomosti* (Moscow News) in 1863. Katkov was a more militant figure than the original Slavophiles, and the Polish Rebellion of 1863 set off fierce anti-Polish diatribes in his paper. Katkov believed that soft liberal treatment over the past decade regarding the ‘Polish question’ had allowed an uprising in the Western borderland regions of the empire. Katkov, despite his deep misgivings over the Russian state’s path of development, was deeply involved with the imperial establishment, and enjoyed a

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<sup>11</sup> K. S. Aksakov, ‘Memorandum to Alexander II’, in Leatherbarrow and Offord (eds.), *A Documentary History of Russian Thought*, p. 100.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 98-99; Venturi, *Roots*, pp. 336-330.

close relationship with Tsar Alexander III, who on occasion granted him special privileges and favours.

In his desired solutions to such problems, Katkov broke ranks with the original Slavophiles. He believed that firm central government action was needed to unite the subjects of the empire under a strong, centralized Russian state. Katkov had adopted earlier Slavophile precepts of cultural nationalism, whilst allying these to fulminations on the need for stronger state power. In particular, Katkov attacked the Polish citizens of the empire as political subversives who sought to weaken the Russian state. 'Ten million pure Russians' had become 'alienated from their roots' in the Western borderlands, the fault of the Russian regime. Harsh attacks on national minorities were becoming common amongst Russia's conservative factions; in this, we can see direct parallels between Katkov and later rightists.<sup>13</sup> Intriguingly, certain right-wingers in later years looked to Katkov for inspiration. These included the leader of the Russian Monarchist Party (RMP) from 1905, Vladimir Gringmut, who saw nineteenth-century Russian conservatives including Katkov as heroes.<sup>14</sup>

A complex matter should not of course be over-simplified. Many in the regime shared Katkov's chauvinism, and criticisms of Poland were certainly not unique to the reactionary publicist. However, more problematic was that the eventual target of Katkov's criticism was not Poland, but the contemporary Russian regime. Like many rightists in a later era, Katkov was deeply dissatisfied with the group whom he called the 'Petersburg bureaucrats', He claimed that 'bureaucratic procedures dominate all of our doings, and dominate exclusively; all of our doings move through bureaucratic organizations, all of the practices and doings of our

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<sup>13</sup> M. N. Katkov, *Sobranie peredovykh statei: Moskovskikh vedomostei, 1864 god.* (Moscow, 1897), p. 371. Originally published in *Moskovskie vedomosti*, 17 June 1864, no. 164. For secondary literature on Katkov, see M. Katz, *Mikhail N. Katkov: A Political Biography, 1818-1887* (Michigan, 1966); K. Durman, *The Time of the Thunderer: Mikhail Katkov, Russian Nationalist Extremism and the failure of the Bismarckian System, 1871-1887* (New York, 1988); G. P. Izmet'eva, 'Mikhail Nikiforovich Katkov', *Voprosy istorii*, 4 (2004), pp. 71-92; Thaden, *Conservative Nationalism*, pp. 38-56.

<sup>14</sup> V. A. Gringmut, *Sobranie statei, 1896-1907*, Vol. 1 (Moscow, 1908), pp. 14-17, 'M. N. Katkov i sovremennoe obshchestvo'. This essay first appeared in *Moskovskie vedomosti* in 1896.



government are bureaucratic properties'. Katkov, who considered a pre-Petrine, pre-Westernized Russia favourably, looked upon 'modernization' of Russia's institutions with dismay. In particular, he criticized the legal and political developments known as the Great Reforms.<sup>15</sup> These included: the Emancipation Manifesto of 1861; the judicial reforms of 1864; the formation of a system of local government, establishing councils (*zemstvo*); a university statute, and further reforms throughout the 1860s and 1870s, all of which showed Katkov that the feared path of Westernism was becoming a reality. To Katkov, the imperial regime had lacked strength in combatting this general tendency. In particular, the bureaucracy was obscuring the link between Tsar and people.

As Slavophilism hardened into Pan-Slavism in the 1860s and 1870s, militant views amongst Russia's conservative factions became more common, stimulated in part by the growing revolutionary movement and the impact of thinkers such as Nikolai Chernyshevskii, Petr Tkachev and Petr Lavrov.<sup>16</sup> One whose views became more extreme towards the end of his life was Ivan Aksakov (1823-1886), who demonstrated the increasingly vehement chauvinism of Pan-Slavism. Aksakov's mission was more radical than that of the regime; he had a messianic, utopian worldview, presenting a mission to unite all of world Orthodox Slavdom led by the Russian people. He perceived a fundamental and irresolvable duality between the West and Russia, believing the future world would belong to the Slavic peoples. In typical style, he wrote that 'the jealousy, often instinctive, of the West towards the world of Slavic Orthodoxy derives from other, deeply hidden reasons; these reasons start from the antagonism of two opposing spirits of enlightenment, and the envy of the ancient world towards that to which the future belongs'.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> M. N. Katkov, *Sobranie peredovykh statei Moskovskikh vedomostei, 1864 god* (Moscow, 1897), p. 190. Originally published in *Moskovskie vedomosti*, 28 March 1864.

<sup>16</sup> For an overview, see H. Kohn, *Pan Slavism: Its History and Ideology* (New York, 1960).

<sup>17</sup> I. Aksakov, *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii*, Vol. 1 (Moscow, 1886), p. 5, originally published in *Slavianskii obzor*, 1 October 1861. For biography, see S. Lukashevich, *Ivan Aksakov, 1823-1886: A Study in Russian Thought and Politics* (Cambridge, MA, 1965).

A disturbing inclination that Aksakov shared with later rightists was anti-Semitism. Aksakov reflected the non-religious character of Russian anti-Semitism; in particular, the idea of a global Jewish political and financial conspiracy based around the exploitation of non-Jewish subjects of the empire. His denunciations of Jews joined religious and modern anti-Semitism: ancient animosity towards Jewish religion, and criticisms of overwhelming Jewish power and ‘dominance’ due to the involvement of Jews in political movements. He linked Russian Jewry to the pernicious effects of a cosmopolitan, liberal, Western intelligentsia: a small group, but one with much power in society. In this he was influenced by the presence of Jews in revolutionary movements. His paper *Rus’* (Russia) published an early version of the notorious *Protocols of the Elders of Zion* in 1864.<sup>18</sup> In particular, Aksakov claimed that Jews dominated Russia’s educational institutions. At the outset of the pogrom wave that swept the empire from 1881 to 1882, he wrote ‘already, one third of our students are Jews’.<sup>19</sup> Whilst Aksakov conceded the pogroms were a horrific occurrence, he claimed the Russian people were the true victims. Instead, he described the Jews as the cause of the riots, emphasizing a growing gap between the ‘dark forces’ within Russian society at large and the views of the educated elite. Regarding the Jewish and Polish inhabitants of the empire, Aksakov wrote:

The sympathy of the ‘liberals’ was on the side of these nationalities, and, as usual, wrath fell upon the barbarism, which comes from the lack of ‘culture’ and ‘correct order’ of the Russian people. So it was, for example, with the popular movements against the Jews – certainly, lawless movements that demanded restraint and taming by our authorities (moreover, our Russians suffered no less, even much more than the Jews).<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> H. Rogger, ‘Russia’, in Weber and Rogger (eds.), *The European Right*, p. 472; Lukashevich, *Ivan Aksakov*, pp. 95-110.

<sup>19</sup> I. Aksakov, *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii*, Vol. 2: *slavianofil’stvo i zapadnichestvo* (Moscow, 1886), p. 502, originally published 14 February 1881. ‘Pogrom’ is here defined as ‘an outbreak of mass violence directed against a minority religious, social or ethnic group’. This was usually, though not always, targeted against Jews. J. D. Klier, ‘Pogroms. YIVO Encyclopedia of Jews in Eastern Europe’ (2010). <<http://www.yivoencyclopedia.org/article.aspx/Pogroms>> (accessed 24/4/2014).

<sup>20</sup> I. Aksakov, *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii*, Vol. 2, p. 563, ‘The liberal programme’, originally published 20 February 1881. On the 1881 pogroms see J. D. Klier, *Russians, Jews and the Pogroms of 1881-1882* (Cambridge, 2011).

The press fulminations of Aksakov led to these ideas gaining influence with a minority of the population, providing a model for later rightists.<sup>21</sup> Significantly, some ministers shared his ideas, including the Minister of the Interior from 1881-1882, N. P. Ignat'ev, who also claimed that Jews were the cause of the pogroms. Ignat'ev tabled a resolution to the Committee of Ministers in March 1882 on the 'Jewish question', with harsh measures calling for further restrictions of the rights of Jews in the empire. His thinking was that the Russian people needed protection from Jewish economic domination. Influence, however, does not always result in trust. His proposals were defeated easily; all the other members of the Committee of Ministers objected, for a range of pragmatic and ideological reasons.<sup>22</sup>

Though the proposals were defeated, the ideas lived on. Anti-Semitic ideas and policies had currency elsewhere in Russian society, including within the regime itself, albeit with the wilder designs of Ignat'ev curtailed by more fearful ministers due to the potential for popular disruption. As well as the notorious Pale of Settlement (created 1791-1835) as many as 1,400 different laws existed, representing a vast and unworkable bureaucracy of legalized discrimination.<sup>23</sup> Passports and registration acts were designed to make it difficult for Jewish citizens to move freely around the Russian Empire. In addition, after 1893 even baptized Jews were banned from changing their names to Christian ones.<sup>24</sup> Therefore, when the right adopted anti-Semitism as such a central part of their message, it needs to be remembered that it was not only a principle of outsiders, but part of the structure of Russian autocracy; anti-Semitic ideas were also a centuries old feature of Russian life, and hardly unique to rightists.

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<sup>21</sup> E. Haberer, 'Cosmopolitanism, Antisemitism and Populism: A reappraisal of the Russian and Jewish Response to the pogroms of 1881-1882', in J. D. Klier and S. Lambroza (eds.), *Pogroms: Anti-Jewish Violence in Modern Russian History* (Cambridge, 1992), pp. 98-134.

<sup>22</sup> H. Rogger, 'Russian ministers and the Jewish question', in *Jewish Policies and Right-Wing Politics*, pp. 58-62; Klier, *Russians, Jews and the Pogroms of 1881-1882*, pp. 207-232.

<sup>23</sup> For more on this, see Rogger, *Jewish Policies and Right-Wing Politics*, p. 106; A. L. Gol'denveizer, 'Pravovoe polozhenie evreev v Rossii', in *Kniga o russkom evreistve: ot 1860-kh godov do revoliutsii 1917 g.* (Moscow, 2002), pp. 115-158.

<sup>24</sup> M. I. Mysh', *Rukovodstvo k russkim zakonam o evreiakh* (St. Petersburg, 1914), pp. 34-37; *Polnoe sobranie zakonov Rossiiskoi imperii*, 2<sup>nd</sup> series, Vol. 40, Pt. 1, no. 41799 (1865), p. 191.



Figure 1 Pale of Settlement in the Russian Empire circa 1900. G. D. Hundert (ed.), *The YIVO Encyclopedia of Jews in Eastern Europe* (New Haven, CT, 2008), p. 1312; also available online at <[www.yivoencyclopedia.org](http://www.yivoencyclopedia.org)> (accessed 2/6/2014).

An especially dramatic event occurred in 1881: the assassination of the Tsar by a terrorist organization, the People’s Will. In no small irony, it was the ‘Tsar liberator’, Alexander II, who on the eve of the event was preparing to put into practice plans for a consultative assembly, or the Loris-Melikov constitution, which would have been the first such body in Russia’s history. His reign was interpreted by many conservative observers as one of liberalism, associated with the Great Reforms of the 1860s and 1870s. His murder saw the onset of the ‘counter-reform’ era, partially in reaction to the growing revolutionary movement, but also in response to the liberal reforms of the preceding twenty years, which had failed to work as

desired. Within the regime, conservatives were becoming increasingly reactionary, opposing any change in Russia's political system. In May 1882, inspired by a letter from Ivan Aksakov, Ignat'ev proposed summoning a *zemskii sobor*, based on the Slavophile principle, uniting thousands of peasants from across the empire. However, Ignat'ev's proposal, when put to the Committee of Ministers, was defeated, and he was subsequently replaced as the Minister of the Interior.<sup>25</sup> Ignat'ev's successor, Dmitrii Tolstoi, opposed any such form of popular representation, however symbolic it may have been.<sup>26</sup> Tolstoi claimed, 'my ministry can be summed up in one word: order'.<sup>27</sup> Another significant source of opposition to Ignat'ev's proposal was Konstantin Pobedonostev, the Over-Procurator of the Holy Synod from 1881 until 1905, and a central figure in the counter-reform era.<sup>28</sup>

The regime's desire to contain autonomous activity, fed by the suspicion of revolutionary politics, also had the effect of slowing the development of right-wing forces outside the regime during the following two decades. One example of this curtailment was the short-lived Holy Brotherhood (1881-1882), an organization founded on a pledge to defend the life of Alexander III after his father's assassination. It called itself a fighting brotherhood, or *druzhina*, a word that rightists would adopt later. The political police (or third section) shut this group down soon after its formation. The illegality of political groups before 1905 meant that autonomous groups, even ones with a pro-Tsarist focus, attracted suspicion and faced closure by the Ministry of the Interior. Like leftists and liberals, this denied pro-autocracy groups the public space required to sharpen skills that would be later required for a different kind of debate. However right-wing cultural groups, unlike any association of the far left, did not desire to challenge the Tsarist system, so they

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<sup>25</sup> This episode is recounted in Lukashovich, *Ivan Aksakov*, pp. 153-157; Rogger, 'Russian Ministers and the Jewish Question', in *Jewish Policies and Right-Wing Politics*, p. 62.

<sup>26</sup> V. L. Stepanov, 'D. A. Tolstoi', in A. I. Bokhanov (ed.), *Rossiiskie konservatory* (Moscow, 1997), pp. 234-286.

<sup>27</sup> D. A. Tolstoi cited in Rogger, 'Russia', in Weber and Rogger (eds.), *The European Right*, p. 474.

<sup>28</sup> On Pobedonostev, see A. Iu. Polunov, *K. P. Pobedonostev v obshchestvenno-politicheskoi i dukhovnoi zhizni Rossii* (Moscow, 2010). A useful older work is R. F. Byrnes, *Pobedonostev: His Life and Thought* (Bloomington, 1968).

were not driven underground or into exile, but could sustain a limited amount of marginal activity, under the auspices of the regime.<sup>29</sup>

The tensions between official and autonomous conservative forces towards the end of the nineteenth century were thrown into sharper relief by broader developments in Russian society. These included: Russia's rapid industrialization under the Minister of Finance from 1892 until 1903, Sergei Witte, and the resulting appearance of an urban working class; land hunger in the countryside and the revitalization of the *zemstvo* movement after the famine of 1891-1892; the reappearance of the revolutionary movement, now inspired by the successes of a nascent Russian Marxism; and the use of 'Russification' policy starting under Alexander III towards the empire's significant national minority populations. All of these policies and movements created an increasingly fissile empire. It was especially problematic that any right-wing movement might be made up of 'the masses' – crowds of peasants or townsfolk from the rapidly urbanizing empire. Ministers such as Tolstoi and Pobedonostev associated popular movements with a benighted peasant democracy threatening order in the Russian land, and wished to keep a firm check on their rise and spread; Nicholas II dismissed the 'senseless dreams' of *zemstvo* representatives at the outset of 1895. The new social basis, rather than the political ideology, of a populist right was what most concerned ultra-conservative ministers, who greatly feared the destructive potential of the Russian people.

Though reactionary policy inside the Tsarist regime had the curious effect of stifling an autonomous right, figures that would have strong influence on right-wing movements in the early twentieth century were developing their arguments in this era, albeit being restricted to the use of the pen. One was the publicist Sergei Sharapov (1855-1911) who would become a member of the Russian Assembly and

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<sup>29</sup> S. Lukashevich, 'The Holy Brotherhood: 1881-1883', *American Slavic and East European Review*, 18, 4 (1959), pp. 491-509. The world of the right-wing salons in St. Petersburg has been recounted in D. I. Stogov, *Pravomonarkhicheskie salony Peterburga-Petrograda (Konets XIX-nachalo XX veka)* (St. Petersburg, 2007).

the Union of Russian Men (URM), active throughout the 1890s in sharpening and developing earlier Slavophile ideals. He was a prolific writer, publishing brochures with titles such as *The Future of Peasant Ownership* (1882) and *In The Garden and the City* (1895) and the short-lived journal *Russkii trud* (Russian Work) from 1897 until 1899.<sup>30</sup> Sharapov's work exhibited a central connection between the above conservatives and the right after 1900: strong dissatisfaction with the current path of Russia's political, social and economic development. In Sharapov's view, Russia since the time of Peter the Great had reneged on its authentic values, taking on Western forms of political development not suited to its own unique state structure.<sup>31</sup>

Sharapov's objections were to wider social and economic processes. One of these was industrialization, undertaken since the time of Witte. Sharapov saw Russia as an agrarian society, mistakenly copying Western models of economic development with the goal of becoming an industrialized nation. This had led to the Russian people being exploited for the financial gains of foreign states. Sharapov opposed modern building projects, such as railroad construction in Russia. He opined, 'railroads, and other developments of foreign capital, are actually strangers to Russian property, and cause the accumulation of real wealth abroad and give the Russian people only a subservient role to international capital'.<sup>32</sup> Instead, Sharapov saw the future salvation of Russia in the peasantry, and claimed Russia's future economic development should be based on the peasant commune (*obshchina*). Sharapov's nostalgia for a lost rural world would have no small impact within the rightist movement, in particular, the stance adopted towards Russia's peasants.<sup>33</sup>

Sharapov formed an intellectual link between Slavophilism from an earlier age and the organized right as it appeared during and after 1905. Like the Slavophiles during the 1830s and 1840s, Sharapov was a utopian in temperament,

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<sup>30</sup> For background on Sharapov, see *Chernaia sotnia. Istoricheskaia entsiklopediia* (hereafter *CSIE*, Moscow, 2008), pp. 589-596; *RKE*; pp. 572-577. For a detailed analysis of his central ideas, see M. D. Suslov, 'Neo-Slavophilism and the Revolution of 1905-07: A Study in the Ideology of S. F. Sharapov', *Revolutionary Russia*, 24, 1 (2011), pp. 33-58.

<sup>31</sup> *Russkii trud*, 20 April 1897, 15-16, p. 2.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 3.

<sup>33</sup> *Russkii trud*, 3 January 1898, 1, p. 3.

not a pragmatic political thinker. His ideas on Russia's development were out of step with Witte's industrialization plans. Like the earlier Slavophiles, Sharapov was a populist: his own ideas demanded, at least ostensibly, freedom for the Russian people whilst also desiring a strong autocratic state structure.<sup>34</sup> This would form one of the most substantial challenges for the Russian right after the revolution of 1905 had legalized political parties: how to preserve Russia's autocratic governance, and yet promise liberation for the people?<sup>35</sup> Sharapov was earlier grappling with the connected problem of how to present a populist style as genuine and on behalf of the Russian people.<sup>36</sup> One answer was to turn against enemies. In his publications, Sharapov asserted unity of interests with Russia's peasant majority, against capitalists, big business and, frequently, Russia's Jews. Behind much of this anti-capitalist propaganda were anti-Semitic ideas. In the case of Sharapov's journal, opposing the supposed economic subjugation of Russians meant also opposing the 'enemy within', meaning minority nationalities and Jews.<sup>37</sup> Sharapov, like Katkov, took a harsh line towards the Russian government since the Great Reform era. Sharapov asserted that in making concessions to liberalism, Russia's leaders had failed to preserve the individuality of the nation in the latter half of the nineteenth century. The bureaucracy, he declared, was what had inhibited true understanding between Tsar and people. Legal reforms, the establishment of *zemstvo* and other 'western' developments had stood between Tsar, people and the realization of Russia's true greatness.<sup>38</sup> Yet unlike earlier thinkers, Sharapov would have a practical impact, joining several rightist associations.

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<sup>34</sup> *Russkii trud*, 7 August 1899, 32, p. 4.

<sup>35</sup> Sharapov was nothing if not consistent in his view of autocracy as the necessary form of state power in Russia. In his pamphlet 'autocracy or a constitution?' published a decade later, he described the autocracy as the 'cement of the Russian state.' S. F. Sharapov, *Samoderzhavie ili konstitutsiia?* (Moscow, 1908), p. 17.

<sup>36</sup> This would remain a theme in his journal *Russkoe delo* (Russian Cause, 1905-1907) with frequent references to the 'eighty million ploughmen' in Russia. *Russkoe delo*, 23 April 1905, 17, pp. 12-14; 7 May 1905, 19, pp. 16-18; 21 May 1905, 21, pp. 6-7; 20 August 1905, 34, pp. 1-3.

<sup>37</sup> *Russkii trud*, 28 November 1898, 48, p. 17. For incisive commentary on Sharapov's anti-capitalism, see H.-D. Löwe, *Antisemitismus*, pp. 11-13, 26-29, 94-95.

<sup>38</sup> S. F. Sharapov, *Rossiia budushchego (tret'ie izdanie "opyta politicheskoi programmy")* (Moscow, 1907), pp. 9-10.



Right-wing interests, like liberally inclined educated elites, were beginning to coalesce in this period. The journal *Russkoe obozrenie* (Russian Review) was a short-lived attempt to present monarchist ideas to a wider audience. It contained essays from figures such as Vladimir Gringmut, and Lev Tikhomirov, a former member of the People's Will, now reborn as an ultra-conservative, who also reflected pessimistically on Russia's current path of development.<sup>39</sup> The journal lasted only seven years (1890-1897) as, despite generous donations from friends, it had to close due to lack of funds. This sheds light on another factor: 'the right' in these years was not a large-scale presence in Russian life; public interest was confined to the educated elites of Russian society. Primarily, these were intelligentsia and gentry figures that felt the need for an independent right-wing politics. However, during much of the nineteenth century, the absence of open political opposition to tsarism meant that there was little need to formalize the potential of an independent right. But the educated elites were becoming increasingly fissile in this era. Liberals as well as conservatives were creating independent non-political associations, such as educational and technical societies. Organized group formation was beginning to assume a greater scale, though these associations would draw their support from elites. Unlike their rivals on the left, conservatives did not place themselves in explicit opposition to the regime: whilst socialists were also beginning to mobilize, they would have to do so away from the state's auspices.<sup>40</sup>

Though political groups were banned before 1905, in creating civic groups, right-leaning thinkers had an important advantage over their rivals: conservatism was built into the ethos of the regime, which increased their chances of being

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<sup>39</sup> Tikhomirov was a member of the People's Will (*Narodnaia volia*) terrorist organization in the late 1870s. In later years his political views shifted far to the right, though he lost none of his radicalism. Tikhomirov declared Russia to be in a state of chaos. He perceived the need for the monarchist movement to harness social support after 1905 in order to be successful, and foresaw the cataclysm of war in 1914 with some precision. An innovative thinker, Tikhomirov has unsurprisingly attracted no small interest in recent historiography. A comprehensive recent biography is A. V. Repnikov and O. A. Milevskii, *Dve zhizni L'va Tikhomirova* (Moscow, 2011).

<sup>40</sup> This discussion draws on Rogger, 'Russia', in Weber and Rogger (eds.), *The European Right*, p. 475. For prominent liberal voices see A. A. Fedyashin, *Liberals Under Autocracy: Modernization and Civil Society in Russia, 1866-1904* (London, 2012).

tolerated by it. The institutions of the state, such as the 215 members of the State Council under Nicholas II, were composed from landowning and official families, and the bureaucracy was understandably dominated by a sense of elitism, reflecting the social composition of those who ruled Russia.<sup>41</sup> Also, the press before 1905 was a powerful voice for different conservative ideas, some staunchly pro-government, but others more independent. *Moskovskie vedomosti* and A. I. Suvorin's newspaper *Novoe vremia* (New Time) had no small influence in the developing sphere of public opinion.<sup>42</sup>

Yet a growing sense of dissatisfaction, embattlement and pessimism about the path of Russia's development was stimulating reactionary tendencies. The revolutionary movement emphasized the fears of thinkers such as Nikolai Danilevskii (1822-1885) and Konstantin Leontiev (1831-1891), who criticized the Russian state for its 'Europeanism' and proclaimed the necessity of autocratic absolutism.<sup>43</sup> Alongside Sharapov, they attacked the industrialization of Russia and liberal attitudes within the bureaucracy. The main ideas of twentieth-century rightists, such as anti-Semitism, nationalism and chauvinism were all being developed in this period. Moreover, by the end of the nineteenth century, all strands of the political spectrum were beginning to coalesce into formal groups. These included ones on the far left inspired by Marxism, such as the Russian Social Democratic Worker's Party in 1898, and the Socialist Revolutionary Party in 1901; from the liberal position, prominent examples included the Union of Liberation, officially formed in 1904. Rightists responded by developing their own associations, including elite circles in the salons of St. Petersburg, and also combative tendencies on the ground, that took an anti-revolutionary message to the streets and fields of the empire.

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<sup>41</sup> For the bureaucratic culture of the late imperial period, see D. C. B. Lieven, *Russia's Rulers under the Old Regime* (London, 1989).

<sup>42</sup> On press regulation, see L. McReynolds, *The News Under Russia's Old Regime: The Development of a Mass-Circulation Press* (Princeton, 1991); C. Ferenczi, 'Freedom of the Press, 1905-1914', in O. Crisp and L. Edmondson (eds.), *Civil Rights in Imperial Russia* (Oxford, 1989), p. 205.

<sup>43</sup> R. E. MacMaster, *Danilevsky, a Russian Totalitarian Philosopher* (Cambridge, MA, 1967). For discussions of Leontiev, see Thaden, *Conservative Nationalism*, pp. 164-182; and Walicki, *A History of Russian Thought*, pp. 290-308.

## The Russian Assembly

Cultural groups on the right began to proliferate in the final years of the nineteenth and the earliest years of the twentieth centuries. An important step on the road to the right becoming more of an organized force was the creation of a group called the Russian Assembly. This small group was in several respects a model for later right-wing parties; post-1905 ‘national’ right-wing groups adopted the central ideology of this frontrunner, and followed many of its cultural practices. ‘Reaction’ was key to its formation. Circles of writers and thinkers from the gentry met in St. Petersburg between November and December 1900 with the aim of founding an organization celebrating the strength of Russia’s native artistic works, in opposition to what members perceived as the domination of Russia’s elites by West European ideas and practices.<sup>44</sup> The contrast with the Holy Brotherhood in 1882 is instructive. V. K. Pleve, the Minister of the Interior, perceived the Assembly as a cultural rather than political organization, and decided to allow the group to form, somewhat sidestepping the long-standing tensions between autonomous right-wing forces and the regime.<sup>45</sup> The organization was officially opened, and the rules and regulations promulgated, in January 1901.<sup>46</sup>

Like many later right-wing groups that claimed to be representing ‘the people’ the Assembly was a group drawn exclusively from elites of Russian society, and its council was a list with impeccable upper-class credentials. The group was the brainchild of D. P. Golitsyn (1860-1928), a minor novelist and a member of the State Council.<sup>47</sup> As chair of the group’s council in St. Petersburg, Golitsyn had a large impact on the initial ideas and tactics of the group. Vice-chairs A. A. Suvorin,

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<sup>44</sup> On the Russian Assembly, see Rogger, ‘The formation of the Russian Right’, pp. 191-193; Rawson, *Russian Rightists*, pp. 46-55; Vydra, *Život ot Cara?* pp. 59-71; Stepanov, *Chernaia sotnia v Rossii*, pp. 32-34; and V. Levitskii, ‘Pravye partii’, in L. Martov et al. (eds.), *Obshchestvennoe dvizhenie v Rossii v nachale XX-go veka* (St. Petersburg, 1910), pp. 357-360; the most comprehensive recent work is Kir’ianov, *Russkoe sobranie*.

<sup>45</sup> See E. H. Judge, *Pleve: Repression and Reform in Imperial Russia, 1902-1904* (New York, 1983).

<sup>46</sup> *Russkii vestnik*, 3 (1906), p. 296.

<sup>47</sup> For a brief biography of Golitsyn, see *RKE*, pp. 121-123.

editor of the influential *Novoe vremia* newspaper, and the Slavophile writer S. N. Syromiatnikov shared his elite background and upbringing; all were members of prominent gentry families. The council of the group was composed of members from noble backgrounds; from the official records published early in 1902, it is apparent that bishops, academics, officers and writers together made up a large proportion of the total membership.<sup>48</sup> The group was small at first, consisting of several circles totaling a few hundred people, and even in later years it never possessed more than several thousand members.<sup>49</sup> One sympathetic estimate claimed the St. Petersburg branch had just over 1,000 members in April 1902.<sup>50</sup> This elitist composition was typical of organized associations in late imperial Russia.<sup>51</sup> Significantly, several figures that would later be active on the radical right became members of this self-stated cultural and non-political group. Aleksandr Dubrovin, the leader of the Union of Russian People (URP) from October 1905, Vladimir Gringmut, and the publicists Pavel Krushevan and Pavel Bulatsel all joined the Russian Assembly before or during 1905.<sup>52</sup> These central figures, and also other members, would later join right-wing political organizations established during the 1905 revolution.

Other branches appeared in different parts of the empire following the establishment of the council in St. Petersburg. The first regional branch was established in Khar'kov, Ukraine, on 8 December 1902.<sup>53</sup> The council in Khar'kov was comprised of six intellectuals: the chair, professor A. S. Viazigin; the vice-chair, professor Ia. A. Anfimov; the organizer of the group, Ia. I. Denisov; the treasurer, V. I. Al'bitskii; and two further members of the council, professors P. N. Butskinskii and

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<sup>48</sup> *Letopis' russkogo sobraniia* (St. Petersburg, 1902), pp. 6, 32-45; *Izvestiia russkogo sobraniia*, 3 (1903), p. 5; Kir'ianov, *Russkoe sobranie*, pp. 84-85; *Mirnyi trud*, IV (1902), pp. 198-203.

<sup>49</sup> For a comparison between the social composition of the membership in 1902 and 1914, see Kir'ianov, *Russkoe sobranie*, pp. 84-85. An estimate from the Assembly itself in the first half of 1905 gives a figure of 3,000 members for the Petersburg branch.

<sup>50</sup> *Mirnyi trud*, IV (1902), pp. 198-203; *Mirnyi trud*, V (1903), pp. 195-196.

<sup>51</sup> Bradley, *Voluntary Associations in Tsarist Russia*, pp. 10-11.

<sup>52</sup> *Russkii vestnik*, 11 (1906), pp. 307-308.

<sup>53</sup> *Russkii vestnik*, 10 (1903), p. 831; *Mirnyi trud*, 10 (1904), pp. 164-175.

N. K. Kul'chitskii.<sup>54</sup> That the council of the Russian Assembly was composed only from intellectuals is a curious feature, given the suspicions of the Russian intelligentsia displayed by members of the group. The establishment of a branch in Khar'kov points towards another trend exemplified by later organizations, parties and groups on the right: the strong provincial dimension of right-wing activity.<sup>55</sup> During 1903, Assembly branches were established in Ekaterinoslav, Odessa, Orenburg, Kiev, Voronezh, Saratov, Warsaw and Tambov.<sup>56</sup> To publicize the activities and ideas of the group, Viazigin would publish the journal *Mirnyi trud* (Peaceful Work) from 1902, and on a monthly basis from 1903.<sup>57</sup>

### *Central ideas*

'Official nationality' was the ideological lodestone of the group.<sup>58</sup> Like later rightists, a primary aim of the group was to oppose what members felt was growing 'cosmopolitanism' in Russian cultural life, clear from even a brief survey of the Assembly's literature published between 1900 and 1904.<sup>59</sup> Their mission was to promote self-awareness (*samosoznaniia*) amongst Russians, by educating those who joined about native culture, language and society.<sup>60</sup> Much of this involved a particular conception of Russia's decline due to prevailing trends of cultural

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<sup>54</sup> A 52-page appendix accompanied the January 1904 edition of the Assembly's journal *Mirnyi trud*, describing at length the opening of a branch in Khar'kov. *Mirnyi trud*, 1 (1904), section 2, p. 4, P. Khorsov, 'Prazdnik russkogo samosoznaniia'.

<sup>55</sup> A central rationale of the group in Khar'kov was opposing foreign strength in the region. GARF, F. 588, op. 1, d. 1243, ll. 1-1 ob.: *Zapisi zasedaniia soveta Russkogo sobraniia*, 9 April 1902.

<sup>56</sup> *Mirnyi trud*, 10 (1904), p. 170. The Warsaw branch was sympathetically regarded by a local army commander, general-lieutenant Andrei Bogoliubov, who apparently trusted the 'aims and activities' of the group enough not to consider shutting it down. GARF, F. 588, op. 1, d. 1243, ll. 8-9 ob.: *Iz zapisi zasedaniia soveta Russkogo sobraniia*, 16 April 1903; *ibid.*, l. 19: *Iz zapisi zasedaniia soveta Russkogo sobraniia*, 22 December 1903.

<sup>57</sup> A. Kaplin and A. Stepanov, A. S. Viazigin, 'Tol'ko vera daet silu zhit', in A. A. Ivanov and A. D. Stepanov (eds.), *Voinstvo Sviatogo Georgiia: zhizneopisaniia Russkikh monarkhistov nachala XX veka* (St. Petersburg, 2006), pp. 339-367.

<sup>58</sup> See the extracts from a meeting of the Assembly attended by Boris Nikol'skii, who would later join the URP: GARF, F. 588, op. 1, d. 1243, l. 10: *Iz zapisi zasedaniia soveta Russkogo sobraniia*, 6 September 1903.

<sup>59</sup> See the review of the Assembly's activity in opening the Khar'kov branch in the conservative journal Russian Messenger. *Russkii vestnik*, 10 (1903), pp. 831-843. 'Sovremennaia letopis': otkrytie Khar'kovskogo otdela Russkogo sobraniia'.

<sup>60</sup> *Mirnyi trud*, 1 (1904), section 2, p. 3.

Westernization in art, literature and music.<sup>61</sup> The group's council held that Russians had not realized their artistic and cultural potential. Instead, decadent Western trends that represented egoism and rootlessness, rather than community and authenticity, had swept the Russian land.<sup>62</sup> Instead of Western artistic trends, which centred on individual achievement, the Assembly emphasized collective achievements, freedom and personality.

The greatness of the nineteenth-century Russian canon pointed towards the innate genius of the Russian people; examples of outstanding high culture from the nineteenth century were used to illustrate this idea. Lermontov, Tolstoy, Gogol and Pushkin were preferred points of discussion to the ideas of Slavophile and Pan-Slav thinkers such as Aksakov or Leontiev and were held up as examples of what the Russian cultural genius had achieved. The Assembly's literature claimed a desire to emphasize group achievement over individual talent, whilst celebrating heroes in Russian art and literature.<sup>63</sup> However, founders of the group claimed not to be focusing only on a series of 'great men' and their significance to the canon, but also exploring the contribution of the Russian people (*narod*). It was a celebration of Russian (and only Russian) national genius.<sup>64</sup> Music was particularly important to the Assembly, as it was to later right-wing groups. Many of the association's gatherings took the form of literary and musical evenings (*literaturno-muzykal'nye vechera*) held to promote and celebrate the greatness of Russian culture.<sup>65</sup> Later right-wing associations such as the Union of Archangel Mikhail (UAM), and many smaller civic groups, would share the Assembly's nostalgia for a supposedly vanishing culture.

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<sup>61</sup> *Russkii vestnik*, 10 (1903), pp. 838-839.

<sup>62</sup> *Mirnyi trud*, 1 (1904), section 2, p. 41. In adopting 'community principles' (*obshchinnoe nachalo*) and not 'society', the Assembly was using older Slavophile precepts. Walicki, *A History of Russian Thought*, pp. 108-109.

<sup>63</sup> *Mirnyi trud*, 1 (1904), section 2, pp. 9-10.

<sup>64</sup> *Russkii vestnik*, 10 (1903), p. 838.

<sup>65</sup> This would be a tactic that the Assembly, and other rightist organizations, would use throughout their existence until the revolutions of 1917.

Before 1905, the group described itself as a cultural rather than a political organization. This was not merely a pragmatic consideration to evade closure by the Ministry of the Interior (Russia's police). It signified something deeper: many members of the group regarded any form of organized political activity with suspicion, a development that they connected with 'the left' and Western influences on Russian society and culture. Later right-wing groups would echo these principles. The writer and publicist S. N. Syromiatnikov, one of the group's founders, wrote in 1901 that Western developments were the antithesis of the autocratic tradition. The Western idea of constitutionalism threatened the existing system of government, which alone 'understood the heart of every Russian'.<sup>66</sup> S. N. Syromiatnikov drew a distinction between the long-established institution of the autocracy, and artificial developments in contemporary Russia and the West. He presented the Emancipation Manifesto of 1861 as proof that it was the autocracy, not the revolutionaries, that protected the true interests of the people. Syromiatnikov described Russia's liberals as sustained by a series of falsehoods, and claimed in his work *Experience of Russian Thought* that real liberalism and freedom could only be provided by the autocracy. He claimed to be 'above politics', reflecting his view that 'modern politics' – a loaded term – represented negative ends.<sup>67</sup>

The ceremonial trappings of Russian religion were a central element of the symbolism of the Assembly. Student members of the Khar'kov branch chose an icon of the priest Serafim Sarovskii to display rather than one of a Tsar or even a leader of the group at the first ceremonial meeting held on 8 December 1902.<sup>68</sup> The demonstrations of the Assembly, with icon processions, crosses, and images of saints, were richly redolent of Orthodox religious symbolism. The roots of the conflict between the greater Russia and minority nations were often considered by the leaders of the Assembly, such as Boris Nikol'skii, to be religious: Russian

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<sup>66</sup> S. N. Syromiatnikov, *Opyty russkoi mysli* (St. Petersburg, 1901), p. 37.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 99.

<sup>68</sup> *Russkii vestnik*, 10 (1903), p. 843.

Orthodoxy against Roman Catholicism, in the case of Poland.<sup>69</sup> From an early stage, religious figures played an important role in right-wing groups.<sup>70</sup> Priests formed a small percentage of the group's membership, but reflected a wider perception amongst members of the centrality of religion to Russia's development. Tying into these convictions was an avowed nationalism. Members conceived of Russian statehood as centering on the achievements of the 'great Russian' state, and its control over the 'little Russian' nations, such as Ukraine. The Assembly drew on older Pan-Slavist ideals, as expressed by Aksakov above, of a worldwide mission to unite all of the Slavic peoples, based on an idea that the Russian nation was the greatest of all nations.<sup>71</sup>

The aim of the group as stated by prominent members such as A. S. Viazigin may have been the preservation of a particular type of 'great Russian' culture and its heroic, ascetic ideals, but there was also a negative focus to this. Certain lists of enemies – political, social, ethnic or national – were contrasted with the positive aspects of Russian culture and art, in order to accentuate threats to the state and people. A commentator from the Assembly, Nikolai Engelgardt, drew a link between the 1863 Polish rebellion and the subversive nature of Roman Catholicism, as opposed to Russian Orthodoxy.<sup>72</sup> Additionally, the group continued to display the anti-Semitism associated with Pan-Slavist thinkers such as Aksakov as it attracted more reactionary members. Sharapov displayed his own anti-Semitic inclinations, stating in a meeting that the group had a mission to oppose 'international Jewry'.<sup>73</sup> Members also opposed atheism, anarchism and nihilism.<sup>74</sup> Overall, the central ideas of the Assembly were not innovative, but derived from nineteenth-century conservative ideals. The main ideas of the Assembly reflected the central principles of later organized right-wing parties, though with one important distinction. Before 1905, it was a cultural rather than a political group, necessarily so given the blanket

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<sup>69</sup> GARF, F. 588, op. 1, d. 1243, ll. 1–1 ob.: Zapis' zasedaniia soveta Russkogo sobraniia, 9 April 1902.

<sup>70</sup> Kir'ianov, *Russkoe sobranie*, p. 78.

<sup>71</sup> *Mirnyi trud*, 1 (1904), section 2, p. 28.

<sup>72</sup> *Russkii vestnik*, 1 (1905), pp. 420–421, Nikolai Engelgardt, 'Sovremennaia letopis'.

<sup>73</sup> *Letopis' russkogo sobraniia*, p. 25.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 1.



ban on political organizations. Only later would political activity become a more central feature.

### *Radicalism and social transformation*

The Assembly placed great stress on the group's relationship with the *narod*. Like the URP, the URM and the UAM, the Assembly was desperate to claim mass support, though it did not have many obvious advantages in this aim. It was an organization composed of the nobility, who had little in common with the majority of the subjects of the Russian Empire, including the *narod* that was frequently idolized. Members such as D. P. Golitsyn only had an abstract conception of the Russian people and their role throughout history. However, the populist-demagogical tendency in the organized right was developing within the group, with appeals to ultra-nationalism as well as social and cultural ideas celebrating 'the people'.

The right-wing student movement (or Academists) that would form a support base for later right-wing groups had its origins within the Assembly. Securing wider social bases was a challenge for the right, especially during and after the revolutionary period.<sup>75</sup> This appeal to youth was an intriguing feature, discernible from the early propaganda of the founders and organizers of the group.<sup>76</sup> Youth were held to be the future and salvation of Russia, and members of the Assembly wished to give them a role reflecting their importance to the organization, as well as to the Russian land and state. A speech given by D. P. Golitsyn at a meeting of the Khar'kov branch on 8 December 1902 included the following address to student

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<sup>75</sup> *Mirnyi trud*, 1 (1904), section 2, p. 7. The Academist movement will be assessed in chapter five.

<sup>76</sup> Intriguingly, clear echoes of this right-wing appeal to youth can be seen in later Romanian nationalist student movements, which were also created in response to fear of a left-wing revolution, and a strong national minority presence on university campuses. The student movement of Corneliu Codreanu in the 1930s played on such fears, and saw that the incumbent regime had not done enough to prevent the revolutionary threat from within higher education. 'In 1936, Codreanu claimed that he had been frightened by the revolutionary phenomena he observed after the war and that the authorities had not responded to the leftist and Jewish danger vigorously enough'. I. Livezeanu, *Cultural Politics in Greater Romania: Regionalism, Nation Building, and Ethnic Struggle, 1918-1930* (Ithaca, NY, 1995), p. 256.

members, ‘Youth, tomorrow will be the day of our nation, youth – you will be the future of the life of our land, youth – this, which may be yours...when we depart, it will be your turn’.<sup>77</sup> However, only very small numbers of students were initially attracted to the Assembly. The Khar’kov student branch had only around 50 members at first, all of them drawn from the nearby university.<sup>78</sup> Only 100 students appeared at a demonstration on 27 November 1903 in Khar’kov, held in defence of the Uvarov triad of Orthodoxy, autocracy and nationality, in what was apparently a peaceful protest.<sup>79</sup>

A primary rationale of such groups was to oppose revolutionaries. A law student, S. Mandrukin, opined that there were only 82 student members of the Assembly in Khar’kov by December 1904, united in declaring ‘cultural war’ against revolutionary elements. The main council of the ‘Russian-students’ organization suggested compiling a list of the ‘student-revolutionaries’ and liberal professors who resided at Khar’kov University, which would then be passed on to the government. Given its political status, the Russian-students organization was technically illegal, but this did not appear to dissuade the organizers of the group from the possibility of communicating with the government. Its members wished to work with the regime, showing the shared desire of the regime and the autonomous right to combat revolution.<sup>80</sup>

It was desperately important to appeal to youth to win support for the nascent right. Incidents such as the 1899 student disturbances had highlighted the urgency of the crisis at the Russian university. According to the publicist Pavel Khorsov, writing in *Mirnyi trud*, the university was in a ‘state of decline’, as was Russian

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<sup>77</sup> *Mirnyi trud*, 1 (1904), section 2, p. 51; *Russkii vestnik*, 10 (1903), p. 843.

<sup>78</sup> *Mirnyi trud*, 1 (1904), section 2, p. 2. At the turn of the twentieth century, the Russian Empire had nine universities (St. Petersburg, Moscow, Kiev, Kazan, Odessa, Khar’kov, Tomsk, Warsaw, and Iurev [also known as Dorpat or Tartu]) with a total student population of 16,497. This would grow exponentially in later years, which was accompanied by a concomitant rise in numbers involved in Academist movements. This information is from S. K. Morrissey, *Heralds of Revolution: Russian Students and the Mythologies of Radicalism* (Oxford, 1998), p. 11.

<sup>79</sup> Iu. I. Kir’ianov and B. F. Dodonov (eds.), ‘Predystoriia pravomonarkhicheskikh partii v Rossii, 1902-1905 gg.’, *Istoricheskii arkhiv*, 5 (2001), p. 115.

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 118-119.

culture generally. The purity of ‘Russian science’ was threatened by political developments on the university campus, and Russia’s technological progress was potentially delayed.<sup>81</sup> A wave of student strikes had disrupted the calm of Russia’s universities; Russia’s place as a centre of scientific and cultural development, a feature the group held with pride, was threatened by such unrest. A future Dmitrii Mendeleev, rather than working in the laboratory, could be out amongst the rioters: a detrimental development indeed in regard to Russia’s future. Though many conservatives looked on the power of Russian youth with dismay,<sup>82</sup> at an early stage, influential figures on the right, including Lev Tikhomirov, and the leader of the Russian Assembly in Kiev, Boris Iuzefovich, placed great emphasis on the potential power of youth movements and attempted to entice them to the cause.<sup>83</sup> This is not to deny rightist fears of youth radicalism. Tikhomirov himself claimed radicalism in the Russian university had grown immensely during 1905, posing a serious threat to the stability of the autocracy. He claimed between 3,000 and 4,000 students took part in strikes at Moscow University during September 1905.<sup>84</sup> The relationship between Russia’s rightist factions and youth was not uniform, but complex: a delicate balance between optimism and pessimism, and in this, the Assembly set a template for later rightist organizations.

There was a great interest shown in using music to enhance public celebrations by members of the Assembly. There were conservative precedents for

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<sup>81</sup> In their readiness to defend ‘Russian science’, the Assembly was adopting nineteenth-century precedents from a variety of civil society groups, in Europe as well as in Russia. The Society of Friends of Natural History (established in 1863 in Moscow) displayed a similarity with right-wing student groups in seeing a link between patriotism and ‘forms of useful knowledge’. The nineteenth-century fascination with science including materialism, theories of evolution, Darwin and natural history also had clear echoes in a number of Academist groups. See Bradley, *Voluntary Associations in Tsarist Russia*, pp. 128-168.

<sup>82</sup> Prince Vladimir Meshcherskii’s very conservative newspaper *Grazhdanin* (Citizen) described increasing anarchy as the culmination of the 60-year influence of socialist ideologies within the Russian university, protected and promoted by liberal sympathizers. This had reached a peak in 1905-1906, when he claimed that 12,000 students from St. Petersburg University had taken part in strikes. Given the total number of students enrolled in all nine Russian universities in 1908 was estimated to be around 35,000, this is an unlikely figure. *Grazhdanin*, 14 March 1910, 8-9, p. 20.

<sup>83</sup> One proponent was Lev Tikhomirov, who wrote of the need for a strong nationalist student wing to combat the powerful tendencies of the left-wing student movement in 1907. See L. Tikhomirov, *Khristianskoe gosudarstvo i vneshniaia politika* (Moscow, 2012), p. 650.

<sup>84</sup> ‘25 let nazad: iz dnevnika L. Tikhomirova’, *Krasnyi arkhiv*, 3(40) (1930), p. 60.

this, such as the Slavophile publicist Petr Kireevskii's collaboration on a collection of popular folk songs in the 1830s; an attempt to preserve specific popular songs, and prevent the possible disappearance of Russian folklore. Members of the Assembly, like nationalist thinkers elsewhere, understood that music could be used for mobilization purposes, and its meetings were rarely silent affairs, frequently including performances of patriotic music. These musical evenings provided opportunities for members to listen to high-minded 'great Russian' music that was held by organizers to be of a superior style to more modern trends.<sup>85</sup> The emphasis on music as a feature of the 'cultural performance' lasted throughout the course of the Assembly's existence. Choices included the arias from the opera *Eugene Onegin*, and performances of the nationalist composer Mikhail Glinka's 1836 opera *A Life for the Tsar* (*Zhizn' za tsaria*). Such musical choices were carefully selected to emphasize the glory of holy *Rus'*, Orthodoxy and autocracy.<sup>86</sup> The cultivation of this 'national' style of music had the central aim of glorifying the Russian land and people. It is therefore curious that in these meetings there was no sustained attempt to cultivate folk conceptions of music or art that were instead held to be 'decadent' trends. Instead, the Assembly had in mind a certain type of high-minded, ascetic music as the accompaniment for their events. Hence, these musical choices were not genuinely 'popular' but reflected the tastes of the group's organizers. Teasing out popular aspects would prove to be a challenge to the right in its quest to cultivate a style appealing to a wider public, rather than the narrow set of elites that made up the Assembly.<sup>87</sup>

A particular element that needs highlighting is the negative aspects of the group. The Assembly was established as an antidote to a series of threats to the

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<sup>85</sup> *Mirnyi trud*, 1 (1904), section 2, pp. 19-20.

<sup>86</sup> *Russkii vestnik*, 10 (1903), p. 838.

<sup>87</sup> For further discussion, see R. A. Rothstein, 'Death of the Folk Song?' in S. Frank and M. D. Steinberg (eds.), *Cultures in Flux: Lower-class Values, Practices, and Resistance in Late Imperial Russia* (Princeton, 1994), pp. 108-120; and F. Maes, *A History of Russian Music: From Kamarinskaya to Babi Yar* (translated by A. Pomerans and E. Pomerans, Berkeley and London, 2002). The use of music was an important part of nationalist student fraternities led by Friedrich Ludwig Jahn in Wilhelmine Germany. See G. L. Mosse, *The Nationalization of the Masses: Political Symbolism and Mass Movements in Germany from the Napoleonic Wars Through the Third Reich* (New York, 1975), pp. 77-81.

Russian land. The conservatively-inclined founders of the group, D. P. Golitsyn and A. S. Viazigin, saw chaotic, destructive Western chimeras unleashed within nineteenth-century Russia: revolution, cosmopolitanism and anarchism.<sup>88</sup> Though later rightist groups such as the URP would take on huge notoriety throughout the empire for their violent and demagogical nature, the Assembly always renounced violence as part of its programme, though some of its members, such as Pavel Krushevan, did much to incite tensions and hatreds.<sup>89</sup> However, given the size of the Assembly, its ability to plan and oversee large-scale violence across the empire was indeed limited.<sup>90</sup>

Notwithstanding such limitations, the group undeniably had a hostile element, based around an idea of ethnic, as well as religious, exclusiveness. At a meeting between members of the Odessa branch of the Russian Assembly on 26 September 1902, it was declared that foreigners of all types were not to be admitted to the group. Only ‘true Christians, true Russian subjects’ were allowed to be members. National minorities and Jews were not to be admitted, in the case of the latter, even after conversion to Orthodoxy. The temperament of the group, as expressed by figures such as Golitsyn and Nikol’skii, was militantly anti-Semitic and nationalist.<sup>91</sup> The Assembly after 1905 would refuse to compromise with what it saw as more moderate conservative tendencies, such as the Octobrists, who were seen, along with liberals such as the Kadets, as part of the problems facing Russian society.<sup>92</sup> The Assembly’s rationale serves to demonstrate the ambiguity between traditional conservatism and newer ideas of right-wing radicalism.

Therefore, whilst the group had a limited size and social base, it signified an important turning point in the historical development of the right. Ideologically, it

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<sup>88</sup> A. Kaplin and A. D. Stepanov, ‘A. S. Viazigin, tol’ko vera daet silu zhit’’, in Ivanov and Stepanov (eds.), *Voinstvo Sviatogo Georgiia*, pp. 348-349.

<sup>89</sup> Kir’ianov and Dodonov (eds.), ‘Predystoriia pravomonarkhicheskikh partii v Rossii’, 5 (2001), p. 126; *Mirnyi trud*, 5 (1909), pp. 54-55.

<sup>90</sup> *Mirnyi trud*, 5 (1909), pp. 54-55.

<sup>91</sup> GARF, F. 588, op. 1, d. 1243, ll. 6–6 ob.: Zapis’ zasedeniia soveta Russkogo sobraniia, 26 September 1902.

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*, ll. 6–6 ob.

focused on Russian supremacy and ethnic exclusivity. Its desire to use the power of culture to educate the masses was also adopted by later right-wing civic groups. The Assembly was a bridging point between later associations, affording many figures prominent in the monarchist movement later on the first chance to tackle the problems of the day in a group forum. However, as a wave of social and political crises hit Russian society, tensions existing within this group would develop elsewhere, causing a growing instability in the forces claiming to defend the old regime.

### **Towards Crisis: A New Time of Troubles**

The early twentieth century saw the emergence of fresh right-wing radicalism, inspired by events in contemporary Russia.<sup>93</sup> A conservative diagnosis of Russian politics and society at the outset of the twentieth century would not have been a healthy one. Historical crises from the latter half of the nineteenth century, including the 1863 Polish uprising, university unrest and the dawn of the worker's movement were pointed to by members of the Assembly as evidence of the growing ferment in society. Many rightists were informed by a sense of history; these historical shocks pointed towards the future ruin of Russia.<sup>94</sup> One of the founders of the Assembly, Boris Nikol'skii, perceived a variety of political, social and economic crises on the horizon at the outset of the twentieth century.<sup>95</sup> This sense of pessimism was deeply felt across wider society; it was not limited to right-wing thinkers.<sup>96</sup> It is important to remember that the autocracy was genuinely embattled; what can be seen as a series of right-wing myths were often exaggerations, but were constructed around real events and crises, albeit often loosely.

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<sup>93</sup> Newstad, 'Components of Pessimism', pp. 270-271.

<sup>94</sup> As noted by Levitskii, 'Pravye partii', in Martov et al. (eds.), *Obshchestvennoe dvizhenie v Rossii*, Vol. 3, p. 468.

<sup>95</sup> 'Dnevnik Borisa Nikol'skogo', *Krasnyi arkhiv*, 2(63) (1934), p. 63.

<sup>96</sup> This thinking and worldview would continue to permeate conservative circles until 1914. See M. N. Luk'ianov, 'V ozhidanii katastrofy: eskhatologicheskie motivy v russkom konservatizme nakanune pervoi mirovoi voiny', *Russian History*, 31, 4 (2004), pp. 419-446.

*Pogroms, assassinations and failed wars*

The immediate catalyst for the rise of the right was a series of events between 1902 and 1905. Not only were there agrarian riots in Poltava during 1902, continuing ferment in the cities was a negative development intimately tied to existing ideologies; we have already seen how the agrarian utopia of Sharapov was built on older Slavophile precepts of celebrating rural Russia.<sup>97</sup> Rapid urbanization gave rise to new fears of an urban working class, as workers were seen to be losing their ties with the Russian countryside and acquainting themselves with the writings of Marx and Engels, leading to political radicalization. Tikhomirov was one thinker who perceived this, and the workers' issue became a central priority for him during 1905, in response to urbanization in Russia.<sup>98</sup>

The Easter 1903 pogrom in Kishinev was the first large-scale anti-Jewish riot since those of 1881-1882.<sup>99</sup> The reactionary publicist Pavel Krushevan, a member of the Russian Assembly and leader of the URP in Bessarabia from 1905 until 1909, published anti-Semitic tirades in the months leading up to the pogrom in his paper *Bessarabets* (Bessarabian), blaming Jews for a variety of ills in Russian life, as well as re-animating the ancient ritual murder myth.<sup>100</sup> According to the governor of Bessarabia from 1903, Prince S. D. Urusov, Krushevan's paper had exploited tensions in the area, which were pronounced given Kishinev's 45 per cent Jewish population.<sup>101</sup> The 'opinion of radical right society' perceived Russians as exploited by rich and powerful Jews. Though the Russian Assembly did not have the organizational wherewithal to organize a mass uprising, the appearance of a group

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<sup>97</sup> *Russkii trud*, 20 April 1897, 15-16, p. 3.

<sup>98</sup> A contemporary report of the workers' movement after 1905 can be found in D. Kol'stov, 'Rabochie v 1905-1907 gg.', in L. Martov et al. (eds.), *Obshchestvennoe dvizhenie v Rossii v nachale XX-go veka*, Vol. 2, Pt. 1 (St. Petersburg, 1910), pp. 185-341.

<sup>99</sup> For analysis of the pogrom, see E. Judge, *Easter in Kishinev: Anatomy of a Pogrom* (New York, 1992); A. Kushko and V. Taki (comps.), *Bessarabiia v sostave Rossiiskoi imperii, 1812-1917* (Moscow, 2012), pp. 265-278; S. Lambroza, 'The Pogroms of 1903-1906', in Klier and Lambroza (eds.), *Pogroms*, pp. 195-212.

<sup>100</sup> The best known example of this obsession with Jewish ritual murder myths was the Beilis affair, 1911-1913.

<sup>101</sup> This figure is from the imperial census of 1897. *Pervaia vseobshchaia perepis' naseleniia rossiiskoi imperii. 1897 g.* Vol. 3 (St. Petersburg, 1905), pp. 74-93.

known as the Union of Truly Russian Men (*Soiuz istinno-russkikh liudei*) in Kishinev shows that provincial radical right movements were developing.<sup>102</sup> Members of the Assembly tended to be unsympathetic towards Jewish plight in Kishinev.<sup>103</sup> Like Ivan Aksakov in the 1880s, rightists saw the poor Russian masses, not the Jews, as the true victims of the pogroms. A. M. Zolotarev, a vice-chair of the Russian Assembly, in one of its meetings countenanced establishing a fund to provide financial assistance for the ‘Russian victims’ of the pogrom in Kishinev.<sup>104</sup>

Consequently, rightists were beginning to worry establishment figures such as Urusov.<sup>105</sup> Pleve, the Minister of the Interior, was no friend of the Jews, but realized the dangers posed by mass unrest. It was necessary to suppress any disorders that posed a threat to the calm of the empire. This was made difficult by the scant police presence in the provincial regions, as well as corrupt and lazy officials turning a blind eye to disorders, which helped to create a situation whereby mobs could create anarchy in Kishinev. Though there is no evidence that the government planned the Kishinev pogrom, inaction, foot dragging and general incompetence from the local authorities meant the violence took days to subside.<sup>106</sup> After Kishinev, fierce pogroms swept other regions, a major one being in Gomel during 1903. Unlike in Kishinev, fierce fighting broke out between pogromists and Jewish self-defence groups, much to the government’s alarm. In 1904, there were a further 43 pogroms across the empire.<sup>107</sup> In Kishinev and Gomel, the pogroms were spontaneous events, with disorganized bands of townsfolk carrying out the violence. Smaller groups with interests akin to the right were certainly involved in these outbreaks of violence, suggesting that the pogroms were popular uprisings, though it is difficult to definitively assess the complicity of the central right-wing groups

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<sup>102</sup> S. D. Urusov, *Zapiski gubernatora* (Moscow, 1907), pp. 108-109.

<sup>103</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 108.

<sup>104</sup> GARF, F. 588, op. 1, d. 1243, l. 10: Iz zapisi zasedaniia Russkogo sobraniia, 6 September 1903.

<sup>105</sup> Urusov, *Zapiski gubernatora*, p. 109.

<sup>106</sup> *Pravo*, 30 May 1904, cols. 1241-1245; 6 June 1904, cols. 1280-1287; Lambroza, ‘The Pogroms of 1903-1906’, in Klier and Lambroza (eds.), *Pogroms*, pp. 195-247; Urusov claims the regime wished to exploit the events, Urusov, *Zapiski gubernatora*, pp. 108-110.

<sup>107</sup> Lambroza, ‘The Pogroms of 1903-1906’, in Klier and Lambroza (eds.), *Pogroms*, p. 213.



during 1903 and 1904.<sup>108</sup> This spell of anti-Jewish violence led to the word ‘pogrom’ taking on international as well as domestic recognition.<sup>109</sup>

It was in this period that the movement increased its provincial presence. In Nizhnii Novgorod province, the Words and Deeds (*Slovo i delo*) group was created as a small ‘monarchist’ party, pledging to defend the Uvarov triad of Orthodoxy, autocracy and nationality. The total membership of the group was estimated to be around two hundred. A proclamation from March 1903 appealed to ‘true Russian people’, and the committee pledged allegiance not to the Russian government, but to the ‘Tsar-father’ (*Tsar’-batiushka*) and the preservation of an autocracy that was not in any way compromised by contemporary political developments.<sup>110</sup> Radicalism was becoming an increasing feature, not primarily expressed by ideological novelty, but rather pledges to commit violence. A police report from 1 May 1903 noted the proclamations of the Russian Union that promised ‘death to the yids!’<sup>111</sup> Both documents show a desire to appeal to the masses, rather than only elites. The regime itself had previously tried to utilize a ‘conservative monarchism’ aimed at attracting the workers, under the auspices of the Zubatov Unions. But the Words and Deeds group and the Russian Union were different in that they were not organized by figures from within the regime, but were spontaneous associations; these were popular movements that rejected any accusation that they were created at the behest of the government.<sup>112</sup>

The key event was the onset of the revolutionary era, with the rise of spontaneous rightist groups stimulated by developments elsewhere, mobilizing in defence of an increasingly embattled autocracy. A series of attacks on significant

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<sup>108</sup> Analysis of the Gomel pogrom is in *ibid.*, pp. 209-212.

<sup>109</sup> S. Johnson, ‘Uses and Abuses: “Pogrom” in the Anglo-American Imagination, 1881-1919’, in E. M. Avrutin and H. Murav (eds.), *Jews in the East European Borderlands* (Boston, MA, 2012), pp. 147-166.

<sup>110</sup> Kir’ianov and Dodonov (eds.), ‘Predystoriia pravomonarkhicheskikh partii v Rossii’, 5 (2001), pp. 111-112.

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 114.

<sup>112</sup> On the Zubatov Unions, see J. Schneiderman, *Sergei Zubatov and Revolutionary Marxism: The Struggle for the Working Class in Tsarist Russia* (Ithaca, NY, 1976); and J. Daly, *Autocracy under Siege: Security Police and Opposition in Russia, 1866-1905* (DeKalb, 1998), pp. 72-97.

establishment figures by revolutionary movements alarmed many conservatives. The assassination of Pleve in 1904, the result of a bomb attack by the SRs, drew public attention to anti-state revolutionary violence.<sup>113</sup> For other conservatives, as well as the radical right, there were fears that further concessions would be wrung out of the regime by these attacks on government officials. Vladimir Meshcherskii, influential member of the Tsarist court camarilla, confidant of Nicholas II and editor of the reactionary newspaper *Grazhdanin* was one who expressed such views.<sup>114</sup> Pleve's successor, Prince Sviatopolk-Mirskii, was perceived, not inaccurately, as a liberal sympathizer by Meshcherskii, who saw in his tendency to follow a more moderate course of action than his predecessor Pleve the encouragement of further demands for change from liberal elites.<sup>115</sup> Sviatopolk-Mirskii's predilection for moderate reform did indeed encourage liberal demands, with the banquet campaign of November to December 1904 and the subsequent formation of the Union of Liberation shortly prior to the revolution of 1905 being one outcome.<sup>116</sup>

The greatest cause of pessimism at this time was the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-1905. Yet in the initial phases of the war, the feeling amongst the right was optimistic. Lev Tikhomirov wrote in his diary that on 28 January 1904 'in Moscow, the mood was high and patriotic'.<sup>117</sup> Nicholas II, openly dismissive of the Japanese and predicting an easy victory, was shocked by the humiliating nature of the military defeat, exemplified by events such as the rout of the Russian navy at Tsushima. As much as the defeat itself, it was the resulting political radicalization of Russian society that frightened onlookers. Tikhomirov noted how crowds of anti-war demonstrators in Moscow had grown in size during 1904, and wished for the fall of the autocracy, 'war with the Russian government' and 'unity with the Japanese proletariat'.<sup>118</sup> That it was an *urban* crowd who chanted 'down with the autocracy

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<sup>113</sup> For examples, see *Grazhdanin*, 1 August 1904, 61, pp. 18-20; *Russkii vestnik*, 9 (1905), p. 333.

<sup>114</sup> For commentary, see W. E. Mosse, 'Imperial Favourite: V. P. Meshchersky and the *Grazhdanin*', *Slavonic and East European Review*, 59, 4 (1981), pp. 529-547; D. C. B. Lieven, *Nicholas II: Emperor of all the Russias* (London, 1993), pp. 135-141.

<sup>115</sup> *Grazhdanin*, 5 August 1904, 62, p. 20.

<sup>116</sup> Galai, *Liberation Movement*, pp. 221, 223, 232-236.

<sup>117</sup> '25 let nazad: iz dnevnika L. Tikhomirova', *Krasnyi arkhiv*, 1(38) (1930), p. 30.

<sup>118</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 38.

and the Tsar!’ in particular riled this ex-revolutionary, who saw in increasing worker radicalism ‘the ruin of the unhappy nation’.<sup>119</sup> Mikhail O. Men’shikov, contributor to Aleksei Suvorin’s influential, widely-circulating St. Petersburg newspaper *Novoe vremia*, felt the war would reveal the weakness of Russia’s ruling classes; he predicted the resulting mood of anarchy would fundamentally change Russian society. Men’shikov wrote in late 1905, ‘revolution has come to Russia...but after every revolution there comes an uncertain period of anarchy, from which comes war – not with the old, but with the new regime’.<sup>120</sup> A. V. Bogdanovich, the wife of the future URP member General E. V. Bogdanovich, expressed the following sentiment in her diary, after a meeting between members of her husband’s salon in St. Petersburg on 17 May 1905 where Russian failures in the war were discussed:

So far, no terrible disturbances have followed this clash, but there have been many others – Port Arthur, Laioian, Mukden, etc. All of today’s guests had a deep fall in their spirits, and everyone expects domestic troubles, that from the catastrophes that have befallen the monarchy, the Tsar would issue not only a constitution, but a republic...<sup>121</sup>

Such developments contributed towards an idea in rightist circles of a second time of troubles (*smutnoe vremia*), the first of which came after the period between Ivan IV’s death in 1598 and the installation of the Romanov dynasty in 1613.<sup>122</sup> This underlying feeling of chaos and instability was integral to the message of the right before, during and after 1905, with current events representing nothing less than national humiliation. Tikhomirov wrote in his diary, ‘apart from nonsense and anarchy, what is the basis of the contemporary disorganization and demoralization of Russia? It is a horrible time’.<sup>123</sup> Reaction also came from elsewhere. A letter from 12 February 1904, signed by members of the Group of Russian Patriots, claimed that workers in the factories of Tiflis had taken it on themselves to organize branches of patriotic groups in defence of the ‘140 million Russian patriots’ let down by the liberal classes of greedy, money-hungry bureaucrats. The events of the Russo-

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<sup>119</sup> Ibid., p. 48.

<sup>120</sup> M. O. Men’shikov, *Pis'ma k blizhnim*, December 1905, p. 512.

<sup>121</sup> A. V. Bogdanovich, *Tri poslednikh samodorzhtsa* (Moscow, 1990), p. 349.

<sup>122</sup> Ibid., p. 349; *Moskovskie vedomosti*, 27 February 1905, 58, p. 2.

<sup>123</sup> ‘25 let nazad: iz dnevnika L. Tikhomirova’, *Krasnyi arkhiv*, 1(38) (1930), p. 54.

Japanese War were cited as one example of the catastrophe that would follow if Russia continued to go down the path of liberalism. Though these groups may have wanted to keep the autocracy, they were far from happy with it in its present form. Indeed, there was widespread anger at present developments.<sup>124</sup>

*Moskovskie vedomosti*, edited by the future leader of the RMP Vladimir Gringmut since 1896, explicitly linked workers with political radicalism and the ensuing era of crisis. Gringmut wrote in one editorial that the workers' movement lay behind much of the crisis, and the onset of the revolutionary period.<sup>125</sup> The worrying events of Bloody Sunday, 9 January 1905, revealed Father Gapon to be a revolutionary, one who had 'previously drawn a salary from the security section'. Gringmut added that Gapon was the tool of 'the young red nihilists and the Jews'.<sup>126</sup> That the new period was conceived of as an era of social crisis would have an important effect on the rightist conception of the *narod* – never straightforward from its inception. Right-wingers such as Gringmut realized the importance of creating a wider appeal, but due to widespread strikes and riots saw large sections of the Russian people in a pessimistic light.

Other monarchist groups displayed fear of an impending catastrophe at the outset of 1905. The assassination of the governor-general of Moscow, Grand Duke Sergei Aleksandrovich, by an SR bomb in February 1905 added to the general sense of unease.<sup>127</sup> The most extreme branches of the right attempted to create a worldview where politically motivated (as opposed to anti-Semitic) violence was

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<sup>124</sup> Kir'ianov and Dodonov (eds.), 'Predystoriia pravomonarkhicheskikh partii v Rossii', 5 (2001), pp. 125-126.

<sup>125</sup> Editorials on the threat posed by working-class radicalism were an almost daily occurrence in the pages of *Moskovskie vedomosti*, for example: 12 January 1905, 12, p. 2; 21 January 1905, 21, p. 2; 24 January 1905, 24, p. 2; 1 February 1905, 31, pp. 1-2; 2 February 1905, 33, pp. 1-2.

<sup>126</sup> '25 let nazad: iz dnevnika L. Tikhomirova', *Krasnyi arkhiv*, 1(38) (1930), p. 56; *Moskovskie vedomosti*, 24 January 1905, 24, p. 2.

<sup>127</sup> For discussion of political violence from the extreme left, see Geifman, *Thou Shalt Kill*, pp. 11-44. Geifman distinguishes the targeted political violence of terrorism from chaotic mob violence, the latter of which was more widely associated with right-wing bands. The distinction is useful, but given the realities of governing such a vast empire and the regime's often inadequate resources to deal with this, both terrorist and mob violence necessitated the same response: quick and decisive restoration of order.

exclusively the preserve of the left. Rightists would continually hark back to such events as proof of the murderous intentions of revolutionaries.<sup>128</sup> A monarchist proclamation from April 1905 in Kiev, addressed ‘to the Russian workers’, mentioned the following assassinations: Alexander II (1881), A. S. Sipiagin (1902), V. Pleve (1904) and Grand Duke Sergei Aleksandrovich (1905).<sup>129</sup> Activists claimed that these assassinations, and the prevalence of revolutionary terror, would in future necessitate a more combative approach.<sup>130</sup>

### *The Russian Monarchist Party*



Figure 2 Badge of the Russian Monarchist Party, *Vladimir Andreevich Gringmut: ocherk ego zhizni i deiatel'nosti* (Moscow, 1913), p. 73.

A central paradox of the right was that in mobilizing politically, they clearly felt that the regime itself could no longer be relied upon to defend Russian interests. This built on existing trends within rightist circles, such as the Russian Assembly, in distrusting Russia’s bureaucratic classes.<sup>131</sup> As well as the events of Bloody Sunday, the early months of 1905 saw key events that would lead to the creation of new parties and groups on the right. January 1905 saw the rise of a fresh wave of opposition to the government, in the wake of the Russo-Japanese War. The Union of Liberation became more vocal in its demands, provincial *zemstvo* assemblies became increasingly critical of government policy, and

several thousand students joined strikes at St. Petersburg University. A further wave of political and economic strikes swept major cities such as St. Petersburg, Moscow, Baku, Warsaw, Vilna, Riga, Kiev and several others. In one month, 500,000 people

<sup>128</sup> Later the URP’s paper, *Russkoe znamia* (Russian Flag), would describe the far left as ‘...murderers, bombers, expropriators...who up until now have decided only to resort to these measures’. *Russkoe znamia*, 19 February 1907, p. 1.

<sup>129</sup> Kir’ianov and Dodonov (eds.), ‘Predystoriia pravomonarkhicheskikh partii v Rossii’, 5 (2001), pp. 134-135. Sipiagin was the Minister of the Interior from 1899-1902.

<sup>130</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 135.

<sup>131</sup> *Russkii vestnik*, 9 (1905), p. 333, ‘Sovremennaia letopis’’, Nikolai Engelgardt.

went on strike. A series of declarations from the regime on 18 February, the imperial rescript, pleaded for loyalty from the empire's people in a time of war and also outlined the concessionary measure of establishing a consultative (but not legislative) assembly.

The imperial rescript triggered both further oppositional activity – and also a nascent right. A particularly significant group that emerged was the RMP, created in Moscow under the leadership of Vladimir Gringmut on 24 April 1905. As the editor of *Moskovskie vedomosti*, Vladimir Gringmut also had a journalistic platform. The RMP's banner was ornately decorated in Old Church Slavonic, with images of saints and the Virgin Mary. The official seal of the group included a quote from Nicholas II, 'may my autocracy stay as of old' which is indicative of the mood of the group and its attitude towards the idea of socio-political development in contemporary Russia. For Gringmut, the 18 February rescript was the result of the machinations of liberal 'blabbers and charlatans'. Like the Russian Assembly, the RMP sought to turn the clock back to a time before such political changes. At first the RMP was small in scale. The initial meetings, often attended by less than 100 people, took place in Moscow, with small groups of neo-Slavophiles and rightist publicists present.<sup>132</sup>

The need to form this group (which, significantly, Gringmut called a party, with the accompanying political associations, rather than an assembly or union) suggested the monarchist movement thought the autocracy on its own was inadequate to save Russia. Indeed, Gringmut and others were critical of the contemporary situation. In the first months of 1905 more rightist groups formed in response to the 18 February acts.<sup>133</sup> Gringmut saw that rightist party formation was needed to safeguard the autocracy, but other prominent conservatives, such as

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<sup>132</sup> For biography on Gringmut, see *CSIE*, pp. 152-158; S. D. Stepanov, 'Bogatyř' mysli i dela, Vladimir Andreevich Gringmut (1851-1907)', in Ivanov and Stepanov (eds.), *Voinstvo Sviatogo Georgiia*, pp. 143-155; Z. Vydra, 'Na strážii samodéržavii. Vladimir Andrejevič Gringmut a Ruská monarchistická strana, 1905-1907', *Theatrum historiae*, 5 (2009), pp. 113-142; Rawson, *Russian Rightists*, pp. 21-33.

<sup>133</sup> *Moskovskie vedomosti*, 3 March 1905, 61, pp. 1-2.

Vladimir Meshcherskii, disagreed. Meshcherskii had accurately perceived the aforementioned paradox. He noted from examples of other autocratic states in Europe that there were no autonomous political groups mobilizing to defend them, so why should Russia be different?<sup>134</sup> In contrast, Gringmut saw the need to establish a party in order to channel the ideas of existing cultural groups such as the Assembly. This party could place pressure on the Tsar and his advisors, influencing the politics of the official court. Gringmut, unlike Sharapov, jettisoned any allusions to Slavophilism, and claimed what Russia needed was a benign dictatorship, led by the Tsar, to oppose the current revolutionary developments. Unlike the later URP, Gringmut conceived of the RMP primarily as a pressure group to influence the Tsar and important advisors, who may be sympathetic to their aims.<sup>135</sup> In this conception, Gringmut differed from Sharapov. In his paper, *Russkoe delo* (the Russian Cause) Sharapov called for a wider process of popular mobilization on the part of a potential right. He denounced the Russian Assembly as the ‘essence of Petersburg police patriotism’, and called for a more autonomous set of rightist groups. Gringmut in his turn defended the Assembly, suggesting that the right needed to work closely with the Tsar.<sup>136</sup>

One of the main attractions of the RMP was Gringmut himself, who used his oratorical talents to excite crowds of observers in Moscow. In later years, a number of monarchists would present a view of Gringmut as the dynamic leader (*vozhd'*) of the movement, with unassailable values of heroism and strength.<sup>137</sup> His personality cult amongst followers was one aspect of his importance to the wider monarchist movement, but also vital was Gringmut's conception of how to harness a social

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<sup>134</sup> *Grazhdanin*, 12 May 1905, pp. 18-19.

<sup>135</sup> *Moskovskie vedomosti*, 5 May 1905, 121, pp. 1-2.

<sup>136</sup> *Russkoe delo*, 5 March 1905, 8, p. 12. In this conception of the Tsar's politics, Gringmut was largely correct: see S. Podbolotov, ‘And the Entire Mass of People Rose Up...the Attitude of Nicholas II Towards the Pogroms’, *Cahiers du monde russe*, 45, 1/2 (2004), pp. 193-208. During and after 1905 rightists would attempt to communicate directly with the Tsar to declare unity with the Russian monarch. But this did not stop criticism of Nicholas II emerging in rightist circles, with his personal weakness perceived as his main failing. See S. Podbolotov, ‘Monarchists Against Their Monarch: The Rightists' Criticism of Tsar Nicholas II’, *Russian History*, 1/2 (2004), pp. 105-120.

<sup>137</sup> See the hagiographic account of his life published by supporters in 1913, *Vladimir Andreevich Gringmut: ocherk ego zhizni i deiatel'nosti* (Moscow, 1913), pp. 5-72.

dynamic in Russia. Yet Gringmut, despite what his followers may have believed, did not represent the entire right. His social and political views betrayed a conflict between rightist leaders at an early stage on key issues, including the relationship with authority, desirability of launching a mass appeal, and how to go about achieving the latter aim. He spoke of a potential autonomous right as possessing an authoritarian dynamic, with the masses of people loyal subjects of the Tsar himself and the right-wing movements. Sharapov, however, sharply criticized this conception of a future right, given its rejection of the *zemskii sobor*, the consultative element beloved of the Slavophiles. Sharapov wrote that the popular potential of a monarchist movement was lost by Gringmut's stress on order and authority, and that this emerging right was not truly popular, or indeed autonomous.<sup>138</sup>

## Conclusion

At the outset of 1905, many of the most significant thematic aspects of the rightist movement were set, and its influences in place. Ideologically, rightists were committed to the Uvarov triad of Orthodoxy, autocracy and nationality. Many different monarchist groups had sprung up across the empire in support of these ideas, the most significant of which were the Russian Assembly and the RMP, as well as other provincial groups. However, the movement before the middle of 1905 was small in scale, with discordant aims. Whilst members of the Russian Assembly and the RMP were in dialogue, they had different conceptions of the necessary tactics to take the movement forward, outside the studies of thinkers and small-scale cultural meetings.<sup>139</sup> These groups had formed populist ideas, but were still composed exclusively of elites. The mobilization that the movement sought was only just beginning. However, the RMP took a different view from Slavophile groups of the role the *narod* should play. Gringmut imagined monarchist movements as acting on the people's behalf via his strong leadership, whilst Sharapov in *Russkoe delo* made frequent reference to the potential of the Russian people

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<sup>138</sup> *Russkoe delo*, 5 February 1905, 4, p. 3.

<sup>139</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 3.



themselves, the ‘80 million ploughmen’ who were the truly loyal subjects of the Tsar.<sup>140</sup> But even by the spring of 1905, the rightist reach outside minute cultural groups was very tenuous.<sup>141</sup>

Additionally, major conservative figures agreed that the movement was weak at this stage. Vladimir Gurko, Assistant Minister of Internal Affairs (1906-1907), wrote early in 1905, ‘at the time, those who represented conservative thought in Russia found it very difficult to freely express their thoughts and sentiments’.<sup>142</sup> Lev Tikhomirov concurred with Gurko’s assessment. ‘In recent times...there appears to be taking shape a “conservative party”. But everywhere where its existence is manifest, there is ideological emptiness: apparently, it is composed of old or limited people. It will hardly be a great bulwark against the masses of liberals and the disgruntled.’<sup>143</sup> However, the events of 1900-1905 created the potential for a much larger monarchist movement. The critical changes that the movement needed to react against in society were starting to occur: wartime humiliation, urban unrest, demographic shifts and political assassinations. Ironically, it was the failings of the autocracy that prompted the much wider formation of a popular monarchist movement during the 1905 period.

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<sup>140</sup> *Russkoe delo*, 23 April 1905, 17, pp. 12-14.

<sup>141</sup> Rogger, *Jewish Policies and Right-Wing Politics*, pp. 200-202.

<sup>142</sup> V. I. Gurko, *Features and Figures of the Past: Government and Opinion in the Reign of Nicholas II* (Stanford, 1939), p. 381.

<sup>143</sup> ‘25 let nazad: iz dnevnika L. Tikhomirova’, *Krasnyi arkhiv*, 1(38) (1930), p. 26.

## **In Reaction to Revolution**

The development of the right was especially pronounced during the revolution of 1905. The increasing vocalization of liberal criticism directed at the imperial regime, prompted by the 18 February imperial rescript and widespread rebellions and disorders across the empire shown how the challenges to the autocracy were multi-faceted in nature and occurring across class and social divides. For rightist observers at the outset of 1905 the sources of this instability were both within and outside of the establishment.<sup>1</sup> Later events of that year, such as the promulgation of the October Manifesto, exacerbated such views by showing that the autocracy could no longer be counted upon to effectively defend itself. These events acted as the catalyst for the emergence of two national groups, the Union of Russian Men (URM) and the Union of Russian People (URP), as well as a plethora of smaller associations. This chapter will assess how these new groups created a populist appeal, based on a desire to attract workers and peasants allied to a vision of national pride. It will consider the impact of the violence and radicalization of these groups and the controversy that these features engendered. The rise of a spontaneous, radical right that wished to develop a mass appeal was a challenge to the autocracy, as well as for the right's ostensible opponents, and reflected a longer-term instability in Russian conservatism.

### **The Development of Populist Nationalism**

The most obvious sign of this instability was the emergence of new parties and groups, which arose to defend the autocracy. Count Pavel Sheremetev officially launched the URM in the spring of 1905. Sheremetev had previously been involved

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<sup>1</sup> There are many studies on a huge variety of different aspects of 1905. However, the outstanding general history of the 1905 revolution remains the two-volume work by A. Ascher, *The Revolution of 1905: Russia in Disarray* (Stanford, 1988), and *Authority Restored* (Stanford, 1992).

in the Beseda circle, a group of *zemstvo* activists meeting since 1899.<sup>2</sup> Sheremetev opposed a constitutionalist answer to Russia's problems, and left to form his own, more conservative, group in 1904. Known as the 'Sheremetev circle', this association believed in a patriarchal version of the autocracy. Sheremetev and most of his colleagues believed that the *zemskii sobor* was the necessary consultative element that could unite Tsar and people.<sup>3</sup> After this, Sheremetev formed the URM in the spring of 1905 and was appointed as its chairman. Like the Russian Assembly, the URM's council was wholly composed of elites. Some of the most notable members of the group were Prince A. G. Shcherbatov, one of the most prominent landowners in the Russian Empire; Prince P. N. Trubetskoi, marshal of the nobility for Moscow province; Prince V. M. Urusov, marshal of the nobility for Smolensk province; Prince V. P. Meshcherskii, the editor of the *Grazhdanin*; and Princes V. A., V. D. and V. P. Golitsyn, all members of the noted noble family.<sup>4</sup> Another notable member has already been encountered – S. F. Sharapov, the Slavophile publicist and editor of *Russkoe delo*.<sup>5</sup> One must bear in mind that, in spite of its claims to represent the people, this was a group from the nobility, supported by socially well-connected, solvent backers. Unlike the Russian Monarchist Party (RMP), Sheremetev conceived of this group, not as a political party, but as a set of gentry interests united in their loyalty to the Tsar, even while representing the people; this was a group therefore not of, but rather for the people.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> T. Emmons, 'The Beseda Circle, 1899-1905', *Slavic Review*, 32, 3 (1973), pp. 461-490.

<sup>3</sup> *Russkoe delo*, 19 March 1905, 10-11, pp. 15-18; Rawson, *Russian Rightists*, pp. 34-45.

<sup>4</sup> Shcherbatov's works, like many of the Russian rightists from this era, have been re-published in contemporary times. One example is his *Obnovlennaia Rossiia i drugie raboty* ("Russia restored and other works") (Moscow, 2002).

<sup>5</sup> *Russkoe delo*, 31 March 1905, pp. 2-3.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 2-3; 23 April 1905, 17, pp. 12-14; 7 May 1905, 19, pp. 16-18; 21 May 1905, 21, pp. 6-7.



Figure 3 Badge of the Union of Russian People. V. A. Obraztsov, *Torzhestvo russkogo ob"edineniia: osviaschenie "narodnogo doma" ekaterinoslavskogo otdela soiuzu russkogo naroda, 5-go Oktiabria 1910 g.* (Khar'kov, 1912), p. 79.

At the end of 1905 a quite different group was formed in St. Petersburg. Aleksandr Dubrovin formally founded the URP on 8 November 1905 in response to widespread strikes and disorders, and, especially, the promulgation of the October Manifesto.<sup>7</sup> By December 1905, the group had dozens of branches across the empire. Newspapers, flyers and banners distributed by the group were part of a mass propaganda drive to raise awareness of the revolutionary crisis facing the land.<sup>8</sup> Whilst precise data for the number of branches of the organization is incomplete, from the newspapers and archival documents analyzed it can be estimated that by mid-1907 there were at least 800 branches across the empire, and perhaps as many as 1,000.<sup>9</sup> Not only was the scale of the URP significant, many individuals of stature within the right-wing movement joined it – intriguingly, both men and women. Its founding members included figures that became prominent on the right after 1905, including the publicists A. N. and A. F. Maikov, Pavel Bulatsel, Elena Poluboiarinova, and V. M. Purishkevich, who would later found the Union of the Archangel Mikhail (UAM) in 1908 after a split in the right. This group would highlight the increasingly radical component to an independent right-wing movement.

<sup>7</sup> Overviews of the URP can be found in Rawson, *Russian Rightists*, pp. 56-72; Rogger, 'Was There a Russian Fascism?' pp. 398-415; Vydra, *Život ot Cara?* pp. 108-119.

<sup>8</sup> The circulation of *Russkoe znamia*, the URP's main newspaper, has been estimated at between 12,000-15,000 copies.

<sup>9</sup> Like Rawson's study, the data used to reach this estimate are incomplete. Not all issues of *Russkoe znamia* for 1906-1907 were available; the total number of issues in the collections examined account for less than half of the total number of issues of those respective years. However, additional branches mentioned in the collections housed in GARF on the URP revealed yet more regional branches. The total comes to around some 800 branches, corroborated by Rawson, *Russian Rightists*, pp. 241-242.

Little is known for sure about the personality and character of Dubrovin. A shady figure with somewhat mysterious origins, it is difficult to pinpoint his political convictions reliably, beyond the most obvious facets of right-wing ideology: an opposition to a variety of internal enemies, most of all Russia's Jews, and a loose belief in the Uvarov triad. He attracted a wide range of descriptions; to Sergei Witte, Russia's first Prime Minister, Dubrovin represented the 'hooligan element' amongst the right, whereas to the Minister of the Interior, Petr Durnovo, Dubrovin was an 'honourable man'.<sup>10</sup> Contrasting opinions were also to be found within the right. Boris V. Nikol'skii, from the Russian Assembly, who joined the URP during 1905, later fell out with Dubrovin. He decried the leadership of Dubrovin as 'already pointless' by late 1907, and described him as a 'foul parasite'.<sup>11</sup> Many of these personal squabbles and insults were prompted by widespread financial corruption within the URP.<sup>12</sup> Yet such criticisms notwithstanding, Dubrovin apparently had some skill as an organizer and leader of the party. Under his leadership, the URP rose to become by some margin the most numerically significant of the myriad of right-wing groups that appeared during 1905.<sup>13</sup>

The emergence of novel right-wing parties and groups would challenge the status quo ante in late imperial Russia. This included these groups led by

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<sup>10</sup> Witte, *Vospominaniia*, Vol. 2, (Berlin, 1922), pp. 36, 80.

<sup>11</sup> 'Dnevnik Borisa Nikol'skogo', *Krasnyi arkhiv*, 2(63) (1934), p. 88.

<sup>12</sup> The issue of corruption will be returned to in chapter six.

<sup>13</sup> It is difficult to calculate the overall numerical strength of the right with certainty, due to incomplete data and poor record keeping amongst the right-wing organizations including the URP. Notwithstanding the claims of the right-wing groups (as seen from their newspapers, such as *Russkoe znamia*) that they had millions of members, one estimate can be arrived at from adding together a large number of police reports from various parts of the empire, housed in GARF, F. 102, 4-e d-vo, op. 1907, d. 164, ll. 179-398 ob. The figures from 1907 total around 358,758 for the URP and 47,794 for all other right-wing groups. S. A. Stepanov in his 1992 work *Chernaia sotnia v Rossii* has presumably used the same set of sources as the present author in arriving at his estimate: pp. 105, 108-109; this is corroborated by data used in Kir'ianov, 'Pravye i konstitutsionnye monarkhisty', *Voprosy istorii* 6 (1997), pp. 108-124; and 8 (1997), pp. 92-117. These estimates seem dubious, given that the largest party elected to the First Duma, the Kadets, accounted for a total organizational strength of around 150,000 across the empire in 1906, and therefore this would mean that in total numbers, the organized right would outweigh *all* left and liberal groups combined for the same period, which appears highly unlikely. Then there are the inconsistencies in the same records: other police reports note how rightists were frequently outnumbered when present at left-wing anti-government demonstrations.

Shcherbatov and Dubrovin, which were reacting to the political changes of 1905. But the right was not emerging as a coherent whole; the URM and the URP were not the same in how they appealed to populist, demagogical elements. There were close parallels between these newer right-wing groups and older conservative associations in content, but the style of these groups was different to what had gone before. Those on the newly emerging *political* right, activists such as Boris Iuzefovich, Aleksandr Shcherbatov and Pavel Sheremetev, as well as commentators such as Mikhail Men'shikov, were expressing increasingly extreme views, developing an intransigent and idealized view of the Russian land and people. The emerging right-wing parties, including the URP and URM, as well as existing organizations such as the RMP, differed from their earlier rivals in that they sought to attract only Orthodox Russians to this mass cause; in one editorial from *Moskovskie vedomosti*, Russia was, quite simply, only for true Russian (*istinno Russkii*) men.<sup>14</sup>

Editorials in the conservative press that described associations including the URM and URP noted their resistance to many of the changes sweeping the Russian land. This included pronounced opposition to several features of Russian modernity, including parliament and politics in a general sense of the term, as well as specific political developments;<sup>15</sup> the promulgation of the October Manifesto of 1905 and the laws of religious toleration and political representation from 17 April, the supposed 'betrayal of the Tsar's powers';<sup>16</sup> the blocking of 'true organic unity between Tsar and people'; and bureaucrats, national minorities and Jews, together creating an 'unhappy motherland (*rodina*).<sup>17</sup> Such developments were considered to be concessions to liberalism, a mood reflected amongst conservative and reactionary pundits and commentators. Mikhail Men'shikov typified such tendencies when he wrote of the 'abominable mood' sweeping St. Petersburg, and the entire Russian nation, during 1905, with riots and disorders demonstrating widespread opposition

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<sup>14</sup> *Moskovskie vedomosti*, 7 December 1905, 323, p. 1.

<sup>15</sup> *Grazhdanin*, 21 July 1905, 57, p. 2.

<sup>16</sup> See P. Waldron, 'Religious Toleration in Late Imperial Russia', in Crisp and Edmondson (eds.), *Civil Rights*, pp. 103-119; *Polnoe sobranie zakonov Rossiiskoi imperii*, 3<sup>rd</sup> series, 25, Pt. 1, no. 26126 (1905), pp. 258-262.

<sup>17</sup> This can be seen from various editorials in *Russkoe znamia* throughout October and November 1905.

to the autocracy,<sup>18</sup> and similarly, Tikhomirov pointed to the revolution as the sign of the future ruin of the nation.<sup>19</sup> For such observers, this new wave of deviant revolutionary behavior could only result in a mass wave of death and destruction.<sup>20</sup>

The founders of the URM and the URP thought that they had grander plans to renovate and transform Russia, more so than the RMP; this is reflected most obviously by their self-description as unions rather than the narrow designation of party that the RMP adopted. Dubrovin drew attention to the ‘higher and greater aims’ of the URP, which he saw as an association to foster unity between all classes of society and the Tsar. The aim was that these would be cross-class groups rather than only elitist organizations.<sup>21</sup> Such populist appeals had long been part of Russian conservatism, but what was different here was the extent to which new parties and groups used such convictions as a basis for action. As part of this general shift of organized political development towards the right, commentators began to observe the potential for a right-wing popular front, in spite of the revolutionary situation, and began to notice the right’s potential to become a mass movement. One *Grazhdanin* editorial noted the cultish attraction of the ‘romance’ of revolution, but also that ‘130 million people’ could unite under the ideas of Sharapov or Gringmut, given the people’s separation from the ruling clique of aristocrats and bureaucrats.<sup>22</sup>

The rise of the right was inspired by the strikes and disorders that swept the nation during 1905. However when liberal publications such as *Birzhevye vedomosti* (Stock Exchange News) castigated groups including the URM as a ‘reactionary part of the gentry’ they were only partially correct.<sup>23</sup> Whilst there were indeed many reactionary tendencies amongst the right, the appeal was wider than only to the

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<sup>18</sup> M. O. Men’shikov, *Natsional’naia imperiia* (Moscow, 2004), p. 39.

<sup>19</sup> ‘25 let nazad: iz dnevnika L. Tikhomirova’, *Krasnyi arkhiv*, 3(40) (1930), p. 59.

<sup>20</sup> A recent research trend in Russian history, the ‘emotive turn’ has focused on such themes from a variety of perspectives. One recent analysis of society and culture in St. Petersburg on the eve of the war that contains an extended assessment of the fascination with decadence as a moral and spiritual condition is Mark Steinberg’s *Petersburg Fin-de-Siècle* (London, 2011), pp. 157-197.

<sup>21</sup> For one example of this mentality, see an early publicity leaflet from the URP’s main council in 1906, ‘Soiuz russkogo naroda’, *K svedeniiu sluzhashchikh russkikh liudei* (St. Petersburg, 1906), p. 1.

<sup>22</sup> *Grazhdanin*, 11 August 1905, 63, p. 30.

<sup>23</sup> GARF, F. 102.OO, op. 316, (1905 g.), d. 999, ch. 39, t.1, l. 16: *Birzhevye vedomosti*, 22 June 1905.

gentry. Groups on the right actively created a wider popular message, like the Tsarist Society of the Russian People mobilizing in Kazan during 1905, a flyer for which declared of workers' riots in the nearby Alafuzovskii factory, '...in view of this, the assembly recognizes the following as unnecessary: economic strikes and disorders, accompanied by attacks on people and property...by workers'.<sup>24</sup> That the organization tried to recruit factory workers shows that groups on the right were attempting to broaden their support by recruiting new social bases.<sup>25</sup>

### *Peasants and proletarians*

At the outset of 1905, peasant disturbances across the empire, riots on university campuses and worker unrest led many on the right to believe that their earlier apocalyptic visions, which had gathered pace during the Russo-Japanese War, were now being realized. Tikhomirov, describing strikes at the Putilov factory on 5 January in his diary, wrote:

...now in St. Petersburg there are 12,000 workers striking in the factory in Putilov (headed by Gapon), but they were joined today by [workers in] the French-Russian factory. There were disorders in Nizhnii, in Vilna, in Vitebsk. In Kiev, the criminal lawyers' union declared that we need a constitution. With one word, all will be gone...<sup>26</sup>

Another crisis occurred on 9 January 1905 in St. Petersburg, when Tsarist soldiers fired upon peaceful crowds of demonstrators led by Father Gapon, a demonstration that had been banned by the regime. The events, known as 'Bloody Sunday', provoked yet further criticism of the regime. The following unrest in factories, and disorders and strikes across the empire, brought major industrial hubs to a standstill.<sup>27</sup> Yet intriguingly, given the number of people taking up actions against

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<sup>24</sup> Ibid., ll. 49–50 ob.: from the council of the 'Tsarist Society of the Russian People' in Kazan, 27 December 1905.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., ll. 55-55 ob.: from the council of the 'Tsarist Society of the Russian People' in Kazan, 4 February 1906, addressed to the minister of internal affairs.

<sup>26</sup> '25 let nazad: iz dnevnika L. Tikhomirova', *Krasnyi arkhiv*, 2(39) (1930), p. 55.

<sup>27</sup> On the urban revolution, see L. Engelstein, *Moscow, 1905: Working-Class Organization and Political Conflict* (Stanford, 1982), pp. 127, 139-148.



the state, certain right-wingers demanded closer interaction with the masses. Boris Nikol'skii, chair of the Russian Assembly, demanded at one meeting the 'betterment' of the lot of the common man, and for their conditions to be improved in line with economic development.<sup>28</sup> A popular revolution could come from below, with the greatness of the *narod* an antidote to the revolutionary threat. A URP message, re-printed in the pages of the Russian Assembly's journal *Mirnyi trud* from September 1905, exemplified this central conviction:

Unite, Russian people, under the banner of the 'Union of Russian People', for truth, Tsar, fatherland, for the royal heritage, for the indivisibility of Russia, for the good of the Russian people, for law, order, for a peaceful and secure population, and for a quiet and gentle life.<sup>29</sup>

Conservatives had used the Uvarov triad of Orthodoxy, autocracy and nationality since the nineteenth century, but addressing these principles to the wider public represented a tactical departure on the part of the right. The numerical growth of the right-wing groups in this period, reflected by the proliferation of archival materials on the right during 1905-1907, suggests that these claims of popular support need to be taken seriously. Whilst rightists may have exaggerated the numerical strength of the movements, evidence suggests the movement was growing rapidly.<sup>30</sup> Existing groups, which had a largely cultural focus before 1905, such as the Russian Assembly, were starting to focus in detail on issues such as the worker's question, developing an approach to popular politics in an illiberal and autocratic regime.<sup>31</sup>

URP propaganda for elections to the Second Duma showed Dubrovin's attempts to attract popular support. The election manifesto of the URP expressed an

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<sup>28</sup> GARF, F. 588, op. 1, d. 1265, l. 157.

<sup>29</sup> *Mirnyi trud*, 9 (1905), pp. 233-244, 'Vozzvanie soiuzu russkogo naroda'.

<sup>30</sup> This increase in numbers could only have derived from an increased social reach on the part of the right. See for example, Iu. I. Kir'ianov, 'Chislennost' i sostav krainikh pravyykh partii v Rossii (1905-1917 gg.): tendentsii i prichiny izmenenii', *Otechestvennaia istoriia*, 5 (1999), pp. 29-43.

<sup>31</sup> One series of the laws of the Russian Assembly appears in the URP collection, in GARF, F. 116, op. 2, d. 66: file no. 3, 'Russkoe sobranie. Programma russkogo sobraniia'. St. Petersburg, 1906, which contains an extended series of points on the 'workers' question' and the need to secure their rights; see also GARF, F. 588, op. 1, d. 1265, ll. 88-92: copy of the rules and regulations of the Russian Assembly.

interest in the wellbeing of the people, and the necessity of improving efforts for ‘popular education’ if Russia were to be saved from a continuum of crisis.<sup>32</sup> The URP’s populism was an important part of the public activities of the post-1905 party programme, moving towards a vision that declared the people needed to be protected from capitalist interests (often, equated with Jews in the propaganda), and claimed to protect the rights of workers and peasants. In using such slogans the URP declared itself to be a protector of the Russian people, Tsar and fatherland.<sup>33</sup> The leadership of these new groups tried to create an idea of the sanctity of the Russian people, and promote it to a wider audience. In the same manifesto, the group also defined itself to be *against* many things: national minorities, Jews and modern political institutions. Some of these were features of the Russian autocracy, as well as minorities, highlighting the dissatisfaction with tsarism on the right.<sup>34</sup>

This did not mean that rightists lacked a positive programme. To build mass support, it would be necessary to entice the peasantry, which comprised well over 80 per cent of the empire’s population. Yet given the riots and disorders that had broken out amongst large sections of the peasantry during 1905, it was not immediately apparent whether such an appeal rang true.<sup>35</sup> Sections of the peasantry had shown themselves to be receptive to revolutionary ideas during 1905, in contrast to the frosty reception that greeted many of the revolutionary agitators involved in the populist movement during the 1860s and 1870s.<sup>36</sup> This was met with disbelief by several monarchist groups, which continued to believe in the idea of peasant loyalty, and devotion to autocracy and Orthodoxy. Publicly, several important right-wingers, such as Gringmut, professed their continued ‘faith’ in the peasantry, and the

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<sup>32</sup> ‘Soiuz russkogo naroda’, in V. V. Shelokhaev (ed.), *Programmy politicheskikh partii Rossii. Konets XIX–nachalo XX veka* (Moscow, 1995), p. 453.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 453.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 440-441.

<sup>35</sup> Recent analyses of this issue examine this mostly through the programmes of the main right-wing parties and groups. See I. V. Omel’ianchuk, ‘Krest’ianskii vopros v programmakh konservativno-monarkhicheskikh partii Rossii (1905-1914 gg.)’, *Voprosy istorii*, 7 (2006), pp. 83-97; for an example of rural unrest, see R. S. Edelman, ‘Rural Proletarians and Peasant Disturbances: The Right Bank Ukraine in the Revolution of 1905’, *Journal of Modern History*, 57, 2 (1985), pp. 248-277.

<sup>36</sup> See for instance, M. Perrie, ‘The Russian Peasant Movement of 1905-1907: Its Social Composition and Revolutionary Significance’, in B. Eklof and S. Frank (eds.), *The World of the Russian Peasant: Post-Emancipation Culture and Society* (London, 1990), pp. 193-218; Venturi, *Roots*, pp. 316-330.

practices of right-wing associations also reflected this view.<sup>37</sup> *Russkoe znamia* (Russian Flag) described how a delegation of URP activists met with the Tsar in Tsarskoe Selo on 23 December 1905. The 23-man delegation, among them Dubrovin, Bulatsel and Maikov, equated the *narod* with anti-revolutionary feelings, and declared that the majority of the Russian people supported tsarism, but had been turned by a minority revolutionary ‘intelligentsia’ of leftists and socialists. The following address to the Tsar demonstrated an ostensibly pro-peasant message:

Your truly loyal subjects slave as peasants...the stronghold and essence of your reign is the peasant village and peasant trade, rather than industrial development, still less the craftsmen in the towns, mainly in St. Petersburg, in these days of widespread strikes...remember the unhappy peasantry, following agrarian and other disorders...truly, Tsar, the Russian people believe in the destiny of their Tsar-father, as his power does not oppress them. The central truth and understanding is that the Tsar’s power – is power from God. The truth of the Tsar – is the truth from God.<sup>38</sup>

This presented an ideal of the ‘Russian peasantry’ and their innate goodness, which built on convictions, held by figures such as Gringmut, that the peasantry idolized the Tsar as a ‘father’ (*Tsar’-batiushka*), and that popular monarchism was widespread.<sup>39</sup> As in the address from the above delegation, Christian myths of divinely ordained power, the Tsar’s devotion to the people, and observance of the rituals and symbols of the autocracy, the Tsar and Orthodox religiosity were portrayed as key parts of the peasant consciousness.<sup>40</sup> These elements were retained in the construction of a mythology amongst rightists, which aimed to celebrate the virtues of the people, such as their decency, work ethic and Orthodox religious values. This represented a continuation of the ideology of Slavophilism that would be demonstrated in public via the political practices of the organized right, and the creation of a nostalgic vision of Russia’s lost rural world. Though the right-wing leaders who presented this *manifesto* to the Tsar described themselves as both

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<sup>37</sup> V. A. Gringmut, *Sobranie statei: 1896-1907*, Vol. 4 (Moscow, 1910), p. 164.

<sup>38</sup> *Russkoe znamia*, 9 January 1906, in Kir’ianov (ed.), *Pravye partii*, Vol. 1, p. 99.

<sup>39</sup> Gringmut, *Sobranie statei*, Vol. 4, p. 164.

<sup>40</sup> D. Field, *Rebels in the Name of the Tsar* (Boston, MA, 1976), pp. 1-29; M. Cherniavsky, *Tsar and People: Studies in Russian Myths* (New Haven, CT, 1961), pp. 214-215.

conservatives and loyal subjects of the Tsar, the wider political and social events of 1905 were starting to transform aspects of rightist ideology, and show the emerging rightists as radical actors.

One idea held by rightists that led to conflicting interests was the defence of property. In a manifesto for elections to the Second Duma, the URP declared that there needed to be radical revisions to the current system of land ownership. A greater percentage of Russian land needed to be placed in the hands of the peasantry, essentially asking for fundamental reform of the 'land question'. One manifesto stated how '...the restriction in the total size of the land of all peasant allotments – as established by the law of 19 February 1861 and the law of 1865 – is entirely symptomatic of how the peasantry was completely forbidden to own any land'. The manifesto continued that a greater amount of surplus land needed to be placed in the hands of the peasantry, and the URP 'sought betterment' for their lot. Criticisms of the state were widespread on the right: before Stolypin's land reforms in 1906, the URP pointed towards the inadequacy of the 1861 legislation, as it did not give the people enough freedom or indeed, land.<sup>41</sup> In celebrating the greatness of the people, then, the URP expanded on the Slavophile vision of populism, though with the crucial difference that this was set against developments in constitutional Russia and the dawn of mass politics. There was an idea of rights for the masses developing on the right, though the exact conceptions of what these 'rights' would entail were often weakly developed.

Other right-wing groups, such as the Russian Assembly, pursued the same ideas with a different emphasis. The main council declared that the structure of Russian society should not be radically altered; once the basic claims of wishing to enrich the Russian peasant had been made, this group stopped short of truly extreme ideas of reforming Russia's rural world. Crucial to this was the retention of the *obshchina* around which to construct Russian society, in much the same manner that

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<sup>41</sup> 'Soiuz russkogo naroda', in Shelokhaev (ed.), *Programmy*, p. 451; see also V. V. Vodovozov (ed.), *Sbornik program politicheskikh partii v Rossii*, Issue 6 (St. Petersburg, 1906).

Russia's nineteenth-century conservatives had believed.<sup>42</sup> This was in contrast with the economic orthodoxy of the age, as displayed by Witte and the Ministry of Finance. The main aim of the Assembly in regard to their economic plans for the peasantry was the development of self-sufficiency: cultivating protectionist policies, avoiding reliance on any foreign imports, and opposing economic modernization and industrialization.<sup>43</sup> Its manifesto for elections to the Second Duma described the need for self-sufficiency:

The main aim of our economic politics must be the visible development of Russia, most of all in the sphere of the peasantry and landowners, with the aim of progressing down the path of self-sufficiency for the peasantry and their cultures, the development of cottage industries, and increasing peasant land plots.<sup>44</sup>

Furthermore, even at an early stage of its development, there were contradictions in the populist message, including within the more extreme groups. One URP manifesto, in devoting a large section to discussion of the peasant question (in terms of written text, more than was devoted to the worker's issue, education or even the 'Jewish question') showed how the URP's ideology was a mixture of supposedly radical reform whilst simultaneously engaging with more conservative ideas. It declared, 'on the peasant question: the Union will be arguing with full force in favour of increasing the amount of land owned by peasants, whilst however remembering the words of Tsar Alexander III, and agreed upon by Tsar Nicholas II; all property, in terms of size and land, must be inviolable'. The URP, like the Russian Assembly, followed a policy of protectionism, and, most crucially, desired the preservation of the *obshchina*. The policies of the URP presented a convoluted message: private property was to be preserved, yet the mass of the Russian peasantry needed to be enriched and strengthened. The group sought to appeal to peasantry and

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<sup>42</sup> It is worth reflecting how conservative groups in the twentieth century were moving away from such designs, and some groups had even broken away completely from such conceptions. See M. Rendle, 'Conservatism and Revolution: The All-Russian Union of Landowners, 1916-18', *Slavonic and East European Review*, 84, 3 (2006), pp. 481-507.

<sup>43</sup> 'Russkoe sobranie', in Shelokhaev (ed.), *Programmy*, p. 423

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 423.

gentry alike, rather than entirely to either.<sup>45</sup> In an ideological sense, the URP's ideas about the peasantry were a halfway house between radical change, and established conservative views of Russia's rural world. The development of such views shown that the right was unlikely to form a pliant buffer from the autocracy; such visions sharply diverged from the convictions of figures such as Witte.

Class divides could supersede 'left' or 'right' political leanings. In their consideration of 'the workers' question', monarchist newspapers such as *Moskovskie vedomosti* began to publish addresses and appeals directed specifically at the working classes, as in the case of one editorial from December 1905.<sup>46</sup> One URP flyer circulated within Odessa in the same month, which was addressed to 'simple working people'.<sup>47</sup> Another detailed manifesto from a right-wing group, possibly the URM, published and disseminated in December 1905 was specifically addressed to 'factory and textile workers', evidence that the right was changing its use of language, gearing appeals towards workers by addressing specifically 'working-class' concerns.<sup>48</sup> Right-wingers, particularly the URP, jettisoned some of the ideas of traditional conservatives in presenting a programme of cross-class unity, if not quite collectivism, socialism or egalitarianism.

As well as the delivery of the message, there were also changes in content. One point of policy of the URP was to lobby for the shortening of the working day to no longer than eight hours.<sup>49</sup> The economic objectives of a manifesto for elections to the Second Duma called for the nationalization of major industries, and the establishment of a Russian industrial bank, which would, it was hoped, lead to an increase in the 'educated level' of the workers, via the formation of industrial *arteli*,

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<sup>45</sup> 'Soiuz russkogo naroda', in Shelokhaev (ed.), *Programmy*, p. 451.

<sup>46</sup> *Moskovskie vedomosti*, 19 December 1905, 326, p. 1.

<sup>47</sup> *K russkomu pravoslavnomu narodu vozzvaniu*, 19 December 1905, Odessa.

<sup>48</sup> 'Obrashchenie [Soiuzu Russkikh Liudei?] k zavodskim i fabrichnym rabochim, po povodu predstoiashchikh vyborov v gosudarstvennuiu dumu', December 1905, in Kir'ianov (ed.), *Pravye partii*, Vol. 1, pp. 86-92.

<sup>49</sup> 'Soiuz russkogo naroda', in Shelokhaev (ed.), *Programmy*, p. 453.

and, in so doing, inculcate a mentality that would oppose strikes and disorders.<sup>50</sup> In these respects, the manifestos of groups such as the URM and the URP did little to reflect conservative concerns such as, for example, safeguarding the primacy of Russian autocracy.

This manifesto at first glance appears almost reminiscent of leftist ideas rather than of conservatism. However, the overriding priority of this message was not to defend workers' rights, but to create an idea of the exceptional nature of Russia and the Russian people, distinguishing the future development of Russia from contemporary 'Western' trends. Though there appears a superficial element of similarity with the policies of the populists of the 1860s and 1870s, the underlying ideas driving these policy directions were very different. One strand of anti-Western ideology was stressed in the discussion of the worker's question.<sup>51</sup> Plans for a shorter working day were contrasted with the supposed ten or eleven-hour days workers had to endure in England, France, Germany, Belgium, Switzerland and America. The workers in these countries were, it was claimed (and not without some justification) being exploited and forced to work in terrible conditions, though this was presented as conclusive evidence of the negative effects of living in a socially democratic and capitalist political system.<sup>52</sup> The anti-capitalism of right-wing groups including the URM and URP was also present in the policies for total nationalization of several fascist groups in twentieth-century Europe, based around the creation of an economic hierarchy, rather than ideals of common ownership.<sup>53</sup>

The right launched a propaganda drive, openly agitating for mass support, across the Russian Empire during and after 1905 in an attempt to recruit more people to the monarchist cause. The Khar'kov branch of the URP claimed to publish a total

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<sup>50</sup> 'Sbornik program politicheskikh partii v red. V. V. Vodovozova. Issue 6', St. Petersburg, 1906, in Shelokhaev (ed.), *Programmy*, p. 453.

<sup>51</sup> 'Soiuz russkogo naroda', in *ibid.*, p. 441.

<sup>52</sup> 'Obrashchenie [Soiuza russkikh liudei?] k zavodskim i fabriчным rabochim, po povodu predstoiashchikh vyborov v gosudarstvennuu dumu', December 1905, in Kir'ianov (ed.), *Pravye partii*, Vol. 1, pp. 86-92.

<sup>53</sup> That Russian conservative thought has often called for more rather than less state intervention is noted by Pipes: *Russian Conservatism and its Critics*, p. xii.

of 344,000 brochures from 1905-1906. Of the twenty titles listed in one issue of the Russian Assembly's journal, nine of these were explicitly addressed either to workers (*k rabochim*) or to the Russian people (*k russkomu narodu*).<sup>54</sup> Use of the press was an important tactic, 'the main means of fighting the exploitation of this service and...administrative arbitrariness', according to a flyer distributed by the URM in early 1906.<sup>55</sup> The right-wing press, including *Moskovskie vedomosti* and *Russkoe znamia*, called for the bridging of the divide between elites and masses. Gringmut wrote of the need to unite different parts of society together in a spiritual union against new political and social forces in Russia. Channeling anger against the 'liberal' establishment was part of this. Of the 'constitutional' classes, he exclaimed, '...these traitors...destroy all of your land, all of your estates – gentry and workers, toilers and workers, and destroy the ancient autocratic power'. What was needed was a concerted effort, on the part of all classes, including the workers, to defend Russia's 'ancient traditions'.<sup>56</sup> An editorial in *Russkoe znamia* similarly desired a very broad popular mandate, aiming for unity between 'Russian conservative, patriotic and monarchical circles', and saw that 'all organizations', including these unions, needed to be based around the theme of patriotism.<sup>57</sup> The result was a stance of total intransigence towards political changes in Russia, seeing the Duma as the preserve of bureaucrats and foreigners, obscuring the 'indivisible' link between Tsar and people.<sup>58</sup> Society was still constructed around a system of rank and differentiation: the right did not want elites to lose their social status, and did not promote equality between classes. But they did promote unity across these divides, and right-wing groups increasingly desired to transfer these views to a wider audience during 1905-1906.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> *Mirnyi trud*, 3 (1907), p. 197, I. Anosov, 'Deiatel'nost' Khar'kovskogo soiuzia russkogo naroda'.

<sup>55</sup> 'Obrashchenie Soiuzia russkikh liudei k svoim storonnikam nakanune vyborov v I gosudarstvennuiu dumu', February/March 1906, in Kir'ianov (ed.), *Pravye partii*, Vol. 1, p. 139.

<sup>56</sup> *Moskovskie vedomosti*, 12 November 1905, 298, p. 1.

<sup>57</sup> 'Listovka obrashchenie vsenarodnogo russkogo soiuzia', *Russkoe znamia*, 22 March 1906, in Kir'ianov (ed.), *Pravye partii*, Vol. 1, pp. 141-142.

<sup>58</sup> GARF, F. 102.OO, op. 316, (1905 g.), d. 999, ch. 39, t.1, l. 125: *Russkoe znamia*, 12 November 1906.

<sup>59</sup> *Novoe vremia*, 19 February 1905, pp. 1, 3.



Such patriotic slogans, in addition to promoting the Uvarov message, were also mission statements for the groups' plans to inculcate patriotic ideas in the subjects of the empire. Away from the central leadership of the URP or URM, police records show how the Tsarist Society of the Russian People in Kazan distributed patriotic literature to railway road workers in and around the Alafuzovskii factory during 1906, in an effort to encourage workers to engage with patriotic ideals. The activists of this society acted as strike breakers, foiling the attempts of rioting workers in the factory to disrupt trade and industry in the region. The perception from activists that 1905 caused a decline in Russian manufacturing capability was key to this effort. Right-wing activists were aware that in order to win the battle for the Russian nation, they would need to recruit greater numbers of people, attracting them to popular monarchism.<sup>60</sup> A circular from the chair of this organization, Professor V. Zaisenii, intercepted by the department of police in February 1906, warned that 'strikes and disorders, generally not tolerated in a civilized state, in the present time of troubles must be stopped, or there will be further consequences'. The council added that they would be writing to the Minister of Trade and Industry with a request to keep the Alafuzovskii factory open, even in the midst of the widespread strikes.<sup>61</sup>

Yet the right's activities actually created more of the disorder that the regime was so keen to contain. Following these proclamations confrontations took place between right-wing activists attracted to the monarchist cause and over a thousand striking workers in the Alafuzovskii factory, who chanted 'down with the Tsar' and fiercely resisted the overtures of the pro-monarchist forces in the factory. In spite of the clamour to protect law and order and restore normality to the daily life of the factory, which the council of this group had insisted was paralyzed by strikes, a wave of further disturbances and fights broke out. The group continued to claim that the true links between Tsar and people were obscured by the new Duma settlement, and that liberal groups, including the Kadets, were deliberately trying to subvert the

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<sup>60</sup> GARF, F. 102.OO, op. 316, (1905 g.), d. 999, ch. 39, t.1, ll. 49-50 ob.: council of the 'Tsarist Society of the Russian People' in Kazan, 27 December 1905.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid., ll. 55-55 ob.

Tsarist state.<sup>62</sup> This group demonstrates how rightists could use these ideas to power violent, ground-level ‘resistance’ against left-wing forces operating in the regions. However, the Tsarist Society of the Russian People, once we look beyond the rather nebulous ideals of ‘patriotism’ and ‘tradition’, appeared to have little in the way of concrete ideas to improve the future state of the nation. The organization’s *raison d’être* appeared to be diagnosing and confronting a situation of crisis, rather than finding political solutions by which to restore Russia.<sup>63</sup>

In a telegram to the Tsar from 28 June 1906, the URP leader in Odessa, Count Aleksei I. Konovnitsyn, described the bravery and passion of the Russian army in the Russo-Japanese War. Explaining the defeat, he claimed they were let down by weak leadership, rather than their own values.<sup>64</sup> Rightists relied on emotion and sentiment, rather than consistent intellectual slogans, to appeal to the masses. On 2 December 1905, following on from a peasant delegation, a group of leaders of the extreme right faction, among them Gringmut, went to Tsarskoe Selo attempting to establish common ground between themselves and Nicholas II. They declared that courage, tenacity and fight were all considered to be characteristics of the *narod*, in contrast to the hated, supine enemies of the Russian land and people.<sup>65</sup> Though such slogans praised the courageous and tenacious spirit of the Russian people, developments elsewhere challenged these visions. In this period, rightists were attempting to craft a popular appeal directed towards a wider social basis than previous conservative groups had desired.

### *Compromised populism*

Like many political and social groups, rightists had both public and private faces. Less idealized views of the Russian people were also being developed. Lev Tikhomirov, who joined the URP in 1905, in a 1906 essay entitled *Citizens or*

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<sup>62</sup> Ibid., ll. 81-81 ob.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid., ll. 81-81 ob.

<sup>64</sup> *Mirnyi trud*, 6 (1906), p. 146, ‘Otkliki russkikh liudei na sovremennyya sobytia’.

<sup>65</sup> ‘25 let nazad: iz dnevnika L. Tikhomirova’, *Krasnyi arkhiv*, 45(41-42) (1930), p. 112.

*Proletarians* depicted a socialist ‘proletariat’ to contrast with his ideal of the ‘citizen’, developing a particular view of civic society. Citizens, Tikhomirov claimed, ‘...stand against exploitation, and for lasting order in society, and peaceful interests’. The main negative factor associated with ‘proletarianism’ was that it was led, not by the conscience of the workers themselves, but the desires of their teachers – the revolutionary left.<sup>66</sup> His fears of the involvement of workers in the revolutionary struggle were reflected in Gringmut’s *Moskovskie vedomosti*, which in early 1906 drew a direct link between workers and revolution, and continued to do so throughout the revolutionary period.<sup>67</sup>

Tikhomirov saw that the link between the disorders sweeping the empire and the people could not be overlooked. Whilst Tikhomirov echoed populist messages outlined elsewhere, he drew images of the ‘masses’ with both positive and negative aspects. In his positive vision, Russians were described as naturally peaceful and good-natured, such as in his work *Russia and Democracy*. However, they were also easily exploited and vulnerable to the subversive intentions of revolutionaries.<sup>68</sup> Tikhomirov was less circumspect with his views of the people in private, which give an altogether more pessimistic view of the workers’ movement than that of the above example, describing widespread unrest in vivid detail. Behind this lay the effects of the revolution of 1905. Whilst perceptively realizing the need for rightists to appeal to working-class support in order to achieve success, Tikhomirov’s diary betrayed no small degree of fear of the people. One entry, penned on 6 May 1905, ran as follows:

All tremble between one another, and all wait for slaughter...and this slaughter is yet to come...and now beneath us, under us, our workers are loudly singing the Marseillaise – “awake, arise, working people”...every day there are fights, and shootings – with the example of the postal-telegraph

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<sup>66</sup> L. A. Tikhomirov, *Rossii i demokratiia* (Moscow, 2007), p. 321. He outlined the importance of solving such issues in another long pamphlet, titled *The Workers’ Question: Practical Steps for its Resolution (Rabochii vopros: prakticheskie sposoby ego resheniia)* (Moscow, 1909).

<sup>67</sup> *Moskovskie vedomosti*, 9 February 1906, 37, p. 1.

<sup>68</sup> Tikhomirov, *Rossii i demokratiia*, p. 321.

strikes. There are innumerable murders and robberies every day and night. Fights occur between the masses.

Tikhomirov's entry continued, 'half of Russia is in strikes and revolution. The military is concerned by manifestations of revolutionary unrest'. A shrewd analyst of the fast-changing social and political situation in 1905, Tikhomirov realized popular attraction to any ideology could rapidly shift.<sup>69</sup> The 'masses' had been turned against each other by the skillful manipulations of revolutionary leaders, and they were particularly susceptible due to their own lack of intellectual development. Tikhomirov drew a further contrast between the promise and reality of socialist ideals, which did not deliver 'true freedom' to the worker:

The lack of working-class consciousness will lead to ten more mistakes being committed. The same weak consciousness allowed the intelligentsia to position themselves in close alliance with the 'proletarian' movement, which has a completely different purpose. As a result of this, our worker question, like our liberating political reforms, will come up against the wall of anarchy.<sup>70</sup>

Tikhomirov claimed that the working classes had not yet reached the stage of consciousness needed to throw off revolutionary ideals. He claimed they had not yet reached the civilized state required to truly understand ideals of patriotism, education and religion. Like Gringmut, he saw that the masses needed to be firmly guided by an autocracy.

Russian autocracy was not totally rejected. Mikhail Men'shikov, writing in *Novoe vremia*, saw it as necessary to guide the worker. Another central foundation for him was Orthodox Christianity. Men'shikov perceived that negative ideologies of atheism and nihilism largely emanated from Western Europe.<sup>71</sup> Men'shikov, in his *Letters to Neighbours* displayed a similarly pessimistic view of the Russian people to Tikhomirov, believing they were easily corrupted by foreign vices.

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<sup>69</sup> '25 let nazad: iz dnevnika L. Tikhomirova', *Krasnyi arkhiv*, 45(41-42) (1930), p. 114.

<sup>70</sup> Tikhomirov, *Rossiia i demokratia*, p. 347.

<sup>71</sup> M. O. Men'shikov, *Pis'ma k blizhnim*, January 1903, p. 19.

Men'shikov feared the degeneration of the masses, not yet ready for the conditioning required for becoming a mass force for patriotism. Men'shikov wrote that anarchists were the cause of the 'days of insurrection' in St. Petersburg during the general strike of December 1905, '...the majority of whom were damaged people, psychological degenerates'.<sup>72</sup> Unlike Tikhomirov, his critiques took a more pseudo-scientific turn towards ideas of decay and decline amongst the rioters. Men'shikov saw a link between the decline in the physical health of the nation, revolution and unrest, with alcoholism a particular concern. In 1902, he described his fears of 'crowds...bottles in hand', and the widespread nature of drunkenness in Russian life.<sup>73</sup> Like many from the autocracy, these two thinkers displayed unhappiness with Russia's present.

Such views were reflected elsewhere. Rightist groups including the Russian Assembly and the RMP were also caught between fearful and idolatrous images of the people. These organizations absorbed tendencies from younger, populist organizations on the right that used an idea of the sanctity of 'the people' – by which was meant only Russian, Orthodox people. Such appeals were displayed by the RMP in the newspaper *Moskovskie vedomosti*. Nevertheless, not all of this propaganda glorified the Russian people. One editorial accused the naturally good-natured *narod* of turning over to the dark forces of revolution and anarchy:

To Moscow workers: is it true that you, Russian people, baptized in the truth of Orthodoxy, have now renounced it, and replaced it with irreligious and different criticisms of God and the Church of Christ? Is it true; is it possible that you, allies of the Tsar's truth, as pledged to his fathers and forefathers, and true servants of the Tsarevich, now stand alongside rebels and enemies of our fatherland, against his power?<sup>74</sup>

The thoughts of prominent right-wing ideologues and newspapers concerning the 'workers' question' show that the construction of these images of the people in right-wing circles was a contested practice. Although there was a shift towards

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<sup>72</sup> M. O. Men'shikov, *Natsional'naia imperiia* (Moscow, 2004), p. 47.

<sup>73</sup> M. O. Men'shikov, *Pis'ma k blizhnim*, February 1902, pp. 66-67.

<sup>74</sup> *Moskovskie vedomosti*, 19 December 1905, 326, p. 1.

populism in the propaganda of the right from 1905, images of the people were presented differently depending on where they appeared. In the diaries of Tikhomirov and Men'shikov, more open criticism of the working classes can be seen, though neither denied the group's positive aspects. In public, criticism was either more restrained or absent. Unsurprisingly, enemies of Russia and the Russian state take the 'blame' for Russia's decline far more than the 'Orthodox' people of Russia. However, examples of both the good and bad visions of the people appear frequently, pointing towards compromise and fracture in the populist message. The URP's leadership, like the RMP at certain moments, called for a dictatorship, with a benevolent autocracy for, but not composed of the people.<sup>75</sup> This populist nationalism, whilst not egalitarian in a true sense, diverged sharply from previous conservative ideas and the views of many within the regime, highlighting dissatisfaction with the autocracy.

### **Violence and Radicalization**

However, it was the actions of the right that thrown their divergence from the regime into sharper relief. The leadership of the URP and URM turned to more radical ends during 1905, a notable aspect of which was the tendency towards militarization, both in words and deeds. Russia could only be the preserve of 'true Russian people' (*istinno russkie liudi*), according to a sentiment displayed in a meeting in Warsaw between 'conservatively inclined' professors and members of the Russian Assembly. Time and again orators and statesmen on the right spoke out against 'subversives' in society, including Poles, Jews and socialists, urging retribution for the negative changes that Russia had undergone since 1905.<sup>76</sup> It was similar sentiments that led to liberal observers quickly realizing the difference between the emerging right and established conservative groups.<sup>77</sup> One factor that ultimately distinguished the right

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<sup>75</sup> A. Chernovskii (comp.) and V. P. Viktorov (ed.), *Soiuz russkogo naroda* (Moscow-Leningrad, 1929), p. 6. Tikhomirov outlined similar ideas in his largest work, the four-volume *On Monarchist Statehood (Monarkhicheskaia gosudarstvennost')*.

<sup>76</sup> GARF, F. 102.OO, op. 316, (1905 g.), d. 999, ch. 39, t.1, l. 26: *Russkoe slovo*, 8 November 1905.

<sup>77</sup> See for example, *Rech'*, 26 August 1906, p. 1; *Vestnik narodnoi svobody*, 31 December 1906, 43, cols. 2363-2364.

from other conservative factions was the right's intransigent mood, with the harshness of their 'solutions' to the crises plaguing the Russian Empire. This was readily displayed in right-wing literature. According to the official protocols of the Third All-Russian Union of Russian Men in Kiev from 1906, the URP was 'an army without officers'.<sup>78</sup>

Whilst newspapers such as *Russkoe znamia* did not often directly call for pogroms and violence, and declared themselves to be in pursuit of fundamentally peaceful aims, they also promulgated a wider, by no means hidden, message of 'us and them' with the 'true Russian' subjects of the empire placed in opposition to the remainder of society.<sup>79</sup> However activists could show more autonomy, and openly promoted violent ends. URM flyers addressed to supporters promised to bring 'death to the revolutionaries...weapons in hand!'<sup>80</sup> Many smaller right-wing groups shared such convictions. The Tsarist Russian People's Society, led by a sympathetic professor from Kazan University, Vladislav Zalesskii, caused 'chaos, strikes and disorders' according to a police report. This refers to a case of recent clashes amongst the peasantry in the region, with a crowd of rightist supporters made up of workers, townsfolk and peasants.<sup>81</sup>

Many police telegrams from provincial branches of right-wing organizations such as the URP accentuated the violent nature of such groups. Considering the widespread peasant uprisings, disorders, strikes and riots during 1905, and the shadows cast by the pogroms, the upturn in police monitoring of right-wing groups is unsurprising.<sup>82</sup> On interrogation by the Provisional Government in 1917, one of the main organizers of the St. Petersburg branch, A. V. Polovnev, described the

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<sup>78</sup> 'Protokoly delovykh zasedanii s"ezda, 2-7 oktiabria 1906 g.', *Pravye partii*, Vol. 1, p. 217.

<sup>79</sup> GARF, F, 102.OO, op. 316, (1905 g.), d. 999, ch. 39, t.1, l. 125: *Russkoe znamia*, 12 November 1906.

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*, ll. 1, 19, 20: addresses from the URM, 28 June 1905.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*, ll. 65 ob.–66: telegram, director of the department of police in Kazan, 20 February 1906; *ibid.*, ll. 81–81 ob.

<sup>82</sup> This is reflected by the number of documents on the right housed in GARF used for this project. Before 1905 there are dozens of files collected on the Russian Assembly and a handful of other groups. But during 1905, this expands to thousands of files. Some of these are hundreds of sheets (*listy*) thick, filling several new collections, including in the special section of the police.

formation of combat organizations (*boevye družiny*) as one of the central aims of the URP. In St. Petersburg, the URP under the guidance of N. M. Iuskevich-Kraskovskii, one of the leaders of the *družiny* in the region, had organized combat units shortly after the branch's formation, and this group planned violent activities such as the murder of Duma deputies Mikhail Herzenstein and I. V. Iollos.<sup>83</sup>

*Soiuzniki* (unionists, as the rightist activists are often described in police reports) went into factories in the manufacturing centre of Iaroslavl, attempting to drum up support through the dissemination of leaflets, heckling of strikers and in many instances threats of physical violence towards leftists and revolutionaries. Sometimes this carried through into fierce pitched battles, with clashes occurring in the Iaroslavl factory.<sup>84</sup> The numerical strength of the Iaroslavl URM was estimated from one police report, dated 17 October 1906, as over 2,000 when taking into account all sectors of the industrialized parts of the economy.<sup>85</sup> According to participants from the right on later recollection, the central councils of the right-wing groups encouraged these activities. On interrogation by the Provisional Government in June 1917, a URP activist claimed that the central council of the group, headed by A. I. Dubrovin, organized the 1905 pogrom in Kherson province. He claimed that members of the branch had agreed on the necessity of violence to oppose the revolutionary threat.<sup>86</sup>

However, the use of violence caused controversy within the rightist movement. Certain leaders questioned whether it was acceptable, even in the face of the revolutionary crisis. Gringmut declared in his newspaper that 'violence is not part of our social or political position'.<sup>87</sup> In an address to the Russian Monarchist Assembly on 15 March 1907, Gringmut, in addition to L. Bobrov, chair of the Society of Russian Patriots, declared that 'patriotic organizations, in contrast with

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<sup>83</sup> Chernovskii (comp.) and Viktorov (ed.), *Soiuz russkogo naroda*, p. 55.

<sup>84</sup> GARF, F. 102.OO, op. 316, (1905 g.), d. 999, ch. 39, t. 1, ll. 161-162 ob., 170-171 ob., 176, 224-224 ob., 280-280 ob.: various police reports from Iaroslavl between September and November 1906.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*, ll. 224-224 ob.: report from the Iaroslavl department of police, 17 October 1906.

<sup>86</sup> GARF, F. 1467, op. 1, d. 497, ll. 75 ob.-76: v protokoly chrezvychainoi sledstvennoi komissii dlia proizvodstva sledstvennykh deistvii, 23 June 1917, N. S. Ivanov.

<sup>87</sup> *Moskovskie vedomosti*, 17 December 1906, 304, p. 1.



the Kadets and socialists, do not recognize political murder as an aim'. Gringmut showed a consistent attitude towards the question of political violence, believing it an inimical method that the right should not pursue, and was only for revolutionaries. However, in the same speech, he also declared that 'militant war with internal enemies must be with the permission of the imperial government', claiming that violence might have a role to play provided it was sanctioned by the regime.<sup>88</sup> The distinction lies, not so much in the use of violence *per se*, but in its association with any political ends, politics being an activity that Gringmut, due to its connections with the 1905 settlement, found distinctly unappealing.

The central council of the Russian Assembly went further to disown the use of violence as a tactic. Though the group was harshly anti-Semitic and chauvinistic, it called for an end to violent reprisals against Jews, including pogroms, due to the 'damage done to the spirit and properties of the Russian population'. It continued 'violent actions against Jews inevitably lead to other conditions'. Instead, anti-Semitic measures should be channelled towards legislation, and the Assembly proposed passing laws banning Jews from participation in Russian state service, including administrative posts, teaching and the army. These were all repressive methods, but in view of the council in St. Petersburg, preferable to violent actions, which took the right closer to becoming 'revolutionaries' themselves.<sup>89</sup> However, central council declarations to refrain from violence did not always appear to resonate with the rank and file. Activists from central and local right-wing groups undertook their own violent activities, often unhindered by the leadership. The most notorious example were pogroms that occurred in many parts of the Russian Empire during 1905.<sup>90</sup> Some of the worst violence occurred in Odessa, but outbreaks of violence occurred in Moscow, St. Petersburg, Volsk (Saratov province), Zolotonoshka (Poltava province) and Kiev. Many of these took place on 18-20

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<sup>88</sup> GARF, F. 634, op. 1, d. 17, l. 53: rezoliutsiia v russkom monarkhicheskom sobranii. 15 March 1907. For more on Witte's attempted assassination see Lauchlan, 'The Accidental Terrorist', 1-32.

<sup>89</sup> GARF, F. 588, op. 1, d. 1265, ll. 51-52: notes from the central council of the Russian Assembly.

<sup>90</sup> On the 1905 pogroms, see Lambroza, 'The Pogroms of 1903-1906' in Klier and Lambroza (eds.), *Pogroms*, pp. 195-247; A. Ascher, 'Anti-Jewish Pogroms in the First Russian Revolution, 1905-1907', in Y. Ro'i (ed.), *Jews and Jewish Life in Russia and the Soviet Union* (Ilford, 1995), pp. 127-145.

October, after the promulgation of the Manifesto, as those sympathetic to the autocracy sought out targets of retribution for the supposed ‘weakening’ of the Tsarist state. Activists targeted Jews, students, ‘leftists’ or those suspected of involvement in such collusions.<sup>91</sup> Pogroms were part of a culture of violence and militarization amongst right-wing groups. Assorted bands of workers, small shopkeepers and others sympathetic to the convictions of right-wing groups across the empire threatened to ‘beat’ their enemies, including the Jews (one of the most common refrains from right-wing militants being ‘beat the Jews!’), and bring destruction to the revolutionary elements of society, and in so doing, secure the autocratic heritage of the Russian state. Though incidences were often small in scale, and apparently without a clear pattern, violence occurred throughout the empire during 1905-1906, with rightist groups mobilizing in response to the October settlement.<sup>92</sup>

In feeding the antagonistic passions of sympathizers rightists were, seemingly unwittingly, engineering a conflict between state and society. The autocracy that the right claimed to defend was not always comfortable with the presence of these ‘patriots’. Authorities were apprehensive about counterreprisals from revolutionary forces prompted by the activities of the URP and its sympathizers. The Bund’s retaliations against the URP were particularly feared. One report from the assistant governor of police in Gomel, Rogachev and Bykhov provinces from 17 June 1906 emphasized the increase in numbers of ‘armed Jews’ ‘Bundists’ and ‘weapon-bearing Jewish self-defence forces’ in response to URP violence.<sup>93</sup> The dynamic between rightist activists bearing pro-Tsarist slogans and their organization of mass street parades and possible recriminations created a tension between rightist groups and the autocracy, which they at least ostensibly sought to serve.

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<sup>91</sup> Ascher, *Revolution of 1905*, Vol. 1, pp. 253-262.

<sup>92</sup> The liberal journal *Pravo* (Law) throughout the winter of 1905 and the spring of 1906 carried extensive reports of these outbreaks of violence across the empire. See for instance *Pravo*, 14 August 1905, 32, cols. 2600-2603, ‘Sobytiia v Kerchi’, which chronicles the outbreaks of violence occurring in this port city.

<sup>93</sup> GARF, F. 102. OO, op. 316, (1905 g.), d. 999, ch. 39, t. 1, ll. 89-90: report from the assistant police chief in Gomel, Rogachev and Bykhov provinces, 17 June 1906.

### *The search for enemies*

A central feature of all the major right-wing groups was their constant search for enemies, a list that included Jews, socialists, students, minority nationalities, freemasons, capitalists, merchants, the Russian government, liberals and other rightists. Particularly common on the right were anti-Semitic and nationalist ideas. In regard to the ‘national question’, as Theodore Weeks has explained, ‘for an easy, quite consistent ‘solution’ to the nationality question, one must consult the Russian right. Here, the answer was quite clear and uncomplicated: Russia existed for the Russians’.<sup>94</sup> Additionally, the URP, RMP, the Russian Assembly and other similar organizations argued that the Jewish question held a distinct position from other problems.<sup>95</sup> Whilst such groups may have claimed that their appeals were addressed to ‘workers’ or ‘the people’, the other side of this ideology was the exclusion of non-ethnic Russians from the body politic.<sup>96</sup> The use of populist ideas was closely tied with this constant, unending search to find enemies within and hence identify threats to the Russian people.<sup>97</sup>

One principal reason for this was the legacy of the revolution of 1905, which aided the use of stereotypes and pejoratives. Anti-Semitism was especially common; we can see how the crisis of autocratic power caused by the revolutionary climate

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<sup>94</sup> Weeks, *Nation and State*, p. 30.

<sup>95</sup> In particular, the most extreme of right-wing groups considered the Jewish question to be separate, given the ‘distinct’ characteristics of the Jewish people and Jewish culture. The URP claimed that the Jewish people were hostile towards all non-Jewish nationalities, as well as the ‘true Russians’. ‘Soiuz russkogo naroda’, Shelokhaev (ed.), *Programmy*, p. 444; see also GARF, F. 588, op. 1, d. 1265, ll. 16-17 ob; Russian Assembly manifesto for elections to the First State Duma, 3 December 1905.

<sup>96</sup> It is important to note that the ‘masses’ did include Ukrainians, whom Russian nationalists called ‘little Russians’, in contrast to the Polish or Jewish subjects of the empire. See A. L. Kotenko, O. V. Martiniuk and A. I. Miller, ‘Maloruss’, in A. I. Miller, D. A. Sdvizhkov and I. Shirle (eds.), *Poniatiia o Rossii: k istoricheskoi semantike imperskogo perioda*, Vol. 2 (Moscow, 2012), pp. 392-443. For a thorough analysis of the Ukrainian question, which includes assessment of Russian nationalists in the southwest, see Hillis, *Children of Rus*’.

<sup>97</sup> For theoretical assessments, see S. Goldin, ‘Evrei kak poniatie v istorii imperskoi Rossii’, in Miller, Sdvizhkov and Shirle (eds.), *Poniatiia o Rossii*, pp. 340-391; E. Weinerman, ‘Racism, Racial Prejudice and Jews in Late Imperial Russia’, *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 17, 3 (1994), pp. 442-495; E. Avrutin, ‘Racial Categories and the Politics of (Jewish) Difference’, *Kritika*, 8, 1 (2007), pp. 13-40; S. Podbolotov, ‘True Russians Against the Jews: Right-Wing Anti-Semitism in the Last Years of the Russian Empire’, *Ab Imperio*, 3 (2001), pp. 191-220.

was central to the use of such images.<sup>98</sup> The promulgation of the October Manifesto, and the seismic changes that it brought to Russian politics, encouraged a view associating Jews with parliament, modernity and bureaucracy. The radical right's reactionary politics were closely tied to the use of anti-Jewish stereotypes.<sup>99</sup> Jews were associated with both 'parliamentary Russia' and revolutionary Russia; the 1905 revolution itself, according to a quotation cited by the publicist A. P. Liprandi, '...may as well have been called a 'Jewish' one'.<sup>100</sup> Political changes were associated with radical left-wing politics and Jews, and rightist election materials to the First State Duma utilized the theme of anti-Semitism in many of the declarations circulated.<sup>101</sup> Aleksandr Dubrovin declared in a 1905 manifesto that no more than three Jews should be elected to the State Duma at any one time, due to their association with revolutionary movements.<sup>102</sup> In discussions held amongst URP members, even more extreme views were expressed. At a meeting in 1906 one member suggested that Jews should not have any electoral rights at all, due to their 'lineage'.<sup>103</sup> The right-wing parties unanimously claimed that groups of enemies, including Jews and socialists, were harming the Russian people and denying them rights, though these were 'indivisible' links between Tsar, people and land, rather than civil rights as decreed by a constitution.

In manifestos for elections to the First Duma compiled by rightists, few themes generated more discussion than the 'Jewish question'. Manifestos presented a theme that Jews, in addition to bureaucrats, minority nationalities, non-Orthodox

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<sup>98</sup> Anti-Semitism is a highly complex and multivalent term that has attracted competing definitions. By 'anti-Semitism' what is meant here is deep-seated hatred of the Jews. This may include various 'psychological' interpretations, such as the well-known 'exterminationist' view, which treats the Jews as a race out to destroy Western civilization, which has become especially notorious as a result of the Holocaust. A not dissimilar interpretation existed amongst the most vehement rightist factions. However, the use adopted here is not limited to this most extreme of all visions, but includes cultural and political stereotypes.

<sup>99</sup> These trends were clear in visual depictions of Jews. See R. Weinberg, 'The Russian Right Responds to 1905: Visual Depictions of Jews in Postrevolutionary Russia', in S. Hoffman and E. Mendelsohn (eds.), *The Revolution of 1905 and Russia's Jews* (Philadelphia, 2008), pp. 55-69.

<sup>100</sup> A. P. Liprandi, *Ravnopravie i evreiskie voprosy* (Khar'kov, 1911), p. 2; *Mirnyi trud*, 9 (1905), pp. 177-190, 'Russkaia revoliutsiia i evreiskaia sotsial-demokratiia', A. P. Liprandi.

<sup>101</sup> One example was a proclamation from the Russian Assembly, 'K obrashchenie russkogo sobraniia', in Kir'ianov (ed.), *Pravye partii*, Vol. 1, p. 73.

<sup>102</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 81.

<sup>103</sup> *Vestnik narodnoi svobody*, 28 October 1906, 33-34, col. 1769.

religions and socialists, were standing in the way of ‘true organic unity’ between Tsar and people.<sup>104</sup> Central to this idea was the theme of Jewish power and desire for world domination.<sup>105</sup> In one manifesto, the URP declared the ‘Jewish question’ distinct from other national questions, due to the power of the Jewish citizens of the Russian Empire. ‘Not only were Jews the enemies of Christians, but to all the non-Jewish populations in view of their desire to place all the world under Jewish ownership’.<sup>106</sup> The Russian Assembly declared in its own manifesto, ‘the Jewish question must be decided with the laws and measures of the government as separate from other tribal questions, in view of the continuing enmity of the Jews towards Christians and non-Jewish nationalities and the desire of the Jews for international supremacy’. The Jews were thus distinguished not only from the Orthodox Russian people, but also from all other national groups within the empire.<sup>107</sup> The laws of religious toleration, convocation of the Duma, and electoral reforms were opposed by members of the URP across the empire, and associated with Jewish power.<sup>108</sup> One result was that many of these anti-Semitic ideas took rightists closer to criticizing the actions of the regime, as well as Jews themselves.

The right-wing groups that appeared after 1905 were deliberately exclusionary in practice. The most vehement associations such as the URP would not admit ethnically Jewish members, even after conversion to Orthodoxy. In an audience with Nicholas II, one member of the URP proudly exclaimed they would never be allowed to enter the group. This highlights a shift in attitudes, from religious towards racial anti-Semitism, taking place in certain circles of the far right.<sup>109</sup> A. S. Shmakov, a commentator who joined the URP in 1905, in his work

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<sup>104</sup> ‘Russkoe sobranie’, in Shelokhaev, (ed.), *Programmy*, p. 422. Further proclamations from the URP on the ‘Jewish question’ can be found in *ibid.*, pp. 449, 451.

<sup>105</sup> *Ibid.*; and S. Goldin, ‘Evrei kak poniatie’, in Miller, Sdvizhkov and Shirle (eds.), *Poniatia o Rossii*, pp. 372-374.

<sup>106</sup> ‘Soiuz russkogo naroda’, in Shelokhaev, (ed.), *Programmy*, p. 444.

<sup>107</sup> ‘Russkoe sobranie’, in *ibid.*, p. 422.

<sup>108</sup> GARF, F. 116, op. 1, d. 37, l. 18 ob.: telegram from the Yalta branch of the Union of Russian People to A. I. Dubrovin (St. Petersburg), 22 June 1907.

<sup>109</sup> Cited in Podbolotov, ‘True Russians Against the Jews’, p. 198; see also *Vestnik narodnoi svobody*, 24 May 1907, 20, cols. 1223-1238. One activist, N. S. Ivanov, claimed that the leadership of the URP would not admit Jews under any circumstances (including after conversion from Judaism): GARF, F.

*Freedom and the Jews (Svoboda i evrei)* presented a view that inter-marriage would lead to weakening of the Russian land and people.<sup>110</sup> This was occurring in other nationalist circles. Men'shikov, a leading ideologue of the Nationalist Party, increasingly developed such racist attitudes after 1905-1906, stating breeding between the Russian and Jewish 'races' would eliminate the Jewish 'type'. Obviously, the eventual significance of this argument was racial, as well as religious and cultural.<sup>111</sup>

However, racist ideas, though present, were not the primary focus of right-wing propaganda at this stage.<sup>112</sup> More prominent in public anti-Semitic discourse throughout 1905 were themes of power and control. In one URM circular, the war with Japan was described as powered by 'Japanese and Jewish money', supporting intrigues against the Tsar.<sup>113</sup> In a speech from 31 December 1905, Boris Nikol'skii declared to the Tsar the need to unite against the 'Jewish Masonic conspiracy', 'international enemies of law and order' who sought to 'fight our fatherland, education and culture'.<sup>114</sup> The idea of 'ownership' of the land, linked to the theme of dominance and capitalism, shows the use of the 'merchant' stereotype in the rightist press. A mythical view of Jews as the masters of international finance capitalism circulated, which rightists desired would increase their own popularity by showing how they were on the side of the 'exploited' Russian people. The threat from the Jews, according to the URP, meant they needed to be limited in number within the First Duma, or even banned outright. This theme of the political, subversive Jew had a wider currency in the conservative press. *Grazhdanin* depicted Jews as clever,

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1467, op. 1, d. 497, ll. 75 ob.-76: v chrezvychainuiu sledstvennuiu komissiiu dlia proizvodstva sledstvennykh deistvii, 23 June 1917.

<sup>110</sup> A. S. Shmakov, *Svoboda i evrei* (Moscow, 1906), pp. lvii-lix. His later works explored the view that Jews were behind revolutionary movements and the assassination of Tsar Alexander II. Shmakov, *Evreiskie voprosy, na stene vseмирnoi istorii* (Moscow, 1912), pp. 76-77, 80-81.

<sup>111</sup> Löwe, *The Tsars and the Jews*, pp. 282-284.

<sup>112</sup> This argument is explored in Weinerman, 'Racism, Racial Prejudice and Jews', pp. 442-495. See also Avrutin, 'Racial Categories', pp. 16-19, for a wider exploration of the 'absence of race' in the discourse of Russian culture and politics in the late imperial period.

<sup>113</sup> GARF, F. 102.OO, op. 316, (1905 g.), d. 999, ch. 39, t.1, l. 1: address to the Union of Russian Men (circa June 1905).

<sup>114</sup> 'Vsepoddanneishaia rech' B. V. Nikol'skogo proiznesennaia im v vysochaishem prisutstvii pri prieme deputatsii "Russkogo sobraniia", 31 December 1905, in Kir'ianov (ed.), *Pravye partii*, Vol. 1, p. 101.

mendacious and intimately tied in to revolutionary movements, especially in the troublesome Western areas of the Russian Empire. In the rightist mindset, the involvement of Jews in government and the legal system, itself a mendacious 'Westernized' development initiated by the Great Reforms of the 1860s and 1870s, had led to Jewish power and influence within the Russian state.<sup>115</sup>

As well as Jews, the Poles, the Finns and other minority nationalities were widely denounced as subversives in right-wing circles. The ideological component of many of these ideas was often meagre; right-wing activists instead aimed to exploit emotions and resentments, hoping that in poor, rural areas of the empire the theme of powerful and wealthy subversives oppressing poor, Orthodox Russians would have a degree of popular resonance. However, an important implication of many of these constructions was how anti-Jewish emblems and feelings came to represent a wider rejection of Russian realities, often being associated with the Duma, liberalism or parliamentary Russia. Therefore, the far right's anti-Jewish views took a more subversive turn for the regime, as well as the right's enemies.

#### *Monarchical policies and mass attitudes*

Assessing whether these ideas correlated with those held by the much-eulogized 'masses', rather than the central councils and pundits of the rightist groups, is an important end. The leadership of the right-wing parties believed the peasantry was particularly receptive to monarchist ideas, even in the face of revolutionary unrest. Violent disorders had challenged such notions; instances of peasant unrest since the Emancipation Manifesto of 1861, such as in Poltava during 1902, had shown rural instability. Furthermore, rapid population growth in the late nineteenth century had placed further strain on the peasantry's ability to support itself.<sup>116</sup> The right clearly desired to appeal across social classes, and there are many instances showing the attraction of rightist ideas and activities to peasants and workers.

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<sup>115</sup> For example, see *Grazhdanin*, 3 September 1906, 65, pp. 2-3; A. P. Liprandi, *Ravnopravie i evreiskie voprosy*, pp. 1-5.

<sup>116</sup> Field, *Rebels in the Name of the Tsar*, pp. 1-27.

One right-wing organization in the village of Aleksandrevskii, in a telegram addressed to Nicholas II himself (the ‘dear Tsar father’), warned that ‘Jewish strikes in future elections’ to the State Duma would lead to the paralysis of the Russian state. This group pledged to defend the fatherland (*otechestvo*) against enemies ‘with the last drop of our blood’. However, the group is not named, and the number of signatories is uncertain.<sup>117</sup> Other documents are more forthcoming with details. One telegram from 22 June 1907 from the Yalta branch of the URP, addressed to Dubrovin, described the work of this provincial branch as primarily to ‘save Russia from the Jews’ (adopting the neutral term *evrei* rather than the pejorative *zhid*’) and working to organize a ‘Union of Russian working men’ in the region, and thus develop working-class support for monarchism.<sup>118</sup> Provincial activists adopted attitudes from the central leadership, mirroring the discourse of anti-revolution. It is notable how the URP projected their views onto wider society. For instance, in one telegram from the Russian Assembly to A. I. Dubrovin, a meeting held in memory of Alexander III near Znamenskii Square in St. Petersburg was said to reflect a moment of historical importance for *all* the Russian people.<sup>119</sup>

It is easier to chart attitudes amongst urban workers recruited to the URP from available sources, among which are the surviving records of the Provisional Government committee of enquiry into the unlawful activities of the former regime. These provide insights into the ideas of the activists themselves, as well as the leaders of the right-wing movements. One St. Petersburg worker who joined the URP in 1905, V. V. Shelkovnikov, recalled his experiences on his interrogation by the committee during June 1917. He recalled how URP activists went into the Nevskii factory in order to raise support for the autocracy, and in so doing deliberately targeted urban workers in order to sway the masses towards tsarism, amid the heat of revolutionary tensions. Strikes and the presence of ‘socialist revolutionaries’ had made activists question whether the masses were truly on the

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<sup>117</sup> GARF, F. 601, op. 1, d. 1061, l. 49: telegram to Nicholas II from Aleksandrevskii, 16 June 1906.

<sup>118</sup> GARF, F. 116, op. 1, d. 37, l. 18 ob.: URP central council (Yalta), to A. I. Dubrovin (St. Petersburg), 22 June 1907.

<sup>119</sup> GARF, F. 116, op. 1, d. 37, ll. 8-8 ob.: main council of the Russian Assembly (St. Petersburg), to A. I. Dubrovin (St. Petersburg), 27 September 1907.



side of the autocracy. Shelkovnikov perceived that the 1905 revolution had spread unrest in the factories, and the urban proletariat was becoming increasingly radical. A *druzhina* was subsequently organized; Shelkovnikov claimed that 500 workers in the Nevskii factory joined this group during 1905.<sup>120</sup>

I. A. Lavrov, a URP activist and factory worker operating in the Semiannikovskii plant in St. Petersburg during 1905, explained on his interrogation that recruitment for this group had started in the factories. Like Shelkovnikov's testimony, he claimed the *druzhiny* in this region were especially active; they had received a cache of weapons from one of the chief organizers of the URP in St. Petersburg, Iuskevich-Kraskovskii. Lavrov claimed that hundreds of workers flocked to the autocratic cause in the Putilovskaia, Moskovskaia and Narvskaia factories during 1905. Lavrov said that the police were well informed about the *druzhiny*'s receipt of weapons, but did little to stop them due to their own sympathies. These weapons, amongst other nefarious goals, were distributed with the intention of fighting strikers in these factories, and also for the planned assassinations of liberal politicians, Shelkovnikov citing the murder of Herzenstein as one example of this activity.<sup>121</sup> Fear of revolutionary criminality was one of the reasons that the URP needed to be formed; activists saw 1905 as a 'crime' against the Russian state, and that urgent methods needed to be taken to rectify this.

Victor Pavlovich Sokolov was the product of a gentry family, and son of general P. V. Sokolov. An engineer by trade, he would later organize a student movement amongst the right, and co-organized a *druzhina* in the Aleksandrovskii factory in St. Petersburg, along with the URP leaders there, A. V. Polovnev and Iuskevich-Kraskovskii. Sokolov's testimony gives an excellent insight into how violence could become an emotive experience. He discussed his recruitment into the *druzhina* after prompting from Polovnev:

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<sup>120</sup> This account is drawn from Chernovskii (comp.) and Viktorov (ed.), *Soiuz russkogo naroda*, pp. 67-69.

<sup>121</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 62-63.

I clearly remember 6 January 1906. Polovnev said to me that the URP has a squad there, the only purpose of which was the maintenance of order, and it would be a real help to the government against the revolution in the streets, and also the self-defence of workers in the factory. Subsequently I convinced myself of such a calling, and joined the squad. Then Polovnev said to me, in relation to serious disorders amongst the workers, that the squad took on the serious work of protecting the lives of a few government figures, and that he, Polovnev, would be heading a combat unit of ten men for this security...'<sup>122</sup>

Polovnev's attempt was persuasive, and showed the attraction of joining one of the most militant tendencies on the right. It provided an opportunity for those with autocratic sympathies to face off against a clear enemy in defence of the autocracy.

It is harder to measure attitudes amongst the peasantry, given inconsistencies in the source base and widespread illiteracy. Clearly, sections of the peasantry shared some of the major prejudices held by rightist leaders. A resolution by peasants in Nogutsk (Stavropol province) from 29 June 1906 shows anti-Semitic attitudes. The resolution, signed by 41 literate peasants and with the names of a further 599 illiterate peasants attached, contains a list of political demands. Among these were, 'under no circumstances give equal rights to the Jews, since these people seek to gain power over us; they wish to destroy the existing state system in Russia and to arrange things so that Jews will govern Russia in the place of God's anointed'. By early June 1906, the politicized right had built up a political presence in Saratov province. The petition does not mention this, but shares certain themes in common with the ideas and aims of the publicity materials of several right-wing groups. Among these are demands to abolish the sale of alcohol, and opposition to amnesties for political criminals.<sup>123</sup>

Peasant petitions examined by Oleg Bukhovets demonstrate some thematic overlap with the extreme right. In a sample of 69 petitions gathered from Ukraine,

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<sup>122</sup> GARF, F. 1467, op. 1, d. 498, ll. 35 ob.-36.: gospodinu predsedatelju glavnogo soveta soiuz a russkogo naroda (circa June 1917).

<sup>123</sup> 'Resolution by Peasants in Nogutsk (Stavropol province), 29 June 1906', in G. Freeze (ed.), *From Supplication to Revolution: A Documentary Social History of Imperial Russia* (Oxford, 1988), pp. 278-280.

extreme negative perceptions of Jews, including a view that they were ‘parasites’ on the Russian land and needed to be ‘cleansed’ from the empire, occurred in only four of the petitions assessed (six per cent). However, the overall prevalence of anti-Semitic cultural stereotypes is much higher, appearing in 23 of the 69 petitions (33 per cent). Most common is the theme of the Jew as a ‘merchant’ or ‘bourgeois’. Whilst the demand for violent measures against Jews is only apparent from a small minority of the petitions, widespread cultural attitudes show the existence of deeply ingrained stereotypes. There was therefore a reservoir of attitudes for the right to play upon. Intriguingly the themes in the petitions correlate with trends in right-wing propaganda; specifically, the claims of Jewish power reflected in the idea of the merchant or speculator. Racial differences were less prevalent than ideas of Jewish wealth and economic domination.<sup>124</sup>

Yet other rightist themes were less prevalent. In terms of peasant attitudes towards the autocracy, Bukhovets has shown from a sample of 200 peasant petitions and documents drawn from across the empire between 1905 and 1907 that monarchist or pro-autocratic sentiments were in a distinct minority. Monarchist or reformist ‘mood’ (*nastroenie*) occurred in 33 documents sampled (16.5 per cent). This is in stark contrast to the ‘revolutionary’ mood present in 181 of the petitions (91.5 per cent). Bukhovets acknowledges the problems of finding representative samples, but his exhaustive research points towards a tentative conclusion that revolutionary ideas were popular amongst large sections of the peasantry during 1905; doubtless, a view informed by Soviet historiographical traditions. However, given the unrest amongst the peasantry during the revolution, his conclusion that peasants were not only passive supporters of the autocracy is credible.<sup>125</sup>

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<sup>124</sup> O. G. Bukhovets, ‘Natsii i etnokonfessionalnye gruppy Rossiiskoi imperii v massovom soznanii (po petitsiiam i nakazam 1905-1907 gg.)’, *Sotsial’naia istoriia: ezhegodnik* (1998), pp. 249-262; ‘The Political Consciousness of the Russian Peasantry in the Revolution of 1905-1907: Sources, Methods, and Some Results’, *Russian Review*, 47, 4 (1988), pp. 357-374; A. Verner, ‘Discursive Strategies in the 1905 Revolution: Peasant Petitions from Vladimir Province’, *Russian Review*, 54, 1 (1995), pp. 65-90.

<sup>125</sup> O. G. Bukhovets, *Sotsial’nye konflikty i krest’ianskaia mental’nost v Rossiiskoi imperii nachala XX veka: novye materialy, metody, rezul’taty* (Moscow, 1993), pp. 219-220.

## **Conclusion**

The councils of the groups that emerged during 1905, such as the URM and URP, displayed a clear proclivity for harnessing a mass dynamic in society, and they had some support in this aim. Their ideas had currency within wider society, though it was distressing for some observers that the 'masses' were also turning to revolutionary forces in the same period. Therefore the image of popular power that emerged on the right was a contested one. To many right-wing commentators, mass politics was perceived as both an opportunity and a threat. Even amongst propagandists who were enthusiastic about creating a mass basis for the right-wing movement, ideals were not clearly defined, and the resulting attitudes towards 'the people' were sometimes confused. However, a mass right-wing popular movement was starting to arise, as a number of activists flocked to the cause, excited by autocratic slogans and promises to be given a role in the war against revolutionary terror.

Rightists were reacting to real conditions during and shortly after 1905: a broad-based and destructive revolutionary movement, social and demographic shifts, and large-scale urbanization. Their rise can only be understood in conjunction with the wider social and political effects of the revolutionary crisis. This prompted the formation of larger parties and groups, quite different from the smaller groups such as the Russian Assembly that had existed prior to 1905. The violence of many activists emerged as a central issue, for rightist leaders, their followers and also observers from within the autocracy. This would place a question mark over their self-proclaimed status as the defenders of the old regime. Whether rightists could be reliable allies for the regime whilst using such tactics was initially unclear. During this phase of the movement, right-wing parties and groups spread across the Russian Empire, taking their approach to peripheral areas, far from the imperial centre, that in turn led to increased tensions with the imperial establishment.

## Across the Empire

Right-wing groups were particularly active in non-Russian areas of the empire, demonstrated by their growth in the southwest during the revolution of 1905.<sup>1</sup> This chapter examines the provincial activity of several different right-wing groups, looking at cases from Odessa, Kiev and Astrakhan', which provide insights into rightist radicalism by considering their militant, populist and anti-political mood. Rightists scored several successes following the revolutionary period; there were areas where the populist and nationalist ideas previously explored were effectively shaped to local concerns and situations. This ideology was generally inflexible; success followed where local factors facilitating the rise of the movement already existed. Rightists were not, however, equally successful in all areas, and the first two cases represented greater successes for rightist forces in the respective region than the final example. As rightists spread across the empire, tensions emerged between the independent right and the autocratic politics of the establishment.

### Odessa: Violence and Militancy on the Imperial Periphery

An exceptional area of right-wing activity during and after 1905 was the bustling port city of Odessa, located in the southwest of the Russian Empire. Founded in 1794, by the late nineteenth century Odessa was the largest city in Ukraine, and the fourth largest in the empire.<sup>2</sup> Several factors underscored the rise of the right. Like other areas of prominent right-wing activity, such as Bessarabia and Kiev, Odessa

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<sup>1</sup> This is reflected by department of police figures in GARF, F. 102, 4-e d-vo, op. 1907, d. 164, ll. 179-398 ob. Rawson notes the success of the rightists in the southwest of the empire in campaigning to elect deputies to the First and Second Dumas, a result of 'the significant role that regional concerns and local leadership played in Russian politics'. See *Russian Rightists*, pp. 91-106. A contemporary liberal analysis is *Russkaia mysl'*, 2 (1908), pp. 20-29, 'Chernaia sotnia v provintsii'.

<sup>2</sup> General analyses of the history of Odessa include P. Herlihy, *Odessa: A History, 1794-1914* (Cambridge, MA, 1986); F. Skinner, 'City Planning in Russia: The Development of Odessa, 1789-1892', (Ph.D. diss., Princeton University, 1973); 'Odessa and the Problem of Modernization', in M. Hamm (ed.), *The City in Late Imperial Russia* (Bloomington, 1986), pp. 209-248.

was a diverse city in terms of its ethnic composition, home to many immigrant communities, including Jews; and like Kiev, it was located within the Pale of Settlement. According to the 1897 census, 30.8 per cent of the population of 403,768 had either Hebrew or Yiddish as their first language.<sup>3</sup> In 1904, 31.31 per cent of Odessa's population of 511,000 was Jewish, one of the highest percentages in any region of the Russian Empire. Many Jews played an important role in the mercantile, financial, pharmaceutical and textile industries; 56 per cent of small businesses in Odessa were Jewish-owned, in a city that has been described as 'a centre of Jewish culture and society in Russia'.<sup>4</sup> Many prosperous Jewish residents played a vibrant role in the economic and social life of the city, yet there was also widespread poverty amongst Odessa's Jews. Furthermore, anti-Semitism had been present in ugly and destructive episodes in its history. Odessa was the scene of the first Russian pogroms in 1821, with further episodes in 1859, 1871 and 1900. Exploiting long-standing tensions, an idea of Jewish power, and economic subjugation of non-Jews, would play an important role in right-wing propaganda after 1905.<sup>5</sup> The city was home not only to Jews, but also to substantial Polish, German, Italian and Greek communities, some of which contained within them pockets of their own anti-Jewish animus.<sup>6</sup>

The Union of Russian People (URP) was one of several right-wing groups present in this city, chaired by Count Aleksei Ivanovich Konovnitsyn (1855-1919) from 1906–1911. Konovnitsyn was a direct descendent of Petr Konovnitsyn, general at the battle of Vitebsk (1812) in the 'Great Patriotic War' against Napoleon, a family tie that Konovnitsyn was no doubt keen to allude to in his self-presentation as a patriot. Konovnitsyn was an unscrupulous figure, a rabble-rousing orator in public, and in private, accusations of his corruption led to splits in the right-wing fraction in

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<sup>3</sup> *Pervaia vseobshchaia perepis'*, Vol. 47, p. vi.

<sup>4</sup> *Evreiskaia entsiklopediia: svod znanii o evreistve i ego kul'ture v proshlom i nastoiashchem*, Vol. 12 (St. Petersburg, 1908-1913), pp. 60-61.

<sup>5</sup> Herlihy, *Odessa*, p. 251; a contemporary report on the 1900 pogrom is in *Russkoe bogatstvo*, 8 (1900), pp. 159-162. For an overview of other pogroms in Odessa, see J. D. Klier, 'The Pogrom Paradigm in Russian History' in Klier and Lambroza (eds.), *Pogroms*, pp. 13-38; Lambroza, 'The Pogroms of 1903-1906', in *ibid.*, pp. 232-237; *Evreiskaia entsiklopediia*, Vol. 12, pp. 67-68.

<sup>6</sup> *Pervaia vseobshchaia perepis'*, Vol. 47, p. vi.

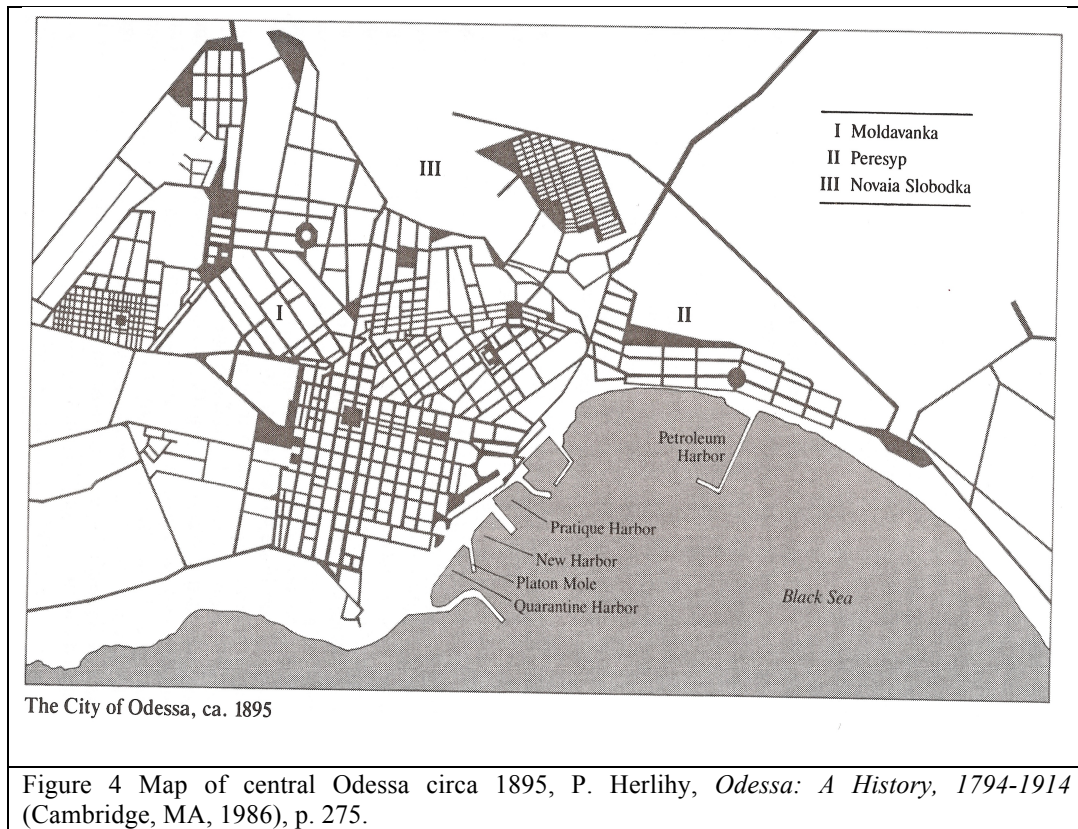
Odessa, which would lead to the formation of the Union of the Archangel Mikhail (UAM) in 1908, led by Vladimir Purishkevich.<sup>7</sup> Beforehand, Konovnitsyn had met with Aleksandr Dubrovin in St. Petersburg in 1905, and it was at the former's behest that a URP branch was formed in Odessa. The other two founding members of the group were the teacher N. N. Rodzevich, who would also lead the closely linked Union of Russian Men (URM) in Odessa, and the barrister B. A. Pelikan. The branch was officially opened on 4 February 1906, with Konovnitsyn sworn in as the chair of the organization, and Pelikan the vice-chair. The newspapers of the Odessa URP, *Russkaia rech'* (Russian Speech) and *Za tsaria i rodinu* (For Tsar and Fatherland) had been circulating since November 1905, shortly before the official establishment of the organization. A central aim of the URP in Odessa, as later recalled by Konovnitsyn, was the creation of a series of *druzhiny* in the region, for armed struggle against revolutionaries.<sup>8</sup> The purpose of the following assessment is not to chart the entire history of the rise and decline of right-wing activity in Odessa, or re-tell the narrative of the pogrom of 1905.<sup>9</sup> It is rather to consider the dynamics of the right-wing movement in the city between 1905 and 1908, and to discuss why right-wing ideas and actions were able to gain a disproportionate degree of traction in Odessa, as opposed to the central metropolitan areas of Moscow or St. Petersburg, or even in many other provinces. The analysis will consider how rightists mobilized, and then the outcomes of the centrality of violence and class struggle to the scenario of the Odessa right, and also what this meant for the autocracy.

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<sup>7</sup> For a biographical sketch of Konovnitsyn, see *CSIE*, pp. 258-261. A recent thesis includes a chapter on the financial irregularities of the URP in Odessa. See Langer, 'Corruption and the Counterrevolution', Ch. 6. This is a theme I shall return to in chapter six.

<sup>8</sup> This is drawn from Konovnitsyn's own account during interrogation by the Provisional Government in June 1917: Chernovskii (comp.) and Viktorov (ed.), *Soiuz russkogo naroda*, pp. 274-275.

<sup>9</sup> On the pogrom, see R. Weinberg, *The Revolution of 1905 in Odessa: Blood on the Steps* (Bloomington, 1992); and Herlihy, *Odessa*, pp. 301-304; G. Surh, 'The Role of Civil and Military Commanders During the 1905 Pogroms in Odessa and Kiev', *Jewish Social Studies: History, Culture, Society*, 15, 3 (2009), pp. 39-55.



### *Revolutionary Odessa*

Like branches in Moscow and St. Petersburg, the Odessa URP saw itself as an organization created in reaction to the revolution of 1905. The two crucial events which prompted the formation of the Odessa branch of the URP were the 17 October Manifesto, and the general strike of that same month; both events influenced how the authorities would respond to these groups. Under the guidance of Konovnitsyn, and Rodzevich from the related URM, the group declared the need to launch a total defence of ‘Russian values’ (meaning Orthodoxy, autocracy and nationality) to fight against what its supporters saw as the growing strength of the non-Russian population.<sup>10</sup> The October 1905 pogrom sent shockwaves around the empire,<sup>11</sup> and the right-wing mobs that became involved blamed the Jews for an erosion of the

<sup>10</sup> GARF, F. 102.OO, op. 316, (1905 g.), d. 999, ch. 39, l. A, t. 1, ll. 92 ob.–93: police circular from Odessa to P. A. Stolypin, 2 December 1906.

<sup>11</sup> See R. Weinberg, ‘The Pogroms of 1905 in Odessa: A Case Study’, in Klier and Lambroza (eds.), *Pogroms*, pp. 248-289.



Tsar's autocratic powers.<sup>12</sup> As in St. Petersburg and Moscow, rejection of the 17 October Manifesto appeared as a key element in this presentation of a 'defence'. The Odessa URP's self-description as the defenders of Orthodox Russians, and the violent methods that many of its members were prepared to go to in order to achieve this defence, were central features of this branch in the years immediately following the revolution of 1905.<sup>13</sup> The pogrom that followed the promulgation of the October Manifesto was one of the largest in the empire. On 18 October, hundreds gathered at Dal'nitskii Street, leading to a heightening of tensions, whipped up by pro-Tsarist orators. Following this demonstration, fierce violence broke out, with 'patriotic demonstrators' ransacking Jewish houses, shops and small businesses. Over 400 Jews were killed in two days of carnage, and scores more injured.<sup>14</sup>

The pogrom of 1905 can prompt us to ask wider questions about government initiative, pro-Tsarist agency, and toleration of what have been described by sympathizers as 'patriotic manifestations'. Much attention has focused on the role of government complicity in the pogrom.<sup>15</sup> This points towards the importance of the relationship between the URP and the establishment. At least until 1908, the URP benefitted from the leniency of the commander of the Odessa military district, Baron Aleksandr Kaul'bars. As chief of the army in the region, he was one figure who could use force to oppose the rise of spontaneous right-wing organizations.<sup>16</sup> However, the liberal journal *Pravo* (Law) claimed on the morning of 18 October 1905, at the outset of the infamous pogrom, that Kaul'bars was welcoming crowds of pro-autocracy demonstrators into the city centre, giving a speech that concluded 'long live Russia, and the free Russian people!'<sup>17</sup> Kaul'bars, in a report circulated within the Odessa police, described the URP as a potentially useful counterweight to revolutionary forces in Odessa, adding that 40 per cent of the city's population was

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<sup>12</sup> Ibid., pp. 259-262.

<sup>13</sup> For one example, see GARF, F. 102.OO, op. 316, (1905 g.), d. 999, ch. 39, l. A, t. 1, ll. 123 ob.-124: B. V. Kaul'bars to P. A. Stolypin, 31 December 1906.

<sup>14</sup> *Evreiskaia entsiklopediia*, Vol. 12, pp. 67-68.

<sup>15</sup> Surh, 'The Role of Civil and Military Commanders', pp. 39-55.

<sup>16</sup> Chernovskii (comp.) and Viktorov (ed.), *Soiuz russkogo naroda*, p. 215.

<sup>17</sup> *Pravo*, 4 December 1905, 48-49, appendices, col. 137.

Jewish; this was an exaggeration of around seven per cent, based on figures from the 1897 census.<sup>18</sup>

Yet Kaul'bars was not alone in considering his overriding prerogative to be the control of revolutionary violence; indeed, this was where the main focus lay for most of the police at the time. The revolutionary climate in Odessa throughout the first half of 1905, with sporadic strikes in the first several months followed by a general strike in June, deeply affected the actions taken by the authorities during the rest of the year.<sup>19</sup> Though the authorities did not, as has been claimed, plan and direct the pogrom of their own accord, they did not effectively keep public order.<sup>20</sup> In an investigation by Senator Aleksandr Kuzminskii into the origins and consequences of the Odessa pogrom, it emerged that the Odessa city prefect (*gradonachal'nik*) Dmitri Neidgardt ordered the removal of police from stationary posts on the night of 18 October, which allowed for outbreaks of 'patriotic' violence to spread more easily over the next few days, as they were unopposed by the presence of police on the streets.<sup>21</sup> Though the pogrom pre-dates the 'official' formation of the URP by several months, Neidgardt describes 'patriotic manifestations' as one of the main sources of violence in clashes between pro-

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<sup>18</sup> GARF, F. 102.OO, op. 316, (1905 g.), d. 999, ch. 39, l. A, t. 1, ll. 92 ob.–93 police circular from Odessa to P. A. Stolypin, 2 December 1906.

<sup>19</sup> For a more detailed assessment, see Weinberg, *The Revolution of 1905 in Odessa*, Chs. 4 and 5. These existing tensions included pogroms, which had swept Odessa from October 1905 before the URP was officially established here. It should be noted that the Odessa pogroms, whilst involving right-wing groups, were a wider phenomenon that did not only include these factions. They also drew in townsfolk uninvolved in the movements, including the unemployed, and day labourers out of work.

<sup>20</sup> This argument was originally expounded by Simon Dubnov, a co-editor of the Russian-Jewish journal *Voskhod* (Dawn), in *The History of the Jews in Russia and Poland*, Vol. 3 (Katv, 1975). Odessa is mentioned on p. 129. See also his *Materialy dlia istorii antievreiskikh pogromov v Rossii*. 2 Vols. (St. Petersburg, 1919-1923). A similar view can be found in M. Vishniak, 'Antisemitism in Tsarist Russia, A Study in Government Fostered Antisemitism', in K. S. Pinson (ed.), *Essays on Antisemitism* (New York, 1964), pp. 122-144. One contemporary interpretation stressing government complicity is 'Iz istorii vosmidesiatykh godov', *Evreiskaia starina*, 8 (1915). Many works cited above, including by Weinberg, Klier and Surh, cast doubt on the notion that the pogroms were centrally planned, though it is not so easy to dismiss claims of culpability at a local level, where examples show police officials praising 'patriotic manifestations' as signs of a welcomed popular mobilization against revolutionary forces.

<sup>21</sup> *Materialy k istorii russkoi kontr-revoliutsii*. Vol. 1: *pogromy po offitsial'nym dokumentam*. (St. Petersburg, 1908), pp. 14-15.

autocracy and revolutionary forces from 18-20 October.<sup>22</sup> However, in the wake of the general strike from October 1905, the emphasis and attention of the police and army was on anti-authority violence, rather than on crowds that pleaded loyalty to the Tsar. Hence, a period of toleration of these forces on the part of the city authorities, during and immediately after the pogrom, ensued.<sup>23</sup> But far from showing government support for the far right, this approach was down to other factors. Neidgardt and his associates considered attacks on stationary police over previous days a more than adequate reason to withdraw a substantial armed police presence, and avoid further inflaming tensions. Neidgardt scaled down the police presence in order to try and avert further violence; this was not in itself an invitation for anti-Jewish crowds to run riot.<sup>24</sup>

Inadequate policing was one factor facilitating the rise of the right, but another was the appeal of the groups themselves. Class conflict was central to the URP message. Appeals to workers took on an anti-intelligentsia focus, attempting to turn supporters against the ‘30,000 bourgeois in the city of Odessa’ and adding that Odessa University, where riots and disorders had broken out during 1905, was full of ‘half-educated strikers’ and needed to be ‘burned’. In public, these pro-autocracy groups attempted to stoke the flames of class, as well as ethnic, conflict by utilizing the language of revolution. One group of right-wing activists, documented in the legal journal *Pravo*, declared that ‘proletarian’ elements of society needed to ‘unite around the Tsar’. The group was composed of town-dwellers (*meshchane*) and the focal point of their violent activities was properties and shops considered ‘Jewish’, and educational establishments: much of the worst violence occurred either at or near Odessa University.<sup>25</sup> Many of these spontaneous disorders targeted Jews and students, in attacks against what were perceived to be the educated and well-to-do

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<sup>22</sup> Ibid., pp. 23-25.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., p. 24.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., p. 14. This version of events was interpreted in the liberal and juridical press as a sign that Neidgardt’s sympathies lay with pro-autocracy demonstrators: see *Pravo*, 4 December 1905, 48-49, appendices, cols. 136-145; Surh, ‘The Role of Civil and Military Commanders’, pp. 46-47.

<sup>25</sup> *Pravo*, 4 December 1905, 48-49, appendices, cols. 137-138.

elements of Odessa's population.<sup>26</sup> Konovnitsyn and his associates claimed 'Jewish money' was bankrolling the enemies of the autocracy.<sup>27</sup> Class-conflict and anti-Semitism mutually reinforced each other in this scenario.

*Workers, populism and anti-Semitism: public demonstrations*

Rightists in Odessa were keen to recruit from new bases of social support. Local instability caused by recent processes of urbanization meant that many workers from the dock areas of the city faced long periods of unemployment, with thousands often being out of work at any one time.<sup>28</sup> In such a climate, the normal propaganda of the URP – that economic devastation had been wrought on the *narod* by controlling foreign and Jewish influences – became more effective, with the portrayal of the 'enemies' of the Russian people as powerful subversives who exploited Russians having more traction in this context. In Odessa, the rightist press depicted Jews as merchants and speculators, and created a narrative of a powerful and wealthy Jewish community. Jews were described as the cause of many employment worries, portrayed as the dominant group seeking to exploit poor, Orthodox Russians.<sup>29</sup> Consequently Konovnitsyn aimed to recruit workers from the dock areas, and presented his movement as one dedicated to the people. When describing the rationale behind the creation of the URP in Odessa towards the end of 1905, he spoke of his desire to create a group that would 'unite the Russian people'.<sup>30</sup> As well as economic factors, Odessa's politics was an additional stimulus for the rise of the radical right, linked tightly to its anti-Semitic ideology. The presence of a revolutionary movement, including the Bund and also branches of the Russian Social Democratic Workers' Party (RSDWP) was an additional factor aiding the URP's rise in the area.<sup>31</sup> This is shown by the numerous examples of the far right

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<sup>26</sup> Ibid., cols. 139-140.

<sup>27</sup> Chernovskii (comp.) and Viktorov (ed.), *Soiuz russkogo naroda*, p. 231.

<sup>28</sup> Herlihy, *Odessa*, pp. 304-305.

<sup>29</sup> Various issues of *Russkoe znamia*, January-March 1906.

<sup>30</sup> Chernovskii (comp.) and Viktorov (ed.), *Soiuz russkogo naroda*, p. 274.

<sup>31</sup> The Jewish Labour Bund of Poland, Russia and Lithuania, or Bund for short (1897-1920) played a prominent role in the propaganda of the URP and other right-wing radicals. Right-wing extremists developed a scenario where the typical Jew was also a professional revolutionary, partly based on the

portraying a scenario in newspapers such as *Russkoe znamia* that being in a revolutionary group such as the Bund was typical of Odessa's Jews.<sup>32</sup> These economic and political factors mutually reinforced one another. Whilst these claims for mass support were not new to the right, Konovnitsyn's branch clearly scored some successes in this aim. By 1907, Odessa had become a particular hotbed of URP activity, in stark contrast to the small-scale, elitist groups that had existed before 1905, such as the Russian Assembly.

The Odessa right took practical steps to advance its cause. One was to hold public meetings or rallies to recruit people to the movement. In one open-air meeting of URP activists held on 12 December 1906, a scenario was created which pitted the 'simple people' against the revolutionary intelligentsia. Baron Kaul'bars noted that this assembly appealed to the 'simple Russian people' or as he termed it, the '99 per cent' who would be 'praying for their Tsar'. The activities at the meeting, including the singing of patriotic hymns and arias from Mikhail Glinka's 1836 opera *A Life for the Tsar*, were according to a police report not 'political' but designed to unite 'forces of law and order' specifically against 'revolutionary' forces and Jewish self-defence groups. Like the Russian Assembly a few years earlier, music played a central role in such events. This report was sympathetic to the right-wing cause, noting the 'non-political' nature of the demonstration, and suggested that similar outbursts of public feeling should be allowed to continue.<sup>33</sup>

In Odessa and in other villages and towns in Ukraine, one strategy for popular mobilization was holding public funerals for previous members of the right-wing groups, many of whom were workers who had joined the groups due to the

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number of Jewish leaders of revolutionary movements. See the relevant chapters in J. Frankel, *Prophecy and Politics: Socialism, Nationalism and the Russian Jews* (Cambridge, 1981); and H. J. Tobias, *The Jewish Bund in Russia: From Its Origins to 1905* (Stanford, 1972). For more on right-wing depictions of Jews in visual culture, see Weinberg, 'The Russian Right Responds to 1905', pp. 55-69.

<sup>32</sup> See for example, GARF, F. 102.OO, op. 316, (1905 g.), d. 999, ch. 39, l. A, t. 1, l. 316: *Russkoe Znamia*, 19 Feb 1907. The list of examples of similar statements from right-wing organizations could be multiplied hundreds of times.

<sup>33</sup> GARF, F. 102.OO, op. 316, (1905 g.), d. 999, ch. 39, l. A, t. 1, ll. 123 ob.-124: B. V. Kaul'bars to P. A. Stolypin, 31 December 1906.

recruitment efforts of Konovnitsyn. These public processions were initially presented by supporters of these groups and the right-wing press as detached, sacrosanct events, separate from the planes of everyday political activity. Much of the symbolism of these events utilized the triad of ‘Russian’ values: Orthodoxy, autocracy and nationality that needed to be defended in a time of crisis. An addition to the URP’s message in Odessa was how it presented itself as a movement in defence of the masses. The populist element in the right-wing message created an additional element of tension, with funerals held for rightist workers allowing far-right groups to portray themselves as defenders of ‘the people’.<sup>34</sup> Russian rightists frequently presented themselves as under attack from external threats, and funerals and processions held for workers and the demonstrations and chants accompanying them were designed not to promote leaders or statesmen, but instead everyday ‘true Russian’ people.<sup>35</sup> Funerals for members of right-wing workers acted as a trigger for waves of violence in defence of ‘the masses’ or common people, against an ‘enemy within’ threatening to destroy Russia.<sup>36</sup>

This ‘enemy within’ was often considered to be a Jewish one. Anti-Semitism, as used by these far-right groups, was changing from a purely religious conception (for instance, depicting Jews as Christ-killers) to a ‘modern’ anti-Semitism based on power and political oppression, which was fed by its association with the economic conditions of Odessa. Prominent themes of protection and retribution emerge in the scenarios of funerals held for members of the URP, or ‘for the people’, and can further show how the group conceived of itself as a defender of the *narod*. A funeral in Kherson province, Ukraine, was held for the URP activist

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<sup>34</sup> The report from Senator Kuzminskii, sent to Odessa to conduct an investigation into the reasons for the pogroms in the city in late 1905, mentioned funeral processions in his report several times: *Materialy k istorii Russkoi kontr-revolutsii*, pp. CXXXIII-CXXXIV; *Kievskii i Odesskii pogromy v otchetakh senatorov Turau i Kuzminskogo* (St. Petersburg, 1907), pp. 14-16. URP bands appeared with red flags (representing the blood of Christ) and adorned with Georgii Pobedonosets (the sign of the URP) at student and revolutionary funerals. This led to counter violence from student militants, with the ensuing disorders often taking days to die out.

<sup>35</sup> *Moskovskie vedomosti* first used the nationalist slogan ‘Russia for the Russians’ in the mid-nineteenth century, one of the earliest newspapers to do so. This phrase has been revived amongst Russian nationalist groups in our time. See Gringmut, *Sobranie statei*, Vol. 3, p. 212.

<sup>36</sup> One example of this mentality can be found in GARF, F. 102.OO, op. 316, (1905 g.), d. 999, ch. 39, l. A, l. 214 c: *Ruskaia rech*, 14 May 1907.

Aleksandr Prokhorov on 28 February 1907. A dockworker, he was killed in a clash between URP and revolutionary forces, and his funeral was held in the nearby cemetery. Supervised by leaders of the local branch, A. A. Bankovskii and M. I. Ivanov, a police report noted how after the memorial service a crowd of several hundred URP activists were invited to ‘unite for the fight with enemies’, crying ‘Russia is on the march! (*Rus’ idet*) and ‘hurray!’ whilst promising to wage war, most of all against Odessa’s Jews. Led by Bankovskii, the crowd carried flags, including the Russian imperial standard, filing down Petrovskii and Alekseevskii streets. A pogrom was started, and shops considered ‘Jewish’-looking had their windows smashed with bottles and stones and were set on fire. Scores of onlookers were injured in the chaos that engulfed the town centre. The violence had subsided by the following day, but the sudden nature of these acts of violence had caused panic in the town centre and created an air of tension amongst residents.<sup>37</sup>

A funeral held for Polivanov, a former member of a group called the Russian Society of Steamship Workers, attracted bands of URP supporters, who urged retributive violence against revolutionary oppressors, namely, Jews and socialists. Polivanov’s death was supposedly at the hands of the powerful, subversive revolutionary movements operating within the city.<sup>38</sup> Russian rightists frequently presented themselves, and the Russian people, as under attack from a variety of internal threats. These funerals, as well as the processions adopted for workers, and the demonstrations and chants that accompanied them, were not designed to promote leaders or statesmen, but, instead, everyday ‘true Russians’. The image of the sanctity of the worker was added to long-standing values of Orthodoxy and nationalism, creating a new synthesis on the far right between populism and the Uvarov triad, resulting in a populist nationalism that took on shades of certain fascist movements.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> Chernovskii (comp.) and Viktorov (ed.), *Soiuz russkogo naroda*, pp. 395-396.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 218.

<sup>39</sup> See Rogger, ‘Was there a Russian fascism?’ pp. 398-415.

The presentation of the images of the people had changed in the case of these worker-funerals. The people were no longer passive receptors of the ideas of leaders, as they had been in previous right-wing scenarios, but were the central focus of the right-wing myth. This distinguished the URP's events from the contemporary scenarios of the regime that involved audiences of peasants, but did not present the peasantry as the primary focus of their activity.<sup>40</sup> Such demonstrations had a large potential to incite unrest. These funerals for workers could act as a trigger for further waves of violence in defence of 'the masses' against an 'enemy within' threatening to destroy Russia. The results could be pogroms, or isolated outbreaks of violence with a random pattern.<sup>41</sup>

In the period following the October Manifesto and the pogrom, the right became a more visible public presence.<sup>42</sup> The demonstrations and rallies of right-wing forces in the region give a strong insight into the nature of these groups, re-imagined by activists and supporters as groups in support of the people, opposing contemporary political and social changes sweeping the empire. Instead of being conceived of as pro-government strikebreakers, rightist groups in Odessa should be considered to be protestors and demonstrators. This conceptualization takes us closer to the mood of the organizations that arose from 1905-1906, with the resulting mobilization of opinion driven by protest against contemporary Russia and the status quo, which presented themselves as groups in support of 'the people'.<sup>43</sup> Hence, the populist tradition started in St. Petersburg and Moscow by those respective branches of the URP was continued in Odessa, guided by Konovnitsyn and Rodzevich, yet with local factors creating a more extreme presence.

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<sup>40</sup> See, for instance, R. Wortman, *Scenarios of Power: Myth and Ceremony in the Russian Monarchy*, Vol. 2 (Princeton, 2000).

<sup>41</sup> Chernovskii (comp.) and Viktorov (ed.), *Soiuz russkogo naroda*, pp. 217-218.

<sup>42</sup> Existing records, including the police reports cited, are not always forthcoming on specific figures. When they do cite numbers they vary wildly, from describing only a few dozen supporters to groups of several thousands. One should treat such estimates with a degree of caution, but one can generalize that a sudden proliferation of reports from the end of 1905 showed an enhanced right-wing presence in Odessa.

<sup>43</sup> GARF, F. 102.OO, op. 316, (1905 g.), d. 999, ch. 39, l. A, t. 1, ll. 332-334 : undated and unsigned police report, referring to demonstrations from the end of 1906 and beginning of 1907.



### *Mass violence, militancy and independence*

The slogans of right-wing groups frequently declared themselves to be acting peacefully, and did not usually call directly for the incitement of further pogroms and violence. However, the published works of the central councils of groups such as the URP, Society of Russian Patriots and the Russian Society of Steamship Workers, as well as the editorials of papers such as *Za tsaria i rodinu* and *Russkoe znamia*, often appeared to have little connection to the activities of activists at ground level.<sup>44</sup> As supporters of such groups were not averse to using violence to achieve a ‘united and indivisible’ Russia, the imperial regime closely monitored their actions, which casts doubt on the notion that right-wing groups were organized at the behest of the Tsarist state. However, toleration of these groups by the regime was always a risky premise, as the activity of the right in Odessa could cause significant disruption to patterns of everyday life in the city; most notably, trading through the busy port area was threatened by crowds of armed rightist activists.<sup>45</sup> Consequently, the role of violence in the Odessa movement arises as a central issue. This distinguished militants in Odessa, with their demagogic and vehement message, from other pro-authority groups, which in turn shaped the responses of other social and political groups towards the URM and URP in Odessa.

Throughout 1906, small groups of URP activists continued to commit intermittent violent acts, proclaiming armed combat as the solution to restore Russia. Activists claimed this was directed against Jews and students, the enemies most commonly presented as revolutionary oppressors.<sup>46</sup> Konovnitsyn and his followers made it clear that they conceived of the Odessa URP primarily as a series of combat organizations (*boevye druzhiny*) designed to wage war against the enemies of Russia. An ongoing dynamic of counter-revolutionary violence was the result.<sup>47</sup> As

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<sup>44</sup> URP banner, *K russkomu pravoslavnomu narodu, vozzvanie*, Odessa, 19 December 1905.

<sup>45</sup> The police response to right-wing violence in Odessa will be assessed in the following chapter.

<sup>46</sup> Reports of similar attacks can be found in various police circulars housed in GARF, F, 102.OO, op. 316, (1905 g.), d. 999, ch. 39, l. A., t. 1, ll. 1, 1 ob., 2, 3-4, 15-15 ob., 20, 57, 60-60 ob., 61, 62 ob., 72, 89-93, 103, 107-108 ob., 121-124 ob.

<sup>47</sup> Chernovskii (comp.) and Viktorov (ed.), *Soiuz russkogo naroda*, p. 274.

time elapsed, it became clear that the URP was taken more seriously as a threat in its own right. The Odessa city mayor, A. G. Grigor'ev, fully cognizant of the possible disruption that this, as his colleagues more euphemistically put it, 'disorder' could cause sent a telegram to Prime Minister Petr Stolypin in September 1906 recording his concerns that the URP in Odessa was disrupting the hard-won calm achieved in the region after the pogrom.<sup>48</sup> His feeling was in the wake of the revolutionary crisis of 1905 the city had returned to its previous calm, but this was threatened by fresh outbreaks of right-wing violence.<sup>49</sup> Another message from Grigor'ev to Stolypin displayed concerns that 'the simple working people, the bulk of whom in the present time are unemployed, are roused by the religious message of *Russkaia rech'*, and its appeal to mob law'.<sup>50</sup>

Grigor'ev's fear needs to be considered with the revolutionary disorders that occurred before, during and after 1905. Riots, strikes and demonstrations had sharpened the authorities' suspicions towards independent political and social movements, and a powerful revolutionary force had made all of Odessa's administrators especially wary. However, the demagogic message of rightist groups was unique, in that they claimed to be pro-autocracy, and on the side of both Tsar and people. But their use of violence and intransigent mood towards the present realities of Russia highlighted the distinctiveness of populist ultra-nationalism from official state conservatism. That the title of one of the URP's 1906 publications was *The Plot Against Russia* gives some idea of the mood held amongst the highest echelons of this group. The URP, Russian Society of Steamship Workers, Russian Brotherhood and other smaller groups in Odessa responded to leftist 'disorders' by targeting Jews and students in violent reprisals. URP activists, headed by Konovnitsyn, denounced the October Manifesto, and similar groups loudly proclaimed the necessity to take action against any 'foreigners' weakening the

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<sup>48</sup> It should be noted that city mayor of Odessa and the governor of *Novorossia* region, which incorporated Odessa, were two distinct offices, though often held by the same person. Grigor'ev served as city mayor until August 1907, when he was replaced by V. D. Novitskii.

<sup>49</sup> GARF, F. 102.OO, op. 316, (1905 g.), d. 999, ch. 39, l. A, ll. 1, 1 ob., 2, 3-4: A. Grigor'ev to P. Stolypin, 4 and 7 September 1906.

<sup>50</sup> GARF, F. 102.OO, op. 316, (1905 g.), d. 999, ch. 39, l. A, t. 1, l. 1 ob.: A. Grigor'ev to P. Stolypin, 4 September 1906.

Russian state. However in criticizing the manifesto so vehemently the URP was showing a growing schism between establishment forces, whose political wrangling had resulted in the document, and the autonomous right.

One of the centres of right-wing violence in Odessa was the university campus, where pro-URP youth groups were allied with activists from the central organization. At Odessa University, URP bands brandished weapons and intimidated many of the students on the campus. Though it should be noted that not all of these acts ended in violence, there was widespread disruption at the university, as lectures were stopped by groups of URP activists, and many fled from the campus in terror at the right's activities.<sup>51</sup> It is crucial to note that through the spontaneous nature of this activity, URP activists were envisaging more than sporadic armed conflicts. They desired a total war against modern Russian society in its entirety, rejecting what were perceived, either in reality or in the imagination, as parliamentary institutions, modern political conceptions, Western-based ideologies and other chimerical ideas that were seen as having no place in the soil of the *rodina*. The intransigence of these conceptions illustrates a rejection of the political realities as delivered by the autocracy, as well as the more obvious enemies of Jews and students.<sup>52</sup>

The perception of a Russia in crisis and violent responses to it formed a powerful statement of intent; but the use of violence attracted controversy within the right-wing movements. The Odessa branch of the Russian Assembly, under the leadership of Iosef Passat, created what it described as 'patriotic workers' circles' from 29 May 1905, pre-dating the October pogrom and the formation of the URP.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> GARF, F. 102.OO, op. 316, (1905 g.), d. 999, ch. 39, l. A, t. 1, ll. 103, 126, 126 ob., 127, 128: this series of police reports chronicles one outbreak of violence on the Odessa campus in November 1906, headed by Konovnitsyn, accompanied by an audience of pro-rightist demonstrators. Though we can say for sure that the URP possessed considerable power to disrupt the life of the university and direct police efforts toward increased surveillance of their own activities, and had a level of attraction for students that sympathized with their actions, the human cost of this particular outbreak of violence is unclear, at least from this set of reports.

<sup>52</sup> The press had as much to say on such matters as the above police reports. See the following in *ibid.*, l. 5: *Tovarishch*, 2 September 1906; l. 10: *Russkie vedomosti*, 12 September 1906; l. 24: *Russkie vedomosti*, 16 September 1906; and *Russkie vedomosti*, 19 September 1906.

<sup>53</sup> *Mirnyi trud*, 7 (1905), p. 191, 'Odesskii otdel Russkogo Sobraniia'

The Assembly had created groups in response to revolution, primarily with the aim of opposing ‘radicalism’, in practice meaning ‘social democratic’ parties and Jewish self-defence movements. It associated these groups with other enemies, often described as cosmopolitans, national minority groups and masons in the editorials of its journal, *Mirnyi trud*. Though they shared the URP’s view towards Russia’s ‘enemies’, Passat and the Assembly rejected the use of violence, noting a contradiction between this and a desire to be seen as for ‘law and order’. He claimed of the pogroms, ‘we well understand...that all [these] disorders, which were not in our character, cause grief to his imperial highness, and benefit the enemies of the motherland and the Russian people’. According to Passat, other rightists could not have been involved in earlier pogroms for such reasons. On the subject of the Kishinev pogrom, he declared the newspaper *Bessarabskaia zhizn’* (Bessarabia Life) was the source of many of these claims, a ‘Jewish paper’ labelling the right-wing groups as ‘black hundreds’ and ‘patriotic hooligans’. This was a smear campaign from Russia’s enemies to discredit the right and bring about the total ruin of Russia. Passat declared that the true aims of the Assembly in Odessa were the dissemination of ‘patriotic literature’ and holding educational evenings, often with a musical theme. The Russian Assembly leader thereby dismissed claims that the group’s members were involved in any pogroms.<sup>54</sup>

The controversy over violence within the monarchist factions illustrated that there was no consensus on the use of it, and the extent to which right-wing activists could pursue radical measures. Notably, though pogroms in Odessa and Kiev were discussed in sections of the monarchist press, this was in a vague and even euphemistic fashion. *Moskovskie vedomosti* ran numerous articles covering the pogroms from June 1905, and placed the blame for these events, unsurprisingly, on Jewish radicalism and revolutionary politics.<sup>55</sup> These articles described the events in Odessa not as ‘pogroms’ but as ‘disorders’ (*bezporiadki*) and suggested left-wing students and workers were the primary instigators behind them, as they joyously

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<sup>54</sup> Ibid., p. 191.

<sup>55</sup> *Moskovskie vedomosti*, 15 July 1905, 191, pp. 2-3.

reacted to the October Manifesto, and then partook in orgies of revolutionary violence and destruction.<sup>56</sup> In this sense, the primary agency for the violence of these events was placed on revolutionary culture, and ‘blame’ shifted towards those from the left who sought to do harm to the *rodina* by continuing their existing culture of violence. The RMP wished to distance itself from violence in its public pronouncements,<sup>57</sup> and even the URP’s *Russkoe znamia*, like *Moskovskie vedomosti*, declared that it was Jewish and socialist radicals instigating violence.<sup>58</sup>

Some later rightist groups would shift their tactics towards non-violent activities. One was the UAM under the leadership of V. M. Purishkevich, which generally followed political practices, such as attempting to elect deputies to the State Duma, rather than enticing violent disturbances.<sup>59</sup> Purishkevich saw that the violence of Dubrovin’s URP limited its potential as a mass movement. Instead there should be a degree of compromise with the political settlement of October 1905 – which all right-wingers including Purishkevich still fundamentally opposed – and that rightists should therefore at least attempt to work with the Duma system. However this did not mean that the UAM only pursued peaceful measures; correspondence in 1908 between the department of police and city mayor I. N. Tolmachev shown that the combat organizations, *boevye druzhiny*, associated with the URP were something that the UAM also used.<sup>60</sup> The later split in the right was the result of factionalism, corruption and also such tactical disagreements.

The Russian-Jewish paper *Voskhod* (Dawn) reported on crowds of right-wingers laying the blame for the revolutionary situation at the feet of Odessa’s Jewish population.<sup>61</sup> One of the Jewish responses to pogroms and right-wing

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<sup>56</sup> *Moskovskie vedomosti*, 22 October 1905, 280, p. 2; 25 October 1905, 283, p. 1. Long before this stage the term ‘pogrom’ had been used to describe an anti-Jewish riot, including in the foreign press. See an extensive report on the Kishinev pogrom in *The Times*, 7 December 1903, 37257, p. 10.

<sup>57</sup> *Moskovskie vedomosti*, 25 October 1905, 283, p. 1.

<sup>58</sup> *Russkoe znamia*, 19 February 1907, p. 1.

<sup>59</sup> Chernovskii (comp.) and Viktorov (ed.), *Soiuz russkogo naroda*, p. 238.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 239-240.

<sup>61</sup> *Voskhod*, 13 May 1906, 19, pp. 21-26. The theme of Jewish self-defence has attracted much interest in the historiography. See the work of G. Surh, ‘Jewish Self-Defense, Revolution, and Pogrom Violence in 1905’, in F. Fischer von Weikersthal et al. (eds.), *The Russian Revolution of*

violence, though not without controversy for many of Odessa's Jews, was for them to take up arms against right-wing activists. The revolutionary left was well organized in Odessa, and in particular, the Bund took a stand on this issue, claiming that the Jewish community could no longer stand back and become the passive victims of right-wing brutality. In the wake of pogroms in Belostok and Kishinev, the Bund issued this call to arms in May 1905:

...it must become a general rule that each worker who considers himself part of the struggle should carry a revolver in his pocket...and as tens of thousands of workers will go into the streets and each feel he is prepared for the struggle then the uprising will take on a different appearance. Arm yourselves. Learn how to handle a weapon.<sup>62</sup>

In wake of this, Jewish self-defence forces (*evreiskie samooborony*) mobilized in towns and villages across the Pale of Settlement, the scene of the most brutal pogroms in Russian history. This call to arms was directed against both the Tsarist government and the right-wing movements. Throughout 1906-1907, there was a series of clashes in Odessa, as crowds of right-wing activists were countered with armed revolutionary movements. In particular, rightists were often outnumbered and outgunned by well-organized Jewish self-defence forces.<sup>63</sup>

The right encountered opposition and dissatisfaction with its activities from the civil and cultural establishment in Odessa. Though the Russian Orthodox Church

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*1905 in Transcultural Perspective: Identities, Peripheries, and the Flow of Ideas* (Bloomington, IN, 2013), pp. 55-74; 'Russia's 1905 Era Pogroms Reexamined', *Canadian-American Slavic Studies*, 44 (2010), pp. 253-295; 'Ekaterinoslav City in 1905: Workers, Jews, and Violence', *International Labor and Working-Class History*, 64 (2003), pp. 139-166; and S. Lambroza, 'Jewish Self-Defense during the Russian Pogroms of 1903-06', *Jewish Journal of Sociology*, 23 (1981), pp. 123-34; 'Jewish Responses to Pogroms in Late Imperial Russia', in J. Reinharz (ed.), *Living with Antisemitism: Modern Jewish Responses* (London, 1987), pp. 253-274; S. Weise, 'Jewish Self-Defense and Black Hundreds in Zhitomir. A Case Study on the Pogroms of 1905 in Tsarist Russia', *Quest. Issues in Contemporary Jewish History. Journal of Fondazione CDEC*, 3 (2012), <[www.quest-cdecjournal.it/focus.php?id=304](http://www.quest-cdecjournal.it/focus.php?id=304)> (accessed 15/5/2014); I. Shtakser, 'Self-Defence as an Emotional Experience: The Anti-Jewish Pogroms of 1905-07 and Working-Class Jewish Militants', *Revolutionary Russia*, 22, 2 (2009), pp. 153-179.

<sup>62</sup> *Der Bund* 2, 7 (May 1905), pp. 3-4, cited in Lambroza, 'Jewish Responses to Pogroms', p. 272.

<sup>63</sup> One clash in Odessa is referred to in newspaper reports and police circulars in GARF, F. 102.OO, op. 316, (1905 g.), d. 999, ch. 39, l. A, t. 3, ll. 17, 18, 19, 21, 22, 30. Jewish self-defence particularly troubled the authorities. I shall return to this theme in the following chapter.

has been seen as a buttress of nationalism and autocratic support, it is important to note how elements of the Orthodox Church in Odessa as elsewhere rejected URP violence. Many of these relations between the Church and the URP show ambiguity; though the Church officially endorsed the URP in 1908, this was on the condition that the organization conformed to the rules of the Church. When it did not do this, and activists did not uphold preferred values on occasion, the URP met with criticism.<sup>64</sup> One example was a communiqué sent from the head of the Church (Over-Procurator of the Holy Synod), Petr Izvolskii, to the police in Odessa:

The Archbishop of Kherson, in a letter dated from 25 April this year [1908] reported on the extremely unpleasant actions of members of the 'Union of Russian People'...who accompanied pilgrims from the city of Odessa to the village of Kasperovko Kasperovskii to the miraculous icon of the Holy Mother (this has been repeated annually for over 50 years), the behaviour of the union's orchestra and choir, singing Easter hymns along with a variety of other church chants and verses from operettas, very much appalled the majority of the pilgrims and offended their good feelings.<sup>65</sup>

This is not to claim that the URP was universally opposed within the hierarchy of the Orthodox Church, more to suggest that members' attitudes towards the right, including those of its most significant figure, were contested and inconsistent, with the URP and its followers dividing many within the episcopate.<sup>66</sup> Though the URP drew a substantial segment of its support from figures within the Church, the group also engendered controversy. Several Church leaders, including Izvolskii, preferred to turn their attentions to pro-Tsarist peasants and pilgrims, more meek observers of

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<sup>64</sup> See J. Curtiss, *Church and State in Russia, 1900-1917* (New York, 1965), pp. 271-272. An insightful analysis of the subversive nature of the Church is G. Freeze, 'Subversive Piety: Religion and the Political Crisis in Late Imperial Russia', *Journal of Modern History*, 68, 2 (1996), pp. 308-350.

<sup>65</sup> GARF, F. 102.OO, op. 316, (1905 g.), d. 999, ch. 39, l. A, t. 3, l. 128: vedomostvo pravoslavnogo ispovedaniia. Kantseliariia ober-prokurora Sviateishogo sinoda. Otdelenie 2. Stol' 3. S. Peterburg. Ober prokuror Sviateishogo sinoda: Petr Petrovich Izvolskii-MVD, 22 May 1908.

<sup>66</sup> Analyses of the right's relationship with the Church are M. Agursky, 'Caught in the Cross-Fire: The Russian Church between Holy Synod and Radical Right (1905-1908)', *Orientalia Christiana Periodica*, 59, 1 (1984), pp. 163-196; A. K. Pisiotis, 'The Orthodox Clergy and the Radical Right at the Beginning of the Twentieth Century: Ideological Mentor or Strange Bedfellow?' in A. Iu. Minakov (ed.), *Konservativizm v Rossii i mire, nastoiashchee i proshloe: sbornik nauchnykh trudov*, Vol. 2 (Voronezh, 2005) <<http://podelise.ru/docs/index-26683442.html>> (accessed 15/5/2014).

traditional institutions, rather than the activities of a vehement, organized right.<sup>67</sup> Violence could be at the core of this rejection, and for others, betrayal of the people whom the groups ostensibly supported. A priest from Klepachev in Poltava (another area where the far right had built regional support) on 12 January 1907 condemned the URP as a tool of the landowners and gentry, which would not provide the much-needed peace for the majority of the *narod* during the revolutionary era.<sup>68</sup>

Odessa was an exceptional area for right-wing activity due to several contextual factors: its substantial Jewish population, patterns of seasonal employment, the presence of revolutionary and militant forces, both Jewish and gentile and the leadership of Konovnitsyn. These all provided forces for the radical right to react against. The rightist appeal in Odessa was united to existing tensions and concerns amongst many Odessans, and from 1905 onwards, the right was disproportionately active in the area due to a combination of all of the above factors.

### **Kiev: Right-Wing Interests and Criticism of the Status Quo**

Kiev was another area to the southwest of the empire where right-wingers were exceptionally active. As in Odessa, several contextual factors underscored the rise of the right in Kiev. Significantly, the city was home to a large Jewish population. According to the 1897 census, 49,813 of the 450,904 residents of the city were Jewish, around 11 per cent.<sup>69</sup> Not only this, but the Jewish community was disproportionately involved in the civic and economic life of the city; 44 per cent of all merchants in the city, and over one-third of all of its craftsmen, were Jewish.<sup>70</sup> So active was the city's Jewish population that one scholar has commented how 'Jews influenced – indeed shaped – this city to a remarkable extent'.<sup>71</sup> However, at the outset of the twentieth century there was the rise of fresh anti-Jewish animus, most notable in the 1905 pogrom, which followed the promulgation of the October

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<sup>67</sup> Wortman, *Scenarios of Power*, Vol. 2, p. 460.

<sup>68</sup> Chernovskii (comp.) and Viktorov (ed.), *Soiuz russkogo naroda*, p. 390.

<sup>69</sup> *Evreiskaia entsiklopediia*, Vol. 9, p. 526.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 528.

<sup>71</sup> N. M. Meir, *Kiev: Jewish Metropolis. A History, 1859-1914* (Bloomington, IN, 2010), p. 9.



Manifesto, occurring from 18-20 October. This anti-Jewish riot had shown the fragility of peace in the city.<sup>72</sup> It was also a sign of anti-Semitic moods; Kiev had long been a citadel for nationalist feeling, decades before any rightist groups had even formed. The newspaper *Kievlianin* (Kievan), in circulation since 1864, outlined a strongly conservative and nationalist agenda, carrying many anti-Semitic ideas.<sup>73</sup> As in Odessa, long-standing religious and ethnic tensions were a backdrop for the right-wing groups that were emerging during 1905. Additionally the Kiev city council had reacted slowly and hesitantly to the pogroms in October, and the governor-general of Kiev, Nikolai Kleigels, was removed from his post on the night before the pogroms started for his decision to transfer the power for dealing with them directly from the police to the army, which was declared illegal.<sup>74</sup>

Such factors made Kiev a potential stronghold for right-wing activity. One particular aspect of this activity that needs stressing is that rightists in Kiev did not operate independently from each other, but met to discuss their plans on a cross-party basis shortly after their formation. Assembly figures, such as Boris M. Iuzefovich, met with URP leaders, including Dubrovin, and also more 'moderate' nationalists, such as the commentator and later member of the Nationalist Party, A. I. Savenko, to discuss their plans and ideas.<sup>75</sup> The United Rightist Parties of Kiev, the coalition formed between several right-wing groups that campaigned for election to the Duma in 1906, proved to be a powerful and politically successful force for right-wing interests in the region. In elections for the Second Duma, the rightist coalition secured 51 per cent of the vote in Kiev, against only 48 per cent for the Kadets, ranking as the strongest electoral performance of rightists anywhere in the

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<sup>72</sup> On the 1905 pogrom, see V. Khiterer, 'The October 1905 Pogrom in Kiev', *East European Jewish Affairs*, 22, 2 (1992), pp. 21-37; M. Hamm, *Kiev: A Portrait, 1800-1917* (Princeton, 1993), pp. 189-207; Meir, *Kiev*, pp. 122-130; *Evreiskaia entsiklopediia*, Vol. 9, pp. 524-525; Suhr, 'The Role of Civil and Military Commanders', pp. 39-55. One of the fullest contemporary accounts is that of Senator Turau, 'Vsepoddaneishii otchet o proizvedennom senatorom Turau izsledovanii prichin bezporiadkov, byvshikh v gor. Kieve', in *Materialy k istorii russkoi kontr-revoliutsii*, pp. 224-230; see also *Kievskii i Odesskii pogromy*, pp. 47-48.

<sup>73</sup> J. D. Klier, 'Kievlianin and the Jews: A Decade of Disillusionment, 1864-1874', *Harvard Ukrainian Studies*, 5, 1 (1981), pp. 83-101.

<sup>74</sup> *Materialy k istorii russkoi kontr-revoliutsii*, p. 263.

<sup>75</sup> *Kievlianin*, 15 January 1907, 15, p. 3.

Russian Empire.<sup>76</sup> The United Congresses of the Union of Russian Men from 1905-1907 held their meetings in Kiev. Dubrovin, Gringmut, Viazigin, Purishkevich, Pavel Bulatsel and hundreds of other delegates from a score of different right-wing groups converged on the city to discuss their plans and compile manifestos for elections for the First Duma, outlining a vision of how Russia was to be ruled.<sup>77</sup>

Criticisms of the contemporary situation in Russia were also emerging in Kiev. Vladimir Gringmut, in a speech to the United Council of Monarchist groups on 2 October 1906, agreed to carry out the ‘indivisible will of the Tsar’, but rejected the entire ethos of constitutionalism. Many delegates agreed with his stance; others oscillated between an uneasy toleration of the system, and outright rejection of it. Relatively few embraced the possibilities this could provide for the right, such as, most obviously, the election of delegates to the Duma who shared their own convictions (one important exception was Vladimir Purishkevich). All betrayed a feeling of deep dissatisfaction with the fact that this series of developments had even come about.<sup>78</sup> One URP delegate, D. V. Tushkevich, described the possible incompetence of the Duma as due to Russia’s liberals, ‘they come to Witte, and to see again when they can start troubles and disorders’.<sup>79</sup> The meetings of the right-wing coalitions in Kiev demonstrated the distinction between support for the establishment, which created the new political culture after 1905, and the pronounced rejection of such ideas by the autonomous right.

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<sup>76</sup> Meir, *Kiev*, pp. 204-208; Rawson, *Russian Rightists*, pp. 98-103.

<sup>77</sup> The full list of 166 delegates from the 1906 meeting is re-printed in *Tretii vserossiiskii s’ezd russkikh liudei v Kieve* (Kiev, 1906), pp. 219-230.

<sup>78</sup> ‘Protokoly delovykh zasedanii s’ezda’, in Kir’ianov (ed.), *Pravye partii*, Vol. 1, p. 210.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 211.

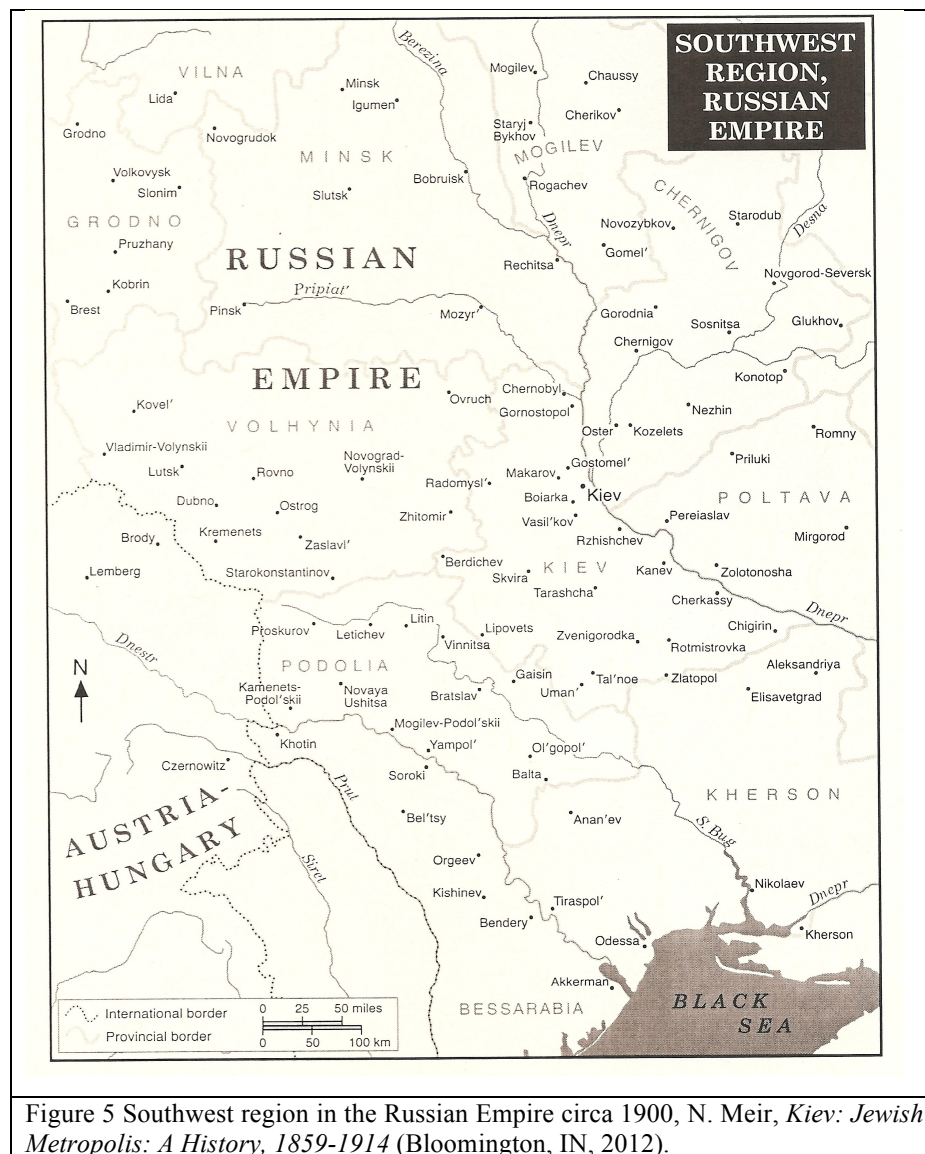


Figure 5 Southwest region in the Russian Empire circa 1900, N. Meir, *Kiev: Jewish Metropolis: A History, 1859-1914* (Bloomington, IN, 2012).

The right in Kiev was very diverse. More militant associations included the White Guard, a group that patrolled the streets near Kiev University during the end of 1906 looking for students to antagonize.<sup>80</sup> Other rightists in Kiev attempted to create a civic culture; this was part of the general rightward shift in civil society during 1905.<sup>81</sup> Activities included holding patriotic meetings, religious assemblies, musical evenings, and conducting charity works, all to help create an alternate public

<sup>80</sup> Chernovskii (comp.) and Viktorov (ed.), *Soiuz russkogo naroda*, p. 378.

<sup>81</sup> As recounted in H. Balzer, 'The Problem of Professions in Imperial Russia', in E. W. Clowes, S. D. Kassow and J. L. West (eds.), *Between Tsar and People: Educated Society and the Quest for Public Identity in Late Imperial Russia* (Princeton, 1991), pp. 184-198.

space for the dissemination of patriotic and religious ideas.<sup>82</sup> Groups such as the Russian Assembly and the All-Russian Union of Russian Workers took an active part in such projects. Yet even in these civic groups, there were pronounced exclusionary practices. The Kiev Russian Sports Society provided a forum for rightists with an interest in sport, but was established for ‘Orthodox Russians’ and closed to all others.<sup>83</sup> Like the URP and URM on a national level, rightists in Kiev were interested in workers’ rights, one of which was to make demands for the eight-hour day. But in comparison with the forces of the revolutionary left and liberals in Kiev, particularly the Kiev branch of the Kadet Party, active from 1906, these ideas were weakly developed. They involved mostly negative visions: opposition to developments such as the freedom of conscience edict; the October Manifesto; the 17 April 1905 laws of religious toleration; promises of increased rights for minority groups; and the general strike from October 1905.<sup>84</sup> Given the widespread dissatisfaction with these developments, the same rightists portrayed this era as the new ‘time of troubles’ (*smutnoe vremia*).<sup>85</sup>

Another strength of the right in Kiev was its ability to attract different social groups. Contemporaries sympathetic to right-wing interests later recounted this potential. One was I. G. Shcheglovitov, the Minister of Justice from 1906-1915, who on his interrogation by the Provisional Government in 1917 described the proliferation of monarchist parties in Kiev after 1905 as resting on crude populism, which attracted peasants, townsfolk, disaffected members of the working class and small landowners.<sup>86</sup> The militant character of certain Kiev rightists played a role in this attraction. The strongly anti-Semitic, anti-revolutionary message of the rightist coalition during 1905-1907 was more effective at exploiting tensions in a city with a large Jewish population and a mixed ethnic base, with a strong history of worker-radicalism. Messages of the rightist hatred of the ‘bourgeoisie’, and promulgation of

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<sup>82</sup> Omel’ianchuk, *Chernosotennoe dvizhenie*, pp. 622-642.

<sup>83</sup> Meir, *Kiev*, pp. 205-206.

<sup>84</sup> B. M. Iuzefovich, *Politicheskie pis'ma: Materialy dlia istorii russkogo politicheskogo umopomrachenii na rubezhe dvukh stoletii (1898-1908 gg.)*, Vol. 12 (Kiev, 1908), p. 228.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 228. Like the first ‘troubles’, this appellation had anti-Polish allusions.

<sup>86</sup> Chernovskii (comp.) and Viktorov (ed.), *Soiuz russkogo naroda*, p. 381; this was revealed on his interrogation by the Provisional Government in June 1917.

an anti-intellectual message, attempted to incite feelings of exploitation in working-class supporters, the so-called ‘true Russians’ who were suffering in the current revolutionary period. Shcheglovitov considered these held appeal for many who poorly understood the jarring effects of 1905, developments including the appearance of a parliament, civic society and equal rights. The resulting attempts to recruit Kievans to the monarchist cause, or even to join a *druzhina*, had more attraction as a result.<sup>87</sup>

Other rightists took criticism of the status quo further in their development of a populist appeal. On the pogroms, Iuzefovich, a prominent member of the United Rightist Parties of Kiev,<sup>88</sup> expressed the following sentiments in *Moskovskie vedomosti* during November 1905:

We all recognize that this popular protest, apparent from the pogroms of Jews and intellectuals, appears very ugly, but, in this case, it was not caused by the evil will of the Russian peasant, who is normally unusually mild and tolerant, but of all these savage insults, of all that is dear and holy to him, vile shootings on the streets, and our criminally inactive government, its cowardice before revolutionaries and intellectuals, and false views on humanity and Christian forgiveness.<sup>89</sup>

Some features here are unsurprising; like many other right-wingers, Iuzefovich claimed the causes for the pogroms lay not with ‘truly Russian’ people but with revolutionaries and Jews.<sup>90</sup> Given Iuzefovich’s anti-Semitism, his gross underplaying of Jewish suffering is no surprise, and the idea that pogroms were ‘popular protest’ bears little basis in reality.<sup>91</sup> But as the ‘spirituality’ of the masses

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<sup>87</sup> Ibid., pp. 380-387.

<sup>88</sup> Iuzefovich held important roles in several right-wing groups, including: chair of the Kiev branch of the Russian Assembly; member of the Kiev URP after 1905; and leader of the Party of Legal Order (*pravovogo poriadka*), which published a newspaper *Zakon i poriadok* (Law and Order) from 1906-1908. A biographical sketch can be found in *CSIE*, pp. 628-631.

<sup>89</sup> *Moskovskie vedomosti*, 28 November 1905, 314, p. 2.

<sup>90</sup> See also editorials on the Kiev ‘disorders’ in *Moskovskie vedomosti*, 16 November 1905, 302, p. 2; 26 November 1905, 312, p. 2; 28 November 1905, 314, p. 2.

<sup>91</sup> For an idea of his anti-Semitism, which was cultural and religious rather than racially-based, in one essay Iuzefovich described Jews not as ‘true subjects of the Tsar’, but as subversives, representing ‘falsifying political doctrines’ ‘equal political rights’ and ‘violence against Russia’; *Politicheskie pis'ma*, Vol. 12 (Kiev, 1908), p. 210. But the Kiev pogrom was not the popular uprising that he

was the key for the restoration of Russia, they could not be indicted.<sup>92</sup> Instead, Iuzefovich described the ‘poorest classes’ as the ones suffering in these days of terror, who were the victims of a conspiracy from powerful Jewish and foreign forces operating within Russia.<sup>93</sup>

This critique of Russia’s government divided a potential base of support from the regime.<sup>94</sup> Iuzefovich particularly blamed bureaucrats and ‘liberal’ politicians such as Sergei Witte, whom he held culpable for the revolutionary crises unfolding in Russia. In terms of right-wing political ideas, there was little new material here; more significant was the implication that the events of 1905 were the result of a clash of values between state and society that had been occurring since the October Manifesto. In particular, Iuzefovich blamed the Church, with the leadership of the Holy Synod allowing an increasing schism to occur between Church and state after 1905. The Holy Synod had ignored the powerful and virtuous ideals of Russian Orthodoxy in favour of focusing on pogroms.<sup>95</sup> Iuzefovich thought much valuable time had been wasted on what he saw as such minor problems; the main objective was to train priests to fight the revolution and revolutionaries. The Church was abdicating its responsibilities in such matters, and wayward priests and bishops provided weak leadership for the masses, allowing the bacilli of revolution to further spread through Russian society:

The Holy Synod, in its declarations from 20 December 1905, said that, “There were cases where the parish priests, in interviews with parishioners, without understanding, or even completely knowingly gave a false interpretation of the orders and actions of the government, stirring people to disobedience to the legitimate authorities”. Therefore, the pastors’ instructions affected the spirit of peace, love and obedience of the flock.<sup>96</sup>

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described. In *Kiev: A Portrait*, Hamm notes that the participants (*pogromshchiki*) did not form enormous crowds, but were isolated groups of provocateurs and opportunists. Relatively few Kievans actively participated in the October pogrom: p. 195.

<sup>92</sup> Iuzefovich, *Politicheskije pis'ma*, Vol. 16, p. 340.

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. 10, p. 156.

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. 9, pp. 330-332.

<sup>95</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 341; Curtiss, *Church and State*, pp. 236-283.

<sup>96</sup> Iuzefovich, *Politicheskije pis'ma*, Vol. 16, p. 341.

It is important to note that this was no private utterance, but part of an address delivered on 24 April 1907 to the United Assembly of Councils and Committees of the Kiev Monarchist Parties and Unions. The public-private divide was less pronounced here, as in private too, Iuzefovich's populist views entailed nothing less than the transformation of the nation. This was a prerequisite to arrest contemporary decline, which took on both spiritual and physical manifestations. The inspiration for action, curiously enough, came from the West.<sup>97</sup> Iuzefovich specifically engaged with ideas of physical decline, declaring that for Russia's youth, 'a healthy spirit is paralleled by a healthy body'. Previous decades of educational failings had resulted in the physical degeneration of Russian youth, caused by the corrupting effects of political revolution. Iuzefovich described how there was an epidemic of nervous illnesses amongst Russia's students, particularly, anaemia.<sup>98</sup> As a corrective, Iuzefovich wanted the Russian educational system to adopt techniques of the English public schools, and universities such as Oxford and Cambridge, and increase the amount of physical education taught in schools. In the moral sphere, Iuzefovich demanded focusing teaching on the greatness of the Russian literary canon; it was no coincidence that he was the leader of the culturally focused Russian Assembly in Kiev.<sup>99</sup> The final criticism was aimed at the establishment, as since Alexander II's government had passed the University Statute of 1863, the Ministry of Education had assumed virtually complete control over Russian education, taking control of scholarships, disbursements, appointments and course content. This left little room for autonomy; the resulting failings could only be the fault of the state's educators.

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<sup>97</sup> Ibid., Vol. 8, p. 106.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid., pp. 106-107 (the letter cited is from 14 May 1899). The *fin-de-siècle* era in Europe and America, as well as Russia, was a 'nervous age'. Not only rightists, many different groups in late imperial Russia were very concerned that modern life, particularly the strains and stresses of industrialization, was having a detrimental effect on the psychological health of many people. See for further analysis S. K. Morrissey, 'The Economy of Nerves: Health, Commercial Culture and the Self in Late Imperial Russia', *Slavic Review*, 69, 3 (2010), pp. 645-675. This was a pan-European phenomenon, with educated classes in Germany and France also fearful of nervous illness. An overview of nervousness in Europe can be found in R. Porter, 'Nervousness, Eighteenth and Nineteenth Century Style: From Luxury to Labour', in M. Gijswijt-Hofstra and R. Porter (eds.), *Cultures of Neurasthenia: From Beard to the First World War* (Amsterdam, 2001), pp. 31-49.

<sup>99</sup> Iuzefovich, *Politicheskie pis'ma*, Vol. 8, pp. 106-107

These problems were deep seated in other ways. Since the onset of revolutionary terror, exemplified by the shooting at Tsar Alexander II by Dmitrii Karakozov in 1866, Russian society had gradually been disintegrating.<sup>100</sup> Iuzefovich reflected pessimistically on such developments. Yet in public, Iuzefovich distanced himself from acts of violence and terror, including the notorious pogroms. He described violence as a leftist phenomenon. In an address to the Kiev branch of the Russian Assembly on 29 October 1907, he described how Russia's youth had suffered at the hands of revolutionaries, these 'fanatics' and 'instruments of terror'.<sup>101</sup> He pointed to the revolution of 1905, the 'sorrowful events of the last few years', as the primary event clouding the self-awareness of the Russian people (*samosoznaniia*).<sup>102</sup> Iuzefovich added that the over-representation of Jews in the press, and in the legal institutions of Russia, was a result of the 1864 legal reforms, with Russia's liberal leaders willing participants in this progressive decline.<sup>103</sup>

The ultimate implication of these multi-faceted criticisms of modern Russia was that the enemies of the Russian state were considered to be not just autonomous leftists, terrorists and minority nationalities, but also dark forces operating within the state itself. Iuzefovich's rejection of the Duma settlement was also a rejection of the Tsarist status quo. Iuzefovich displayed how in creating such a populist appeal, elements on the right were positioning themselves away from the state, and even beginning to grow increasingly critical of it. The defenders of the autocracy were increasingly looking less like supporters, and more like a source of opposition.

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<sup>100</sup> Ibid., Vol. 12, p. 232.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid., Vol. 17, p. 364.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid., p. 365.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid., Vol. 12, pp. 208-209; Vol. 17, p. 367.



## Astrakhan': The People's Monarchists and Right-Wing Populism



Figure 6 Astrakhan in 1914, 'The 1900 collection: Maps and Plans of Yesteryear', <<http://www.discusmedia.com/album.php?album=40&id=24430>> (accessed 2/6/2014).

Another region where the right established a presence during 1905 was Astrakhan'. Far to the east of either Odessa or Kiev, it was located on the two banks of the Volga River, northwest of the Caspian Sea. Though in a different part of the Russian Empire, similar factors underscored the rise of the right here. One of these was a significant non-Russian population; the city was home to Jewish and Armenian communities that played a lively role in the civic life of the city.<sup>104</sup> Furthermore, the revolutionary left was active in the city during 1905. One group was the RSDWP, active until 1906; and a related revolutionary worker's movement had arisen during the

revolution of 1905.<sup>105</sup> The differences, as well as the similarities, with the above cases are worth noting. Firstly, though there was a prominent Jewish community in Astrakhan', it was not as large as that in Odessa or Kiev. According to the 1897 imperial census, 2,164 of 113,000 residents were Jewish, or less than 2 per cent, though the proportion of Jews involved in the mercantile industries was much higher.<sup>106</sup> Furthermore, the entire Astrakhan' province had been removed from the Pale of Settlement in 1816, as part of the increasingly *ad hoc* legislation on the

<sup>104</sup> *Evreiskaia entsiklopediia*, Vol. 3, pp. 405-406.

<sup>105</sup> Several proclamations from the Astrakhan' branch of the RSDWP can be found in A. L. Sidorov et al. (eds.), *Vtoroi period revoliutsii: 1906-1907 gg.*, Pt. 1, Bk. 1 (Moscow, 1957), pp. 647-654.

<sup>106</sup> *Evreiskaia entsiklopediia*, Vol. 3, pp. 405-406.

Jewish question in the nineteenth century.<sup>107</sup> Therefore, the different political and social structure in Astrakhan' would necessarily affect the popular reception of the discourse of the extreme right, which followed similar ideological contours to Odessa and Kiev.

The most significant monarchist organization in the region was 'the Astrakhan' People's Monarchist Party' (APMP), the leader of which was Nestor Tikhanovich-Savitskii (1866-after 1917), the owner of *Lira*, a large music shop in Astrakhan'. He saw the potential for a popular monarchist movement, uniting millions of Orthodox believers across the Russian Empire, in support of his ideas. Like other rightists, his beliefs were constructed around the Uvarov triad. During 1904-1905, following the disastrous war with Japan and the upsurge in revolutionary activity, Tikhanovich-Savitskii was emboldened to step onto the political scene, responding to what he called the 'time of troubles' (*smutnoe vremia*).<sup>108</sup> Tikhanovich-Savitskii and his supporters saw that the October Manifesto and other similar developments represented concessions to liberalism on behalf of the Tsarist state, which had gone too far in attempting to satisfy revolutionary feelings that did not represent the 'true will' of the people.<sup>109</sup> His response was to form the APMP in the early months of 1907.<sup>110</sup> Though this group encountered a degree of success in Astrakhan' during 1907-1908, perhaps at one stage numbering around several thousand followers,<sup>111</sup> the APMP was never as large in scale as the URP in Odessa.<sup>112</sup> That the appearance of the organization was delayed until early 1907 –

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<sup>107</sup> *Polnoe sobranie zakonov Rossiiskoi imperii*, 2<sup>nd</sup> series, Vol. 40, nos. 30,402 and 30,404 (18 June 1825); J. D. Klier, *Russia Gathers Her Jews: The Origins of the "Jewish Question" in Russia, 1772-1825* (DeKalb, 1986), p. 168.

<sup>108</sup> Biographical information is in S. D. Stepanov, 'Vozhd' Astrakhan'skikh Monarkhistov. Nestor Nikolaevich Tikhanovich-Savitskii', in Ivanov and Stepanov (eds.), *Voinstvo Sviatogo Georgiia*, pp. 548-585; and *CSIE*, pp. 536-542.

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>110</sup> Chernovskii (comp.) and Viktorov (ed.), *Soiuz russkogo naroda*, p. 311.

<sup>111</sup> Membership figures are difficult to state accurately, given conflicting sources and figures. A police report from January 1908 claimed the group had 1,300 members, but an issue of *Vestnik Souiza russkogo naroda* (more optimistically) gave a figure in excess of 4,000 from December 1905. Kir'ianov (ed.), *Voprosy istorii*, 8 (1997), p. 109.

<sup>112</sup> By the outbreak of the First World War, membership of the right had sharply declined. One police report claimed, perhaps improbably, that at the start of 1914 the Astrakhan' monarchist groups

months after the most intense period of the revolutionary crisis had passed – was one likely explanation for this.

The techniques used by the APMP were not especially novel by the standards of contemporary rightists. These included holding meetings attended by monks sympathetic to the right, such as the so-called ‘mad monk’, Iliodor, Archbishop Germogen, and authority figures who shared their autocratic and Orthodox convictions, such as the governor of Khar’kov. Attendees gave speeches where they spoke of the necessity to wage a ‘defence of the state’ against Russia’s enemies, mainly the Armenians and Jewish communities of Astrakhan’. The group’s newspaper *Russkaia pravda* (Russian Truth) was established in 1907, disseminating the messages of Tikhanovich-Savitskii and his associates, primarily designed to accentuate the threat posed by the non-Russian communities in the city. Another practice used by Tikhanovich-Savitskii was sending telegrams to notable figures, including Prime Minister Petr Stolypin, but most notably, Nicholas II, in a bid to establish favour with those that he deemed sympathetic to the monarchist cause within the imperial regime.<sup>113</sup>

As in Odessa and Kiev, the Astrakhan’ right took practical steps to cultivate a populist appeal. One editorial in *Russkaia pravda* from 28 October 1908 titled *On the Workers’ Question (k rabochemu voprosu)* claimed that the APMP was defending the interests of the ‘true subjects of the fatherland’ and had a degree of mass support. It denounced ideals of liberalism, cosmopolitanism, socialism and related doctrines as infections; these were alien developments coming out of Europe after the French Revolution.<sup>114</sup> Telegrams from Tikhanovich-Savitskii to the Tsar made similar claims. They were sent directly to Nicholas to bypass bureaucrats and many of the ‘liberal’ ministers, whom Tikhanovich-Savitskii and like-minded right-

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consisted of no more than 10 active members. GARF, F. 102.OO, op. 316, (1905 g.), d. 999, ch. 39, l. B, l. 80: doklad nachal’nika Astrakhan'skogo zhandarm'skogo upravleniia, v DP 6 October 1915.

<sup>113</sup> Ibid., l. 85: N. Tikhanovich-Savitskii (Astrakhan’), to P. A. Stolypin (St. Petersburg), 2 May 1908.

<sup>114</sup> Ibid., l. 95: *Russkaia pravda*, 28 October 1908.

wing figures distrusted. He claimed that he was on the side of the Tsar in opposing the current epoch of revolution and constitutionalism.<sup>115</sup>

The similarities between the APMP in Astrakhan' and the URP in Odessa are striking. Both harshly denounced the October Manifesto and claimed they were upholding 'traditional' values of Orthodox religion, Russian nationhood and autocracy. Both also criticized the authorities. Tikhanovich-Savitskii wrote to the governor of Astrakhan', I. N. Sokolovskii, explaining that the APMP was based around a total defence of 'Russian values' (by which was meant the Uvarov triad), which the authorities had not done enough to safeguard.<sup>116</sup> A telegram from Tikhanovich-Savitskii to Petr Stolypin from 31 March 1908 gives a good insight into the former's plans to restore Russia, as well as his critique of the contemporary situation:

In the present time of troubles those in the highest administrative positions in the provinces should appoint persons of sensitive and skilful direction, and certainly patriotic, not only in words, but in deeds. For in this province of Astrakhan', like other provinces composed from a diverse population, of which Armenians and Jews chip away at other foreigners, the appointment of administrative officials possessing the above qualities to the highest positions of government is absolutely necessary.<sup>117</sup>

However the APMP, far from having the sympathy of many local officials, gradually attracted the suspicions of law and order. F. P. Nikitin, one of the most prominent police officials in Astrakhan', displayed a recurring suspicion of the aims and intentions of the APMP in his reports. Crucial to this was the perception that 'pogromist violence' was a destabilizing force in the area.<sup>118</sup> A police report from 21 January 1907 specifically mentions the 'militant character' of the organization as increasing tensions in the area, and damaging the public peace. Furthermore, the

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<sup>115</sup> Ibid., I. 97: N. Tikhanovich-Savitskii (Astrakhan'), to Nicholas II (St. Petersburg), 29 October 1908.

<sup>116</sup> Ibid., I. 29: N. Tikhanovich-Savitskii (Astrakhan'), to I. N. Sosnovskii (date unknown).

<sup>117</sup> Ibid., II. 57-58: N. Tikhanovich-Savitskii (Astrakhan'), to P. A. Stolypin (St. Petersburg), 31 March 1908.

<sup>118</sup> Chernovskii (comp.) and Viktorov (ed.), *Soiuz russkogo naroda*, p. 303.

report suggested that members of the group were engaged in suspected ‘criminal activity’ (although it is unclear what exactly was meant by this).<sup>119</sup> Another circular from 7 February 1907 reported on the social composition of the group. It was composed, not from elites or the intelligentsia, but instead ‘only from small shop owners, and townfolk’ which waged a series of ‘pogroms against the intelligentsia, Armenians and Jews’. Of Tikhanovich-Savitskii himself, he was said to be ‘a man of nervous illness, almost completely crazy’. Yet judging from the report, his incitement of violence against Armenians and Jews in Astrakhan’ was affecting certain sections of the population. The mood in Astrakhan’ was taking a darker turn due to the speeches of right-wing orators, and the report noted that one of the earliest actions of the APMP was the formation of a *druzhina* in the region. Though the police may have found the group unpalatable, it was, at least initially, managing to attract supporters to its cause of armed action against revolutionaries.<sup>120</sup>

Like the URP in Odessa, the APMP displayed intransigence in both its views and actions that meant it attracted suspicions. Police reports from the area were critical of the group’s activities. Though Tikhanovich-Savitskii stressed that the group’s true rationale was the ‘defence of Russian values...and the Russian flag’ even those who shared his central convictions had their suspicions over the activities of the group.<sup>121</sup> These were prompted by the use and reception of orators, including Iliodor, who drew fearful images of a Russia ‘fettered in Jewish chains’.<sup>122</sup> Authorities then decided to act. A telegram from Tikhanovich-Savitskii to Petr Stolypin claimed that a number of issues of *Russkaia pravda* had been confiscated on 20 March 1908 by the authorities, a claim repeated in another telegram from 27 March of the same year. Tikhanovich-Savitskii complained that the governor of Astrakhan’, I. N. Sokolovskii, had fined him due to such publishing activities. According to Tikhanovich-Savitskii, Sokolovskii had taken this action primarily due

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<sup>119</sup> GARF, F. 102.OO, op. 316, (1905 g.), d. 999, ch. 39, l. B, ll. 7, 9, 11: various police reports from Astrakhan’ to the chair of the MVD, through January 1907.

<sup>120</sup> Ibid., l. 14: MVD Astrakhan’ gubernator. Po kantseliarii, g. Astrakhan'. v DP 7 February 1907.

<sup>121</sup> Ibid., l. 29: k otvetu g-na gubernatoru, N. Tikhanovich-Savitskii (date unknown).

<sup>122</sup> A recent study of this radical is S. Dixon, ‘The “Mad Monk” Iliodor in Tsaritsyn’, *Slavonic and East European Review* 88, 1/2 (2010), pp. 377-415.

to his fear of the APMP inciting further pogroms in the region, and his wish to defend the region's Jews (Tikhanovich-Savitskii used the pejorative *zhid'* rather than the neutral *evrei* in this telegram). The obsession with Jewish power was a constant theme amongst radical rightists in Astrakhan'; but previous pogroms had raised suspicions. Furthermore, the relatively small Jewish population of Astrakhan' somewhat detracted from Tikhanovich-Savitskii's claims of Jewish power and control.<sup>123</sup>

Tikhanovich-Savitskii appeared undeterred by this lukewarm reception from the authorities. He insisted that the masses were still patriotic, and only a tiny minority, led by Jews and radical students, were behind the revolutionary crises. The confiscation of newspapers, conflicts with authority and suspicions from the authorities were the result of nefarious attitudes of liberal sympathizers, plotting against patriots from within the autocracy itself. Tikhanovich-Savitskii refused to face the realities of the new constitutional system. It was not that the rulers of Russia opposed (or were unresponsive) to his ideas; instead, blame was sought on the 'enemy within', trying to bring down the state.<sup>124</sup> At a later date, Tikhanovich-Savitskii would write to Nicholas II suggesting that it was the 'spies in the army' that were responsible for the military's calamitous performances during the first year of the First World War. The disastrous defeats of the Russian army, such as that at Tannenberg in 1914, were not even partially the fault of the Russian military, but instead evidence of the destruction wrought by subversive revolutionaries and Jews on the institutions of the imperial state.<sup>125</sup>

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<sup>123</sup> GARF, F. 102.OO, op. 316, (1905 g.), d. 999, ch. 39, l. B, l. 85; Chernovskii (comp.) and Viktorov (ed.), *Soiuz russkogo naroda*, p. 306; for further analysis see J. D. Klier, 'Zhid': Biography of a Russian Epithet', *Slavonic and East European Review*, 60, 1 (1982), pp. 1-15.

<sup>124</sup> GARF, F. 102.OO, op. 316, (1905 g.), d. 999, ch. 39, l. B, ll. 16-17.

<sup>125</sup> Chernovskii (comp.) and Viktorov (ed.), *Soiuz russkogo naroda*, p. 321.

## Conclusion

The most obvious parallel between the three cases discussed in this chapter was the potential for right-wing mass mobilization during and after 1905, and the spontaneous nature this took. The Odessa URP was particularly committed to violent, ground level struggle against revolutionary enemies. The APMP in Astrakhan' also promoted the use of terror against its enemies, though made less headway in terms of popular support. In all instances, rightists were counter-revolutionary rather than conservative actors, highlighted by the presence of religious and ethnic minority populations, especially Jews, and a tradition of organized revolutionary movements as prerequisites for their rise.<sup>126</sup> It was no coincidence that each region had experienced pogroms of different severity between 1905-1906; rightists appeared where tensions already existed. Without opposing forces to oppose, rightist movements were bereft of their rationale. One example was in Saratov, where the regime had largely suppressed the revolutionary movement by 1908. There was thereafter no perception that an independent right was needed to fight such a movement, and one newspaper reported how this led to right-wing support disappearing. Only 12 members appeared at a URP branch gathering in February 1908: here, radical rightists were not reflecting common fears and tensions held by the local population.<sup>127</sup>

The activities and ideas of three militants in the provinces, Konovnitsyn, Iuzefovich and Tikhanovich-Savitskii, illustrate that a significant theme in rightist activity and ideas was pronounced dissatisfaction with Russia's post-1905 settlement and rejection of the Tsarist status quo. The Kiev Monarchist Coalition harshly castigated 'Jewish revolutionaries' and 'Bundist terrorists' who were 'anti-Church, anti-nationalist and anti-government', but another main inspiration for criticism was

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<sup>126</sup> This was not only the case in the southwest. On the Finnish border too, right-wing groups were also active, driven by a desire to combat increasing national consciousness amongst minority groups. See M. Vitukhnovskaya, 'Cultural and Political Reaction in Russian Karelia in 1906-1907. State Power, the Orthodox Church, and the 'Black Hundreds' against Karelian Nationalism', *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas*, 48, 1 (2001), pp. 24-44.

<sup>127</sup> GARF, F. 102.OO, op. 316, (1905 g.), d. 999, ch. 101, l. 25: *Saratovskii vestnik*, 7 February 1908.

the Duma settlement.<sup>128</sup> The legacy of 1905 was central to right-wing culture and politics; the rise of right-wing movements was intimately linked to the revolutionary experience in the Russian Empire, which gave the right stimulus for action. The provincial dimension to the right's growth was linked to increased tensions between the imperial centre and the periphery, which impacted on the crisis of autocratic power suffered during the 1905 revolution. Autonomous right-wingers who ostensibly backed the autocracy were in fact increasingly divided from the regime, and many observers from within the regime did not consider such 'defenders' to be a reliable source of support.

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<sup>128</sup> Chernovskii (comp.) and Viktorov (ed.), *Soiuz russkogo naroda*, p. 386.



### The Responses of the Authorities and Popular Mobilization

The strategies and techniques that right-wing leaders and activists wished to utilize, and the authority response to these, can shed light on the popular impact of the right-wing groups.<sup>1</sup> This chapter will consider two closely related aspects of the right's public resonance. First will be the right-wing relationship with the authorities, considering examples of toleration, support, and, finally, opposition to autonomous right-wing activities from the Ministry of Internal Affairs (*Ministerstvo vnutrennykh del*, Russia's political police). It will then consider one particularly important element of right-wing presentation *sui generis*: the use of rituals and symbols in pursuit of mass-scale popular mobilization. These two aims were not separate, but related aspects of the same question. The outcome of the right's pursuit of public, mobilization activities was strongly influenced by the perceptions of the authorities. One important element of this, pogroms and violence, has already been considered; this will consider another feature of the right's ability to mobilize.

Rightists played an active role in state and civic life after 1905. Leaders of the right were on friendly terms with Nicholas II, who like the Tsarina regarded them as loyal subjects, and their support for national, religious and autocratic values as expressing the popular will.<sup>2</sup> He received delegations of rightists throughout his reign, and gifts from civic groups and political parties, including the URP.<sup>3</sup> But important political figures were divided in their views of the right. Unsurprisingly,

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<sup>1</sup> The police did not, of course, represent the entire establishment. Rightists made inroads into other areas, one of which was the institutions of official religion. For the right's relationship with the Church, see the recent essay by A. K. Pisiotis, 'The Russian Orthodox Clergy and Populism in the Twilight of the Romanovs', in V. Tsurikov (ed.), *Metropolitan Antonii (Khrapovitskii): Archpastor of the Russian Diaspora* (Jordanville, NY, 2014), p. 191.

<sup>2</sup> 'Introduction', in M. D. Steinberg and V. M. Khrustalev (eds.), *The Fall of the Romanovs: Political Dreams and Personal Struggles in a Time of Revolution* (Yale, 1995), pp. 35-36.

<sup>3</sup> See for instance Kir'ianov (ed.), *Pravye partii*, Vol. 1, p. 99; a later example is a delegation of Academists meeting with Nicholas at Tsarskoe Selo. The date at which the picture was taken is unknown. V. A. Obraztsov, *Torzhestvo russkogo ob"edineniia: osviaschenie "narodnogo doma" Ekaterinoslavskogo otdela soiuza russkogo naroda 5-go oktiabria 1910 goda*, (Khar'kov, 1912), p. 191.

given their attempted assassination of him, Witte considered the URP to be little more than terrorists, but others harboured more favourable views, including Petr Durnovo, and Petr Stolypin, who initially thought that groups such as the URP might have a role to play as a buttress for the autocracy. In the world of imperial politics and parliament, one of the most notable achievements of the right was their enhanced presence in the later Dumas.<sup>4</sup> From 1905-1907, the right-wing presence was little more than negligible, and the Kadets dominated the parliament. However, after the 1907 re-structuring of the Duma, it became a very conservative body, with strong moderate conservative, nationalist and rightist elements.<sup>5</sup> The rightist fraction was particularly pronounced in the Third and Fourth Dumas.<sup>6</sup> An enhanced right-wing presence in the Duma was a problem for the autocracy, given the vocal opposition of right-wing radicals to politics and the procedures of parliament. Away from the legislative chamber, the rightist presence on the ground also represented a divergence between the status quo ante and newer, more radical forces.

### **Rightists and the Authorities**

Though many right-wing activists claimed to be defending the fatherland and the Russian people, several factors made the support of the authorities for an independent right less likely. One was the revolution of 1905. Political and economic strikes, pogroms, riots and military mutinies had shown the fragility of public order. A long-term precedent was the Tsarist regime's suspicion of all autonomous social and cultural groups; political parties became legal only in 1905. Furthermore, there were the structural and administrative deficiencies of the police

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<sup>4</sup> It needs to be stated at the outset that this chapter will consider public activities largely overlooked by existing scholarship; therefore, demonstrations and the public use of rituals, as well as the regime's reception of these. It will not focus on right-wing activity in the State Duma, though this was undoubtedly an important aspect of right-wing strategies and achievements. For overviews of the right-wing relationship with the State Duma, see the works by Avrekh, Diakin and Ivanov listed in the introduction.

<sup>5</sup> Not only the ultra-right, but conservatives in the Third and Fourth State Dumas expressed a wide variety of viewpoints, including those from the Nationalist Party. See Edelman, *Gentry Politics*, pp. 65-100, 166-201.

<sup>6</sup> For thorough overviews of the statistical breakdown of rightist election results to the First and Second Dumas, see Rawson, *Russian Rightists*, pp. 152-224; a particularly strong analysis of the Third and Fourth Dumas is Vydra, *Život za Cara?* pp. 357-424.

force.<sup>7</sup> The police were the day-to-day face of the Tsarist power pyramid, headed by the Tsar and supported by the Duma,<sup>8</sup> and were given a host of responsibilities for keeping public order. Yet the police were spread very thinly; one estimate gives a ratio of one policeman for every 700 people in urban areas, which could fall to as few as one for every 50,000 in rural areas.<sup>9</sup>

However there is also evidence to suggest that the authorities funded and supported the far right on numerous occasions. Whether to support these independent organizations that claimed they were pro-autocracy posed a difficult question. There did not appear to be a coherent strategy for dealing with the right, and a variety of responses emerged. The likely reason for this conflicted approach was the day-to-day realities of governing Tsarist Russia, a difficult task that did not readily lend itself to supporting sustained, ideologically based directives from superiors. Instead, local and personal objectives within different sections of the Ministry of Internal Affairs were often in conflict. Asking the difficult though rewarding question of how close the right was to the autocracy, and examining the responsiveness of the conservative regime towards these groups, can show some of the similarities, as well as tensions, between the 'old' and the 'new' right in late imperial Russia. It can also show how far rightists were able to enact their desired role of 'protection', and to what extent right-wing activities actually created further tensions for an increasingly embattled autocracy.

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<sup>7</sup> Rawson also examined the government approach towards the major right-wing groups in *Russian Rightists*, pp. 142-151. This section will build on these conclusions by looking at temporal and contextual changes behind the reduced authority toleration of the right-wing groups after 1906-1907.

<sup>8</sup> The distinctions between the two were not always clear-cut in the Russian Empire, where the Tsar and the administrative system were conceived of as one; the separation of powers between executive, legislative and judiciary was seen as a largely alien concept. See J. Daly, 'Political Crime in Late Imperial Russia', *Journal of Modern History*, 74, 1 (2002), pp. 62-100.

<sup>9</sup> N. Weissman, 'Regular Police in Tsarist Russia, 1900-1914', *Russian Review*, 44, 1 (1985), pp. 45-68; D. C. B. Lieven, 'The Security Police, Civil Rights, and the Fate of the Russian Empire, 1855-1917', in Crisp and Edmondson (eds.), *Civil Rights*, pp. 235-262.



Figure 7 Academists meet with Nicholas II. V. A. Obratsov, *Torzhestvo russkogo ob"edineniia: osviashchenie "narodnogo doma" Ekaterinoslavskogo otdela soiuzna russkogo naroda, 5-go Oktiabria 1910 g.* (Khar'kov, 1912), p. 191.

### *Support*

A number of right-wing groups looked primarily to generous internal donations for financial backing. Vladimir Purishkevich, the leader of the Union of the Archangel Mikhail (UAM) from March 1908, dipped into his own pocket on several occasions to fund groups affiliated to his organization.<sup>10</sup> Additionally, right-wing groups looked to a variety of sources of external funding in order to build and strengthen. These could be wealthy landowners, small traders, merchants or shopkeepers who looked favourably on monarchist ideas, often making private donations. Right-wing groups also wrote to the government requesting financial support, a tactic adopted soon after their formation and apparently pursued throughout their years of

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<sup>10</sup> See for instance GARF, F. 117, op. 2, d. 8, ll. 36, 37, 40, 51: these are letters from members of the student right (Academists) at the St. Petersburg Polytechnic University thanking Purishkevich for his financial support.

existence.<sup>11</sup> But who to write to, and what to expect? The Tsar himself looked upon the right favourably, but trying to ascertain the motives of local officials, police or even government ministers is a trickier task. Many rightists were silent on the issue of government funding, and their own newspapers rarely reveal any specific insights. However, sometimes, figures from within the regime are more forthcoming on this controversial issue. Indeed V. A. Dediulin, the St. Petersburg palace commandant even went so far as to claim that he had practically created the Union of Russian People (URP) during 1905.<sup>12</sup>

S. E. Kryzhanovskii, the Assistant Minister of Internal Affairs in 1906, claimed in his memoirs that several prominent rightists received funding from the government, including A. I. Dubrovin, V. M. Purishkevich and Father Ioann Vostorgov. These funds were distributed primarily for the purpose of supporting the publication of a variety of rightist brochures and newspapers, including *Russkoe znamia*, but a score of others too.<sup>13</sup> On his interrogation by a Provisional Government official in June 1917, Kryzhanovskii recalled government support during 1906 for rightist groups. This was mostly to boost their publication activities; he claimed Purishkevich's *Kniga russkoi skorbi* (Book of Russian Sorrows) and his journal *Priamoi put'* (Straight Path) both received financial support.<sup>14</sup> V. N. Kokovtsov, the Minister of Finance from 1904 to 1914 and Prime Minister from 1911 to 1914 gave more specific details than Kryzhanovskii. He claimed that the government's level of support for the right's publishing activities from 1905 until the eve of the First World War was very high, estimating that as many as three

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<sup>11</sup> GARF, F. 116, op. 1, d. 16, ll. 5, 6: protokol obshchogo sobraniia (plenarnogo) vserossiiskogo s"ezda soiuzna russkogo naroda i primykaiushchikh k nemu monarkhicheskikh organizatsii v g. Moskve, 24 November 1911. The financial affairs of the URP are discussed in this case, which makes reference to both press and public support.

<sup>12</sup> [V. A. Dediulin] 'Vlast' i krainye pravye partii. Zapis' besedy dvortsovogo komendanta V. A. Dediulina (1908 g.) i zapiski chlena soveta ministra vnutrennykh del N. Ch. Zaionchkovskogo (1913 g.)', *Istoricheskii arkhiv*, 1 (2000), pp. 88-89.

<sup>13</sup> S. E. Kryzhanovskii, *Vospominaniia* (Berlin, 1938), pp. 100-101.

<sup>14</sup> 'Dopros S. E. Kryzhanovskogo', in P. E. Shchegolev (ed.), *Padenie tsarskogo rezhima*, Vol. 5 (Moscow-Leningrad, 1926), p. 410.

million rubles had been distributed to right-wing groups between 1910 and 1912.<sup>15</sup> Kokovtsov claimed that the newspaper *Zemshchina* (Realm), which the Tsar himself read, was subsidized to the tune of 180,000 rubles a year.<sup>16</sup> Aleksandr Protopopov, the Minister of the Interior from September 1916 to February 1917, claimed that the rightist deputy to the Third and Fourth State Dumas, Nikolai Markov, received a total of around 40,000 rubles, most of which went towards newspapers, including his own *Kurskaia byl'* (Kursk's Past).<sup>17</sup>

Such accusations are often difficult to corroborate, and many of these claims came well after the event. Many contemporary sources tend to conceal and obfuscate more than they clarify. The exact amount of money rightists received was a particular source of contention. Whilst Kokovtsov claimed both *Kurskaia byl'* and *Zemshchina* were supported by 200,000 rubles annually, rightists themselves did not always second such accusations.<sup>18</sup> However, on interrogation in 1917, Markov claimed that he received 12,000 rubles every year from Stolypin's premiership until 1916. This was for the purposes of supporting the newspapers and other publication activities of the URP. It is not always clear how exactly this money received was distributed. When right-wing deputies to the State Duma received money personally, they could then spend it on their own newspapers, organizations, or even embezzle the funds.<sup>19</sup> Claim and counter claim are rife in these sources, but tellingly, some right-wing leaders and activists did not deny accusations of governmental support. E. A. Poluboiarinoва, the secretary of the URP from the end of 1907, claimed the URP had received government subsidies throughout her time as secretary of the organization.<sup>20</sup> One report into the activities of the URP in Odessa stated that the group received a monthly subsidy of 1,000 rubles throughout 1908 for the support of

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<sup>15</sup> V. N. Kokovtsov, *Iz moego proshlogo. Vospominaniia, 1903-1919 gg.*, Vol. 2 (Paris, 1933), pp. 9-10.

<sup>16</sup> V. N. Kokovtsov, *Out of My Past: The Memoirs of Count Kokovtsov* (Stanford, 1935), pp. 338-339.

<sup>17</sup> 'Dopros Protopopova', in Shchegolev (ed.), *Padenie tsarskogo rezhima*, Vol. 1, pp. 122-125.

<sup>18</sup> Kokovtsov, *Out of My Past*, p. 285.

<sup>19</sup> 'Dopros N. E. Markova', in Shchegolev (ed.), *Padenie tsarskogo rezhima*, Vol. 5, pp. 184-185.

<sup>20</sup> GARF, F. 116, op. 1, d. 16, l. 7: Protokol obshchogo sobraniia (plenarnogo) vserossiiskogo s'ezda russkogo naroda i primykaiushchikh k nemu monarkhicheskikh organizatsii v g. Moskve. 24 November 1911.

the newspaper *Za tsaria i rodinu*, dispensed through the agents of the city mayor, I. N. Tolmachev. The distribution of such large sums of money had the effect of encouraging widespread corruption within the URP. During this year, the in-fighting that occurred over missing disbursements contributed to a split in the group, when supporters of V. M. Purishkevich's URP faction broke off from the main council, then led by A. I. Dubrovin, to form a rival right-wing group, the UAM.<sup>21</sup>

The other main funding was for the distribution of arms. This shows a more committed level of support than newspapers, as this entailed not only tacit agreement with right-wing ideas, but the material support of rightist groups that intended to carry out their imagined role as 'patriotic' and violent defenders of the motherland. In Odessa, several caches of weapons during 1906 were seized, with the apparent intention of being distributed to URP activists. The leader of the military in Odessa district during 1907, Baron Kaul'bars, took receipt of a stock of weapons with the intention of distributing them to the URP, and similar actions took place in Elizavetgrad. Konovnitsyn later claimed that Kaul'bars gave the combat groups of the URP in Odessa weapons after 1905.<sup>22</sup>

Overall, it appears the regime was prepared to support the right on occasion, though there are more examples of support for newspapers, rather than the supply of weapons. Sympathizers in the regime were more frequently prepared to use soft rather than hard power to support the right. The regime and right's shared desire to safeguard the autocracy could lead sympathetic officials to offer financial support where they saw fit. However, plans to distribute revolvers, rifles and bombs were understandably controversial, and the authorities often seem to have been willing to draw the line before this stage was reached. Even for sympathizers, supporting the right was no easy matter. I. G. Shcheglovitov, the Minister of Justice and a notorious reactionary, later involved in the Beilis affair (1911-1913), pointed out the difficulty

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<sup>21</sup> Chernovskii (comp.) and Viktorov (ed.), *Soiuz russkogo naroda*, p. 276.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 275.

of providing financial support for the right, due to the disorganization of many of their groups.<sup>23</sup>

It is ironic that the government was at all a source of funding for far-right groups that considered themselves to be ‘anti politics’. The government’s policy throughout the late imperial period of funding newspapers was an attempt to curtail opposition to its policies, including from the extreme right, and in a crude way attempt to mobilize public support for the regime by funding ‘friendly’ journals and newspapers. Stolypin in particular desired this; he imagined support from a loyal press could help him achieve his aim of neutralizing conservative opposition during the Western *zemstvo* crisis of 1911. These attempts to control right-wing support were unsophisticated, inconsistent, and also highlighted the growing ideological divisions between different right-leaning groups after 1905. For whilst Stolypin was proclaimed to be the hero of several nationalist associations, including the Nationalist Party and the Kiev Club of Russian Nationalists, right-wing parties such as the URP and UAM did not temper their criticism of current policies, even given support from government sources. This shows that, in the long term, the funding of the right by the regime was not only a risky tactic, but also one that did not always bring them into line with the regime’s policies.<sup>24</sup>

### *Toleration*

Many significant individuals as well as local police forces, whilst not openly supporting rightists, displayed a tolerant attitude towards them. In one sense, this was natural given the shared motto of ‘Orthodoxy, autocracy and nationality’, and the desire to protect the *rodina*. Consequently, many Soviet works expounded at length on the deep entanglement of the Tsarist regime with the right-wing parties.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> ‘Dopros I. G. Shcheglovitova’, in Shchegolev (ed.), *Padenie tsarskogo rezhima*, Vol. 2, p. 353.

<sup>24</sup> Waldron, *Between Two Revolutions*, pp. 161-165.

<sup>25</sup> See the introductory essay by Viktorov in Chernovskii (comp.) and Viktorov (ed.), *Soiuz russkogo naroda*, pp. 3-18; and Avrekh, *Stolypin i tret’ia Duma*, pp. 22-30; *Tsarizm i IV Duma, 1912-1914 gg.*, pp. 224-239; Diakin, *Samoderzhavie, burzhuziia i dvorianstvo v 1907-1911 gg.*, pp. 91-107; and N. G. Koroleva, ‘Pomeshchich’e-monarkhicheskie organizatsii v 1905-1907 gg.: obrazovanie, struktura,



The reality was more complex than several analyses made out, but certainly, many with conservative inclinations initially welcomed the appearance of these groups. Vladimir Gurko, the Assistant Minister of Internal Affairs from 1906 to 1907, remarked:

...I have never sympathized with organizations like the Union of Russian People. I have always thought that certain sentiments such as love of country should be inculcated and strengthened at school and by courses and lectures organized by educational societies, and not by organizing useless tea shops, which decent educated people could not be tempted to enter. In normal times no government should use methods employed by revolutionists...but during times of revolutionary unrest, when people are in the grip of mass psychosis, the government must support individual organizations that spring up to support it.<sup>26</sup>

Whilst Gurko was suspicious of the methods of the URP, he was not in principle opposed to independent right-wing forces.<sup>27</sup> In Odessa, there were other important examples where local officials and administrators viewed an autonomous right positively. The commander of the military in the district, Baron Kaul'bars, stated that a 'patriotic defence' was needed to 'actively fight' revolutionary and foreign-backed forces in the city.<sup>28</sup> Others of a lower rank echoed such sentiments. One police report from Odessa, addressed to Stolypin from 2 December 1906, whilst mentioning Kaul'bars' laxity towards right-wing forces, also pleaded that a strong, independent right was needed, to oppose revolutionary forces in the city.<sup>29</sup> In Molchanov, Ukraine, an army official, Captain Budagovskii, reported to his superiors that he saw Union of Russian Men (URM) demonstrations of over 2,000 participants as 'deeply felt' and of a 'patriotic, and not a party political character', and should therefore be allowed to proceed unhindered.<sup>30</sup> Central to this toleration was the idea of a popular patriotism that was beneficial, but equally pertinently,

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taktika', in K. V. Gusev (ed.), *Neproletarskie partii Rossii v trekh revoliutsiiakh. Sbornik statei.* (Moscow, 1989), pp. 101-105.

<sup>26</sup> Gurko, *Features and Figures of the Past*, p. 437.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 437.

<sup>28</sup> GARF, F. 102.OO, op. 316, (1905 g.), d. 999, ch. 39, l. A, t. 1, l. 91.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, l. 89.

<sup>30</sup> GARF, F. 102.OO, op. 316, (1905 g.), d. 999, ch. 39, t. 2, ll. 50-50 ob.: telegramma ot direktora departamenta politsii, January 1907.

manageable; such feelings were not to be opposed, even if apparently developing separately from the autocracy.

Lying behind this apparent support was the conception that rightist activists and the regime had shared aims and ideas. To some extent, this was of course the case. Right-wing groups, even in their most extreme and virulent form championed the autocracy, the supremacy of Russian religion and Russian nationalism as the glue with which to hold state and society together during an era of revolutionary crisis. These were ideas that the regime and various Tsars had been developing in both theory and practice for many decades.<sup>31</sup> Even perceptive and intelligent ministers who had suspicions about the right-wing groups, such as the Minister of the Interior and later Prime Minister, Petr Stolypin, saw that in principle autonomous organizations in defence of the autocracy could be tolerated. Unlike Witte, Stolypin did not see the URP and similar organizations as an innate nuisance, though he did recognize that their violent actions could disrupt previously tranquil areas. His initial reaction to the groups was that they offered a potential service to the empire. Chiefly, this was in helping to combat the revolutionary threat, though with the need for them to be closely monitored and policed. Given his own desire to mobilize conservative opinion, tacit support for right-wing ideas and groups continued under Stolypin's premiership until his assassination in 1911.<sup>32</sup>

Left-wing and liberal voices critical of the regime and the right believed that the two were enjoying a mutually beneficial relationship. The newspaper *Russkie vedomosti* (Russian News) expounded the view that the weapons which URP activists brandished in their fights with striking workers and Jewish self-defence groups in Odessa had been distributed by the authorities; more specifically, the large number of agents in the secret police sympathetic to the URP. One right-wing group,

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<sup>31</sup> For the official view, see E. C. Thaden and M. H. Haltzel (eds.), *Russification in the Baltic Provinces and Finland, 1855-1914* (Princeton, 1981); Weeks, *Nation and State*, pp. 44-69.

<sup>32</sup> 'Mobilizatsiia reaktsii v 1906 g. Podg. N. I. Sidorov', *Krasnyi arkhiv*, 1(32) (1929), p. 180.

the White Guard, was accused of being given weapons by sympathetic officials.<sup>33</sup> In the police force too, concerns were raised at this. One official accused Kryzhanovskii and his associates of dispensing 1,000 rubles a month towards the paper *Za tsaria i rodinu* in Odessa from the end of 1907 onwards.<sup>34</sup> Away from clandestine financial support, a further criticism was that the government was not doing enough to stop the violence of the pogroms. The left-leaning newspaper *Tovarishch* (Comrade) ran a leading article on 2 September 1906 criticizing the apparent unwillingness of the government to stop outbreaks of right-wing violence, as ‘the governor-general [of Odessa, A. G. Grigor’ev] did not see any danger to societal order’, and criticized the level of respect in the conservative, pro-state press given to right-wing groups. In a later editorial, *Tovarishch* accused the police of taking an indifferent stance towards right-wing disorders in Odessa, as officers idly observed a meeting amongst the URP convened in the city on 29 September 1906, with attendees openly discussing violent measures to be taken against revolutionary agitators, in particular, Odessa’s Jewish population.<sup>35</sup>

### *Opposition*

On other occasions, the presence of militant, armed activists worried many significant figures in authority. In contrast to liberal press claims, the city mayor of Odessa and governor-general of *Novorossiiia*, A. G. Grigor’ev, showed a marked fear of a potential right-wing movement that cultivated a populist appeal, evident from several reports circulated within the MVD.<sup>36</sup> Lower-ranking police officials in Odessa reflected his concerns. For example, crowds assembling in Odessa’s port during December 1906 in support of the right-wing group the Russian Society of Steamship Workers, led by A. I. Konovnitsyn, were noted as having a particularly aggressive character. Though the group supported autocratic values, what was also

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<sup>33</sup> GARF, F. 102.OO, op. 316, (1905 g.), d. 999, ch. 39, l. A, t. 1, l. 10: *Russkie vedomosti*, 12 September 1906.

<sup>34</sup> Chernovskii (comp.) and Viktorov (ed.), *Soiuz russkogo naroda*, p. 277.

<sup>35</sup> GARF, F. 102.OO, op. 316, (1905 g.), d. 999, ch. 39, l. A, t. 1, l. 5: *Tovarishch*, 2 September 1906; l. 33: *Tovarishch*, 29 September 1906.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, l. 1 ob, 2, 2 ob., 3-4; Chernovskii (comp.) and Viktorov (ed.), *Soiuz russkogo naroda*, p. 279.

recorded was the promotion of ground-level struggle against revolutionary workers, and the violence that accompanied this group.<sup>37</sup> Between 11 and 23 February 1907, approximately 28 separate incidents of violence involving URP activists were recorded in the region.<sup>38</sup> Were such events to reach uncontrollable proportions, those in the positions of the greatest responsibility had the most to lose. Grigor'ev stated in 1906 that he opposed any financial support for the rightist paper *Russkaia rech'*, given that the militant tone of the newspaper was inciting the public mood, and threatening the fragile calm of the city. The main fear of these authority figures was not the message of the right in itself, but the potential for a popular, spontaneous and uncontrollable movement from the right. That the right could rouse 'religious passions' in the people betrayed the regime's fear of the same masses that rightists claimed to represent.<sup>39</sup>

More worrying still were occasional attacks by rightists on the authorities. One report from September 1906 referred to the arrest of two prominent members of the URP, Averuchev and Voznok, for the attempted murder of a police chief. This assassination attempt was apparently in retribution for the official's attempts to crack down on groups such as the URP whom he held responsible for the 1905 pogrom. Under this individual, Odessa's police force had taken forceful measures to disperse groups of far-right activists, including breaking up rightist ceremonials and parades.<sup>40</sup> The mayor of Odessa from 1907 until 1911, I. N. Tolmachev, displayed more tolerance toward the actions of right-wing bands than his predecessor, V. D. Novitskii, but less than the chief of the army in the district, Baron Kaul'bars.<sup>41</sup> Tolmachev did however accurately perceive a greater potential for disorders with armed bands of rightists rampaging around the city. During his period in office, violent actions by the URP against other townsfolk helped to gradually erode government trust in rightist forces. Police officials might even describe their

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<sup>37</sup> GARF, F. 102.OO, op. 316, (1905 g.), d. 999, ch. 39, l. A, t. 1, l. 332 ob.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid., ll. 333, 333 ob.-334.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid., l. 2: A. Grigor'ev (Odessa), to P. A. Stolypin (St. Petersburg), 4 September 1906.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., l. 90 ob.: unsigned police report (Odessa), to P. A. Stolypin (St. Petersburg), 2 December 1906.

<sup>41</sup> V. D. Novitskii was the city mayor between 22 August and 14 November 1907, when he died of a heart attack. He was replaced by I. N. Tolmachev.

suppression of threats from the right in order to progress up the local chain of command. One unsigned police communiqué from August 1907, addressed to Tolmachev, described the exclusion of the far right from a parade:

Today, I am in good spirits due to my categorical refusal to admit the flags of the Union of Russian People and [Union of] Russian Men to participate in this spiritual procession...neither I nor the governor-general [of Odessa] would think of allowing their participation, given that the procession was a purely spiritual ceremonial, as his excellency approved...why introduce political elements into this religious procession...especially taking into account the overall mood of anxiety in the city.<sup>42</sup>

After the peak of the revolutionary crisis had passed by mid-1907, the government appeared to be more circumspect about giving firm support to the right. Attitudes and sympathies notwithstanding, there was simply not as much practical incentive to give weapons and support to armed and dangerous bands of right-wing activists, as the violence of the revolutionary left had been suppressed. The regime had taken matters into its own hands; repression was part of the government campaign against the opposition. Stolypin's notorious Article 87, introduced on 19 August 1907, was a central element in the drive to repress revolutionary unrest.<sup>43</sup>

Additionally, rightists incited violent reprisals from other ethnic and social groups. Local officials were not always concerned primarily about right-wing violence in itself, but about the ferocious responses it could initiate. In Odessa, authorities feared the Jewish self-defence groups formed in response to the pogroms of October 1905.<sup>44</sup> Right-wing activists provoked a sizeable response from these well-organized and powerful groups that often fought back fiercely against right-wing violence. V. D. Novitskii, the mayor of Odessa after A. G. Grigor'ev, and one who appeared to be unreceptive to the overtures of Konovnitsyn and his supporters, described how rightists attempted to infiltrate a funeral procession for a murdered police officer, Kharchenko, and in so doing present themselves as on the side of the

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<sup>42</sup> GARF, F. 102.OO, op. 316, (1905 g.), d. 999, ch. 39, l. A, ll. 346 ob.–347: unsigned police report circulated during August 1907, addressed to I. N. Tolmachev.

<sup>43</sup> Ascher, *The Revolution of 1905*, Vol. 2, pp. 245-252.

<sup>44</sup> See the list of works in Chapter three, footnote 61, pp. 109-110.

authorities. This led to a furious response from Jewish self-defence groups. Whilst this telegram noted that the main cause of outbreaks of violence in Odessa was the Jewish self-defence groups which had ‘fired the first shots’, the actions of the two leaders of this group, Moshko Nastashkin and Mendel Barnovskii, were incited by URP attempts to start a pogrom. Novitskii appeared to be highly suspicious of the URP’s intentions, and held a view that all spontaneous activities needed to be controlled, including those of an independent, autonomous right.<sup>45</sup>

The URP attempted to exploit a public mood in the wake of Kharchenko’s death, and activists converged on the surrounding streets and at a nearby hospital, urging retribution against the ‘Jews’ who had ‘murdered’ Kharchenko. On 3-4 September 1907, the already tense atmosphere in the neighbourhood following the interment of Kharchenko had deteriorated to such an extent that it was feared by local officials that another pogrom, like the one of October 1905, could break out in Odessa. Faced with this possibility, officials from the police and army quickly colluded with Novitskii in an attempt to stop any new outbreaks of violence, increasing the police presence and arresting any wandering bands of URP activists. This crackdown was pursued partly due to the fear of the violent nature of socially lower-class elements, the ‘riff-raff’ in the URP bands, but also the appearance of Jewish self-defence groups in response to rightist promises of violence to be carried out against Odessa’s Jews. One Jewish self-defence force, the Young Will, appeared on 3 September 1907 after a band of URP supporters had assembled outside a Jewish hospital. Several of the followers of the group brandished revolvers and fired shots into nearby crowds of rightist activists. Though it is unclear how many died in this clash, it appears to have caused a widespread panic, and was reported in all the newspapers in the following days. Groups of black-shirted URP activists, who were themselves armed, had apparently fled at the appearance of this well-organized and apparently destructive group that had adopted a fight fire with fire approach, and

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<sup>45</sup> GARF, F. 102.OO, op. 316, (1905 g.), d. 999, ch. 39, l. A, t. 3, l. 28: Razbor shifrovannoi telegrammy iz Odessy, V. D. Novitskii-g. direktora departamenta politsii, 13 September 1907. It is telling that the words ‘Jewish self-defence’ and ‘the first shots were fired by Jews’ (*pervymi otkryli strel’bi evrei*) are the words underlined by the censor in this police report, showing that the primary threat was considered to be the Jewish self-defence force, rather than the URP’s supporters.

was prepared to meet right-wing destructiveness with their own, decisive, measures.<sup>46</sup>

Such conflicts placed URP funding under threat. In Odessa, a student section of the URP was formed in 1909 under the guidance of N. N. Rodzevich, the regional chair of the URM. Led by a student, Korniichuk, the URP student branch received a donation towards the building of a classroom during 1909.<sup>47</sup> However, in later years, the organization appears to have struggled to find sufficient funding to expand its pedagogical activities, which were curtailed by a lack of financial support from both members and the authorities. A police report shows how by 1911, previous disbursements received through supporters of the URP in the police force had slowed to a trickle, and by 1912 to 1913, such financial aid was not forthcoming at all. Additionally the authorities in Odessa closely monitored the group, with undercover police agents sitting in on its meetings to observe its actions.<sup>48</sup> However this decline in support was an incremental and gradual, rather than continuous, process.

### *Ambiguity and inconsistency*

The responses of the authorities towards the right were ambiguous and inconsistent, with no consistent over-arching strategy emerging for how to deal with new parties and groups.<sup>49</sup> Between 1906 and 1908, there were perceptible changes in attitude from the authorities towards the right; these were partially down to changes in personnel. Novitskii was particularly intolerant of the presence of the URP in Odessa, more so than Grigor'ev, and later, Tolmachev. Certainly, the bickering,

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<sup>46</sup> The sources corroborate each other closely in this controversial set of incidents, discussed in the following newspaper and police reports found in *ibid.*, l. 17: *Birzhevye vedomosti*, 3 September 1907; l. 18: *Novoe vremia*, 4 September 1907; l. 19: *Birzhevye vedomosti*, 4 September 1907; l. 21: *Russkoe slovo*, 4 September 1907; l. 22: *Russkoe slovo*, 4 September 1907; l. 27: police report from V. D. Novitskii; l. 28: Razor shifrovannoi telegrammy iz Odessy, V. D. Novitskii-g. direktora departamenta politsii, 13 September 1907.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 289.

<sup>48</sup> Chernovskii (comp.) and Viktorov (ed.), *Soiuz russkogo naroda*, pp. 290-292.

<sup>49</sup> As noted in Rawson, *Russian Rightists*, p. 151.

corruption and factionalism of the right put off many potential supporters.<sup>50</sup> However, a point that united many significant individuals in the establishment was the trepidation with which they approached the militant and extreme right, no matter their own personal convictions towards particular individuals or groups. The main reason for this fear is that revolutionary violence, which had been largely quelled by late 1907, would become a threat again in reaction to a more organized and powerful militant right. Furthermore, a wider point was the revolutionary crisis itself. During 1905, strikes, revolution and agrarian unrest had stretched Russia's police force (described by Weissman as 'peasants in uniform') to breaking point, presenting them with a task to keep public order, for which they were often ill equipped.<sup>51</sup> Once the most intense period of revolutionary violence had subsided by the end of 1906, the support of the authorities for arming the right-wing factions became notably less fervent. Curiously, the far right was increasingly monitored in the absence of a revolutionary left, with undercover agents placed in the tearooms and meeting houses of the URP at an increasing rate from the end of 1906.<sup>52</sup>

A central point from reading the voluminous reports that have survived is the inconsistent approach of the police towards right-wing radicals. Overall, there did not appear to be a coherent plan from the regime in terms of dealing with the right. Instead, much was left up to local initiative. Previous studies have claimed that the regime backed the radical right, particularly in Odessa.<sup>53</sup> Whilst this is undoubtedly true in some areas, in other parts of the empire a spontaneous, mobilized rightist presence was feared. As well as the practical considerations, such as the violence and unrest seen in 1905, there was a growing distinction between official practices

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<sup>50</sup> In a letter, Tolmachev claimed that 'you will be more and more disappointed with the activities of all the rightists', and though he voiced no opposition to the existence of an independent right in itself, he did accurately claim that the right was disunited and riven with corruption by this stage, both in the Duma and elsewhere. GARF, F. 102, op. 265, d. 562, l. 643: I. N. Tolmachev (Moshonk, Kaluzhskoi), to an unknown recipient, 25 February 1912.

<sup>51</sup> Weissman, 'Regular Police'; for an overview of peasant uprisings during 1905-1906 from the view of the landowners, see 'Iz istorii bor'by s agrarnym dvizheniem 1905-1908 gg.', *Krasnyi arkhiv*, 2(39) (1930), pp. 76-107; 3(40) (1930), pp. 41-58.

<sup>52</sup> See for one example a report in GARF, F. 102.OO, op. 316, (1905 g.), d. 999, ch. 39, l. A, t. 1, l. 61: MVD circular in Odessa, 15 November 1906.

<sup>53</sup> See Langer, 'Corruption and the Counterrevolution', Ch. 3.



of conservatism and a separate right-wing politics in late imperial Russia. Certainly, the difference between the two was far from clear to many observers. Yet the regime's more perceptive observers, particularly those of conservative convictions such as Gurko and Stolypin, recognized that the new right was in one sense a tribute to the autocracy, but at the same time, posed a threat to it. Protest and dissent from the right aiming to build popular support intruded into the regime's own space for publicly proclaiming the virtues of the autocracy. Rural and urban unrest caused by rightists undermined their own claims to be saving Russia, and shown to the autocracy the unreliability of one potential set of defenders.

### **Rituals, Symbols and Popular Mobilization**

A wave of 'jubilemania', celebrating past military victories, imperial unity and national pride hit the Russian Empire in its final years. Public use of rituals and symbols was immensely important for a large number of rightists. Studies of right-wing rituals, symbols and related demonstrations are thin on the ground, often playing a lesser role in existing analyses of the right, or are entirely absent.<sup>54</sup> This section redresses this balance by considering several representative case studies examining how right-wing groups used rituals and symbols, and the wider conclusions about the far right that can be deduced from these activities. An example of a leadership cult will be examined, and then three cases of right-wing involvement in the cults of commemoration that swept the empire between 1909 and 1913: the Poltava celebrations, the Bessarabia centennial and, finally, the Romanov tercentenary.<sup>55</sup> The right relied on mobilizing moods, sentiments and emotions more than it did the construction of carefully articulated programmes and manifestos; this analysis will give the public phenomena of demonstrations the due weight it deserves by examining how these symbols were manifested and applied, and where

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<sup>54</sup> Two important exceptions are Löwe, 'Political Symbols and Rituals', pp. 441-466; and Vydra, *Život za Cara?* pp. 333-356.

<sup>55</sup> The term comes from Konstantin Tsimbaev: K. Tsimbaev, 'Fenomen iubileimanii v rossiiskoi obshchestvennoi zhizni kontsa XIX-nachala XX veka', *Voprosy istorii*, 11 (2005), pp. 98-108. The outstanding study of official monarchist ideology and one that examines the Poltava and Romanov tercentenary celebrations from a variety of perspectives is Wortman, *Scenarios of Power*, Vol. 2; see for these two ceremonials pp. 421-428 and pp. 439-480.

they fitted into the wider context of contemporary Russian society. The goal is to show how right-wing identities were created and transformed between 1907 and 1914.

### *Reasons for rituals*

The overriding goal of rituals was to imbue the rightist social order with legitimacy. The creation of ‘sacred space’ in public was an important part of this legitimization process, involving the establishment of an area where the sanctity of what is taking place in front of observers cannot be questioned and takes on a detached, mythic and timeless quality independent from normal human activity.<sup>56</sup> However, these simple statements make the process appear to be smoother and more unilateral than examples actually demonstrate; it was not fixed, but constantly evolving. Whilst in theory, right-wing groups were committed to the ideology of ‘official nationality’ the construction of rituals was in reality a dynamic practice that involved subversive processes and outcomes. The *narod* themselves were involved in the creation of this national myth. As in nineteenth-century Germany, national ideas were widely used in order to create a public grand narrative, in that case creating ‘heroes’ of the Second Reich.<sup>57</sup> Public involvement in the legitimization process was crucial in order to build support, and to convince the masses of the inherent worth of right-wing ideas and feelings. Visual symbols as a focal point for public demonstrations could take the notice of the wider community quickly, much faster than alternative techniques such as sending the Tsar telegrams, or even distributing newspapers.<sup>58</sup>

We can see that primitive forms of group identity and even civic society were evolving amongst the right-wing factions immediately prior to the First World War. If they are skillfully constructed and given the correct thematic weighting for

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<sup>56</sup> This concept of ‘sacred space’ has been explored in the context of state funerals in France of the Third Republic: A. Ben-Amos, ‘The Sacred Center of Power: Paris and Republican State Funerals’, *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 22, 1 (1991), pp. 27-48.

<sup>57</sup> See Mosse, *The Nationalization of the Masses*.

<sup>58</sup> For instance, see G. Elenius, ‘The Politics of Recognition: Symbols, Nation Building and Rival Nationalisms’, *Nations and Nationalism*, 17, 2 (2011), pp. 396-418.

their intended audience, public rituals can successfully demonstrate a consecrated symbolic system, functioning as what Glifford Geertz describes as a ‘cultural performance’ which imposes order on life’s apparently chaotic and arbitrary events.<sup>59</sup> The religious symbols used in funerals and crafted onto memorials were two techniques widely used amongst rightists, which served to function as visualizations of ‘ancestor worship’, signifying respect for generations past and ties to the wider community.<sup>60</sup> Themes of death, remembrance and commemoration provided a potential common ground between rightists and their intended audience, and were directly linked with existing right-wing activities, which were already heavily reliant on themes including community, tradition, observation and, in particular, religious symbolism. Examples of such phenomena included ‘union banners, peasant choirs, church services, requiems and other purely religious rites that usually occupied no less a place than patriotic manifestations, and the sending of telegrams’.<sup>61</sup> The focus of rightist rituals could change from emphasis on the grandeur of the autocracy or Russia’s ‘great men’ when in pursuit of new avenues of popular support. Though in private, rightists commonly feted ‘tough’ heroes such as the reactionary Tsar Alexander III, in public, rightists chose subjects that they believed would have a greater popular resonance.<sup>62</sup>

One instance of this was at the presentation of a bust in honour of Alexander II, the ‘Tsar liberator’, in September 1912 in Vladimir province by a crowd of pro-monarchist peasants, including representatives from the Vorshin branch of the URP. Rightists here tried to prove that tsarism still had popular support, whilst attempting to establish their own credentials as members of a movement for the people. The choice of Alexander II, often considered a ‘liberal’, might appear to be an odd one

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<sup>59</sup> Theoretical underpinnings are C. Geertz, ‘Religion as a Cultural System’, in *The Interpretation of Cultures* (London, 1973), especially pp. 91, 112-113; C. Bell, *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice* (Oxford, 1992); D. I. Kertzer, ‘The Role of Ritual in Political Change’, in M. J. Aronoff (ed.), *Political Anthropology: Culture and Political change*, Vol. 2 (New Brunswick, NJ, 1983), pp. 53-73.

<sup>60</sup> Geertz, ‘Religion as a Cultural System’, p. 88.

<sup>61</sup> Levitskii, ‘Pravye partii’, in Martov et al. (eds.), *Obshchestvennoe dvizhenie*, Vol. 3, p. 351.

<sup>62</sup> Examples of rituals held in celebration of Alexander III can be found in the Messenger of the Russian Assembly during 1909, *Vestnik Russkogo sobraniia*, 19 February 1909, 8, p. 3; 9 April 1909, 15, p. 6; and GARF, F. 116, op. 1, d. 38, ll. 8-8 ob.: main council of the Russian Assembly to A. I. Dubrovin, 27 September 1907.

from a group of right-wingers, but in choosing the ‘liberator’ monarchists were attempting to reach out to peasant observers by showing them how they too venerated the Tsar who had emancipated the peasantry from serfdom in 1861. After local peasants had sung pro-autocracy hymns, V. M. Koriakin, a URP activist, gave a speech about ‘the important events from the life of the Tsar-martyr, since the peasants asked why the Tsar submitted to the feelings of his loyal subjects’.<sup>63</sup> The powerful image of the Tsar’s martyrdom, dying for his subjects, was one example of how right-wing ritual demonstrations attempted to arouse emotion and feeling in observers, though with the important caveat that this applied only to ethnic, Orthodox Russian observers.<sup>64</sup>

The adoption of ‘the people’ as part of a national myth had been pursued previously by the imperial regime, most clearly seen in the projected ideal of the ‘good Tsar’, an idea that had been used for centuries.<sup>65</sup> The right, like the regime, desired that rituals would be ‘cross class’ and demonstrate unity between people, Tsar and monarchist movements.<sup>66</sup> However, differences between the regime and the right were emerging. A more novel development of certain right-wing rituals was that, unlike in the scenarios of the autocracy, the role of the *narod* changed from being an essentially abstract focus, shared with the Tsars, to an explicit personification of rightist favourites. Ideas of protecting the sanctity of the people, as well as the deep entanglement of the 1905 revolution with the rise of the right, can be seen in the construction of a church in memory of the ‘victims of revolution’. This was the ‘Church in Memory of Russia’s Sorrows’ (*Khram-pamiatnik russkoi skorbii*) in 1909 by the Ekaterinoslav branch of the URP, headed by leaders Ivan Andreevich and Kseniia Fedorovna Kolesnikova. This was dedicated to ‘2,000

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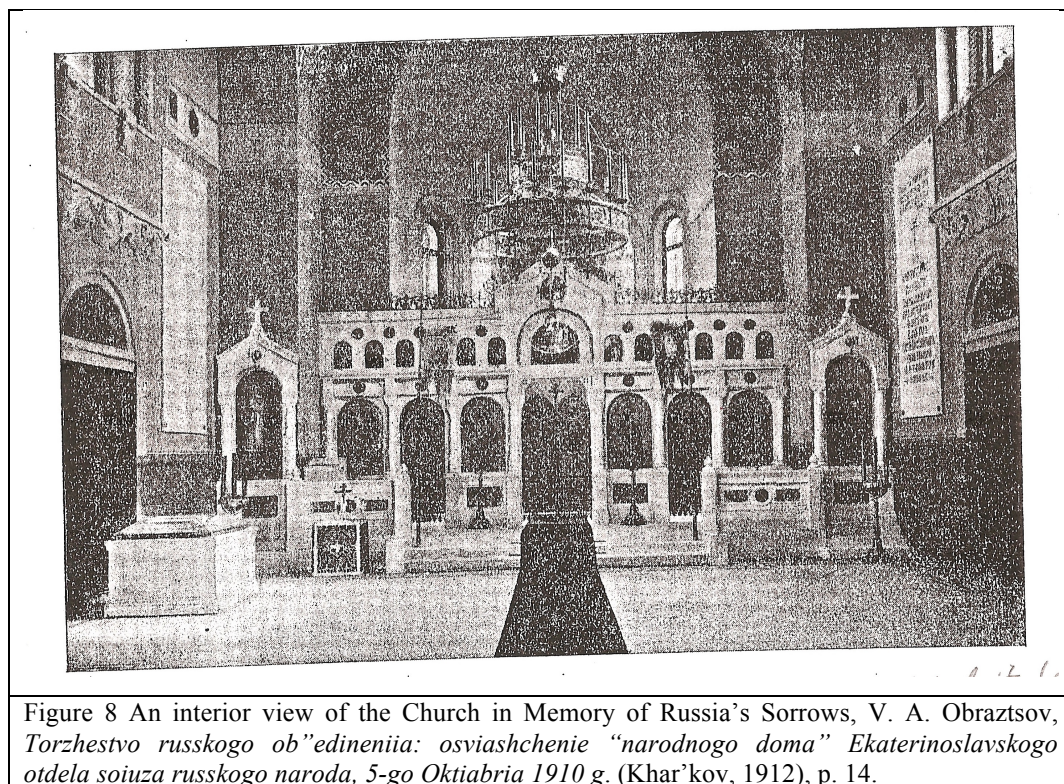
<sup>63</sup> *Priamoi put’*, December 1912, p. 227. It should be noted that the description of this Tsar as a ‘liberator’ was a key feature of the editorial covering the event.

<sup>64</sup> *Moskovskie vedomosti*, 3 June 1906, 141, p. 1. Alexander II’s martyrdom was also a central theme of several rightist memorial services carried out in his honour. For further examples see Kir’ianov (ed.), *Pravye partii*, Vol. 2, pp. 13-17.

<sup>65</sup> Cherniavsky, *Tsar and People*, p. 187.

<sup>66</sup> There are surprisingly few historical (as opposed to sociological) investigations on death, and those that do exist tend to be episodic works rather than prolonged analyses. One exception is J. Whaley (ed.), *Mirrors of Mortality: Studies in the Social History of Death* (London, 1981). See especially his ‘Introduction’, pp. 1-14.

victims of revolution’ one of whom was Grand Duke Sergei Aleksandrovich, killed by revolutionaries in Moscow in 1905, with the remaining 1,999 all ‘ordinary’ people, ‘true Tsarist subjects’ killed by subversive forces in the new ‘years of troubles’ (*smutnye gody*).<sup>67</sup> These ‘subversive forces’ were taken to mean Jews and national minorities by right-wing activists; the tense interplay between positive and negative ideals was a distinctive feature of the new right.



*Vladimir Andreevich Gringmut: his leadership and cult*

A measure of the right's independence from tsarism was the right-wing parties celebrating their own heroes of the movement that had arisen after 1905. ‘Heroization’ has played a powerful role in Russian culture, managing to affect the

<sup>67</sup> Many reports on this church can be found in the right-wing press, for example *Priamoi put'*, December 1912, pp. 220-221; Obraztsov, *Torzhestvo russkogo ob"edineniia*, pp. 12-14; see also *CSIE*, pp. 562-564. The reference to the present era as a ‘time of troubles’ (*smutnoe vremia*) was common in right-wing circles: see for example *Moskovskie vedomosti*, 23 October 1905, 281, p. 1.

wider public consciousness as well as those more intimately involved, and the right was certainly not unique in its uses and abuses of selected deifications.<sup>68</sup> The funeral and subsequent celebration of the life of Vladimir Gringmut by followers was one such instance; a peaceful event, but with several features inviting implicit – sometimes explicit – rejection of the regime.<sup>69</sup> Gringmut, a former headmaster and a Russian ultra-nationalist of Baltic German descent, was the leader of the Russian Monarchist Party (RMP) from 24 April 1905, and the editor of the monarchist newspaper *Moskovskie vedomosti* from 1896 (positions he held until his death on 28 September 1907), and one of the most notorious leaders of the right.<sup>70</sup> His death at the age of 51 led to the construction of a cult amongst his most erstwhile followers, and is a good indicator of many of the values that the right wished to follow.

Large crowds gathering to mark Gringmut's passing on 1 October showed that an independent right had emerged that could mobilize a significant number of followers. The symbolism of the funeral drew on Orthodox religiosity, and the power of Russian autocracy. Unlike Socialist Revolutionary funerals such as that held for Nikolai Bauman, this was not a subversive event from the regime's perspective. The emblems used were powerful visual demonstrations of the Orthodox religiosity that the regime had been using for decades past. The icons and flags carried by supporters, including many RMP members, depicted various saints, the Virgin Mary, and Gringmut himself; importantly, both Gringmut *and* the Tsars were venerated here. On the day of the funeral, crowds of several thousand followers, led by the priest and orator Father Ioann Vostorgov, a close confidant of Gringmut and one of the leaders of the RMP, gathered at Red Square to chant slogans and sing Orthodox hymns. Many of these musical renditions, such as 'God is with us' (*bog s nami*) and verses from Mikhail Glinka's 1836 opera *A Life for the Tsar* were typical of monarchist ritual. The procession formed at his funeral and

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<sup>68</sup> A famous example is, of course, the first leader of the Soviet Union. See N. Tumarkin, *Lenin Lives! The Lenin Cult in Soviet Russia* (Harvard, 1997).

<sup>69</sup> The creation of cults was not, of course, limited to Gringmut, though he was a prominent case. Another example was the religious celebrations of the memory of Father Ioann of Kronstadt. See for example *Vestnik Russkogo sobraniia*, 5 February 1909, 6, p. 5.

<sup>70</sup> For background on Gringmut's life and work, see the list of works under 'Russian Monarchist Party', Chapter one, footnote 132, p. 54.

wound its way from Red Square, where several thousand followers and leaders of the movement had gathered, along Malaia-Dmitrovka and Dolgorovka streets to Skorbiashchenskii monastery. Supporters sang ‘save God!’ and carried Orthodox crosses along the procession route. The interment of Gringmut occurred in the monastery that evening. Reportage from the event declared that ‘the meaning of this will be fixed in popular memory’,<sup>71</sup> and emphasized the peaceful nature of the crowds.<sup>72</sup>



Gringmut's funeral was described by monarchist followers, not without some justification, as a mass event that attracted a broad cross-section of society.<sup>73</sup> One sympathetic source estimated that over thirty thousand people were present: if this is accurate, then it suggests that the funeral was on a mass scale.<sup>74</sup> This assessment seems high, though an important piece of surviving evidence is a series of

<sup>71</sup> *Bogatyr' mysli i dela: pamiati Vladimira Andreevicha Gringmuta* (Moscow, 1913), pp. 287-295. Father Ioann Vostorgov repeatedly praised Gringmut in his own public appearances and played a prominent role in the development of the Gringmut cult.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 287.

<sup>73</sup> *Vladimir Andreevich Gringmut: ocherk ego zhizni i deiatel'nosti*, p. 119.

<sup>74</sup> *Bogatyr' mysli i dela*, p. 294.

photographs from the event, which show crowds of at least several thousand. The crowd attending the event appeared to be socially mixed. Smartly attired men, some in uniform, peasant women in headscarves, as well as the drably dressed and not clearly identifiable were all present amongst the throng of supporters carrying flags, many depicting the Russian standard and images of Gringmut. Leaders from dozens of provincial branches of the RMP were present, along with various delegates of other monarchist groups from across the empire. Also present were the governor-general of Moscow, V. F. Dzhunkovskii, and Metropolitan Vladimir of Moscow and Kolomenskoe. The mixed social base of the demonstration was important, as the right were generally keen to portray a degree of mass support. This event was ‘cross estate’ (*soslovie*), aimed at both elites and the masses, appealing for unity via the use of transcendent symbols of Orthodoxy and nationality rather than political or social emblems.<sup>75</sup>



Figure 10 Gringmut’s funeral procession, 1 October 1907, *Vladimir Andreevich Gringmut: ocherk ego zhizni i deiatel’nosti* (Moscow, 1913), p. 119.

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<sup>75</sup> Ibid., p. 290.



The centrality of religion to the right's rituals and symbols was also apparent in the tributes presented in memory of Gringmut at the funeral. Unlike Alexander II, Gringmut had died of natural causes, so it was not possible to present him as a martyr. Instead, he was described as a steadfast defender of 'Russian' values. Supporters, such as father Ioann Vostorgov, depicted him as a man of the people, representing the popular mood. In a speech delivered by Vostorgov at the funeral, he stressed that at this event:

...in the crowds there were no idlers and senseless gatherings, there was, in place of this, a popular mood united in profound veneration and prayer...between us we have seen that the death of Vladimir Andreevich was felt by thousands of people, many circling his coffin, as the death was dear to native men, who have rarely shed so many pure and just tears'.<sup>76</sup>

The targeting of enemies, a common feature among the Russian right, was present in these tributes. This included recourse to anti-Semitism, a frequent feature of more extreme factions. Vostorgov referred to the 'despicable words of one Jew' in the press, who had reportedly commented on the surprisingly low turnout at the funeral, a claim that Vostorgov vociferously denied in his own speech. Though the event appears to have passed off peacefully, the idea of a conflict between the 'true Russians' and their enemies was apparent in the presentation of this funeral.<sup>77</sup>

It is the legacy of Gringmut, rather than the funeral itself, which shows the growing distinction between regime and right with greater clarity. Whilst the development of a Gringmut cult was not in obvious conflict with the regime, followers widely criticized the status quo, and perceived an alarming decline in contemporary Russia, with Gringmut's 'mission' to restore the nation one that had been cruelly curtailed. According to the chair of the Russian Monarchist Society,

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<sup>76</sup> I. Vostorgov, *Piat' rechei v pamiat' V. A. Gringmuta* (Moscow, 1907), pp. 33-34.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 33-34; I. Vostorgov, *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii*, Vol. 3 (Moscow, 1915), pp. 347-349, for one of five speeches he made in 1907 commemorating the life and work of Gringmut; *Vestnik Russkogo sobraniia*, 8 October 1909, 25, pp. 1-2.

Boris Nazarevskii, writing in the newspaper *Staraia Moskva* (Old Moscow) his mission was to re-energize the Russian people in spirit and religion, as well as to create a party machine.<sup>78</sup> At a requiem (*panikhida*) for Gringmut held at the Skorbiashchenskii monastery on 30 March 1908, a crowd of bishops, priests and members of the RMP sang monarchist hymns, including arias from the Glinka opera. They also listened to a speech given by URP member and right-wing commentator A. S. Shmakov, which opined on threats to Russia in the new era. Shmakov's speech was more aggressive than Nazarevskii's tribute: essentially, a lengthy criticism of the recently elected second Duma. This was only interested in 'passing Jewish laws' and stood as the foremost bridge between the self-realization of the Russian people and the spiritual degeneration of the nation. This echoed the ideas of Gringmut, who had been a virulent anti-Semite and opponent of the Duma system.<sup>79</sup> As Gringmut had declared in an editorial in June 1906, the leadership of the monarchist movement would 'carry out the will of the Tsar' and would co-operate with the Duma only grudgingly. Gringmut's legacy attracted diatribes against politics, and demonstrates the negative core of the cult, as his supporters widely decried the situation in contemporary Russia.<sup>80</sup>

The content of much of the Gringmut cult was not novel. However, in contrast to other conservative heroes such as Alexander III, frequently praised by right-wing groups such as the Russian Assembly, eulogizing Gringmut was a chance to deify a figure not merely of conservative conviction, but one who was specifically from the right.<sup>81</sup> The secular aspects of the Gringmut cult emphasized his personal values as a dynamic and independent leader of the movement. He was presented not only as an outstanding figure, but the focus of all convictions and a warrior (*bogatyř*).<sup>82</sup> His supporters saw him as the 'outstanding individual talent' in the earliest years of the formation of a nationwide, mass scale monarchist movement,

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<sup>78</sup> *Bogatyř' mysli i dela*, p. 207.

<sup>79</sup> *Moskovskie vedomosti*, 1 April 1908, 76, p. 3.

<sup>80</sup> *Moskovskie vedomosti*, 4 June 1906, 141, p. 1; Gringmut, *Sobranie statei*, Vol. 3, pp. 173-178.

<sup>81</sup> *Vestnik Russkogo sobraniia*, 12 March 1909, 11, p. 8; 28 May 1909, 22/23, pp. 8-9.

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*

and wished to demonstrate this through his cult.<sup>83</sup> Indeed, it was perhaps the closest the organized right in late imperial Russia came to demonstrating one of the core tenets associated with the rise of fascist and totalitarian regimes to power, that of a 'leadership cult'.<sup>84</sup> This is not to deny that older symbolism was frequently apparent, as many of the symbols used by the RMP at Gringmut's funeral and after were Russian Orthodox, but rather to suggest that emphasis was shifting towards a secular emphasis on 'heroic' individuals as well. However, Gringmut could not usurp the role of the Tsar himself, so this heroic role was necessarily limited.<sup>85</sup>

A series of book publications between 1910 and 1913 were an additional tribute dedicated to his memory. Gringmut's collected works, consisting of essays, newspaper columns from *Moskovskie vedomosti* and letters from all over the Russian Empire addressed to him were re-published in collected form.<sup>86</sup> Members of a variety of monarchist organizations, from not only the RMP, but many other provincial groups, wrote in to major monarchist newspapers and journals, including *Russkoe znamia*, *Grazhdanin*, *Vestnik Russkogo sobraniia*, as well as Gringmut's own newspaper *Moskovskie vedomosti*. These made extravagant claims that Gringmut was the best monarchist and supreme leader of the movement – some even claimed he was a spiritual leader of the Russian nation.<sup>87</sup>

From the regime's perspective, the Gringmut cult may have appeared harmless enough. Indeed the official badge of Gringmut's RMP was dedicated to Nicholas II, bearing a quote attributed to him, 'may my autocracy stay as of old'. However, many of the eventual targets of the criticism generated by the Gringmut cult, such as the State Duma, were products of the regime.<sup>88</sup> Gringmut, along with right-wing leaders G. V. Butmi, A. I. Dubrovin and the commentator K. N.

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<sup>83</sup> Rawson, *Russian Rightists*, pp. 32-33.

<sup>84</sup> Griffin, *The Nature of Fascism*, pp. 42, 197.

<sup>85</sup> *Vladimir Andreevich Gringmut: ocherk ego zhizni i deiatel'nosti*, pp. 78-79.

<sup>86</sup> Two of these works have been cited here: *Bogatyr' mysli i dela* and *Ocherk ego zhizni i deiatel'nosti*. Gringmut's collected essays were published between 1910 and 1913 under the title Gringmut, *Sobranie statei, 1896-1907*, 4 Vols.

<sup>87</sup> *Bogatyr' mysli i dela*, p. 224; *Mirnyi trud* (10) 1907, pp. 185-192.

<sup>88</sup> *Vladimir Andreevich Gringmut: ocherk ego zhizni i deiatel'nosti*, p. 73.

Paskhalov, was a monarchist who did not wish for any sort of representational system in Russia.<sup>89</sup> He instead desired direct and ‘indivisible’ links between leaders, organizations and people, dispensing with any parliamentary system.<sup>90</sup> He saw, above all, the RMP as an all-class movement, beyond mere political aims, and for ethnic Russians only. This relates to a wider point; much of the energy created by Gringmut’s deification had a negative focus, and was directed against the enemies of the Russian state, rather than in pursuit of creating a positive ideal. His followers did not view the status quo in Russia with optimism. Many requiems and assemblies held for Gringmut stressed the need to renovate Russia. According to one recent analyst, ‘he declared that the black hundred movement had a higher and greater aim: the desire for a national and religious revival of the Russian people’.<sup>91</sup>

Gringmut was headmaster at the Tsarevich Nikolai Lyceum in Moscow between 1870 and 1895. Playing on his previous role in life, the theme of Gringmut as teacher was prominent in a report from 30 September 1908, two days after his death. RMP member I. A. Kolesnikov had arrived in Moscow to open a school established in Gringmut’s name, aiming to carry on his brand of teachings. This reveals the importance of youth to the monarchist movements. Followers such as Kolesnikov attempted to suggest that Gringmut was more than a political leader; he was also a spiritual teacher of Russia’s youth. Continuing the appeal to the masses rather than elites from the funeral itself, the school was free, and ostensibly aimed at poor students. In these publications, supporters attempted to present Gringmut as a spiritual as well as a political figure. One quote described him as ‘the dear leader and unifier of the Russian people, father-warrior (*bogatyř*) Gringmut’.<sup>92</sup> In a similar example from July 1909, B. V. Nazarevskii reported to delegates at a conference in Moscow that a church school in Siberia had opened, primarily aimed at peasants, which gave special instruction on Gringmut’s life and teaching. Selected spiritual

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<sup>89</sup> Repnikov, *Konservativnye kontseptsii pereustroistva Rossii*, pp. 194-196.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 194.

<sup>91</sup> Stepanov, ‘Bogatyř’ mysli i dela, Vladimir Andreevich Gringmut’, p. 153.

<sup>92</sup> *Bogatyř’ mysli i dela*, pp. 302-305; *Grazhdanin*, 30 September 1907, 74, p. 10; 4 November 1907, 88, p. 15.

texts, Gringmut's own works and pamphlets from the movement would be distributed amongst the students, as in the case of the Moscow school.<sup>93</sup>



Figure 11 Gringmut's monument unveiled in Mogilev, 25 April 1910, in *Priamoi put'*, 30 April 1910, p. 31.

The final piece in the development of the cult was a large monument that was unveiled in the cemetery of the Skorbiashchenskii monastery in Moscow on 25 April 1910. Supporters claimed this part of the cult was operating on a purely religious basis, and reportage of the event presented a series of Orthodox rituals. Unlike at Gringmut's funeral, the party organization of the RMP, which had declined by this stage, did not figure as a prominent presence at the unveiling.<sup>94</sup> The monument was designed by the architect and artist (and himself a member of the right-wing

movements) Viktor P. Vasnetsov, and created by stonemason M. P. Ovchinnikov working in his shop. The body of the monument was constructed from only two pieces of granite. The top section of the edifice was made out of one massive granite block hewn by stonemason V. I. Orlov into the shape of an Orthodox cross. Another large piece of granite formed the base, and was inscribed with words dedicated to V. A. Gringmut, 'Orthodox Russian people: assemble, unite, pray'. The cross, which depicted icons of the Virgin Mary and the priest Ioann Bogoslov, was sculpted from solid bronze and raised separately from the granite fascia. It reportedly cost over 6,000 rubles to produce.<sup>95</sup>

<sup>93</sup> GARF, F. 102.OO, op. 316, (1905 g.), d. 999, ch. 39, t. 5. l. 167: *Russkii vostok*, 29 July 1909; on B. V. Nazarevskii, see *CSIE*, pp. 339-340.

<sup>94</sup> *Istoricheskii vestnik*, June 1910, Vol. 120, pp. 1105-1107; *Moskovskie vedomosti*, 25 April 1910, 93, pp. 1-2; 26 April 1910, 94, pp. 3-4; 4 May 1910, 100, p. 4; *Novoe vremia*, 26 April 1910, 12255, p. 2.

<sup>95</sup> *Istoricheskii vestnik*, June 1910, Vol. 120, pp. 1105-1107.



Figure 12 The Gringmut monument unveiled to crowds of monarchists, *Priamoi put*, 30 April 1910, p. 30.

The unveiling of the memorial was a major event for a variety of monarchist groups. Though the RMP did not have a large presence, *Grazhdanin* reported how Vostorgov had given a speech to a delegation composed from a range of major monarchist groups, including the Mogilev branch of the URP, with over 2,000 supporters present in all.<sup>96</sup> Crowds had gathered to praise Gringmut's life and works, chanting 'Christ has risen! Christ has risen!' and 'God is with us'. Vostorgov declared at the unveiling of the monument, 'It is wonderful to hear that today we speak of you: look on the cross in silence, hear us cry for "true resurrection", hear us, and our words!'<sup>97</sup> Gringmut's values, including his supposed veneration of Russia and the Russian people, commitment to Orthodoxy and nationalist ideology

<sup>96</sup> *Grazhdanin*, 2 May 1910, 15, pp. 11-12; Vostorgov, *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii*, Vol. 3, pp. 340-346.

<sup>97</sup> *Priamoi put*, April 1910, pp. 30-31.

would live on, as supporters sought to ‘resurrect’ his ideas for the contemporary age.<sup>98</sup>

Not all monarchists were completely satisfied with the effusive praise that the cult provided. Whilst Mikhail Men’shikov recognized the personal qualities of ‘will’ and ‘unwavering service’ that Gringmut had given to the monarchist movement, he saw him primarily as a man betrayed by dark forces from the era. Men’shikov, a regular contributor to *Novoe vremia*, considered that Gringmut had been ignored by Russia’s rulers, ‘not because he did not have anything to teach them, but because the state idea was largely calibrated around a great many bureaucratic goals. And therefore Gringmut, like the majority of our publicists, wrote mainly for the bureaucracy’. Gringmut’s death was interpreted by some on the right not as a sorrowful passing, but as a prelude to catastrophe, with Men’shikov claiming his life had demonstrated the weakness of the autonomous right.<sup>99</sup> Other monarchist commentators did not miss the opportunity to criticize the status quo that the creation of the Gringmut cult afforded. One obituary by N. Chernikov, as well as mentioning Gringmut’s own ceaseless war with ‘enemies of Russian unity’, mentioned the widespread mistrust of the ‘Petersburg bureaucrats’ and the enemies of the Russian state operating within the regime.<sup>100</sup> Though the cult appears to have been peaceful, there was some mixed criticism of the regime emerging when presenting Gringmut’s qualities after his death.

#### *Poltava, 1909: military victory and populist nationalism*

The Poltava bi-centennial celebrations, held in the spring of 1909 in celebration of the military victory over Charles XII’s Sweden, were an attempt by the imperial regime to disseminate the bond between Nicholas II and the people. Like the other great celebrations held between 1909 and 1913 to celebrate the Russian autocracy,

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<sup>98</sup> The Gringmut memorial was removed by the Bolsheviks after 1917, though the circumstances of this removal are not clear. Today, no trace of the monument remains in Mogilev.

<sup>99</sup> Men’shikov, *Natsional’naia imperiia*, p. 195; *Novoe vremia*, 3 October 1907, 11336, pp. 2-3.

<sup>100</sup> *Mirnyi trud*, 10 (1907), pp. 205-215.

Poltava was organized on a large scale.<sup>101</sup> The celebrations were a spectacular evocation of the power and appeal of the Romanov monarchy and monarchist values, taking place across the empire, and used modern methods of technology, including the cinema and the press, to distribute this message. In the related Borodino centennial of 1912, Aleksandr Khanzhonkov's spectacular historical epic *1812* opened in cinemas across the empire on the eve of the celebrations taking place. Poltava was accompanied by the mass publication of laudatory works under both public and private auspices. From the regime's perspective, these celebrations were the perfect demonstrations of successful leadership and imperial unity under a monarchy, in celebration of a military victory that subsequently enhanced the prestige of the nascent Russian Empire. The related values of military might and heroism had resulted in a series of ceremonies celebrating the triumph and grandeur of the Romanov monarchy. They also had a social function, designed to demonstrate the closeness between Tsar and people, though in an idealized light.<sup>102</sup>

Like many areas where rightists were particularly active, Poltava was a largely non-Russian area of the empire, in what is now Ukraine. Its 'great Russian' population accounted for around 2.6 per cent of the inhabitants of the region, with Ukrainians, known as 'little Russians' in the imperial nomenclature, accounting for around 93 per cent. The remainder of the population was composed of Jews (around 4 per cent), and very small groups of Tatars, Poles, Germans and Belorussians.<sup>103</sup> Therefore, as elsewhere, these attempts to hold an anniversary based on 'great Russian' precepts drew a sharp distinction between the imperial regime and the increasingly *political* nation. Nevertheless, the right, like the regime, were greatly enthused by the Poltava project, not least as it demonstrated great pride in Russian military capability. A crucial feature was the triumphalism of many of the rituals. One ceremonial, held at the Saint Sampson church on 27 June 1909, celebrated pride

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<sup>101</sup> K. N. Tsimbaev, 'Pravoslavnaia tserkov' i gosudarstvennye iubilei imperatorskoi Rossii', *Otechestvennaia istoriia*, 6 (2005), pp. 42-51.

<sup>102</sup> The information about Khanzhonkov's film is from *Wortman, Scenarios of Power*, Vol. 2, p. 421. Coverage of Poltava was carried in *Moskovskie vedomosti*, 5 June 1909, 144, p. 1; 10 June 1909, 131, pp. 1-2; 18 June 1909, 138, p. 3; 19 June 1909, 139, p. 3; 27 June 1909, 146, p. 2. For a lengthy description of the official view, see *Istoricheskii vestnik*, August 1909, Vol. 117, pp. 561-585.

<sup>103</sup> *Pervaia vseobshchaia perepis'*, Vol. 36, pp. xviii-xix.



in Russia's victory through a series of processions. At a liturgy in the cemetery of the church, a delegation including 97 members from the Poltava branch of the URP bore flags with images of Georgii Pobedonosets (the saint depicted on the URP badge, whose surname means the 'bringer of victory'), and took part in a ritual in remembrance of the great victory. Delegates included N. E. Markov, one of the leaders of the UAM and delegate to the Third State Duma, who recalled the glorious military victory won by Peter the Great, and praised the greatness of the Russian people in winning this victory over a great power rival. Peasant choirs assembled and sang hymns to the Tsar; largely, these were refrains from Glinka's opera, giving thanks to the Tsar and to God.<sup>104</sup>

It was not only right-wing radicals, but also more moderate nationalist groups who were present at the ceremonials, such as the Nationalist Party, as well as the Kiev Club of Russian Nationalists. The appearance of Nicholas II at the battlefield in Poltava, the site of the victory two hundred years earlier, at the end of June 1909 gave him an opportunity to show himself as a leader in the style of Peter the Great, the military icon who had defeated Charles XII of Sweden in the great battle. His meeting with leading officials of the Preobrazhenskii regiment on June 25 meant that Nicholas II could show himself as Peter's heir by establishing his credentials as a military figurehead. The following day in June, a meeting between Nicholas, the Prime Minister Petr Stolypin and a large crowd of peasants drawn from the surrounding region (numbering around 4,200 according to some reports) gave the Tsar the chance to show his stature as a man of the people.<sup>105</sup> In the fields of Poltava, peasants could approach Nicholas and, according to the pro-regime propaganda, feel at one with the autocracy itself. Monarchist commentators also linked the victory with the unity of the Russian Empire in the contemporary age. L. Volkov described how Poltava demonstrated the glory of 'great Russia' over 'little Russian' nations, including Ukraine (though quite how this was linked to a military

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<sup>104</sup> *Moskovskie vedomosti*, 28 June 1909, 147, p. 2; *Grazhdanin*, 2 July 1909, 47-48, pp. 2-3.

<sup>105</sup> This discussion draws on an extensive report in *Grazhdanin*, 2 July 1909, 47-48, pp. 1-6.

victory won against Sweden, Volkov declined to explain).<sup>106</sup> The veneration of the ‘most holy Tsar’ Nicholas II and the imperial family, the promotion of Orthodox religiosity and the celebration of Russian nationhood were all features derivative of those used by the autocracy.<sup>107</sup> In this sense, the right-wing message was not a challenge to the socio-political structure of Russia, but rather a reiteration of it. Icon processions, choirs, chants, and demonstrations married ancient themes of Orthodoxy with the presentation of a national-religious myth; this was a central element of both the imperial and the rightist scenario.

Looking beyond superficial thematic similarities, how close was this confluence between the radical right and the regime? An important distinction arises when considering the particular focus of the celebrations. The populist instincts of the right can be seen from the ceremonials, demonstrations and rituals surrounding Poltava, which celebrated the triumph as one of the Russian *narod*. In one ritual, Count A. I. Konovnitsyn, the leader of the Odessa branch of the URP, led a delegation of around 50 URP activists to Main Square in the city of Poltava, and then to the grounds of the Podvor’ia monastery on 28 June. Delegates including A. S. Shmakov, Bishop Makarii and N. E. Markov unfurled flags in front of a group of URP members, and took Swedish banners to tombs in the grounds of the monastery. The victory was held to be a moment of great national – and popular – historical awakening.<sup>108</sup> Private political functions, such as a meeting between members of the Kiev branch of the Russian Assembly in April 1909, also celebrated the Russian victory over Sweden as a moment of great ‘national and historical awakening’, and a ‘victory also for the great Russian spirit’.<sup>109</sup> Religious figures on the right, such as Ioann Vostorgov, wrote how the ‘destiny’ of Russia had led to a ‘love of truth, of church and observance’ amongst the Russian people. It was the unique national characteristics of the Russian people that had, in Vostorgov’s view, secured a great

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<sup>106</sup> *Moskovskie vedomosti*, 28 June 1909, 147, p. 2.

<sup>107</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 2.

<sup>108</sup> GARF, F. 102.OO, op. 316, (1905 g.), d. 999, ch. 39, t. 5, ll. 150-150 ob.: MVD poltavskogo gubernatora po kantseliarii, v D. P., 3 August 1909.

<sup>109</sup> *Vestnik Russkogo sobraniia*, 30 April 1909, 18, p. 5; 16 October 1908, 26, p. 2; *Grazhdanin*, 2 July 1909, 48-49, pp. 1-6; *Tserkovnye vedomosti*, 6 June 1909, 23, appendices, pp. 1026-1029.

military victory. Patriotic and religious feeling amongst Russia's people had made it exceptional, and marked it out for greatness.<sup>110</sup>

A special commission organized by the Iaroslavl branch of the URP wished to mobilize all members of the group in support of the celebrations. A declaration from the group gives an insight into the plans. A procession, to be held in Iaroslavl in late June, would involve a delegation from this group carrying 500 flags, displaying slogans promoting the significance of Poltava as a 'national-historical event'. Flags would depict Georgii Pobedonosets, who appeared on the official seal of the URP, as well as Russian and Swedish national ensigns, all in memory of a victory held by these groups to be a moment of Russia's historical awakening. The 'wisdom' of the Westernizing leader, Peter the Great, was particularly singled out for praise. One tribute from a rightist commentator went, 'memory of the feats of our warrior (Peter) must be used for unity, and conveniently refreshed for popular memory'. Peter's legacy as a winner and warrior from 1709 was celebrated above any disputations that his legacy as a Westernizer Tsar had compromised Russian conservative tradition.<sup>111</sup> Such a practice shows that right-wing ritual practices could be subversive. The opportunity to venerate the institution of the autocracy trumped any possible dispute over whether the legacy of the Westernizing Tsar had betrayed Russia's conservative heritage.<sup>112</sup>

The Iaroslavl wing of the URP enthusiastically took part in the choral singing and parades organized by the regime at Poltava. The branch went to great lengths to show that the group was carrying out ritual practices in support of tsarism. The permission of the authorities and spiritual leaders, including the Poltava governor, military detachments and bishops was sought in order to make sure that the URP would comply with the projects of the Poltava district administration, with which it declared a complete unity of aims. The wish was to hold celebrations that would be

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<sup>110</sup> *Tserkovnye vedomosti*, 21 February 1909, 8, p. 53.

<sup>111</sup> 'Zhurnal komissii Iaroslavskogo soveshchaniia soiuzia russkogo naroda po voprosu o chestvovanii dvukhsotletnei godovshchiny Poltavskoi pobedy i po voprosu o vserossiiskom s"ezde soiuzia russkogo naroda', in Kir'ianov (ed.), *Pravye partii*, Vol. 1, p. 442.

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 442.

‘coordinated with the government programme’ in celebrating the role of the Russian people in this great military victory.<sup>113</sup> Presenting a confluence with the regime was easier in this case, as the ‘enemy’ in this scenario was an external threat to national unity, rather than a political or religious enemy destroying the Russian state from within. Hence, the criticism of the Russian land and state in the present day that rightists displayed on occasion was necessarily less pronounced in the Poltava celebrations<sup>114</sup>

Yet in spite of this, rightists were not always welcome at many of the regime’s official ceremonies. Whilst Nicholas II praised the rightists present as his ‘true Russian subjects’, many viewed the forces of the autonomous right with some suspicion. A report in the newspaper *Rossiia* (Russia) on 26 June 1909, the paper of the Ministry of the Interior, played down the presence of URP activists at the St. Petersburg celebrations, instead drawing attention to crowds of peasants. The peasantry was the preferred subject of this ‘national awakening’. Why might this have been the case? The peasantry was portrayed as obedient, compliant and devout; they were easier targets to shape national feeling around, rather than autonomous political groups mobilizing, even if apparently on behalf of the autocracy. Therefore differences between regime and right were often more, rather than less, pronounced in nationalist celebrations.<sup>115</sup>

*Bessarabia centenary, 1912: nationalism and identity on the imperial periphery*

Bessarabia was another area in the empire where Russians were in a distinct minority. Kishinev, scene of the destructive pogrom in 1903, had a 45 per cent Jewish population, and large Romanian and Moldovan communities.<sup>116</sup> The UAM took a special interest in the celebrations marking one hundred years since

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<sup>113</sup> Ibid., pp. 443-444.

<sup>114</sup> *Moskovskie vedomosti*, 28 June 1909, 147, p. 2.

<sup>115</sup> *Rossiia*, 30 June 1909, pp. 2-3.

<sup>116</sup> This was from a total population of 110,000, based on data from the 1897 census. *Evreiskaia entsiklopediia*, Vol. 9, pp. 504-507; *Pervaia vseobshchaia perepis*, Vol. 3, pp. 74-93. Demographic factors influenced the far right that looked to build on existing tensions.



Figure 13 Bessarabia in 1883. <http://www.berdichev.org/index.html> (accessed 5/5/2014).

Bessarabia became part of the Russian Empire, held between May and June 1912. Bessarabia was a territory annexed after the war of 1806-1812 against Turkey, and incorporated many Orthodox believers into the Russian Empire, a point of fundamental importance in the right's construction of the centennial rituals. Bessarabia, like the more famous Poltava and Romanov celebrations, was designed to demonstrate the greatness of the Russian Empire, and the Russian people.<sup>117</sup> How to organize the

celebrations set off fierce arguments from two different groups behind the centennial. Central to this was a

conception of Russian identity, integral to the right-wing view of how the commemoration was to be presented. What emerged were two concepts of nationalism, one associated with the council originally organizing the centennial, and another associated with independent right-wing tendencies in the region.

Arguments over Bessarabia's identity, and its place in the Russian Empire, showed the controversy that the nationality question could engender. A. N. Krupenskii, a marshal of the nobility in Bessarabia province from 1908 to 1912, was the leader of the official council for the organization of the centenary, which first met on 10 May 1911. His view, like others on the council, was that the centenary should celebrate Bessarabia's position within the Russian Empire as part of a 'family of peoples' (*sem'ia narodov*). Krupenskii perceived Bessarabia's role as one of the

<sup>117</sup> Bessarabia is briefly recounted in Wortman, *Scenarios of Power*, Vol. 2, pp. 236-237.

many members of the imperial family. In contrast was an autonomous right-wing vision.<sup>118</sup> This was, most of all, associated with the right-wing delegate to the Third and Fourth State Dumas from Bessarabia and the leader of the UAM, Vladimir Purishkevich, with one of his most notable associates in the region being the monk Serafim (Chichagov), Bishop of Kishinev and a leader of the Bessarabia branch of the URP.<sup>119</sup> Echoing the official position, right-wingers in Bessarabia supported the ‘nationalization’ of Bessarabia, in essence a variation of the regime’s Russification policy. However, in contrast to the official organizational council, the radical right, led by the UAM leadership in the region, and supported by Serafim’s propaganda activities, believed that it was religion, rather than nation, that was the key to the successful promotion of the centenary of Bessarabia’s unity with the Russian Empire. This was particularly due to Bessarabia’s mixed demographics. Serafim perceived Bessarabia was not only separate from Moldova, but had a culture closer to that of the Russian people, due to the Orthodox religiosity of many of its inhabitants (for Serafim, as with many rightists, Russian meant also Orthodox).<sup>120</sup>

The importance of whether the accent of the ceremonials lay on religion or nation can be seen from the activities of the right in the run-up to the official celebrations. Serafim’s hosting of meetings amongst Bessarabia’s population that inspired the need for political and social revolution were of no small concern to Krupenskii and several of his associates on the official council. Serafim had been actively spreading a message amongst the population in Kishinev that Russia was undergoing a process of ‘spiritual re-birth’.<sup>121</sup> The targets of Serafim’s speeches were mainly peasants, whom he considered to be good subjects of the Tsar. This concerned the committee, as there was a great potential for spontaneous and popular demonstration should Serafim be successful in arousing vitriol in the peasants of Kishinev. Serafim held that the ‘truly Orthodox’ subjects of Nicholas needed to be united, and to achieve this he believed that the rituals of the centenary should be

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<sup>118</sup> A. I. Kushko, ‘Ritualy imperii i natsii v Bessarabskom kontekste v nachale XX v.’, in Kushko and Taki (comps.), *Bessarabiia v sostave Rossiiskoi imperii 1812-1917*, p. 298.

<sup>119</sup> For background on Serafim, see *CSIE*, pp. 477-480.

<sup>120</sup> Kushko, ‘Ritualy imperii i natsii’, pp. 300-301.

<sup>121</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 304.

constructed around a religious framework. Activists from the UAM and the URP lobbied the organizational council to change the potential presentation of the ceremonials during the first half of 1912. Midway through the year, Krupenskii resigned from his position as the chair of the committee, probably due to pressure from the right. After this, the right had more leeway to take a greater role in the planning of the ceremonials.<sup>122</sup> Unlike other celebrations from around the same time, such as the Poltava bicentennial or the Romanov tercentenary, the right was not merely present at the Bessarabia centennial, but took a more direct role in shaping how the ceremonials would be conducted in the region. Purishkevich and Serafim's pressure had told in producing a re-shuffled committee, one more receptive to right-wing ideas.

The ceremonials in Kishinev that followed demonstrate the rightist conviction that religion was the central lodestone around which to construct the identity of Bessarabia, given the strong presence of Orthodox believers. Orthodoxy was portrayed as the bridge between Bessarabia and the rest of the empire, as it was in Kholm, where rightists placed pressure on the government to take action against the Roman Catholic population on the part of 'true Russian men' (*istinno russkie liudi*).<sup>123</sup> Furthermore, religion played a major role in the Tsar's own view of the events. An official bulletin celebrating Bessarabia's incorporation into the Russian Empire, dated 5 May 1912 and signed by Nicholas II himself, noted 'the memorable event that saw hundreds of thousands of Orthodox Christians of the same faith take on total Russian citizenship'.<sup>124</sup> Rightist leaders such as Serafim were confident in the success of the celebrations, especially given that the Tsar agreed with their interpretation of events. On 16 May 1912 a right-wing demonstration, a jubilee parade, was held in Kishinev. By eight in the morning, a crowd had gathered outside the cathedral, led by Serafim, though accompanied by many other priests and bishops. After the liturgy, prayers were sung to the Tsar and to Russia. The

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<sup>122</sup> Löwe, 'Political Symbols and Rituals', pp. 455-456; Kushko, 'Ritually imperii i natsii', pp. 301-302.

<sup>123</sup> For a detailed analysis of the Kholm case, see Weeks, *Nation and State*, pp. 172-192.

<sup>124</sup> GARF, F. 102, 4-e d-vo, op. 121, 1912 g., d. 179, l. 11: biuro russkoi pechati, SpB, signed 'Nikolai' (Tsar), 5 May 1912.

procession then took to the town square, where members of the Kishinev branch of the URP, students from the nearby school, peasant choirs and various townfolk had gathered. A central element in this ceremonial was the rightist desire to claim mass support, and to function purely as a voice for ‘the people’, ostensibly in opposition to the intelligentsia. An editorial in Purishkevich’s journal *Priamoi put’* noted with some pleasure that ‘the intelligentsia and the middle classes (*sredniaia publika*) were excluded from the service’.<sup>125</sup> One of the key distinctions between the right and the establishment was the use of such populist messages.<sup>126</sup>

Rightist ritual activity continued in Bessarabia once the centenary had passed. In December 1912, *Priamoi put’* reported on the work of the Patriotic League in Bessarabia, a group related to the UAM. After the *panikhida*, dedicated to ‘victims of the years of troubles’ (*smutnye gody*), prayers were offered to the health of the Tsar. Like the Gringmut funeral, the *panikhida* here demonstrated the centrality of the revolution of 1905 to the monarchist mindset. In the services held, the present era was referred to as the new *smutnoe vremia*, a second ‘time of troubles’, after the first between the death of Fedor Ivanovich in 1598 and the establishment of the Romanov dynasty in 1613. I. V. Malinovskii, the chair of the Kishinev branch of the UAM, welcomed the forthcoming collections of patriotic holidays, and dedicated his speech to the victims of the revolution of 1905. The UAM re-iterated its aim to ‘unite the Christian population of Bessarabia’. The focus was on both Tsar and people. As in the example of Sergei Aleksandrovich cited above, the idea of ‘victimhood’ is important. The suffering ‘good’ people had died at the hands of villainous revolutionaries, much like Sergei himself.<sup>127</sup> This was an excellent opportunity for the UAM to portray a vision of cross-class unity, a theme rightists widely used. When the imperial family was welcomed by a delegation of

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<sup>125</sup> *Priamoi put’*, May 1912, p. 750. For a typical example of this anti-intelligentsia ideology, see B. V. Nazarevskii writing in *Moskovskie vedomosti*, 20 July 1906, 181, p. 2.

<sup>126</sup> *Priamoi put’*, May 1912, p. 750.

<sup>127</sup> *Priamoi put’*, December 1912, pp. 220-221.



right-wing groups in Kishinev in June 1914, love for Russian religion as well as love for the Russian Tsar was proclaimed.<sup>128</sup>

However, these visions were much contested and inflamed rival nationalisms, as can be seen from counterdemonstrations which occurred throughout 1912. The UAM view that a religious and chauvinistic campaign would unite the Russian elements in Bessarabia also had the effect of bringing out into the open Romanian nationalist groups. The transformation of the town centre in Loov (Ismail district) included the public display of Russian symbols, such as flags and Orthodox crosses, and the illumination of the town square in the colours of the imperial standard at night. On 6 May at two o'clock in the afternoon, cries and shouts were heard from the Romanian section of the town, together with 'the sound of a funeral march'. A large crowd of passers-by had gathered around the wharf area. This included a sizeable group in Romanian national dress, with a full brass band playing the Romanian anthem. A counterdemonstration by members of the crowd playing the Russian national anthem seems to have raised the temperature of the events, whereupon the police were called. They asked the pro-Romanian demonstrators to leave, orders with which they peacefully complied.<sup>129</sup> Police reports monitoring the mood of the people in Bessarabia made frequent reference throughout May and June 1912 to the upturn in Romanian nationalism and anti-Russian demonstrations. Rather than showing a united pro-Russian front amongst the townsfolk as was hoped, the officially organized celebrations helped to exacerbate divisions amongst many residents, though there was notably little in the way of actual violence.<sup>130</sup>

A council receptive to right-wing ideas had arisen as a result of rightist pressure placed on the centennial's organizers. But in fact, the Bessarabia example can also point towards several limitations of rightist rituals. Rightists mainly utilized pre-Petrine forms of worship: Russian Orthodox hymns and ceremonials, slogans in Old Church Slavonic, liturgies and hymns. These rituals in Bessarabia were

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<sup>128</sup> *Vestnik Soiuzu russkogo naroda*, June 1914, 186, p. 17.

<sup>129</sup> GARF, F. 102, 4-e d-vo, op. 121, 1912 g., d. 179, l. 16: *Russkie vedomosti*, 28 May 1912.

<sup>130</sup> This demonstration is referenced again in police reports in *ibid.*, ll. 2-2 ob., 6-6 ob., 18-18 ob.

structured around the Church. Modern ideologies of nation building were largely absent from right-wing discourse. Instead they stuck to a strictly prescribed high culture; rituals and symbols emphasizing heroism and asceticism that appeared authentic to their own members, but were of limited appeal in a multi-confessional, poly-ethnic empire. In Bessarabia, where citizens whom the UAM and other right-wing groups would have considered ‘true Russians’ were in the minority, this was especially limiting. Indeed, rival nationalist groups were if anything provoked by the right’s activities. The rightist-organized celebrations led to a more divisive set of ceremonials than may have been the case had the regime’s original plans been followed. This highlighted a disjuncture between right-wing ideas of popular observance and realities in the periphery of the Russian Empire.

*The Romanov tercentenary, 1913: apotheosis of imperialism*

We turn finally to the grandest example of ‘jubilemania’, that of the Romanov tercentenary, the celebrations of which took place between February and June 1913. This event assumed an even greater scale than previous celebrations, and was accompanied by a rush of books, leaflets and other promotional materials, celebrating the importance of the event and its relevance to Russian history.<sup>131</sup> Rightists, like a variety of other social and political groups, were present at many of the festivals. The tercentenary celebrations demonstrate the close thematic relationship between the right and the autocracy, but also reveal other telling aspects of the relationship between official and populist monarchism.

The tercentenary plans excited monarchist groups, who, on hearing the announcements from the regime, immediately created their own projects to celebrate the tercentenary.<sup>132</sup> What followed was the convening of a council, the Committee of United Monarchist Organizations, which met on 5 February to discuss their plans.

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<sup>131</sup> An extended analysis of the tercentenary from a more general perspective can be found in Wortman, *Scenarios of Power*, Vol. 2, pp. 439-480.

<sup>132</sup> ‘Okruzhnoe poslanie komiteta monarkhicheskikh organizatsii po ustroistvu prazdnovaniia 300-letii doma romanovykh’, in Kir’ianov (ed.), *Pravye partii*, Vol. 2, p. 301.

This would bring together delegates from the URP, UAM, Russian Monarchist Union, Russian Assembly and a variety of other provincial monarchist groups. The symbolism that would be used, and variety of rituals planned, closely followed the autocracy's own projects. The flags to be carried at a procession in St. Petersburg on 22 February would feature portraits of past Tsars, as well as Nicholas II, and display the official standard of the Russian Empire. The parades following on 23 and 24 February would include 'traditional' features of monarchist demonstrations, such as peasant choirs, which represented popular support for the autocracy. Also featuring were more modern methods of mass communication, including the distribution of pamphlets, use of primitive cinemas and the performing of plays. However, in spite of claims to present popular support for the autocracy, the meeting of the assembly of monarchist groups, convening on the 24<sup>th</sup>, would feature a strict ticketing policy. Therefore, one must critically regard the UAM central committee's concomitant claims of openness, as in reality a degree of selection was enforced in terms of who attended this 'popular' event.<sup>133</sup>

The widespread participation of monarchist groups in ceremonials held across the empire meant that the movement had momentarily to put aside the factionalism that had plagued it for years, and show a united front. Not only in St. Petersburg, but in cities across the empire, including Iaroslavl, Kostroma and Nizhnii Novgorod, the right mobilized in celebration of the autocracy, during both the February and May celebrations.<sup>134</sup> The main council organizing right-wing involvement, the Sixth All-Russian Union of Russian Men, followed a five-day period of celebrations in St. Petersburg from 19-23 February 1913. The key rightists present in this five-day series of events were N. E. Markov, V. M. Purishkevich and N. F. Geiden, a leader of the Russian Assembly. However, not all monarchist leaders attended these celebrations. A. I. Dubrovin, the leader of the URP from 1905-1912

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<sup>133</sup> Ibid., pp. 302-303.

<sup>134</sup> 'Okruzhnoe poslanie soiuzu russkogo naroda otdelam soiuzu russkogo naroda i monarkhicheskimi organizatsiiam, vkhodiashchimi v ego sostav', in Kir'ianov (ed.), *Pravye partii*, Vol 2, p. 325; *Vestnik Soiuzu russkogo naroda*, 27 May 1913, 143, pp. 1-12; 5 June 1913, 144, pp. 1-4; *Moskovskie vedomosti*, 22 May 1913, 117, p. 2; 25 May 1913, 119, p. 2; 26 May 1913, 120, pp. 1-3; 28 May 1913, 121, p. 2.

and chair of the All-Russian Dubrovinit Union of Russian People from 1912-1917, was not present amongst the monarchist delegation. According to UAM propaganda, he had declined an invitation to be part of the ceremonials, and was not deliberately omitted.<sup>135</sup> However, the resulting congress was united only in name, rather than spirit, given that significant figures were absent.<sup>136</sup> Afterwards, on 24 February, a reception of URM leaders met in Kazan Square, with significant figures of Church and state, such as Grigorii (Bakhnin) and the Metropolitan of Moscow, Vladimir (Bogoiavlenskii), present amongst crowds of UAM activists. The festivals gave the opportunity to praise the autocracy, and the string of Russian military successes that had occurred under the Romanov dynasty. Most notably, these included the victories against Napoleon at Borodino and the triumph at Poltava.

Newspaper reports on a number of processions held from February to May make it apparent that the symbolism and rituals used encompassed primarily traditional practices, such as the peasant choir, Orthodox liturgies and processions to cathedrals. That the celebrations emphasized such religious symbolism exemplified how emblems of Russian Orthodox religiosity were central to the right's demonstrations. Propaganda drew special attention to the religious elements of the assembled right-wing groups, including the appearance of various holy men, use of liturgies, and the mobilization of the Russian *narod* under God.<sup>137</sup> Figures from the episcopate sympathetic to the right participated in the ceremonials; one was Germogen (Dolganev), Bishop of Saratov and Tsaritsyn from 1903 until 1912. In a procession to Moscow, Germogen spread news amongst the region's peasants of the 'spiritual enlightenment and missionary organizations' that the URP aimed to promote.<sup>138</sup> The banners of the URP and UAM were decorated with Old Church Slavonic lettering – representing the glory of ancient *Rus'* rather than the current time of troubles – and emblems of both God and the Tsar. In the absence of new

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<sup>135</sup> *Priamoi put'*, March 1913, p. 153; 'VI vserossiiskii s'ezd russkikh liudei 19-23 fevralia 1913 goda', in Kir'ianov (ed.), *Pravye partii*, Vol 2, p. 305.

<sup>136</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 306-309, 312.

<sup>137</sup> *Novoe vremia*, 20 May 1913, 13357, p. 1; *Vestnik Soiuzna russkogo naroda*, 18 May 1913, 142, p. 9; 'VI vserossiiskii s'ezd russkikh liudei', in Kir'ianov (ed.), *Pravye partii*, Vol 2, p. 307.

<sup>138</sup> *Novoe vremia*, 24 April 1913, 13331, p. 3.

ideas, the UAM had appropriated the existing visual signatures of the Russian Orthodox Church.<sup>139</sup>

At a banquet held for the upper ranks of state, church and marshals of the nobility in St. Petersburg on 22 February, both the URP and UAM were present, and accorded the special privilege of witnessing the procession of the imperial family through the halls of the Winter Palace. Whilst other political groups were omitted, Nicholas II's favourable view of the monarchists accorded them a prime place in the celebrations. In contrast to the Bessarabia celebrations outlined above, it was the Romanov regime itself that had provided the right with a stage upon which to demonstrate their close thematic congruence with the autocracy. V. F. Dzhunkovskii, the governor-general of Moscow, noted Nicholas II's granting of a request from Purishkevich to lead a delegation of 1,320 UAM activists to the Winter Palace, where they would meet with the Tsar himself, on 24 February.<sup>140</sup> This went ahead, and shown the Tsar's preference for right-wing groups to take the central role of all political associations, given their agreement with his own convictions.<sup>141</sup> It should be noted, however, that though the UAM were accorded this special favour, they were not allowed to present bread and salt to the Tsar, a preferred element of the ritual they had planned.<sup>142</sup> This was a partial rather than total toleration of the right-wing groups.

Elsewhere, ceremonials held across the empire afforded the right the opportunity to promote their own civic culture. We can see that ideas of charity and social work, which several rightist civic groups stressed played a key role in their activities, were also present in these celebrations. The right presented its own involvement in the tercentenary as one that would project virtuous ideas of social responsibility, as well as the enforcement of law and order. Many of these themes came from the right's entwinement with religious movements and ideas.

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<sup>139</sup> Löwe, 'Political Symbols and Rituals', pp. 460-461.

<sup>140</sup> V. F. Dzhunkovskii, *Vospominaniia*, Vol. 2 (Moscow, 1998), pp. 154-156; 'VI vserossiiskii s"ezd russkikh liudei', in Kir'ianov (ed.), *Pravye partii*, Vol. 2, p. 321.

<sup>141</sup> Dzhunkovskii, *Vospominaniia*, Vol. 2, p. 155.

<sup>142</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 155.

Germogen's passage to Moscow during the tercentenary had the aim of educating the peasant population, through spreading a message of Christian virtue.<sup>143</sup> In contrast, militancy against enemies was a preferred theme for other cassocked men associated with the right. Father Ioann Vostorgov's report on the ceremonials in *Tserkovnye vedomosti* stressed anti-Catholicism and the supremacy of Russian Orthodoxy as the true faith. Russian nationality and the triumph, victimhood and heroism of the Russian people were all key themes in his report.<sup>144</sup> There was another side to the rightist presentation; this was the success of the autocracy, and Russia's necessity to wage ceaseless war against cosmopolitans, foreigners and intelligentsia who yearned to destroy it. In one example, a reading from the chair of the Kholm branch of the URP opined on the threat that Poles – meaning, Roman Catholics – posed to the Tsar's true subjects. Like the Jewish citizens of the empire, such opposition could not be tolerated. The anti-national minority instincts of rightists had apparently not changed much since 1905.<sup>145</sup>

Looking beyond the obvious similarities with the regime, including the religiosity, celebration of the autocracy and use of Russian chauvinism, we can see further congruities between the regime and the right from the tercentenary celebrations. By February 1913, when the celebrations were at their height in St. Petersburg and across the empire, the right's committees and plenaries organizing their involvement in the ceremonials only stressed congruence with the Romanov dynasty. One URP leader even described the ascension of the Romanov dynasty to the throne as a moment of national awakening. Criticism of the Tsar's advisors and even Nicholas II was occurring in private circles of the right, but in public the Tsar was treated more generously.<sup>146</sup> Rightist groups such as the URP seemed uncritically to adapt the iconography of the regime, and use even older emblems from an imagined 'golden age' including past 'heroic' Tsars such as Alexander III, and

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<sup>143</sup> 'VI vs Rossiiskii s'ezd russkikh liudei', in Kir'ianov (ed.), *Pravye partii*, Vol 2, p. 322.

<sup>144</sup> *Tserkovnye vedomosti*, 9 February 1913, 6, appendices, pp. 265-271.

<sup>145</sup> 'VI vs Rossiiskii s'ezd russkikh liudei', in Kir'ianov (ed.), *Pravye partii*, Vol 2, pp. 308, 311; *Vestnik Soiuzna russkogo naroda*, 27 May 1913, 143, p. 10.

<sup>146</sup> One analysis of this dissent is Podbolotov, 'Monarchists Against Their Monarch'. The private rather than public nature of much of this criticism should be noted: Nicholas II may have been publicly praised but he was not widely toasted in private monarchist circles.

biblical figures such as the Virgin Mary. This indicates that a genuinely original symbolic language on the part of the right had not been created by 1913, and that furthermore, the right would be tolerated at official celebrations, albeit uneasily.<sup>147</sup>

In disseminating the message of the might and splendour of the Romanov monarchy, the propaganda activities of the right celebrated the popular relevance of the monarchist autocracy. The public activities of the right entailed nothing less than total support for untrammelled autocracy, a vision that did not encompass either the Duma or other representative systems.<sup>148</sup> 5,000 copies of a text called *Votsarenie doma romanovykh* (Reign of the House of the Romanovs) were to be published.<sup>149</sup> Elsewhere, the commemorations involved the creation of mementoes of the event, such as the minting of celebratory medals bearing portraits of the imperial family. These were distributed in September 1913 to all members of the URP that had participated in the tercentenary celebrations, and were available to purchase from the central council for 80 kopeks.<sup>150</sup> Whilst such gestures no doubt pleased activists, whether such activities reflected a wider popular monarchism is uncertain. This is in contrast to the February ceremonials in which the UAM and URP enthusiastically participated, which were presented in rightist propaganda as holidays ‘for the people’ with the aim of representing a majority who had been long oppressed by mendacious internal enemies and left-wing political machinations.<sup>151</sup> There was however a sharp contrast between this enthusiastic public participation and more pessimistic private views. This is evident from one telegram from Purishkevich to Count A. A. Bobrinskii, dated 4 June 1913, which remarked on the link between the celebrations and fear of revolution:

Count, we do not dare to sleep, we should not follow the example of the Russian government, which, returning from the Romanov ceremony, we

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<sup>147</sup> ‘VI vserossiiskii s’ezd russkikh liudei’, in Kir’ianov (ed.), *Pravye partii*, Vol. 2, p. 323.

<sup>148</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 316.

<sup>149</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 317.

<sup>150</sup> ‘[Ob”iavlenie glavnogo soveta SRN o vozmozhnosti priobreteniia medali v pamiat’ 300-letia doma romanovykh]’, in Kir’ianov (ed.), *Pravye partii*, Vol 2, p. 332; GARF, F. 116, op. 2, d. 9, l. 78 ob.

<sup>151</sup> ‘VI vserossiiskii s’ezd russkikh liudei’, in Kir’ianov (ed.), *Pravye partii*, Vol. 2, p. 314.

believe, is under a hypnotic picture that all is calm in the countryside. We need to understand the psychology of the Russian crowds and the masses of the people, which today cry in ecstasy “hurrah!” but tomorrow will approach with red flags.<sup>152</sup>

## Conclusion

In the sphere of public ritual and demonstrations, the regime had a clearly inconsistent attitude towards the ultra-right. Dzhunkovskii’s account of the Romanov tercentenary reflected the attitude of many local officials; this was an equivocal view of the ceremonial activities and rituals of the right. This trend also emerges from many police reports; though the idea that right-wing activity needed to be contained, rather than eradicated completely, is especially telling as to how many observers in Russian administration viewed their activities. Away from St. Petersburg or Moscow, rightist activity on the imperial periphery was more of a threat, especially considering that the Russian Empire was under-governed in the late imperial period. This can be seen from Bessarabia and Odessa, where the importance of geography, demographics and local rather than national factors played a significant role. Such factors should not be underestimated; the activities of right-wing activists were not static, but adapted to reflect local concerns. Events in Bessarabia, Kiev or Odessa show a different ‘right’ to that in St. Petersburg and Moscow; the former was often more militant in tone, and their visions of conflict were encouraged by the social composition of the cities and towns which they inhabited. A ritual demonstration occurring in a heavily Jewish area would use different themes, more redolent of Russian Orthodoxy, or especially Russian nationhood. Yet other provincial activities appeared to be more pacific. Even though Poltava was a largely non-Russian area, the scenario here mirrored the St. Petersburg-based Romanov tercentenary celebrations.

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<sup>152</sup> Rossiiskoi gosudarstvennyi arkhiv drevnykh aktov (RGADA), F. 1412, op. 2, d. 57, ll. 2-4: V. M. Purishkevich (St. Petersburg), to Count A. A. Bobrinskii (St. Petersburg), 4 June 1913; published in Kir’ianov (ed.), ‘Perepiska i drugie dokumenty pravyykh (1911-1913 gody)’, *Voprosy istorii*, 11-12 (1999), p. 127.



The creation of right-wing identities in a poly-ethnic and multi-denominational empire with growing political and minority nationality awareness – and by this stage, not only amongst the educated elites – was one of the most compelling challenges of Russian modernity. A general feature is the distinction between right-wing radicalism and the Tsarist status quo that these activities demonstrate. Though several features of right-wing public activity appeared largely to copy the thematic appeals of tsarism, the similarity of monarchist emblems generated tensions between the regime and the right. The very appearance of the right displayed a lack of confidence in the imperial regime to safeguard ‘true Russian’ values in the era of crisis. This is reflected by subtle shifts in the visions of the people and state presented. Images of Tsar and people played a prominent role in the scenarios of both the autocracy and the independent right, but the latter shifted emphasis towards the *narod*, as well as Nicholas II. The inadequately developed symbolic and political emblems of the far right, some of which were derivative of the regime’s own religious and popular ideals, had, in the long run, a detrimental effect on the right’s ability to mobilize. The right, instead, placed much of its energy into creating negative emblems, pursuing ‘enemies of the people’, groups which included Jews and bureaucrats.<sup>153</sup> Unlike certain right-wing tendencies in twentieth-century Europe, the Russian right did not find genuinely popular symbols and rituals with wide social appeal, and ended up caught between the ideas of elitist gentry organizations and an emerging, though incomplete, ideology of populist nationalism. These shortcomings had the ultimate result that by 1914 and the revolutions of 1917 the right was much depleted as an independent force, and also divided a potential base of support from the autocracy that rightists claimed to support. Such failures left in tatters the right’s desire to unite the Russian Empire together as an army of many millions, and also undermined the autocracy that it wished to defend.

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<sup>153</sup> O. Figes and B. Kolonitskii, *Interpreting the Russian Revolution: The Language and Symbols of 1917* (Yale, 1999), pp. 156-158.

### Russia Renewed – Right-Wing Visions of Civic Society

It was not only through violence and conflict that radical rightists sought to transform Russian society. This chapter will focus on the understanding and creation of right-wing civic society, defined here as autonomous associations, non-political as well as political, operating outside of government control and working to develop bonds of association between members united around central ideas. I term this civic rather than civil society to demonstrate that these were decidedly ‘uncivil’ ideas, and show that mass politics in the Russian Empire had illiberal potentials and outcomes.<sup>1</sup> Right-wing associations, like a wide variety of other political and social groups and their activists, demonstrated nationalist, exclusionary ideas that contributed to destructive social conflicts. Whilst study of civil society has long been a fashionable topic, it has usually been interpreted as a liberal phenomenon, and very rarely used to analyze right-wing activity.<sup>2</sup> However, as Susanne Hohler has recently assessed, there was a ‘dark side’ to civil society in late imperial Russia.<sup>3</sup> ‘Uncivil movements’ and ‘contentious politics’ need to be included in analysis of civil society. Groups on the right inculcated bonds of association, trust and shared ideals in their members as much as liberal and left organizations; one should aim for an understanding of how these processes work by focusing on cases from the ‘dark side’ of civic society’s history.<sup>4</sup> Like the campaigns to the State Duma, and the symbols and rituals

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<sup>1</sup> I agree with Hillis that the outcomes of civic society were not always positive, and generated destructive as well as creative energy, hence the use of this term. See Hillis, *Children of Rus*, p. 16.

<sup>2</sup> The literature on this subject is vast. A few contributions that have informed the below analysis are: L. Engelstein, ‘The Dream of Civil Society: The Law, the State, and Religious Toleration’, in *Slavophile Empire: Imperial Russia’s Illiberal Path* (Ithaca, NY and London, 2009), pp. 78-98; R. Wortman, *The Development of a Russian Legal Consciousness* (Chicago, 1976); L. McReynolds, *The News Under Russia’s Old Regime: The Development of a Mass Circulation Press* (Princeton, 1991); W. G. Wagner, *Marriage, Property and the Law in Late Imperial Russia* (Oxford, 1994). See also the essays in Clowes, Kassow and West (eds.), *Between Tsar and People*; and Crisp and Edmondson (eds.), *Civil Rights in Imperial Russia*; for the impact of civil society in Weimar Germany, see S. Berman, ‘Civil Society and the Collapse of the Weimar Republic’, *World Politics*, 49 (1997), pp. 401-429.

<sup>3</sup> Hohler, ‘Radical Right Civil Society’, pp. 93-104.

<sup>4</sup> In using this term, I adopt the terminology used by Mudde and Hohler. See P. Kopecky and C. Mudde, ‘Rethinking Civil Society’, *Democratization*, 10, 3 (2003), pp. 1-14; C. Mudde, ‘Civil

previously assessed, the use of civic culture was another technique for popular mobilization in the era of mass politics, features that would be demonstrated elsewhere in the onset of the revolutions of 1917.<sup>5</sup>

Right-wing civic groups spread across the empire after 1905 in provincial regions such as Perm, Odessa, Tula and Kiev, as well as in Moscow and St. Petersburg.<sup>6</sup> Many of these groups were non-political, and nominally separate from organizations such as the Union of Archangel Mikhail (UAM) that elected leaders to the State Duma. Socially, the right was diversifying. Several associations, such as the Double-Headed Eagle (*Dvuglavnyi orel*, DHE) were student groups; others, such as the Union of Russian Working Men (*Soiuz russkikh rabochikh liudei*, URWM) aimed to attract workers. These were not only populist gestures, but built into the organization and structure of certain groups. The leadership of the URWM decreed at any one time that it needed at least three people of 'working-class' origin sitting on its council, though it was not made clear how 'working-class' would be defined.<sup>7</sup> A police report in Kiev from December 1907 estimated that this group had 6,500 members, whilst the DHE had a more modest 300.<sup>8</sup> However, these 'non-political' associations could still act in tandem with the politicized right. The URWM, among other activities, relied on the distribution of publicity materials, which were passed onto it from the regional branch of the Union of Russian People (URP). Help was also given through the circulation of newspapers and lectures delivered by prominent figures; for instance, Boris Iuzefovich, the chair of the Russian Assembly in Kiev, gave lectures to delegations from the URWM and also the DHE throughout

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Society in Post-Communist Europe: Lessons from the Dark Side', in P. Kopecky and C. Mudde (eds.), *Uncivil Society? Contentious Politics in Post-Communist Europe* (London and New York, 2003), pp. 157-170; S. Chambers and J. Kopstein, 'Bad Civil Society', *Political Theory*, 29, 6 (2001), pp. 837-865; R. D. Putnam, 'Bowling Alone: America's Declining Social Capital', *Journal of Democracy*, 6, 1 (1995), pp. 65-78.

<sup>5</sup> See Rogger, 'Russian Fascism' and 'Formation of the Russian Right', in *Jewish Policies*, pp. 189, 228.

<sup>6</sup> Analysis of the provincial parties is in Rawson, *Russian Rightists*, pp. 75-106.

<sup>7</sup> Kir'ianov (ed.), 'Pravye i konstitutsionnye monarchisty v Rossii v 1907-1908 gg.', *Voprosy istorii*, 8 (1997), p. 94.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 94. According to this police report, the former had declined in number to around 550 members by June 1909. Another report estimated 386 members of another group, also called *Dvuglavnyi orel*, in Ekaterinoslav in June 1907: GARF, F. 102, 4-e d-vo, op. 1907, d. 164, l. 297 ob.

1907.<sup>9</sup> The Khar'kov branch of the Russian Assembly, established in 1902 and attended by members of the clergy such as Professor T. I. Butkevich, began to meet more frequently during the revolution of 1905.<sup>10</sup> The URP also established tearooms across the empire, where activists could meet to discuss a variety of issues.<sup>11</sup> The links between political and non-political groups were often unclear. Though much of this activity was ostensibly non-political, the majority of it was in reaction to political developments; mainly, this was due to what activists perceived as negative changes that had arisen during 1905, including laws of religious toleration, the establishment of a parliament and promises of increased rights for minority groups.<sup>12</sup>

### **Cultural Campaigns**

Right-wing groups, such as the Russian Assembly, had perceived themselves largely as cultural organizations before 1905. Whilst such groups developed positive elements, structured around a shared veneration of the Uvarov principles of Orthodoxy, autocracy and nationality, there were also pronounced negative components. These included anti-Semitism, harshly chauvinistic sentiments, and vehemently anti-democratic ideas, including those circulated in the Russian Assembly by members such as A. S. Viazigin and D. P. Golitsyn, which do not fit the inclusive liberal ideals of 'good' civil society. Later groups, including radical right associations established in Kiev and Odessa, followed the pattern set by conservative groups, as well as the Assembly, towards the end of the nineteenth century. These groups did not consider that they were carrying out political work

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<sup>9</sup> Recounted in Iuzefovich, *Politicheskie pis'ma*, Vol. 17, p. 335.

<sup>10</sup> A record of this activity is published in *Mirnyi trud*, 10 (1905), pp. 182-216, 'Vtoraia godovshchina otkrytiia Khar'kovskogo otdela russkogo sobraniia', P. Khorsov.

<sup>11</sup> See for one account P. Timofeev in *Russkoe bogatstvo*, 2 (1907), pp. 57-81, 'V chainoi soiuzu russkogo naroda'.

<sup>12</sup> A prominent example was the statute promising reforms to the existing laws of religious toleration, 17 April 1905, which can be found in *Polnoe sobranie zakonov Rossiiskoi imperii*, 3<sup>rd</sup> series, Vol. 25, Pt. 1, no. 26126 (1905), pp. 258-262. For commentary, see Waldron, 'Religious Toleration in Late Imperial Russia', pp. 103-119.

before 1905; indeed, they would not have been allowed to. Instead, the central theme was a battle for culture, one returned to after the revolutionary crisis had passed.<sup>13</sup>

Paradoxically, whilst the right-wing movement made a large impact on the streets, and responded enthusiastically to the challenges of mass politics, its overall political impact, especially in the First and Second Dumas, was comparatively weak.<sup>14</sup> This was no coincidence, as rightists were in general more comfortable expending their energy on ‘non-political’ forms of group association, such as lectures, charity works, temperance drives and sports, and the civic groups established reflect this.<sup>15</sup> This was driven by fear of the events and conflagrations from the revolutionary era. The preoccupation to create a vision that was civically rather than politically-minded reflected this dislike of institutional politics; and the resulting ideas were often divisive and exclusive.<sup>16</sup>

A significant feature of the right was its transition to different support bases. This can be seen in the appeal to a wide range of demographics, including women and students.<sup>17</sup> Generally, conceptions of education were a central theme in the activities of civic groups, and the creation of youth wings of the right-wing movements (often known as Academists) and conceptions of ‘moral education’ as

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<sup>13</sup> Kir’ianov, *Russkoe sobranie*, pp. 25-73. Several literary and cultural salons were established in St. Petersburg and Moscow at the end of the nineteenth century. See for example the discussion of the salon of E. V. Bogdanovich, who joined the URP in 1905, in Stogov, *Pravomonarkhicheskie salony*, pp. 146-174.

<sup>14</sup> Rawson, *Russian Rightists*, pp. 151-220; Hillis, *Children of Rus*, pp. 171-177.

<sup>15</sup> Of course it was not only rightists that realized the social importance of such work. Groups that shared interests with the right, including patriotism and social activism, were appearing in late imperial Russia, which had a dynamic and lively civic life. See for examples A. Lindenmeyr, *Poverty is Not a Vice: Charity, Society and the State in Imperial Russia* (Princeton, 1996); and Bradley, *Voluntary Associations*.

<sup>16</sup> In other countries, civil society has utilized concepts of division and exclusion, particularly, in states that have undergone, or are products of, recent processes of nation building, disintegration or transition to new varieties of political systems. However, the limitations of private groups may also be apparent in states where public distrust of autonomous associations is at high levels. For further examples, see P. Kopecky, ‘Civil Society, Uncivil Society and Contentious Politics in Post-Communist Europe’, in Kopecky and Mudde (eds.), *Uncivil Society?* pp. 1-18; M. M. Howard, *The Weakness of Civil Society in Post-Communist Europe* (Cambridge, 2003).

<sup>17</sup> For discussions of the social basis of the Russian right after 1905 see Kir’ianov, ‘Chislennost’ i sostav krainikh pravyykh partii v Rossii’, pp. 29-43; Omel’ianchuk, *Chernosotennoe dvizhenie*, pp. 178-227.

disseminated by right-wing activists reflect concerns elsewhere. Certain members of the right-wing movement were creating a more independent and transformative vision of Russia's spiritual and moral renewal within these civic associations. This is illustrated by the resulting cultural campaigns, which included involvement in the temperance movement, creation of student branches, interest in workers' education and focus on the role of women in society. This approach reveals important distinctions between the old and the new right, as well as how conceptions of civic-mindedness and group identity functioned within right-wing groups, whilst still not adhering to the normative forms of 'good' civic society. The creation of these civic groups, as well as the major political associations such as the URP and UAM, also shows the extent of the right's independence from the state.

### *Cultural visions and Russia's decay*

Some rightists viewed culture as a potentially positive transformative tool, with the creative arts having a major role to play in the 'freedom' of the people from revolutionary tyranny, instead of conceptions of civil or legal rights.<sup>18</sup> Vladimir Gringmut wrote in the posthumously published *Istoriia narodovlastiia* (History of Popular Power) that 'the history of European culture was founded not on basic rights of law, but on fundamental European freedoms in the arts and creative works'.<sup>19</sup> A key problem was that Russia's culture had not been safeguarded against artistic degradation, mainly, threats that had been emanating from Western Europe over the previous several decades, a view shared by many activists, including ones from the Khar'kov branch of the URP.<sup>20</sup> This was reinforced by a view that the nation needed to be protected. At certain rightist gatherings, as in a meeting of the Patriotic Unions held in Kazan during late November 1909, the Russian nation was conceived as a cultural and ethnic rather than a legal and constitutional entity. This was based around a vision of protecting the purity of the 'truly Russian' subjects of the empire,

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<sup>18</sup> By 'culture' is meant the broader norms and values of the rightist parties. This perspective goes beyond the features of propaganda and artistic works, into the realms of thought and feeling, considering how people were, according to the right, meant to think and act.

<sup>19</sup> V. A. Gringmut, *Istoriia narodovlastiia* (Moscow, 1908), p. 21.

<sup>20</sup> *Mirnyi trud*, 10 (1905), p. 183.

united around the autocratic Tsar and the Orthodox Church.<sup>21</sup> Political changes that had occurred during the Great Reforms of the 1860s were looked upon with dismay, and instead ‘culture’ was given a prominent role in right-wing conceptions of civic society.

But how were these striking visions precisely shaped and rendered? The precise conception of the nature of the autocracy exemplified the continuation of mystical trends amongst right-wing cultural groups. In one meeting of the Khar’kov branch of the URP on 14 November 1905, the power of the Tsar was described as ‘unlimited’ (*neogranichennyi*) as well as absolute and unchanging.<sup>22</sup> Pavel Khorsov, the pundit and activist, in chronicling this meeting quoted from the official laws of the Russian Empire published in 1898, which stressed that the will of the monarch could not be compromised or devolved to other sources.<sup>23</sup> In attempting to justify the autocracy’s basis for power in the face of revolutionary changes, such as the October Manifesto, Khorsov was adding little new material to an argument that the autocracy had outlined for itself.<sup>24</sup> Later groups affiliated with the right, such as the Union of Russian Orthodox People in Kazan, would not deviate from this basic conception of the Tsar’s power.<sup>25</sup>

Branches of the DHE, URP and the Russian Assembly all shared an idea that it was the Russian people that had been the most affected by the changes in Russian society over the past several decades. Hence, they needed re-education in a patriotic, religious and enlightened spirit, which would re-forge Russia’s *narod* in future generations. But in practical terms, how would the decline of the people be arrested? Artistic works had a strong role to play here. The ‘great cultural works’ of Russian writers, many of them canonical greats from the nineteenth century, such as Mikhail Lermontov, Fedor Dostoevsky and Leo Tolstoy needed to be distributed. This was

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<sup>21</sup> *Mirnyi trud*, 1 (1909), p. 107, ‘Pervyi volzhsko-kamskii oblastnoi patrioticheskii s’ezd v Kazani’, 21-25 November 1908 (author unknown).

<sup>22</sup> *Mirnyi trud*, 10 (1905), p. 183.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 183.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 183.

<sup>25</sup> *Mirnyi trud*, 1 (1909), p. 91.

not merely to inculcate a love of fine literature and reading, but also had a patriotic goal: the re-education of the *narod* in a conception of civically-minded patriotism, which would contribute to a renewed conception of Russia's national greatness. These ideas also inspired practical projects. For instance, DHE activists in Kiev discussed plans to build a library.<sup>26</sup> In another letter, circulated within the Academist Union from the St. Petersburg Polytechnic Institute, addressed to the right-wing Duma leader G. G. Zamyslovskii in October 1909, this student group requested 13,000 rubles for the construction of a one-storey wood and stone building to house the Academist's library collections, which would disseminate pro-monarchist literature, and also be used as a space to hold meetings.<sup>27</sup> The establishment of libraries, meeting rooms and literary salons were central aims of many right-wing groups, used to spread the pro-autocratic message, and were also an attempt to build a right-wing 'salon culture'. This view of Russian cultural greatness inspired by nineteenth-century cultural work is more common than arguments engaging with issues such as civil or legal rights in these particular groups.

The main conceptions behind the real and imagined restoration of the nation were education and patriotism, themes that applied to the Russian Assembly's work in general, as well as the student cells of the right-wing groups. Taking one example from the URP's branch in Khar'kov in 1907, we can see a conception of Russian 'popular education' was a central theme behind the reports and lectures given in the house of this group. To give an idea of the tone of these, a report by the orator Ia. A. Denisov discussed the dangers posed by the wave of liberalism in Russia, and another following it, delivered by I. A. Anosov, was titled 'the raising of the great religious spirit of the Russian people'.<sup>28</sup> Other branches of the Assembly stuck closely to the Uvarov triad, enthusiastically celebrating Russian autocracy as the structure that state and society needed, especially given the threats to 'mother

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<sup>26</sup> GARF, F. 102, 4-e d-vo, op. 1907, d. 128, l. 7: rules and regulations of the DHE.

<sup>27</sup> GARF, F. 117, op. 1, d. 119, l. 5 ob.: report describing the activities of the Academic Union in St Petersburg, 7 October 1909.

<sup>28</sup> *Mirnyi trud*, 2 (1908), pp. 127-128, 'Godovoi otchet, "Khar'kovskogo soiuzha russkogo naroda" za 1907 god (vtoroi god sushchestvovaniia)', Iv. Anosov. This branch claimed to have 556 active members at the end of 1907.



Russia' posed since 1905.<sup>29</sup> Activists perceived these not only as threats to the Russian state, but more pertinently, as threats to the Russian people. This civic-minded vision of education in Russian and national ideas had a motive of re-education after the events of 1905, over fears that the Russian people at large were being lost to revolutionary ideals, no matter that the number of those actively involved in the revolutionary movements was still very small at this stage.<sup>30</sup>

A report delivered from A. S. Viazigin to members of the Assembly in 1908 opined on the threats posed to the Russian people by the events of the 'liberal' epoch. Following Viazigin's declarations, there would be further reports from assembly members Ia. A. Denisov on 'liberalism', and another report from I. A. Anosov on 'patriotism in Russian poems'.<sup>31</sup> Trends from Western Europe were described as having a detrimental effect on native literature.<sup>32</sup> In 1910, *Moskovskie vedomosti* carried an editorial entitled *Critical Writings: From the Revolution to Erotomania*. This article outlined the negative impacts of artistic modernism in Russia. These were accusations that recent trends in Russian literature, brought into Russia by European writers such as Heinrich Mann, were too realistic and depressing. A particular problem was the absence of heroism:

Literature in recent times...perhaps in the last half-century, is an unbroken evolution towards a depressive cadence. All literary works will be completely inconceivable without heroes. In our time, the time of associations and debased democracy, heroes have not only become unnecessary but even odious. The claim 'down with heroes!' follows, and the start of our literary lineage will be the systematic debunking of heroism'.<sup>33</sup>

Threats also came from other areas, and in many of the reports delivered to cultural associations, the exclusive and exclusionary rhetoric of many leaders of the right can be seen. Unlike more 'positive' civic society groups, the meeting houses of rightist

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<sup>29</sup> *Mirnyi trud*, 3 (1909), pp. 57-58, 'Tretii god', Iv. Anosov.

<sup>30</sup> *Mirnyi trud*, 2 (1908), p. 127.

<sup>31</sup> *Mirnyi trud*, 3 (1909), pp. 57-58, 'Tretii god', Iv. Anosov.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 57.

<sup>33</sup> *Moskovskie vedomosti*, 7 May 1910, 103, p. 2; see also Newstad, 'Components of Pessimism'.

associations such as the Russian Assembly usually sought to exclude Jews, national minorities, non-Orthodox religions and leftists, often giving reports on the dangers that these enemies posed, and creating a group identity united around a shared hatred of a common enemy. These were meetings established specifically for ‘Russians only’, though there were occasionally exceptions to this, such as the attempted establishment of a branch of the URP for Jewish members.<sup>34</sup>

Threats to the people took many different forms (including Masons, Europeans, merchants and speculators), but most of all this ire was directed against Russian and world Jewish populations. ‘Jewish masonic cliques’ were behind 1905; the revolution itself was purported to be Jewish.<sup>35</sup> Such ideas were common in right-wing circles, but as well as the reported economic and political machinations of the Jews in the revolutionary era, examples of anti-Semitism moving in different, and more radical, directions after 1905 can be seen. One instance was a report from P. A. Krushevan (editor of the anti-Semitic newspaper *Bessarabets*, which worked to inflame tensions in the notorious pogrom in Kishinev during 1903), presented to a delegation of Russian Assembly activists in April 1907. This made a series of outrageous claims, blaming Jews for a long list of mythical ills, including stealing bread from the Russian workers, the economic subjugation of the people, and infiltrating Russia’s schools and universities to teach socialist doctrines.<sup>36</sup>

Quoting from Western racist authors such as Houston Stewart Chamberlin, as well as the Russian Monarchist Party’s (RMP) A. S. Shmakov, Krushevan’s report presented an anti-Semitic fantasy constructed along largely religious lines. He blamed the ‘character’ of the Jewish people for the continuing ferocity of their 2,000 year-old fight with the world’s Christian populations. This ‘enemy within’ was responsible for Russia’s decay, particularly given their markedly different

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<sup>34</sup> GARF, F. 102.OO, op. 316, (1905 g.), d. 999, ch. 39, l. A, t. 3, l. 146: MVD Odesskogo gradonachal’nika. Kantseliaria, 1 July 1908. A police report from Odessa in July 1908 commented that success for this group was ‘not forthcoming’, though says less about why this was the case. Possibly, it was due to lack of funding by other nearby right-wing groups.

<sup>35</sup> *Mirnyi trud*, 1 (1909), p. 94.

<sup>36</sup> *Vestnik Russkogo sobraniia*, 6 April 1907, 13, pp. 4-5.

psychological characteristics.<sup>37</sup> Modern and religious anti-Semitism co-existed in Krushevan's report, which assessed world Jewry as both a racial and religious threat. Krushevan's quoting of Western writers demonstrates how the changing ideology of anti-Semitism from religious to racial conceptions was inspired by trends from Western Europe; no small irony given how frequently the right stated its distaste for West European influences. The crucial point is that the anti-Semitism expressed in this report would not admit for the possibility of Jewish reconciliation with other members of the body politic, even in the case of conversion from Judaism to Orthodoxy.<sup>38</sup> Though Krushevan's conception of anti-Semitism may have been particularly radical, not held by all the members of the Russian Assembly who had gathered to listen, the group had the shared mutual end of identifying a common enemy to members, even if the 'theoretical' about turns made to get to this differed on occasion.

In other features too, the radical right's societies promoted an exclusionary, exclusive message, inspired by a view of Russia in the throes of social disorder. V. A. Bobrinskii, a rightist delegate to the Third and Fourth Dumas, spoke in 1910 about class war in response to a previous speech by a kadet delegate, I. K. Pokrovskii. Bobrinskii saw that the proletariat, as idolized and mythologized by sections of the right, could itself become a danger due to the introduction of consumerist values in Russia. The spread of these ideas, linked to the onset of urbanization, would lead to the fearful separation of the *narod* from the gentry, from which horizontal splits in state and society would follow. The results of this would be devastating: yet more political and social revolution, as was the case in 1905.<sup>39</sup> This was a crucial problem, as in their cultural associations groups including the Russian Assembly promoted a vision of society based on rank and differentiation, but united under the banner of tsarism; a vision of Russia's future shared by the Tsar, landowners, gentry, workers and peasantry alike. When discussing the Poltava

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<sup>37</sup> Ibid., pp. 4-5.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid., pp. 4-5.

<sup>39</sup> *Gosudarstvennaia Duma: Stenograficheskie otchety*, Third Duma, session 3 (St. Petersburg, 1910), iv, col. 349.

celebrations in 1909, the URP leader Aleksei I. Konovnitsyn spoke of his desire to see ‘dukes and peasants alike united under one banner’.<sup>40</sup> However, unity did not mean social equality: rightists such as Konovnitsyn and Bobrinskii promoted a hierarchical vision of Russia’s future society, with each group having a role to play in a truly ‘Russian’ society. The Tsar as leader, the rulers of Russia and then the masses would all be united under Tsarist ideals.

It is curious that in spite of cross-class attraction, a central fear was the spread of hooliganism. On 1 August 1913, the right-wing newspaper *Vestnik Soiuza russkogo naroda* reported how a group of hooligans attacked an officer from the 37<sup>th</sup> Ekaterinburg regiment, named as Kikul, in an unprovoked assault occurring on Polevaia Street in the city of Nizhnii-Novgorod.<sup>41</sup> The assault was committed by local riffraff who had been drinking heavily in the nearby tavern for several hours. This illustrated fear of the threat posed by hooligans and wanton mob violence.<sup>42</sup> This attack on an officer being singled out for discussion is particularly telling: rightists venerated the institution of the armed forces, and an attack on a member of them by ‘the rabble’ made the story especially shocking for readers. Curiously, despite rightist autonomy, this shows that some elements shared the central fears of the establishment. Not only right-wing radicals, but also figures in polite society condemned these social trends.<sup>43</sup> *Novoe vremia* was one pro-regime newspaper that also reported on ‘hooligans’ carrying out attacks on innocents.<sup>44</sup>

In its practical activities, cultural associations and meetings, the radical right did little to disown certain, more preferred ideals. The importance of Russian religion to the right can be clearly seen from many reports on the activities of both political and non-political groups. The Khar’kov branch of the URP united with members of the Russian Assembly from the same region to hold a celebration on 17

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<sup>40</sup> Obraztsov, *Torzhestvo russkogo ob’edineniia*, p. 46.

<sup>41</sup> *Vestnik Soiuza russkogo naroda*, 16 August 1913, 151-152, p. 19.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 19.

<sup>43</sup> The fear of hooliganism was often linked to the revolution of 1905. See J. Neuberger, *Hooliganism: Crime, Culture and Power in St. Petersburg, 1900-1914* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1994), pp. 88, 139.

<sup>44</sup> *Novoe vremia*, 8 March 1914, p. 13.

May 1907 in honour of the bishop's 25 years of service to the Khar'kov region. This was attended by many religious figures, such as Bishop Arsenii (a member of the URP), a number of priests, as well as leaders of the monarchist movement such as A. G. Shcherbatov, of the URP and Union of Russian Men (URM).<sup>45</sup> The meetings of these groups kept close formal ties to organized religion, as well as the use of religious symbolism in such processions. Even the 'radical' wings of the right, such as the URP, demanded the inclusion of Russian religion as a stimulus for civic development. It was integrated into the educational activities of the Russian Assembly, primarily as a tool for inspiring the Russian people. Therefore, the conception of moral education was largely a religious one: members attending these soirees, processions and banquets held by rightist groups would have been saturated in the language and symbols of Orthodoxy.<sup>46</sup>

An overall aim of these meetings was to construct a vision of the modern era as a time of chaos, crisis and decay caused by the revolution of 1905 and also long-term negative developments, such as political reforms and social change. Right-wingers at these gatherings reacted to such developments by constructing an idealized past, based around mythic visions of Russian heroism, achievement and grandeur: social projects were created aiming to put such ideas into practice.

### *Charity and poverty*

Whilst one should not wish to lose sight of the negative character of many of these right-wing groups, it was also the case that in the same era, conceptions of charity, voluntarism and welfare were developing amongst certain right-wing societies.<sup>47</sup> Not every meeting revolved around visions of destruction and the pursuit of common enemies, though these were standard themes. The focus on charity might initially appear surprising, but one needs to bear in mind the shared end it had with the

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<sup>45</sup> *Mirnyi trud*, 2 (1908), p. 129, 'Godovoi otchet "Khar'kovskogo soiuza russkogo naroda" za 1907 god. (Vtoroi god sushchestvovaniia)', Iv. Anosov.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 131.

<sup>47</sup> Lindenmeyr's *Poverty Is Not a Vice* discusses the challenge of poverty to civil society, but makes no reference to the efforts of the organized right, pp. 217-224.

negative racist and exclusionary visions outlined above: the moral and cultural improvement of the Russian body politic.

Crucial in this idea of charity was the theme that the right was on the side of the nation's poor as the revolutionary crisis worsened; the aid given to poor students was cited as an example. RMP member I. A. Kolesnikov arrived in Moscow to open a girl's school established in Gringmut's name after his death, which aimed to carry on his brand of teachings. The school, like several others that the right founded, was free and aimed at the poorest students in society, those most in need of education. There was, of course, more to this than merely giving poor students a helping hand: the political and spiritual legacy of Gringmut and the RMP's teachings would be carried on to the next generation as a result of its construction.<sup>48</sup> These projects, as in the case of a meeting house built for members of the Russian Assembly unveiled on 21 October 1909, were aimed at educating youth by inculcating national and patriotic feelings, specifically, in the socially needy, and subsequent publications described a message of charity.<sup>49</sup> As Aleksandr Shcherbatov noted, the aim of this education was not only to teach people how to read and write, but to inculcate a basic theoretical conception of the way that the world worked, aims that came with 'correct' messages about the proper ideologies to follow.<sup>50</sup>

On an individual basis too, activists involved in the monarchist movements played a role in charity and volunteer work across the empire. Dar'ia Kudelenko (c. 1870-after 1917) gave lectures to workers and students, and took part in consumer cooperatives in Kiev during 1907; she was also the secretary of the DHE in the region.<sup>51</sup> Aleksandr Evskii (1842-1913), chair of the Kiev Union of Russian Workers (*Kievskii soiuz russkikh rabochikh*) founded a universal aid society to help victims of the Russo-Japanese War, their families and lower-ranking members of the

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<sup>48</sup> This is recounted in *Bogatyř' mysli i dela*, pp. 302-305; *Grazhdanin*, 30 September 1907, 74, p. 10; 18 November 1907, 88, p. 15. Another school aimed at poor students was established by a group of students in Astrakhan' during 1908, or at least, so it was claimed: GARF, F. 117, op. 2, d. 8, l. 3: *Russkaia pravda*, 1 October 1908.

<sup>49</sup> *Dom i gimnaziia russkogo sobraniia* (St. Petersburg, 1910), p. 40.

<sup>50</sup> *Mirnyi trud*, 1 (1909), p. 95.

<sup>51</sup> For a short biography, see *CSIE*, p. 269.

armed forces, who had returned from the conflict and were in need of financial support.<sup>52</sup> Supporters of these mutual aid activities crossed over between a number right-wing, conservative and nationalist groups. Evskii was also a member of the Kiev Club of Russian Nationalists (*Kievskii klub russkikh natsionalistov*), in some ways a comparatively moderate nationalist group that supported Stolypin and his nationalist policies. This had a social base largely composed of elites, and lacked the socially demagogic elements associated with the URP, URM or indeed, the Union of Russian Workers.<sup>53</sup> In another instance from 1908, a report from a member of the council of the Russian Assembly, T. I. Butkevich, given to a meeting of the Kazan branch, outlined the work of the All-Russian Missionary Union. This group had been active during 1908 in helping out the poor in the region, including the peasantry, and Butkevich, a member of the clergy, was keen to report on the positive impact of its work. The exact extent of the right's practical involvement with this work was unknown, though clearly, many delegates praised and supported the work of the group.<sup>54</sup>

The heroism of Russia and the Russian people in both previous and current eras was a much-worn theme. The meetings of the assemblies, often attended by leaders such as Golitsyn and Krushevan, depicted the greatness of the Russian *narod*, who had been betrayed by a ruling clique of intelligentsia and bureaucrats. They placed themselves on the side of the peasantry and workers, and claimed much of the work they carried out was for their benefit, rather than for the rightist factions. A commission organized by a meeting between different branches of the URP in 1911 enquired into ways in which the condition of the poor peasant (*bedniak*) could be improved. The rights of the peasants, conceived of as moral and spiritual, rather than civic, had been denied in the current revolutionary epoch. It was claimed that only the autocracy itself, and the organized political right, were attuned to the

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<sup>52</sup> See *ibid.*, pp. 196-197.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 197. His obituary is printed in *Kievlianin*, 12 September 1913.

<sup>54</sup> *Mirnyi trud*, 3 (1909), p. 58.

interests of the peasantry.<sup>55</sup> In a similar light, it is worth noting that several of the letters addressed to the URP or UAM stressed poverty as the primary social condition of the sender.<sup>56</sup> The detail of many of these sources, especially in terms of the social impact of the organized charity efforts of rightist groups and councils, is unfortunately lacking. What is safer to state is that the populist appeal of the right continued well after 1905, and that the overall goal of these activities in aid of the nation's poor was linked to the support of monarchist ideologies, and attempts to improve the moral and spiritual condition of the Russian people, in order that they might fit into rightist projects.

### *Temperance*

Alcoholism was one example of the interest in illnesses. The radical right, like many other observers, was especially perturbed by many Russians continual love of drink. Alcoholism was pervasive in the social life of late imperial Russian society, and widespread drunkenness played a central role in its dysfunctional nature. Dr. P. S. Alekseev, a physician from Riga and a pioneer in studies of alcoholism and its effects, went as far as to suggest that 'the temperance question lies at the foundation of all social and political reform'.<sup>57</sup> Important establishment groups shared his concern, and Church temperance movements were also active in trying to combat the root causes of alcoholism. They saw that the main effect was the poverty that alcoholism brought upon households, as the nation's poor spent what little time and money they had in the tavern.<sup>58</sup>

The radical right shared this interest in alcoholism with many other political and social groups in late imperial society, yet their concerns had different roots. Groups including the Guardianship of Public Sobriety, the state's official

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<sup>55</sup> GARF, F. 116, op. 1, d. 17, ll. 29-40 ob.: doklady komissii vserossiiskogo s'ezda SRN v g. Moskve v 1911 g. A further example of right-wing charity and civic activism is outlined below, the Union of Russian Women in Voronezh.

<sup>56</sup> *Priamoi put'*, February-March 1911, p. 890.

<sup>57</sup> P. S. Alekseev quoted in P. Herlihy, *The Alcoholic Empire: Vodka and Politics in Late Imperial Russia* (Oxford, 2002), p. 4.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 78-80.



temperance organization, perceived a decline in working productivity and broken families as among the main negative effects of alcoholism.<sup>59</sup> In contrast to this, many rightists held that alcoholism represented a corrupting spiritual ill in Russian society. Accordingly, right-wingers saw that moral corruption was among the worst effects of a ubiquitous social ill. Alcoholism was a ‘perversion’ that would ‘corrupt the mass of the people’, according to one editorial in *Vestnik Russkogo sobraniia* from January 1908.<sup>60</sup> Negative political as well as social effects would arise as a result. As in so much of the right’s activities and propaganda, 1905 played a central role in such images; the eventual outcome of Russia’s vodka-soaked decay would be yet more political revolution.<sup>61</sup> The commentator K. F. Golovin, writing in the UAM thick journal *Priamoi put’*, noted the rapid spread of shops selling wine and spirits, which were linked to revolutionary propaganda. Golovin expounded on the dangers Russia faced from the onset of alcoholism. It was, in his view, connected to the onset of revolution, and particularly, the impact of ‘revolutionary’ parties, such as the Kadets.<sup>62</sup> In these intransigent visions, the right’s political opponents, such as the moderate conservative Octobrists, were themselves presented as drunks: the ‘pervasive alcoholism’ of the Octobrists was part of their negative influence on Russian politics. Drunkenness was a weakness to be associated with political rivals, as much as a lack of self-control: the same criticism was also levelled at left-wing students.<sup>63</sup> In addition, groups of right-wing activists claimed their own sobriety as a virtue; a telegram addressed to Petr Stolypin from students of the rightist group the Russian Union claimed, ‘of course, we are completely sober’.<sup>64</sup>

One leading figure in this anti-alcohol campaign was Ivan Sikorskii, a psychologist, theorist of nationalism, social activist, witness at the trial of Mendel Beilis in 1911 and a member of the Kiev Club of Russian Nationalists. Sikorskii

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<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 14-35. The Guardianship of Public Sobriety was established on 1 January 1895.

<sup>60</sup> *Vestnik Russkogo sobraniia*, 4 January 1908, 1, pp. 8-10.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 8-10; 28 February 1908, 9, pp. 1-5.

<sup>62</sup> *Priamoi put’*, February 1910, p. 530.

<sup>63</sup> *Vestnik Russkogo sobraniia*, 28 February 1908, 9, p. 9; *Moskovskie vedomosti*, 25 September 1908, 222, p. 1.

<sup>64</sup> GARF, F. 102.OO, op. 316, (1905 g.), d. 999, ch. 39, t. 5, ll. 137-138 ob.: telegram, the ‘Russian Union’ in Kursk (anonymous), to P. Stolypin (unknown date).

spoke at several rightist functions and assemblies, perceiving that alcoholism was inextricably linked to decay in Russian society.<sup>65</sup> In his view, it was one of the biggest threats to popular health, as he outlined in a pamphlet on the ‘physically and psychologically destructive’ effects of alcoholism on the Russian nation in the nineteenth century.<sup>66</sup> Purishkevich also took an interest in the problem of alcoholism. Like Sikorskii, he considered that alcoholism was a social danger that was on the increase in Russian society, and that decisive measures needed to be taken to combat it. Sikorskii appeared at the First All-Russian Union for the Fight with Alcoholism in November 1909, the proceeds of which were held by Purishkevich. Sikorskii carefully noted, in particular, its detrimental effects on the young, and what he termed the ‘socially irresponsible’ in society. He was chosen as one of the nine representatives from the provinces on the organizing council, a role that accorded with his earlier researches into the illness. Like many others at the congress, Sikorskii conceived of alcoholism not only as a debilitating problem in itself, but as a form of nervous illness, which particularly affected the poorest classes in society.<sup>67</sup> This congress was not only attended by rightists, but also brought together many other figures, including liberals and conservatives from the *zemstvo*.<sup>68</sup>

The Russian Assembly was strident in its criticism of state actions that could limit the popular impact of temperance groups. It fiercely criticized the state’s withdrawal of funding for the much-maligned Guardianship of Public Sobriety. In this, the radical right again exhibited divisions between the status quo and spontaneous right-wing tendencies.<sup>69</sup> The state was simply not taking drastic enough measures to reverse the contemporary decline of the Russian people, though from the bottle in this case, rather than pornographic novels or the unscrupulous Kadets. It was the poorest who were most at threat from the perils of drink. V. V. Malyshev, an

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<sup>65</sup> A biographical entry of Sikorskii appears in *CSIE*, pp. 482-485.

<sup>66</sup> I. A. Sikorskii, *Alkogolizm v Rossii v XIX stoletii i bor’ba s nim* (Kiev, 1899).

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*; see also Morrissey, ‘The Economy of Nerves’, pp. 645-675.

<sup>68</sup> The proceedings of the congress have been preserved in the personal chancellery of Purishkevich. GARF, F. 117, op. 1, d. 649, ll. 3-13 ob.: Russkii narodnyi soiuz imeni Mikhaila Arkhangel’a. Lichnaia kantseliariia Purishkevicha. Pis’mo organizatsionnoi kommissii 1-go vsrossiiskogo s’ezda po bor’be s pianstvom..., 13-18 November 1909.

<sup>69</sup> *Vestnik Russkogo sobraniia*, 28 February 1908, 9, p. 5.

activist from Orenburg, wrote a circular addressed ‘to the Russian people’ in May 1908, which addressed the threat that alcohol posed to Russia’s poor.<sup>70</sup> The effects were most deleterious on the poor peasants who lacked education or awareness of its corrupting effects. What was needed was more, not less, government control. Malyshev called for restrictions on personal freedoms to drink, in favour of increased state control; in particular, the government needed to more closely monitor the sale and distribution of alcohol.<sup>71</sup> A 1912 edition of *Pochaevskii listok* (Pochaev Newsletter), the paper of the Pochaev branch of the URP, called for the establishment of clinics to combat alcoholism, a necessity given the regime’s inaction against the scourge in previous years.<sup>72</sup>

Why was there so much emphasis on controlling alcoholism? Activists claimed that alcoholism was responsible for all manner of ills in society: a wide-ranging critique that encompassed everything from Jewish power and control, to defeat in the Russo-Japanese War, poor military performance due to drunken soldiers and the onset of the widely despised era of parliament and politics.<sup>73</sup> Malyshev wrote that the control of alcoholism would result in ‘the restoration of brotherly unity, prosperity, and by economic means, the maintenance of the poorest members of the population’. In his view, ‘drunkenness and debauchery’ had resulted in the need to save the country from the ‘Jewish stench’. In his criticisms and concerns, we can see that the adoption of anti-Semitism was not far away, even on apparently completely unrelated topics.<sup>74</sup> There was also a strong religious element to the anti-alcoholism drive, a move that accorded with the links between the radical right and Russian Orthodoxy. Religious figures, including Father Ioann of Kronstadt, whom some from right-wing groups such as the URP idolized, had been heavily involved in the temperance movements throughout imperial Russia. The anti-alcohol drive was seen by many activists, not only from within the right, as a

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<sup>70</sup> GARF, F. 117, op. 1, d. 2, l. 4: Proekt. Russkie liudi!, 28 May 1908.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid., l. 7.

<sup>72</sup> *Pochaevskii listok*, 61 (1909), pp. 10-11.

<sup>73</sup> *Vestnik Souiza russkogo naroda*, 13 June 1914, 188, p. 14. This editorial described the need to fight drunkenness in the army, due to its detrimental effect on Russia’s military capacity.

<sup>74</sup> GARF, F. 117, op. 1, d. 2, l. 7.

spiritual and religious mission, as well as one to liberate the people from the physical effects of alcoholism.

One central reason for promoting a message of anti-alcoholism was the threat that alcoholism posed to the body politic.<sup>75</sup> As in the case of cultural decline, this was a vision of an idealized body of people, Orthodox ‘true Russians’, under attack from a contemporary threat. In this, the right had something in common with later fascist parties in Europe, which saw that a nation undergoing a process of spiritual re-birth needed to be inoculated against all possible threats. The emphasis on the dangers of alcohol was not only a pet interest of isolated thinkers, but reveals a more radical ideology, based on combatting all possible threats to the people. Whilst it would be incorrect to portray the anti-alcohol drive as a completely secular mission, given the influence of religious practice, the right’s views to protect the people as an ethnic and cultural entity were at the forefront of many of these visions to create a healthier nation. Therefore, more modern ideologies were being adopted, albeit slowly and in a piecemeal fashion, and integrating many traditional ideas and emblems. Involvement in temperance movements and anti-alcohol ideology was a source of pride for the right, tying into civic patriotism. *Priamoi put’* proudly declared in May 1912, possibly erroneously, that Moscow University was the first institute in the world to set up an academic enquiry into the effects of alcoholism.<sup>76</sup>

### **Education and Society**

Many rightists had a pronounced interest in youth, with Russia’s students an important part of the future resistance to revolution. As early as 1902, a member of the central council of the Russian Assembly, A. F. Rittikh, delivered a report to the group of his plans to open a school ‘for the education and the enlightenment of youth in the Russian national spirit’.<sup>77</sup> Right-wing student organizations including

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<sup>75</sup> See for instance *Priamoi put’*, December 1912, pp. 206-207, which discussed alcoholism as a ‘popular’ illness.

<sup>76</sup> *Priamoi put’*, May 1912, pp. 186-187.

<sup>77</sup> *Dom i gimnaziia russkogo sobraniia*, p. 3.

the *Dennitsa* (Dawn) movement appeared shortly afterwards in 1902; additionally, there were several branches of the Russian Assembly exclusive to students, the first of which was established in Khar'kov on 9 November 1903.<sup>78</sup> However, from 1905 there was a wave of further development, with the emergence of what came to be known as the Academist movement.<sup>79</sup> The DHE in Kiev, established June 1907, was one of many similar groups that appeared across the empire. Whilst there was widespread criticism of student 'politics' on the right, mainly due to an association of students with left-wing radicalism, many rightists also stressed the importance of students to the monarchist movement.<sup>80</sup> Lev Tikhomirov wrote, 'it is completely evident, that in the sphere of civic activism we must draw from the forces of youth, and with it her training, and her social position, as these are what Russia needs'.<sup>81</sup> Iuzefovich was another commentator who saw that Russia's youth needed revitalization if the nation was to be saved.<sup>82</sup> The school was a battleground for Russia's future, but in the view of Purishkevich in a telegram to Count A. A. Bobrinskii, 'the future of Russia, as you can see, will be the most terrible catastrophe'.<sup>83</sup> Rightists would portray the future of the nation in such stark terms; not only was there an impending 'war' for the Russian university campus, but there was a psychological battle for the hearts and minds of the next generation coming to pass.

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<sup>78</sup> For the *Dennitsa* movement, see Morrissey, *Heralds of Revolution*, pp. 79-80; Kir'ianov and Dodonov (eds.), 'Predystoriia pravomonarkhicheskikh partii', 5 (2001), p. 118.

<sup>79</sup> Morrissey, *Heralds of Revolution*, pp. 140-146.

<sup>80</sup> For criticism of student movement, see for example *Moskovskie vedomosti*, 31 July 1908, 177, p. 1; 6 February 1911, 29, p. 1.

<sup>81</sup> Tikhomirov, *Khristianskoe gosudarstvo i vneshniaia politika*, p. 642. 'K voprosu ob obshchestvennoi deiatel'nosti uchashcheisia molodezhi: predstaviteliam kruzhkov patrioticheskoi molodezhi' (originally published in *Moskovskie vedomosti*, 1907). Tikhomirov's view of the power of youth was also driven by fear stemming from the outbreaks of disorder at Moscow University during the revolution of 1905. See for instance '25 let nazad: iz dnevnika L. Tikhomirova', *Krasnyi arkhiv*, 3(40) (1930), p. 60.

<sup>82</sup> Iuzefovich frequently returned to this theme in his writings. See Iuzefovich, *Politicheskie pis'ma*, Vol. 17, p. 368.

<sup>83</sup> RGADA, F. 1412, op. 2, d. 57, l. 1: V. M. Purishkevich (St. Petersburg), to Count A. A. Bobrinskii (St. Petersburg), 28 March 1913. The telegram informed Aleksei Bobrinskii of the publication of a book, *School the Victory of the Second Revolution*, by Purishkevich's organization the UAM in 1913, outlining how the Russian university had degenerated as a result of left-wing radicalism.

*The culture war for Russian universities*

The Academists appeared across many different parts of the Russian Empire during and after 1905, primarily in response to the longer-standing presence of left-wing student groups. In places as diverse as St. Petersburg, Tula and Kazan, the right attempted to mobilize youth, though their presence was particularly strong in the southwest of the empire, a largely non-Russian region.<sup>84</sup> Academist groups, such as the DHE in Kiev, have left voluminous recollections, letters and a wide variety of documents revealing their main ideas and principles. Like the mature right-wing groups, Academists declared themselves protectors of the three central principles of the Uvarov triad: ‘God, Tsar and fatherland’ (*Bog, Tsar’ i otechestvo*). Furthermore, Academists created an educational agenda for raising the consciousness of Russian youth towards patriotism. A flyer from the Academist Union distributed around Odessa University in April 1907 listed the following points, to be adopted as basic principles of Russian education:

1. Necessary ‘religious consciousness’ instilled in pupils;
2. National patriotic feeling;
3. A courageous upbringing, and how this relates to social and religious ideals;
4. Discipline;
5. The necessity to oppose strikes and idleness;
6. National patriotic feeling towards the state;
7. Necessity of family life;
8. National spirit, creation of a national history;
9. Defence of the ideas of law and order;
10. Opposition to the nihilistic and individualist tendencies of our time;
11. Turn towards an upbringing in favour of the state;
12. Creation of circles of a religious-moral character.<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>84</sup> For overviews of the social basis, structure and ideology of the Academist movements, see I. V. Omel’ianchuk, ‘Monarkhicheskie ‘akademicheskie korporatsii’ v uchebnykh zavedeniiakh Rossii (1901-1914 gg.)’, <<http://ukrstor.com/ukrstor/omel’ianchuk-akademobszestva.html>> (accessed 9/4/2014); *Chernosotennoe dvizhenie v Rossiiskoi imperii*, pp. 128-142; Stepanov, *Chernaia sotnia v Rossii, 1905-1914* (2<sup>nd</sup> edition, Moscow, 2005), pp. 324-340.

<sup>85</sup> GARF, F. 102.OO, op. 316, (1905 g.), d. 999, ch. 39, l. A, l. 67: *Volia i zemstva*, 5 April 1907; ll. 99-99 ob. The DHE in Kiev had an almost identical list of rules and regulations: GARF, F. 102, 4-e d-vo, op. 1907, d. 128, l. 5: Chernigovskogo gubernatora, po kantseliarii 6 June 1907; and so did the Academist club at St. Petersburg Polytechnic Institute, GARF, F. 117, op. 2, d. 8, l. 10: *ustav obshchestva (Akademicheskii soiuz studentov S. Peterburgsk. Politekhnikheskogo instituta)*; and ll. 96, 97-99 ob., 100, 105-108, all copies of the rules and regulations of the group, titled ‘*Ustav akademicheskogo studencheskogo obshchestva S. Peterburgskogo politekhnikheskogo instituta*’; and GARF, F. 117, op. 1, d. 183, ll. 3-5 ob. is a near-identical document.

Many of these points were long familiar as rightist ideological principles, but were there also more radical elements to the Academist plan? For instance, what form would this search for ‘consciousness’ take? Certain tactics of the groups appeared similar to the principles of the civic associations outlined above. These involved the distribution of books, holding of seminars and also the beloved musical literary evenings.<sup>86</sup> Leaders of the Academists claimed such measures were a corrective to the current state of Russian education. The DHE, for instance, claimed that liberal educators had led the previous several generations astray: they were responsible for Russia’s decline. There was also a degree of sympathy with the current generation of youth, who were said to have suffered as a result.<sup>87</sup> Whilst the violent nature of many of these groups should not be overlooked – a theme to be returned to – one of the main visions of the Academists themselves was an ideological war to win back the wayward student community.<sup>88</sup> Youth needed to be re-educated in conceptions of Russia’s national greatness.

A prominent example, a theme that recurs continuously in Academist correspondence, was the interest in science. This was not, however, merely a pursuit of the love of education and learning for its own sake, but part of a mission to raise awareness of the relationship between science and patriotism, a source of great pride given Russia’s achievements in the sphere. The right could appropriate a new set of heroes, such as the chemist Dmitrii Mendeleev, creator of the periodic table, with no small amount of satisfaction, as these were held to be uniquely ‘Russian’ achievements. Furthermore, the ‘culture war’ in the Russian university was described as a battle between science and politics.<sup>89</sup> Letters from rightist students to

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<sup>86</sup> GARF, F. 102, 4-e d-vo, op. 1907, d. 128, l. 7: rules and regulations of the DHE; GARF, F. 117, op. 2, d. 8, l. 98.

<sup>87</sup> GARF, F. 117, op. 2, d. 8, ll. 7-8.

<sup>88</sup> It should be noted that many of these appeals, for instance, in flyers distributed around St. Petersburg Polytechnic Institute in 1908, were addressed to the student body as a whole, rather than only other Academists: GARF, F. 117, op. 2, d. 8, ll. 1-1 ob.: K studenchestvu S. Peterburgskogo politekhnikuma; and ll. 83-83 ob.: K umerennomu i bezpartinomomu studenchestvu.

<sup>89</sup> Of course, this pre-dates the 1905 era, as described in chapter one. See for instance *Mirnyi trud*, 1 (1904), section 2, p. 7, P. Khorsov, ‘Prazdnik russkogo samosoznaniia’. A sympathetic discussion of the Academists in 1905 is A. S. Budilovich, *Nauka i politika* (St. Petersburg, 1905); see also S. D. Kassow, *Students, Professors and the State in Tsarist Russia* (Berkeley, 1989), pp. 259-260.

the leadership of the UAM reflected on the desire to preserve Russian science against what was perceived as one of the main degenerate tendencies within the modern Russian university, the growing threat posed by politics.<sup>90</sup> One letter from Nikolai Nikol'skii, an Academist studying at Warsaw University, expanded at length upon the problems facing Russian education:

Soon, we will no longer be students. I only want to see our educational institutions be peaceful, and I do not want to see our schools – temples of science – turn into political arenas, and turn away from science and towards politics. Furthermore, as a student, I have come to believe that schools must stand above all politics, that they must be purely Russian in spirit and thought. Academic life must flow freely and without interruption, if one only desires to study, and not understand politics – in other words, school must be for science, and not party division.<sup>91</sup>

Like Nikol'skii's letter, another undated communication from Odessa University discussed the need to 'free science' within the modern Russian university. The main strengths of Russia were its abilities in the hard sciences, and 'action and liberation' were needed to preserve these.<sup>92</sup> The rightist Professor N. S. Mishenko, in a speech delivered to members of the URP in Kiev on 24 October 1908, described the need to preserve 'pure science' against the forces of revolution and anarchism in the Russian university. Particularly this was necessary as the science in question connected to notions of Russian greatness, achievement and national pride.<sup>93</sup> Vladimir Purishkevich, in his reports to right-wing groups, also spoke of the need to keep the university as a place for the 'preservation of science'.<sup>94</sup>

The subject hierarchy was expressed in other ways. Student groups, like the main council of the Russian Assembly, preferred what they described as the 'hard'

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<sup>90</sup> For a few examples, see student letters to the UAM leadership: GARF, F. 117, op. 1, d. 119, ll. 7-10; similar examples can be found from student groups at the Alexander III Electro-Technical Institute, dated between 1909-1910 in GARF, op. 2, d. 13, ll. 2-6, 7-12, 16; *Priamoi put'*, 23 October 1910, pp. 255-256; February-March 1911, pp. 869-871, 890-891; 30 April 1911, pp. 1088-1093; 30 May 1911, pp. 41-44. These letters came in to the main council of the UAM from across the empire, and were mostly addressed to Vladimir Purishkevich.

<sup>91</sup> *Priamoi put'*, 23 October 1910, p. 255.

<sup>92</sup> GARF, F. 117, op. 1, d. 119, l. 23: *obrazhenie k nezavisimoi i bezpartiinoi: chasti studenchestva*.

<sup>93</sup> Chernovskii (comp.) and Viktorov (ed.), *Soiuz russkogo naroda*, p. 244.

<sup>94</sup> *Vestnik Russkogo sobraniia*, 4 January 1908, 1, p. 5.



subjects, including chemistry, physics, biology and mathematics, but also the oldest humanities discipline, philosophy.<sup>95</sup> The Russian Assembly founded its own gymnasium in 1911, geared towards improving ‘the health of the nation’. Its activities were designed to demonstrate ostensible sympathy with the people, such as in a 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration of the emancipation of the peasantry, held on 17 February 1911.<sup>96</sup> Patriotism was linked to the celebration of science, which was held to be a source of Russian greatness, as represented by the achievements of the nation’s finest minds.<sup>97</sup> Students reflected these desires, claiming in letters they were themselves ‘above politics’ and how as ‘university was only for science’ they opposed dangerous political trends ‘but we ourselves present the theme of calm currents of academic life, without ceremony, declining to please party interests’.<sup>98</sup> These ‘party interests’ were taken to mean strikes; a group of Academists from Moscow University protested against the disruption of a professor’s lectures, proclaiming that university was ‘for the motherland, honesty, and science’. Subsequently, Academists at St. Petersburg, Odessa and Kiev Universities organized anti-strike meetings after 1905.<sup>99</sup>

Politics was rejected due to its associations with the left. In contrast, right-wing groups described themselves as attempting to preserve ‘pure science’ and ‘further the lives of students and of study’ at universities, as seen from the rules and regulations of the Union of Academists at the Alexander III Electro-Technical Institute in St. Petersburg. They claimed that they were only interested in improving the educational level of the student community, and the pursuit of learning on university campuses across the empire. St. Petersburg University, like several others, had been previously disrupted by widespread strike action.<sup>100</sup> The legacy of 1905

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<sup>95</sup> *Vestnik Russkogo sobraniia*, 28 April 1908, 17, p. 7; GARF, F. 117, op. 2, d. 8, l. 121: *Iuzhnye vedomosti*, 229, 7 October 1908; *Priamoi put’*, February-March 1911, 20 March, pp. 869-871.

<sup>96</sup> GARF, F. 434, op. 1, d. 383, ll. 10 ob.-11 ob.

<sup>97</sup> *Moskovskie vedomosti*, 15 October 1905, 274, p. 2.

<sup>98</sup> *Priamoi put’*, February-March 1911, 20 March, p. 891.

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 891; GARF, F. 117, op. 2, d. 8, l. 41, Academist letter; l. 61, Academist letter; l. 76: *Kolokol*, 4 October 1908, no. 781.

<sup>100</sup> GARF, F. 117, op. 2, d. 13, ll. 2-6: rules and regulations of the Academic Union, students of the Alexander III Electro-Technical Institute; and GARF, F. 117, op. 2, d. 8, ll. 52, 53, 61.

hung heavily; in their claims that university campuses had been thrown into chaos by strikes and protests, right-wing students were not always wide of the mark. However, many negative aspects of right-wing ideology manifested themselves in the letters and ideas of the Academists. The humanities, in contrast to the sciences, were largely perceived negatively, due to their associations with corruption and also with Judaism. The law faculties of the Russian universities were held to be full of the right's enemies, including Jews and socialists. In a speech delivered to the Duma on 3 March 1907, Purishkevich spoke of a 'Jewish section' amongst the professoriate, which was driving Russian universities into a state of anarchy; in a revealing insight into his anti-Semitic mindset, Purishkevich even opined on the infiltration of Jews into Russia's State Council.<sup>101</sup> The social crisis manifested itself in other ways too. In his work, *The Decline of the Contemporary Russian University*, Purishkevich spoke of a wave of student suicides that had swept through university campuses after the 1905 revolution.<sup>102</sup>

Curiously several of the educational trends praised were associated with West European education, which some rightists suggested Russia should emulate. In a report to the Russian Assembly on 14 December 1907, Vladimir Purishkevich praised the German system of higher education, for its clear understanding of the need to separate science from politics and its emphasis on patriotism. Kaiser Wilhelm II was praised as one of the few European leaders who understood the 'correct' transformative power of higher education, and Academicist groups were partially based on notions of patriotism and discipline imported from the German patriotic student associations, known as the *Burschenschaften*.<sup>103</sup> The right vowed to transform Russian youth, in large part due to the desire to create a new generation of

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<sup>101</sup> V. F. Dzhunkovskii, *Vospominaniia*, Vol. 1 (Moscow, 1998), p. 473. Academists also partook in the view that large numbers of Jews were taking over university campuses. See for instance letters in GARF, F. 117, op. 2, d. 8, l. 87.

<sup>102</sup> V. M. Purishkevich, *Materialy po voprosu o razlozhenii sovremennogo russkogo universiteta* (St. Petersburg, 1914), pp. 270-273.

<sup>103</sup> *Vestnik Russkogo sobraniia*, 4 January 1908, 1, p. 5. The training of young men for conformism rather than independence of spirit was also pursued in late nineteenth-century France. See E. Weber, 'Gymnastics and Sports in *Fin-de-siècle* France: Opium of the Classes?' *American Historical Review*, 76, 1 (1971), pp. 70-98; Morrissey, *Heralds of Revolution*, pp. 142-143.

patriots, who would mirror the values of Uvarov whilst attempting to preserve the, in their mind, world-leading status of Russia as a technological and scientific pioneer.

But there was more to these conceptions than just lessons in the classroom. Rightists were also interested in physical culture. The most common form of this was gymnastics, which the UAM promoted as a tool with which to transform youth. In Akkerman province, rightists established their own gymnasium, focusing on fitness activities and recreational pursuits. These were supported by internal donations, such as from the UAM leader, Purishkevich. Following on from the models established by the *Burschenschaften*, Baltic German Student corporations, as well as older native conservative student organizations such as the *Dennitsa* movement, rightist groups stressed the benefits of these activities, and also of school sports. As in the case of the positive interpretation of science, these were promoted as healthy alternatives to the corruption and decay of politics, which had resulted in the decadence of the student body. However, it was only a specific type of physical culture that was emphasized. These groups not only promoted physical fitness, but also what were seen as the ‘true Russian’ values of brotherhood, companionship and order. In some images, participating students wear military-style uniforms. Other photographs depict the students holding the Russian imperial standard whilst performing these exercises. Sport, like science, was contrasted with the negative influence of politics and the humanities.<sup>104</sup> Letters from students also stressed the importance of sport, and its potential use as a device to inculcate patriotic ideas, as in the case of the St. Petersburg Academic Union, which pledged in its manifesto to stand for ‘science, art and sport’.<sup>105</sup>

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<sup>104</sup> *Priamoi put’*, December-January 1911/1912, pp. 360, 367-368. Unfortunately, the report does not specify the amount received from Purishkevich.

<sup>105</sup> GARF, F. 117, op. 1, d. 119, l. 5 ob.: police report describing the activities of the Academic Union in St. Petersburg, 7 October 1909.

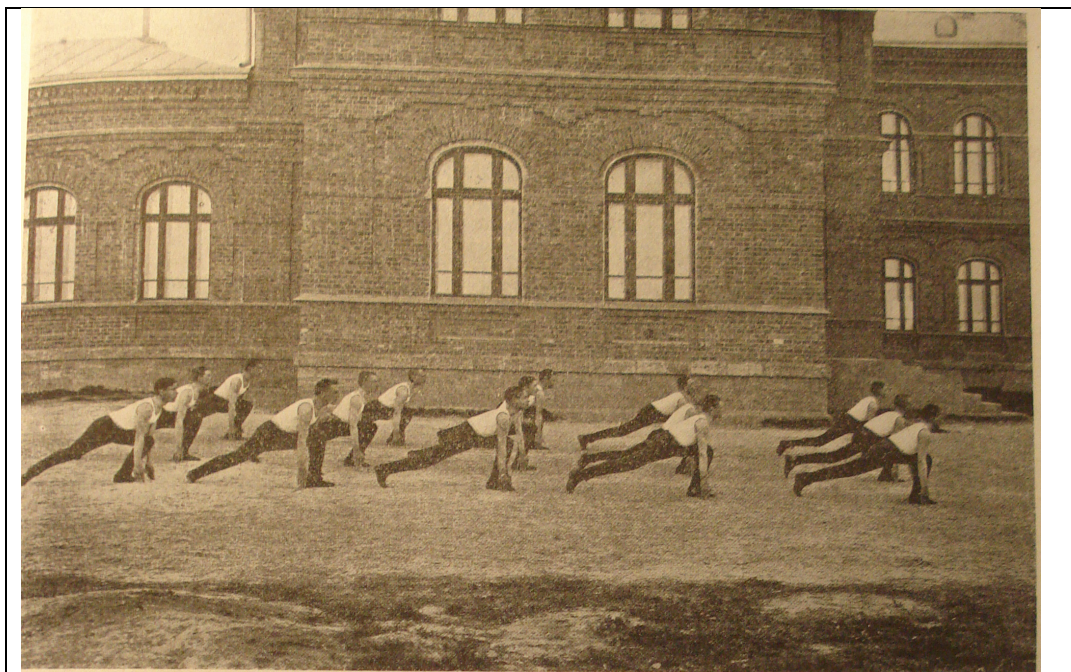


Figure 14 Academists outside the Akkerman gymnasium, *Priamoi put*’, December-January 1911/1912, p. 359.

Quite late in the day, the UAM had discovered an idea with potential mass appeal. Sport and gymnastic societies had been used to some effect in other countries, in connection with ideas of national revival. One of these was nineteenth-century Germany. In 1848, the German Gymnastic League was founded, an organization ‘dedicated to the purity of the Volk’. The membership of a variety of gymnastic organizations rose rapidly in Germany in the second half of the nineteenth century. As in the Russian case, the rituals of these gymnastic movements stressed cult and symbol, and expressed fraternity and brotherhood amongst students. The surviving images of the Russian gymnastic group organized by the UAM in Akkerman emphasize these values by showing the students involved in fitness activities in perfect synchronicity. This was not merely the appearance of order, but of people working together in the national will. That inspiration for these groups came from abroad again highlights that it was Western ideologies and trends often driving these ‘anti-Western’ groups, though with one important distinction. The Akkerman gymnasts, in contrast to the *Burschenschaften*, used the physical

reconstruction of Russian youth as the central symbol of their cult, rather than that of the nation as a legal or civic entity. The eventual aim was the reconstruction of the self in a more virtuous, civically-minded, patriotic form.<sup>106</sup>

Leading rightists such as G. G. Zamyslovskii, Purishkevich and Markov may have voiced their support for the Academists, but in reality how did they intend to back them? These rightist student groups received many donations from branches of established rightist groups, though it has been alleged by some contemporary reports circulating within local administration that the Russian regime financially supported them as well.<sup>107</sup> Generally, Purishkevich and other figures operating within the main leadership council of the UAM were the most willing to lend a hand, at least according to the students themselves. Student rightists frequently wrote to Purishkevich to express their thanks for his generous financial support. A group of several students from the Academic Club of Polytechnic Students in St. Petersburg wrote to Purishkevich to thank him for his assistance. Records from Purishkevich's office show that large sums passed through his hands, and were diverted to the organization after 1912. The amount came to hundreds of thousands of rubles. Purishkevich distributed funds to these associations himself, though it is unclear where all this money that Purishkevich received came from. As he was a man of some financial means, it is likely that at least some of this came from his own pocket; though it is unclear to what exact extent the regime also funded the Academists.<sup>108</sup>

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<sup>106</sup> For analysis of the gymnastic societies in Germany from the mid nineteenth century, see Mosse, *Nationalization*, pp. 125-136; for France, see Weber, 'Gymnastics and Sports', pp. 74-76. As in the Russian Empire, these aimed for national revival as part of their rationale, though achieved a grander scale than the Academists' projects.

<sup>107</sup> In Odessa, reports circulating within the city administration between 1909 and 1910 claimed that money was forthcoming from the regime in order to build a school for the URP. Chernovskii (comp.) and Viktorov (ed.), *Soiuz russkogo naroda*, pp. 289-290.

<sup>108</sup> As can be seen from student letters addressed to Purishkevich in GARF, F. 117, op. 1, d. 119, ll. 39-40, 42. See also GARF, F. 117, op. 1, d. 241, ll. 3-4: denezhnyi otchet predsedatelia soiuza purishkevicha po summam proshedshikh cherez ego ruki so vremeni osnovaniia soiuz, 8 November 1912; GARF, F. 117, op. 2, d. 8, ll. 36, 37, 40, 41, 50, 51; and GARF, F. 117, op. 1, d. 12, l. 14.



Figure 15 Academists outside the Akkerman gymnasium, *Priamoi put'*, December-January 1911/1912, p. 361.

The numerical strength of the Academists is subject to some dispute. Soviet historiography tended to downplay their numerical significance, but their own sources give substantial numbers. Academist groups at the Nicholas II Technological Institute in Tomsk and at the St. Petersburg-based Lesnyi Institute both claimed 400 members in 1908, though of course, such claims should not be taken at face value.<sup>109</sup> What we can be more certain of is that though right-wing student groups may have made up a small percentage of the overall student body, they produced a disproportionately large impact on university campuses due to their intransigent stance towards Russia's present. It should not be overlooked how rejection of the educational present was both implicit and explicit in much of this activity. In criticizing the state's policies from the last thirty to forty years, these

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<sup>109</sup> For one example, see M. V. Borisenko, 'Vliianie opyta pervoi rossiiskoi revoliutsii na formirovanie obshchestvennogo oblika rossiiskogo studenchestva v mezhevoliutsionnyi period (1907-1917 gg.)', in Iu. D. Margolis (ed.), *Novoe o revoliutsii 1905-1907 gg. v Rossii: mezhevuzovskii sbornik* (Leningrad, 1989), pp. 168-169. The rightist estimates are from GARF, F. 117, op. 2, d. 8, l. 29 ob.; and GARF, F. 117, op. 1, d. 199, l. 5 ob.

groups placed themselves in a position of intellectual opposition to the current Tsarist regime, concerns reflected by rightist leaders elsewhere. When Boris Nikol'skii wrote that schools needed to be 'Russian in spirit', he also suggested that the educational establishments of the contemporary era were a betrayal of Russia's student body.<sup>110</sup> Academist claims, as well as Purishkevich's letters to the Minister of Education from 1906-1908 A. N. Shvartz, and to his successor, Lev A. Kasso, took on a similar tone. The university was held to be in a state of crisis as a result of liberals acting inside the establishment, as well as from revolutionaries.<sup>111</sup>

### *Workers' education*

Right-wing activists saw the need to 'educate' other sections of the *narod*, including urban workers, as shown from the publicity materials of the Khar'kov branch of the URP. The membership of this branch was listed as 3,940 on 1 March 1907.<sup>112</sup> Leaders, including I. V. Kovalevskii, P. I. Butov, M. G. Kovalev and A. S. Viazigin, described how 'the activists of the Union declared the aim of teaching workers as one understanding of its activities in regard to its relationship with other monarchist organizations, and to delegates'.<sup>113</sup> This built on earlier trends in addressing the workers' question.<sup>114</sup> The aim was the 'immediate' cultivation of mass support, and the branch was positive about the public impact of its activities in 1907:

Public opinion has turned, expressed by the fact that the Union's members are drawn from the peasantry and the working class, and we see representatives of the highest echelons of the Orthodox Church, true science, figures from the military and the civil service, nobility and even *zemstvo* figures, of which a number of *zemstvo* activists representing the Valkov *zemstvo* from the town of Enisherlov (members of the Valkov branch of the

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<sup>110</sup> The council of the Russian Assembly, led by Nikol'skii, voiced such criticisms in its official laws: GARF, F. 588, op. 1, d. 1265, ll. 49-50.

<sup>111</sup> Purishkevich, *Materialy po voprosu o razlozhenii sovremennogo russkogo universiteta*, pp. V-VII; *Priamoi put'*, May 1912, p. 771; March 1914, pp. 277-278.

<sup>112</sup> *Mirnyi trud*, 3 (1907), p. 194, Iv. Anosov, 'Deiatel'nost' Khar'kovskogo soiuzza russkogo naroda. Otchet za pervyi god' sushchestvovaniia'.

<sup>113</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 190.

<sup>114</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 197.

Khar'kov Union of Russian People) were elected as members of the State Duma from Khar'kov province.<sup>115</sup>

Other examples show how lectures were considered one important tool for teaching the workers, giving them a thorough grounding in the importance of Russian Orthodoxy and Russian education. Rightist delegates to the State Duma including Vladimir Purishkevich, A. D. L'vov, G. G. Zamyslovskii and V. Kazarinov met with leaders of the Society of Russian Firemen on 22 October 1909 to discuss a lecture held on 18 October for the Russian Workers' Economic Union, landowning members of the Russian Assembly and right-wing delegates to the Duma. Antonii (Khrapovitskii), Archbishop of Volynia and Zhitomir, delivered the lecture in L'vov's apartment at eight in the evening.<sup>116</sup>

But did activists, or provincial leaders, reflect the preoccupations of the leaders of the central right-wing associations? The correspondence of the leader of the Perm branch of the URP, Petr Vasilievich Riabov (1870-1918), provides some indicators. Between September 1913 and March 1915, Riabov wrote frequently to Aleksandr Dubrovin to voice his desire to carry out educational work.<sup>117</sup> Of peasant background, Riabov had worked as a sorter in the Perm cannon factory until 1907, when he was forced to resign from his post on health grounds. Afterwards, he lived near the Motovilikha factory just outside Perm, where he opened a tearoom, and became one of the organizers of the Motovilikha branch of the URP. He subsequently became permanent chairman until the branch's disbanding in 1917. In December 1909, he opened a URP branch for railway workers in Perm.<sup>118</sup> His telegrams describe worker and peasant concerns, and his attempts to mobilize right-wing support in the factory in which he was formerly employed largely focused on

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<sup>115</sup> Ibid., p. 198.

<sup>116</sup> 'Zasedanie soveta imperatorskogo rossiiskogo pozharnogo obshchestva sovместno s chlenam pravoi fraktsii gos. dumy 22 Oktiabria 1909 g.', in Kir'ianov (ed.), *Pravye partii*, Vol. 1, pp. 535-536.

<sup>117</sup> GARF, F. 116, op. 1, d. 346, l. 56: P. Riabov (Perm), to A. I. Dubrovin (St. Petersburg), 1 November 1913. These communications were addressed to what was by then known as the All-Russian Dubrovinist Union of the URP, rather than merely the URP.

<sup>118</sup> For biographical details of Riabov, see Kir'ianov (ed.), *Pravye partii*, Vol. 1, p. 685; *CSIE*, p. 475.



educational projects. One letter, entitled *The Workers' Question* listed the following demands:

The education of workers by reliable cadres for the most important tasks of state work; development of a religious patriotic spirit amongst circles of workers, as opposed to revolutionary propaganda; peaceful struggle with strikers in the sphere of self-awareness; construction of *arteli* for workers; support for Russian craftsmen in order to evade the dominance of foreigners; construction of technical offices for the sale of work tools and factory equipment; a requirement to save weight on railway transport and on the steamship wharf; supply union members with free medical work and insurance for them in case of misfortune, injury and death; the formation of professional teaching in the Motovilikha factory for the children of workers of the Perm cannon factory.<sup>119</sup>

The letter shows how even far-right figures such as Riabov could integrate elements of what are usually considered left-wing ideologies, in this instance, social care, as well as those more typical of nationalists and conservatives, such as the supposed inculcation of a patriotic spirit. Riabov chaired several congresses in Perm for URP activists between 1913-1915. In 1913, Riabov gathered URP activists to draft a letter to Nicholas II, raising awareness of the branch's work.

The Perm governor, in an apparent show of sympathy, allowed a delegation of monarchist organizations led by Riabov to converge on the Motovilikha factory from 13-16 December 1913. In doing so, he allowed for a discussion forum for the 'spiritual enlightenment activity' of the group. Riabov explained a month before the event how it was going to work. After a 'ceremonial service' the attentions of the delegation turned to discussing a seven-point plan to 'raise awareness of the monarchist position' and 'revive understanding of [our] activity'. Riabov's concerns encompassed education, the condition of the peasantry and the working class. The basic message of 'Orthodoxy, autocracy and nationality', and 'Russia, one and indivisible' reflected monarchist ideologies established after 1905.<sup>120</sup> Riabov also

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<sup>119</sup> GARF, F. 116, op. 1, d. 346, ll. 70-71: P. Riabov (Perm), to A. I. Dubrovin (St. Petersburg), 1 November 1913.

<sup>120</sup> *Ibid.*, ll. 70-71.

referred to the need to fight the strikers disrupting work in the factory, yet curiously stressing his desire to halt these groups via ‘peaceful’ means, and the need to develop a ‘religious patriotic spirit’ amongst the workers.<sup>121</sup>

In another telegram to Dubrovin, Riabov expanded on how to ‘educate’ workers in the Motovilikha factory. The rightist movement in Perm needed to engage with 12,000 local workers, and Riabov voiced his frustration that not enough was being done to inculcate patriotic feelings in the local populace, a requirement for them to join the monarchist movement. A central idea in his conception of education was the purity of science, and need for ‘objective’ rather than political learning. But this claim did not by any means represent a noble search for uncorrupted, de-politicized knowledge. Whilst Riabov stressed a desire to improve the knowledge of workers in the Motovilikha factory, more strenuous examination of his ideals reveals the ways in which this knowledge would be harnessed. Riabov suggested the founding of study circles for the children of workers, where they could study the necessary ‘hard’ technical subjects required for a sounder understanding of the practices of modern manufacturing. The problem of ‘uneducated’ workers was, in his view, a pressing one, as it was holding back the strength of Russia, as well as the success of right-wing organizations on a local level.<sup>122</sup>

His other letters to Dubrovin touched on the theme of transforming the education of children, suggesting a mixture of science-based learning structured around a technical education, with a spiritual element of teaching based around ‘religious feeling’, and a nebulous concept described as ‘patriotic education’.<sup>123</sup> In his view, what had led to the crisis in Russian education was that the children of workers had not been inculcated with the spirit of Russian Orthodoxy. Another problem was poor understanding of modern scientific practices, particularly,

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<sup>121</sup> Ibid., ll. 70-71.

<sup>122</sup> Several similar examples of telegrams from Riabov to Dubrovin, many of which contain similar themes to the cited source, appear in *ibid.*, ll. 70-71, 142 ob., 143-144 ob., 145-146, 149-150, 187-188. These date from between 1913 and 1915.

<sup>123</sup> *Ibid.*, l. 150: a list entitled ‘programme of people’s education: understanding national-patriotic self awareness in the development of people’s schools’.

knowledge of how to repair and build the weapons needed for state defence.<sup>124</sup> Riabov saw that, in future, Russia would be engaged in unceasing war with foreign enemies. The defence of a strong, technologically advanced future Russia would require a productive and efficient workforce, which needed a sound understanding of how to build and repair destructive armaments worth many thousands of rubles. The new generation would need to familiarize itself with such work.<sup>125</sup>

Riabov's interests in science, technological understanding and patriotism as necessary frameworks for education were all related principles. The need to defend the motherland aggressively would require a greater level of technological progress, and improvements in the training and technical skills of the current workforce across Russia, united to a patriotic spirit. In the view of Riabov, the current population was simply too decadent to achieve this aim. Riabov mentioned how endemic drunkenness in Russian life needed to be eradicated if the nation wanted to achieve its goals in the future, including successful state defence.<sup>126</sup> Riabov's communiqués with Dubrovin show no small grasp of the challenges that Russia would need to overcome in order to achieve such aims. However, his personal interests were not representative of all rightists, who often stuck to more conventional themes, such as devotion to Russian religion, and love of the Tsar.

### *A role for women*

A striking feature of several of these right-wing groups was the pronounced presence of women, who were in many cases given prominent roles. In contrast to the all-male composition of, for instance, the State Council, the leadership of the right was not entirely masculine. Certainly, elite women had long played a role in private charitable societies and institutions. Empress Elizabeth and other women from the aristocracy had founded the Women's Patriotic Society in 1812 to help those who

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<sup>124</sup> Ibid., I. 145: a sheet titled 'the workers' problem: document seven in the programme for the founding of professional study in the factories of Motovilikha for worker's children'.

<sup>125</sup> Ibid., II. 145-146.

<sup>126</sup> Ibid., II. 187-188.

had suffered as a result of the war against Napoleon, and later charitable groups also encouraged the active participation of women.<sup>127</sup> For the radical right nearly one hundred years later, women were not only given charitable roles such as baking cakes at the local bazaar and fete, but were also afforded more distinguished and less traditionally gendered roles as activists, organizers and leaders. One prominent example was Elena Poluboiarinova (1864-1919), the secretary of the URP after 1907, and editor of the group's newspaper, *Russkoe znamia*, between 1909 and 1912.<sup>128</sup> Another is Lidiia Kologrivova (?-1915), a member of the Russian Monarchist Assembly, one of its chief poets, and the daughter of Count Aleksandr Ivanovich Ukhtomskii, who participated in the war against Napoleon in 1812.<sup>129</sup>

Women were accorded a role in the transformation of the nation sought by other civically-minded right-wing groups. Taking the example of student associations, the leadership of the Academist unions was keen to recruit female students. V. Zh. Kursov, an activist with the Russian Assembly, established a circle of female students in Moscow during 1907, with additional support from V. A. Gringmut.<sup>130</sup> The main council of the group consisted of: E. E. Vostorgova; Sofia Aleksandrovna Golitsina; Liubova Dmitrievna Gringmut'; Lidia Aleksandrovna Kologrivova; Nadezhda Aleksandrovna Murovtseva; and E. A. Bogolenova. Like the men's sections of the organizations the aim of these groups was to banish politics from the Russian university, and preserve it 'only for science'.<sup>131</sup> The groups appeared to have primarily cultural aims, with the goal to set up study circles, libraries and clubs, all for the preservation of 'free thought' in the time of 'ruinous strikes and disorder' across Russian universities.<sup>132</sup>

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<sup>127</sup> Lindenmeyr, *Poverty is Not a Vice*, p. 111.

<sup>128</sup> A short biography appears in *CSIE*, pp. 403-404. Poluboiarinova, unlike many of her male colleagues, appeared to stay loyal to Dubrovin during the later splits in the right-wing groups, and she accompanied him in his formation of the 'Dubrovinist' wing of the URP in 1912.

<sup>129</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 255-256. Her obituary appears in *Moskovskie vedomosti*, 25 March 1915; and *Istoricheskii vestnik*, 5 (1915).

<sup>130</sup> *Mirnyi trud*, 5 (1909), p. 47, 'Deiatel'nost' russkogo zhenskogo kruzhka uchashchikhsia g. Moskvyy, otchet' 1907-1908 god'; see also *Mirnyi trud*, 10 (1912), pp. 20-23.

<sup>131</sup> *Mirnyi trud*, 5 (1909), p. 49, 'Deiatel'nost' russkogo zhenskogo kruzhka uchashchikhsia g. Moskvyy, otchet' 1907-1908 god'.

<sup>132</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 50.

But did these groups merely reflect the concerns also seen in the male wings of the organizations, or were they adding new elements to a revised conception of Russian society? What was the exact role for women? A. G. Chutaevskaia was the leader of the Russian Women's Student Circles in Moscow from 1910-1911. The group was dedicated to the preservation of the university 'for science only', the love of motherland, patriotism and search for the improvement of the nation, which exactly mirrored the claims of other right-wing student groups. However, it is intriguing to note that women, as well as making up the sole membership of this organization, were also leading and driving the group.<sup>133</sup> Claiming between 30-50 active members in Moscow, the scale of this group was much smaller than that of the DHE in Kiev in 1907 (estimated to number around 350 or so), though it used similar tactics, such as giving reports and seminars. Apparently, the leaders of the right-wing groups took an interest in the circle's progress; Purishkevich was invited to travel from St. Petersburg to give a report to the group.<sup>134</sup> The numerical presence of female Academicist circles was stronger in non-Russian areas, like other right-wing groups. In Odessa, one report from 22 October 1911 claimed there were 400 students at a school for female students organized by the URP.<sup>135</sup>

Certain provincial groups demonstrated a degree of civic-mindedness. The Union of Russian Women in Voronezh, led by Mariia Nikolaevna Ditrikh, undertook a variety of activities, including participation in artistic exhibitions, painting and charity work.<sup>136</sup> The first annual meeting of this group in 1908 passed a resolution that it would open a group for making Russian national costumes. This had the dual role of creating styles of Russian national dress, therefore contributing to what members saw as patriotic awareness, and also giving work to poor women;

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<sup>133</sup> GARF, F. 117, op. 1, d. 184, l. 1: T. Lebedeniskaia (Moscow), to V. M. Purishkevich (St. Petersburg), 19 October 1910.

<sup>134</sup> Ibid., ll. 2-2 ob.: A. G. Chutaevskaia (Moscow), to V. M. Purishkevich (St. Petersburg), 27 October 1910.

<sup>135</sup> GARF, F. 1467, op. 1, d. 847, l. 6: report from Nikolai Tregubov in Odessa, published 24 July 1917 in the Provisional Government committee of inquiry into the illegal activities of the old regime.

<sup>136</sup> Ditrikh was also a member of the Russian Assembly. See *CSIE*, p. 170. This tells us that membership of these central organizations was also open to women by 1907-1908.

these female groups considered such a charitable social function very important. A report from the chair of the Union, M. Bernova, vice-chair N. Popova and secretary E. Prokhorova, declared that between 1908 and 1911 it had provided economic assistance for poor families. The Union had attempted to spread charitable ideals in Voronezh, undertaking such noble activities including baking bread, and distributing salt, sausages, tea and eggs for poor families at Easter, and also opening a day care centre for children in poverty, called Manger.<sup>137</sup> These social roles mirrored other organizations such as the URWM in Kiev, as well as the efforts of individual activists such as Dar'ia Kudelenko.

These social roles largely reflected activities in other groups on the right, and did not accord a unique status or rationale to female members. Furthermore, female emancipation and liberation were not themes of these women's groups, and feminist questions were not even on the agenda in other rightist circles. However, female membership was an issue, with leaders such as V. A. Gringmut clearly considering the female branches of the Academists an important part of the organizations, writing to these groups expressing his support.<sup>138</sup> More generally, the presence of women in the higher echelons of the right stands in stark contrast to the masculine nature of Russian officialdom in the era; the rulers of Russia were all men, as indeed, they were in Western Europe. Rightists were often keen to include women, as well as peasants, workers and students in their activities, as part of the desire to improve the social reach of such groups. Leaders including Gringmut saw that, in the ideal to reach across horizontal ties in society, their groups would need to include a variety of social demographics, in one sense a forerunner of the people's community, *Volksgemeinschaft*, later pursued in 1930s Germany. However, in contrast to several fascist groups in Europe later on, religion and nationality played a more significant role than gender in the identity hierarchy created by rightists. This is demonstrated by the exclusionary practices towards Jews and national minorities,

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<sup>137</sup> GARF, F. 117, op. 1, d. 53, l. 34: *Vestnik Russkogo sobraniia*, 18 November 1911, 29, p. 5. In this aim, the rightist women's groups mirrored the role of women in civic society and charitable associations elsewhere in the late imperial period. See Lindenmeyr, *Poverty is Not a Vice*, pp. 123-129.

<sup>138</sup> GARF, F. 117, op. 1, d. 53, l. 34.

in contrast to the more inclusive role for women. Indeed, generic prejudice in this sphere did not appear to be as pronounced as it was in several others, which is not to suggest that it was absent. Rightists did not in fact strive for gender equality, but rather sought to reach across gender as well as social divides in order to promote a vision of unity in society. Consequently, not only traditional gender roles were accorded to female members, even if the right-wing groups did not go as far as to promote ideologies of feminism, as several revolutionary groups certainly did.<sup>139</sup>

### *The dark side*

Having considered the social reach of the right, it is time to return once again to the issue of why this has been termed the ‘dark side’ of civic society. One reason was the appeal to and use of violence. The DHE in Kiev was one of several student groups that disrupted lectures, and members carried out attacks on other students. The association had taken confidence from the success of the right in the local elections, held in Kiev during February 1907. Three of its leaders, Kiselevich, Kornaichik and Sevastianovo, were promoting a message designed to ‘discourage internal revolution’ at the local school. *Kievskii golos* (Kievan Voice) sarcastically suggested that ‘only the best and most pure of Russia’s youth’ were joining the group, which in reality was creating new tensions amongst the local population.<sup>140</sup> The rector of Odessa University, I. M. Zanchevskii, wrote to Petr Stolypin about the growing problem of the antagonism of Jewish students on the campus by groups of URP activists. The harassment of many students who merely wished to study and learn was one feature of the Academist groups, in spite of their oft-stated claims to appear above politics, and to display pious and respectful behavior.<sup>141</sup> When the

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<sup>139</sup> The presence of women in twentieth-century fascist movements in a variety of European countries is considered in K. Passmore, (ed.), *Women, Gender and Fascism in Europe, 1919-1945* (New Brunswick, NJ, 2003). See particular K. Passmore, ‘Introduction’, pp. 1-10.

<sup>140</sup> GARF, F. 102, 4-e d-vo, op. 1907, d. 128, l. 1: *Kievskii golos*, 2 February 1907.

<sup>141</sup> GARF, F. 102.OO, op. 316, (1905 g.), d. 999, ch. 39, l. A, t. 1, ll. 15-15 ob.: I. M. Zanchevskii (Odessa), to P. A. Stolypin (St. Petersburg), 11 September 1906. Examples of Academist violence appear elsewhere. See for instance GARF, F. 1467, op. 1, d. 849, l. 18: police telegram from 8 February 1907 in Odessa (republished in the Protocols of the Emergency Commission of the Provisional Government, 16 September 1917).

Council of the Students' Committee at the St. Petersburg Polytechnic Institute was accused of being full of Jews (using the pejorative *zhid'*) by the leadership of the UAM, it was no surprise that UAM students then pledged to wage war against leftist, Jewish students.<sup>142</sup>

In spite of these examples of violence, rightist students portrayed themselves as strike breakers and champions of law and order, against the disruptive tendencies of the strike movement that had prohibited learning. In the village of Novo-Aleksandriia, a group of Academists wrote to the UAM central council, stating 'the last strike was a scandalously illegal one, and we, opposed to the strikes, were unable to support and enter into open war with their adherents'.<sup>143</sup> This illustrates another feature: the establishment of Academicist groups corresponded with a desire to fight strikes and disorders across university campuses. This was also apparent from student circles established in Khar'kov back in 1903.<sup>144</sup> The White Double-Headed Eagle, another organization operating within Odessa during October 1907, was reported in the liberal paper *Birzhevye vedomosti* as openly committing anti-student violence.<sup>145</sup> The targeting of the student community appeared to be a tactic for rightist *druzhiny* linked to the URP, with further reports describing incidents on the Odessa campus when rightists clashed with leftist students.<sup>146</sup> Attacks on students, particularly Jewish ones, from small groups of rightist students in Odessa tended to increase the authority suspicion of these self-stated 'patriots'.<sup>147</sup>

Another 'dark' feature was the exclusionary practices of these civic societies, which cannot be over-estimated. These groups had an exclusive nature, membership normally being limited to Russians, and therefore, Jews and national minorities were

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<sup>142</sup> GARF, F. 117, op. 2, d. 8, l. 84 a.: *Veche*, 5 October 1908.

<sup>143</sup> GARF, F. 117, op. 2, d. 15, ll. 4-6: letter to the main council of the UAM from Novo-Aleksandriia, 21 February 1910; GARF, F. 117, op. 2, d. 8, ll. 7-7 ob., 61, 89.

<sup>144</sup> Iu. I. Kir'ianov (ed.), 'Publikatsii: perepiska i drugie dokumenty pravyykh (1911-1913)', *Voprosy istorii*, 10 (1999), p. 107; Kir'ianov and Dodonov (eds.), 'Predystoriia pravomonarkhicheskikh partii', 5 (2001), p. 118.

<sup>145</sup> GARF, F. 102, 4-e d-vo, op. 1907, d. 164, l. 64: *Birzhevye vedomosti*, 3 October 1907.

<sup>146</sup> GARF, F. 102.OO, op. 316, (1905 g.), d. 999, ch. 39, l. A, l. 209: *Utro svobodne*, 23 April 1907.

<sup>147</sup> *Ibid.*



banned from joining, as in the case of the Kiev sports club 'Eagle'. Other nationalist groups, such as the Kiev Club of Russian Nationalists, also adopted such practices.<sup>148</sup> Elsewhere, projects of charity and education did not only aim to improve the immediate material situation of those that needed help, but had other, more subversive functions. A day centre for the Circles of Russian Women in Voronezh provided not only a social service, but also a forum for the discussion of rightist values.<sup>149</sup> When a school for the poor was established, a device for inculcating the values of Orthodoxy, autocracy and nationality was also created.

## Conclusion

Between the revolution of 1905 and the years immediately preceding the outbreak of the First World War, rightists made some headway appealing to different social groups, and creating a cross-class civic vision united by the connecting thread of an idealized patriotic society, but with its roots located in Russia's history. Across the empire, workers, students, peasants and women joined the monarchist cause, showing that the patriotic ideals of the central monarchist councils had some popular resonance, although the exact scale of the movement is difficult to precisely determine from available sources. Yet there were clear limits to this vision of unity across society. The divisive and exclusionary ideologies adopted, far from being a source of strength, in fact became a weakness for several right-wing groups. These limited their potential social intake, and additionally, repelled educated and well-to-do Russians, again highlighting the growing class dimension to the new right's following. For many conservatives, right-wing radicals were seen as hooligans and they rejected their demagogical leanings. Fears of the pogrom crowd are apparent in the memoirs of a Duma deputy from the Nationalist Party, Vasilii Shul'gin. Describing crowds of patriotic demonstrators in the 1905 pogroms, he notes their 'wild roars' and asks 'what could be more frightening than a mob?'<sup>150</sup>

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<sup>148</sup> Hohler, 'Radical Right Civil Society', pp. 101-102.

<sup>149</sup> GARF, F. 117, op. 1, d. 53, l. 34.

<sup>150</sup> V. V. Shul'gin, *Days of the Russian Revolution: Memoirs From the Right, 1905-1917* (edited and translated by B. F. Adams, Gulf Breeze, 1990), p. 25.

However, even given the small scale of several right-wing civic groups, they should not be excluded from an examination of civic society in late imperial Russia. Firstly, there were overlaps between these radical rightist groups, and more mature, developed and sophisticated organizations, such as, for instance, the Society of Friends of Natural History, which shared with many Academist groups the importance of science as a form of social capital.<sup>151</sup> Secondly, we see the true complexity of the right when studying examples such as the DHE or URWM, and the creation of a civic vision for Russian society. The response to different social groups changed depending on whether national minorities, women, students or Jews were the demographic in question.<sup>152</sup> This casts new light on the radical right's position in society as well as in politics, caused in part by this unusual intersection between extreme and conservative visions, and the related impact of identity politics. Furthermore, these civic groups, in portraying a divisive and dark view of society were not unique to their time, but reflect exclusionary practices in other European and global organizations, similar examples of which endure across the world to this day. In late imperial Russia, the absence of strong and responsive central government only encouraged the appearance of non-democratic, 'dark' civic groups.<sup>153</sup>

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<sup>151</sup> See for example Bradley, *Voluntary Associations*, pp. 128-168.

<sup>152</sup> Hohler, 'Radical Right Civil Society', pp. 101-103.

<sup>153</sup> Berman, 'Civil Society and the Collapse of the Weimar Republic', pp. 401-429.

### Towards Catastrophe – Internal Crises and Division

As the revolutionary tide ebbed after 1905, the radical right groups suffered a gradual decline in membership numbers. These numbers reveal that although at one stage a large-scale presence, rightists never achieved the level of support that they desired.<sup>1</sup> In one respect, the answer to why this was the case is obvious. After 1905-1906, revolutionary violence was on the wane; without a revolutionary movement, counter-revolutionaries were not needed. By the middle of 1907, Stolypin had quelled left-wing extremism in brutal fashion, and there appeared to be more terror coming from extremists on the right, though the evidence showing this is 'impressionistic and inconclusive'.<sup>2</sup> This reinforced the regime's view that the autonomous right was a threat, in spite of its shared convictions with tsarism. Even so, this factor reveals less of the right's internal weaknesses, which gradually robbed the movement of its initial dynamism. There had been serious attempts by the right to develop conceptions of workers' rights, forge links with the peasantry and spread ideas of social improvement after 1905. Since these views did not always fall on entirely stony ground, why then was the right diminished as a political and social movement by the outbreak of war in 1914?<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> This is shown by police reports compiled by Kir'ianov, *Pravye partii v Rossii, 1911-1917*, pp. 69-103. The numbers of right-wing groups across the empire deteriorated markedly between the two periods compared, the first being from the end of 1907 to the start of 1908, and the second period from the end of 1915 to the start of 1916. Taking Odessa as an example: from 1907-1908, the membership of the URP in the region was estimated at 3,000, with all other combined right-wing groups at 2,670. The data from 1915-1916 shows a drop in numbers to 1,050 and 400 respectively. The figures are on p. 82.

<sup>2</sup> Ascher, *The Revolution of 1905: Authority Restored*, p. 326; Waldron, *Between Two Revolutions*, Ch. 3.

<sup>3</sup> Kir'ianov's monograph on the right-wing parties has examined the First World War period (1914-1917) in considering the 'reasons for crisis and failure'. In this author's view, right-wing weakness was apparent well before this time. With substantial evidence to show various problems, such an analysis can be attempted for an earlier period: Kir'ianov, *Pravye partii v Rossii, 1911-1917*, pp. 388-424.

There were alternative reasons for the right's decline: factionalism and corruption, the divisive and yet potentially powerful mobilizing idea of nationalism, and the Beilis affair and its fall out. These factors were all connected; together, they form an argument that factionalism and ideological disagreements combined to contribute to the right's self-destruction, a process largely driven from within. This does not mean that the right was without its successes after 1907, the year that the movement appeared to peak in terms of numbers, members and overall influence. As we have seen, there were many examples of right-wing clubs with influential social capital operating across the empire, and the presence of rightists in the re-configured Third Duma, structured to be more 'Russian in spirit' according to Petr Stolypin, increased rapidly after 1907.<sup>4</sup> However, the recruitment of rightists into the political arena paralleled the declining influence of the right's extra-parliamentary activity. Its stature as an independent social movement was not aided by the recruitment of major right-wingers to positions in parliament and politics.

### **Schisms in the Right**

A central cause of rightist weakness was political infighting, which crippled the ability of several major groups to operate effectively on a day-to-day basis. The first major crisis in right-wing power came at the start of 1908, when the largest right-wing group, the Union of Russian People (URP), suffered a split significant on its own terms and indicative of problems occurring in several groups across the empire. One of the root causes of this split was corruption. Embezzlement of government funds and subsidies was widespread amongst the right, and a recent analysis has focused in detail on the financial corruption of the URP, both in St. Petersburg and Odessa, as well as in several other areas across the empire. Such financial problems did not, it should be noted, end all productive links between right-wing organizations, but contributed to a series of tensions within the movement that were

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<sup>4</sup> See for instance Ivanov, *Poslednie zashchitniki monarkhii*; and Edelman, *Gentry Politics*, p. 30.

never entirely overcome, mainly centered on the ‘Dubrovinist’ wing of the URP. After four years of internecine strife amongst local groups, a nationwide split followed in early 1912, when the URP once again broke apart to form two rival organizations.<sup>5</sup>

### *The Union of Russian People and the Union of the Archangel Mikhail*

By late 1907 the URP, under A. I. Dubrovin’s leadership, had grown in size to become a very large-scale political movement, with membership in the tens of thousands, but all was not well under an apparent veneer of success.<sup>6</sup> There were widespread accusations within the URP that Dubrovin had embezzled a large amount of funds, mainly those given to the organization by surreptitious government sources, intended for supporting newspapers, *druzhiny* and councils.<sup>7</sup> A. I. Prusakov, a member of the URP in 1906, claimed Dubrovin took a cut of the substantial government subsidy directed towards *druzhiny* in St. Petersburg for himself.<sup>8</sup> What is clear is that within the URP after 1905, criticism began to grow over allegations of his financial wrongdoing, and his stance of total intransigence towards the Duma: a toxic combination of corruption and tactical squabbles leading to unrest.<sup>9</sup> Though the URP had staged electoral campaigns to the First and Second Dumas, the disappointing return of rightist deputies had led many within the movement to question the wisdom of espousing anti-constitutional ideas whilst playing the constitutional game.<sup>10</sup> One significant source of opposition was Vladimir Purishkevich, a flamboyant figure from a minor gentry family in Bessarabia who

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<sup>5</sup> Langer, ‘Corruption and the Counterrevolution’, covers St. Petersburg, pp. 116-126, and Odessa, pp. 242-262.

<sup>6</sup> The exact figures are open to dispute. Stepanov in his *Chernaia sotnia v Rossii* claims around 400,000: pp. 104-105, 108-109. However, for reasons I have laid out in chapter two, this estimate could be unreliable.

<sup>7</sup> For examples, see Chernovskii (comp.) and Viktorov (ed.), *Soiuz russkogo naroda*, pp. 43-45, 49, 50-53, 55, 75-77.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 45.

<sup>9</sup> GARF, F. 116, op. 1, d. 1, ll. 19-19 ob.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, l. 11.

had joined the URP in 1905. His personality clashed with that of Dubrovin from an early stage. His infighting with Dubrovin reached such a point that he was expelled from the URP's central council at the start of 1908. From the end of 1907 until the start of 1908, Purishkevich and his closest associates discussed the creation of a new group, and on 11 March, the Union of the Archangel Mikhail (UAM) was officially established, with its main council located in St. Petersburg.<sup>11</sup>

Ideologically, this group was almost identical to the URP, believing in the supremacy of the autocracy, Russian religion and an intense form of nationalism. But the tactics of the group were different to the earlier and larger organization.<sup>12</sup> Purishkevich, unlike Dubrovin, did not preclude the possibility of working with the Duma system (whilst still voicing his opposition to it), and his enthusiastic campaigning for election bore reward when he became a deputy to the Second, Third and Fourth State Dumas from Bessarabia, which he represented between 1907 and 1917.<sup>13</sup> This was undoubtedly helped by the Tsar's dissolution of the Second Duma to create a more compliant buffer of 'conservative' feeling. In other areas of policy too, Purishkevich's group displayed increased autonomy from the main council of the URP. Though Purishkevich, like Dubrovin, lamented the period of constitutionalism and revolution, he was increasingly attempting to find political solutions to political problems. However, it should be recognized that this does not

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<sup>11</sup> Biographical details for the group can be found in 'Soiuz imeni Mikhaila Arkhangel'skogo', in V. V. Shelokhaev (ed.), *Politicheskie partii Rossii: konets XIX-pervaia tret' XX veka. Entsiklopediia* (Moscow, 1996), p. 491; and its leader in *CSIE*, pp. 423-432; *RKE*, pp. 388-392. A comprehensive and sympathetic recent biography of Purishkevich is A. A. Ivanov, *Vladimir Purishkevich: opyt biografii pravogo politika (1870-1920)* (St. Petersburg, 2011).

<sup>12</sup> The rules and regulations of the group, which it should be noted closely mirror those of the URP, are published in *GARF*, F. 117, op. 2, d. 36, ll. 1-9 ob.; see also Kir'ianov (ed.), *Pravye partii*, Vol. 1, pp. 369-374.

<sup>13</sup> For a thorough portrait of Purishkevich's activity in the Duma, see I. K. Kir'ianov, *Rossiiskie parlamentarii nachala XX veka: novye politiki v novom politicheskom prostranstve* (Perm, 2006), pp. 159-181.

mean the UAM was a less radical organization: *druzhiny* were established under its own auspices.<sup>14</sup>

Purishkevich's stage in the Duma allowed for opportunities both of self-promotion and the broadcasting of the rightist cause, that the clandestine activities of Dubrovin's URP, such as the attempted assassination attempts, could not. His lengthy and virulent speeches in the Duma, castigating all manner of ills in Russian society, including Jews, socialists and other parliamentarians, led to him gaining notoriety across the empire. On one occasion, after throwing a glass of water at Pavel Miliukov, he was thrown out of the chamber, to much applause from liberal deputies.<sup>15</sup> However his elevated profile appeared to help his organization, and after Purishkevich had left the URP in 1908, significant numbers of monarchists gravitated towards the UAM, which had a measure of success in creating its own social movements, particularly in the realm of student support. Furthermore, Purishkevich was active in the field of publishing and propaganda. The total print-run of the myriad of books published by the UAM, such as the 13-volume *Book of Russian Sorrows (Kniga russkoi skorbi)*, designed to chronicle the many victims of the revolutionary movement, was estimated to come to nearly 1.3 million copies.<sup>16</sup> Purishkevich '...appeared as a most active publisher, it was thanks to his efforts that there was a turn towards the ability to publish en masse...of the rightist political and societal organizations'.<sup>17</sup> Purishkevich's publication activities, like the different endeavours of Riabov, had the eventual goal of educating the population in a civic, anti-revolutionary, 'Russian' spirit. Purishkevich's success in this sphere may have been greater than that of many of his contemporaries on the right, and such activities doubtless helped to raise his own profile. But the split between the URP and UAM

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<sup>14</sup> B. A. Pelikan, whom we will encounter below, formed a *druzhina* for UAM members in Odessa during 1908, mentioned in Chernovskii (comp.) and Viktorov (ed.), *Soiuz russkogo naroda*, p. 274.

<sup>15</sup> The incident is mentioned in Ascher, *Revolution of 1905*, Vol. 2, p. 307.

<sup>16</sup> Kir'ianov, *Rossiiskie parlamentarii*, pp. 160-161.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 160. More evidence of this publication activity is in a list of UAM books, in *Priamoi put'*, 30 April 1910, pp. 79-80; and evidence of disbursements from the authorities in support of these ventures can be found in Chernovskii (comp.) and Viktorov (ed.), *Soiuz russkogo naroda*, pp. 138-139.

proved damaging to the right-wing movement more widely, as it divided its potential base of social support, and the lasting enmity between central figures such as Dubrovin and Purishkevich was never resolved.<sup>18</sup>

After 1908, the two main right-wing groups, the younger UAM, with its commitment to parliamentary struggle, publishing and exploring new avenues of social support, and the older URP, which adopted a more combative approach to what many activists saw as a necessarily fierce anti-revolutionary war, became increasingly separate. The two leaders did not directly communicate with one another. Purishkevich's stage in the Duma gave him a more visible platform than his rival, and by 1910, Dubrovin had become something of a *bête noire* for many in the movement, as Purishkevich's attitude towards him had no small influence within right-wing ranks. However, Dubrovin still had many supporters, including amongst members (and also, former members) of the URP. An open letter to the main council of the URP on 19 June 1910, sent by an activist, Olga Morozova, strongly praised the 'wise and direct leadership' of A. I. Dubrovin, and his strong, semi-dictatorial style of leadership of the URP, a necessity due to the severity of the revolutionary threat faced. She claimed the 'backstage intrigue' by his rivals would lead only to the weakening of the monarchist movement, and Dubrovin's secrecy in regard to his own affairs was a merely a sign of his personal nobility, an unwillingness to 'air his dirty laundry in public'. Even at this advanced stage, Dubrovin exerted influence over some activists within the movement. By 1910, a 'Dubrovinite' faction had emerged, removed from other groups on the right, but with a measure of influence over many activists.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> There were also criticisms of Purishkevich from a conservative angle. Vladimir Meshcherskii, who had no small influence within the press, described the Duma orator as 'an extremely talented actor', considering him to be little more than a self-publicist. *Grazhdanin*, 10 June 1911, 26, p. 12.

<sup>19</sup> GARF, F. 102.OO, op. 316, (1910 g.), d. 244, ll. 22-23 ob., 25-26: otkrytoe pis'mo glavnomu sovetu SRN (otoslannoe v glavnyi sovet), Olga Morozova, 19 June 1910.



However, other leading monarchists were harshly critical of Dubrovin and his corruption. Ioann Vostorgov, an associate of Gringmut, also left the URP in 1908 to join the UAM. Much bickering continued between the two warring factions afterwards, and one police report even describes an assassination attempt in October 1910 on Dubrovin by recalcitrant former members of the URP who opposed his rule. This was discussed in the main council of the group, and reported in *Russkoe znamia*. Such incidences point towards the symbolic significance of violence as a central part of the political culture of the extreme right.<sup>20</sup> However, one newspaper, *Sovremennoe slovo*, reported that by autumn 1910 these factional fights had ‘ceased to attract the interest of the general public’ and were leading to the wider ‘decline in the influence of the monarchist movement.’ Following this, Dubrovin left the central council of the URP for some months, resulting in a further crisis of leadership.<sup>21</sup>

The warnings of the damage that infighting would do to the right-wing movement apparently went unheeded by Dubrovin, Purishkevich and their principal associates. To further compound the factionalism that was widespread in the central councils of the URP after 1908, the group, still led by Dubrovin, split once again in November 1911. This further schism was driven by criticisms of his ‘dictatorial’ attitudes from within the group, in particular, disapproval of his tendency to expel members he did not like. Additionally, his refusal to allow the URP to undergo a total audit of funds raised further suspicions of his corruption. Criticism was also driven by his uncompromising stance towards the UAM; he would not admit to any level of reconciliation with his enemy, Purishkevich.<sup>22</sup> The split came after members of the URP’s main council, still led by Dubrovin at this time, realized a drop in the numbers of new members. Leading members of the URP decided to take firm action. At a session convened to deal with the problem, after several ballots, members voted

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid., ll. 29-29 ob.: MVD, DP, po osobomu otdelu. Sekretno. Nachal’nik S. Peterburgskogo okhrannogo otdeleniia, October 1910; ll. 30-30 ob., shows an apparently identical source.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., l. 27: *Sovremennoe slovo*, 17 September 1910.

<sup>22</sup> GARF, F. 116, op. 1, d. 1, ll. 26-28 ob.

to replace Dubrovin with E. I. Konovnitsyn as the leader of the group.<sup>23</sup> Dubrovin responded to his expulsion in 1912 by convening his own group, and decided to cut all of his remaining ties with the URP, a decision influenced by his irritation at continuous criticisms of his rule. Dubrovin left the group, along with his associate Elena Poluboiarinova, to form yet another right-wing organization. This was the grandiloquently titled All-Russian Dubrovinist Union of Russian People (*Vserossiiskii Dubrovinskii soiuz russkogo naroda*, or ARDURP), which was active from 1912 until 1917.<sup>24</sup> Meanwhile, the URP continued to exist under the same name, now led by N. E. Markov and Count E. I. Konovnitsyn, after the secession of the Dubrovinists. It should be noted that the rules and regulations of the Dubrovinist faction of the URP, and its central ideological tenets, did not differ from those of the main council of the URP or of the UAM. Dubrovin's faction was strongly committed to Orthodoxy, autocracy and nationality, as well as anti-Semitism and harsh xenophobia, and like the original URP, designated itself a 'union' rather than a 'party'.<sup>25</sup>

This new split in the right was prompted in part by Dubrovin's corruption, but to focus solely on this is to place insufficient emphasis on important tactical disagreements emerging within the rightist movement. By the end of 1907, some of the more perceptive figures inside the movement were realizing that if the faction were to adapt, diversify and achieve wider success, then it would have to bring to an end its activities of clandestine violence. In particular, it would need to stop planning (and occasionally, undertaking) assassinations, which were unsurprisingly damaging the credibility of the group as a buttress for the autocracy. There is an obvious paradox about a group that ostensibly styled itself as 'pro-autocracy' and then decided that the best course of action to defend that same governmental structure

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<sup>23</sup> Ibid., l. 28 ob.

<sup>24</sup> Chernovskii (comp.) and Viktorov (ed.), *Soiuz russkogo naroda*, p. 39; this split is also chronicled in Langer, 'Corruption and the Counterrevolution', pp. 122-126.

<sup>25</sup> The rules and regulations of the group are listed in GARF, F. 116, op. 1, d. 1, ll. 31-37.

was to carry out an assassination attempt on a chief policy-maker, such as Sergei Witte, or дума deputies such as Mikhail Herzenstein and Grigori Iollos.

### *The URP in Odessa*

The reverberations from the split in the central right-wing councils at the start of 1908 were felt around the empire. In Odessa, the URP branch, at that point led by Count A. I. Konovnitsyn, was subject to internal turmoil driven by political infighting. Like the central branch led by Dubrovin in St. Petersburg, much of this resentment amongst members was caused by accusations of widespread corruption within the organization. One claim was that Konovnitsyn had embezzled funds that the government channeled towards the Odessa branch of the URP from 1906 onward.<sup>26</sup> Konovnitsyn's control of the worker's *arteli* in the region, and his disbursements to URP members amongst the *druzhiny*, allowed for plenty of opportunities for him to take a cut of the subsidies. By the end of 1907, accusations of corruption had spread throughout the organization. His leadership of the URP was, unsurprisingly, increasingly challenged by his own associates. Among these were the influential B. A. Pelikan, vice-chair of the URP, and Nikolai N. Rodzevich, the chair of the closely affiliated organization the Union of Russian Men (URM) in Odessa. As in the case of Dubrovin, Konovnitsyn had a tendency to expel members that complained about missing disbursements and insufficient funding weakening the structure of the group.<sup>27</sup> This created a wide pool of disgruntled former members of the URP in the area, and also led to dissatisfaction within the ranks. Pelikan, increasingly angry at missing disbursements leading to the financial weakness of the group, quit as editor of *Za tsaria i rodinu*. He led many members of the Odessa URP, and supporters from a related group called the White Guard, in secession from

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<sup>26</sup> GARF, F. 1467, op. 1, d. 847, ll. 23 ob.-24

<sup>27</sup> In a telegram to fellow URP member K. A. Durante, Konovnitsyn described his feud with Dubrovin, and also Boris Nikol'skii, stressing that he wanted to see the expulsion of the 'hooligan elements' from the group, in order that the leadership of the monarchist unions from the end of 1912 could be placed back into the hands of the 'good' section of the URP and the UAM. GARF, F. 102, op. 265, d. 556, l. 30: A. I. Konovnitsyn (St. Petersburg), to K. A. Durante (Odessa), 4 January 1912.

the main council in March 1908. They formed a UAM branch in Odessa, in opposition to the URP in the same city.<sup>28</sup>

This dispute became exceptionally heated, and the repercussions led to smear campaigns, backstabbing and even physical fighting. Pelikan launched a campaign against Konovnitsyn in the right-wing press, the aim of which was to force Konovnitsyn from the main council of the URP. Things came to a head in March 1908, when a gun battle broke out between the two warring factions in a URP tearoom, leading to a dozen arrests.<sup>29</sup> A propaganda war then ensued, as the rival newspapers of the two groups, the UAM's *Iuzhnyi bogatyr*' (Southern Hero) and Konovnitsyn's *Za tsaria i rodinu* continued to trade blows during 1908, each accusing the other of the worst kinds of depravity.<sup>30</sup> Konovnitsyn sent a telegram to A. N. Grigor'ev's successor as mayor of Odessa, I. N. Tolmachev, who was more receptive to rightists than his predecessor, with a request that he disband Pelikan's group. Tolmachev did not cede to this, or to a further request to chair a mediating session between the two warring factions, but he did take the firm action of writing to Pelikan to request him to disband the *druzhiny* of the UAM.<sup>31</sup>

Pelikan was uncooperative at first, but after receiving another direct request, this time from the leader of the UAM in St. Petersburg, Vladimir Purishkevich, he did disband the combat arm of the UAM in 1908.<sup>32</sup> The consequences of this infighting were grave for the monarchist movement in Odessa. Konovnitsyn had recruited many workers to the URP cause, particularly due to his control over the *arteli* in the port area, where right-wing recruitment had been strong during 1906

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<sup>28</sup> The corruption of the URP in Odessa is recounted in Langer, 'Corruption and the Counterrevolution', pp. 242-246.

<sup>29</sup> GARF, F. 102.OO, op. 316, (1905 g.), d. 999, ch. 39, l. A, t. 3, l. 123.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., ll. 157-158: I. N. Tolmachev to the Odessa department of police, 25 July 1908.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., ll. 125-125 ob.: I. N. Tolmachev to the Odessa department of police, 18 April 1908. Further reports on this factionalism amongst the Odessa URP can be found in Tolmachev's reports, as well as police circulars addressed to him, passed within the department of police during 1908 in: *ibid.*, ll. 126-126 ob.; l. 147; ll. 172 ob.-173.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, ll. 126-126 ob.

and 1907. His approach had led to the creation of new right-wing workers' groups, such as the Russian Society of Steamship Workers. These groups, often closely affiliated with the URP, had managed to build up a strong level of organization during 1906 and 1907.<sup>33</sup> As the majority of the disbursements given to the URP by the government were channeled to worker's *arteli* by Konovnitsyn, the split in the right served to divert these much-needed resources, as well as to have the effect of playing the rival factions off against each other. As I. N. Tolmachev noted, another outcome was that these splits helped to destroy whatever credibility the leaders of the right had, not just within their own groups, but also with other sympathizers in the region, including in the Odessa city administration.<sup>34</sup> The URM, still led by Rodzevich, continued to publish hostile reports of the URP in their paper, and the propaganda war helped to discredit the movement. As Tolmachev foresaw, this made members lose sight of whatever 'higher' aims that they had, as the movement became gradually more riven with infighting.<sup>35</sup>

This was, however, not the end of the story for the URP in Odessa. In November 1909, a group from within the main council of the URP requested a full audit of the group's finances, and that Konovnitsyn be removed due to his corruption and hampering of the popular potential of the URP. The split, as reported in *Novoe vremia*, occurred when a group of three members wrote an open letter to the main council of the URP, requesting that Konovnitsyn step down, and nominated a local right-wing activist, I. I. Zaichenko, to step up to replace him. Konovnitsyn, far from giving up his position, declared the move illegal and expelled the dissident group, who subsequently left to form a new group under Zaichenko, the Southern Monarchist Union (SMU).<sup>36</sup> Unsurprisingly, animosity ran high afterwards, and the SMU continually aimed barbs at the leader of the URP from their affiliated paper,

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<sup>33</sup> Konovnitsyn claimed as much in a later telegram: GARF, F. 102, op. 265, d. 565, ll. 995-996: A. I. Konovnitsyn (St. Petersburg), to I. V. Sosnovskii (Odessa), 2 April 1912.

<sup>34</sup> GARF, F. 102.OO, op. 316, (1905 g.), d. 999, ch. 39, l. A, t. 3, ll. 157-158: I. N. Tolmachev to the Odessa department of police, 25 July 1908.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, l. 158.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, l. 242: *Novoe vremia*, 14 February 1910, no. 12187.

the UAM's *Iuzhnyi bogatyr*'. One of these in February 1910 accused Konovnitsyn of pocketing the funds intended for the URP's paper *Za tsaria i rodinu*. Activists from the SMU even issued death threats against their ex-leader.<sup>37</sup> The group claimed that Konovnitsyn's dictatorial leadership was ruining the potential of the monarchist movement in Odessa to achieve a truly mass scale. His desire to enrich himself was at odds with the real aims of monarchism, which needed to re-establish the autocratic and religious principles of the movement, and not play to the whims and caprice of corrupt leaders.<sup>38</sup>

But this war of words did not go unanswered from Konovnitsyn's side. *Za tsaria i rodinu*, still controlled by Konovnitsyn, responded in 1910 by suggesting that the SMU were not and could not be 'true patriots' due to their factionalism. Rebutting their accusations, Konovnitsyn claimed that an audit carried out independently by I. N. Tolmachev in 1908 had found the finances of the group were all in order. He also claimed his commitment to social reform, citing his opening of a school for poor children in Odessa, one of several charitable works on his part, and that he had successfully directed a mass monarchist movement in Odessa as shown by his work in appealing to the worker's *arteli* in the port area from 1906.<sup>39</sup> The movement was, he claimed, not in decline, but only just beginning. The succession of Zaichenko and the SMU from the main council of the URP was against the constitution of the group, the spirit of the monarchist movement, and demonstrated Zaichenko's own grasping nature and love of power. This infighting and factionalism was reported in the monarchist press throughout the year.<sup>40</sup>

These schisms in the right severely weakened the popular impact of the URP in Odessa, which underwent a sharp decline in membership numbers after 1907.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> Ibid., l. 243: *Russkoe slovo*, 11 February 1910.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid., l. 243.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid., ll. 244-244 ob.: *Za tsaria i rodinu*, February 1910.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

<sup>41</sup> See Kir'ainov, *Pravye partii v Rossii, 1911-1917*, pp. 69-102.

The authorities in Odessa increasingly opposed the monarchist movement, one result of the vicious infighting that had broken out within it. Furthermore, the groups were compromised by lingering suspicions of violence, such as the anti-Jewish pogroms that had been associated with the right between 1906-1908, before the UAM's *druzhiny* was wound up on the orders of Tolmachev. Moreover, those who had previously sympathized with the monarchist movements, including voices within authority, were now put off by the widespread corruption and factionalism of the URP and its breakaway organizations. Importantly, the corruption in these two examples was not unique, but indicative of trends elsewhere. The Bessarabia branch of the URP, which underwent its own set of internal problems after the death of its leader Pavel Krushevan in 1909, also suffered from corruption and factionalism. After Krushevan's passing, I. I. Dudnichenko, a leading member of the group in Kishinev, sent a telegram to the main council of the ARDURP in October 1912 to complain that he 'could not stay silent when people use the monarchist badge as a device to enrich their personal well-being'. Certainly, his leader Dubrovin would have recognized his claims.<sup>42</sup>

Corruption, whilst certainly not helping the activities of the right, is an inadequate explanation on its own to explain right-wing weakness. Corruption served to exacerbate existing tensions and engender further problems, and helped to accelerate the decline of the movement. But other significant problems prohibited the wider social, political and cultural influence of the right-wing associations. Corruption forms part of rather than the entire explanation, as the groups that left the URP after 1906, including the UAM, went away to pursue their own activities, sometimes with quite different aims and goals in mind. The weaknesses of the URP central council and its recalcitrant members cannot fully explain the shortcomings of these different groups. There were wider problems, ones that illuminate the political

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<sup>42</sup> GARF, F. 116, op. 1, d. 57, l. 6: I. I. Dudnichenko (Kishinev), to the main council of the URP, A. I. Dubrovin (St. Petersburg), 10 January 1912.

culture of the far right. Significant ideological and tactical disputes dogged the right after 1907, one of which was the divisive approach to the national question.

### **People and Nation**

In addition to the practical problems sketched, there were also many ideological disputes occurring within the various factions of the movement, often revolving around the three central elements of the Uvarov triad, not least the role of autocracy and Russian religion. Here, one of the most significant sources of tension within rightist groups will be highlighted, which is the problem of nationalism, and more specifically, how the ideas of both people and nation were understood within the rightist factions and the complexities this engendered.<sup>43</sup> This question was a crucial one for the right, as the stress on national issues was a central part of their appeal. When considering the issue of nationality in the Russian Empire, central questions arise immediately, as illustrated by the terminology. What did rightists mean by people (*narod*)? What did they mean by Russian (*ruskii*, or *rossiiskii*)? What did they mean by nation (*natsiia*) or nationality (*narodnost'*)? These crucial issues would have profound implications for the ability of rightists to mobilize supporters in a multi-denominational, multi-ethnic empire, where in 1897, only 43.3 per cent of the population were 'Great Russians'.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> Some major studies of Russian nationalism are Weeks, *Nation and State*; G. Hosking, *Russia: People and Empire, 1552-1917* (Cambridge, MA, 1997); Thaden, *Conservative Nationalism*; Lieven, *Empire*; Hillis, *Children of Rus'*; H.-D. Löwe, 'Russian Nationalism and Tsarist Nationalities Policies in Semi-Constitutional Russia, 1905-1914', in R. B. McKean (ed.), *New Perspectives in Modern Russian History* (Harrogate, 1990), pp. 250-277.

<sup>44</sup> Theodore Weeks defines *Ruskii* as opposed to *Rossiiskii* as a more 'intimate' word 'used to describe the language, culture, and even religious faith (i.e., Eastern Orthodoxy) shared by Russians'. T. Weeks, 'National Minorities in the Russian Empire, 1897-1917', in Geifman (ed.), *Russia Under the Last Tsar*, p. 113. The statistic is cited from p. 118.



Nationalism has shaped the course of modern history more than any other force, and the Russian Empire was no exception to this.<sup>45</sup> It was not only the right-wing parties and their related civic groups that were pre-occupied with the issue. Conceptions of Russian nationhood had haunted the policy-makers of the Russian Empire long before the late imperial period, and were one of the primary challenges in governing its vast empire. An enormous territorial space, with dauntingly long borders, the regimes of successive Tsars were all in broad agreement about the necessity of bolstering the power of the state, but there was no consensus about an underlying conceptual understanding of what the state actually was. For instance, the European myth under Peter the Great identified the autocrat with the power of the secular state. In stark contrast, the national myth under Alexander III ‘strove to display an ethnic and spiritual bond between the Russian Tsar and the Russian people’, the latter conception of which held more appeal for the rightist groups.<sup>46</sup> In addition to the far right, the Nationalist Party and the Kiev Club of Russian Nationalists were also perplexed by such matters. Professor P. I. Kovalevskii was one Nationalist Party member who thought that the force of nationalism could be used as an above-class ideology creating a very wide social basis for the party. He saw that the Nationalists could be a truly ‘democratic’ group, speaking in the interests of all classes. His resulting appeal, therefore, included the need to ‘arouse national feeling among the dark masses’.<sup>47</sup> However, when Kovalevskii urged the need for the group to transform its ideology in 1912, it was still drawing on a very limited social basis. Kovalevskii’s desire for increased popular involvement was reflected in the right-wing groups.<sup>48</sup> However, as will be seen, there were divisions

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<sup>45</sup> One classic study is E. J. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism Since 1870: Programme, Myth, Reality* (Cambridge, 2005). The divide between ‘state’ and ‘nation’ in this period makes it difficult to apply Hobsbawm’s central thesis to the case of the Russian Empire.

<sup>46</sup> Wortman, *Scenarios of Power*, Vol. 2, pp. 6-7, 13-14.

<sup>47</sup> P. I. Kovalevskii, *Osnovy russkogo natsionalizma* (St. Petersburg, 1912), p. 16; *Russkii natsionalizm i natsional’noe vospitanie v Rossii* (St. Petersburg, 2006), p. 105; Edelman, *Gentry Politics*, pp. 146-148.

<sup>48</sup> On the Nationalists, see Weeks, *Nation and State*, pp. 30-40. For a detailed outline of the central ideological tenets of the Nationalist Party (or All-Russian National Union), see Kotsiubinskii, *Russkii natsionalizm*, pp. 76-115.

between rightists and conservatives, often over the position of national minorities in the empire.<sup>49</sup> But even to extreme rightists, how radical were changes in the actual content of such nationalist appeals?

*The rightist view: exclusive and exclusionary*

A central feature of the right-wing view was its exclusive and exclusionary nature. Like fears over degeneration stemming from sources such as alcoholism or pornographic novels, minority nationalities were perceived as threats to the body politic. The rightist factions considered that Russia was a religious and cultural entity, the central focus of which was the *narod*. Russian Orthodoxy was a key element of this construction: the *narod* was composed only from Orthodox ‘true Russians’.<sup>50</sup> Exclusionary practices were a guiding principle of the Russian Assembly, which established in its rules and regulations in 1901 a law that only Orthodox men would be admitted to the group. In one early meeting, a member declared that ‘to become Russian men, we must first become Orthodox, only those who derive from Orthodoxy will support Russian nationality’.<sup>51</sup> One of the striking features of the manifestos, editorials, rules, regulations and many other pronouncements of the Russian Assembly, URM, URP and UAM is the frequency of which the term *narod* is used, rather than empire or nation, in describing the entity that the right-wing groups wished to protect.<sup>52</sup>

This is not to say that groups, including the URP, were unaware of the importance of issues of nation and empire, rather to state that they conceived of

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<sup>49</sup> See Loukianov, “‘Russian for Russians’ or ‘Russia for Russian Subjects?’” pp. 77-92.

<sup>50</sup> *Narod* does not translate easily into English. Authors in the nineteenth century sometimes used it to refer to the Russian peasantry. Some commentators and statesmen when using it meant more than just ‘people’ (its literal translation). It was also associated with nationality and nationhood, and particularly the ‘simple folk’ of society – the masses to whom the Russian right appealed.

<sup>51</sup> GARF, F. 588, op. 1, d. 1243, ll. 6–6 ob.: *Zapis’ zasedaniia soveta Russkogo sobraniia*; this note records a standard Assembly view.

<sup>52</sup> This was the view held by the URP, which can be found in a manifesto from 1906 titled ‘*Soiuz russkogo naroda*’, in Shelokhaev (ed.), *Programmy*, pp. 444, 447.

these problems as ‘tribal questions’ (*plemennye voprosy*) in which Russian Orthodox people were considered separately from the rest of the population.<sup>53</sup> Gringmut described such a view in a pamphlet published after his death, *The History of Popular Power*.<sup>54</sup> Similarly, the rules and regulations of the main council of the UAM in 1908, as outlined in its newspaper *Kolokol* (Bell) described a rising ‘feeling of national self-awareness in the majority of the people’ and described Russians as under threat from subversives within the empire.<sup>55</sup> These were often taken to mean national minorities, including the Poles, Jews and Finns. The ARDURP copied these ideas. In early 1912, a pronouncement from Dubrovin, the chair of the main council, claimed the *narod* was the centre of the Russian body politic, requiring special protection by right-wing groups, making explicit reference to ‘Russian nationality’.<sup>56</sup>

The national question was powerful, but also divisive; many who believed in Russian nationalism could not agree on a shared conception of it in order to create a party united on such a platform. In considering the issue, Dubrovin thought the ARDURP to be at odds with nationalist groups, as well as his fierce rivals on the left. Dubrovin claimed the most dangerous individuals ‘we must consider to be not only the revolutionaries and the Kadets, but also the Octobrists and the nationalists’. By the latter, Dubrovin was referring to the Nationalist Party, which had supported Stolypin over the Western borderlands bill that was blocked in the State Council in 1911.<sup>57</sup> Lev Tikhomirov also criticized this group. ‘The National Union is claiming a national role, but in reality the people have no demand for it. It has not introduced anything into its program, and has no connection with Russian nationality’.<sup>58</sup> At a meeting of the main council of the Russian Assembly on 27 March 1906, chaired by Nikolai Rodzevich (also a member of the rightist URM) it was declared by one

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<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 447.

<sup>54</sup> V. A. Gringmut, *Istoriia narodovlastiia* (Moscow, 1908).

<sup>55</sup> UAM program as republished in *Kolokol*, no. 642, 1908, St. Petersburg, in Kir’ianov (ed.), *Pravye partii*, Vol. 1, p. 370.

<sup>56</sup> GARF, F. 116, op. 1, d. 1, l. 19.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>58</sup> L. A. Tikhomirov, *K reforme obnovlennoi Rossii (stat’i 1909, 1910, 1911)* (Moscow, 2012), p. 51.

member that the Assembly stood in opposition to constitutional monarchists. This meant the Octobrists and their offshoots such as the Union of 17 October – in this instance, the Party of Legal Order (PLO) established in St. Petersburg in October 1905. The major point of contention was that the PLO's propaganda in elections to the State Duma held during 1906 had taken the somewhat ambiguous position that the autocracy was to exist unchanged, and yet be bound by a constitution. The Russian Assembly saw this as an unacceptable, false compromise, '...the invitation of indivisible autocracy is only a ruse, which was behind the PLO and the constitutional parties'.<sup>59</sup>

But where did the source of disagreement lie on the national question? A significant point in the pronouncements of Dubrovin is the use of the term *ruskii*, Russian by ethnicity, rather than *rossiiskii*, or Russian by nationality. This was not merely semantics, but points to an important distinction from moderate conservative groups.<sup>60</sup> Dubrovin was referring to the Russian people, rather than the Russian Empire. The use of 'people' supported the view that to be 'Russian' was a cultural, religious and intimate rather than national quality. This qualitatively transforms the meaning of the term, and also its implications, as identity became linked to ethnicity. Nationality could not simply be acquired: one was born with it.<sup>61</sup> Not only Dubrovin's group took this stance; N. L. Mordivinov, a member of the Russian Assembly, declared in a meeting between the central council of the group that 'true Russian Orthodox men' were *ruskii* rather than *rossiiskii*.<sup>62</sup> Yet others on the right had slightly different conceptions. As we have seen, the *narod* was a central point of importance to the right-wing parties – the group imagined as *ruskii*.<sup>63</sup> Some right-

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<sup>59</sup> GARF, F. 588, op. 1, d. 1243, ll. 33-34 ob. This statement is particularly telling, as the final aim behind both this case and the principle of national self-realization was the same for the far right: defending state power.

<sup>60</sup> It was on the conception of the potential Russian nation on which few conservative groups agreed. The Nationalist Party did not have close accord with the right-wing factions on this matter, in addition to their disagreements on the direction that 'constitutional' Russia was to take.

<sup>61</sup> For a discussion of this distinction, see Hosking, *Russia: People and Empire*, pp. xix-xxviii.

<sup>62</sup> GARF, F. 588, op. 1, d. 1243, ll. 6-6 ob.: Zapis' zasedaniia soveta Russkogo sobraniia.

<sup>63</sup> See also the discussion in chapter two under 'the rise in populist nationalism'.

wingers, among them Lev Tikhomirov, did refer to the nation, but like Dubrovin and the ARDURP, he conceived of Russian Orthodox people as a separate group, needing to be inoculated against the corrupting effects of other peoples within the empire. For Tikhomirov, the basis of this difference was cultural and religious, as well as ethnic. In his essay *What is Nationalism?* which appeared in *Moskovskie vedomosti* in 1910, Tikhomirov outlined his conception of the national issue:

...it is evident that this concept and principle can be reduced to the simple fact, that we must *become ourselves*. Nations, people, as in the case of all individuals, have a unique character, which is to say, metaphorically speaking, personality. This character is based on the characteristics of different tribes, and the individual circumstances of the historical development of a people...<sup>64</sup>

For other rightists, religion was central to this imagined separateness. N. D. Obleskhov, a commentator writing in Purishkevich's journal, equated being Russian with a belief in Russian Orthodoxy.<sup>65</sup> It was also clear from the publicity materials of the central council of the UAM from 1908 onwards that Russian was taken to mean Orthodox.<sup>66</sup> Right-wing activists expressed their concerns about political subversion primarily in relation to the non-Orthodox subjects of the empire. The Catholic Poles were one (though far from the only) source of consternation, and these rebels from the Western regions of the empire were imaged to be subversives. In a letter from L. Ivanov to V. M. Purishkevich in 1913, the Polish deputies to the State Duma were described as 'the first and most desperate enemies of the Russian people'.<sup>67</sup> In the writings of G. G. Zamyslovskii, the non-Russian peoples of the empire were associated with liberalism, revolution and subversion of the autocracy,

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<sup>64</sup> L. A. Tikhomirov, *Apologiia very i monarkhii* (Moscow, 1999), p. 212. The italics have been preserved from the original.

<sup>65</sup> *Priamoi put'*, 30 September 1910, pp. 151-153.

<sup>66</sup> Kir'ianov (ed), *Pravye partii*, Vol. 1, p. 370.

<sup>67</sup> GARF, F. 102, op. 265, d. 920, l. 446: L. Ivanov (Warsaw), to V. M. Purishkevich (St. Petersburg), 2 March 1913. We should not consider that rightists were alone on this issue. Other conservatives, such as Vladimir Meshcherskii, agreed national minorities posed a grave threat. In one editorial, Meshcherskii claimed that the revolutionary threat came, most of all, from Finland. *Grazhdanin*, 4 September 1911, 34, p. 16.

and religious differences were central to this.<sup>68</sup> A similar logic lay behind the idea that the revolution of 1905 was Jewish-inspired.<sup>69</sup> The regime's proposed creation of a separate province in Kholm was looked upon with no little suspicion for these reasons; the region contained large numbers of Roman Catholic Poles, who would destabilize state power in the region.<sup>70</sup> A view developed that Russian nationhood involved several non-acquirable characteristics; therefore, it was the preserve of a certain group of people. However, in contrast to later rightist groups in Europe, this view was often based on culture and religion, rather than exclusively ethnicity.

Generally, right-wing groups stuck to 'Great Russian' nationalism of a nineteenth century variety.<sup>71</sup> Many rightists considered that the way to integrate subject or 'enemy' nationalities was to apply administrative and cultural Russification, much in the same way that the regime itself had done throughout the latter half of the nineteenth century.<sup>72</sup> This shows the largely derivative nature of the ideas of the Russian right when it came to the national question. Ideas of nationalism that involved politics or ethnicity were often weakly developed. Instead, many rightists saw religious and cultural differences as the primary focus of the national question. The resulting views were often primitive, and relied primarily on the exclusion of non-Russians, as well as ideas of integrating the distant 'truly Russian' masses.

In contrast, some members of the Nationalist Party developed appeals to nation building. One figure was P. A. Kovalevskii. Such slogans could use political and ethnic ideas, as well as appeals to Russian religion. A speech from B. A. Vasil'chikov to a meeting of the Kiev Club of Russian Nationalists on 21 February 1910 revealed an appeal to the *narod*, where he stated 'we call for Russian men to

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<sup>68</sup> G. Iurskii [G. G. Zamyslovskii], *Pravye v tret'ei gosudarstvennoi dume* (Khar'kov, 1912), p. 12.

<sup>69</sup> This view was widespread in right-wing circles, for instance, in the work of A. S. Shmakov, a later witness at the Beilis trial in September 1913. A. S. Shmakov, *Svoboda i evrei* (Moscow, 1906).

<sup>70</sup> *Vestnik Evropy*, 4 (1912), p. 422; Weeks, *Nation and State*, pp. 172-192.

<sup>71</sup> See Weeks, *Nation and State*, pp. 3-18.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*

unite in our club under the banner of nationalism'. He claimed that the club called for cultural and political work, such as an increase in Russian language tutorials for other peoples of the empire.<sup>73</sup> Through tuition in a shared language, culture, and identity, Vasil'chikov held that many subjects of the empire could be converted to the cause of Russian nationalism.<sup>74</sup> Such views were more sophisticated than the doctrines of certain right-wing groups, and behind these were the differing statuses of respective ethnic and minority nationalities. Nationalists also saw the empire as a 'family of peoples', which like the official effort to organize the Bessarabia celebrations, allowed for a possible reconciliation of different peoples under the imperial framework. The aim was very far from equality – 'Great Russians' held the prominent role – but each group would be afforded a role. Nationalists, like the right-wing parties, the regime and a great many Russians, perceived that Ukraine and Belorussia were not separate from Russia. However, the Jewish question was a thornier issue for the Nationalists, who were split on whether Jews could be assimilated or converted.<sup>75</sup> One development was indicative of this conflicted mood. At a 1909 conference in the southwest of the empire, attended by a wide variety of nationalists and URP members that resulted in the creation of the Nationalist Party, there was debate over whether Jews could join the nationalist group to be created. The resolutions following the conference decreed that Jews would be barred from joining the organization, a view shared by many moderate and radical nationalists alike.<sup>76</sup>

However, differences between the two movements became more pronounced over time. One case showing this was the debate over the Western *zemstvo* bill, when rightist opposition to Stolypin's policies coalesced between 1910 and 1911.<sup>77</sup> The bill promised fundamental reform of the Western borderland regions in the

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<sup>73</sup> *Sbornik kluba russkikh natsionalistov*, Vol. 2 (Kiev, 1910), pp. 113-114.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 114.

<sup>75</sup> *Sbornik kluba russkikh natsionalistov*, Vol. 1 (Kiev, 1909), p. 35.

<sup>76</sup> *Okrainy Rossii*, 2-19 September 1909, pp. 521-522; Hillis, *Children of Rus*, pp. 228-230.

<sup>77</sup> Weeks, *Nation and State*, pp. 131-151; see also Hosking, *The Russian Constitutional Experiment*.

empire. It was the Nationalist Party on which Stolypin leaned in order to get the bill passed through the State Duma in 1911.<sup>78</sup> Indeed, this bill was originally proposed to Stolypin by the Nationalist Party member D. I. Pikhno, whose idea of a bill to establish *zemstva* in the Western regions of the empire gave Stolypin an opportunity to use nationalism as a potential basis of support for his administration. In the charged atmosphere after 1909-1910, this was an appealing prospect for him. The bill was initially supported by a number of groups including the Nationalist Party, as well as several delegates from the right, but further qualifications to the bill, debated in the State Duma, proved controversial for the latter tendency. In sharp contrast to the Nationalist Party, rightists opposed any possible qualifications to the bill, believing they would strengthen the interests of non-Russian peoples in the empire, and the devolution of powers from a centralized state.<sup>79</sup> Several rightists fiercely criticized the bill in the Duma; N. E. Markov declared that the bill could only be supported if it strengthened the Russian people and the Russian state.<sup>80</sup> Purishkevich added that he too saw such a bill as potentially weakening the hold of the Russian state on subject nationalities.<sup>81</sup> Both were united in a view that establishing legislative powers in regions of the empire with largely non-Russian populations would devolve power from the central administration in St. Petersburg. In spite of these criticisms, the bill passed on a reading through the State Duma in the spring of 1910, albeit only by a narrow margin.

The bill met with a different fate in the State Council. The commission that examined the bill in March 1911 removed most of the amendments that had been added to the bill in the Duma. In the full session, the bill was defeated. It had met with strong opposition, directed against what was considered by many to be little more than a piece of unscrupulous politics. Stolypin had already been under pressure

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<sup>78</sup> Edelman, *Gentry Politics*, p. 101; Weeks, *Nation and State*, pp. 145-148.

<sup>79</sup> Waldron, *Between Two Revolutions*, p. 172.

<sup>80</sup> *Gosudarstvennaia Duma, Stenograficheskie otchety*, Third Duma, session 3 (St. Petersburg, 1910), iv, col. 922.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*, cols. 1490-1491.



from the Octobrists, shown by opposition to Article 87 in the State Council, and this failure helped to further diminish his already shaky support in the State Duma and State Council.<sup>82</sup> More significantly, there was a widespread view on the right that the bill would potentially strengthen the power of minority nationalities in the Russian Empire, where there were large numbers of Polish Catholics, and it met with inveterate criticism. It also inspired machinations from other conservatives, not least Petr Durnovo in the State Council.<sup>83</sup> As well as revealing the right's position in relation to the nationality question, this episode also shows that the right was not, even by 1910-1911, completely marginalized from mainstream political discourse. This was not the only area where the right had an influence. The United Nobility, a congress composed of nobles whose assemblies started to meet in 1908, exerted behind the scenes pressure by leaning on high-level ministers and also on the Tsar himself in order to place further pressure on Stolypin's reform plans.

### *The Nationalists, the right and race*

Modern racist ideas were developing on the right before the First World War, as seen from Krushevan and Shmakov, but significant figures, not technically members of the right-wing parties, also demonstrated such views. Often, these were developing in what have been termed more 'moderate' national associations, such as the Nationalist Party and the Kiev Club of Russian Nationalists.<sup>84</sup> Yet the matter is complex: more extreme ideas were in development in different types of conservative groups.<sup>85</sup> Ivan Sikorskii, a member of the Kiev Club of Russian Nationalists, drew

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<sup>82</sup> *Gosudarstvennyi Sovet, Stenograficheskie otchety*, Session six, meeting 36 (St. Petersburg, 1910), cols. 1781-1795.

<sup>83</sup> Weeks, *Nation and State*, pp. 148-151; Waldron, *Between Two Revolutions*, pp. 170-175.

<sup>84</sup> The view that these were moderates is expressed in Edelman, *Gentry Politics*, p. 70; Loukianov, 'Russia for Russians', pp. 77-78.

<sup>85</sup> The influence of the concept of race on conservative, nationalist and rightist thought in the late imperial period has attracted attention in recent Russian scholarship, though reference to such ideologies can be fleeting. See for example Repnikov, *Konservativnye kontseptsii pereustroistva Rossii*, pp. 310-315; Luk'ianov, *Rossiiskii konservatizm i reforma*, pp. 135-137. A work that examines the history of physical anthropology in Russia in a much wider context, taking into account such leading literary lights as A. S. Pushkin, as well as aspects of nationalist discourse in the late

on contemporary ideas of anthropology and race with both West European and native influences in his lectures delivered between 1912 and 1913. Western authors such as Houston Stewart Chamberlin were attracting increasing interest in debates exploiting the concept of race – particularly, an emerging interest in biology and aesthetic differences as categories for racial separation.<sup>86</sup> Sikorskii, whilst a member of the Nationalist Party rather than the URP, did contribute to rightist activities in other areas, such as the temperance movement, and was called upon as a witness during the initial stages of the Beilis affair in May 1911.<sup>87</sup>

Sikorskii shared a wider suspicion of minority nationalities, and unlike many on the right, conceived that aesthetic and biological differences between races were more significant than religious ones. In a lecture delivered to the Kiev Club of Russian Nationalists, later published in 1915 as *What is the Nation and Other Forms of Ethnic Life?* Sikorskii declared that ‘in our days the biggest mistake we have made is mixing races with nations’.<sup>88</sup> ‘The unity and relationships between different groups’, he continued ‘establishes itself most clearly in the life of the race, the aim of which is a successful organization of labour, and in particular, the task of preserving the lives of races and making their progress complete – both physical and spiritual’.<sup>89</sup> Sikorskii claimed that the peoples of Russia were both modern and European (describing them as ‘true Aryans’), and that Ukrainians and Belorussians were not separate from them, due to their shared ethnicity.<sup>90</sup> In contrast, he considered the ‘ancient tribe’ of the Jews to be distinct, due to their unique ‘character’. Like many others on the right, he considered the Jewish question

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imperial period, is M. Mogil’ner, *Homo imperii: istoriia fizicheskoi antropologii v Rossii* (St. Petersburg, 2008). This has recently been published in English as M. Mogilner, *Homo Imperii: A History of Physical Anthropology in Russia* (Lincoln and London, 2013).

<sup>86</sup> I. Sikorskii, ‘Chto takoe natsiia i drugie formy narodnoi zhizni?’ *Ab Imperio*, 3 (2003), p. 242. This re-publication includes footnotes and commentary by I. Gerasimov, M. Mogil’ner, and A. Semenov.

<sup>87</sup> R. Weinberg, *Blood Libel in Late Imperial Russia: The Ritual Murder Trial of Mendel Beilis* (Indiana, 2013), pp. 99-101.

<sup>88</sup> Sikorskii, ‘Chto takoe natsiia i drugie formy narodnoi zhizni?’ p. 242.

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 247.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 259.

separately, but he made specific reference to their racial difference, using the term race as well as tribe in his report.<sup>91</sup>

Unlike most other racialists, Sikorskii was a trained psychiatrist, with a general interest in theories of degeneration and psychological decline, as seen in his opposition to the problem of alcoholism. To a greater degree than several other nationalist commentators, he attempted to give his observations on nationalism and racial difference a degree of scientific respectability, whilst making claims that referred to the importance of the spirit of each nation.<sup>92</sup> On the Russian people, he wrote ‘their popular *spirit* – is the most biologically rich, based on centuries of biological and historical life, which is one of the main reasons that it is hidden from present view’.<sup>93</sup> His views are a mixture of nineteenth-century Romantic thought (in Germany, where it originated, the spirit of a nation [*Geist*] was central to this Romantic revival), and more modern concepts that drew on scientific ideas and techniques transforming Russian nationalist discourse immediately before the First World War.<sup>94</sup>

The idea of race was prevalent elsewhere. The main ideologue of the Nationalist Party, and one of the main columnists for *Novoe vremia*, Mikhail Men’shikov, also developed ideas of race and biological difference. This demonstrates how Russian nationalist thought was moving in new and unusual directions in the earliest years of the twentieth century, inspired by Western European trends and ideas. Like Sikorskii, the Jewish citizens of the empire were a particular problem for Men’shikov, and he held this particular ‘tribe’ to be distinct

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<sup>91</sup> Ibid., pp. 262-263.

<sup>92</sup> For extensive commentary on Sikorskii’s ideology, see Mogil’ner, *Homo imperii*, pp. 237-278; for his role in the Beilis affair, see I. A. Sikorskii, ‘Ekspertiza po delu ob ubiistve Andriushi Iushchinskogo’, in V. B. Avdeeva (ed.), *Russkaia rasovaia teoriia do 1917 goda*. Vol. 2 (Moscow, 2004), pp. 325-336; his influence on psychiatry and degeneration is considered in D. Beer, *Renovating Russia: The Human Sciences and the Fate of Liberal Modernity* (Ithaca, NY, 2008), pp. 41-43, 51-52, 55-56.

<sup>93</sup> I. A. Sikorskii, *O psikhologicheskikh osnovakh natsionalizma* (Kiev, 1910), p. 4.

<sup>94</sup> Ibid.

not only from Russians, but from all other national groups in the empire. In an article published in *Novoe vremia* on 1 February 1909, he wrote that ‘the Jews are all individuals, but they have no individuality’.<sup>95</sup> They were described as a tribe of ‘other people’ who derived from the Semitic lands, and hence their ‘different blood’ from the Russian people would manifest itself in a variety of cultural and behavioral differences.<sup>96</sup> Like Sikorskii, a main thrust of his argument was that the Jewish race could not mix with native Russian populations, not only due to profound differences of culture and language, but also due to their biological separateness. He continued, ‘we, Aryans, even with our feelings of fear and disgust at these other parasitic tribes, cannot comprehend the internal element, as can a Jew himself. Here, we must understand that it is imperative to separate ourselves from this danger’.<sup>97</sup>

It is telling that many of these doctrines that utilized ‘modern’ racism or anti-Semitism were in development outside of the specific party confines of the right-wing groups, as there was undoubtedly an overlap between other nationalist groups and the rightist factions on issues of race. A. S. Shmakov was one ardent anti-Semite on the right (a member of the RMP and URP) who specifically engaged with racist doctrine, expounding on the merits of the ideas of Houston Stewart Chamberlin, and describing the Jews as a pestilence on the Russian land, following this with the claim that ‘race is the main factor in the problems of state and society’.<sup>98</sup> He was joined in having such ideas by rightists including Pavel Krushevan, G. V. Butmi and Pavel Bulatsel.<sup>99</sup> However, for both Nationalists and the ‘extreme’ right, ethnically based racist ideologies that drew on biology and Darwin as their intellectual background,

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<sup>95</sup> M. O. Men’shikov, *Pis'ma k russkoi natsii* (Moscow, 1999), p. 110.

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 108.

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 114.

<sup>98</sup> A. S. Shmakov, *Mezhdunarodnoe tainoe pravitel'stvo* (Tallin, 1999), pp. 20-21; see also his report delivered to the Russian Assembly, re-printed in *Vestnik Russkogo sobraniia*, 9 February 1907, 5, p. 5. In the report, Shmakov claimed that the assimilation of Jews into Russian society would lead to ‘the moral and spiritual decomposition of the nation’. Such themes would be continued in later works such as *Evreiskie voprosy, na stene vseмирnoi istorii*, pp. 76-77, 80-81.

<sup>99</sup> Several of these anti-Semitic reports delivered to the Russian Assembly have been preserved in the organization’s newspaper. See *Vestnik Russkogo sobraniia*, 13 April 1907, 14, p. 3, report from Krushevan; 8 May 1907, 18, pp. 2-3, report from Bulatsel.

though present, were usually marginal ideas in their discourse.<sup>100</sup> Older ideas of religious infiltration, and the threat to poor Orthodox Russians from Jewish merchants and speculators, were more common. Men'shikov's essay cited above was not merely a report about biological racist doctrine, but also contained the more common stereotypes of the Jews as the masters of international finance capitalism and monetary exploitation.<sup>101</sup>

The most important point to realize is that these pejorative visions, in all their varieties, mutually reinforced one another despite the qualitative differences. Considering racist anti-Semitism as the 'other' in the ranks of the various types of Russian anti-Semitism, whilst a useful tool for scholarly analysis, does not always take us closer to the reality of how these doctrines actually influenced people. Not only was the distinction between ethnic, religious and cultural racism often unclear, more generally, it is a climate where traditional religious anti-Semitism was not only common, but often encouraged and legitimized, that allowed for the rise of different types of anti-Semitic ideology. Prejudices that had existed for centuries created fertile ground for the rise of new, yet linked, ideologies. What is most telling is the interaction between these different tendencies; they often occurred alongside each other, with commentators such as Men'shikov and Shmakov holding a potpourri of views simultaneously, rather than sticking rigidly to one type or the other. When considering the generic irrationality of racist thought and practice, this is hardly the most surprising outcome.

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<sup>100</sup> Löwe, *The Tsars and the Jews*, pp. 282-284.

<sup>101</sup> Men'shikov, *Pis'ma k Russkoi natsii*, p. 115.

## The Beilis Affair

The most notorious example of this interdependence was the Mendel Beilis affair. The controversial episode of a factory worker accused of the murder of a Christian child, Andrei Iushinskii, shook Russian society and gained international notoriety.<sup>102</sup> The affair started on 20 March 1911, with the discovery of the corpse of thirteen-year old Iushinskii in a cave on the outskirts of Kiev, and lasted for over two years, continuing through to the acquittal of Beilis on 29 October 1913. The discovery of the body was the starting point for a wave of lurid accusations against Beilis and many other Jews in the empire, with extreme right-wingers concocting a myth of a ‘ritual murder’, a vision based on an ancient, religious mythology of a Jewish proclivity to target Christian children and commit a ‘blood libel’.<sup>103</sup> The extreme right, in particular the URP and DHE in Kiev, the latter headed by a student at the nearby Kiev University, V. S. Golubev, took a prominent role in promoting the affair, firstly in bringing it to public attention, and then subsequently fuelling the interest of the imperial regime.<sup>104</sup>

The details of the affair itself have been repeatedly examined: it is not the aim here to present a chronology.<sup>105</sup> It has been agreed that the affair was in effect an anti-Semitic show trial, manufactured to demonstrate the ‘guilt’ of Beilis, and that the ‘facts’ reported by the prosecution team in the Kiev district court, based on the

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<sup>102</sup> For instance, the London newspaper *The Times* ran occasional reports on the affair in 1913: *The Times*, 13 March 1913, 40158, p. 5; 27 October 1913, 40353, p. 7; 26 December 1913, 40404, p. 5.

<sup>103</sup> For background on the ritual murder charge, see J. D. Klier, ‘The Origins of the “Blood Libel” in Russia’, *Newsletter of the Study Group on Eighteenth-Century Russia*, 14 (1986), pp. 12-22; R. Weinberg, ‘The Trial of Mendel Beilis: The Sources of “Blood Libel” in Late Imperial Russia’, in M. S. Melancon and D. J. Raleigh (eds.), *Russia’s Century of Revolutions* (Bloomington, IN, 2012), pp. 17-35.

<sup>104</sup> Biography of this student radical can be found in *CSIE*, pp. 150-152; T. Kal’chenko and A. D. Stepanov, ‘Student-cheranosotnets: Vladimir Stepanovich Golubev (1891-1914)’, in Ivanov and Stepanov (eds.), *Voinstvo Sviatogo Georgiia*, pp. 683-689.

<sup>105</sup> Some of the most useful secondary studies are: Löwe, *The Tsars and the Jews*, pp. 284-302; M. Samuel, *Blood Accusation* (New York, 1966); A. S. Tager, *The Decay of Czarism: The Beilis Trial* (Philadelphia, 1935); Rogger, *Jewish Policies and Right-Wing Politics*, pp. 40-55; Weinberg, *Blood Libel*; Lindemann, *The Jew Accused*; Hillis, *Children of Rus’*, pp. 244-273; Stepanov, *Chernaia sotnia v Rossii*, pp. 265-321.

blood ritual myth propagated by the far right, were fictitious.<sup>106</sup> This interpretation is entirely satisfactory: the following analysis will instead consider how the affair sheds light on the nature of the right in this period. It will examine right-wing conceptions of religious and modern anti-Semitism; and also, how the controversial incidents contributed to the wider perception of the radical right. In particular, it will stress how the affair highlighted the fragility of the right-wing vision.<sup>107</sup>

### *The Beilis affair: a right-wing myth*

On the discovery of Iushinskii's body, pressure was put on local police to find a culprit for the murder. The ritual murder accusations first became public on 27 March 1911, when Victor Pavlovich interrupted the calm of Iushinskii's funeral by spreading leaflets depicting his murder as part of the blood libel ritual. The case quickly piqued the interest of local far right groups. Two associations, the youth organization the DHE, and the Kiev branch of the URP, were the most intimately connected with much of the resulting anti-Semitic propaganda – and Pavlovich was a member of both groups. The DHE's paper, *Dvuglavyi orel* (the Double-Headed Eagle, edited by Dar'ia Kudelenko) as well as other right-wing tribunes such as *Zemshchina* and *Vestnik Soiuza russkogo naroda* carried grisly depictions of the blood ritual, and depicted Christian Russians as under attack from a Jewish 'enemy within'. On 11 April 1911 a *Dvuglavyi orel* editorial claimed that 'there is no doubt whatsoever that we have here a case of ritual murder conducted by the kikes'.<sup>108</sup> *Zemshchina* protested 'surely we do not yet live in a kike republic, but a Russian monarchy'.<sup>109</sup> In an age of a developing public press, the distribution of these graphic images was having an effect on the reading public. One powerful image was martyrdom myths: a strong theme on the right, and observers became familiar with

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<sup>106</sup> See for example Rogger, *Jewish Policies*, pp. 40-55.

<sup>107</sup> The findings of the Provisional Government committee of enquiry into the affair, held during 1917, are published in G. M. Reznik, V. Kel'ner, R. Sh. Ganelin, et al. (eds.), *Delo Mendelia Beilisa* (St. Petersburg, 1999).

<sup>108</sup> *Dvuglavyi orel*, 11 April 1911, 17, p. 1.

<sup>109</sup> *Zemshchina*, 26 April 1911, 627, p. 1, in Weinberg, *Blood Libel*, p. 87.

rightist attempts to present Iushinskii as a martyred victim of Russian Jewry. One Kievan described an image in *Dvuglavyi orel* as ‘a snapshot of a corpse surrounded by mourners, encircled with the inscription: to the memory of the eternal martyrs at the hands of the Jews’.<sup>110</sup>

The presentation of the ritual murder claim was an opportunity for hardcore anti-Semites to project their own warped view of the state of Russian society and the role of the Jews in the history of the nation to the wider public. The radical right created an outlandish and gruesome interpretation of the murder to fit into their anti-Semitic worldview. The police in Kiev were placed under pressure to prosecute, especially by the right-wing press, which pushed forward the ritual murder claims on both a local and national level. V. A. Golubev hounded the local prosecutor’s office in order to find a Jew fit to pin the ritual murder accusations on. The case received support from prominent right-wingers, including V. M. Purishkevich and G. G. Zamyslovskii, who pushed the regime to take up the ritual murder case, and in mid-1911, Mendel Beilis, a local brick worker, was accused of ritual murder.

The affair demonstrated a meeting between religious and modern anti-Semitism on the far right. Propaganda, as carried in *Vestnik Soiuzna russkogo naroda*, and the views of Purishkevich, Zamyslovskii and Golubev, constructed an anti-Jewish prejudice based largely on religious lines. The ‘blood libel’ was an ancient myth that stretched back to medieval times, though by this stage it had more or less died out in Western Europe. As Robert Weinberg has described, it had originated in twelfth-century England, when rumours spread that Jews had murdered Christian children to subvert the Passion of Christ. The Fourth Lateran Council (1215) was crucial in propagating the ‘blood libel’ or ritual murder myth. A vital moment in this was when ‘the Western Latin Christian Church affirmed the doctrine of transubstantiation, the belief that the water and wine used in the sacrament of the

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<sup>110</sup> GARF, F. 102, op. 265, d. 564, l. 883: A. Arkhipov (Kiev), to M. F. Bazarevich (Kazan), 18 March 1912.



Eucharist contained the body and blood of Christ'. This facilitated the propagation of a mythical ritual involving blood, as guilty Christians felt that the consuming of wine and wafers at weekly communion was a form of ritual cannibalism, and this deviant behavior was projected onto Jews.<sup>111</sup>

The right used both ancient and modern anti-Semitic ideas in the affair. The long-established religious myth of the Jews as 'Christ killers' was added to more recent ideas, which presented Jews as involved with socialism (the primary example being Marx himself), and the revolutionary movement more generally. This anti-Semitism stemmed from a deep-seated rejection of constitutional and civil rights for ethnic and religious minorities, including rights of religious toleration.<sup>112</sup> Both types of anti-Semitism mutually reinforced one another.<sup>113</sup> The affair also demonstrates that the most radical and demagogical wing of the right, including the URP and the DHE, were obsessed with conspiracy theories. The rightist press was full of descriptions of outlandish 'plots' to subvert and to take over Russia. A wide variety of 'conspiracies' could also emanate from other enemy groups, including masons, socialists, students, Poles, Armenians and Finns; in short, a whole gamut of subversives undermining the power of the Russian Empire.<sup>114</sup>

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<sup>111</sup> Weinberg, *Blood Libel*, p. 4.

<sup>112</sup> A cartoon in the UAM's journal depicted two figures from the Kadet party in top hat and tails (clearly showing they were from the middle-class intelligentsia) bringing a crude Jewish caricature a dinner tray labeled 'equal rights'; this was literally serving up concessions on a platter. *Priamoi put*, 20 January 1910, p. 17.

<sup>113</sup> Weinberg, *Blood Libel*, pp. 7-8.

<sup>114</sup> *Vestnik Soiuzu russkogo naroda*, 27 September 1913, 157, pp. 7-11. Often, these groups were said to act in tandem; an Assembly piece asserted that the revolution was 'Jewish-masonic': *Vestnik Russkogo sobraniia*, 28 February 1908, 9, p. 3; N. E. Markov's *Voiny temnykh sil* presented the French Revolution (a particular *bête noire* of virtually all Russian conservatives) as a masonic conspiracy: pp. 58-77.



Figure 16 Kadets and Jewish 'equal rights', *Priamoi put*, 20 January 1910, p. 17.

The Beilis ritual murder campaign quickly gained adherents in the first half of 1911. Significant figures within the regime, such as the Minister of Justice from 1906 to 1915, Ivan G. Shcheglovitov, have been suspected of bringing it to the attention of Nicholas II.<sup>115</sup> The right's role is clearer. Activists including Golubev brought it to public prominence and fuelled wild rumours of anti-Russian outrages committed by Jews, myths that some bought into. Once the case was transferred to the Kiev judicial office, the rightist press, such as *Vestnik Soiuzo russkogo naroda*, carried extensive coverage of the trial, sometimes in lurid detail.<sup>116</sup> A maniacal view of all Jews as Christ-killers was presented, and this interpretation was adopted by the prosecution team, in particular, by the ardent anti-Semites A. S. Shmakov and G. G. Zamyslovskii. That a distinctly dubious case had even reached the comparatively

<sup>115</sup> 'Dopros I. G. Shcheglovitova', in Shchegolev (ed.), *Padenie tsarskogo rezhima*, Vol. 2, pp. 352-359.

<sup>116</sup> *Vestnik Soiuzo russkogo naroda*, 27 September 1913, 157, pp. 7-11.

late stage of undergoing legal process shows that right-wing attitudes, even at their most extreme, were not wholly on the periphery of Russian society, but had some influence. Notably, Golubev's contention that Jewish ritual murder was the only possible explanation for the death of Iushinskii had support at the trial in September 1913.<sup>117</sup>

However, the Beilis affair was a much-contested matter. Even to those who sympathized, such views were potentially dangerous given the violence that could stem from them. Though rightist papers such as *Dvuglavyi orel* pleaded for calm after the ritual myth was first published,<sup>118</sup> during and after 1911, there was an upturn in reports of anti-Jewish violence in Kiev.<sup>119</sup> In wake of the Beilis affair, there was a desire from certain DHE activists to incite a new wave of pogroms, with Golubev one particular agitator. The publicizing of the affair shows a clear correlation with fresh incidences of public disorder; reports from Kiev province in 1912 show isolated outbreaks of anti-Semitic violence.<sup>120</sup> But these sources also point towards the limits of the right-wing vision, and in particular, the subsequent attempts to incite a new wave of anti-Semitic violence. Though there were isolated incidents, the outbreak of mass violence against all the Jews in Kiev from 1911, as hoped for by Golubev and others, never materialized.<sup>121</sup> Was this a popular rejection of the anti-Semitic claims of the affair's exponents? One can speculate that the overwhelming majority of Kievans, as had been the case in the 1905 pogrom,<sup>122</sup> had no intention of getting themselves involved in anti-Jewish violence, whether they held such prejudices or not. Another source of opposition came from within Kiev's governance. A. F. Girs, the governor of the province and certainly no liberal, far from granting the wishes of Golubev and other rightists to take retributive measures

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<sup>117</sup> *Delo Beilisa. Stenograficheskii otchet*. Vol. 1 (Kiev, 1913), p. 201.

<sup>118</sup> *Dvuglavyi orel*, 24 April 1911, 17, p. 1.

<sup>119</sup> These can be found in various police reports in GARF, F. 102.OO, op. 316, (1905 g.), d. 999, ch. 39, t. 6, ll. 16-16 ob.; ll. 22-22 ob.; l. 27; ll. 36-37; l. 42; l. 43; ll. 46-48.

<sup>120</sup> *Ibid.*, ll. 22-22 ob.

<sup>121</sup> *Ibid.*, l. 43: *Rech'*, 22 May 1913.

<sup>122</sup> Hamm, *Kiev, A Portrait*, pp. 205-207.

against Kiev's Jews, demanded they stop publishing graphic newspapers, warning that the resulting de-stabilization of the region would not be tolerated.<sup>123</sup>

### *Controversy amongst nationalists*

Criticism also came from elsewhere; one letter from a Kievan criticized the right-wing press coverage during 1912. Of a *Dvuglavyi orel* editorial it asked 'are we in the twentieth century?'<sup>124</sup> Liberal publications universally condemned the affair, and several nationalists spoke out against it.<sup>125</sup> D. I. Pikhno, the owner and editor of *Kievlianin*, criticized the Beilis affair, as did one of the newspaper's main contributors, Vasilii Shul'gin. Shul'gin penned an extensive defence of Beilis' innocence, appearing in *Kievlianin* on 27 September 1913, the third day of the Beilis trial.<sup>126</sup> Shul'gin, a Nationalist Duma deputy, was himself an anti-Semite, and his articles in *Kievlianin* often presented invective against Jews. He did, however, denounce the claims of ritual murder, declaring that they had no basis in reality. Shul'gin's principal reason for his opposition to the affair was that, as a lawyer by training, he found the lack of respect for the rule of law and the conspiratorial views presented in *Dvuglavyi orel* farcical. Opposition to anti-Semitism as an ideology played a lesser role, if it did at all. Shul'gin was confident that the judicial procedure would demolish all the accusations in due course.<sup>127</sup> His editorial denounced the ritual interpretation of the murder as pure superstition. 'One doesn't have to be a lawyer, but only need to have some common sense, to understand that the Beilis indictment is mere prattle, which any defence attorney could break down without

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<sup>123</sup> Ibid., ll. 16–16 ob.: police circular from A. F. Girs in Kiev, 24 February 1912.

<sup>124</sup> GARF, F. 102, op. 265, d. 564, l. 883: A. Arkhipov (Kiev), to M. F. Bazarevich (Kazan), 18 March 1912.

<sup>125</sup> See for example *Rech'*, which carried extensive reports on the Beilis affair during the trial in late 1913: 15 October, 13504, p. 3; 16 October, 13505, p. 3; 17 October, 13506, p. 2; 18 October, 13507, p. 2; 19 October, 13508, p. 2; 20 October, 13509, p. 3; 22 October, 13511, p. 2.

<sup>126</sup> V. Shul'gin, *The Years: Memoirs of a Member of the Russian Duma, 1906-1917* (New York, 1984), pp. 114-115.

<sup>127</sup> *Kievlianin*, 28 June 1911, p. 1.

even trying'.<sup>128</sup> Shul'gin continued 'weren't any...educated in the law or connected to a judicial department?'<sup>129</sup> However, right-wing papers throughout October continued with the murder ritual charge.<sup>130</sup> In Shul'gin's own Nationalist Party, the ritual murder accusations had some support. A telegram sent during the trial to the vice-prosecutor Georgii G. Chaplinskii from several members of the Kiev Club of Russian Nationalists, including A. I. Savenko, Mossakovskii, Dvorzhitskii and Chikhachev, re-iterated the view that Beilis was 'tortured by Jewish-fanatics'.<sup>131</sup> Rightists responded to Shul'gin's denunciations of the affair with invective:

On September 28 1913, in issue no. 267 of the *Kievlianin*, I published a critical analysis of the work of the Kiev prosecutor's office of the Beilis case. One can imagine the reaction from the right. The editor received a flood of most vile abuse, including not a few charges that the *Kievlianin* had been bought by Jews.<sup>132</sup>

Shul'gin further complained that his stance against the case led to him receiving threats from many on the right, though mainly the DHE and their supporters.<sup>133</sup> The potential for violence during the heated trial attracted particular controversy. One article in the Dubrovinite newspaper *Vestnik Soiuzo russkogo naroda*, published as the trial was underway, reported on a meeting between several monarchist organizations. These included ones that had previously backed the ritual murder claims, such as the Russian Assembly, the URP and the UAM. The editorial called for all of their members to remain calm during the trial:

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<sup>128</sup> Shul'gin, *The Years*, p. 114.

<sup>129</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 105.

<sup>130</sup> 'Okruzhnoe poslanie glavnogo soveta soiuzo russkogo naroda vsem otdelam soiuzo russkogo naroda i prochim organizatsiiam, vkhodiashchim v ego sostav', *Vestnik Soiuzo russkogo naroda*, 158-159, p. 3, in Kir'ianov (ed.), *Pravye partii*, Vol. 2, p. 333.

<sup>131</sup> 'Telegrammy monarkhicheskikh organizatsii G. G. Chaplinskomu, A. S. Shmakovu i G. G. Zamyslovskomu', *Vestnik Soiuzo russkogo naroda*, 158-159, p. 3, in Kir'ianov (ed.), *Pravye partii*, Vol. 2, p. 335. For more on the confluence between national and rightist interests, see 'Otchet o deiatel'nosti russkogo narodnogo soiuzo im. Mikhaila arkhangel'a za 1912-1913 gg.', in Kir'ianov (ed.), *Pravye partii*, Vol. 2, p. 382.

<sup>132</sup> Shul'gin, *The Years*, p. 104.

<sup>133</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 104.

...in view of the continual broadcasting of left-wing views in the newspapers, as well as from individuals hostile to monarchism, connecting the events of the Beilis case with upcoming events such as pogroms, and turning attention to them, what monarchists are essentially showing is that they have not learned the lessons of the pogroms, as apparently the authority powers will not tolerate mob law. The committee of monarchist organizations, in view of the celebrations of the Romanov tercentenary, zealously asks all monarchist organizations to take all necessary measures that may stop their members becoming involved in violence and pogroms...<sup>134</sup>

The article displays concern over possible counter recriminations, and indeed, a lack of faith in the members of the monarchist groups to show restraint, believing activists from the URP, DHE and others might retaliate in fury at a potential ‘innocent’ verdict.<sup>135</sup> The jury in the Kiev court reached the verdict on 29 October 1913. The jurors were mostly peasants, and the case for the prosecution had hoped that ignorance and suspicion of Judaism amongst the local population would lead to a conviction. However, the surprising result was that Beilis was acquitted, after a vote from the twelve-man jury tied at six each for guilty and not guilty meant he was able to walk free under Russian law. Whilst finding Beilis innocent, the jury’s summation that Iushinskii’s death ‘looked like a ritual murder’ (by seven votes to five) led to extremists on the right presenting the case as a success. A shrill article in *Dvuglavnyi orel* added, ‘the torturers of Christian children exult, but their criminality has been proven with extensive clarity in court’.<sup>136</sup> Lev Tikhomirov, writing in *Moskovskie vedomosti*, demanded legal redress:

...the Kiev court found Beilis not guilty of the ritual murder, but at the same time, recognized that the killing was itself proof of a ritual murder. Such recognition makes it yet more alarming if the government does not take immediate serious action towards final clarification on the issue of the existence of ritual murder.<sup>137</sup>

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<sup>134</sup> *Vestnik Soiuzna russkogo naroda*, 162-193, 1913, p. 3; see also Kir’ianov (ed.), *Pravye partii*, Vol. 2, p. 356.

<sup>135</sup> Klier, ‘*Zhid*’: Biography of a Russian Epithet’, pp. 1-15.

<sup>136</sup> *Dvuglavnyi orel*, 30 October 1913, 44, p. 1, in Weinberg, *Blood Libel*, p. 165.

<sup>137</sup> *Moskovskie vedomosti*, 30 October 1913, 250, p. 1.

That the court came close to convicting Beilis satisfied the extremists of the URP and DHE, even given his eventual acquittal. Although the case had been defeated, this was not a convincing verdict. Therefore, it is no surprise that voices from the right, including Tikhomirov, were still not convinced of Beilis' innocence due to the contradictory verdicts. Vasilii Shul'gin, who had spoken out against the entire process, was later arrested in 1913 on the charge of disseminating false evidence during the trial, but was later acquitted by Nicholas II, who never took more than a cursory interest in the affair. Though in one sense, the right had won a tactical battle in bringing the Beilis case to a local court and creating national and international interest in the resulting 'affair', from another perspective it was not at all a victory. Apart from the acquittal result, it met with domestic and international condemnation. Moreover, regime support for the affair showed how the right was reliant on sympathizers elsewhere, and had lost some of its spontaneity as a movement by 1911-1913.<sup>138</sup>

## **Conclusion**

By 1914, the right was beset by a series of divisions: practical, ideological and political. There were serious problems regarding factionalism crippling the right from 1907 onwards, but other more subversive challenges were also damaging right-wing credibility. The myths of the right, in the field of anti-Semitism where they had many adherents, alienated elitist nationalists such as Shul'gin who otherwise shared certain basic convictions, such as a belief in the Uvarov triad. As some perceptive conservative observers saw, the Beilis affair was damaging Russian prestige and credibility in making international headlines and achieving negative press coverage. The London-based newspaper *The Times* condemned the affair as the essence of

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<sup>138</sup> Weinberg, *Blood Libel*, pp. 109-110.

reaction.<sup>139</sup> Lucien Woolf, a British journalist, published a newspaper *In Darkest Russia* that took a special interest in popular and political anti-Semitism in the final years of the Russian Empire. It included regular updates on the Beilis affair, including voices from the nationalist wing that spoke out against it, such as Pikhno and Shul'gin. Another was Prince V. P. Meshcherskii, who commented 'I look upon it as a page from the annals of a lunatic asylum'.<sup>140</sup> Nationalists such as D. I. Pikhno who shared the URP's commitment to a vision of 'Great Russian' superiority and opposition to 'Jewish power' saw the organization, and in particular its Dubrovinist faction, as little more than a bunch of street ruffians. The above analysis shows that there was a schism between right-wing groups and other nationalists, which would have the consequence of prohibiting any drive to create a cross-party conservative or right-wing political group united from these disparate elements. In the end, due to deep ideological divisions, no such group was created on this platform.<sup>141</sup>

The breaking of the right also robbed tsarism of a potentially useful buffer of support. This did not necessarily need to be the case. Right-wingers used elements of traditional monarchism, including visions of a strong, centralized state – the primacy of the Russian autocracy. Many rightists also portrayed a Russia united by the supremacy of Russian Orthodox religion. Desiring the assimilation of national minorities was also not at odds with the past practice of the imperial regime. However, nationalism was changing in this period. Some conceptions of the greatness of the Russian *narod* involved ethnic exclusion, and others, a tacit rejection of the Tsarist status quo. Whilst both counter-revolutionary and reactionary ideologies on the right mutually reinforced one another, the tension between the two is of crucial importance in understanding why the right did not make more of a popular impact. In using elements of both modern and reactionary ideas, several

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<sup>139</sup> *The Times*, 11 November 1913, 40336, p. 8; 12 November 1913, 40337, p. 9. International notoriety and condemnation had followed pogrom episodes during the previous decade. See Johnson, 'Uses and Abuses', pp. 162-166.

<sup>140</sup> *In Darkest Russia*, 22 October 1913, p. 17.

<sup>141</sup> See Loukianov, 'Russia for Russians', p. 88.



right-wing groups positioned themselves in a difficult position. Clearly, they were separate from the autocracy, but did not present distinct, independent or convincing solutions to the crisis of Russian power that many different elements of society recognized as the central problem of the old regime. The extreme nature of the right's response to the revolutionary crisis had two important implications. Firstly, the exclusionary nature of the extreme right undermined the potential for greater right-wing support; the widespread press coverage of the Beilis affair, along with the supposed threats posed by national minorities, created a perception that rightists were solely negative, not providing positive or constructive solutions to the problems of Russia's present. Secondly, the autocracy's support base was fragmented by the inability of moderate and extreme rightists to work together, and provide a stable, larger conservative group that could provide support for the embattled Romanov monarchy.

## Conclusion

At the outset of the First World War one hundred years ago, the Russian right had been severely diminished as a social movement from its peak in 1905-1907. Though it still commanded adherents in Russian society, its ability to appeal to peasants and workers, which was what organizations such as the Union of Russian Men (URM) and the Union of Russian People (URP) had originally aimed for in 1905, was limited. Organizational disarray, ideological disputes and the unique political and social context of the Russian Empire did not give the right enough fertile ground upon which to make the necessary breakthroughs. There was little overlap between extreme rightists and other defenders of the state, denying the right its imagined role as a vital buffer of support for the autocracy.<sup>1</sup> However, some right-wingers were proven accurate in predicting a future revolution and further crisis. Whilst not from 'the right' as described here, it was an arch-conservative from inside the regime, Petr Durnovo, one who had seen an emerging autonomous right as a potential buttress of support for tsarism in 1905, who proved most sage in his predictions. At the outset of the war, Durnovo wrote in his famous memorandum that Germany and Russia did not have conflicting interests and needed to act as allies, and that 'in the event of a defeat, the possibility of which in a struggle with a foe like Germany cannot be overlooked, social revolution in its most extreme form is inevitable'.<sup>2</sup>

Like so many other political and social groups in Europe, the war changed much after 1914; here, only the most general contours of right-wing activity can be sketched. The fortunes of the right did not improve in this period, and the outbreak of war and its ensuing events further split the supporters of the autocracy. Whether to enthusiastically back the autocracy, or to go further in realizing its deficiencies

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<sup>1</sup> One example of this criticism was from the Nationalist deputy to the Fourth Duma, A. I. Savenko, who also specifically referred to the rightists as a 'separate fraction'. GARF, F. 102, op. 265, d. 987, l. 8: A. I. Savenko (St. Petersburg), to N. K. Savenko (Kiev), 28 April 1914.

<sup>2</sup> 'Durnovo's memorandum', in F. A. Golder (ed.), *Documents of Russian History, 1914-1917* (Gloucester, MA, 1964), p. 21; for incisive commentary on Durnovo's career, see Lieven, *Russia's Rulers*, pp. 207-223.

than before, was one particular point of contention. Some of the most prominent monarchists such as Nikolai Markov exhibited pro-German sentiments, not least as Germany was still a monarchy at this stage. The loyalties of monarchists were split between what some saw as their own wavering autocracy, which had not done enough to secure right-wing interests, and backing the war effort, which had shown the patriotism of the Russian people. Vladimir Purishkevich saw the outbreak of pro-Russian sentiment in 1914 as a popular expression of support for the regime, and enthusiastically threw himself into supporting the monarchist cause. This rightist Duma deputy cancelled almost all of his political activities after 1914, to organize relief and charity work in support of the war effort, which he enthusiastically backed until 1917.<sup>3</sup>

More widely, there was a triumphant mood in Russia at the outset of the war, reflected by right-wing newspapers such as Dubrovin's *Vestnik Soiuzo russkogo naroda*, a sentiment reminiscent of conservative visions of imperial grandeur and a swift, decisive military victory in the war against Japan a decade earlier. For these newspapers, unequivocal support for the war effort was the only possible option.<sup>4</sup> This triumphalism was challenged by the stark realities of Russia's military campaigns in the initial phases of the war, which were largely disastrous, exemplified by among other defeats the rout at Tannenberg, which resulted in the destruction of the Russian Second Army in August 1914. War brought chaos and a challenge to perceptions of an easy victory, though some right-wingers continued to support the military campaign whilst hoping against hope for a Russian victory. Tikhomirov wrote in his diary in August 1915 'in truth, demoralization has occurred on both sides. The Germans are also giving in, and there is even an expression now that soldiers "fight a loser's chess game", where Germans and Russians are equally

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<sup>3</sup> J. Langer, 'Fighting the Future: The Doomed Anti-revolutionary Crusade of Vladimir Purishkevich', *Revolutionary Russia*, 19, 1 (2006), pp. 43-44.

<sup>4</sup> *Vestnik Soiuzo russkogo naroda*, 23 August 1914, 195, p. 12; 21 December 1914, 203, p. 12.

striving to surrender to one another'.<sup>5</sup> Indeed, Russia's improving performances in the field during 1916 and 1917 fed such aspirations for eventual victory, and not only amongst rightists.

In the imperial court, the autocracy's leading figures were attracting increasing criticism. The military had long been a sacred cause for the right, but the imperial regime was more open to criticism. A particularly hated figure was Grigorii Rasputin, rumoured to hold the favour of the Tsarina, and the stories of his unseemly activities in the imperial court were seen by important rightists, who themselves wished for the favour of the imperial regime, as bringing shame on the motherland.<sup>6</sup> Fantasies of treason and pro-German influence at the imperial court were on the rise throughout the war, not only from the far right, but from liberal Duma deputies too.<sup>7</sup> This fevered atmosphere, and Rasputin's activity in spreading rumours of his own influence, inspired a plot to kill off this increasingly hated figure, with one rightist playing a central role in the eventual assassination of the imperial favourite. On 16 December 1916, the plot to kill Rasputin was carried out by Purishkevich, Felix Iusupov and S. S. Lazover. By this stage, rightists were increasingly critical of the government's conduct in the war, even in the Fourth Duma, a largely pliant political system. Purishkevich and Markov launched speeches critical of all aspects of the military campaign, showing that the autocracy itself was increasingly under fire from right-wingers who posed as the defenders of the people against an increasingly hapless regime and its chaotic conduct of the war effort.<sup>8</sup>

The revolutions of 1917 represented the final defeat of the organized post-1905 right, bringing a swift end to the main organizations that had been tottering for several years. After 1917, many rightists retreated from organized political activity,

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<sup>5</sup> L. A. Tikhomirov, *Dnevnik, 1915-1917 gg.* (Moscow, 2008), p. 113.

<sup>6</sup> Figes and Kolonitskii, *Interpreting the Russian Revolution*, pp. 15-19.

<sup>7</sup> For discussion of the fear of German spies within the Russian Empire, see W. C. Fuller Jr., *The Foe Within: Fantasies of Treason and the End of the Russian Empire* (Ithaca, NY, 2006).

<sup>8</sup> See for example two published speeches delivered in the Fourth State Duma in 1916 from Markov, in N. E. Markov, *Voiny temnykh sil* (Moscow, 2008), pp. 408-421 and pp. 422-436.

with some going into exile, and others retreating from public life entirely. Many of the figures from the old regime were captured and interrogated by the Provisional Government Commission of Enquiry in 1917, one of which was Markov. Others, such as Purishkevich, initially escaped this fate, and conspired against the Bolshevik regime, but after later capture and punishment (in his case, serving a four-month sentence of hard labour) toned down their political activity.<sup>9</sup> However, the emergence of the White Armies in the civil war provided some ex-rightists, including Purishkevich, with a natural home. One of the most prominent right-wingers in the White movement was Markov, leader of the southern section of the monarchical Loyal Union (*Soiuz vernykh*). The activities of former far-rightists in the White Armies show previous obsessions; one of these was anti-Semitism, as exhibited by distribution of copies of the notorious tract *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion* amongst the White Armies, a book that blamed the Jews for the decline of Western civilization.<sup>10</sup> However, suffering from divided ideologies, unclear goals, strategic difficulties and political impotence, this movement did not provide the organizational framework necessary for a monarchist restoration of Russia; in this way, paralleling the right-wing movement that had preceded it. Instead, many right-wingers went into exile – Paris was one particular destination – or toned down all of their political activities whilst staying in Russia.<sup>11</sup> One prominent figure, Lev Tikhomirov, died in Moscow in 1923, left untouched by the Bolsheviks. One can only speculate why he met with this relatively serene fate; perhaps by this stage, devoid of his movement and without any social support, he was considered to be no more than a harmless crank by leading figures in Russia's Bolshevik regime, not worth pursuing seriously.

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<sup>9</sup> See Langer, 'Fighting the Future', pp. 50-51.

<sup>10</sup> One author has suggested that by giving refuge to figures that would later migrate to the White Armies in the civil war after 1917, who would then go into exile and serve as an inspiration for later fascist movements, the Russian right in an indirect way influenced Nazism. See Kellogg, *Russian Roots of Nazism*, pp. 30-46. On the influence of the protocols after 1917, see R. Sh. Ganelin, 'Beloe dvizhenie i "protokoly sionskikh mudretsov"', in *Natsional'naiia pravaia prezhdie i teper'. Istoriko-sotsiologicheskie ocherki*, Pt. 1: *Rossiiia i russkoe zarubezh'e* (St. Petersburg, 1992), pp. 124-130.

<sup>11</sup> J. J. Stephan, *The Russian Fascists: Tragedy and Farce in Exile, 1925-1945* (New York, 1968).

However, to focus only on these individual fates is to lose sight of the wider context. Russian rightists were part of a general crisis of European conservatism in the early twentieth century, and in this they were significant. As we have seen, the story of the Russian right is a European as well as a Russian one, with West European influences playing a central role in shaping individual ideologies, as well as the direction of the movement more generally, which was ironically formed in response to ‘Western’ tendencies. The impact of European racialist ideas, and the influence of German nationalist student groups such as the *Burschenschaften* on the Academists are but two examples of this.<sup>12</sup> What light can study of the pre-revolutionary Russian right shed on contemporary European movements? The similarities with other nationalist groups in the *fin-de-siècle* period elsewhere in Europe are quite pronounced. Analogous tendencies appear in a variety of countries, among which were British conservative groups, but perhaps more striking were similarities with German nationalist groups before 1914, such as the Pan-German Union, which criticized the bureaucracy and pledged unswerving defence of the emperor.<sup>13</sup> Charles Maurras of the *Action Française*, like the leaders of the URP and the Union of the Archangel Mikhail (UAM), desired to create a movement based around an official state religion, uniting the people with the state, and constructing a sense of a national community. Like the URP, this group owed more to cross-class unity, rather than traditional left and right distinctions.<sup>14</sup>

Perhaps the most tempting initial comparison to make is with the fascist movements of the 1920s and 1930s.<sup>15</sup> Certainly the right represented a departure

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<sup>12</sup> Luk’ianov, *Rossiiskii konservatizm i reforma*, pp. 243-257.

<sup>13</sup> See G. Eley, *Reshaping the German Right: Radical Nationalism and Political Change After Bismarck* (New Haven, CT, 1980); R. Chickering, *We Men Who Feel Most German: A Cultural Study of the Pan-German League, 1886-1914* (Boston, MA, 1984); and the essays in L. E. Jones and J. Retallack (eds.), *Between Reform, Reaction and Resistance: Studies in the History of German Conservatism from 1789 to 1945* (Oxford, 1993).

<sup>14</sup> See for example E. Weber, *Action Française: Royalism and Reaction in Twentieth Century France* (Stanford, CA, 1962); S. Kalman, *The Extreme Right in Interwar France: The Faisceau and the Croix de Feu* (Hampshire, 2008).

<sup>15</sup> Rogger, ‘Was there a Russian Fascism?’ pp. 398-415.

from traditional conservative positions, and in this they mirrored fascist movements in Germany and Italy. However, unlike later fascists, the pre-1914 rightist rise to pre-eminence was hampered by an equivocal response from the regime. The splitting of the support for the autocracy, which was accused of not understanding the right's true role, was a source of major regret for some. Most right-wingers did not live long enough to see the rise to power of fascist regimes in Europe, but in 1928, Nikolai Markov wrote:

The Union of Russian People in 1906-1907, consisting of three to four thousand local councils, represented a great nucleus for the formation of a government organization for popular monarchism. If the Russian government at the time had been able to understand what Mussolini later realized in Italy, and instead of stubbornly opposing the Tsar and leaders of the monarchist associations, supported and implemented them as appropriate, salvaging the idea of the need for supreme power to rely on the best parts of the population organized in strong unions, Russia's history would have been quite different.<sup>16</sup>

In their commitment to existing institutional structures, rightists, unlike fascists, did not desire truly *revolutionary* changes to the superstructure of society. Yet Markov accurately noted how the smashing of any hopes for the creation of a coalition of pro-autocracy forces aided the downfall of the regime, as well as the right:

Rebellion against the royal authorities – in the name of royal power – was impossible. We had to abandon the offensive, the public construction of such activity (otherwise – fascism) and retreat deep underground in order to save the shrines and the banners of the autocracy. This mournful retreat of the Union of Russian People lost many supporters and most of their leaders, and from a mighty, efficient and formidable force of the enemies of the people, gradually turned into the autocracy's propaganda organization for the ideological struggle against the dark forces.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Markov, *Voiny temnykh sil*, p. 124.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., p. 125. For more on this theme, see the various essays in 'Ot chernosotenstva k fashizmu', in *Natsional'naia pravaia prezhd e i teper'*, pp. 111-171.

The inability to provide effective support for the autocracy raises the question as to where to place the right among the regime's defenders. Rightists have been seen as proto-fascists by some commentators,<sup>18</sup> but a more appropriate comparison is between the extreme right in countries that had similar pre-conditions to the Russian Empire, such as Romania and Spain in the twentieth century. Unlike in the modern, industrialized societies of Northern Italy and especially Germany, emerging far right groups in these two countries arose in response to demographic conditions closer to those in much of the Russian Empire in the early twentieth century. All three were largely agrarian, rural societies undergoing processes of modernization and urbanization that were to a large extent incomplete during the rise of a nascent right-wing movement. Once in power in Spain, the Franco regime utilized principles similar in important respects to many apparent in the *pravye* factions: protecting the power of the corporate state; the centrality of an official religion to civic and public life (albeit Roman Catholicism, rather than Russian Orthodoxy); veneration of 'traditional' institutions such as the army, Church and government; protecting the agrarian economy; beatification of an authoritarian political superstructure; and the denial of emerging 'liberal' institutions. But a central difference was the role of the leader – in the case of Franco's Spain, the dictator himself.<sup>19</sup> Unlike in post-civil war Spain, the Russian right could celebrate no *primus inter pares* of their own: only the Tsar could hold such a role.<sup>20</sup>

An even more striking parallel emerges with the Romanian far right in the 1930s. The most famous of these groups was the fissiparous tendency led by the charismatic Corneliu Codreanu, founded on 24 July 1927. The movement started out as the League of the Archangel Mikhail, before the formation of the Iron Guard in 1930 as the paramilitary wing, and the name under which the entire movement came

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<sup>18</sup> See, typically, S. B. Liubosh, *Russkii fashist V. M. Purishkevich* (Leningrad, 1925), p. 29.

<sup>19</sup> R. Carr, *Modern Spain, 1875-1980* (Oxford, 1980), pp. 155-172.

<sup>20</sup> This does not mean that subtle changes were not occurring, as we saw with the example of Gringmut.



to be known in later years.<sup>21</sup> The ideological and practical similarities between rightist tendencies in Russia and Romania, as in the case of Spain, show some distinct congruities. One analyst has described the supporters of this Romanian movement as ‘pseudo-intellectual riff-raff unable or unwilling to make a decent living, who sought refuge in a mystic nationalism, the only reality of which was a ferocious anti-Semitism’.<sup>22</sup> The latter two statements could easily be applied to many of the followers of the URM, URP or UAM. The visions of the right’s supporters in both countries had many parallels. Romanian nationalists relied on romantic conceptions of land and state from a bygone era, and the emblem of the Archangel Mikhail, like the group’s name, was identical to one of the most prominent Russian far-right groups assessed above. The symbolic similarities are therefore obvious. Another congruent feature was the obvious debt of both movements to religion. Like the URP, the League in Romania relied on overt religiosity in terms of its symbolism, and also its central ideological tenets; these were heroic, puritan, ascetic and above all Christian revivals.<sup>23</sup> Both movements expressed harsh anti-Semitism and anti-minority nationalism.

But the most important correlation is with the post-Soviet Russian Federation, where the idea of social crisis and revolution that inspired the radical right in the earliest years of the twentieth century has not gone away, but been transformed. Similar ideas have fed the right as it emerged after communism. In the early 1990s, several groups appeared as part of a nationalist revival in protection of ‘Russian traditions’, which shared the names of groups examined in this thesis. One was the URP, another, the Russian Assembly and a newspaper called *Russkoe znamia* appeared.<sup>24</sup> Certainly, one must be careful when making direct parallels between the pre-1917 right and these ‘new’ extreme nationalist groups. The social

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<sup>21</sup> For background, see Livezeanu, *Cultural Politics*; E. Weber, ‘The Men of the Archangel’, *Journal of Contemporary History*, 1, 1 (1966), pp. 101-126; ‘Romania’, in Rogger and Weber (eds.), *The European Right*, pp. 501-574.

<sup>22</sup> A. Cretianu, *The Lost Opportunity* (London, 1957), p. 20.

<sup>23</sup> Payne, *A History of Fascism*, pp. 277-289.

<sup>24</sup> Laqueur, *Black Hundred*, pp. 261-270.

conditions in the 1990s were entirely different. The Russian Federation is not the Russian Empire, although problems over what the ‘nation’ means remain. A seventy-five year period of communism has come and gone. However, the idea of a social crisis, national instability and threats to Russian religion and nation play a key role in the extreme right of today, as they did with the movements of yesteryear.<sup>25</sup>

Certainly the ‘enemy’ targets may have changed, and new sources of ‘social chaos’ added. It should not be overlooked how extreme, fringe right-wing movements, which often attract media attention entirely disproportionate to their size, may reflect developments and moods elsewhere in society. In Western Europe, popular concerns over immigration have seen the rise of voluble radical right movements in virtually every country. A different case, currently attracting much attention in the West, is the promulgation in Russia of laws restricting ‘gay propaganda’, and the resulting tensions over homosexuality and homophobia that have stimulated the activities of right-wing extremists – a global and European as well as a Russian phenomenon. In 2009, a group composed of members of ultra-nationalist and Orthodox Christian groups, one of which adopted the nomenclature of the 1905 period and called itself a ‘black hundred’ group, denounced homosexuality in a rally held in the centre of Moscow.<sup>26</sup> The use of modern technology in these activities and addresses sits alongside ancient prejudices. It has been reported how rightist groups have been using social media as a tool with which

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<sup>25</sup> Some of the most extreme of these far right movements, such as Russian National Unity and Arctogaia, are being classified as neo-fascist. See A. Umland, ‘The Post-Soviet Russian Extreme Right’, *Problems of Post-Communism*, 44, 4 (1997), pp. 53-61; and ‘Conceptual and Contextual Problems in the Interpretation of Contemporary Russian Ultrnationalism’, *Russian Politics and Law*, 46, 4 (2008), pp. 6-30; see also R. Griffin, W. Loh and A. Umland (eds.), *Fascism Past and Present, West and East: An International Debate on Concepts and Cases in the Comparative Study of the Extreme Right* (Stuttgart, 2006).

<sup>26</sup> Associated Press, ‘Moscow Riot Police Violently Break up Gay Pride Rally’, *The Guardian*, 16 May 2009, <<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2009/may/16/moscow-police-gay-rights>> (accessed 26/4/2014).

to ‘ambush’ homosexuals, part of an upsurge in vigilantism.<sup>27</sup> Concepts of conservative nationalism that share the common ground of national restoration, pro-Orthodoxy and Russian chauvinism with the extreme right have been revived elsewhere; a distinct echo from an earlier period. These compete with right-wing groups by diverting or releasing public energies in providing non-toxic fronts for similar impulses. Yet otherwise disconnected activities can serve to inspire further efforts from fringe far-right groups, by vetoing their desires and legitimizing their prejudices. The activity of extreme nationalists in both Russia and Ukraine in Russian intervention in Crimea during 2014 shows how the use of nationalism by regimes and governments can lead to increased activity from autonomous, radical political and social groups.

As long as it is possible to stimulate an idea of an impending social crisis, regardless of the actual source of tensions, radical right activity will not completely disappear. Rightist activity relies on a constellation of factors in harnessing an idea of crisis and presenting it to followers. The myth of an idealized, usable past and its corruption in the present period is a malleable idea that can be shaped to rapidly changing social, political and economic circumstances. In Europe today, we can see similar events occurring in rightist revolts that draw on working-class support, channeling popular disaffection and anger against ‘ruling classes’ of liberals and bureaucrats. Yet the contingency of these processes is merely stimulated in Russia, by its turbulent history as well as its present crises. Interest in Russia’s conservative and right-wing heritage, a trend alive and well in Russia today, will continue into the future as debates on Russia’s history and identity continue to be one of the inescapable dilemmas of the progress of that nation.

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<sup>27</sup> A. Luhn, ‘Russian Anti-Gay Law Prompts Rise in Homophobic Violence’, *The Guardian*, 1 September 2013, <<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/sep/01/russia-rise-homophobic-violence>> (accessed 26/4/2014).

## Appendix A. Significant individuals

Dubrovin, Aleksandr I. (1855-1921): leader of the Union of Russian People (1905-1912), chair of the All-Russian Dubrovinist Union of Russian People (1912-1917).

Golitsyn, Dmitrii P. (1860-1928): a co-founder of the Russian Assembly (1901), member of the State Council.

Grigor'ev, Apollon G. (?-?): mayor of Odessa (1905-1907).

Gringmut, Vladimir A. (1851-1907): editor of *Moskovskie vedomosti* (1896-1907), leader of the Russian Monarchist Party (1905-1907).

Iuzefovich, Boris M. (1842-1911): the leader of the Russian Assembly in Kiev, editor of the newspaper *Pravovogo i poriadka*, a member of the URP in Kiev, son of publicist and statesman Mikhail V. Iuzefovich.

Konovnitsyn, Aleksei I. (1855-1919): leader of the Union of Russian People in Odessa (1906-1911).

Krushevan, Pavel (Pavolachi) A. (1860-1909): editor of *Bessarabets*, member of the Russian Assembly, leader of the URP in Bessarabia (1905-1909).

Markov, Nikolai E. (1866-1945): member of the Union of Russian People, leader of the Union of the Archangel Mikhail and later a leader of the Union of Russian People after the 1912 split.

Men'shikov, Mikhail O. (1859-1918): Nationalist Party member, contributor to *Novoe vremia* newspaper.

Nikol'skii, Boris V. (1870-1919): member of the Russian Assembly, member of the Union of Russian People from 1905.

Poluboiarinova, Elena (1864-1919): associate of A. I. Dubrovin, secretary of *Russkoe znamia* (1909-1912), treasurer of the Union of Russian People from 1907.

Purishkevich, Vladimir M. (1870-1920): member of the Russian Assembly and the Union of Russian People; later leader of the Union of the Archangel Mikhail (1908-1917); delegate to the Third and Fourth State Dumas.

Riabov, Petr V. (1870-after 1917): leader of the Perm branch of the Union of Russian People (1907-1917), previously a sorter in the Motovilikha cannon factory.

Sharapov, Sergei F. (1855-1911): editor of *Russkii trud* and *Russkoe delo*; also one of the founding members and a leader of the Union of Russian Men.

Shcherbatov, Aleksandr G. (1850-1915): one of the organizers and chairs of the Union of Russian Men (1905-1909).

Sheremetev, Pavel S. (1871-1943): a leader of the *Beseda* circle, leader of the Union of Russian Men from 1905.

Shmakov, Aleksei S. (1852-1916): author of numerous anti-Semitic tracts, including *Mezhdunarodnoe tainoe pravitel'stvo* and *Svoboda i evrei*.

Shul'gin, Vasilii V. (1878-1976): co-editor of *Kievlianin*, Nationalist Party deputy to the Third and Fourth State Dumas.

Sikorskii, Ivan A. (1842-1919): psychologist, ideologue of the Nationalist Party, called as a witness in the Beilis affair in 1911.

Tikhanovich-Savitskii, Nestor N. (1866-after July 1917): leader of the Astrakhan' People's Monarchist Party.

Tikhomirov, Lev A. (1852-1923): member of the Russian Assembly and the Union of Russian People; editor of *Moskovskie vedomosti* (1919-1912).

Tolmachev, Ivan N. (1861-1931): mayor of Odessa (1907-1911).

Viazigin, Aleksandr S. (1867-1919): co-founder of the Russian Assembly (1901).

## Appendix B. Glossary

*Chernaia sotnia* – black hundred

*Druzhina* – combat organization, also known as the ‘fighting brotherhoods’

*Narod* – literally ‘people’, sometimes used to mean Russian peasant or ‘simple folk’

*Narodnost’* – Russian nationality

*Obshchina* – peasant commune

*Osobyi otdel* – special section of the department of police

*Otechestvo* – fatherland

*Panikhida* – memorial service

*Panskie vecherniki* – musical literary evenings

*Pravoslavie* – Russian Orthodoxy

*Pravye* – rightist/right-wing

*Rodina* – motherland

*Rossiiskii* – Russian by nationality or the Russian Empire

*Russkii* – Russian by ethnicity or culture

*Samoderzhavie* – the autocracy

*Samosoznaniia* – self-awareness or self-awakening

*Soslovie* – estate system

*Smutnoe vremia* – the time of troubles, as rightists often referred to the post-1905 era

*Zemskii sobor* – assembly of the land

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Fond 588: B. V. Nikol'skii

Fond 601: Nikolai II

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*Dvuglavyi orel*

*Grazhdanin*

*In Darkest Russia*

*Istoricheskii vestnik*

*Izvestiia russkogo sobraniia*

*Kievlianin*

*Mirnyi trud*

*Moskovskie vedomosti*

*Novoe vremia*

<i>Obrazovanie</i>	<i>Russkoe delo</i>
<i>Okrainy Rossii</i>	<i>Russkoe znamia</i>
<i>Pis'ma k blizhnim</i>	<i>Sbornik kluba russkikh natsionalistov</i>
<i>Pochaevskii listok</i>	<i>Svidetel'</i>
<i>Pravo</i>	<i>The Times</i>
<i>Priamoi put'</i>	<i>Tserkovnye vedomosti</i>
<i>Rech'</i>	<i>Vestnik Evropy</i>
<i>Rossia</i>	<i>Vestnik narodnoi svobody</i>
<i>Ruskaia mysl'</i>	<i>Vestnik Russkogo sobraniia</i>
<i>Russkii trud</i>	<i>Vestnik Soiuza russkogo naroda</i>
<i>Russkii vestnik</i>	<i>Voskhod</i>
<i>Russkoe bogatstvo</i>	<i>Zakonouchitel</i>

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