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## THE POLITICAL IDEAS OF RUSSIAN RIGHT RADICALISM

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Russian right radicalism developed in reaction to the revolution of 1905. The initiative for the organization of right radical groups came from members of the gentry, the commercial and the professional classes. These conservative elements considered the Tsar's Manifesto to the Russian people, of February 18th, the signal of official approval for open political activities. Russian conservatives regarded the demands of the revolutionary-liberal movement for such fundamental changes as the introduction of a constitutional monarchy and a parliamentary government, as serious threats to their well-established, historically tested and orderly social system. Furthermore, the continuous advocacy of violence and the numerous acts of political terrorism which militant revolutionaries committed, raised in the minds of conservatives the spectre of a modern *pugachovshchina*.

In defence of the established order, Russian conservatives not only organized political parties for the first time in modern Russian history, but they also adopted the style of Russia's traditional radicals and, like them, appealed directly to the Russian people for support with a radical political programme and a call for political violence. This conservative appeal was successful, for during 1905, several right-wing groups emerged, and among them the most active and the strongest party was known as "the Union of Russian People" (URP). These right-wing parties were called "Black Hundreds". To-day, they are frequently described as "reactionary"<sup>1</sup> and "proto-fascist".<sup>2</sup> Instead of using these descriptions which reflect prejudice rather than present the views of the Russian rightists, the phrase "right radical" will be used in this paper. I hope to show in this paper the conventional conservative nature and the overlying radical veneer of Russian right radicalism through a detailed examination of its political ideas.

It is difficult to offer a brief definition of Russian right radicalism because this movement had neither an authoritative spokesman nor a continuously functioning central organization. However, one can make

<sup>1</sup> A. Levin, "The Reactionary Tradition in the Election Campaign to the Third Duma", *Social Studies Series No. 8*, Oklahoma State University Publication (1962) LIX, No. 16.

<sup>2</sup> For a refutation of this point see H. Rogger "Was there a Russian Fascism? The Union of Russian People", *Journal of Modern History* (1964), XXXVI, No. 4, 398-415.

some general comments. Right radicals, like other European conservatives of the pre-1914 era, stood for the established religion, the monarchy and the Fatherland. Furthermore, Russian rightists held such conventional conservative notions as a respect for authority, tradition and were opposed to changes unless these were in agreement with Russia's historical principles. Russian rightists distrusted the individual, his ability to make a political judgement, yet they trusted the people's instinct to decide such important issues as the land question. Allied with these conventional conservative tendencies were several radical features. Not only did Russian right radicals appeal to "all honest Russians regardless of class or trade",<sup>3</sup> but they also claimed to be the sole representatives of all the Russian people. The radical element emerged, however, most clearly in their uncompromising hostility to their political enemies, and in the right radicals' determination to subjugate their opponents "by all legal means"<sup>4</sup> and, if necessary, with violence. The use of pogroms and murder by Russian right radicals against liberals, the intelligentsia and the Jews differentiated the Russian conservatives from conventional European Conservatives.

Russian right radicalism differed, moreover, from such anti-Semitic groups as Adolf Stoecker's *Christlich-Soziale Arbeiterpartei* and Karl Lueger's *Christlich-Soziale Volkspartei*, which relied for support on the lower middle classes, and arose in bitter opposition to capitalism and social democracy. In contrast, Russian right radicals found support among all social classes, from the peasantry to the Tsar's court. They attacked capitalism and socialism for their evil consequences, but fought chiefly against their alleged non-Russian character and their revolutionary propensities. Furthermore, Stoecker's and Lueger's parties were not supported by the German or Austrian authorities; the Russian rightists, however, spoke and acted in the name of Nicholas II, often even against the Tsar's appointed officials, without ever receiving an Imperial reprimand.

The dichotomous character of Russian right radicalism was reflected also in its political programme which promised relief to various elements in society. Right radicals proposed increases in the land holdings of the peasants by expropriation of state and Imperial lands.<sup>5</sup> Occasionally, their leaders even supported the partial expropriation of large estates.<sup>6</sup> Yet, they insisted also on the preservation of property rights. They were also prepared to abolish the *obshchina*, a treasured institution among Russian conservatives ever since the days of the Slavophiles. Right

<sup>3</sup> V. Ivanovich, *Rossiiskie partii, soyuzy i ligi* (St. Petersburg, 1906), 118.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 117.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 121.

<sup>6</sup> *Gosudarstvennaya Duma, Stenograficheskie otchety* (St. Petersburg, 1907), I, 1522.

radicals demanded more restrictions on the operations of foreign capitalists and industrialists in favour of greater scope for the economic activities of "true Russian" businessmen. Rightists advocated severe limitations on all business activities of Russian Jews in order to prevent the impoverishment of the Russian people. Rightists promised easier credit by abolishing the gold standard and introducing a "national credit ruble" backed by silver.<sup>7</sup> To the workers, right radicals offered social insurance schemes which provided a measure of security in case of sickness, accident, and old age. Furthermore, they demanded shorter working hours, better working conditions, and a general improvement in the workers' way of life.<sup>8</sup> But, they called also for government measures against strikers and warned the workers that the advocates of strikes were only interested in causing unemployment and the impoverishment of the working classes in order to demand "liberties" from the Tsar. Using these liberties, right radicals said, the enemies of the Tsar and the workers would more intensively exploit the Russian people.<sup>9</sup>

The political doctrine of Russian right radicalism was neatly summarized in the formula "Orthodoxy, Autocracy, and Nationality". The concepts of this formula were not the product of right-radical thinking; they formed part of Russia's nineteenth century conservative tradition.<sup>10</sup> In 1833, the Minister of Education, Count S. S. Uvarov proposed this formula to Nicholas I as a weapon for safeguarding Russia against the entrance of such destructive European ideas as liberalism, socialism and nationalism.<sup>11</sup> Uvarov's formula became the official government ideology, and was also adopted and propagated by a vociferous group of professors, journalists and writers.<sup>12</sup> The original contribution of Uvarov and his followers was never acknowledged by right radicals who, instead, bestowed the spiritual fatherhood of the formula upon the Slavophiles and M. N. Katkov.<sup>13</sup>

For Uvarov and his followers Orthodoxy meant a personal faith in Christ; the only way to salvation and the true basis of morality. They believed that Orthodoxy was necessary for the happiness and survival

<sup>7</sup> V. V. Vodovozov, *Sbornik program politicheskikh partii v Rossii* (St. Petersburg, 1905), VII, 28.

<sup>8</sup> Vodovozov, *Sbornik*, VII, 26-27.

<sup>9</sup> Ivanovich, 117-18.

<sup>10</sup> E. C. Thaden, *Conservative Nationalism in Nineteenth Century Russia* (Seattle, 1964).

<sup>11</sup> S. S. Uvarov, *Desyatiletie Ministerstva Narodnogo Prosveshcheniya 1833-1843* (St. Petersburg, 1864), 2-4. Also *Zhurnal Ministerstva Narodnogo Prosveshcheniya* (1834), I, 1, for first official statement of this formula in Uvarov's first circular.

<sup>12</sup> For an excellent full treatment of "Official Nationality", see N. V. Riasonovsky, *Nicholas I and Official Nationality in Russia, 1825-1855* (Los Angeles, 1959), chapters 2 and 3.

<sup>13</sup> *Moskovskie Vedomosti* (1907), January 16, No. 12, pp. 1-2.

of both an individual and the whole nation.<sup>14</sup> The Slavophiles, who opposed Uvarov's "official nationality" in general, accepted these views of Orthodoxy. The Slavophiles emphasized that Orthodoxy was the only true form of Christianity, and that it was God's special gift to the Russian people whom He had selected for a special Christian mission in this world. Orthodoxy gave Russians a superior and unique civilization which the Slavophiles recognized in the *obshchina*. The *obshchina* was not merely an economic arrangement, but they regarded it as a way of life which was based on principles of social harmony and organic growth and which aimed for the attainment of a moral life in a Christian society.<sup>15</sup>

Right radicals agreed generally with these views of their forerunners on Orthodoxy as the decisive formative influence in Russia's culture. But, right radicals strongly emphasized the political implication of Orthodoxy. They stressed that Orthodoxy taught love, but also obedience and loyalty to the Tsar and the proper fulfilment of one's Christian duties. Orthodoxy brought the Bible to Russia, they said, but it also introduced the Biblical idea of kingship and the Byzantine concept of autocracy.<sup>16</sup> They considered Orthodoxy as the only way to a person's spiritual and moral perfection.<sup>17</sup> Yet, they insisted on the close co-operation between State and Church because only the state possessed the necessary power for creating conditions which enabled individuals to improve themselves morally, and thereby contribute to the general improvement of society. Co-operation, however, did not imply for the rightists the subordination of the Church to the government. They insisted not only on the Church's duty to evaluate all secular matters and decide all moral issues, but they also demanded more independence for the Church from the government of Nicholas II. By strengthening the Church through this and such other reforms as the re-establishment of the patriarchate; the calling of an elected church *sobor*; the re-organization of the parish; and the recruitment of better men for the clergy, right radicals hoped that the Church could participate more effectively in the spiritual regeneration of Russia along the "true Russian principles" of right radicalism. Perhaps right radicals intended to use a regenerated Orthodox Church instead of Autocracy as a new rallying point for the Russian people.

In their view of the Church's role in Russian history, right radicals considered Orthodoxy "the saviour of the Russian state in difficult

<sup>14</sup> S. S. Uvarov, *Bericht an Seine Majestaet den Kaiser ueber das Ministerium des oeffentlichen Unterrichts fuer das Jahr 1836* (St. Petersburg, 1837), 136.

<sup>15</sup> N. L. Brodskii, ed. *Rannye Slavyanofily* (Moscow, 1910), 69-78. "Zapiska K. S. Aksakova' o vnytrennem sostoyanii Rossii", predstavlenaya Gosudaryu Imperatoru Aleksandru II v 1855 g."

<sup>16</sup> I. I. Vostorgov, *Polnoe sobranie* (Moscow, 1914), III, 20-31; 147-157.

<sup>17</sup> A. A. Maikov, *Revolutsionery i Chernosotentsy* (St. Petersburg, 1907), 23.

moments of its political life, and the preserver of the political freedom of the Russian people".<sup>18</sup> Under the Tatars, Orthodoxy had given Russians a common identity and spiritual strength which had protected them against foreign influence, and during the "Time of Troubles", the Church had aroused the Russian people against foreign intruders.<sup>19</sup>

Comparing these historic events and the revolutionary situation of 1905, and interpreting both as the work of foreigners and aliens, right radicals tried to stir up religious emotion and utilize this against the Russian revolutionary-liberal movement. Repeatedly, they pointed out that obedience to the authorities was a Christian duty which every conscientious Orthodox Russian performed out of gratitude to God.<sup>20</sup> Disobedience was a sin for the rightists, but active support of the revolutionary-liberal movement placed a person among the devil's followers.<sup>21</sup> Right radicals interpreted the revolutionary programme as the devil's work because the revolutionaries taught "take all you need", "disobey the Tsar and kill all who stand loyally with the Tsar, for Orthodoxy and the Fatherland".<sup>22</sup> Such teachings, the rightists continued, flatly contradicted Orthodoxy's teachings of love and obedience. They urged all Orthodox Russians to rally their spiritual strength and put an immediate end to these insults upon Orthodoxy, Holy Russia and the Tsar. When parish priests presented appeals of this type, they seldom failed to arouse religious feelings and often produced a minor pogrom against the Jews or the intelligentsia.

Right radicals used the Church also in other ways for supporting their political aims. Priests were often the leaders of local groups; the parish churches were the headquarters of these groups; and on all church and secular holidays these local branches would stage processions in which were carried holy ikons and church banners as well as the picture of Nicholas II and the national flag. If priests should refuse to officiate at meetings of the URP, the Union would unhesitatingly attack them and accuse them of harbouring revolutionary ideas, and of disloyalty to the Church, the Tsar and the Russian people.<sup>23</sup>

Sincerely believing in Orthodox Christianity, but also recognizing its usefulness, right radicals demanded for Orthodoxy "the leading and predominant position in the state".<sup>24</sup> This demand reflected both the Slavophile and rightist belief in Orthodoxy's mission. But for right radicals it justified repressive measures against Catholics and Protestants

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 24.

<sup>19</sup> Vostorgov, *Sobranie*, II, 360-67; I, 175-180; III, 187-193.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, II, 490-96.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, II, 119-24.

<sup>22</sup> G. Butmi, *Oblichitel'naya rechi. Rossiya na rasput'i. Kabala ili svoboda?* (St. Petersburg, 1906), 28.

<sup>23</sup> A. N. Bryanchaninov, *Mezhdudume, Sbornik*. (St. Petersburg, 1907), 344.

<sup>24</sup> A. Chernovskii, ed. *Soyuz russkogo naroda* (Moscow/Leningrad, 1929), 411.

and other Christian sects. The predominancy of Orthodoxy or, in the case of Old Believers, the reunification with Orthodoxy, meant control or even the elimination of centres of religious dissent which could become also centres of political opposition to the state.<sup>25</sup>

Right radicals denounced religious toleration as "freedom from religion".<sup>26</sup> Tolerance, like drunkenness, they argued, would gradually corrupt the moral fibre of Russians, it would allow Russians to engage in polygamy by becoming Moslems and would permit Jews to join Orthodoxy.<sup>27</sup> This last point presented a radical departure from the views held by Uvarov's followers and the Slavophiles. Although anti-Semitic tendencies were common to both, but more pronounced among the Slavophiles,<sup>28</sup> they did not oppose the conversion of Jews.<sup>29</sup> In contrast, right radicals considered the Jews incapable of experiencing a true conversion, for some inscrutable reason Jews were evil and remained evil.<sup>30</sup>

The central concept of the right radical doctrine was the notion of Autocracy; upon it was focused both Orthodoxy and Nationality. For Uvarov and his followers, Autocracy meant the divine origin of the Tsar's supreme power over the Russian people. The Tsar was guided only by direct inspiration from God and the rules of the Orthodox Church. Autocracy's chief purpose was, for Uvarov, the prevention of social and political change; only the Tsar prevented the peasantry from demanding the gentry's land, and the gentry from demanding political rights as compensation.<sup>31</sup> The Slavophiles were hostile to the state, though they recognized its necessity. They declared that Autocracy granted the Russian people freedom from the exercise of political power and left Russians to pursue a Christian life. By emphasizing that moral perfection was possible only under the protection of Autocracy,<sup>32</sup> the Slavophiles made it a vital aspect of Russian society. It is this notion, this exultation of Autocracy which significantly influenced the right radical concept of Autocracy.

Right radicals, like their predecessors, accepted the divine origin of Autocracy. As the Autocrat, the Tsar stood above every other authority or institution in Russia. He was governed by his conscience and Orthodox dogmas. The essence of the Tsar's Autocracy was its "unconditional

<sup>25</sup> Cf. A. M. Ammann, *Abriss der ostslawischen Kirchengeschichte* (Wien, 1950), 577, on the revival of Polish nationalism following the issue of the *ukaz* of toleration (April 17, 1905).

<sup>26</sup> G. Yurskii, *Pravye v Tretei Gosudarstvennoi Dume* (Kharkov, 1912), 48.

<sup>27</sup> Yurskii, *Pravye*, 50-55.

<sup>28</sup> N. V. Riasanovsky, *Russia and the West in the Teaching of the Slavophiles* (Cambridge, Mass, 1952), 114-116.

<sup>29</sup> Riasanovsky, *Nicholas I*, 231.

<sup>30</sup> Butmi, *Kabala*, 36.

<sup>31</sup> N. Barsukov, *Zhizn i trudi M. N. Pogodina* (St. Petersburg, 1888-1910), IX 306-308.

<sup>32</sup> Brodskii, *Rannye*, 69-79.

completeness and indivisibility".<sup>33</sup> They denied most emphatically that the Tsar could limit his Autocracy because Autocracy was not a personal possession but belonged to past, present and future tsars. Therefore, they continued, no Tsar could abdicate and thereby deprive future Russian generations of Autocracy's blessings.<sup>34</sup> Although Konstantin Leontiev and Mikhail Katkov had already expressed the same notion,<sup>35</sup> right radicals expanded its meaning and argued that not only was the Tsar's will law, but also every law such as the Electoral Law of June 3, 1907, was merely another expression of the Tsar's will.<sup>36</sup> Right radicals denied the historical view to which the liberals adhered, that Autocracy meant independence from foreign powers,<sup>37</sup> or that the Fundamental Laws of the Russian Empire were more than guides for legislative and administrative procedures.<sup>38</sup> Right radicals repeated Katkov's view that Russia had a constitution in the oath of allegiance to unlimited Autocracy which the Tsar and the Russian people swore during the coronation.<sup>39</sup>

An important aspect of the right radical concept of Autocracy was the union of the Tsar and his people. Only those of Uvarov's followers who stood close to the Slavophiles advocated a union or a *zemskii sobor*. The Slavophile *sobor* was a representative assembly which enjoyed full freedom of expression on all matters except political issues since politics remained the exclusive domain of the Tsar.<sup>40</sup> For right radicals, the idea of a union between the Tsar and the people had considerable practical political meaning at the time of the First and Second Duma (1906-1907). They agreed on the usefulness of a Duma, but they disagreed over either the meaning or the realization of such a union. The URP declared that Autocracy was based on the union of Tsar and people.<sup>41</sup> The Monarchists, on the other hand, considered the union the Tsar's gift to his people.<sup>42</sup> Some rightists even denied the utility of a Duma, and others warned that it might turn into a constituent assembly or a "sham western parliament".<sup>43</sup>

Right radicals unanimously opposed the existing Dumas. They alleged that the elected Duma members were unrepresentative of the Russian people, and that they were nothing but Jews, Russian traitors,

<sup>33</sup> Bryanchaninov, *Mezhdudume*, 330.

<sup>34</sup> Ivanovich, 110-111.

<sup>35</sup> K. N. Leontiev, *Sobranie sochineniya* (Moscow, 1912), VII, 227.

<sup>36</sup> *Moskovskie Vedomosti* (1907), June 10, No. 132, editorial.

<sup>37</sup> *Pravo* (1906), No. 7, cols. 569-574. Yurskii, 69.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, 79.

<sup>39</sup> *Rech'* (1907), Nov. 4, p. 3, col. 5, reporting a speech by Professor B. V. Nikolskii.

B. B. Glinskii, "Epokha mira i uspokoenie". *Istoricheskii Vestnik* (1911), CXXV, 194-196, quoting *Moskovskie Vedomosti* (1882), May 12, No. 130.

<sup>40</sup> Glinskii, "Epokha mira..." *Ist. Vestnik*, CXXV, 192.

<sup>41</sup> Maikov, 26; Chernovskii, 411.

<sup>42</sup> Vostorgov, III, 45-52.

<sup>43</sup> *Moskovskie Vedomosti* (1905), Feb. 1 and 4, Nos. 32 and 35.



free-masons and "Caucasian expropriators".<sup>44</sup> The Dumas' claim of representing the Russian people was false, right radicals maintained, and only the Russian Tsar who stood above all parties represented the people and all its aspirations. Rightists regarded the Dumas as a threat to Autocracy. Duma members acted like 500 autocrats<sup>45</sup> on the pernicious idea of popular sovereignty (*narodovlastie*). This last objection, coming from Monarchist leader V. A. Gringmut, differed sharply from the URP's view which stated that the people had "handed over" (*vruchat'*) power to the Tsar.<sup>46</sup> This difference in view reflected the URP's radicalism.

The right radicals' version of the Duma, though never explicitly formulated, featured a "true Russian" membership based on either election by class or selection from every class by the Tsar.<sup>47</sup> This right radical Duma would fight the evils of bureaucracy and, therefore, right radicals demanded "the right of interpellation and of actual control over the action of ministers",<sup>48</sup> and also the right of direct access to the Tsar for reporting illegal acts of officials. These radical demands were associated, however, with the denial of any legislative powers for this body. The right radical Duma seemed hardly compatible with the right radical view of Autocracy as the supreme authority since the Duma practically controlled the executive aspect of Autocracy. Right Radicals agreed that the Tsar should appoint his ministers who would be responsible to him, but the rightists denied that the Autocrat was ultimately responsible for the actions of his government. They declared that only the ministers were responsible for their acts.<sup>49</sup>

Right radicals adheared with surprising tenacity to Autocracy, although the dismal reality of Nicholas II was clearly recognized by them.<sup>50</sup> Their faith in Autocracy was based on their interpretation of the historical role of Autocracy as "the gatherer of the Russian lands", the guardian of Russia's territorial and spiritual integrity, and as the dynamic force which had saved Russia in 1613 and 1812, and which had restored liberty to the Russian people in 1861.<sup>51</sup> Right radicals believed in the essential soundness of Autocracy, and looked to Russia's history for support of their belief, and they considered the only defect of Autocracy in 1905 and 1906, was the Autocrat Nicholas II. Although the rule of Nicholas II demonstrated the weakness of the concept of Autocracy, right radicals continued to trust in men rather than in measures. In order to assist Nicholas II, several right radical leaders

<sup>44</sup> Butmi, 36.

<sup>45</sup> *Moskovskie Vedomosti* (1906), May 7, No. 116; June 8, No. 145.

<sup>46</sup> Maikov, 26-27.

<sup>47</sup> Ivanovich, 112.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, 118.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, 119.

<sup>50</sup> Sh. M. Levin, "Materialy dlya kharakteristiki kontr-revolutsii 1905 g". *Byloe* (1923), vols. 21-23, 156-186.

<sup>51</sup> A. S. Vyazigin, *V tumane smutnikh dnei. Sbornik.* (Kharkov, 1908), 58.

demanded a dictator who, through his will power and conviction, would give expression to the force in the law.<sup>52</sup>

The concept of Nationality had many meanings for Uvarov and his followers, the Slavophiles, and also the right radicals. For Uvarov, Nationality meant the Russian people's traditional loyalty to the Tsar; but his followers considered Nationality a dynamic concept. For them Nationality was "the totality of all spiritual and physical forces with which providence endowed every people in order that it might accomplish on [this] earth its human mission (*chelovecheskoe naznachenie*)".<sup>53</sup> They agreed with the Slavophiles on the immense potentialities for sacrifice and the great moral force of the Russian people. From Uvarov to the right radicals, all agreed about the uniqueness and superiority of the Russian people, which they attributed to the significance of Orthodoxy in forming the Russian Nationality.

In contrast to their forerunners, right radicals stressed the political elements in the concept of Nationality. Previously the concept referred in a general way to the peasantry, right radicals, however, specified that the Russian Nationality included only Great, Little, and Byelo-Russians, and that the decisive factor in determining membership in the Russian people was Orthodoxy.<sup>54</sup> This limitation of Nationality attempted to create a sense of national pride and to encourage an elite attitude among the members of the Russian Nationality. Right radicals hoped to widen the support for Autocracy and to aggravate national differences between the Poles and Ukrainians.

Nationality meant for right radicals also "the Russian spirit",<sup>55</sup> which was that peculiar quality in Russians which enabled them to build an Empire after enduring centuries of foreign oppression. Rightists believed that Nationality fostered a dislike for violence in Russians. The proof for this belief right radicals saw not only in the peaceful conversion of the Russian people to Christianity, but also in Russia's expansion, which lacked, according to the rightists, any colonial ambitions. On the contrary, they insisted Russia's expansion merely fulfilled God's command to bring Christianity and civilization to heathen barbarians.<sup>56</sup> Behind this cloak of pious morality, right radicals concealed their demands for the alienation of huge land parcels used by nomadic Kirgis for the settlement of land-hungry Russian peasants.<sup>57</sup> This aggressive aspect of Nationality reappeared in the right radical demand for the predom-

<sup>52</sup> *Vestnik Russkogo Sobraniya* (1907), Jan. 26, No. 3.

<sup>53</sup> Uvarov, *Zhurnal* (1847), IV, S. Shevyrev, "Istoria russkoi slovesnosti, preimuschestvennodrevnei", 48.

<sup>54</sup> Chernovskii, 411-412.

<sup>55</sup> Vyazigin, 334. *Izvestiya Russkogo Sobranie* (St. Petersburg, 1903), III, 93-104 (speech by N. I. Maksimov).

<sup>56</sup> Vostorgov, I, 336-342.

<sup>57</sup> Vodovozov, VII, 14-15; 23-24. *Gosudarstvennaya Duma*, I, 1509.

inancy of the Russian nationality over the numerous national minorities in the Empire.<sup>58</sup> Rightists justified this demand by stressing the state building services performed by the Russian people. They declared that the minorities were guests of the Russian people and as such their only right was to show gratitude to Russia.<sup>59</sup>

In common with the Slavophiles, right radicals believed that the "Russian spirit" was preserved in the common people. The people supposedly understood instinctively both the essence and the importance of Nationality and, in contrast to the intelligentsia, resisted such evils as cosmopolitanism and socialism. These forces, right radicals declared, destroyed the different characteristics of each nationality by levelling all nations to some "absurd, theoretical, universal standard", and thus ruined the only basis for knowledge, philosophy and creativity.<sup>60</sup> They disagreed with the Slavophile view of the Russian people as essentially apolitical, instead, the rightists argued that the people's choice of Autocracy was not an act of resignation but a manifestation of political wisdom which the people had acquired in the course of its historical experiences. Right radicals declared their readiness to accept reforms if such changes were the products of the people's wisdom.<sup>61</sup> They regarded the Russian language as the preserver of the people's wisdom and of the Russian spirit. As long as Russian was spoken, they believed that Russian Nationality would live, because as soon as the child learned to speak, language began to inculcate the essence of Nationality.<sup>62</sup> Recognizing the importance of language in the growth of nationalism, they demanded the use of Russian as the only official language in the Empire.<sup>63</sup>

The right radical belief in the people, its instincts and its power implied a threat to the idea of Autocracy. A. A. Bashmakov, a leading rightist journalist, indicated this danger when he wrote that "the common people have already saved their Fatherland more than once from troubles, because within the people are great dynamic (*zhivitel'naya*) forces, which are more significant than those of the Tsar . . . [and] which are more salutary than the state and the church institutions".<sup>64</sup>

Bashmakov repeated the URP's view of popular investiture of Autocracy when he asserted that the Tsar was "placed upon the throne"<sup>65</sup> by the people who had also created the state institutions. Although right radicals endlessly proclaimed that "true Russians" would never abolish the Autocracy and bring upon themselves the horrors of 1789 and of

<sup>58</sup> Chernovskii, 412.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, VII, 14.

<sup>60</sup> Vyazigin, 2, 4, 66.

<sup>61</sup> Maikov, 35.

<sup>62</sup> Vyazigin, 90-92.

<sup>63</sup> Chernovskii, 412.

<sup>64</sup> A. A. Bashmakov, *Za smutnie gody* (St. Petersburg, 1906), 183.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*

continuous economic enslavement by foreign capitalists and Jews, the ultimate consequence remained that the people might abolish Autocracy. Against this threat the rightists used two lines of defence. One was reliance on Orthodoxy and its call to obedience, and the second was the URP's claims that the URP was the product of these popular forces and that these forces found expression through it. The existence of these popular forces was never doubted by right radicals. They considered the wave of pogroms which swept through Russia in October 1905 as a manifestation of these dynamic forces.

In Uvarov's formula right radicals saw a suitable device for repelling the revolutionary-liberal movement in 1905. The formula provided a solid conservative core which right radicals adapted to the political exigencies of 1905. Orthodoxy was not only a religious faith and an established institution, but it was also part of one's political conviction and a means for fighting a political enemy. Autocracy defended the existing order, assured justice and a moral life in peaceful times, but it also involved each individual Russian by seeking union with him. Nationality turned from a sense of obedience into a dynamic force which could only be tamed through the close interconnection between all three concepts. Russian right radicalism failed not only because it lacked the men, but also because its radicalism was associated with conservatism and nationalism both of which were unpopular in Imperial Russia.