ABSTRACT

Title of dissertation: PRINTING POWER, PRESSING POLITICS: M.N. KATKOV AND THE RISE OF PRIVATE NEWSPAPERPRESS IN LATE IMPERIAL RUSSIA, 1860s-1880s

Ala Creciun Graff, 2022

Dissertation directed by: Dr. Mikhail Dolbilov
Department of History

This dissertation examines the rise of the private political press and its engagement in Russian politics during the 1860s-1880s. During these three decades, Russia's newspaper press underwent a dramatic cultural, technological, and political change. Censorship liberalization and accelerating communication technology transformed the Russian newspaper from a marginal genre on the print landscape into a hub of information exchange and a vibrant forum for political discussion, where editors sought to influence not only public opinion, but also bureaucratic decision making. Whereas existing literature has focused on the influence of the state on the press (censorship) or the role of the press in shaping a civil society, this dissertation uncovers the ways in which the press influenced political discussion and decision-making.

Concentrating on a handful of prominent newspapers during the 1860s-1880s, such as M.N. Katkov's *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, A.A. Kraevskii's *Golos*, A.S. Suvorin's *Novoe Vremia*, and I.S. Aksakov's *Rus'*, this study explores a variety of ways in which these newspapers and their powerful editors shaped debates, careers, and political outcomes in Russia's political stage. The dissertation is the first to examine the increased readership and impact of the private political press within the bureaucratic ranks and at court, and to track the penetration of newspaper discourses into policy discussion and decision-making. It dissects the complex relationships of collaboration,

patronage, and mutual dependency between press editors and bureaucratic officials. Prominent editors aligned themselves with like-minded bureaucratic interest groups to advance political ideas, engage in fierce polemics, and take on political rivals; their partisanship made the press a surrogate of party politics in Russia. The growing entanglements of politics and press spanned wide networks of press informants, agents, and protegees within government ranks, whose leaks fueled public debate and further eroded the government control of information.

Discreet instruments of political maneuvering, private political newspapers ultimately served as vehicles for the political agendas and ideologies of their editors. This dissertation traces the emergence of the "journalist-politician" M.N. Katkov, who, as an ideologue of Emperor Alexander III's rule, formulated a new basis of monarchic legitimacy grounded in national politics (*narodnost'*), an all-estate approach (*vsesoslovnost'*), and welfare policies (*blagosostoianie*). Taking a broader approach to Katkov's intellectual legacy – beyond his national politics – and borrowing revisionist approaches in recent literature, this study builds an alternative framework for understanding perhaps the most prominent newspaper editor of the nineteenth century. Delving into Katkov's direct work on two key reforms of Alexander III's rule, this study sheds light on an extent of influence exercised by the press on political processes.

This work contributes fresh perspectives on the role of the press on the political stage and its relationship with the state in late Imperial Russia. It reveals that the press, far from the supplicant of the government, became a powerful political actor in its own right. Ultimately, this study demonstrates that the rise of Russia's private political press eroded the government's control over information, over the shaping of political narratives, and finally over political processes.

PRINTING POWER, PRESSING POLITICS:
M.N. KATKOV AND THE RISE OF PRIVATE NEWSPAPER PRESS IN LATE IMPERIAL RUSSIA, 1860s-1880s

by

Ala Creciun Graff, M.A.

Dissertation submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School of the
University of Maryland, College Park, in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
2022

Advisory Committee:

Dr. Mikhail Dolbilov (Chair)
Dr. Sarah Cameron
Dr. Piotr Kosicki
Dr. Alfred J. Rieber
Dr. Sarah Oates

© Copyright by
Ala Creciun Graff
2022

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This dissertation would not have been possible without the community of scholars who have given it their valuable advice and unwavering guidance along the way. I am deeply grateful to my dissertation advisor, Dr. Mikhail Dolbilov, whose feedback has helped define and articulate this project at critical junctions. Dr. Dolbilov's unparalleled erudition and archival knowledge have pointed me toward primary and secondary sources that have greatly enriched this research. His attentiveness to research, argumentative base, and style have left an indelible mark on my development as a historian. I will always be profoundly thankful to Dr. Alfred J. Rieber, who has been a source of inspiration, intellectual support, and encouragement. Our conversations have taught me to ask big questions and find meaning in research. I have benefited from his scholarship and generosity in more ways than I can express on these pages. My very special thanks go to Dr. Sarah Cameron and to Dr. Piotr Kosicki for their very insightful commentary and thoughtful suggestions that have guided this project. It has been a privilege to have Dr. Sarah Oates on my dissertation committee; I am thankful for her contemporary perspectives as this project looks as to the history of the press as well as its future.

Conversations with Dr. Jeffrey Brooks, Dr. Louise McReynolds, Dr. Charles Ruud, Dr. Christopher Stolarski, and Dr. Elizaveta Raykhlina provided helpful feedback on various aspects of this dissertation. Dr. Willard Sunderland was a great source of support and encouragement. At the University of Maryland, Department of History faculty helped me grow as a scholar.

I am thankful for the funding this project received from the Association of Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies, the American Historical Association, the German Historical Institute in Moscow, the Cosmos Club Foundation, and the University of Maryland. On research trips, the kindness of archivists, particularly at the State Public Historical Library in Moscow, has

made an incomparable contribution to this project.

My family and friends in the U.S., Ukraine, Moldova, and Russia have been a source of unconditional support. Dr. Chelsea Schein and Dr. Alina Lapushkina have been kindred spirits and a source of motivation. Above all, none of this work would have been possible without my husband, Dr. Philip Graff -- his kindness, patience, and terrific interest. Thank you.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION……...1
Historiography……..9
Theoretical Framework and Methodology……26
Scope, Limitations, and Sources……...32
Chapter Organization……38

CHAPTER ONE: The Rise of Russia's Private Political Press, 1850s to 1860s…….…. 42
Changing Government Approaches to the Press……44
Literacy and the Great Reforms: A New Appetite for Information ……..……50
Technology and Skill – The Emergence of a New Generation of Editors.……48
Editorial Professionalization and its Limits……...…70
Conclusion……..79

CHAPTER TWO: Press Enters Politics: Newspaper Discourses in Bureaucratic Corridors, 1860s-1870s……...82
The Press and Its First Reader……83
Bureaucratic Instrumentalization of the Press……...…94
Press Informants and Leaks……..117
Conclusion……129

CHAPTER THREE: Party Politics: Political Polarization and the Press at the Accession of Emperor Alexander III, 1881……..132
Political Polarization of the Press during the 1860s-1870s……..133
Press Polemics at the Accession of Alexander III – 1881……148
The Whigs and the Tories: Newspaper Polemics and Party Politics……...185
Conclusion……190

STUDY: M.N. Katkov on the Role of the Press……..192

CHAPTER FOUR: The Journalist-Politician: M.N. Katkov as the Ideologue of the New Rule, 1881-1883……..…….205
M.N. Katkov: An Ideologue in the Time of Troubles……..…210
Narodnost': National Politics as Basis for Monarchic Legitimacy……..217
Vsesoslovnost': Addressing Russia's Shifting Social Estate System……...229
Blagosostoianie: The Inception of Social Welfare……...…245
Conclusion……257

CHAPTER FIVE: M.N. Katkov's Political Projects: Case Studies, 1883-1887…….259
The 1884 University Statute: Standardizing Education…….. 261
The 1889 Land Captains Statute: Centralizing the Local Government……299
Conclusion……....319

CONCLUSION……325
Bibliography……333

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Figure 1. "Lawn Tennis," Carricature. A.V. Ipolitov, ed., *Tuzy, damy, i valety. Dvor i teatr v karikaturakh I.A. Vsevolozhskogo* (Moscow: Kuchkovo Pole, 2016).

Figure 2. *I.E. Repin, "Alexander III receiving the volost elders in the courtyard of the Petrovskii Palace in Moscow," 1886.*

Figure 3. I.E. Repin. "Alexander III' Receiving the Volost' Elders," 1885.

Figure 4. Lithograph, Vsemirnaia Illiustratsia, 12 (1880): 244.

Figure 5. "The Night Table of the Sleeping Beauty," Carricature. A.V. Ipolitov, ed., *Tuzy, damy, i valety. Dvor i teatr v karikaturakh I.A. Vsevolozhskogo* (Moscow: Kuchkovo Pole, 2016).

INTRODUCTION

> "The majority of our political periodicals, having lost their mooring from the principles and convictions of Russian subjects, and from political tact and respect […], have become unlimited judges of politics, discussing and deciding political events and questions independently and at times in opposition to the intentions of our government."
>
> - A.A. Berte, Chairman of the Committee for the Revision of the Censorship Statute, 1862.[1]

Between the late 1850s and the 1880s, Russia's press culture underwent a dramatic cultural, technological, and political transformation. Prompted by Alexander II's 1858 and 1859 censorship reforms, which eased private newspaper publishing and permitted political commentary, private political press soon emerged to the center of Russia's print landscape as a busy hub of information and political debate. Supplanting the rarified genre of the 'thick' literary journal and the little-read official newspaper, private political newspapers quickly became vibrant forums of political discussion and, increasingly, criticism. Censorship official A.A. Berte reflected not without apprehension on the bold engagement of the press in Russia's political life over the span of only several years – an engagement that government officials like himself struggled to contain, suppress, and instrumentalize. Not content with merely reporting on politics, influential editors sought to shape both public opinion and government decision-making. Engaged in sophisticated political maneuvering, they cultivated powerful political patrons who shielded them from censorship, networks of government informants whose leaks fueled public debate, and loyal agents who advanced political projects. For the decades that followed, the complex negotiation of the relationship between the state and the press tracked the changing relationship between the state and society in the second half of the nineteenth century as the government lost its longstanding monopoly on political narratives in particular and control over political processes in general.

[1] A.A.Berte, *Zapiska predsedatelia Komiteta dlia peresmotra tsenzurnogo ustava, deistivetlnogo statskogo sovetnika Berte i chlena sego Komiteta statskogo sovetnika Yankevicha* (St. Petersburg: [n.p.], 1862), 5-7, 11.

The following pages outline the research agenda and methods of this study: to examine the rise of Russia's private political press and its engagement in political processes. The dissertation focuses on private commercial newspapers across the political spectrum: M.N. Katkov's right-leaning *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, A.A. Kraevskii's Western-minded *Golos*, A.S. Suvorin's centrist to moderate-right *Novoe Vremia*, and I.S. Aksakov's Slavophile *Rus'*. As Chapter 1 will detail, all four constituted a new generation of newspaper editors who emerged onto the publishing scene in the late 1850s and largely by the mid-1860s were publishing the newspapers that made their reputations. While this selection exemplifies a political diversity, the dissertation centers on M.N. Katkov's *Moskovskie Vedomosti* as the most prominent and richly documented example of a politically engaged newspaper.

The study sets off by establishing the factors that gave rise of Russia's private political press: Alexander II's censorship reforms, fast-growing public literacy, demand for information during the Great Reforms, and advances in communication technologies. Closing in on the latter, the study looks at how emerging communication technology of the 1850s – the telegraph, the railway, and the steam-powered printing press - accelerated newsgathering, printing and dissemination, thus revolutionizing the speed, quality, and impact of the newspaper press production in Russia. It analyzes the transformation of newspaper publishing from an anemic government undertaking before the mid-1850s (little-read official newspapers) into highly competitive and complex commercial enterprises of the 1860s, which demanded of their editors a sophisticated set of technical, logistical, and political networking skills. This study aims to show how the private press, with its accelerated news cycle from weekly to daily and twice-daily newspapers and its expanded news base, revolutionized news consumption and crafted a new social and political role for itself. Understanding this dramatic transformation in newspaper

production illuminates the emergence of a modern newspaper press in Imperial Russia.

To grasp the emerging political significance of the private press, this dissertation explores how Russian emperors and high-ranking bureaucratic officials consumed and engaged with private political press beginning with the late 1850s. Speedy communication technology made the press an important source of information not only for its subscribers, but also for the government and for the monarch. However, the speed of information delivery and the breadth of newspapers' sources, challenged the government's longstanding control over information. Breaking news, government leaks, investigative reports, and sharp editorial commentary quickly proved able to steer political debate within the corridors of power, influence decision-making, and change career trajectories. Understanding the process by which the government lost its longstanding monopoly over political news, interpretation, and narrative illuminates a deeper process: its loss of control over political processes and the emergence of the press as a new political actor.

Exploring the growing engagement of the press on the political arena, this study investigates the relationships between the press editors and the government officialdom throughout the 1860s and 1870s. As private newspapers became influential sources of news and commentary, consumed daily by ministers and by the emperor, it quickly became in the eyes of bureaucratic officials a desirable, effective, and discreet instrument of political maneuvering. This study investigates how government officials and political interest groups sought to instrumentalize the press to advance their political agendas, influence decision-making processes, and take on political rivals. It also delves into the way in which private editors forged relations with bureaucratic patrons as protectors from the strictures of censorship and cultivated networks of loyal government informants whose leaks fueled political discussion. Dissecting the entanglements between the editorial offices and ministerial corridors, this study reveals blurring lines between the government

and the press, where favors and insider information traded hands. By analyzing the innerworkings of these interpersonal relations – their difficulties and pitfalls – sheds light on the mechanisms through which the private press gained and advanced its influence in the world of Russian politics.

As Russia's private political press gained a foothold in the political establishment, this dissertation analyzes how private editors used their newspapers to engage in key political debates of their time. This study brings to the fore vibrant editorial polemics of the 1880s to reveal a remarkable political diversity and pluralism as influential newspapers offered competing political visions and interpretations at a critical juncture in Russia's history. At the same time, this dissertation investigates the effects of a deep-seated political polarization within the Russian government and in the press, which took root since the 1870s as newspapers and their influential editors aligned themselves with powerful interest groups. Sharp editorial polemics, culminating in the first few months of Alexander III's rule, have demonstrated how a polarized and politically aligned press can serve as a surrogate to party politics in a system that formally had no parties. Understanding the mechanisms and impact of press polarization and political alignment helps better understand the interaction of press and politics as the former served to give voice and shape – within the narrow confines of the permitted – the outlines of a pluralist party system in Russia.

Finally, this study delves into the ambitions of private editors to engage more directly in political processes. Editors such as Katkov, Kraevskii, Aksakov, and Suvorin saw themselves above all as public intellectuals, whose newspapers served as vehicles for their views. The dissertation focuses on M.N. Katkov during the 1880s as perhaps the most notorious and successful of the four in his work in formulating a political program for Alexander III's rule and for designing, advancing, and steering several of the key reforms of the post-Reform government. The study analyzes the exceptional role of Katkov's editorials in cultivating particular views, narratives, and

ambitions in an undecided monarch. Combined with political maneuvering, Katkov's editorials effectively gained him the status of an influential statesman - a counsel – without being so formally appointed.

Katkov's direct involvement in drafting reform projects during the 1880s – the 1884 University Statute and the 1889 Land Captains Statute – represents the pinnacle of editorial involvement in politics. This dissertation aims to unravel the complex mechanisms through which Katkov most unusually cultivated political allies and protegees in government ministers and loyal agents in high-ranking ministerial positions who helped steer his political projects through the narrow straits of legislative procedure, against opposition majorities in the State Council and even despite the reservations of the Emperor. This study reveals the skillful maneuvering of Katkov's political campaigns, in which he used both his newspaper and his sprawling network of political agents to apply pressure to key decision-makers. Understanding how Katkov reached such a high degree of political involvement reveals the mechanisms by which non-systemic political actors can play critical roles in political decision-making, using unconventional instruments, such as the press.

Historiography

The body of scholarship on the history of the Russian press is substantial, yet irregular in in its thematic coverage, with broad research areas remaining under- or un-explored. This overview of Russian press historiography will set off by outlining the key approaches in the field and their evolution. It will then explore the literature on the newspapers and editors in focus of this dissertation. Finally, the overview will connect the key contributions of this dissertation to the existing literature and its interventions into the major historical debates.

The foundational scholarship on press history has been grounded, above all, in institutional approaches, which focused on government policies regulating the press, chiefly through censorship. Pioneering in the field of press history have been the works of M.K. Lemke on journalism and state censorship in nineteenth-century Russia.[2] Lemke's institutional approach spanned a substantial press history scholarship – including prominent works by Charles Ruud and V.G. Chernukha – which dissected continuous government efforts to control the press and traced the evolution of censorship methods.[3] These works illuminated the full spectrum of limitations faced by the Russian press at the hand of a repressive censorship apparatus, which often lacked in clarity and consistency, and greatly stifled political discussion.

Press history literature has since departed from the top-down approach of the censorship studies and challenged its assumptions about a monolith punitive government censorship. For example, V.G. Chernukha and V.A. Tvardovskaia examined the collaboration between the government and the press as they identified the stratum of "semi-official press" [*ofitsioznaia pechat*], which Chernukha defined as "the mouthpiece of the government, posing under a private or partisan sign."[4] Their focus on clientele relations between press editors and government officials introduced significant nuance in the relationships between the press and the state, revealing

[2] M. K. Lemke, *Dumy zhurnalista* (St. Petersburg: Kn-vo M.V. Pirozhkova, 1903); Idem, *Epokha tsenzurnykh reform 1859-1865 godov* (S.-Petersburg: Tipo-lit. "Gerol′d," 1904); Idem, *Ocherki po istorii russkoi tsenzury i zhurnalistiki XIX stoletia* (St. Petersburg: Kn-vo M.V. Pirozhkova, 1904); Idem, *Nikolaevskie zhandarmy* (St. Petersburg: Izd. S.V. Bunina, 1908).

[3] W. Bruce Lincoln, *The Great Reforms: Autocracy, Bureaucracy, and the Politics of Change in Imperial Russia* (DeKalb, Ill.: Northern Illinois University Press, 1990), 121–34; Daniel Balmuth, *Censorship in Russia, 1865-1905* (Washington, D.C.: University Press of America, 1979); Charles Ruud, *Fighting Words Imperial Censorship and the Russian Press, 1804-1906* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1982); Gary Marker, *Publishing, Printing, and the Origins of Intellectual Life in Russia, 1700–1800* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985); N.G. Patrusheva, "Glavnoe upravlenie po delam pechati (1865-1917 gg.) i proekty ego reformirovania," *Istoricheskie, filosovskie, politicheskie i iuridicheskie nauki, kul'turologia i iskusstvovedenie. Voprosy teorii i praktiki* 8, no. 14. Part III (2011): 147–51.

[4] V. A. Tvardovskaia, *Ideologiia poreformennogo samoderzhaviia: M. N. Katkov i ego izdaniia* (Moscow: Nauka, 1978); V. G. Chernukha, *Pravitelstvennaia politika v otnoshenii pechati 60-70-e gody XIX veka* (Leningrad: Nauka, 1989), 99.

discreet mechanisms of political influence. Biographies of prominent Russian newspaper editors have likewise revealed their influential role and extensive involvement in political processes and decision-making.[5] N.G. Patrusheva identified the systematic influence of newspaper editors on bureaucratic deliberations.[6] Alfred Rieber's work on Russia's merchants and entrepreneurs demonstrated the voluntary collaboration of editors with the Moscow entrepreneurial group in the pursuit of shared aims.[7] Rieber has also demonstrated the press to be an important and at times unpredictable actor in bureaucratic manoeuvring and interest group politics around M.Kh. Reutern's Ministry of Finance (1862-1878).[8] These studies have dismantled the longstanding assumption of an opposition between the press and the government in Imperial Russia, revealing extensive "grey zones" in which they collaborated.

Building on these approaches, this dissertation analyses a broader spectrum of interactions between the press and the bureaucratic officialdom as they sought to instrumentalize one another. Press editors, I argue, worked to influence state officials and not just serviced their agendas. In doing so, this study further reveals mechanisms of mutual influence and showcases a previously unseen role of the press in Russia's political life.

The social and cultural turns produced scholarship that departed from institutional approaches in favor of a broader societal context, exploring the press from a variety of new angles,

---

[5] Abram Reitblat, *Faddei Venediktovich Bulgarin: Ideolog, zhurnalist, konsul'tant sekretnoi politsii: Stat'i i materialy* (Moscow: Novoe literaturnoe obozrenie, 2016); A.E. Kotov, *Tsarskii put Mikhaila Katkova: Ideologia biurokraticheskogo natsionalizma v politicheskoi publitsistike 1860–1890-kh godov* (St. Petersburg: Vladimir Dal', 2016).

[6] N.G. Patrusheva, "Glavnoe upravlenie po delam pechati (1865-1917 gg) i proekti ego reformirovania," *Istoricheskie, filosofskie, politicheskie i iuridicheskie nauki, kul'turologia i iskusstvovedenie. Voprosy teorii i praktiki*. 8, no. 14. Part III (2011): 147–51; N.G. Patrusheva and M.A. Benina, eds., *Periodicheskaia pechat i tsenzura Rossiiskoi imperii v 1865-1905 gg. Sistema administrativnykh vzyskanii* (St. Petersburg: Nestor-Istoria, 2018).

[7] Alfred J. Rieber, *Merchants and Entrepreneurs in Imperial Russia* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1982), 178–98.

[8] Alfred J. Rieber, "Chapter 8: The Reutern System in Operation," in *The Imperial Russian Project: Autocratic Politics, Economic Development, and Social Fragmentation* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2017), 199-234.

such as labor, gender, economic, and cultural histories. The era of *glasnost'* and *perestroika* prompted new questions about the role of the press in fostering a civil society. Louise McReynolds focused on the connection between the commercialization of the Russian press during the nineteenth century and the inception of a civil society.[9] Mark Steinberg and Diane Koenker interrogated labor relations in the print industry in pre- and post- revolutionary Russia as a prism for observing the formation of a professional and political culture.[10] Barbara Norton and Jehanne Gheith shed light on the role and impact of women in Russian journalism before 1917 as part of a broader integration of women into societal functions.[11] Jeffrey Brooks, Deborah Martinsen, Abram Reitblat, and Richard Stites investigated the evolving print consumption and the cultures of reading and literacy in Imperial Russia as elements of broader social and cultural change.[12] More recently, press historians have ventured beyond the newspapers of Moscow and St. Petersburg to investigate the role of regional press in shaping class values, local culture, national self-determination, and political resistance.[13]

---

[9] Louise McReynolds, *The News Under Russia's Old Regime: The Development of a Mass-Circulation Press* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991); Charles Ruud, *Russian Entrepreneur: Publisher Ivan Sytin of Moscow, 1851–1934* (Montreal: McGill-Queens's University Press, 1990).

[10] Mark D. Steinberg, *Moral Communities: The Culture of Class Relations in the Russian Printing Industry, 1867–1907* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1992); Diane P. Koenker, *Republic of Labor: Russian Printers and Soviet Socialism, 1918–1930* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2005).

[11] Barbara T. Norton and Jehanne M. Gheith, eds., *An Improper Profession: Women, Gender, and Journalism in Late Imperial Russia* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2001).

[12] Jeffrey Brooks, *When Russia Learned to Read: Literacy and Popular Literature, 1861–1917* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1985); Deborah A. Martinsen, ed., *Literary Journals in Imperial Russia* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1997); Abram Reitblat, *Ot Bovy k Bal'montu: ocherki po istorii chteniia v Rossii vo vtoroi polovine XIX veka* (Moscow: Izd-vo MPI, 1991); Richard Stites, ed., *Culture and Entertainment in Wartime Russia* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1995).

[13] Stephen Frank and Mark Steinberg, eds., *Cultures in Flux: Lower-Class Values, Practices, and Resistance in Late Imperial Russia* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001). Jeffrey Brooks, *Thank You, Comrade Stalin! Soviet Public Culture from Revolution to Cold War* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1999). Matthew E Lenoe, *Closer to the Masses: Stalinist Culture, Social Revolution, and Soviet Newspapers* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004). T.A. Belogurova, *Russkaia periodicheskaia pechat' i problemy vnutrennei zhizni strany v gody pervoi mirovoi voiny (1914–fevral' 1917)* (Smolensk: Gody, 2005). Batiia Val'dman, *Russko-evreiskaia zhurnalistika (1860–1914)* (Riga: Tsentr izucheniia iudaiki latviiskogo universiteta, 2008). Lisa Khachaturian, *Cultivating Nationhood in Imperial Russia: the Periodical Press and the Formation of a Modern Armenian Identity* (New Brunswick, CT: Transaction Publishers, 2009). Yosef Gorni, *The Jewish Press and the Holocaust, 1939–1945: Palestine, Britain, the United States, and the Soviet Union* (New York, NY: Cambridge

Borrowing approaches in cultural studies, this dissertation is first to investigate the culture of newspaper readership within governmental ranks. In doing so, it aims to understand the culture and practices of political discussion and governmental decision-making, as well as how newspaper editors navigated, shaped, and exploited this culture.

Having outlined the key 'turns' and approaches in the historiography of the Russian press, this overview will now take a closer look at the literature on the particular newspapers and editors who come into the focus of this dissertation: M.N. Katkov, A.A. Kraevskii, A.S. Suvorin, and I.S. Aksakov.

The literature on nineteenth-century editors has been for the most part sparse and irregular, focused on just a few prominent figures. In the years before 1917, a number of biographies, largely hagiographic, was authored by contemporaries in the aftermath of the editors' passing.[14] Remarkably absent from this first wave of biographies have been those on A.A. Kraevskii. On the other hand, far more has been written on M.N. Katkov, the most prominent and, indeed, notorious of the four. Katkov's political influence and controversial legacy were evident already from his first biographies, some of which praised his patriotic engagement in politics, while others critiqued his interference and disruption.[15] In the 1920s, Katkov received a brief mention in the works of historian Iu.V. Got'e, a student of V.O. Kliuchevskii, on bureaucratic infighting after the accession

University Press, 2012). C.J. Storella and A.K. Sokolov, *The Voice of the People: Letters from the Soviet Village, 1918–1932* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2013).

[14] S. Nevedienskii, *Katkov i ego vremia*. (St. Petersburg: Tipografia A.S. Suvorina, 1888). N. A. Liubimov, *Mikhail Nikiforovich Katkov i ego istoricheskaia zasluga*. (St. Petersburg: Tipografia Tovarishestva "Obshchestvennaia Pol'za," 1889). R. I. Sementkovskii, *M.N. Katkov: ego zhizn i literaturnaia deiatelnost: biograficheskii ocherk* (St. Petersburg: Tipografia Ju. N. Erlich, 1892). I.I. Balakeev, *I.S. Aksakov (1823-1886)* (Khar'kov: Tip. "Mirn[yi] trud," 1910). N.L. Brodskii, ed., *Rannie slavianofily: A.S. Khomiakov, I.V. Kireevskii, i I.S. Aksakov* (Moscow: Tov[arishchestvo] I.D. Sytina, 1910). A.E. Kaufman, *A.S. Suvorin* (St. Petersburg: Pravda, 1908).

[15] In an iconoclastic biography by one of Katkov's closest associates, see: N. A. Liubimov, *Mikhail Nikiforovich Katkov i ego istoricheskai͡a zasluga. Po dokumentan i lichnym vospominanii͡am N.A. Li͡ubimova* (St. Petersburg: Tipografia Tovarishestva "Obshchestvennaia Pol'za," 1889). For a critical biography, see: S. Nevedenskii *Katkov i ego vremia* (St. Petersburg: Tipografia A.S. Suvorina, 1888). See also: R. I. Sementkovskii, *M.N. Katkov: Ego zhizn i literaturnaia deiatel'nost: biograficheskii ocherk* (St. Petersburg: Tipografia Ju. N. Erlich, 1892).

of Alexander III.[16] However, Got'e's arrest, imprisonment, and exile in 1930 placed the subject off-limits for the decades that followed.

It was only with the Khrushchev-era Thaw of the mid-1950s to mid-1960s that made the study of Russian press and the political climate of post-reform Russia possible to broach once more. During this time, Iu.V. Got'e's student, P.A. Zaionchkovskii, systematized the study of post-Reform Russia in a series of seminal works on the 1870s-1880s. [17] Zaionchkovskii's richly documented work offered a new historical paradigm in which Russia's post-reform period was dominated by an intense struggles between 'liberal' ideologies that sought to continue and expand the Great Reforms and 'conservative' ideologies, which sought to reverse them. Identifying these uncompromising fault lines in Russian politics, Zaionchkovskii highlighted the press as the public voice of debating interest groups and an important political player in its own right.

Two of Zaionchkovskii's students, V. G. Chernukha and V.G. Tvardovskaia, published seminal works on the political role of the press in pre-Revolutionary Russia. V.G. Chernukha's monograph, *Pravitel'stvennaia politika v otnoshenii pechati,* presented a foundational study of governmental regulation of the press during the 1860s-1870s – a period of critical censorship reforms.[18] It was first to discern the nuanced relationships of the press with the state by distinguishing among pro-governmental newspapers the official press [*ofitsial'nia* pechat], the semi-official press [*ofitsioznaia pechat'*], and the 'right leaning' press by conviction [*pravaia pechat'*]. Among these, Chernukha singled out M.N. Katkov and his newspaper, *Moskovskie*

[16] Iu.V. Got'e, "Bor'ba pravielstvennykh gruppirovok i manifest 29 Aprelia 1881g.," *Istoricheskie zapiski*, no. 2 (1938).
[17] P.A. Zaionchkovskii, *Krizis samoderzhaviia na rubezhe 1870-1880-kh godov* (Moscow: Izd-vo Moskovskogo Universiteta, 1964). Idem, *Rossiiskoe samoderzhavie v kontse XIX stoletiia: politicheskaia reaktsiia 80-kh-nachala 90-kh godov* (Moscow: Izd-vo Mysl, 1970). Idem, *Pravitel'stvennyi apparat samoderzhavnoi rossii v XIX v.* (Moscow: Mysl', 1978).
[18] Chernukha, *Pravitelstvennaia politika v otnoshenii pechati 60-70-e gody XIX veka*. Tvardovskaia, *Ideologiia Poreformennogo samoderzhaviia*. Aleksandr Vasilevich Zapadov, *Istoriia russkoi zhurnalistiki XVIII -XIX vekov.* (Moscow: Vysshaia shkola, 1973).

Vedomosti, which "stand apart" [*stoiat osobniakom*] among pro-government newspapers as "influential, widely read, supported by the government and the conservative strata of society."[19] The nuanced approach of his work extended to its analysis of the unreliable partnership between Katkov and the bureaucratic officialdom, in which the former exercised his influence sometimes in the discreet favor of the government and at other times in manifest defiance of its censorship regulations, exposing the increasingly difficulty of information controls.

While Chernukha's study provides an overview of non-institutional relations between the press and the government, this dissertation builds her approach to provide a more expansive and detailed analysis of the collaboration, patronage, mutual instrumentalization, and competition for influence between press editors bureaucratic officials. Chernukha's work also focused on the government's efforts to co-opt the press – to shape it. This dissertation aims to show the reverse side of this relationship: the efforts of the press to engage in politics and to shape them. Advancing Chernukha's approach non-institutional approach, this dissertation illuminates the ways in which the newspapers aligned themselves with political interest groups to gain a political foothold, wielded their editorials in efforts to influence political decision-making, cultivated press informants and political agents in the ranks of the state to advance their views and political projects.

The first work to systematically study the ideological contributions of press editors was the seminal work by V.A. Tvardovskaia, *Ideologia poreformennogo samoderzhavia.*[20] Tvardovskaia took an intellectual history approach to M.N. Katkov's *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, placing him not only at the forefront of "conservative," "reactionary" thought in post-Reform Russia, but also on the political arena as "ideologue of autocracy" during the "counterreforms" of the 1880s.

[19] Chernukha, *Pravitelstvennaia politika v otnoshenii pechati*, 149.
[20] Tvardovskaia, *Ideologiia poreformennogo samoderzhaviia*.

Tvardovskaia has argued that Katkov's reactionary politics, which defended Russia's autocratic regime as an absolute, centralized, nationalist, and inherently anti-European system, were fundamentally incompatible with democratic reform and thus never aimed to adapt to the democratic demands of revolutionary politics.[21] "Regressiveness" [*popyatnost'*] rather than adaptation, she concluded, was the defining feature of Katkov's political program."[22]

At the time of its publication in 1978, Tvardovskaia's monograph and its notion of a monolithic Russian autocracy confronted the more fluid approach of Western scholars. Two decades earlier, P.A. Zaionchkovskii's work ignited a wave of interest in Russia's post-Reform political and intellectual history among Western historians, who ultimately sought to understand whether the official ideology of the tsarist regime has led it onto a political course that brought its demise, and, conversely, whether alternative ideologies could have stabilized the autocratic regime, led it onto a path of social progress and economic prosperity, and ultimately avoided revolutionary scenarios. For a new generation of historians, editors and public intellectuals like M.N. Katkov, I.S. Aksakov, A.S. Suvorin and statesmen such as K.P. Pobedonostsev became lightning rods for the study of ideologies and ideologues of autocracy. [23]

---

[21] Tvardovskaia, *Ideologiia poreformennogo samoderzhaviia*, 267. The question on the proximity of Russian autocracy to the European absolutist tradition remains one of the key debates in Russian historiography. To give a few examples: P.L. Sedov, *Zakat moskovskogo tsarstva: tsarskii dvor kontsa XVII veka* (St. Petersburg: DB, 2006). Marc Raeff, *Political Ideas and Institutions in Imperial Russia* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1994). Marc Raeff, "The Bureaucratic Phenomena of Imperial Russia, 1700-1905," *The American Historical Review* 84, no. 2 (1979): 399–411. John P LeDonne, *Absolutism and Ruling Class: The Formation of the Russian Political Order, 1700-1825* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1991). Wortman, *The Development of a Russian Legal Consciousness* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1976). Liah Greenfeld, *Nationalism: Five Roads to Modernity* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992).

[22] Tvardovskaia, *Ideologiia poreformennogo samoderzhaviia*, 268.

[23] To name a few examples: Marc Raeff, *The Russian Autocracy and Its Officials*. (Gravenhage: Mouton, 1957). Idem, "Some Reflections on Russian Liberalism," *Russian Review* 18, no. 3 (1959): 218–30. Idem, *Plans for Political Reform in Imperial Russia, 1730-1905* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1966). Idem, "A Reactionary Liberal: M. N. Katkov," *Russian Review* 11, no. 3 (1952): 157–67. Stephen Lukashevich, *Ivan Aksakov, 1823-1886. A Study in Russian Thought and Politics*. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1965). Martin Katz, *Mikhail N. Katkov* (The Hague: Mouton, 1966). Karel Durman, *The Time of the Thunderer: Mikhail Katkov, Russian Nationalist Extremism and the Failure of the Bismarckian System, 1871-1887* (Boulder, NY: East European Monographs. Distributed by Columbia University Press, 1988). Effie Ambler, *Russian Journalism and Politics,*

Inspired by P.A. Zaionchkovskii's work, historians such as Richard Pipes, Robert Byrnes, Edward Thaden, Michael Katz, and Thomas Pearson, and later Richard Wortman came to view autocratic ideologies as malleable products of monarchic personalities, political challenges, and bureaucratic negotiation. Their works took great interest in Katkov and Pobedonostsev as public intellectuals, who sought to formulate unifying ideologies to strengthen monarchic appeal in the face of direct challenges.[24] Edward Thaden has argued that the conservative nationalism of the nineteenth century was an attempt to eliminate the detachment of the Westernized educated elites and government officials from the people, *narod*. Nationalism, he concluded, was an effort at cultural unity.[25] Much like Thaden, Robert Byrnes saw in Pobedonostsev's politics an effort to edify "national ideals." Martin Katz credited Katkov with a key role in developing the ideology of "integral nationalism" which, Katz argued, counteracted the centrifugal forces on the Russian empire and the eroding social estate system.[26] Katz argued Katkov was "conservative and Western," perceiving no contradiction in terms as Tvardovskaia later did.[27]

Going further, Richard Pipes argued that the nationalism of Katkov, Pobedonostsev, Aksakov, Dostoevsky and others was "democratically oriented" in that it was "explicitly antigentry" and sought harmony between the autocracy and the people, *narod*, not between autocracy and the nobility.[28] The non-cosmopolitan nature of nineteenth-century conservative

---

1861-1881: The Career of Aleksei S. Suvorin (Detroit, MI: Wayne State University Press, 1972). N. I. Tsimbaev, *I.S. Aksakov v obshestvennoi zhizni poreformennoi Rossii* (Moscow: Izdatelstvo Moskovskogo Universiteta, 1978).

[24] Edward C. Thaden, *Conservative Nationalism in Nineteenth-Century Russia* (Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, 1964). Martin Katz, *Mikhail N. Katkov: A Political Biography, 1818-1887* (The Hague: Mouton, 1966). Robert Byrnes, *Pobedonostsev: His Life and Thought* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1968). Richard Pipes, "Russian Conservatism in the Second Half of the Nineteenth Century," *Slavic Review* 30, no. 1 (March 1971): 121–28. Richard Wortman, *Scenarios of Power: Myth and Ceremony in Russian Monarchy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1995).

[25] Thaden, *Conservative Nationalism*, xiii, 4.

[26] Katz, *Mikhail N. Katkov*, 181.

[27] Ibid., 182.

[28] Pipes, "Russian Conservatism in the Second Half of the Nineteenth Century," 124.

nationalism, Pipes acknowledged, bore at times openly xenophobic elements; at the same time, he argued, nationalist sentiment and democratic orientation reinforced one another.[29] Thomas Pearson further contended that Katkov's support for governmental centralization – one of the 'reactionary' traits highlighted by Tvardovskaia – was in fact an effort to improve the functioning of the government.[30] Holding in their sights both the democratic and the anti-democratic characteristics of nineteenth-century nationalism, this body of Western scholarship saw Katkov's contribution as an attempt to adapt the monarchic ideology to the political climate of the moment.

This dissertation brings together all sides of this longstanding debate under a revisionist approach to Katkov's profile as an "ideologue of autocracy." It expands on Tvardovskaia's study of Katkov as a political actor by detailing Katkov's extensive involvement in political processes and its methods: shaping and negotiating reform projects, launching influence campaigns in the press, advancing the interests of friendly ministers, taking on political rivals, forging new political narratives and a new image for a nationalized Russian monarchy. In doing so, this study contributes new perspectives on press engagement in politics, revealing the rising influence of non-governmental agents in Russian politics.

This dissertation joins Thaden, Byrnes, Pipes and others in their view of Katkov's national politics as an adaptive effort. However, re-examining Katkov as an ideologue Alexander III's rule, this study departs from the persistent and narrow focus on his nationalism in both English- and Russian-language historiography. Instead, it delves into Katkov's broader program in which civic nationalism (*narodnost'*) went hand in hand with all-estate economic and fiscal policies (*vsesoslovnost'*), and notions of government as a guaranteur of public welfare (*blagosostoianie*).

[29] Ibid.
[30] Thomas S. Pearson, "The Origins of Alexander III's Land Captains: A Reinterpretation," *Slavic Review* 40, no. 3 (October 1981): 384–403.

Analyzing Katkov's editorial campaigns, correspondence, and political projects – particularly his most active involvement in shaping political reforms during the 1880s - , this dissertation attempts a more systematic approach to Katkov's intellectual legacy. It builds a new interpretative framework which integrates previously contradictory "liberal" and "conservative" aspects of Katkov's intellectual history.

The 'liberal-conservative' dichotomy, embedded in P.A. Zaionchkovskii's interpretative framework and pervasive in Russian- and English-language scholarship, has provided helpful guide poles to a complex political arena in late nineteenth century Russia. However, the model was not without its complications. Marc Raeff observed that Katkov

> wanted a modern, "liberal" (in the Manchesterian sense of the word) economic and social basis for Russia. Yet, […], the political structure of the country was to remain quite "medieval"; in particular, the Emperor's autocratic power was not to be touched. Katkov's economic views, progressive for his time and country, could not be squared with his conservative and even reactionary political plans.[31]

Raeff pondered how Katkov "advocates for liberty and individualism in the economic and social realms" on the one hand and "defends a conservative and obsolescent political regime" on the other hand.[32] Raeff's conclusion, seemingly unsatisfactory even to himself, was that Katkov was "a reactionary liberal." Since the publication of Raeff's study, Katkov's reputation as a 'conservative' or 'reactionary' has been maintained by studies that focused almost exclusively on his national politics. As this study expands its focus to include his social and economic views, it builds a new interpretative framework that integrates previously contradictory and irreconcilable aspects of Katkov's intellectual legacy. In doing so, it presents a more cohesive picture of Katkov,

[31] Raeff, "A Reactionary Liberal," 167.
[32] Ibid.

his ideas and motivations, incorporating his capacities as a philosopher or public intellectual (Katz), a political actor (Tvardovskaia), and a journalist – all three roles reinforced one another and propelled him into an unprecedented position on the political stage. Finally, the study resolves Tvardovskaia's central critique of Western scholarship: its notions of a "unifying," "above-class," and "democratically oriented" nationalism, it overlooked how national politics addressed class issues in their practical implications (the peasant question, for instance).[33]

The era of *glasnost'* and *perestroika* gave a new impulse to press scholarship, which shifted its focus to the role of the press in shaping civil society, political values, and intellectual communities.[34] Most notably, Louise McReynolds has argued that the advent of mass press production, its commercialization, has fostered the growth of a civil society in late Imperial Russia.[35] Although this work does not directly study the effects of Russia's political press on civil society, it nevertheless asks new questions about the role of the press in subjecting the government to increased scrutiny of its decisions and to exposing into the public view a plurality of ideas within the government itself.

The collapse of the Soviet Union and the ensuing search for political alternatives to socialism redoubled interest in Russia's pre-revolutionary intellectual traditions. 'Conservative traditions,' A.Iu. Minakov explained, gained particular appeal as "natural counterweight to

---

[33] Tvardovskaia, *Ideologiia poreformennogo samoderzhaviia*, 14.

[34] To give a few examples: Gary Marker, *Publishing, Printing, and the Origins of Intellectual Life in Russia, 1700-1800* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1985). N. Ia. Eidelman, *Gertsen protiv samoderzhavia: sekretnaia politicheskaia istoriia Rossii XVIII-XIX vekov i vol'naia pechat*, 2nd ed. (Moscow: Mysl', 1984). Louise McReynolds, *The News under Russia's Old Regime: The Development of a Mass-Circulation Press* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1991). Louise McReynolds, "Autocratic Journalism: The Case of the St. Petersburg Telegraph Agency," *Slavic Review* 49, no. 1 (1990): 48–57. Gary Marker, "The Creation of Journals and the Profession of Letters in the Eighteenth Century," in *Literary Journals in Imperial Russia*, ed. Deborah A. Martinsen (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1997). Deborah A. Martinsen, ed., *Literary Journals in Imperial Russia* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1997). Daniel Balmuth, *The Russian Bulletin, 1863-1917* (New York, NY: Lang, 2000). E. S. Sonina, *Petersburgskaia universal'naia gazeta kontsa XIX veka* (St. Petersburg: Izdatel'stvo S-Petersburgskogo Universiteta, 2004).

[35] Louise McReynolds, "Autocratic Journalism: The Case of the St. Petersburg Telegraph Agency," *Slavic Review* 49, no. 1 (1990): 48–57.

'leftism'" and because "the relative failure of the liberal reforms launched in 1992 also contributed to a revulsion against liberalism 'imposed by the West.'"[36] Katkov, Aksakov, Suvorin and others received renewed attention as prominent representatives Russia's "conservative traditions," however, the scholarly output has been mixed. While some of the post-Soviet works on Katkov, Aksakov, and others have largely reproduced the narratives borrowed from Zaionhkovskii, Chernukha, and Tvardovskaia, while others have claimed their relevance to contemporary politics.[37]

Far more productive have been the new approaches to press history. A.E. Kotov has looked to milieu studies to identify the members of Katkov's school of thought among the intellectuals and statesmen of his day.[38] O.S. Kruglikova has taken up methods in collective biographies to uncover collaborations between press editors and bureaucratic officials.[39] Octavie Bellavance and A.G. Iushkov have engaged in the study of the financial aspect of newspaper publishing.[40] Zachary Hoffman has examined the role of the Russian press in fanning imperialist sentiments – a departure

[36] A. Iu. Minakov, "Russian Conservatism in Contemporary Russian Historiography: New Approaches and Research Trends," *Russian Studies in History* 48, no. 2 (Fall 2009): 8–28. See also: V.L. Stepanov, "Revisiting Russian Conservatism," *Russian Studies in History* 48, no. 2 (2009): 3–7.
[37] A. L. Brutian, *M.N. Katkov: sotsial'no-politicheskie vzgliady* (Moscow: MAKS Press, 2001). V.M. Kantor, "O sud'be imperskogo liberalizma v Rossii (M.N. Katkov)," *Filosovskie Nauki*, no. 2 (2007): 66–91. A. V Novikov, *Rossiiskie konservatory (M.N. Katkov, D.A. Tolstoi, K.P. Pobedonostsev) i samoderzhavie: seredina XIX-nachalo XX vekov* (Moscow: n.p., 2002). D. A Davudov, *Formirovanie i razvitie politiko-pravovykh vozzrenii Mikhaila Nikiforovicha Katkova: Monografia* (Volgograd: Volgogradskoe Nauchnoe Izd-vo, 2014). O.V. Kuleshova, *Nasledie M.N. Katkova v sovremennoi Rossii: analiticheskii obzor* (Moscow: INION RAN, 2013). E.A Popov and I.V. Veligonova, *Kogda slovo povelevaet imperiei: periodicheskie izdania M.N. Katkova i novye tekhnologii obshchestvenno-gosudarstvennoi politiki reformiruiusheisia Rosii (seredina 1850-1880 gg.)* (Moscow: RISI, 2014).
[38] A.E. Kotov, *Ptentsy gnezda Katkova* (St. Petersburg: GUMRF, 2013). Idem, *Tsarskii put' Mikhaila Katkova: Ideologia biurokraticheskogo natsionalizma v politicheskoi publitsistike 1860-1890-kh godov* (St. Petersburg: Vladimir Dal', 2016).
[39] O.S Kruglikova, "Opyt konstruktivnogo sotrudnichestva zhurnalistiki i vlasti v poreformennoi Rossii: publitsistika i obshchestvennaia deiatel'nost' M.N. Katkova," *Vestnik Sankt-Peterburgskogo universiteta* 9, no. 4, Part II (2007): 248-255.
[40] Octavie Bellavance, "Fourth Estate, Fifth Power: The Daily Press, the Public and Politics in Russia, 1861-1907" (Ph.D., Dissertation, Yale University, 2015). A.G. Iushko, "Za kulisami publitsistiki: vlasti i *Moskovskie Vedomosti* v 1887 g po smerti M.N. Katkova," in A. P. Dmitriev, ed., *Nikita Petrovich Giliarov-Platonov: Issledovania. Materialy. Bibliografia. Retsenzia.* (St. Petersburg: Rostok, 2013), 153-181.

from the focus on internal newspaper coverage in press scholarship.[41] Particularly valuable has been A.N. Nikoliukin's effort to publish Katkov's writings.[42]

In the last two decades, new approaches have reinterpreted traditional nineteenth-century narratives and prepared the ground for a revision of Katkov's political legacy. Examining Katkov's pedagogical legacy, V.N. Bugaeva argues that his was an effort to centralize and standardize university curriculum, textbooks, and testing, rather than a deliberately stifle university autonomy.[43] She stops just short from making parallels with similar processes of centralization and nation-building around Europe, as described, for example, by Eugen Weber in *Peasants into Frenchmen*.[44] Focusing on Russia's imperial policy in the Western Borderlands, Mikhail Dolbilov has analyzed the intricate negotiation of ethno-confessional categories that do not lend themselves to clear-cut dichotomies.[45]

The boom of nationalism studies during the 1990s and 2000s has yielded new and more sophisticated tools for re-conceptualizing Katkov's national politics beyond the platitude of 'reaction.' Andreas Renner has argued for a complete re-thinking of Katkov's *Weltanschauung* in particular and of late 19th-century nationalism in general.[46] Rejecting traditional treatments of nationalism, Renner's article on Katkov contends that the nationalism of Katkov's time was "far from simply being an aggressive, narrow-minded ideology of political oppression, nationalism was

[41] Zachary Hoffman, "Orienting the Empire: Russian Identity and East Asian Imperialism in the Conservative Press, 1894-1905" (PhD Dissertation, University of Virginia, 2017).
[42] A.N. Nikoliukin, *Mikhail Nikiforovich Katkov: pro et contra* (St. Petersburg: Rostok, 2012). A.N. Nikoliukin and T.F. Prokopov, eds., *Filosofskie chtenia: stat'i, traktaty, polemika* (St. Petersburg: Rostok, 2011).
[43] V.N. Bugaeva, *Pedagogicheskoe nasledie M.N. Katkova* (Smolensk: Madzhenta, 2011).
[44] Eugen Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen: The Modernization of Rural France, 1870-1914* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1992).
[45] M.D. Dolbilov, *Russkii krai, chuzhaia vera: etnokonfessionalnaia politika imperii v Litve i Belorussii pri Aleksandre II* (Moscow: NLO, 2010), 416-417, 460-471, 497-502, 614-620.
[46] Andreas Renner, "Defining a Russian Nation: Mikhail Katkov and the 'Invention' of National Politics," *The Slavonic and East European Review* 81, no. 4 (2003): 659–82.

intrinsically linked to the liberalism of its day."[47] Renner has argued that

> Katkov had urged implementation of the very reforms previously undertaken by European nation-states: a standardized bureaucracy and judiciary, a system of state-controlled education (with Russian as the *lingua franca*), and a reduction of local and estate privileges and the 'national will' as the principle legitimation for state politics.[48]

Renner shows that "Katkov was skillful in taking this Slavophile keyword [*narodnost'*] and deploying it in the context of a Russian nation fashioned after the West European nation-states."[49] Aware of the challenges to the legitimacy of the Russian monarchy post-Crimean War, Katkov, as Renner shows, sought to formulate "a new interpretation and legitimacy for the Tsarist empire."[50] Katkov's idea of a Russian 'nation-empire,' outlined on the pages of *Moskovskie Vedomosti,* envisioned "a form of nationalism based on the older principles of nation-building: a modern unified state whose responsibility for the rule of law lay with a politically aware civil society."[51]

While Renner's work focuses primarily on Katkov's national politics during the early 1860s, this study aims to expand on his methods for a broader reinterpretation of Katkov's political and socio-economic ideas. To do so, this dissertation draws on a body of revisionist works that has over the last two decades begun to reconceptualize the late nineteenth century. Igor Khristoforov's monograph, *Aristokraticheskaya Opozitsiia,* has – among others – challenged the "liberal-conservative" dichotomy by exposing a spectrum of political nuance in the debates over the Great Reforms.[52] Boris Mironov's work has departed from the binaries of "Europeanization" vs.

---

[47] Renner, 661.
[48] Ibid., 671.
[49] Ibid., 681.
[50] Ibid., 669.
[51] Ibid., 661.
[52] I. A Khristoforov, *"Aristokraticheskaiâ" oppozitsiiâ velikim reformam: konetś 1850 - seredina 1870-khgg.* (Moscow: Russkoe slovo, 2002).

"Russian *Sonderweg*" in his assessment of Russia's socio-economic development, proposing instead a model of its asynchronous development vis-à-vis Europe.[53] Economic historians have challenged notions of economic decline during the period of Alexander III's "counterreforms," showcasing Russia's vibrant economic development, modernizing taxation, and a productive engagement of the state in economic life.[54] Boris Gorshkov's study of factory children in the Russian empire contributes a radically new perspective on thriving social legislature during the 1880s and 1890s. These new perspectives transform the picture of a period of which Katkov deemed an ideologue, inviting a reinterpretation that is the task of this study.

Having outlined the evolution of the historiography on the subject, the following paragraphs will lay out the contributions of this dissertation to the field of Russian press history, to the scholarship on M.N. Katkov, and to the study of late nineteenth-century Russia.

To the scholarship on post-Reform Russia, this dissertation offers new insights into the way in which increasingly free and speedy circulation of information transformed the political establishment, making it keenly attuned to public assessments made in the press. It reveals how the networks of informants, allies, and agents fostered by editors within government ranks forced

[53] Mironov contended that "Russians and Europeans have shared common features of development […]. However, Russia developed asynchronously with other European countries." Mironov's narrative, particularly that on late imperial Russia, has been a normalizing one, acknowledging, among the first, the "unprecedented and extremely rapid rate of industrial growth" during the rule of Alexander III. B.N. Mironov and Ben Eklof, *A Social History of Imperial Russia, 1700-1917* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1999),193.

[54] For example, Paul Gregory's book *The Russian National Income, 1885-1913*, has highlighted Russia's vibrant economic development during the 1880s and 1890s – a period associated by traditional historiography with backward-looking reaction. Yanni Kotsonis's analysis of Russia's fiscal policy remarked on the modern trends of fiscal centralization and individualized taxation taking place beginning with the 1880s. In these developments Kotsonis observes a modernizing trend that had its contemporary parallels in Western Europe. M.A. Davydov, in his monograph on the two decades of economic and industrial growth in the lead-up to WWI, demonstrates the increasing and productive engagement of the state in economic and social life: state aid in food provision, facilitation of heavy industry growth, and increase in savings, state aid to the Peasant Bank, the legal treatment of peasants as individuals and the cultivation in them of a growing sense of responsibility for their land, mortgage, and production. See: Paul R Gregory, *Russian National Income, 1885-1913* (Cambridge [Cambridgeshire]. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1982). V. L. Stepanov, *N.Kh. Bunge: Sudba reformatora* (Moscow: ROSSPEN, 1998).Yanni Kotsonis, *States of Obligation: Taxes and Citizenship in the Russian Empire and Early Soviet Republic* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2014). M.A Davydov, *Dvadtsat' let do velikoi voiny: rossiiskaia modernizatsia Vitte – Stolypina* (St. Petersburg: Aleteia, 2016).

upon the government an unprecedented level of transparency as leaks fueled public debate and imposed on the government new elements of public accountability. The revisionist approach of this dissertation toward Katkov as an "ideologue of autocracy" contributes new insights to the literature on Alexander III. To the scholarship on Russian bureaucracy, this work highlights the growing role of the press in thwarting or advancing political careers and projects. As this study dissects the political alignments between press editors and bureaucratic interest groups on key political debates of the post-reform period, it exposes political partisanship before parties became a formal fixture on Russia's political scene in the early 1900s.

To the field of press history, this study explores themes previously unexamined in the literature on nineteenth-century press. It contributes an original perspective on the technological and logistical development of the Russian press, which made it a hub of information and a necessity for the bureaucratic elites. It is first to dissect the transformation of the editorial work (together with the technological, logistical, commercial transformation of the press) in order to ask new questions about the professionalization of journalism in late Imperial Russia.

In a definitive departure from top-down approaches to press history, this dissertation sets itself as principal pursuit the understanding of how the press shaped the world of Russian politics during 1860s-1880. Examining the newspaper reading patters of monarchs and their bureaucratic entourages, this work offers original insights into the ways the press shaped political debates and, ultimately, decision-making. Building on existing literature, it pursues expanded research into relationships of collaboration, patronage, and mutual dependency, revealing the press as an agent of growing political influence, compulsion, and scrutiny.

To the scholarship on M.N. Katkov, this dissertation offers a two-fold contribution. First, by applying methods in collective intellectual and political biography and milieu history, this work

reveals a web of political allies, informants, and agents as well as patterns of political maneuvering that gained him his influential status, readily assumed in existing literature. In doing so, this work sheds light on the complex mechanisms of interaction between the press and the state and those of the growing press entrenchment in politics. Second, this dissertation offers new perspectives on Katkov's intellectual legacy, which has confounded much of the existing literature. Moving away from the focus on Katkov's national politics, this study presents a broader and more complex ideological legacy. Where existing literature has found elements of this legacy contradictory, this work builds a new interpretative framework that lends cohesion to his thought through new approaches in recent revisionist literature.

Theoretical Framework & Methodology

As this dissertation traces the roots of the political influence of the press to its technological progress in gathering and disseminating information, it draws on the work of communication theorist James Carey. In his seminal publication, *Communication as Culture,* Carey has demonstrated how certain communication technology – particularly the telegraph – has revolutionized information consumption in the course of the nineteenth-century.[55] Specifically, Carey has argued that the telegraph "for the first time permitted the separation of communication from transportation," thus circumventing the need of physical travel for information to travel and freeing communication from geography.[56] The telegraph allowed for information to move faster than people, altering "the special and temporal boundaries of human interaction." Investigating the impact of a private press on the political establishment, this study is interests in how the accelerating speed of information travel – particularly of information from non-governmental

[55] James W. Carey, *Communication as Culture: Essays on Media and Society* (New York: Routledge, 2009).
[56] Carey, 156–57.

sources that private newspapers thrived on – affected the government's control over political processes.

Carrey's approach can be transferred onto other communication technology that aided the rise of the Russian press. The cooptation of Russia's expanded railroad systems into networks of newsgathering by courier services, correspondent dispatch, and newspaper delivery highlights the fast-growing importance of information transfer as a growing priority on Russia's transportation arteries. The steam-powered press likewise transformed newspaper printing from a craft into industrial-scale production for mass consumption, setting the stage for a truly mass press at the turn of the century.

The technological revolution of newspaper production transformed the nature of editorial work. On the one hand, the growing complexity of editorial work, its logistics and commercial aspects imbued it with an ethos of expertise and service, thus making significant progress toward the professionalization of editorial (and journalistic) work in Russia, in Eliot Friedsen's definition.[57] On the other hand, the technological transformation of the press, as Carey highlighted from the work of R.L. Thompson *Wiring a Continent*, broke with the personal, communal, face-to-face patterns of information travel and exchange.[58] The volume and speed of communication demanded "a new form of organization of essentially impersonal relations – that is relations not among known persons but among buyers and sellers," readers and editors.[59] Unlike eighteenth-century newspapers and literary journals, which circulated within a community of many known individuals, the rising newspaper press aimed to address a wide, unknown readership and create a

[57] Eliot Freidson, *Professionalism Reborn: Theory, Prophecy, and Policy* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1994).
[58] Robert Luther Thompson, *Wiring a Continent: The History of the Telegraph Industry in the United States, 1832-1866* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1947).
[59] Carey, *Communication as Culture*, 158.

community of shared values within it. Within the political establishment, where information exchange and policy discussion took place in person or via correspondence among known members of the establishment, the rising political press emerged as an impersonal actor in governmental policy discussion, in which editors sought to exert their ideological influence and shape policy through the organizational medium of the newspapers.

Analyzing the political role of the press, this dissertation draws on three key concepts formulated by Jürgen Habermas: "the public sphere," "communicative action," and "deliberative democracy."[60] Habermas defined the public sphere broadly as "a sphere of private individuals coming together as a public." Alongside salons, coffee houses, and voluntary organizations, the press represented an early site of public sociability. The private political press in Russia represented an early mediator of the public sphere insofar as it brought forth into the public view political controversy, debate, and critique thus engaging mostly an educated reading public in large cities into the day-to-day business of governance. However, this study also joins the critique of the Habermasian concept of the public sphere as singular and inclusive; the public sphere of the bureaucratic elites and the court – which are the focus of this study – was but one of the many public spheres in the vast Russian empire.[61]

The second key concept, "communicative action" has been developed by Habermas as an action that "establishes an interpersonal relation (whether by verbal or extra-verbal means)" in order to "reach an understanding about the action situation […] and to coordinate their actions by way of agreement."[62] In their effort to influence both the bureaucratic establishment, the Emperor,

---

[60] Jürgen Habermas, *The Theory of Communicative Action: Volume 1: Reason and the Rationalization of Society* (Beacon Press, 1985). Idem, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1991). Idem, *Between Facts and Norms: Contributions to a Discourse Theory of Law and Democracy* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1996).
[61] John Michael Roberts and Nick Crossley, "Introduction," in *After Habermas: New Perspectives on the Public Sphere* (Oxford and Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers, 2004).
[62] Habermas, *The Theory of Communicative Action*, 86.

and the public, editors such as Katkov, Kraevskii and others sought to build a common understanding of the political situation and in doing so, coordinate decision-making according to that common understanding. Critical in this process of persuasion, Habermas has argued, was the interpretations, which refers to "negotiating definitions of the situation which admit of consensus;" language, Habermas stressed, was a prominent factor in this model.[63] As Chapter 3 will demonstrate in particular, the competition among private newspapers (and the bureaucratic interest groups behind them) over the course of Alexander III revolved to a large extent around diverging definitions of Russia's political crisis from where grew diverging understandings of future action.

Habermas formulated the third notion, "deliberative democracy," as a concept of democracy that revolves around the exchange of arguments, opinions, and reasons – i.e. deliberation – as central to political decision-making.[64] Although Habermas identifies parliaments, governments and courts as sites of deliberation, this dissertation emphasizes the role of the press in deliberative action. Passing over the notion of democracy, inapplicable to Russian during the 1860s-1880s, this study highlights the vibrant political deliberation in the Russian press during this period and its fast-growing impact on political decision-making. As this research dissects the sharp partisanship in the press and within government ranks during the 1870s and 1880s along the same political fault lines, it exposes the drama of deliberative politics at their best.

Whereas Jürgen Habermas emphasized the value of deliberative action, Edward Shils ascribed the task of deliberation and shaping "civil politics" to the intellectual stratum, on whom "the stability of the larger society depends."[65] Expanding Shils's definition of intellectuals, this study shows that editors such as Katkov, Kraevskii, Aksakov, and Suvorin conceived of

[63] Ibid.
[64] Habermas, *Between Facts and Norms*.
[65] Edward Shils, *The Intellectuals and the Powers, and Other Essays* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1972), 195.

themselves as public intellectuals, whose discursive action was imbued with an ethos of public service to the government as well as to their readers. Their communicative task, as they viewed it, was not only to inform, but to cultivate a community of shared understanding. In James Carey's elegant expression, this ritual view of communication "is direction not toward the extension of messages in space, but toward the maintenance of society in time; not the act of imparting information but the representation of shared beliefs."[66] Aligned with likeminded interest groups, Russia's private political press cultivated and gave voice to partisan communities – communities of shared values and beliefs – before political parties were formed. Carey's theoretical underpinnings represent particular importance to this study as they depart from traditional "transmission" approaches to communication theory (emphasis on information transmission), but rather engage with cultural approaches (emphasis on a shared communication culture created, modified, transferred).

Seminal to the study of press and communal culture is the work of Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities,* which specifically identifies the press as the instrument for constructing the idea of a nation, an imagined community.[67] Anderson's theory has since sustained criticism for its singular emphasis on the press as the shaper of national identities and for its emphasis on a singular national community rather than a plurality of regional communities, reading publics, and nationalisms.[68] In the field of nineteenth-century Russian nationalism, Anderson's concept of nationality is not monolith or static. As Alexei Miller has argued in his reassessment of S.S. Uvarov's triad "Orthodoxy, autocracy, nationality," the notion of nationality (*narodnost'*, not

[66] Carey, *Communication as Culture*, 15.
[67] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1983).
[68] See, for example: Trish Loughran, *The Republic in Print: Print Culture in the Age of U.S. Nation Building, 1770-1870* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2007).

natsional'nost') was conceived by Uvarov as intentionally vague and has subsequently been imbued with evolving meanings.[69]

Katkov's understanding of *narodnost'* as Chapter 4 details, embodied *civic-individualistic* type of nationalism rather than the traditional *ethnic-collectivistic* promoted by Slavophile discourses, with which he is occasionally associated in historiographic literature. For him, *narodnost,'* as Richard Pipes has argued (see the "Historiography" section above), eroded estate hierarchies in favor of and 'all-estate community' (*vsesoslovnost'*) – all against the backdrop of an inclusive national myth. To conceptualize Katkov's preference for *narodnost'* and *vsesoslovnost',* this dissertation draws on the work of Reinhard Bendix, who explained the political integration of a community into the national myth and the reconceptualization of social hierarchies in a nation-state. In *Nation-Building and Citizenship*, Bendix demonstrated how nation-building transformed European societies during the nineteenth century as states transitioned from feudal orders to nation-states, and their subjects gradually became citizens.[70] Moreover, the transformation of the estate society in Europe, Bendix has argued, profoundly changed the role o the state, ushering in an era of greater government involvement in subject welfare and ultimately the institution of a welfare state.

Liah Greenfeld has argued in the same vein that the rise of nationalism and economic surge across Europe spurred state centralization, an erosion of social hierarchies, and a growing government attention to "the interest of the governed," thus building modern nation- and welfare states across the Western Europe.[71] Greenfeld has excluded Russia from this model, and

[69] A. I. Miller, *The Romanov Empire and Nationalism: Essays in the Methodology of Historical Research* (New York, NY: Central European University Press, 2008), 139–60.
[70] Reinhard Bendix, *Nation-Building and Citizenship: Studies of Our Changing Social Order* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1977).
[71] Liah Greenfeld, *The Spirit of Capitalism: Nationalism and Economic Growth* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001).

problematics of comparative research have prompted some scholars of Russian nationalism and social history to argue Russia's exceptionalism. For example, Gregory Freeze has emphasized the difference between Russia's fluid *soslovia* and the European four-estate hierarchy.[72] However, as this dissertation shows, Katkov's national and social politics – which found its reflection in Alexander III's policies - in many ways replicated (albeit asynchronously) the evolutionary elements described by Greenfeld. Labor, banking, gender policies of the 1880s gave the government a new role of a guardian of public welfare. Alongside the new myth of a national monarchy, the government's new welfare functions (*blagosostoianie*) provided the monarchy and the state with what Eric Hobsbaum called "supplementary legitimacy." Moreover, as Alexei Miller's recent study has shown, the nationalization of European monarchies – including Russia's – was, in fact, quite synchronous.[73]

Scope, Limitations, and Sources

This dissertation examines the rise of the private political press and its engagement in Russian politics during 1860s-1880s. It does not pursue a comprehensive history of Russia's private political press, but rather it follows key milestone developments in press history: technological advancement, professionalization, engagement with bureaucratic officials, pivotal newspaper debates, and influence over reform projects. To do so, this work focuses on the experiences of several leading private political newspapers such as M.N. Katkov's *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, A.A. Kraevskii's *Golos*, A.S. Suvorin's *Novoe Vremia*, and I.S. Aksakov's *Rus'*. Geographically, the research centers on the Moscow and St. Petersburg press as these were among

[72] Gregory L. Freeze, "The Soslovie (Estate) Paradigm and Russian Social History," *The American Historical Review* 91, no. 1 (February 1, 1986): 11–36.
[73] Alexei Miller and Stefan Berger, eds., *Nationalizing Empires* (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2014).

the first to develop and employ cutting-edge communication technologies, and because their physical proximity to the government allowed them to become more politically connected. For scholarship on press history, the question of societal impact and reception has been one of the most important and challenging. This study sets a more modest, narrowly defined, yet original goal of untangling the relationship between the press and the bureaucratic officialdom.

The study's focus on M.N. Katkov owes itself to his exceptionally extensive and well-documented relationships with government officials and the Emperor. Though Katkov's case was not representative of all his peers – he was *primus inter pares* –, it offers the best medium for observing the maximum extent of the political and interpersonal entanglements between the press and the political establishment. The dissertation does not pursue a biographical study of M.N. Katkov and does not provide a comprehensive account of his political projects and engagements. Rather, the research examines a variety of well-documented encounters in which Katkov, his patrons, agents, and informants has engaged in political maneuvering. Combining these accounts from Katkov's career with episodes from the editorial practices of his peers, this study aims to create an impressionistic image of the intertwining of press and politics in late nineteenth-century Russia.

The study presents a novel approach to studying the intermingling of press and politics. A larger project would expand its focus on A.A. Kraevskii's *Golos*, A.S. Suvorin's *Novoe Vremia*, and I.S. Aksakov's *Rus'*. It would include a broader spectrum of leading political newspapers such as V.F. Korsh's *Sankt-Peterburgskie Vedomosti*, S.P. Propper's *Birzhevye Vedomosti*, O.K. Notovich's *Novosti*, N.F. Pavlov's *Russkie Vedomosti* among others. Such a diversified panel of newspapers would allow us to observe a greater range and variety of interactions between editors and government officials. It would also expose and focus on other bureaucratic interest groups and

the ways in which they co-opted press organs, which in turn sought political influence for themselves. The interaction between Russia's financial press and the Ministry of Finance represents particular interest. An expanded study would look to rising regional private political newspapers as important players beyond Moscow and St. Petersburg. Finally, a more expansive work would engage with a greater variety of political projects pursued by private editors, such a Katkov, often juggling several simultaneously, to reveal the great extent of editorial engagement in legislative processes.

Tracing the rise of Russia's private press and its relationship with the government, this dissertation delves into a broad range of sources, including newspapers, editorial archives, the extensive personal collections of press editors and government officials, legislative drafts and government memoranda. These collections are held at Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv Rossiiskoi Federatsii [The State Archive of the Russian Federation] (GARF), Otdel Rukopisei Rossiiskoi Gosudarstvennoi Biblioteki [The Manuscript Division of the Russian State Library] (OR RGB), and Rossiiskii Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv Literatury i Iskusstva [The Russian State Archive for Literature and the Arts] (RGALI) and Rossiiskii Gosudarstvennyi Istoricheskii Arkhiv [The Russian State Historical Archive] (RGIA).

First, the dissertation examined the large collection of issues of *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, *Golos*, and *Novoe Vremia*, and *Rus'* (as well as I.S. Aksakov's earlier newspapers *Moskva* and *Den')* over the broad period of 1855-1887, held at the Russian State Library and the State Public Historical Library in Moscow. While the weekly newspaper *Rus'* followed a magazine format, the former three newspapers published large volumes of information and opinion every day. Their front pages contained government announcements and proclamations as well as telegrams news reports from across Russia and the world, which allowed this dissertation to closely follow news

events particularly related to critical legislative projects. This dissertation takes the greatest interest in the editorial portion of each newspaper [*peredovitsa*] as the voice of the editor, which usually appeared on the second page of the newspaper. The editorials serve as a faithful medium for understanding the political views and opinions of the editor and allow one to best observe editorial polemics. While editors authored the vast majority of their editorials, close and trusted editorial assistants occasionally produced editorials consonant with the views of their patrons during the latter's travel or illness; M.N. Katkov's editorial partner P.M. Leontiev was on several occasions the author of *Moskovskie Vedomosti* editorials. Yet, it must be highlighted that all four editors maintained complete control over content – particularly over the editorial – throughout their careers.

Following the editorials, the dissertation also examined articles, opinion pieces, and feuilletons (light commentary and criticism) – both signed and anonymous – which offered analysis, commentary, or news reporting on various subjects. Signed opinion articles often came from public figures, whose commentary complemented and supported the editorial or a view otherwise held by the editors. Feuilletons published under pseudonyms or anonymously often came from the pen of the editor himself sought to speak from the whole newspaper or impersonate an authoritative outside view in support of the editorial agenda. A.S. Suvorin published regular feuilletons in his column "Little Letter" and also wrote opinion pieces under the pseudonym "Neznakomets" ("Stranger").

Second, the dissertation mines the personal archives of the four editors – M.N. Katkov, A.A. Kraevskii, A.S. Suvorin, and I.S. Aksakov – open the rich world of their correspondence with government officials, ministers, and the Emperor, as well as with their political agents in the government apparatus, informants, editorial assistants, and commercial agents. While existing

literature on Katkov has examined some of his correspondence with government officials such as P.A. Valuev and K.P. Pobedonostsev, this dissertation broadens its research into Katkov's under-researched relationships with government ministers such as D.A. Tolstoi, A.V. Golovnin, I.D. Delyanov and re-examines it from the perspective of networking, collaboration, and co-optation. Furthermore, this dissertation delves into a large and unexamined collection of Katkov's correspondence with ministerial officials (not ministers) who served as his political agents and informants – men such as B.M. Markevich, V.P. Bezobrazov, A.I. Voeikov among others. This rich correspondence allows this dissertation to reconstruct the sprawling network of ties that advanced Katkov's influence. Similar excursions into the archives of Kraevskii, Suvorin, and Aksakov reveal similar networks and ties to political interest groups and informant networks. For all newspapers, the archives of their respective editorial offices reveal the technological and logistical transformation of newspaper publishing, while their accounting books reveal much about the priorities, investments, illicit payments, and hardships encountered by editorial offices.

Distinctively, this dissertation has uncovered previously unresearched and unpublished essay in M.N. Katkov's archive, in which the editor reflects on his public role and the role of the press in politics and society. The essay, which is the centerpiece of the Study in this dissertation, was written by Katkov as a reflection and not for publication. Three drafts of the essay have been preserved in Katkov's archive, each bearing his extensive original edits as he reflected on the nature of editorial work and the relationship of the press with the government.

Thirdly, the dissertation draws on the archives of Emperors Alexander II and Alexander III, which contain M.N.Katkov's letters to both sovereigns over three decades. The letters reveal the Moscow editor's efforts to influence political decision-making, seek collaboration with the government as well as a modicum of autonomy. The archives of government ministers and high-

ranking officials such as N.P. Ignatiev, P.A. Valuev, and K.P. Pobedonostsev further complement their correspondence with the editors as well as informants, available in the editors' personal archives. The archive of the Chancellery of the Ministry of the Interior allows this dissertation to observe the nuance of legislative decision-making, while the archive of the 'Tsar's overviews" [*Tsarskie obozrenia*] provide an invaluable and previously unresearched source the monarchs' reading habits.

Finally, this dissertation draws on an array of published primary sources. Katkov's correspondence with and petitions to Alexander II and Alexander III have been published in historical journals *Byloe*. Katkov's biography, published soon after his death, by N.A. Liubimov – his trusted associate and informant – provides further insight into the editor's political maneuvering, particularly in the Ministry of Education, where Liubimov served. The memoirs of *Grazhdanin* [*Citizen*] editor, V.P. Meshcherskii provide a unique view on the press world and the events of the day from an editor.

The diaries of high-ranking statesmen and government ministers such as P.A. Valuev, D.A. Miliutin, E.A. Peretts, A.A. Polovtsov allow this dissertation to intricately reconstruct political decision-making from a variety of political viewpoints. The published letters of K.P. Pobedonostsev offer an especially candid vista for observing political manoeuvering around Emperor Alexander III. The substantive memoirs of censors A.V. Nikitenko and E.M. Feoktistov offer a vista not only in the inner workings of the government's oversight of the press, but also into the growing political role of the press and its increasingly complex relations with the government. The great collection *Literaturnoe nasledstvo* [*Literary heritage*], counting over one hundred volumes, has published the memoirs of Katkov's close associate and informant A.I. Georgievskii and I.S. Aksakov's correspondence with his father-in-law, informant and censor, F.I.

Tiutchev.

Bringing new approaches to published primary sources and discovering a wealth of previously unresearched archival documents, this dissertation reconstructs the sprawling networks of influence and information exchange that accompanied the rise of the press as a participant on the political stage.

Chapter Organization

This dissertation is composed of five thematic chapters, each divided into three to five sections, detailing different aspects of the development of the press and its engagement in politics. The chapters proceed in a chronological order from the 1860s to the 1880s.

Chapter One examines the rise of Russia's private political newspapers since the late 1850s, fueled by growing public literacy and unprecedented demand for information during the society-wide change engendered by the Great Reforms. It focuses on the communication technologies – the railway, the telegraph, and the steam-powered press – that powered the rise of Russia's political press. Novel communication technology transformed the private newspapers into bustling hubs of information and debate, and their production into highly complex logistical and commercial ventures. At the helm of the private press stood a new generation of influential, self-made editors who combined editorial and managerial skill with political ambitions and an uncanny ability to navigate the temperamental demands of censorship. The chapter argues that while the complex demands and organization of editorial have made considerable strides toward professionalizing editorial work, the outsized personal role of editors within the editorial office hampered the professionalization of journalism in Russia.

Chapter Two explores the evolving relationship of the press with the government. Already

by the early 1860s, the technological and logistical transformation of newsgathering and dissemination made the private political press an important source of information and opinion for high-ranking bureaucratic officials and for the Emperor. Drawing on networks of correspondents and telegraph agencies around the world, newspapers at times surpassed official government sources in their speed of delivery or – in the earliest examples of investigative journalism – brought novel facts to the attention of the government and the public. However, as the chapter demonstrates, the editors of private newspapers positioned themselves not only as newsmen, but as public intellectuals whose task was to explain the news, not just report on them. Editorials became important sources of opinion for government officials and the Emperor while at the same time serving as vehicles for editors to broadcast their views. As arguments expounded in editorials made their way into the State Council and the private audiences with the monarch, bureaucratic interest groups quickly understood the benefits of instrumentalizing the press to promote their political agendas, steer political decisions, and take on rivals. The growing entanglements between the press and the bureaucracy nurtured their mutual dependencies, underpinned by practices of editorial favor, illicit information transfer, press informants within government ranks, and leaks that stirred public debate. Within a short period during the 1860s the Russian government lost its closely held control of information and – having long been the surveyor of the press – came to be surveilled by it, facing unprecedented scrutiny from the press.

Chapter Three dissects the emerging political polarization and partisanship within the private opinion press during the 1870s and early 1880s as it observes influential newspapers situate themselves along the ideological fault lines in Russia's politics. The chapter observes the height of political polarization in the press during the first three months of Alexander III's rule, while the undecided Emperor contemplated a political course. As bureaucratic interest groups competed

behind the scenes for influence over the direction of the new rule, their allied editors engaged in fierce polemics that sought to influence the newly acceded monarch and their readers. Newspapers offered competing visions for the new rule, embodying a political pluralism in the press that reproduced the ideological diversity in the political arena. This chapter argues that during the second half of the nineteenth century, the private political press served as a surrogate for party politics in Russia – a stand-in and a voice for *de dacto*, but not yet *de jure*, political parties.

Chapter Four delves into the growing involvement of the press in politics by focusing on the emergence of M.N. Katkov as a 'journalist-politician.' The chapter analyzes how Katkov, having emerged victorious in the competition for influence over the course of the new rule, came to become its ideologue. Alexander III acceded to the throne facing the complex legacy of the Great Reforms – their uneven and adverse results, a decaying estate system, and stirring revolutionary thought – all of which eroded the monarchic legitimacy and gave rise to public politics in Russia much as across Europe. Keenly attuned to this challenge, Katkov – as this chapter shows – sought to recast and strengthen the monarchic legitimacy around concepts that would appeal to public politics: *narodnost'* (national politics), *vsesoslovnost'* (all-estate approach), *blagosostoianie* (wellbeing or welfare). National politics aimed to create a national monarchy and, in doing so, lend monarchic legitimacy a "supplementary" national foundation. The all-estate approach aimed to address the decaying estate system by creating an alternative and more egalitarian system of social integration. The welfare approach recast the monarchy and the government as guaranteurs of public wellbeing thereby strengthening their legitimacy. Katkov's new elements of monarchic legitimacy found their reflection in some of the key reforms of Alexander III. This chapter not only reveals the unprecedented degree of press participation in politics, but also argues that the concepts of *narodnost', vsesoslovnost',* and *blagosostoianie* – far

from anti-Western - mirrored similar developments toward nation-state politics across Europe during the 1880s and 1890s.

Chapter Five goes further still in examining the role of the press in politics and uncovers M.N. Katkov's direct involvement in shaping two hallmark reforms of Alexander III's rule: the 1884 University Statute and the 1889 Land Captains Statute. The 1884 University Statute centralized university education and subjected it to direct government oversight, abolishing university autonomy. The 1889 Land Captains Statute centralized local administration, subjecting it to the oversight of central government officials (land captains), abolishing the autonomy of *zemstvo* administration. Analyzing these two projects from their inception, this chapter sheds light on Katkov's extensive and secretive role in drafting, promoting, advancing, and steering these highly controversial projects through political straits within ministries, in the State Council, and with Alexander III. The chapter reveals Katkov's uncanny political maneuvering, his influence on government ministers and their appointment, his network of loyal informants and agents within government ranks, and his adept use of his newspaper to promote his projects. This chapter argues that the press, far from the subject of the state became deeply enmeshed in political processes. It also discusses centralizing efforts in education and local administration within the broader context of state-building in Russia as it mirrored similar processes across Europe.

Setting off from a broader study of the rise of Russia's private newspaper press, this dissertation transitions to one of its pre-eminent representatives, M.N. Katkov.

CHAPTER 1:
The Rise of Russia's Private Political Press, 1850s to 1860s

Introduction

During the nineteenth century, the Russian press landscape underwent a dramatic transformation. Politically and socially marginal in the early 1800s, the press developed by the end of the century into an influential political forum and a bustling social institution commanding the attention of the state. In post-Reform Russia, the new appetite and necessity for information during the era of Great Reforms motivated a growing literacy and an unprecedented press consumption. Technological advances in transportation and communication transformed the breadth and speed of information travel, lending the Russian newspaper urgency and importance as a news source for the public as well as the state. Achieving a measure of autonomy from the state, newspapers developed as viable commercial enterprises catering to new reading markets. The press – increasingly abundant, diverse, and specialized - became the binding agent for urban, rural, regional, professional, and political communities. The transformation of the press during the nineteenth century followed closely, reflected, and facilitated the broader societal change in post-Reform Russia: greater geographical and social mobility, urbanization, professionalization, political engagement and association.

The present chapter examines the factors that set the stage for the rise of Russia's private political press. First, the chapter probes the government's changing relationship with the press with the accession of Alexander II, which prompted important censorship reforms and ushered in a new generation of private newspaper editors. Second, the chapter analyzes the growing public literacy in the first decades of the nineteenth century and an emerging appetite for information beginning with the 1860s as factors that prepared a market for newspaper press. Third, the chapter explores

how a new generation of private editors transformed the technology, logistics, and content of the newspaper press to make it a commercially viable industry, revealing much about the modernization of Russia's print culture during the 1860s. Here, the study draws on James Carey's communication theory, which dissects how accelerated communication technology (the telegraph) uncoupled information from physical travel and revolutionized information exchange and consumption.[74] The chapter then turns to a discussion of the editorial profession and specifically to the extent the modernization of print production (with its new technical and commercial complexities) contributed to the formation of an editorial profession in Russia. Grounded in Eliot Freidson's theory of professionalization, this chapter examines the extent and limits of editorial professionalization as it probes the issues of editorial autonomy, expertise, editorial ethics and solidarities.[75]

Pursuing the factors that contributed to the rise of Russia's private political press, the chapter illuminates the transformation of Russia's print landscape during the mid-nineteenth century. It sheds light on significant changes in literacy and print consumption associated with broad-ranging societal transformation during the Great Reforms. Taking a sociological approach to the study of private editors, the chapter places the rise of a commercially successful private press into a context editors' social mobility. Finally, this study's emphasis on the technological and logistical transformation of the press, not only answers the questions of '*how'* around rise of private political press, but also exposes the growing importance of technical and commercial expertise in the publishing world as part of the broader growth of professions in Imperial Russia in conflict

[74] James W. Carey, *Communication as Culture: Essays on Media and Society* (Boston, MA: Unwin Hyman, 1989); Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1983); Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1991).
[75] Eliot Freidson, *Professionalism Reborn: Theory, Prophecy, and Policy* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1994).

with government control.

Changing Government Approaches to the Press

On March 11, 1859, at half-past noon, senior press censor A.V. Nikitenko arrived at the Winter Palace for an audience with Emperor Alexander II.[76] Nikitenko had been appointed as member of the new secret Committee on Print Affairs [*Komitet po delam knigopechatania*], founded only weeks earlier. The Committee was the first dedicated institutions charged with oversight of the press. Not tasked with censorship *per se*, it was meant to "serve as an instrument of the government for preparing the [public] minds by means of the press for the forthcoming reforms" as well as to "direct [*napravliat'*]" the press "to discuss public questions from the viewpoint of the government."[77]

Led to the grand waiting hall overlooking the Admiralty, Nikitenko collected his thoughts. Nikitenko had been a censor during the "long and joyless" period of Nicholas I's restrictive censorship regime.[78] Committed to ideas of *glasnost*, Nikitenko concluded already by the end of the 1840s that it was time to end "the vulgar policy of threats and persecution" of the press in favor of a "directive policy" [*politiku napravliaiushchuiu*]– a view he shared with the new Tsar, Alexander II.[79]

At two o'clock in the afternoon, Nikitenko was finally ushered in to meet Alexander, where the discussion turned quickly to the new approach toward the press. Alexander sought to convey a new attitude for government oversight of the press: the articles written "in disagreement with the

[76] A.V. Nikitenko, Entry for 11 March 1858, *Dnevnik*. 3 vols. (Moscow: Gosud. Izdat. Chudozestvennoi Literatury, 1955), vol. 2, 70–71.
[77] S.M. Seredonin, *Komitet ministrov v tsarstvovanie imperatora Aleksandra Vtorogo* (St. Petersburg: Kantseliaria Kommiteta ministrov, 1902), vol. 3, part 2, 197-98.
[78] Nikitenko, Entry for 17 February 1855, *Dnevnik*, vol. 1, 402–3.
[79] Ibid., Entry for 12 February 1849, vol. 1, 326.

views of the government" should be stopped from publication, however "important issues must be considered and discussed in a scientific way."[80] The only condition, Alexander clarified, was that the tone should be "moderate [*umerenny*], especially related to politics."

Few audiences had such profound impact on the history of the Russian press. Alexander II's instructions overturned the longstanding ban on private newspapers publishing political news or commentary – a subject hitherto strictly in the monopoly of official newspapers. As this chapter will detail, the decision ushered in the rise of Russia's private political press and dramatically transformed the print landscape, expanding public discussion and debate on governance. Before we move forward, this chapter delves into the important continuities in the history of the Russian press, which offer a context to the watershed moment of Alexander II's reforms.

During the 1700s, Russia's print landscape was dominated by two official newspapers – *St. Peterburgskie Vedomosti* (est. 1703), and *Moskovskie Vedomosti* (est. 1756) – as well as a small number of irregular newspapers, journals, and pamphlets.[81] Official newspaper were edited by government officials and published state-issued news. Enjoying a small circulation among bureaucratic elites chiefly in the capitals, these newspapers commanded little influence. Aside from official newspapers, an average of two new periodicals appeared every year on Russia's anemic print market – mostly literary or satirical – many ceased their existence after only a few issues.

The Romanticist era brought to the fore a new genre of prominent 'thick' literary journals. Published privately by and for a small, educated elite, literary journals gathered around themselves

[80] Ibid., Entry for 11 March 1858, vol. 2, 71.
[81] To be sure, Russia's modern periodicals did have a worthy, albeit an irregular, predecessor in the form of *Vesti-Kuranty (News and Notices)*. These were published irregularly during the seventeenth century. See: Gary Marker, "The Creation of Journals and the Profession of Letters in the Eighteenth Century," in *Literary Journals in Imperial Russia*, ed. Deborah A. Martinsen (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 11. See also: N. M Lisovskii, *Russkaia periodicheskaia pechat', 1703-1900 gg: bibliografiia i graficheskiia tablitsy* (Petrograd: Tip. G.A. Shumakhera i B.D. Brukera, 1915).

Russia's cultural luminaries like V.A. Zhukovskii, A.S. Pushkin, P.A. Viazemskii, A.A. Bestuzhev, N.M. Karamzin.[82] Journals like *Syn Otechestva* in St. Petersburg (*1812-1844, 1847-1852*), *Otechestvennye Zapiski* (1818-1884, with interruptions), and later *Sovremennik (1836-46; 47-66)* garnered not only cultural but also political importance. Weaving between the lines of literary criticism, political discussion, and critique – forbidden in print -, these early influential journals were building a rapport with their modest readership while they built, defined, and maintained an intellectual and an increasingly political community.

The growing impact and subtle political critique of these journals, which survived far longer than their predecessors (beyond five or ten years), increasingly attracted the attention of the government.[83] Imprinted with the trauma of the 1825 Decembrist Uprising greeting him into power, Nicholas I introduced not only strict censorship, but also sought for the government to instrumentalize the press and monopolize political narratives. Thus, in the capitals, the recently formed ministries created their own press organs to inform and promote their work.[84] Beyond St. Petersburg and Moscow, 42 regional newspapers (*Gubernskie Vedomosti)* were founded in 1838 in each gubernia in European Russia, the Kingdom of Poland, the Western borderlands, Caucasus, and by the 1850s into the Far East. For most of these regions, their respective *Gubernskie Vedomosti* represented the first regular periodical in that region, bringing to light local issues and drawing out of isolation contributors to local newspapers.[85] The most sensitive category of

[82] McReynolds, *The News under Russia's Old Regime*, 20.
[83] N. M Lisovskii, *Russkaia periodicheskaia pechat*.'
[84] Examples include: *Sankt-Peterburgskie Senatskie Vedomosti [St, Petersburg Senate Bulletin]* (1809-1917), *Russkii Invalid [The Russian Veteran]* of the Ministry of War (1813-1917), *Jurnal Ministerstv Narodnogo Prosveshchenia [Journal of the Ministry of Education] (1821-present)*. With the accession of Nicholas I, the ministerial journals multiplied: *Zhurnal manufaktury i torgovli [The Journal of Manufacturing and Trade]* of the Ministry of Finance (1825-1860), *Jurnal Ministerstva Putei Soobshchenia [The Journal of the Ministry of Railways] (1826-present), Jurnal Ministerstva Vnutrennikh Del [Journal of the Ministry of the Interior] (1828-1861), Zemledelcheskaia Gazeta [Agricultural Gazette]* of the Ministry of State Domains (1834-1917).
[85] On the cultural isolation of Russian professionals in the countryside, see: Harley Balzer, "The Problem of Professions in Imperial Russia," in *Between Tsar and People: Educated Society and the Quest for Public Identity in*

periodicals – political newspapers – remained the monopoly of the government with the notable exception of *Severnaia Pchela* (*The Northern Bee)*, placed in the hands of trusted editors N.I. Grech and F.V. Bulgarin.[86]

Nicholas I's desire dominate every segment of the print market extended to a slowly growing market for professional and specialized literature during the late 1830s and 1840s. Periodicals published by ministerial departments, universities, academies, and societies sought to fill this niche.[87] As the appetite for specialized information – often in agricultural production - grew also in the countryside, the government sought to fill this niche if only to drive out private competitors.[88]

The official press came at a considerable expense for the government, but readership remained low. Official newspapers, i.e. newspapers published by the government, sourcing government-issued news, and edited by a government official, never commanded a great deal of public trust. Published at times irregularly, in small circulation, languishing in official corridors and public institutions, the Russian official press before the 1860s, as Louise McReynolds has aptly observed, was "neither especially urgent not widely read."[89] Another cause has been Russia's

Late Imperial Russia, eds. Edith W Clowes, Samuel D Kassow, and James L West (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1991), 186.

[86] As Louise McReynolds has noted, before 1863 the only independent newspaper permitted to publish political news was *Severnaia pchela* (*The Northern Bee)*, even so it was entrusted to trusted editors, I. Grech and F.V. Bulgarin. See: McReynolds, *The News under Russia's Old Regime*, 20.

[87] Examples include: *Zhurnal Selskogo Khoziaistva i Ovtsevodstva [The Journal of Agriculture and Sheep Breeding]* of the Moscow Imperial Society for Agriculture *(1841-1859); Zhurnal Konnozavodstva I Okhoty [The Journal of Horse Breeding and Hunting]* affiliated with the Main Administration of State Horse Breeding (founded in 1842); the *Vestnik Moskovskoi Gorodskoi Politsii* and *Vestnik Peterburgskoi Gorodskoi Politsii [Bulletins of Moscow and St. Petersburg City Police]*, founded in 1839 and 1848 respectively*; Morskoi Sbornik [The Naval Bulletin]* of the Russian Navy *(*founded in 1848*), Inzhynernii Zhurnal (*1857- 1917)

[88] Government subsidies for government-published periodicals sustained them while privately published periodicals on the same subject were unable to survive for long. An example was the competition between the privately-owned *Russkii Zemledelets* (1838-1839) and the state-subsidized *Zemledelcheskaia Gazeta (1834-1917)*.

[89] McReynolds, *The News under Russia's Old Regime*, 18.

historically low literacy rates compared with Western Europe, U.S., or Japan.[90] Before the onset of the nineteenth century, literacy in Russia has largely been the purview of the noble and merchant elites. Between the 1250s and 1797, overall literacy rates in Russia increased from 1% to 3.5% of the population, with higher rates among urban population (approximately 10% in 1797).[91] Russia's experienced its first dramatic growth of literacy with Catherine the Great's institution of compulsive civil service for Russia's nobility and with the cultural expectations of the Enlightenment age during her reign. In the first years of the 1800s, literacy among the nobility rose to 77%, growing fast in Russia's urban centers and increasingly among peasants.

The accession of Alexander II brought a dramatically different approach on the part of the government toward the press. Acceding to the throne in 1855, Alexander II came to conclude that his predecessor's two-pronged approach of strict censorship and government's monopolization of the press marked through official newspapers has proven thoroughly ineffectual. Instead, Alexander viewed the newspapers, as a potential ally. By cultivating and partnering with private opinion newspapers, the Russian government could discreetly – and therefore more convincingly – promote its agenda. With discussions of the Great Reforms facing resistance in the high corridors of power, the press presented itself as an instrument for harnessing public support for the reforms. Indeed, the fast-growing literacy rates since the beginning of the century helped prepare the ground for the press as an instrument of shaping public opinion. By 1857, peasant literacy reached 12% while 37% of urban population could read.[92]

---

[90] On the eve of the Mongol invasion, literacy rates could be estimated between 1-2% of all population. Literacy gradually increased during the Muscovite period, up to the 18th century. Literacy varied widely depending on the geographical region, sex, and ethnicity. In the late 17th century, rural male literacy was no higher than 2-4% and urban male literacy was no higher than 13%. For a statistical study of Russia's literacy rates from the 10th to the 20th century, see: Boris N. Mironov, "The Development of Literacy in Russia and the USSR from the Tenth to the Twentieth Centuries," *History of Education Quarterly* 31, no. 2 (1991): 229–52, esp. 247.

[91] Ibid., 245.

[92] Ibid., 242.

By 1859, additional censorship reforms eased the process of obtaining private newspaper publishing permits. The result was the momentous expansion of Russia's private political press amid a print landscape previously dominated by literary journals and official newspapers. If before 1855, an overage of 10 new private periodicals were founded each year, this number rose to 23 in 1856, to 32 in 1857, and to 43 in 1870.[93] Between 1859 and 1864, 233 new periodicals were founded in Russia – double those founded during the entire eighteenth century (116). In fact, more newspapers were founded during Alexander II's rule (827) than in all of Russia's history since Peter the Great (623).[94] Starting with 1881, 60 to 80 new periodicals were founded every year (79 in 1881), and in 1900 their number reached 93 per year.

A broad range of political newspapers quickly rose to prominence in Moscow and St. Petersburg, among them were K.V. Trubnikov's financial daily *Birzhevye Vedomosti*, V.D. Skariatin's organ of noble interests *Vesti* and its rival - A.A. Kraevskii's Western-minded *Golos*, M.N. Katkov's *Moskovskie Vedomosti* and I.S. Aksakov's Slavophile *Den'*.

Long forbidden from discussing political issues, the newspapers rushed to report and opine on the latest in news. *Birzhevye Vedomosti* advertised itself as "not missing even one significant issue that arises interest in the area of politics, finance, credit and so on."[95] Censor, P.I. Kapnist noted that the Great Reforms, particularly the 1861 peasant reform, prompted "the periodical literature [to] have pay special attention to issues related to government activities and [to] questions arising from the conditions of people's lives."[96] Among readers, too, the reforms fostered demand for coverage of "everyday issues," thus driving the content of newspapers toward a more

[93] N.M. Lisovskii, *Russkaia periodicheskaia pechat' 1703-1900 gg.*
[94] Ibid.
[95] *Birzhevye Vedomosti*, 12 September 1862, No. 193, 1.
[96] P.I. Kapnist, *Sochinenia* 2 vols. (Moscow: [n.p.], 1901), vol. 2, 427, 431.

extensive political coverage.[97] Observing the transformation of the print landscape within mere years, Kapnist concluded "purely literary works are no longer the first priority and do not arouse particular interest among the reading public."[98]

The fast-growing number of periodicals went hand in hand with their increasing longevity and frequency of publication. Since the 1860s, more periodicals weathered the first 5 years and survived for decades, some lasting until 1917 and becoming influential voice in the political arena, as this dissertation aims to show. A growing number of journals and magazines increased the frequency of their publication. Already in the first years after Alexander II's censorship reforms, newspapers transitioned from weekly publication - common for the eighteenth-century periodicals – to a daily format, which satisfied a greater appetite for information. Toward the late nineteenth century, the adoption of a twice daily format by Russia's leading newspapers, many of them financial newspapers in the capitals, spoke to an accelerated information transfer and reader for information exchange.

Literacy and the Great Reforms: A New Appetite for Information

The rise of the private political press and of literacy during the 1860s was precipitated by the sweeping and complex nature of the Great Reforms. As Jeffrey Brooks explains, the 1861 emancipation of serfs introduced a formalized and monetized relationship between former serf and landowner, reliant on all things written or typed – the Emancipation proclamation, legal agreements, deeds, and loans.[99] The creation of zemstvos expanded the purview, and

[97] A.A. Berte, *Zapiska predsedatelia Komiteta dlia peresmotra tsenzurnogo ustava, deistivetlnogo statskogo sovetnika Berte I chlena sego Komiteta statskogo sovetnika Yankevicha*, (St. Petersburg: [n.p.],1862), 6.
[98] Kapnist, *Sochinenia*, vol. 2, 427.
[99] Jeffrey Brooks, *When Russia Learned to Read: Literacy and Popular Literature, 1861-1917* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1985), 4–8.

simultaneously the paperwork, of local self-administration, impressing upon peasants the importance of individual literacy in navigating a new and complex local bureaucracy. The Judicial reform of 1865, which created independent courts reliant on the written law and documented cases impressed the value of literacy whether one sat among the jury, presented as the defendant or the plaintiff at court.

In the decades that followed the 1860s, the reforms necessitated continuous adjustments and clarifications on land pricing, quality, redemption payments, and loan conditions, etc. Newspapers became the expedient vehicle for communication and continuous implementation of the reforms. The practices of state announcements in newspapers (*kazennye ob''iavlenia*), which predated the Great Reforms, became busy, structured, and regularized format for such communication. The high individual stakes of the Great Reforms produced new appetite for information and a public far more attuned to the government's decision-making.

With the emancipation of serfdom, another factor contributed rising literacy: the slowly expanding physical and social mobility. Peasant labor in the aftermath of the emancipation gradually expanded into factories, house service, cottage industries, crafts, and day jobs. These new forms of peasant employment, often in an urban setting, placed peasants in situations where literacy and numeracy were valuable.[100]

In the second half of the nineteenth century, the increasing transfer of people, goods, and services between city and countryside provided an impetus to growing literacy. In cities and towns, local newspapers aggregated information about jobs, services, goods for sale, providing the urban community with a shared reality and meaning that often transcended class divides. Specialized and professional publications provided a sense of community to a growing number of high- and

[100] Ibid.

medium-skill professionals migrating to large cities like St. Petersburg, Moscow, Kiev, Odessa.

For example, young print workers, attending to an expanding print industry during the 1860s, came overwhelmingly from urban lower-classes, i.e. families of shopkeepers, artisans, soldiers, and clerks. Often unmarried and far from their families, print workers found a strong professional community and collective identity, reinforced by professional satirical periodicals like *Balda*, *Golos Pechatnika, Naborshchik*, *Pechatnik*, *Pechatnoe Delo, Trud Pecahtnika*.[101] Other periodicals circumscribed their professional identities economists, engineers, and other high-skilled workers: *Aktsioner, Birzhevye Vedomosti, Ekonomicheskii ukazatel, Promyshlennost' i torgovlia, Torgovyi sbornik, Inzhener*, *Tekhnicheskii listok*, *Vestnik inzhenerov*. Looking ahead, periodical press fostered not only urban and professional communities, but also political communities centered around leading and competing newspapers such as *Moskovskie Vedomosti, Golos, Novoe Vremia* and *Rus*.

As Alexandr Zapadov and Louise McReynolds have noted, the content of the expanding press attested to the new appetites in the Russian society. Of the 150 newspapers founded between 1855 and 1860, most focused on broader socio-political and economic issues, some branching into technical, professional, regional, and satirical press.[102] Russia's renewed ties with Europe under Alexander II stimulated exchange through technical and scientific journals 1860s and 1870s.[103] Medical journals – at the forefront of professional periodicals– exploded in numbers and become ever more specialized. Urbanization and competition among skilled labor in the cities sustained the growth of professional and trade journals for governesses, hairdressers, tailors, teachers,

[101] For more on print workers and their professional identity, see Mark D Steinberg, *Moral Communities the Culture of Class Relations in the Russian Printing Industry, 1867-1907* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1992).
[102] Zapadov, *Istoriia russkoi zhurnalistiki XVIII -XIX vekov.*, 316; McReynolds, *The News under Russia's Old Regime*, 18, 20.
[103] *Tekhnicheskii Obzor noveishykh Otkrytii (1882-86)*

builders, electricians, and others.[104] Professional periodicals facilitated transnational information exchange, aiming to delimit professional practices. The public appetite for entertainment and outspoken content produced 30 new satirical periodicals in 1858 in St. Petersburg alone. Whereas the longevity of satirical periodicals remained rather brief, several new satirical publications like *Budilnik*, *Strekoza*, and *Shut* became lasting institutions on the journalistic landscape, reflecting a greater tolerance o toward bolder content. Leisure and disposable income prompted the rise of entertainment and hobby periodicals about fashion, theater, photography, and chess.[105]

The growth of periodical press during the second half of the nineteenth century was underpinned by an unprecedented growth of literacy during the same period, best illustrated by Russia's first census, conducted in 1897. In 1897, boys between 10-19 years of age had a literacy rate of 45.3%, which was considerably higher their fathers (33.2% literacy rate among men 40-49 years old) and their grandfathers (20% literacy rate among men over 60). Among young women and girls between 10-19 years old 21.8% were literate while their mothers (women 30-39 years old) were 15.7% literate, and their grandmothers (women over 60) were 9.7% literate.[106] Urban centers were havens of literacy and print culture. In cities and towns 64% of men and 42% of women were literate, the highest literacy men (72%) among young boys in urban centers.[107] Among peasants, literacy rates reached 35% among men and 13% among women.[108] St. Petersburg

---

[104] *Guvernantka (1862)*, *Eskiz arkhitektury I Khudozhestv (1875-1878); Prilozhenie k Frantsuzkomu Zhurnalu dlya Parikhmakherov (1877), Stroitelnyi Material (1884), Gazeta Elektrika (1889-1890), Pozharnii (1892-96), Vestnik Mody dlya Portnykh (1894-98), Zhurnal Obshchestva Schetovodov (1898- ?)*

[105] *Fotograf 1864-66*. Fashion magazines, emerging from their predecessors – crafts and embroidery magazines –, first appeared during the 1860s (*Severnyi Tsvetok, modnii zhurnal dlia svetskikh lyudei, 1860)*. The first few ones last a short while, but the later ones have a longer life span and compete with one another.

[106] Gregory Guroff and S. Frederick Starr, "A Note on Urban Literacy in Russia, 1890—1914," *Jahrgescoste Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas* 19, no. 4 (1971): 523. Similar numbers are given by Mironov, "The Development of Literacy in Russia and the USSR from the Tenth to the Twentieth Centuries," 236.

[107] Mironov, "The Development of Literacy in Russia and the USSR from the Tenth to the Twentieth Centuries," 235.

[108] Ibid.

enjoyed the highest literacy rates 70.5% in 1900, up from 59.5% in 1869. Moscow rates lagged slightly with of 66.0% in 1902. Even outside cities, male literacy was 70% in the Moscow Province outside the city and 68% in Vladimir Province.[109] By 1917, peasant literacy stood at 36%, while the literacy among urban population was at 64% and among nobility – 90%.[110]

Since the mid-1850s, the diversification of the press transformed the landscape of Russia's print culture. Private periodicals no longer reflected the unidirectional communication from the government to its subjects. Instead, professional, satirical, trade, hobby periodicals, and city notices, offered a forum for communication among members of society or professional communities, with content composed by and for themselves, thus creating and defining spheres of activity outside the purview of the state.

Technology and Skill – The Emergence of a New Generation of Editors

Alexander II's censorship reforms ushered onto the publishing stage a new generation of editors, whose social provenance and approach to publishing were dramatically different from their predecessors. Before the 1850s, private periodical publishing was largely the occupation of wealthy landowning or entrepreneurial elites. The literary journal editors came largely from the landed nobility, such as the founder and editors of *Sovremennik* – A.S Pushkin, P.A. Viazemskii, and later N.A. Nekrasov –, or the editor of *Moskovskii zhurnal* and *Vestnik Evropy* - N.M. Karamzin. Other editors came from the merchant class, such as the editor of *Otechestvennye Zapiski*, N.A. Polevoi.[111] Literary journals, often published and delivered irregularly to a limited

[109] Jeffrey Brooks, *When Russia Learned to Read*, 4.
[110] B.N. Mironov, *Sotsialnaia istoriia Rossii perioda imperii: XVIII-nachalo XX v. : genezis lichnosti, demokraticheskoi semii, grazhdanskogo obshchestva i pravovogo gosudarstva* (St. Petersburg: D. Bulanin, 2000), vol. 1, p. 527.
[111] To give a few more examples editors and publishers from landowning nobility: A.P. Sumarokov of pre-Petrine gentry edited *Trudoliubivaia pchela* (1759); N.I. Novikov of Petrine nobility edited *Truten* (1769-1770) and a string of other periodicals; G.V. Kozitskii, who married into the wealthy Miasnikov merchant family, published *Vsiakaia*

readership, were for the most part unprofitable.[112] Their independently wealthy publishers of literary journals could dip into personal resources to sustain a commercially failing enterprise. Eighteenth-century publishers such as N.I. Novikov and the editor of *Truten',* could also use their wealth to move swiftly from one failed or censored periodical to found the next.[113] Government newspapers, likewise operating at a loss, could count of official coffers to sustain their activity.

The new generation of newspaper editors – born between 1810s and 1840s - came from disadvantaged urban and some rural classes, *raznochintsy*, and peasants, to rise to unprecedented influence on the political arena. This dissertation will focus on four such prominent editors, who led some of the most influential newspapers of the second half of the nineteenth century. The editor of Russia's leading liberal newspaper *Golos,* Andrei Kraevskii, was born in 1810 in Moscow out of wedlock to the illegitimate daughter of Moscow's former chief of police, N.P. Arkharov. The editor of the influential conservative daily *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, Mikhail Katkov, was born in 1818 in Moscow into an impoverished family of petty nobility.[114] The editor of the prominent large-circulation paper *Novoe* Vremia, Alexei Suvorin, was born in 1834 into a family of state peasants in the cattle-breeding village of Korshevo in the Voronezh region, where his early education was limited to reading Church Slavonic.[115] Th editor of influential Slavophile dailies such as *Parus, Moskva, Rus',* Ivan Aksakov, born in 1823, was one of eleven children in the family

Vsiachina (1769-1770); M.M. Khersakov, who came from a family of Wallachian boyars edited *Poleznoe uveselenie* (1760-1762) and *Svobodnye chasy* (1863). There were exceptions to the dominance of landowning nobility on Russia's print landscape. For example, M.D. Chulkov, born to a family of a soldier, rose first through a brief theatrical career to enter the court service and soon publish the satirical journals *I to i vsio* (1769) and *Parnasskii shchepetilnik* (1770).

[112] Gary Marker, "The Creation of Journals and the Profession of Letters in the Eighteenth Century," in *Literary Journals in Imperial Russia*, ed. Deborah A. Martinsen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 12–13.

[113] N.I. Novikov, born into a family of Petrine nobility, first founded the satirical periodical *Truten* (1769-1770), subsequently closed by censorship. He then followed with a cavalcade of other short-lived publications such as *Pustomelia* (1770), *Zhyvopisets* (1772-1773), *Koshelek* (1774), *Utrennii svet* (1777-1780), *Moskovskioe ezhemesechnoe izdanie* (1781).

[114] Alexei Lubkov, *Mikhail Katkov. Molodye gody* (Moscow: Litres, 2018), 12.

[115] Ambler, *Russian Journalism and Politics, 1861-1881*, 37-38.

of writer and literary critic, S.T. Aksakov.

Kraevskii, Katkov, Suvorin, and Aksakov all pursued higher education as means to improve their social standing. Katkov and Kraevskii earned graduate degrees in philosophy from Moscow University, albeit a decade apart. Aksakov earned a degree in law from the elite Imperial School of Jurisprudence [*Imperatorskoe uchilishe pravovedenia*] in St. Petersburg, while Suvorin graduated from the Voronezh Cadet Corps. All four settled in St. Petersburg and Moscow, where the "professional geography" of the printing world, to use Harley Balzer's term, clustered. This professional geography focused around the prominent Stankevich and Belinskii circles, where young and seasoned editors, publishers, writers, critics, and future censors gained their publishing start and formed what could loosely be called an early professional network. All four got their early experience by contributing to a variety of literary journals such as *Moskovskii Nabliudatel', Russkii Invalid*, and *Otechestvennye zapiski*, which they did not only to establish themselves as literary figures, but also for a much-needed income.

All four initially found employment in the civil service, which granted them some financial stability as they continued to write. Kraevskii became the literary editor of *Zhurnal Ministerstva Narodnogo Prosveshchenia* and *Russkii Invalid*. Aksakov moved through unhappy desk jobs. Suvorin became a schoolteacher and Katkov – a professor at Moscow State University. [116] However, life in civil service gradually drew them evermore from the realm of the literary into the realm of the political, from the realm of the journal to that of the newspaper.

During the 1850s, all four entered the editorial offices of the state-owned newspapers. The official newspapers of the late Nicholaevan era were largely unprofitable due to a modest

[116] R. I. Sementkovskii, *M.N. Katkov: ego zhizn i literaturnaia deiatelnost: biograficheskii ocherk* (St. Petersburg: Tipografia Ju. N. Erlich, 1892), 20-21.

subscription that left many copies unsold.[117] Having spent a decade monopolizing the periodical landscape at great expense, Nicholas I's government sought a way to make state-owned newspapers such as *Moskovskie Vedomosti* and *St. Peterburgskie Vedomosti* profitable by leasing them to private individuals under strict bureaucratic control. Under the terms, the Ministry of Education was to regulate a paper's content, operations, budget and its allocation, as well as the logistics of newspaper printing and delivery.

In 1851, the Ministry of Education hired former Moscow University philosophy professor, M.N. Katkov, to edit the Moscow University's bankrupt newspaper, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*. The same year, Kraevskii came to edit Russia's first and prominent newspaper, *Peterburgskie Vedomosti*. Suvorin, who at the time wrote Sunday feuilletons for *Sankt-Peterburgskie Vedomosti,* eventually becoming a key member of the editorial team. Only Aksakov took a different, private, route by editing his own Slavophile almanac, *Moskovskii Sbornik*.

The decision to place state-owned newspapers under private editorial management gave a new life to little-read official periodicals. Taking over *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, Katkov expanded its content to engage with the work Moscow University faculty, advertise cultural events, expand the sections of domestic and foreign correspondence, report on latest news including those delivered by telegraph. The additions doubled the content volume of *Moskovskie Vedomosti* from one or two to three or four pages (excluding advertisement) and allowed it to triple the cost of subscription. The confirmation of Katkov's success in raising the profile of Moscow's august newspaper came as subscription doubled from 7,000 to 15,000 by 1855, making it a leader among Russian newspapers.

Their early newspaper publishing experiences proved difficult and revealed much about

[117]Between 1759 and 1769, newspapers had a modest circulation of 600 to 1050 copies per issue, and only as many as 2500 per issue at the turn of the nineteenth century, with most copies going unsold. Marker, 17, 19.

the editorial and publishing practices under state monopoly. Katkov's letters to his then friend and censor, A.V. Nikitenko, reveal his many frustrations, particularly during the early days of taking over the paper:

> The editorial office is heavily in debt. Many [contributors] have not been paid for last year's articles. I am only told to edit the newspaper in the best and most interesting way, - and not to worry about money. […] [but] the miserly sums, assigned for this purpose, would not suffice for an editorial office half of this size. I am bankrupt in an enterprise not my own.[118]

Indeed, the Ministry of Education allocated to *Moskovskie Vedomosti* – the newspaper of the Moscow University - a minuscule yearly budget of 3,000 rubles. For Katkov, the casual production and distribution of the newspaper – at times with great delays --, as well as continuous shortages of print materials to which the state-run editorial office was previously accustomed was no longer acceptable:

> The minister is sent one of the best copies [of the newspaper], - and if only you knew in what state other subscribers receive their copies (if they receive them). Often on a whole page one cannot make out even a single word. The press does not have any decent ink and [we] must instead scavenge [for ink] at other presses. […] no matter how good the newspaper is, it is senseless if the subscribers receive it belatedly, in a terrible condition, or do not receive entire issues on end. With every letter [to the editorial office] I receive [the subscribers'] complaints on the delivery of the newspaper.[119]

[118] M.N. Katkov. Letter from M.N. Katkov to A.V. Nikitenko, 3 June 1854, *Russkaia starina* no. 11-12 (1897): 364-365.
[119] Ibid.

Perhaps most frustrating about his lease of *Moskovskie Vedomosti* Katkov found the close control of the Ministry of Education and the Moscow University authorities:

> Not being the owner of this publication, I could only improve it to a very limited extent. The editorial office of *Moskovskie Vedomosti* is in the most unfavorable conditions. It cannot undertake anything to increase its circulation. The most insignificant project has to undergo so much bureaucracy and encounter so many difficulties that even the best efforts come to naught. […] The editorial office cannot subscribe to a publication it needs if that requires an extra ruble out of the sum allocated [publishing]; without special requests, often unsuccessful, it cannot print an extra copy for the author of an article in *Vedomosti*; considering the constantly rising price of literary works, it cannot go beyond its miserly budget to pay well the author of an article, which, according to the editorial office, could make the publication more attractive.[120]

Katkov's frustrations here reveal the clash between ministerial approach to state-owned newspapers and the commercial approach and desire for improvement that drove private publishing. Katkov's apprehension at budgetary constraints reflected broader concerns with growing competitiveness among newspapers for content, readership, and influence – and ultimately for viability. Finally, Katkov lamented the disconnect between his editorial success and his modest salary, which constituted 25 silver kopecks per subscription or approximately 2,000 rubles per year, which he compared to that of an adjunct professor. Even greater was his apprehension at the salary of his editorial assistant's, V.F. Korsh – the future editor of *Sankt-Peterburgskie Vedomosti* -, who earned only 400 rubles per year, approximately the pay of a low-

[120] M.N. Katkov. Letter from M.N. Katkov to A.V. Nikitenko, n.d. [August-September 1855], *Russkaia starina* no. 11 (1897): 583.

ranking government official.[121] Finding himself "sous le coup," Katkov walked away from *Moskovskie Vedomosti* in 1855.[122]

The initial highly controlled newspaper leasing scheme proved unworkable and was subsequently abandoned as the government sought a new arrangement. In 1862, M.N. Katkov made the Ministry of Education a compelling offer to lease *Moskovskie Vedomosti* on new terms, which allowed more managerial autonomy in return for greater profits for the state. Facing competitors in the takeover of *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, Katkov offered an unprecedented lease payment of 74,000 rubles per year - nearly twice the income of the newspaper during its publication by the state.[123] In return, the lease granted a much greater degree of editorial autonomy over the content, aesthetics, personnel, printing process, and delivery of the newspaper. On the one hand, the offer placed a considerable amount of pressure on Katkov to make the newspaper a commercial success; contemporaries reacted not without surprise and apprehension at the sheer sum of the lease. On the other hand, the arrangement permitted Katkov to draw on part of the profit (or bear personal loss) rather than receive a salary.

The government's departure from closely managed leasing schemes granted editors considerable managerial autonomy which, within the limits of censorship, motivated them to commercialize and popularize their respective newspapers. Although *Moskovskie Vedomosti* remained in Katkov's lease until the end of his life with complete managerial discretion, it never came into his property. Fellow editors, however, took a different path to founding fully private

[121] M.N. Katkov. Letter from M.N. Katkov to A.V. Nikitenko, 3 June 1854, *Russkaia starina* no. 11-12 (1897): 362-365; B.N. Mironov, *Sotsialnaia istoriia Rossii,* vol. 2: 207.
[122] M.N. Katkov. Letter from M.N. Katkov to A.V. Nikitenko, 3 June 1854, *Russkaia starina* no. 11-12 (1897): 364.
[123] Of the total rent of 74,000 rubles, 35,000 were paid for the right to publish *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 27,000 – for the right to publish state notices (*kazennye ob''iavlenia*), and 12,000 for the rent of the Moscow University press, where the newspaper was contractually required to be printed. The lease was contracted for 12 years, from 1763 to 1874. The lease was paid in full by Katkov and Leontiev, if not always on time. *Zapiska o nedoimkakh na arendatore "Moskovskikh Vedomostei" i universitetskoi tipografii po kontraktu 1863 goda*, (St. Petersburg: [n.p.], 1880).

newspaper in their ownership; our attention now turns to them.

The same year, in 1863, Kraevskii founded *Golos*, which for the next twenty years served as the voice of Westernization. In 1875, Suvorin founded the *Novoe Vremya*, which would become the most widely read source of domestic and international news, distinguished by a milder brand of nationalism compared to *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, yet a strong polemical opponent to *Golos*. Aksakov founded a cavalcade of private newspapers - *Parus*, *Parokhod*, *Den'*, *Moskva, Moskvich,* before finally founding *Rus*' in 1880 – the premier organ of Slavophile thought in Russia.

Standing at the helms of their newspapers, Katkov, Kraevskii, Aksakov, and Souvorin as well as others of their generation, differed dramatically from the editors and publishers of literary journals and government newspapers in which they got their early start. Coming from modest means, private editors such as Katkov depended on the commercial success of their newspaper for their personal livelihood. This dependency on profitability of a newspaper harnessed a new approach to publishing: the newspaper was no longer an unhurried project of cultural prestige that could afford a small audience or absorb consistent losses, but a commodity in a competitive publishing marketplace. The production of this commodity had to be managed with utmost competence to assure its profitability. Facing the financial pressures of the new private newspaper publishing, these resourceful and enterprising editors and publishers strove to deliver high-quality, accurate, timely newspaper, and make their operation profitable. In the process, they transformed the content, logistics, and labor of periodicals publishing.

First, to render newspapers commercially viable, the new editors sought to appeal to the widest possible readership. Louise McReynolds aptly observed that the commercialization of the press in post-Reform Russia "broadened the base of what constituted "the public" by inviting more

and different Russians to coalesce into a body of opinion."[124] If official newspaper of the pre-Reform period often consisted of only a handful of sections that may appeal to administrative elites, such as "The Orders of the Government" [*Rasporiazhenia pravitel'stva*], "The Orders of Gubernia Administration" [*Ob'iavlenie gubernskogo nachal'stva*], "Announcements" [*Ob'iavlenia*].[125]

Post-Reform periodicals such as *Moskovskie Vedomosti, Golos, and Novoe Vremia* contained a variety of information from the editorial, which provided the principal political commentary, to the weather forecast, train schedule, financial report, international news, crime columns, advertisements searching for maids, butlers, and tutors among many others. Editors sought to make their newspaper a universal source of information – catering to the tastes that consumed the latest political and economic news and analysis, as well as to readers seeking entertainment in crime reports, gossip, and short stories. The diversification of content (and readership) is best reflected in the wide range of advertisement, catering to every social class, gender, occupation, and provenance: chocolate and sweets, tea, furniture, orthopedic armchairs, pharmacies offering treatments for venereal disease and blisters, corsets, furs, fur storage, and even faux diamond jewelry for socially-aspiring urbanites.

Second, to provide a richer content and to dispel previous close association with the state, newspapers diversified their news sources. Until the first half of the nineteenth century, newspapers' reliance on the state of news was a cause of their sluggish popularity. Seeking greater autonomy from the state, editors subscribed to newspapers from around the world and from across the empire. The daily ledger of the *Moskovskie Vedomosti* editorial office for 1875 shows the editorial office subscribing to 36 leading newspapers and magazines from Britain, France, Austro-

[124] McReynolds, *The News under Russia's Old Regime*, 30.
[125] See for example: *Vladimirskie Gubernskie Vedomosti,* 23 January 1838, No. 3.

Hungary, Germany, the United States, etc.[126] During 1877, *Moskovskie Vedomosti* was subscribed to 57 newspapers from each gubernia and imperial borderland to the tune of 336 roubles,[127] in addition to another 41 professional and trade newspapers, like *Birzhevye Vedomosti* and *Khristianskie chtenia*.[128] Russia's leading newspapers organized this enormous and fast-paced inflow of information and digested it into foreign and domestic press overviews for daily issues. These overviews engaged readers with global news and perspectives, but also forged informational connections between Russia's capitals and regions across the empire.

To complement foreign press deliveries and satisfy the growing demand for news, newspapers expanded their network of correspondents across the empire and the European capitals.[129] In some cases, these correspondents aboard were able to establish close relationships with key figures in foreign governments, whom they cultivated as a direct source of news for newspaper editors, circumventing the strictures of the Foreign Ministry. For example, Olga Novikova, the London correspondent for *Moskovskie Vedomosti* and the hostess to a prominent London intellectual salon, reported to her editor, M.N. Katkov, that "Gladstone is as usually very kind to me and visits me whenever he is in London."[130] Aside from promoting correspondents' close access to news sources, editors like Katkov sought to organize and streamline the work of correspondents for an efficient publication process, and cultivate in correspondents professional

[126] "Zhurnal iskhodiashchikh bumag redaktsii gazety 'Moskovskie Vedomosti,'" Rossiiskii Gosudarstvennyii Arkhiv Literatury i Iskusstva [RGALI], f. 262, op. 3, ed. 17, l.399.
[127] Ibid., ll. 422 -422ob.
[128] Ibid., l. 337
[129] In 1877, A.A. Kraevskii contracted the French telegraph news agency Havas to receive international news by telegraph. However, because of the costs of the telegraph, Kraevskii mulled the worth of correspondents using the telegraph to report news: "This is very risky business. These correspondents, fascinated by local events, will report all sorts of trifle that might interest their city, but not us – and we would pay for the communication of these trifles by telegraph. Big events are reported by telegraph agencies." A.A. Kraevskii, Letter from A.A. Kraevskii to A.D. Mein, 1 October 1873, RGALI f. 459, op. 2, ed. 1374, l. 32. Ibid., Letter from A.A. Kraevskii to A.D. Mein, 25 June 1873, RGALI f. 459, op. 2, ed. 1374, l. 18.
[130] Olga Novikova, Letter from O. Novikova to M.N. Katkov, 28 November [no year], Otdel Rukopisei Rossiiskoi Gosudarstvennoi Biblioteki [OR RGB] f.120, ed. 23, book 5, l. 18.

qualities and standards. In an instruction to one of his correspondents, Katkov requested a structure and quality of writing so that "your reports could be immediately sent to the press without the additional work of the editorial office."[131] Newspaper editors placed a great deal of trust in their private correspondents, whose reports were occasionally at odds with information from ministerial channels. Editors also upheld the highest level of professional ethics with respect to their correspondents, going to great lengths to protect their identity when a report provoked displeasure of a state officials.[132]

Third, the transfer of information, newspapers, correspondents, and their letters at across vast distances was facilitated and made speedier by newly built railway connections with Europe and inside Russia. Later, the telegraph further accelerated the transfer of information. Major Russian dailies drew contracts with international news agencies – the British Reuters, the French Havas Agency, the German Wolf Agency, and the Vienna Correspondence Bureau – to supply news via telegraph.[133] Contracts with the Russian and international telegraph agencies assured the speedy delivery of news. Whereas newspaper delivery from Vienna to St. Petersburg could take days via the railway, the telegraph made it a matter of hours. The telegraph also enabled newspaper correspondents to make speedy tip-offs, further decoupling the travel of news from physical travel of persons, as James Carey has argued, and reducing the length of time between a news break and publication thus accelerating the news cycle.

---

[131] M.N. Katkov. Letter from M.N. Katkov to an anonymous correspondent, 3 September 1861, OR RGB, f. 120, k. 50, ed. 29, l. 1.

[132] For example, in 1864, an article on Moscow city administration in *Moskovskie Vedomosti* provoked the displeasure of some Moscow officials, who demanded that Katkov reveal his source for the article. Katkov wrote directly to the Minister of the Interior, P.A. Valuev, who was able to satisfy his request to protect the identity of the correspondent for the article. P.A. Valuev, Letter from P.A. Valuev to M.N. Katkov, 28 February 1864, *Russkaia Starina* no. 6 (1916): p. 348.

[133] For example, in 1873, A.A. Kraevskii's *Golos* contracted the French telegraph news agency to supply news through the Russian telegraph. For more on telegraph agencies, see: Louise McReynolds, "Autocratic Journalism: The Case of the St. Petersburg Telegraph Agency," *Slavic Review* 49, no. 1 (1990): 48–57.

Fourth, newspapers' efforts to supply diverse and speedily arriving content went hand in hand with perfecting newspaper production quality and speed, and improving the promptness of their delivery. The rise of private Russian press coincided with the commercialization of the high-speed and steam rotary printing press by a Bavarian manufacturer, Koenig & Bauer, during the 1850s and 1860s. By the 1870s, Russia's leading newspapers were outfitted with high-speed and steam rotary presses, able – according to estimates – to print 3,000 impressions per hour, which did not account for the stoppages and breakdowns.[134] Soon after the beginning of his 1863 lease, M.N Katkov renovated and replace the printing machines of the Moscow University Press to a value of nearly 73,000 roubles. The increased speed of print production became particularly important for daily newspapers, which could broaden their time window for taking in news and avoid delays to delivery. Steam rotary presses also reduced the costs of production, requiring fewer workers and producing more newspaper copies at smaller cost margins thus allowing newspaper to keep prices as accessible as possible and outmaneuver more expensive competitors.

Not merely machines, but also new approaches to print workers' management made the printing process go smoothly. The newly outfitted presses sought out and rewarded with good pay the most capable print workers to run the presses and train young apprentices, forging a skilled professional class and with strong professional solidarities. The creation of print workers' and compositors' mutual aid societies in Moscow, St. Petersburg, Odessa, and other cities, facilitated the training, socialization, and regulation of the print and editorial profession. Indeed the "wave of association" was the earliest harbinger of the emerging professions.[135] The publishers' initiative and donations to societies for the mutual aid and professional improvement of print workers and

[134] Swen Kjaer, *Productivity of Labor in Newspaper Printing: March, 1929* (U.S. Government Printing Office, 1929), 235.
[135] Steinberg, *Moral Communities.*

compositors reflected a sense of professional ethics and solidarity in the printing industry.[136]

Fifth, the issue of prompt and reliable delivery was paramount to maintaining and expanding the number of subscribers. Newspaper editors during the 1860s and 1870s redesigned the logistics of press delivery, departing from traditional expedition by mail. Private newspaper publishers forged informal agreements with train conductors and railway guilds (*arteli*) representatives for newspaper delivery by rail. At first, train conductors used to transport newspaper for free, but starting with 1874, Kraevskii complained in a letter, they demanded 1 ruble per day for the safe delivery of newspapers, thus forging the beginnings of a courier service in Russia.[137] As Russia's railway network expanded, so did the speedy delivery of newspapers across the empire. In 1872, A.A. Kraevskii described in a letter to his assistant, A.D. Mein, the perfected delivery of his newspaper *Golos* from St. Petersburg to Moscow:

> Every day, the newspaper agent runs from the editorial office, at 12 noon, [with] a certain number of copies to the station of the Nicholas railway [connecting Moscow and St. Petersburg], and gives them to one of the conductors on the 2:30 postal train. In Moscow the train is met by Zhyvarev's courier, who brings them to Zhyvarev's store - which explains the store's consistent receipt of *Golos*. The mailmen could never surpass this train because the post officers take time to receive the mail, wait for the post office to have it sorted among mailmen, the letters could

[136] In 1867, M.N. Katkov and P.M. Leontiev founded the Print Workers' Mutual Aid Society in Moscow, aiming to improve printer workers' professional skills and provide them with financial support in times of sickness, disability, retirement, unemployment, and financial strains. A.A. Kraevskii was among the founders of the Society for the Aid to Writers and Scientists (*Obshchestvo dlia posobiia nuzhdaiushchimsia literatoram i uchenym*). He took active part in the Society for the Arts (*Obshchestvo pooshcherenia khudozhestv*), in the Society for the Aid of Theater Workers (*Obshchestvo dlia posobia nuzhdaiushchimsia stsenicheskim deiateliam*), and in the Society for the Aid to Students of City Primary Schools (*Obshchestvo posobiia uchashchimsia v nachal'nykh gorodskikh uchilishchakh).*

[137] A.A. Kraevskii, Letter from A.A. Kraevskii to A.D. Mein, 1 January 1874, RGALI f. 459, op. 2, ed. 1374, l. 39.

take a while, adding an extra 2-3 hours.[138]

Other editors forged similar delivery schemes. In 1880, not long after the opening in 1878 of the Moscow-Kursk railway, Katkov and his distribution manager for *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, N.N. Voskoboinikov, held talks with the Kursk railway guild to set up delivery along the railway - a profitable opportunity for *Moskovskie Vedomosti*. The timely and reliable delivery of newspapers became a paramount condition in the rise of daily newspapers and their growing subscription numbers. Greater promptness an efficiency in printing and delivery, in turn, minimized the time between editorial office's receipt of news and their delivery to readers, further accelerating the news cycle.

Finally, private editors had to approach the pricing of their newspapers with entrepreneurial skill. While subscriptions continued to be the cornerstone of newspapers' solvency, street sales – often difficult to predict – were quickly becoming critical to profitability. They were in fact so critical that the Main Administration for Press Affairs, the central censorship organ, gave out bans on street sales to newspapers in violation of censorship as a form of alternative penalty to a warning. Price increases both for yearly subscription and street sales were carefully weighed against those of the competitors.[139] In 1874, an issue of *Golos* cost a relatively low price of 7.5 kopecks per issue, drawing razor-thin profit margins of 0.5 kopeck per copy as Kraevskii carefully balanced profit and accessibility.[140] With the expanding geography of sales, another difficult task

[138] A.A. Kraevskii, Letter from A.A. Kraevskii to A.D. Mein, 27 November 1872, RGALI f. 459, op. 2, ed. 1374, l. 7.

[139] In 1873, the editor and publisher of *Golos*, A.A. Kraevskii, noted that the street price of his newspaper was 2 kopecks and an additional 8 for official notices (*kazennye ob''iavlenia)*. Observing that these prices were higher than those charged by *St. Petersburg Vedomosti*, Kraevskii suggested to his editorial assistant A.D. Mein that the prices must be lowered. A.A. Kraevskii, Letter from A.A. Kraevskii to A.D. Mein, 25 June 1873, RGALI, f. 459, op. 2, ed. 1374, ll. 18-18ob.

[140] See A.A. Kraevskii, Letter from A.A. Kraevskii to A.D. Mein, 11 November 1872, RGALI f. 459, op. 2, ed. 1374, l. 5ob. Ibid., Letter from A.A. Kraevskii to A.D. Mein, 6 November 1873, RGALI f. 459, op. 2, ed. 1374, l. 37-37.

faced by the editors was estimating the number of copies to send for street sale to send to various cities and the price at which they will sell in various locations.[141] With the expanding geography of sales, publishers had to estimate how many copies for street sale to send to various cities and at what price should they be sold in the streets.[142] In 1872, A.A. Kraevskii contemplated a business model for bulk supply to street sellers, however the scheme bore losses as street sellers often had to sell excess copies at a discount.

Within the two decades since the 1860s, new private publishers and editors have transformed the content, readership, modes of production and delivery of the newspaper. The modernization of newspaper publishing during the second half of the nineteenth century universalized newspaper content, expanded and accelerated news gathering and printing, and improved timeliness of delivery. Balancing the aspirations for improvement in quality, reputation, and profit, and facing enormous financial pressures of publishing, new publishers and editors were increasingly engaged in the business aspect of newspaper publishing. In other words, the nature of editorial work, no longer focused predominantly on content, included new and complex calculations regarding the incorporation of communication technology, logistical and commercial calculations.

The technological transformation and fast-growing complexity of newspaper production made expertise – an attribute of professionalization as per Eliot Friedson's definition - an

[141] For example, in 1872, Kraevskii estimated that 150 copies – on top of subscription – should be sent to Moscow to be sold at 6 kopecks each without the right to return the newspaper. Publishers also regulated the maximum price street retailers could sell newspapers – ordinarily 6 and no more than 10 kopecks per copy. The practice of returning newspapers after purchase and reading was in place at the time. Kraevskii strictly forbade it in St. Petersburg. A.A. Kraevskii, Letter from A.A. Kraevskii to A.D. Mein, 11 November 1872, RGALI f. 459, op. 2, ed. 1374, l. 5ob.

[142] For example, in 1872, Kraevskii estimated that 150 copies – on top of subscription – should be sent to Moscow to be sold at 6 kopecks each without the right return the newspaper. Publishers also regulated the maximum price street retailers could sell newspapers – ordinarily 6 and no more than 10 kopecks per copy. The practice of returning newspapers after purchase and reading was practiced at the time. Kraevskii strictly forbade it in St. Petersburg. A.A. Kraevskii, Letter from A.A. Kraevskii to A.D. Mein, 11 November 1872, RGALI f. 459, op. 2, ed. 1374, l. 5ob.

indispensable ingredient in the editorial office. The rise of private newspaper publishing and its modernization beginning with the 1860s reflected broader social change in Russia. Much like the 'enlightened bureaucrats' of the 1860s, new publishers were motivated by merit, expertise, and service. But they also competed for status and influence the publishing and -as we will later discuss – in the political world. These new editors, lacking "ascribed status" of wealthy landowning publishers of the eighteenth century, strove for and attained an "achieved" status outside the Table of Ranks.[143]

For many of Russia's leading editors, the "achieved status" made them substantially wealthy in their own right. M.N. Katkov left an inheritance of over 440,000 rubles in his personal bank account along with the large estate of Znamenskoe-Sadki near Moscow.[144] Kraevskii was rumored to have accrued a fortune in the course of his editorial careers. Suvorin built a publishing empire. By the 1900s, a new generation of commercial publishers and entrepreneurs like, V.A. Anzimirov and I.D. Sytin, came to the fore to produce popular penny papers surged to a circulation of over 100,000 in 1904 and over 1 million rubles in 1917.[145]

Still, their social advancement through expertise – regardless of wealth – raises important questions about the professionalization of editorial work in the Russian empire. The final part of this chapter investigates the extent (and limits) of professionalization in journalism and editorial work during the nineteenth century as a means for observing the negotiation of the public sphere between the government and the press during the same period.

[143] Ralph Linton, "Chapter VIII: Status and Role," in *The Study Of Man* (New York: Appleton Century Crofts, Inc., 1936), 113-131.
[144] "Raschetnaia knizhka torgovogo doma L.S. Poliakova na imia M.N. Katkov za 1886 [i 1887] god," OR RGB f. 120, k. 56, d. 32, ll. 1-20.
[145] McReynolds, *The News under Russia's Old Regime,* Apendix A, Table 8.

Editorial Professionalization and Its Limits

The question of journalistic professionalization – not unlike the development of other professions – is concerned with the emergence of an autonomous and self-governing corporation under an otherwise autocratic regime; it also interrogates the emergence of a culture of expertise and expert authority in society. With journalistic and editorial work engaged more than any other in civic critique and government accountability, the professionalization of this work holds a special key to understanding the development of a public sphere and civic values in pre-Revolutionary Russia. The literature on professionalization in Imperial Russia – particularly in medicine, education and sciences - have consistently dissected tensions between autonomy and government control in development of the professions in tsarist Russia.[146]

Sociologist Eliot Friedson defined a 'profession' as "an occupation that controls its own work, organized by a special set of institutions sustained in part by a particular ideology of expertise and service" – one might also add ethics, solidarities.[147] In his edited volume, *Russia's Missing Middle Class: The Professions in Russian History*, Harley Balzer highlighted autonomy from the state as a key element of professionalization.[148] In nineteenth-century Russia, Balzer argues, professionals in various areas of law, medicine, university education "repeatedly found out that the state was both the greatest obstacle and the most prominent source of assistance"[149] This Janus-faced relationship with the state, as Balzer elegantly put it, built in a growing tension

[146] Harley D. Balzer, ed., *Russia's Missing Middle Class: The Professions in Russian History* (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1996); Nancy M. Frieden, *Russian Physicians in an Era of Reform and Revolution, 1856-1905* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1981); Harley Balzer, "The Problem of Professions in Imperial Russia," in *Between Tsar and People: Educated Society and the Quest for Public Identity in Late Imperial Russia*, ed. Edith W. Clowes, Samuel D. Kassow, and James L. West (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1991); Richard G. Robbins, *The Tsar's Viceroys: Russian Provincial Governors in the Last Years of the Empire* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1988).
[147] Eliot Freidson, *Professionalism Reborn: Theory, Prophecy, and Policy* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 10, n. 1.
[148] Balzer, *Russia's Missing Middle Class*.
[149] Balzer, "The Problem of Professions in Imperial Russia," 187.

between professions and the state at the turn of the century Russia.

This part of the chapter probes the fledgling professional solidarities and emerging ideology of service among newspaper editors – the latter two elements speak to Friedson's definition of professionalization. At the same time, it brings to light the ways in which all the elements of professionalization – autonomy from the state, ideology of expertise and service, and solidarity –remained limited.

The new generation of post-Reform newspaper editors was motivated not only by the commercial success of their enterprises, but also by an emerging ethos of journalistic work: an ideology of service and of autonomy from the state. Most private editors saw their activity as a service to the state and to society. They sought to draw attention to social issues, analyze – even scrutinize – the actions of the government, and suggest policy recommendations. *Birzhevye Vedomosti* set out to publish a daily column titled "Agricultural Review" [*Sel'sko-Khoziaistvennoe obozrenie*] to "focus on the results of the great reform of peasant life in various corners of the Empire" and suggest measures that "could be speedily and successfully applied."[150] Like other newspapers, their *Birzhevye Vedomosti* conceived of its coverage of trade and the economy as a service to the state and to society – as "a service to public good."[151]

In the same vein, Katkov considered his editorial work at *Moskovskie Vedomosti* a "public service" [*obshchestvennaia deiatelnost*] and a duty to the state and to the Tsar. "Public discussion," he wrote in a private note, "is irreplaceable, it leads to the explanation of issues, toward the prevention of disasters, [and] toward the correction of mistakes."[152] To that effect, the new press frequently drew on the reports of their correspondents, letters to the editor, and peasant

[150] *Birzhevye Vedomosti*, 12 September 1862, No. 193, 1.
[151] Subscription advertisement, *Birzhevye Vedomosti*, 12 September 1862, No. 193, 1.
[152] M.N. Katkov, ["Statia Katkova M.N. o ego deiatelnosti i o vrazhdebnykh emu napravleniakh"], OR RGB f. 120, k. 53, d. 26, l. 9ob-10.

deputations, to study the course of reforms in every area of social life.

Taking this argument further, Katkov envisioned an active role for the press in politics. On the one hand, he believed his journalistic activity could "aid [*sposobstvovat*] government officials in fulfilling the duties placed on them by the Tsar."[153] It also worked "to explain the essence of this reform for our society."[154] Finally, believing the press to be a guaranteur of good governance [*blagoustroistva*], Katkov believed it was the duty of his newspaper to scrutinize the government and even to "expose" [*izoblichat'*] state officials since "harm to the government," he argued, "could come from within."[155]

The idea of the press as a check on the government was not shared by all the highest ranks of bureaucracy. In an 1862 report, the chairman of the committee for reforming the censorship statute, A.A. Berte, decried the press for "touching with its brazen hand such authorities as religion, the Church, the Supreme Authority [*Verkhovnaia vlast'*], the government, the courts and other powers, compromising the respect that is due to them." [156]

The deference to the government and the monarch in public political discussion caused divisions even in the censorship organs. In "tense discussions" at the Main Censorship Administration, Minister of Court, A.V. Adlerberg, alleged that all articles on finance, politics, judiciary, and administration "encroached on the rights of autocracy" and risked harming the monarchy with their public criticism.[157] On the contrary, argued Nikitenko and other censors, public discussion [*glasnoe obsuzhdenie*] of societal and administrative issues improved legislative outcomes. "The government," Nikitenko argued, "should wish [such a discussion] for its own

[153] Ibid., l. 3.
[154] Ibid., l. 5.
[155] Ibid., l. 9ob-10.
[156] Berte, *Zapiska predsedatelia*, 5-7, 11.
[157] Nikitenko, Entry for 17 December 1860, *Dnevnik*, vol. 2, 167.

benefit."

The ideology of service pivoted to the second element of the emerging journalistic ethos: independence. Despite widespread collaborative relationships between newspaper editors and the government, the editors consistently and often staunchly claimed independence from the government as a moral position and a key element of the newspaper's credibility.

In an unpublished essay on his editorial activity, Katkov plead "the purity of our service [*chistota nashego sluzhenia*] [to the Tsar] requiring complete independence from all sorts of parties in administrative spheres as well as among the estates. Our activity would lose its meaning and would be more harmful than useful, if on various questions we would permit ourselves to enter into agreements or deals."[158] Indeed, the more meaningful examples of editorial independence in action were instances of defiance in the face of censorship or bureaucratic displeasure. Katkov's career was particularly rich in such examples. In 1865, for instance, he refused to publish a warning notice, given to *Moskovskie Vedomosti* for a report that provoked P.A. Valuev's personal displeasure. The editors also went to great lengths to protect their sources and correspondence when a report provoked displeasure of a state officials.[159] Often Katkov placed greater trust in his correspondents than in government-issued information when the two were at odds; P.A. Valuev once even reproached Katkov for his "belief in the infallibility [*nepogreshimost*] of private reporters."[160] Unable to attain independence, press editors in fact sought to carveout a modicum of autonomy from the government in the content and management of their newspapers.

---

[158] M.N. Katkov, Letter from M.N. Katkov to Alexander II, n.d. [1866], *Byloe* no. 4 (1917): 5.
[159] For example, in 1864 an article on Moscow city administration in *Moskovskie Vedomosti* provoked the displeasure of some Moscow officials, who demanded that Katkov reveal his source for the article. Katkov wrote directly to the Minister of the Interior, P.A. Valuev, who was able to satisfy his request to protect the identity of the correspondent for the article. P.A. Valuev, Letter from P.A. Valuev to M.N. Katkov, 28 February 1864, *Russkaia Starina* no. 6 (1916): 348.
[160] P.A. Valuev, Letter from P.A. Valuev to M.N. Katkov, 21 November 1864, *Russkaia Starina* no. 6 (1916): 357-359. Ibid, Letter from 24 February 1879, 363-364.

The principle of editorial independence was also occasionally weaponized as competing editors sought to undermine the credibility of rival newspapers. Public revelations or mere rumors of ties between private newspaper editors and government officials often irrevocably discredited a newspaper. One of the earliest examples of such an effect, was the 1861 demise of N.F. Pavlov's *Nashe Vremia* soon after the onset of later confirmed rumors subsidies from P.A. Valuev's Ministry of the Interior. In another example, in 1882, Minister of the Interior N.P. Ignatiev sought to discredit M.N. Katkov, who published increasingly critical articles about the minister's project to call in *Zemskii Sobor*. Ignatiev partnered with one of Katkov's rivals, A.S. Suvorin's and his *Novoe Vremia*, to discreetly circulate the notion that Katkov was to be appointed as member of the State Council. Horrified at the rumor once it reached him, Katkov wrote to Emperor Alexander III requesting his intervention on "this issue of political life and death" for Katkov.[161]

Indeed, the competition between editors such as that between Katkov and Suvorin undercut potential professional solidarities and hampered the professionalization of editorial work in late imperial Russia. Brought up in the pre-Reform tradition of the thick literary journals, the post-Reform generation of newspaper editors brought with them notions of editorial roles from literary journals and applied them to newspaper publishing. With few exceptions, the new generation of newspaper editors saw themselves as public intellectuals, whose mission was not only to inform on the news, but also to interpret them for their readers. Aksakov put it best when he argued in a letter that "the newspaper [is] a tribune, and what is said from the height of this tribune is a sermon, an advice, a recommendation, or the expression of sympathy."[162] Viewing their newspaper as a platform for advancing their own political views, the new generation of political editors sought to

[161] "Vozhd reaktsii 60-kh-80-kh godov, (pis'ma [M.N.] Katkova Alexandru II i Alexandru III" [Letter dated to February 1884], *Byloe* no. 4 (1917): 20.
[162] I.S. Aksakov, Letter from I.S. Aksakov to O.A. Novikova, 29 April 1882, OR RGB f. 126, k. 8337a, ed. 8, l. 7.

cultivate a political community in their own image. Government censor, P.I. Kapnist noted that almost as soon as the 1858-1859 censorship reforms were in place, the fast-growing diversity of private political newspapers "created among them a vivid polemic."[163]

As Chapter 3 will show in greater details, the editors diverged in their political views and competed to influence both their audience and political decision-makers, their sharp – often bitter – editorial polemic as they undercut possibilities for forging professional solidarities. Their rivalry, however, extended far beyond political influence; they also competed for information and for bureaucratic patronage as a protection against censorship.

While Alexander II's press reforms granted newspaper substantial operational autonomy, autonomy over content remained considerably constrained. The system of administrative warnings to newspapers, introduced in P.A. Valuev's 1865 Censorship Reform, gave the Ministry of the Interior – in Kraevskii's words - "the right to life and death over a journal," "demoralizing" the press and leading to arbitrary rule of the authorities.[164] From 1865 to 1870, the Ministry of the Interior and its Main Administration for Press Affairs issued 48 warnings to a more than dozen newspapers, permanently suspending eight of them.[165]

Warnings were meted out mostly for editorials – the sharpest and more politically significant part of every newspaper issue, one the Main Administration for Press Affairs most frequently took issue with. The editor thus played a key role in violating censorship restrictions, but also in navigating out of potentially perilous situations. The ability of a newspaper editor to anticipate press warnings and avoid them depended almost exclusively on the editor's connections

[163] I.P. Kapnist, ed., "Vospominania o grafe Petre Ivanoviche Kapniste," in *Sochinenia grafa P.I. Kapnista* (Moscow: [n.p.], 1901), 427–28.
[164] A.A. Kraevskii, Editorial, *Golos*, 29 September 1865, No. 269. A.A. Kraevskii, Editorial, *Golos*, 9 October, No. 279. As cited in *Literaturnoe nasledstvo*, 112 vols. (Moscow: Nauka, 1988), vol. 97, part 1, 420 n. 6.
[165] Ruud, *Fighting Words*, 256.

and patrons within the government as well as the censorship apparatus. The editors' necessity to protect their financially leveraged newspapers from censorship, closure, and fines, led editors to seek out patronage relationships with high-ranking government officials. With Ministries of Education, Interior, and Finance seeking to cultivate friendly press outlets beginning with 1862, the task securing such patronage did not present editors with an unsurpassable challenge.

As Chapter 2 will discuss in more vivid colors, Kraevskii's *Golos* was under the patronage of A.V. Golovnin's Ministry of Education from the newspaper's very founding in 1863. During the 1870s and early 1880s, it came under the patronage of a group of Western-minded ministers within the government of Alexander II, men such as M.Kh. Reitern and later A.A. Abaza at the Ministry of Finance, D.A. Miliutin at the Ministry of War, and M.T. Loris-Melikov at the Ministry of the Interior. Katkov cultivated a relationship with P.A. Valuev during the 1860s, testing the minister's ability and desire to protect him from warnings by publishing sharply-worded editorials in the wake of the 1863 Polish uprising. Valuev obliged on more than one occasion before their relationship soured in 1865.

Throughout the 1860s-1880s, Katkov cultivated close relationships with D.A. Tolstoi at the Ministry of Education and later at the Ministry of the Interior, as well as with numerous ministers in the government of Alexander III: the Ober-Procurator of the Holy Synod, K.P. Pobedonostsev; Minister of Education, I.D. Delyanov; Minister of Finance, I.A. Vyshnegradskii among others. Suvorin cultivated relationships with Minister of Interior, N.P. Ignatiev, during 1881-1882, and his eventual successor I.L. Goremykin. S.M. Propper's *Birzhevye Vedomosti* entertained ties with S.Ju. Witte's Ministry of Finance. Aksakov counted on his father-in-law, poet F.I. Tiutchev, employed by the Main Administration for Press Affairs remain informed about potential warnings to his newspapers.

The editors' ties with the highest-ranking officials not only offered the prospect of censorship protection, but also the possibility of receiving exclusive news and information from within government ranks. Kraevskii cultivated a relationship with censor and temporary head of the Main Administration for Press Affairs, Feofil Tolstoi, who – during the Nechaev trial - supplied *Golos* with stenographic notes before other newspapers could access them. Moreover, Kraevskii's son Evgenii Kraevskii, was employed by the chancellery of the State Council.[166] P.A. Valuev, D.A. Tolstoi, I.D. Delyanov supplied Katkov with government documents and reports from their own ministerial desks. F.I. Tiutchev supplied his son-in-law, Aksakov, with documents secretly obtained by him from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.[167]

The necessity to navigate censorship and obtain valuable news scoops made the editor a singularly important presence in the editorial office. B.N. Chicherin commented on Katkov's dominant figure in the editorials office: "the editorial thought was law for employees. Of course, in such conditions, the journal [Russkii Vestnik] could not become a center and organ for people with independent thought. Here myrmidons, not employees, were needed."[168] Russia's most influential political dailies were personified by their editors as the latter rose to become influential and well-connected press lords. However, it was the editors' unique understanding of their role that cemented the editorial position far above all other editorial staff. Such power disparities in the editorial office atomized the editorial community and undermined professional solidarities and the formation of a professional corporation that could collectively negotiate its relationship with the government.

---

[166] A.A. Polovtsov, *Dnevnik gosudarstvennogo sekretaria A.A. Polovtsova: v dvukh tomakh,* 2 vols. (Moscow: Nauka, 1966), vol. 1, 26.
[167] F.I. Tiutchev, Letter from F.I. Tiutchev to I.S. Aksakov, St. Petersburg, 4 January 1868, *Literaturnoe nasledstvo* 112 vols. (Moscow: Nauka, 1988), vol. 97, part 1, 318-319.
[168] B. N Chicherin, *Vospominaniia Borisa Nikolaevicha Chicherina: Moskva sorokovykh godov* (Moscow: Izd. M. i S. Sabashnikovykh, 1929), 175.

The failure to form professional solidarities reflected itself in the lack of formal professional training and corporate organization of editors in the second half of the nineteenth century. Editors and journalists lacked specialized education in their craft or criteria for admission into the profession. Editors like Katkov, Kraevskii, Suvorin, and Aksakov, educated in law and philosophy, learned the editorial craft effectively as apprentices in large editorial offices early in their career and intuited effective improvements to the newsgathering, publication, and delivery processes. On the other hand, a more formal professional training was typical for print workers directly involved in production, particularly among compositors, who enrolled as apprentices in early teenage years to undergo years of training, often on a scholarship sponsored by a print workshop or a newspaper.

Secondly, formal professional organizations for journalists and editors were founded only in 1914-1915, with the institution of the All-Russian Society of Editors and the Petrograd Society of Journalists. On the other hand, print workers were far more effective at collective organization and bargaining. Print workers' societies were founded in Moscow, St. Petersburg, Odessa, and other cities beginning with the 1860s, attending to the needs and demands of print workers. The publishers' initiative and donations to print workers' mutual aid societies reflected a sense of emerging solidarities in the printing industry.[169]

Editors like Katkov, Kraevskii, Suvorin, and Aksakov effectively personified their newspapers as their outsized editorial roles determined the course of the newspaper.. The passing or retirement of such an editor spelled the closure or the quick fall in readership and popularity of their newspaper. Thus, with Katkov's passing in 1887, *Moskovskie Vedomosti* lost their

[169] In 1869, M.N. Katkov and his editorial assistant, P.M. Leontiev, founded the Moscow Print Workers' Mutual Aid Society in Moscow, aiming to improve printer workers' professional skills and provide them with financial support in times of sickness, disability, retirement, unemployment, and financial strains.

tremendous influence almost overnight. Aksakov's retirement from editorial activity marked the closure of *Rus'* in 1886. The fall of Kraevskii's liberal patrons – Loris-Melikov, Abaza, Miliutin - in 1881 soon spelled censorship woes for *Golos* and resulted in suspension and ultimately closure in 1883, marking the end of Kraevskii's editorial career.

Conclusion

The social and political significance of the Russian press underwent a profound change during the nineteenth century. The comprehensive nature of the Great Reforms and their continuous adjustment created the need for regular communication between the state and its subjects. Co-interested in this communication were both the state and subjects: the former - to assure the implementation of reforms; the latter – in navigating the new complexities of post-reform land ownership, local administration, judicial and bureaucratic systems. This new world of bureaucratic entanglements, literacy motivated to literacy all strata of Russia's population. The press thrived on the growing appetite for information across the empire and on the new taste for specialized information. When, in the late 1850s the state abandoned the Nicolaevan ambition to dominate the press landscape, private publishing surged to transform the nature and role of the press, its relationship with the state and the reader, and the business of publishing.

The newfound modicum of self-governance granted to the press – reflected, among others, in the abolition of preliminary censorship – gave an impetus to the commercialization of the press and to the professionalization of journalism. A new generation of enterprising and self-reliant editors and publishers transformed the technology and speed of news gathering, diversified the content, and perfected the logistics of newspaper printing and delivery. These professional editors and publishers were first to define the journalistic profession and foster professional ethics and

solidarities through early professional organizations. The professionalization of the press – defined by early establishment of professional autonomy, competency, solidarity, and ethics - marked the definitive separation of the press from the state. The gradual autonomy of the press reflected the departure of other spheres of activity from under the purview of the state. In fact, since the 1860s, the growing private press cultivated and defined new and independent spheres of human activity and communication through specialized and professional periodicals.

The unprecedented autonomy of the press from the state, its speedy technology of information gathering across Russia and the world have rendered it an important source of news for its readership, but also for the state. With it, newspapers' ability to select, interpret, and discuss news increasingly shaped the political discourse in the highest corridors of power. Russia's leading dailies became the principal stage of communication where, in James Carey's definition, "reality is produced, maintained, repaired and transformed."[170] The press – whether newspapers or journals – used communication to create shared reality and shared meaning among a political, professional, and cultural groups increasingly autonomous from the patronage or purview of the state. In the long term, the creation of shared meaning, community, and mediation of the press between the governing and the governed is to be understood in in relation to participatory democracy; in Russia, such demands resurfaced already in 1905.

At the end of their editorial careers, Katkov, Kraevskii, Aksakov, and Suvorin left a vastly different press landscape than one in which they got their early start. It was a fast-paced and competitive press market in which the newspaper was a commercialized commodity requiring considerable operational expertise, political acumen, and high-placed patrons. Coming from relatively modest means, the new generation of editors rose to unprecedented prominence as they

[170] James W. Carey, *Communication as Culture: Essays on Media and Society* (Boston: Unwin Hyman, 1989), 23.

harnessed both social influence and political connections. The commercial success of their newspapers reflected on the personal wealth of their editors. M.N. Katkov accrued a fortune of over 440,000 rubles, passing it on to his family together with the large estate of Znamenskoe-Sadki near Moscow.[171] At the same time, this generation was the first to openly conceptualize their editorial role as public service. Much like the 'enlightened bureaucrats' of the 1860s, new publishers were motivated by merit, expertise, and service. However, they also competed for status and influence the publishing and -as we will later discuss – in the political world. These new editors, lacking "ascribed status" of wealthy landowning publishers of the 18th century, strove for and attained an "achieved" status outside the Table of Ranks.[172]

The technological, commercial, and social development that the newspaper press achieved over the second half of the nineteenth century since Alexander II's reforms doubtlessly laid the groundwork for the professionalization of journalism in Russia. However, evolving relationship of the press with the official bureaucracy – the highly personal relationships of patronage, protection, and information transfer, as well as the political atomization among editors undercut the process of professionalization. The limited autonomy the editors from the government and the centrality of the editor to a newspaper allowed for the emergence of influential editors (press lords) who personified their newspapers and limited the professionalization of journalism in Russia during the nineteenth century. As with other skilled occupations in late imperial Russia, the tensions between a professional community and the government reflected the same Janus-faced relationship – to use Harley Balzer's term - in which the state was both the greatest obstacle and the most prominent source of assistance.

[171] "Raschetnaia knizhka torgovogo doma L.S. Poliakova na imia M.N. Katkov za 1886 [i 1887] god," OR RGB f. 120, k. 56, d. 32, ll. 1-20.
[172] Linton, *The Study of Man*, 113-188.

CHAPTER 2:
Press Enters Politics: Newspaper Discourses in Government Debates, 1860s-1870s

Introduction

The technological transformation of Russia's private political press during the late 1850s and early 1860s, discussed in Chapter 1, made it an important source of information not only for its readers, but also for government officials and even for Emperor Alexander II. Drawing on communication technology such as the telegraph (and telegraph agencies), the railways, and the steam-powered press, Russia's leading dailies increasingly competed with governmental information channels in their speed and breadth of information, delivered from across the empire and the world. Sharp political commentary, underpinned by investigative reporting, expert opinion, and research, brought newspaper discourses into the political discussions within the government. Government ministers were quick to identify the political uses of the press. During the second half of the nineteenth century, the press and the government developed patterns of mutual influence, collaboration, coordination, and patronage in which both competed for influence over political decision-making and public opinion.

Chapter 2 explores the emerging influence of the private newspaper press on governmental discussion and the relationships between editors and government officials during the 1860s-1870s. The chapter sets off by examining the newspaper readings habits of the Tsars as well as within ministerial ranks and in the State Council, revealing the ways in which newspaper discourses made their way into political discussion and decision-making. The chapter then investigates how bureaucratic interest groups sought to instrumentalize the press to advance political agendas and take on rivals. At the same time, it uncovers how increasingly well-connected editors exploited networks of patrons and informants within government ranks for exclusive information, the

advancement of political projects, and protection from censorship.

The chapter contributes a nuanced narrative of the transformation of the relationship between the press and the government, which transitioned during the 1850s-1860s from control to negotiation, co-optation, and even reverse influence. Looking into press consumption within the highest ranks of the government, this study sheds light on the government's loss of monopoly over information and over political discussion as newspapers made political debates a purview of the public. The government's desire (and struggle) to instrumentalize the private press reveals the difficulty of controlling information in a society touched by publicity. Yet, the chapter highlights the fast-growing importance of publicity in public politics.

The Press and Its First Reader

The politicization of the press, fueled by its newfound ability to discuss political and public issues, transformed press consumption not only among the broad reading public, but also within ministerial corridors and at court. The reading habits of Russian Tsars and their bureaucratic officials represent a key avenue into monarchic decision-making. During the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the reading habits of Tsars have been irregular and left to their personal discretion and taste. Short-lived literary magazines, engaging in literary criticism, translation, and scientific news dominated Russia's print landscape until the 1850s. Newspapers, on the other hand, peddling information obtained from the state offered little of novelty particularly to the monarch.

The earliest initiative to introduce a regular reading practice for the Emperor came in the early 1850s from Minister of Education and bibliophile, A.S. Norov (1853-1858). Norov sought to create a more structured reading habit at court for Emperor Nicholas I by providing monthly overviews of new books. Norov's overviews of literary works served an educational and

enlightenment purpose, rather than a political one. The overviews also represented an early effort to acquaint the Emperor with the political press with the primary purpose to gain information rather than to censor it. His successor at the Ministry of Education, geologist E.P. Kovalevskii (1858-1861), inherited the practice. However, soon after his appointment, Kovalevskii delegated the compilation of overviews to one of his trusted assistant– historian and literary critic P.K. Shchebalskii. Shchebalskii was tasked with continuing Norov's practice, compiling monthly overviews [*obozrenia*] of "notable articles in our magazines with extractions [intended] to acquaint the Emperor with our best literary and scientific works."[173]

Shchebalskii's appointment represented the first dedicated institutional effort to regularize the Emperor's reading habits. However, much about the compilation of press overviews was left to the discretion of the compiler. Shchebalskii saw his role to "serve literature" and his personal interest in history reflected in the abundance of historical essays he selected for the Emperor's reading which constituted about a third of all articles included in the overviews.[174] Furthermore, even as a censor, Shchebalskii continued to publish his historical essays in the very journals he relied on in compiling his overviews.[175] Close relationships between officials like Shchebalskii and press editors, suggest an early the institutional porousness between the press and the

[173] A.V. Nikitenko, Entry for 16 January 1859, *Dnevnik* 3 vols. (Moscow: Gosud. Izdat. khudozhestvennoi literatury, 1955), vol. 2, 55.
[174] D.A. Badalian, "Zhurnalist, obshchestvennoe mnenie i vlast: izdania M.N. Katkova v tsarskikh obozreniakh' 1860-1866 gg.," *Tetradi po konservatizmu* 3 (2018): 91–92; M.K. Lemke, *Ocherki po istorii russkoi tsenzury i zhurnalistiki XIX stoletia* (St. Peterburg: Kn-vo M.V. Pirozhkova, 1904), 346–47.
[175] For example, in 1860 and 1861, P.K. Shchebalskii compiled daily overviews that frequently featured M.N. Katkov's *Moskovskie Vedomosti,* in turn, Shchebalskii was able to publish his essays in Katkov's literary journal *Russkii Vestnik*. See: P.K. Shchebalskii, "Kniaz Menishikov i graf Moritz Saksonskii v Kurliandii 1726-1727," *Russkii Vestnik*, vol 25 (1860): 5-68. P.K. Shchebalskii published in *Russkii Vestnik* on multiple occasions in 1856, 1869, 1871, as well as in other literary and historical journals (*Niva, Besedy v obscestve liubitelei Rossiiskoi slovesnosti)* at the time of his tenure at the Main Censorship Administration. Shchebalskii's 1860 historical essay "Prince Menshikov and count Moritz of Saxony in Courland, 1726-1727" was passed through censorship by N.P. Giliarov-Platonov, also a contributor to Katkov's *Russkii Vestnik*, fired in 1862 from the censorship committee for "censorship delinquency" [*za tsenzurnye provinnosti*]. See: N.P. Generalova, "Neizvestnii Otvet Turgeneva Chernyshevskomu," in *I. S. Turgenev : Novye Issledovania i Materialy*, vol. iv (Moscow: Alians Arheo, 2016), 26.

bureaucracy.

The beginning of the Great Reforms and their discussion in the press altered the composition of the Tsars' overviews. The new Minister of Education, A V Golovnin (1862-1866), "presented the Emperor three times a week with an overview of current literature, and its opinions on the reforms."[176] Overviews compiled under Golovnin's Ministry of Education constituted the earliest regular incorporation of political press into overviews for the Tsar, acquainting the monarch with the local reports and opinions of public intellectuals in the persons of leading editors on the course of the Great Reforms.

The fast-expanding number of periodicals prompted Shchebalskii to hire an assistant in 1861 - P.I. Kapnist, a poet and officer of special assignments. In his memoirs, Kapnist noted that "from the beginning of 1862, the periodical press accorded particular attention to issues pertaining to government activity and those arising from the conditions of peoples' lives." [177] Purely literary works," he observed, "were not a priority and did not elicit a special interest of the reading public."[178] On the contrary, Kapnist highlighted, "the participation of journalism in our governing activities especially increased."[179] In late 1862, under the growing volume of the press, Shchebalskii hired another censor for work on press overviews – publicist and officer of special assignments, E.M. Feoktistov. Recalling the start of his appointment, Feoktistov noted that already in 1862 press overviews were composed daily from literary journals as well as newspapers.[180] The increasing inclusion of newspapers in press overview and the growing frequency of overviews from three times weekly to daily -, highlighted the changing informational environment around

[176] Ina Kapnist, ed., "Vospominania o grafe Petre Ivanoviche Kapniste," in *Sochinenia grafa P.I. Kapnista* (Moscow: [n.p.], 1901), cii.
[177] Ibid., 427.
[178] Ibid., 427.
[179] Ibid., 427.
[180] E. Feoktistov, *Za kulisami politiki i literatury, 1848-1896* (Moscow: Novosti, 1991), 134.

the monarch.

Beginning with 1863, with the task of compiling press overviews being transferred from the Ministry of Education to the Ministry of Interior, the nature of press overviews began to reflect the new interest of the state in political discourses in daily political press. In 1865, Minister of the Interior P.A. Valuev issued an instruction for the Chief Administration for Press Affairs to compile for Emperor Alexander II daily "overviews of notable articles, expressing the feedback and opinions [*otzyvy I mnenia*] on the most important issues and goings on in state and public life."[181] The overviews consisted of a summary and annotation of two to three notable articles of the day, usually published in Moscow and St. Petersburg newspapers, and a collage of select newspaper article cut outs.[182] These were occasionally returned to editors with warnings, praise, or comment written on margins by the Tsar.

Valuev's instructions for the press overviews rethought the reading materials necessary a Russian Emperor should read, reflecting on the changing role of the monarchy. The overviews departed from literary works that aimed to cultivate a Emperor's the cultural erudition in the Enlightenment tradition, in favor of information and opinion on key current social issues that would improve governance particularly at the time of active state reforms during the 1860s. Soliciting "feedback and opinions," Valuev's instructions aimed to engage the monarch with a plurality of political views in the press as options in the state decision-making.[183] In doing so,

[181] N.G. Patrusheva, "Glavnoe upravlenie po delam pechati (1865-1917 gg) i proekti ego reformirovania," *Istoricheskie, filosofskie, politicheskie i iuridicheskie nauki, kul'turologia i iskusstvovedenie. Voprosy teorii i praktiki* 8, no. 14, part III (2011): 148.
[182] The daily press overviews are briefly discussed in V. G. Chernukha, *Pravitelstvennaia politika v otnoshenii pechati 60-70-e gody XIX veka* (Leningrad: Nauka, 1989), 25, 27.
[183] Mikhail Dolbilov describes a similar process, where the Emperor would not himself formulate political decisions, but rather choose from a variety of options put forth by ministers. The press overviews compiled under Valuev's Ministry of Interior presented additional options for monarchic decision-making. See: Mikhail Dolbilov, "Rozhdenie imperatorskikh reshenii: monarkh, sovetniki i 'Vysochaishaia volia' v Rossii XIX v.," *Istorichaskie Zapiski* 9, no. 127 (2006): 5–48.

Valuev engaged for the first time a non-state actor in political decision-making.

Despite the transfer of press censorship under the purview of the Ministry of the Interior, the selection of articles for press overviews continued to be governed largely by the discretion of the head of the Chief Administration for Press Affair and of the official compiling overviews. Shchebalskii's successors in compiling press overviews – albeit at the Chief Administration for Press Affairs – were for the most part career bureaucrats and military veterans. M.P. Shcherbinin (1865-1866) was a homeschooled veteran of the Caucasus with no literary experience, something that – according to A.V. Nikitenko – earned him no respect among government censors.[184] His successor, M.N. Pokhvisnev (1866-1870), appointed by Valuev in December 1866, had previously served as the director of the Police Department [*Departament Ispolnitelnoi Politsii*] before his appointment to the Chief Administration for Press Affairs. Despite his policing background, M.N. Pokhvisnev turned out more amenable than his predecessor. F.I. Tiutchev confessed in a private letter to Pokhvisnev that "the oppression of the press [which] thanks to you, has been less felt lately."[185] Much to Tiutchev's disappointment, in September 1870, Pokhvisnev was "demoted for liberalism" as Alexander II's ordered to "tighten up the press [*podtianut pechat*]."[186]

Pokhvisnev's successor at the Main Administration for Press Affairs was General M.R. Shidlovskii (1870-1871), had served as governor of Tula region before his appointment as head censor. Shidlovskii allegedly insistently refused this appointment, arguing that he was "entirely unacquainted with the administration of literature and print. With this, he added that he is hotheaded and used to act "energetically," as is appropriate in a police sphere, but may not be appropriate in the sphere of science and thought. He was rebuked [for his refusal], since this exact

[184] Nikitenko, Entry from 15 January 1867, *Dnevnik*, vol. 3, 68.
[185] F.I. Tiutchev, Letter from F.I. Tiutchev to M.N. Pokhvisnev, [St. Petersburg, 25 December 1869], *Literaturnoe nasledstvo* (Moscow: Nauka, 1988), vol. 97, part 1, 536.
[186] Nikitenko, Entry for 18 September 1870, *Dnevnik*, vol. 3, 181.

[approach] is needed because [the press] is to be 'tightened.'"[187] A.V. Nikitenko recalled not without amusement Shidlovskii's military habits in the censorship office,[188] and M.E. Saltykov-Shchedrin used Shidlovskii as a prototype for his pamphlet "The Governor with a Stuffed Head" [*Gubernator s farshirovannoi golovoi*]. As the decade of the 1860s proceeded under the negotiation of press freedoms, the choice of head censors from among military men, bureaucrats, and policemen signals a cautious if somewhat blunt approach, nuanced by the personal arbitration of P.A. Valuev. It was not until later in the 1870s that successive chiefs of the Main Administration for Press Affairs came from a literary background, often from the same circles as the editors and publishers they were meant to censor. Examples of academic and literary figures at the helm of Russia's censorship organ were Orel governor M.N. Longinov (1871-1875), Oriental studies scholar V.V. Grigoriev (1875-1880), medical doctor and career serviceman N.S. Abaza (1880-1881), historian P.P. Viazemskii (1881-1883), aspiring literary figure E.M. Feoktistov (1883-1896).

This discretion of frequently changing heads of the Main Administration for Press Affairs was often guided by their personal opinion on what should the Emperor read, which newspapers and political opinions were considered acceptable for his overview. E.M. Feoktistov, a longstanding official at the Chief Administration for Press Affairs, instructed his compiling official V.V. Nazarevskii "not to tire the Emperor [Alexander III] with articles about issues or anything written in a caustic [tone] [*rezko napisano*], […] only articles written in a moderate [tone] can be

[187] Ibid., 182.
[188] A.V. Nikitenko's diary entry from Tuesday, 29 September 1870, recalls Shidlovskii's first day in office from the account of another censor Nagel [no full name]. Allegedly, Shidlovskii arrived for the first day as head of the Main Administration for Press Affairs dressed in his military uniform, at the time Shidlovskii achieved the rank of a general. Having briefly interviewed every member of the Administration, inquiring as to their duties, Shidlovskii proceeded to reprimand censors for attending in the less formal civil servants' uniform (*vitsmundir*) rather than in the formal uniform (*mundir*) – "which is against the laws of service." Shidlovskii also expressed displeasure that "some have beards," declaring that there is "no need for beards" as well as mustaches and sideburns - much to censors' surprise. See: Nikitenko, Entry from 29 September 1870, vol. 3, 182–83.

included."[189] Feoktistov admonished Nazarevskii's for his selections "because they frequently provoke the rebuke of the Tsar," aiming instead for a selection of articles the monarch would find palatable and agreeable.[190] Working under Valuev's instructions, Feoktistov faced the task of delimiting the political range of "feedback and opinions" to be presented to the Emperor in press overviews.

Aiming to avoid the Emperor's rebuke, Feoktistov's press overviews occasionally muffled controversy where it truly existed. On April 29, 1881, Emperor Alexander III issued the "Manifesto of Unshakeable Autocracy" meant to set the tone of Alexander's rule. The Manifesto stunned Western-minded society as a consolidation of autocratic power, while being greeted by Russia's Slavophiles as a turn to Russia's more viable homegrown solutions. On April 30, the Russian press expressed deep divisions over the Manifesto with influential Western-minded newspapers like *Vestnik Evropy (The Herrald of Europe)* cautiously expressing confusion and suggesting the "need for an official commentary."[191] However, Feoktistov's press overview resolved that "The Manifesto of April 29 has elicited in our press a full and profound accord."[192] Feoktistov selected three agreeable editorials expressing support for the manifesto. The editorial from A.S. Suvorin's major conservative newspaper *Novoe Vremia (The New Time)* was highlighted for celebrating the Manifesto as "an independent path of development for Russian life." The other two editorials offering reception to the Manifesto were from minor newspapers: L.A. Polonskii's thrice-weekly newspaper *Strana (Country)* and I.A. Batalin's daily *Minuta (Minute)* – both short-lived newspapers founded only a year earlier.[193] In providing the Emperor

[189] A.V. Bogdanovich, Entry from 13 March 1891, *Tri poslednikh samoderzhtsa: dnevnik A.V. Bogdanovich*. (Moscow: L.D. Frenkel', 1977), 135.
[190] Ibid.
[191] "Khronika – Vnutrennee Obozrenie," *Vestnik Evropy* 5/6, vol. 3 (1 June 1881): 801-802.
[192] "Doklad po periodicheskoi pechati," 30 April 1881, St. Petersburg, Rossiiskii Gosudarstvennyii Istoricheskii Arkhiv [RGIA] f. 1470, op. 1, d. 117, l. 115.
[193] Ibid., 115-169.

with feedback from press overviews, Feoktistov went to some lengths to please the monarch with positive reviews.

Statesmen in the high ranks of bureaucracy were aware of the role compilers' discretion in selecting press readings for the Tsar. State Secretary A.A. Polovtsev confided in his diary his disappointment that Emperor Alexander III "is currently sufficing himself with reading Feoktistov's doctored excerpts [*podtasovannye vypiski*]," wishing the Empress would read newspapers "which she could share with her husband."[194] Polovtsev's discontent was somewhat exaggerated, as the Emperor received frequent newspaper cutouts from ministers seeking to strengthen their political projects, thus complementing, albeit fragmentarily, the Emperor's newspaper reading habits.

Indeed, newspapers were becoming an important source of news not only for its readers, but also for the government in post-Reform Russia. Powerful newspapers such as *Golos*, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, and *Novoe Vremya*, and *Rus* were published daily and provided daily wide-ranging reporting, featuring telegraph reports and correspondence from European capitals and from around the Russian Empire. Private newspapers increasingly came to complement official sources. Government officials read daily newspaper less with the intent of censorship and more as a source of speedily delivered news. Censor P.I. Kapnist pointed to the important informational role of the press for the state, particularly "as a vehicle for communication needs and for the resolution of various issues of public life." Kapnist argued that

> This role is especially important in such a vast fatherland such as ours[…] because a full understanding of laws has not taken hold everywhere, even among official guardians and executors [of the law], and the government – due to tremendous

[194] A.A. Polovtsov, *Dnevnik gosudarstvennogo sekretaria A.A. Polovtsova* 2 vols. (Moscow: Nauka, 1966), vol. 2, 46.

> distances – cannot follow everything, and many local issues are known as they often do not have an opportunity to be known through official channels.[195]

Even a critic such as A.A. Berte came to recognize the benefit of "news received by means independent of official sources" as they may give the government "an opportunity to verify the information of official information and undertake needed measures."[196]

Newspapers complemented official sources not only in the breadth of their newsgathering, but also in their speed. For example, on 9 March 1877, ahead of Russia's declaration of war with the Ottoman Empire, *Golos* printed a report on the Sultan's speech, in which the latter spoke of the possibility of concluding peace with Serbia and thus averting war. Receiving the of the Sultan's speech from its correspondent by telegraph, *Golos* publicized it hours before the speech was reported to Alexander II through official diplomatic channels. Dismayed at the slow pace of official dispatches and at the speed of newspaper reporting, Alexander II ordered that a copy of *Golos* be delivered to him by eight o'clock every morning.[197] Leading dailies were required by their leasing contracts, overseen by the Ministry of the Interior, to supply free copies to ministries and their chancelleries, while members of the State Council subscribed to them individually. *Moskovskie Vedomosti* were obligated by their leasing contract to provide 100 free copies to various ministries.

Newspapers were also sources of opinion, policy interpretation, and for investigative journalism. Newspaper editorials offered interpretations, suggestions, and policy ideas on issues of the day. Enjoying greater autonomy in content creation, newspapers were able to draw public

[195] Kapnist, *Sochinenia grafa P.I. Kapnista*, 434.
[196] A.A.Berte, "Kopia tsyrkuliarnogo predlozhenia po tsenzurnomu vedomostvy, 3 Aprelia 1859 goda, po Vysochaishemu poveleniu, o glasnosti v pechatnykh sochineniakh i zhurnalov," *Zapiska predsedatelia*, 13.
[197] A.V. Lunochkin, "Russkii Times," in *Peterburg Gazetnyi: 1711-1917*, ed. E. Sonina (Tiumen: Mandri Ko, 2009), 68-69.

attention to issues it chose to cover and promote specific solutions. Newspaper articles and particularly editorials were frequently discussed in ministerial meetings, mentioned in ministerial reports to the Tsar, and cited or shared in correspondence. Sharing cutouts of newspaper articles was a common feature of correspondence among statesmen and with the Tsar. E.M. Feoktistov, on the eve of his appointment to head of the Censorship Department, wrote that *Golos* had particular popularity in the State Council that abounded with the men of the Great Reforms,[198] while *Moskovskie Vedomosti* and *Novoe Vremya* – with Alexander III.[199] Feoktistov wrote to Katkov in private: "His [the Emperor's] attention is constantly drawn to *Moskovskie Vedomosti* by others regarding various notable articles [*raznyh zamechatel'nyh statei*]."[200]

For government officials as well as subscribers, newspapers formulated discursive options and provided ready evidence on issues of the day. A member of the State Council wondered at Alexander III's close reading of newspapers: "the Sovereign has a remarkable memory. Likely, he only once read the article on the concentration of power in *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, but when we spoke about it [in the State Council] he repeated the article almost word for word."[201] Censor E.M. Feoktistov credited Katkov with "creating a sensible public opinion [*sozdal zdravoe obshchestvennoe mnenie*]."[202] Former Minister of the Interior P.A. Valuev noted during ministerial meetings on press censorship that Minister of Finance A.A. Abaza "spoke in the language of *Golos* and *Novoe Vremya*," suggesting that newspaper editorials had a formative effect

[198] E.M. Feoktistov, Letter from E.M. Feoktistov to M.N. Katkov, 16 Oct 1882, Otdel Rukopisei Rossiiskoi Gosudarstvennoi Biblioteki [OR RGB] f. 120, k. 12, ed. 25, ll. 6-8ob.
[199] E.M. Feoktistov, Letter Letter from E.M. Feoktistov to M.N. Katkov, 1886 [n.d.], OR RGB f. 120, k. 12, ed. 28, ll. 1-2ob.
[200] E.M. Feoktistov, Letter Letter from E.M. Feoktistov to M.N. Katkov, 29 December [1883], OR RGB f. 120, k. 12, ed. 26, l. 11.
[201] E.M. Feoktistov, Letter from E.M. Feoktistov to M.N. Katkov, 14th [no month or year], Thursday, Gosudarstvennyii Arkhiv Rossiiskoi Federatsii [GARF] f. 1718, op. 1, d. 8, l. 68ob.
[202] Feoktistov, *Za kulisami politiki i literatury*, 143–44.

on discourse among statesmen.[203] In October of 1880, P.A. Valuev observed in his diary that "the voice of the Armenian hawk [M.T. Loris Melikov] is not natural, but is the voice of the fox Abaza, and the voice of Abaza is nothing but the voice of Kraevskii, Bilbasov, Suvorin, and tutti quanti!"[204] The editorials formulated discursive options and evidence M.N. Katkov's informant in the Ministry of Finance, D.I. Voeikov, wrote that "Count Tolstoy spoke first [on the sugar export], [spoke] very well, with your arguments, with riposte [*kolkimi vykhodkami*] against Ostrovsky and Bunge."[205]

M.N. Katkov went further than other editors in promoting his political vision, presenting his projects directly to the Emperor – in personal audience and through his letters and projects sent directly or through powerful intermediaries to Alexander III. Katkov's personal archive holds 22 such reports to Alexander III, written between 1881 and Katkov's death in 1887. In his memoirs, E.M. Feoktistov, head of the Main Administration for Press Affairs [*Glavnoe upravlenie po delam pechati*], commented on Katkov's success in fostering such a relationship:

> It must be said that Alexander Alexandrovich [Alexander III] was much more partial to Katkov than his father [Alexander II] was; this was evident also from his notes on the so-called "*tsarskie obozrenia*" [press overviews], which the Main Administration for Press Affairs sent to him [the Tsar] daily; articles from *Moskovskie Vedomosti* on various issues received constant approval of the Tsar, but in addition to that, Katkov often sent the Emperor detailed letters [*zapiski*] on the issues of the day, and all of them were received with utmost good will.[206]

In sum, in the course of the late nineteenth century, private political newspapers were

[203] P. A Valuev, Entry for 2 March 1881, *Dnevnik, 1877-1884* (Petrograd: Izd-vo "Byloe," 1919), 147.
[204] Valuev, Entry for 3 October 1880, *Dnevnik, 1877-1884*, 118.
[205] D.I. Voeikov, Letter from D.I. Voeikov to M.N. Katkov, 29 October 1886, OR RGB, f. 120, ed. 23, book 5, l. 35.
[206] E.M. Feoktistov, *Za kulisami politiki i literatury*, 243–44.

becoming not only an important source of news for the state and the public, but also a vibrant sphere of debate. Editorials were increasingly formulating political opinion and discourse not only for the public sphere, but also for state officials at the highest levels as well as the Tsar. This new role of the press altered its relationship with the government. The statesmen, who aimed to shape and influence the press landscape throughout the eighteenth and early nineteenth century – were by the last few decades of the nineteenth century increasingly influenced by the press, dependent on the very news and discourse it was attempting to control. As statesman and seasoned Nicholaevan-era censorship official, M.A. Korf, best put it, "when there appears in a society a true necessity to speak freely, the government finds it impossible to counteract it, this necessity becomes an unbridled force, from which even the official entourage is not saved because it breathes the same air as everyone else."[207]

Bureaucratic Instrumentalization of the Press

Even as Alexander II and his entourage closely followed and were increasingly drawn into press discourses, they maintained the idea that newspapers' growing public influence made them effective instruments for shaping public opinion. The notion of cultivating a government-friendly press was not altogether original. Already in the last years of Nicholas I's rule, D.N. Bludov, the head of the Emperor's Personal Chancellery, privately entertained the idea of the government's "own organ" to polemicize with opposition press such as A.I. Herzen's *Kolokol*.[208] However, it was only with the accession of Alexander II that concrete proposals were set forth.[209]

[207] M.K. Lemke, *Epokha tsenzurnykh reform 1859-1865 godov* (St. Petersburg: Tipo-litografiia "Gerol'd," 1904), 11.
[208] Chernukha, *Pravitelstvennaia Politika,* 100.
[209] Patrusheva, "Teoria 'nravstvennogo vliania,'' 113.

The importance of "preparing" the public for Alexander II's forthcoming Great Reforms became clear within government ranks in the early on. Already in 1858, the future head of the Committee for Press Affairs, A.V. Nikitenko noted the urgency of the issue: "The government wants improvements and believes that it can attain them without public opinion, by means of bureaucracy, which is [already] so deep in corruption. Meanwhile, the government [will find] more useful an alliance with the press rather than a war with it."[210] Less than a year later, the Committee was founded, under his leadership, as "an instrument of the state for preparing the public for the upcoming reforms by means of the press."[211]

In October 1861, the first concrete plan to harness the press were set in motion. The newly-appointed Minister of the Interior Valuev presented Alexander II with a report on the state of the press. Valuev argued that "coercion, commands, etc. do not make a good press and cannot stop the bad one."[212] "The printed word," he concluded, "had to be countered with a printed word." Alexander II left a resolution on the report read "this thought completely agrees with what I have wished for some time now."[213]

Valuev's initiative reflected what sociologist Erving Goffman later called "impression management," defined in the realm of interpersonal relations as the actions of an individual who "presents himself and his activity to others, the ways in which he guides and controls the impression they form of him, and the kinds of things he may and may not do while sustaining his performance before them."[214] Valuev's plan, broadly speaking, envisioned the government collaborating with the press to guide and control the public impression of governmental activities

[210] Nikitenko, Entry from 10 April 1858, *Dnevnik*, vol. 2, 17.
[211] S.M. Seredonin, *Komitet Ministrov v tsarstvovanie imperatora Aleksandra Vtorogo* (St. Petersburg: Kantseliaria Kommiteta ministrov, 1902), vol. 3, part 2, 197-198.
[212] As cited in Chernukha, *Pravitelstvennaia Politika*, 42.
[213] N.G. Patrusheva, "Teoria 'nravstvennogo vliania,'' 113.
[214] Erving Goffman, *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (Edinburgh: University of Edinburgh, 1956), 7.

and of the complex and divisive Great Reforms. By the same token, "impression management" advanced government narratives to counteract alternative narratives, speculations, and critique. Finally, the instrumentalization of the press offered a "corrective practice" employed, Goffman suggested, "to compensate for discrediting occurrences that have not been successfully avoided."[215]

Valuev's first experiment with a government-friendly press came in 1861 with the launch of the Ministry of the Interior's first daily newspaper *Severnaia Pochta*, "to garner the support of the public and influence it."[216] However, as an official government newspaper, *Severnaia Pochta* ultimately failed to gain readership despite its large starting capital of 40,000 rubles. Having learned the importance of a newspaper's autonomy from the government as a condition of its credibility, Valuev sought out the collaboration of private newspapers that could be employed more discreetly – and thus more successfully – promote state agenda. Editors in some financial straits and eager to grow their readership, could be more willing collaborators. Valuev's choice fell on N.F. Pavlov's struggling newspaper *Nashe Vremia*, but he soon learned that even generous subsidies did little to grow the readership of a little-read newspaper, whose editor wielded little influence in society. Ultimately, the wide circulation of rumors about government subsidies to *Nashe Vremia* led to its demise two years later.

By late 1862, Valuev, together with minister of Education Golovnin, embarked on a discreet campaign to court an emerging group of young but experienced editors – such as Katkov, Kraevskii, and others - , whose newspapers already had independently secured or were expected to secure a substantial readership. Their autonomy from the state lent them much-needed credibility and their editorial talent attracted subscribers. The considerable competition and

[215] Ibid.
[216] Nikitenko, Entry for 25 January 1863, *Dnevnik*, vol. 2, 312.

financial pressures faced by these editors, particularly in the early days, made government subsidies – direct and indirect – an effective instrument for enticing editors to collaborate.

As N.G. Patrusheva suggests, during the early 1860s Golovnin and Valuev co-opted through subsidies a host of newspapers, diverse in their political outlooks. Golovnin secured the collaboration of Kraevskii *Golos* for 12,000 rubles per year for publishing articles related to the Ministries of Education and Finance, suggesting Finance Minister M.Kh. Reutern may have been involved as well.[217] *Severnaia Pchela* received censorship privileges in exchange for the publication of a few articles "in the spirit of the government."[218] *Syn Otechestva* received discounts on its delivery for its favorable articles. *Birzhevye Vedomosti* received 5,000 rubles for publishing official reports on alcohol excise and over 28,000 rubles for publishing articles that came from within the Ministry of Finance. Valuev even co-opted V.D. Skariatin's the reactionary *Vesti*, the organ of noble landowners, with whom Valuev collaborated on writing and editing particular articles.

However, not every newspaper agreed to subsidies; notable was the case of Katkov's *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, who, in the course of 1862, repeatedly refused Golovnin's subsidy offers. Unlike Golovnin, Valuev began to court Katkov in spring of 1863 in a far more careful manner. Their extensive surviving correspondence opens a unique perspective on such collaborations: how they are forged, how they coordinate political activities, and how they cultivate an ambiguous power dynamic.[219]

---

[217] Some sources indicate that Kraevskii, like other editors, was himself willing to accept such a subsidy, setting it at 6,000 rubles per year. N.G. Patrusheva, "Teoria 'nravstvennogo vliania,' 117-118. For more on M.Kh. Reutern's co-optation of the press, see: Alfred J. Rieber, "Chapter 8: The Reutern System in Operation," *The Imperial Russian Project: Autocratic Politics, Economic Development, and Social Fragmentation* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2017), 199–234. See also: Chernukha, *Pravitelstvennaia politika v otnoshenii pechati 60-70-e gody XIX veka*, 106–7.

[218] N.G. Patrusheva, "Teoria 'nravstvennogo vliania,' 117-19.

[219] Letters from P.A. Valuev to M.N. Katkov, OR RGB f.120, box 19. Letters from M.N. Katkov to P.A. Valuev OR RGB, f. 120, Boxes 45 and 49. The correspondence between Katkov and Valuev has been published. See: V.

In March 1863, two months after the January outbreak of the Polish Uprising, Valuev made Katkov a far more modest proposition. He offered an informal agreement, a "pactum" as he put it, "about the future exchange of thoughts and opinions."[220] Valuev continued:

> I am ready, within the realm of the possible, to give you *confidential* [original cursive] answers to every question you would like to ask me, and I would like, in turn, to have the possibility to turn to you, *confidentially* as well [original cursive], to learn your views on certain questions, on which I would like to learn your opinion.

Such a collaboration, Valuev opined, would be "beneficial for both sides."[221] Cultivating a friendly relationship with Katkov's *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, Valuev intended to employ this leading Moscow newspaper to promote the government agenda in the Kingdom of Poland. For Katkov, such a partnership promised exclusive information from the powerful Minister of the Interior himself, as well as the minister's patronage in matters of censorship.

The only condition, Valuev insisted, was that "this correspondence remain between us. Cela vous va-t-il? Yes or no?" By July 1863, Katkov accepted the collaboration and what followed was a period of productive collaboration. Their correspondence quickly turned to frank conversations on a wide range of subjects that went far beyond the usual conversations between editors and ministers: Russia's ongoing actions in the Kingdom of Poland, growing tensions in the Grand Duchy of Finland, and the zemstvo reform among others. Valuev's letters offered Katkov exclusive information as they discussed the goings on behind closed ministerial doors, revealed

---

Mustafin, "Mikhail Nikiforovich Katkov i graf Petr Alexandrovich Valuev v ikh perepiske (1863-1879)," *Russkaia Starina* 163, no. 8-12 (August-December 1915).

[220] P.A. Valuev, Letter to M.N. Katkov, 29 March 1863, *Russkaia Starina* 163, no. 8 (August 1915): 294-95.

[221] P.A. Valuev, Letter from P.A. Valuev to M.N. Katkov, 29 July 1863, *Russkaia Starina* 163, no. 9 (September 1915): 406.

political intentions, and even sought advice.[222] The tone of their correspondence, as historian E.V. Perevalova also remarks, was so casual that it resembled a conversation between equals.[223] Katkov, on the contrary, never shying from open disagreement in his letters, insisted on greater police and military control in the Kingdom as well as its greater Russification.

In a confidential letter to Katkov, Valuev asked Katkov to "draft the plan of a new edifice" of Russian policy in the Kingdom of Poland.[224] Valuev sought to employ Katkov's political and editorial acumen to formulate and promote the policy of greater autonomy for the Kingdom of Poland in the Russian empire. In exchange, Valuev made special censorship provisions for Katkov, instructing the chairman of the Moscow Censorship Committee, M.P. Shcherbinin, to take all matters related to *Moskovskie Vedomosti* under his personal care and to "ease the censorship formalities" on them.[225]

Valuev partnered with Katkov to advance shared projects and influence high-ranking statesmen. In September 1863, Valuev invited Katkov to St. Petersburg to discuss the idea of instituting a representative institution in the Kingdom of Poland, on which both were in agreement. The visit, Valuev suggested, "will help you understand matters more clearly." Indeed, their nightly conversations during the visit "encompassed almost all out internal issues."[226] Ultimately, however, Katkov's presence in St. Petersburg would also help gain the support of the hitherto reluctant Minister of Foreign Affairs A.M. Gorchakov, whom Valuev struggled to convince. Valuev made the introductions: Katkov spent a morning with the British ambassador in Russia,

[222] P.A. Valuev, Letter from P.A. Valuev to M.N. Katkov, 3 April 1864, *Russkaia Starina* 166, no. 6 (June 1916): 351.
[223] E.V. Perevalova, "'Moskovskie Vedomosti' M.N. Katkova v 1863-1864gg. – politicheskii ofitsiozili organ nezavisimogo obshchestvennogo mnenia?" *Vestnik Tomskogo gosudarstvennogo universiteta. Filologia* 36, no. 4 (2015): 163-179.
[224] P.A. Valuev, Letter from P.A. Valuev to M.N. Katkov, 19 August 1863, OR RGB, f. 120, 19, book. 1.
[225] P.A. Valuev, Letter to M.P. Shcherbinin, 31 December 1863, *Russkaia Starina* 166, no. 6 (June 1916): 346.
[226] Valuev, *Dnevnik*, vol. 1, 251.

Francis Napier, examining confidential British dispatches from Warsaw, and two afternoons dining with Gorchakov, whom Katkov ultimately convinced of the necessity of representative institutions in the Kingdom.

Days after Katkov returned from St. Petersburg to Moscow, another crisis struck: on 1 November 1863, the Russian ruble fell nearly 8% in a single hour on the Russian stock exchange, prompting widespread bank runs in the days that followed. The crisis had its origins in M.Kh. Reutern's effort during 1862 and 1863 to set Russia on the gold standard, but the exhaustion of the gold exchange fund during autumn of 1863 caused the State Bank to cease the exchange of paper notes and coin. Katkov took to his pen in efforts calm public concerns, allay fears, and defend Reutern's policy.[227] On 11 November, Valuev passed on to Katkov the "special thanks that the Minister of Finance" for articles which he "greatly appreciated."[228] Valuev added his own "special delight on the first time the press was able to foresee and foretell the government's emergency measures."

The following year, in 1864, Valuev and Reutern employed the assistance of newspapers in a planned financial operation. To relieve the pressure on Russia's finances by the military actions in the Caucasus and in the Kingdom of Poland, Reutern proposed Russia's first ever domestic bond issue (*vnutrennii zaim)* of a colossal sum of 100 million rubles, fixed at 5% interest.[229] The success of the operation issue rested on public trust and enthusiasm in purchasing bonds. Reutern and Valuev approached a number of newspapers, including *Moskovskie Vedomosti* and *Golos,* to promote the sale of bonds. Valuev's letter to Katkov requested that the Moscow

[227] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 5 November 1863, No. 240.
[228] P.A. Valuev, Letter from P.A. Valuev to M.N. Katkov, 11 November 1863, *Russkaia Starina* 164, no. 11 (November 1915): 251. For a more in-depth study of M.Kh. Reutern's co-optation of the press, see: Alfred J. Rieber, "Chapter 8: The Reutern System in Operation," in *The Imperial Russian Project: Autocratic Politics, Economic Development, and Social Fragmentation* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2017), 199-234.
[229] P.V. Lizunov, "Vnutrennie piatiprotsentnye zaimy: liubimye bumagi russkoi publiki," *Trudy istoricheskogo fakulteta Sankt-peterburgskogo Universiteta* (2014): 19.

editor to "as much as possible to prepare your readers for a positive view on this issue," sending him a draft of the official announcement ahead of its release.[230] A lengthy and positive editorial in *Moskovskie Vedomosti* followed without delay, addressing readers' potential reservations and urging the purchase of the bonds about to be issued.[231] The sale of the bond issue turned out a success, their sale exceeding 115 million rubles, prompting a second bond issue in 1866.

During the 1860s and 1870s, the practice of co-opting friendly editors for the promotion of political projects became widely practiced within government ranks. Louise McReynolds identified the mutual connections between press lords and statesmen, such as those between the Ober-Procurator of the Holy Synod and close advisor to Alexander III, K.P. Pobedonostsev, and editor of *Moskovskie Vedomosti* M.N. Katkov, Minister of Education A.V. Golovnin (1862-1866) and editor of *Golos* A.A. Kraevskii, Minister of Finance S. Ju. Witte (1892-1903) and editor of *Birzhevye Vedomosti* S.M. Propper, Minister of the Interior Goremykin (1895-1899) and editor of *Novoe Vremya* A.S. Suvorin.[232] A looser connection could be made between Minister of the Interior N.P. Ignatiev (1881-1882) and editors of *Rus* and *Novoe Vremya,* I.S. Aksakov and A.S. Suvorin respectively.[233]

However, while high-raking government officials initially sought to co-opt the press to promote 'the government position,' these efforts also sought to promote the officials' own the interests, agendas, and projects. Ministerial officials employed the resources entailed by their

[230] P.A. Valuev, Letter from P.A. Valuev to M.N. Katkov, 21 November 1864, *Russkaia Starina* 163, no. 9 (1915): 412.
[231] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 25 November 1864, No. 259.
[232] McReynolds, *The News under Russia's Old Regime*, 128–30.
[233] The connection between N.P. Ignatiev and A.S. Suvorin has suggested in the diary State Secretary of E.A. Petetts. In 1882, Peretts related ongoing rumors of Katkov's, Turgenev's, and Ostrovsky's appointment to the State Council. These rumors were initiated and circulated particularly in Suvorin's *Novoe Vremya*. Peretts attributed the initiative to N.P. Ignatiev, who sought to either flatter Katkov with the proposition or discredit him with formalized ties to the government. E.A. Peretts, Entry for 18 January 1882, *Dnevnik E.A. Perettsa (1880-1883)* (Moscow: Gosud. izd-vo, 1927), 117.

position – privileged information and subsidy budgets - to secure a personally favorable press. Censor E.M. Feoktistov recalled in his memoirs a first-hand account from A.A. Kraevskii, editor of the Western-oriented *Golos* newspaper. According to Kraevskii:

> [Minister of Education A.V.] Golovnin, on the evening of his appointment [to the ministerial post], sent for him [Kraevskii] and offered him his complete support in obtaining the right to publish a newspaper (this is how "Golos" came to be). […] Above all, Alexandr Vasilievich [Golovnin] took care to acquire his own press organ.[234]

Katkov did not shy from discussing such practices in his editorials, particularly as they were aimed against *Golos*, his principal rival:

> The public sees that within the governing spheres there are officials, who managed to create by means of state subsidies a [press] organ, which serves not the interests of the government, […] but as a broadcaster of doctrines that have nothing in common with the purpose of the Russian state.[235]

Indeed, a closer look at the practice of collaboration between bureaucratic officials and the press dispels the assumptions behind a monolith semi-official press (*ofitsioznaia pechat*) as a private organ serving the government. In fact, ties between editors and statesmen often served not the government as a whole, but a particular statesman or interest group aligned with the beliefs of the publishing editor himself.

Indeed, the instrumentalization of the press by government officials occasionally aimed to thwart official orders and promote alternatives. On 13 October 1865, poet and censor F.I. Tiutchev – member of the Main Administration for Press Affairs - wrote a letter to Katkov, confiding his

[234] Feoktistov, *Za Kulisami Politiki i Literatury*, 139.
[235] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 25 September 1865, No. 210.

distress over the recently adopted 1865 Censorship Statute, which introduced in Russia the French system of censorship warnings. The reform, Tiutchev explained, has sown confusion among censors, who lacked the government's guidance on whether the warnings were to be implemented in the "French practice – [as] policing and punitive" or as "something transitional" from strict censorship to open discourse as most censors presupposed.[236]

The inconsistent application of censorship warnings has earned the Main Administration for Press Affairs a strong and public critique from *Golos* – "terrible abuse," wrote Tiutchev. All the while, the Main Administration for Press Affairs sought to propose its own interpretation of the censorship reform, one which would entail "as little legal intervention in press affairs as possible […] and instead of formal warnings – early on – friendly advice would suffice […]."[237] Tiutchev's letter to Katkov came to a bold conclusion: "help us – by us I mean the Council of the Main Administration for Press Affairs."[238] Aiming to co-opt an ally in the press to take on *Golos*, Tiutchev asked Katkov "support us in this – affirm and edify us in this well-meaning direction with your participation and assistance. Only you can do it. […] you will really *oblige* us in all possible ways."[239]

The practice of co-opting editorial allies eventually exposed the growing dependency among bureaucratic officials and interest groups on friendly press. Minister of the Interior N.P. Ignatiev relied on *Rus* and *Novoe Vremya* to promote his foreign policy visions and his project of *Zemskii Sobor*.[240] Minister of Finance, I.A. Vyshnegradskii – according to one of Katkov's

[236] F.I. Tiutchev, Letter from F.I. Tiutchev to M.N. Katkov, St. Petersburg, 13 October 1865, *Literaturnoe nasledstvo* (Moscow: Izd-vo Nauka, 1988), vol. 97, part 1, 418.
[237] F.I. Tiutchev, Letter from F.I. Tiutchev to A.I. Georgievskii, St. Petersburg, 25 October 1865, Ibid, vol. 97, part 1, 394-395.
[238] F.I. Tiutchev, Letter from F.I. Tiutchev to M.N. Katkov, St. Petersburg, 13 October 1865, Ibid, vol. 97, part 1, 418-419.
[239] Ibid. It does not appear that Katkov ever fulfilled Tiutchev's request in an editorial.
[240] In November of 1881, Valuev remarked in his diary: "In *Rus* and *Novoe Vremya* – impossible articles about the past [Russo-Turkish War] and the Berlin peace treaty. Apparently "the russian narod" threw itself into nihilism from

informants – "counted on a favorable outcome" for his project to institute technical secondary education [*real'nye uchilishcha*] "only if this issue will be actively [*energichno*] supported in Moskovskie Vedomosti"[241] Valuev noted in his diary, not without amusement, that even ministers like A.A. Abaza, who criticized their colleagues for their use of the press, themselves depended on such ties. Abaza once expressed to Valuev his frustration with K.P. Pobedonostsev's use of the press: "[it should be] impossible for ministers to write or contact any press behind the backs of their colleagues – a direct indication toward Pobedonostsev and *Moskovskie Vedomosti*."[242] Valuev later noted not without irony that A.A. Abaza, in fact, "tried to make un *discourse-ministre de par* Katkoff [a discourse minister of Katkov]" when both agreed on the Caucasus transit issue in 1883.[243]

While such discreet collaborations between ministers and press lords had their successes, they were also fraught with potential conflicts, misunderstandings, and unmet expectations. Perhaps naively, Katkov expected that his "pactum" with Valuev will translate into a greater freedom to express his own views, only to find himself facing "the pestering of censorship, which not only troubles and constrains me, but robs me of the ability to fulfill my obligations to the public."[244] On the other hand, Valuev expected greater deference and compliance with his requests, only to become frustrated with Katkov's defiance.[245] At the crux of his growing conflict with Katkov was the challenge of separating a government agenda and Valuev's personal ambitions. Although Katkov's *Moskovskie Vedomosti* have long been labeled as "semi-official press," loyal

---

sorrow that it did not win Constantinople. Ignatiev's hand is seen here [in these articles]." Valuev, Entry for 18 November 1881, *Dnevnik, 1877-1884*, 177.

[241] D.I. Voeikov, Letter from D.I. Voeikov to M.N. Katkov, 15 February 1886, OR RGB f. 120, ed. 23, book 5, l. 41.

[242] Valuev, Entry for 24 April 1881, *Dnevnik, 1877-1884*, 162.

[243] Ibid., Entry for 29 April 1883, 225.

[244] M.N. Katkov, Letter from M.N. Katkov to P.A. Valuev, 21 December 1863, *Russkaia Starina* 166, no. 6 (June 1916): 349-50.

[245] In a letter, Valuev reproached Katkov for "giving too little importance to my opinions." P.A. Valuev, Letter from P.A. Valuev to M.N. Katkov, 11 June 1864, *Russkaia Starina* 166, no. 6 (June 1916): 355.

to government patrons, Valuev was disappointed to discover that his collaboration with Katkov was only possible when their views converged.

By late 1864, Katkov's open defiance of censorship and Valuev's effort to enforce control let to the breakdown of their relationship. Although Valuev initially downplayed their differences ("our opinions, as in artillery, fire slightly to the left of the right, [but] they are directed to the same target"), their disagreements eventually posed significant challenges.[246] The minister's requests to publish a few articles on the dangers of police violence in the Kingdom went for the most part unheeded, as did other recommendations to soften the tone. In his final letter to Katkov, Valuev concluded that "there is no agreement, and no alliance. There can only be subordination; but neither you nor I am accustomed to limit our mind with subordination."[247] Disenchanted in his efforts to cultivate a friendly press, Valuev used his position as Minister of the Interior to retaliate, issuing nearly thirty warnings and suspending six periodicals between 1865 and his departure from the ministry in 1868.[248] Censor Nikitenko lamented that Valuev "forgot the very important service that the press rendered to the government on numerous occasions."[249]

Breakdowns in the relations between the press and government officials often made the former vulnerable to retaliation in the form of censorship or suspension, but in some cases the fallout damaged the reputations and career trajectories of the most senior statesmen. In 1861, the newly-appointed minister of Education, A.V. Golovnin – unable to co-opt Katkov as an editorial ally – sought to publicly polemicize with him on his pro-Russification stance in the 'Polish question.' Aiming to fight an unfriendly press by co-opting friendly publicity, Golovnin engaged publicist F.I. Firks who, during 1861-1862, wrote under the pen name of Schedo-Ferroti an essay,

---

P.A. Valuev, Letter to M.N. Katkov, 29 July 1863, *Russkaia Starina* 163, no. 9 (September 1915): 406.
[247] P.A. Valuev, Letter to M.N. Katkov, 21 November 1864, *Russkaia Starina* 166, no. 6 (June 1916): 359.
[248] Ruud, *Fighting Words*, 256, Table 5.
[249] Nikitenko, Entry from 12 November 1872, *Dnevnik*, vol. 3, 260.

titled "Que fera-t-on de la Pologne?," aimed to prove the unpopularity of Katkov's position on russification and to promote a measure of Polish autonomy as the most likely solution to the 'Polish question.'

Golovnin purchased 1,000 copies of the essay, published as a booklet, for educational institutions across the empire, but its effects were not altogether expected.[250] The Moscow University sent back the twenty copies it received, deeming the pamphlet "offensive to the Russian national feeling [*oskorbitelnogo russkomu narodnomu chuvstvu*] and evidently coming from the pen of those hostile to Russia."[251] Soon, the real authorship and, worse, Golovnin's role behind Schedo-Ferroti's pamphlets was discovered, producing what F.I. Tiutchev called "an electrical impact."

Katkov soon erupted with lengthy editorials, rebuking what he perceived to be a personal attack, "aimed to uncover the harm caused by us."[252] Cutting through any pretense, Katkov polemicized on the subject of his most acute disagreement with Golovnin – the status of the Russian language in the Kingdom of Poland. Most of all, it appears, Katkov enjoyed unmasking Golovnin behind Schedo-Ferroti's pamphlet:

> Mr. Schedo-Ferroti has mocked the displays of support [*iz'iavlenia sochivstvia*] we received last year. We do not think these are as contemptuous as he believes them to be… We are particularly pleased to remember now the letter, we received last year from the Minister of Education, who proposed us to collect all our articles on

[250] See also: E.L. Staferova, *A.V. Golovnin i liberal'nye reformy v prosveshchenii, pervaia polovina 1860-kh gg.* (Moscow: Kanon, 2007).
[251] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 28 September 1864, No. 212. See also: F.I. Tiutchev, Letter from F.I. Tiutchev to A.I. Georgievskii, Geneva, 6/18 October 1864, *Literaturnoe nasledstvo* (Moscow: Nauka, 1988), vol. 97, part 1, 381-382. See also: Nikitenko, Entry from 19 September 1864, *Dnevnik*, vol. 2, 463–464.
[252] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 5 September 1864, No. 195. M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 6 September 1864, No. 196.

> the polish question… and volunteered to buy a large number of this book, which would be sent to all educational institutions.[253]

"We have highly appreciated the complete support of our views, suggested by this letter," coyly concluded Katkov. Katkov's editorials not only exposed Golovnin's effort to pay off Katkov with the publication of a book, they also directly pointed to the Ministers of Education as the force behind Schedo-Ferroti's brochure, which was used as a personal retaliatory measure against Katkov. While Katkov turned the pamphlet into an instrument for rousing the Russian sentiment, Golovnin emerged out of the affair as "a patriotic *agent provocateur* of sorts," to use Tiutchev's wording.[254] Golovnin's embarrassment was complete. He faced questioning from the State Council over his role in financing and distributing the pamphlet, while Alexander II, having read the pamphlet, called it "a poor favor [*medvezhaia usluga*]" on Golovnin's part.[255]

Katkov's bold attack on a sitting government minister posed an unprecedented challenge to the government and prompted a months-long debates that illustrated the growing difficulty managing the press in its newfound freedoms. In October 1864, shortly after Katkov's first editorials on the Schedo-Ferroti affair, P.A. Valuev raised in the Council on Press Affairs the question of issuing a warning to *Moskovskie Vedomosti*. The Council, equally reluctant to issue such a warning and to confront the minister with its non-issue, ordered the censor and member of the Council of the Minister of the Interior, O.A. Przhetslavskii (Przeclawski), to draft a report on *Moskovskie Vedomosti*. The report showed best the confounding position of the government:

---

[253] Ibid.

[254] Tiutchev's interesting letter observed that Katkov's articles helped "the French brochure do a huge favor to the Russian sentiment and Russian interest." F.I. Tiutchev, Letter from F.I. Tiutchev to A.I. Georgievskii, Geneva, 6/18 October 1864, *Literaturnoe nasledstvo* (Moscow: Nauka, 1988), vol. 97, part 1, 381-382.

[255] Nikitenko, Entry from 19 September 1864, *Dnevnik*, vol. 2, 463–464.

> The last Polish Uprising has naturally provoked in Russian people the strongest feelings apprehension and fiery patriotism, and these feeling were naturally expressed in all the organs of contemporary press. Soon, however, one of these [press organs], *Moskovskie Vesomosti*, took the first place in this regard, through their particular ability of formulating editorials, which distinguished themselves with their unusual vigorousness, boldness of ideas, the insistence of their demands in the name of Russian and government interests. This brought to the aforementioned newspaper a kind of popularity, which has not hitherto existed in Russian journalism.[256]

Acknowledging Katkov's merits during the Polish Uprising, Przhetslavskii noted the unusual boldness of Katkov's editorials:

> In its political overviews, [*Moskovskie Vedomosti*] freely and even wit an unusual permissiveness [*neobyknovenno razviazno*] interpret the issues of high-level diplomacy, weighs in on and comments the acts o our government, allowing itself to even bestow advice and personal directives. In its internal overviews, [*Moskovskie Vedomosti*] also do not shy away from analyzing the actions of the government, giving it their advice, often in a didactic tone, and occasionally directly condemning the actions of high-ranking officials even as it results in a public scandal.[257]

Pointing to Katkov's "open condemnation of one of the Ministers in connection with the Schedo-Ferroti affair," Przhetslavskii pointed out that

[256] N. A. Liubimov, *Mikhail Nikiforovich Katkov i ego istoricheskaia zasluga*. (St. Petersburg: Tipografia Tovarishestva "Obshchestvennaia Pol'za," 1889), 303.
[257] Ibid., 304.

> Ministers and other high-ranking officials, who are entrusted the administration of a region or an area of governance, are appointed by the Emperor on His personal trust in them.[…] This is why in our and in other monarchic governments, the public condemnation of the actions of government officials always reflects on the Authority by which they are appointed, and thus cannot be allowed in any case.[258]

The members of the Council on Press Affairs agreed that Katkov "overstepped the line," but none supported Przhetslavskii – Valuev's agent - in his proposal to "not allow in newspapers any discussion on legislative initiatives or […] on questions of governance."

Valuev's efforts to reach an agreement with Katkov also fell through and Katkov threatened to cease all publishing activity altogether if he felt further pressure. Sensing a dead end in negotiations, Katkov's close associate, A.I. Georgievskii made a last-ditch effort to seek help. On 30 December 1864, Georgievskii sent a telegram to F.I. Tiutchev, who at the time was in Nice, France, at the very time as Empress Maria Alexandrovna. Georgievskii alerted Tiutchev that Katkov has already prepared a farewell editorial.[259] In two days' time, Tiutchev replied: "Continuez vos travaux"[260] The Moscow University soon stepped in to defend Katkov, addressing a petition to the Committee of Ministers and proposing that the University as the publisher of *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, and not the censorship authorities, conduct the preliminary censorship of the newspaper. Asking for what was certainly impossible, the petition in fact asked for the cessation of the case. Encouraged by this, Katkov followed up with an editorial that turned the case against him on its head, arguing "the violation of censorship rules on the part of an editorial

[258] Ibid., 305.
[259] A.I. Georgievskii, *Vospominania*, ll. 100-102, as cited in F.I. Tiutchev, Letter from F.I. Tiutchev to A.I. Georgievskii, Nice, 2/14 January 1865, *Literaturnoe nasledstvo* (Moscow: Nauka, 1988), vol. 97, part 1, 387-389, n. 1.
[260] F.I. Tiutchev, Letter from F.I. Tiutchev to A.I. Georgievskii, Nice, 13/1 January 1865, *Literaturnoe nasledstvo* (Moscow: Izd-vo Nauka, 1988), vol. 97, part 1, 386.

office is far more evident and easier to prosecute that the violation of censorship rules on the part of a censorship institution."[261]

The Committee of Ministers resolved to "allow the Minister of the Interior to grant the editorial office all possible relief in the application of censorship rules to them [*Moskovskie Vedomosti*]."[262] The Main Administration on Press Affairs pursued no further the case against Katkov's *Moskovskie Vedomosti* in connection with the Schedo-Ferroti affair. The decision was a humiliation to Golovnin and a blow to Valuev, who sought to rein in what he viewed as an impetuous newspaper. The embarrassment of the former was exacerbated by the transfer of censorship and press oversight from the Ministry of Education to Valuev's Ministry of the Interior during the same year, in 1865.

Katkov's attack on Golovnin and his efforts to instrumentalize press was not finished, however. In late 1865, he launched a campaign to expose *Golos* as an organ of the Ministry of Education. As private political newspapers thrived on their reputations of independence and autonomy from the government, allegations of a newspaper ties with bureaucratic officials could be weaponized in the settling of scores among rival newspapers and political adversaries. In August 1865, *Moskovskie Vedomosti* came out with bold editorials, calling *Golos* an outright "semi-official" [*ofitsioznaia*] newspaper as it "receives [government subsidies].[263]

Katkov went on to point that "*Golo*s has supported the opinion of the academic committee [*uchenyi komitet*] at the Ministry of Education on the issue of education reform, and in anonymous articles repeated the very same things, in the same formulations, as were expressed by the chair of

[261] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 16 January 1865, No. 13.
[262] S.M. Seredonin, *Istoricheskii obzor deiatelnosti Kommiteta ministrov* (St. Petersburg: Izd. Kantseliarii Komiteta Ministrov, 1902), vol. III, part 2, 205.
[263] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 16 August 1865, No. 187.

the committee in signed articles in other newspapers." [264] *Golos*, Katkov argued, "serves as the organ of particular individuals in the government" – a fact that "compromises the dignity of the entire government."[265] Government officials such as Golovnin, Katkov surmised "managed to create with the help of government funds newspapers that do not defend the interests of the government," pointing to the ultimate self-interest of press patrons.[266] Moreover, "what should Russian people think," asked the Moscow editor, "[when] this direction, so obviously and so conceitedly hostile to the [Russian] interests, [is] fueled by Russia's state treasury?" [267] Airing in public the "semi-transparent haze of mystery that envelops the relationship between of a newspaper and government bureaucrats," Katkov aimed to position himself as a singularly independent editor.[268]

Katkov's campaigns against government ministers, not only worked to convey a certain independence from the government, but also added to his notoriety and influence. Where some sought status through a discreet collaboration with bureaucratic groups to gain clout, Katkov achieved the very same through virtual hostility. After two years of Katkov's discreet collaboration with Valuev during 1863-1864, the peak of their hostilities reached in the spring of 1866, when took a direct aim at Valuev and his allies in the government and at court, where a new support has resurfaced for greater autonomy for the Kingdom of Poland and the Grand Duchy of Finland. Katkov's editorial from March 19 accused "the governing spheres" of intentions inherent to "the enemies of Russia."[269] Katkov's further editorials reminded "individuals vested with power" that they were not "schoolboys fantasizing over the map of their fatherland."[270] Days later, despite a

[264] Ibid.
[265] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 18 September 1865, No. 204.
[266] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 25 September 1865, No. 210.
[267] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 18 September 1865, No. 204.
[268] Ibid.
[269] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 19 March 1866, No. 61.
[270] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 2 April 1866, No. 69.

near unanimous opposition of the Council the Main Administration for Press Affairs, Valuev issued the first warning to Katkov's newspaper, arguing before censors that it was unacceptable "to accuse of treason anyone who does not fully share their views […] Any further permissiveness [*snishozhdenie*] would look like this newspaper is above the law"[271]

Katkov's refusal to publish the warning, as required by law, posed an unprecedented challenge to Valuev and his censors. His call for the Main Administration for Press Affairs to "correct the mistake already made [issuing the warning], without the fear of losing face," scandalized official St. Petersburg, drawing the close attention of observers across the Russian Empire and beyond.[272] Katkov's provocative behavior tested the limits of the new censorship, which Valuev faced difficulty in addressing a press that – once emboldened by its government ties – has now turned against it. Alexander Herzen noted the role reversal between with a great deal of irony that "the Main Administration for Press Affairs has received its second warning from Katkov. Saddened, it awaits the third [warning], and then also its closure."[273]

As weeks passed by after Katkov's refusal to publish the warning, some – such as F.I. Tiutchev – expressed a disbelief that Valuev, "'le Prince de la parole' […] does not dare make as much as a peep, - because, at the smallest action, Katkov, like a nanny to a child, immediately threatens him that she *will leave him* – of which he is very afraid."[274] A month later, however, two more provocative editorials were followed by a second and third warnings on May 6 and 7, which resulted in the temporary suspension of *Moskovskie Vedomosti* for two months and its resumption

[271] P.A. Valuev as cited in *Materialy, sobrannye osoboi komissiei, vysochaishe utverzhdennye 2 noiabria 1869 goda, dlia deistvuiushchikh postanovlenii o tsenzure i pechati* (St. Petersburg,: [n.p.],1870), part II, 127. Also cited in K.V. Pigarev, "Pisma k Moskovskim publitsistam," in *Literaturnoe nasledstvo* (Moscow: Nauka, 1988), vol. 97, part 1, 271, n. 6.
[272] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 2 April 1866, No. 69.
[273] A.I. Herzen, "Vtoroe predosterezhenie i vtoroi Godunov," in *A.I. Herzen: Sobranie sochinenii v tridtsati tomakh* (Moscow: Izd-vo Akademii Nauk SSSR, 1960), vol. XIX, 76
[274] F.I. Tiutchev, Letter from F.I. Tiutchev to I.S. Aksakov, St. Petersburg, 19 April 1866, *Literaturnoe nasledstvo* (Moscow: Nauka, 1988), vol. 97, part 1, 273.

under the formal editorial leadership of N.A. Lyubimov. However, Katkov's personal petition to Alexander II yielded a surprising early release from his detention.

In May 1866, Alexander II and his entourage, traveling on a visit to Moscow and settled in his nearby Iliinskoe estate. Katkov saw this as an opportunity to mend his relationship with the Tsar. In late May 1, Katkov met with P.A. Shuvalov who was to mediate communication between Katkov and Alexander II. Lyubimov records in his memoirs that Shuvalov expressed the Emperor's "appreciation of [Katkov's] activity" but regretted Katkov's refusal to publish the warning.[275] Wishing for a private audience with the Tsar, Katkov followed up by writing to Alexander II personally. Lyubimov, who took part in the writing and re-writing of the letter recounted in his memoirs Katkov's struggle to re-write it in his own hand, reining in his infamous handwriting and his tendency to drip ink onto letters, "re-writing some pages [of the letter] several times."[276] Lyubimov personally delivered the letter to A.V. Adlerberg.

Katkov letter, in which he "neither complained nor asked for anything" as the accompanying note to A.V. Adlerberg read, offers insight into Katkov's understanding of his role and relationship with the state.[277] The letter began with Katkov drawing parallels between himself and Alexander II:

> I was born in the same year as Your Majesty. […] When I was a child, […] I often imagined my royal peer [*sverstnik*] and dreamt of my future service to Him. […] It so happened that the first independent civic activity [*obshchestvennaia deiatelnost*] coincided with the accession of your majesty to the throne [in 1855].[278]

[275] Liubimov, *Mikhail Nikiforovich Katkov*, 341.
[276] Ibid., 342.
[277] Ibid., 342–43.
[278] M.N. Katkov, Letter from M.N. Katkov to Alexander II, n.d. [1866], *Byloe*, no. 4 (1917): 4.

This bold comparison and reference to a relationship of peers did more than diffuse tension with some familiarity, it came close to drawing parallels between the careers of two men. Reminiscing of his childhood dreams to serve Alexander II, Katkov referred to the beginning of his journalistic career as a fulfillment of this dream and a "special service [*osobennaia sluzhba*] that was destined for me [*kotoraia byla mne prednaznachena*]."[279] The letter proved well-received by Alexander, and on June 20th Katkov received a private audience with Alexander II. Katkov does not appear to have left a note about the meeting, but a reminiscence of it survives in Liubimov's memoirs from Katkov's words:

> The Emperor received Katkov alone. He took him by the hand and sat him down. 'I know you, said the Tsar, I believe you – count you "mine" (this was the response to the final words of the letter). Mikhail Nikiforovich had tears in his eyes; the Emperor's eyes were also moist. "Safeguard this holy fire (that feu sacre – as the Emperor expressed himself), which you have: I give my hand to those whom I know and respect. You have nothing to worry about. I follow *Moskovskie Vedomosti* attentively; read them constantly. I am quite sure of you.[280]

Turning to discuss Katkov's discussion of the government policy in the Kingdom of Poland, which earned Katkov the warnings, Alexander advised Katkov not to "prickle and irritate [*kolot' i razdrazhat'*] when it comes to provenance. Everyone can be loyal subjects [*poddanye*] and good citizens [*grazhdane*]. It should be talked about it, but a measure needs to be preserved [*nuzhno sokhraniat' meru*]. […] Of course, I value the magnificence and the unity of empire, no less than you [Alexander said] with a smile."[281] Liubimov recounts, from Katkov's words, that the meeting

[279] Ibid., 5.
[280] Liubimov, *Mikhail Nikiforovich Katkov*, 343–44.
[281] Ibid., 344.

concluded with Alexander reiterating "remember, I am quite sure of you."[282] Five days after Katkov' momentous meeting, *Moskovskie Vedomosti* came out with an issue under the editorship of Katkov and Leontiev, the editorial proclaiming "We are returning" [*My vozvrashchaemsia*].[283] A.I. Herzen remarked on the timing of Katkov's reinstatement:

> The Emperor [sic] could not wait two weeks [remaining on Katkov's two-month suspension], and like a physiologist decided that a six-weak cleanse is enough for Katkov. Katkov on his part did not make peace with the Emperor in vain: *he set the conditions – and they were accepted* [original emphasis] […]. Under this kind of hazard let *some Valuev* [original emphasis] and his committee give warnings [*predosterezhenia*]…[284]

Observing the unravelling of events around Katkov's newspaper from some distance, Herzen juxtaposed "the pitiful role of our ex-benevolent monarch" and the empowerment of "the patriarch of *Moskovskie Vedomosti*." [285] A similar sentiment was expressed by Chief of Gendarmes, P.A. Shuvalov, who observed in a conversation with Katkov four stages of the latter's career up to that point:

> During the first [period] you amazed Herzen: all of Russia applauded you. Second period – the Polish question. You explained it. Third – you got ahead of the government, proclaiming national politics. You enticed everyone: willingly or not,

[282] Ibid.
[283] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti,* 25 June 1866, No. 132.
[284] A.I. Herzen, "Katkov i Gosudar," in *A.I. Herzen: Sobranie sochinenii v tridtsati tomakh* (Moscow: Izd-vo Akademii Nauk SSSR, 1960), vol. XIX, 117. Herzen's coverage of Katkov's predicaments during the spring of 1866 lacks neither in sharpness nor in humor. It also highlighted their marked political differences. Amused at the prospect of "Russia being spared of *Moskovskie Vedomosti* for two months," Herzen feigned concern for the wellbeing of the "militant editor [*voeredaktor*] and the bodyguard of Russia's unity [*telokhranitel' edinstva Rossii*]." Ibid., 93.
[285] Ibid., 118.

> everyone followed you. In the fourth period – you struggled with the government. You won so brilliantly that one might have feared, and here (with a smile), that you will attain a final victory and discredit the government.[286]

Indeed, that Alexander II reinstalled Katkov as editor months before the sanctions against him expired, highlighted the government's inconsistent management of the press in which much depended on personal relations.

The efforts of Alexander II and his ministers to instrumentalize the press yielded mixed results during the 1860s. Collaborations between government officials and newspaper editors have yielded examples of successful 'impression management' on the part of the government, particularly when it came to harnessing public trust or reassuring public sentiments. When conducted discreetly, such collaborations elevated press editors, empowering them to contribute to the process of governance and emboldened them as ministerial patrons provided protections. Indeed, the growing dependency of ministers on friendly publicity further placed editors in positions of power, giving rise to influential editors – press lords – such as M.N. Katkov. However, as this part of the chapter demonstrates, the blurring lines between government interests and the personal interests of government officials made such collaborations fraught with potential conflict. The negotiation of complex dynamics between the press lords and bureaucratic officials, analyzed in this chapter, reveals the two-way nature of power in such interactions. The final part of this chapter examines the practical aspects of collaborations between editors and government officials. It also investigates how influential press lords advanced their foothold in the political arena independently of their patrons, by cultivating networks of loyal political agents, informants, and

[286] Liubimov, *Mikhail Nikiforovich Katkov*, 241.

intermediaries within government ranks, who engaged in political lobbying and information gathering on behalf of press editors.

Press Informants and Leaks

Despite widespread collaboration between newspaper editors and state officials, their relationships were governed by utmost discretion, particularly where information switched hands. The censorship circular of the 27 August 1861 banned the unauthorized disclosure of legislative projects under review or those already approved but not yet announced.[287] The circular instructed censors to not allow information about such pending projects in print, however, the circular mandated no sanctions for the revelation, speculations, or outright publication of such information.

The principal challenge in collaboration between press editors and bureaucratic officials was, therefore, discretion. The practice of perlustration in the Russian empire, meant that particularly sensitive information was sent in coded letters, passed as a letter or oral message through a trusted courier, or sent through a senior assistant in the ministry.[288] Government officials as well as editors cultivated trusted intermediaries as go-between in information exchanges.

On the ministerial side, intermediaries were high-ranking bureaucratic officials such as officers of special assignment (*chinovniki osobykh poruchenii),* officials of ministerial chancelleries or the chancellery of the State Council. The 'intermediary' passed information at the direction of the minister and conducted correspondence with the editor on the minister's behalf.

[287] A.A. Berte, "Kopiia s tsyrkuliara predlozhenia po tsenzurnomu vedomostvu, 27 Avgusta 1861 goda, po Vysochayshemu poveleniu o nedopushchenii k pechati statei o gosudarstvennykh voprosakh, postupivshikh na rassmotrenie vysshykh gosudarstvennykh uchrezhdenii ili poluchivshykh okonchatelnoe razreshenie," in *Zapiska predsedatelia Komiteta dlia peresmotra tsenzurnogo istava, deistivetlnogo statskogo sovetnika Berte I chlena sego Komiteta statskogo sovetnika Yankevicha,* (St. Petersburg: [n.p.], 1862), 17.
[288] For example, Katkov's informant, D.I. Voeikov, sent the editor "a live notice" [*zhyvuyu gramotu*] in the person of the Kurland Gubernia Prokuror N.A. Miasoedova, your greatest admirer." D.I. Voeikov, Letter from D.I. Voeikov to M.N. Katkov, 13 March 1887, OR RGB, f. 120, ed. 23, book 5, l. 43.

On the editors' side, intermediaries were often the trusted and high-ranking members of the editorial office. Katkov and Valuev's letters were dispatched through trusted associates such as the Senator and (after 1880) Over-Procurator of the Holy Synod K.P. Pobedonostsev, Ministry of the Interior official A.M. Gezen, and publisher V.P Meshcherskii among many others. Intermediaries carried correspondence in unmarked envelopes or – in cases of particularly sensitive information – relayed oral messages. Early in their correspondence, Katkov requestion that Valuev not sent him any more letters on ministerial stationary to preserve the discretion of their ties.[289] Typically, intermediaries carried correspondence while travelling on other business. However, in urgent situations, they could be dispatched from St. Petersburg to Moscow for the sole purpose of passing on a time-sensitive message. Ministerial intermediaries served only as mediators in information transactions and did so at the discreet request of the minister.

During the 1860s, Minister of Interior P.A. Valuev informed Katkov through his trusted head of Chancellery V.Ya. Fuks and official in the Department for Affairs of Foreign Confessions, A.M. Gezen. During 1881 and 1882, Katkov's relationship with Minister of the Interior, N.P. Ignatiev, was mediated by the head of the Ministry's Chancellery, D.I. Voeikov (1843-1896). A landowner and writer, Voeikov first served as the head of N.P. Ignatiev's Chancellery when the latter was appointed Governor General of Nizhnii Novgorod. Subsequently, Voeikov became "[N.P.] Ignatiev's trusted person."[290] During the 1880s, Voeikov provided Katkov with tip-offs from Ignatiev, with notes from ministerial meetings, and ministerial reports Ignatiev submitted to the State Council.[291] Voeikov's letters to Katkov were swiftly followed by editorials in *Moskovskie*

[289] P.A. Valuev, Letter from P.A. Valuev to M.N. Katkov, 30 March 1863, *Russkaia Starina* 163, no. 8 (August 1915): 296
[290] Feoktistov, *Za kulisami politiki i literatury*, 202.
[291] D.I. Voeikov, Letter from D.I. Voeikov to M.N. Katkov, 22 January 1886, OR RGB, f. 120, ed. 23, book 5, l. 22. Idem., Letter from D.I. Voeikov to M.N. Katkov, 28 March 1886, OR RGB, f. 120, ed. 23, book 5, l. 26.

Vedomosti on the same issue.[292]

During the 1880s, Katkov's relationship with Minister of Education, I.D. Delianov, was likewise mediated through N.M. Anichkov - Delianov's trusted assistant at the Ministry of Education. Writing on behalf of Minister of Education, I.D. Delianov, Anichkov maintained a regular correspondence with Katkov and involved him in developing and drafting ministerial projects, university curricula (*uchebnye plany*) and university exams.[293] As an 'intermediary,' Anichkov followed the direction of his superior without any particular affinity for Katkov; the transfer of information in this case was dependent on Katkov's relationship with Delianov rather than his intermediary, Anichkov.

On the other hand, 'political agents' and 'informants' served within government ranks and shared with newspaper editors privileged governmental information without the knowledge or direction of the minister. Such informants were generally political sympathizers of the respective newspaper editor. They worked in positions in which they had access to ministers or to ministerial projects, for example as ministerial advisors, heads of ministerial chancelleries, chancellery clerks, and officers of special assignment. Frustrated with the course of events within the government or on a particular issues, they were motivated to aid in advancing the political program and worldview they shared with the editor. Loyal to their editorial patrons, 'political agents' were often a rich source of information for the former.

M.N. Katkov was particularly effective at forging broad networks of patronage. During the 1860s and 1870s, Katkov had a loyal agent in the Ministry of Finance - V.P. Bezobrazov (1828-

[292] On 2 April 1886, Voeikov wrote to Katkov a letter on the discussion of issues related to the Ministry of Transportation. On April 7, 1886, a *Moskovskie Vedomosti* editorial came out about the Ministry of railways. See: D.I. Voeikov, Letter from D.I. Voeikov to M.N. Katkov, 2 April 1886, OR RGB, f. 120, ed. 23, book 5, l. 26ob. M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 7 April 1886, No. 97.
[293] N.M. Anichkov, Letters from N.M. Anichkov to M.N. Katkov, OR RGB, f. 120, ed. 19, book 1.

1889). Bezobrazov was an economist and statistician first for the Ministry of State Domains and later for the Ministry of Finance. A researcher for the Academy of Science and the Russian Geographical Society, Bezobrazov also taught political economy to the younger sons of Alexander II and Grand Duke Konstantin Nikolaevich. Throughout the 1860s and 1870s, Bezobrazov, supplied Katkov with critical information on ministerial discussions, rumored personnel changes, information on the reception of Katkov's editorials within government ranks. Occasionally, Bezobrazov provided Katkov with exclusive state documents:

> I finally obtained for you the new draft of the gymnasia reform, which was introduced just now by [the Minister of Education, A.V.] Golovnin into the State Council and is being reviewed now. I am sending it to you with the stamp of the Geographical Society. Please, bear in mind, that I obtained this [document] under the greatest secrecy from the State Chancellery, so you cannot speak directly about this draft as if you have it because it is not a published document, but only printed for the State Council.[294]

Katkov's cultivation of independent 'political agents' dated back to his early days as an editor in the mid-1850s. His earliest and most prolific informant in the Ministry of the Interior was B.M. Markevich. Markevich served in the State Chancellery and in the Ministry of the Interior in the mid-1860s when he began to supply his long-time friend, M.N. Katkov, with the goings on of state affairs. Markevich's scandalous demise from the Ministry of Education in 1875, he provided regular dispatches and at times state documents to Katkov – documents that number in hundreds of pages in Katkov's archive.[295]

[294] V.P. Bezobrazov, Letter from V.P Bezobrazov to M.N. Katkov, 16 October [no year], OR RGB, f. 120, ed. 23, book 5, l.71.
[295] B.M. Markevich, Letters from B.M. Markevich to M.N. Katkov, OR RGB, f. 120, op. 1, k. 8, ed. 1-26.

Katkov was also successful at converting ministerial intermediaries into personal informants and agents. Voeikov, initially an 'intermediary,' became an independent 'political agent,' loyal to Katkov, continuing to supply Katkov with sensitive information even after Ignatiev lost his ministerial seat in 1882. Voeikov tipped off Katkov on the timing of State Council deliberations on particular issues, ministerial meetings, Committee of Ministers meeting with the Tsar. Acting on Voeikov's tips, Katkov timed his strongly-worded editorials to influence the outcome of legislature being decided upon. Voeikov viewed such coordinated actions as an opportunity to inform course and substance of ministerial and State Council debates: "Precisely at the moment it is especially important to explain the essence of this issue, before it is definitively ruined."[296] Stressing the importance of good timing, Voeikov reminded Katkov that

> Your articles on sugar manufacturing are making a strong impression, but because the discussion of this issue [in the State Council] will be no earlier than on 4th of November, we might regret that they are printed too far in advance. In this marshy place no impressions stick around for long [*nikakie vpechatlenia dolgo ne zaderzhivaiutsa*]; also [our] opponents already have good techniques for libel, which they will in the next two weeks use to change the opinions they prize most [*peredelayut po-svoemu chast "mnenia" kakoyu oni dorozhat*].[297]

The sensitivity of Voeikov's leaks is highlighted by frequent coded letters, with the protagonists of inter-ministerial debates concealed by aliases.[298] Occasionally, Voeikov even tipped Katkov off about the timing and content of forthcoming articles in other newspapers and journals – an ability likely owing itself to Russia's censorship being subordinated to the Ministry

[296] D.I. Voeikov, Letter from D.I. Voeikov to M.N. Katkov, 5 October 1886, OR RGB, f. 120, ed. 23, book 5, l. 21.
[297] D.I. Voeikov, Letter from D.I. Voeikov to M.N. Katkov, 19 October 1886, OR RGB, f. 120, ed. 23, book 5, l. 32.
[298] D.I. Voeikov, Letter from D.I. Voeikov to M.N. Katkov, 5 February 1886, OR RGB, f. 120, ed. 23, book 5, l. 22ob et passim.

of the Interior.[299]

Katkov's 'political agents' were fiercely loyal to him and occasionally felt persecuted for their collaboration.[300] Still, having a sense of political mission, informants viewed their relationship with the press as a partnership in achieving a desired outcome. In 1868, informing Katkov on the discussion of tariffs on imported machinery in the State Council, V.P. Bezobrazov celebrated their impact of their collaboration: "Our efforts [*nashi starania*] about the tariff, it seems, will result in success: the articles in *Moskovskie Vedomosti* about the tariffs on machinery made such an impression that the Ministry of Finance refused them [the machines]. This business needs to be finished [*nuzhno zakonchit' delo*]."[301] Voeikov was ecstatic that ""with the efforts of sugar manufacturers [we] managed finally to move from place 'tsar-pushka' [Tsar cannon] Al.[exander] Al.[exandrovich]," referring to Alexander III's heavy inertia and indecision.[302]

Finally, Katkov's informants also provided him with important feedback on the reception and impact of their editorials with the Tsar, among ministers, and within the State Council. In late 1865, at the height of Katkov's critique of Minister of Education, A.V. Golovnin, over gymnasia V.P. Bezobrazov reassured Katkov "your article on gymnasia (reply to *Severnaia Pochta*) continues to make a profound impression: everyone in the highest spheres [of the government] is talking about it; it seems this article dealt a blow to Golovnin like no other."[303] Voeikov provided Katkov on feedback from "people who support *Moskovskie Vedomosti*" their satisfaction and

[299] D.I. Voeikov, Letter from D.I. Voeikov to M.N. Katkov, 21 February 1886, OR RGB, f. 120, ed. 23, book 5, l. 23ob.
[300] In an 1873 letter to M.N. Katkov, V.P. Bezobrazov pleaded for help, confessing that "I am persecuted for participating in your publications. I cannot describe everything." V.P. Bezobrazov, Letter from V.P Bezobrazov to M.N. Katkov, 1 April 1873, OR RGB, f. 120, ed. 23, book 5, l.69.
[301] V.P. Bezobrazov, Letter from V.P Bezobrazov to M.N. Katkov, 3 March 1868, OR RGB, f. 120, ed. 23, book 5, l.69.
[302] D.I. Voeikov, Letter from D.I. Voeikov to M.N. Katkov, 8 September 1886, OR RGB, f. 120, ed. 23, book 5, l. 31ob.
[303] V.P. Bezobrazov, Letter from V.P Bezobrazov to M.N. Katkov, no date [early November 1865], OR RGB, f. 120, ed. 23, book 5, l. 73.

occasional concerns about the newspaper's editorials, which nevertheless "made here [in St. Petersburg] the best impression."[304] Occasionally, when editors faced the prospect of a warning, informants passed on the assessment of the reaction and advised on further course of action.[305]

Katkov's most unusual informant was censor and head of the Main Administration for Press Affairs, E.M. Feoktistov (1828-1898). Feoktistov supplied Katkov with exclusive information and updates on state affairs. The two entertained an extensive decades-long correspondence in which Feoktistov – even as a censor and (from 1883) the head of the Main Administration for Press Affairs – assumed a rather subservient tone. Feoktistov also mediated between the government and Katkov when the latter's editorials provoked displeasure.

Some of Katkov's informants, such as Feoktistov, Voeikov, and Markevich, were overwhelmingly loyal by conviction. However, there is also evidence suggesting that their assistance was financially remunerated. Katkov's correspondence with Feoktistov also reveals that Feoktistov occasionally borrowed money from Katkov, on one occasion as much as 500 rubles, but no evidence suggests that these sums were ever repaid.[306] The accounts of the *Moskovskie Vedomosti* editorial office for 1886 reveal that D.I. Voeikov was listed as a St. Petersburg reporter" [*korrespondent*] and paid 100 rubles monthly.[307] Markevich was also likely paid for his services. In his diary, A.P. Chekhov noted B.M. Markevich received from Katkov 5,000 rubles for his novels *Turning Point* [*Perelom*] and *The Abyss* [*Bezdna*], published in 1881 and 1884 respectively in Katkov's literary magazine *Russkii Vestnik*.[308] Chekhov balked at the unusual generosity of such

[304] D.I. Voeikov, Letter from D.I. Voeikov to M.N. Katkov, 8 August 1886, OR RGB, f. 120, ed. 23, book 5, l. 30.
[305] D.I. Voeikov, Letter from D.I. Voeikov to M.N. Katkov, 18 February 1886, OR RGB, f. 120, ed. 23, book 5, l. 23-23ob.
[306] E.M. Feoktistov, Letter to M.N. Katkov, [no date, attributed to 1884], OR RGB, F120.k12. d. 27, l. 24.
[307] "Materialy kasaiushiesia izdania "Moskovskikh Vedomostei" Rukopisi [1864, 1884, 1886]," OR RGB, f. 120, karton 55, ed. 16, l. 8.
[308] A.P Chekhov, *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii i pisem*, ed. A.M. Egolin and N.S. Tikhonova (Moscow: OGIZ, 1948), 99.

payments, speculating that these sums concealed payment for something else.

Other leading Russian newspaper editors – such as A.A. Kraevskii and I.S. Aksakov – cultivated similar networks of 'intermediaries' and 'political agents,' with similar financial arrangements. Kraevskii, like other editors, hid such transactions. In 1874, Kraevskii directed his assistant, D.A. Mein, to pay the considerable sum of 150 rubles to an unnamed person – likely an informant – and list this expense as tea and cigars for the editorial office.[309] However, some informants were rewarded with favors as a more discreet form of payment. During the early 1870s, A.A. Kraevskii entertained ties with censor and temporary head of the Main Administration for Press Affairs, F.M. Tolstoi. In 1871, during the highly publicized trial of revolutionary S.G. Nechaev for the murder of student I. Ivnov, suspected by *nechaevtsy* of collaboration with government, Tolstoi used his position to supply *Golos* with stenographic notes of the trial before they were released to the press. For *Golos*, the early access to information in a trial that commanded significant public attention drove its sales. As the head of censorship, Tolstoi also informally consulted *Golos*. For his services, Tolstoi – an amateur composer of over two hundred ballads – had a regular musical column in *Golos*. The revelation of his ties with Kraevskii shortly after the Nechaev trial spelled the end of his career as a censor.[310]

Far more convenient and discreet than payments and favors were familial ties among editors and informants within government ranks. Much to the surprise and dismay of State Secretary A.A. Polovtsov, Kraevskii's older son, Alexander, served in the chancellery of the State Council, where he had access to virtually any government project before its public

[309] A.A. Kraevskii, Letter from A.A. Kraevskii to D.A. Mein, 20 June 1874, Rossiiskii Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv Literatury I Iskusstva [RGALI], f. 459, op. 2, ed. 1374, l. 44.
[310] A.V. Lunochkin, "Ot Sotrudnichestva k konfrontatsii: Gazeta 'Golos' i tsenzura (1863–1883)," *Tsenzura v Rossii* 1 (2001), 77-94.

announcement.[311] Katkov's daughter, Olga, married Gleb Tolstoi, the son of Minister of Education (1866-1880) and Minister of the Interior (1882-1890), D.A. Tolstoi. F.I. Tiutchev was also close with Katkov's close associate, A.I. Georgievskii: Tiutchev's mistress (E.A. Denis'eva) and Georgievskii's wife (M.A. Denisieva) were stepsisters. Georgievskii was one of few who recognized Tiutchev's relationship and children with E.A. Denisieva. The two men became quite close especially after the passing E.A. Denisova, when a grieving Tiutchev personally confided into Georgievskii; in one of his letters, Tiutchev wrote "at this time you are indispensable to me."[312] Geogrievskii's career, which began in *Moskovskie Vedomosti* and ended in the highest ranks of the Ministry of Education (see Chapter 5), best illustrates the porous divide between the press and governmental service.[313]

As this chapter mentions earlier, Tiutchev was implicated in aiding Katkov's *Moskovskie Vedomosti* during a particularly perilous time as it faced potential suspension. An admirer of Katkov, Tiutchev also sent him notes to inform him of the reception of his articles in the government. During a summer of European diplomatic negotiations with Russia's participation in 1864, Tiutchev took care to thank Katkov that "for your article, in which you so correctly and so well determine our current situation, and hint at the program we need to follow. Prince Gorchakov was very pleased with the article."[314]

---

[311] A.A. Polovtsov, *Dnevnik gosudarstvennogo sekretarja A.A. Polovtsova, 2. vols.* (Moscow: Nauka, 1966) vol. 1, 26.

[312] F.I. Tiutchev, Letters from F.I. Tiutchev to A.I. Georgievskii, Geneva, 6/18 October 1864 and Nice 10/22 December 1864, *Literaturnoe nasledstvo* (Moscow: Izd-vo Nauka, 1988), vol. 97, part 1, 381-382, 384-386.

[313] On one occasion in 1865, as *Moskovskie Vedomosti* faced potential warnings, Georgievskii turned to Tiutchev in search of alternative employment in government service. In a letter to Tiutchev, he wrote: "nothing would make me happier than being useful to you in some way. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as far as I know, does not have a place with all the conditions. In my Censorship Committee, I do not find enough remuneration for that capital of time that is required for this service."[313] Ultimately, Katkov's design to influence the Ministry of Education placed Georgievskii into its highest ranks. See Chapter 5. A.I. Georgievskii, "Iz vospominanii A.I. Georgievskogo," in *Literaturnoe nasledstvo* (Moscow: Nauka, 1988), vol. 97, part 2, 198.

[314] F.I. Tiutchev, Letter from F.I. Tiutchev to M.N. Katkov, St. Petersburg, 6 November 1864, *Literaturnoe nasledstvo* (Moscow: Izd-vo Nauka, 1988), vol. 97, part 1, 416-417.

Tiutchev's most productive correspondence, however, was with his son-in-law, I.S. Aksakov, who married Tiutchev's daughter Anna. Tiutchev's extensive correspondence with I.S. Aksakov during the 1860s reveals the mechanisms for tip-offs, transfer of information and confidential state documents, friendly warnings about censorial intentions. In 1867, Tiutchev sent Aksakov a not impartial welcome and his "hearty congratulations" on his new paper *Moskva* - "may God sent it a long, long existence – and if not and entirely peaceful, then at least not too tempestuous a life."[315] Despite his position as a censor, Tiutchev viewed himself a part of Aksakov's political agenda: "we now have a full opportunity to turn our opposition element with great sense against our current veritable opponents," praising the tone of *Moscow* "to correspond completely to what is required at this minute."[316]

Tiutchev used his position and connections within government ranks and at court to supply Aksakov with exclusive information by writing letters in French to his daughter, Anna, which in reality were intended for his son-in-law. In 1867, Alexander traveled to Paris first of all to visit the World Fair and meet with Napoleon III regarding the Eastern question. Tiutchev sent detailed dispatches with information that "doubtlessly is the stuff of many and many articles for *Moskva."*[317] Tiutchev also sent to Aksakov state documents to inform the latter's editorials:

> I am sending you a very curious thing. I was told about it in secret from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and *in secret* I am passing it on to you, asking you not to write share it publicly, not even indirectly, - but you can use the information at your

[315] F.I. Tiutchev, Letter to I.S. Aksakov, St. Petersburg, 5 January, [18]67, *Literaturnoe nasledstvo* (Moscow: Izd-vo Nauka, 1988), vol. 97, part 1, 281. Tiutchev's wishes to *Moscow* were not fated to come true. In a mere 22 months of existence from (1 January 1867 – 21 October 1868), *Moscow* faced 9 warnings, was stopped 3 times, and after the third stoppage was abolished by the decision of the Senate. See: Ibid., n. 1.
[316] F.I. Tiutchev, Letter from F.I. Tiutchev to I.S. Aksakov, St. Petersburg, 8 January 1867, *Literaturnoe nasledstvo* (Moscow: Izd-vo Nauka, 1988), vol. 97, part 1, 282-183.
[317] F.I. Tiutchev, Letter from F.I. Tiutchev to I.S. Aksakov, St. Petersburg, 18 April 1867, Ibid, vol. 97, part 1, 293-294, 299-301.

discretion. This news comes from our clandestine agent in Paris.[318]

The letter, which did not survive, recalled the conversation between an unknown person and the French Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lionel de Moustier, about France's stance on the Greece and on the potential uprising of Christian subjects of the Ottoman empire.

Some of the information Tiutchev leaked to Aksakov was aimed to advance the latter's standing at court. In 1867, Russia's foreign ministry was preparing a declaration to the Ottoman Empire condemning its refusal to transfer Crete to Greece. Signed by France, Italy, and Prussia, the document announced the refusal to guarantee the integrity of the Ottoman Empire in case of the uprising of Christian population of the empire, which the declaration sought to provoke. Tiutchev informed Aksakov of these developments and advised that "it would be useful […] in an editorial to advertise the likeness of the step [declaration] just taken as a desideratum for the dignity and interests of Russia."[319] Aksakov published just such a piece in *Moskva* on 30 September (No. 141), which Tiutchev promptly wrote "was received here [in St. Petersburg] with sympathy and *appreciation*."[320] Weeks later, Aksakov was presented order of the Savior from the King of Greece Georg I.[321]

As a censor, Tiutchev gave Aksakov insider advice avoiding warnings and suspensions. In one of his letters, Tiutchev suggested that Valuev's successor at the Ministry of the Interior,A.E. Timashev, "is not very generous on warnings and has more than once rejected the recommendations of the Main Administration [for Press affairs]."[322] However, when in 1867

[318] F.I. Tiutchev, Letter from F.I. Tiutchev to I.S. Aksakov, St. Petersburg, 4 January 1868, Ibid, vol. 97, part 1, 318-319.
[319] F.I. Tiutchev, Letter from F.I. Tiutchev to I.S. Aksakov, St. Petersburg, 23 September 1867, Ibid, vol. 97, part 1, 308.
[320] F.I. Tiutchev, Letter from F.I. Tiutchev to I.S. Aksakov, St. Petersburg, 2 October 1867, Ibid, vol. 97, part 1, 309.
[321] F.I. Tiutchev, Letter from F.I. Tiutchev to A.F. Aksakova, St. Petersburg, 18 October 1867, Ibid, vol. 97, part 1, 312-313.
[322] F.I. Tiutchev, Letter from F.I. Tiutchev to A.F. Aksakova, St. Petersburg, 3 October 1868, Ibid, vol. 97, part 1, 344-345.

Moskva received two warnings in the first two months of its existence, Tiutchev advised caution:

> At the moment [*Moskva*] can contribute its word to the resolution of so many controversial issues, but the resolution of the issue in question could be helped only if the newspaper abstained from its discussion for some time… In current circumstances it is sometimes more useful to allow the public opinion an opportunity to develop on its own, at a grassroots level [*stihiino*], without pushing it to conclusions; *gentle* pressure will elicit less resistance.[323]

Tiutchev also kept Aksakov informed on the deliberations over a second warning to Aksakov's *Moskva* in the Main Administration for Press Affairs caused by "excessive acerbity"[324] "After the *forte* that have lately resounded in his [Aksakov's] polemics," Tiutchev wrote to his daughter Anna, "he should, in the interest of the musical piece, to transition to *piano* – additionally, it also seems appropriate to me to express more trust in the views of the Tsar."[325] "After a few days' pause," Tiutchev continued, "I would write an editorial with *all possible* calm and restrain, exposing my *profession de foi* – on all fronts defended by *Moskva* […] After this, or better said, in concurrence with this, I would – boldly and clearly – indicate all hostile forces, inside and outside Russia, which threaten its existence […] – Poland, Catholicism, Turks – their name is legion."[326] Aksakov did not heed Tiutchev's advice, protesting in his editorial the "systematic worsening of government measures."[327] This editorial resulted in a third warning and closure.

Unlike ministerial patrons discussed earlier in this chapter, newspapers' political agents

---

[323] F.I. Tiutchev, Letter from F.I. Tiutchev to A.F. Aksakova, St. Petersburg, Friday, 17 March 1867, Ibid, vol. 97, part 1, 291.
[324] F.I. Tiutchev, Letter from F.I. Tiutchev to I.S. Aksakov, St. Petersburg, 23 August 1867, Ibid, vol. 97, part 1, 301-303.
[325] F.I. Tiutchev, Letter from F.I. Tiutchev to A.F. Aksakova, St. Petersburg, 3 October 1868, Ibid, vol. 97, part 1, 344-345.
[326] F.I. Tiutchev, Letter from F.I. Tiutchev to I.S. Aksakov, St. Petersburg, 26 November 1867, Ibid, vol. 97, part 1, 314-315.
[327] I.S. Aksakov, Editorial, *Moskva*, 28 November 1867, No.189. As cited in Ibid, vol. 97, part 1, 315, n. 4.

and informants serviced the interests of the editorial office, whether by providing exclusive information, advancing editors' political projects, or helping navigate the strictures of censorship. For editors, such ties helped build a foothold in the world of politics independently of bureaucratic patrons, who sought to advance their own interests by instrumentalizing the press. As Chapter 5 will demonstrate in greater detail, an effective network of political agents and informants was critical in advancing M.N. Katkov's reform projects in local administration and education despite resistance in the ministry.

Conclusion

The rise of Russia's private press as a vibrant hub of information and political discussion profoundly altered its relationship with the government during the early 1860s. For leading daily newspapers, timely investments into telegraph technology, news correspondents, and delivery improvements gained them and increased subscription as well as a new and attentive readership in the highest corridors of power. As a comprehensive source of news, newspaper reading became the daily habit for the Tsar, his ministers, and members of the State Council, who turned their broadsheets every morning no longer only in search of censorship violations, but to gain a grasp of events across the empire and the world. As private newspapers increasingly competed with government sources in the speed and breadth of their news, the government gradually lost its monopoly on the dissemination of information. Gaining dominance in the domain of information, the press increasingly gained a foothold on the political stage, particularly as ambitious press lords such as Katkov, Aksakov, Suvorin, and Kraevskii sought to not only inform their highly-placed readers, but also to persuade. Newspaper editorials and their arguments gradually worked their way into ministerial cabinets and the court, revealing the emerging dependencies of an autocratic

regime on information and political discussion in the press.

Bureaucratic officials quickly grasped the uses of the private press both as an instrument for shaping public opinion and for influencing political decision-making. As this chapter details, however, the efforts of bureaucratic officials to instrumentalize the press proved complicated. Initially envisioned as a tool of 'impression management' for the government – and successfully implemented as such – the collaboration between bureaucratic officials and the press was often steered to service the interests and convictions of individual ministers or interest groups. While such collaborations were occasionally fruitful for all involved, the potential for abuse on both sides was significant. Editors were, of course, particularly vulnerable to retaliation, however, Katkov's example has shown that ministers also stood much to lose from compromising revelations made in the press. Thus, despite failures in co-opting private newspapers, bureaucratic officials persisted in their efforts to cultivate friendly press organs as publicity became an increasingly important factor in advancing careers, political projects, and private interests. This emerging dependency of the political establishment on publicity further empowered and emboldened the press on the political arena as influential editors pursued their own interests.

By the late 1860s, well-connected private editors sought to gain a foothold in the government independently of bureaucratic patrons. They did so successfully by cultivating political agents, allies, and informants deep within government ranks. Press informants, politically loyal and/or paid, leaked privileged – often secret – governmental documents and news thus further eroding the government's control of information. While the government had long been surveilling the press, it was itself becoming increasingly surveilled by the private press that forced an unprecedented transparency on the government as both public service and commercial model for the media. Political agents, who advanced the editors' own political projects and ideas, turned

longstanding political processes upside down as they served as instruments for non-governmental actors to exercise influence on government decisions.

The collaboration between bureaucratic officialdom and the press offered timely opportunities to the former to cultivate desired images and narratives when public opinion was beginning to emerge as a factor in governance. However, the government's eventual dependency on the press for information, discussion, and the cultivation of a favorable public opinion left the government vulnerable as its monopoly on information eroded and the private press came to represent a gatekeeper to shaping public political discussion.

CHAPTER 3:
Party Politics: Political Polarization and the Press at the Accession of Emperor Alexander III, 1881

Introduction

During the 1860s, Russia's private political press has secured a firm foothold within the corridors of the government by becoming an important source of information and opinion for government officials and the Emperor himself, as Chapter 2 details. Moreover, some influential newspapers became critical partners to ministers and bureaucratic interest groups in advancing both governmental and private agendas. However, the press lords who stood at the helms of these powerful dailies, saw their roles not only as reporters of latest news, but as public intellectuals – as political thinkers in their own right – whose newspapers served as platforms for their own political ideas. Once newspapers were permitted, in 1859, to publish political commentaries, the drama of the Great Reforms during the 1860s provided ample occasions for press lords to opine, critique, and debate these far-ranging changes and their applications on the pages of their newspapers. During the 1870s, vibrant editorial polemics were reflected in the growing polarization of Russia's political establishment along broader disagreements over the consequences of the Great Reforms. The assassination of Alexander II on 1 March 1881 catalyzed longstanding debates within the political establishment, which found their public expression in private political newspapers. As editors competed in their interpretation of events, they found themselves aligned across the emerging partisan divides within the corridors of power, exposing both a rich plurality of views and a deeply fractured political arena.

Chapter 3 examines Russia's private political press as a voice for and a surrogate of emerging party politics in the second half of the nineteenth century. First, the chapter explores the conditions that led to the polarization of the political establishment in Russia during the late 1870s,

namely the fragmentation of bureaucratic elites in the post-Reform period. The polarization of Russian politics reached its climax during the accession of Alexander III in 1881 as rivaling interest groups and their press organs competed to influence an undecided new Tsar. The chapter, therefore, turns to the vibrant press polemics as a voice of unofficial political parties during the spring of 1881. Third, the chapter probes the political pluralism in the press as private newspapers promoted competing visions for the new rule. Finally, this chapter showcases how private newspapers allied themselves with competing political interest groups at the critical junction of Alexander III's accession to the throne in efforts to influence the political course of the new rule.

Analyzing the polarization of the political establishment and the press during the 1870s and 1880s, this chapter establishes the origins of deep-seated political cleavages on Russia's political life. With the accession of Alexander III presenting a critical moment in shaping the political course of post-Reform Russia, the study of press polemics opens a vista for observing competing political programs and ideologies both in the public sphere and within the highest government ranks. Such competition demonstrates a political plurality both on the press landscape and within the government not typically associated with late imperial Russia in existing historiography. Examining the efforts of press editors to influence the politics of the newly acceded Tsar, this work reveals the increasing participation of non-state actors in political processes. Ultimately, the manner in which the press voiced competing discourses tied to rivaling political factions, shows that the press acted as a surrogate to political parties in late Imperial Russia.

Political Polarization and the Press During the 1860s-1870s

Within the bureaucratic entourage of Russian Tsars, political plurality has been – to varying extents - a regular fixture of Russian court and government. As Mikhail Dolbilov has argued, a

plurality of opinions has been part of the monarchic decision-making, presenting the Tsars with a variety of options to select from.[328] The era of the Great Reforms during the 1860s brought out one of the most vivid manifestations of such plurality within the corridors of power as government officials, aristocratic interest groups, preparatory commissions, and local representatives debated the *ifs* and *hows* of the most broad-ranging reforms since Peter the Great. The Westernizer-Slavophile debates of the 1840s-1850s gave only a broad cultural framework to the respective supporters and opponents of the reforms, while arguments 'pro et contra' came from a variety of ideological and practical angles.[329] However, as the following paragraphs will discuss, the difficult and uneven implementation of the Great Reforms, their adverse and unexpected results, deepened political divisions and polarized the bureaucratic officialdom.

Alongside the merits of the Great Reforms, much has been written about their shortcomings, limitations, and consequences that the government was unprepared to handle.

---

[328] Mikhail Dolbilov, "Rozhdenie Imperatorskikh Reshenii: Monarkh, Sovetniki 'Vysochaishaia Volia' v Rossii XIX v.," *Istorichaskie Zapiski* 9, no. 127 (2006): 5–48.

[329] The motivations behind Alexander II's Great Reforms have been at the center of a longstanding historiographical debate. One school of thought has ascribed the Great Reforms to Alexander II's ideological convictions. For example, Bruce Lincoln has argued that the Great Reforms were undertaken by "Enlightened bureaucrats" such as D.A. Miliutin, A.V. Golovnin, M.Kh. Reutern, S.I. Zarudny among others, as an effort to Westernize and modernize Russian society and governance, create new conditions for the rule of law, *glasnost'*, and the formation of a civil society. Daniel Field has written in a similar vein, contending that by the 1850s serfdom has lost all ideological and political structures and required a reform. Other historians have taken a more pragmatic view. Alfred Rieber has argued that the abolition of serfdom was a requirement for a military reform, necessary after Russia's defeat in the Crimean War. P.A. Zaionchkovskii and Terrence Emmons have contended that the reforms were necessary for social and political stability while serfdom increasingly threatened widespread revolts. Much less has been written about the opposition to the Great Reforms, with the notable exception with I.A Khristoforov's monograph *Aristokraticheskaia oppozitsia.* Khristoforov has shown that the opposition to the Great Reforms came not necessarily from the Slavophile camps as the opposition to Westernization. On the contrary, the aristocratic opposition to the Great Reforms proposed an Anglicized reform project and model of landownership. See: W. Bruce Lincoln, *The Great Reforms: Autocracy, Bureaucracy, and the Politics of Change in Imperial Russia* (DeKalb, IL: Northern Illinois University Press, 1990); W. Bruce. Lincoln, *In the Vanguard of Reform: Russia's Enlightened Bureaucrats, 1825-1861* (DeKalb, IL: Northern Illinois University Press, 1982); W. Bruce. Lincoln, *Nikolai Miliutin, an Enlightened Russian Bureaucrat* (Newtonville, MA.: Oriental Research Partners, 1977); Alfred J. Rieber, *The Politics of Autocracy; Letters of Alexander II to Prince A.I. Bariatinskii, 1857-1864.* (Paris: Mouton, 1966). P.A. Zaionchkovskii, *Otmena Krepostnogo Prava v Rossii* (Moscow: Gos. izd-vo Polit. lit-ry, 1954); Terence Emmons, *Emancipation of the Russian Serfs.* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1970); I. A Khristoforov, *Aristokraticheskaia oppozitsia velikim reformam: konets 1850-kh -seredina 1870-kh gg.* (Moscow: Russkoe slovo, 2002).

Notable amid the vast literature on the subject is the collection of essays *Russia's Great Refroms, 1855-1881*, edited by Ben Eklof, John Bushnell, and Larissa Zakharova, which offers critical perspectives on the reforms: the poor conception and execution of the emancipation project (Zakharova), its variable implementation (Field), the addition of new financial burdens of the redemption payments to old obligations of poll tax (Gartrell), the ambiguous autonomy of universities (Kassow) to give only a few examples.[330] Other notable works have highlighted in greater detail the short-term negative effects of the miscalculations and lack of local knowledge engendered by reformers' one size fits all approach.[331] The challenges of implementing the Great Reforms, however, were not merely challenges of administrative nature, they also reflected on something greater – on monarchic legitimacy

The ability of Russian sovereigns to undertake reforms had been since the time of Peter the Great an important element of monarchic legitimacy, as Cynthia Whittaker has shown. [332] Reforms as a source of monarchic legitimacy became particularly prominent during the reign of Catherine II. However, as Anatolii Remnev has argued, reform initiatives have long been a double-edged sword as monarchs were reluctant to appropriate a reform initiative before its success was clear, lest its failure or incomplete success could undermine their image.[333] The unprecedentedly broad scope of the Great Reforms offered a broad scope of opportunities to claim success, but also to face failure.

Moreover, the rise of the political press during the era of the Great Reforms brought their

[330] Ben Eklof et al., eds., *Russia's Great Reforms, 1855-1881* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1994);
[331] Steven L Hoch, *Serfdom and Social Control in Russia: Petrovskoe, a Village in Tambov* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1986); David Moon, *Abolition of Serfdom in Russia: 1762-1907* (London, New York: Routledge, 2014); Thomas S. Pearson, "The Origins of Alexander III's Land Captains: A Reinterpretation," *Slavic Review* 40, no. 3 (October 1, 1981): 384–403.
[332] Cynthia H Whittaker, *Russian Monarchy: Eighteenth-Century Rulers and Writers in Political Dialogue* (DeKalb, IL: Northern Illinois University Press, 2003).
[333] A. V. Remnev, *Samoderzhavnoe pravitel'stvo: komitet ministrov v sisteme vysshego upravleniia rossiiskoi imperii: vtoraia polovina XIX - nachalo XX veka* (Moscow: ROSSPEN, 2010).

imperfections into the public view, ushering in – in Russia and across Europe – the emergence of public politics. While the press scrutinized the design and implementation of reforms, the growing threat of revolutionary forces and the government's struggling efforts to subdue them chipped away the sense of control claimed by autocratic governance. Indeed, the assassination attempts on Alexander II – increasingly frequent in 1866, 1867, two in 1879, 1880 and finally in 1881 – raised the stakes by posing not only a symbolic, but a physical challenge to Russia's tsarist regime and dispelling any remaining imagery of the sacredness of the monarchic body and institution.

Alexander II's attempts to contain these challenges by partially reversing some reforms and enacting a broad-ranging ministerial reshuffle divided the bureaucratic elites. At the Ministry of Education, the 1866 replacement of A.V. Golovnin – the author of the 1863 University Statute - with D.A. Tolstoi signaled a partial reversal on university autonomy granted by the reform. At the Ministry of Justice, the 1867 replacement of D.N. Zamiatnin – the author of the 1864 Judicial Reform - with K.I. Pahlen marked a departure from the autonomy granted to juries. At the Ministry of the Interior, P.A. Valuev's evolution as Minister of the Interior and his replacement in 1868 with head of the Gendarmes Corps, A.E. Timashev, signaled a partial reversal on autonomy granted to *zemstvo* administrations and to the press. Finally, at the Ministry of Finance, the 1878 replacement of M.Kh. Reutern with S.A. Greig marked a departure from a financial and economic policy based on a rapprochement with Europe in favor of nationalist economic policy (Russo-Turkish war of 1877-1878). This significant turn in Alexander II's politics fragmented the bureaucratic officialdom, juxtaposing the reformers – many of whom retired into the State Council – and their successors in ministerial seats.[334]

Yet, the inability of the newly appointed ministers to curb the intensifying revolutionary

[334] Alfred J. Rieber, *The Imperial Russian Project: Autocratic Politics, Economic Development, and Social Fragmentation* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2017)

activity – culminating in the three attempts on Alexander II's life in quick succession during 1879-1880 – turned Alexander II back on the path of continuing, correcting, and improving the Great Reforms rather than undoing them. The new ministerial reshuffle of 1880 brought about another tidal personnel change, installing in ministerial seats many of the political mentees of the 'reformers.' At the Ministry of the Interior A.E. Timashev was replaced by M.T. Loris-Melikov, who drew on the support of the key reformer, Grand Duke Konstantin Nikolaevich. At the Ministry of Finance, a more open economic policy was signaled with the replacement of S.A. Greig with A.A. Abaza – an adherent of the enlightened salon of Grand Duchess Elena Pavlovna and a mentee of M.Kh. Reutern. At the Ministry of Education, D.A. Tolstoi was replaced by A.A. Saburov – a protegee of A.V. Golovnin. Once more, a changing political course and a tidal personnel change further fragmented the bureaucratic elites.

The fragmentation of bureaucratic elites in post-Reform Russia has been studied and overall embedded in existing scholarship. The work of P.A. Zaionchkovskii has been foundational in establishing the ideological fault lines of 'liberal' and 'conservative' politics to describe inter-ministerial rivalries particularly during the late 1870s to early1880s. Such signposts ('liberal-conservative,' 'red-reactionary') have helped early studies navigate complex relationships within the ministerial apparatus. On the other hand, Alfred J. Rieber has demonstrated that not only ideological divides fragmented the elites, but also varying interests and aspirations. According to Rieber, a plurality of "interest groups" – rather than a binary of 'liberals' and 'conservatives' – created "associations of individuals from the upper and middle strata of society [ministers, press editors, entrepreneurs] who acted in concert to defend and advance public policies that met their ideological aspirations and material needs."[335] Rieber identified a number of such groups: "the

[335] Alfred J. Rieber, "Interest Group Politics in the Era of the Great Reforms," Ben Eklof, Larissa Zakharova, John Bushnell, eds., *Russia's Great Reforms, 1855-1881* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994), 59.

economics," "the engineers," "the military," and the faction around the powerful figure of the Chief of Gendarmes, P.A. Shuvalov.

For these fragmented elites – divided by ideologies, interests, and attitudes toward the Great Reforms – , the capture of the Emperor and his agreement was the ultimate goal, as Rieber has argued. However, as Alexander II's political course underwent change and his heir - the future Alexander III – matured during the 1870, the bureaucratic officialdom increasingly coalesced around two emerging polarities – the present monarch and the future.

The differences between Alexander II and his son, Alexander III, have been well-studied.[336] Richard Wortman's seminal work has traced the uneasy relationship between father and son to young Alexander's relative neglect as the second son (until the death of his older brother and heir, Nicholas, from spinal meningitis), his academic difficulties, his struggles to forge relationships at the court, and not least to his disapproval of his father's relationship and later morganatic marriage to Princess Ekaterina Dolgorukaia following the death of Alexander Alexandrovich's mother, Empress Maria Alexandrovna. Having completed a relatively basic education as a 'spare', Alexander Alexandrovich viewed his unexpected status as an heir as "a terrible burden," which he felt unprepared to carry.[337] Reflecting on young Alexander's alienation of his father's cosmopolitan court, Wortman also weighed in on Alexander II's sense of loss of a primed heir in young Nicholas and his growing contempt for what he believed to be an uncouth new heir in Alexander, to whom he referred as '*bychok'* [*little bull*].

---

[336] The key work in this respect: Richard S Wortman, *Scenarios of Power: Myth and Ceremony in Russian Monarchy from Peter the Great to the Abdication of Nicholas II* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000). See also: A. N. Bokhanov, *Imperator Aleksandr III* (Moscow: Russkoe slovo, 1998); Heide W. Whelan, *Alexander III & the State Council: Bureaucracy and Counter-Reform in Late Imperial Russia* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1982); Hans Heilbronner, "Alexander III and the Reform Plan of Loris-Melikov," *The Journal of Modern History* 33, no. 4 (December 1961): 384–97; Ju.V. Got'e, "Pobedonostsev and Alexander III," *The Slavonic and East European Review* 7, no. 19 (June 1928): 30–54.

[337] V. P. Meshcherskii, *Moi vospominaniia, chast vtoraia (1865-1881gg)* (St. Petersburg: Tip. kniazia Meshcherskago, 1898), 450.

As Wortman also noted, young Alexander's emerging ideological differences with his father stemmed both from the unusual choice of tutors and from the heir's early formative experiences with his father's ministers. Alexander's aversion toward the luster of his father's court and the intellectual debates of the Western society developed in the remarkably Slavophile entourage of tutors, among whom were jurist and critic of St. Petersburg society K.P. Pobedonostsev, etatist historian S.M. Soloviev, and proponent of national economics I.K. Babst.[338] Alexander's first and formative experiences with bureaucratic elites brought him into confrontation not only with his father's ministers, but also with his father.

For example, in 1868, Alexander - then aged twenty-three – chaired the Committee of Ministers while the French company *La grande société des chemins de fer russes* and the Moscow entrepreneurial competed for concessions on the lucrative Kharkov-Kremenchuk railway. The Committee of Ministers unanimously supported the terms of the French contract concessions over the proposals of the Moscow group. Young Alexander opposed the decision as unfavorable and a slight to domestic interests, for which he was sharply rebuked by his father.[339] Only after his own accession Alexander III learned about millions of francs deposited by French railway magnates into the bank accounts of Princess Dolgorukaia in Paris and London.[340] The following year, in 1869, Alexander unsuccessfully attempted to uncover abuses at the D.A. Miliutin's War Ministry, and in 1877-1878 sparred with M.Kh. Reutern who was reluctant to commit funds to Russia's Balkan campaign. Alexander bemoaned Reutern as a "heathen German," who could not appreciate Russia's "interests, dignity," and patriotic duty to fellow Orthodox Slavs.[341] These incidents sowed

[338] Richard Wortman, *Scenarios of Power: Myth and Ceremony in Russian Monarchy from Peter the Great to the Abdication of Nicholas II* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2006), 248–49.
[339] Alexandr Bokhanov, *Emperor Alexander III*, 171-172.
[340] Ibid. 257.
[341] Wortman, *Scenarios of Power*, vol. 2, 186.

the seeds of Alexander's distrust in his father's bureaucracy reformist bureaucracy and what he perceived to be a corrupting influence of the West on his father's officialdom.

Alienated from his father, Alexander found company in a loose collection of courtiers, former tutors, Moscow merchants, and their connection, whose nationalist views indulged Alexander's own budding political tastes and his differences with his father. Alexander's critique of St. Petersburg officials was steered by his former law tutor, K.P. Pobedonostsev, who introduced him to another critic of St. Petersburg officialdom – M.N. Katkov.

Alexander's childhood acquaintance and longstanding correspondent, Prince Meshcherskii, sought to construct for the heir an image of a two-party government: the 'Russian party' that sought to defend 'national interests' and the umbrella-party, headed by P.A. Shuvalov – the former Chief of Gendarmes and Head of the Third Section representing – as the "Russian party" saw it – foreigners in the state apparatus striving to stifle the Russian people.[342] In a letter to Alexander, Meshcherskii juxtaposed these two camps, highlighting the leader of the 'Russian party':

> There is no doubt that with every year the enemies of national politics will seek to influence you more and more. You will not be able to counter [this influence] unless you will be firmly convinced that there is no other [way] but national politics. […] But if you are not firmly convinced that the only politics of your rule is national, that is opposite of the current one, then there is no doubt that quite soon they will convince you that the Katkovs and Co. – are the enemies of the government, while the Shuvalovs and Co. are its loyal servitors.[343]

[342] Wortman, *Scenarios of Power*, 184.
[343] V.P. Meshcherskii, Letter to Grand Duke Alexander Alexandrovich, 24 March 1871, Moscow, in V.P. Meshcherskii, *Pis'ma velikomu kniaziu Aleksandru Aleksandrovichu, 1863-1868*, ed. N.V. Chernikova (Moscow: NLO, 2011), 352–54.

The Russian party, with Katkov its most persistent voice, was – as Wortman explains – a collection loosely-associated voices that counted in its ranks statesmen and cultural figures such as Prince A.V. Obolenskii, publicist I.S. Aksakov, and poet F.I. Tiutchev. The Russian party came to critique Alexander II's Western manner and court, his favorable posture toward the Western financial markets after the Crimean War, his only partially successful reforms – all of which they saw as unbecoming of a Russian Tsar. The 1877-1878 Russo-Turkish War drove further Alexander's national sentiments, such that by the late 1870s, more than a decade since Grand Duke Alexander Alexandrovich became an heir, his fledgling political outlooks were showing unmistakable signs of divergence from the politics Alexander II.

Another formative moment for Alexander III and a polarizing event for the St. Petersburg bureaucracy was the trial by jury and acquittal of Vera Zasulich in March 1878. Zasulich's acquittal by jury, despite her arrest on the spot for the attempted murder of St. Petersburg Governor-General F.F. Trepov reignited debates around the legacies of the Judicial Reform of 1864, which instituted trial by jury. Three more assassination attempts on Alexander II the following two year - on 2 April 1879 by Alexander Soloviev, on 19 November 1879 by Andrei Zheliabov, and on 5 February 1880 by Stepan Khalturin in the Winter Palace – further called into question the ability of the autocratic regime to protect itself and those who serve it in the face of mounting revolutionary threats, deeply dividing the bureaucratic officialdom and calling for urgent action.

On the one hand, Alexander Alexandrovich's closest advisor K.P. Pobedonostsev, had since 1878 called for a more intensive government crackdown on revolutionary forces. Soon after the acquittal of Vera Zasulich, Pobedonostsev voiced his alarm to the heir: "this government

should either wake up or it will perish."[344] "The government," Pobedonostsev urged, "does not exist, there is no [government] as it should be, with a resolute will, with a sense of what it wants and a desire to defend its basic governing principles, with a readiness to *act* wherever needed."[345] Pobedonostsev boldly placed the responsibility for the rising revolutionary activity on the bureaucratic officialdom, discreetly hinting at the responsibility of the Tsar: "the trial Trepov's injury is the trial over the injury to the government, and this is why the government should have stood behind him no matter what. But instead, it [the government] backed away."[346]

Decrying the decision to put the Zasulich case to trial by jury, Pobedonostsev broadly questioned the achievements of the Judicial Reform of 1864 and its applicability in a tumultuous time. Writing to the heir, Pobedonostsev called to "unite the authorities, arm them with the means for a *quick and decisive* punishment."[347] Pobedonostsev's views on the judicial reform were consonant with Katkov's editorials on the same subject, which also asked if the Russian government "has fallen apart or is merely standing on the precipice."[348] Beginning with the late 1870s, a new motif in Pobedonostsev's correspondence with the Alexander Alexandrovich and in Katkov's editorials was the dual fear for the heir's safety and of Alexander II's government undertaking what they perceived to be extreme scenarios of issuing a constitution.[349] In his letters, Pobedonostsev projected upon "the Russian people" (*Russkii narod)* a "deep belief that the government is composed of traitors, who keep a weak Emperor under their power. All their hopes they are placing *on you* and everyone is asking themselves: is the heir really going to follow

[344] K.P. Pobedonostsev, Letter from K.P. Pobedonostsev to Grand Duke Alexander Alexandrovich, 8 April 1878, in K.V. Dolgov, *Pis'ma Pobedonostseva* (Moscow: Novaia Moskva, 1926), 117.
[345] Ibid.
[346] Ibid., 119.
[347] K.P. Pobedonostsev, Letter to Grand Duke Alexander Alexandrovich, 2 April 1879, in Dolgov, *Pis'ma Pobedonostseva*, 194.
[348] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 12 April 1878, No. 95.
[349] K.P. Pobedonostsev, Letter from K.P. Pobedonostsev to Grand Duke Alexander Alexandrovich, 14 December 1879, in Dolgov, *Pis'ma Pobedonostseva*, 249.

through with the constitution."[350]

On the other hand, Alexander II's newly appointed Minister of the Interior, M.T. Loris-Melikov, proposed a continuation, improvement, and correction of the Great Reforms. Already on 11 April 1880, he presented Alexander II with a draft of his reflections on the origins of the revolutionary movement and his immediate program, which he shared with the heir as well.[351] The project, composed in confidence from other ministers, argued that "leading Russia out of such a profound crisis […] cannot be done only through police and punitive measures."[352] Reflecting on almost two decades since the Great Reforms, Loris pointed to the incompetence and "miscoordination of the administration," the "stalled improvement of the peasant reform," the "incorrect actions of judicial authorities," as well as the loss of influence among clergy, nobility, zemstvo and urban self-administration – all of which, Loris concluded, led to "the displeasure and more or less justified disappointments [*osnovatel'nye razocharovania*], [caused] by the stalled activity over issues pointed by your Highness for resolution."[353] Loris's interest in the report focused on "various expectations [among the public] for improvement" and proposed "to prompt government institutions and officials toward more attentive attitude toward the everyday needs of the population and its representatives that are being expressed."[354]

Despite his close relationship with Pobedonostsev, Alexander Alexandrovich supported Loris's program.[355] In the months that followed, Loris's senatorial inspections, found the legacy

[350] Ibid.
[351] M.T. Loris-Melikov, Letters from M.T. Loris-Melikov to Grand Duke Alexander Alexandrovich, 9 April 1880, *Krasnyi Arkhiv* 8 (1925): 106-107. It may be possible that Loris's sharing of the project with Alexander Alexandrovich on April 9 and presenting it to Alexander II on April 11 made the former a symbolic gesture.
[352] "Vsepoddaneishii doklad grafa Loris-Melikova ot 11 Aprelia 1880. s rezoliutsiiami Aleksandra II," *Byloe*, 5 (1918): 154-161.
[353] Ibid., 156-157.
[354] Ibid., 158-160.
[355] The day after its presentation to the Tsar, he congratulated Loris on its approval, declaring that "now we can go ahead and calmly and insistently enact your program *for the happiness of our dear motherland* and for the unhappiness of [other] ministers, who will be jarred by this program and the Tsar's decision, let them be [original

of the Great Reforms, "partly unfinished and partly discrepant among themselves."[356] The resulting proposals aimed to "satisfy the lawful needs of the population [*zakonnye nuzhdy naselenia*]" through a wide range of measures: the reform zemstvo and urban administration, the "completion of 19 February 1861 laws […] according to recently learned needs of the peasant population," the securing of foodstuff reserves and assistance to peasants in the development of animal husbandry among others.[357] Charged, above all, with reining in Russia's revolutionary movement, Loris made a connection between the improvement of rural and urban livelihood through the completion of the Great Reforms, and the cessation of revolutionary activity. On 16 February 1881, the journal of the special council for the discussion of Loris-Melikov's proposal was drawn up for Alexander II and bore the signature of the heir, Alexander Alexandrovich, alongside with those of ministers and uncle Grand Duke Konstantin Nikolaevich. The following day, on 17 February, Alexander II signed the draft of the new reforms and planned to reconvene his ministers for early March for further discussion.

The assassination of Alexander II only two weeks later, on 1 March 1881, upended the plans of new reforms and called into question their implementation under the new rule. Much like his accession to the role of heir, Alexander III's accession to the throne was sudden and unexpected above all to himself. The issue immediately at stake in the aftermath of the accession was Loris's project, which Alexander approved as an heir. During the first days of the new rule, Loris-Melikov and Miliutin were confident that discussions with the newly-acceded Alexander III of Loris's

---

emphasis]." Referring to other ministers, Alexander meant the growing conflict within the Committee of Ministers caused not only by Loris's proposals, but also by his increased prerogatives as Minister of the Interior, which statesmen like P.A. Valuev and D.A. Miliutin interpreted as reminiscent of 'prime ministerial.' Grand Duke Alexander Alexandrovich, Letter to M.T. Loris-Melikov, 12 April 1880, *Krasnyi Arkhiv* 8 (1925): 108. P.A. Zaionchkovskii, *Krizis samoderzhaviia na rubezhe 1870-1880-kh godov* (Moscow: Izd-vo Moskovskogo universiteta, 1964), 156.

[356] "Vsepoddaneishii doklad ministra vnutrennikh del grafa, M.T. Loris-Melikova, ot 28 ianvaria 1881 g.," *Byloe*, 5 (1918): 163.

[357] Ibid., 162-164.

project for the completion of the Great Reforms would be "a formality, because it has already received the Supreme Accord of the late Tsar, [and] the current Emperor [Alexander III], who chaired the secret committee [on the project] has signed its conclusion."[358] However, Alexander's indecision in the weeks and months that followed cast doubt on his resolution to follow through with it. For Alexander, the success of the assassination called into question Loris's ability to safeguard the monarchy both physically and politically by enacting his reforms.

Thus, the newly acceded Alexander III faced a momentous choice between moving forward with Loris's project – thereby continuing his father's legacy of Great Reforms, which coincided with the rising revolutionary movement – or quietly setting aside the reformist approach that now appeared defeated by the revolutionary forces. Were Alexander II's reforms the cause or the remedy to the revolution? The question profoundly divided Alexander II's bureaucratic officialdom, coalescing it around two polarities, i.e. two interest groups: the interest group formed around Loris-Melikov and included Minister of Finance A.A. Abaza, Minister of War D.A. Miliutin, Minister of Justice D.N. Nabokov, which composed and rallied around his reform project, and the more disjointed and amorphous group opposing the reforms, which included government officials and Alexander III's former tutor K.P. Pobedonostsev, former Minister of Education D.A. Tolstoi, State Council members S.G. Stroganov and M.N. Ostrovskii, as well as editors such as M.N. Katkov and I.S. Aksakov. P.A. Zaionchkovskii has notably detailed in his monograph *Krizis samoderzhavia* the discreet and months-long opposition of these two groups which he designated as 'liberals' and 'conservatives' respectively.

Alexander III was particularly unprepared to take on this challenge. Among heirs to the Russian throne the future Alexander III was not only less academically prepared than his

[358] D.A. Miliutin, Entry for 8 March 1881, in *Dnevnik D.A. Miliutina, 1881-1882*, ed. P.A. Zaionchkovskii, vol. 4 (Moscow: Gos. Bibl. SSSR im. V. I. Lenina, 1950), vol. 4, 33.

predecessor, but also less connected to bureaucratic elites. A close childhood friend of young Alexander Alexandrovich, V.P. Meshcherskii noted that when Alexander II first came to power "he had around himself, so to say, a whole political party of his own people, and immediately on his accession could install them into ranks as he saw fit. The same could not be said about young Emperor Alexander III."[359] The latter had around him "good and honest people," wrote Meshcherskii, referring to his former tutor and Ober-Procurator of the Holy Synod K.P. Pobedonostsev, the Chief of Staff of the Guards Corps and (from 1881) Minister of the Imperial Court I.I. Vorontsov-Dashkov, aides-de-camp A.S. Vasil'kovskii and V.S. Obolenskii among others, but who "did not engage in politics."[360] Therefore, "in a political sense," concluded Meshcherskii, "one can truly say that the future Emperor [Alexander III] was alone in his Anichkov Palace."[361]

Alexander III was also far less independent. When Alexander II acceded to the throne, Meshcherskii observed, "he was not for a minute taken by surprise [*zastignut vrasplokh*] by the novelty of his position: He was […] long in the thick of things."[362] Alexander III, Meshcherskii noted, "could not even dream of a tenth of this independence" as his father treated him "with suspicion and gave him rather a limited experience of governance.[363]

Lacking close allies and political resolve, Alexander faced the prospect of defining his political vision as his father's ministers and courtiers grew impatient for cues. The Chairman of the Council of Ministers, P.A. Valuev, noted in his diary that "the Emperor does not have a clear

[359] Meshcherskii, *Moi vospominaniia*, vol. 3, p. 6,
[360] Ibid., 6-7.
[361] Ibid.
[362] For example, Meshcherskii recalled how during the 1840s, young Alexander Nikolaevich [Alexander II] "openly and directly impeded [the then Minister of the Interior D.G.] Bibikov in implementing his inventory project in the South-Western regions." Meshcherskii, *Moi vospominaniia*, vol. 2, 505.
[363] Meshcherskii, *Moi vospominaniia*, vol. 2, 504-505.

idea of what is desired and what is decided."[364] Writing to Alexander III on 3 March, days after the assassination, Pobedonostsev offered an instruction: "for God's sake, in these first days of [your] rule, which will have for you a decisive meaning, do not miss the chance to express your firm will, directly from you, so that everyone can hear and know: "I want this, or I do not want and will not allow [that]."[365] "The new politics," pleaded Pobedonostsev, "needs to be announced immediately and decisively."[366] Pobedonostsev's urgings soon grew more pressing, insisting that "all the people [*narod*] are awaiting your strong decision [*vlastnogo resheniia*]."[367]

Alexander III's prolonged indecision during on Loris-Melikov's project March and April 1881, detailed by Zaionchkovskii in *Krizis samoderzhavia*, created a vacuum within the highest ranks of bureaucracy. Weary of expressing themselves too unequivocally and finding themselves on at odds with the new rule, government ministers, courtiers, high-ranking officials awaited the new political course while remaining discreet efforts to steer the new rule. Within this vacuum, the private political press voiced many of the debates discussed privately in the corridors of power, at times acting with the approval of or in coordination with rival bureaucratic factions.

While P.A. Zaionchkovskii examined inter-ministerial rivalries around the accession of Alexander III, this work is interested in press polemics as vivid expression of factional struggles inside Alexander III's bureaucratic entourage. The press – able and willing to voice its views to a greater extent than the bureaucratic officialdom – articulated with far greater nuance the political debates during Alexander III's accession, illuminating it as a time of profound reckoning with the legacy of the Great Reforms, its reformist traditions, and the cultural and political directions of the

[364] P. A Valuev, Entry from 24 April 1881, *Dnevnik, 1877-1884* (Petrograd: Izd-vo "Byloe," 1919), 162.
[365] K.P. Pobedonostsev, Letter from K.P. Pobedonostsev to Alexander Alexandrovich, 3 March 1881 in Dolgov, *Pis'ma Pobedonostseva*, 314–15.
[366] Ibid.
[367] K.P. Pobedonostsev, Letter to Alexander Alexandrovich, 6 March 1881, in Ibid., 316.

new rule. As competing interest groups competed to influence the Tsar, so did private press editors – boldly and at times brazenly so. The rest of the chapter examines vibrant press debates as they competed for influence over the course of the new rule and reflected the polarized positions of rivaling interest groups within Alexander III's entourage.

Press Polemics at the Accession of Alexander III – 1881

On 2 March 1881, the day after Alexander II's assassination, Russia's daily newspapers came out with the news of Alexander II's assassination, displaying the dramatic black frame on their front pages to signify mourning and expressing horror at the "terrible event"[368], "vile act,"[369] and "people's sorrow [*narodnoe gore*]."[370] The assassination of a Russian monarch was not only an unprecedented political event, but also a news event unlike any other.

Before the nineteenth century, the death of a Russian sovereign was not widely publicized in the press. The news of the death of Peter the Great was notably absent in *Sankt Petrburgskie Vedomosti*. During the 1800s, the deaths of Alexander I and Nicholas I that newspapers published brief eulogies commending their moral qualities but stopped short of discussing of the political legacies. As Alexander II ushered in political discussion into the press, his death reflected the newfound vibrancy private political press acquired under his rule. His assassination produced a media furor, replete with daily reports of searches, arrests, investigations of revolutionary activity but it also opened the stage for debating the central issue of his reign: the complex legacy of the Great Reforms. Alexander II thus became the first Russian monarch whose political legacy was publicly discussed and debated in the press.

[368] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 2 March 1881, No. 61.
[369] A.A. Kraevskii, Editorial, *Golos*, 2 March 1881, No. 61.
[370] A.S. Suvorin, Editorial, *Novoe Vremia*, 2 March 1881, No. 1799.

A day after Alexander II's assassination, Russia's typically contentious leading dailies united in tributes to the late Tsar. Katkov's *Moskovskie Vedomosti* praised a "beloved tsar" whose life was "a great feat [*velikii podvig*] full of good deeds for the people."[371] Kraevskii's *Golos* paid homage to "Tsar-Liberator" whose "liberation of peasants from serfdom signified the beginning of a new life for Russia." [372] Suvorin's *Novoe Vremia* went even further, proclaiming "Yes, it was the best Tsar. None of his predecessors committed so many great [acts], so much good for the heart of Russia, for its people, for this mass, which for entire centuries had neither freedom [*volia*], nor courts, which bereft of all human rights [*chelovecheskie prava*]. He gave these rights."[373] Suvorin recalled "a whole range of reforms that freed the Russian person [*russkogo cheloveka*] […] culminating this truly liberating reign."[374] Praising Alexander II rule, Suvorin likened Russia's serfdom to slavery, while Kraevskii compared Alexander II to Abraham Lincoln, whose 1862 Emancipation Proclamation soon followed the 19 February 1861 Manifesto on the emancipation of serfs; both met their ends in public at the hand of an assassin.[375]

In his first weekly issue since the assassination, I.S. Aksakov's *Rus'* praised the abolition of serfdom for "returning human rights [*chelovecheskie prava*] to tens of millions," elevating Russia "onto a moral high ground," the moral argument indeed characteristic of the Slavophile thought.[376] P.A. Valuev privately expressed his distaste with such "strange, half-naïve, half-vain taste for flattering paradoxes" in descriptions of the "Tsar-liberator," who – Valuev remarked – "only liberated from serfdom one third or one quarter of all population. Everyone else received no

[371] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 2 March 1881, No. 61.
[372] A.A. Kraevskii, Editorial, *Golos*, 2 March 1881, No. 61.
[373] A.S. Suvorin, Editorial, *Novoe Vremia*, 2 March 1881, No. 1799.
[374] Ibid.
[375] A.A. Kraevskii, Editorial, *Golos*, 8 March 1881, No. 67.
[376] Neznakomets, "Nedelnye ocherki i kartinki: Kharakter prozytykh reform," *Novoe Vremya*, 8 March 1881, No. 1805, 2. I.S. Aksakov, Editorial, *Rus*, 14 March 1881, No. 18.

freedoms at all."[377]

However, the following day, on 3 March, more critical assessments of Alexander II and the Great Reforms began to seep into the press. At the forefront of this critique, M.N. Katkov declared "this is how it ends for the twenty-five-year [rule] of ceaseless reforms, that amazed the world with their speed and exceeded the expectations of the most liberal parties in all countries!"[378] Later that spring, Katkov formulated his stance more clearly: "The great reforms [*velikie preobrazovaniia*] raised a multitude of issues [*mnozhestvo voprosov*]. Nothing was left in our lives that was not called into question, everything destabilized and became uncertain [*zashatalos' i zakolebalos'*], and we lost from the view the very subject of our reforms and improvements."[379] Indeed, "considering the number and comprehensiveness of the reforms," he argued, "it was impossible to foresee all the details that could have become harmful rather than helpful."[380] Hinting at the origins of Russia's revolutionary movement, Katkov suggested that the Great Reforms, particularly the 1861 peasant reform "[required] careful removal of the roots and foundations of Russian society, and a change of the entire way of peoples' lives."[381]

In an editorial on the same day, 3 March, Kraevskii conceded that although Alexander II "fulfilled his task," the reforms that followed "did not achieve the momentum, the meaning in the life of the people that He vested in them."[382] Kraevskii explained loss of momentum as follows:

> [The Great Reforms were] a process of transition from one order to another, having prolonged itself, [it] has become a process of decomposition. And the signs of decomposition have been observed in the last few years. […] During this

[377] Valuev, Entry from 7 April 1882, *Dnevnik, 1877-1884*, 193.
[378] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 3 March 1881, No. 62.
[379] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 8 April 1881, No. 99.
[380] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 6 July 1883, No. 186.
[381] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 4 March 1881, No. 64.
[382] A.A. Kraevskii, Editorial, *Golos*, 3 March 1881, No. 62

> transitional period, everything has been attempted, and nothing brought the desired result. On the contrary, the resolution of the most pressing issues has been delayed further and further, until, finally, after the horrific, unprecedented catastrophe of March 1st, when all these issues have fallen on the shoulders of the new Ruler [Alexander III].[383]

As Kraevskii celebrated the comprehensiveness of the Great Reforms ("this enormous task"), Katkov lamented their failure precisely for this reason.[384] If Katkov viewed the reforms primarily as a destructive and destabilizing force, Kraevskii celebrated Alexander's rule as a creative force in all matters concerning society (*obshchestvo*): "during his time appeared all-estate institutions – zemstvo and urban; during his time appeared the press that for the first time discussed social and political issues; during his time appeared everything that bears the sign of society and some civic liberties."[385] Katkov's views were cautiously supported by Suvorin, who followed suit days later with a discussion of the fundamental difficulty of reforming the countryside and allaying landowner interests.[386] Aksakov's *Rus* concurred while highlighting the shortcomings in implementation of the Great Reforms in the countryside: land shortage, food shortage often in the more fertile region, and the mismatch between peasant income from harvest and fiscal obligations to name a few.[387]

The complications of the peasant reform engendered a relative consensus among otherwise contentious press editors much in the same way as it did among otherwise rivaling political factions around Alexander II before 1881 and his son thereafter. The 1864 Judicial Reform stirred a far

[383] A.A. Kraevskii, Editorial, *Golos*, 4 March 1881, No. 63.
[384] Ibid.
[385] Ibid.
[386] Neznakomets [A.S. Suvorin], "Nedelnye ocherki i kartinki: Kharakter prozytykh reform," *Novoe Vremya*, 8 March 1881, No. 1805.
[387] [I.S. Aksakov], "Zadachi tsentral'nogo khoziaistvennogo organa v Rossii, IV)," *Rus*, 2 May 1881, No. 25, 13.

more controversial press polemic. Kraevskii celebrated the Judicial Reform for striving to "awaken civil consciousness (*pod''em obshchestvennyh sil*)," and applauded efforts to institute an "open civic society" and "free institutions."[388] The reforms in general, he argued "began to affirm and strengthen individuals' dignity, to this extent previously unknown. Together with individual dignity, national dignity began to grow and enter [public] consciousness."[389]

Responding to Kraevskii, Aksakov strongly disagreed. Recalling the trial of Vera Zasulich and anxious about the trial over the revolutionaries responsible for the assassination, Aksakov interjected that the "progress" that Kraevskii praised "has brought us to regress."[390] Suvorin likewise challenged Kraevskii's stance on the moral superiority of the reforms – particularly the Judicial Reform, arguing, to the contrary, that their implementation has led to the "moral degradation [*moral'noe rastlenie*]" of post-Reform Russia and the "deterioration of legal consciousness [*poniatia o zakonnosti*]." Remarkable here is not only the boldness of editorial assessments only days after the assassination of the 'Reformer-Tsar,' but also that the ways in which editorial discourses aligned with bureaucratic factions along the same political divides. Kraevskii's praise for the humanism of the Great Reforms echoed the sentiments of the reformist officials of the 1860s and their mentees in ministerial positions in March of 1881. On the other hand, Suvorin's, Aksakov, and Katkov's critique of the 1864 Judicial Reform was largely consonant with Pobedonostsev's dim view of Russia's post-Reform courts, where --

> [There are] hordes of lawyers are driven by amour-propre and self-interest to exercise their sophistry and logomania to influence a mass [of people]; where there is a disparate herd of jury members, chosen either at random or with intent, who

[388] A.A. Kraevskii, Editorial, *Golos*, 8 March 1881, No. 67.
[389] A.A. Kraevskii, Editorial, *Golos*, 4 March 1881, No. 63.
[390] I.S. Akskaov, Editorial, *Rus'*, 12 March 1881, No. 17.

> understand neither the duty of the judge nor the facts, which require analysis and logical examination; finally, there is a mixed crowd of viewers, who come to the court for a spectacle amid their dully and poor lives; and this public has to signify the *people* [*narod*] in the minds of the idealists.[391]

Much like the divergent bureaucratic factions, press editors differed in whom they held accountable for the shortcomings of the Great Reforms. Already on 4 March 1881, Katkov hinted at Alexander II as primarily responsible for the failings of the Great Reforms and for his inability to remedy their negative consequences. *Moskovskie Vedomosti* was perhaps unique in transitioning within a matter of days from its portrayal of a noble, charitable, benevolent Emperor,[392] to that of a rather pitiful characterization of a monarch, who "belittled and constrained himself [*prinizhal i stesnial*], was in constant danger of letting his power slip [*uronit' nachalo vlasti*]."[393] Katkov boldly argued that "the weakening of the supreme authority inevitably creates unrest" had led to the assassination "as if it was necessary for us to feel even more the unrest [*smuta*] that we lived through, as if to punish and awaken us [*vrazumit'*]."[394]

Other newspapers, like V.P. Meshcherskii's *Grazhdanin* likewise blamed Alexander II's incompetence in matters of peasant life and his willingness to "give away his autocracy."[395] Katkov argued that it was indeed this transfer of decision-making powers from the monarchy and its administration to institutions such as universities and court juries – and the persistence of this transfer in the face of mounting revolutionary threats - that were at the root of the 1 March events. Alexander II, Katkov hinted, was essentially responsible for such a turn of events, and so were

---

[391] A.I. Pashkov, *K.P. Pobedonostsev: Sochinenia* (St. Petersburg: Nauka, 1996), 300.
[392] It is interesting that with Alexander II Katkov prefers the more cosmopolitan Emperor, rather than 'Tsar' as he does with Alexander III.
[393] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 4 March 1881, No. 64.
[394] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti* 3 March 1881, No. 62.
[395] Meshcherskii, *Moi vospominaniia*, 503.

"the administrators [who] began themselves speaking if not in the language of *Zemlia i Volia*, then with the feuilletons of *Golos.*"[396]

Katkov's and Meshcherskii's stance was wholly shared by Pobedonostsev, who shared in his frank letters to his lifelong confidante, E.F. Tiutcheva, I.S. Aksakov's sister-in-law, his view on Alexander II as "a pitiful and unhappy man [*zhalkii i neschastnyi*]" in whose hands "the [autocratic] power, given to him by god [sic] has fallen apart and has disgraced itself, and his reign, perhaps not for his fault, was the reign of falsehood and mammon, not of truth."[397]

Kraevskii protested the bold critique of Alexander II, shifting the responsibility on bureaucratic inertia for sabotaging the Great Reforms. Reprinting an editorial in L.A. Polonskii's likeminded newspaper, *Strana* newspaper, Kraevskii agreed it was "a terrible evil [*strashnoe zlo*] - to hold only one person [Alexander II] responsible for everything that could be inflicted on our multi-million nation power loving and ignorant advisers and administrators."[398] Drawing on Polonskii, the *Golos* editor concurred on the need for "a lightning rod for decisions [*gromootvod dlia lichnosti glavy gosudarstva*]" to protect the legitimacy of the monarch from the unexpected effects of reforms.[399] Yet, while Kraevskii deemed the bureaucracy to be too slow to act on reforms, Aksakov argued "peaceful nihilists" for what he believed to be an overly speedy change.[400]

Newspaper polemics over the Great Reforms soon raised a broader debate over Russia's reformist and Westernizing traditions, drawing parallels between Russia's two "great reformers"

---

[396] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 4 March 1881, No. 64.
[397] K.P. Pobedonostsev, Letters to E.F. Tiutcheva, as cited in Iu.V. Got'e, "P.P. Pobedonostsev i naslednik Alexandr Alexandrovich. 1865-1881," in *Publichnaia biblioteka SSSR. Sbornik II* (Moscow: Izdanie biblioteki, 1928), 119.
[398] A.A. Kraevskii, Editorial, *Golos*, 4 of March 1881, No. 63.
[399] Interestingly, among all four editors, their praise for the Great Reforms was intertwined with the name and character of Alexander II, however, critical passages lend the Reforms an agency of their own, leaving Alexander II's name unmentioned. Indeed, Kraevskii among all four was particularly keen on protecting the legacy of the Reformer-Tsar in hopes it might encourage his successor to continue in the spirit of the Great Reforms.
[400] I.S. Aksakov, Editorial, *Rus*, 21 March 1881, No. 19.

- Peter I and Alexander II. Closely followed by the state officials and the Tsar, editorial debates among Katkov, Kraevskii, Suvorin, and Aksakov questioned Russia's civilizational identity, Peter's legitimacy as a reformer, the suitability of Western-style reforms, and the symbolic legitimacy of St. Petersburg as Russia's political center. The city of St. Petersburg – the embodiment and tangible symbol of Peter's Europeanizing reforms – became a lightning rod in press polemics on Peter's legacy, Russia's civilizational identity, Peter's legitimacy as a reformer, the suitability of Western-style reforms. Indeed, by the late nineteenth century, the cultural dichotomy surrounding St. Petersburg and Moscow came to symbolize a vast political divide as St. Petersburg, came to signify Russia's European ambitions while Moscow came to be a symbol of Russian nativism and national culture – the locus of Russia's *Sonderweg*.

The opening shot in this polemic came already on 7 March from Katkov's *Moskovskie Vedomosti,* timed just ahead of the first meeting of the Committee of Ministers with Alexander III to discuss Loris-Melikov's project on 8 March 1881. Although the date of the meeting was closely held, Katkov likely received a tip-off from his ally in Alexander's entourage, K.P. Pobedonostsev. Indeed, the discussion of Moscow and St. Petersburg first appeared in Pobedonostsev's letter to Alexander III a day earlier, on 6 March 1881, in which the Ober-Procurator urged Alexander to leave the "cursed" St. Petersburg and settle in Moscow, "a cleaner place."[401] In the same vein, Katkov suggested that Russia's capital should be transferred from St. Petersburg to Moscow for the security of the new monarch as well as for the particular cultural qualities of the city:

> May God impress it upon the heart of the newly-acceded Emperor to begin his rule in Moscow. Here, where our state had been formed and [where] the supreme authority was raised above all others, here in Kremlin, full of sacred traditions,

[401] Dolgov, *Pis'ma Pobedonostseva,* 317.

> ghosts will disappear, trials will end and our [public] opinion will be healed [*mnenie budet istseleno*]. Here is a different moral atmosphere than in [St.] Peterburg, where our officialdom, ill with opinion [*bol'noe mneniem*] dominates, where evil is born and feeds, where it is mainly concentrated.[402]

Katkov's critique of the Great Reforms as the source of revolutionary unrest and his sharp assessment of the St. Petersburg officialdom were aimed to dissuade from the adoption of Loris's plan in the forthcoming meeting. More symbolically, his call for a change of capital discreetly called for a tidal change of Russia's political course. Responding to Katkov's proposal in a 9 March editorial, Kraevskii understood it as such, suggesting that "the proposal should be understood not literally as a simple move from St. Petersburg to Moscow, but in the sense of abandonment of the traditions of the St. Petersburg period in our history and a return to the traditions of the Moscow period." [403]

Safety precautions quickly gave way to political motives behind the initiative. Katkov, Aksakov, and Suvorin argued that moving Russia's capital to Moscow would assure that the capital would be far more representative of Russia's population and strengthen the ties between the state and the subjects. The very next day, Suvorin's *Novoe Vremia* came out with a front-page column titled "Moscow or St. Petersburg?," declaring that the issue of the transfer of the capital "is only a matter of time."[404] Suvorin affirmed, in agreement, with Katkov that "Moscow is indeed closer to everything Russian, just as everything foreign is closer to St. Petersburg," but he did not share Katkov's national sentiment vis-à-vis Moscow.[405] In another editorial, days later, Suvorin wrote on the geographical remoteness of St. Petersburg, considering it "quite unnatural to have the capital

[402] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 6 March 1881, No. 65.
[403] A.A. Kraevskii, Editorial, *Golos*, 9 March 1881, No. 68.
[404] [A.S. Suvorin], "Moskva ili Peterburg?" *Novoe Vremia*, 10 March 1881, No. 1807.
[405] Ibid.

at the borderland [*na okraine*] of the state."[406] "The master of the house," he concluded, "does not live in the yard."[407]

The strongest voice in the developing Moscow-St. Petersburg polemic came on 10 March in Aksakov's *Rus'*, which began by declaring: "Yes, to Moscow, to Moscow now Russia calls its Tsar!... Time to go home! Time to end the St. Petersburg period of Russian history with all its bloody overthrows, treason, and sedition of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries!"[408]

Katkov, Suvorin, and Aksakov – all argued that the move to Moscow would assure that the capital would be far more representative of Russia's population and strengthen the ties between the state and the subjects. Moscow, they argued, would better correspond to Russia's population and issues at hand. While Katkov protested any efforts under Alexander II to introduce a representative body, his polemic in the weeks after 1 March was acutely focused on the non-representative nature of the St. Petersburg officialdom. In his proposal, Katkov juxtaposed the St. Petersburg "officialdom" and "the people" in Moscow.[409] Katkov saw it as a characteristic trait of St. Petersburg bureaucracy "to govern the lives [of its subjects] without asking about it or looking closer at it."[410] In the same vein, Aksakov deemed St. Peterburg "the symbol of removal [*otchuzhdenia*] from the *narod", "*a high priest and salve of bureaucratism, - i.e. a formal, lifeless, abstract, bureaucratic red tape [*bumazhnochinovnichestvo*], and mechanized administration of the Russian people."[411] In his 4 April 1881 issue of *Rus*, Aksakov published a series of readers' letters to his editorial office "so that the 'intelligentsia' from the capitals would see what Russia - so little

[406] A.S. Suvorin, Editorial, *Novoe Vremya*, 12 March 1881, No. 1809.
[407] Ibid.
[408] I.S. Aksakov, Editorial, *Rus*', 10 March 1880, No.17.
[409] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 6 March 1881, No. 65.
[410] M.N. Katkov, Letter from M.N. Katkov to P.A. Valuev, undated [1881], Otdel Rukopisei Rossiiskaia Gosudarstvennaia Biblioteka [OR RGB] f. 120, ed. 47, l. 52ob-55ob.
[411] I.S. Aksakov, Editorial, *Rus*', 10 March 1881, No. 17.

known by them - feels!"[412].

Katkov reassured his readers that even Bismarck was proposing a similar move of the capital from Berlin to the central city of Kassel, although Katkov's critique highlighted the inequitable political consequences of such a location: "The composition of the Reichstag ceases to be the faithful [*vernoe*] expression of the composition of the German people, because the chamber has many Berliners, who do not need to bear the costs of travel."[413] In a subtle reference to St. Petersburg, Katkov surmised that "the Imperial chancellor, likely finds that Berlin's population, as a whole, ceased to correspond to the expression of the German people."[414]

The differences between "the people" and the "St. Petersburg officialdom", the governing and the governed, took center stage in acrimonious debates among the editors during he spring of 1881. Kraevskii, responding to Katkov's call for a return to "the people," asked what is meant by "the people" – "uneducated classes, which the publicist want to juxtapose to the so-called intelligentsia, then the present moment is hardly suited for such juxtapositions."[415] Suvorin likewise took issue with such a juxtaposition, "as if the Russian intelligentsia will diminish if the residence is transferred to Moscow."[416] Kraevskii protested the new national or perhaps popular direction (*narodnoe napravlenie*) championed by Katkov, Aksakov, and Suvorin, which, Kraevskii argued, would "awaken the beast" [*probudit zverya*], i.e. that "this political course will politically awaken the 80% of Russian population," presumably the peasantry. *Golos* argued that these 80% will devour the remaining 20%, i.e. the Russian nobility. Aksakov saw Kraevskii's comment as an attempt to "scare the government with the potential consequences of the popular

[412] I.S. Aksakov, Editorial, *Rus'*, 4 April 1881, No. 21.
[413] Otto von Bismarck, as cited in M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 23 April 1881, No. 112. For more on Bismarck's contemplated move of the German capital from Berlin to Kassel, see: Perry Anderson, *The New Old World* (New York: Verso, 2009), 225.
[414] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 23 April 1881, No. 112.
[415] A.A. Kraevskii, Editorial, *Golos*, 9 March 1881, No. 68.
[416] [A.S. Suvorin], "Moskva ili Peterburg?" *Novoe Vremia*, 10 March 1881, No. 1807.

[*narodny*] direction in politics, [by] representing the people [*narod*] not only as an uncouth [and] ignorant, mass, but as a bloodthirsty beast!"[417]

Highlighting the differences between the governing and the governed, Katkov and Aksakov condemned St. Petersburg officials and "liberal press" for "denigrating our simple people [*narod*], […] likening the *narod* to cattle [*skot*]."[418] Aksakov argued that *Golos* and the "Russian intelligentsia" to which he ascribed Kraevskii, "do not know, negate, or resent" the Russian *narod,* its values and way of life.[419] Aksakov suggested that while *Golos* "claims that they above all appreciate the Russian 'soul,'" in its "decency," "holy patience [*vysokoe smirenie*]," if the Russian *narod* were to lose its patience, "the same 'liberals' will be screaming about 'the butchers from Okhotnyi Riad [*Okhotnoriadskikh miasnikakh*], about *chern'* [chernye krestiane, i.e. taxable population, rabble], and would denigrate them." [420] In a similar vein, Katkov underlined in a personal letter to P.A. Valuev the historical continuities of such attitudes: "We have gotten used to treat ourselves, our society, our people [*narod*] with disdain [*prezritel'no*], [and] on the surface it is possible that we may be to some extent right in this; but there are issues on which our government can feel that it governs a great people [*pravitel'stvo velikogo naroda*] and speak in European councils with dignity and energy."[421]

Debates over Russia's tradition of Europeanization inflamed the press. Already by mid-March 1881, Suvorin published an excerpt from historian I.E. Zabelin's article in *Istoricheskii Vestnik* on the Muscovite period, in which Zabelin praised the Muscovite tradition of Tsars "living at once with the *narod*" - traditions destroyed beginning with the "development of a strong, even

[417] I.S. Aksakov, Editorial, *Rus*, 16 January 1882, No. 3.
[418] Ibid.
[419] I.S. Aksakov, Editorial, *Rus*, 9 April 1881, No. 22.
[420] Ibid.
[421] M.N. Katkov, Letter from M.N. Katkov to P.A. Valuev, undated [1881], OR RGB, f. 120, ed. 47, l. 52ob-55ob.

tyrannical tsarist power from the 16th century was accompanied by disasters unknown to ancient Rus," referring to the reign of Peter the Great.[422] Turning to a critique of the Petrine reforms, Katkov, Suvorin, and Aksakov drew parallels between the shortcomings of Russia's Westernization since Peter the Great and the Great Reforms of Alexander II – their violence, unforeseen consequences, and limited results beyond the capitals. Aksakov issued an unsparing critique of Peter the Great and the violent methods of his reforms in a subtle critique of the Great Reforms. Aksakov noted that Peter the Great

> demanded that Russia adopts from Europe not only the Enlightenment, but also the European nationality, for the sake of which the Russian nationality was suppressed even in clothing. He demanded that Russia abandoned its independence, without realizing, that [borrowing European traditions] will only be useful if [Russian] people internalize this on their own.[423]

Characterizing Peter as "a despot the universe has never known before or after", Aksakov condemned his reforms, which "for the success of his 'historic mission' for the enactment of his ideals, had to break all resistance of the zemstvo life, all manifestation of nativeness [*samobytnost'*], uniqueness, and transform all into a docile, obedient material, suitable for the molding of his beloved European form of governing." [424] Peter, Aksakov lamented, "penetrated, using the police, into all the nooks of public life, wherever the free spirit might find refuge, left nothing in its place, regulated everything, and took everything for the treasury, submitted everything to his will – morals, customs, consciousness, hairstyle, church, dress, literacy and language […]."[425] The long list of Petrine reforms invites the parallel with the comprehensiveness

[422] A.S. Suvorin, Editorial, *Novoe Vremia*, 18 March 1881, No. 1815.
[423] I.S. Aksakov, "Znachenie Stsolitsy," *Rus'*, 2 January 1882, No. 1, 12.
[424] I.S. Aksakov, Editorial, *Rus'*, 9 May 1881, No. 26, 3.
[425] Ibid.

of the Great Reforms, their imposition from the top, and their aspiration to Western ideals. Some newspapers drew the parallel between the Petrine and the Great Reforms remarkably bluntly. In his *Sovremennye Izvestia (Contemporary News),* Slavophile N.P. Giliarov-Platonov's ventured as far as arguing that the March 1 assassination was the culmination of the St. Petersburg period of Russian history.[426]

Katkov and Aksakov in particular advocated for a turn away from Russia's Westernizing course in favor of vaguely-defined pre-Petrine traditions of governance with "a Emperor in the old ways [who] calls to his support the Russian land (not the bureaucracy and the chattering "liberals"), but the great now *silent* land."[427]

While Kraevskii insisted on the late emperor's "spiritual connection of the Emperor and the *narod*," he asked on the pages of *Golos* "why is it only possible in Moscow?"[428] The discourse of unity between Emperor and *narod* had its critics even in the high ranks of the state. P.A. Valuev questioned it entirely "as if it is possible, without intermediary mechanism [to have] direct relations between 100 million people and one tsar."[429] Valuev remained a skeptic: "the illusion of Moscow plays a big role. Dipping into this river supposedly gives the desired immunity. But the Achilles heel here, too, remains unsubmerged."[430]

Kraevskii had similar objections to Katkov's and Aksakov's arguments: "Moscow will turn into the same bureaucrat" as St. Petersburg.[431] In a broader sense, Kraevskii rejected these proposals to return to pre-Petrine Russia:

> If the 'St. Petersburg' period must end, then there is no reason a 'Moscow' period

[426] As cited in "Among Newspapers and Journals," *Novoe Vremya*, 13 March 1881, N1810, p. 2.
[427] I.S. Aksakov, Editorial, *Rus*, 12 March 1881, No. 17.
[428] A.A. Kraevskii, Editorial, *Golos*, 9 March 1881, No. 68. A.A. Kraevskii, Editorial, *Golos*, 15 March 1881, No. 71.
[429] Valuev, Entry from 4 May 1881, *Dnevnik, 1877-1884*, 165.
[430] Valuev, Entry from 16 July 1881, *Dnevnik, 1877-1884*, 170.
[431] A.A. Kraevskii, Editorial, *Golos*, 13 March 1881, No. 72.

> should begin - [instead] a Russian period must begin. […] No, Alexander II stretched his arms not to Tsars Feodor and Boris, as Mr. Aksakov tries to convince us all. He [Alexander II] extended his hands to the future of Russia, which will become a great future only if we understand his idea, if we carry his legacy with honesty and truth.[432]

Kraevskii, as many Western-minded reforming officials, regarded pre-Petrine Russia distinctly in the past, as a foregone in Russian history, an earlier stage in Russia's linear evolution. On the contrary, Suvorin proposed that "the Moscow period has not run its course, it was forcefully [*nasil'stveno*] interrupted."[433] In fact, Suvorin sought to demonstrate that the very things *Golos* was calling for – self-governance, factory development, and craftsmanship – "were laid in the foundation [*zalozheny v osnovu*] of the Moscow period."[434]

A keen observer of the newspaper polemics, P.A.Valuev, noted that "the erratic course of affairs continues and from drama at times becomes a comedy. […] patriotic amusements from Moscow continues with calls to transfer there the seat of power and with Aksakov's moto: "time to go home", i.e. to Kitai-gorod; in short, there is no real government anywhere and there does not seem to be any single idea uniting and directing the government."[435]

The press polemic over Russia's cultural belonging between Moscow and St. Petersburg and its reformist legacies stirred by Pobedonostsev and Katkov ahead of the 8 March meeting of the Committee of Ministers coincided with an unexpected turn of events. For ministers in Loris-Melikov's entourage, such as D.A. Miliutin, the discussion of the project was unexpected and "at first appeared as a formality" since "the issue already received the approval of the late Emperor

[432] A.A. Kraevskii, Editorial, *Golos*, 13 March 1881, No. 72.
[433] [A.S. Suvorin], "Moscow or Petersburg?" *Novoe Vremya*, 10 March 1881, No. 1807.
[434] Ibid.
[435] Valuev, Entry for 23 March 1881, *Dnevnik, 1877-1884*, 157.

[Alexander II] and of the currently reigning Emperor [Alexander III], who chaired the secret commission and signed its report."[436] Furthermore, having sent Alexander III the draft of his announcement of the reforms, Loris received a reply from the monarch stating that "The draft is composed very well."[437]

However, on 8 March, Alexander III opened the meeting expressing uncertainty "I say ahead of time that this issue should not be considered decided upon, since even my late father wanted to review it in the Council of Ministers before finally approving of the project."[438] Alexander then interrupted Loris-Melikov's presentation of his project stating that 'I think we were mistaken [*kazhet'sa, my zabluzhdalis'*]."[439]

The discussion that followed, detailed by P.A. Zaionchkovskii, exposed deep divsions in Alexander III's entourage.[440] Ministers' remarks focused on one point of contention – the involvement of representatives in shaping reforms. On the one hand, Pobedonostsev and his ally, S.G. Stroganov, agued that Loris's project was "a path leading to constitution" and that the "talking shops" of representatives it proposed would lead to "a struggle within the state" and to the empowerment of a single minister as a "dictator."[441] L.S. Makov concurred that this was a "limitation of autocracy" and Alexander III agreed.[442] On the other hand, Valuev countered that the project was in fact "very far from a constitution" and had to do with learning the needs and

---

[436] D.A. Miliutin, Entry for 8 March 1881, in *Dnevnik D.A. Miliutina, 1881-1882*, ed. P.A. Zaionchkovskii, vol. 4 (Moscow: Gos. Bibl. SSSR im. V. I. Lenina, 1947), vol. 4, 33.
[437] "Vsepoddaneishii doklad grafa Loris-Melikova ot 6 Marta 1881," *Byloe*, 5 (1918): 177.
[438] E.A. Peretts, Entry for 8 March 1881, *Dnevnik E.A. Perettsa (1880-1883)* (Moscow: Gosud. izd-vo, 1927), 32.
[439] "Iz dnevnika E.A. Peretsa," *Krasnyi Arkhiv* 8 (1925): 134. Loris's project indeed claimed that "In the first 6 months of the institution of the Supreme [Administrative] Commission, its chief [Loris] was able to affirm before the Emperor the visibly successful results of the [Emperor's] orders to calm the society and restore order." "Proekt pravitel'stvennogo soobshchenia," *Byloe*, 5 (1918): 174.
[440] Zaionchkovskii, *Krizis samoderzhaviia*, 325–33.
[441] Here, Pobdonostsev alluded to the role of France's President of the Chamber of Deputies at the time, Leon Gambetta, who presided over factional struggles in the Chamber, subsequently becoming prime minister – a role Pobedonostsev feared Loris-Melikov was eyeing. "Iz dnevnika E.A. Peretsa," *Krasnyi Arkhiv* 8 (1925): 141,
[442] Zaionchkovskii, *Krizis samoderzhaviia*, 326.

opinion of local representatives. Miliutin and Abaza urged the necessity of the measure, the former insisting there "is not a shadow of constitution." Commenting privately on Pobedonsotsev's scare tactics, D.A. Miliutin noted that "only those who wanted to frighten Alexander II and his heir [Alexander III] could portray Loris-Melikov's suggestions as the first step toward a constitution."[443] The session ended without Alexander expressing himself on the project, adding only his doubt about representatives as communicators of popular needs.[444]

Leaving the 8 March meeting, Valuev called it "a total fiasco."[445] Yet, few other events demonstrate so clearly the emergence of rivaling factions within ministerial ranks which continued to struggle for influence over the monarch for much of the spring of 1881. Indeed, Loris-Melikov's project polarized the bureaucratic officialdom, coalescing a variety of persuasions within ministerial ranks around the polarities of support and opposition to the project.

Still, as ministers grasped the possibility of a tidal change in Russia's political course, the press – with its keen sense of the moment - warned of a political watershed. Aksakov, much like Katkov, Kraevskii and Suvorin, noted that "an entire epoch is passing, and a new epoch is starting! [It is] the end of one [and] the beginning of another [epoch], determined by clear differences [*grani*]."[446] M.N. Katkov likewise anticipated a significant change "a new era is beginning, let us hope we will end all confusion and tumult that were the consequences of the fast and poorly coordinated innovations."[447] However, what the new era would entail in practice – not just in a cultural sense – remained unclear during the early months of the new rule.

---

[443] Miliutin, Entry for 4 July 1881, in *Dnevnik D. A. Miliutina*, vol. 4, 96–97.

[444] According to State Secretary E.A. Peretts, present at the 8 March 1881 meeting, Alexander concluded with the following: "I think the same thing. In Denmark ministers told me more than once that deputies holding sessions in the chambers cannot be considered the expression of true popular needs." "Izdnevnika E.A. Peretsa," *Krasnyi Arkhiv* 8 (1925): 141,

[445] Valuev, Entry from 9 March 1881, *Dnevnik, 1877-1884*, 153.

[446] I.S. Aksakov, Editorial, *Rus'*, 7 March 1881, No. 17.

[447] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 21 May 1883, No. 140.

Political Pluralism in the Press: Competing Visions of the New Rule

In the aftermath of the 8 March meeting, Alexander III withdrew from the St. Petersburg court to the secluded Gatchina Palace, leaving his bureaucratic officialdom to an anxious and increasingly frustrating wait. D.A. Miliutin noted in his diary that "the Emperor does not speak a work with me about general affairs" and has reduced "to extreme limits" his audiences with ministers.[448] Much like his fellow ministers, D.A. Miliutin, observed the shaping of opposing camps around Loris's project, noted in mid-March that "the Emperor has so far not expressed the slightest inclination toward one side or the other."[449] Publicist and former state official, B.M. Markevich, wrote to M.N. Katkov of the "complete indecision of the Tsar; nothing is clear or decided, et un mutisme complet [a total silence]."[450] Himself impatient for a sign of the new political direction, Katkov emphasized in his editorials – perhaps hoping it would reach his most important reader – that these early months of the new rule as "critical moments" [*kritichiskie minuty*].[451]

With Alexander III withdrawing to Gatchina, Loris-Melikov adopted a wait and see approach. In this vacuum created by this political pause, another political force – the press – began to step in, presenting competing visions and projects for the new rule. M.N. Katkov's editorials boldly opened the discussion, asking in one of its March editorials: "What is necessary at the moment?"[452] Over the weeks that followed, the editors focused on two main issues, perceived to be at the root of the rising revolutionary movement: peasant welfare (land access, pricing, taxation)

[448] D.A. Miliutin, Entries for 24 March 1881 and 31 March 1881, in *Dnevnik D.A. Miliutina, 1881-1882*, vol. 4, 46, 51.
[449] D.A. Miliutin, Entries for 15 March 1881, in *Dnevnik D.A. Miliutina, 1881-1882*, vol. 4, 40.
[450] B.M. Markevich, Letter from B.M. Markevich to M.N. Katkov, 20 April 1881, OR RGB f. 120, ed. 28, l. 46.
[451] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 19 March 1881, No. 79.
[452] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 18 March 1881, No. 78.

and education (school and universities).

All four editors agreed that the peasantry struggled under the weight of their redemption payments obligations often caused by the high price of the land. Indeed, the State Council was due to review the project lowering redemption payments later that spring. Suvorin was the first to call for "lowering the [peasant'] cost of living, easing their lot" [453] Already on 25 March, his editorial in *Novoe Vremia* declared that "the peasant question [*narodnyi vopros*], in our opinion, is the most difficult at the moment and the most necessary to solve."[454] Suvorin encouraged Alexander III to

> resume his convictions and desires, which he expressed as an heir. They are: the reduction in redemption payments, a radical reform of taxes, the elimination of the poll tax, the facilitation of [peasant] resettlement from one *guberniia* to another, the easing of the passport system that oppresses the peasantry most of all, the institution of banks for low land credit for peasants.[455]

Suvorin's calls for a peasant reform coincided with the appointment of N.P. Ignatiev as Minister of State Domains. Seeking favor with the new minister, Suvorin welcomed him warmly, complementing him on being "polite and accessible [...] with great abilities and curiosity, while Kraevskii, greeted Ignatiev coolly, noting only that "the new minister has much to do."[456]

Days after Ignatiev's appointment, Aksakov published an article by D.F. Samarin, who called for "the lowering of redemption payments in areas where they exceed the paying capacity of the peasants and where this causes the constant accruing of debts with no hope of repayment." [457] Samarin urged, however, that the redemption payment should be lowered "not with respect to the

---

[453] V.P., "*Tseli i sredstva: intelligentsia i narod"* [Goals and Means: Intelligentsia and *narod*], *Novoe Vremya*, 12 March 1881, No. 1809.
[454] A.S. Suvorin, Editorial, *Novoe Vremia*, 25 March 1881, No. 1822.
[455] Ibid.
[456] "Ministerskie Peremeny," *Novoe Vremia*, 27 March 1881, No. 1824. A.A. Kraevskii, Editorial, *Golos*, 28 March 1881.
[457] D.F. Samarin, "Ob umenshenii vykupnykh platezhei," *Rus'*, 28 March 1881, No. 29.

profitability of the land as proposed by many of our publicists, but with respect to the ability of the peasants to pay." [458] Samarin argued that this measure would be key in completing the reform that otherwise made peasants personal freedom unclear in conditions of such high obligations. [459] Over the course of April, Aksakov dedicated each of his editorials in support of the lowering of redemption payments as this project was being prepared for discussion in the State Council. Kraevskii, who otherwise shared little with Slavophile Samarin, likewise supported the lowering of the redemption payments. With its close connections to the Ministry of Finance, Kraevskii's *Golos* asked what could replace the lost income from the lowered redemption payments. Contrary to Samarin, who argued that the reserves of the Main Redemption Institution [*Glavnoe vykupnoe uchrezhdenie*] and the Treasure would cover the losses, Kraevskii insisted that "the state needs to do another bond issue, otherwise "the bank will not be able to satisfy its obligations."[460]

Katkov and Suvorin proposed a very different solution to the problem of high land prices and onerous redemption payments: peasant resettlement. Suvorin argued in March 1881 that it was the passport system, tying the peasant to a land that increased the prince of the land. Responding to Aksakov's *Rus*, Suvorin accused "the Moscow press in which the names of Samarin and Koshelev are often mentioned" and "which is close the land and the peasantry" of an impractical approach toward the peasant question; their attitude "more reminiscent of the fable of Trishkin's Kaftan, than of a serious and immediate government program."[461]

Katkov joined Suvorin in this argument, suggesting that "the lowering of redemption payments for formerly enserfed peasants in non-black-earth gubernias will not be sufficient in

[458] Ibid.
[459] Ibid.
[460] Ibid.
[461] A.S. Suvorin, Editorial, *Novoe Vremia*, 31 March 1881, No. 1828.

improving the livelihoods of peasants."[462] Katkov was blunt in writing that "the lowering of redemption payments in black-earth areas will not bring them benefit" because it would immediately raise land rent.[463] It was the population density in the black-earth regions that raised the price of land rent and subsequently of the price of land, Katkov argued. Katkov saw a solution in "the reduction of the peasant population density and the weakening of existing attachment to the land that – these are the solutions that will improve the wellbeing [*blagosostoianie*] of peasants in the black-earth gubernias."[464] In this sense, Katkov called for the state to organize peasant resettlements, which "will require a lot of resources, perhaps greater than required by the lowering of the redemption payments. […] But these sacrifices will be rewarded by the increased wellbeing both in the places from which peasants will depart and in the places that are now baren."[465]

The editors also offered additional projects for the improvement of the peasant population. Kraevskii made a compelling argument for the consolidation of all peasant affairs – divided between the Ministries of Interior and State Domains, The Main Redemption Institute [*Glavnoe vykupnoe uchrezhdenie*], the Credit Chancellery [*Kreditnaia kantseliaria*], and the State Bank. Suvorin mocked this proposal as an attempt to create "a Ministry of muzhyk affairs" [*muzhytskikh del ministerstvo*], alluding to 'muzhyk' as a contemptuous diminutive of male peasant (*muj*) implying the triviality of concentrating too intently on the peasant question.[466]

Kraevskii also focused on the issue of *volost'* and its insufficient representativeness in local *zemstvo* administration. "Volost," Kraevskii posited, "must be counted as a land unit [*zemskokhoziaistvennoiu edinitseiu*]," which will make it a unit in the *zemstvo sobraniia;* more

[462] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 23 April 1881, No. 111.
[463] Ibid.
[464] Ibid.
[465] Ibid.
[466] "Sredi Gazet i Zhurnalov," *Novoe Vremia*, 15 April 1881, No. 1841.

generally, Kraevskii argued in order for local administration to be most representative, it must include private landowners, merchants, peasants, *meshchane* and have the same rights and obligations as enjoyed by commune peasants.[467]

Katkov, on the contrary, sought solutions not in improved representation and better collective decision-making, but in freeing peasants from the confines of communal decision-making that would allow them to pursue individual benefit. Katkov argued that the commune needs to be re-thought because the private sale of land has made it possible for peasants to sell land and continue to be tied to communal obligations, and for others to buy communal land and not be responsible for communal obligations. Thus, Katkov argued, the commune could bankrupt itself by selling to its lands without tying them to membership obligations, increasing the burden on the remaining members.[468] The commune's most fervent defender, Aksakov, admitted that "it is beyond doubt that under individual land ownership agriculture can develop more freely and the land can produce more than under communal land ownership."[469] But, for Aksakov the value of communal ownership was in sufficiency and equality rather than productivity as it was for Katkov.

Suvorin was likewise concerned with the falling communal and zemstvo incomes. He urged the abolition of "The Law of 21st of November 1866" affecting state peasants, which – he argued - has limited the sources of income for the zemstvo, while its expenses have grown in the years.[470] *Novoe Vremya* and *Moskovskie Vedomosti* proposed centralized measures for improving peasant life. *Novoe Vremya* argued the way to continue improving the reforms is the initiation of a tax reform, the use of currently unused state lands, and development of credit.[471] Highlighting

[467] A.A. Kraevskii, Editorial, *Golos*, 6 April 1881.
[468] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 26 April 1881, No. 114.
[469] D.F. Samarin, "Ob Umen'shenii vykupnyh platezhei, V.," *Rus*, 2 May 1881, No. 25.
[470] A.S. Suvorin, Editorial, *Novoe Vremia*, 4 April 1881, No. 1832.
[471] A.S. Suvorin, Editorial, *Novoe Vremia*, 15 March 1881, No. 1812.

the fact that in 1881 peasants were brought to take the oath of allegiance to Alexander III for the first time, *Novoe Vremya* highlights that this initiative of endowing the peasant with a legal entity [*legal'naia samostoiatel'nost'*] will need to continue.[472] *Rus* supported this initiative, but only in consultation with local needs. For the most part, *Rus* called for decentralization and greater local self-administration, "only then will the government learn the true needs of the people."[473]

On 27 April, the State Council voted near unanimously on the lowering of the redemption payments. *Rus'* welcomed the decision, and even expressed a sympathetic view of Katkov's calls for peasant resettlement.[474] Katkov welcomed the measure as one of several to "improve peasant livelihood that should complement and complete what had been done by the 19 February 1861 Statute."[475] However, a mere day after the measure to lower redemption payments has been adopted in the State Council, Katkov returned with a large editorial to the issue of peasant resettlements, arguing that the emancipation of peasants – without easing their mobility – "has only re-enserfed [*zakrepostila*] them to the places of their settlement."[476] Katkov and Suvorin's calls for resettlement were answered on 10 July 1881 with the issuing of temporary laws on resettlement, which enabled the state to issue resettlement permits to persons "whose economic condition forces them [to resettle]."[477] Six months later, on 26 January 1882, Alexander III approved a project of extending the sale of state lands at reduced prices to Russian peasants resettling in Priamurskii krai beginning with 27 April 1881.[478]

The second issue, that of school and university reform, likewise came to dominate the press

---

[472] Ibid.
[473] I.S. Aksakov, Editorial, *Rus'*, 9 May 1881, No. 26.
[474] "Ezhenedel'nye itogi: vnutrennee obozrenie," *Rus,'* 2 May 1881, No. 25.
[475] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 25 March 1881, No. 113.
[476] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 28 April 1881, No. 116.
[477] D.N. Belianin, "Organizatsia krestianskikj pereselenii na kazennye zemli Sibiri v XIX – nachale XX vv." *Vestnik Kemerovskogo gosudarstvennogo universiteta* 44, no. 4 (2010): 18.
[478] "O nekotorykh izmenenikh v pravilakh o l'gotakh pereselentsam v Priamurskom krae," Polnoe Sobranie Zakonov, Sobranie (1881-1913), vol 2 (1882), 26 January 1882, #633, 26-27.

discourse in the early months of the new rule. Even before the assassination, student unrest at universities were highly publicized and continued after the assassination of Alexander II.[479] The connections between university students and the revolutionary movement were intensely discussed in the press in the days after the assassination. The appointment of A.P. Nikolai as Minister of Education on 25 March prompted renewed attention to the "university question;" for the newspaper editors, this was an opportunity to shape the politics of the new ministry.

Already on 3 April, Katkov argued for a renewed engagement of the state in university affairs as a way to undercut the revolutionary movement:

> It is clear that in the student masses there are depraved and unsuitable [individuals]. The identification of such elements can be performed by a trusted hand, and the government cannot, without giving up from its most sacred duties, neglect this task of identifying rotten [elements] in universities, but also undertake their correction.[480]

By "rotten" elements, Katkov presumed not so much students, but "those who have power over them."[481] This was indeed a subtle call to abolishing the 1863 University Statute that secured university autonomy in selecting faculty and internal administration. Defending the students from the "unjust, senseless and indiscriminate wrangling" against them, Katkov pointed instead to "the sins of the order that brought us to the edge of the abyss."[482] As April proceed, Katkov deployed a number of editorials calling for the government to "undertake measures of strictness that will

[479] For example, on 8 February 1881 at the St. Petersburg University, student L.M. Kogan-Bernshtein - member of *Narodnaia Volia* – interrupted the speech of Minister of Education, A.A. Saburov with a critique of his ministry and calls to restore the 1864 university statute; another student, P.P Podbel'skii, slapped the minister on the face. Simultaneously, the Moscow University was also embroiled in highly publicized student unrest sparked by a disagreement among students on whether or not to place a commemorative to Alexander II.
[480] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 3 April 1881, No. 93.
[481] Ibid.
[482] Ibid.

save us" [*mery spasitel'noi strogosti*] against "leaders of the youth who have themselves provoked it toward the unrest that it [the youth] now pays for," referring to the arrests of 200 students during March and April.[483] To "safeguard the majority that is good students from the infected agitators," Katkov argued, "there needs to be a sorting among them." [484] What Katkov, in fact, mean by "sorting" was the introduction of a standard university curriculum and standardized exams, which he proposed in a large editorial on 21 April 1881. Katkov argued that "the government has a right to demand that students graduating from universities into government positions have a solid education, be used to work and to impeccable performance of their duties."[485] To make this possible, Katkov proposed the introduction of a state exam that would test graduates' knowledge to assure that they had mastered "the program without which no student could be admitted into state service."

Suvorin, however, openly disagreed with Katkov on the prospect of government involvement in university affairs. He acknowledged that while "the government cannot do nothing in this situation," but argued that "any intervention on the part of the state in matters of teaching can hardly bring about anything [positive] and are undesirable."[486] Suvorin confessed that "we are not supporters of the system of exams as it was proposed recently."[487] Instead, Suvorin suggested that the main issue in the 'university question' is the quality of the faculty, "among whom are people who in no way belong to the university environment by means of their scientific capacity or teaching talent" and who maintain their positions by indulging student popularity through "easing of exams and privileges [to students] of sorts."[488] Suvorin's suggestions, many of which

[483] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 7 April 1881, No. 97.
[484] Ibid.
[485] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*,, 21 April 1881, No. 109.
[486] "Po voprosu ob universitetakh,," *Novoe Vremia*, 11 April 1881, No. 1839.
[487] Ibid.
[488] Ibid.

agreed with Katkov, drew on the experiences of European universities with their more rigorous teaching and less hierarchical faculties. [489]

Kraevskii, on the other hand, posed against any infringement of the state on university autonomy and saw the main problem with Russia's higher education in the exclusivity of universities and the limitations on technical education in Russia. Echoing A.V. Golovnin and other reformers in Loris-Melikov's entourage, Kraevskii advocated for the development of technical education [*real'nye uchilishcha*] in Russia. Discussing the example of Vilna, where the opening of a technical school was given serious consideration in April 1881, Kraevskii argued that "organized correctly, technical education will produce developed, education, and expert persons in agriculture and technical domains […]. The demand for these specialists is significant and felt everywhere."[490]

Kraevskii's proposal to expand technical education in Russia was met with sharp criticism from Katkov and Suvorin. Katkov, a known defender of classical education, responded on 17 April by arguing that after Russia has attained "the schools equivalent to those that bring up Europe's intelligentsia," *Golos* "under the name of some technical system wants to return us to the previous low-probe and corrupting education that made us the tributaries of foreign thought and gave us false education."[491]

Kraevskii, much as his longstanding patron A.V. Golovnin, countered Katkov's protests

[489] Basing himself, much like Katkov, on the German example, Suvorin suggested that the Russian faculty require invigoration to teach more actively and effectively, comparing the German faculty who teach 10-15 lectures per week with 4-5 lectures in Russia.[489] Suvorin also proposed incentivizing professors for increased student enrollment as was done in Germany. This goal, according to Suvorin, could be facilitated by making university departments less hierarchical and gerontocratic, since young *privat-dotsenty* could only advance with the blessing of veteran faculty. While a strong supporter of university autonomy, Suvorin expressed concern that university elections of faculty and by faculty struggled to prevent ineffective faculty who are poor teachers from being elected by their peers, who seek to prolong their own tenure.

[490] A.A. Kraevskii, Editorial, *Golos*, 5 April 1881.

[491] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 17 April 1881, No. 105. Here Katkov reprints an earlier editorial: M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 5 Febraury 1880, No. 36.

with a lack of evidence that classical education, promoted by Katkov, was unable to deter the rising revolutionary movement, or the growing interest in materialism or atheism among university students. An entire generation of students, including a growing number of revolutionaries, Kraevskii pointed out, was educated under a more classically inclined university system instituted since the 1871 and it had not prevented the assassination of a Russian Sovereign.[492]

Suvorin critiqued Kraevskii's proposal on entirely different grounds: building more technical schools could be very expensive, instead suggesting that "there should be an increase in vocational schools [*remeslennye shkoly*] and especially secondary technical schools [*srednie tekhnicheskie zavedenia*], especially in the provinces and even villages where there are factories and manufacturing plants."[493]

Suvorin advocated for more attention to be focused on primary and secondary schools rather than higher education. [494] "While, naturally, the spread of knowledge is useful," remarked Suvorin, "one should not forget that the excess supply of intellectual work diminishes its value on the market" and leads to the creation of "an intellectual proletariat" – a fertile ground for anarchist theories, presupposed Suvorin.[495] Indeed, Suvorin called for the government "to turn its attention and its resources to *narodnoe obrazovanie*, which is in such a pitiful state, that even such a *narod*-lover as Aksakov recognized recently that 'in terms of education our *moujik* stands at the level of the XII century.'"[496] Aksakov, in fact, preoccupied with his recommendations on improving the

[492] As Chapter 5 will discuss in greater detail, A.V. Golovnin's Ministry of Education introduced technical education with its emphasis on natural sciences and mathematics as an alternative to classical education and its emphasis on the study of classical languages. Alexander II's partial course reversal on the education reform led him to appoint in 1866 D.A. Tolstoi as Minister of Education – a proponent of classical education. At Katkov's advice, Tolstoi took measures to constrain technical education and empowered classical gymnasia and universities in his 1871 University Statute to supersede A.V. Golovnin's 1863 University Statute. See: A.A. Kraevskii, Editorial, *Golos*, 22 April 1881.
[493] "O Vysshykh tekhnicheskikh shkolakh," *Novoe Vremia*, 11 April 1881, No. 1839.
[494] "Ob umstvennom proletariate," *Novoe Vremia*, 31 March 1881, No. 1828.
[495] Ibid.
[496] A.S. Suvorin, Editorial, *Novoe Vremia*, 22 April 1881, No. 1848. Here, Suvorin refers to the previous issue of I.S. Aksakov, Editorial, *Rus'*, 18 April 1881, No. 23.

livelihoods of peasants, had little to say about education in the early days of the new rule.

With polemics over new legislation in full stride, Loris-Melikov sent Alexander III another draft of his reform project on 12 April 1881, aiming to secure the monarch's approval. The project presented in greater detail nine measures that focused on consolidating the police, reforming local administration, zemstvo, education, and press legislation among others. [497] However, the new draft included two added conditions of the reform program. The first condition was "government unity and the consistency of internal politics."[498] Loris noted the "confrontations of opposing directions" in the government, caused by "various ministers being led at the same time by persons of varying [political] persuasions." Instead of "separate opinions, he proposed a "homogenous government, in agreement with itself," in which "ministers will agree among themselves on the most important issues and determine a common program of internal politics, binding for all of them." In essence, Loris-Melikov was proposing instituting a cabinet in which "the Sovereign will indicate a political direction or a change thereof while replacing the ministerial roster with another, homogenous, one."

The second condition was "the involvement of representatives in the preliminary discussion and implementation of the reforms." Proposing a consultative role for such representatives, Loris-Melikov argued that "on some of the most important issues, particularly economic ones, the central bureaucracy will not manage without the opinions and participation of

[497] "Vsepoddanneishii doklad gr. Loris-Melikova ot 12 Apr. 1881," *Byloe*, 5 (1918): 180-185. Specifically, Loris proposed nine measures: 1. Consolidate the police and gendarmes corps under the authority of the governors; 2. Reform local administration, simplifying and reducing costs, minimizing internal conflicts; 3. Reform the education system by abandoning the classical education, building more schools in the regions, increase literacy, focusing on school completion, providing assistance to students – all as measures to prevent "school drop-outs [nedouchki], harmful for society"; 4. Legally regulate the press, "secure its freedom" but also "stop it from stirring passions with impunity;" 5. Review local administration by introducing "a more uniform representation among various classes" in zemstvo and city administration; 6. Review local peasant administration; 7. Take measures to address the peasants' economic concerns and assist in peasant resettlement; 8. Organize and restore the stockpile of foodstuffs; 9. Reform the tax and passport systems by abolishing the poll tax, institute "more just all-estate taxes."
[498] "Vsepoddanneishii doklad gr. Loris-Melikova ot 12 Apr. 1881," *Byloe*, 5 (1918): 180-185.

persons more knowledgeable of people's needs and the diversity of local conditions." Pointing to the government's shortcomings, Loris highlighted instances in which the lack of understanding of local specificities caused reforms to "elicit widespread complains and force the measure to be cancelled." To discuss his project, Loris proposed to call "a special session," subsequently scheduled for 21 April 1881, "to determine the future government program and to indicate *what* is to be done and *how* it is to be done"[499]

Loris-Melikov's efforts, however, were countered by Pobedonostsev from the earliest days of the new reign. In a letter to Alexander III, Pobedonostsev warned not only against "the siren songs of continuing on the same liberal path and conceding to the so-called public opinion," but outright asked for the dismissal of Loris-Melikov and ministers in his interest groups, such as Minister of Education A.A. Saburov and Minister of Justice D.I. Nabokov, referring Loris as "a master of intrigue" and "unpatriotic," who "seeks to subdue your will to his [*zavladet' vashei volei'*]."[500]

In concert with Katkov, Pobedonostsev chose a winning strategy of reducing Loris-Melikov's entire reform project to the issue of representation and projecting his exaggerated fears about an impending installment of a representative parliamentary government or a constitution. Ahead of the 21 April meeting, Katkov wrote a momentous editorial with comprehensive rebuttal to Loris-Melikov's project. Speaking in the words of Berlin's Free Conservative Party newspaper, *Die Post*, Katkov concurred that "as history teaches us, the transition from autocracy to constitution, in conditions of an unstable government, is a step toward revolution. New order is instilled peacefully only when the condition of the people is strengthened by the law." [501] Katkov's

[499] "Vsepoddanneishii doklad gr. Loris-Melikova ot 12 Apr. 1881," *Byloe*, 5 (1918): 180-185.
[500] Dolgov, *Pis'ma Pobedonostseva*, 316.
[501] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 16 April 1881, No. 105.

editorial boasted some foresight by citing its editorial from 5 February 1880, printed hours before the Winter Palace explosion, which argued against "borrowing the tired European template" of constitutionalism and parliamentarism proposed by "the rotten part of our intelligentsia," but to preserve the "indisputable, unshaken, inseparable state power, united with the *narod*." Katkov made his vision of a Russian *Sonderweg* clear: "Our education is superficial and imitative […]. We lack our own understanding, conceived by us to see and comprehend our surroundings. […] Our intelligentsia, frivolous and treating poorly its people [*narod*] and having nothing in common with it." [502] Pobedonostsev made a special effort to send to Alexander III a copy of the editorial to "draw [Alexander's] attention" to it.[503] Katkov's engagement of a European newspaper, which he pointed "for once does not force upon us a constitution, but is wisely recommending us to avoid experiments," aimed to address arguments in favor of Europeanization.

On the morning of 21 April, hours before the Council of Ministers meeting, Katkov prepared an editorial which made an open case against a representative government. Following up on Alexander III's analogy with Denmark, Katkov's editorial exposed the ferocious debate in the British Parliament over the 1881 Irish Land Law Act as an example of parliamentary deadlock and ineffectiveness. The Act, introduced by Whig Prime Minister Gladstone on 7 April 1881, aimed to address the unrest among Irish land tenants with requirements of fair rents and reimbursement for improvements on the land.

Katkov laid open the heated Parliamentary discussions of the Act, accompanied by party in-fighting, resignations in protest, and deadlock,[504] to highlight "the powerlessness of the

[502] M.N. Katkov, Editorial,*Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 16 April 1881, No. 105..
[503] K.P. Pobedonostsev, Letter from K.P. Pobedonostsev to Alexander Alexandrovich, 17 April 1881 in K.P. Pobedonostsev, *K.P. Pobedonostsev i ego korrespondenty: pis'ma i zapiski* (Moskva: Gos.izd-vo, 1923). 326.
[504] The Tories mounted a strong opposition to the Act in March 1881, and even members of Gladstone's Whig government opposed it. In March 1881 the Duke of Argyll, a landlord, resigned from Gladstone's government in protest of the Act.

parliamentary system before a task that demands resolution," contrasting it to "the powerful act of 19 February 1861, with which the Russian autocratic power at once resolved the agrarian question."[505] The editorial was intended to shape Alexander III's opinion on the issues of constitution, representative government, political parties with their turmoil and deadlock during the debate of the Land Law Act. The publication of Katkov's editorial, preempting the meeting, put the ministers especially on the offensive. Speaking in confidence to Valuev, Abaza was adamant about "making it impossible for ministers to write to or refer to newspapers behind the backs of their colleagues" – "a direct indication on Pobedonostsev and *Moskovskie Vedomosti,*" concluded Valuev.[506]

The 21 April meeting, detailed by P.A. Zaionchkovskii, passed without the confrontations of 8 March, but also without any decision on the new political course.[507] Though Loris and his allies interpreted the meeting as tactical victory, Alexander III had an entirely different impression, one that demonstrated the extent to which he internalized Katkov's and Pobedonostsev's discourse on representative government.[508] In a letter to Pobedonostsev in the evening after the meeting, Alexander weighed in: "Loris, Miliutin and Abaza propose a representative government, but until I am convinced that it is necessary for the happiness of Russia, of course it will not be, I will not allow it. It is unlikely that I will ever be convinced in the utility of such a measure, I am too sure of its harm. It is strange to hear smart people talk *seriously* about representative principles in Russia in phrases learned by heart from our rotten journalism and bureaucratic liberalism. I am growing

[505] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 21 April 1881, No. 110.
[506] P. A Valuev, Entry from 24 April 1881, *Dnevnik, 1877-1884* (Petrograd: Izd-vo "Byloe," 1919), 161–62.
[507] Zaionchkovskii, *Krizis samoderzhaviia,* 350–63.
[508] Alexander consented to regular ministerial meeting that would aim toward unanimous recommendations and a general government unity – a move that was interpreted by A.A. Abaza as the institution of a ministerial cabinet and by M.T. Loris-Melikov as a potential role of prime minister, wrote Valuev. P. A Valuev, Entry from 24 April 1881, *Dnevnik, 1877-1884,* 161–63.

more and more convinced that I will not see any good from these ministers."[509]

In the days and weeks after 21 April, Katkov redoubled on his campaign against popular representation with a number of editorials on British, German, French, and Italian parliament systems in a bid to convince his readership – and particularly the Emperor – about the ineffectiveness of representative governments. Discussing the ongoing reform of the 1873 French Electoral law, Katkov argued that the winner-take-all system of deputy elections in France ensured that "many electoral districts will not have representatives that reflect their views."[510] With many small and divided parties, combined artificially, the French electoral reform, argued Katkov "will likely be decided by five-six votes."[511]

Katkov highlighted the difficulties experienced by Bismarck in the German parliamentary commissions, where projects are "either vetoed, significantly changed or indefinitely postponed."[512] He detailed Bismarck's difficulties persuading the Reichstag to pass legislation on the mandatory insurance of factory workers by their employers.[513] Difficulties in passing the insurance legislation, beneficial to workers as it may have been, led Katkov to conclude that "the so-called representation is powerless because it does not represent the people, it is an artificial product, [and] it in no way includes in adequate measure the people of need and the people of labor – agricultural, industrial, trade, [which] constitute the majority of the population."[514] Delving into Italy's ongoing ministerial crises, Katkov remarked on the corrupt nature of the electoral system and on the great multiplicity of parties without party discipline.[515] While in Italy the people are

[509] Alexander III, Letter from Alexander III to K.P. Pobedonostsev, 21 April 1881, in Pobedonostsev, *K.P. Pobedonostsev i ego korrespondenty*, 48.
[510] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 29 April 1881, No. 118.
[511] Ibid..
[512] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 1 May 1881, No. 120.
[513] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 3 June 1881, No. 154.
[514] Ibid.
[515] M.N. Katkov, "Editorial," *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 13 May 1881, No. 132.

burdened by taxation and the king has no right to intervene into state affairs, Katkov noted, "the representatives, busy with party infighting, leave governance to stagnation and disorder." [516]

Skeptical of the results of representative politics thus far, Katkov expressed hope that with the close of the nineteenth century – "a century of parliamentarism" – "nations [*narody*] […] will come out of the fog of false popular representation."[517] Touching on parliamentarism in Denmark – a reference bound to make an impression of Alexander III, who was married to Maria Feodorovna, formerly Princess Dagmar of Denmark --, Katkov highlighted the growth of opposition parties since 1873, which have since cast "Danish politics in complete disorganization" and had in July 1881 resulted in the monarch to once more disband a newly-elected parliament over state officials' salaries.[518] Katkov was making a case for Russia' autocracy as a more efficient way of addressing the needs of the people, where parliamentarism – he argued – resulted in deadlock that tied the hands of the government.

With Katkov's editorials heightening fears about representation and constitutionalism, making them central to Loris's project, Pobedonostsev urged Alexander "to put an end to the rumors that today or tomorrow a constitution will be issued."[519] Pobedonostsev's letters to Alexander III recommended the manifesto as a measure intended for the public rather than for ministerial ranks. He explained that such manifestos were not unusual, referring to similar proclamations issued by Nicholas I early in his rule.[520] Summarizing the intentions of the manifesto, Pobedonostsev emphasized the "expressed will to safeguard autocratic power, that will

[516] Ibid.
[517] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 29 May 1881, No. 147.
[518] M.N. Katkov, "Parlamentarizm v Danii," *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 16 July 1881, No. 195.
[519] K.P. Pobedonostsev, Letter from K.P. Pobedonostsev to Alexander Alexandrovich, 26 April 1881, in K.V. Dolgov, *Pis'ma Pobedonostseva*, 331-333.
[520] Specifically, Pobedonostsev refers to Nicholas I's manifestos of 19 December 1825 and 13 July 1826. K.P. Pobedonostsev, Letter from K.P. Pobedonostsev to Alexander Alexandrovich, 23 April 1881 in Dolgov, *Pis'ma Pobedonostseva*, 328.

end all rumors that today or tomorrow a constitution will be issued."[521] Likewise, Pobedonostsev highlighted the desire to "express the permanency of peasant emancipations, disproving evil rumors that freedom will be taken away."[522] Pobedonostsev also emphasized the importance of a manifesto abroad, where "it is keenly awaited."[523] Alexander replied to the draft with a telegram: "I approve of and share [the ideas] of the draft."[524]

However, the real audience of the manifesto was Loris-Melikov and his interest group. Pobedonostsev commissioned Katkov from Moscow to work on the manifesto, producing a draft that "expresses the wish to not create new institutions [parliament], but to enact peace with existing [institutions]."[525] Declaring the principle of "unshakable autocracy," Pobedonsotsev somewhat forced Alexander's hand in making a statement on his politics and declaring a strategic victory over Loris-Melikov's plan.[526]

With the editorial published on 29 April 1881, Katkov helped interpret the manifesto on the pages of *Moskovskie Vedomosti* as a signal of a new political direction entirely that defeated the 'liberal party.' In an editorial on 30 April 1881, on the day of the publication of Alexander III's Manifesto of Unshakeable Autocracy, Katkov proclaimed "Now we can breathe freely. [It is] the end of faintheartedness [*malodushie*], the end of any unrest of the minds [*smuty mnenii*]."[527] Although Katkov's editorial welcomed the manifesto, privately he disapproved of it at the time of

[521] K.P. Pobedonostsev, Letter from K.P. Pobedonostsev to Alexander Alexandrovich, 26 April 1881 in Dolgov, *Pis'ma Pobedonostseva*, 331-333.
[522] Ibid.
[523] Ibid.
[524] Alexander III, Telegram form Alexander III to K.P. Pobedonostsev, 27 April 1881, Pobedonostsev, *K.P. Pobedonostsev i ego korrespondenty*, 50.
[525] K.P. Pobedonostsev, Letter from K.P. Pobedonostsev to Alexander Alexandrovich, 26 April 1881, in Dolgov, ed, *Pis'ma Pobedonostseva*, 331-333.
[526] Valuev, Entry from 2 May 1881, *Dnevnik, 1877-1884*, 164. Miliutin, Entry for 1 May 1881, *Dnevnik D.A. Miliutina*, vol. 4, 65.
[527] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 29 April 1881, No. 118.

publication as it did not indicate a more specific program, according to E.M. Feoktistov.[528] Aksakov likewise rushed to welcome the 29 April manifesto, which Russia has thirsted for and patiently awaited," and highlighted the "depth and strength of the roots - of that love and faith between the Emperor and the people [*narod*]."[529] He dwelled especially on the passages in the manifesto where Alexander affirmed his belief "in the truth of the autocratic power and the calling to affirm it for the benefit of the people [*narod*]."[530]

The Manifesto produced what State Secretary E.A. Peretts called privately "a daunting impression in the society" and prompted the resignations of the Minister of the Interior, M.T. Loris-Melikov, the Minister of Finance, A.A. Abaza, and the Minister of War, D.A. Miliutin in early May 1881.[531] It also sparked an uncanny reaction on the stock market. Whereas the events of 1 March had little impact the Russian markets, much to the surprise of *Birzhevye Vedomosti*, the publication of the Manifesto produced a considerable fall on the money markets.[532]

Kraevskii, who produced an otherwise muted response to the Manifesto, remarked that since 29 April "our stock market had a sudden and sharp turndown in its outlook" from "its

[528] Feoktistov, *Za kulisami politiki i literatury*, 196.
[529] I.S. Aksakov, Editorial, *Rus'*, 2 May 1881, No. 25.
[530] Ibid.
[531] Peretts, Entry from 1 May 1881, *Dnevnik E.A. Perettsa (1880-1883)*, 69.
[532] In the aftermath of the Manifesto's publication, British newspaper, *The Standard*, commented on "the heavy depression of the Russian Bonds […] directly caused by the increasing gravity of the political situation in the Russian Empire." "Money Market and City Intelligence," *The Times*, 16 May 1881, No. 30,195, p. 8-9. "Editorial," *Birzhevye Vedomosti*, 10 March 1881, No. 132. *Birzhevye Vedomosti* editorial expressed surprise that "after the tragic catastrophe of 1 March everywhere, it seemed, that our markets will suffer an immediate fall of 10-15%, especially since Russia's bond prices sold abroad already boasted high prices. To everyone's surprise, Monday's markets [2 March 1881] displayed a remarkable stability; a collapse was nowhere in the cards; for all Russian debt obligations there were insistent buyers and the prices they offered were only slightly lower than those of the previous week." *Birzhevye Vedomosti* argued that such market stability owed itself to the Rothschild bankers – "remembering their close relations with the [Russian] ministry of finance" - swept in to buy Russian bonds "to hold them from inevitable collapse on the foreign markets." The editorial suggests that the night from Sunday, 1 March, onto Monday, 2 March, "the telegraphs continuously transmitted Rothchild's orders to buy all Russian bonds offered for sale" and that on the Monday's markets "circulated rumors, supported by all foreign and financial newspapers, that now reforms will be accelerated in Russia and the new Russian government will reform itself with its first order, according to St. Petersburg, the creation of representatives from 36 zemstvos for the advancement of reform."

optimistic and upbeat mood" [*svetlo i bodro*] on the eve on 29 April.[533] Kraevskii noted that although Russia had a "good exchange rate on discounting notes [*blagopriatnyi veksel'nyi kurs*]," but since 29 April "the hopes and trust to the future [of Russia] disappeared, replaced by [foreign capital's] abstinence from business [with Russia] and the weakening of [stock] prices." [534] Kraevskii highlighted the newly set-in "distrust toward our financial situation and our economic powers." Kraevskii was quite correct. *The London Times* dedicated a lengthy column to Alexander III's "recent proclamation, [of which] there is only one judgment, and that is one of regret and condemnation," reporting a few days of sharp falls of Russian Bonds.[535] The German *Börsencourier,* cited *The Times* in the same issue, viewed the troubles to have arose from "the struggled between inflexible autocratic and the bloodthirsty tendencies of the revolution," and advised the German public "to have nothing whatever to do with Russian bonds and to recover and re-invest their capital thus invested as soon as possible."

For Alexander III, the publication of the Manifesto provided some relief – if perhaps not in the sense of setting the program of his rule, then in provoking a change of key ministers that may have brought him closer to a political direction. Alexander, in his own words to his brother, Grand Duke Sergei Alexandrovich, in June of 1881, wrote that he was "Happy to be rid of them [ministers], especially of c[ount] Loris-[Melikov]."[536] The latter, Alexander felt, "[tried to] take me into their hands" [*zabrat' menia v svoi lapy*] and "to subdue me" [*zakabalit' menia*], referring perhaps to what contemporaries like Valuev described as Loris's hurried efforts to proceed with his project days after Alexander II's assassination, and his work to attain ministerial "unity" that

[533] A.A. Kraevskii, Editorial, *Golos*, 3 May 1881.
[534] Ibid.
[535] "Russia," *The Times,* 16 May 1881, No. 30195, 7-8. "Money Market and City Intelligence," *The Times,* 17 may 1881, No. 30196, 11.
[536] Alexander III, Letter from Alexander III to Grand Duke Sergey Alexandrovich, 11 June 1881, Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv Rossiiskoi Federatsii [GARF] f. 648, op. 1, d. 52, l. 33ob. I thank Dr. Mikhail Dolbilov for locating and providing me with a copy of this letter.

may have appeared to the new Emperor as an attempt to consolidate an ministerial consensus that would compel him to acquiesce to their shared program. Alexander scoffed at the latter's "popularity-seeking [*populiarnichanie*] with journalism and [his] liberalism game," alluding to the support Loris's project enjoyed in the St. Petersburg salons, bureaucratic corridors and in the Wester-minded newspapers such as *Golos*. Reflecting on Loris, Miliutin, and Abaza's triumvirate, Alexander concluded that "their behavior has forced me to dismiss them," since "a little more and we would be in a total revolution."[537]

The ministerial rivalries in the spring of 1881 demonstrate the challenge posed to autocratic rule from ministerial consensus – which Alexander III feared could exert undue pressure - and of ministerial discord – which brought deadlock and an increasingly public rivalry among interest groups. However, the case of Pobedonostsev and Katkov also demonstrates an effective case of political maneuvering and co-optation of the press to overturn the opinion of the Emperor against significant odds.

[537] Ibid.

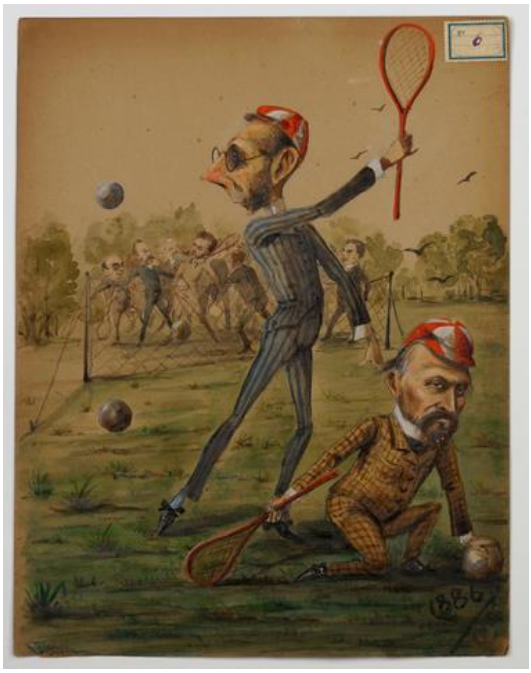

Figure 1. "Lawn Tennis," Caricature. A.V. Ipolitov, ed., Tuzy, damy, i valety. Dvor i teatr v karikaturakh I.A. Vsevolozhskogo (Moscow: Kuchkovo Pole, 2016). The caricature satirizes the competition among bureaucratic groups. M.N. Katkov and K.P. Pobedonostsev are pictures playing lawn tennis with a larger crowd of smaller men, among whom can be distinguished I.D. Delyanov, A.A. Polovtsev, Grand Duke Vladimir Alexandrovich. ,

The Whigs and The Tories: Newspaper Polemics and Party Politics

The sharp oppositional polemics between Loris-Melikov's and Pobedonostsev's factions indeed resembled similarly juxtaposed parties in parliaments across Europe. Indeed, Katkov's polemics on parliamentary disagreements and deadlock in Europe was not unlike the disagreements in ministerial meetings during March and April 1881. Although the Russian empire lacked formal parties or a cabinet, interest groups – such as those around Loris-Melikov and Pobedonostsev - competed for influence and decision outcomes. Indeed, the members of these interest groups referred to their or their adversaries "parties." In mid-March, as Loris nursed his dissatisfaction from the momentous 8 March meeting, he expressed, in the words of D.A. Miliutin – "serious misgivings about the reactionary party, that begins to gather around Pobedonostsev."[538]

[538] D.A. Miliutin, Entry for 15 March 1881, *Dnevnik D. A. Miliutina, 1881-1882*, vol. 4, 40.

Miliutin understood the differences between parties to be so profound that "neither Loris-Melikov, nor I will remain in our seats if the party of Pobedonostsev wins."[539] Alexander III himself understood it as *de facto* party politics that embroiled him in the first months of his rule as he, from Loris's account placed himself, Miliutin and Abaza "in the ranks of representatives of the so-called liberal party, which does not support the principle of autocracy."[540]

Unlike political parties in Western Europe at the time, Russia's interest groups and the ministers around whom they gathered were unable to argue their political programs in the public. This, of course, did not prevent them from discreetly collaborating with friendly editors with the aim of promoting particular policies of views. However, whereas Loris and Pobedonostsev awaited for the Emperor to express the political course of the new rule, the newspaper editors engaged in a spirited debate over this very course – this was the public debate the ministers could not have. P.A. Valuev had a keen sense of the ties between ministers and their press platforms. Valuev called D.A. Miliutin's ministry as "regime à la *Golos"*.[541]

As this chapter shows, Russia's leading dailies, such as Katkov's *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, Kraevskii's *Golos*, Suvorin's *Novoe Vremia*, and Aksakov's *Rus*, effectively served as surrogates to Russia's party politics long before political parties were legally permitted to form and participate in politics in the early 1900s. Their support for and collaboration with particular interest groups aimed to publicly persuade both their readers and the Emperor of their proposed course of action.

On the issue of party politics, the editors were themselves divided. Averse to parliamentary politics, Katkov vehemently denied the existence of political parties: "In our educated society the first sign of a person politically inexperienced and *mente capti* is the idea of liberalism and

[539] Miliutin, Entry from 14 March 1881, in *Dnevnik D. A. Miliutina, 1881-1882*, vol. 4, 39.
[540] Miliutin, Entry from 8 May 1881, in *Dnevnik D. A. Miliutina, 1881-1882*, vol. 4, 70.
[541] Valuev, Entry from 24 May 1881, *Dnevnik, 1877-1884*, 167.

conservatism as two parties in Russia."[542] Yet, in the very same editorial, Katkov likened "our liberals" with the "anti-national party of North America" who rivaled only "our conservatives, who have forgotten their people and are rooting only for abstract concepts." [543] Although Katkov understood full well and participated in party politics, in his editorials he argued that "in Russia the government party is constituted from the entire Russian *narod*," subtly juxtaposing it to his political adversaries – opposed, Katkov implied, both to government and to the people.

Unlike Katkov, Kraevskii, Suvorin and other Western-minded editors openly spoke about partisan politics in the spring of 1881. For example, *Poriadok* editor, M.M. Stasiulevich, wrote in April 1881 that there were in Russia "two diametrically opposed parties, one returns us into the past, the other wishes to continue the path Russia started two hundred years ago," meaning the Slavophiles and Westernizers respectively. Suvorin, agreed that that they were indeed parties, but challenged Stasiulevich's chronological characterization.[544] Instead, he argues that

> Both [Slavophiles and Westernizers] could work for the benefit of the state according to their talents, sometimes agreeing, other times disagreeing [...]; they could fiercely compete in knowledge and talent, and make up our two main parties [*osnovnye partii*], as the Whigs and the Tories in Britain. Slavophiles [would be] - the Whigs, the Westernizers [would be] - Tories. There is nothing strange in this comparison, if one things about the meanings of both parties and replaces British life and historical conditions with Russian. Just as the Whigs and the Tories have similar views and disagreements, so would our two main parties have firm support in history and contemporary events. We think that for the country this would be

[542] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 13 March 1881, No. 72.
[543] Ibid.
[544] [A.S. Suvorin], "Liudi i Partii," *Novoe Vremia*, 7 April 1881, No.1835.

> advantageous if we had two well-defined parties and other [parties] would be absorbed or join them ; there is nothing more fruitless than small parties.[545]

Much like the British Whigs and the Tories, some of Russia's leading opinion newspapers – like Aksakov's *Rus'* – viewed editorial polemics as the necessary venue for public debate. At the height of editorial and inter-ministerial competition in April 1881, Aksakov expressed that he "value the possibility of open direct battle [*bor'by*], an such a battle is not only possible, but is capable of leading us to the victory of the truth if the participants are equal and enjoy the same freedoms."[546] Aksakov welcomed editorial polemics: "We should invite our adversaries to a battle of thought and word."[547]

Indeed, since 1 March, the tone of the editorial polemics had been nothing short of combative. Katkov compared "the feuilletons of our liberal 'press'" – i.e. *Golos* - with the proclamation of the "Executive Committee" [*Ispolnitel'nogo Komiteta*] of the People's Will, which organized the 1 March assassination.[548] He remarked that what "they [liberals] call "liberalism" in Russian is called "treason" – treason of their people."[549] Aksakov also put it bluntly, referring in particular to Loris's project: "anyone, who proposes to introduce any measures that create Western-European liberal institutions, not only aristocratic, but also democratic, that distort the popular image of tsarist power [*narodnyi obraz tsarskoi vlasti*] or to strengthen in a "liberal fashion" the bureaucratic structures erected between the Emperor and His land since the times of Peter – "*is in the spirit of deceit*" [original emphasis] – not from the Russian people and not from its spirit."[550] Aksakov outright called "that fraction of society that calls itself 'liberal', essentially

---

[545] Ibid.
[546] I.S. Aksakov, Editorial, *Rus'*, 18 April 1881, No. 23.
[547] Ibid.
[548] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 6 March 1881, No. 65.
[549] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 13 March 1881, No. 72.
[550] Here, Aksakov emphasizes the phrase "is in the spirit of deceit" [*ot dukha lestcha est'*]. This language particular to 1 John 4:6 in the Gennadius Bible translation of 1499, which in the English King James Version (KJV) is

simply not Russian [*nerusskaia*], foreign to our historical tradition and the popular spirit."[551] Commenting on potential connections between Poland and terrorist revolutionaries, Katkov likewise argued that "although Mr. Kraevskii is not a Pole, his newspaper actively serves as an organ of anti-Russian polemic."[552] Kraevskii responded to what he called Katkov's and Aksakov's "crusade against 'the liberals,' who termed their adversaries by this name with the intention to make them look to the known [authority] as enemies of the public order, [and] 'above-ground' revolutionaries."[553] Aksakov called *Golos* "the voice [of this vulgarity],"[554] while Kraevskii, commenting on Aksakov's speech in the Slavonic Benevolent Society, called his exhortations a "meaningless, meandering bluster [*shumikha*]" in which "exclamations are substitute for thoughts."[555] Kraevskii saw political opportunism in Katkov's and Aksakov's increasingly personal polemics:

> Some newspapers have found the present moment [since 1 March] as quite suitable to settle old scores with their colleagues, newspapers of other convictions, other [political] thought, and being quite honest, as the moment requires it, have come down with accusations. In their political adversaries they reject not only patriotic,

translated as follows: "We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and *the spirit of error*." Aksakov's choice of verse suggests his view of the magnitude of the confrontation between "liberals" and "conservatives both in the press and in the entourage of Alexander III. Aksakov deliberately uses of the Old Church Slavonic version of the phrase – first recorded in the Gennadius Bible of 1499, despite the availability of the Synodal Translation from the 1810s and 1820s, which formulates the respective phrase as "*dukh zabluzhdenia*," similar to the KJV formulation "in the spirit of error." Indeed, Aksakov's choice of translation not only signals his affinity for pre-Petrine times, but also assigns his adversaries the responsibility for deceit rather than error. Rus, Editorial, 14 March 1881, No. 18, 3. See also: *Biblia 1499 goda i Biblia v sinodal'nom perevode: Kn. Sviashchennogo Pisania i Vethogo Zaveta v 10 tomakh*. Vol. 8. (Moscow: Izdatel'skii otdel Moskovskogo patriarkhata, 1992), 148-149. *Biblia ili knigi sviashchennago pisania vetkhago i novago zaveta v russkom perevode* (St. Petersburg: v Sinodal'noi Tipografii, 1876).

[551] I.S. Aksakov, Editorial, *Rus'*, 14 March 1881, No. 18.
[552] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 13 March 1881, No. 72.
[553] A.A. Kraevskii, Editorial, *Golos*, 17 April 1881, No. 105.
[554] I.S. Aksakov, Editorial, *Rus'*, 10 March 1881, No. 17.
[555] A.A. Kraevskii, Editorial, *Golos*, 1 April 1881, No. 91.

but all human sentiment![556]

The increasingly combative polemic in the press reflected its polarization, mirroring similar processes within the bureaucratic officialdom with whom they collaborated. Within the bureaucratic ranks, polarization brought about gridlock and lack of co-operation and compromise as ministers coalesced rivaling interest groups pursuing radically different agendas. In the press, political polarization exposed to the public gaze profound divisions within the government, which spanned not only political, but broader cultural divides. As editors increasingly pursued more polarized and polarizing rhetoric in polemics with journalistic rivals, moderate and centrist opinions and politics ceded ground on Russia's print landscape.

Conclusion

The complex legacies of the Great Reforms and the rising revolutionary movement in their aftermath introduced lasting divisions among the bureaucratic officialdom, which became increasingly polarized as Alexander II's political course wavered during the 1860s and 1870s. By the 1880s, the political diversity within ministerial ranks coalesced around the polarities of continuing, improving, and perfecting the Great Reforms on the one hand and abandoning them on the other hand. Alexander III's unexpected accession to the throne in the aftermath of his father's assassination brought the issue to a heed, with rivaling interest groups discreetly competing behind the scenes for influence over the new rule. Yet, in the political vacuum of months-long indecision on behalf of the new monarch, and the private press gave voice to pressing political discussions, debating broader issues of Russia's reformist legacy, cultural identity, and path forward. Aligned with patron interest groups and polarized along the same political lines,

[556] A.A. Kraevskii, Editorial, *Golos*, 9 March 1881, No. 68.

Russia's influential newspapers served as surrogates of political parties from the 1880s.

The vibrant and remarkably bold debates in the press highlight a remarkable plurality not only within the high ranks of bureaucracy but also within the society of late Imperial Russia. Broader cultural debates in the press highlight deep-seated political cleavages and persistent factors in Russia's political life in a balancing act between Westernization and a Russian *Sonderweg*. The plurality of competing political programs, set forth by Katkov, Kraevskii, Suvorin and Aksakov highlight a range of political options beyond the 'liberal-conservative' binary divisions that endure in the historiography of this period. In doing so, the chapter complicates the narrative of an imminent conservative turn and counter-reform suggested in P.A. Zaionchkovskii's seminal work, *Krizis samoderzhavia*.[557] Not least, the active public role of the newspapers and their collaboration with statesmen highlights the growing role of non-state actors in political decision-making. Ultimately, the manner in which the press acted as a surrogate to political parties in late Imperial Russia has demonstrated that parliamentary-style opposition – however much Katkov was averse to it – was in fact already fledgling on Russia's political arena.

[557] P.A. Zaionchkovskii, *Krizis samoderzhaviia na rubezhe 1870-1880-kh godov* (Moscow: Izd-vo Moskovskogo universiteta, 1964).

STUDY:
M.N. Katkov on the Role of the Press

In 1867, after nearly five eventful years at the helm of *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, M.N. Katkov sat down to write an essay and reflect on the role of the press in Russian society, its relationship with the government, and his own role as one of Russia's most influential press editors. The previous year had been a challenging one for Katkov. After a series of blistering editorials in the spring of 1866 critiquing the government's policy in the Kingdom of Poland, Katkov received his first warning (see Chapter 3). His defiance of censorship warnings, earned him a temporary suspension from publishing and set him on a collision course with the government. Yet, a personal audience with Alexander II in June 1866 not only reinstated him in the editorial office before the end of his suspension, but reassured him of the Sovereign's trust and good graces.

In the months after his return to editorial activity, Katkov penned essay, never published, pondering the intricate relationship between the press and the state. The essay, which survives in three drafts and, although undated, could be attributed to 1867. The note was kept by Katkov in some discretion: although drafts were re-written by a scribe – likely Katkov's secretary – and contain Katkov's handwritten edits, the folder containing the drafts has an inscription in Katkov's hand "Forbidden to read. Transgressors will get it in the neck [*Chitat' ne dozvoliaetsa. Vinovnomu vletit po shee.*]."[558]

Katkov's note began with a reminiscence of his meeting with Alexander on June 25, 1866, during which as Katkov puts it, Alexander II "called me again toward public activity."[559] He remembered his meeting with Alexander II in the most positive terms, during which "the Emperor

[558] M.N. Katkov, ["Statia Katkova M.N. o ego deiatelnosti i o vrazhdebnykh emu napravleniakh. Bez daty, kopii v 3-kh ekzempliarah"], OR RGB f. 120, k. 53, d. 26.
[559] M.N. Katkov, ["Statia Katkova M.N. o ego deiatelnosti i o vrazhdebnykh emu napravleniakh. Bez daty, kopii v 3-kh ekzempliarah"], OR RGB f. 120, k. 53, d. 26, l. 1

approved the direction of our activity and expressed desire for us to continue it in the same sense as before, and that we remain confident that in Him we will have support, which will give [crossed out: me] us a possibility to act in our belief [*po sovesti*]."[560] Katkov considered the meeting as a validation of his beliefs and methods, but also as a victory over the bureaucratic ministerial officials like P.A. Valuev and the Maid Administration of Press Affairs who had censored his articles. In appraising his close relationship with Alexander II, Katkov celebrated what he perceived was an independence from ministerial bureaucracy – overridden by the Sovereign in permitting Katkov to return to *Moskovskie Vedomosti*: "the independence, which we had sought and without which were unable to continue our work, we found it at the foot of the throne."[561] Perhaps considering the phrase too bold, Katkov crossed it out in the final draft.

Katkov conceived of his journalistic activity to be motivated by "a sense of duty toward the Sovereign and the fatherland," and therefore answerable to the latter two rather than to ministerial bureaucracy.[562] To justify his diminished deference toward ministerial bureaucracy, Katkov sought to highlight the differentiation between the monarch and the administration: "the Sovereign and the government are not one and the same. […] The government is a part of the Supreme Authority [*Verkhovnoi Vlasti*] and without it means nothing, but the Supreme Authority means much more than the government."[563] He only feigned remorse for the rhetoric that landed him three warnings: "perhaps we took too much to heart this new direction in our affairs, which are tied to the glory of the Tsar, the well-being of Russia, the we cared too much for the successful resolution of issues encountered by the government."[564]

---

[560] Katkov's lapsus linguae in the latter sentence betrays his belief in his centrality to the newspaper despite his co-lease with P.M. Leontiev. Ibid., l. 1ob.
[561] Ibid., l. 1ob.
[562] Ibid., l. 1ob.
[563] Ibid., l. 8ob.
[564] Ibid., l. 5ob.

While showing little affection for the ministerial bureaucracy, Katkov nevertheless saw his journalistic career was a mission to "aid [*sposobstvovat*] government officials in fulfilling the duties placed on them by the Tsar, but we did this regardless of individuals, [or] parties, [and] from most of [added: our] government officials we received expressions of [crossed out: full] support for our course [*napravlenie*]; many of them testified to us of the helpful assistance, which they received from us in special cases."[565] Katkov then proceeded to enumerate such testimonies:

> Repeatedly we heard [support] from the Minister of Foreign Affairs, who particularly valued our cooperation [*posobie*] in difficult diplomatic circumstances. [Added: The Imperial Russian Ambassador in Paris found, on his part, that the opinions we expressed during last year, especially on the then emerging Eastern question, corresponded with the interests of the Russian diplomacy. Our diplomatic agent in in East was of the same opinion.] From the Minister of Finance we have a letter in which he recognizes that our newspaper rendered his ministry useful assistance [*poleznoe posobie*] in one of particularly difficult times for it. From the Minister of the Interior we have a set of letters in which he repeatedly testifies to the assistance [*polza*] rendered by our newspaper in the resolution of various issues. From count Muraviev, not long before his death, we received a letter, in which he expressed himself regarding our activity in such terms that modesty does not allow us to understand them in a literal sense. Other governors of the Western borderlands, were administrative duties are beset by such challenges, [we received] oral and written testimonies of the usefulness of our newspaper's activity. Last summer, count Shuvalov recognized in a conversation with me that *Moskovskie*

[565] Ibid., l. 3.

> *Vedomosti* eased for him the issues he faced in administering Baltic gubernias. I could mention many other testimonies in the same sense. If government officials found that our activity was not futile, it was not because we tried to please them personally. We were in no special relationship with any of them, many we did not know, and it is quite possible that we were at times liked and disliked by the same government official, or were liked by one for what he considered useful, and vice versa […].[566]

Katkov recognized that at times, his activity was contrary to the intentions of government officials albeit well-intentioned: "If at any time we were forced to counteract ministerial officials, it was not in the fulfillment of their duties."[567] As an example, he reflected on his uneasy relationship with A.V. Golovnin with ambivalence: "On the one hand, we had to assist the minister [of education], who was charged with such an important task [the 1864 University Reform], and to impede him in the interest of this very task."[568] Katkov here posed as the beholder of the ultimate conception of the Great Reforms as incepted by Alexander II, which even the ministers required to have it explained to them. Katkov's essay displays his remarkable self-assurance in his work, "the consequences [of which] have proven that we followed here the direction most in line with the state interests of Russia," relishing in his mission " to prove the necessity of some [initiatives] and the prematurity of others."[569]

Katkov's confidence in his understanding of "state interests" and monarchic intentions went further still as he considered it his duty - particularly during the era of Great Reforms - , to clarify new regulations. He expressed it boldly in the note: "The Ministry of Justice can, in turn,

[566] Ibid, l. 3-4.
[567] Ibid., l. 4ob.
[568] Ibid., l. 5.
[569] Ibid., l. 4.

testify that we lacked no zeal to explain the questions brought up by the judicial reform outlined by the Supreme Authority [*Vysochaisheiu Voleiu*]; all our efforts were directed toward these new institutions created by Russia's Reformer so that they correspond to the though [He] expressed so clearly […]."[570] Katkov's obsequiousness is not without its mockery here, considering that the judicial reforms "expressed so clearly" required further explanation.

While Katkov relished his extensive connections and close collaborations with ministers, such relationships – as the essay shows – had become increasingly delicate and difficult to manage. Collaborating with one unnamed ministry, Katkov soon found himself in the crossfires of ministerial disagreements, testing the influence of ministerial patrons versus rival political factions. Further, Katkov's essay details early ministerial efforts to employ his newspaper in inter-ministerial dispute:

> Government officials demanded [*trebovalos*] not only that *Moskovskie Vedomosti* not lend its support to other government persons regarding the orders placed on them by the Tsar, but that it make an effort to discredit it; it was demanded not only that *Moskovskie Vedomosti* not serve as an organ for certain government officials, which it never was, but that it agree to become the organ of [crossed out: intrigue of] one party against another.[571]

Considering himself "obligated" in his "public service" [*obshchestvennaia deiatelnost*] to serve the Sovereign and Russia, Katkov re-affirmed his conviction that "we reject any deals that would place us into a relationship of obligation toward any parties or influential persons."[572] His depiction of a shifting and contrarian inter-ministerial relationship implicating the press drove back

[570] Ibid., l. 4ob.
[571] Ibid., l. 7.
[572] Ibid., l. 2ob.

to the dramatic events on April-May 1866. Addressing accusations against him of "undermining trust in government officials,"[573] Katkov argued that "the very government officials that accuse us of this, had previously vigorously encouraged us to act against government officials, and that the persecution we endured date back to when we rejected to head to this call."[574] Katkov was willing to present evidence of such pressure, presumably in saved correspondence from officials like P.A. Valuev. Indeed, very accusation that Katkov could undermine trust in the government and its officials speaks to the belief of his accusers – namely, P.A. Valuev – that a newspaper may have the clout to influence the public opinion to such a great extent.

At the heart of the inter-ministerial crossfire were what Katkov believed to be "political parties" as he referred to them in this essay. He argued that *Moskovskie Vedomosti* could not be accused of "serving as an organ of parties antagonistic to the state" but at the same time he complained that "its editors [i.e. himself and P.M. Leontiev] were constant targets of fierce hatred [*ozhestochennaia nenavist*] of malicious parties."[575] Katkov went even further, calling it "an dear honor [*dorogaia chest*] to have the enemies of the Sovereign as their personal enemies."[576] In some respect, Katkov saw himself as an agent who wages political battle on behalf of the Tsar, the dubious honor had indeed cost him dearly, not least – as he saw it – in the receipt of three warnings and temporary closure.

Denying the existence of *de facto* political parties on the pages of *Moskovskie Vedomosti,* Katkov recognized and identified them in this private essay. For example, while discussing the judicial reform in his note, he pointed to "the open and discreet agitation against this Great Reform on the part of an influential party, which had its own agenda, not entirely in accord with the

[573] Ibid., l. 2.
[574] Ibid., l. 7ob.
[575] Ibid., l. 2ob.
[576] Ibid., l. 2ob.

existence of a correctly organized and well-run judicial system."[577]

Amid rival factions, Katkov recognized that around the Ministry of the Interior as particularly powerful. Katkov observed that in matters of local administration, the governor retains the authority over all aspects of governance. He highlights that governor retains the ability to call on representatives of the court, concluding that "is it not obvious that the governor is thereby given indirect influence over judicial affairs. The obligation to arrive at the call or invitation without any legal basis, is this not a subjugation of the court to the personal discretion of the governor?"[578] Katkov highlighted that with governors being directly responsible to the Ministry of the Interior, they effectively subdue all other ministries to that of the Interior.[579] Katkov argued that in this system all other ministers retain their responsibilities while being dependent on the minister of the interior.[580] In addition, all ministries act locally through the governor, but the governor – being personally responsible only to the Minister of the Interior – has no personal responsibility to other ministries and their affairs are outside his competencies.[581]

This led Katkov to compare the Minister of the Interior in Russia effectively with the office of prime minister in constitutional systems, with the difference that the prime minister makes his or her cabinet while the Minister of the Interior could only hope to influence the officials working for other ministries.[582] Katkov also remarked on another difficult aspect of the position of Minister of the Interior in Russia: "on the one hand, all civic forces [*obshchestvennye sily*] have gained a new importance, but on the other hand they have come under an unprecedented personal dependency on the Minister of the Interior."[583]

---

[577] Ibid., l. 4ob.
[578] Ibid., l. 13.
[579] Ibid., l. 13.
[580] Ibid., l. 13ob.
[581] Ibid., l. 15ob-16
[582] Ibid., l. 16.
[583] Ibid., l. 16-16ob.

As well as other spheres of governance, Katkov argued, the press was particularly vulnerable to the dispositions of the Ministry of the Interior – a statement he made not without aiming to defend his position in the 1866 affair:

> The press is completely at the mercy of this minister, who can influence it directly or indirectly. [The press can be] rewarded and coerced, punished by bankruptcy or courts at the will of the Minister of the Interior, because the press council only has an advisory capacity and it subordinated to the same minister - those are powerful tools for influencing the press, the public opinion and government spheres. What is required in extraordinary efforts and self-sacrifice for private individuals to retain some independence [*nezavisimosti*] in announcing the facts or in their discussion. In current conditions, the press can easily become an instrument of the dominant party. The right given to the press to discuss issues of the government can serve as the means to strengthen one party that has in its domain the administrative powers, to take over civic forces [*ovladet' obshchestvennymi silami*.[584]

Katkov argued that such an empowered Ministry of the Interior threatened to encroach upon the authority of the monarchy and its intolerance for public discussion and debate in the press is unjustified:

> Outside of their duties, every government official however high-ranking is no more than a mere subject; his opinions cannot have any mandatory power for the society. [An official's] Fulfillment of duties should not encounter any resistance, however this does not mean that everything done by an administrative power is indisputable. On the contrary, the more open for public discussion [*obshchestvennogo suzhdenia*]

[584] Ibid., l. 16ob-17ob.

> are the actions of government officials, the more useful it is in all respects, particularly for the Supreme Power [added and crossed out: and the government].[585]

In particular, Katkov highlighted the encroachment of the Ministry of the Interior on the Ministry of Education to an extent that the latter was "not an independent institution" and its "teachers were bureaucrats rather than pedagogues."[586]

The most certain countermeasure to the power of the Ministry of the Interior, Katkov contended in his essay, was publicity assured by the right – more, the obligation – of the press to scrutinize the government:

> In our discourse about the actions of government officials we acted not out of a right, but out of duty. This duty is the oath to the state, which demands that everyone works toward the benefit of the Sovereign and the state, and uncover anything that detracts from them. The newborn public force, the press, must submit itself to this duty and apply itself in this sphere. Exposure [*izoblichenie*] in the press does not have that unfavorable meaning ascribed to secret denunciations; it is a completely clean path, and that is why the less difficult it is – the better. The harm that can be done to the government is contained not only in criminal acts, but also in general system and directions which may have nothing to do with criminal intentions.[587]

Indeed, the editor of *Moskovskie Vedomosti* conceived of his editorial work as a "public service" [*obshchestvennaia deiatelnost*] directed at good governance and beholden to the monarch and the people:

> Public discussion is irreplaceable, it leads to the explanation of issues, toward the

[585] Ibid., l. 9.
[586] Ibid., l. 13ob.
[587] Ibid., l. 9ob-10.

> prevention of disasters, toward the correction of mistakes, toward the revival of beneficial and fruitful forces. […] as recent as the existence of our press is, it has already brought doubtless benefits due to its newly-acquired freedom [crossed out: freedom, which could be even more significant were the public role and independence of the press even greater. Publicity is the most important [crossed out: condition] [added: warrant] of social [crossed out: progress] [added: order] and state prosperity [*blagoustroistva*]. In Russia, the more space given to publicity, the less it is fastidious and arbitrary, the more it can benefit the government and all lawful interests.[588]

Katkov noted that his well-intentioned publicity had prompted accusation against him in 1866, but rejected the notion that it shaped public opinion:

> When the press is being accused of attempts to undermine public trust [*doverie publiki*] in government officials. The public has no influence here. [crossed out: We do not have political assemblies or clubs, there are no influential salons.] There is no example of an article [added: in Russian newspapers] that incited resistance to lawful authorities. Could anyone complain that in Russia government officials, even those completely compromised by their behavior in public opinion, encounter as a consequence any resistance in their fulfilment of official duties? [Crossed out: The government officials who accuse [us] in undermining trust in them fear not for the public opinion.] If they want to secure any opinion, then it is not public opinion […]. What is meant is not the public opinion, in a broad sense, but that in the government spheres and particularly the Sovereign himself. They fear that [added:

[588] Ibid., l. 9ob-10.

> the press will raise in the government] an opposite issue that will garner support in the State Council, but most importantly that it finds its way to the Tsar. All the efforts of the government parties naturally aim for the Sovereign to see issues in one and not a different light.[589]

Katkov understood his primary audience well: rather than subscribers, *Moskovskie Vedomosti* directed their discourse at the Tsar, ministers, and the members of the State Council. In absence of popular representation, newspapers like Katkov's spoke primarily at the immediate decision-makers. In fact, Katkov regarded himself as a legitimate participant of political discussion, empowered to influence decision-making. Foreshadowing the work of future press historians, Katkov warned against interpreting the "new social forces [*obshchestvennye sily*], new rights and institutions that have appeared among us," to have come at the expense autocratic power.[590] In this way, he added, "it can be understood that the more civic society grows [*chem bolee rastet delo grazhdanskoi tsivilizatsii*], the more the Supreme Authority weakens."[591] This course of ideas would imply, argued Katkov, that "either the Supreme Authority would have to self-destruct to contribute to public good; or there would be no progress, no liberty [*svobodna*], no civic spirit [*grazhdanstvennost*]."[592] "Must the progress of Russian *narod,"* asked Katkov, *"*tend toward eliminating this dearly earned principle [of unitary, centralized Supreme Authority," correcting his scribe to capitalize the reference to the monarchy.[593]

Writing somewhat naively and somewhat prematurely, Katkov argued in the aftermath of the positive effects of the Great Reforms the Russian autocracy should be interpreted such that the

[589] Ibid., l. 7ob-8.
[590] Ibid., l. 10ob.
[591] Ibid., l. 10ob.
[592] Ibid., l. 12ob.
[593] Ibid., l. 10ob.

monarchy is the source and the warrant – not the antipode – of civic developments of the Reforms. Specifically, he contended, "the meaning of reforms is that alongside with government authorities emerge other service authorities not dependent on the former but along with them subordinated to the Supreme Power." [594] These civic authorities would develop "under the umbrella of common and equalizing power of the monarch" rather than in opposition to it.[595] Although he recognized the "violent and bloody" [*nasil'stvennye i krovavye*] Petrine reforms, he still deemed them as necessary as centralizing efforts during the Muscovite period that the Russian people endured."[596] Indeed, Katkov believed that autocracy had not lost its power with the reforms, but on the contrary, "became dearer to its people."[597]

It was finally during the rule of Alexander II that the centralization of his predecessors "has been completed, the principle of the Supreme Authority so ingrained in the people [*narod*] [that it] has become for it the source and guaranteur of civic liberties [*grazhdanskoi svobody*] and progress."[598] Considering the empowerment of the bureaucracy during the reforms, Katkov wondered "must it [centralization] now head toward its sunset and lose its meaning for the Russian people." [599] Considering central authority of the monarchy "a good [*blago*] for the people," Katkov argued that "even the broadest social progress must be not only compatible with it [the monarchy], but must find in it its guarantee [*obespechenie*]."[600] A strong proponent of government centralization, Katkov, argued that "Only those people [*narody*] in Europe have a future, which have conditions for lie [crossed out: progress] historically rooted in the [crossed out: origin]

[594] Ibid., l. 10ob.
[595] Ibid., l. 10ob.
[596] Ibid., l. 11.
[597] Ibid., l. 12.
[598] Ibid., l. 11ob.
[599] Ibid., l. 11ob.
[600] Ibid., l. 11ob.

[added: notion] of a unitary all-encompassing, all-embracing power, elevated above all."[601] Katkov's advocacy of state centralization came to full fruition during the rule of Alexander III.

Katkov's 1867 essay on his editorial activity tells us much about his views, attitudes, and editorial approach observed during the following two decades of his editorial activity. His faith in the ultimate protective powers of the monarch and relative lack of deference toward government ministers – even particularly powerful officials such as the Minister of the Interior – offers a perspective onto his bold behavior with ministers, propelling them into positions of power and taking them down, drafting their reform projects and berating them for lack of initiative (Chapter 5). The essay sheds light on the political and public role Katkov claimed for himself, justifying not only the utility, but the necessity of his participation in politics. Yet, the essay also reveals the occasional vulnerability of the press as it found itself in inter-ministerial crossfire. Not least, the essay offers a chance to observe the formation of Katkov's attitudes toward autocratic rule, state centralization, and his flirtation with nativism and Slavophilism – all of which demonstrated themselves during the 1880s (Chapter 4 and 5). Crossing out in his essay the "principle" of autocratic power [*printsip verkhovnoi vlasti*], Katkov replaced it with the Russian-origin word "*nachalo*," offering us a glimpse into the political program he shaped for Russia's autocratic rule over a decade later.

[601] Ibid., l. 11.

Chapter 4:
The Journalist-Politician:
M.N. Katkov as the Ideologue of the New Rule, 1881-1883

Introduction

Identifying the characteristics of the modern state in the aftermath of the French Revolution, historian Eric Hobsbawm observed the emergent need of the governments to take notice of their subjects' or citizens' opinions.[602] The necessity of consent in governance, Hobsbawm has suggested, came from intensifying interactions between the governing and the governed, whether through the collection of taxes, military conscription, expansion of local administration, etc. The ensuing state centralization raised the issue of subject loyalty and identification with the state and ruling system. Yet, traditional guaranteurs of loyalty such as dynastic legitimacy, divine ordination, monarchic continuity, or religious identity, had by then been severely weakened. Furthermore, rising socialist and radical politics in Russia and across Europe questioned brought into the public sphere discourses increasingly critical of the state, undercutting the assumed loyalty of the subjects. Thus, in the second half of the nineteenth century, monarchies across Europe - Queen Victoria, Emperor Franz Joseph II, King Victor Emanuel II, Kaiser Wilhelm I, and Sultan Abdulhamid II, and Russia's Alexander II as well as his successor – all faced a profound challenge of legitimacy.

As Chapter 3 has demonstrated, the complex outcomes of the Great Reforms and the rising revolutionary movement challenged the legitimacy of Alexander II. The early months of his successor's rule, Alexander III, were associated with withdrawal and indecision. Having provoked the resignations of his father's key reformer-ministers, Alexander III appointed in their stead a

[602] Eric Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 80-84.

disconnected group of vastly different levels of experience and worldviews, lacking a unified vision or program for the new rule. Reflecting on the new government, P.A. Valuev characterized it as "hastily put together from company officers, salon-dwelling political dilettantes, generals unfit for war, incompetent statesmen, and a few the sages from *Kitai-gorod* [the neighborhood of Katkov's editorial office], and their sexton [K.P.] Pobedonostsev."[603] High-ranking officials noted the "extreme uncertainty of the direction, the absence of a program, and the total suspense regarding the government's intentions."[604]

Within this vacuum of political resolve during the early days of Alexander III's rule, increasingly prominent became the voice of M.N. Katkov, the editor of *Moskovskie Vedomosti,* toward whom Alexander III was partial already during his days as an heir. Between the publication of the 29 April Manifesto in 1881 and Alexander III's coronation in 1883, Katkov used his newspaper to formulate and disseminate a new public image and direction for the monarchy to strengthen its legitimacy in the face of imminent revolutionary challenge. Much like courtiers to European monarchs, Katkov shared an understanding that subjects' political attitudes gained a new importance in the survival of monarchic regimes. Whether knowingly or intuitively, Katkov thus sought to create during the early 1880s what royal courts across Europe had done just decades earlier to secure themselves from revolutions: to create, what Eric Hobsbawm would later call, "a supplementary, 'national' foundation" to reinforce monarchic legitimacy. Monarchic identification with a 'people' or a 'nation,' Hobsbawm has shown, provided monarchs across Europe with a "convenient and fashionable" way of addressing challenges to their legitimacy in the second half of the nineteenth century, especially as it provided a sense of popular sovereignty

[603] P. A Valuev, Entry from 30 July 1881, *Dnevnik, 1877-1884* (Petrograd: Izd-vo "Byloe," 1919), 171.
[604] D.A. Miliutin, Entry from 7 August 1881, in *Dnevnik D. A. Miliutina, 1881-1882*, ed. P.A. Zaionchkovskii, vol. 4 (Moscow: Gos. Bibl. SSSR im. V. I. Lenina, 1950), vol. 4, 104.

without giving in to the demands of revolutionary politics.

The press and Katkov was among its most prominent representatives offered an unparalleled medium for cultivating public attitudes and broadcasting the image of a national monarchy. Here, the concept of nation as a communicative society and of nationalism as a form of communication - indeed, with the printed press as its vehicle – the works of Andreas Renner, Karl Deutsch, Ernest Gellner and Benedict Anderson are especially relevant.[605]

Chapter 4 examines the emergence of M.N Katkov as a leading voice formulating - in private as well as on the pages of his *Moskovskie Vedomosti* - the ideology and public image of Alexander III's to resolve the crisis of monarchic legitimacy and forge a new post-Reform course of Russian politics. The chapter sets off by exploring the origins of this supplementary foundation. It shows how Katkov's interpretation of the crisis at the accession of Alexander III drew parallels with Russia's seventeenth-century Time of Troubles, laying the groundwork for his national and popular discourse. From here, the chapter focuses on the three main elements of this supplementary foundation that came to reframe monarchic legitimacy and direct the politics of the new rule.

First, the chapter explores Katkov's concept of *narodnost'* as he formulated the image of a national monarchy and promoted its identification with *narod* -- 'a people' and 'a nation.' Much like S.S. Uvarov nearly half a century earlier, Katkov loaded the notion of *narodnost*' with an ambiguous meaning that oscillated between 'the popular' and 'the national,' fostering a more inclusive social concept of *narod* better poised to foster popular loyalties than the ethnically-charged *natsia*.[606]

---

[605] Karl W. Deutsch, *Nation-Building* (New York: Atherton Press, 1963); Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1983); Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1983).

[606] Andreas Renner, "Defining a Russian Nation: Mikhail Katkov and the 'Invention' of National Politics," *The Slavonic and East European Review* 81, no. 4 (2003): 659–82; Alexei Miller and Stefan Berger, *Nationalizing Empires* (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2014), 328.

Second, with the Great Reforms disrupting Russia's historic estate system, that dictated all subjects' loyalty and service to the crown, Katkov proposed a second concept, *vsesoslovnost'* ('all-estateness' or the inclusion of all estates), as an ingenious solution. Rather than reinforcing already eroded estate divides, *vsesoslovnost'* further downplayed estate divides in favor of integrating subjects along the lines of individual loyalty to the monarchy. *Narodnost'* and *vsesoslovnost'* thus offered a new framework of societal integration, one in which a diffuse popular-national and estate unity sought to paper over contentious ethnic and class divides while also responding to the egalitarian demands of revolutionary politics without indulging them.

Third, the chapter engages with Katkov's concept of *blagosostoianie* (or *narodnoe blagosostoianie*, i.e. popular welfare) as it reflected a new role for the state and the monarch as patrons of subjects' welfare. The emerging focus on individual welfare regardless of estate belonging offered a new source for strengthening monarchic legitimacy and was reflected in a range of Alexander III's policies. Indeed, Europe's nationalizing monarchies were first to co-opt public welfare as a source of monarchic and government legitimacy, with the last decades of the nineteenth century marking the earliest policies instituting public welfare and pensions.

Ultimately, *narodnost', vsesoslovnost', blagosostoianie* constituted a new framework for strengthening monarchic legitimacy, one in which the monarchy – challenged by revolutionary ideas of unity, quality, and individual welfare – sought to spearhead them. As this study dissects the strategies employed by Alexander III and formulated by Katkov to strengthen monarchic legitimacy, it reveals considerable parallels with European practices and unlikely forays into more egalitarian and welfare policies promoted by revolutionary politics. The triad of national, all-estate, and welfare politics runs as a red thread throughout Katkov's editorials during the 1880s, permeated both Katkov's policy projects and Alexander III's reforms.

The chapter makes several key contributions to the literature on Katkov and to the study of the late nineteenth century. First, this work presents an entirely new perspective on the interaction between the press and the state – one of bi-directional influence – unlike the dominant top-down approach in the historiography of the Russian press. Expanding on Richard Wortman's *Scenarios of Power*, chapter then turns to the ways in which Katkov utilized his newspaper to craft a national image for Alexander III on the pages of *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, thus uncovering the role of the press in shaping, communicating, and disseminating monarchic imagery. The use of the press in the promotion of the monarchic "scenario of power" was novel, yet increasingly popular in Western Europe.[607] This approach challenges Katkov's portrayal in V.A. Tvardovskaia's *Ideologia poreformennogo samoderzhavia* as a government organ, a mouthpiece of the state.[608] Instead, it builds on the work of V.G. Chernukha in *Pravitel'stvennaia Politika*, which highlights Katkov's autonomy from the government officials, his frequent collisions with high-ranking bureaucrats, and the considerable difficulty of the censorship organ in managing *Moskovskie Vedomosti*.[609] Expanding' on Chernukha's limited focus on Katkov self-willed journalistic activity predominantly during the 1860sa and 1870s, this chapter aims to examine his activity during the 1880s – the zenith of his activity, as argued also by P.A. Zaionchkovskii.[610]

Second, the chapter reconciles the long-standing paradox of modernization and

[607] For a handful of examples, see: Maria Bucur-Deckard and Nancy Wingfield, *Staging the Past the Politics of Commemoration in Habsburg Central Europe, 1848 to the Present* (West Lafayette, IN: Purdue University Press, 2001); Nancy Wingfield, "Emperor Joseph II in the Austrian Imagination up to 1914," in *The Limits of Loyalty: Imperial Symbolism, Popular Allegiances, and State Patriotism in the Late Habsburg Monarchy*, ed. Laurence Cole and Daniel L Unowsky (New York: Berghahn Books, 2007); John Plunkett, *Queen Victoria: First Media Monarch* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003); Catherine Brice, "La Monarchie, un acteur oublié de la 'nationalisation' des Italiens?," *Revue d'histoire Moderne et Contemporaine* 45, no. 1 (January 1, 1998): 147–69.
[608] V. A. Tvardovskaia, *Ideologiia poreformennogo samoderzhaviia: M. N. Katkov i ego izdaniia* (Moscow: Nauka, 1978).
[609] V. G. Chernukha, *Pravitelstvennaia politika v otnoshenii pechati 60-70-e gody XIX veka* (Leningrad: Nauka, 1989).
[610] P.A. Zaionchkovskii, *Krizis samoderzhaviia na rubezhe 1870-1880-kh godov* (Moscow: Izd-vo Moskovskogo universiteta, 1964), 70.

nationalism, observed by Richard Pipes, Robert Byrnes, Edward Thaden, and Martin Katz in their biographies of Katkov. The same paradox has puzzled not only biographers of Katkov to date, but also historians of Alexander III's rule, whose reign has been defined by both modernization and nationalism. Instead, this chapter looks at how modernization and nationalism – advocated by Katkov – sought to address the legacies of the Great Reforms and the rising revolutionary sentiment. This part of the chapter will see Katkov proposing a broad vision for one of Russia's most pressing issues in the aftermath of the Great Reforms – its shifting estate system. Bringing together the notions of Katkov's *narodnost'*, *vsesoslovnost'*, and *blagosostoianie*, this chapter begins to reconcile the paradox of modernization and nationalism within the framework of Katkov's early notion of a Russian nation-state with social policies that had parallels in other European fledgling nation-states at the time.

M.N. Katkov: An Ideologue in the Time of Troubles

On the morning of 30 April 1881, the issue of *Moskovskie Vedomosti* came out of press bearing on its front page the 29 April Manifesto, issued the previous day. In the brief editorial that accompanied the Manifesto, M.N. Katkov proclaimed that "Now we can exhale freely. This is the end of pusillanimity [*malodushie*], the end of all unrest [*smuta*] of the minds!"[611] What might have struck Katkov's contemporary reader as particularly unusual is the term 'unrest' [*smuta*]. Over the preceding few years, Katkov had increasingly used the concept of *smuta* to define the state of Russian politics and the growing revolutionary threat.[612] As he took to his pen in the aftermath of

[611] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomsoti*, 30 April 1881, No. 118.
[612] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 2 August 1880, No. 213. M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 16 February 1881, No. 48. M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 2 March 1881, No. 62. Ironically, not long after the explosion at the Winter Palace, Katkov wrote in a letter to Alexander II about the appointment of Loris-Melikov: "May God help our great general […] lead us from the trouble [*smuta*]." Zaionchkovskii, *Krizis samoderzhaviia*, 158.

the events of 1 March 1881, Katkov employed *smuta* as an important comparative device and a powerful metaphor to interpret the crisis of monarchic legitimacy – or "the crisis of autocracy" to use Zaionchkovskii's term. Moreover, this device offered a conceptual framework for building a new, 'supplementary national foundation' for monarchic legitimacy under Alexander III.

Dal's explanatory dictionary defines '*smuta'* as an "uprising" or "unrest" [*vosstanie*], "revolt" [*miatezh*], "sedition" [*kramola*], "a dispute between people and the authorities" [*razdor mezhdu narodom i vlast'iu*][613] Defining Russia's political situation as unrest stood in contrast to the milder language – more limited in scope – used by other newspapers across the political spectrum.[614] More importantly, however, Katkov's conceptualization of the revolutionary situation as *smuta* alluded to Russia's Time of Troubles [*Smutnoe vremia*] (1598-1613) – a time of crisis, marked by the end of the Riurik dynasty after the death of Ivan IV "the Terrible", a prolonged struggle within the elites, concluded with the election of Mikhail Romanov and the founding of the Romanov dynasty.

Referencing the Times of Troubles, Katkov drew parallels that elicited a particular understanding of Russia's revolutionary situation in 1881. The two crises lent themselves to easy, if somewhat superficial, comparisons: both were set off by the death of the monarch (Ivan IV and Alexander II); both stemmed at least in part out of the complicated legacies of preceding land reforms that had significantly impacted landowning elites – Oprichnina and the Great Reforms. The ministerial rivalries during the spring of 1881 made easy comparisons with the rivaling elite factions vying for influence over the throne, especially as rogue political actors – pretenders and

---

[613] *Tolkovyi slovar' zhyvogo velikorusskogo iazyka V.I. Dal'ia,* vol. 4, (Moscow: Tipografia T. Ris, 1866), s.v. "smuta," 216-217.

[614] *Golos* referred to it as "disaster" [*bedstvie*], *St. Peterburgskie Vedomosti* called it an "evildoing" [*zlodeistvo*], Western-minded *Poriadok* deemed it "public misfortune" [*narodnaia beda*], *Novoe Vremia* - "a people's tribulation" [*narodnoe gore*]. A.A. Kraevskii, Editorial, *Golos*, 8 March 1881, No. 67, 1; V.F. Korsh, Editorial, *St. Peterburgskie Vedomosti*, 12 March 1881, No. 69; M. Stasiulevich, Editorial, *Poriadok*, 5 March 1881, No. 63; A.S. Suvorin, Editorial, *Novoe Vremia*, 2 March 1881, No. 1799.

revolutionaries – fueled contentious debate. The metaphor of *smuta* served Katkov to subtly suggest the perils of perceived foreign influence in internal politics – whether the threat of Polish Catholicism in the 1600s or of and revolutionary ideologies of the 1880s, which he falsely attributed to West-European influences.

Katkov first wrote about *smuta* as a revolutionary notion in March of 1880, one year before the assassination of Alexander II, when he discussed in a long editorial the *Catechism of a Revolutionary*, published in 1869 by Russia's budding group of revolutionaries abroad. The *Catechism* briefly enjoyed a spotlight during the trial of *nechaevtsy* in 1871 for suggesting that liberal state officials be co-opted into revolutionary efforts to "muddle the state" [*mutit' gosudarstvo*].[615] Katkov was quick to make a connection between *mutit'* and *smutit':* "Evidently they demand to create unrest [*smuta*] in Russia… to muddle the state [*mutit' gosudarstvo*]."[616] In the aftermath of the February 1880 Winter Palace explosion, Katkov commented on Loris-Melikov's appointment to head the Supreme Administrative Commission was "to undercut the unrest [*presech' smutu*]" which "recently has become extremely rampant."[617]

On 2 March 1881, in his first editorial after the assassination of Alexander II, Katkov declared that for some time Russia has been "undergoing unrest" [*perezhyvaem smutu*].[618] During the month that followed, Katkov referred to a state of *smuta* in almost every editorial to describe the state of Russian affairs.[619] Katkov was ambivalent about ascribing responsibility for *smuta*. On the one hand, like many of his contemporaries, he linked *smuta* directly to revolutionary designs:

---

[615] E.L. Rudnitskaia and O.V. Budnitskii, eds., *Revoliutsionnyi radikalizm v Rossii -- vek deviatnadtsatyi: dokumental'naia publikatsia* (Moscow: Arkheograficheskii tsentr, 1997), 246–47.
[616] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 10 March 1880, No. 70.
[617] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 3 August 1880, No. 213.
[618] M.N. Katkov, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 2 March 1881, No. 62.
[619] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 2 March 1881, No. 62. See also subsequent editorials in *Moskovskie Vedomosti* for the following dates: 3 March 1881 (No. 63), 4 March 1881 (No. 64), 6 March 1881 (No. 66), 12 March 1881 (No. 72), 14 March 1881 (No. 74), 17 March 1881 (No. 77), 26 March 1881 (No 86), 28 March 1881 (No. 88), 2 April 1881 (No. 93).

"the catechism of our revolutionaries […] demands the creation of unrest [*smuta*] in Russia."[620] On the other hand, in a far more provocative move, he also attributed direct responsibility to Alexander II for "mistakes" that "introduced unrest [*smuta*] in our life, paralyzing its forces."[621] *Smuta*, he argued, was possible because of "the weakening power of lawful authority" that allowed for "rogue authorities to arise [*zarozhdaiutsa dikie vlasti*], social degradation to take root, violence to be committed, the moral foundations to be shaken, the spirit of immorality takes hold of the minds and instead of the real government, a secret one arises, acting strongest where the legitimate government is weakest."[622]

Katkov was not alone in making such parallels between the Time of Troubles. In his letters to Alexander III in 1879, his tutor K.P. Pobedonostsev referred to "the current time of trouble" [*v nyneshnee smutnoe vremia*],[623] a "time most troublesome" [*samoe smutnoe vremia*].[624] In the same letters, Pobedonostsev encouraged Alexander to read "without delay" I.E. Zabelin's 1872 article "Minin i Pozharskii: priamye i krivye v smutnoe vremia." Pobedonostsev specified that "this article is notable especially for this time [*primechatel'na imenno dlia nyneshnego vremeni*]. The picture that it paints, appears now vaguely [*smutno*] to many Russian people, who have not forgotten their past."[625]

The metaphor of *smuta* indeed appeared to resonate with Alexander III. The 29 April Manifesto referred to Russia having previously "survived great unrest [*velikie smuty*]."[626] By July

[620] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 3 March 1881, No. 63.
[621] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 4 March 1881, No. 64.
[622] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 2 March 1881, No. 62.
[623] K.P. Pobedonostsev, Letter from K.P. Pobedonostsev to Alexander Alexandrovich, 17 May 1879, in K.V. Dolgov, ed, *Pis'ma Pobedonostseva k Alexandru III* (Moscow: Novaia Moscow, 1926), 206.
[624] Ibid., 221. More mentions: K.P. Pobedonostsev, Letter from K.P. Pobedonostsev to Alexander Alexandrovich, 12 December 1879, in Dolgov, *Pis'ma Pobedonostseva*, 248; K.P. Pobedonostsev, Letter from K.P. Pobedonostsev to Alexander Alexandrovich, 14 December 1879, in Dolgov, *Pis'ma Pobedonostseva*, 249-250.
[625] Ibid., 250.
[626] S.P. Sushkov, Editorial, *Pravitel'stvennyi Vestnik,* 30 April 1881, No. 93.

1881, even the revolutionaries took notice of the term, beginning their first editorial in *Listok Narodnoi Voli*, since 1 March with the words "Unrest [*Smuta*] reigns in our fatherland."[627] Other contemporaries found the parallel likewise persuasive. E.M. Feoktistov reflected on historian D.I. Ilovaiskii's volume *Smutnoe Vremia Moskovskeoego Gosudarstva I Epokha Mikhaila Feodorovich Romanova,* drawing comparisons between Ivan IV and Nicholas I. Feoktistov concluded that both Tsars prepared the ground for *smuta* with their "unobstructed despotism."[628] Over the next decade, the Time of Troubles became an important subject of research for prominent historians such as S.F. Platonov, V.O. Kliuchevskii, and S.M. Soloviev.[629]

For Katkov, however, the metaphor of *smuta* proved a versatile rhetorical instrument. First, it provided a historically familiar and popularly understandable framework for juxtaposing the autocratic government and the forces of unrest. Drawing parallels with the turmoil that followed the demise of the monarchy in the late sixteenth century, Katkov sought to make it a cautionary tale against any weakening of monarchic powers. Russia's political stability, he argued, was "inextricably linked with autocratic power of the Russian Tsar."

Second, drawing on pre-Petrine historicity, the metaphor of the Times of Troubles implicitly drew parallels between the nativism of Russia's monarchy and the foreign (Western, Catholic) influences that underpinned the unrest and influenced the boyars (ministers), leading them to prolong *smuta*. This comparison offered a subtle, but damning, indictment of Katkov's political rivals – the coalition of ministers around the figure of M.T. Loris-Melikov and their

---

[627] *Listok Narodnoi Voli*, 22 July 1881, No. 1, in *Literatura partii "Narodnoi voli"* (Moscow: Tip. A.P. Poplavskogo, 1907), 189.
[628] E.M. Feoktistov, *Za kulisami politiki i literatury, 1848-1896* (Moscow: Novosti, 1991), 124–25; D.I. Ilovaiskii, *Smutnoe vremia Moskovskogo gosudarstva okonchanie istorii Rossii pri pervoi dinastii* (Moscow: Tipografia Volchannikova, 1894), 259.
[629] Around two dozen monograph on the Time of Troubles were published, see: S.F. Platonov, *Novaia povest' o smutnom vremeni XVII veka* (St. Petersburg: Tip. V.S. Balasheva, 1886). V.O. Kliuchevskii, *Drevniaia Russkaia istoria (ot nachala Rusi do smutnogo vremeni)* (Moscow: n.p., 1887). S.M. Soloviev, *Istoria Rossii s drevneishikh vremen, t. 8: Istoriia Smutnogo vremeni* (Moscow: Universitetskaia Tip. Katkov I Ko, 1883).

powerful presence in the first months of Alexander III's rule. More broadly, it contained a criticism of Russia's Europeanizing tradition. Hardly a Slavophile sympathizer, Katkov's appeals to "Old Russia," i.e. to pre-Petrine Russia, went hand in hand with abounding references to "Russian people," the "Russian land," and the "Russian Tsar," with "Russianness" standing as an antipode to Westernizing reforms.[630]

Third, and most significantly, the metaphor of *smuta* spanned a scenario of resolution that Katkov was keen to draw on. This was a scenario in which the accession of a quintessential "Russian Tsar," Mikhail Feodorovich in 1613 and Alexander III in 1881, ended *smuta* by reviving Russia's dynastic and – Katkov would add autocratic – rule and undercutting foreign influences and elite rivalries. The parallel was, of course, a strained one: the very young Mikhail Fedorovich Romanov, whose familial entourage largely governed on his behalf, hardly embodied the symbol of Russian autocracy Katkov sought to project onto Alexander III. But, referencing the celebrated founding monarch of the Romanov dynasty, the metaphor aimed to make a parallel with the renewal of Russia's monarchy, after 1 March 1881.

Katkov began draw such parallels between 1613 and 1881 just days after Alexander III's accession, inviting him to visit Moscow, "in Kremlin, where our state came into being and where all authority was empowered in sacred traditions."[631] Juxtaposing Moscow with St. Petersburg, Katkov ascribed the latter "a different moral atmosphere, where our official world, ill with opinion feeds on evil." By contrast, Moscow – Katkov argued, was the only place to cleanse and renew the autocracy.

The first opportunity to illustrated direct parallels came in July 1881, when Alexander III

[630] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomsoti*, 4 March 1881, No. 64. M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomsoti*, 8 April 1881, No. 99.
[631] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 7 March 1881, No. 66.

was persuaded to make the visit to Moscow – traditional for a newly acceded Tsar. Katkov seized the chance to declare on the eve of Alexander III's arrival to Moscow on 17 July 1881 "a day of jubilation for Moscow" as --

> Russia's Autocratic Ruler, for the first time since his accession, will touch Russian Land in the sanctuary of its past, in its heart, in the source of its power. What a powerful, elusive, inspired force in the great historical lessons.[632]

Redoubling on his subtle references to Mikhail Feodorovich, Katkov he greeted the new Emperor into "the first capital" [*pervoprestol'naia stolitsa*].[633] Katkov expressed hope that "among the holy relics of the Moscow Kremlin, under its historical canopy, in this solemn moment, perhaps the Tsar's heart will determine the course of this new rule" and would dispel "all the unrests of the mind [*smuty v umakh*]" and "sound the threat to all the enemies internal and external."[634] Katkov's concluded that although "already several months passed of the new rule, it feels as if only now God has returned the people their Leader [*Vozhdia*]."[635]

The parallels between the renewal of the Russian monarchy with the accession of Mikhail Romanov in 1613 and of Alexander III aimed to turn the page on *smuta* and forge a new beginning. Yet, this rhetoric had its skeptics. P.A. Valuev conceded that summer that "the mirage of Moscow plays a great role. As if the immersion into this source gives the desired invulnerability. But the Achilles' heel even here remains unsubmerged."[636] For Katkov, however, the metaphor of Moscow offered far more than legitimation of historical continuity. Greeting Alexander III into the old capital in July 1881, Katkov cited Alexander speechon the eve of arrival, celebrating that

[632] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomsoti*, 16 July 1881, No. 196.
[633] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomsoti*, 17 July 1881, No. 197.
[634] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomsoti*, 16 July 1881, No. 196.
[635] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomsoti*, 17 July 1881, No. 197.
[636] P.A. Valuev, Entry from 16 July 1881, *Dnevnik,1877-1884*, 170.

Moscow "as an example for all of Russia that the Russian Tsar and Russian *narod* make a strong unanimous whole."[637]

Spanning parallels with seventeenth-century Russia, Katkov located the key element in strengthening monarchic legitimacy: a rapprochement with the people (*narod*). Doubtlessly, aware of that the survival of the monarchy and the strength of its legitimacy depended on fostering closer relations with its subjects, Katkov reached into pre-Petrine era to project a nativist Russian monarchy's direct relationship of goodwill with its subjects. Indeed, the very impression or appearance of such a relationship, broadcast particularly through the press, could inspire a popular consent in governance that modern European monarchs found indispensable, to return to Hobsbawm's conclusions. Across Europe, monarchies increasingly projected national mythologies of historical acquiescence, consent, and harmony between the governing and the governed. The part that follows explores the notion of the monarchy's rapprochement, its turn to the people - i.e. *narodnost'* –, which constituted an essential part of Russian monarchy's 'supplementary foundation' for its legitimacy.

Narodnost': National Politics as Basis for Monarchic Legitimacy

On 10 March 1881, days after the assassination of Alexander III, the Executing Committee of *Narodnaia Volia* sent Alexander III a letter that gave the newly-acceded monarch an ultimatum: "From this situation there are only two solutions: either an inevitable revolution, or a turn of the Supreme Authority to the people [*obrashchenie Verkhovnoi Vlasti k narodu*]."[638] Weeks later, on 1 May 1881, commenting on the publication of the Manifesto, Katkov echoed this very sentiment: "The government [*pravitel'stvo*] needs a closer relationship with the people [*sblizhenie s*

[637] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomsoti*, 17 July 1881, No. 197.
[638] "Pismo Ispolnitelnogo Komiteta k Aleksandru III, 10 Marta 1881," in *Literatura Partii "Narodnaia Volia,"* 453.

narodom]."[639] There was, of course, little love lost between Katkov and *narodnovol'tsy*, yet their convergence in advocating for "a turn to the people" is an intriguing phenomenon.

The Russo-Turkish War of 1877-1878 provided an early impetus not only to the build-up of nationalism, as Alexei Miller has suggested, but also to popular politics.[640] The "care" and "interest" in "the oppressed Christian population" served as the widely broadcast justification for Russia's engagement in Balkan crises and figured prominently in the very declaration of war in 1877.[641] By 1880, the rising revolutionary movement and its attempts on the Emperor's life have also prompted Alexander II to "complete" the Great Reforms to improve the lot particularly of the peasantry. By the accession of Alexander III, the Russian monarchy had been primed to project a popular and national imagery and identity around the concept of *narodnost'*.

Katkov's own turn to *narodnost'* appears to have coincided with the intensifying revolutionary activity in the last years of the previous rule. During 1879, *Moskovskie Vedomosti* editorials used the word "*narod*" 393 times. The following year, in 1880, the number of mentions rose to 588 times, and over the course of 1881 – at the height of revolutionary activity – doubled to nearly 1,200 times. In the weeks after the 1 March assassination, *narodnost'* permeated the language of grief in *Moskovskie Vedomosti* editorials. Already on 2 March the *Moskovskie Vedomosti* painted the death of the Emperor in popular, national hues, referring to "the people's grief [*narodnaia skorb'*], to Alexander II as "the Sovereign of a great people [*Gosudar' velikogo naroda*]," whose rule was "full of good deeds for the people [*blagodeianii dlia naroda*]."[642] The 29 April Manifesto, drafted for Alexander III by Katkov and Pobedonostsev, reaffirmed this

[639] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomsoti*, 30 April 1881, No. 119.
[640] Stefan Berger and Aleksei Miller, "Nation-Building and Regional Integration, c.1800-1914: The Role of Empires," *European Review of History: Revue Europeenne D'histoire* 3, no. 15 (June, 2008): 317-330.
[641] A.L. Narochnitskii, ed., *Rossiia i natsional'no-osvoboditel'naia bor'ba na Balkanakh, 1875–1878* (Moscow: Nauka, 1978).
[642] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomsoti*, 2 March 1881, No. 61.

sentiment by referencing in identical terms the "people's grief," "people's prayer," and "a loyal people." Rallying the national sentiment around the monarchy, Katkov went to lengths to project Alexander as a "shepherd" to his *narod*, who – despite his "cosmopolitan upbringing" – "found it in his heart to follow the national spirit [*narodnoe chuvstvo*] in his decisions."[643]

Nevertheless, Katkov also suggested that the present unrest [*smuta*] was the result of the "mistakes" of the previous rule. "The truth of Russian history," he posited, was in the "unbreakable bond between the supreme authority and the *narod*, and that governance be an expression of their unity."[644] In a rebuke of what he feared were Loris-Melikov's constitutional and parliamentary designs, Katkov rejected "any foreign formulas based on the experiences of other countries for the relationship between the authority and the people [*narod*] in Russia" as unapplicable. The path forward for the new rule – for Alexander III -, he concluded, was in the "unity of the supreme authority with the *narod*."

The theme of unity between the Tsar and the *narod*, the identification of the monarchy with the people and nation, became key in Katkov's rhetoric during the early years of Alexander III's rule. It was, indeed, an essential element of the supplementary 'national' foundation for monarchic legitimacy. Katkov located the historical precedent, and the golden age, of "close unity" between Tsar and *narod* in pre-Petrine Russia with its capital in Moscow.[645] When, in July 1881, Alexander III arrived on his first visit to Moscow as Tsar, Katkov's editorial celebrated the appearance of the monarch "among his people [*sredi svoego naroda*]."[646]

The culmination of the scenario of unity between the Tsar and the people was on display during the coronation events in May 1883, and particularly during his audience with the *volost'*

[643] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomsoti*, 5 March 1881, No. 64.
[644] Ibid.
[645] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomsoti*, 2 November 1881, No. 305.
[646] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomsoti*, 18 July 1881, No. 197.

elders as well as the nobility on 21 May 1883, portrayed in I.E Repin's 1886 work "Alexander III receiving the *volost* elders in the courtyard of the Petrovskii Palace in Moscow." Alexander's speech on that occasion was indeed only a few sentences long and sought to disprove rumors that peasants may receive free additional land parcels.[647] However, Katkov's editorial, much like Repin's painting, focused on conveying a much broader picture of the new rule. Writing on the event in his editorial, Katkov highlighted the "two close-knit estates, the peasantry and the nobility" taking in the "words said by the Tsar face to face with the people [*narod*]."[648] Katkov argued that "both estates equally need, for their welfare [*blagosostoiania*], a strong delimitation of property rights; both live off agriculture; both are deeply vested in the protection of public morality [*ograzhdenie obshchestvennoi nravstvennosti*]; both need to have their legal freedom [*zakonnaia svoboda*] protected by strong and just power that goes up to the Tsar."[649] The affirmation that both estates needed a strong delimitation of property rights begs the question if those right were to be equal and whether that equality would usher in others.

Repin's painting gave a new visual form to the issue. The painting was ordered by the Ministry of the Imperial Court in 1884 to mark the Alexander III's speech to the *volost*' elders during the 1883 coronation celebrations; its iterations and details meticulously vetted, such that the final iteration represents official intentions. The painting was ordered by the Ministry of Court in 1884. With its iterations and details meticulously vetted by the court, the final version of the painting represents official intentions.

---

[647] The full text of the speech, as inscribed around I.E. Repin's painting is the following: "I am very glad to see you; [I] sincerely thank you for your heartfelt participation in our celebrations, that have been so warmly received by all Russia. When you leave for your homes, render to all my heartfelt thanks, follow the advice and guidance of your nobility marshalls and do not believe the nonsensical and confusing rumors and ideas about the re-division of land [*o peredelakh zemli*], the free additional land parcels [*darovye prirezki*], and so on. These rumors are circulated by our enemies. All property, such as yours, must be untouchable. May God bless you with happiness and health."
[648] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomsoti*, 23 May 1883, No. 142.
[649] Ibid.

Figure 2. I.E. Repin, "Alexander III receiving the volost elders in the courtyard of the Petrovskii Palace in Moscow," 1886.

The painting, much like Katkov's editorials, re-states the centrality of the Tsarist governance just as the revolutionary efforts that assassinated Alexander III's father sought to subvert the centrality of the monarchy. Casting a bright light from above on Alexander III and conveying his confident posture, Repin's painting communicates the monarchy's assertive right to governance and command of the attention of its subjects. Still, Alexander's direct addresses the *volost'* elders symbolizes a new and direct relationship with his subjects, while bureaucratic ministerial ranks and the court – minister D.A. Tolstoy, N.P. Ignatiev, head of security P.A. Cherevin - are set aside, the Tsar standing symbolically with his back to them. An earlier draft of the same painting (Fig. 2), dated to 1885, shows the Alexander engulfed by a crowd.

Figure 2. I.E. Repin. "Alexander III' Receiving the Volost' Elders," 1885.

The distance between the Tsar and the crowd, placed there by Repin in the final version of the painting, inserted a symbolic distance of to highlight the special status of the monarch that revolutionaries sought to dismantle. Circling the monarch on all sides, the elders representing the *narod*, appear as a human shield of defense around the Tsar. As Elizabeth Valkenier notes, the crowd of peasants being portrayed only with their backs showing "could have been taken as an allusion to the mute role of the populace."[650] While the painting indeed makes an effort at representing the engagement of the Tsar with the peasants, their facelessness – even in the final painting – suggests an approach to the peasantry as a mass, lacking in individual traits and differentiated perhaps only in their ethnic belonging. Ultimately, Alexander III's *narodnost'*, as formulated by Katkov on the pages of *Moskovskie Vedomosti* and portrayed by Ilia Repin, was a populism without popular participation.

Displays of such unity manifested themselves on fast-increasing monarchic visits and imperial celebrations, where the press played a paramount role conveying and disseminating accounts of monarchic interaction with the people conveyed mutual regard and therefore consent. Increasingly, monarchic "turns to the people" were documented with the aid of lithography,

[650] Elizabeth Kridl Valkenier, *Russian Realist Art :The State and Society : The Peredvizhniki and Their Tradition /* (Ann Arbor: Ardis, 1977), 126.

photography, souvenirs, etc.[651]

Contemporaries acknowledged, often critically, Katkov's role in Alexander III's national politics and his protectiveness of his national discourse. Historian K.D. Kavelin, in an 1882 letter to D.A. Miliutin wrote:

> The national sentiment, national self-consciousness, apparently is growing, ripening and has taken over the highest bureaucracy more than ever. Those who express this popular [*narodnyi*] genius and needs are various imbecile fanatics and intriguers – Katkov (soon to be member of the State Council [this rumor was erroneous], Aksakov, Pobedonostsev, and Ignatiev. Supposedly they keep in their pocket the box with the Russian national [*narodnyi*] spirit. Only in the current helplessness of the Russian autocracy and isolation from real life could lead to such thoughts; in all others [Katkov, Aksakov, Pobedonostsev, and Ignatiev] see the enemies of Russian *narodnost'* and autocracy and attempt to keep them away from influence. The comic nature of these childish concepts, if they rule politics long enough, can become a terrible tragedy.[652]

Katkov's rhetoric faced criticism even from former allies, like P.A. Valuev who doubted "the remarkably naïve (or not naïve) elucubrations in *Moskovskie Vedomsoti* about "The Tsar and the *Narod*," the live connection between 100 million [people] and one Tsar, etc. as if it is possible, without a representative mechanism, to have direct relationship between 100 million and people

[651] Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation, 1707-1837* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992); John Plunkett, *Queen Victoria: First Media Monarch* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2003); Nancy Wingfield, "Emperor Joseph II in the Austrian Imagination up to 1914," in *The Limits of Loyalty: Imperial Symbolism, Popular Allegiances, and State Patriotism in the Late Habsburg Monarchy*, ed. Laurence Cole and Daniel L Unowsky (New York: Berghahn Books, 2007); Maria Bucur-Deckard and Nancy Wingfield, *Staging the Past the Politics of Commemoration in Habsburg Central Europe, 1848 to the Present* (West Lafayette, IN: Purdue University Press, 2001); Laurence Cole and Daniel L Unowsky, *The Limits of Loyalty: Imperial Symbolism, Popular Allegiances, and State Patriotism in the Late Habsburg Monarchy* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2007).

[652] E.M. Feoktistov, *Za kulisami politiki i literatury*, 409, n. 222.

master, as if our current situation is not the result of autocratic governance."[653] P.A. Valuev lamented the ubiquity of national symbols in an era he called "semi-Tashkent," alluding to the de-Europeanization of Russia: "Ce n'est pas encore du Téhéran, mais ce ne'est pas plus du Pétersbourg."[654] Valuev felt "embarrassment before the foreigners and [before] our [people]" for the "savage pre-Petrine force [*stikhia*] [that] took over. The degradation of Imperial Russia portends its disintegration."[655]

Much like S.S. Uvarov nearly half a century earlier, Katkov employed the notion of *narod* in all its ambiguity of designating a people, an estate, or a nation. As Alexei Miller has noted with respect to Uvarov's use of *narodnost'*, it was precisely the vacuity of the term – far from accidental – that allowed it to fulfill its role as ideology and gain support.[656] Katkov's use of *narod* was likewise vacuous, even when it was used in conjunction of *Russkii narod* it lacked the clear exclusive designations of the ethnically-charged *natsiia*.[657] Although Katkov's nationalism has created controversy among researchers, Andreas Renner has convincingly demonstrated that Katkov's nationalism had been an inclusive one, rather than an ethnic or exclusive one.[658]

"The whole meaning of the Russian history and its entire state wisdom," contended Katkov, "is that the supreme authority of our people [*narod*] should be inseparably connected to it."[659] Katkov thought representative institutions will be fraught with "instability and trouble [*shatanie i*

[653] P. A Valuev, Entry from 4 May 1881, *Dnevnik, 1877-1884*, 165.
[654] P. A Valuev, Entry from 15 April 1884, *Dnevnik, 1877-1884*, 255.
[655] P. A Valuev, Entry from 11 March 1882, *Dnevnik, 1877-1884*, 186.
[656] A. I. Miller, "Chapter 5: Official Nationality? A Reassessment of Count Sergei Uvarov's Triad in the Context of Nationalism Politics," in *The Romanov Empire and Nationalism: Essays in the Methodology of Historical Research* (New York: Central European University Press, 2008), 139-160.
[657] Andreas Renner, "Defining a Russian Nation: Mikhail Katkov and the 'Invention' of National Politics," *The Slavonic and East European Review* 81, no. 4 (2003): 659–82. Alexei Miller and Stefan Berger, *Nationalizing Empires* (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2014), 328.
[658] Andreas Renner, "Defining a Russian Nation: Mikhail Katkov and the 'Invention' of National Politics," *The Slavonic and East European Review* 81, no. 4 (2003): 659–82.
[659] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomsoti*, 4 March 1881, No. 64.

smuta]," promoting "the wavering opinions of people [*vetrom kolebimye, vetrom nosimye*]."[660] The prospect of partisanship among a St. Petersburg bureaucracy "mentally afflicted by opinions"[661] – "rotten liberalism and rotten conservatism" - presented to Katkov perhaps the greatest threat. In his typical etatist manner, Katkov sought to establish government monopoly even over parties he argued did not exist: "In Russia, the party of the state [*gosudarstvennaia partiia*] is the entire Russian people [*Russkii narod*]."[662]A representative institution, like a parliament, he argued, would "force between the central authority [*verkhovnaia vlast*] and the people [*narod*], […] some other kind of representation, creating parties and leave to their political games state interests and the wellbeing of the people."[663]

Since the 1860s, various projects on popular engagement in governance were advanced from vastly different political camps. Many drew on the practices of temporary Preparatory Commissions of elective deputies during the Great Reforms. Projects by P.A. Valuev, Grand Duke Konstantin Nikolaevich, and M.T. Loris-Melikov offered blueprints for consultative bodies either as independent institutions or as elected members to the State Council. Revolutionary *Narodnaia Volia* demanded "a permanent popular representation," while Slavophile proposed the projects of a traditional, native, form of representation: *Zemskii Sobor* – a sixteenth- and seventeenth-century consultative body periodically convocated as a consultative body to discuss key state projects.[664] By the 1880s, the notion of *Zemskii Sobor* was ancient history, however against the backdrop of growing demands for public engagement from the Westernizing reformers and from the budding revolutionary movement, it offered a homegrown representative institution rooted in autocratic

[660] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomsoti*, 30 April 1881, No. 119.
[661] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomsoti*, 6 March 1881, No. 66.
[662] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomsoti*, 12 March 1881, No. 72.
[663] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomsoti*, 30 April 1881, No. 119.
[664] "Programma ispolnitel'nogo komiteta," in *Literatura sotsial'no-revoliutsionnoi partii "Narodnoi Voli"* ([no place]: Tipografia partii sotsialistov-revoliutsionerov, 1905), 164.

tradition.

After the assassination of Alexander II, Slavophile I.S. Aksakov, proposed the convocation of *Zemskii Sobor* to the Minister the Interior, N.P. Ignatiev, as "a solution from [our] predicament" – "broader and more liberal [than constitutions] and at the same time grounding Russia in its historical, political, and national foundations."[665] For Ignatiev, who had already attempted the project of *Zemskii Sobor* with Alexander III before the latter's accession, the project presented appeal. According to his memoirs, by 30 March 1882 Ignatiev prepared the project of a manifesto announcing *Zemskii Sobor* on 6 May 1882 for its convocation the following year – on the initial date of the coronation and the bi-centennial of the retirement of the last *Zemskii Sobor*. Ignatiev drafted the manifesto with the assistance of I.S. Aksakov and his trusted associate P.D. Golokhvastov, who was hired into the Ministry of the Interior as an official for special assignments [*chinovnik osobykh poruchenii*].[666] On 12 April, Ignatiev presented the project to Aleksander III and, according to his memoirs, Alexander "expressed sympathy and approval, but expressed concerns about its implementation."[667] During Ignatiev's next audiences in April 1882, Alexander expressed concerns the project being "misinterpreted as a concession on the part of the government" and weariness about Ignatiev's rush to have it approved before the 6 May anniversary. Evidently, Alexander sent one of Ignatiev's drafts of the project to Pobedonostsev, who replied with "horror at seeing these papers and thinking about Igntiev's proposal."[668] In his next audience with Alexander, Ignatiev noted the Emperor's doubt in the project.[669] Pobedonostsev

[665] I.S. Aksakov, Letter from I.S. Aksakov to N.P. Ignatiev, 10 January 1882, Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv Rossiiskoi Federatsii [GARF] f. 730, op. 1, ed. 2258, ll. 15, 17. Also cited in Zaionchkovskii, *Krizis samoderzhavia*, 452.
[666] I.V Lukoyanov, *Zemskii Sobor: N.P. Ignatiev* (Kishinev: Nestor, 2000), 105–7.
[667] Ibid., 107.
[668] K.P. Pobedonostsev, Letter from K.P. Pobedonostsev to Alexander III, 4 May 1882, in Dolgov, *Pis'ma Pobedonostseva*, 379–81. See also: K.P. Pobedonostsev, Letter from K.P. Pobedonostsev to Alexander III, 6 May 1882, Dolgov, *Pis'ma Pobedonostseva*, 381-383. See also: Feoktistov, *Za kulisami*, 206.
[669] Lukoyanov, *Zemskii Sobor*, 120.

suspected Aksakov's participation in drafting the project, but "while it is not surprising that Aksakov preaches this in his newspaper; [it is] surprised that a statesman decides to act upon it."

Ignatiev was not the only one who resorted to press alliances as the troubled project of the *Zemskii Sobor* came to a head. On the evening of 10 May, Pobedonostsev dispatched censor E.M. Feoktistov on a speedy courier train from St. Petersburg to Moscow to relate to Katkov Ignatiev's proposal – this leaked information, as Feoktistov noted, was still unknown to most ministers.[670] Already on 12 May, Katkov's *Moskovskie Vedomosti* came out with a damning editorial that compared Ignatiev's proposals to convoke *Zemskii Sobor* to similar calls from revolutionaries S.G. Nechaev and A.I. Zheliabov, discarding Ignatiev's claims that such an institutions will strengthen the regime.[671] This comparison made clear that Ignatiev's position as minister was hardly tenable – a prospect Pobedonostsev made clear in his 4 May and 6 May letters to Alexander. Katkov went further, highlighting "the uneasy task of the press to serve the state," especially when "confronting individuals who come and go from power, and can – with their mistakes, incompetence, and bad faith leave a trail of harmful effects."

Ignatiev found the editorial "insidious," "vile," and "subversive of the state," and turned to his friendly editor and supporter in this collision – A.S. Suvorin of *Novoe Vremia*. Already on 14 May, Suvorin's *Novoe Vremia* came out with an editorial titled "The Missed Anniversary of 6 May," recalling the historical merits of *Zemskie Sobory*; the editorial did not work as Ignatiev had hoped, only spanning rumors of newspaper agitation in efforts to influence the Tsar.[672] Ignatiev's protests against Katkov's bold rhetoric was received less than sympathetically by Alexander III,

[670] Ibid., 121. Feoktistov confirmed in his memoirs that it was he who informed Katkov about Ignatiev's project. See: Feoktistov, *Za kulisami*, 207.
[671] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 21 May 1882, No. 140.
[672] It appears that Suvorin genuinely sympathised with Ignatiev's initiative in a personal telegram to Ignatiev on 13 May 1881, a day after the publication of Katkov's editorial. Lukoyanov, *Zemskii Sobor*, 125.

who responded that "these articles are not against the state in general, but only against the Ministry of the Interior."[673] Alexander III recognized that "of course, the press should not have touched this [issue of *Zemskii Sobor* – Ignatiev banned any publications on this on 10 July 1881], but still the article in *Moskovskie Vedomosti* is very good, and it expresses the right thoughts."[674] Ignatiev's career at the Ministry of the Interior ended with his resignation soon thereafter, on 30 May 1882.

In sum, the complex legacy of the Great Reforms made the issue of popular welfare a realm of competition between the state and the revolutionary forces as the legitimacy of the former came under attack by the latter. Katkov stood at the forefront of formulating the language of this state undertaking, which rang remarkably similar to the projects of the Loris-Melikov ministry. The difference thus consisted less in the "what" and more in the "how". Katkov's proposals for the improvement in popular welfare assumed the omniscience of the autocracy and its administration, something Loris considered impossible and favored a consultative body of representatives - which, in turn was distrusted by *Narodnaia Volia* sought direct governance following the overthrow of the monarchy and its institutions. This turn to the *narod* and the competition for popular welfare, and thus for legitimacy, posed new challenges to Russia's estate systems which has been shifting since the 1860s.

Katkov's program entailed a national image for the Russian monarchy and a discourse of national belonging [*narodnost*]. Katkov did not conceive of a national monarchy to exist in a vacuum, he also formulated the idea of a national community [*narod*] to which the national monarchy would appeal. This was an inclusive national community [*narod*] as opposed to the

[673] Lukoyanov, *Zemskii Sobor*, 124. 128.
[674] Alexander III expressed this in a meeting on 27 May 1882. See. Feoktistov, *Za kulisami*, 208. Katkov published another editorial again *Zemskii Sobor*, more moderate in tone. See: M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 23 May 1881, No. 141.

exclusive [*natsiia*].[675] *Narodnost* reconciled autocratic and the representative principles, offering a nod to popular politics without actual popular participation.

Vsesoslovnost': Addressing Russia's Shifting Estate System

Repin's painting, as Richard Wortman remarks, portrays the emperor and the people "at the same level, facing each other as fellow human beings, in contrast to the representations of Alexander II standing above the peasants who look up worshipfully."[676] Among and behind, peasants stand several high-ranking officials in full dress uniform with gold-embroider collars, including a government official decorated with the red riband of the Order of Alexander Nevsky – Russia's third highest honor after the Order of St. Andrew the First-called and the Order of St. Catherine – its holder could have been a high-ranking court official awarded "for work and patriotism" [*za trud i otechestvo*].[677] Such inter-mixing of estates signaled more than a slight to the bureaucratic world, which Alexander III mistrusted since the days of his father's rule. It reflected the shift in the social estate hierarchy since the Great Reforms following which the landowning nobility faced economic displacement in its reliance on land and labor, confronted the impoverishment of lesser nobility, and the emergent wealth of entrepreneurial and merchant classes. Within bureaucratic ranks, Russia's nobility had been ceding ground to educated non-

[675] Although, admittedly, the difference between these terms should not be overstated. A.I. Miller, "Istoriia poniatia *natsiia* v Rossii," in *"Poniatia o Rossii": k istoricheskoy semantike imperskogo perioda*, eds., A. Miller, D. Sdvizhkov, and I. Shirle (Moscow: NLO, 2012), 7-49. See also: I. Shirle, "Poniatia 'narod' i 'natsia' v russkikh perevodakh vtoroi poloviny XVIII veka," in *Laboratoriia poniatii: Perevod I iazyki politki v Rossii XVIII veka*, V. Pol'skii, V.S. Rzheutskii, eds., (Moscow: NLO, 2022), 104-135.

[676] Richard Wortman, *Scenarios of Power: Myth and Ceremony in Russian Monarchy from Peter the Great to the Abdication of Nicholas II* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000), 230.

[677] Leonid Efimovich Shepelev, *Tituly, mundiry i ordena v Rossiiskoi imperii* (Moscow; Sankt-Peterburg: TSentrpoligraf ; MiM-Del'ta, 2005). This high-ranking gentleman, bearing an uncanny resemblance to the Minister of Court, I.I. Vorontsov-Dashkov, stands behind a peasant and gives out a surveilling sideways glance, evoking perhaps Vorontsov-Dashkov's watchfulness over Repin's iterations of this painting that had come to upset the artist. I.E. Grabar', *Repin* (Moscow: Zhurnal'no-gazetnoe ob'edinenie, 1933), 161–62.

noblemen. Finally, increased peasant mobility diversified labor opportunities and fostered urbanization. By the 1880s, the structure of Russia's estate system, grounded in economic, legal, and state service hierarchies had been undercut with increasing overlaps. Earlier in 1881, *Narodnaia Volia* highlighted the weakness of Russia's estate system, which "lacks independent and well-organized estates, like in Europe."[678] Later that year, *Narodnaia Volia* highlighted the "antagonism among estates [*soslovia*] and particularly among peasants and landowners has terribly increased."[679] The main culprit, revolutionaries argued, were the centralized government itself [*gosudarstvennaia vlast'*], which the latter "at its own discretion created and destroyed entire estates, conducted any experiments it wished over the privileged classes, crushing any attempts at resistance."[680]

While revolutionary organ saw the solution in the definitive dismantling of Russia's estate system – the decentralization of the government and the emergence to power of "the people and the social-revolutionary party" – Repin's painting suggests a new form of social organization – one that integrated on a populist, national basis. Weeks after Alexander's accession, Katkov articulated on the pages of *Moskovskie Vedomosti* new attitudes toward estate hierarchy:

> In previous centuries, the interests of particular estates were taken into account. But this is not the way of the Tsars. The throne is elevated because in its eyes all estates, ranks, and classes have become equal. Princes and laymen, the rich and the poor, despite all their differences, are equal before the tsar.[681]

The idea of *narodnost* served as a new, reinforced, model of social integration, a social

---

[678] "Politicheskaia revoliutsia i ekonomicheskii vopros," *Narodnaia Volia: Sotsial'no-Revoliutsionnoe obozrenie* (5), 5 February 1881, in *Literatura Partii "Narodnaia Volia"* (Moscow: Tipografia A.P. Poplavskogo, 1907), 172.
[679] "Iz Voronezha," 20 September 1881, in *Literatura Partii "Narodnaia Volia"* (Moscow: Tipografia A.P. Poplavskogo, 1907), 453.
[680] "Politicheskaia revoliutsia i ekonomicheskii vopros," *Narodnaia Volia: Sotsial'no-Revoliutsionnoe obozrenie* (5), 5 February 1881, in *Literatura Partii "Narodnaia Volia"* (Moscow: Tipografia A.P. Poplavskogo, 1907), 172.
[681] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 25 April 1881, No. 114.

framework in which wide disparities and conflicts among the estates would be toned down by the sense of common national belonging and by their loyalty to the Tsar as a locus of their national sentiment. In April 1885, just as Repin was working on the painting of Alexander III receiving the *volost'* elders, Katkov reflected on the "old unity" between peasant and landowner "can no longer be" in post-Reform Russia, with serfdom "has served its purpose and its time has passed."[682] "Instead of the old, abandoned unity," argued Katkov, "there can and must take root a new, [and] better [unity] for the wellbeing [*blago*] of the greater whole in which both sides have such a significant, native meaning [*korennoe znachenie*]."[683] Deeming the nobility merely "the highest class of the *narod*," Katkov emphasized it – together with the peasantry - as "the most native elements of our peoples and government life [*narodnaia i gosudarstvennaia zhyzn'*]."[684]

In a practical sense, Katkov's idea of a new, equalizing estate system translated into his advocacy for the elimination of estate or occupation as fiscal or legal determinants. On significant issues, such as taxation, Katkov converged with officials ascribed to the 'Westernizers' camp. Much like N.Kh. Bunge, Katkov had called for the abolition of the poll tax and of the commune.

Katkov welcomed the 1881 initiative to abolish the onerous the poll tax that was paid – or rather widely unpaid toward vast arrears – by peasants.[685] Signed into law on 28 May 1885,[686] the abolition of the poll tax was a project in the works under Alexander II and was being prepared by A.A. Abaza along with a reform of the sugar excise and the re-imposition of an excise on gold mining.[687] The definitive shaping and implementation of the abolition of the poll tax under Alexander III marks a continuity with his father's initiatives in welfare.

---

[682] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomsoti*, 20 April 1885, No. 108.
[683] Ibid.
[684] Ibid.
[685] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomsoti*, 27 May 1883, No. 146.
[686] "Ob otmene podushnoi i pereobrazovanii obrochnoi podatei," Polnoe sobranie zakonov Rossiiskoi Imperii (PSZ), vol. 5 (1885), 28 May 1885, #2988, 238-239.
[687] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomsoti*, 3 January 1881, No. 4.

Katkov considered the abolition of the poll tax as a first step to the abolition of the commune and expressed a hope that "this issue is resolved in the significant interest of the peasants, who have been for too long sacrificed in the name of fiscal convenience."[688] The greatest woe of the poll tax, he argued, was not financial, but logistical: the manner in which it was collected "burdened the people [*narod*] with communal responsibility [*krugovaia poruka*] and the passport system, which rendered former serfs and state peasants unfree people. Serfdom was abolished, but the people [*narod*] remained enserfed in a taxation system with all its conditions."[689] The abolition, of the poll tax, Katkov argued, was expected to bring about "a progress of peasant wellbeing [*blagosostoiania*]."[690] Lamenting the postponement of this measure ever since the Great Reforms, Katkov highlighted the efforts of the State Treasury, beginning in 1879, to search for a replacement source of taxation should the poll tax be abolished. "Is it not possible to undertake the reform [the abolition of the poll tax] without waiting to find new tax [revenue sources] in equal sum to the poll tax?" asked Katkov in June of 1882, arguing for an equal budget cut instead.[691] In this sense, Katkov was in complete agreement with Abaza, Loris Melikov, and Bunge, who conceived in 1879 a commission to abolish the poll tax.[692] Katkov also converged with Bunge on the necessity of lowering redemption payments. On 17 October 1881, in a departmental hearing, Bunge announced that "The gradual lowering of all peasant tax will lead to a long-desired measure of the reform. But first it is best to begin with redemption payments as the most significant and the most burdensome taxes for the rural population,"[693] much as Katkov agreed the measure will improve peasant livelihoods.[694] On this, and other fiscal issues, Katkov in fact stood closer to the

[688] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomsoti*, 14 January 1881, No. 15.
[689] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomsoti*, 1 June 1882, No. 151.
[690] Ibid.
[691] Ibid.
[692] V. L. Stepanov, *N.Kh. Bunge : Sud'ba reformatora* (Moscow : ROSSPEN, 1998), 127–28.
[693] Ibid., 129.
[694] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomsoti*, 22 April 1881, No. 111.

officials of Alexander II's rule than to Pobedonostsev. Pobedonostsev protested against the abolition of the poll tax during its review in the State Council on 3 May 1882 on ground that it was "premature" and should be postponed until it was more researched, but it was signed into law by Alexander III on 18 May 1882.[695]

Whereas both Bunge and Katkov agreed on the necessity of reducing the fiscal burden on the peasants, they disagreed, however, on the fiscal measures needed to replace lost fiscal revenue. Their differences reveal diverging visions for Russia's shifting estate system. During his time at the helm of the Ministry of Finance, Bunge sought to undertake a comprehensive tax reform, one that would move away from the multitude of indirect taxes toward direct taxation, and particularly, toward a universal income taxation. Although Bunge supported certain high-revenue generating excises on alcohol and tobacco, he envisioned direct taxation as an exercise in civic duty, "a universal obligation [*vseobshchaia obiazannost'*] that comes from the equality of all before the law and from justice." [696] Referring to the traditional distinction between tax-paying and non-taxpaying estates, Bunge argued that "those who belong to a united state cannot be exempt form obligations that belie this unity."[697] Although realizing the inevitability of income taxes for Russia, historian V.L. Stepanov suggested, Bunge deemed them unrealistic at least for the foreseeable future, their introduction requiring new bureaucratic institutions designed to track, collect, and account for income taxes.[698]

In January 1884, Katkov discussed the "well-formed rumors that a project of 'personal tax,' deemed to replace a part of the poll tax has been drafted and will soon be discussed in the

[695] Stepanov, *N.Kh. Bunge*, 132.
[696] Ibid., 73.
[697] Ibid.
[698] Ibid., 132

State Council."[699] The rumored tax was to be levied from all men aged 18 to 55 from every estate in the presupposed amount of 55 kopecks, exempting men in military service, priesthood of all confessions, students, the injured and disabled and those living off public charity.[700] Katkov's discussion of a possible personal tax did not take issue with the idea of an all-estate levy, but pondered rather the logistical complications from collecting such a tax in one day as rumored, especially as the payment of the tax was to be tied with the passport system: upon the payment of the tax, each payer will have his passport stamped thus prolonging his residency permit [*vid na zhytel'stvo*]. Katkov argued that "the most inconvenient is the connection between the new personal tax with the passport system, which has long required reform and relief."[701]

The potential bureaucratic and logistical complications of a one-day payment and passport stamping – resembling a one-day census --, was a particular concern, considering the slow processing of other documents, such as craftsman permits [*promyslovye iarlyki*]. This was a challenge, Katkov suggested, the Russian bureaucracy was not ready to take on. In addition, he argued, "the greatest proportion of the levy will fall on the peasants, i.e. on small landowners […] in such a way that the poll tax will not have been abolished, only its collection will have been different." [702] "Is there any need to replace the abolished polltax with a personal tax [that would be] the same for the poor and the wealthy?", asked Katkov. [703] Acknowledging the need to replace the poll tax with a new source of revenue, Katkov suggested shifting the tax from personhood to property by levying of large landowners and urban dwellers a "larger land and occupational tax [*pozemel'nyi i promyslovyi sbor*]."[704] Such a shift from personal to occupation taxes would "free

[699] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomsoti*, 16 January 1884, No. 17.
[700] Ibid.
[701] Ibid.
[702] Ibid.
[703] Ibid.
[704] Ibid.

from levies all the poorest population living from daily labor and personal services, thus simplifying the [process of] tax collection and the control over the revenue."[705]

To provide some fiscal relief for the peasants, Katkov proposed replenishing the loss of tax revenue from the poll tax with tariffs and indirect taxes. Katkov advocated for tariffs on the import of wool – analogous to the high and meticulously imposed US tariffs on wool – as well as on silk, measures he argued would stimulate and protect the domestic production of these materials and would provide profitable employment for peasants.[706] Advocating for taxation on the better off strata of the population to spread the fiscal burden justly, Katkov proposed levies on mainly urban occupations, on foreigners living in Russia, on real estate as well as new inheritance and capital gains taxes.

Capital Gains Tax. Katkov supported Bunge's initiative that introduced on 20 May 1885 a new capital gains tax of 5%. Katkov even defended the tax against an onslaught of criticism from the foreign press that disapproved of the taxation of foreign capital in Russia. [707] Although Katkov maintained the modesty of the tax comparing it to the analogous taxes in Austro-Hungary and Italy at 7% and 12% respectively, he called for exemption on foreign capitals to prevent an outflow of foreign investment.[708] The tax tapped into a source of wealth that previously escaped taxation. It was also a tax on commercial income that made no distinction of the legal estate of its holder.

Katkov's protectionist motives drove him to argue for first taxing all things foreign before introducing new taxes on Russian subjects. Promoting his national politics in the fiscal domain and facing "rumors of an inheritance tax", Katkov asked "is it not better , before taxing Russian properties, to tax properly the consumption of foreign goods, the products of foreign labor and

[705] Ibid.
[706] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomsoti*, 7 June 1882, No. 157.
[707] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomsoti*, 13 April 1885, No. 101.
[708] Ibid.

foreign capitals."[709]

Inheritance tax. Katkov's advocacy for first taxing foreign capital and foreigners in Russia spilled over into his discussion of the inheritance tax drafted by N.Kh. Bunge during 1881-1882. Bunge's inheritance tax, signed into law by Alexander III on 15 June 1882, presupposed a tax on inheritance of 1% for direct heirs (spouses and children); of 4% for step-children, siblings, nephews and nieces; 6% for more removed relatives; and 8% for all other heirs.[710] With estates under 1,000 rubles not subject to the inheritance tax, this measure approached the goal of filling treasury coffers by targeting the life's earnings of the relatively well-off in proportion to their wealth.

In *States of Obligation*, a study of fiscal practices and their transformation in late Imperial Russia, economic historian Yanni Kotsonis has aptly observed that inheritance and apartment taxes along with, one might add capital gains taxes, were in fact income taxes that captured wealth rather than a legal status.[711] The exclusion of peasants from these taxes, Kotsonis argues, was not by virtue of their legal status, but on the basis of wealth. Taxes on urban properties, which had increased during the rule of Alexander III, likewise served to undermine the separation of estates, argues Kotsonis.[712]

On occasion, Katkov critiqued the lack of nuance in Bunge's efforts to tax wealth that inadvertently affected the poor. Reflecting on Bunge's 3% business tax, Katkov expressed dismay that it also taxed the profits of smaller savings and lending institutions [*ssudosberegatel'nye*

[709] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomsoti*, 7 June 1882, No. 157.
[710] "I. Polozhenie o poshlinakh s imushchestv perekhodiashchikh bezmezdnymi sposobami, II. Pravila ob otsenke imushchestv dlia vzimania poshlin s bezmezdnogo perehoda onykh i III. Vremennye pravila o poriadke ischisleniia I vzimania poshlin s nasledstvennykh imushchestv," PSZ, vol. 2 (1882), 15 June 1882, #972, 306-311.
[711] Yanni Kotsonis, *States of Obligation: Taxes and Citizenship in the Russian Empire and Early Soviet Republic* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2014), 140.
[712] Ibid., 119. See: "Ob uvelichenii naloga s gorodskikh nedizhymukh imushchestv I o razmere sego naloga na 1884 god," PSZ, vol 3 (1883), 13 May 1883, #1578, 232-233.

tovarishchestva] that focused on peasants at the same rate it taxed joint stock ventures [*aktsionernye predpriatia*].[713] Highlighting the burdensome nature of this tax on small banking and mutual aid institutions, Katkov argued the necessity to "relieve institutions beneficent for the people [*narod*], [institutions] that are being crushed by the tax burden." [714]

Occupation. Instead of an income tax, especially a flat one, Katkov argued that for "a large landowner or an urban dweller might not find it so difficult to pay, instead of a personal tax, a respectively increased land or occupational tax [*pozemel'nyi ili promyslovyi nalog*]." [715] Such a transfer of tax from individual to property or occupation, he argued, will free from payments all the poorest strata of the population and ease tax collection. Indeed, beginning with 1884, Alexander III approved the increase of the land tax, which was to be exacted irrespective of estate belonging.[716] Although Yanni Kotsonis describes the highly irregular collection process for this increased tax and the modes in which some noble landowners were able to circumvent it, the all-estate land spoke to the state's efforts to tax the value of land rather than the extent of a legal estate.[717]

The same year, in 1884, the state undertook a number of increases on the basis of occupations. By the early 1880s, the uneven taxation of business enterprises [*promyslovyi nalog*] resulted in disproportionate fiscal burden on smaller enterprises and relatively light taxation of larger enterprises, proceeding largely without accounting for the size, volume, and profits of an enterprise. Plans for the reform of business taxes were discussed at the initiative of N.Kh. Bunge in the departments of the State Council since 1882. Despite resistance from entrepreneurial circles,

[713] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomsoti*, 17 March 1887, No. 76.
[714] Ibid.
[715] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomsoti*, 16 January 1884, No. 17.
[716] "Ob uvelichenii gosudarstvennogo pozemel'nogo naloga," PSZ, vol. 4 (1884), 17 January 1884, # 1962, 16-17.
[717] Kotsonis, *States of Obligation*, 94–98.

on 5 June 1885, Alexander III signed into law a new business tax assigning enterprises to guilds according the size of their capital and the number of their workers, issuing trade license on the basis of guild, and taxing 1st and 2nd guilds at 15% and 3rd guild at 10%, exempting small enterprises [*melochnyi torg*] and family businesses. [718] This was followed by the Supplemental Repartitional Levy [*Dopolnitl'nyi raskladochnyi sbor*] in 1885, applied initially to guild enterprises.[719] Cities and towns across the empire also received permissions in 1884 to impose additional taxes on coachmen (3 rubles per horse)– a quintessential urban tax.[720]

Lending. Katkov acknowledged early on that the Great Reforms have significantly undone the estate divides and welcomed Alexander II's initiatives to make criminal punishment independent of estate belonging. During Alexander III's time, Katkov welcomed the idea that all estate deserve government care and protection. He celebrated a range of initiatives that downplayed estate and religious differences re-drawing lines across occupation as a social criterion. In December of 1881, Katkov celebrated the lessening of punishment for underage criminal offenders, and the elimination of the differentiation of punishment depending on the estate.[721] Instead of exile, underage criminal will be sent either locally to "labor houses" [*rabochie doma*] or to correctional facilities [*ispravitelnye arestantskie otdelenia*]. Previously, Katkov argued, some of the punishments for the non-taxpaying estates were too severe; though not corporeal, the punishment for petty theft for a nobleman could be lifetime exile in Siberia without

[718] "O bolee ravnomernom oblozhenii torgov i promyshlennosti," PSZ, vol. 4 (1884), 5 June 1884, #2282, 339-341.
[719] "Vysochaishe utverzhdennye pravila ob oblozhenii torgovykh I promyshlennykh predpriatii dopolnitel'nym sborom (protsentnym i raskladochnym)," PSZ vol. 5 (1885), 15 January 1885, # 2664, 10-12. See also: Yanni Kotsonis, *States of Obligation*, 175–80.
[720] A few such examples from 1884: "Ob ustanovlenii v pol'zu goroda Bogodukhova sbora s izvoznago promysla," PSZ, vol. 4 (1884), 6 March 1884, #2070, 99-100. "Ob ustanovlenii sbora s loshadei I ekipazhei v pol'zu goroda Ustiuzhny," PSZ, vol. 4 (1884), 20 March 1884, #2106, 200. "Ob ustanovlenii v pol'zu posada Dubrovki sbora s izvoznogo promysla," PSZ, vol. 4 (1884), 20 March 1884, #2108, 201. "Ob ustanovlenii v pol'zu goroda Egor'evska sbora s izvoznogo promysla," PSZ, vol. 4 (1884), 20 March 1884, #2294, 347.
[721] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomsoti*, 1 December 1881, No. 334.

the right to travel in Siberia for 10-20 years. Where the law had previously dictated life in labor camp, underage convicts will spend 20 years. Katkov argues that what is needed in legislation governing underage convicts and convicts of age - is their equal treatment independent of estate.

Moskovskie Vedomosti balanced the notion of financial relief for peasants with the emerging idea of gradual equalization among estates at least in the eyes of the government. This discussion was most evident in connection to the government's establishment of the Peasant Land Bank on 18 May 1882.[722] The Peasant Land Bank provided land mortgages to peasants and loans to peasants against land collateral. Katkov welcomed the initiative "as much as the reform of the taxation system, and the lowering of redemption payments as signs of care [*zaboty*] for the improvement of the livelihoods of peasants. One may only wish that these measures conclude with the utmost success."[723] A the same time, Katkov expressed concern that peasants would gain the ability to "purchase land without a penny " and that peasant buyers may be favored over other buyers who would be subject to additional taxes [*krepostnye, gerbovye i kantseliarskie poshliny*]. "Thanks to the discounts they receive," Katkov suggested, "peasants may outbid other buyers," who may purchase the land outright and in full, yet "the only risk for peasants is limited to the confiscation and auction sale of their land" without facing financial ruin other sellers might face.[724] "If they [peasants] buy well – all the profit is theirs; if they buy poorly, they will be freed from an unprofitable purchase and all the losses will befall on the Peasant Bank," argued Katkov.[725]

While Katkov agreed that "it is best for the land to be in the hands of agriculturists

[722] "Vysochaishe utverzhdennoe polozhenie o Krestianskom Pozemel'nom Banke," PSZ, vol. 2 (1882), 18 May 1882, #894, 218.
[723] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomsoti*, 3 June 1882, No. 153.
[724] Ibid.
[725] Ibid.

[*zemledelets*] than in the hands of persons of other professions. But the peasants and the agriculturist are not synonyms."[726] An advocate of intensive agriculture, Katkov highlighted that whereas some peasants "may not feel and affection for the land […] outside the peasant environment may be many people who feel a calling to agriculture." [727]

If Katkov's judgment overestimated the favorable conditions of the peasant bank, they belied a greater principle of estate distinction with which Katkov took issue:

> the estate-[linked] nature of the Bank is obvious since its proclamation was issued at the same time as the publication of the *ukaz* abolishing the poll tax, which was meant to remove all differences between the tax-paying and the non-tax-paying classes. The concern for equalizing all estates and at the same time the creation of new inequalities among them is inconsistent. For the government, the interests of all classes of the entire country without exception are important, it cannot have favorite and not favorite children, it cannot take to heart the preferred interests of one or another estate.[728]

Katkov was weary that the lending conditions of the Peasant Bank may "sow in the minds a mistaken opinion that the government does not treat all it subjects the same, as if it treasures the benefits of a certain part of the population and is ready to sacrifice other equal interests."[729]

In 1885, Minister of Finance N.Kh. Bunge proposed to replace the Peasant Land Bank with a State Land Bank [*Gosudarstvennyi zemel'nyi bank*], an all-estate lending institution for both peasants and the nobility.[730] Katkov expressed "complete sympathy" toward this initiative – meant

[726] Ibid.
[727] Ibid.
[728] Ibid.
[729] Ibid.
[730] L.A. Murav'eva, "Reformy ministra finansov N.Kh. Bunge," *Stranitsy Istorii* 17 (2014): 58.

to "cheapen credit in the long term" - and wished it "success in such an important undertaking," suggesting even the increase of interest rates to shore up a lending capital.[731] However, at the end of 1883, the Orel nobility delivered an address to Alexander III in which it drew attention to the [financial] straits of the noble estates, requesting discounted long-term credit and a refinancing of existing debt to make it less burdensome. On the margin of the address the Emperor noted "indeed, it is time to finally do something for the nobility."[732] Sensing a change in Alexander's inclination and citing the resolution in his editorial, Katkov promptly turned to support the project of a bank for the nobility, highlighting "the transfer of noble country properties to persons of other estates," particularly to land renters and speculators [*kulak-spekuliant*].[733]

During the following few years between 1883 and 1885, delegations from the nobility of other gubernias directed similar petitions, protesting the all-estate nature of the bank and asking for lending privileges to protect their estates and strengthen noble landownership through the purchase of land from non-noble landowners. Alexander III's wish to "do something for the nobility" led the Ministry of Finance to abandon the idea of an all-estate bank, and propose instead the project of a Noble Land Bank to provide the nobility with discounted loans; the project was approved on 3 June 1885, marking the foundation of the Bank. Despite being organized on estate principle, the Noble and Peasant Land Banks provided conditions that did not outright appear to favor one estate or the other. The Peasant Land Bank offered loans on up to 100% of land value for communal peasants up to 125 rubles per person and individual loans up to 500 rubles per homestead at an interest rate of 7.5-8.5% for 24 ½ to 34 ½ years.[734] The Noble Land Bank offered loans for up to 60% of an estate's value with an interest rate maintained

[731] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomsoti*, 2 January 1885, No. 3.
[732] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomsoti*, 1 April 1885, No. 89.
[733] Ibid.
[734] A. N. Zak, *Krest'ianskii pozemel'nyi bank, 1883-1910* (Moscow: Tip. Levensona, 1911), 67.

by I.A. Vyshnegradskii to the end of his term in office to "limit the pressure of noble demands" for discounted credit that "many from the nobility" took on for consumer spending, according to Russian economist P.P. Migulin. Subsequently the Noble Land bank interest rates were lowered to 4% in 1894 and 3.5% in 1897.[735]

Katkov, who had previously denied any affinity toward the nobility before 1885, embarked on a campaign to promote the rights of the noble estate in the spring of 1885 just as preparations for the founding of the Noble Land Bank were underway. Whereas only in January 1885 he commended the project of an all-estate Land Bank, by April 1885, Katkov first turned to celebrate the centennial of Catherine the Great's Charter to the Nobility [*Dvorianskaia gramota*], which bestowed upon the noble estate personal property, and juridical rights.[736] In an extended, multi-part editorial, Katkov reprinted a 1863 editorial celebrating the unity of the nobility and the peasantry as "rural classes" [*sel'skie klassy*] brought together by the zemstvo as one Russian people [*Russkii narod*].[737] The following issue, Katkov advocated for the preservation of the estate system in absence of which will be "unrest and chaos" [*smiatenie i khaos*], only to conclude that whereas "an impoverished nobleman is no good as a marshal of the nobility or in any other [state service] position" the institution of the Noble land Bank "would be a measure not charitable, but […] will support noble landownership."[738]

Immigration. Katkov argued that Russia's facilitated immigration procedure for foreigners was a remnant from the Petrine era, when Russia was in need of engineers, scientists, etc. But, more recently, Katkov argued that "a big part of young people who finish higher education

[735] Ibid., 215. P.P. Migulin, *Russkii gosudarstvennyi kredit, 1769-1906* (Khar'kov: Tip. "Pechatnoe Delo" kn[iazia] K.N. Gagarina, 1900), 462. For more on the Peasant and Noble Land Banks see also: S. Iu. Witte, *Vospominaniia: Tsarstvovanie Nikolaia II* (Berlin: Knigoizdatelstvo "Slovo," 1922), vol. 1, 424–427.
[736] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomsoti*, 20 April 1885, No. 108.
[737] Ibid. See also: M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomsoti*, 20 September 1885, No. 205.
[738] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomsoti*, 20 April 1885, No. 108.

courses spend whole years seeking workplace where they could apply their knowledge."[739] As Russian enterprise strengthened, Katkov argued, privileges to foreigners have not only "outlived their use" but also have become "a strain on our business [development]." [740] He stressed the recently simplified immigration procedure in France, but pointed to the unemployment rates that "forces workers almost every month to resort to deadly strikes" - a condition, he pointed, that may attract immigrants from Western and Central Europe to Russia.[741] Katkov lamented the prospect of immigrants sending money home from Russia or taking their life's earnings to retire in their home countries. "Such foreigners," argued Katkov, "are a direct loss [*ubytok*] for us in the same way as various factories belonging to foreigners, employing foreign workers," hence the simplification of naturalization Katkov deemed "extremely harmful" for us. [742] Drawing parallels with "a decent family," Katkov argued that new members [should] only be accepted through choice, not randomly. Would it be wise to prematurely equate the members of this family, whose ancestors "suffered for" [*vystradali*] today's Russia, with random strangers who have no other guarantees of their reliability [*blgonadezhnosti*] other than their desire to take on our subjecthood and receive respective benefits?" [743]

To conclude, Katkov's concept of national politics presented a unique framework for addressing Russia's shifting estate system, in which downplayed estate belonging along with a national ideology could act as an alternative basis for social integration. The abolition of the onerous poll tax served as the first step in lowering estate divides. As Yannis Kotsonis argued, the abolition of the poll tax served to equalize the different types of peasants (former serf, state, court),

[739] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomsoti*, 16 May 1887, No. 134.
[740] Ibid.
[741] Ibid.
[742] Ibid.
[743] Ibid.

such that in the eyes of the government the peasantry was becoming one single estate to be acted on.[744] Katkov's advocacy for taxation on the basis of occupation, property, and profit rather than legal ascription would eventually reconfigure the Russian society along professional and class lines, rendering the concept of estates vacuous.[745] Katkov's proposal to do away with the commune and open up the agricultural occupation for those anyone who wanted to join it or leave it, would foster a new level of social and geographical mobility. The growing inclination among high-ranking state officials toward an income tax or a single flat tax further served to dismantle estate divisions to view subjects as a more homogenous society. On the other hand, Katkov's enthusiasm for indirect taxation offered an interesting alternative, since universalized indirect taxes, as Kotsonis writes, are levied on consumption which could be self-regulated. Individualism, is thus the common feature of many of Katkov's proposals as they focus not only on the maximization of financial success at an individual level, but also on the state interacting with its subjects on an individual level. Here, Kotsonis's argument is particularly relevant: the reconfiguration of taxation along the lines of occupation, property, and wealth in Europe from mid-century and Russia from the 1890s "would become the "popular" or "national" economy that we now take for granted as *Volkswirthschaft*, *économie nationale*, and the *narodnoe khoziaistvo*."[746] Indeed, Katkov's concept of an immigration policy worked toward shaping up the very "national" labor force – one that the state, in true Katkovian etatist fashion, would protect with its earliest welfare policies thus superseding the efforts of *The People's Will*.

[744] Kotsonis, *States of Obligation*, 119.
[745] Ibid.
[746] Ibid., 120.

Blagosostoianie: The Inception of National Welfare

The theme of popular wellbeing, or welfare, persisted in Katkov's editorials from the early days of the new rule. Writing on the eve of the 29 April Manifesto, Katkov suggested:

> There are many plans suggested right now… But there is one path of the Tsar [*odin tsarskii put'*]. This is not the path of liberalism or conservatism, of the new or of the old, or progress or regress. It is not the path of the happy medium [*zolotaia seredina*] between two extremes. […] Let God, King of Kings inspire our Sovereign to walk on this very kingly path [*tsarskii put'*], to have in mind neither progress nor regress, neither liberalism nor reactionary goals, but only the wellbeing of his *hundred-million people* [original emphasis].[747]

The revolutionary forces greeted the efforts of the government with surprise. In the 23 December 1881 issue of its eponymous newspaper, *The People's Will* weighed in on the "difficult task of the current government […] the strengthening of the government order and the improvement of people's welfare [*podniatie narodnogo blagosostoianiia*]."[748] The concept of people's welfare [*narodnogo blagosostoianiia*] is a remarkable and unlikely red threat running through the discourses of both *The People's Will* and of M.N. Katkov. The former discounted the efforts of the government as petty restitution for a grand robbery unlikely to improve the welfare of the robbed.[749] Acknowledging the efforts of the state to "improve its care of the people [*usilit' popechenie o narode*]," the periodicals of *The People's Will* focused on critiquing the implementation of the alcohol sales, peasant resettlement, and factory regulations rather than on

---

[747] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 25 April 1881, No. 114.
[748] "Edinenie vlasti s 'zemleiu,'" *Narodnaia Voilia*, 23 December 1991, No. 7, in *Literatura Partii "Narodnaia Volia"* (Moscow: Tipografia A.P. Poplavskogo, 1907), 453.
[749] Ibid. See also: "Vnutrennee obozrenie: II," *Narodnaia Voilia*, 12 October 1885, No. 11-12, in *Literatura Partii "Narodnaia Volia"* (Moscow: Tipografia A.P. Poplavskogo, 1907), 380.

the ideas of these undertakings.[750] Remarkably, Katkov promoted on the pages of *Moskovskie Vedomosti* the very projects *narodnovol'tsy* wished were better implemented.

A proponent of greater labor mobility among peasants, Katkov deemed its greatest obstacles not only the commune and the passport system but also by the cost of travel. To remedy the high cost of rail travel for peasants – exacerbated by long distances and amounting to nearly double per mile compared with Germany -, Katkov proposed the introduction of a fourth class on trains, which, in Germany, served agricultural migrants and workers.[751] In fact, Katkov argued that "the exploitation of railways must have not just a commercial role, but to be a state service [*predpriatie gosudarstvennogo sluzhenia*], and its goal is not the highest possible profit, but the satisfaction of the needs of mobility."[752] Lamenting that the state frequently covered the debt of railroads without participating in their profits, Katkov argued that railways should be gradually nationalized and re-purposed for a social use "for which they were built" - selling more tickets at a lower cost. [753] This was the case in Germany, for example, where the railroad industry started off in private hands, but after the Unification it became nationalized. In France, similarly, railroads were built privately, but toward the end of the 19th century the state played an increasingly prominent role. This was the case in Germany, for example, where the railroad industry started off in private hands, but after the Unification it became nationalized. In France, similarly, railroads were built privately, but toward the end of the 19th century the state played an increasingly prominent role.

Katkov recognized the obligation of the state to care for those subjects more in need. During the coronation proceedings, Katkov celebrated the newly-instituted long-term welfare

[750] Ibid.
[751] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomsoti*, 12 May 1883, No. 131.
[752] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomsoti*, 3 August 1883, No. 214.
[753] Ibid.

initiatives for injured, disabled families of soldiers, and state compensations for soldiers killed in wartime.[754] Katkov praised the "widened rights to monthly pensions from the state to the retired lower ranks who have become disabled and whose wounds prevent them from work."[755] Highlighting the fact that injured and disabled soldiers suffered from difficulties in finding and maintaining jobs and their injuries during military service translate into permanent disability and long-term loss of income, Katkov contended that a state pension would allow injured and disabled soldiers compensation for lost income and allow them to care for their long-term health conditions. For the families of those killed in action the loss of a breadwinner and the ensuing hardship for children was to be remedied by state pensions for children of killed soldiers until their 18 years of age.

Katkov recognized not only the necessity, but also the efficiency of the state as caretaker of its people. In the summer of 1883, during an epidemic of cholera in Egypt, Katkov praised the institution of a Medical Department commission to discuss the possibility of a cholera quarantine in Russia and the sale of medication in case of the spread of the epidemic. However, he objected that the privileged pharmacists who paid for pharmacy licenses were well-represented in the commission, while "all other interests, both those of the significant non-pharmacy medication trade, and those in need of medication, have no representation on the commission" except for one representative.[756] Katkov called for the commission to involve representatives from pharmacy suppliers, medical corporations, and the zemstvos that procure pharmacy materials in bulk. [757] Highlighting the "very limited number of locations of medication sale and the exceedingly high cost of medication" as well as a culture of the wealthy and the educated seeking medical treatment,

[754] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomsoti*, 21 May 1883, No. 140.
[755] Ibid.
[756] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomsoti*, 4 July 1883, No. 184.
[757] Ibid.

Katkov lamented that "thanks to outdated rules, we have pharmacies for the wealthy, pharmacie de luxe, but we do not have [pharmacies] affordable for those in need."[758] Katkov argued that the dismantling of exclusive and outdated pharmacy privileges – ended in Europe decades ago – will lead to the "much-needed widening of medication accessibility."[759]

Katkov also saw an opportunity for public welfare in the government's regulation of private insurance enterprises, pointing to the abuses, unfavorable terms, and neglect to fulfil obligations as private insurance companies received little to no oversight at the time.[760] Katkov points to "the absolutely correct idea of insurance against various accidental losses and disasters," especially against fires that ravaged the predominantly wood-built villages in Russia, however, he also point to the recent abuses of insurance companies. First, noting the increase in the popularity of home insurance in Russia, Katkov notes that "it is hardly a secret that our insurance companies have entered into a mutual agreement and have all simultaneously considerably raised the cost of their premiums."[761] Accusing insurance companies' increase being driven by gluttony – "since their shares rose were always above par, even during the most disastrous events for the people [*narod*]," Katkov argued instead that mutual insurance companies –which are owned by policy holders and rebate its profits to policy holders as dividends on years when premiums are underutilized.[762] "The profits of this business," argued Katkov, "must go toward the entire society that realizes the benefits of insurance."[763]

Katkov bore the idea of the state as a guaranteur of public welfare through regulation into questions surrounding factory work. Already in May 1881, he advocated in his editorials greater

[758] Ibid.
[759] Ibid.
[760] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomsoti*, 27 July 1883, No. 207.
[761] Ibid.
[762] Ibid.
[763] Ibid.

responsibility for workplace safety to be borne by employers.[764] Katkov's advocacy came on the heels of a terrible factory fire the previous year and the court proceedings involving the factory owner in the spring of 1881. On the night of 25 May 1880, the large Moscow weaving factory owned by a merchant of the first guild, A.A. Givartovskii, caught on fire that started in the illegal sleeping quarters in the factory building. [765] The wooden four-story construction, equipped with wooden stairs between floors – built against the requirements of stone or metal stairs – trapped workers inside; 39 died and 33 were seriously injured while the product, owned by Givartovskii, - valued at 50,000 rubles was insured. In May 1881, Givartovskii stood before a court inquiry, determining his liability for the fire and loss of life, however, by then all injured workers accepted small payments of 50-60 rubles in exchange for a promissory note to withdraw their lawsuit.[766] Givartovskii was nonetheless found guilty and sentence to four months of prison and church penance. In an editorial at the time of the trial, Katkov lamented that "the issue of providing for workers in case of their workplace injury of death has been a sad fact here, such as the case of fires at Givartovskii's factory in which several tens of people had died."[767]

[764] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomsoti*, 26 May 1881, No. 145.
[765] "Pozhar na tkatskoi fabrike g. Givartovskogo v Moskve," *Vsemirnaia Illiustratsia* 12 (12 March 1880): 244.
[766] "Sudebnaia khronika: Moskovskii Okruzhnoi sud. Delo o pozhare na fabrike Givartovskago," *Zemstvo*, 28 (10 June 1881): 45-46.
[767] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomsoti*, 26 May 1881, No. 145.

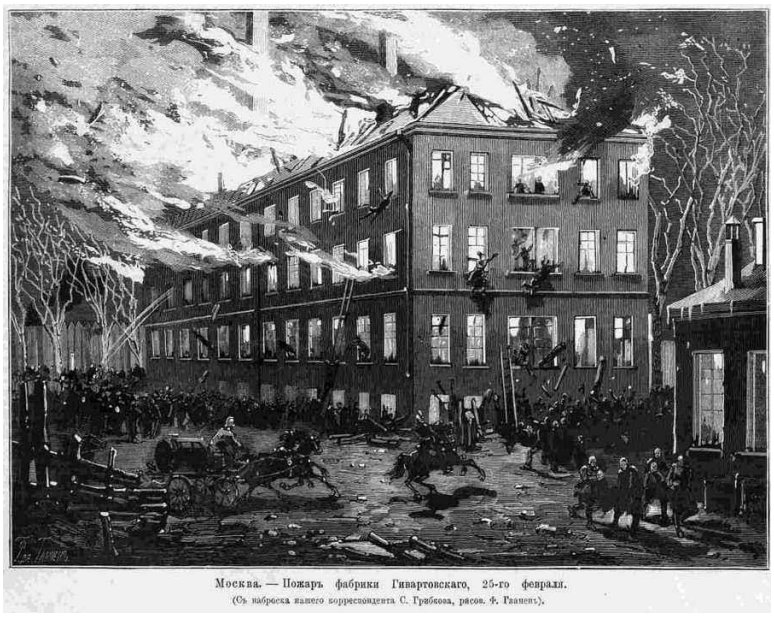

Figure 4. Lithograph, Vsemirnaia Illiustratsia, 12 (1880): 244.

Katkov decried that the accident has revealed both "the lack of suitable and accurate laws for determining personal responsibility for such a terrible accident or the amount of compensation for the families of the deceased." [768] Pointing to Germany's law of 7 June 1871. requiring manufacturers to compensate injured workers or their families in cases of workplace accidents, Katkov acknowledged that "here, as in everything else, the German socialists have rightly recognized the necessity of active government involvement, and demanded that workers be insured from injurious accidents regardless of whether the accident was committed through the negligence of a worker or not." [769] As a way to ensure that, Katkov suggested a mandatory life insurance to be paid by factory employers for their employees, and for laws to enforce employer responsibility for worker injury and death. Katkov even agreed with German socialists who argued that the state should enforce employer responsibility and for insurance to pay whether or not worker was at

[768] Ibid.
[769] Ibid.

fault: "Here as in all else, German socialists have rightly recognized the necessary active intervention of the government, and demanded that workers be mandatorily insured from injurious accidents regardless if these accidents occur through the negligence of the worker of not."[770]

In June 1881, days after the trial of A.A. Givartovskii, Katkov celebrated the creation of the Society for the Improvement of Popular Labor [*Obshchestvo uluchshenia narodnogo truda*] that would "on the one hand engage private individuals closely familiar with local conditions, needs, and industries; on the other hand – [it would have] the serious support of the government."[771] The organization was to build "a relationship" and engage in "consultation" [*soveshchanie*] between the state and "individuals closely familiar" with factory labor.

Katkov's keenness on the German example of worker protections overlapped with the preferences of the Bunge ministry that chose the German law of 1871 as a model during the discussions of the project in May 1881. The German law of 1871 mandated the individual responsibility of employers for the injury and death of workers – covering the costs of health care, funeral, compensation of material loss. Unlike the analogous laws of Britain (1880) or Switzerland (1881), the German law forbade private settlements between employers and workers, which would give factory owners greater birth at circumventing regulations.[772]

V.L. Stepanov explains this choice through Russia's and Germany's late industrialization and strong protectionism toward the end of the nineteenth century, which "in social sphere was expressing itself in the intervention of the state into social relationships" whereas in Britain, Stepanov points, "the nobility was the dominant social stratum."[773] The similarity of the German and Russian approaches to welfare, Stepanov explained, originated in both empires form a fast-

[770] Ibid.
[771] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomsoti*, 4 June 1881, No. 154.
[772] Stepanov, *N.Kh. Bunge*, 218.
[773] Ibid.

paced industrialization that fostered conflicts between entrepreneurs and workers and activated (in Germany) Social-democratic movements. [774] Bismarck sought to remedy this conflict by attracting workers onto the side of the ruling elites; an effort attempted, albeit less successfully by Napoleon III in France an Benjamin Disraeli in Britain. Such welfare initiatives toward factory workers, argues Stepanov, were directed by the state primarily to secure the state and were conducted together with bureaucratic control over workers, excluding the involvement of parties or workers' organizations, even resorting to repressions. [775]

Katkov argued much in the same vein, that "the misunderstandings between workers and employees demand local intervention [*vmeshatel'stvo*] of the authorities who will determine the relationship between different sides on the basis of the law."[776] Katkov was convinced that if in Britain strikes might serve as a "guarantee for one side against the other," "strikes cannot be permitted here [in Russia] when the authority [*vlast'*] takes on itself the determining of relations between the sides during conflicts and misunderstandings."[777] Katkov advocated for "energetic measures" on the part of the government to avoid strikes and work to determine which strikes are caused by "the trampling of workers' rights" versus "by the nefarious intentions [*durnoi dukh*] causing worker unrest."[778] The government was thus to fulfill the role of an arbiter between workers and manufacturers, balancing between preventing worker abuse but avoiding "indulgences" [*poblazhki*] on the part of the state that he argued caused the 1863 Polish uprising or the university unrest. In fact, by making the connection between the workers' question and the revolutionary movement in Russia, Katkov suggested that government involvement may "prevent

[774] Ibid.
[775] Ibid.
[776] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomsoti*, 15 February 1883, No. 47.
[777] Ibid.
[778] Ibid.

the emergence of a workers' question in the same acute form as in other countries."[779] Precisely such an effort of state intervention presented the factory legislation, banning women and children from night work. As a more permanent fixture of state involvement in factory was the factory inspection, founded in 1882.

On the other hand, Katkov advocated for government involvement to curb exploitative work practices against factory workers. Specifically, Katkov identified as the most blatant abuses, first, the sudden salary cuts to workers "in violation of contracts;" second – the frequent fines that are "relaxed when the factory is in need of labor and intensified when the factory looks to cover deficits;" and, three, - the exorbitant prices at stores for factory workers, where the latter "pay more and on credit, which few understand" – "essentially, a robbery," concluded Katkov.[780] Katkov saw the lowered pay, fines, and predatory factory stores to cause "workers to see in their employer a breach [*posiagatel'stvo*] on their labor and income," resorting to violence, and "becoming debased as a result of the weak action of the government" – there is a need for "true authority" [*deistvietel'naia vlast'*] lest factory masses foment, Katkov concluded.[781]

In his advocacy of factory workers' welfare, Katkov converged with German social-democrats. His editorials shed light on their efforts to institute a 10-hour work day in factories and a 8-hour working day in mines, ban night work as well as work on Sundays and on holidays for all buy a few strategic industries. Katkov supported the notion that such projects "from the German social-democrats, amaze one with their understanding of the necessity to institute strict discipline in the relationship between the employer and the employee […] and at the same time punish with the arm of the law the breach of duty."[782] Katkov praised the project for instituting a "spirit of

[779] Ibid.
[780] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomsoti*, 18 January 1885, No. 19.
[781] Ibid.
[782] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomsoti*, 21 January 1885, No. 22.

discipline, strict responsibility and strong authority that is called to regulate the relationship between the employer and the employee."[783] This state regulation of employment relationship in Germany – and implicitly in Russia, observed Katkov – "would guarantee [factory] owners from worker strikes."[784]

Drawing on the legislation of West European states, Katkov highlighted that "the conflicts between factory owners and workers arise to a significant degree by the legislation that does not precisely describe the relationship between the employee and the employed, [and] the lack of legislative regulations gives wide berth to arbitrary behavior on both sides."[785] Katkov noted the "mounting necessity to change" Russia's "outdated" and "inadequate" labor legislation – *Ustav promyshlennosti fabrichnoi i zavodskoi* -, published in 1835 and 1845, that functioned in 1885 along with factory laws issued by Peter the Great.[786] Lamenting that "the complex relationship between workers and employers are now regulated by laws written by Peter the Great and Anna Ioanovna, Katkov demanded "the reform and change of all our factory legislation"[787]

Katkov turned in particular to night labor. Night workers, Katkov argued, were "unable to work as effectively at night as they do during the day," they were inevitably prone to falling asleep on the job and incurring fines, or worse – cause accidents and suffer injuries.[788] Seeking to appease the protests of the Moscow manufacturers, Katkov made parallels with the British factory owners, who despite fearing losses from the ban of night labor, instead "saw an expansion of

[783] Ibid.
[784] Ibid.
[785] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomsoti*, 12 February 1885, No. 43. In Britain, women and children were banned from night labor through the bill of 6 June 1844. In France, the law of 19 May 1874 banned night labor for children under 16 years of age and for women from 16 to 21 years of age who work in factories. Perry Gauci, *Regulating the British Economy, 1660–1850* (Routledge, 2016); Susan K. Foley, *Women in France Since 1789: The Meanings of Difference* (Macmillan International Higher Education, 2004).
[786] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomsoti*, 22 February 1885, No. 53.
[787] Ibid.
[788] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomsoti*, 12 February 1885, No. 43. Another editorial on this very subject: M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomsoti*, 19 April 1885, No. 107.

manufacturing." [789] Going further, Katkov proposed that it was not enough to regulate night work, but also day labor which "now at other factories may last up to 16 hours per day, becoming more burdensome for workers than even night work" whereas day and night shifts would last 12 hours.[790]Katkov asked for the introduction of laws regulating the length of a working day, on the model of other West European analogues.[791] Katkov, much like the proposed labor legislation, faced criticism both from workers and from Moscow region factory owners, but he insisted that the already existing economic crisis of 1885 and reduced demand for goods are could be a suitable time to introduce labor regulations that will result in lower production and increase the price of manufactured goods, thereby helping factory owners themselves. [792] Katkov advocated for even more regulation of work – not merely on the factory floor, but also in the fields, by hired peasants. Katkov advocated for the contractual relationship between hired field laborers and their employees to protect the interests of landowners whose hired labor does not turn up for harvest. [793] A contractual relationship between hired field labor and hiring landowner presented a new framework for interaction that emphasized the transaction rather than obligation, the occupation rather than birth, and placed the state in a position to regulate and enforce the duties and obligations of both parties.

With popular welfare becoming the plane of rhetorical competition between revolutionary forces on the one hand and the government on the other hand, the ideology of nationalism and *narodnost'* offered an alternative approach to welfare, from the right. In formulating a nationalist populist ideology for the rule of Alexander III, Katkov presented an alternative to the socialist

[789] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomsoti*, 12 February 1885, No. 43.
[790] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomsoti*, 22 February 1885, No. 53
[791] Ibid.
[792] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomsoti*, 4 June 1885, No. 153.
[793] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomsoti*, 29 May 1883, No. 148.

populism of the revolutionaries, which allowed the monarchy to spearhead the rise of popular politics in Russia rather than stand opposite it as was the case under Alexander II. This way, the approach of Alexander III's national politics represented an adaptive mechanism as the rise of popular politics posed a challenge to the legitimacy of the Russian monarchy. *Narodnost* provided an equality without democracy.

Here, I disagree with Daniel Beer that liberalism in Russia took the form of a new and intensified concern with the population and its welfare,[794] an argument Yanni Kotsonis also makes about liberalism "mean[ing] a concern for the individual and the population."[795] Concern for popular welfare was not unique to the Westernizing elites, as Katkov's editorial activity demonstrates. From here, I further question Yanni Kotsonis's argument that "Russian participated in debates on enlightenment, universalism, and integration through a discourse on the West." [796] By the same token, it was not "liberalism" as Kotsonis suggests that "aggregated the population into a coherent economy and allowed for new kinds of generalization and global action." [797] Rather, it was the erosion estate separation in the post-reform period accelerated by state fiscal and credit reforms during the 1880s and the use of national language that forged an alternative framework for social interaction – *économie nationale* driven by class and occupation rather than ascribed estate. Where it was impossible to undo the disintegration of social estates, the state under Alexander III sought alternative means of universal integration. The notion of national belonging provided an egalitarian appeal and a new plane for social re-integration.

[794] Daniel Beer, *Renovating Russia: The Human Sciences and the Fate of Liberal Modernity, 1880–1930* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2018), 26.
[795] Kotsonis, *States of Obligation,* 120.
[796] D. Hoffmann and Y. Kotsonis, *Russian Modernity: Politics, Knowledge and Practices, 1800-1950* (London: Springer, 2000), 3.
[797] Kotsonis, *States of Obligation,* 120.

Conclusion

The rise of popular politics in Russia had been under way long before the assassination of Alexander II. Across Europe and beyond, nineteenth-century monarchies confronted an unprecedented rise of popular interest and desire of participation in political life. The advent of mass press, telegraph, railways fostered a rapidly expanding and increasingly difficult to control space for civic dialogue. Toward the middle of the nineteenth century, this dialogue became dominated by debates about the social, economic, national, ethnic, ideological divisions, which had been percolating since the late eighteenth century. Where monarchs represented not merely the symbolic, but the functional embodiment of the state, popular politics confronted the monarchy directly, posing unprecedented challenges to monarchic legitimacy. In the post-revolutionary era, monarchy was, in turn, no longer the only conceivable form of government. As Nancy Wingfield put it, the survival of the monarchies depended to a significant extent on its ability to remain an attractive symbol of the state and of popular self-identification.[798]

Within the political vacuum of Alexander's early months in power, the emergence of the M.N. Katkov and his *Moskovskie Vedomosti* as an organ formulating a discursive paradigm addressed directly to the new Tsar, presents the unique and unprecedented involvement of the press on the political stage. Formulating the language and imagery of Alexander's 'turn to the people,' Katkov presented an alternative to the populism of the revolutionaries, aiming for the state to lead popular politics rather than leave them to the purview of *The People's Will.*

Katkov's three-pronged ideology of *narodnost', vsesoslovnost'* and *blagosostoianie* offered a potential solution and a modicum of control over Russia's fast-changing society. In

[798] Nancy Wingfield, "Emperor Joseph II in the Austrian Imagination up to 1914," in *The Limits of Loyalty: Imperial Symbolism, Popular Allegiances, and State Patriotism in the Late Habsburg Monarchy*, ed. Laurence Cole and Daniel L Unowsky (New York: Berghahn Books, 2007), 214.

practical terms, *narodnost'* provided an essential element of supplementary 'national' foundation for monarchic legitimacy. *Vsesoslovnost'* underplayed hierarchical estate divisions and translated into fiscal, property, and labor reforms in which the Russian state increasingly saw its subjects through the prism of wealth and occupation rather than birth estate. In context of Russia's shifting estate system since the Great Reforms, *narodnost'* and *vsesoslovnost'* offered a populist framework of social integration. *Blagosostoianie* allowed the government to claim its own role in public welfare and undo the monopoly of revolutionary discourses on this issue.

The improvement of popular welfare became the central element of the Russian monarchy's new legitimacy. Much as in Europe, Russia's rising national politics precipitated its early welfare policies.[799] Therein was, indeed, what Richard Wortman called a "paradox of conservative nationalism": Russia's turn 'inward' toward, nationalism and away from Westernization came at a time when nationalism was blossoming in the West.[800] Alexander III, much like Britain's Queen Victoria, Germany's Wilhelm II, Italy's Emanuel II, Habsburg Empire's Franz Joseph, Ottoman Abdulhamid II, Alexander III of Russia, and Empress Cixi of China – all turned to national symbols to rebuild their monarchic legitimacy and strengthen their popular appeal in an age of popular politics.

[799] Liah Greenfeld, *The Spirit of Capitalism: Nationalism and Economic Growth* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001).
[800] Wortman, *Scenarios of Power*, vol. 2, 162.

CHAPTER 5:

M.N. Katkov's Political Projects: Case Studies, 1884-1887

Introduction

The aspirations of the private press to not only report on political processes, but also to participate in them, became evident already in the first years after Alexander II's momentous censorship reforms of 1858-1859. By 1865, having observed months of intense and bitter press debate around the gymnasium reform the previous year, publicist and literary critic D.I. Pisarev remarked that "almost all of our journalists wish exceedingly strongly to be legislators and administrators."[801] Russian editors, Pisarev remarked, shared a particular passion for telling their readers how governing and legislative processes must proceed. Particularly prone toward "these legislating and administrative tendencies," Pisarev contended, was M.N. Katkov's *Moskovskie Vedomosti*" which "could speak only with the government, and not with their readers," and like *The Times*, it "deemed itself to be a sixth power."[802]

Among editors such as M.N. Katkov, I.S. Aksakov, and A.A. Kraevskii, their desire to not only report on politics, but also participate in them, came both from their self-perception as public intellectuals as well as from their early entanglements with high-ranking bureaucratic patrons. In the course of the 1860s and 1870s, private editors' close collaboration with ministerial interest groups and patronage networks in promoting political projects increasingly drew the press into legislative and administrative process itself, blurring the line between the government and the

[801] D.I. Pisarev, *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii i pisem v dvenadtsati tomakh*, ed. F. F Kuznetsov (Moscow: Nauka, 2000) vol. 7, 317.

[802] The expression of "the sixth power" denoted during the second half of the nineteenth century the emerging power of the press, comparable to the other five powers: Russia, Britain, France, Germany, and Austro-Hungary. Pisarev's sarcastic comparison of *Moskovskie Vedomosti* with *The Times* refers to Katkov's Anglophilia and reverence for the British newspaper. For example, both P.A. Valuev and F.M. Dostoevsky have compared *Moskovskie Vedomosti* to *The Times*. Pisarev, *Polnoe sobranie*, vol. 7, 596.

press. At the height of his influence during the rule of Emperor Alexander III, M.N. Katkov went further than any of his fellow editors by actively engaging in drafting and editing legislative projects.

Chapter 5 examines M.N. Katkov's involvement in writing and editing two legislative projects that became the hallmarks of Alexander III's rule: the 1884 University Statute and the 1889 Land Captains Statute. First, the chapter delves into Katkov's work on the 1884 University Statute, which limited university autonomy, introduced standard university exams, and instituted a competitive basis for hiring university faculty. Studying Katkov's work on the project in a discreet partnership with Minister of Education, I.D. Delianov, this chapter reveals an unprecedented level of involvement of a journalist in the legislative process. The statute showcases Katkov's vision for a more centralized and standardized university education system – a development in step with similar processes across Europe during the late nineteenth century.

Second, the chapter analyzes Katkov's work on the 1889 Land Captains Statute instituted land captains to supervise local administration. This work builds on the work of Thomas Pearson, who argued that the Statute was a centralizing effort aimed at enforcing administrative and fiscal compliance in the face of mounting zemstvo petitions and tax arrears since the mid-1870s, rather than at the re-assertion the nobility's dominance in local administration.[803] Using untapped archival resources, this work is able to definitively attribute a significant role in this project to M.N. Katkov, uncovering the discreet collaboration links between the editor of *Moskovskie Vedomosti* and the Ministry of the Interior. While previous chapters trace the rise of Russia's private political press and its increasing engagement in political processes, Chapter 5 showcases a direct implication of the press in legislative processes and state affairs broadly speaking.

[803] Thomas S. Pearson, "The Origins of Alexander III's Land Captains: A Reinterpretation," *Slavic Review* 40, no. 3 (October 1, 1981): 384–403.

Finally, this chapter brings together the three themes of Katkov's political discourse analyzed in Chapter 4 - *narodnost', vsesoslovnost', blagosostoianie* - with the theme of centralization that permeates the two above-mentioned legislative projects. This sub-chapter draws on comparative context of late nineteenth-century Britain, France, and Germany to examine how centralizing approaches to administration and education as well as fledgling concepts of a national community and welfare state shaped the processes of state- and nation-building in Europe. By combining these key themes in Katkov's political discourse and discerning their interaction, this chapter offers new perspective on Katkov's intellectual legacy – one that was far more in step with European developments in state- and nation-building at the time. Such a perspective situates Russia within broader European processes of state- and nation-building.

The 1884 University Statute: Standardizing Education

M.N. Katkov's long editorial career at the helm of *Moskovskie Vedomosti* was intimately intertwined with his "legislative and administrative tendencies," which found opportunities to shape – not only to report on – governmental projects. Among a variety of such initiatives over the years, the cause of educational reform was particularly close to Katkov. His former career as a Moscow University professor during the late 1840s-early 1850s, and his very own Tsesarevich Nicholas Lyceum in Moscow closely aligned him with the issues of secondary and higher education. Moreover, university unrests convinced Katkov that the cause of higher education was intimately intertwined with the security of the regime. After decades of discussion and fierce polemics on the subject of university reform in his *Moksovskie Vedomosti,* Katkov came to shape the 1884 University Statute – a hallmark reform of Emperor Alexander III. His active participation in a legislative project demonstrates the extraordinary role of a non-state actor, a newspaper editor,

in the affairs of the state and reveals the intricate informant networks and mechanisms of influence he built within the corridors of state.

Katkov's participation in the shaping of legislative projects began as early as 1862, when Minister of Education A.V. Golovnin requested Katkov's opinion on a censorship project, which combined pre-emptive and punitive censorship and was drafted by D.A. Obolensky's preparatory commission.[804] It was indeed unusual for the Minister of Education to solicit the opinion of a journalist on a censorship reform. Golovnin's decision to share with Katkov the draft of the reform and to solicit Katkov's feedback was part the minister's elaborate courtship of influential editors, who saw themselves not only as journalists, but as public intellectuals with a political vision. At the time, Katkov rejected this attempted rapprochement, declaring his resolve to "strictly protect our personal independence and avoid everything that could feed the accusations and libels regarding our public activity."[805]

In mid-1863, Golovnin made another attempt to build a relationship with Katkov by inviting him and his editorial partner, P.M. Leontiev, to contribute to a gymnasium reform among other representatives of the pedagogical community "in order to discuss the issue from all points of view."[806] Golovnin's reform project sought to consolidate and formalize the division of gymnasia into *classical* and *real* gymnasia. The classical gymnasia provided a humanities education that focused heavily on the study of ancient Greek and Latin, and lead to the university and state service. The *real* gymnasia focused on mathematics and lead students to a handful of technical higher education institutions, but not to universities.

[804] E.V. Perevalova, "M.N. Katkov i A.V. Golovnin: k istorii vzaimootnoshenii," *Voprosy teorii i praktiki zhurnalistiki* 6, no. 3 (2017): 334.
[805] M.N. Katkov, Letter to A.V. Golovnin, [no date], Otdel Rukopisei Rossiiskoi Gosudarstvennoi Biblioteki [OR RGB] f. 120, k. 47, l. 151.
[806] E.V. Perevalova, "M.N. Katkov i A.V. Golovnin: k istorii vzaimootnoshenii," 335.

By placing Katkov at the discussion table and flattering his pedagogical expertise, Golovnin hoped for favorable press coverage on the reform. However, emerging differences between the two made such calculations entirely implausible. A strong supporter of classical education, Katkov launched a daring campaign of public criticism of Golovnin's project generally and against real gymnasia in particular. On the pages of *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, Katkov argued that classical gymnasia, with their emphasis on ancient languages, were sure to cultivate in students a sense of discipline that would deter them from rebellious tendencies.[807] On the other hand, real gymnasia, he argued, were incapable of cultivating such discipline and since their institution with the 1849 reform, caused gave breeding ground to nihilism.[808] Katkov took public issue with the minute details of Golovnin's project - the number of hours allocated to each discipline, the curriculum, and the schedule among others.[809] Indeed, D.I. Pisarev's 1865 note on Katkov's "legislative and administrative tendencies," was written as a critique of his effort to steer the 1864 gymnasiums reform.

Golovnin's effort to turn *Moskovskie Vedomosti* into an ally of the Ministry of Education were completely frustrated. Having once turned to Katkov to discredit influential émigré writer A.I. Herzen, Golovnin turned to the press to take on the impetuous Moscow editor by engaging a former Russian official turned journalist, baron F.I. Firks, to publish under the pen name "D.K. Schedo-Ferroti" a scathing critique of Katkov's "ultra-Russian ideas" – a case discussed at greater length in Chapter 2.[810] The revelation of Golovnin's retaliation caused him embarrassment and his subsequent public standoff with Katkov created much turbulence in the Ministry, but it was the assassination attempt on Emperor Alexander II on 4 April 1866 by former

[807] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 31 October 1864, No. 238.
[808] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 25 March 1864, No. 68.
[809] Ibid.
[810] D.K. Schedo-Ferroti "Etudes sur l'avenir de la Russie," (Brussels: Aug. Schnee, 1864).

Moscow University student D.V. Karakozov that brought Golovnin's career to an end.

The dismissal of the minister of education only ten days after the assassination attempt clearly communicated the connection between Russia's education system and the rise of revolutionary sentiment. By then, Katkov had for years reiterated this idea on the pages of *Moskovskie Vedomosti*. The assassination attempt presented a compelling opportunity to re-state boldly that "nihilism is possible in our [homeland] as a consequence of the pitiful state of our education."[811] Indeed, this message appears to have landed on fertile ground. In his rescript from 13 May 1866 – a key document setting a new tone for the government - Alexander II stated that the assassination attempt has "opened Russia's eyes" at those who "challenge its sacred beliefs, family life, property rights, respect of the law and of the authorities."[812] "My attention," concluded Alexander, "is already directed at the upbringing of our youth."

In an outright struggle with a government minister, Katkov emerged victorious. Golovnin was swiftly replaced with the recently appointed Over-Procurator of the Holy Synod and a close associate of Katkov - D.A. Tolstoi. The fact that Tolstoi continued to hold the position of Over-Procurator contiguously with his appointment as minister of education also spoke to a change in education policy. On 20 June 1866, Katkov was granted a one-on-one audience with Alexander II, during which the latter admonished Katkov against editorial excesses but also, according to Katkov, expressed his respect and support for the editor and for *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, which he reportedly "followed attentively" and "read all the time."[813] In a bid to reduce Katkov's public struggles with government ministers, Alexander II also granted Katkov right to address letters

[811] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 19 April 1866, No. 82.
[812] S.V. Rozhdestvenskii, *Istoricheskii obzor deiatelnosti ministerstva narodnogo prosveshchenia, 1802-1902* (St. Petersburg: Izdanie Ministerstva narodnogo prosveshchenia, 1902), 483.
[813] N. A. Liubimov, *Mikhail Nikiforovich Katkov i ego istoricheskaia zasluga*. (St. Petersburg: Tipografia Tovarishestva "Obshchestvennaia Pol'za," 1889), 343–44.

directly to him – a right that placed Katkov among a small circle of ministers and high-ranked courtiers.[814]

Triumphant, Katkov soon returned to the subject of education reform. The new minister of education, D.A. Tolstoi, who was both like-minded and deferential to the Moscow editor, presented a new such opportunity. The collaboration between Tolstoi and Katkov began while Tolstoi was still the Ober Procurator of the Holy Synod. In 1865, the future minister of education Tolstoi wrote to Katkov about the drafts of the reformed elementary and secondary school statutes. "During the discussion [of these drafts] in the Synod," Tolstoi intimated, "all the Synod members ordered me to ask you to do us a favor and look these drafts over, when they will be ready, and before there are confirmed."[815] Unlike Golovnin, who engaged Katkov in legislative projects to build a rapport, Tolstoi turned to the Moscow editor, requesting his private opinion – and perhaps even for a contribution - on a project of government reform.

Before ascending to the ministry of education, Tolstoy's largely administrative career in the chancellery of the Naval ministry and briefly in the Senate and the Holy Synod had not prepared him well to head the Ministry of Education, where the task of designing, perfecting, reforming educational institutions and processes demanded more creative qualities. In addition, having never studied or taught at a university, Tolstoi – unlike Katkov, for example – had no direct experience of university education.[816] Having ascended to the Ministry of Education, Tolstoi – in

[814] V. G. Chernukha, *Pravitelstvennaia politika v otnoshenii pechati 60-70-e gody XIX veka* (Leningrad: Nauka, 1989), 170.
[815] D.A. Tolstoi, Letter to M.N. Katkov, [date unknown], OR RGB f. 120, ed. 56, l. 6. As cited in E. A. Popov, "'Departament Katkova': Novatsionnye tekhnologii obshchestvennogo vliania na kurs gosudarstvennoi politiki reformiruemoi Rossii," *Vestnik surgutskogo gosudarstvennogo pedagogicheskogo universiteta* 66, no. 3 (2020): 45.
[816] B.N. Chicherin intimated in his memoirs a telling story from D.A. Tolstoi's biography. As a young man, Tolstoi published a book, titled *Istoria finansovykh uchrezhdenii v Rossii so vremeni osnovania gosudarstva do konchiny Imperatritsy Ekateriny II* (St. Petersburg, 1848). According to Chicherin's source, all notes for the book from archival materials were taken by Tolstoi's colleague S.S. Dzhunkovskii (1820-1870). In 1842, Dzhunkovskii, a prominent Catholic, was sent to Western Europe for several years to acquaint the Western public with Orthodox Christianity. Leaving Russia, Dzhunkovskii left all his papers in Tolstoi's care and upon his return was surprised to

the words of contemporary E.M. Feoktistov -, "expressed himself strongly against Golovnin's reforms, but did not know how to go about changing them."[817] Reportedly, Tolstoi "was eager to take action in the right direction, but the nature of that action was very unclear to him […] so Katkov, Leontiev and [*Moskovskie Vedomosti* associate A.I.] Georgievskii came to his aid," noted Feoktistov in his memoirs.

The vacuum of initiative and expertise at the Ministry of Education was exacerbated by vice-minister, I.D. Delianov (1866-1874), who also had no particular vision for the higher education reform. Despite his far greater experience in the education system – he served at the superintendent of the St. Petersburg education district and as a director of the State Library - contemporaries generally noted his lack of design and resolve in matters of education reform. Feoktistov called Delianov as a "useless" advisor, who was "[politically] unsteady on his feet."[818]

Two days after his appointment as Minister of Education, Tolstoi wrote to Katkov thanking him for a warm and welcoming editorial and promised that Katkov and his associate, Leontiev, "can contribute more than others" to the forthcoming work of the ministry. In the same letter, Tolstoi solicited Katkov's opinion on reforming the 1864 gymnasium statute:

> You know my profound conviction that classical education must be the foundation of everything [in education]. It is necessary for this thought to become reality, help me in this. Please, let me know the details of your objections to the gymnasium

see his work published under D.A. Tolstoi's name. Chicherin shares another similar case with another book published by Tolstoi: *Le Catholicisme Romain en Russie* (Paris, 1863-1864). The subject of Catholicism was studied by Tolstoi's close associate, D.P. Khrushchev, the former vice-minister of state domains. Khrushchev spent significant time, studying the archives and preparing materials for publication. According to Chicherin, who had greater knowledge of this case, Tolstoi convinced Khrushchev to lend him the manuscripts for reading, promising their quick return. The manuscripts then served as material for Tolstoi's own book. Khrushchev, according to Chicherin, "kicked up quite the storm," but never received the originals back. Chicherin learned this story from Khrushchev's son. B.N. Chicherin, *Vospominania B.N. Chicherina* (Mosckva: Izd-vo im. Sabashnikovykh: 2010), 149-150, 497.

[817] E.M. Feoktistov, *Za kulisami politiki i literatury, 1848-1896* (Moscow: Novosti, 1991), 166.

[818] Ibid., 174.

statute, on its implementation, and on what -in your opinion – we could do about it. Please be sure that I will have enough energy to insist on its correct execution.[819]

From the very first days of his ministerial posting, Tolstoi involved Katkov in the drafting of a number of projects and reforms at the Ministry of Education. In May 1866, only a few weeks after his appointment, Tolstoi asked Katkov to "give me your opinion on the following subject: what is the most practical way to overcome current difficulties with teaching these [ancient] languages. Knowing how closely this issue is to your heart, I am sure you will not be upset that I am disturbing you so."[820]

Katkov was admittedly grateful to Tolstoi for "the trust [Tolstoi] placed in us by turning to us for advice," but his ambitions – in fact – went much further.[821] It was not enough to consult Tolstoi on ministerial projects; to reverse Golovnin's reforms, Katkov wished to steer the direction of projects at the ministry.

Unlike Tolstoi, Katkov had a clear vision of educational reform in Russia. For the most part, his vision of Russia's primary and secondary schooling was in line particularly with contemporary Prussian, French, and British models: a classically oriented schooling that was centralized, compulsory, and free or subsidized, leading into universities and ultimately state service.[822] However, Karakozov's attempt on Alexander II's life convinced Katkov even more that Russia's educational institutions were the principal source of revolutionary sentiments, and that an imminent educational reform should be directed to stem the revolutionary tide. To that end, he offered two imperatives.

---

[819] D.A. Tolstoi, Letter to M.N. Katkov, 17 April 1866, OR RGB f. 120, p. 19, book 1, ll. 139.
[820] D.A. Tolstoi, Letter to M.N. Katkov, 3 May 1866, OR RGB f. 120, p. 19, book 1.
[821] M.N. Katkov, Letter to D.A. Tolstoi, 4 November [1867], OR RGB f. 120, k. 47, ll. 142-142ob.
[822] Katkov's vision of education deviated from European models on the issue of secularization in education – which took place across Europe in the second half of the nineteenth century. M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 7 February 1867, No. 30.

The first central tenant of education reform, in Katkov's vision, was centralization. A man of etatist views, Katkov believed not only that the state was the most effective manager of education, but also that an active government role – and control – over educational institutions would allow it to stem the sources of revolutionary activities in universities. In a letter to Alexander II, Katkov argued that A.V. Golovnin's reforms – which de-centralized primary and secondary schooling and granted autonomy to university – forced the government "to relinquish its indelible and sacred duty to educate its youth" into the schools hands of the zemstvos "not suited for pedagogical purposes."[823] Pressing for the reversal of Golovnin's reforms, Katkov argued that "the government cannot let the people's education out of its hand, neither in our tumultuous time, nor at any other time."

The second tenant was a necessity to re-focus the education system on classical education with an emphasis on Greek and Latin grammar, diminishing – if not excluding – the role of natural sciences and *real* gymnasia. This approach completed the undoing of Golovnin's reform. Katkov advocated a narrow focus for primary and secondary education on ancient Greek and Latin languages, specifically on their grammar, which would instill in pupils "concentration and mental discipline" that would deter from revolutionary sentiment.[824]

On the other hand, real gymnasia, Katkov argued, were incapable of cultivating such qualities and the study of natural sciences could lead pupils to materialism, atheism and anarchism. Since their very institution in 1849, *real* gymnasia – Katkov argued – caused "the rise of senseless sedition that subsequently bloomed into full-blown nihilism."[825] Katkov believed it was not enough to close the path to university for graduates of *real* gymnasia – a measure that produced

[823] M.N. Katkov, Letter to Alexander II, July 1879, *Byloe* 26, no. 4 (October 1917): 6.
[824] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 31 October 1864, No. 238.
[825] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 25 March 1864, No. 68.

considerable displeasure both among graduates and within bureaucratic circles. *Real* gymnasia themselves had to be undone or downgraded in their standing so as not to convey an equality with classical gymnasia. Katkov thus advocated for more hours of ancient Greek and Latin grammar, and fewer hours of Russian language, mathematics, and natural sciences.

The preparation of the new gymnasia reform began in the autumn of 1866, when Tolstoi's new ministry requested the gymnasia superintendents (*popechiteli*) to provide feedback specifically on the shortcomings of the 1864 Statute. Unlike the preparation of the 1864 statute, in which then minister Golovnin engaged the representatives of education institutions and the press in the discussion of the reform, Tolstoi kept his reform project out of the public view, consulting almost exclusively with M.N. Katkov and his associate P.M. Leontiev. The results of the survey, published in the ministerial journal, found particular issues with "the lack of clear and exact directions for all gymnasia as to the materials that need to be covered" and with "the lack of support among local population for [*real*] gymnasia that do not lead to the university."[826]

The findings of the survey offered Tolstoi's ministry an opportunity not only to clarify the content of the gymnasia education programs – steering it in the preferred direction of classical education -, but also to re-frame the status of *real* gymnasia in the same direction. However, the influence and involvement of Katkov and Leontiev in this process was unparalleled.

In creating a program for gymnasia, Katkov and Leontiev considered that the primary focus should focus on the study of ancient Greek and Latin should be on grammar rather than the reading of literary works, and that the study of the Russian language was not at all necessary at school – a subject of intense disagreement with Tolstoi in late 1866 and 1867. P.D. Shestakov, the superintendent of the Kazan education district, recalled and aggrieved Tolstoi during his 1866 visit

[826] "Mery i predpolozhenia otnositel'no gimnazii i nachal'nogo narodnogo obrazovania," *Zhurnal ministerstva narodnogo prosveshchenia (Sovremennaia letopis),* vol. CXXXIII (1867): 8, 13.

to Kazan, soon after his ministerial appointment. Tolstoi then expressed "surprise that such an intelligent man as Leontiev would reject the necessity of a fundamental study of the Russian grammar, but he is stubborn and it is difficult to compete with him, while another intelligent man with fundamental knowledge, Katkov, supports him."[827] Shestakov also observed the "significant disagreements" between the minister of education and the editors of *Moskovskie Vedomosti* and, yet, "ultimately [Katkov and Leontiev] were able to convince him [Tolstoi] in the correctness of their views." Indeed, despite disagreements, Tolstoi continued – sometimes through his vice-minister, I.D. Delianov – to solicit "as soon as possible" Katkov's opinion on the gymnasium reform at key moments in its preparation.[828]

To advance his vision of the reform project, Katkov understood that it was not sufficient to consult the new minister at a distance; instead, to keep a firm foothold in Tolstoi's ministry it was necessary to place trusted proteges within ministerial ranks. When in 1867 Tolstoi appointed the assistant superintendent for the Kharkov education district and a former official in A.V. Golovnin ministry, K.K. Foigt [Voigt], as the chairman of the Education Committee [*Uchenyi komitet*], Katkov boldly protested in a letter to Tolstoi that this "choice could not be more unfortunate."[829] To counter this presence, and potential others like it, Katkov embarked on an effort to place a number of his trusted associates into high-ranking positions, particularly in the Council of the Minister of Education and in the Education Committee.

Tolstoi himself was open to such arrangements. Immediately after his appointment, Tolstoi offered Leontiev an official position at the Ministry of Education, but the latter's intensive work at *Moskovskie Vedomosti* and very close associations with Katkov made it an unlikely proposition.

---

[827] P.D. Shestakov, "Graf Dmitrii Andreevich Tolstoi kak ministr narodnogo prosveshchenia. 1866-1880." *Russkaia starina* vol. LXIX, no. 1-3, (1891): 398.
[828] D.A. Tolstoi, Letter to M.N. Katkov, 3 November 1867, OR RGB f. 120, k 19, ll. 159.
[829] M.N. Katkov, Letter to D.A. Tolstoi, 4 November [1867], OR RGB f. 120, k. 47, ll. 142-142ob.

Instead, Katkov offered for the job the head of the international news section at *Moskovskie Vedomosti* – A.I. Georgievskii - , who in 1867 was appointed to the Education Committee in the ministry – the second highest consultative organ in the ministry.

No doubt, owing to his patronage, Georgievskii quickly became the third-ranking official at the ministry.[830] An active member of the Council, Georgievskii received frequent requests to draw up opinions on ministerial projects from Tolstoi, who probably knew the projects would receive not only Georgievskii's review, but also Katkov's. Georgievskii's appointment allowed Katkov to follow closely the developments at the Ministry of Education, and to check on Tolstoi himself, but also to participate in a large number of projects at the ministry. In an extensive correspondence that counts at least four dozen letters, Georgievskii informed Katkov that D.A. Tolstoi "managed things well, firmly and skillfully, without making significant concessions"[831]

Georgievskii informed Katkov on projects undergoing preparation or review, on the voting patterns of ministerial officials on particular issues. He also asked Katkov for advice and instructions on projects, requested that the editor "influence" [*podeistvovat'*] the ministerial ranks when projects "encountered difficulties", and cued Katkov as to the timing of the decision to coordinate the tenor of *Moskovskie Vedomosti* editorials.[832] Indeed, in 1867, Katkov's influence on affairs of the state reached a new height, as noted by censor A.V. Nikitenko: "To tell the truth, it is difficult, very difficult to accept the state of affairs in this country, which is managed by Valuevs, Shuvalovs, and Tolstois, where ministers are so miserable and weak that they travel and

[830] It would not be remiss to mention that when in 1881 the Ministry of Education began to publish the salaries of its officials, Georgievskii was the third-highest paid official at the ministry, second only to the minister and the vice-minister. In 1887, Georgievskii was the second-highest paid official at the Ministry of Education after the minister. See: "Spisok litsam, sluzhashchim po vedomstvu Ministerstva narodnogo prosveshchenia. 1887/1888 god." (St. Peterburg: Tip. Balasheva, 1887), 8.
[831] A.I. Georgievskii, Letter to M.N. Katkov, 7 January 1873, OR RGB f. 120, k. 2, ll. 1.
[832] A.I. Georgievskii, Letter to M.N. Katkov, 3 May 1873, OR RGB f. 120, k. 2, ll. 5ob. For more example, see the entire collection of letters: A.I. Georgievskii, Letters to M.N. Katkov, OR RGB f. 120, k. 2, ll. 1-65.

send [couriers] to Moscow to ask Katkov and Leontiev, what to do and how."[833]

In early 1869, the materials gathered by Tolstoi's survey began their formal discussion in the Council of the Minister of Education and in the Education Committee with the participation of A.I. Georgievskii and the specially invited for the occasion P.M. Leontiev. The sessions were chaired by vice-minister of education, I.D. Delianov. Leontiev set the tone of the discussion with his prepared address, which advocated for an increase in the number of school hours dedicated to the study of ancient Greek and Latin from one third to almost half of all weekly lessons.[834] However, the proposal was met with considerable resistance. A seasoned member of the Council of the Minister of Education, A.S. Voronov, argued that the number of hours dedicated to the learning of ancient languages was sufficient according to the 1864 statute and that an increase will be neither possible – due to a shortage of teachers – nor will it offer significant benefit as it will reduce the hours of other subjects.[835] In a similar vein, the assistant superintendent of the St. Petersburg education district, A.K. Serno-Solovievich, argued that an intensified course of ancient languages will suppress the study of the Russian language. The protestations, however, came to a naught. The discussions produced the following resolutions, among others:

1) To institute a preparatory year in gymnasia;

2) To extend the gymnasia education to eight years [from seven previously];

3) To increase the number of hours on ancient Greek and Latin, and to reduce the hours on mathematics, physics, natural sciences, and Russian language;

4) To institute detailed curricula for all gymnasia;

---

[833] A.V. Nikitenko, Entry from 21 November 1867, *Dnevnik* (Moscow: Gosud. izdat. chudozestvennoi literatury, 1955), vol. 3, 105.
[834] I. Aleshintsev, *Istoria gimnazicheskogo obrazovania v Rossii (XVIII i XIX vek.)* (St. Petersburg: Izd-vo O. Bogdanovoi, 1912), 288.
[835] Ibid.

5) To institute the same examination rules and disciplinary actions across gymnasia;

6) To name classical gymnasia and pro-gymnasia simply as gymnasia and pro-gymnasia; the *real* gymnasia were to receive a separate statute and name."[836]

At the same time, Tolstoi's ministry was working on the draft of the *real* gymnasia statute, which included the following points:

1) To rename *real* gymnasia into *real* schools [*real'nye uchilishcha*] with a special statute;
2) The *real* schools were to become specialized according to the local trade;
3) The duration of the schooling was to be set at seven years;
4) The *real* schools were to prepare students for special technical institutes [*vysshie spetsialnye uchilishcha*].

In its key propositions, the above resolution closely followed the vision and demands made by Leontiev and Katkov. The re-designed curriculum, which emphasized the learning of ancient languages and grammar and reduced their application in reading classical texts, signaled a new approach that focused on exercising discipline and memory rather than thought. Indeed, this was the very discipline Katkov advocated on the pages of *Moskovskie Vedomosti* as a preventative measure against the rise of revolutionary sentiments among students. The excesses of this approach effectively constrained the educational advancement in the provinces and among non-noble students as illustrated by A.P. Chekhov in his short story "Incident with a Classics Author" [Sluchai s klassikom].[837] Constraining the number of classical gymnasia graduates thinned the numbers of candidates for university study in favor of the nobility – a bulwark of support for Russia's autocracy. Although Katkov's editorials avoided specific preference for nobility in the

[836] S.V. Rozhdestvenskii, *Istoricheskii obzor deiatelnosti Ministerstva narodnogo prosveshchenia. 1802-1902.* (St. Petersburg: Izd-vo Ministerstva narodnogo prosveshchenia, 1902), 517. See also: I. Aleshintsev, *Istoria gimnazicheskogo obrazovania*, 288.
[837] A.P. Chekhov, *Polnoe Sobranie sochinenii i pisem tridtsati tomakh* (Moscow: Nauka, 1975), vol. 2, 124-126.

ranks of university students, the effective enactment of such preference through Tolstoi's reform played into Katkov's broader vision of addressing revolutionary sentiments in university classrooms.

In a similar vein, Tolstoi's reform of the *real* gymnasia effectively undid the greater parity between *real* and the *classical* gymnasia, introduced by Golovnin's 1864 reform. Tolstoi project enacted Katkov's longstanding proposal to cut off all access to university education for the graduates of *real* gymnasia. Defenders of classical education, such as Katkov, has long believed that the study of mathematics and natural sciences led students to materialism, atheism, and revolutionary sentiments, thus advocating for a reduction in the number of class hours dedicated to these subjects. In downgrading the *real* gymnasia to *real* schools, Tolstoy's reform definitely set the path of *real* education away from the university and away from parity in prestige and opportunity with university education. Finally, permeating the reform project was an effort on behalf of the Ministry of Education to exert greater control – to centralize – secondary and higher education whether by regulating the program of study or the examination process.

In February 1871, Tolstoi submitted the draft of the amendments to the 1864 Statute into the State Council, together with a report prepared by A.I. Georgievskii. The project designated ancient languages as priority subjects, increasing the number of hours on Latin from 34 to 49 hours per week spread over 8 school years, on ancient Greek from 24 to 35 hours, and on mathematics from 24 to 37 hours.[838] Latin was taught already in first grade for 8 hours per week, while Russian language was to be taught for only 4 hours per week. Other subjects, such as jurisprudence

[838] The number of hours per week as indicated above was distributed over a total of 9 schools years: 1 preparatory year, grades 1st through 7th with the 7th grade lasting 2 years. For example, the reform foresaw a total of 43 hours of Latin per week distributed over grades 1st through 7th, meaning that student had in preparatory grade – 0 hours of Latin, in the 1st grade had 8 hours, in the 2nd grade – 7 hours, in 3rd and 4th grades – 5 hours, in 5th, 6th, and 7th – 6 hours per week for a total of 43 hours. Sh. I. Ganelin. *Ocherki po istorii srednei shkoly v Rossii vtoroi poloviny XIX veka* (Moscow-Leningrad: UChPeDGIZ, 1950), 55-58. See also: Rozhdestvenskii, *Istoricheskii obzor*, 527.

[*zakonovedenie*] were eliminated, history and theology were reduced from 14 to 12 hours each, drawing, sketching, and calligraphy were reduced from 13 to 5 hours.

Aiming to pass the reform quickly, without procedural discussions in the department of economics and legislation, Tolstoi organized a special council [*osoboe prisutsetvie*] for preliminary consultation, chaired by a sympathetic S.G. Stroganov. However, the project encountered substantial opposition: 6 of 14 members vehemently opposed the project, among them were minister of war, D.A. Miliutin, former minister of education A.V. Golovnin, the president of the Academy of Sciences F.P. Litke, as well as State Council officials from the department of economics K.K. Grot and K.V. Chevkin, and the head of the Emperor's Personal Chancellery, V.N. Panin.

Moving on to the general assembly of the State Council in May 1871, the reform project faced an even stronger opposition. Among the members of the State Council, 29 members vehemently opposed, while 19 supported it. The unfavorable majority of the 29 took issue with the reform closing all paths to university for the graduates of *real* gymnasia. Many highlighted the "growing development" and the importance of sciences for "the wellbeing of the country."[839] They emphasized the shortage of engineers and technicians "for building railways, ports, telegraphs, and mines" and of chemists and mechanics "for developing out industry and manufacturing." The 19 members in support of the reform argued that the graduates of the *real* schools should not be admitted into universities under any circumstances.

In June 1871, Alexander II issued a resolution "execute according to the opinion of the 19."[840] The following year, in early 1872, the *real* school statute made its way into the State

[839] Sh. I. Ganelin. *Ocherki po istorii srednei shkoly v Rossii vtoroi poloviny XIX veka* (Moscow-Leningrad: UChPeDGIZ, 1950), 51.
[840] Ibid., 49.

Council and faced the same fate: 19 members of the Council supported Tolstoi while 27 sided with the opposition. Once more, on 15 June 1872, Alexander II sided with the minority. In doing so, Alexander II also went against the opinion of his reformer-ministers such as Golovnin, and against a press largely in against the reform. For Katkov and Leontiev this was a resounding victory, which made gymnasia once more exclusively classical institutions.

The swift passing of the reform strengthened Katkov's and Leontiev's authority in the ministry of education and signaled their legislative influence on other ministries. In July 1871, shortly after the passing of the reform project, Georgievskii was made member of the Council of the Minister of Education, and in 1873 he was made chairman of the Education Committee, replacing K.K. Foigt, whose appointment Katkov protested in 1866. Over the course of the next few years of Tolstoi's ministry, multiple of Katkov's trusted and like-minded associates at *Moskovskie Vedomosti* came to occupy high-raking places in the Ministry. In November 1873, Katkov's longstanding informer, Boleslav Markevich, was appointed to the Council, in 1878 – his close associate A.M. Gezen, and in 1882 – another close associate, N.A. Liubimov.[841] Referring to the appointment schemes as "combinations" [*kombinatsii*], Katkov and Georgievskii hoped to achieve a favorable interest group in the ministerial Council.[842]

In the course of his contributions to the reform, Katkov sought to position himself and his proteges as experts in higher education. In a letter to Alexander II, Katkov stated that he has "has sacrificed much to the cause [of education], has studied its theory and practice, and has enough political acumen to understand the connection between it [education] and the principal interests of the State."[843] Katkov's decision to institute, together with his editorial partner, P.M. Leontiev, the

[841] "Spisok litsam, sluzhashchim po vedomstvu Ministerstva narodnogo prosveshchenia. 1874/1875 god." (St. Petersburg: Tip. Balasheva, 1874), 9.
[842] A.I. Georgievskii, Letter from A.I. Georgievskii to M.N. Katkov, 3 May 1873, OR RGB f. 120, k. 2, ll. 6.
[843] M.N. Katkov, Letter from M.N. Katkov to Alexander II, July 1879, *Byloe* 26, no. 4 (October 1917): 7.

Tsesarevich Nicholas Lyceum in Moscow solidified him as a representative of the educational establishment in Russia and a stakeholder – in any subsequent education reforms.

Over the years that followed, Tolstoi continued to consult Katkov – directly and through Gergievskii – on the most sensitive projects. In 1872, Katkov drafted lesson plans for the teaching of classical languages in schools and in universities.[844] While working on the draft of a new university statute in 1872, Tolstoi asked Katkov "as a big favor to correct and complete [the draft of the university statute] as you see fit."[845]

The following year, in early 1873, in preparation of the 1874 military reform instituting universal conscription, the Ministry of Education intervened with a project of military service exemption for university students. The project soon became a subject of confrontation between the Ministries of War and Education. In January 1873, Georgievskii was charged by Tolstoi to write an opinion on the project, turned to Katkov for assistance, sending the Moscow editor "all the papers" related to the project and asking for "a speedy overview and for your opinion on the project."[846] The opinion, Georgievskii suggested, was to be presented by Tolstoi in the State Council. Shaping and augmenting the ministerial opinion in favor of military service exceptions, Katkov also provided support for them in the editorials of *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, taking a bold stance against the "destabilizing" proposal of the Ministry of War.[847] Tolsoi later invited Katkov to take direct part in discussions about military service.[848]

Even in small decisions, such as whether or not to institute awards in schools and universities, or the transfer of the Surgical Academy into the authority of the Ministry of the

[844] D.A. Tolstoi, Letter from D.A. Tolstoi to M.N. Katkov, 21 June 1872, OR RGB f. 120, p. 19, book 1.
[845] D.A. Tolstoi, Letter from D.A. Tolstoi to M.N. Katkov, 9 July 1872, OR RGB f. 120, p. 19, book 1.
[846] A.I. Georgievskii, Letter to M.N. Katkov, 11 January 1873, OR RGB f. 120, k. 2, ll. 2-2ob.
[847] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 30 April 1873, No. 106.
[848] D.A. Tolstoi, Letter from D.A. Tolstoi to M.N. Katkov, 25 November 1873, OR RGB f. 120, p. 19, book 1.

Interior, Tolstoi invariably consulted Katkov.[849] E.M. Feoktistov observed in his memoirs that "it was obvious to everyone that the motor of one reform after another [in the Ministry of D.A. Tolstoi] – were the "katkovians" [*katkovtsy*] as they were called both in society and in the press. Remarkably, I never saw Tolstoi to be displeased about this."[850]

The momentous assassination attempt on Alexander II in April 1866 drove the Tolstoi ministry to reform not only the gymnasia, but also the universities – the ultimate goal, as Katkov deemed it. Indeed, Karakozov's status as an auditing student [*vol'noslushatel'*] at Moscow University re-opened the "university question" and drew the government's attention to universities as sites of percolating revolutionary sentiment. In the aftermath of the assassination attempt, university students were the first to experience the change of course in Alexander II's education policy, which viewed university students as exposed to "harmful false teachings" and "tendency toward sophistry" that "brazenly undermine" Russia's sacred values: "religious faith […] obedience of the law […] respect for authorities."[851]

Unlike with the gymnasium reform, Tostoi did not set out to propose a new university statute; rather, gradual measures were supposed to limit access to universities and institute far greater government surveillance and oversight both over students and faculty. In August 1866, a special commission, chaired by vice-minister I.D. Delianov, adopted "Rules on the surveillance of students outside of the university," which compelled university faculty and deans to report "the most dangerous and unreliable elements of university youth."[852] In early 1867, the Ministry of Education restricted access for auditing students by requiring them to submit records of secondary

[849] D.A. Tolstoi, Letter from D.A. Tolstoi to M.N. Katkov, 7 March 1873, OR RGB f. 120, p. 19, book 1. D.A. Tolstoi, Letter from D.A. Tolstoi to M.N. Katkov, 21 December 1873, OR RGB f. 120, p. 19, book 1.
[850] Feoktistov, *Za kulisami*, 176.
[851] Rozhdestvenskii, *Istoricheskii obzor*, 483.
[852] Ibid., 500. See also: "Pravila o nadzore za studentami vne sten universiteta i vospitannikami vysshykh uchebnykh zavedenii raznykh vedomstv (Odobreny vysochaishe utverzhdennym polozheniem Komiteta ministrov 26 maia 1867 goda." RGIA f. 908, op. 1, d. 288.

education.[853] Over the decade that followed, university admissions were also restricted to other "unreliable" groups, such as Polish students – deemed "prone to revolutionary agitation" - and the graduates of seminaries, deemed to be insufficiently academically prepared.

Despite growing limitations, student unrest in universities continued, exploding in mass unrests in 1869 and 1874. A year earlier, in 1873, Tolstoi issued a circular to university councils on an impending reform of the 1863 University Statute. The first to break the story and spearhead its discussion was Katkov's associate N.A. Liubimov in a *Russkii Vestnik* article titled "On the Forthcoming Review of the University Statute."[854] Liubimov attacked the principal university autonomy – foundational to the 1863 statute – for creating inconsistencies in decision-making and a distance from the Ministry of Education while relying on the ministry for funding. He argued that the university autonomy over its court, policing, and matters of internal economy and housekeeping - privileges received by universities in 1863 – should be reversed, so that universities "are not in a position of decision-making, but in that of requesting [from the ministry]."[855]

In this opening salvo for a new university statute, Liubimov articulated with precision not only Katkov's grievances against the 1863 University Statute, but also the centralizing initiatives Katkov has long since discussed, such as the implementation of standardized curricula and state examination.[856] Liubimov's and Katkov's proposals soon found their reflection in the official discussions in the Council of Ministers. In late 1874, a special session chaired by State Secretary P.A. Valuev "for the in-depth study of the question of student unrest" found their main problem in

[853] Rozhdestvenskii, *Istoricheskii obzor*, 500.
[854] N.A. Liubimov, "Po povodu predstoiashchego peresmotra universitetskogo ustava," *Russkii Vestnik* 103, no. 2 (February 1873): 886-903.
[855] Ibid., 893.
[856] Liubimov proposed lowering admission barriers for junior faculty, standardizing education programs through government exams, and introducing subsidies for students who may lack in means to pursue a university education. "It is in the interests of the state," wrote Liubimov, "that capable people from poorer classes can access higher education. […] Expanding government scholarships is most desirable." N.A. Liubimov, "Po povodu predstoiashchego peresmotra universitetskogo ustava," *Russkii Vestnik* 103, no. 2 (February 1873): 902.

the organization of university education on the whole.[857] The session found that university faculty "lack in old guard tact [*ne imeiut okhranitel'nogo takta*] necessary to maintain discipline in their institutions," leading the ministers to conclude in favor of a comprehensive university reform.[858] The session proposed curtailing the autonomy of university faculty assemblies by relieving them of their administrative and policing duties; by reforming the process of faculty hire, promotion, and governance; by regulating the curriculum; and by limiting the influx of "poorly prepared and financially struggling" auditing students.

In early 1875, despite the protestations of university faculty, Alexander II authorized a commission for creating a new university statute. The commission was chaired by the vice-minister of education, I.D. Delianov, and included both the ministerial officials who supported the reform of the 1863 statute and the deans of all universities, who constituted the mainstay of the opposition. The commission also included Katkov's trusted associates - A.I. Georgievskii, A.M. Gezen, and N.A. Liubimov.

Observing the struggle for a new university statute, jurist B.N. Chicherin remarked in his memoirs: "the campaign against the 1863 [university] statute was provoked by Katkov and Leontiev out of their personal desire, and because they did not shy away from any means, they – with their characteristic shamelessness – portrayed in a perverted way an issue they knew much about. In turn, the government and the ignorant public took it all at face value."[859] The majority of N.A. Liubimov's proposals made it into the draft of the new university statute as their accent on strengthening the presence and control of the government in the process of university education articulated the desire and preferences of Alexander II, Tolstoi, and Katkov.

[857] G.I. Shchetinina, *Universitety Rossii i ustav 1884 g*. (Moscow: Nauka, 1976), 55.
[858] Ibid.
[859] Chicherin, *Vospominania*, 41.

While the new draft of a university statute was viewed by its supporters within Delianov's commission as a panacea for the "university question," the university rectors on commission were vocally opposing the change. The sharp, uncompromising debates around the reform were reflected not only in fifty-nine journals of the commission's meetings, but also spilled over into intense polemics in the press.

In 1879, besieged by controversy, Tolstoi secured the approval of the Committee of Ministers to introduce the "Temporary laws" and "Rules for students" that diminished the autonomy of universities by restoring the authority of the superintendent [*popechitel'*] and empowered the university inspection as an organ of oversight over students.[860] The decision provoked a wave of protestations from university faculty; a handful of professors resigned, among them the Kiev University professor and future minister of finance – N.Kh. Bunge. In Moscow and Kiev Universities students engaged in widespread, active protests.[861] B.N. Chicherin recalled in his memoir recalled a "student demonstration" turned into "a brawl" in front of Katkov's apartment on Strasnoi Boulevard, where young people sought to express their protest of his role in the project.[862]

The public backlash against Tolstoi's reform fueled rumors of his impending resignation just as the complete reform draft was submitted for review in the State Council. Seeking to salvage the project, in July 1879, Katkov wrote personally to Alexander II pleading to defer Tolstoi's dismissal.[863] Katkov boldly defended Tolstoi before the Emperor against "malicious agitation" from the opponents of the reform within government ranks.[864] Tolstoi's dismissal, Katkov argued,

---

[860] "O vremennom izmenenii poriadka upravlenia I nadzora za studentami Universitetov," *Polnoe sobranie zakonov Rossiiskoi Imperii (PSZ)* vol. 54 part 2 (1879), #59901, 2 August 1879, 30-31.
[861] Shchetinina, *Universitety Rossii*, 84-85.
[862] Chicherin, *Vospominania*, 288.
[863] M.N. Katkov, Letter from M.N. Katkov to Alexander II, July 1879, *Byloe* 26, no. 4 (October 1917): 9.
[864] Ibid., 8.

would "compromise, and possibly completely spoil a project of the greatest national importance [*gosudarstvennoi vazhnosti*]." Seeking to protect the fate of the reform, Katkov went so far as to suggest that Tolstoi's dismissal may be better timed with the conclusion of the reform and the transfer of reformed institutions of higher education to his successor.

Katkov's letter to Alexander II shows the editor of *Moskovskie Vedomosti* not only as a strategist of the university reform formally advanced by the Tolstoi ministry, but as its conceptual source. The most important element of the university reform, Katkov argued in the letter, was the element of examinations, which were to be conducted not by teaching faculty on the basis of their lectures, but by "special commissions" and "according to particular teaching programs."[865] The examinations would "not only to test the students' knowledge, but also to regulate the [content] of the lectures by their professors." The institution of state exams in universities served as an indirect means of setting the program of the university course curricula. By the same token, state exams were directed to curtail faculty autonomy over curricula, "compelling them instead to lecture on the subject needed for the students to pass the state examination, and the students – in order to be able to enter civil service – will be compelled to prove their knowledge in [actual] sciences, not in the subjects that the professor just happens to teach." Urging Alexander II to undertake the reform as "a measure of extreme necessity," Katkov promised "the defeat of unrest [*smuta*] in one of its principal sources."

Tolstoi was ultimately spared dismissal, but the reform stalled in the State Council. In February 1880, a new assassination attempt on Alexander II called into question the effectiveness of Tolstoi's approach in eradicating revolutionary sentiments. In response to the assassination attempt, Alexander II appointed a new institution, the Supreme Executive Commission, charged

[865] Ibid., 10.

with addressing the acute revolutionary situation. Headed by M.T. Loris-Melikov, an ally of Golovnin, Reutern, Miliutin, the Commission signaled once more a change in Alexander II's political direction. In the early days of the new regime, Katkov promptly arrived to St. Petersburg to plead with Loris-Melikov to keep Tolstoi in this position.[866] Although Katkov was at first reassured of no intentions to demote Tolstoi, the latter's careless word addressed at minister of the interior L.S. Makov soon made his position untenable.[867]

Tolstoi's dismissal in April 1880 was, without doubt, a loss for Katkov. The new university statute, by then fully prepared, was suspended. The loss was all the more acute since Tolstoi's successors - A.A. Saburov (1880-1881) was closely associated with Loris-Melikov. The new minister of education produced a "daunting" impression on Georgievskii, an opinion Katkov shared.[868] Despite his high rank in the Ministry of Education, Georgievskii -- Katkov's dutiful informant of nearly fifteen years – was soon marginalized by Saburov and cut off from access to information not directly related to his duties. [869]

Having lost his access to information and his influence in the ministry, Katkov initiated an editorial campaign against the new ministry by drawing attention to student unrest in universities, "which began since the head of the Ministry of Education set off on [his] travels to review the Moscow education district."[870] Katkov openly criticized the ministry for delegating the

---

[866] Feoktistov, *Za kulisami*, 188.

[867] D.A. Tolstoi's confrontation with Minister of Interior L.S. Makov began with a speculative accusation by Tolstoi, made in private, about Makov's corruption. The accusation made its way to Makov and elicited his strong response, as well as an invitation to a duel, according to E.M. Feoktistov. The conflict ultimately reached Alexander II, who concluded that – despite his previous support of Tolstoi – the hostile sentiment toward Tolstoi among fellow ministers was such that it made the latter's position untenable. The confrontation is described in details in P.A. Valuev's diary. Loris-Melikov reportedly rejoiced at Tolstoi's dismissal, recalling ministers greeting one another with a play on the traditional Easter greeting: "Tolstoi has been replaced, indeed he has been replaced!" [*Tolstoi smenen, voistinu smenen!*]. See: Feoktistov, *Za kulisami*, 189.

[868] A.I. Georgievskii, Letter from A.I. Georgievskii to M.N. Katkov, 7 May 1880, OR RGB f. 120, k. 2, ll. 24ob.

[869] There is some evidence that Saburov sought to restrict this access for Georgievskii. A.I. Georgievskii, Letter from A.I. Georgievskii to M.N. Katkov, 7 May 1880, OR RGB f. 120, k. 2, ll. 23ob. A.I. Georgievskii, Letter from A.I. Georgievskii to M.N. Katkov, 21 August 1880, OR RGB f. 120, k. 2, ll. 26.

[870] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 6 December 1880, No. 338.

disciplinary aspects of university governance from superintendents to university deans, reversing Tolstoi's "Temporary laws."[871] Aiming to portray a mayhem of student unrest at universities, Katkov declared Saburov's attempt to revive university autonomy as failed.[872] Launching attacks on newspapers friendly to the Saburov ministry, such as *Golos, Russkie Vedomosti,* and *Vestnik Evropy*, Katkov's diatribes reached such intensity that even Slavophile N.P. Gilyarov-Platonov – editor of *Sovremennye Izvestia* – publicly accused Katkov of spreading "anti-government" sentiments.[873]

As discussed in Chapter 3, the assassination of Alexander II on 1 March 1881 brought about not only a new monarch – Alexander III -- , but also a tidal change in ministerial personnel. Weeks into the new reign, Alexander III contemplated Saburov's replacement. For Katkov, this was an opportunity to advance into the ministerial seat the pliable and loyal former vice-minister of Tolstoi's time in office - I.D. Delianov.[874] However, the powerbroker of the new rule, K.P. Pobedonostsev, sought to advance his own candidate - A.P. Nikolai, the former vice-minister under A.V. Golovnin.[875] Katkov was dismayed by such a choice from a conservative ally and argued that Nikolai was "even more dangerous than Saburov." [876] Pobedonostsev attempted to reassure him

[871] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti,* 6 December 1880, No. 338.
[872] For more articles in the same vein, see: M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti,* 9 December 1880, No. 341. M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti,* 14 February 1881, No. 45. M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti,* 17 February 1881, No. 48.
[873] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti,* 9 December 1880, No. 342. M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti,* 29 July 1880, No. 208. See also: M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti,* 9 January 1881, No. 9. M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti,* 27 January 1881, No. 27. M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti,* 4 February 1881, No. 35. M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti,* 10 February 1881, No. 41.
[874] I.D. Delianov, Letter from I.D. Delianov to M.N. Katkov, 15 April 1881, OR RGB f. 120, book 19, ll. 162ob.
[875] A.P. Nikolai and K.P. Pobedonostssev were unusual allies. As a protégé of Golovnin and an affiliate of the political interest group around M.T. Loris-Melikov, Nikolai was Pobedonostsev's political antipode. Yet, their correspondence during Nikolai's time as Minister of Education suggests a closer relationship, which included exchange of information and ideas as well as mutual support and consultation. According to his letter to Pobedonostsev, Nikolai doubted his suitability for the ministry, argued that his time at the Ministry of education was almost 20 years prior. See: K.P. Pobedonostsev, *K.P. Pobedonostsev i ego korrespondenty: pis'ma i zapiski* (Moscow: Gos.izd-vo, 1923), 22, 154-155, 158.
[876] Pobedonostsev, *K.P. Pobedonostsev i ego korrespondenty*, 347.

that he "did not believe" Golovnin had any influence on Nikolai and countered with concerns about Delianov's course of actions "once he is independent" in the ministerial role.[877] Having travelled to St. Petersburg, Katkov had a "a heated argument" with Pobedonostsev about the successor to the Ministry of Education.[878]

A.P. Nikolai was appointed Minister of Education in April 1881, when an undecided Alexander III retained his late father's ministers, led by M.T. Loris-Melikov, A.A. Abaza and D.A. Miliutin. However, their resignations in May 1881 – weeks after Nikolai's appointment – left the new Minister of Education without important allies. During his brief time in office, from early 1881 to early 1882, Nikolai struggled to maintain his relationship both with Golovnin, Loris-Melikov, and his reformist patrons, as well as with Pobedonostsev – the power broker of the new rule.

The result proved fruitless. Nikolai avoided the issue of reforming the 1863 university statute, focusing on perfecting its implementation.[879] Katkov and his trusted associates in the Ministry of Education – seeking to "protect and salvage" their work on the university statute reform – resolved to adopt a strategy of sabotage and "inflict defeats" on ministerial projects. Among the casualties of Katkov's efforts was A.P. Nikolai's 1882 project to institute 4-year real schools [*real'nye uchilishcha*]. As with Saburov, Katkov once more mounted a press campaign against Nikolai, urging a new university statute.[880] By early 1882, the difficult position of the Nikolai ministry gave rise to intense rumors about his resignation. In March, Alexander III confided in Pobedonostsev that he "strongly disagrees with Nikolai on many issues and cannot

[877] K.P. Pobedonostsev, Letter from K.P. Pobedonostsev to M.N. Katkov, St. Petersburg, 25 March 1881, OR RGB f. 120, book 19, ll. 110ob-111.
[878] Pobedonostsev, *K.P. Pobedonostsev i ego korrespondenty*, 347.
[879] N.A. Liubimov, Letter from N.A. Liubimov to M.N. Katkov, 7 August 1881, OR RGB f. 12, book 19, ll. 208ob.
[880] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 20 April 1881, No. 109. M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 18 February 1882, No. 50. M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 22 February 1881, No. 54. M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 11 March 1881, No. 77.

approve many of his actions, but most important is that behind him is Golovnin."[881] In March 1882, A.P. Nikolai was replaced by former minister of education under D.A. Tolstoi – I.D. Delianov.

I.D. Delianov's appointment as Minister of Education was preceded by Katkov's considerable campaign in his favor. Katkov's letters to Alexander III, advocating for the adoption of D.A. Tolstoi's university reform, suggested a welcome continuity in a choice of an active participant in the shaping of the reform. In February 1882, a month before the appointment, Katkov's rare visit to St. Petersburg and audience with Alexander III sealed the success of the campaign.[882] In a letter to K.P. Pobedonostsev, Katkov celebrated Delianov's appointment: "Of course, I am very happy […] that a "great" matter [the university reform project], as you write, has been snatched from wicked hands [of A.P. Nikolai]."[883] Having almost entirely neglected Nikolai's appointment on the pages of *Moskovskie Vedomosti* a year earlier, Katkov celebrated the new Delianov ministry as an "end of a crisis in our education."[884]

"Loyal and obedient," Delianov was widely perceived in government circles to be even more prone to Katkov's influence than Tolstoi was in his time.[885] Former minister of war, D.A.

---

[881] Pobedonostsev, *K.P. Pobedonostsev i ego korrespondenty*, 240. In addition to Alexander III's loss of confidence in A.P. Nikolai as Minister of Education, the latter also became embroiled in a conflict with M.N. Katkov around the same time, which reached the Emperor and accelerated his demise from the ministry. In early 1882, Katkov and Nikolai collided over the term of N.A Liubimov's professorship at Moscow University. Five years earlier, in 1877, having reached retirement age, N.A Liubimov received from Emperor Alexander II the benefit of an extension of his university tenure, bypassing the customary faculty vote, as reward for his work in the Ministry of Education. While university regulations allowed for five-year extensions, the wording of Alexander II's order made the exact term unclear and was interpreted by Liubimov and Katkov as an indefinite extension. In early 1882, Nikolai, as Minister of Education, was notified of the expiration of the customary five-year term extension and presumed Liubimov's imminent departure, which Alexander III interpreted as a violation of his father's indefinite extension of Liubimov's tenure. Nikolai's ultimate collision with Alexander III on the matter drove him to resignation. Pobedonostsev, *K.P. Pobedonostsev i ego korrespondenty*, 251-254.
[882] K.P. Pobedonostsev, Letter to M.N. Katkov, St. Petersburg, 17 February 1882, OR RGB f. 120, book 19, ll. 115.
[883] Pobedonostsev, *K.P. Pobedonostsev i ego korrespondenty*, 273.
[884] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 11 March 1881, No. 77.
[885] V.A. Tvardovskaia, "Alexandr III," in *Russkie samoderzhtsy 1801-1917*, ed. A.N. Bokhanov, L.G. Zakharova (Moscow: Nauka, 1993), 215-306.

Miuliutin noted in his diary that appointing Delianov as minister of education "is almost like appointing Katkov."[886] In the same vein, State Secretary E.A. Peretts, deemed Delianov "kind, but entirely in the hands of Katkov, Liubimov, Georgievskiiet tutti quanti."[887] Indeed, even Delianov's letters to Katkov, which addressed the latter as "Your Excellency" [*Vashe Prevoskhoditel'stvo*], suggest an unusual obsequiousness even after Delianov became minister.[888]

Delianov, however, proved a much more challenging partner than Katkov anticipated. Much of 1882 – Delianov's first year at the head of the ministry – passed without recourse to Tolstoi's shelved 1863 University Statute reform project, much to Katkov's impatience. Furthermore, Katkov's trusted associate, Georgievskii – who anticipated a "trusting and sincere relationship" with Delianov - soon found himself marginalized at the ministry. Georgievskii's reports to Katkov noted an abrupt reduction of access to Delianov and to information at the ministry.[889]Katkov then turned to another high-ranking informant within the Ministry of Education – N.A. Liubimov. In October 1882, Liubimov was made member of the Council of the Minister of Education. Over the months that followed, Liubimov became Katkov's main informer in the Ministry of Education.

In early December 1882, I.D. Delianov re-introduced the project to reform the 1863 University Statute into the State Council. Strategizing course of the project, Katkov and Liubimov shared confidence in its success. The reform, they agreed, "was only introduced [in the State

[886] Miliutin, Entry for 21 March 1882, *Dnevnik D.A. Miliutina*, vol. 4, 130. Contemporaries in the high ranks of the government held a low opinion of Delianov at his appointment. Miliutin called Delianov "a person of limited intellect and extreme reactionary," as well as an "obedient instruments of Katkov." Even such a trusted associate of Katkov's as E.M. Feoktistov thought of Delianov as "a man who achieved a very high position without any accomplishments." See: Ibid. Feoktistov, *Za kulisami*, 175.
[887] E.A. Peretts, Entry from 19 March 1882, *Dnevnik E.A. Perettsa (1880-1883)* (Moscow: Gosud. izd-vo, 1927), 129.
[888] I.D. Delianov, Letter from I.D. Delianov to M.N. Katkov, 23 July 1882, OR RGB f. 120, book. 19, ll. 163.
[889] A.I. Georgievskii, Letter from A.I. Georgievskii to M.N. Katkov, 10 July 1882, OR RGB f. 120, k. 2, ll. 41ob.

Council] after approval from "the Study" [of Alexander III]."[890] The far greater concern, Liubimov reported, was I.D. Delianov, who "becomes very disoriented in current circumstances."[891] "Many issues [in the Ministry of Education] are in extreme need of your advice," concluded Liubimov, asking that Katkov visit St. Petersburg at the earliest convenience.

By January, Katkov was in St. Petersburg for consultations with Delianov and an audience with Alexander III about the submitted reform.[892]

Delianov hoped to have the new university statute adopted by May 1883 - the end of the spring session for the State Council –, but delays in the State Council soon made this improbable.[893] Grand Duke Mikhail Nikolaevich, Alexander III's uncle and chairman of the State Council, argued about the untimeliness of the reform, particularly because of Alexander III's coronation in May the same year. The chairman of the legislative department of the State Council, I.P. Staritskii, referred to the need to study this large project first.[894] Other members of the State Council, such as Alexander III's brother, Grand Duke Vladimir Alexandrovich, M.Kh. Reutern, K. P Pobedonostsev – all concurred about a necessary delay.[895]

By March 1883, Liubimov reported to Katkov that "the issue is clearly being purposely delayed, [and] I.D. [Delianov] sees it himself, but flounders without taking any decisive action."

---

[890] N.A. Liubimov, Letter from N.A. Liubimov to M.N. Katkov, St. Petersburg, Saturday, 30 October 1882, OR RGB, f. 120, book 19, ll. 300ob-301. See also: N.A. Liubimov, Letter from N.A. Liubimov to M.N. Katkov, St. Petersburg, Saturday, 1 December 1882, OR RGB, f. 120, book 19, ll. 305.

[891] N.A. Liubimov, Letter from N.A. Liubimov to M.N. Katkov, St. Petersburg, Saturday, 8 December 1882, OR RGB, f. 120, book 19, ll. 306.

[892] The audience took place on 14 January 1882. See: I.D. Delianov, Letter from I.D. Delianov to M.N. Katkov, 11 January 1883, OR RGB f. 120, book 19, l. 164. N.A. Liubimov, Letter from N.A. Liubimov to M.N. Katkov, St. Petersburg, Saturday, 17 November 1882, OR RGB, f. 120, book 19, ll. 302. N.A. Liubimov, Letter from N.A. Liubimov to M.N. Katkov, St. Petersburg, Saturday, 8 December 1882, OR RGB, f. 120, book 19, ll. 306-307.

[893] N.A. Liubimov, Letter from N.A. Liubimov to M.N. Katkov, St. Petersburg, Saturday, 11 February 1883, OR RGB, f. 120, book 19, ll. 306.

[894] A.A. Polovtsov, *Dnevnik gosudarstvennogo sekretaria A.A. Polovtsova v dvukh tomakh* (Moscow: Tsentrpoligraf, 2005), vol. 1, 67.

[895] Polovtsov, *Dnevnik gosudarstvennogo sekretaria*, vol. 1, 67. See also: N.A. Liubimov, Letter from N.A. Liubimov to M.N. Katkov, St. Petersburg, Saturday, 9 March 1883, OR RGB, f. 120, book 19, ll. 308.

[896] In the face of delay, Liubimov intimated, Delianov "hesitates and has not yet mustered the courage to ask [His Majesty's] order [to speed up or circumvent proceedings in the State Council] because Pobedonostsev expressed himself in favor of the delay."[897] Frustrated by the delay, even D.A. Tolstoi – appointed Minister of Interior at a time – urged Delianov to be "more insistent."[898]

Katkov simmered with frustration by delays in the State Council and by Delianov's inability to overcome them. In conversations with close friend and banker, S.S. Poliakov, Katkov openly berated Delianov, and promised to "present the minister of education with a bonnet in honor of his effeminate pliancy in the matters of the university statute."[899] In another instance, V.P. Meshcherskii reported from a conversation with K.P. Pobedonostsev that Katkov "scolded [Delianov] as a molycoddle" [*rugaet baboiu*].[900] The coronation ceremony and later the summer recess let the project fall by the wayside. Faced with the wait, Katkov's regular editorials on university reform – "awaited with impatience" – kept the public momentum for the project.[901] In large editorials, Katkov outlined in some detail the provisions of the new university statute and boldly criticized the 1863 statute.[902]

After "endless delays," the proceedings of the new University Statute resumed in January 1884, there it once more faced a majority opposition.[903] Alexander II's former ministers - A.V.

---

[896] N.A. Liubimov, Letter from N.A. Liubimov to M.N. Katkov, St. Petersburg, Saturday, 4 March 1883, OR RGB, f. 120, book 19, ll. 308.
[897] N.A. Liubimov, Letter from N.A. Liubimov to M.N. Katkov, St. Petersburg, Saturday, 16 March 1883, OR RGB, f. 120, book 19, ll. 309.
[898] N.A. Liubimov, Letter from N.A. Liubimov to M.N. Katkov, St. Petersburg, Saturday, 9 March 1883, OR RGB, f. 120, book 19, ll. 309. N.A. Liubimov, Letter from N.A. Liubimov to M.N. Katkov, St. Petersburg, Saturday, 16 March 1883, OR RGB, f. 120, book 19, ll. 309.
[899] P. A Valuev, Entry from 29 April 1883, *Dnevnik, 1877-1884* (Petrograd: Izd-vo "Byloe," 1919), 225.
[900] V.P. Meshcherskii, "15 Maia [1885]," in *Pis'ma k Imperatoru Aleksandru III, 1881-1894*, ed. N.V. Chernikova (Moscow: NLO, 2018), 160.
[901] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 21 July 1883, No. 200. M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 28 July 1883, No. 208.
[902] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 13 September 1883, No. 255. M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 28 September 1883, No. 269.
[903] N.A. Liubimov, Letter from N.A. Liubimov to M.N. Katkov, St. Petersburg, Saturday, 5 January 1884, OR RGB, f. 120, book 19, ll. 317.

Golovnin, A.A. Abaza, M.T. Loris-Melikov, and D.A. Miliutin, who honorably retired into the State Council – expressed themselves strongly against the proposed reform of the 1863 University Statute. Even Katkov's occasional ally, Pobedonostsev, sided with the opposition to the statute – "sworn enemies," argued Katkov - on the grounds of its university exam provision.[904] Katkov acutely felt the need for like-minded and influential allies; his most reliable advocates had been D.A. Tolstoi, whom the *Moskovskie Vedomosti* editor deemed "passive," and the not particularly influential Ministry of State Domains, M.N. Ostrovsky. Pobedonostsev's opposition was a particular loss. In a lengthy letter, Katkov reproached the Ober-Procurator as well as "other people in power" for "secluding themselves from contact with me in matters of state affairs."[905] "Why am I such a poisonous creature," he continued, "that everyone on this [university statute issue] avoids me and tries not to hear me, and that everything in which my participation can be suspected, must a priori be considered unfit?"[906]

Lacking in allies to maneuver in the State Council proceedings, Katkov characteristically turned to his newspaper as an instrument of influencing both the public and decision-making. On 12 January 1884, *Moskovskie Vedomosti* came out with a large editorial that launched a bold attack on the State Council. Discussing the history and merits of Russian autocracy, Katkov argued that the role of the State Council as an example of "multiple loci of power" [*mnogovlastie*] has undermined Russian statehood.[907]

Aiming to discredit the very role of the State Council, Katkov suggested in the article that the State Council stands as an obstacle between government ministers and the Tsar, insinuating a

[904] Pobedonostsev, *K.P. Pobedonostsev i ego korrespondenty*, 349.
[905] Ibid., 348.
[906] In the same letter, Katkov denies having participated in the writing of the reform project of the 1863 University Statute. However, his correspondence – cited earlier in this chapter – disproves this statement.
[907] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 12 January 1884, No. 12.

desired outcome in the university statute proceedings: "new legislation should arrive to the Emperor through the State Council, which is a transit institution, but cannot in itself be a legislative institution." Katkov stressed the exclusively "consultative" role of the State Council, reproaching it for emulating Western European parliamentary institutions, whose decisions were legitimized by majorities. Consensus-building "in parliamentary games of majority and minority," he argued, imposed changes, additions, and subtractions on legislative projects, "resulting in a half-measure that introduces new problems into the issue it was supposed to resolve."

To the surprise of his officials and even family members, Alexander III expressed his approval of the article. When, in a ministerial meeting, Grand Duke Mikhail Nikolaevich brought the article to Alexander's attention for having caused "unrest" in the State Council, Alexander III reportedly replied that he "found what was said quite right" and that he was "happy that there is a sensible person in Russia."[908]

Katkov's outsized influence on legislative proceedings was well-known in ministerial corridors and in the State Council. Soon after the appearance of the article, Grand Duke Mikhail Nikolaevich spoke in confidence to Empress Maria Feodorovna, lamenting that Alexander uses Katkov's and Pobeonodstsev's opinions to guide his decisions on projects in the State Council.[909] The Grand Duke also expressed amazement at Katkov's access to information, when former diplomat and Chief of Gendarmes, P.A. Shuvalov, arrived to Moscow a day after a State Council session and on meeting Katkov was stunned that Katkov could describe in details the proceedings of the session only the day before.

Katkov's attack on the State Council in the winter of 1884 failed to move along the

[908] N.A. Liubimov, Letter from N.A. Liubimov to M.N. Katkov, St. Petersburg, Saturday, 23 January 1884, OR RGB, f. 120, book 19, ll. 317.
[909] Polovtsov, *Dnevnik gosudarstvennogo sekretaria*, vol. 1, 193.

university statute; from January through April, it lingered in the chancellery of the State Council. Liubimov continuously reported delays and noted Delianov's "extreme fatigue" with the statute and a desire to finish with it that led him to consider concession.[910] Enraged by delays, Katkov launched in *Moskovskie Vedomosti* a brazen campaign against the State Council, accusing it of deliberate delay and sabotage of the new university statute. "The enemies of the Russian state and of the Russian universities," wrote Katkov referring to the State Council chancellery, "are fighting against this [university] statute by joining hands with the St. Petersburg liberals, which joined forces many times before in any kind of intrigue under the moto 'the worse – the better.'"[911]

Katkov's attacks on the State Council shocked the St. Petersburg bureaucracy. The head of the State Council chancellery, A.A. Polovtsov, threatened to resign. In a letter to K.P. Pobedonostsev, Polovtsev wrote that he "will not endure this abuse […] and will ask [Alexander III] for someone of Katkov's choice to be appointed as [State] Secretary."[912] Like many in the high government ranks, Polovtsev was taken aback by the government "patronizing a newspaper that undermines [public] trust and respect for one of its highest institutions."[913] Even the Minister of Interior D.A. Tolstoi – charged with censorship – was disinclined to censor Katkov.[914]

Nevertheless, the article coincided with the desired effect – a week later, the project moved from months-long wait in the chancellery of the State Council into its general assembly of the State Council. Reporting this advancement to Katkov, Liubimov urged him to visit St. Petersburg:

---

[910] N.A. Liubimov, Letter to M.N. Katkov, St. Petersburg, Saturday, January 1884, OR RGB, f. 120, book 19, ll. 319.
[911] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 17 April 1884, No. 106. A second article followed on May 4, 1884. See: M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 4 May 1884, No. 122.
[912] K.P. Pobedonostsev, *K.P. Pobedonostsev i ego korrespondenty: pis'ma i zapiski* (Moscow: Gos.izd-vo, 1923), vol. 1, 460-461.
[913] A.A. Polovtsov, *Dnevnik gosudarstvennogo sekretaria*, vol. 1, 216.
[914] Tolstoi is said to have confessed to the Minister of Finance N.Kh. Bunge that he "could silence any newspaper except *Moskovskie Vedomosti*." A.A. Polovtsov, *Dnevnik gosudarstvennogo sekretaria A.A. Polovtsova v dvukh tomakh* (Moscow: Tsentrpoligraf, 2005), vol. 1, 216.

> We must act upon I.D. [Delianov]. It is obvious that they [the opposition to the statute] are hoping to spoil the project with Delianov's hands. Everyone knows that the Emperor will agree with the minority, i.e. with what the Ministry of Education will put forth. Now is the time for you to come. Without you we will be stuck. We need to support I.D [Delianov] with decisiveness, otherwise everything will collapse.[915]

After many requests to arrive in St. Petersburg, Katkov made the journey in early May. Immediately with Katkov's arrival, Delianov walked back some of his concessions made in the State Council. Aiming to drive the project to its conclusion, Tolstoi came close to taking over it from Delianov and even threatened to speak in the State Council to "take back all the concessions made by Delianov to his [Tolstoi's] original project."[916] After the coronation celebration in mid-May, discussions of the university statute resumed in the State Council in late May. Elaborating a strategy, Tolstoi gathered at his home the ministers and high-ranking officials in support of the project: Delianov, Ostrovskii, Shuvalov, Greig, senator T.I. Filippov, Liubimov, and Georgievskii. Preparing for the presentation of the project in the general assembly, Tolstoi distributed speaking roles to the attendees on various aspects of the reform: Shuvalov spoke on university deans, Ostrovskii on curricula, Filippov about exams, and Tolstoi on faculty salaries.[917] Debates in the State Council formed a minority of 14 members in favor of the new statute, of which 13 approved of the exam clause. The matter of exams posed the final hurdle as Liubimov and Katkov worried that the statute, otherwise supported by Alexander III, may be held up by reluctance to approve

[915] N.A. Liubimov, Letter to M.N. Katkov, St. Petersburg, Saturday, 1 May 1884, OR RGB, f. 120, book 19, ll. 323.
[916] Tolstoi is said to have confessed to the Minister of Finance N.Kh. Bunge that he "could silence any newspaper except *Moskovskie Vedomosti*." A.A. Polovtsov, *Dnevnik gosudarstvennogo sekretaria A.A. Polovtsova v dvukh tomakh* (Moscow: Tsentrpoligraf, 2005), vol. 1, 216.
[917] N.A. Liubimov, Letter from N.A. Liubimov to M.N. Katkov, St. Petersburg, Saturday, 26 May 1884, OR RGB, f. 120, book 19, ll. 324.

the exams.[918] Uncertain that Delianov will be "insistent enough in his explanation" of the exams and that the statute must be adopted altogether, Liubimov urged Katkov to arrive to St. Petersburg to urge the minister or send a message to Alexander III.[919]

Indeed, the issue of the university exams caused Alexander to waver on the entire reform during the summer of 1884. Alexander, according to Polovtsev, found merits in the arguments of both its supporters and opponents, and considered postponing any decision-making to the autumn. The ministers behind the reform – D.A. Tolstoi, I.D. Delianov, and M.N. Ostrovsky – made representations to Alexander, pressing for the passing of the reform before the beginning of the new educational year in September. Evidently, Alexander sensed pressure to make a decision in the affirmative. In a final audience before Alexander's departure on summer travels, K.P. Pobedonostsev expressed his reservations about the approval of the new university statute. Alexander III replied: "What is there to do if this is being demanded both by the current minister of education [I.D. Delianov] and by his predecessor [D.A. Tolstoi]?"[920]

Concerned with a lack of decision on the exams and that summer recess may delay it into the autumn, Katkov wrote Alexander III two letters in a last-chance effort to persuade the Emperor to approve the university statute; these letters played a decisive role in the fate of the university reform. Katkov's first letter from July 1884, addressed head-on the issue of state exams, insisting that it is "the most significant" part of the university statute and cannot be taken out of it.[921] Katkov dismissed valid concerns that the institution of university exams must be coordinated with the standards of secondary schooling or the procedures of other institutions of higher education, such

[918] N.A. Liubimov, Letter from N.A. Liubimov to M.N. Katkov, St. Petersburg, Saturday, 7 June 1884, OR RGB, f. 120, book 19, ll. 325.
[919] N.A. Liubimov, Letter from N.A. Liubimov to M.N. Katkov, St. Petersburg, Saturday, 10 June 1884, OR RGB, f. 120, book 19, ll. 326.
[920] Polovtsov, *Dnevnik gosudarstvennogo sekretaria*, vol. 1, 239.
[921] M.N. Katkov, Letter to Alexander III, July 1884, *Byloe* 26, no. 4 (October 1917): 25.

as theological and military institutions – a measure that would surely delay the adoption of the new statute. Instead, he argued that the new university exams will simply set the tone for the rest of the education system that will ultimately adopt state exams at respective levels.

In a second letter, seeking to portray a common ground, Katkov advocated for a measure Alexander III was already known to support - the removal of university autonomy, granted to universities by the 1863 statute.[922] Katkov argued against the ability of universities to self-administer through the institute of faculty-elected rectors. The 1863 statute, Katkov argued, placed rectors, hitherto elected by university faculty, in a "compromised" position of authority over the very faculty that elected them. The institution of elected rectors - defended by a majority in the State Council as an element of university autonomy -, appeared to Katkov as an area of opaqueness for the state in which opposition and even revolutionary sentiments may lurk.

Instead, Katkov pressed for the replacement of elected university rectors with those appointed by the Ministry of Education – a measure that would place the universities under the direct control of the government. Placed to confirm new faculty, government-appointed rectors could advance the candidates of the Ministry of Education rather than those of the faculty councils, thus bringing the university into direct conflict with the government. Rejecting arguments that university faculty were only members of a scientific community, Katkov argued they were, in fact, "official figures [*dolzhnostnye litsa*] entrusted with the highest interests of our best youth and their education. They are preparing persons for all the areas of state and public service, the leaders of the people [*narod*] and servants of the state." [923] "Can the government authorities leave such a task in the hands of people unknown to it, who are chosen through [faculty] elections?," concluded

[922] M.N. Katkov, Letter from M.N. Katkov to Alexander III, [July or August] 1884, *Byloe* 26, no. 4 (October 1917): 26-28.
[923] Ibid.

Katkov.

Persuaded by Katkov and his allies, Alexander called in a consultative session for 12 August 1884 at the imperial estate in Ropsha, south-west of St. Petersburg. Katkov's informant in the Ministry of Education, N.A. Liubimov, wrote a report to his patron, which allows us a glimpse into that important session.[924] The first to speak was K.P. Pobedonostsev, who argued that although the 1863 University Statute was "ill-conceived and demands reform," it was "risky to step on a new path" that could lead to a lower standard of education. Pobedonostsev's opponent in the debate was Delianov, who argued that the new statute and the exams will introduce greater government influence and control over universities. Other participants of the debate were Grand Duke Mikhail Nikolaevich, who – according to Liubimov – expressed the opinion of Katkov's associate, P.M. Leontiev and N.A. Liubimov himself, on the subject of exams. At the end of the session, Pobedonostsev gave up his position, stating that "if two ministers, the former one and the current one, so decisively vouch for the [new] statute, we must, of course, agree with them."[925] "All went well," wrote N.A. Liubimov to Katkov.

Thus, Pobedonostsev's concerns that non-expert government examiners would lower the standards of university education gave way to Katkov's confidence that the new statute will subordinate university education to the government and to the autocrat at its helm. Three days after the session in Ropsha, Alexander III approved the new 1884 University Statute by placing his resolution on the draft "Agree with the minority." On 23 August 1884, Alexander III signed the decree to the Senate that enacted the new university statute beginning with the 1884-1885 academic year. Katkov's informants in the ministry of education, N.A. Liubimov and A.I.

[924] N.A. Liubimov, Letter from N.A. Liubimov to M.N. Katkov, St. Petersburg, Saturday, 13 August 1884, OR RGB, f. 120, book 19, ll. 329-329ob.
[925] Ibid.

Georgievskii, then proceeded with their work on an explanatory note to accompany the signed University Statute and the Ministerial Circular for university rectors.[926]

The 1884 University Statute determined the relationship between universities and the state until 1917. Its elements reflected the autocracy's attitude toward education as an area requiring close government oversight, its students – in need, above all, of discipline and surveillance, and its faculty – as government servants. In abolishing the university autonomy, Alexander III attempted to subordinate to government control the most elusive stratum of the Russian society – the educated elites, seeking to create out of it "an official intelligentsia" [*kazenaia intelligentsia*]. The concept of the government taking charge of and playing a greater role in various areas of administration was entirely coherent with Alexander III's general determination to organize, govern, and therefore control public life in order to secure the safety and continuity of Russia's autocratic system. Empowered by his political victory, Katkov declared in late 1884: "So, ladies and gentlemen, rise up: the government is coming, the government is returning!"[927]

Katkov's involvement in the affairs of the Ministry of Education did not end with the university reform in 1884. The following year, in March 1885, Delianov invited Katkov become a permanent member of the reform commission at the Ministry of Education, finding Katkov's presence "particularly necessary for the good of the project," sending the editor the draft of exams for the history and philology departments as well as the report of the Chairman of the Education Committee.[928] The same year, after presenting to Alexander III the results of the first year of the new University Statute, Delianov passed on to Katkov the Emperor's thanks for his active

[926] Ibid.
[927] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 7 October 1884, No. 278.
[928] I.D. Delianov, Letter from I.D. Delianov to M.N.Katkov, 11 March 1885, OR RGB f. 120, k. 2, ed. 41, l. 16.

participation in the composition of exam requirements." [929] Even in 1886, Delianov continued to update Katkov on the progress of the university exam legislature, sharing with the Moscow editor confidential ministerial documents and soliciting advice. [930]

In 1883 at Alexander III's coronation, Katkov received from the monarch the Order of St. Anne of First Degree, awarded for his "steadfast and loyal service to the throne and the fatherland in the domain of education." Although awarded in his capacity as the head of the Tsasarevich Nicholas Lyceum in Moscow, the Order of St. Anne – given for "love of truth, honor, and loyalty" – was no doubt awarded to Katkov for his role in the new University Statute. [931] In 1886, Alexander III awarded Katkov the Order of Vladimir of Second Degree for "fruitful activity in the domain of education and tireless efforts of cultivating in young minds an understanding of the true principles of Russian statehood." Granted for "service, honor, and glory," the Order of Vladimir was typically awarded to ministers and high ranking government officials.

[929] I.D. Delianov, Letter from I.D. Delianov to M.N. Katkov, 3 October 1885, OR RGB f. 120, k. 2, ed. 41, l. 18-19ob.
[930] Ibid.
[931] I.D. Delianov, Letters to M.N. Katkov, OR RGB f, 120, k. 2, ed. 41.

Figure 3 "The Night Table of the Sleeping Beauty," Caricature. A.V. Ipolitov, ed., Tuzy, damy, i valety. Dvor i teatr v karikaturakh I.A. Vsevolozhskogo (Moscow: Kuchkovo Pole, 2016). The caricature satirizes the education politic of Katkov, Delianov, and Tolstoi. Tolstoi represents the bottle of morphine, Delianov – the candle extinguishing cap, and Katkov – the bell to ring for a servant. Together, they represent a policy to extinguish enlightenment (i.e. education) in late Imperial Russia.

The 1889 Land Captains Statute: Centralizing the Local Government

During the final preparation of the university statute, M.N. Katkov, D.A. Tolstoi, and a handful of intermediaries were working on another project: the reform of the zemstvo administration. In 1864, in an effort to organize local administration over undergoverned Russian provinces and 22 million recently-emancipated serfs, Alexander II instituted a new organ of local administration – the county *zemstvo*s. *Zemstvo*s consisted of an assembly that met once a year and whose members were elected by local population from three categories: landowners (nobility, merchantry, and other non-peasant classes), town and city dwellers, and peasant village communes. When the *zemstvo* assembly was not in session, an executive board – elected by the assembly – conducted the business of day-to-day governance under a chairman, approved by the governor. Much like the universities, *zemstvo*s were governed by similar principles of internal

elections and relative autonomy of internal governance.

The proponents and supporters of the reform, such as D.A. Miliutin, praised the institution of *zemstvo*s for empowering local officials to engage in local governance and for unburdening the central administration from addressing "petty and distant abuses."[932] This de-centralizing approach was designed to systematize local governance, making it more autonomous from the center and therefore more functional. However, as Thomas Pearson has argued, *zemstvo*s also suffered from the mismanagement and abuses of power by elected peasant officials. Already in 1872, the government began a formal investigation under the Minister of State Domains, P.A. Valuev, into widespread mismanagement by *zemstvo* officials' in the allocation of grain reserves during food shortages.[933] By 1878-1880, *zemstvo*s began to incur fast-growing tax arrears, which in some provinces exceeded the annual rate of all taxes.[934] While some governors ascribed the tax arrears to a series of poor harvests, cattle epidemics, village fires, and peasants drafted to fight in the Russo-Turkish War (1877-1878), other governors accused unsupervised peasant officials of mismanaging tax collection and outright embezzlement.[935]

Distrustful of decentralization and autonomy in local administration and university education alike, Katkov criticized in print the work of *zemstvo*s since the early 1870s. In his editorials, Katkov highlighted the "complaints about the lack of energy" in *zemstvo* self-

[932] W. Bruce Lincoln, *The Great Reforms: Autocracy, Bureaucracy, and the Politics of Change in Imperial Russia* (DeKalb, Ill.: Northern Illinois University Press, 1990), 102. The literature on zemstvo reforms and administration is substantial. See, for example: L. G Zakharova, *Zemskaia kontrreforma 1890 g.* (Moscow: Izd. Mosk. un-ta, 1968); P.A. Zaionchkovskii, *Rossiiskoe samoderzhavie v kontse XIX stoletiia: politicheskaia reaktsiia 80-kh-nachala 90-kh godov* (Moscow: Izd-vo Mysl, 1970); George L. Yaney, *The Systematization of Russian Government: Social Evolution in the Domestic Administration of Imperial Russia, 1711-1905* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1973); Thomas Pearson, "The Origins of Alexander III's Land Captains"; Terence Emmons and Wayne S Vucinich, *The Zemstvo in Russia: An Experiment in Local Self-Government* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1982); Thomas S Pearson, *Russian Officialdom in Crisis: Autocracy and Local Self-Government, 1861-1900* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989).
[933] Lincoln, *The Great Reforms*, 386, n.9.
[934] Ibid., 387.
[935] Ibid., 389-390.

administrations, their "unnecessary, wordy debates,"[936] inaction during failed harvests,[937] "cliques and intrigues that provoke complaints" as well as embezzlement by *zemstvo* treasurers among others.[938] While these critiques did not gain much traction with Alexander II, it certainly resonated with Alexander III, who characterized gubernatorial and zemstvo reports as "a dreadful picture, although one not new."

In the autumn of 1881, Minister of the Interior N.P. Ignatiev instituted the special Kakhanov Commission to conduct a review of local administration, chaired by State Secretary M.S. Kakhanov and modeled on the commissions that prepared the 1861 peasant reforms. However, Ignatiev's known preference for elected and consultative peasant institutions – culminated in his project to create an all-Empire *zemstvo* assembly (*Zemskii sobor*) – made it clear to Katkov that a reform of *zemstvo* institutions was unlikely. However, the appointment of D.A. Tolstoi as Minister of the Interior in May of 1882 and on K. P. Pebedonostsev's suggestion presented a real chance.

Katkov greeted Tolstoi's appointment with mixed sentiments. On the one hand, Tolstoi's tenure at the Ministry of Education proved him malleable to Katkov's influence, but their relationship was not without significant complications. Discussing his appointment with close friend and informant, E.M. Feoktistov, Katkov lamented:

> You know full well what it cost me to make a decent minister of education out of him; even now I cannot think calmly of that difficult challenge, but now he faces a far more difficult and trying challenge: who will steer him? […] Tolstoi will compromise himself in the most shameful fashion if he will not listen to me.[939]

[936] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 5 January 1873, No. 4.
[937] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 3 January 1874, No. 3.
[938] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 9 January 1875, No. 8.
[939] Feoktistov, *Za kulisami*, 211.

Tolstoi, too, acceding to the key ministry in the government, remembered Katkov's unrelenting tutelage over himself during the 1870s. Moreover, Katkov's sharp criticism of Tolstoi to Alexander II and in the press after the latter's demise from the Ministry of Education further soured their relations. Though at Tolstoi's appointment in 1882 he and Katkov shared a common goal of passing the reformed University Statute, the Moscow editor knew he could no longer maneuver the Tolstoi ministry as he did before.

Having an unreliable ally in the new Minister of the Interior, Katkov turned to his newspaper. Already in 1882, Katkov redoubled his campaign against *zemstvo*s, accusing them of inefficiency and highlighting their problems with widespread absenteeism, procedural delays, and general indifference toward governance.[940] Beginning with 1883, Katkov focused his attention on one particular function of the *zemstvos* – the judicial function --, carried out through justices of the peace, elected by the *zemstvos*. Katkov's opposition to elected justices and trial by jury came to the fore already during the 1870s, when he attempted to prove the incompatibility of a "judicial republic" in an autocratic system. However, under Alexander III, Katkov took on the issue with renewed force.

Katkov reached deep into local newspapers to bring to the pages of *Moskovskie Vedomosti* cases of zemstvo assemblies making unlawful fiscal decisions,[941] judicial inconsistences,[942] unlawful acquittals, and unreasonably harsh punishments.[943] Katkov decried what he concluded to be the "careless or biased" judicial process in post-Reform Russia, the "immorality" of lawyers, the extra-legal tendencies of the justices of the peace "playing liberals" [*liberal'nichaiut*], and the

[940] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 16 December 1882, No. 349. M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 17 January 1883, No. 18.
[941] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 4 June 1883, No. 153.
[942] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 30 March 1883, No. 89. M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 19 September 1883, No. 260.
[943] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 14 June 1883, No. 163.

"ignorance" of jury members.[944] In collecting such cases – or rather evidence – Katkov was building a case for reforming the trial by jury and the position of the justices of the peace, instituted by the 1864 Judicial Reform. "All of Europe has been disappointed by this institution of trial by jury," concluded the editor of *Moskovskie Vedomosti*.[945]

Writing above all, as he admitted, for "one reader," Katkov had many times employed the tactic of launching an intensive editorial attack on a government institution and practice, mining the local press and even dispatching correspondents to accrue a compelling body of evidence to support his argument, while making the case before high-ranking bureaucracy and the Emperor for a particular course of action. On the subject of local administration and judiciary, Katkov followed the same blueprint as he argued that:

> The state authority, the government in the fullest sense of the word, cannot – without betraying itself or renouncing itself - leave the people it governs to the arbitrary and irresponsible notions of a corporations [*zemstvos*], which appeared by itself or was founded by the government, but which act in arbitrary and uncontrollable fashion and sense no dependency from the highest government authority.[946]

Katkov was indeed the most publicly vocal opponent of the existing court system; a number of high-ranking officials and members of Alexander III's the inner circle likewise advocated for its reform. D.A. Tolstoi, K.P. Pobedonotsev, M.N. Ostrovskii supported the change. The editor of *Grazhdanin*, V.P. Meshcherskii, contended in his publication that by keeping an autonomous and unchangeable system of justices of the peace and trial by jury, the government "gives away its

[944] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 23 June 1883, No. 172.
[945] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 13 February 1883, No. 44.
[946] M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 6 April 1882, No. 94. A.N. Bokhanov, *Rossiiskie samoderzhtsy: 1801-1917* (Moscow: Mezhdunarodnye otnoshenia, 1993), 281.

historical, sacred, strong, and healthy prerogatives to a society in disarray ."[947]

Alexander III proved receptive to the notion of widespread disfunction in local administration and courts. In his correspondence with D.A. Tolstoi, Alexander reflected on the "abnormality" and "degradation" of the Russian court system, concluding that "the government must not *criminally* leave these depravities without punishment."[948] As P.A. Zaionchkovskii observed, Alexander III was discussing the judiciary with the Minister of the Interior, not with the Minister of Justice.[949] The incumbent Minister of Justice, D.N. Nabokov, left over from the reign of Alexander II, was able to achieve relatively little in his position. His attempt to eliminate the tenure of the justices of the peace had no success, and while the law of 20 May 1885 gave the Senate the ability to dismiss and move justices from their positions, the many conditions and exemptions instilled in this law with Nabokov's help, made it virtually impracticable.

In the Spring of 1885, as the Kakhanov Commision was in its fourth year of activity, Katkov took action to unseat Nabokov in hopes of moving the potential reform further along. In a letter to Alexander III, Katkov restored to outright manipulation to make the case for Nabokov's replacement. The discord of the judicial system, he argued, was "wedged into the heard to Russia's political life" and "until it will be resolved, [Russia] will not come out of its difficulties, end its internal unrest, will not recover the authority of its government, and will not institute order in its local administration."[950] But, if all of Russia's issues – as Katkov contended – rested on the judicial reform, the Moscow editor quickly rushed to advise delaying this measure until it can be in the hand of the "right" minister:

---

[947] V.P. Meshcherskii, Editorial, 1882, No. 94. As cited in A.N. Bokhanov, *Rossiiskie samoderzhtsy: 1801-1917* (Moscow: Mezhdunarodnye otnoshenia, 1993), 281.
[948] "Zapiski Aleksandra III po gazetnym stat'iam o rabote sudov," Rossiiskii Gosudarstvennyi Istoricheskii Arkhiv [RGIA], f. 1282, op. 2, ed. 253, l. 1-2.
[949] Zaionchkovskii, *Rossiiskoe samoderzhavie*, 235.
[950] M.N. Katkov, Letter from M.N. Katkov to Alexander III, 18 April 1885, Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv Rossiiskoi Federatsii [GARF] f. 677, op. 1, ed. 823, ll. 13-13ob.

> However imperative is the need for reforming the judicial statutes, it would be better to leave everything as is until this task can be entrusted into the hands of a committed minister […] who would be devoted to its cause, who would clearly understand the true needs of the government, who would profoundly believe in the harm that is caused to the government by the poorly designed judiciary system, and who will act firmly and unrelentingly. Otherwise, the correction of our judicial institutions will not only not be a correction but will worsen their evils. I dare talk in this regard about the disciplinary court designed by the Minister of Justice [D.N. Nabokov]. There is reason to fear that this dubious improvement will only strengthen the false principle of judicial tenure that is irremovable even for the Supreme Authority and depends only on the judicial corporation itself.[951]

Katkov's letter exploited a strategic mistake made by Nabokov only weeks earlier. In February 1885, Nabokov nominated the prominent jurist A.F. Koni as the Over-procurator of the criminal cassation chamber of the Senate. Alexander III protested against this nomination. In 1878, A.F. Koni presided over the trial of Vera Zasulich, who shot the St. Petersburg mayor, general F.F. Trepov. In a case that widely appeared to be proven by the apprehension of Zasulich, Koni became notable for upholding the principle of judicial independence as he refused to give Alexander II and the incumbent Minister of Justice Pahlen assurance that Zasulich would be convicted. When the jury, over which Koni presided, acquitted Zasulich, Koni upheld the legality of the outcome unde the post-Reform judicial system. Drawing the ire of much of St. Petersburg's bureaucratic elite as well as the Emperor himself, Koni then refused to resign from his position, insisting on the protections of judicial tenure.

[951] M.N. Katkov, Letter from M.N. Katkov to Alexander III, 18 April 1885, GARF f. 677, op. 1, ed. 823, ll. 14-14ob.

For Alexander III, the Zasulich trial – which took place only 3 years before his accession – encompassed what he believed to be the principal flaws of the reform-era justice system: the trial by jury, the independence of justices and the judicial tenure. In correspondence with Pobedonostsev, Alexander expressed his dismay at such a nomination – which was nevertheless confirmed – while Pobedonostev himself expressed concern that Koni "will have the main levers of criminal justice in Russia."[952] Katkov's aforementioned letter, pulling at the arguments bound to resonate with Alexander III, all but drew the line under the need to replace Nabokov.

Katkov's pleas for the replacement of the Minister of Justice were not in vain and neither was he alone in his efforts to unseat Nabokov. Pobedonostsev, who attended the Faculty of Jurisprudence with Nabokov and maintained close relations, likewise turned on his erstwhile friend. In late October 1885, Katkov's audience with Alexander III coincided with the replacement of Minister of Justice D.N. Nabokov with N.A. Manassein, much to the former's surprise.[953] It appears that on the eve of his dismissal on 5 November, Nabokov received a letter from Alexander III, which announced his replacement with immediate effect, motivating it by the Emperor's desire to conduct judicial reform that has hitherto not been undertaken.[954] Having had little indication of his impending dismissal, Nabokov was reported to be completely surprised and disoriented by his dismissal.[955]

On Pobedonostsev's advice, Nabokov was replaced by a career jurist in the Ministry of

[952] K.P. Pobedonostsev, *K.P. Pobedonostsev i ego korrespondenty*, 496.
[953] Polovtsov, *Dnevnik gosudarstvennogo sekretaria*, vol.1, 345-347.
[954] Ibid., 378.
[955] Ibid. 376. It appears that Nabokov credited his dismissal, above all, to Pobedonostev. In a letter dated a day after Nabokov's departure from the ministry, Pobedonostsev explained: "I have never deceived you or engaged in intrigues against you – an intrigue is undertaken in secret; but everything that I thought about the flaws of the judicial system I told you openly and firstly to you. It is unfortunate that you have given a personal meaning to these thoughts. Personally, I have more than once told you, forget that you are the minister of justice and listen to me as a friend – [you] must act. I did not incite anyone behind your back." Pobedonostsev, *K.P. Pobedonostsev i ego korrespondenty*, 1923, 517–19.

Justice and a senator close to the Over-Procurator of the Holy Synod, N.A. Manassein. In a letter to Katkov, Pobedonostev sought to reassure his ally: "regarding the direction of the current Ministry of Justice, you can rest easy. Manassein looks at things correctly."[956] Manassein's appointment was relatively uncontroversial among adversarial political groups in Moscow and St. Petersburg. Polovtsev characterized him as "above all a specialist," "smart and capable."[957] Katkov's editorials glanced over this appointment without much interest; no special editorial appeared dedicated to this event. Despite his keenness on undertaking the judicial reform, Katkov was relatively unconcerned by the Justice Ministry, well aware that the reform was likely to be advanced through Tolstoi's Ministry of the Interior. For that purpose, Katkov had already set his signs on a prospect.

In late 1884, the Kakhanov Commission invited local representatives of the nobility to participate in the discussion of the judicial reform. Among these representatives, Katkov's eye was caught by A.D. Pazukhin - an experienced justice of the peace and the Simbirsk marshal of the nobility. Charismatic Pazukhin quickly emerged as a leader among the representatives on the Kakhanov Commission despite being only one of several to oppose elected justices.[958] Katkov recognized in the forty year-old Pazukhin a man of conviction, dedicated to the cause of dismantling of judicial tenure and electability. The two quickly became close associates.

Katkov and Pazukhin shared views on the urgency of the judicial reform, but Katkov – like A.D. Tolstoi - was motivated by etatist visions of government centralization, uniformity, and control over local administration, while Pazukhin was driven by the restoration of the primacy of nobility in local administration. Despite their differences, Katkov – already ill with stomach cancer

[956] K.P. Pobedonostsev, Letter from K.P. Pobedonostsev to M.N. Katkov, 17 December 1885, St. Petersburg. OR RGB f. 120, book 19, ll. 130ob.
[957] Polovtsov, *Dnevnik gosudarstvennogo sekretaria* vol. 1, 347.
[958] Ibid., 278, 282.

- seized the opportunity he saw in Pazukhin: a discreet collaborator to carry the task of the judicial reform. In January 1885, Katkov published in his literary journal *Russkii Vestnik* Pazukhin's article "The Contemporary State of Russia and the Estates Question."[959] The article, which produced a furore in political circles and was received as a manifesto of 'counter-reforms' in local administration, gave Pazukhin – a relatively little-known official – a renown and even a notoriety in Russia's political establishment.

From its very first sentence, Pazukhin's article boldly declared that "the contemporary state of Russia is tumultuous and uncertain. The life of the people has lately been abundant with events of amazing internal contradiction. The rapid spread of anarchic ideologies, the collapse of all the authority of the government, the development of materialist instincts in society, the diminishing role of religion, morality, and family values."[960] However, it was with the judicial reform of 1864 – Pazukhin argued – that Russian history made the "cardinal turn from order to disorder, from respect of the law to a collapse of the government's authority."[961]

Referring to the trial by jury and the system of elected justices of the peace, Pazukhin insisted that the new, Reform-era judicial institutions not only forced 'foreign models' alien to Russian judicial tradition, but also filled the courts and the legal profession with individuals who supported "the spirit of destruction of our history" and who formed "a very strong corporation" – a stance that echoed Katkov's editorials.[962] Having disempowered the landowning nobility as the traditional dispenser of justice, the Great Reforms – Pazukhin argued - placed elected justices "in an independent and autonomous position, armed with the right to punish and pardon, which gave

[959] D.A. Pazukhin, "Sovremennoe sostoianie Rossii i soslovnyi vopros," *Russkii Vestnik* no. 1 (January 1882): 5-58.
[960] D.A. Pazukhin, *Sovremennoe sostoianie Rossii i soslovnyi vopros* (Moscow: Universitetskaia tipografia M. Katkova, 1886), 3.
[961] Ibid, 6.
[962] Ibid., 22.

the judicial corporation the full power to influence societal affairs."[963]

The crux of the problem, as Pazukhin saw it, was the decentralization that the Great Reforms engendered in the local judiciary and *zemstvo* administration. By instituting complex elected institutions and procedures, Pazukhin set forth, the *zemstvo* reform of 1864 created organs of local administration "disconnected from the government and from the estates."[964] Having spent "hours at a time in conversation" with Katkov, according to A.A. Polovtsov, Pazukhin's essay reproduced many of Katkov's grievances with *zemstvo* administration aired on the pages of *Moskovskie Vedomosti*: backlog of cases among justices of the peace, the conflict between legal interpretations and peasant customs, the procedural irregularities in *zemstvo* assemblies, the low quality of school education *zemstvos* provide.[965]

Pazukhin's solution, broadly speaking, was a re-centralization of the judiciary and of local administration under the purview of the landowning nobility. Venturing into a study of the dissolved institution of "arbiters of the peace" [*mirovye posredniki*] – local landlords appointed by the senate to mediate land disputes between peasants and their former landlords and to oversee peasant officials – Pazukhin highlighted their effectiveness in both managing peasant affairs and in strengthening the control of the central government.[966] The article thus made the case for a reinstatement of a local government officials – land captains [*zemskii nachal'niki*] as they were subsequently known – appointed by the central government from the ranks of the nobility with broad judicial and administrative powers. This *zemstvo* reform, Pazukhin concluded, should be undertaken without any delay as "only these reforms could bring some order."[967]

[963] Ibid., 23.
[964] Ibid., 13.
[965] Ibid., 36-37.
[966] Ibid., 37-38.
[967] Ibid., 62.

Katkov did not share Pazukhin's views on reinstating the pre-Reform privileges of the nobility, he nevertheless co-opted and elevated Pazukhin as his agent in the task of accomplishing the judicial reform and the centralization of local government. Katkov went so far as publishing Pazukhin's article as a book at the Moscow University Press – an unprecedented gesture of support and assistance.[968]

Pazukhin's essay reportedly made a significant impression on D.A. Tolstoi, who – in late 1885 – invited Pazukhin to become the head of the chancellery of the Ministry of the Interior. For a local official with no experience in the St. Petersburg bureaucracy, the appointment was a meteoric rise to a key position in the powerful Ministry of the Interior – an appointment P.A. Zaionchkovskii has argued did not happen without the involvement of M.N. Katkov. The editor of *Greazhdanin*, V.P. Meshcherskii described in his memoirs the following observation:

> Having read Pazukhin's article, having invited him for a conversation, and having been following his [Pazukhin's] resolute activities in the Kakhanov Commission, count Tolstoi right away determined this young man to be a giant of mind and labor, whose principal advantage consisted in the absence of any bureaucratic element and who exuded the truth of life, which he gathered in studying his *uezd* – and offered him a position, in which he could at one be a strong support for him [Tolstoi] and a helping hand regarding any petition that reached the minister and required his attention and help.[969]

Tolstoi, who in his previous role as Minister of Education somewhat struggled to articulate political projects, placed high hopes in Pazukhin: "Now – he told E.M. Feoktistov – will come the

[968] D.A. Pazukhin, *Sovremennoe sostoianie Rossii i soslovnyi vopros* (Moscow: Universitetskaia tipografia M. Katkova, 1886).
[969] Meshcherskii, *Moi vospominania*, 232.

second period of my service; I am perhaps being reproached for not undertaking anything until now for instituting law and order in Russia; [but] it was impossible to solve two problems at ones – I first had to calm the spirits, end unrest, which I have already done, and now I will try to leave a good legacy for myself with another kind of accomplishment."[970] Indeed, having been at the helm of the Ministry of the Interior for several years, Tolstoi – despite his efforts on the University Statute - increasingly came under pressure to produce a significant reform project for the Ministry of the Interior rather than stewarding it through day-to-day operation.[971] A.A. Polovtsev noted in the same vein that "having no creative initiative, Tolstoi happily latched on [*ukhvatilsia*] to the wretched essay written by Pazukhin."[972] The prospect of a young and energetic Pazukhin was all the more attractive to Tolstoi as by then he was, according to Feoktistov, chronically and seriously ill and had become so reclusive away from the ministry that E.M. Feoktistov noted "without exaggeration, Tolstoi gradually let things out of his hands and one could only wonder that the Emperor does not notice it."[973] As P.A. Zaionchkovskii noted, having become the head of the chancellery, Pazukhin "soon became Tolstoi's right-hand man."[974]

The combination of an unobstructive Minister of Justice and withdrawn Minister of the Interior created the conditions for Pazukhin and Katkov to advance a program of local administrative reforms for which Pazukhin's article prepared the ground – the Land Captains Statute. Pazukhin began working on the land captains project immediately after his arrival to the Ministry of the Interior, in late 1885, and completed it in the spring of 1886. As P.A. Zaionchkovskii and L.G. Zakharova remark, Pazukhin "worked on the project by himself, without

[970] Feoktistov, *Za kulisami*, 241.
[971] Polovtsov, *Dnevnik gosudarstvennogo sekretaria*, vol. 2, 190.
[972] Ibid.
[973] Ibid., 242.
[974] Zaionchkovskii, *Rossiiskoe samoderzhavie v kontse XIX stoletiia*, 95.

consulting Tolstoi."[975] On the other hand, Pazukhin's relationship with Katkov blossomed into a collaboration. Katkov played an important role in introducing Pazukhin into the highest ranks of bureaucracy among whom the former cultivated allies. A.A. Polovtsov remarked in his diary on Katkov's travel to St. Petersburg, whereby he would be met at the train station by Minister of Education Delianov and "immediately after his arrival he would be visited by [Minister of State Domains] Ostrovskii, [the head of the Main Administration for Press Affairs] Feoktistov, [Minister of Finance] Vyshnegradskii, [and] Pazukhin."[976] Pazukhin thus joined an inner circle of Katkov's powerful ministerial allies.

When in late March 1886 the draft of the reform was completed, Tolstoi circulated it among like-minded colleagues – Manassein, Pobedonostsev, Ostrovskii - in hopes to secure their support before submitting it to Alexander III and into the State Council. However, subsequent informal discussions on 2 April raised a number of objections from the aforementioned ministers, including – remarkably – from Tolstoi's own vice-minister, V.K. Plehve.[977] Pazukhin reported to Katkov in strict confidence that Pobedonostsev – previously in support of the reform – had a change of heart and sided with "the liberal program" of preserving the role of justices of the peace in overseeing local administration and of maintaining the electoral principle in *zemstvo* assemblies.[978] "Manassein has managed to influence him on these main points," lamented Pazukhin in the same letter.

Just as Katkov's informants in the affair of the 1884 University Statute, Pazukhin shared his assessments of the ministers involved in the case. Tolstoi was "not losing steam, but needed strong support," Ostrovskii was "unreliable" and "will lean toward the more powerful camp," and

[975] Zaionchkovskii, 366. Zakharova, *Zemskaia kontrreforma*, 91.
[976] Polovtsov, *Dnevnik gosudarstvennogo sekretaria*, vol. 2, 468.
[977] Zaionchkovskii, *Rossiiskoe samoderzhavie v kontse XIX stoletiia*, 367.
[978] A.D. Pazukhin, Letter from A.D. Pazukhin to M.N. Katkov, 31 March 1886, GARF 1718, op. 1, d. 7, ll. 1-2.

shared inside information about ministerial visits to Moscow in efforts to strategize their campaign.[979] The candid tone of Pazukhin's letters to Katkov reveal not only their close collaboration – far closer than that with Tolstoi – , but also that Pazukhin's profound trust and loyalty to Katkov. The extent of this trust is evident from Pazukhin's willingness to share in writing unflattering assessments of ministers, lamenting Tolstoi's "fear of battle" and possible resignation, Pobedonostsev's "self-importance," Ostrovskii's "unprincipled" nature, Manassein "an instrument" of the adversary party, and went on to reproach Alexander III for "not doing much" for the reform.[980]

Without doubt, Pazukhin saw Katkov not only as an ideologue and patron, but also as an astute strategist able to guide their shared project through the straits of bureaucratic debate. Katkov, according to Feoktistov, "was really counting on the success of the reform" and "positively approved everything Pazukhin proposed."[981] Much like Katkov's proteges in the Ministry of Education during the 1870s and early 1880s, Pazukhin and Katkov coordinated the timing of editorials in *Moskovskie Vedomosti* for maximum effect, discussed the release of drafts and concessions. Pazukhin tipped his patron off about the travel itineraries of Tolstoi and Pobedonostev to Moscow.

Pazukhin's frank reports reveal the locus of his loyalties to be with the Moscow editor rather than with his employer, Tolstoi, with whom the young head of chancellery grew increasingly frustrated. Their letters echo similar efforts by Katkov and his informants in the Ministry of Education during Tolstoi's tenure there to influence and manipulate the stance of a minister prone to concessions. Tolstoi was indeed weary that Pazukhin's ideas, those essentially of an

[979] Ibid.
[980] A.D. Pazukhin, Letter from A.D. Pazukhin to M.N. Katkov, 6 April 1886, GARF 1718, op. 1, d. 7, ll. 3-4. A.D. Pazukhin, Letter to M.N. Katkov, 5 February 1887, GARF 1718, op. 1, d. 7, ll. 10-11.
[981] Feoktistov, *Za kulisami*, 242.

inexperienced provincial bureaucrat, were alienating ministers and high-ranking officials who were in many other respects his political allies.[982] To that end, Tolstoi instituted in September 1886 a set of guardrails for the initiative – a special commission for reviewing Pazukhin's projects, headed by K.D. Gagarin. After two months of consultation in the Gagarin's commission, Pazukhin secured its approval for two projects: the institution of land captains and the *zemstvo* reform.[983] Both survived relatively unchanged, except for the concession on Pazukhin's demand to abolish the justices of the peace.

In mid-December 1886, Tolstoi presented the program to Alexander III, who expressed his support for it, and in early January – having learned of the Emperor's approval – Pobedonostsev, Ostrovskii and Manassein likewise supported the project.[984] On 5 February 1887, Tolstoi introduced the land captains project into the State Council. Having already secured Alexander III's approval, Tolstoi expected the project to move to approval relatively quickly, however the support he so counted on turned out to be somewhat fickle. Pazukhin's letter to Katkov on 5 February reveals that Manassein was still expected to show resistance, that Tolstoi was growing anxious about a strong opposition – remembering perhaps the efforts of the university reform – and that Alexander III "has spent little time on our project. He did not even read [Tolstoi's] report on the reform."[985]

Like Georgievskii during his work on the university reform, Pazukhin coordinated with Katkov the publication of editorials in support of their project after the critical milestone of a project's submission to the State Council:

[982] M.A. Borovaia, "A.D. Pazukhin. Obshchestvenno-politicheskie vzgliady I gosudarstvennaia deiatel'nost'," Ph.D. dissertation (Chuvashskii gosudarstvennyi pedagogicheskii universitet imeni I.Ia. Iakovleva, 2003), 119.
[983] Ibid., 120.
[984] Ibid., 120.
[985] A.D. Pazukhin, Letter from A.D. Pazukhin to M.N. Katkov, 5 February 1887, GARF 1718, op. 1, d. 7, ll. 10-11.

> Will you find a chance to say in *Mosk[ovskie] Ved[domosti]* a few words about the significance of the reform, about its main goal, which it should accomplish – to raise the authority of the government – and about the harm of concessions on this subject. I think this will be useful for count T[olstoi] (it will sustain his energy) and for the Tsar, who has spent little time on our project. He did not even read [Tolstoi's] report on the reform. It is unclear what approach in their opposition will our adversaries choose. It would be good to safeguard [*okhranit'*] Pobedonostsev from adversary influence. Your article about judicial misdeeds in the case of the Viaznikov pogroms has made a predictable impression on [our] friends and foes. But, […] the principles at the heart of these reforms are completely alien to Manassein. He does not mind showing his reformist energy, but without understanding the conceptual flaws of [current] judicial institutions, he will never come onto the right path. We have to show him this path and give this a ready plan for reforms. This could be done by placing a serious article on this issue into *Russkii Vestnik*.[986]

The collaboration between Katkov and Pazukhin sought to shape the opinion of government ministers as well as that of Alexander III. Katkov's journal, *Russkii Vestnik*, presented itself once more as a strategically timed instrument for exerting pressure on decision-makers. Furthermore, Pazukhin's invitations for Katkov to arrive in St. Petersburg – "your presence will soon be needed" – echo Katkov's strategic visits to the capital during the debates over the university statute.[987] On his part, Katkov published a steady stream of editorials engaging in a damning critique of *zemstvo* administration and particularly the courts, highlighting cases of grift in *zemstvo* institutions,

[986] Ibid.
[987] Ibid.

electoral mismanagement, inconsistent and arbitrary decision-making, abuse of power, and the fallibility of the trial by jury.[988]

The polemics in the State Council over the land captains project have been described in detail by P.A. Zaionchkovskii.[989] This chapter will focus on the role of Pazukhin and Katkov in the proceedings. At first, in mid-February, Pazukhin reported to Katkov that the progress of the reform through the State Council was "satisfactory" and that Grand Duke Mikhail Nikolaevich "spoke much about the immediate desire of the Emperor for it [the reform project] to not linger in the State Council."[990]Even State Secretary, A.A. Polovtsov, who privately called Pazukhin's project "the inventions of a government greenhorn [*izmyshlenia gosudarstvennogo mal'chishki*]" offered Tolstoi his assistance in ushering the project through.[991] Pazukhin also reported to Katkov that "Tolstoi was set firmly, has promised not to make concessions to the enemies" and Ostrovskii and Vyshnegradskii "gave favorable reviews."[992] Pazukhin expected objections from the Ministry of Justice, specifically on the existence of an appeal process for the decisions of the land captains; the appeal – proposed by Manassein – was to be filed with the justices of the peace, which Pazukhin wished to abolish altogether as redundant to the judicial-administrative position of the

[988] On *zemstvo* administration: M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 24 January 1886, No. 24. M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 20 February 1886, No. 51. M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 5 March 1886, No.63. M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 17 April 1886, No. 104. M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 11 July 1886, No. 189. M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 8 August 1886, No. 217. M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 9 October 1886, No. 279. On courts: M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 19 February 1886, No. 50. M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 11 March 1886, No. 69. M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 25 May 1886, No. 142. M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 29 May 1886, No. 146. M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 17 June 1886, No. 165. M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 28 June 1886, No. 176. M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 27 August, No. 236. M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 4 October 1886, No. 274. M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 6 November 1886, No. 307. M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 9 December 1886, No. 340. M.N. Katkov, Editorial, *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, 25 December 1886, No. 356.

[989] Zaionchkovskii, *Rossiiskoe samoderzhavie v kontse xix stoletiia*.

[990] A.D. Pazukhin, Letter to M.N. Katkov, 18 February 1887, GARF 1718, op. 1, d. 7, ll. 12-13.

[991] Ibid.

[992] Ibid.

land captains.[993] "To allow appeals to the court will mean to allow sluggishness, complaints by lawyers, and to bring to nothing the main goal of the reform," argued Pazukhin.[994] He finished the letter with a promise to "maintain count Tolstoi's fighting spirit. It would be good if you helped in this."

However, by early spring, Pazukhin began to receive a far larger number of objections than he estimated; these came expectedly from Manassein, but also from Ostrovskii and Vyshnegradskii. Pazukhin's former superior, M.S. Kakahnov, objected to vesting land captains with both administrative and judicial functions, as well as their authority to impose corporeal punishment on peasant officials.[995] Tolstoi faced once more a very contentious legislating process, but while he was resolute not to make concession, it also became apparent to those around him that Pazukhin played a key role in maintaining this hardline stance and that a long hold-out in the State Council will force him to make considerable concessions.[996]

On 20 July 1887, amid heated debates in the State Council on the land captains project, Katkov passed away from stomach cancer. The loss of his ally and mentor was a blow to Pazukhin. E.M. Feoktistov noted that "Katkov went to his grave at the very time when the projects of local administration, developed by Pazukhin, were received in the State Council, where the vast majority of its members were very much opposed to it."[997]With Katkov's passing, the loose alliance of ministers and high-ranking officials around Alexander III – Pobedonostsev, Tolstoy, Ostrovskii, Vyshnegradskii – lost a powerful partner and an influential platform for the promotion of their views.

[993] Ibid.
[994] Ibid.
[995] M.A. Borovaia, "A.D. Pazukhin. Obshchestvenno-politicheskie vzgliady I gosudarstvennaia deiatel'nost'," 124
[996] Polovtsov, *Dnevnik gosudarstvennogo sekretaria*, vol. 2, 48.
[997] Feoktistov, *Za kulisami*, 263.

The loss of Katkov left Pazukhin entirely reliant on Tolstoi, whose worsening health made him increasingly sluggish in his work, removed from daily ministerial bustle, and unable to consider in-depth the nuances of the project and – perhaps more importantly – the nuances of his adversaries' objections. By early 1888, Tolstoi conceded to Manassein's demands to maintain the judicial tenure of the justices of the peace and limit the duties of land captains to administrative only – a turn that profoundly distressed Pazukhin. While discussions of the project in the State Council continued, Tolstoi – who attended one of the sessions – privately told his vice-minister V.K. Plehve "I am tired and am leaving; I think they want to organize a commission to re-write the project. You can agree with them, but only to make Staritskii the chairman. I will consult with Pazukhin tonight."[998]

Tolstoi's further departure from the affairs of the ministry left Pazukhin effectively alone to defend the land captains project. Over the course of 1888, he was forced to re-write it twice, every time with concessions. Member of State Council and the former head of the Ministry of Justice chancellery, B.P. Mansurov, dealt Pazukhin's project a serious blow with his note of opposition: "I cannot agree that in the reign of Alexander III we create institutions from the reign of Nicholas I, that is a few thousand village despots."[999] Yet, despite strong opposition in the State Council, Tolstoi's audiences with Alexander III during 1888 reaffirmed the latter's support for the land captains project. Isolated from allies, Tolstoi and Pazukhin could only count on Alexander III to agree with the minority in the State Council. It was this continuous support from the Emperor that led Tolstoi, despite his illness, to stand by the project and make no further concessions.[1000]

On 16 January 1889, the State Council finally voted on the land captains project: 13 in

[998] Polovtsov, *Dnevnik gosudarstvennogo sekretaria*, vol. 2, 120-121.
[999] V.P. Meshcherskii, *Moi vospominania, vol. 3*, 282.
[1000] Zaionchkovskii, *Rossiiskoe samoderzhavie v kontse xix stoletiia*, 392.

favor, and 39 in opposition.[1001] The opposition was even greater than to the 1884 University Statute, yet – like then – Alexander III sided with the minority. His resolution on the memorandum from the State Council on the vote stated: "I agree with the opinion of the 13 members and wish that the justices of the peace in *uezdy* are abolished to secure the necessary number of reliable land captains in *uezd* and to ease the burden on [salary] payments. A part of the cases of the justices of the peace may be taken up by the land captains and by *volost'* courts, while a smaller portion, the more important cases, can go to the regional courts. In any case, I insistently wish that these changes do not hold up the final review of the project before the summer recess."[1002] Thus, Alexander III not only affirmed Pazukhin's project against the determined opposition in the State Council, but went much further in abolishing the institution of justices of the peace – a measure Pazukhin insisted on in his letters to Katkov.

Conclusion

While previous chapters tracked the rise of private opinion press and its engagement in political discussion and debate, this chapter has demonstrated the direct participation of the press in politics, i.e. the direct engagement of a powerful press lord like M.N. Katkov in initiating, shaping, advancing, and helping pass political projects even against considerable opposition within ministerial ranks and the State Council. To do so, Katkov cultivated powerful political allies, fostered a network of highly-placed and loyal informants and political agents in ministries and government institutions, used his access to Alexander III, and manipulated his fears and political views to secure his support. Not least, he employed his press platform – *Moskovskie Vedomosti* and *Russkii Vestnik* – to exert pressure on government decision-makers at critical turns in the

[1001] Zaionchkovskii, *Rossiiskoe samoderzhavie v kontse xix stoletiia*, 394.
[1002] Ibid., 395.

advancement of his projects or projects he favored. The controversy that surrounded both the 1884 University Statute and the 1889 Land Captains Statute as well as the considerable resistance they encountered from influential ministers and from the State Council only highlight Katkov's skill in political maneuvering.

State Secretary A.A. Polovtsov put it best when he confided in his diary in late 1886:

> The trouble is that next to the lawful tsarist government has emerged a new, almost governmental power in the person of the editor of *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, who is surrounded by numerous accomplices [*posobniki*] in the highest ranks of power, such as Deliaanov, Ostrovskii, Pobedonostsev, Vyshnegradskii, Pazukhin. This entire court gather at Katkov's place on Zakharievskaia street, [and] openly talks about the need to replace this minister with that individual, to follow a particular course on a particular issue, in other words, [it] impetuously issues its orders, prints denunciations and praise and in the end achieves its objectives.[1003]

As a newspaper editor, Katkov was in some ways exceptional in the extent of his political influence and participation, however his case reveals the full extent of the porous divide between the bureaucracy and the press. Katkov's fellow editors such as A.A Kraevskii, A.S. Suvorin, and I.S. Aksakov fostered intimate networks within the corridors of power, which likewise placed ministers, editors, and State Council members into the same St. Petersburg salons.

Placed at the heart of legislative processes during Alexander III's rule, Polovtsev showed concern about Katkov's political role in particular and the growing involvement of non-state actors in political processes in general:

> With his relationship toward Katkov, this Emperor communicates to society that

[1003] Polovtsov, *Dnevnik gosudarstvennogo sekretaria*, vol. 1, 461.

> there is a person outside the government, whose advice and ideology dictate the government program, if one at all exists. This development presents considerable danger not only for the dignity of the government, but also for the future of the ruling dynasty. This must end either by making Katkov a government official or by stripping him of his present influence.[1004]

It was precisely this non-bureaucratic status of Katkov, as well as his ideological stance, that attracted Alexander III, who as a young man became profoundly disenchanted with his father's officials.

Despite his position outside the government apparatus, Katkov's vision was profoundly etatist. This vision was rooted in his experience and belief that the de-centralization introduced by the Great Reforms – whether in universities, courts, or local administration – resulted in uneven and unsatisfactory governing outcomes that coincided (or caused, as Katkov believed) revolutionary unrest. Thomas Pearson's study of tax arrears accrued by the *zemstvos* delivers one example.[1005] Therefore, the remedy - Katkov was convinced - lay in the government's reclaim of control through bureaucratic centralization and expansion of its reach in universities, courts, local administration and other spheres of governance. The memory of centralized rule with its inefficiencies and abuses under Nicholas I was not lost on many of the seasoned government officials, who – like B.P. Mansurov – were rightfully concerned not only about repeating past errors, but also about the public backlash about the loss of autonomy after more than two decades.

The bureaucrats who shared Mansurov's concerns - many of them officials of Alexander II's rule - regarded the Great Reforms and the decentralization they engendered as a Westernizing project. After the strictures of the Nicholaevan rule, the measure of autonomy granted by

[1004] Polovtsov, *Dnevnik gosudarstvennogo sekretaria*, vol. 1, 462.
[1005] Pearson, "The Origins of Alexander III's Land Captains."

Alexander II to universities, courts, local administration, and the press marked a return to a liberal European political ethos.[1006] From this perspective, shared by officials of the Great Reform era who found themselves increasingly frustrated in the State Council of Alexander III's rule, new centralizing efforts were not only a step back – into Nicholas I's time, as Mansurov argued – but also a step away from European governance.

By the 1880s, however, governments across Europe were centralizing their local administration, judicial institutions, and school and university systems. Eugene Weber's seminal work *Peasants into Frenchmen* demonstrates how the centralization of local governance and primary education in the late nineteenth-century France sought to expand the administrative, cultural, and fiscal reach of Paris and create a homogenous social fabric from an otherwise heterogenous population.[1007] As Weber shows, the French state- and nation-building project constituted a distinctly modern approach to governance, one in which the expansion of bureaucratic reach brought state and its subject into closer and more frequent contact.

In Britain, Italy, and Germany state- and nation-building projects in the second half of the nineteenth century centralized local administrations, education, military recruitment, and fiscal systems.[1008] Facing steep economic competition and a rise in popular politics, many European

[1006] S. Frederick Starr, *Decentralization and Self-Government in Russia, 1830-1870* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1972); George L. Yaney, *The Systematization of Russian Government: Social Evolution in the Domestic Administration of Imperial Russia, 1711-1905* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1973).
[1007] Eugen Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen: The Modernization of Rural France, 1870-1914* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1992).
[1008] Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation, 1707-1837* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1992); George L. Mosse, *The Nationalization of the Masses; Political Symbolism and Mass Movements in Germany from the Napoleonic Wars through the Third Reich* (New York: H. Fertig, 1975); George Steinmetz, *Regulating the Social: The Welfare State and Local Politics in Imperial Germany* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1993); Liah Greenfeld, *Nationalism: Five Roads to Modernity* (Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press, 1992); Karen Barkey and Mark Von Hagen, *After Empire: Multiethnic Societies and Nation-Building : The Soviet Union and the Russian, Ottoman, and Habsburg Empires* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1997); Alexei Miller and Stefan Berger, *Nationalizing Empires* (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2014); Abigail Green, *Fatherlands: State-Building and Nationhood in Nineteenth-Century Germany*, New Studies in European History (Cambridge, UK ; Cambridge University Press, 2001).

governments viewed centralization as an effective mechanism of fiscal extraction, political control, cultural cohesion, mobilization, and ultimately of survival. Alongside existing bureaucratic institutions, new centralized institutions of local administration, fiscal service, and public welfare. In this context, Katkov's advocacy for a centripetal approach to governance appears not as out of step with contemporary European trends as his critics may have suggested.

The assassination of Alexander II certainly left Katkov focused on the element of survival of the tsarist regime, however, a centralizing approach also held the key to actualizing the key principles he sought to formulate for Alexander III's rule: *narodnost', vsesoslovnost', blagosostoianie*. As Yanni Kotsonis has shown in his book *States of Obligation*, the centralization of the fiscal apparatus in the last decades of the nineteenth century enabled the transformation of the fiscal administration along all-estate principle (*vsesoslovnost'*) through the enactment of taxation on the basis of wealth rather than estate.[1009] The expansion of the bureaucratic reach, Kotsonis demonstrated, established a more direct and individualized relationship between the state and the subject. At the same time, the centralized approach invested the government and the monarchy as the locus of the national principle (*narodnost'*) and placed the individualized relationship of the subject and state into a (civic) national context. Finally, the centralization of welfare services across Europe at the end of the century signaled a new role for the state in disbursing more effectively resources for the wellbeing (*blagosostoianie)* of its subjects.

In many ways, Katkov accomplished what few if any of his contemporaries managed inside or outside the corridors of power: he formulated a prescient political program, calibrated to hold appeal for the ultimate decision-maker – the Tsar. His use of the press to shore up public support (and evert pressure) and his political maneuvering ultimately enabled the enactment of this

[1009] Yanni Kotsonis, *States of Obligation: Taxes and Citizenship in the Russian Empire and Early Soviet Republic* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2014).

program. The two projects explored in this chapter are by no means the only two ushered by Katkov into law. At the height of his power, during the 1880s, his interests and ambitions drove him to champion, shape, maneuver through bureaucratic corridors a variety of bold initiatives: an expansive protectionist policy, the replacement of Minister of Finance N.Kh. Bunge with a trusted ally I.A. Vyshnegradskii, and campaign for a diplomatic rapprochement with France at the expense of Germany among many others. While his interests varied, his methods, discussed in this chapter, remained the same.

CONCLUSION:
The Rise of the Private Political Press and Its Implications

This dissertation has examined the dramatic rise and development of the private political press in Russia between the 1860s and the 1880s, focusing on M.N. Katkov's *Moskovskie Vedomosti* as a prime example. The liberalization of press strictures in the first few years of Alexander II's rule coincided with a fast-growing public appetite for information, whetted by the transformative changes enacted by the Great Reforms. Both the newfound ability of private newspaper to undertake political discussion and the public demand for it produced an upsurge in private newspaper publishing, transforming the print landscape into a vibrant and politically diverse marketplace of political discussion. Within a few years, the daily newspaper replaced the monthly literary journal as the dominant genre of periodical print, fueled by publishers' avid integration of communication technology – telegraph, steam-powered press, and railroad– to improve the speed and reliability of news gathering, print, and distribution. Editorial work, once the unhurried undertaking of literary journals published by wealthy noble patrons, became far more logistically complex business that required commercial and organizational acumen that pushed the new generation of newspaper editors toward professionalization.

Fueled by growing public literacy, the fast-expanding private political press soon became the new forum for political discussion as debate at the prescient time of political reforms during the 1860s. Editors of various political views engaged in vibrant polemic as they sought to explain, comment, and critique government initiatives, drawing on the information from their sprawling network of correspondents and growing readership across the empire. The swift newsgathering and influential political comment of dailies such as *Moskovskie Vedomosti, Golos, Novoe Vremia* among others soon made them valuable sources of information and opinion not just for the public,

but also for government officials. Thus, newspaper discourse increasingly entered and influenced the discussions and debates in the highest ranks of the government. As weekly and soon daily press overviews landed on Alexander II's desk, the newspapers and their editors emerged as a new political actor.

Alexander II and his high-ranking bureaucratic officials quickly saw the potential uses of the press and sought to co-opt it for the promotion of the Great Reforms early on. Such collaborations proved occasionally fruitful, but also presented a myriad of challenges. Secrecy was a paramount condition where editorial favors were exchanged for political protection from censorship and exclusive information. Compromised partnerships between editors and government officials not only instantaneously stripped a newspaper of its credibility – and therefore of its readership and commercial viability – but also caused the government considerable embarrassment as large subsidies were exposed.

The relationships between bureaucratic patrons and editorial proteges were fraught with potential for conflict as disagreements on political issues and editorial discretion often caused a breakdown of ties. The political entanglements between press editors and government officials grew ever more complex as ministers increasingly curried favor with newspapers to promote their political agendas or take on political rivals. Competing bureaucratic interest groups co-opted likeminded editors, exposing fissures within the government to society at large. Increasingly, government officials – who hitherto regarded the press as a dependent – themselves were becoming dependent on favorable press and public promotion. In fact, certain powerful editors did not merely rely on their bureaucratic patrons, but also sought to cultivate intricate and discreet networks of allies and informants within the highest ranks of the state. Leaks stirred and shaped

political discussion, demonstrating the extent to which the government, once the surveillor of the press had itself become the surveilled.

The evolving political role of the press was perhaps best illustrated in the aftermath of the assassination of Alexander II on 1 March 1881, during the crisis of autocratic rule that spanned the first three months of his successor – Alexander III. As Alexander III pondered the course of the new rule during the spring that year, rivaling bureaucratic interest groups employed their respective press organs to engage in a fierce polemic as they competed to influence the newly acceded monarch, undecided between continuing his father's Westernizing course or departing from it in favor of nativist and Russophile solutions. The political diversity – indeed polarization - of the debate, carried out on the pages of Russia's leading editorials, speaks of the political plurality embodied by the press. Shaping the political narratives and discourses on the political arena, influential press editors – or press lords – positioned themselves as public intellectuals who defined and publicized the ideologies espoused by competing bureaucratic interest groups. While late nineteenth-century Russia lacked formal political parties, the press posed as a catalyst of party politics among the polarized bureaucratic interest groups in Alexander III's entourage.

Among the competing 'parties' in the spring of 1881, K.P. Pobedonostev and his press ally, M.N. Katkov, emerged victorious. Over the following few years, Katkov shaped a new narrative and ideology centered around national, all-estate, and welfare principles - *narodnost', vsesoslovnost', blagosostoianie* - as the new basis of monarchic legitimacy challenged by partial success of the Great Reforms. The national principle (*narodnost'*) provided a supplementary legitimacy of a national monarchy. The all-estate principle (*vsesoslovnost')* addressed the breakdown of Russia's estate system and the rising popular politics by conceiving of a society bound by national belonging rather than estate hierarchies.

While the national image of the Russian monarchy was most vividly illustrated during Alexander III's 1883 coronation, the more horizontal structure of a national society under a national monarchy found its reflection in Alexander III's fiscal reforms that departed from the practice of estate-based taxation and moved toward wealth-based taxation. Finally, Katkov's welfare principle (*blagosostoianie*) formulated the role of the monarchy and the state as a patron of public welfare. While existing scholarship treats Katkov's ideology and Alexander III's rule as overwhelmingly in opposition to contemporary European trends, this dissertation has demonstrated some ways in which Katkov's national, all-estate, and welfare ideology was practiced across Europe as emerging nation-states departed from strict social hierarchies and forged early welfare systems.

As this work has shown, the role of the press was far from limited to formulating public discourses; in some cases, press organs played an active and direct role in shaping policy. Using his political influence, alliances, and loyal political agents, M.N. Katkov was able to shape two key political projects of Alexander III's rule: the 1884 University Statute and the 1889 Land Captains Statute. The former aimed to standardize higher education – and by implication secondary schooling -, while the latter aimed to centralize local government. While both revoked the autonomy granted during the Great Reforms to universities and local *zemstvos*, they echoed the centralization of local governance and the standardization of education among the emerging European nation-states – a process marked by modernity in as much as violence.

In the span of three decades between the 1860s and the 1880s, Russia's private political press rose from the margins of society and politics to their very center. It fostered a vibrant marketplace of political opinions, elevated the importance of public image and public approval in political processes, and in surveilling and critiquing government politics initiated a culture of

accountability in governance. M.N. Katkov's editorial career demonstrates the extent to which the press penetrated – and even thwarted - political processes and institutions, and challenges long-standing narratives of the press as a subject of the state, showcasing *Moskovskie Vedomosti* and its contemporaries as influential political actors in their own right.

***

In the spring of 1887, months before his death in July the same year, the terminally ill Katkov was embroiled in an audacious campaign attempting to steer Russia's diplomatic alliances toward France, at the expense of its relations with Germany. The unprecedented scale of the affair created an uproar in Russia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, stirred tense discussions in European diplomatic corridors, and prompted Alexander III to issue a rare informal warning to Katkov. Reflecting on Katkov's political influence and drawing a line under an imminent editorial career, Pobedonostsev characterized the *Moskovskie Vedomosti* editor in a letter to Alexander III as "a highly talented journalist, clever, [and] perceptive," who "as a journalist has committed valuable acts of service to Russia ad to the government in difficult times."[1010] Recognizing Katkov's unprecedented clout as a journalist, Pobedonostsev nevertheless asked a poignant question:

> Why was he made a man of state? In some ministries nothing important was undertaken without Katkov's participation. This is what spoiled him and made him interfere beyond his station. He wrote wonderful articles, which could be celebrated, but not made state policy.[1011]

[1010] K.V. Dolgov, ed., *Pis'ma Pobedonostseva k Alexandru III* (Moscow: Novaia Moskva, 1926), vol. 2, 141–144.
[1011] Ibid., 141–144.

Pobedonostsev's letter reflected boldly on many of the government's challenges in co-opting, coercing, and regulating the private political press in the post-Reform period. First, Russia's premier political dailies – particularly those closely aligned with government officials, such as *Moskovskie Vedomosti* – had become for European officials a medium for gauging state policy. Foreign diplomacy, Pobedonostsev lamented, had come to identify the program of the Russian state with those of *Moskovskie Vedomosti*.[1012] "Is this at all surprising," remarked Pobedonostsev, "since Katkov had been receiving approving responses to his articles and letters from the highest government ranks, [and] gradually gained disproportionate [influence]."[1013] On the other hand, "despite his drawbacks and pursuits, [Katkov] is very valuable with his newspaper especially now, at a time of unrest" and the difficult prospect of searching for another press ally of similar stature filled Pobedonostsev with dread. The letter made plain both the emerging dependency of the state on the press and the struggle of the government apparatus to control editors like Katkov through the traditional levers of censorship.

This difficulty was perhaps best illustrated in the deliberations within the highest ranks of the government as to whether to issue *Moskovskie Vedomosti* a formal warning for his impetuous articles attempting to steer foreign policy. The issue, Pobedonostsev made clear to Alexander III in the same letter, was no longer clear:

> The telegraph will spread this news [the warning] to all the corners of the *world* [original emphasis]. This will be a notable political event. It will be interpreted as a turn in our [foreign] policy. It will be reflected on the stock market. It will provoke celebratory demonstrations in all the large cities as well as from the parties hostile to Russia. Inside Russia there will be extreme confusion and turmoil. […] It will

[1012] Ibid., 142.
[1013] Ibid.

> mean […] a loss for the government of a significant force, a moral force. Is an article, albeit one written in an indecent and foolish tone, worth all this?[1014]

To resolve this difficult situation, Pobedonostsev proposed an unusual solution: sending the chief censor and Katkov's protégé – E.M. Feoktistov – on a discreet mission to entreat Katkov to moderate his editorial zeal. The delicate manner in which this was handled no doubt highlighted the unusual standing of one editor, but it also highlighted the emerging challenges posed to the government by press as a whole.

In his last editorial scrap found on his desk before his death, Katkov reflected on his "unusual position" that required him "to face a ceaseless [and] fierce struggle. Government officials did not trust me, I was uncomfortable for all parties [original emphasis], especially the antinational [parties] of both conservative and liberal hue."[1015] "My only weapon was my skill," concluded Katkov, "- the truth and […] my readiness any minute to leave my position – and to become silent, so that I could never be caught."

Katkov's lengthy obituary in *The Times* – the newspaper he aspired his *Moskovskie Vedomosti* to be compared to – called him "a politician," "a public writer," "the head of the National party" and "the most conspicuous Russian of the day, for, in addition to his position as a popular hero, he had acquired a European reputation which was likely to increase with the knowledge of the powerful influence he exercised over the mind of the Czar and the passions of his fellow countrymen."[1016] "That influence," *The Times* continued, "was all the more remarkable because […] it says much for the power of the press in a country where it has no liberty and exists under a constant sense of peril, that M. Katkov made it for 25 years the exponent and the propagator

[1014] Ibid.
[1015] M.N. Katkov, [Posledniaia korrektura naidennaia na stole], OR RGB f. 120, k. 57, ed. 2, l. 1 ob.
[1016] "Death of M. Katkoff," *The Times*, Tuesday, 2 August 1887, No. 23140, 6.

of his views, until the Government found before long that he was a force which had to be reckoned with and did the wisest thing in its power by taking him into its councils."

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Archives

Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv Rossiiskoi Federatsii (The State Archives of the Russian Federation; GARF)

f. 677: Alexander III
f. 678: Alexander II
f. 730: Ignatiev, Nikolai Pavlovich
f. 1718: Katkov, Mikhail Nikiforovich

Otdel Rukopisei Rossiiskoi Gosudarstvennoi Biblioteki (The Manuscript Division of the Russian State Library; OR RGB)

f. 120: Katkov, Mikhail Nikiforovich
f. 126: Aksakov, Ivan Sergeevich
f. 230: Pobedonostsev, Konstantin Petrovich

Rossiiskii Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv Literatury i Iskusstva (The Russian State Archive for Literature and the Arts; RGALI)

f. 262: Katkov, Mikhail Nikiforovich
f. 271: Kraevskii, Andrei Alexandrovich
f. 459: Suvorin, Alexei Sergeevich

Rossiiskii Gosudarstvnnyi Istoricheskii Arkhiv (The Russian State Historical Archive; RGIA)

f. 908: Valuev, Petr Alexandrovich
f. 1282: Kantseliaria Ministerstva Vnutrennikh Del
f. 1470: Obzory pechati, vypiski i vyrezki iz pechati

Law Code

Polnoe sobranie zakonov Rossiiskoi imperii. Sobranie vtoroe. St. Petersburg, 1830-1885.

Dictionary

Dal', V.I. *Tolkovyi slovar' zhivogo velikorusskogo iazyka Vladimira Dalia.* 4 vols. St. Petersburg-Moscow: 1903-1909.

Newspapers

Moskovskie Vedomosti, Moscow, 1756-1917

Golos, St. Petersburg, 1863-1883

Rus', Moscow, 1880-1886

Novoe Vremia, St. Petersburg, 1868-1917.

Primary Sources

Berte, A.A. *Zapiska predsedatelia Komiteta dlia peresmotra tsenzurnogo ustava, deistivetlnogo statskogo sovetnika Berte i chlena sego Komiteta statskogo sovetnika Yankevicha*. St. Petersburg: [n.p.], 1862.

Bogdanovich, A.V. *Tri poslednikh samoderzhtsa dnevnik A.V. Bogdanovich*. Moscow: L.D. Frenkel', 1977.

Chekhov, A.P. *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii i pisem*. Edited by A.M. Egolin and N.S. Tikhonova. Moscow: OGIZ, 1948.

Chicherin, B. N. *Vospominaniia Borisa Nikolaevicha Chicherina: Moskva sorokovykh godov*. Moscow: Izd. M. i S. Sabashnikovykh, 1929.

Dolgov, K.V. *Pis'ma Pobedonostseva k Alexandru III*. Moscow: Novaia Moskva, 1926.

Feoktistov, E.M. *Za Kulisami Politiki i Literatury, 1848-1896*. Moscow: Novosti, 1991.

Georgievskii, A.I. "Vospominania," in *Literaturnoe nasledstvo* (Moscow: Nauka, 1988), vol. 97, part 1 and 2.

_____. "Moi vospominania i razmyshlenia," *Russkaia Starina*, no. 8 (1915): 414-442.

_____. "Moi vospominania i razmyshlenia," *Russkaia Starina*, no. 6 (1916): 282-292.

Grand Duke Alexander Alexandrovich. Letters to M.T. Loris-Melikov. *Krasnyi Arkhiv* 8 (1925): 101-131.

Herzen, A.I. *A.I. Herzen: Sobranie sochinenii v tridtsati tomakh* (Moscow: Izd-vo Akademii Nauk SSSR, 1960), vol. XIX.

Katkov, M.N. *Polnoe sobranie peredovykh statei "Moskovskih Vedomostei" 1863-1887*. ed. S.P. Katkova. Moscow: Izd. S.P. Katkovoi, 1897.

_____. "Vozhd reaktsii 60-kh-80-kh godov, (pis'ma [M.N.] Katkova Alexandru II i Alexandru III," *Byloe* no. 4 (1917).

_____. Letter from M.N. Katkov to Alexander II, *Byloe* 26, no. 4 (October 1917).

_____. Letters from M.N. Katkov to A.V. Nikitenko, *Russkaia Starina* 11 (November 1897): 355-373.

_____. *Mikhail Nikiforovich Katkov: pro et contra*. ed., A.N. Nikoliukin, St. Peterburg: Rostok, 2012.

Literatura partii "Narodnoi voli" (Moscow: Tip. A.P. Poplavskogo, 1907).

Liubimov, N. A. *Mikhail Nikiforovich Katkov i ego istoricheskaia zasluga*. St. Petersburg: Tipografia Tovarishestva "Obshchestvennaia Pol'za," 1889.

Loris-Melikov, M.T. "Vsepoddaneishii doklad grafa Loris-Melikova ot 11 Aprelia 1880. S rezoliutsiiami Aleksandra II." *Byloe*, 5 "Special Issue on 1 March 1881" (1918): 154-161.

_____. "Vsepoddaneishii doklad ministra vnutrennikh del grafa, M.T. Loris-Melikova, ot 28 ianvaria 1881 g.." *Byloe*, 5 "Special Issue on 1 March 1881" (1918): 162-167.

_____. "Vsepoddaneishii doklad grafa Loris-Melikova ot 6 Marta 1881," *Byloe*, 5 "Special Issue on 1 March 1881" (1918): 177-180.

_____. "Vsepoddanneishii doklad gr. Loris-Melikova ot 12 Apr. 1881," *Byloe*, 5 "Special Issue on 1 March 1881" (1918): 180-185

"Mery i predpolozhenia otnositel'no gimnazii i nachal'nogo narodnogo obrazovania," *Zhurnal ministerstva narodnogo prosveshchenia (Sovremennaia letopis),* vol. CXXXIII (1867).

Meshcherskii, V. P. *Moi vospominaniia*. St. Petersburg: Tip. kniazia Meshcherskago, 1898.

_____. *Pis'ma k velikomu kniaziu Aleksandru Aleksandrovichu, 1863-1868*. ed. N.V. Chernikova. Moscow: NLO, 2011.

_____. *Pis'ma k Imperatoru Aleksandru III, 1881-1894*. ed. N.V. Chernikova. Moscow: NLO, 2018.

Miliutin, D.A. *Dnevnik D. A. Miliutina, 1881-1882*. ed. P.A. Zaionchkovskii. 4 vols. Moscow: Gos. Bibl. SSSR im. V. I. Lenina, 1947.

Mustafin, V. "Mikhail Nikiforovich Katkov i graf Petr Alexandrovich Valuev v ikh perepiske (1863-1879)," *Russkaia Starina* 163, no. 8-12 (August- December 1915).

Nikitenko, A.V. *Dnevnik*. 3 vols. Moscow: Gosud. Izdat. Chudozestvennoi Literatury, 1955.

Pazukhin, D.A. *Sovremennoe sostoianie Rossii i soslovnyi vopros*. Moscow: Universitetskaia tipografia M. Katkova, 1886.

Peretts, E.A. *Dnevnik E.A. Perettsa (1880-1883)*. Moscow: Gosud. izd-vo, 1927.

_____. "Iz dnevnika E.A. Peretsa," *Krasnyi Arkhiv* 8 (1925): 133-150.

Pobedonostsev, K.P. *K.P. Pobedonostsev i ego korrespondenty: pis'ma i zapiski*. 2 vols. Moscow: Gos.izd-vo, 1923.

Polovtsov, A.A. *Dnevnik gosudarstvennogo sekretaria A.A. Polovtsova*. 3 vols. Moskva: Izdatel'stvo "Nauka," 1966.

"Pozhar na tkatskoi fabrike g. Givartovskogo v Moskve," *Vsemirnaia Illiustratsia* 12 (March 1880).

"Programma ispolnitel'nogo komiteta," in *Literatura sotsial'no-revoliutsionnoi partii "Narodnoi Voli"*([no place]: Tipografia partii sotsialistov-revoliutsionerov, 1905).

Shestakov, P.D. "Graf Dmitrii Andreevich Tolstoi kak ministr narodnogo prosveshchenia. 1866-1880." *Russkaia starina* vol. LXIX, no. 1-3, (1891).

"Spisok litsam, sluzhashchim po vedomstvu Ministerstva narodnogo prosveshchenia. 1887/1888 god." (St. Petersburg: Tip. Balasheva, 1887).

"Sudebnaia khronika: Moskovskii Okruzhnoi sud. Delo o pozhare na fabrike Givartovskago," *Zemstvo*, 28 (10 June 1881): 45-46.

Tiutchev, F.I. Letters from F.I. Tyutchev to I.S. Aksakov, St. Petersburg, *Literaturnoe nasledstvo* 112 vols. (Moscow: Nauka, 1988), vol. 97, part 1, 258-279.

Valuev, P. A. *Dnevnik P.A. Valueva, ministra vnutrennich del. Vol 1, 1861-1864 gg*. Moscow: Izd. Akademii nauk SSSR, 1961.

_____. *Dnevnik P.A. Valueva, ministra vnutrennich del. Vol 2, 1865-1876 gg*. Moscow: Izd. Akademii nauk SSSR, 1961.

_____. *Dnevnik, 1877-1884*. Petrograd: Izd-vo "Byloe," 1919.

_____. Correspondence between P.A. Valuev to M.N. Katkov, *Russkaia Starina*, no. 6 (1916): 346-465.

_____. Letters to M.N. Katkov, *Russkaia Starina*, no. 8 (August 1915): 403-413.

Witte, S. Iu. *Vospominaniia: Tsarstvovanie Nikolaia II*. Berlin: Knigoizdatelstvo "Slovo," 1922.

Secondary Sources

Ambler, Effie. *Russian Journalism and Politics, 1861-1881: The Career of Aleksei S. Suvorin*. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1972.

Anan'ich, B.V., ed., *Vlast' i reformy. Ot samoderzhavnoi k sovetskoi vlasti*. St. Petersburg: "Dmitrii Bulanin," 1996.

Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. London: Verso, 1983.

Anderson, Perry. *The New Old World*. London; New York: Verso, 2009.

Badalian, D.A. "Zhurnalist, Obshchestvennoe Mnenie i Vlast: Izdania M.N. Katkova v 'Tsarskikh Obozreniakh' 1860-1866 Gg." *Tetradi Po Konservatizmu* 3 (2018).

Balakeev, I.I. *I.S. Aksakov (1823-1886)*. Khar'kov: Tip. "Mirn[yi] trud," 1910.

Balmuth, Daniel. *Censorship in Russia, 1865-1905*. Washington, D.C.: University Press of America, 1979.

Balzer, Harley. "The Problem of Professions in Imperial Russia." In *Between Tsar and People: Educated Society and the Quest for Public Identity in Late Imperial Russia*, edited by Edith W Clowes, Samuel D Kassow, and James L West. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1991.

———. *Russia's Missing Middle Class: The Professions in Russian History*. Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe, 1996.

Barkey, Karen, and Mark Von Hagen. *After Empire: Multiethnic Societies and Nation-Building : The Soviet Union and the Russian, Ottoman, and Habsburg Empires*. Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1997.Baumann, Robert F. "Universal Service Reform and Russia's Imperial Dilemma." *War and Society War and Society* 4, no. 2 (1986): 31–49.

Beer, Daniel. *Renovating Russia: The Human Sciences and the Fate of Liberal Modernity, 1880–1930*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2018.

Bellavance, Octavie. "Fourth Estate, Fifth Power: The Daily Press, the Public and Politics in Russia, 1861-1907." Ph.D., Yale University, 2015.

Belogurova, T.A.*Russkaia periodicheskaia pechat' i problemy vnutrennei zhizni strany v gody pervoi mirovoi voiny (1914–fevral' 1917).* Smolensk: Gody, 2005.

Bendix, Reinhard. *Nation-Building and Citizenship: Studies of Our Changing Social Order*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977.

Bokhanov, A. N. *Rossiiskie samoderzhtsy: 1801-1917*. Moscow: Mezhdunarodnye otnoshenia, 1993.

_____*Imperator Aleksandr III*. Moskva: Russkoe slovo, 1998.

Bradley, Joseph. "Subjects into Citizens: Societies, Civil Society and Autocracy in Tsarist Russia. *American Historical Review* 107:4 (Oct. 2002): 1094-1123.

_____. *Voluntary Associations in Tsarist Russia: Science, Patriotism and Civil Society*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009.

Brice, Catherine. "La Monarchie, Un Acteur Oublié de La 'Nationalisation' Des Italiens?" *Revue d'histoire Moderne et Contemporaine (1954-)* 45, no. 1 (January 1, 1998): 147–69.

Brodskii, N.L. ed., *Rannie slavianofily: A.S. Khomiakov, I.V. Kireevskii, i I.S. Aksakov*. Moscow: Tov[arishchestvo] I.D. Sytina, 1910.

Brooks, Jeffrey. *When Russia Learned to Read: Literacy and Popular Literature, 1861-1917*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1985.

Brutian, A. L. *M.N. Katkov: sotsial'no-politicheskie vzgliady*. Moskva: MAKS Press, 2001.

Bucur-Deckard, Maria, and Nancy M Wingfield. *Staging the Past the Politics of Commemoration in Habsburg Central Europe, 1848 to the Present*. West Lafayette, IN: Purdue University Press, 2001.

———. *Staging the Past the Politics of Commemoration in Habsburg Central Europe, 1848 to the Present*. West Lafayette, IN: Purdue University Press, 2001.

Bugaeva, Valentina Nikolaevna. *Pedagogicheskoe nasledie M.N. Katkova*. Smolensk: Madzhenta, 2011.

Byrnes, Robert Francis. *Pobedonostsev: His Life and Thought*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1968.

Carey, James W. *Communication as Culture: Essays on Media and Society*. New York: Routledge, 2009.

Chernukha, V. G. *Pravitelstvennaia Politika v Otnoshenii Pechati 60-70-e Gody XIX Veka*. Leningrad: Nauka, 1989.

Cole, Laurence, and Daniel L Unowsky. *The Limits of Loyalty: Imperial Symbolism, Popular Allegiances, and State Patriotism in the Late Habsburg Monarchy*. New York: Berghahn Books, 2007.

Colley, Linda. *Britons: Forging the Nation, 1707-1837*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992.

Davudov, D. A. *Formirovanie i razvitie politiko-pravovykh vozzrenii Mikhaila Nikiforovicha Katkova: Monografia*. Volgograd: Volgogradskoe Nauchnoe Izd-vo, 2014.

Davydov, M.A. *Dvadtsat' let do velikoi voiny: rossiiskaia modernizatsia Vitte – Stolypina*. St. Petersburg: Aleteia, 2016.

Deutsch, Karl W. *Nation-Building*. New York: Atherton Press, 1963.

Dixon, Simon. "Russia's *Soslovie* (Estate) Paradigm Revisited." *The Slavonic and East European Review* 93:4 (October 2015): 732-740.

Dolbilov, Mikhail. *Russkii krai, chuzhaia vera: etnokonfessionalnaia politika imperii v Litve i Belorussii pri Aleksandre II*. Moscow: NLO, 2010.

_____. "Rozhdenie Imperatorskikh Reshenii: Monarkh, Sovetnik i 'Vysochaishaia Volia' v Rossii XIX v." *Istorichaskie Zapiski* 9, no. 127 (2006): 5–48.

Durman, Karel. *The Time of the Thunderer: Mikhail Katkov, Russian Nationalist Extremism and the Failure of the Bismarckian System, 1871-1887*. Boulder; New York: East European Monographs ; Distributed by Columbia University Press, 1988.

Eidelman, N.Ia. *Gertsen protiv samoderzhavia: sekretnaia politicheskaia istoriia Rossii XVIII-XIXvekov i vol'naia pechat*. 2nd ed. Moscow: Mysl', 1984.

Eklof, Ben, John Bushnell, L. G. Zakharova, eds. *Russia's Great Reforms, 1855-1881*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994.

Emmons, Terence, and Wayne S Vucinich. *The Zemstvo in Russia: An Experiment in Local Self-Government*. Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1982.

Esin, B.I. *Istoriia russkoi zhurnalistiki XIX veka*. Moscow: Aspekt Press, 2003.

_____. *Russkaia dorevoliutsionnaia gazeta: 1702-1917 gg: kratkii ocherk*. Moscow: Izd-vo Mosk. un-ta, 1971.

Frank, Stephen, and Mark Steinberg, eds. *Cultures in Flux: Lower-Class Values, Practices, and Resistance in Late Imperial Russia*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001.

Freeze, Gregory L. "The Soslovie (Estate) Paradigm and Russian Social History." *The American Historical Review* 91, no. 1 (February 1, 1986): 11–36. https://doi.org/10.2307/1867233.

Freidson, Eliot. *Professionalism Reborn: Theory, Prophecy, and Policy*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994.

Frieden, Nancy Mandelker. *Russian Physicians in an Era of Reform and Revolution, 1856-1905*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1981.

Fusso, Susanne. *Editing Turgenev, Dostoevsky, and Tolstoy: Mikhail Katkov and the Great Russian Novel*DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2017).

Gauci, Perry. *Regulating the British Economy, 1660–1850*. Routledge, 2016.

Gellner, Ernest. *Nations and Nationalism*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1983.

Generalova, N.P. "'Neizvestnii' Otvet Turgeneva Chernyshevskomu." In *I. S. Turgenev : Novye Issledovania i Materialy*, vol. IV. Moscow: Alians Arheo, 2016.

Goffman, Erving. *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*. University of Edinburgh, 1956.

Gorni, Yosef. *The Jewish Press and the Holocaust, 1939–1945: Palestine, Britain, the United States, and the Soviet Union*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2012.

Got'e, Ju.V. "Pobedonostsev and Alexander III." *The Slavonic and East European Review* 7, no. 19 (June 1, 1928): 30–54.

_____. "Bor'ba pravielstvennykh gruppirovok i manifest 29 Aprelia 1881g.," *Istoricheskie zapiski*, no. 2 (1938).

Grabar', I.Je. *Repin*. Moscow: Zhurnal'no-gazetnoe ob'edinenie, 1933.

Green, Abigail. *Fatherlands: State-Building and Nationhood in Nineteenth-Century Germany*. New Studies in European History. Cambridge, UK ; Cambridge University Press, 2001.

Greenfeld, Liah. *The Spirit of Capitalism: Nationalism and Economic Growth*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2001.

Gregory, Paul R. *Russian National Income, 1885-1913*. Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1982.

Guroff, Gregory, and S. Frederick Starr. "A Note on Urban Literacy in Russia, 1890—1914." *Jahrgescoste Jahrbücher Für Geschichte Osteuropas* 19, no. 4 (1971): 520–31.

Habermas, Jürgen. *The Theory of Communicative Action: Volume 1: Reason and the Rationalization of Society*. Beacon Press, 1985.

_____. *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1991.

_____. *Between Facts and Norms: Contributions to a Discourse Theory of Law and Democracy*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1996.

Heilbronner, Hans. "Alexander III and the Reform Plan of Loris-Melikov." *The Journal of Modern History* 33, no. 4 (December 1, 1961): 384–97.

Hobsbawm, E. J. *Nations and Nationalism since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012.

Hoch, Steven L. *Serfdom and Social Control in Russia: Petrovskoe, a Village in Tambov*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986.

Hoffman, Zachary. "Orienting the Empire: Russian Identity and East Asian Imperialism in the Conservative Press, 1894-1905," 2017.

Hoffmann, D., and Y. Kotsonis. *Russian Modernity: Politics, Knowledge and Practices, 1800-1950*. Springer, 2000.

Ilovaiskii, D.I. *Smutnoe vremia Moskovskogo gosudarstva okonchanie istorii Rossii pri pervoi dinastii*. Moscow: Tipografia Volchannikova, 1894.

Kantor, V.M. "O sud'be imperskogo liberalizma v Rossii (M.N. Katkov)." *Filosovskie Nauki*, no. 2 (2007): 66–91.

Kapnist, P.I. *Sochinenia grafa P.I. Kapnista*. Moscow, [n.p.], 1901.

Katz, Martin. *Mikhail N. Katkov: A Political Biography, 1818-1887*. Studies in European History 6. The Hague: Mouton, 1966.

Kaufman, A.E. *A.S. Suvorin*. St. Petersburg: Pravda, 1908.

Khachaturian, Lisa. *Cultivating Nationhood in Imperial Russia: the Periodical Press and the Formation of a Modern Armenian Identity*. New Brunswick, CT: Transaction Publishers, 2009.

Khristoforov, I. A. *Aristokraticheskaia oppozitsia velikim reformam: konets 1850-kh -seredina 1870-kh gg*. Moscow: Russkoe slovo, 2002.

Kotov, A.E. *Ptentsy gnezda Katkova*. St. Petersburg: GUMRF, 2013.

Kotov, A.E. *"Tsarskii put'" Mikhaila Katkova: Ideologia biurokraticheskogo natsionalizma v politicheskoi publitsistike 1860-1890-kh godov*. Sankt-Peterburg: Vladimir Dal', 2016.

Kotsonis, Yanni. *States of Obligation: Taxes and Citizenship in the Russian Empire and Early Soviet Republic*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2014.

Kuleshova, O.V. *Nasledie M.N. Katkova v sovremennoi Rossii: analiticheskii obzor*. Moscow: INION RAN, 2013.

Kuznetsov, F. F, ed. *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii i pisem v dvenadtsati tomakh*. Moskva: Nauka, 2000.

Lenoe, Matthew E. *Closer to the Masses: Stalinist Culture, Social Revolution, and Soviet Newspapers*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004.

LeDonne, John P. *Absolutism and Ruling Class : The Formation of the Russian Political Order, 1700-1825*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1991.

Lemke, M. K. *Dumy Zhurnalista*. St. Petersburg: Kn-vo M.V. Pirozhkova, 1903.

———. *Epokha Tsenzurnykh Reform 1859-1865 Godov*. S.-Peterburg: Tipo-lit. "Gerol'd," 1904.

———. *Nikolaevskie Zhandarmy*. St. Petersburg: Izd. S.V. Bunina, 1908.

———. *Ocherki po istorii russkoi tsenzury i zhurnalistiki XIX stoletia*. St. Peterburg: Kn-vo M.V. Pirozhkova, 1904.

Lincoln, W. Bruce. *The Great Reforms: Autocracy, Bureaucracy, and the Politics of Change in Imperial Russia*. DeKalb, Ill.: Northern Illinois University Press, 1990.

———. *In the Vanguard of Reform: Russia's Enlightened Bureaucrats, 1825-1861*. DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 1982.

———. *Nikolai Miliutin, an Enlightened Russian Bureaucrat*. Newtonville, Mass.: Oriental Research Partners, 1977.

_____. *Nicholas I: Emperor and Autocrat of All the Russias*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1978.

Linton, Ralph. *The Study Of Man*. New York: Appleton Century Crofts, Inc., 1936.

Lisovskii, N. M. *Russkaia periodicheskaia pechat', 1703-1900 gg: bibliografiia i graficheskiia tablitsy. Petrograd, Shumakher i Bruker, 1895-1915*. Cleveland: Bell & Howell, 1963.

Lizunov, P.V. "Vnutrennie piatiprotsentnye zaimy: liubimye bumagi russkoi publiki." *Trudy istoricheskogo fakulteta Sankt-peterburgskogo Universiteta*. St. Petersburg, 2014.

Loughran, Trish. *The Republic in Print: Print Culture in the Age of U.S. Nation Building, 1770-1870*. New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2007.

Lubkov, Alexei. *Mikhail Katkov. Molodye gody.* Moskva: Litres, 2018.

Lukashevich, Stephen. *Ivan Aksakov, 1823-1886; a Study in Russian Thought and Politics*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1965.

Lukoyanov, I.V. *Zemskii Sobor*. Nestor. Kishinev, 2000.

Lunochkin, A.V. "Ot Sotrudnichestva k Konfrontatsii: Gazeta 'Golos' i Tsenzura (1863–1883)." *Tsenzura v Rossii* 1 (2001).

Marker, Gary. *Publishing, Printing, and the Origins of Intellectual Life in Russia, 1700-1800*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1985.

———. "The Creation of Journals and the Profession of Letters in the Eighteenth Century." In *Literary Journals in Imperial Russia*, edited by Deborah A. Martinsen. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997.

Martinsen, Deborah A., ed. *Literary Journals in Imperial Russia*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997.

McReynolds, Louise. "Autocratic Journalism: The Case of the St. Petersburg Telegraph Agency." *Slavic Review* 49, no. 1 (1990): 48–57.

———. *The News under Russia's Old Regime: The Development of a Mass-Circulation Press*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1991.

Miller, A. I. *The Romanov Empire and Nationalism: Essays in the Methodology of Historical Research*. New York: Central European University Press, 2008.

Miller, A, D.A. Sdvizhkov, and I Shirle, eds. *"Poniatia o Rossii": k istoricheskoy semantike imperskogo perioda*. Moskva: NLO, 2012.

Miller, Alexei, and Stefan Berger. *Nationalizing Empires*. Budapest: Central European University Press, 2014.

Minakov, A. Iu. "Russian Conservatism in Contemporary Russian Historiography: New Approaches and Research Trends." *Russian Studies in History* 48, no. 2 (Fall 2009): 8–28.

Mironov, Boris Nikolaevich, and Ben Eklof. *A Social History of Imperial Russia, 1700-1917*. Boulder, CO.: Westview Press, 1999.

_____. "The Development of Literacy in Russia and the USSR from the Tenth to the Twentieth Centuries." *History of Education Quarterly* 31, no. 2 (1991): 229–52.

Moon, David. *Abolition of Serfdom in Russia: 1762-1907*. London: Routledge, 2014.

Mosse, George L. *The Nationalization of the Masses; Political Symbolism and Mass Movements in Germany from the Napoleonic Wars through the Third Reich*. New York: H. Fertig, 1975.

Nevedienskii, S. *Katkov i ego vremia*. St. Petersburg: Tipografia A.S. Suvorina, 1888.

Nikoliukin, A.N., and T.F. Prokopov, eds. *Filosofskie chtenia: stat'i, traktaty, polemika*. St. Petersburg: Rostok, 2011.

Novikov, A. V. *Rossiiskie konservatory (M.N. Katkov, D.A. Tolstoĭ, K.P. Pobedonostsev) i samoderzhavie: seredina XIX-nachalo XX vekov : monografiia*. Moskva: publisher not identified, 2002.

Patrusheva, N.G. "Glavnoe upravlenie po delam pechati (1865-1917 gg) i proekti ego reformirovania." *Istoricheskie, filosofskie, politicheskie i iuridicheskie nauki, kul'turologia i iskusstvovedenie. Voprosy teorii i praktiki.* 8, no. 14. Part III (2011): 147–51.

Patrusheva, N.G., and M.A. Benina, eds. *Periodicheskaia pechat i tsenzura Rossiiskoi imperii v 1865-1905 gg. Sistema administrativnykh vzyskanii*. St. Petersburg: Nestor-Istoria, 2018.

Pearson, Thomas S. "The Origins of Alexander III's Land Captains: A Reinterpretation." *Slavic Review* 40, no. 3 (October 1, 1981): 384–403.

_____. *Russian Officialdom in Crisis: Autocracy and Local Self-Government, 1861-1900*. Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989.

Pipes, Richard. "Russian Conservatism in the Second Half of the Nineteenth Century." *Slavic Review* 30, no. 1 (March 1, 1971): 121–28.

Plunkett, John. *Queen Victoria: First Media Monarch*. Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2003.

Polovtsov, A.A. *Dnevnik gosudarstvennogo sekretaria A.A. Polovtsova*. Moskva: Izdatel'stvo "Nauka," 1966.

Popov, E.A, and I.V. Veligonova. *Kogda slovo povelevaet imperiei: periodicheskie izdania M.N. Katkova i novye tekhnologii obshchestvenno-gosudarstvennoi politiki reformiruiusheisia Rosii (seredina 1850-1880 gg.)*. Moskva: RISI, 2014.

Raeff, Marc. "A Reactionary Liberal: M. N. Katkov." *Russian Review* 11, no. 3 (1952): 157–67.

———. *Political Ideas and Institutions in Imperial Russia*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1994.

———. "The Bureaucratic Phenomena of Imperial Russia, 1700-1905." *The American Historical Review* 84, no. 2 (1979): 399–411.

Reitblat, Abram. *Ot Bovy k Bal'montu: ocherki po istorii chteniia v Rossii vo vtoroi polovine XIX veka*. Moscow: NLO, 2009

_____. *Faddei Venediktovich Bulgarin: Ideolog, zhurnalist, konsul'tant sekretnoi politsii: Stat'i i materialy*. Moscow: NLO, 2016.

Remnev, A. V. *Samoderzhavnoe Pravitel'stvo: komitet ministrov v sisteme vysshego upravleniia Rossiiskoi Imperii: vtoraia polovina XIX - nachalo XX veka*. Moscow: ROSSPEN, 2010.

Renner, Andreas. "Defining a Russian Nation: Mikhail Katkov and the 'Invention' of National Politics." *The Slavonic and East European Review* 81, no. 4 (2003): 659–82.

Rieber, Alfred J. *Merchants and Entrepreneurs in Imperial Russia*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1982.

_____. *The Imperial Russian Project: Autocratic Politics, Economic Development, and Social Fragmentation*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2017.

Roudakova, Natalia. *Losing Pravda: Ethics and The Press in Post-Truth Russia*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2017.

Rudnitskaia, E.L., and O.V. Budnitskii, eds. *Revoliutsionnyi radikalizm v Rossii: vek deviatnadtsatyi: dokumental'naia publikatsia*. Moscow: Arkheograficheskii tsentr, 1997.

Ruud, Charles. *Fighting Words Imperial Censorship and the Russian Press, 1804-1906*. Toronto; Buffalo; London: University of Toronto Press, 1982.

Sedov, P.L. *Zakat moskovskogo tsarstva: tsarskii dvor kontsa XVII veka*. St. Petersburg: DB, 2006.

Sementkovskii, R. I. *M.N. Katkov: ego zhizn i literaturnaia deiatelnost: biograficheskii ocherk*. St. Peterburg: Tipografia Ju. N. Erlich, 1892.

Seredonin, S.M. *Istoricheskii obzor deiatelnosti Kommiteta ministrov*. St. Peterburg: Izd. Kantseliarii Komiteta Ministrov, 1902.

Shepelev, Leonid Efimovich. *Tituly, mundiry i ordena v Rossiiskoi imperii*. Moscow; St. Petersburg: TSentrpoligraf; MiM-Del'ta, 2005.

Shils, Edward. *The Intellectuals and the Powers, and Other Essays*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1972.

Sonina, E. S. *Petersburgskaia universal'naia gazeta kontsa XIX veka.* St. Petersburg: Izdatel'stvo S-Petersburgskogo Universiteta, 2004.

Staferova, E.L. *A.V. Golovnin i liberal'nye reformy v prosveshchenii, pervaia polovina 1860-kh gg*. Moscow: Kanon, 2007.

Starr, S. Frederick. *Decentralization and Self-Government in Russia, 1830-1870*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1972.

———. *Decentralization and Self-Government in Russia, 1830-1870*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1972.

Steinberg, Mark D. *Moral Communities the Culture of Class Relations in the Russian Printing Industry, 1867-1907*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1992.

Steinmetz, George. *Regulating the Social: The Welfare State and Local Politics in Imperial Germany*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1993.

Stites, Richard, ed., *Culture and Entertainment in Wartime Russia*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1995.

Stepanov, V. L. *N.Kh. Bunge : Sud'ba Reformatora.* Moscow : ROSSPEN, 1998.

Storella C.J. and A.K. Sokolov. *The Voice of the People: Letters from the Soviet Village, 1918–1932*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2013.

Thaden, Edward C. *Conservative Nationalism in Nineteenth-Century Russia*. Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, 1964.

Thompson, Robert Luther. *Wiring a Continent: The History of the Telegraph Industry in the United States, 1832-1866*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1947.

Tvardovskaia, V. A. *Ideologiia poreformennogo samoderzhaviia: M. N. Katkov i ego izdaniia*. Moskva: Nauka, 1978.

Val'dman, Batiia. *Russko- evreiskaia zhurnalistika (1860–1914).* Riga: Tsentr izucheniia iudaiki latviiskogo universiteta, 2008.

Valkenier, Elizabeth Kridl. *Russian Realist Art :The State and Society : The Peredvizhniki and Their Tradition*. Ann Arbor, MI: Ardis, 1977.

Weber, Eugen Joseph. *Peasants into Frenchmen: The Modernization of Rural France, 1870-1914*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1992.

Whelan, Heide W. *Alexander III & the State Council: Bureaucracy and Counter-Reform in Late Imperial Russia*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1982.

Whittaker, Cynthia H. *Russian Monarchy: Eighteenth-Century Rulers and Writers in Political Dialogue*. DeKalb, IL: Northern Illinois University Press, 2003.

Wingfield, Nancy M. "Emperor Joseph II in the Austrian Imagination up to 1914." In *The Limits of Loyalty: Imperial Symbolism, Popular Allegiances, and State Patriotism in the Late Habsburg Monarchy*, edited by Laurence Cole and Daniel L Unowsky. New York: Berghahn Books, 2007.

Wortman, Richard. *The Development of a Russian Legal Consciousness*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976.

_____. *Scenarios of Power: Myth and Ceremony in Russian Monarchy from Peter the Great to the Abdication of Nicholas II*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000.

Zaionchkovskii, P.A. *Krizis Samoderzhaviia Na Rubezhe 1870-1880-Kh Godov*. Moskva: Izd-vo Moskovskogo universiteta, 1964.

———. *Pravitel'stvennyi Apparat Samoderzhavnoi Rossii v XIX v.* Moscow: Mysl', 1978.

———. *Rossiiskoe Samoderzhavie v Kontse XIX Stoletiia: Politicheskaia Reaktsiia 80-Kh-Nachala 90-Kh Godov*. Moskva: Izd-vo Mysl, 1970.

Zakharova, L. G. *Zemskaia kontrreforma 1890 g*. Moskva: Izd. Mosk. un-ta, 1968.

Zapadov, A.V. *Istoriia russkoi zhurnalistiki XVIII -XIX vekov*. Moskva: Vysshaia shkola, 1973.