Russian liberals' views on national minorities during the Russian Revolution and the Civil War

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I, Julia Klimova, confirm that the work presented in this thesis is my own. Where information has been derived from other sources, I confirm that this has been indicated in the thesis.

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Abstract

This thesis explores the policies of Russian liberals towards national minorities from 1905 to the 1920s. By the early twentieth century, the Russian Empire struggled to control a vast territory of ethnically and religiously diverse peoples. As the last two tsars introduced harsh policies of Russification, inadvertently triggering discontent from the non-Russians, Russian liberal thinkers developed their own policy of governing national minorities based on principles of equal individual rights and universal suffrage. This thesis charts continuities and changes in Russian liberals' views on national minorities' rights from the Duma period through the revolutions of 1917 and the civil war, when they participated in the White Governments and lived in emigration. Drawing on published and unpublished sources from Russia, Britain and the United States, the thesis considers the nationalities question within the broader set of challenges that liberals faced both at home and abroad. It is argued that fundamental liberal assumptions came under increasing pressure in the context of the Russian civil war and the Paris Peace Conference. In particular, although Russian liberals remained committed in principle to individual rights, and some were sympathetic to demands for national independence, their perception of various minorities was increasingly coloured by their sense of patriotism and the need to preserve the boundaries of the disintegrating Russian state. Particular attention is paid to the different positions taken by Russian liberals towards national minorities in the White governments.

Statement of purpose

The history of late imperial and early revolutionary Russia is widely discussed by historians of Russia and attracts a great deal of interest from the non-academic community. Russian history in the early twentieth century completely reshaped the map of Europe, while the establishment of the Soviet Union impacted the development of world history with the subsequent establishment of a bipolar world. There has been much research on late revolutionary Russia, seeking to answer the question: "Why did the Russian Empire fail?" Following the establishment of the Soviet Union, Soviet history was treated as a different subject, separated from the rest of European history. This thesis looks at Russian liberals from 1905 to the 1920s, and aims to bridge this gap between Russia and the rest of Europe by considering the views of liberal thinkers who associated themselves with French, British and American politicians as colleagues, far more than with the early Soviet government.

The issue of national minorities' rights to self-determination was one of the key debates that shaped the post-WWI world order, and European borderlands after the fall of the German, Austro-Hungarian, and Russian empires. It is widely accepted that the post-World War I Wilsonian peace represented the triumph of liberalism, as nations were granted their own states. This thesis aims to bring Russian liberals into the wider discussion of liberal thought on the rights of minorities, and to discuss how Russian liberal thought fits into this debate.

The history of Russian liberalism has been analysed by many scholars in both Russia and the West. Throughout the existence of the Soviet Union, Western scholars had access to the foreign émigré archives that allowed them to understand Russian émigrés, while Soviet studies of Russian liberalism were shaped by the regime at the time. The dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991 sparked interest in the last available liberal tradition in Russia. Scholars turned to the history of liberals in late imperial and revolutionary Russia to see what parallels could be drawn with Russia of the 1990s; during that period, Russian scholars produced abundant research on this subject. The centenary of the Russian revolution in 2017 sparked a new wave of interest in late imperial and early Soviet Russian history, but many questions remained unanswered. This thesis adds to the revisionist discussion of the history of revolutionary Russia by focusing on liberal political groups in the White Governments and in the community of 'Russia abroad', and by analysing what a consideration of these groups can add to the debate on the rights of national minorities.

Table of Contents

A note on spelling and transliteration

Russian words, including names, places, phrases, and book and journal titles, are all transliterated according to the Library of Congress System, without the diacritical marks. Belorussia and Belorussians are spelled in the old style (as opposed to contemporary Belarus and Belarusians) because this is how they were referred to by the Russian liberals, to highlight this national minority as subjects of the Russian Empire. Cossacks are spelled with a capital letter, to highlight their different ethnicity from the Russians. The Constitutional Democratic party is shortened as the 'Kadet' party, and not 'Cadet' as it sometimes appeared in older texts.

A note on dates

Until the February Revolution of 1917, Russia used the Julian calendar, 13 days behind the Gregorian calendar in the twentieth century. All events in Russia prior to the February Revolution are therefore referred to using the Julian calendar, and all subsequent events are dated according to the Gregorian calendar, in widespread use in Western Europe.

Introduction

This thesis aims to examine Russian liberals in the early twentieth century, and their views on the rights of national minorities. Russia entered the twentieth century as an absolute monarchy, governing vast territories of ethnically diverse people. Over a half of the Empire's population were non-Russian, which inevitably affected the way the tsarist government and his Duma opposition developed their policies. The events of the early twentieth century in Russia, such as the revolution of 1905–1906, the First World War, and subsequent revolutions of 1917, greatly affected the liberals in the empire, putting them at the forefront of Russian politics for a brief period. The Russian Constitutional-Democratic Party (also known as the Kadet party) will be at the centre of discussion in this thesis. It was the main liberal party of late tsarist Russia, and its members were some of the most prominent Russian liberals. However, the thesis deliberately aims to discuss wider liberal views, rather than just the Constitutional-Democratic party's position. While almost all individuals mentioned in the thesis, with the exception of Boris Bakhmeteff, were members of the Kadet party, some of their views that diverged from the party's official position were never adopted as Kadet party policy. In addition, some of them did important liberal work as leaders in local zemstvos or within the Progressive Bloc, aside from being members of the Constitutional-Democrats. Furthermore, although the party was officially dissolved in 1924, the Kadet party had ceased to exist in a traditional form after the October Revolution, with members being spread across the White Governments and different émigré communities abroad. The decisions they made both in Russia and abroad were individual, rather than on behalf of the Constitutional-Democratic party.

National minorities will be considered within the realm of Russia's borderland in the West and in the Caucasus; this region includes the Baltic States, Poland, Ukraine, Belorussia, Armenia, and Georgia. People in these border territories underwent a rapid development in their national consciousness from 1905 until 1918; in some places, they changed from seeking relatively small concessions from Petrograd regarding local governance and the right to cultural determination, to demanding complete state independence from Russia at the Paris Peace Conference.

The end of the First World War and the Peace Conference, followed by the establishment of the League of Nations, signified the end of the age of empires in global history and the beginning of the age of nation-states. Many of the new states were established in areas of the German and Austro-Hungarian empire, but also some former Russian lands enjoyed a brief period of independence until the Soviet Union later reclaimed control over them. The new map of Europe, which was drafted with some influence from the US President Woodrow Wilson, became known as the New World Order. This thesis will explore Russia's position in post-World War I Europe through the prism of Russian liberal views on Russia's place in the New World Order.

The thesis aims to explore to what extent the liberals' position changed throughout the First World War and the Russian Civil War, as well as how their policies towards national minorities affected Russia's position on the eve of the New World Order. This approach seeks to reconnect Russia to the West, as national minorities' rights were the overarching issue, as well as contribute to wider studies on Russian liberalism; particularly to provide a more continuous approach to this topic, as 1917 often appears to be a cut-off point, where imperial history ended, and Soviet history took its place.

The first chapters will be arranged chronologically, down to the October Revolution of 1917. The first chapter will analyse liberal policies in 1905–1914. It will largely focus on the Kadet party, and will consider the Kadets' discussions of national minorities' rights in the Duma and within the party committee meetings; it will also analyse the position of national minorities and their aspirations before Russia entered World War I. In the aftermath of the 1905 revolution, Russian liberals were primarily interested in safeguarding and strengthening the empire's borders, rather than ensuring nationalities' political rights to self-determination. They took a conservative position on the nationalities issue with the outbreak of the First World War, which persisted in the Russian Revolution. The second chapter will focus on World War I and the February Revolution. It will analyse the impact of the war on the national minorities, as well as on the liberal policies towards them. The February Revolution was a pivotal point for liberals in Russia, as they formed the majority of the Provisional

Government. This chapter will assess the way liberals were affected by the situation around them, having to retain their power and withstand the Petrograd Soviet, and to pursue their political agenda at the same time. Chapter 3 will bring us to the culmination of World War I: the Paris Peace Conference. This chapter will focus on the expectations that both Russian liberals and national minorities had of the Peace Conference, as well as on their preparations and the final arguments they presented to the international community.

Then, the subsequent Chapters 4 to 7 will be arranged thematically, to revisit different events in 1917–1922. The fourth chapter will turn to events after October 1917 and will consider liberals within the White Government. It will focus on the relationship between the Siberian All-Russian Government in Omsk, and the North-Western and Southern Governments on the borderlands. The aim of the chapter is to explore any differences in liberal politicians' views on the rights of national minorities, depending on which White Government they joined. It will analyse how the civil war affected liberal thinkers differently, according to their practical political needs at the time. Chapter 5 will, in turn, consider the position of liberal thinkers in emigration. The chapter will argue that Russian liberal émigrés played a very important role in serving as the link between White Russia and its allies in the West. Liberals who fled from the Bolsheviks and settled in Europe thought that they were best suited to serve as foreign representatives of White Russia: their geographical location, as well as the liberal values they shared with the West, would position them advantageously as the Allies' informants on the Russian situation. The chapter will analyse how émigrés' position regarding the national minorities differed from those within the Russian White Governments. Chapter 6 will also focus on liberals in emigration, but it will consider the nationalities issue in a broader perspective. It will examine the challenges that the broader Russian émigré community faced across Europe, as well as other political discussions that the liberals abroad engaged in, aside from the nationalities' rights and Russia's borderlands, in order to show the wider debate around the nationalities issue.

Finally, Chapter 7 will act as an epilogue, considering alternative perceptions of the Russian liberals regarding national minorities' rights. Some

accounts are sourced from lesser-known party members who had more personal experiences of living in Russia's borderlands, while others will show how some liberal émigrés revisited and reconsidered their own position in the aftermath of the civil war. These different perspectives will help to draw a conclusion regarding to what extent, and in what ways, the Russian liberals' position on the rights of national minorities evolved throughout the early twentieth century.

A note on sources

This thesis will draw on a variety of primary sources, both published and unpublished. I sought to consider personal correspondence, official documents produced by the Kadet party in Russia and the Russian Political Committee in Paris, and other publications to which Russian liberals contributed. While I did not see any significant discrepancies between the official and unofficial papers regarding the liberals' position towards national minorities, the largest differences were between material intended for a Russian readership and those aimed at the Allies. The official correspondence with the Allies, along with publications that Russian liberals aimed at a foreign readership (in particular, *The New Russia*, a journal published in Great Britain, and discussed in Chapter 5), aimed at representing the situation in Russia in the most promising light. Russian liberals were writing these materials in order to ensure Allied military support for the anti-Bolshevik struggle. Furthermore, the Russian liberals sought to ensure the strongest possible position for the Whites in the Paris Peace Treaty. These aims dictated both the tone and contents of the correspondence. In relation to the national minorities question, it meant ensuring that Russia's 1914 borders stayed as intact as possible and further meant convincing the Allies that the rights of minorities to self-determination would be satisfied after the Civil War in Russia.

On the other hand, private correspondence and material written for the Russian public did not necessarily aim to make a case for Russia. It provided more discussions of the 'on the ground' situation in the White governments. This revealed the many blind spots that liberals had with regards to the military situation and the nationalities conflict in Russia. It also showed the liberals' views towards national minorities and the reasons behind their imperialist arguments in support of "Russia united and indivisible".

The Russian State Archive (GARF) offered a wide range of both personal and official correspondence between members of the White governments. I looked at personal collections of the leading Russian liberals as well as collections of various provisional White governments. White government documents provided rich material on the activities of the Russian liberals at home before they emigrated. This internal correspondence offers an insight into the plans and aspirations of the Whites in general, and the liberals among them in particular. Writing for their compatriots, liberals were far less constrained by self-censorship than in their correspondence with the Allies. These documents also demonstrated the lack of information that the White governments possessed regarding the military situation in other regions of Russia, as well the lack of knowledge about the wider moods of the people in territories controlled by the Bolsheviks. Personal collections here added to the official documents, providing an insight into individuals' personal correspondence and drafts of official documents. Documents from the Russian archives laid the foundation of Chapter 4 of the thesis that focuses on the work of Russian liberals within Russia.

The Bakhmeteff archives provided an insight into the life of émigrés as well as the relationships that the liberal émigrés established with the Allies. Here, personal collections proved to be more fruitful, including both personal and official correspondence, copies of articles and other published material. Correspondence between former colleagues trying to re-establish old ties proved a rich source. Most commonly, 'professional issues', such as continuing the work of the Kadet party or Russia's participation at the Paris Peace Conference, were discussed together with personal matters, related to settling abroad after emigration.

There are equally rich materials on the interaction of Russian liberals with the Allies in both official and unofficial sources. Private correspondence as well as published materials in this case are relatively similar in the ways liberals presented themselves and spoke about Russia. They focussed on a post-Bolshevik future, emphasising unity of the Whites and plans to re-establish liberal institutions in the aftermath of the Civil War. At the same time, liberals tried to ignore 'uncomfortable' realities of the White governments, such as the autocratic nature

of these regimes, and the emergence of independent states that were formerly part of the Austro-Hungarian empire.

Lastly, memoirs are largely discussed in the final chapter of the thesis, which focuses on liberals' reflections on their past. The Russian émigré community at large produced an extensive number of memoirs and articles abroad. Liberals among them were not an exception. The limitations of memoirs as sources of information are widely understood and undoubtedly apply to those that are mentioned in this thesis. I found, however, that the limitations of memoirs, such as self-censorship of the authors, the desire to justify their actions and lack of critical approach to the past was revealing in itself. Memoirs demonstrated the periods that Russian liberals deemed the peak of their political career. For most, this was their work in the Duma, rather than any later periods in life, such as their work in the Provisional Governments or their contributions to the Paris Peace Conference.

Concepts of 'nation', 'national minorities' and 'self-determination'

Words such as 'nation', 'national minority', and 'national self-determination' are some of the key terms in this thesis. While these terms seem clear in contemporary language and are consistently used by historians, they were not necessarily used at that time by Russian liberals or other groups discussed in this thesis. It is worth exploring how ideas of nationalism, minorities, and their rights and protection developed. The end of the First World War signified a breakthrough in global understanding and dialogue on nationalities' rights to self-determination. However, ideas that were so heatedly discussed at the Paris Peace Conference had been developing for centuries, not just in Europe and Russia, but across the world. Discussions of nationalism and whether a nation could form an independent state during the post-World War I period brought the concepts of 'state' and 'nation' into a close interconnection, as the aim of national self-determination became pivotal to peace negotiations. It was anticipated that "in the golden age of self-determination", all nations would have their own state.[1] One of the central aspects in discussions on nationalism is the problem of periodisation, where modernists

[1] However, this approach may lead to misleading conclusions, as Hugh Seton-Watson warns in *Nations and States. An Inquiry to the Origins of Nations and the Politics of Nationalism* (London: Methuen, 1977).

have convincingly argued that nations and national identities are relatively novel and only started to develop during the French Revolution.[2] Previously, people had identified themselves as members of smaller regional groups or subjects of a ruler, without expecting to influence the state. This development reinforced a sense of parity in the social contract between the state and the people, leading to a sense of equality on a national basis.[3]

Hans Kohn is considered one of the key thinkers who conceptualised the idea of nationalism during and after the Second World War. He argued that the essence of nationalism was for each nation to aim towards forming its own state, loyalty to which would overpower other political loyalties. While the roots of nationalism went back to ancient times according to Kohn, the idea of nationalism was relatively modern and started to form after the French Revolution. The most fundamental idea in Kohn's theory is that nationalism developed differently the East and the West. In the latter, comprising the US, Great Britain and France, nationalism was expressed in political and economic changes; whereas in the East – Germany, Italy, and Eastern and Central Europe – nationalism was expressed in the cultural field.[4] Later this dichotomy became known as 'civic' and 'ethnic' nationalism, and it became inherently implied that one is superior to the other.[5] The studies of nationalism in general put forward several ways of classifying how nationalist movements developed in different parts of the world. Contrary to Kohn, Adrian Hastings argued that all nations of Europe developed at their own pace, and not necessarily after the French Revolution. He suggested a different system of categorising nationalisms, whereby England presented a clear prototype of both nation and nation-state long before the Enlightenment. An example of a much later development was the Southern Slavs: at the end of the First World War, only Serbs

[2] For discussions of modernists and their view on the theory of nationalism, see: Anthony D. Smith, *The Nation in History* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2000).; Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism. New Perspectives on the Past* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1993).; Eric J Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).; Miroslav Hroch, *Social Preconditions of National Revival in Europe: A Comparative Analysis of the Social Composition of Patriotic Groups among the Smaller European Nations* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985).
[3] Miroslav Hroch, 'From National Movement to the Fully-Formed Nation: The Nation-Building Process in Europe', in *Mapping the Nation* (London: Verso, 1966), pp: 78–97.
[4] Hans Kohn, *The Idea of Nationalism. A Study in Its Origins and Background* (New York: Macmillan Company, 1944), p, 9.
[5] Krzysztof Jaskułowski, "Western (Civic) 'versus' Eastern (Ethnic) Nationalism. The Origins and Critique of the Dichotomy", *Polish Sociological Review* 171 (2010), p. 290.

among all Yugoslav nations had an understanding of national identity.[6] Similar to the Southern Slavs, nationalities within the Russian Empire did not develop at the same pace as in Western Europe. Miroslav Hroch, another scholar of nationalism, divided nations into ruling and ruled. The latter type lacks a ruling class and therefore experiences cross-national class struggles before it constructs a nation – a process that he divided into three phases: scholarly interest, patriotic agitation, and rise of a mass national movement. Another aspect of discussions on nationalism concerned determining how successfully these nationalistic ideas were spread among the masses. Some scholars argued in favour of national indifference suggesting that in practice, nationalist movements were not affecting the wider population as much as had been assumed, since they were discussed and practised almost uniquely among the educated and literary elite.[7] This idea was put forward by Ernest Gellner, who labelled the non-consolidated nationalist movements "dogs that failed to bark". While we can identify the agents of nationalism – the state and nationalist movements – we cannot always analyse or control mass behaviour.[8] Anthony D. Smith provided several types of nationalism,[9] out of which Brubaker concentrated on the 'civic' and 'ethnic' dichotomy, which was first proposed by Hans Kohn's distinction of Western and Eastern nationalism.

The conflict between majority and minority groups has been a perennial problem in politics and society. The concept of 'minority' developed in the fields of sociology and political science in the nineteenth century.[10] National groups were the first ones to be recognised as minorities in heterogenous states. Later, the notion of 'ethnic minorities' became a significant part of political discourse. Derived from the Latin 'minor' – "the lesser part or smaller number; less than half a total" – this originally quantitative term acquired a very qualitative meaning at the beginning of the twentieth century, with the collapse of empires. However, the term became discussed and applied only in the second half of the twentieth century.

[6] Adrian Hastings, *Construction of Nationhood* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).
[7] Tara Zahra, 'Imagined Noncommunities: National Indifference as a Category of Analysis', *Slavic Review* 69, no. 1 (2010): 93–119.
[8] Mark Bessinger, 'Nationalisms That Bark and Nationalisms That Bite. Ernest Gellner and the Substantiation of Nations', in: John A. Hall, ed., *The State of the Nation, Ernest Gellner and the Theory of Nationalism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).
[9] Anthony D. Smith, *Theories of Nationalism*, 2nd ed. (London: Duckworth, 1983).
[10] Lewis M Killian, 'What or Who Is a 'minority'?', *Michigan Sociological Review* 10 (1996), p. 18.

'Nation' and 'nationality', on the other hand, were previously the predominant terms. When talking about 'minorities', it is often assumed that the term implies 'national minorities', and the two can be used interchangeably. The term 'minority', however, was rarely used in relation to ethnic or national groups before 1918. Philip Gleason argued that the concept of minority developed differently in various global regions, and took on different meanings until the twentieth century. Thus, in the nineteenth century United States, for example, the term 'minorities' was more widely used in the political sense of minority political parties, rather than the sociological sense of a population subgroup. It was in fact the Versailles Peace Treaty and the famous 'minorities treaties' that popularised the sense of 'national minorities' across the Atlantic.[11] Even when the term started to be applied more universally to national minorities, the minorities' struggles in Europe and the US remained very different: while in Europe they strived for independence, in the United States they fought for equal rights within their community.[12]

In fact, the idea that representatives of minority religious, cultural or ethnic groups should have their rights protected appeared long before the Paris Peace Conference. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, foreign intervention on behalf of minority groups was becoming widely accepted. Therefore, the concept of protecting minorities developed alongside a concept of some form of international law above sovereignty. Originally, these minority protection treaties were aimed at religious rather than ethnic groups. If a group was transferred from one empire to another, it should be allowed to practise its own religion, but not necessarily preserve its language.[13] The Congress of Vienna in 1814–1815 recognised the need to protect a nationality specifically for the first time. For instance, the Kingdom of Poland was recognised as a separate state, although it was to be ruled by the Russian Tsar Alexander I. Nevertheless, Alexander's plan to incorporate parts of Poland into the Russian Empire failed. Other parts of Greater Poland that became part of Prussia also were protected by the treaty. Up until the First World War, issues with national minorities' rights appeared across

[11] Philip Gleason, "Minorities (Almost) All: The Minority Concept in American Social Thought", *American Quarterly* 43, 3 (1991), p. 393.
[12] Ibid., p. 397.
[13] C. A. Macartney, *National States and National Minorities* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1934), pp. 157–158.

the world: the Congress of Berlin resulted in one of the most important peace treaties for protecting the minority rights of Jews in Romania, but it still focused on religious tolerance, rather than of nationalities.[14]

Russian political groups, including liberals, could also not ignore the issue of nationalities at that time. Thus, Russian liberals devoted time to addressing the policies towards national minorities, and criticising the state's official policies of Russification. However, contemporary Russian political thinkers did not apply the concept of 'minority' to non-Russian nationals of the empire. In discussions of the rights of national minorities in the former Russian Empire, none of the liberals ever referred to them as 'minorities'. Miliukov, for example, who wrote numerous articles and texts on the rights of the peoples of Russia, either refers to particular titular nations (e.g. Ukrainians, Estonians, Finns, etc.), or talks about them as peoples or nations (*narody*). The term 'nation' also needs some clarification. It was applied to all nationalities in the Russian Empire, and was used very frequently when referring to the First World War. "War is an effort of the entire nation", wrote Nikolai Astrov in 1927, in his lecture notes on civil society in Russia during World War I.[15] Russia was repeatedly portrayed as a uniform state. In addition, in their propaganda, liberals tended to overlook the fact that the Russian empire was a multinational empire. For example, in conversations about national minorities, the term 'minorities' was not used; instead they were referred to as 'peoples' (*narody*), or by the titular nation (Ukrainians, Georgians, etc.). Liberals also used the term '*okrainy'* (suburbs) for the suburbs of the empire and the peoples who populated them. In addition, national minorities themselves did not refer to themselves as 'minorities', but rather as 'nations'. Nevertheless, the term 'minority' has affected the way we consider the situation in post-World War I Russia in contemporary discourse, with the *okrainy* struggling for state independence. This highlights the issue of outnumbered national groups and sets them apart from the titular Russian nation.

The concept of national self-determination also came into our vocabulary in the aftermath of the First World War. However, it was introduced by

[14] Ibid., pp. 159–169, p. 166.
[15] Nikolai Astrov, 'Voĭna i Obshchestvennye Organizatsii.' Bakhmeteff Archive, Columbia University, Panina papers, Box 11.

Enlightenment thinkers long before the twentieth century, with the focus on the rights of the individual rather than the collective.[16] John Locke originally developed the idea that political sovereignty resided in the nation and could be transferred from one sovereign to another.[17] Theories of sovereignty and liberty were adopted and further developed in France. In Central and Eastern Europe, however, the concept of self-determination arguably developed based on ideas of nationalism, rather than concepts of individual liberty and popular sovereignty, due to more diverse ethnic groups being gathered in one state.[18] National consciousness grew throughout the nineteenth century, and early nationalist writers thought that peace would be achieved once every nation in the world attained its own state. However, this did not happen, and national tensions peaked by the outbreak of the First World War.[19] By the time of the Paris Peace conference, there was a hope that the New Wilsonian World Order would help every nation to determine its own political status.

This development was often associated with President Woodrow Wilson's 'Fourteen Points'. By the end of the war, many nations desired to establish their own independent states far beyond Europe. Known as the 'Wilsonian moment', the period from autumn 1918 until the spring of 1919 saw great hopes that President Wilson's principles would be widely applied to create the New World Order.[20] Chapter 3 will look in depth at the events of the Paris Peace Conference, and nationalities pleading their cases for independence. Although Wilson was often in the spotlight when discussing the idea of national self-determination, the discourse had already been applied earlier: for instance, by the Bolsheviks and the Germans in the Brest-Litovsk treaty.[21] Ultimately, towards the end of the First World War, the discourse of national self-determination was prevalent among all sides in the conflict: the Allies, the Central Powers, the Bolsheviks, the Whites,

[16] Borislav Chernev, "The Brest-Litovsk Moment: Self Determination Discourse in Eastern Europe before Wilsonianism", *Diplomacy & Statecraft* 22, 3 (2011), p. 369.
[17] John Locke, *Two Treatises of Government*, vol. 5 (London: Printed for Thomas Tegg; W. Sharpe and Son, 1823), p. 163.
[18] Thomas Musgrave, *Self-Determination and National Minorities* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), pp. 4–5.
[19] Ibid., p. 11.
[20] Erez Manela, *The Wilsonian Moment: Self-Determination and the International Origins of Anticolonial Nationalism* (Oxford University Press, 2007), p. 6.
[21] Ibid.; Chernev, 'The Brest-Litovsk Moment: Self Determination Discourse in Eastern Europe before Wilsonianism', p.370.

and the relevant minorities themselves. The complication arose from the fact that each side had its own interpretation of nationality and aimed to pursue its own political goals. Consequently, the winners were the ones redrafting the map of post-war Europe, and the principle of self-determination was applied uniquely to the territories of the defeated powers, as will be discussed in Chapter 3. Importantly, the term 'minorities' did not always appear in the Allied discourse either. Woodrow Wilson in his Fourteen Points, for example, mentioned 'populations', 'nations', 'other nationalities', while the term 'minorities' never appeared in his lexicon.[22] On the other hand, the term 'minority' was explicitly used in a separate 'minority treaty', which was signed by the newly established Committee on New States and for the Protection of Minorities. It guaranteed equal rights to citizens of any ethnic background within some newly established states.[23] This terminology reflected a contemporary perception of national groups within multi-ethnic states and empires, which helped to highlight their inferior position to the dominant nation. In this way, scholars of the New World Order referred to newly independent states and minorities.[24]

The diversity of the Russian Empire

The growth of the Russian state, from Kievan Rus' to the Grand Duchy of Moscow, and later into the Russian Empire proclaimed in 1721, happened over centuries of both peaceful amalgamations and a series of forceful annexations. The more the tsarist empire expanded, the greater the number of peoples who became subjects of the Russian tsar. Governing a multinational empire proved to be a challenge for the Russian authorities. The challenge of ruling over a vast variety of lands and peoples with different cultures, identities and beliefs was common in the history of empires.[25] Nevertheless, the Russian situation was further

[22] Woodrow Wilson, 'Fourteen Points', 8 January 1918, https://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/wilson14.asp.

[23] Carole Fink ('Minority Rights as an International Question', *Contemporary European History* 9, no. 3 (2000), pp: 385–400.) argued that the Minority Treaties were not very well accepted by the newly independent states and were not very effectively ratified, staying unpublished and unknown to the wider public for many years.

[24] For example: Susan Pedersen, "Back to the League of Nations", *The American Historical Review* 112, 4 (2007), pp. 1091–1117; Carole Fink, "Minority Rights as an International Question", *Contemporary European History* 9, 3 (2000), pp. 385–400.

[25] Dominic Lieven, 'Russia as Empire and Periphery', in *The Cambridge History of Russia: Imperial Russia, 1689-1917*, vol. 2, ed. D. Lieven(Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), p. 10.

complicated by the fact that it was a land empire, expanding into its own borderlands rather than conquering lands overseas, as was the case for France and Great Britain.

As already mentioned, this thesis will touch on several nationalities located on the western and southern outskirts of the Russian Empire. Most of these territories became part of the empire between the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries.[26] Westward expansion was achieved largely at the expense of Poland-Lithuania and Sweden. A large part of Ukraine came under the rule of the Muscovite tsar in the middle of the seventeenth century, Estonia and Livonia were conquered by Peter the Great in 1710 and three partitions of Poland (1772, 1793 and 1795) followed under Catherine the Great. In 1815, the Congress of Vienna added further Polish territory to the empire and further strengthened the position of the Russian Empire on its western borders. All the new lands were populated by diverse national groups with varying degrees of national consciousness and different faiths. National divisions usually coincided with class. In the Baltic lands, for instance, the pre-existing social and national divisions remained the same: the landowners were largely of German origin, whereas the peasantry were Baltic. Belorussians, who were subjects of the Polish-Lithuanian state, were also mostly peasants, rather than landowners.

Andreas Kappeler argued that initially there was relatively little resistance to joining the Russian Empire from ethnic groups in the west, compared to those in the east or the south. This is despite the fact that Russian expansion in the west was part of European power politics, characterized by the Partitions of Poland and the Northern Wars. According to Kappeler, the lack of resistance could be explained by a lack of nationalist sentiments among the peasants who constituted a majority of the population. The fact that they became subjects of the Russian tsar did not have much practical impact on their daily lives. As for the local nobility of German, Polish or Swedish origin, they were initially integrated into the Russian noble circles and maintained their positions and wealth.[27] Theodore Weeks shares

[26] This thesis will focus on the later years of the Russian empire and the position of non-Russian nationalities within it. There is a vast historiography on Russian imperial expansion, much of it listed by: *The Cambridge History of Russia: Imperial Russia, 1689-1917*, vol. 2. See also Andreas Kappeler, *The Russian Empire, a Multiethnic History* (Harlow: Pearson Education Ltd, 2001).
[27] Kappeler, *Russian Empire*, pp: 103-104.

a similar view. He acknowledged that Peter the Great, who reinforced Russia's position on the western borderlands, was careful not to alienate the ruling elites in the newly acquired and strategically important territories.[28]

The Russian regime focused on territorial incorporation of the newly acquired lands and allowed cultural and religious independence, which permitted the Russian tsar to rule over a multinational empire. Arguably, social identities played a more important role in the fate of the new subjects of the Russian empire than their nationality. The Russian government adopted a so-called 'separate deals' approach to defining the categories and rights of non-Russians in the empire.[29] 'Separate deals' were negotiated between the tsar and every national group entering the empire, which created a complex and uneven relationship structure between the center and the borderlands. In particular, the Baltic Lands and Finland were always treated more generously than the Ukrainians.[30] At the same time, this system was initially focused on social estates (*sosloviia)* rather than individual nationalities and permitted integration of the local class representatives into the Russian system.[31] While the Russian tsars did not enforce policies of cultural integration and Russification, the existing system appeared to function.

In the later nineteenth century, however, a national awakening in many parts of the empire was further stimulated by opposition to Russification policies imposed under Alexander III, and Nicholas II.[32] This started to pose a challenge to the empire's stability. By 1914, Nicholas II ruled over a land mass of 13.5 million square kilometers, compared to only 24,000 in 1462.[33] In the twentieth century, governing a multi-ethnic empire had become an insurmountable challenge for the authorities. The Russian intelligentsia actively debated the ideas of national identity and belonging in the Russian Empire and questioned the need for cultural integration. The next section will focus on those ideas.

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[28] Theodore Weeks, 'Managing Empire: Tsarist Nationalities Policies', in *The Cambridge History of Russia: Imperial Russia, 1689-1917*, vol. 2, p. 29.
[29] Eric Lohr, *Russian citizenship: from empire to Soviet Union.* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2012), p. 20.
[30] Edward C. Thaden, *Russia's western borderlands, 1710-1870* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981), p.179.
[31] Lohr, *Russian citizenship*, pp. 20-21.
[32] Thaden, *Russification in the Baltic Provinces and Finland*, pp. 55-55, 152.
[33] Dominic Lieven, *The Russian Empire and Its Rivals* (London: John Murray, 2000), p. 216.

Nationalism and the Russian Empire

The Russian intelligentsia's attempts to define a common Russian identity throughout history were formed on the basis of the empire, rather than nationality or ethnicity. Theodore Weeks argued that policies of Russification originated in the empire's drive for modernity and the need to create a uniform administrative and legal structure to unify new subjects in the Russian Empire.[34] Throughout the 1990s and 2000s, scholars of Russian nationalism were arguing about self-determination among Russians within the empire. Firstly, Russians demonstrated clear local loyalties, as opposed to national. On the one hand, Geoffrey Hosking, Richard Pipes and David Moon pointed to a lack of a coherent Russian identity. Hosking believed that Russian national identity suffered the most from the empire, as "state building obstructed nation-building" in Russia. As a result, Russians failed to develop their own national identity.[35] Richard Pipes suggested that a typical Russian peasant (*Russkii muzhik)* on the eve of the Great War would see himself not as Russian, but as 'Viatskii' or 'Tul'skii', meaning 'belonging to a province' rather than to the state.[36] David Moon argued that peasants' concerns were heavily localised, and reiterated Schapiro's previous argument on the population's passivity in political matters, concluding that the appearance of the Duma failed to raise the wider population's interest in political life.[37] Therefore, these historians demonstrated that even in the early twentieth century, Russians failed to demonstrate the sense of belonging to a nation or state that was necessary for the evolvement of nationalism, according to Hroch's formula.

On the other hand, slightly later analysis of the notion of nationality revealed that Russians were well aware of their own nationality, as were non-Russians in the empire. Robert Geraci demonstrated that Russians perceived themselves as a more developed nationality, rightfully ruling over Siberian barbarian tribes who had inferior cultural practices.[38] Aleksei Miller challenged

[34] Theodore Weeks, *Nation and State in Late Imperial Russia: Nationalism and Russification on the Western Frontier, 1863–1914* (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 1996), p. 35.
[35] Geoffrey Hosking, *Russia: People and Empire, 1552–1917* (London: Fontana Press, 1998), p. xxiv.
[36] Richard Pipes, *The Russian Revolution,1899-1919.* (London: Collins Harvill, 1990), p. 203.
[37] David Moon, 'Peasants into Russian Citizens? A Comparative Perspective.', *Revolutionary Russia* 9, no. 1 (1996), pp. 43–81.
[38] Robert Geraci, referenced in Ronald Grigor Suny, 'Nationalities in the Russian Empire', *The Russian Review* 59, no. 4 (2000), pp. 487–92.

Hosking's views and proposed that Russian identity was still developing, while being equated with imperial identity, since it was the leading nation in the empire.[39] Eric Lohr, in his book on nationalism in the Russian Empire during the First World War, focused on the economic and demographic nationalisation of Russia, arguing that the nationalist campaign during the war started by persecuting merchants, landowners and petty bourgeoise – especially those of German and Jewish origin – in fear of their dominance.[40] Joshua Sanborn argued that national movements in the Russia empire developed relatively slowly.[41]

Scholars have been generally critical of the Russian government's attempts to create a uniform national identity 'from above'. While Russian monarchs recognised differences among subjects of the Empire, they largely focused on an imperial identity, rather than fostering national self-identification. Studies of the Russian census further confirmed these concerns: for instance, Charles Steinwedel showed that the concept of nationality was not taken seriously by Russian authorities until 1905. The census of 1897 was focused on *narodnost'* instead of nationality; the latter concept was introduced only in the census of February 1917.[42] Thus, it can be concluded that imperial Russian identity was the attempt to foster a 'civic' identity. However, it failed to unify Russians with non-Russians. The imperial legacy that influenced the Soviet Union's policies on nationalities has inevitably become the focus of scholarly attention, in attempts to see continuities.[43]

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[39] Geoffrey Hosking, *Russia: People and Empire, 1552–1917*, p. xxiv.
Aleksei Miller and Eric R. Scott, 'Nation and Empire: Reflections in the Margins of Geoffrey Hosking's Book', *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History 13* 13, no. 2 (2012), pp. 419–28.

[40] Eric Lohr, *Nationalizing the Russian Empire: The Campaign against Enemy Aliens during World War I* (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 2003), p. 81.

[41] Joshua Sanborn, *Imperial Apocalypse: The Great War and the Destruction of the Russian Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014).

[42] Charles Steinwedel, 'To Make a Difference: The Category of Ethnicity in Late Imperial Russian Politics: 1861–1917', in David Hoffman and Yanni Kotsonis, eds., *Russian Modernity: Politics, Knowledge, Practices* (London: Macmillan, 1999).For a similar argument see also: Juliette Cadiot, 'Searching for Nationality: Statistics and National Categories at the End of the Russian Empire (1897–1917)', *The Russian Review* 64, no. 3 (2005), pp. 440–55.

[43] Vera Tolz, ('Orientalism, Nationalism and Ethnic Minority in Late Imperial Russia', *The Historical Journal* 48, no. 1 (2005), pp. 127–50.) argued that Bolsheviks implemented the nineteenth-century Orientalists' ideas on nationalities, in the form of *korenizatsya.* Rogers Brubaker, *Nationalism Reframed* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996). and Rogers Brubaker, *Ethnicity without Groups* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004). also acknowledged the Soviet institutionalisation of nationhood.

Liberalism and Russian liberalism

Liberalism as an ideology had fully emerged in the wake of the French Revolution. The age of modernity encompassed the rise of liberalism, along with industrialisation, mass politics and the growth of nationalism, while empires were still the dominant international actors.[44] Having taken different paths of development across the world, the British and German interpretations of liberal ideas are generally considered the main strands of 'Western' liberalism.[45] Nineteenth-century liberalism in Great Britain, which some Russian liberals wanted to take as a gold standard, understood liberalism as a system where people with incompatible interests (e.g. different classes, nationalities and faiths) accept the rule of law which guarantees liberties to each individual. Therefore, British liberals claimed to represent a classless, overarching national government, and put their trust in parliament as a supreme national body that could mediate in overcoming tensions.[46] British imperial liberals were debating on imperialist governance within the liberal ideology, and stressed that British dominions were bound not by force, but by sentiment. They also avoided the uncomfortable discussion of exploitation by focusing on economic efficiency.[47] Striving for greater integration, British liberal imperialists largely applied these ideas to areas of white settlements, and showed surprisingly little interest in, for example, India.[48]

Unlike Britain, Germany developed a bureaucratic type of liberalism, more reminiscent of the classical French than the Anglo-Saxon model. Positioning itself both within and outside the Western community, German liberals adopted Western terms, ideas and institutions, while adding a local interpretation and creating a

[44] Christopher A. Bayly, *The Birth of the Modern World, 1780–1914: Global Connections and Comparisons* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2004).
[45] Tony Ballantyne argues that studies of history are dominated by national approaches, which, in turn, are skewed by inevitable comparisons of 'the West' and 'the Rest'. (See: Tony Ballantyne, 'Putting the Nation in Its Place?: World History and C. A. Bayly's The Birth of the Modern World', in Ann Curthoys and Marilyn Lake, eds. *Connected Worlds: History in Transnational Perspective* (Canberra: ANU E Press, 2006).
[46] Jonathan Parry, *The Rise and Fall of Liberal Government in Victorian Britain* (New Heaven: Yale University Press, 1993), pp. 3–4, 7–8.
[47] Colin H.C. Matthew, *The Liberal Imperialists: The Ideas and Politics of a Post-Gladstonian Élite* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1973).
[48] Ibid, pp. 160–162.

liberal theory that they considered superior to that of the West.[49] Generally, German liberals relied on civil society's involvement in City Councils and envisioned gradual liberal reforms within the existing state, as local administration would conform to liberal principles.[50] Moderate liberalism had socialist features in Germany: while fully supporting the rule of law and equal rights, liberals were against unrestricted free trade, which might lead to greater inequality. On the contrary, they anticipated a growth of a middle class which would eventually encompass the entire country.[51]

Russian liberals borrowed the concept of liberalism from the West and tried to apply it to Russian imperial realities. Therefore, instead of copying a particular model, the Russian liberal intelligentsia drew on various available liberal traditions. For instance, the British perception of their colonies and liberals being a classless party was particularly appealing to the Constitutional-Democrats; however, they also agreed with the socialist features of German liberalism. Shelokhaev, one of the most prominent scholars of Russian pre-revolutionary liberalism, pointed out that this concept is remarkably hard to define, as it was dynamically changing and constantly developing.[52] His Western colleagues have agreed with this.[53] As Randall Poole reiterated, the concept of liberalism is a political philosophy based on human rights, which ensures enforcement of such rights and the rule of law by civil society in case the state fails to fulfil them.[54] Thus, the rule of law and civil society are the key concepts in liberal political setting that the Russian state lacked at the beginning of the twentieth century. Both these aspects have been the focal point for historians of Russian liberalism, who revisited this subject on multiple occasions, especially in the more recent approaches. In this thesis, I will use a broad definition of liberalism as a political

[49] Leonard Krieger, *The German Idea of Freedom* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1973).
[50] James J. Sheehan, 'Liberalism and the City in Nineteenth-Century Germany', *Past & Present* 51 (1971), pp. 116–37.
[51] Wolfgang J. Mommsen, 'German Liberalism in the Nineteenth Century', in G. Stedman Jones and Gregory Claeys, eds., *The Cambridge History of Nineteenth-Century Political Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), pp. 409–32.
[52] Valentin Shelokhaev, 'Predislovie', in *Russkii Liberalizm: Istoricheskie Sud'by i Perspektivy. Materialy Mezhdunarodnoii Nauchnoii Konferentsii* (Moscow: ROSSPEN, 1996), pp.5-6.
[53] For example:Charles Timberlake, 'Introduction: The Concept of Liberalism in Russia', in *Essays on Russian Liberalism* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1972), p.1.
[54]Randall A. Poole, 'Nineteenth-Century Russian Liberalism: Ideals and Realities', *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 16, no. 1 (2015), pp. 157–81.

doctrine that recognises the rights of individuals, the right to private property, and the supremacy of law.

Another discourse problem in the history of Russian liberalism is periodisation. Although Shelokhaev acknowledged that some scholars believed that liberalism started to develop in Russia only in the second half of the nineteenth century, he nevertheless suggested separating Russian liberalism into two periods: the first starting from the reforms of Catherine the Great and ending in 1860s–1870s, and the second one starting from the Great Reforms of the nineteenth century and ending in 1917.[55] I would agree with the periodisation suggested by Liudmila Novikova, who specified the period since the 1890s.[56] During this period, Russian liberalism most resembled the Western liberal model: liberals formed parties that in 1906 become represented in the Russian Duma. As Rosenberg rightly noted in his study of the Kadets in 1905–1917, this period is significant for the fact that we study the fate of Russian liberalism in terms of party behaviour, where liberals had to fight for votes and work within the structure of newly established political institutions, rather than just discussing ideas.[57]

The issue of who should be recognised as a liberal in pre-revolutionary Russia is closely linked to the definition of the concept of liberalism itself. Who were Russian liberals in the late nineteenth to early twentieth centuries? Gogolevskii argued that in the early twentieth century, the liberal movement united people of various political beliefs, with different perceptions on the future of Russia; but they shared a desire to abolish the autocratic regime and opposed themselves to socialists and social-democrats.[58] As this thesis aims to cover the broad development of liberals' thought on the nationalities issue, it will follow the lead of Aleksei Kara-Murza and include what he referred to as "classical liberals" (such as the Kadets, mentioned above, and members of the Progressive Bloc), as well as "conservative liberals" (including the liberal Octobrists, or liberal members of the Zemstvo committees) – people who at the time considered themselves liberal

[55] Valentin Shelokhaev, 'Diskussionnye Problemy Istorii Russkogo Liberalizma v Noveishei Otechestvennoi Literature', *Voprosy Istorii* 5 (2007): 3–16.
[56] Ibid, p.7.
[57] William G. Rosenberg, "Kadets and the politics of ambivalence, 1905–1917", in: Timberlake, ed., *Essays on Russian Liberalism* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1972), p. 139.
[58] Aleksandr Gogolevskii, *Russkii Liberalizm v Poslednee Desiatiletie Imperii. Ocherki Istorii 1906–1912* (St Petersburg: Izdanie Sankt-Peterburgskogo Universiteta, 2002), p.3.

and contributed to the liberal press or liberal political parties.[59] Broader studies of the history of liberalism's development as a political concept in Russia focused on the evolution of liberalism as a political theory within the works of Russian intelligentsia. Due to the absence of political institutions which would provide a platform for legal opposition, liberal parties started to form only in the late

[59] Aleksei Kara-Murza, *Rossiiskii Liberalizm: Idei i Liudi* (Moscow: Novoe izdatel'stvo, 2007), p.14.

nineteenth century in Russia.[60] However, when the political opposition formed into parties after 1905, studies of the Constitutional-Democratic Party became central in literature on the twentieth century. As a result, some scholars have analysed the history of liberalism in the last two decades of Imperial Russia thought the prism of the Kadet party, the main liberal party of pre-revolutionary Russia, according to Wade.[61] A successor of the Union of Liberation (*Soiuz Osvobozhdeniia*) and the Union of Zemstvo Constitutionalists (*Soiuz Zemtsev – Konstitutsionalistov*), the Kadets are widely considered to be the most representative liberal movement in Russia during the early twentieth century, and the party most similar to the classical Western understanding of liberalism.

Historically, the topic of Russian liberalism in the early twentieth century attracted scholars' attention throughout the Soviet period, and it was widely revisited after the dissolution of the USSR, in an attempt to find historical foundations for rebuilding a liberal society. Earlier Western analysis of Russian liberals tended to focus on the reasons for the Bolsheviks' rise to power and the failure of liberalism. The research was largely encouraged by memoirs and papers left by Russian émigrés in Europe and the US, and produced by such scholars as Hugh Seton-Watson and Leonard Schapiro.[62] The widespread argument of the time was a belief that Russia was attempting to adopt a Western direction of development, but its attempts to catch up with the West were sabotaged by the First World War and October Revolution. Thus, George Fischer argued that it was not the fault of liberals as such, but the society being unprepared, which led to the failure of all forms of liberal institutions that had started to develop in Russia, including both Zemstvos and liberal parties.[63] Fischer's argument compared "the West and the Rest", suggesting that this was not a uniquely Russian situation:

[60] These include, Andrej Walicki, *Legal Philosophies of Russian Liberalism* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987). Walicki analysed works of six different Russian liberal legal scholars to prove a strong intellectual liberal tradition in Russia under the old regime; and Viktor Leontovitch, *Istoria Liberalizma v Rossii (1762–1914)* (Moscow: Russkii put', 1995). Leontovitch argued that precisely because of the oppressive nature of the state, some liberals in Russia were more radical than liberals in the West.

[61] Rex A. Wade, *The Russian Revolution, 1917*, 3rd ed., New Approaches to European History (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017).

[62] Hugh Seton-Watson, *The Decline of Imperial Russia, 1855–1914* (New York: F.A. Praeger, 1952). Hugh Seton-Watson, *The Russian Empire, 1801–1917* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967). Leonard Schapiro, *The Russian Revolutions of 1917: The Origins of Modern Communism.* (New York: Basic Books, 1984).

[63] George Fischer, *Russian Liberalism. From Gentry to Intelligentsia* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1958).

similar patterns had occurred throughout Asia and Latin America. In the early 1980s, Adam Ulam expressed a similar view: although there was little uniquely Russian in Russia's political development, there was nothing uniquely Western either, and the Russian revolutionary experience turned out to be a combination of Western liberal ideas affecting Russian political reality, with a different effect than was anticipated in the West.[64]

Some scholarship from the 1960s to 1980s focused on the failed February Revolution as a predecessor of the October. During this period, Russian liberalism became an independent subject of research. This led to a broad discussion on whether or not Russian liberals were radical. Among supporters of this view were Leonard Schapiro, who concluded that commonly recognised Russian liberal figures, such as Miliukov, Petrunkevich, or young Struve, should not be considered liberals, but rather as revolutionaries. Schapiro believed that satisfying the population's demands during the revolution would have been a doomed policy: he argued that although the population was interested in economic changes – particularly, the land reform – it remained largely passive with regard to politics. Therefore, policies such as the widening of Zemstvos failed due to a lack of civil engagement, whereas liberals of the Provisional Government did not have the means to introduce a land reform in the midst of the war.[65]

This view has been contested by scholars who revealed liberals' passivity and reluctance to use force in order to hold onto power. The 1960s also introduced a new approach to Russian history: revisionism. This challenged the traditional top-down view of Russian history, and especially of early Soviet history (the biggest debate between traditionalists and revisionists concerned the Stalinist purges of the 1930s). However, the new approach also influenced the study of pre-revolutionary history, by focusing on social history. The revisionists challenged the traditional perception of liberals as a radical movement, and argued that they were dependent on the old regime and wanted to avoid the revolution. Among them was Von Laue, who argued that Miliukov may have advocated "straight-line

[64] Adam Ulam, *Russia's Failed Revolutions. From the Decembrists to the Dissidents* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1981), p. 430.
[65] Leonard Schapiro and Stephen F. Cohen, 'The Russian Revolutions of 1917: The Origins of Modern Communism', *Science and Society* 50, no. 2 (1986), p 239–42.

modernization", believing that eventually freedom would come to Russia.[66] I argue that conservatism and cooperation with the existing political regime were predominant in liberal tactics, above radicalism. William Rosenberg was also among those who blamed liberals for passivity; but he suggested that the Kadets failed to understand the mood of the society, which was no longer passive, and that they did not address some of its needs; whereas doing so would have undermined the Bolsheviks' popularity. Hasegawa and Acton noted the powerlessness of moderate liberal opposition in the Duma, described as "half-hearted" and "feeble".[67] Hamm was of a similar opinion, arguing that liberal opposition remained passive throughout 1916, and even if its programme had been accepted, the changes it suggested were not sufficient to suit the growing demands of the population.[68]

In addition, revisionist historians added to the study of Russian liberalism by taking into consideration the development of Russia's middle class. Sheila Fitzpatrick, for instance, pointed out that liberals represented a professional rather than capitalist middle class, and their attitude to workers' movement was much more benign that of their Western co-thinkers.[69] This is contrary to Pipes' traditionalist approach, which suggested that liberalism was the dominant political thought of Russian intelligentsia for the last fifty years of the old regime.[70] Furthermore, unlike the liberalism of the West, which was supported by middle-class merchants and entrepreneurs, Russian liberals were focusing on the moral foundation and ideas of liberalism, rather than socioeconomic interest, and believed in the existence of absolute ethical norms.[71]

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[66] Theodore H. Von Laue, 'The Prospects of Liberal Democracy in Tsarist Russia', in: Timebrlake, ed., *Essays on Russian Liberalism* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1972), p.179.

[67] Tsuyoshi Hasegawa, *The February Revolution, Petrograd, 1917. The End of Tsarist Regime and the Birth of Dual Power* (London: Brill, 2017), p.161; Edward Acton, *Rethinking the Russian Revolution* (London: Hodder Arnold, 1990), p.125.

[68] Michael Hamm, 'Liberal Politics in Wartime Russia: An Analysis of the Progressive Bloc', *Slavic Review* 33, no. 3 (1976): 453–68, pp. 453–468.

[69] Sheila Fitzpatrick, *The Russian Revolution*, 4th ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982). Laura Engelstein, *The Keys to Happiness: Sex and the Search for Modernity in Fin-de-Siècle Russia* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994) would later also use a broader understanding of Russian liberals, making the educated middle class the focus of her research (see p. 8).

[70] Pipes, *The Russian Revolution*, p. 51.

[71] Richard Pipes, *Struve. Liberal on the Left, 1870–1905* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1970), pp. 284–285, 293.

The topic of Russian liberalism was readdressed after the dissolution of the Soviet Union. Western scholarship of this period was characterised by the decline of the traditionalist/revisionist debate with the opening up of the Russian archives, and the rise of the new political history. Anthropological and cultural historical perspectives started to appear, which continued into the 2000s. Russian scholarship has shown a growing interest in liberal history as Soviet scholars have been able to reconsider their work with the absence of censorship, and to collaborate with political scientists with the aim of constructing a liberal democratic state.[72] Notably, most Russian scholars of late imperial Russian liberalism focus on the Kadets. More often than their Western colleagues, they emphasise the uniqueness of Russian development, and criticise Western scholarship for measuring Russian progress against some Western standard.[73]

However, the greatest debate on the history of liberalism in Russia persisted: Why had liberalism failed in Russia? Historians continued to argue whether it was due to the incompetence of liberals themselves, or whether the Russian state could not develop in a liberal direction. This debate led to further discussions on the absence of a legal system in Russia, which was necessary for the development of liberal society and maintaining the rule of law. Historians who supported this view tended to be more sympathetic to Russian liberals, for whom the issue of nationalist rights was closely linked to their understanding of the legal system. Earlier works on the issue of Russian legal system were produced by Richard Pipes and Geoffrey Hosking. Pipes emphasised a lack of private property in imperial Russia, which he claimed is more common for the Oriental type of state-development.[74] The Russian tsar had overarching power over all Russian land and citizens, who were subjects of the crown and, essentially, slaves. As a result,

[72] For example, in 1998 an international conference on history and contemporary situation of Russian liberalism was organized in Moscow: *Russkii Liberalizm, Istoricheskie Sud'by i Perspektivy: Materialy Mezhdunarodnoii Nauchnoi Konferentsii, Moskva, 27–29 May 1998.* (Moscow: ROSSPEN, 1999).

[73] Valentin Shelokhaev, 'Russkii Liberalizm Kak Istoriograficheskaia i Istoriosofskaia Problema', in *Russkii Liberalizm: Istoricheskie Sud'by i Perspektivy*, 1999, p. 18. Shelokhaev argued in favour of recognising "Russian liberalism" as a separate political thought, different from the West. I. I. Evlampiev, in "Aktual'nye uroki russkogo liberalizma. Stat'ia pervaia: kritika zapadnoĭ traditsii", *Voprosy filosofii* 6 (2015), pp. 90–99 (p. 91), urged against taking Western liberalism as the ideal standard. Kapustin, in "Algoritmy i varianty zapadnogo liberalizma", *Russkii liberalism: Istoricheskie sud'by i perspektivy* (p. 39), also suggested it was wrong to search for a model of liberalism in the West, as a perfect liberal society was completely unattainable and European liberalism in itself was quite diverse.

[74] Pipes, *The Russian Revolution*, p. 158.

the Russian Empire formed as a purely autocratic state, with no concept of private property as such. Geoffrey Hosking agreed with Pipes' description of the Russian state; however, he saw the relationship between the tsar and the people as more profound than mere ownership, but embedded in a cultural and religious understanding.[75] He reached the same conclusion about the absence of the private property concept in Russia; but, according to Hosking, this understanding of land developed not just because of the relationship between the tsar and the people, but because of the organisation of village communes based on the notion of collective responsibility (*krugovaia poruka*). The communes' members had to share responsibility for paying taxes, preventing crime, etc. A collective understanding of land and commune therefore developed, in place of private property and private responsibility for one's own well-being. According to Hosking, this led to a haphazard legislative system, where the communities were self-governed, with tenuous links to the state apparatus.[76] Moreover, as the central state had few means to reinforce legislation, laws were often freely interpreted by local authorities. As a result, when ministries were created in the nineteenth century to encourage public service, in the absence of elected legislature they failed to fulfil their obligations, although this raised wider public expectations of the enforcement of law.[77]

A lack of political education and of a conscious civil society were the major obstacles to liberal development, as acknowledged by Russian liberals of the time.[78] While the West acknowledged private property ownership as a basic right and crucial to the entire idea of liberalism, not all Russian liberals shared this view. Some liberals had the aim of not eliminating private property, but transforming it, stripping it of its individualist traits. Pravilova analysed this paradox of liberal thinking in Russia, where liberals defended community-centred doctrines and therefore argued in favour of publicly owned land.[79] Liberal officials' resentment of individuals' rights is also discussed in Pravilova's earlier work, *Zakonnost' i*

[75] Geoffrey Hosking, 'Patronage and the Russian State', *The Slavonic and East European Review* 78, no. 2 (2000): 301–20.
[76] Geoffrey Hosking, 'Forms of Social Solidarity in Russia and the Soviet Union', *Proceedings: British Academy* 123 (2004): 47–62.
[77] Hosking, "Patronage and the Russian state".
[78] Svetlana Glushkova, *Problema Pravovogo Ideala v Russkom Liberalizme* (Ekaterinburg: Izdatel'stvo gumanitarnogo universiteta, 2001), p. 443.
[79] Ekaterina Pravilova, *A Public Empire: Property and the Quest for the Common Good in Imperial Russia.* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014).

Prava Lichnosti.[80] Liberals believed that landowners had to possess certain characteristics: civil responsibility and knowledge of running the estate; therefore, the issue of the rule of law was closely linked with issues of morality for Russian liberals. Laura Engelstein interpreted this as one of the obstacles to the formation of liberal society in Russia. In her work *The Keys to Happiness*, she used a broad definition of liberals, focusing on educated professionals rather than politicians. This approach helped her to show the plurality of liberal ideas in Russia, many of which were divided regarding the social role of the state; this prevented them from fully accepting Western liberal values. As a result, she argues, liberals supported the village communes over promoting individualism; they operated with a different set of moral ideas to those of the West, yet attempted to incorporate Western-style institutions into Russian realities.[81] In her later work, *Slavophile Empire*, Engelstein examined the long-term consequences of the weak commitment to the rule of law, showing that it led to a wide hostility to institutions, which resulted in erosion of the state. On the eve of the revolution, civil society was not formless, yet it was still primordial.[82] Engelstein pointed out that liberal thinkers in Russia acknowledged the wider population's unpreparedness for reforms, and that they were cautious about fully implementing liberal ideas. She also argued that liberalism in Russia failed due to the strength of the custodial state, which absorbed self-formatting agencies, consequently preventing the development of civil society.[83] Peter Holquist agreed with the view that Russian liberals acknowledged society's backwardness in Russia, and the lack of a strong and conscious civil society. He argued that by 1917, society had not "matured" as liberals had anticipated, which led to their political failure.[84]

Later scholarship also highlighted the importance of moral idealism in the works of Russian liberals. These beliefs resulted in wide liberal support for a

[80] Ekaterina Pravilova, *Zakonnost'i Prava Lichnosti: Administrativnaia Iustitsiia v Rossii, Vtoraia Polovina XIX v.–Oktiabr'1917* (St Petersburg: Izd-vo SZAGS, 2000).
[81] Laura Engelstein, *The keys to happiness: sex and the search for modernity in fin-de-siècle Russia* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994).
[82] Laura Engelstein, *Slavophile Empire: Imperial Russia's Illiberal Path* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2009).
[83] Ibid.
[84] Peter Holquist, *Making War, Forging Revolution. Russia's Continuum of Crisis, 1914-1921* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002).

constitutional monarchy and gradual reforms.[85] Frances Nethercott highlighted the importance of the morality that liberal lawyers attributed to their legal philosophy. Focusing on prominent Kadet lawyers – namely Kistiakovskii, Kotliarevskii, Novgorodtsev, Struve and Trubetskoi – she noticed notions of justice, human dignity, and a "self-limiting" state, which were grounded in natural law. They saw decent human existence and the right to work as basic civil rights, which they wanted to include in the Kadet party programme of 1906.[86] A similar emphasis on morality appeared in Porter's account of Prince L'vov.[87]

Historians who were inclined to argue that Russian liberals were unable to reform Russia, discussed whether parties or organisations that claimed to be liberal actually were, and to what extent were they radical or conservative. Leontovitch had previously suggested that the lack of a government model to apply liberal ideas made Russian liberals much more revolutionary and radical in their activities prior to 1905.[88] This view seems to be commonly accepted. Much later, Laura Engelstein also suggested that radical methods and the myth of revolution were appealing to some liberals who could not exercise power on their own behalf.[89] In the most recent scholarship, Sean Gillen supported a similar view, highlighting Miliukov's preparedness to use the Russo-Japanese War to stir revolutionary sentiments among the population and provoke change, which was taken over by "illusion of patriotism" on the eve of the Great War.[90] This raises the question: Did liberals become more conservative eventually, and, if so, when did this shift happen? With the outbreak of World War I, the Constitutional Democrats suggested putting aside internal political disagreements and uniting in the face of an external threat. According to Fedor Gaida, this radically conservative turn was

[85] For Example, Glushkova, *Problema pravovogo ideala v russkom liberalizme* (p. 443). In her study on the problem of legal ideal in Russian liberalism, Glushkova also concluded that the main obstacles in liberal development at the beginning of the twentieth century were a lack of political education and a conscious civil society. In addition, she noted the importance of moral idealism in Russian mentality, which was reflected in works of liberal conservatives, such as Boris Chicherin.

[86] Frances Nethercott, 'Russian Liberalism and the Philosophy of Law', in *A History of Russian Philosophy 1830–1930: Faith, Reason, and the Defence of Human Dignity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

[87] Thomas E Porter and Lawrence W. Lerner, *Prince George E. L'vov: The Zemstvo, Civil Society, and Liberalism in Late Imperial Russia* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2017).

[88] Leontovitch, *Istoriia liberalizma v Rossii*.

[89] Engelstein, *Slavophile empire: imperial Russia's illiberal path.*

[90] Sean Gillen, "A Great Russia": The State of a Free Disciplined Nation, 1904-14'. In: David Schimmelpenninck van der Oye et al., eds, *Russian international relations in war and revolution, 1914-22*, Vol. 8, Book 1 (Bloomington, Slavica, 2020).

beneficial for the Kadets, who both wanted to gain time to plan a programme, and were hoping for the tsar's support later on in return.[91] Rosenberg concluded that calls for greater unity across the empire were beneficial for the Kadets at the start of the First World War, as they generally represented themselves as a classless party, aiming to improve the life of all social strata in Russia.[92] However, some scholars argued that this brief period of a conservative shift came to an end with the formation of the Progressive Block. Lubkov agreed that after 1915, the liberals of Zemstvos and the Kadets moved from patriotic support of the tsar to radicalisation and formation of the Progressive Block, thus ending the last period of passive opposition.[93]

However, I argue that conservatism and cooperation with the existing political regime were predominant in liberal tactics, above radicalism. Mostly, liberals were conservative in their approach and reluctant to adopt radical methods. Even the Kadets became inherently conservative after 1914, and were unwilling to use illegal methods in 1917.[94] Some scholars agreed that the Kadets were overly focused on theories and were too idealistic in their approach to politics, which led to their subsequent failure.[95] For instance, Christopher Read believed that the parliamentary system advocated by the Constitutional Democrats acted to their disadvantage, as after the revolution it was dominated by socialist parties. Even securing the position of the largest non-socialist liberal party of Russia and Ukraine was not enough to gain a majority. Failure to secure public support and reluctance to use force resulted in the short-lived period of Russian liberal rule.[96] Oleg Budnitskii and Robin Ganev suggested that the Kadets were radicalised

[91] Fedor Gaida, *Liberal'naia Oppozitsiia Na Putiakh k Vlasti. 1914 – Vesna 1917g.* (Moscow: ROSSPEN, 2003).
[92] William Rosenberg, *Liberals in the Russian Revolution. The Constitutional Democratic party, 1917–1921* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1974), p. 13.
[93] Aleksei Lubkov, 'Pervaia Mirovaia Voiina i Russkie Liberaly: Patriotizm — Oppozitsiia — Revolutsiia.', *Federal'nyi Portal*, 2014. Available Online: https://histrf.ru/uploads/media/artworks_object/0001/09/5aa5fde861e537de2cacb83a0013087e9a17a2a8.pdf [Accessed: 28 May 2018].
[94] Daniel Beer, *Renovating Russia: The Human Sciences and the Fate of Liberal Modernity, 1880–1930* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2008), p. 21. Holquist, *Making War, Forging Revolution*.
[95] Sergei Shabanov, 'Vneshnepoliticheskaia Kontseptsiia Partii Kadetov (1905–1917).' (Moscow, Moskovskiĭ gosudarstvennyĭ universitet im. MV Lomonosova, 1994); Vitalii Kustov, 'Konstitutsionno-Demokraticheskaia Partiia (Partiia Narodnoii Svobody): Razrabotka i Realizatsiia Vneshnepoliticheskoii Doktriny: 1905–1920 Gg.' (Saratov, Saratovskii Gosudarstvennyi universitet im. N.G. Chernyshevskogo, 2001).
[96] Christopher Read, 'Late Imperial Russia: Problems and Prospects', *The English Historical Review* cxxii, no. 499 (2007), pp. 1448–49.

already in the midst of the civil war, around 1919. By then they had departed from liberal democratic principles and placed their stake on military dictatorship.[97] Some Kadets themselves, however, believed that they had abandoned their principles already in the summer of 1917, when they supported Kornilov's revolt.[98] My analysis will start in 1905, to analyse how Russian liberal parties developed in the Duma politics, and to contextualise the situation that they found themselves in by the revolutions of 1917.

[97] Oleg Budnitskiĭ and Robert Ganev, 'Russian Liberalism in War and Revolution', *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 5, no. 1 (2004), pp. 149–168, 153–154.
[98] Vladimir Obolenskiĭ, *Moja Zhizn'. Moi Sovremenniki.* (Paris: YMCA Press, 1988), p. 245.

Chapter 1

Russian Liberalism and the Nationalities Issue in the Aftermath of the First Russian Revolution (1905–1914)

The end of the nineteenth century was a turning point for Russian society as a whole, and for the liberal intelligentsia. The circulation of printed material increased, and new institutions of local governance, such as *zemstvos* and municipal *dumas*, were established, which inspired innovative ways of thinking.[99] Consequently, attitudes regarding social change became more apparent, and the demand for political freedom increased. This sparked responses from the Russian liberal intelligentsia, which represented a full range of liberal political beliefs from liberal-conservative to liberal-socialist.

Makarov outlined three different types of liberalism that had formed in Russia by the beginning of the twentieth century: moderate liberalism, zemstvo liberalism and radical liberalism.[100] Moderate liberalism was represented by members of the Russian intelligentsia, professors, writers and economists, who aimed for the progressive development of the liberal reforms of Alexander II. They believed that the gradual liberalisation of the regime would put an end to revolutionary movements in Russia and would peacefully restore the empire. Zemstvo liberalism was represented by members of local zemstvos, namely landowners, who wanted to increase their authority for passing local liberal reforms. Lastly, radical liberalism was represented by clandestine groups that often operated on the same platforms as others (zemstvo meetings, university circles, etc.), but they began to lose hope in gradual reforms and to lean towards revolutionary methods, while still supporting the idea of constitutional monarchy as the ultimate resulting political structure for the Russian Empire.[101]

Zemstvos, institutions of local self-governance, were established in 1864; they were originally intended to assist local governance in dealing with local

[99] Stephen Lovell, 'Looking at Listening in Late Imperial Russia', *The Russian Review* 72, no. 4 (2013).pp. 551–555.
[100] Nikolai Makarov, 'Liberaly o Perspektivakh Rossiiskoii Modernizatsii', in Andrei Klimenko, Aleksei Lubkov et al., *Modeli Obshchestvennogo Razvitiia Rossii. Proekty i Avtory. Vtoraia Polovina 19-Nachalo 20 Veka* (Moscow: Prometeii, 2006).
[101] Ibid.

issues. However, they also provided the basis for the development of political pluralism and fostered the growth of civil society, as zemstvo activists (*zemtsy*) were elected. The impact of zemstvos on the development of liberalism in Russia has been assessed in different ways. While some argued that zemstvos were one of the central drivers of liberal change in pre-revolutionary Russia,[102] others questioned the liberal nature of zemstvo organisations. They argued that they were still very much driven by a narrow margin of elite society and were largely alienated from the wider population, meaning that zemstvos' contribution to the advancement of civil society was exaggerated. In any event, the conservative policies of Alexander III and Nicholas II tightened control over zemstvos, in order to prevent any opposition movements that may have arisen. Failing to achieve the status of a representative local government frustrated the zemstvo members, pushing them to become a platform for liberal opposition. Consequently, the zemstvos gave rise to Russian liberal parties. In 1903, the first significant illegal zemstvo political organisation was formed: the Union of Zemstvo Constitutionalists (*Soiuz Zemtsev-Konstitutsionalistov*), which later formed the Party of Constitutional Democrats (the Kadets).

Among the issues of rights to equality, freedom of speech, peasants' rights to own land, freedom of religion, and several others already discussed within liberal circles, was the national question. Governing a multinational empire proved challenging for Russian autocrats. The state itself was focusing on an imperial identity, but failed to construct it among either Russians or non-Russians. The Russian people's sense of belonging was localised: they associated themselves with a particular province, rather than the state, while some non-Russians remained aware of their own national identities and usually resisted the enforcement of Russian culture. By the end of the nineteenth century, the Russian autocracy was

[102] Thomas E. Porter and Seregny Scott, "The Zemstvo reconsidered", and Thomas S. Pearson, "Ministerial Conflict and the Politics of Zemstvo Reform", in: Alfred B Evans and Vladimir Gelman, eds. *The Politics of Local Government in Russia* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2004), pp. 19–44, 45–67. These authors recognised weaknesses of zemstvos, but nevertheless concluded that they were major drivers of democratisation and modernisation processes in Russia. On the other hand, Roberta Manning argued that zemstvos were the weakness of the old regime, which were alienated from wider society and failed to modernise it. Roberta Manning, 'The Zemstvo and Politics 1864–1914', in Terence Emmons and Wayne S. Vucinich, eds., *The Zemstvo in Russia: An Experiment in Local Self-Government* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), pp. 133–176.

aiming to incorporate foreign borderlands of the Russian Empire through policies of enforced Russification and a uniform centralised administration. Alexander III reversed the liberal reforms of his predecessor, Alexander II. Nicholas II continued with the nationalist agenda, enforcing Russian culture and language, as well as Orthodoxy, on non-Russians in the empire. Thus, local languages were replaced by Russian in schools, the printed press and state departments, and religions other than Orthodoxy were suppressed, particularly in Poland and Armenia. A lack of encouragement for local cultural and religious practices led to a growing political crisis. Meanwhile, while Russians were indeed the titular national group, they made up only 43.3% of the empire's population, according to the 1897 census.[103]

On 9 January 1905, a group of workers headed by Georgii Gapon, an Orthodox priest, marched to the Winter Palace in St Petersburg in a peaceful demonstration to defend workers' rights. Not only did Nicholas II fail to sign the workers' petition; he ordered the soldiers to open fire upon the unarmed people. That day, remembered as Bloody Sunday, served as a catalyst for the outbreak of the revolution. Uprisings occurred within factories and in the army and navy, resulting in more widespread demonstrations against the absolutist power of the Russian monarch. Revolutionary attitudes had been stirred up in Russian society for several years preceding 1905, due to the population's declining living conditions and growing oppression, along with rapid urbanisation under Witte's reforms, at the cost of agriculture.[104] Conditions were further exacerbated by Russia's poor performance in the Russo-Japanese War of 1904–1905; Russia had hoped that being involved in a short victorious war would hold back a revolution.[105] As a result, Nicholas II issued the Manifesto of 17 October, pledging to grant civil

[103] Andreas Kappeler, *The Russian Empire* (Harlow: Pearson Education Ltd, 2001), pp. 397–399.

[104] This section focuses on the unrest of 1905, followed by the signing of October manifesto and subsequent establishment of the Duma in 1906. The origins of the Russian revolution were commonly discovered in the previous years: Adam Ulam (*Russia's Failed Revolutions. From the Decembrists to the Dissidents*. New York: Basic Books, 1997) argued that the revolutionary movement had been building up since the conservative reforms of Alexander III. The moods were especially aggravated by the state's reluctance to cooperate with any kind of opposition, be they moderates or revolutionaries (see pp. 129–225, especially p. 155). Richard Pipes (*The Russian Revolution*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1990) argued that by the 1870s Russia had a radical revolutionary movement. Orlando Figes (*The People's Tragedy: A History of the Russian Revolution*. New York: Viking, 1996) considers the revolutionary period started with the famine of 1891.

[105] Maureen Perrie, 'The Russian Peasant Movement of 1905–1907: Its Social Composition and Revolutionary Significance', *Past & Present* 57 (1972), pp. 123–55, p. 123.

liberties, including the establishment of an elected parliament (the Duma), freedom of speech and assembly, and freedom of conscience. Zemstvo circles, like others, were outraged by the events of Bloody Sunday and attempted to use the revolution to become representatives of all strata of Russian society. Unfortunately, zemstvos ended up becoming rather separated from society, and split off into a more radical circle, which became known as the Third Element; and a more conservative one, which later began to associate itself with more conservative rather than liberal movements.

Importantly, the revolution of 1905 incorporated all strata of Russian society and all regions in the revolutionary upheaval against autocracy: such as working peasants and students, as well as the middle class and intelligentsia.[106] While national minorities supported the revolution and welcomed the October manifesto, the revolutionary outbreak was not a result of a nationalist struggle but of the oppression of both Russian and non-Russian populations. The revolutionary year of 1905, however, was pivotal in terms of several political developments regarding the nationalities question in Russia. Firstly, national minorities witnessed a rapid growth of nationalist political movements throughout the revolutionary year.[107] In the Baltic states, particularly in Latvia, the uprising of 1905 quickly took a nationalist character due to the fact that the national division was reinforced by social stratifications. Ethnic Latvians making up majority of the peasant population, actively supporting the Social Democratic Party, while landowners were predominantly German.[108] Similarly national movements grew in Finland and the Caucasus.[109] However, Joshua Sanborn argued that although the revolution of 1905 showed the scope of dissatisfaction of national minorities'

[106] Abraham Ascher, *The Revolution of 1905* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1988), p. 3.
[107] Hugh Seton-Watson, *The Decline of Imperial Russia. 1855–1914* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1952), p. 231. Seton-Watson (pp. 231–245) discussed nationalist development among non-Russians on the empire's borderlands. This chapter will discuss national-liberal movements in a separate section.
[108] James White, 'The 1905 Revolution in Russia's Baltic provinces'. In: Anthony J. Heywood, Jonathan D. Smele, eds. *The Russian Revolution of 1905* (London: Routledge, 2005). Ivars Ijabs, "Another Baltic Postcolonialism: Young Latvians, Baltic Germans, and the emergence of Latvian National Movement". *Nationalities Papers*, 42, 1 (2014) pp. 88-107.
[109] For scholarship on national uprisings in different Russia's borderlands see for example: Antti Kujala "The Russian revolutionary movement and the Finnish opposition, 1905", *Scandinavian Journal of History*, 5 (1980), pp. 257-275; Shugaib Magomedovich, *Severnyĭ Kavkaz v trekh revoliutsiiakh: po materialam Terskoĭ i Dagestanskoĭ oblasteĭ* (Moscow: Nauka, 1986), Theodore Weeks, *Nation and State in Late Imperial Russia: Nationalism and Russification on the Western Frontier, 1863–1914* (Chicago: Northern Illinois University Press, 1996); Faith Hillis, *Children of Rus': Right-Bank Ukraine and the Invention of a Russian Nation* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2013).

with the Russian government, they were not recognised as a serious threat.[110] In addition, Geoffrey Hosking argued that while national minorities' discontent was one of the factors that contributed to the crisis of tsarism, wider challenges to autocracy were more widespread and happening simultaneously.[111] Secondly, another important result was the split in the constitutionalist movement, between Russian liberals who were prepared to grant autonomy to certain regions, such as Poland and Finland, and to recognise rights of cultural self-determination, such as the Kadets; and more conservative liberals, such as the Octobrists, who believed this would erode the entire empire.[112] In fact at the core of the disagreement between the Kadets and Octobrists which pushed them to form separate parties, was the Finnish question, where Kadets were proponents of wider autonomy of Finland already in 1905, unlike the more conservative Octobrists.[113] This more conservative block thus ended up extending towards more radical right-wing political blocks and further away from the liberal centre, while the Kadets were attempting to find political allies among national minorities by suggesting that their programme was more acceptable. However, members of the Kadet party focused their programme on ensuring equal rights for all-Russian populations, without developing a specific programme that addressed national minorities' needs. Their rights to cultural self-determination, as this chapter discusses, were expected to be satisfied at the all-Russian level, allowing freedom of conscience but without specific provisions by region. Last but not least was the impact that 1905 had on the religious struggle of the non-Orthodox population. Nationalist oppression was closely linked to the position of non-Orthodox faiths in Russia. Prior to issuing the October Manifesto, Nicholas II signed a religious toleration edict on Easter Sunday, 17 April 1905. This edict, which changed the relationship between the church and the Russian state by recognising the rights of all people to choose their faith and convert from Orthodoxy to other faiths, was discussed by

[110] Joshua Sanborn, Imperial Apocalypse: The Great War and the Destruction of the Russian Empire (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014).
[111] Geoffrey Hosking, *The Russian Constitutional Experiment: Government and Duma, 1907-1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973), p. 243.
[112] Geoffrey Hosking, *The Russian Constitutional Experiment,* p.113. Adam Ulam, *Russia's Failed Revolutions. From the Decembrists to the Dissidents* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1981), pp. 197–198.
[113] Geoffrey Hosking, *The Russian Constitutional Experiment*, p. 113.

ministers throughout 1904–1905. The pressure of revolution, particularly from non-Russian and non-Orthodox borderlands, threatened the regime and pushed the tsar to sign the toleration edict, followed later by the October Manifesto. The revolution lasted until the Third June system, which introduced the Third Duma in 1907, and was formed to ensure the dominance of conservative representatives.

This chapter aims to set the scene in the aftermath of the 1905 Russian Revolution. It focuses on two main topics: liberalism in Russia, and nationalist movements; and it analyses where these interlink. It discusses the development of liberal movements within the context of the establishment of the Duma and its members' positions on the nationalities issue. Furthermore, it considers various scenarios of self-determination that formed on the borderlands of the Russian Empire. The chapter also discusses emerging liberal-nationalist parties on the borderlands of the empire and their communication with liberals in the centre, as well as their attempts to extend their outreach to the masses. Both Russian and non-Russian liberal movements were established to support progressive change and cooperate with the tsar and the state towards the gradual establishment of the *Rechtsstaat* (*pravovoe gosudarstvo*), or state of law through education and reform. Conscious citizens and private property were fundamental prerequisites of a liberal state and were necessary for progress. Russian liberals hoped to develop the notion of citizens' interest and participation in societal necessities through reform and education, which would lead to the establishment of the *Rechtsstaat*, as opposed to absolutism.[114] However, Russian liberals stressed that the state was the main instrument for reforms and policymaking, which was part of the rationale behind the willingness to cooperate with the government. This chapter will demonstrate that liberals anticipated that a strong civil society would put more pressure on the government, as citizens developed a strong civic position. Although members of all the liberal movements recognised the necessity for equal rights of all citizens, including not just rights to private property but also rights to cultural self-

[114] This thesis will focus on Russian moderate liberals, whom Aleksei Kara-Murza defined as "classical liberals" (Aleksei Kara-Murza, ed. *Rossiiskii liberalizm: idei i liudi* (Moscow: Novoe izdatel'stvo, 2007), p. 16). The development of liberal theories in Russia has been discussed in great depth. For example: George Fischer, *Russian Liberalism from Gentry to Intelligentsia* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1958); Timberlake, ed., *Essays on Russian Liberalism* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1972); Valentin Shelokhaev, "Diskussionnye problemy istorii russkogo liberalizma v noveiisheii otechestvennoi literature", *Voprosy Istorii* 5 (2007), pp. 3–16.

determination and freedom of faith, they disagreed about the overall political structure of the empire, and to what extent national minorities should be granted political independence from the centre. The chapter also demonstrates that all liberal movements after 1905 were moderate and willing to cooperate with the regime, and that liberals could have become mediators between national minorities and the tsarist government. However, the outbreak of World War I overturned perceptions about nationalities, and radically changed the situation on the western borderlands of the Russian Empire.

Changes in the aftermath of the First Russian Revolution: 1905–1914: Zemstvos

After the 1905 revolution, zemstvos were dominated by conservative forces. In addition, throughout 1905–1907, they faced budget cuts and the firing of more liberal thinkers, professionals known as the Third Element, who were blamed for stirring up peasant uprisings in 1905. In light of the establishment of the Duma and the legalisation of political parties, zemstvos may have seemed an outdated instrument of liberalisation; however, this was not the case. On the contrary, as Thomas Earl Porter argued, in the aftermath of 1905, conservative zemstvo deputies played a crucial role in the reformation and development of civil society.[115] Stolypin contributed to their development. By no means a liberal, Stolypin nevertheless saw the need to modernise Russian villages and educate the peasantry. He also realised that this task would prove challenging for the central state bureaucracy; hence, he removed restrictions placed on zemstvos in 1900, and increased state funding. Consequently, zemstvo programmes blossomed and developed in new spheres, such as adult education and agronomy. Growing demand for zemstvo programmes led to the employment of specially trained professionals – these were the very same Third Element, who considered themselves public servants, rather than the tsar's civil servants. In addition, Stolypin's reform of resettling peasants in Siberia involved zemstvos' assistance. Stolypin's idea was to move some peasants from western provinces into Siberia and the far east, to avoid land shortages and to help peasant communities develop. Zemstvos assisted with the flood of migrants that the government could not cope

[115] Thomas E. Porter and Lawrence W. Lerner, *Prince George E. L'vov: The Zemstvo, Civil Society, and Liberalism in Late Imperial Russia* (London: Lexington books, 2017), p. 72.

with. In 1907, the Congress of the General Zemstvo Organisation announced itself to be a permanent union that the state accepted de facto.[116] The conservative zemstvo circle, similar to a party, even produced its own programme addressing the nationalities issue and presented it at the zemstvo congress, which took place on 12–15 September 1905. The programme was based on recognising individuals' equal rights, regardless of religion or ethnic background. It also recognised Polish autonomy and the rights of the Polish Sejm to pass local legislation, which would have to be approved by the Russian state. Members of Sejm would be elected. Furthermore, it recognised Ukraine's right to autonomous representation through Rada, which would also be formed through the electoral process.[117] This was quite radical: as the following chapter demonstrates, most liberals did not recognise the Ukrainian nationalist movement as a serious issue. The programme was not realised, and, unfortunately, the nationalities issue became controversial for Stolypin's relations with the zemstvo community.

The original zemstvos of 1864 were introduced in central Russia, where the population was predominantly Russian. The need for zemstvos in western regions had long been recognised; however, after the Polish uprising in 1863, Russian authorities believed Polish landowners to be untrustworthy and did not want to place them at the head of local governance. While both the Russian liberals and the Polish welcomed the idea of zemstvos and did not put much emphasis on national features, Russian officials wanted 'loyal Russians' in charge. Despite the fact that after 1863 the number of Polish landowners in western provinces heavily declined due to Russian repressions, when Polish estates were sold off at bargain prices to Russians, some Russians feared that the Poles would have more support even if they were outnumbered. After long discussions, a law introducing zemstvos was adopted on 2 April 1903, which immediately became known as the 'margarine zemstvo', because the positions there were entirely appointive. This undermined

[116] Thomas E Porter and Scott Seregny, 'The Zemstvo Reconsidered', in Alfred B Evans and Vladimir Gelman, eds. *The Politics of Local Government in Russia* (Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield, 2004), p. 29.
[117] *O Pravakh Natsional'nosteii i o Detsentralizatsii. Doklad Biuro s'ezdu Zemskikh i Gorodskikh Deiateleii.* (Moscow: Tipografiia G. Lissena i D. Sovko, 1906), pp. 1, 6–7, 11–17.

the entire idea of an elected institution. Quasi-zemstvos did not last very long, as their incompetence immediately became obvious. After the October Manifesto, the issue of local governance in western provinces had to be revisited.

Peter Stolypin wanted to establish zemstvos in the nine western provinces of Russia, again aiming to introduce Russian local governance in non-Russian communities and to reduce Polish influence in the State Council. As a result, in 1910, the prime minister introduced a Duma bill, according to which newly established institutions of self-governance would be dominated by Russians. He argued that this was a necessary policy to protect Russians in border territories, rather than a means of oppressing the Polish community. This would be achieved by separating Russians and non-Russians into two separate *curias* (councils) and would demolish the social class restrictions in an election. A Russian majority would be guaranteed because the Polish were mostly landowners in the region, while Russians made up the majority of the peasant population. Progressists – a liberal bloc in the Third Duma formed by the Party of Democratic Reform (*Partiia Demokraticheskikh Reform*) and the Party of Peaceful Renovation (*Partiia Mirnogo Obnovleniia*) – did not support the bill.[118] Although they were not opposed to increasing zemstvos' presence, they considered Stolypin's idea to be unfair. In addition, liberal opposition noted that the peasant community was most commonly represented by Ukrainians and Belorussians, whom state authorities stubbornly recognised as Russian. The Duma rejected the curie idea; however, upon agreement with Nicholas II, Stolypin enforced this reform by ratifying Article 87, which allowed the tsar to issue decrees to bypass the Duma. As a result, the bill was passed in 1911.[119] This measure was supposed to be used in extreme circumstances when the Duma was not in session, so most members took this as direct disrespect of the Duma and rejected this reform. This caused disruption in the existing compromise between the government and liberal opposition to zemstvos, and led to growing tensions between nationalist movements and the

[118] Theodore Weeks, *Nation and State in Late Imperial Russia: Nationalism and Russification on the Western Frontier, 1863–1914* (Chicago: Northern Illinois University Press, 1996).
[119] Thomas E Porter and Philip Gleason, 'The Zemstvo and the Transformation of Russian Society', in Mary S. Conroy, ed., *Emerging Democracy in Late Imperial Russia: Case Studies on Local Self-Government (the Zemstvos), State Duma Elections, the Tsarist Government, and the State Council Before and During World War I* (Niwot: University Press of Colorado, 1998), pp. 60–87.

Russian state. Stolypin's law to establish zemstvos in the western provinces consequently led to a political crisis and remained his most controversial act as prime minister. Thus, zemstvos were introduced in six out of nine western provinces, excluding Vil'no, Grodno and Kovno, the three Lithuanian provinces where peasants were predominantly Catholic, and the state feared Polish influence. Zemstvos played a crucial role in the formation of Russian civil society, even though they also served to infringe national minorities in the matter of local self-governance. The Constitutional Democrats were also widely involved in zemstvos. One of the most prominent Kadets and a supporter of local governance was Nikolay Astrov. Educated as a lawyer, he started his political career in the Moscow city Duma, and as Secretary of Zemstvo City Council in 1905. At the start of the First World War, he was the head of the All-Russian City Union Committee. Astrov strongly believed that even with the cities' limited power of self-governance, they managed to use it in full until the Bolshevik revolution of 1917.[120]

Thus, the development of civil society was different for Russian and non-Russian communities: while Russians started to practise their rights to local governance through zemstvos, national minorities were largely deprived of this, as zemstvos in ethnically non-Russian territories were still governed by the Russians. Instead, minority groups had to form independent societies. Thus, societies published and circulated literature or newspapers in non-Russian languages; Polish communities located outside Polish provinces established schools and benevolent societies; and Estonians had already formed agricultural societies in the second half of the nineteenth century.[121] As a result, Russian and non-Russian groups were locked within their own communities, with more limited opportunities for cross-cultural cooperation; this inevitably led to a more rapid growth of national awareness and growing anti-Russian sentiment among minority groups.

[120] Nikolai Astrov, 'Russkie Goroda.' Bakhmeteff Archive, Columbia University, Sofia Vladimirovna Panina Letters, Box 11, Chapters 1–5.
[121] Mary S. Conroy, 'Civil Society in Late Imperial Russia', in: Alfred B. Evans, Laura Henry and Lisa M. Sundstrom, eds., *Russian Civil Society: A Critical Assessment* (London: ME Sharpe, 2006), pp. 17–18.

The Constitutional-Democratic Party

How did the liberal movement change after the 1905 revolution and October Manifesto? Returning to Makarov's system, his radical liberals reformed into official political parties from the underground. On the one hand, liberal thinkers were already partly prepared for post-1905 Russia, as they had been preparing versions of Russian constitutions and were discussing electoral rights and equality reforms. On the other hand, liberals who were frustrated by the oppressive regime and who were not opposed to more radical methods now had to reconsider their position; they had to adjust their work to the new political conditions by spreading their beliefs, attaining popular support for the Duma elections, etc., rather than just discussing theoretical reforms. As Andreii Egorov argued, studies of liberalism in late imperial Russia were frequently dominated by discussions of the Constitutional Democratic Party (the Kadets), which was perceived as the symbol of the liberal movement in Russia and one of the most successful liberal parties of the Duma.[122] A successor of the Union of Liberation (*Soiuz Osvobozhdeniia*) and the Union of Zemstvo Constitutionalists (*Soiuz Zemtsev-Konstitutsionalistov*, the more radical zemstvo wing), the Kadets succeeded in gaining the majority of seats in the first session of the Russian Duma, and represented the left of the liberation movement. The head of the Kadet Central Committee, Pavel Miliukov, placed Russian liberals between conservatives and Socialist Revolutionaries on the Russian political spectrum.[123] Their closest rival in the Duma was the Union of 17 October, the 'Octobrists': a liberal-conservative party formed of the more conservative zemstvo members.

The Kadets supported national minorities' rights to national self-determination. However, just like both the conservatives and socialists, they were primarily interested in maintaining and strengthening Russian borders, rather than permitting any separatism. The Kadets themselves acknowledged that they were relatively new to this matter. As Count Sergei Korf argued, the question of national

[122] Andrei Egorov, *Otechestvennaia Istoriografiia Rossiiskogo Liberalizma Nachala XX Veka* (Moscow, Cherepovetskii gosudarstvennyii universitet, 2010). For the history of the Constitutional Democratic Party and its role in late imperial Russia, see William G. Rosenberg, "Kadets and the politics of ambivalence, 1905–1917", in: Timberlake, ed., *Essays on Russian Liberalism*, pp. 139–163. Valentin Shelokhaev, *Konstitutsionno-Demokraticheskaia Partiia v Rossii i Ėmigratsii* (Moscow: ROSSPEN, 2015).
[123] Pavel Miliukov, *Russia and Its Crisis* (London: Collier-Macmillan, 1966).

minorities' rights was not properly recognised until the late nineteenth century. Even then, however, it did not receive adequate attention, due to the oppressive nature of the regime and the policies of denationalisation. At the time, liberals, according to Korf, were so overwhelmed with questions of individual rights that they did not make the nationalities issue their priority until the beginning of the 1900s, when their knowledge of the problem was very basic and largely based on the period of absolutism.[124] Perceiving Russia to be one indivisible empire, Russian liberals discussed the extent to which different national minorities should be given freedoms. While liberals argued in favour of equal rights for all citizens of the empire, their degrees of political freedom – i.e. local governing authorities – were subject to discussion. Nikolai Korkunov argued that all Russian borderlands, including Finland, entirely lost autonomy in the Russian Empire.[125] The importance of maintaining Russia's unity caused most Kadets to reject the idea of federal structure, but liberals nevertheless categorised nations by their degree of national development, and argued in favour of granting gradual autonomies to national minorities.[126]

Thus, when discussing the rights of national minorities, liberals largely attempted to remain focused on the rights of cultural self-determination (rights to use their local language in education, rights to choose religious confession, etc.), rather than political freedoms. They acknowledged that forced Russification was damaging to the unity of the empire.[127] Ideas of liberalism on Russian western borderlands went hand-in-hand with the issue of national identity and faith. This was why the Kadets' view, that the liberalisation of provinces should be based merely on cultural freedoms, was already considered the most progressive – for

[124] Nina Haiilova, 'Liberaly-Tsentristy o Natsional'nom Voprose Rossii v Gody Pervoii Mirovii Voiiny (Po Stranitsam "Vestnika Evropy")', in: *Etnokonfessianal'nye i Natsional'nye Problemy Razvitiia Otechestvennoi Gosudarstvennosti v Teorii, Programmatike i Politiko-Pravovoii Praktike Rossiiskogo Liberalizma. Sed'mye Muromtsevskie Chteniia* (Orel: ORLIK, 2015), pp. 362–376.

[125] Natalia Karnishina, 'Natsional′nyi Vopros v Teorii Rossiiskogo Liberalizma Kontsa XIX- Nachala XX Vv', in *Muromtsevskie Chteniia. Trudy. 2009–2013* (Orel: Aleksandr Vorob′ev, 2014), pp. 67–76.

[126] Andrei Medushevskii, 'Formirovanie Kontseptsii Rossiiskogo Federalizma v Politicheskikh Teoriiakh Nachala XX Veka', in: *Etnokonfessianal'nye i Natsional'nye Problemy Razvitiia Otechestvennoi Gosudarstvennosti v Teorii, Programmatike i Politiko-Pravovoii Praktike Rossiiskogo Liberalizma,* pp. 26–40.

[127] The pre-revolutionary liberal journal *Liberation* (*Osvobozhdenie*) criticised the tsar's policies of enforced Russification towards national minorities, especially in Finland and Poland. It argued that it caused the rise of separatist movements, instead of unifying the state. See: Natalia Dmitrieva, "Natsional'naia problematika v teoreticheskom nasledii rossiiskogo liberalizma (1902–1905 gg.)", *Ėtnokonfessional'nye i natsional'nye problemy*, pp. 40–47.

instance, they presupposed freedom of faith and the use of a national language, as well as the cultural activities associated with them. This meant that Catholics of Poland and Lithuania, for example, could observe their religious holidays and conduct church services in Latin or local languages, rather than in Russian. However, while accepting the liberal prerequisite of rights to national self-determination, liberals could not agree on the extent of these freedoms. Unity of the Russian state was viewed by everyone as the ultimate goal, and the debates revolved around the issue of how much freedom would suffice for national minorities, without pushing them to the point where they would evolve separate identities and demand full state autonomy from the Russian Empire. Similar to the zemstvos programme, the Kadets' programme was based on an assumption that Russian Imperial Law would guarantee equal rights to all citizens. This would mean that all nationalities would have equal civil political rights, rights to cultural self-determination (including rights to use local languages in public work, and organising schools and societies for the preservation and development of local languages), and rights to use local languages in schools and local administrations (Russia was still supposed to be the official language in the central administration, the army and the fleet).[128] Importantly, the Kadet programme focused on individual rights, which presupposed giving equal rights to all people, regardless of their nationality, race or faith. All citizens should also be guaranteed freedom of the press and self-expression. The Kadets also argued that national representatives should be elected without prejudice regarding their nationality and faith[129] (which also later made them disagree with Stolypin's western zemstvo reform). The only nationalities that the Constitutional Democrats singled out were the Finns, whose constitution they demanded recognition for; and the Poles, for whom the Kadets wanted to establish regional autonomy.[130]

The Kadets themselves developed close links with the national minorities' representatives on Russia's western borderlands, in the hope of attracting more votes. Some national minorities, including the Ukrainians, who did not have a

[128] Valentin Shelokhaev, ed. *S''ezdy i Konferentsii Konstitutsionno-Demokraticheskoii Partii*, vol. 1. 1905–1907 gg. (Moscow: ROSSPEN, 1997), p. 26.
[129] Ibid., p. 25.
[130] Ibid., pp. 191–192.

strong organisation, backed the Kadets in the Dumas. The issue that the Constitutional Democrats faced on the borders was their own perception of the nations, and their ultimate desire to maintain Russia as a strong and indivisible state. The tsarist government was clearly not treating national minorities equally. Some nationalities, such as the Jews, faced more restrictions than others; it was also argued that the Poles were treated worse than Finns. Maxim Kovalevskii, who established the Party of Democratic Reform in Russia, argued that the Russian state was punishing the Poles for uprisings in 1830 and 1863, and did not consider them trustworthy members of the empire. Consequently, the Russian state attempted to prevent the Poles from developing economically and culturally, by imposing restrictions.[131] Likewise, Russian liberals also did not consider national minorities to be equal. For instance, as the above discussion has demonstrated, the Kadets recognised the strong national movement in Poland and Finland. In fact, at a Russian–Polish meeting in April 1905, the Kadets and the Polish progressive-democratic union agreed to demand Polish autonomy.[132] The head of the Polish block in the Duma, Lednitskii, suggested that any national minority could find support in the Kadet party.[133] The issue was that the Kadets understood the slogan within the limits of cultural autonomy, whereas the Poles were seeking full independence from the Russian Empire and perceived the Russian people as hostile occupiers. On the other hand, the Kadets' relations with the Ukrainian nationalist movement faced other challenges: the Constitutional Democrats were not prepared to consider the Ukrainian movement as 'mature' enough to grant them any autonomy, and they attempted to ignore this question for as long as possible. In addition, while most members agreed to discuss this matter in the future, when Ukrainian nationalism developed sufficiently, certain members, such as Petr Struve, refused even to recognise the Ukrainian people as an independent nationality, which led to conflicts between the parties. Consequently, the Kadets earned only a small percentage of votes from national minorities, while the

[131] Maxim Kovalevskii, *Ocherki Po Istorii Politicheskikh Uchrezhdenii Rossii* (Moscow: Territoriia budushchego, 2007), p. 225.
[132] Tatiana Khripachenko, 'Neudavshiisia Kompromiss: Rossiiskie Liberaly i Proekty Pol'skoii i Ukrainskoii Avtonomii v Rossiiskoii Imperii Nakanune Pervoi Mirovoi Voiny', *Studia Slavica et Balcanica Petropolitana* 1, no. 17 (2015), pp. 3–15.
[133] Pavel Miliukov, *Vospominaniia. 1859–1917* (Moscow: Politizdat, 1991), p. 369.

majority of the party's electorate were Russian intelligentsia and the middle classes of Moscow or St Petersburg.[134]

Anna Procyk analysed the liberal attitude to national identity during the Civil War in her case study of Ukraine. She argued that the liberals' slogan of a "one and indivisible Russia" dominated the policies of the Whites in Ukraine, which obstructed their relationship with Ukrainians, as they perceived them as a strand of the Russian nation. In her analysis of the nationalities policies of the Volunteer army in Ukraine, Procyk argued that the main focus of the volunteer army was to preserve the Russian state, and even defeat of the Bolsheviks came second. She focused on the military aspects of the Volunteer army, and argued that Denikin had failed to create a viable military alliance with the Ukrainians because he was not willing to negotiate on the latter's rights, and even discussed federalism.[135] Tatiana Khripachenko's more recent account of liberals' attempts to find a compromise with Ukrainian and Polish nationalists before the Revolution showed that both projects were unsuccessful. Liberals were reluctant to satisfy Polish demands, as they anticipated that Poles would eventually demand full autonomy from Russia. As for the Ukrainian case, Russian liberals did not consider the Ukrainian nation separate from Russia, and thus did not take nationalist demands seriously, merely advocating for Ukrainian right to cultural self-determination.[136]

The Kadets themselves represented a very wide spectrum of beliefs within their group, and often failed to agree on key policies. Simultaneously, some liberals were developing strategies to encourage national minorities to stay within the Russian Empire, by making it more beneficial for them economically and from a security perspective. For instance, Fedor Kokoshkin, a member of the Kadet party, argued in favour of giving national minorities greater freedoms. Fedor Kokoshkin was born in 1871 to an old noble Russian family. His grandfather, one of the most well-known Kokoshkins, had been a councillor of the state (*statskii*

[134] Elena Antonikhina, 'Nekotorye Osobennosti Resheniia Natsional'nogo Voprosa v Teorii i Parlamentskoi Praktike Kadetov', *Territoriia Nauki* 6 (2013), pp. 212–20.
[135] Anna Procyk, *Russian nationalism in Ukraine. The nationality policy and the volunteer army during the Civil War* (Toronto: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies Press, 1995).
[136] Khripachenko, 'Neudavshiisia Kompromiss: Rossiiskie Liberaly i Proekty Pol'skoii i Ukrainskoii Avtonomii v Rossiiskoii Imperii Nakanune Pervoi Mirovoi Voiny', pp. 3–15.

sovetnik). Fedor Fedorovich studied jurisprudence at Moscow State University and then became a professor of law, specialising in legal issues of local self-governance, before he became involved in politics in 1903. Kokoshkin's progress was very rapid; he became an active member of then-clandestine liberal zemstvo-based organisations: namely, *Soiuz Zemtsev-Konstitutsionalistov*, *Soiuz Osvobozhdeniia* and *Beseda*. In 1906, he was an elected deputy in the First Russian Duma. His main interests were to promote equal representation of all ethnic groups in Russia, and legal protection of private lives from state intervention.[137]

As a lawyer, Kokoshkin observed the issue of autonomy mainly from a legal perspective, including the formation of local legislative governing bodies, which would be responsible for regional legislative reforms but would still be governed by a central authority. He concluded that autonomy posed no threat to state unity if all nations received equal and fair treatment, and were united by common political interests. In 1906, he argued for the introduction of national autonomy to certain parts of the empire, especially the Kingdom of Poland. According to Kokoshkin, regional autonomy would both facilitate the work of the Duma, which could not address all local questions of the empire, and also help develop local self-consciousness and satisfy the demands of national minorities. Kokoshkin did not see any threat to the unity of the state in local autonomies; he merely equated them to a high level of regional self-governance – provided that the army, finance, and international relations would remain uniform and subject to a central authority, which would also have the power to overrule local decisions if need be. By contrast, Kokoshkin believed that national minorities' uprisings were more likely to occur when their rights were infringed. Importantly, Kokoshkin did not support a federalist structure, arguing that it was fundamentally different from regional autonomy: as federations were not subjected to central power, this could lead to the separation of federations.[138] Significantly, however, Kokoshkin envisioned this as a long-term programme. Like most other members of the Kadet party, he emphasised Poland as an exception to the general rule, suggesting that

[137] For a fuller biography of Fedor Kokoshkin and his formation as a politician, see: Valentin Shelokhaev, 'Fedor Fedorovich Kokoshkin', *Mezhdunarodnyi Istoricheskii Zhurnal* 8 (2000).
[138] Fedor Kokoshkin, *Oblastnaya Avtonomiya i Edinstvo Rossii* (Moscow: Narodnoe Pravo, 1906).

all other nationalities at the time should be given the right to cultural self-determination, and that the question of political autonomy should be considered once these nations were mature enough.[139]

Another example of liberal thinking on the nationalities question in Russia is Boris Nolde,[140] whom Peter Holquist called "A man of moderate liberal views, situated on the right wing of the Constitutional Democratic Party".[141] Born in 1876 to a Courland noble family, Nolde was also a law professor before he entered politics. He believed that national equality was essential for Russia's political strength. Writing extensively on the notion of autonomy, Nolde studied the origin of the wording of "the Russian state as uniform and indivisible" from the 1906 legislation. He argued that several non-Russian territories, including Ukraine, Courland, Poland and Finland had become part of the Russian Empire through a system of agreements between the Russian monarch and the local representatives. Thus, several of these borderland territories were originally given the right to a certain degree of autonomy and local legislation, along with adherence to that of Russia. However, over time, their rights were suppressed by authoritarian Russian laws. After being historically treated with different degrees of oppression, by the time the 1906 legislation was issued, with the notion that the Russian state was uniform and indivisible, no territory – with the exception of Finland – was emphasised as being an autonomous region.[142]

Unlike Kokoshkin, however, Nolde did not support the idea of dividing the Russian Empire along ethnic lines, arguing that in that case, the titular nation would inevitably suppress the others, just as it had done in the past. In 1917, Nolde suggested that the issue of national minorities should be resolved by guaranteeing equal individual rights and freedoms to a person of any nationality in Russia, stating that every Russian subject had the right to develop their own culture and

[139] Fedor Kokoshkin, *O Pravakh Natsional'nosteii i Detsentralizatsii* (Moscow, 1906), pp. 33, 34, 45–46.
[140] There is no full biography of Boris Nol'de; however, for an account of his political career, see Mak Vishniak, *Sovremennye Zapiski: Vospominaniia Redaktora* (Bloomington: Indiana University Publications, 1957), pp. 150–161. For a recent analysis of Nol'de's work, see Peter Holquist, 'Dilemmas of a Progressive Administrator: Baron Boris Nolde', *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 7, no. 2 (2006), pp. 241–73.
[141] Holquist, "Dilemmas of a progressive administrator", p. 241.
[142] Boris Nolde, *Ocherki Russkogo Gosudarstvennogo Prava* (St Petersburg: Pravda, 2011), pp. 226–228, 461–468.

speak their own language anywhere in the empire. Such a structure would prevent both centralised and decentralised oppression on national grounds. The most fundamental right for national minorities, according to Nolde, was the right to vote and run for electoral positions in local governments. The second most pressing issue was legitimising the use of local languages in schools and churches, and encouraging the development of local cultures and other faiths.[143] Nolde drew on the example of a religious community: specifically, an Armenian Gregorian church, where people would enter the community to satisfy their needs, rather than based on ethnic or territorial principles. Such an organisation would allow flexibility in approaching different corners of the Russian Empire. Unfortunately, Nolde's thoughts on the matter were not formed into any coherent programme; unlike Kokoshkin, who presented his project on the organisation of Poland in 1914. The Kadets intended to use this as a prototype for the political administration of Lithuania and Finland, and would address the Finnish question later.[144]

A more conservative position was held by Peter Struve. Born in 1870 to a family of German origin, Petr Berngardovich Struve was also a graduate of a law faculty. However, unlike Nolde and Kokoshkin, he was more of a politician than a lawyer. Although his original political views were Marxist, Struve's disagreement with the radical means of socialists pushed him to take a more rightist position and join the Kadet party. He became increasingly more liberal-conservative, especially in his years of emigration.[145] Struve imagined a nation as a cultural community, rather than being ethnicity-based. Hence, he believed that anyone could become Russian upon accepting Russian culture. Consequently, Struve did not support the idea of encouraging other cultures of the empire and giving them equal rights, as he envisioned Russianness as the cornerstone of the

[143] Boris Nolde, *Natsional'niy Vopros v Rossii* (Petrograd: Novoe Vremia, 1917)..
[144] Valentin Shelokhaev, *Na Raznye Temy* (Moscow: ROSSPEN, 2016) , pp. 290–291.
[145] For a biography of Struve, see: Richard Pipes, *Struve, Liberal on the Left, 1870–1905* (Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1970), and Pipes, *Struve, Liberal on the Right, 1905–1944* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1980). Peter Stuve was on the right wing of the Kadet party. Struve wrote his book *Patriotica* in 1911, long before national minorities in the Russian Empire had any real chance of forming independent states, and were merely hoping for some recognition of their languages, culture and religion by the Russian state – which the Kadets were claiming they would grant. In the beginning of 1920s, however, the states of Latvia, Lithuania, Armenia, Georgia and others already had de facto existence. In 1919, Struve still remained the voice of liberal imperialism, questioning even the idea of federation, let alone independent nation-states; he mocked Estonian nationalism and the idea of its independent culture.

unity of the empire. Expansionism was an essential feature of 'Russianness' for him, which led him to justify Russia's expansionist foreign policy as a nation of conquerors. Using this logic, Struve classified nationalities as more or less developed, and drew conclusions regarding nationalities policies based on his classifications. On Russia's western borderlands, Struve saw two developed nations: the Finnish and the Polish, which had already developed strong national identities and should not be Russified. He believed that Finland and Poland were made a part of the empire solely for the purpose of showing Russia's political strength, while the empire did not gain much economic benefit from these areas – although Poland could serve as a buffer zone between Russia and Germany. While Struve believed that keeping these nations in the empire through Russification would not be fruitful, belonging to the Russian Empire should have economic and political benefits which would prevent these areas from seeking independence. Here, Struve praised the British ability to govern its colonies, especially more developed areas, such as America or Australia, where the suppression of local cultures and forced central governance would be a sign of weakness. According to Struve, this was the situation with Russian authorities in Finland.[146] While 'developed' nations were expected to coexist with Russians based on mutual interest, Struve did not view any other national cultures as being strong enough to compete with Russia, and believed that peoples with less developed national identities should be Russified in order to strengthen and consolidate the empire.[147] For instance, he argued that 'small-Russian' (Ukrainian) and 'White-Russian' (Belorussian) cultures, which were spoken about solely by local elites, did not, in fact, exist yet as independent nations; they should have continued to exist under the hegemony of 'all-Russian' culture, which would have included 'Great Russians'.

Unlike most other liberals, who saw national minorities' rights to their own culture, language and faith as fundamental, and mostly disagreed at the political level, Struve believed that Russifying most of the empire would strengthen it and bring peace by putting an end to nationalist separatist movements. As a liberal,

[146] Petr Struve, *Patriotica. Politika, Kul'tura, Religiia, Sotsializm* (Moscow: Respublica, 1997), p. 160.
[147] Ibid., p. 287.

Struve recognised the necessity of introducing individual equal rights and supported it, but he believed that the right to cultural hegemony was essential for the Russian people. His liberal principles focused on private property and the idea of a strong and righteous state. Struve described two types of nationalism: 'free' and 'reactionist'. The former was the ideal form of Russian nationalism that Struve envisioned: a strong nation based on equal rights guaranteed by the constitution, where the state would protect its nation. The latter referred to suppressing the rights of other nationalities: anti-Semitism, anti-Armenism, etc. According to Struve, other nations should want to become Russian and live in a better state. Thus, Struve was attempting to answer a key question: Are nation-states more stable than multi-nations? According to him, if a nation was defined by a common culture rather than by an ethnicity, a nation-state could be stable and even expand its borders.

This conservative position on the nationalities issue put Struve outside the realm of broadly liberal thinking. His only fellow thinkers in the Kadet party, for example, were Berdyaev and Kotliarevskii, who also actively argued in favour of Great-Russian nationalism (*Velikorusskii natsionalizm*). Miliukov recognised this group of thinkers as 'liberal theorists', as opposed to 'liberal politicians'. He expressed concern that these views would prevent the Kadets from constructing a dialogue with liberal representatives of other nationalities. In 1913, he concluded that the Kadets had lost their platform in the Caucasus due to the aggravation of national issues.[148] The example of the three members of the Kadet Central Committee demonstrates the broad range of ideas and interpretations of freedoms circulating within this limited circle alone.

National minorities

The turn of the twentieth century and the First Russian Revolution influenced not only Russian liberals. National minorities were also becoming more vocal and formed coherent nationalist parties, some of which were liberal. This section focuses on national-liberal movements in the Russian western borderlands, the Caucasus and Central Asia. Scholars have studied the development of nationalism among non-Russians on the peripheries of the empire. They demonstrated that the

[148] Valentin Shelokhaev, *Liberal'naia Model' Pereustroistva Rossii* (Moscow: ROSSPEN, 1996).

struggle for national self-determination became especially acute in 1906, when these movements formed themselves into local political parties, or cooperated with central Russian parties. In addition, they were largely leftist, cooperating with socialist-revolutionaries or socialist-democrats. However, some of them collaborated with the Kadets, who in 1906 proposed a law to guarantee equal rights to all peoples of the western borderlands, regardless of their nationality or religious background.[149] While studies of imperial policies towards non-Russians are more detailed, there is less description of liberals' attitudes to Russian peripheries.

The most articulated party programmes and demands came from Poland and Finland, followed by the Armenians of Transcaucasia; however, nationalist movements were also framing political opposition in Belorussia and Ukraine, the Baltic region, and even in Karelia. Some demanded full autonomy from Russia, while others were seeking either cultural or territorial autonomy within the empire. Interestingly, those demanding full separation represented a minority; these included the National Democratic Party of Poland. Generally, Poland was arguably in the least advantageous position, compared to other non-Russian provinces: for instance, the Polish nobility were continuously punished for the 1863 uprising. Forced Russification made socialist and nationalist movements in Poland especially popular, and Polish National Democrats saw Russia as an invader, just like Austro-Hungarian Empire. The party began by making radical demands in the late nineteenth century, but later shifted to a more conservative position after the revolution of 1905, and abandoned the idea of an armed struggle against Russia. Polish National Democrats supported the Russian government in the 1905 revolution, and afterwards, the party successfully secured the majority of the Polish mandate in the first Duma, in the hope of thereby achieving their political goals. By 1907, Polish National Democrats even grew closer to the Russian liberal-conservative Union of Octobrists, demanding only cultural autonomy and the equal rights of Poles and Russians. It was only with the outbreak of World War I that the Polish struggle for independence strengthened. With the support of the foreign Entente Powers, which were interested in the emergence of an independent

[149] Aleksei Miller et al., *Zapadnye Okrainy Rossiĭskoĭ Imperii.* (Moscow: Novoe literaturnoe obozrenie, 2006).

Poland, Polish demands for national autonomy became more direct.[150] Another independent ethnic minority in the Russian Empire was the Finns. Historically Russia's most independent borderland, Finland had had active nationalist parties since the 1880s. Nicholas II's Russification policies and tightening of Finnish freedoms caused a unrest among the Finns. Although a consensus was achieved in January 1904 that recognised the Finnish right to self-determination within Russia, the Finns began to support more radical parties over those that cooperated with state officials. Thus, the Finnish Party, which was hoping to create change through a series of mutual concessions with the tsarist government, lost to the Young Finnish Party at the Sejm elections. The Finnish Party remained loyal to the tsarist government throughout World War I; and while it aimed to widen the legislative rights of the Finnish Sejm, it largely focused on agrarian and language issues. The Young Finnish Party had a more clearly liberal position. Formed in 1894, it stressed the need for a constitution and the widening of electoral rights. The party's tactic of passive resistance, however, was still losing to the social-democratic majority in Finland.[151]

Thus, even liberal-nationalist movements in Russia's most independent areas, which were recognised as such even by the Russian state, were relatively conservative and willing to cooperate with the Russian government. Liberals among other national minorities also developed similar moderate programmes. Estonia, for example, had only one fully formed political party by 1905: the Estonian National Progress Party. Formed by bourgeois anti-German societies, Estonian liberals numbered only about 1,000 members and could not operate without the support of their Russian co-thinkers.[152] Hence, they supported the political programme of the Kadets in the Dumas and welcomed the state anti-German policies of World War I. National-liberal movements in some areas, including Lithuania, Belorussia and Karelia, only began to actively develop after 1905. This was due to the large peasant populations, as their lack of a nobility or

[150] Dmitrii Kondratenko, *Samoderzhavie, Liberaly i Natsional'nyii Vopros v Rossii v Kontse XIX – Nachale XX Veka.* (Kirov: Izdatel'stvo Viatskogo gos. gumanitarnogo universiteta, 2005), pp. 159–163.
[151] Antti Kujala, 'The Policy of Russian Government toward Finland, 1905–1917: A Case-Study of the Nationalities Question in the Last Years of the Russian Empire', in Mary S. Conroy, ed. *Emerging Democracy in Late Imperial Russia* (Niwot: University Press of Colorado, 1998) , pp. 151, 160.
[152] Kondratenko, *Samoderzhavie, liberaly i natsional'nyii vopros v Rossii v kontse XIX – nachale XX veka*, pp. 169–171.

middle class complicated the spread of a nationalist ideology among the masses. In Belorussia, the liberal-nationalist movement formed into a party only after the February revolution – despite the fact that Belorussian intelligentsia had discussed the issue of national self-determination since the nineteenth century, due to opposition to the concept of west-Russianism (*Zapadnorusizm*), which denied the existence of an independent Belorussian identity.

Ukrainian national-liberals were Ukrainian nationalists, and were the only national minority representatives whose programme had a Russia-wide agenda. The Ukrainian Democratic Party envisioned Russia as a federative republic, organised on a national-territorial basis with a decentralised government. It was also, arguably, originally one of the most pro-Russian parties. According to Faith Hillis, nineteenth-century political activists in south-western Ukraine developed a nationalist idea based on strong links with the Russian centre through cultural and religious ties. Proponents of this 'Little Russian' idea viewed the aim of Orthodox Slavs in Ukraine to be protecting the region from the influence of foreign cultures, namely Jews and Polish Catholics. It was the Russian misunderstanding of the 'Little Russian' movement and aggressive Russification policies that led to the emergence of Ukrainian nationalism in the aftermath of the 1905 revolution, when it was enhanced by the spread of nationalism and violence.[153]

The national-liberal movement in Central Asia and the Caucasus was more active than in the western provinces, although still not very popular. The largest liberal movement in Central Asia was *Alash*, which attempted to attract the attention of Russian officials to region-specific issues. The rights of Muslims, and equal land-distribution rights among Russians and the Kazakh and Tadjik populations, were their main concerns. Regarding the issue of the October Manifesto, the Kyrgyz community was particularly satisfied with the promise of personal integrity and freedom of conscience.[154] However, geographical borders in Central Asia were not as clearly divided along ethnic lines. Contemporary Kazakh territory was divided into four regions, where the centre and east were part

[153] Faith Hillis, *Children of Rus': Right-Bank Ukraine and the Invention of a Russian Nation* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2013), pp. 3–7.
[154] Dina Amanzholova, 'Iz Istorii Sopernichestva Partiino-Politicheskikh Proektov i Ideii v Stepnom Krae (Nachalo XX v.)', *Rossiiskie Regiony: Vzgliad v Budushchee*, 2016, pp: 15–42.

of the Steppe region, and Omsk was the local capital. In addition, the Siberian Cossack army was based in Kazakhstan, which led to the blurring of ethnic boundaries and encouraged relations with Siberia, the Urals and the Volga region. Hence, Kazakh nationalist demands remained relatively conservative for a long time, and did not envision separatism.[155] Liberal-nationalist movements in the Caucasus were more demanding in terms of political autonomy than those in Central Asia. Armenian national-liberals formed a party called *Dashnaktsutyn*. Its right wing formed a separate movement in 1917, which would only allow ethnic Armenians to be members and would only consider short-term collaborations with other nationalities. The lack of a middle class and professional intelligentsia in Georgia left the nationalist movement in the hands of the Georgian elite. Unlike nationalist-liberal movements elsewhere, Georgian nationalist-liberals were more radical than socialists and argued in favour of Georgian national self-determination with the help of Europe. However, socialist movements prevailed over liberals in Georgia, as they did elsewhere, and the majority supported an internationalist revolutionary movement that would not focus on Georgian liberation.[156]

Nationalist-liberal movements were only a part of a wider nationalist agenda that was becoming increasingly more popular on the borderlands of the Russian Empire. National liberals shared similar characteristics, especially in western Russia. Firstly, they were often confined to upper-class, educated groups, and members of the professional intelligentsia. They also lacked the funds to develop wide political campaigns and to attract sufficient attention to form independent political parties. For this reason, many of them resorted to educational campaigns and focused on fostering civil society, especially after 1905, or cooperated with the Russian Constitutional Democratic Party. Indeed, national-liberal movements were strikingly similar to the Russian Kadets in their programmes and their support base: local intelligentsia and landowners struggled to gain support among the wider population, especially peasants or workers. Similar to the Kadets, most liberal-nationalist movements supported the 1905 revolution and took a more conservative position, hoping to implement changes

[155] Ibid.
[156] Andreas Kappeler, *The Russian Empire* (Harlow: Pearson Education Ltd, 2001), pp. 231–232.

through the Duma and through soft protest, rather than by revolutionary means. The relative conservatism of national-liberal parties created opportunities for cooperation with Russian liberal circles. However, state reforms after 1905 failed to effectively represent national minorities, while the national-liberal position remained too mild for ethnic minorities. More radical nationalist or socialist parties were gaining support in Russian borderlands, as compared to local liberals. This complicated the Russian Constitutional Democratic Party's attempts to reach out to the borderlands: while most nationalist movements defined their relations to the Russian monarchy through a demand for autonomy and rights to national self-determination, their interpretation of these concepts was broader than that of either the Russian state or Russian liberals, who were focusing on cultural aspects of self-determination, rather than political aspects, and were concerned with the limits of power of local governments. Non-Russian representations in the Dumas and State Council were scarce; in response, national minorities had to unite to push for de-Russification. The situation was further complicated by the outbreak of World War I and the February Revolution, as the next chapter demonstrates.

A note on the Jewish question

In the broader struggle of national minorities in Russia for rights to self-determination, the Jewish population of the empire inevitably stood out. Most of the Russian Empire's Jewish population had been absorbed by the second Partition of Poland in 1793. While the Jews were restricted to Western provinces of the empire known as the Pale of Settlement, initially the state hardly intervened in Jewish affairs, allowing their communities to develop their own associations. In the late nineteenth century, conservative reforms restricted the rights and freedoms of Jewish communities, both culturally and economically.[157] A nation with distinct culture, language, and religion, yet without a territory to claim, it was not clear how to include the rights of the Jewish minority in liberal programmes. The Jewish question is outside the scope of this thesis, since its focus is on western and southern provinces that demanded territorial autonomy. Nevertheless, the attitude

[157] Michael Hickey, "The Jews in the Revolution", *A Companion to the Russian Revolution*, 1st ed. (Chichester: Wiley Blackwell, 2020), p. 377.

to the Jewish right to self-determination is an important aspect of liberals' overall consideration of the minorities issue.

The Jewish nationalist movement was developing similarly to other nationalities. The most radical views were shared by the Zionists, whose ultimate long-term goal was to establish an independent Jewish state. In the late nineteenth century, Simon Dubnov pioneered the idea of Jewish autonomism, arguing that the Jews should have the same rights of cultural self-determination as other nationalities in the Russian Empire.[158] Given their lack of territorial claims in Russia, Dubnov focused on the Jews' rights to cultural autonomy, such as in education, language, religious and cultural practices. Dubnov formed the Jewish People's Party, *Folkspartei*, with a programme very similar to that of the Kadets; however, it included a separate notion on the Jewish issue, envisioning an autonomous Jewish community within the Russian Empire. Many Jews in the empire had historically tried to assimilate with the local society, and adopt Russian cultural values and traditions.[159] However, having been subjected to policies of enforced Russification and the rise of anti-Semitism, the Jewish intelligentsia became more nationalist, as had happened with other national minorities in the empire. Alexander III and Nicholas II were both openly anti-Semitic; and, while the initiation of pogroms did not come from above, they did not discourage the Russian ultra-Right. Most ministers in the old imperial government were not sympathetic to the Jewish minority either, with Count Ivan Tolstoi, Witte's minister of education, being the only minister to support unconditional emancipation of Jews.[160] Most members of the Jewish nationalist movement were either liberals or socialists, and they built their agenda based on theories of equal rights and universal suffrage. While Jewish socialists prioritised the class struggle over the nationalist struggle, Jewish liberals worked on the recognition of Jewish rights as part of a wider provision of equal individual rights for all subjects of the

[158] Simon Rabinovitch, *Jewish Rights, National Rites: Nationalism and Autonomy in Late Imperial and Revolutionary Russia* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2014), p. 2. See Rabinovich for a full account of the Jewish nationalist movement in late imperial and revolutionary Russia.
[159] Rabinovitch, p. 8.
[160] Hans Rogger, *Jewish Policies and Right-Wing Politics in Imperial Russia* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1986), p. 163. Rogger wrote an account of the Russian government's official policies towards the Jewish minority, discussing why such strong anti-Semitic sentiments were persistent in late imperial Russia.

empire. Some liberal Jews aimed to create a Russian civil society parallel to the Jewish national equivalent. In the aftermath of the First Russian Revolution, Jewish nationalist aspirations were in line with the Kadets' programme. Rights to cultural autonomy, after all, were something that the Kadets envisioned for national minorities. Their programme also included decentralisation of the empire, with universal suffrage rights, which would include the Jews, along with other nationalities of the empire, in Russian political life.

On the other hand, Benjamin Nathans convincingly argued that there was some degree of Jewish integration and politically, the Jews were not necessarily 'confined' to the Zionism or the workers' movement.[161] He argued that before the pogroms of 1881, Jews that were willing to integrate into the Russian society were able to do so and they successfully moved "Beyond the Pale," meaning both a physical relocation to the centre of the Empire: St Petersburg and, to a lesser extent, Moscow; and a metaphorical cultural move beyond the traditional culture of the Jewry and integrating with the Russian culture.[162] According to Nathans, universities and the legal sphere were some of the most successful cases of Jewish integration into the Russian society.[163] Examples of the members of the Kadet party prove his point. Many Russian liberals had a Jewish background. Some of the prominent Kadets were Jewish, the most well-known being Maxim Vinaver, Iosif Gessen and Mikhail Gerzenstein. Tyrkova-Williams also argued that Miliukov was very popular within the Russian Jewish community.[164] Nevertheless, the party insisted that it was Russian and represented the interests of the Russian state. The party's programme did not address the Jewish question explicitly, and included it under the wider umbrella of the rights of national minorities. Tyrkova-Williams explicitly mentioned in her memoirs that the Kadet party was not Jewish, and that the Kadets had far fewer Jewish members than the socialist parties. She also emphasised that the main decision-makers of the party were not from a Jewish

[161] Benjamin Nathans, "The Other Modern Jewish Politics. Integration and Modernity in Fin de Siècle Russia," in Zvi Gitelman, ed., *The Emergence of Modern Jewish Politics. Bundism and Zionism in Eastern Europe.* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2003), p. 33.
[162] Benjamin Nathans, *Beyond the Pale: The Jewish Encounter with Late Imperial Russia* (Berkley, University of California Press, 2002), pp. 78-79.
[163] Ibid, pp. 215, 320.
[164] Ariadna Tyrkova-Williams, *Na Putyakh k Svobode* (New York: Izd-vo im. Chekhova, 1952), p. 281.

background.[165] Jewish Kadets were involved in Jewish parties, which were separate from the Constitutional Democrats, even though some of them shared similar values and even borrowed from the Kadet programme. Maxim Vinaver, for example, was one of the founders of the Jewish clandestine organisation, the Union of Full Rights, and then of a liberal Jewish People's Group. He was a prominent member of the Jewish nationalist-liberal movement, but separated it from his work in the Kadet Party. While the Kadets condemned pogroms and anti-Semitism, they were also very clear in distinguishing themselves as a Russian party and not serving the interests of the Jewish community. Association with the Jews did not benefit the Kadets, especially before the February Revolution; for instance, it prevented them from establishing contacts with more conservative elements, or attracting a wider conservative Russian population. In fact, the Union of Russian People (*Soiuz Russkogo Naroda*), a far-right nationalist party, considered the Kadets the most dangerous and powerful of all parties in 1907, because it consisted mostly of rich, educated people, who had "too much money and free time".[166] Tyrkova-Williams complained that the *Rech'* newspaper was constantly attacked by the right wing as a Jewish publication. Although *Rech'* was thought of as the Kadets' press, it was in fact independent, headed by prominent Kadet leaders, Miliukov and Gessen. Tyrkova emphasised that *Rech'* was always a Russian newspaper, which "defended Russian interests, including equal rights of the Jews".[167] The rights of the Jewish community for her, as for the rest of the Kadets, was a wider issue of the rights of national minorities, who had all suffered from policies of Russification and oppression by the tsarist regime. Iosif Gessen, the editor of *Rech'*, did not reflect on his national background in his memoirs. He only talked about encountering anti-Semitism in Berlin in 1927, when he was delivering a speech for the ten-year anniversary of the Russian Revolution, and he and his wife were threatened on their way to the event.

When the Great War started, liberal Jews welcomed it and called for unity with the Entente Powers. However, anti-Semitic moods were rising in the society, as Jews were perceived as traitors and German allies. Pogroms became

[165] Tyrkova-Williams, p. 280.
[166] Rogger, *Jewish Policies and Right-Wing Politics in Imperial Russia*, p. 220.
[167] Tyrkova-Williams, *Na Putyakh k Svobode*, p. 370.

increasingly common. The Jewish community, just like other national minorities, initially welcomed the February Revolution, hoping that the Provisional Government and the Soviets would improve the minorities' position in Russia and recognise their rights. Jewish civil society developed rapidly in the few months of the Provisional Government, with many participating in local elections, and cultural activists working on different educational initiatives. However, the October Revolution put a halt to these developments. The White Army in Russia was infamous for its anti-Semitism and pogroms. This posed a problem for Russian liberals as well, who were building their reputation for promoting equal rights in Russia, and did not want to be associated with anti-Semitism. As a result, they tried to clearly distinguish themselves from the initiators of the pogroms, and from the anti-Semitic radical conservatives among the Whites. The Kharkov Committee of the Constitutional Democratic Party addressed this issue in their resolution of November 1919. While it stated that the party deemed the pogroms morally unacceptable and adversely affecting the greater aim of the White movement, they also put some blame on the Bolsheviks. The "defiling atmosphere" and "moral barbarization" created by the Bolsheviks, according to the Kadets, led to the spread of pogroms among the population.[168] While many liberal and socialist Jews were willing to support the Whites, the growing presence of conservative forces and an anti-Semitic mood pushed them to turn to the Bolsheviks.

The wider White movement favoured Jewish support, and tried to present itself as a protector of the Jews. Boris Bakhmeteff argued that the Jews should be interested in reconstructing a strong, liberal and united Russia, since pogroms were originating from Russian factionalism. Newly established states of Poland, Rumania, as well as Ukraine, Latvia and Lithuania, were too focused on a "narrow nationalistic" and "shallow chauvinistic" agenda; and this, according to Bakhmeteff, was the main cause of anti-Semitism. A strong liberal Russia would be the solution to the Jewish question, since it would be able to implement and enforce laws providing the Jews with equal rights and protecting them from anti-

[168] 'Postanovlenie Khar'kovskogo Soveshchaniia Chlenov Partii Narodnoĭ Svobody, 3–6 Noiabria 1919 g.', Bakhmeteff Archive, Columbia University, Ariadna Vladimirovna Tyrkova-Williams papers, Box 29. Original quote: «растленная атмосфера, созданная большевизмом <…> порожденное большевизмом моральное одичание вызвало также распространение еврейских погромов».

Semitism.[169] Contrary to Bakhmeteff's views, the short-lived Ukrainian state officially recognised Jewish autonomy.[170] Boris Bakhmeteff wrote to Miliukov in March 1921, stating that the Jewish community in America was inclined to support the Bolsheviks in light of the horrific pogroms initiated by the Whites. While Jewish communities originally were sympathetic to the White cause, they started to wonder if there was any reason to support the White governments, when the Soviets were the only institutions protecting Jewish masses in Russia. Bakhmeteff asked Miliukov to involve Maxim Vinaver, who could influence Jewish communities abroad and explain the dangers of Bolshevism.[171] According to the propaganda of the Russian Liberation Committee, the Jewish population in Russia were supposedly victims of the Bolshevik Terror, rather than of the Whites. The Bolsheviks were depriving the Jews of their national self-determination, claimed the Committee's Bulletin, which quoted the *Izvestia* newspaper: "The Jewish proletariat, which alone has the right to speak in the name of the Jewish people, must be made aware that it should seek support only amongst conscious workers of other nationalities".[172]

Since the Jewish population did not claim territorial autonomy, this topic will not be discussed in the subsequent chapters. However, the nature of the relationship between the Russian liberals and the Jewish minority is an interesting representation of liberals' views on nationalities' rights. Their belief in individual rights over rights to national self-determination became especially clear when addressing the rights of the Jewish population, since they made efforts to not be associated with the Jewish community, but to treat all nationalities equally.

Nationalism, faith and freedom of conscience

Andreas Kappeler argued that the October Manifesto gave a considerable impetus to all nationalist movements across the empire. He noted that policies of forced

[169] 'Note by Boris Bakhmeteff for the Paris Peace Conference', 10 June 1919, Bakhmeteff Archive, Columbia University, Boris Bahkmeteff Papers, Box 57.
[170] Rabinovitch, *Jewish Rights, National Rites: Nationalism and Autonomy in Late Imperial and Revolutionary Russia*, p. 257.
[171] Boris Bakhmeteff, 'Letter to Pavel Miliukov', 30 March 1921. Bakhmeteff Archive, Columbia University, Bakhmeteff Papers, Box 5.
[172] 'Bulletins of the Russian Liberation Committee, No 24', 2 August 1919. Bakhmeteff Archive, Columbia University, Tyrkowa-Williams Papers, Box 27.

Russification were already softening, beginning in 1904. For example, the ban on Lithuanian print was lifted, and the religious toleration edict was already executed in April 1905, allowing hundreds of thousands of Catholics and Tatars who had been forced into Orthodoxy to revert to their faiths. Lastly, the October Manifesto of 1905 permitted the formation of national organisations, which politicised national minorities groups, some of which formed independent political parties.[173] In addition, after 1906, national minorities became represented in the Duma, which included 220 non-Russian representatives, largely from Poland and Ukraine.[174] Although these seemingly positive changes were occurring at the turn of the century, they were largely the result of growing dissatisfaction with aggressive Russification, and were the government's attempts to soothe the situation without actually granting any real freedoms.

The religious question was one of the most pressing, and the one most closely connected with the rights of national minorities. Such people were most frequently oppressed on the grounds of their non-Orthodox faith, rather than their nationality, while religion remained the main aspect of self-identification in the Russian Empire for both Russians and non-Russians. Prior to the October Manifesto, the tsarist government had already attempted to address this issue in other legislation. Thus, the Edict of Toleration of 17 April 1905 had been preceded by a December Decree of 1904, which initiated a revision of the state position towards non-Orthodox groups and adopted a policy of religious toleration. The Toleration Edict fully allowed conversion from one faith to another, including Orthodoxy. However, Poole highlighted the stark difference between the "toleration" of April 1905 and the "freedom of conscience" promised in October 1905. Toleration was understood as a "revocable privilege" that the state granted to its people, whereas freedom of conscience was an irrevocable right of an individual. It was adopted in the October Manifesto largely due to its liberal connotations that stressed the individual – which was so central to liberal ideology – rather than the collective of a religious group. 'Freedom of conscience' had already long been a common term in the Russian liberal and nationalist lexicon

[173] Kappeler, *The Russian Empire*, pp. 231–232.
[174] Kondratenko, *Samoderzhavie, liberaly i nacional'nyj vopros v Rossii v konce XIX – nachale XX veka*, p. 84.

and print press; it had even appeared in the tsar's court as a frequent point of wide discussion.[175]

Paradoxically, this posed challenges to both Orthodox and non-Orthodox national minorities on the Russian western borderlands. Orthodox believers, such as Ukrainians and Belarussians, struggled to draw Russian attention to their distinct national identities, whereas other parts of western Russia, such as Catholic Poland, were oppressed based on their religious backgrounds. As Robert Werth argued, members of the Russian Orthodox Church disliked Catholics the most.[176] Consequently, religious toleration became an issue that united various liberal positions in the Russian Duma: Kadets, Octobrists and Progressists (and their predecessor, *Partiia Obnovleniia*) all argued in favour of religious tolerance, with some variations. The Kadets' programme guaranteed each person the individual freedoms of faith and conscience. The Party of Renovation took a similar position, while Progressists, who formed in 1912, took a more radical position and demanded both freedom of conscience and of the church, and argued in favour of recognising the cultural differences of all confessions. Octobrists took a more conservative stance, and wanted to develop a way to raise the authority of the Russian Orthodox Church. They argued that the question of faith should be discussed by a non-party group formed of religious intelligentsia, but recognised that this should be done in an atmosphere of mutual respect and religious tolerance.[177] Unfortunately, liberals' ideas regarding religious freedoms were not implemented as expected. Stolypin bypassed the idea of 'freedom of conscience' reform in favour of other reform programmes. The tsarist state refused to equate all faiths and to strip the Orthodox Church of its privileges; the state opted to use it, instead, to maintain traditional order throughout 1905–1907.[178] Importantly, the part of the October Manifesto on the freedom of conscience was one of the most popular among ethnic minorities, as previously mentioned; this showed the

[175] Paul W. Werth, *The Tsar's Foreign Faiths: Toleration and the Fate of Religious Freedom in Imperial Russia* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), p. 202; Randall A. Poole, 'Religious Toleration, Freedom of Conscience, and Russian Liberalism', *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 13, no. 3 (2012), pp. 611–34., p. 612.
[176] Werth, *The Tsar's Foreign Faiths*, p. 34.
[177] Aleksandr Safonov, *Svoboda Sovesti i Modernizatsiia Veroispovednogo Zakonodatel'stva Rossiiskoii Imperii v Nachale XX v.* (Tambov: Izdatel'stvo Pershina R.V., 2007).
[178] Werth, *The Tsar's Foreign Faiths.*

demand for such reforms, as well as precisely how long overdue they were. However, it is important to note that the October Manifesto gave a mere promise to address this issue in additional legislation – something that was attempted by the Duma but was never put into practice.[179]

National movements had already begun to consolidate in Russia by the end of the nineteenth century, in response to Russia's aggressive policies of Russification. The revolution of 1905 and the October Manifesto gave new hope that both nationalities movements and the Russian liberal opposition might strike a compromise with the Russian state. However, their hopes soon vanished. While the tsarist government made some changes and allotted some cultural and religious freedoms, Nicholas II was not prepared to give up his autocratic power. The Russian state found itself in a peculiar situation: it realised that the country was in desperate need of modernisation, and it attempted to implement changes, while maintaining the autocratic regime. Russian liberal movements became legalised, and they proposed forms of liberalisation while maintaining the monarchy. Hence, after the smoke from the revolution had cleared and the Duma was established, the opposition hoped to work with the government, rather than against it. As Paul Miliukov described it: "His Majesty's opposition, rather than the opposition to His Majesty".[180] The outbreak of World War I reverted policies of liberalisation, as the state's primary concern became external. Liberals also reverted to a more conservative position, with the Kadets' newspaper, *Rech',* famously urging opposition parties to put internal disputes aside and focus on supporting the monarch, for the protection of the motherland. While in the beginning, the population widely supported the aims of the war, Russia's defeats and the growing economic crisis created widespread discontent, which only further revealed previously unresolved problems. This was especially true for the aggravated nationalities issue, as most national minorities were dissatisfied with the military conscription programme. The following chapter further examines the changes in liberal policies during the war, and the position of national minorities.

[179] Paul W. Werth, 'The Emergence of "Freedom of Conscience" in Imperial Russia', *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 13, no. 3 (2012), pp. 585–610.
[180] Pavel Miliukov, 'Speech by Pavel Miliukov', *Rech',* 19 July 1919.

Liberals saw themselves as the ideal balance between the autocratic regime and radical socialists or nationalists, regarding the nationalities issue; however, this position nevertheless proved to be dissatisfying for both parties. This idea of political centrism and being in the middle would remain important for liberals, and Kadets in particular, throughout the revolutions and the civil war; this topic will be readdressed in the subsequent chapters. The regime was often unwilling to accommodate even modest demands, while national minorities demanded more action. Originally, slogans for national self-determination seemed to be able to unite liberal and nationalist movements. However, Russian liberals understood the concept of autonomy in much narrower terms than nationalists; while the liberal movement among national minorities, which was more willing to cooperate with the Russian autocracy, failed to attract wide attention. There were many occasions on which the Russian Revolution could have taken a different turn.[181] The outbreak of the First World War changed the direction of liberal progress, as well as the course of Russian history. As Richard Pipes argued, it put too much pressure on an already belligerent country, where revolutionary sentiments had already been stirring among several social groups.[182] The next chapter will analyse how the war influenced the liberals' position towards national minorities, and how it affected Russia's borderlands themselves. On the one hand, it helped some Kadets to advance their positions in the government, while on the other, it caused the party to choose a more conservative approach to national minorities.

[181] For example: Tony Brenton, ed., *Was Revolution Inevitable?: Turning Points of the Russian Revolution* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017). The book discusses several possible turning points in Russian history since the beginning of the twentieth century.
[182] Richard Pipes, "Did the Russian Revolution Have to Happen?", *The American Scholar* 64, 2 (1994), p. 221.

Chapter 2

The Great War

On 28 July 1914 Austria-Hungary declared war on Serbia, following the assassination of the Austro-Hungarian heir, Franz Ferdinand, by a Bosnian nationalist – this was used as an excuse. Serbia appealed to Russia for assistance, and Russia intervened to protect a smaller 'brotherly' Slavic nation. France and Great Britain followed. The war resulted in the deadliest military conflict the world powers were to engage in, and it turned out to be the last straw for Russia's old regime. An unpopular conflict causing many deaths and casualties, coupled with pre-existing political unrest in the country and the exhaustion of Russia's economic resources, subsequently led to the revolutions of 1917. After this point, the country's history seems to have become alienated from the West. In many respects, the Western perception of the Great War tended exclude Russia's involvement, after the signing of the Brest-Litovsk peace treaty. However, as Dominic Lieven suggested, it was first and foremost an Eastern European conflict, and Russia was central to it.[183]

Russia entered the First World War as the defender of Serbia and, by extension, as the defender of all Slavic nations. Importantly, the argument of defending smaller nations from German and Austro-Hungarian oppression was one of the key elements of war propaganda across the Entente Powers. In August to September of 1914, Russian newspapers were focusing on two major arguments justifying Russian involvement into the Great War: Russia as the liberator of the oppressed minorities, and rejoicing in completing the unification of the Russian Empire. Eventually, the latter argument became increasingly prevalent in the Russian media, focusing on the idea of "national resurrection" (*natsional'noe voskresenie*).[184] While hopes for a short and victorious war were still present, Russian imperialist ambitions were growing among political elites, including the liberals.

[183] Dominic Lieven, *Towards the Flame: Empire, War and the End of Tsarist Russia* (London: Penguin, 2015), p. 366.
[184] Aleksandra Bakhturina, *Politika Rossiĭskoĭ Imperii v Vostochnoĭ Galitsii v Gody Pervoĭ Mirovoĭ Voĭny* (Moscow: AĬRO-XX, 2000), p. 58.

The First World War was a turning point for both Russian liberals and national minorities. In 1914, most national minorities in Russia's borderlands were demanding autonomy within Russia, at most. By the end of the war, these nations were preparing their own delegations for the Paris Peace Conference, to defend their rights to independent states. The change in the mood of national minorities was inevitably reflected in the liberals' discussions and policies regarding the nationalities question. This chapter will analyse how the foreign relations of Russian liberals developed as a result of World War I, and how these links helped the new liberal government after the February Revolution. It will also consider the dynamics in the relationship between Russian liberals in the centre and those representing national minorities, as well as the growing demands of national minorities. Russian liberal circles that were largely associated with the Kadet party played an important role during the war. Initially, the Kadets' leader, Miliukov, called for all political disagreements to be set aside in the presence of an external threat, and to support the tsar in the war. Arguably, the outbreak of the war even benefitted the Kadet Party, whose programme was not quite yet prepared, and gave them time to regroup their forces.[185] One of the most important aims of the Kadets was to gain international recognition as representatives of Russian liberalism. This chapter will demonstrate how they achieved this by using the Entente Powers to their advantage.

The degree of Russian liberals' conservatism at the outbreak of war, followed by the revolution, is central to the discussion of liberals' nationalities policies in particular. Historians agree that the Kadets' main focus in wartime was keeping the state together, which did not satisfy growing nationalistic concerns. For instance, Rosenberg concluded that calls for greater unity across the empire were beneficial for the Kadets at the start of the Great War, as they generally represented themselves as a classless party, aiming to improve the life of all social strata in Russia.[186] Orlando Figes and Rex Wade agreed with this in their later accounts of the Russian Revolution, arguing that the Kadets' main focus in the wartime was keeping the state together, which did not satisfy growing nationalistic

[185] Fedor Gaida, "Vopros o Vlasti v Postanovke Russkoĭ Liberal′noĭ Oppozitsii, 1914–Vesna 1917 Gg" (Moscow, Moskovskiĭ gosudarstvennyĭ universitet im. MV Lomonosova, 2001), p. 91.
[186] Rosenberg, *Liberals in the Russian Revolution*, p. 13.

concerns.[187] Dumova found that the Kadets' nationalities policies became more conservative with the outbreak of the First World War, and especially after the February Revolution, due to fearing a breakup of the country.[188] Eric Lohr, in his analysis of liberalism in the First World War, focused on the liberal understanding of nation and civil society. He argued that most Russian liberals understood nationality as a civic concept, rather than in terms of ethnic or religious belonging. Although the Kadets advocated for universal civil rights, they perceived unity of state to be the main concern, which they believed would be in the best interests of all Russian citizens. Lohr argued that the aggressive nationalist campaign started based on a fear of foreign subjects, and quickly escalated to become directed at all non-Russian subjects of the empire.[189] Melissa Stockdale, in her analysis of Russian society during the First World War, concluded that the idea of the Sacred Union led to a unification of the nation at the start of the war: all classes created a common patriotic community.[190]

The contradiction between recognising the rights of all nations to self-determination and a desire to maintain the empire's borders has caused scholars to question just how 'liberal' the Russian liberals were, by rediscovering Schapiro's arguments, discussed previously.[191] For instance, Von Hagen pointed out the disparity between the Kadets' understanding of a federative state (which they did not oppose, according to the author), and its interpretation by political leaders of the Russian borderlands. While the Kadets imagined a federative structure as a means of territorial administration, which would separate the power between central and regional governments, local nationalists argued in favour of territorial division by ethnicity.[192] Although the liberals advocated the equal treatment of people of all nations in Russia, their primary concern was preventing nations from

[187] Orlando Figes, *A People's Tragedy: The Russian Revolution, 1891–1924* (2nd ed.), (London, Jonathan Cape, 1996), p. 372; Wade, *The Russian Revolution, 1917, p. 149.*
[188] Natalia Dumova, *Kadetskaia Kontrrevoliutsiia i Ee Razgrom (Oktiabr' 1917 - 1920 Gg)* (Moscow: Nauka, 1982), Konstantin Gusev, "Nebol'shevistskie demokraticheskie partii v revoliutsiiakh 1917 g" in: Ivan Koval′chenko, ed., *Rossiia v XX Veke: Istoriki Mira Sporiat* (Moscow: Nauka, 1994), pp. 175–181.
[189] Eric Lohr, *Nationalizing the Russian Empire: the campaign against enemy aliens during World War I* (Harvard University Press, 2003).
[190] Melissa Stockdale, *Mobilizing the Russian Nation. Patriotism and Citizenship in the First World War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), p. 251.
[191] Schapiro, *The Russian Revolutions of 1917*.
[192] Mark Von Hagen, *Federalisms and Pan-movements: Re-imaging Empire, in: Russian Empire: Space, People, Power, 1700–1930* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2007), pp. 495–496.

declaring independence. Randall Poole analysed this through liberals' theoretical discussions on 'freedom of conscience' and 'toleration', which, in a liberal mindset, were inseparable from the idea of personal freedom.[193] These, of course, were incompatible with Russian autocracy, where the law "acknowledges neither freedom nor the freedom of personal belief and conscience".[194] Before the war, the Kadets were inspired by the idea of liberal imperialism; specifically, the government of Great Britain. Pavel Miliukov confessed his admiration of Sir Edward Grey in his diaries, while Kokoshkin once said in his Duma speech that British political structure was the ultimate example of the most advanced system in the world. Ideally, Miliukov had preferred to see a similar political structure in Russia: a constitutional monarchy where national minorities were treated in a similar fashion to those the British colonies, receiving a degree of independence while remaining part of the Empire. As studies of the liberals' nationalities programmes demonstrated, however, these suggestions were too conservative for the growing nationalist movements in Russia's borderlands.

Foreign policy of the Kadets during the First World War

The outbreak of the war helped the Kadets to take a more active part in Russian foreign policy, and to introduce their vision of the future Russia to the world. The formation of the Entente and the existence of a common enemy gave the Constitutional Democrats a chance to build closer ties with liberal European governments, including that of Great Britain – a task which had previously seemed challenging. Before the outbreak of the war, certain cultural and unofficial links were formed between Russian liberals and Great Britain. As a history professor, Miliukov had long-standing academic ties with British universities.[195] Bernard Pares, a Russophile and one of the major figures in Britain to work towards rapprochement between Russia and Great Britain, had close communication with

[193] Randall Poole, "Religious toleration, freedom of conscience, and Russian liberalism", *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 13, 3 (2012), pp. 611–634, p. 626.
[194] Reisner, quoted in Poole, "Religious toleration, freedom of conscience, and Russian liberalism", p. 621.
[195] Miliukov contributed to the *Russian Review* until 1920s and was in correspondence with Professor Bernard Pares, discussing the formation of a Russian Studies faculty at the University of Liverpool. Bernard Pares, 'Letters to Pavel Miliukov', GARF (Gosudarstvennyĭ Arkhiv Rossiĭskoĭ Federatsii) Fond 579, Opis' 1, Delo 5326.

Pavel Miliukov as well as other prominent figures in the Russian Duma. Pares established the School of Russian Studies at the University of Liverpool and the Russian Review journal in an effort to promote Russian culture in Britain. However, these links did little to help the wider Anglo-Russian relations before the outbreak of the First World War.[196] At the beginning of the war, the British government was still wary of forming any special links with the liberal opposition at an official diplomatic level. According to the British ambassador to Petrograd, Sir George Buchanan, all the parties of the left, whether Kadets or Social Revolutionaries (SRs), seemed to be endangering the fragile regime of Nicholas II. A rapprochement between British political elites and Russian liberals began during the First World War, in an attempt by both countries to change their negative perceptions among their respective wider populations. New organisations were formed, such as the Russia Society in Britain and the Anglo-Russian Bureau (later renamed the Anglo-Russian Commission) in Petrograd. People involved in these organisations were sympathetic to Russian liberal parties, especially left-wing liberals.[197]As the war progressed, so did cooperation with the Allies. The Kadets were hoping for British support in Russian domestic affairs. In 1915, for instance, a 'Society for Rapprochement with England' opened in Petrograd. Many members of the Kadet party took part in the opening of the society, including Miliukov. Buchanan participated in the event, which quickly acquired a political character. Speakers openly stated that Russia was "on the eve of a new political regime", and that England as its ally would help the formation of a liberal government in Russia.[198]

In 1916, Miliukov left Petrograd as a part of a Duma delegation to the Allied states; this became one of the defining moments in his career, and was one of the factors that allowed him to become the Minister of Foreign Affairs in the Provisional Government. In his memoirs, the Kadet leader wrote a detailed account of his trip, particularly the meetings he had in London: a dinner at Lancaster House

[196] Michael Hughes, "Bernard Pares, Russian Studies and the Promotion of Anglo-Russian Friendship, 1907-14", *The Slavonic and East European Review* 78, 3 (2000), pp. 511-535, p. 534.
[197] Michael R. Palmer, "The British Nexus and the Russian Liberals, 1905–1917" (Ph.D., University of Aberdeen, 2000); Michael Hughes, "How to Make Your Enemy Your Friend: The Impact of Culture on Anglo-Russian Relations 1900–1920s", *Istoriya,* 6, 43 (2015).
[198] Gaida, "Vopros o Vlasti v Postanovke Russkoĭ Liberal′noĭ Oppozitsii, 1914–Vesna 1917 Gg", p. 100.

with Asquith; an audience with George V at Buckingham Palace; a visit to Lloyd George with Gurko; as well as Miliukov's private meetings with Runciman and Buxton – and, most importantly, his private meeting with Edward Grey. The topic he wished to discuss with Grey was Russia's interests after signing the peace treaty, regarding this as a preliminary agreement. Grey reaffirmed that Britain recognised Russia's right to Constantinople and the Dardanelles, which had already been established under the Straits Agreement between France, Britain and Russia a year earlier. Miliukov and Grey discussed the division of Austro-Hungary, which would help to solve the Polish, Serbian and Romanian questions. Regarding the Poles, Grey stated that they would prefer to see Russia giving autonomy to Poland, but could not intervene in this matter. Miliukov acknowledged the Polish question as Russia's internal affair, and the Armenian question was also recognised by both men as a purely Russian matter. Grey confessed to Miliukov that Turkey was seeking to sign a separatist peace through third parties, but Britain suggested to turn to Russia with this. Interestingly, it seems that Grey and Miliukov did not discuss Russia's internal situation. Although everything in the meeting had been already discussed before, the fact that a leader of a Russian political party without any formal position in the tsarist government had secured an audience with the British Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, to discuss their countries' interests in international relations, was a clear sign that the Kadets' attempts to establish cooperation with British officials were yielding considerable results. According to Thomas Riha, this trip was a "dress rehearsal" for Miliukov's future role as Foreign Minister.[199] In addition, some unpopular reshuffling of cadres by the tsarist government further strengthened the ties between Russian liberal groups and foreign powers. For example, the appointment of the conservative Boris Stürmer as Minister of Foreign Affairs in July 1916, to replace a famous Anglophile, Sergey Sazonov, led to widespread discontent within the Russian political circles, as well as abroad.

On the eve of the February Revolution, 24 February 1917, Miliukov gave a speech in the Duma on the role of Great Britain in the war. Miliukov was

[199] Thomas Riha, *A Russian European: Paul Miliukov in Russian Politics* (London: University of Notre Dame Press, 1969), p. 345.

promoting the idea that the war was defensive for Britain, just as it was for Russia. He stressed that the British Empire represented a peaceful civilisation, whereas the German Empire was a military aggressor. British colonial subjects were not oppressed, and they regarded themselves as free and independent states, with freedom of trade and domestic autonomy. British imperialism was therefore not based on subordinance; only states that were at a lower level of cultural development were subject to British governance, but only as a temporary measure until they could develop an advanced culture in their communities. German colonialism, on the other hand, was portrayed as oppressive, militaristic and exploitative.[200] He drew parallels with Russia, of course, urging support for the Allies in the common fight against the aggressor. While the speech was of obvious propagandistic character, it nevertheless shows how Russian liberals perceived the British political system, and how ideas of liberalism and imperialism cohabited in the Kadets' political argument.

By 1917, anti-British moods in Russia were diminishing. Buchanan even stated in his diary that "the anti-British campaign has died out and Anglo-Russian relations were never better than at present".[201] Importantly, Russian liberals became more recognised across the Entente. Although a great deal of effort was put specifically into cooperation with Great Britain, the Duma delegation, which visited several states, helped to improve Russia's image. Miliukov and Shingarev became the informal leaders and main representatives of the delegation, as they were the most 'left-wing' members, whose political views were the closest to those of their allies.

The Kadets would try to use their political programme's similarities with those of the Allies to influence the Entente during the Revolution, and to justify their reluctance to recognise the independence of the newly emerging nation-states. Hence, this foundation became useful to the Kadets in the Provisional

[200] Pavel Miliukov, 'Speech on the Role of Great Britain in the War', 24 February 1917, GARF, F.579, Op. 1, D. 1588.
[201] George Buchanan, *My Mission to Russia and Other Diplomatic Memories* (London: Cassell, 1923), p. 213.

Government, and later in emigration. However, while the Kadets' relations with the Allies strengthened, the Russian domestic situation deteriorated, exacerbated by failures on the war front; this led to the outbreak of the February Revolution.

The February Revolution and relations with foreign powers in its aftermath

Dissatisfaction with the Old Regime had been building among subjects of the Russian Empire for decades. Coupled with the unpopular First World War, which brought heavy losses, hunger and poverty, it inevitably exploded into wide unrest. On 18 February 1917, workers from the Putilov factory in St Petersburg went out to march on the streets of Petrograd. A few days later, on 23 February, women joined the march, protesting against food rationing. The strikes spread quickly across the Russian capital. The call for bread served as a strong unifying force, compelling more people to join the struggle against the authorities.[202] On 2 March, Nicholas II abdicated in his and his son's name in favour of his brother, the Grand Duke Mikhail Aleksandrovich, who, in turn, refused to accept the throne unless it was approved by an elected Constituent Assembly. This signified the end of the Old Regime for Russia, and the establishment of the Provisional Government. Headed by Georgii L'vov, the government included liberals, moderate conservatives and moderate socialists. The Kadets became the most prominent party in the new government, and the liberals had finally gained the power they had aspired for. At last, liberalism had triumphed in Russia.

The February Revolution placed the Constitutional Democrats in the new centre of the political arena, while radical-right parties were expelled from the Russian government. The term 'provisional' itself implied that its members were not treating their positions as permanent. Miliukov himself argued that the Provisional Government would be in place to ensure a swift preparation for elections and full functioning of the country, until the Constituent Assembly was elected. This feeling of temporary occupation filled the Duma and was associated with more instability. Tyrkova-Williams argued that the term 'provisional' skewed the Kadets' perception of their role: it prevented them from fighting harder for

[202] Rex A. Wade, *The Russian Revolution, 1917*, 3rd ed., New Approaches to European History (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), p. 31.

their positions, and restricted them in their methods. Unlike the members of the Provisional Government when Lenin came to power, he made it clear from the beginning that he was not there temporarily.[203] However, Richard Pipes argued that the Bolsheviks deliberately and actively undermined the authority of Provisional Government, preparing for a coup d'état.[204] Members of the Provisional Government thought that their primary concern was subverting further revolutionary movement in Russia, thereby ensuring its continued involvement in the Great War, guaranteeing new civil rights, and providing a basis for election into the Constituent Assembly that the revolution had fought for. The members were expecting that the Constituent Assembly would deal with more profound political and legal reforms. Rex Wade argued that the Kadets, who were once on the left, became a right-wing party in the new political spectrum – not just because right-wing monarchists had been eliminated, but also because they were concerned with maintaining order in the country.[205] How prepared were the Kadets for their new role in the new government? Vladimir Kuvshinov suggested that they were uncomfortable without the tsar. Despite the fact that Miliukov argued that the form of the government was not very important for the party, the Kadets were feeling more comfortable with a constitutional monarchy.[206]

Miliukov thought that the outburst of 'patriotic enthusiasm' generated in the revolution would remain and would be redirected into the Great War. This turned out to be one of his biggest miscalculations.[207] The war remained unpopular among most Russians, while the Provisional Government was pressured by the Allies to stay in the war, and was counting on the territorial acquisitions that were promised to Russia. The new liberal government has been largely criticised by historians for its inability to deal with administrative issues, requited at the time of political instability.[208] Although they had been preparing themselves for running

[203] Ariadna Tyrkova-Williams, 'Vospominaniia o 1917 Gode', GARF. F. 10230, Op. 1, D. 27.
[204] Pipes, "Did the Russian Revolution Have to Happen?", p. 223.
[205] Wade, *The Russian Revolution, 1917*, p. 57.
[206] Vladimir Kuvshinov, *Kadety v Rossii i Za Rubezhom* (Moscow: Univ. gumanitar. litseĭ, 1997), p. 76.
[207] Rex A. Wade, *The Russian Search for Peace. February–October 1917* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1969), p. 11.
[208] Richard Pipes, *The Russian Revolution, 1899–1919* (London: Collins Harvill, 1990); Jacob Walkin, *The Rise of Democracy in Pre-Revolutionary Russia: Political and Social Institutions under the Last Three Czars* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1962).

the state since 1905, before the revolution they had focused on fighting the bureaucracy, rather than administrating it.

After the February Revolution, what worried the Allies the most was Russia's commitment to the war. Some scholars have argued that the British were satisfied with the outcome of the February coup because effectively a liberal pro-Entente government had succeeded.[209] There was even a demonstration at London's Royal Albert Hall to congratulate Russian democrats upon their new liberal government on 31 March 1917.[210] Despite the fact that George Buchanan had initially mistrusted Russian liberal circles before the revolution, when the provisional government under L'vov (with Miliukov as the Minister of Foreign Affairs) came to power, Britain was quick to recognise the new government, and the states continued their cooperation as before. Although German propaganda attempted to present the revolution as a successful British intervention in Russia's affairs, this rumour was not widely supported among the Russians. Generally, the change of the government was characterised by a stark anti-German campaign.[211]

Others argued that the Russian Revolution, occurring in the midst of the war and overriding its importance at home, was the last nail in coffin of Russia's reliability as a war ally.[212] According to L. P. Morris, liberals were the least trustworthy members of the Provisional Government, as they were too eager to assure the Allies of their commitment to the war and to secure the negotiated territories, which caused them to lose their already weak link with the wider population. Behind the official meetings and diplomatic visits, where Miliukov as well as L'vov and Kerensky tried to assure their allies of Russia's commitment,

[209] Boris Kolonitskiĭ, "Politicheskie Funktsii Anglofobii v Gody Pervoĭ Mirovoĭ Voĭny", *Rossiia i Pervaia Mirovaia Voĭna. Materialy Mezhdunarodnogo Nauchnogo Kollokviuma* (St Petersburg: Dmitriĭ Bulanin, 1999), p. 277.
[210] *Programme of the Demonstration to Congratulate the Democrats of Russia on Their Charter of Freedom: Held at the Royal Albert Hall on Saturday March 31st, 1917 at 7pm* (London: Pelican Press, 1917).
[211] Kolonitskiĭ, "Politicheskie Funktsii Anglofobii v Gody Pervoĭ Mirovoĭ Voĭny", pp. 277, 279.
[212] L. P. Morris, "The Russians, the Allies and the War, February–July 1917", *The Slavonic and East European Review* 50, 118 (1972), p. 29. In addition, General Knox (Alfred Knox, *With the Russian Army 1914–1917*, vol. 2 (London: Hutchinson & Co, 1921)) was very critical of the Russian army in the war, arguing that its poor performance was largely due to lack of organisation, rather than of munitions. He also reported how Russian soldiers refused to fight after the February Revolution, and accused the Russian post-February 1917 government of idleness while the Germans were working tirelessly day and night.

the general disapproval of the war was becoming more apparent; this was reflected in the reports of British and French delegates.[213]

When Miliukov reflected on his time as Minister of Foreign Affairs in the Provisional Government, he acknowledged that after the revolution he was hoping that by ridding itself of the tsarist oppression, Russian society would be more enthusiastic about the war; however, both the Provisional Government and the Allies soon realised that this was far from the case.[214] While Miliukov boasted that he had a very close relationship with the ambassadors of the Entente and they highly valued his opinion, the Kadet leader also confessed that he was pressured by the Allies to publicly acknowledge Russia's commitment. At the first meeting with Paleologue as the Foreign Minister, the French ambassador demanded that an immediate announcement should be made by the Russian government, declaring its preparedness to continue the war "à outrance".[215] The following day, the government issued a memorandum declaring one of its aims to be "war to the winning end"; however. Paleologue was still dissatisfied, as the text did not go into any further detail.[216]

Before the revolution, the Kadets had far-reaching plans for further cooperation with Britain after the war, according to Miliukov's article on the meaning of Anglo-Russian union.[217] Miliukov suggested that although the alliance was formed due to military necessity, "months of the war have shown that the British and Russian Empires are necessary to each other's politics". A "profound affinity" between Russia and Great Britain would lead to a "permanent alliance, independent of political circumstances".[218] In addition, the Kadets were seeking to extend economic cooperation between the two empires. In August 1916, Miliukov was connecting Russian and British representatives in order to organise an exchange trip to Russia for several English students, who would learn about Russian commerce. The exchange was supposed to start in 1917, under the patronage of the Minister of Education and the heads of the universities in Moscow

[213] For example: Lord Milner, Report to the British Cabinet, CAB 28/02/16, Quoted in: L. P. Morris, "The Russians, the Allies and the War, February–July 1917", p. 29.
[214] Pavel Miliukov, *Vospominaniia* (Moscow: Politizdat, 1991), p. 481.
[215] Miliukov, p. 487.
[216] Ibid.
[217] Pavel Miliukov, 'Stat'ia o Znachenii Anglo-Russkogo Soiuza', GARF F.579, Op. 1, D. 1523.
[218] Ibid.

and Petrograd. Students were expected to learn Russian commercial law and find out what products were in demand in Russia, in order to enhance trade between the two empires.[219]

In practice, after the fall of the Old Regime in Russia, the Kadets attempted to maintain a similar relationship with Britain. While the Kadets were in opposition to the regime, supporting pro-British propaganda was an important aspect of this relationship. This remained the case when they became members of the Provisional Government. Miliukov, as Minister of Foreign Affairs, was determined to maintain the foreign policy doctrine of tsarist Russia, and thus made very few amendments to the foreign office cadres. The Provisional Government's foreign policy stressed the need to remain faithful to the Allies and continue fighting against the Central Powers. Under Nicholas II, Russian officials could blackmail the Allies in negotiations of future territorial claims, by threatening to sign a separatist peace with Germany, for instance. When Sazonov lost his temper while discussing the Polish question with Paleologue, and hinted that French interference could jeopardise the Entente, the new government emphasised their liberal foundations.[220] Supposedly, this should have improved the relationship between liberals and Great Britain; however, the domestic situation in Russia prevented this, as the February Revolution brought an end to the Old Regime. From the British perspective, Russia went from being an ally capable of winning the war, to a state torn by domestic political struggles, whose very commitment to the Allies was questionable. British policy towards Russia between the revolutions remained ambivalent, although Britain attempted to sustain the Provisional Government, hoping that in the long run it might become a credible liberal force in Europe.[221] Claims and plans of the Provisional Government were sabotaged by the Soviets. As a result, Miliukov's relations with the ambassador were becoming increasingly tense. The growing influence of the Soviets and mass desertion in the army undoubtedly undermined Russia's performance in the war. The Allies were

[219] Pavel Miliukov, 'Zapiska o Napravlenii Riada Anglichan v Rossiiu Dlia Detal′nogo Oznakomleniia s Russkoĭ Promyshlennost′iu', 1916, GARF F.579, Op. 1, D. 1574.
[220] Jeffrey Mankoff, "The Future of Poland, 1914–1917: France and Great Britain in the Triple Entente", *The International History Review* 30, 4 (2008), p. 750.
[221] Keith Neilson, *Britain and the Last Tsar. British Policy and Russia 1894–1917.* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), p. 350.

growing concerned, putting pressure on Miliukov. The Minister of Foreign Affairs had to assure the Allies of Russia's commitment to the war and, at the same time, agree on the war aims with the Soviets. Here Miliukov did not want to compromise on his previous liberal formulation of fighting "shoulder to shoulder" with the Allies, nor did he think of sabotaging previously negotiated agreements on Constantinople and the Dardanelles.[222] The growing popularity of the Petrograd Soviets made most of the Kadets agree that they should have more authority in the government, much to Miliukov's dislike. Inclined to compromise, the Provisional Government issued a new declaration on Russia's war aims on 27 April 1917, which recognised the Soviets' influence. Buchanan reported a worsening situation at the war front and instability in the government. On 30 April, Buchanan summarised the position of Miliukov, who had left the cabinet:

> I should not be surprised if Miliukov has to go. He [...] is quite sound on the subject of the war, but he has so little influence with his colleagues that one never knows whether he will be able to give effect to what he says.[223]

In addition to the dual power, another challenge for the Provisional Government was the national minorities' growing demands for the right to self-determination. While the Provisional Government did not prioritise this issue, being occupied by the Soviets and the war effort, the Russian borderlands were becoming increasingly unstable.

The Provisional Government and national minorities

The period of the First World War, including the short-lived Provisional Government, was marked by a rapid growth of nationalism among the national minorities in the Russian borderlands. Coupled with international instability and the weakening regime in Russia, the future of the borderlands was becoming harder to predict. This inevitably affected the liberals' policies towards the

[222] William Rosenberg, *Liberals in the Russian Revolution: The Constitutional Democratic Party, 1917–1921* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1974), pp. 74–75.
[223] Buchanan, *My Mission to Russia and Other Diplomatic Memories.*

nationalities question. While the leader of the Kadets showed remarkable achievements on the international relations front, aspiring to considerably expand the borders of the Russian Empire, the moods in Russian borderlands were far from supporting Great Russian imperialism. Russian liberals who made up the new government were desperate to keep the power at the centre, and feared losing the borderlands when they become 'too independent'. However, there were other issues that were obstructing the Kadets' policies: for instance, the uncertain situation at the war front, and unclear borderlands that national minorities were claiming. In addition, once the Kadets became part of the Provisional Government, they felt restricted about their policies, feeling the need to maintain some order while the country prepared for the elections to the Constituent Assembly. For example, the issue of Ukrainian autonomy was discussed at the Central Committee meeting on 2 July 1917. The Kievan regional Kadet Committee announced a new resolution, establishing a provincial autonomy in Ukraine, headed by local zemstvos. Some speakers pointed out that in 1917, the Ukrainian population was already insisting on a regional autonomy which should be established with the constitution, without waiting for the Constituent Assembly to assemble and discuss this matter. On the other hand, it was impossible at the time to outline any clear borders of such autonomy, nor the extent to which Ukrainians would be autonomous from the Muscovite government. It was thus decided that the party would acknowledge and recognise the concept of Ukraine's regional autonomy in its programme, and form a committee which would prepare the appropriate legislation to be presented to the Constituent Assembly.[224]

Uncertainty over the future of Russia was exacerbated by the general reluctance to make pressing decisions, the unstable internal political situation, and the poor military performance at the war front. The postponement of unresolved matters (sometimes deliberately, as well by necessity), concerning the future borderlands and freedoms among both Russians and national minorities, caused high expectations of the Paris Peace Conference, where all interested parties hoped

[224] *Protokoly Tsentral'nogo Komiteta i Zagranichnykh Grupp Konstitutsionno-Demokraticheskoĭ Partii, 1905–Seredina 1930–Kh Gg. 1915–1920*, vol. 3 (Moscow: ROSSPEN, 1998), p. 380. Minutes of the Central Committee session 2 June 1917.

that their matters would be heard and resolved by the international community once and for all.

Contested borders in western Russia: the Baltics, Poland, Ukraine

The borders between Poland, Lithuania, Ukraine and Belorussia had to be decided before national minorities could realistically expect national autonomy. Petras Leonas, a Kadet member of the Duma and liberal representative of the Lithuanians, complained that the Lithuanian people had been overshadowed by the Poles: Lithuanian nobility had adopted a Polish identity (*opoliachilis'*), which inevitably affected Lithuanians' cultural development.[225] Already in 1905, Lithuania's delegation had issued a resolution claiming Suwałki Governorate, Kovno and Grodno to be parts of Lithuania, rather than Poland. In 1916, Petras Leonas wrote to the party's central committee regarding the Lithuania question. He argued that even Russians mistakenly considered these areas to be part of Poland, whereas the population there was predominantly Lithuanian. Leonas pointed out that even all the Duma delegates from Suwałki were Lithuanian, rather than Polish; he demanded Lithuanian autonomy within the Russian state, and for the contested areas to become part of Lithuania.[226]

Russian national minorities that were seeking independence or autonomy had to justify their borderlands not only to the Allies, but even to the Russian government. On the eve of the February Revolution, the Kadets were trying to agree on their position towards national minorities, taking into consideration the changing circumstances. Poland was at the heart of these discussions. While realising that the German influence in Poland further exacerbated local demands for full independence, the Kadets were still contemplating the possibility of attaching Poland to Russia. At a Central Committee meeting of 9 January 1917, the Kadets discussed the future of Russo–Polish relations in the event that the Poles had their own army. Zygmunt Wielopolski, a Polish member of the Russian State Council, warned that the presence of the Polish army would weaken its ties to Russia, and would only leave the possibility of shared foreign policy between two

[225] 'Letter from Petras Leonas to the Central Committee of the Party of People's Freedom', 28 March 1916. GARF F. 579, Op. 1, D. 1917, p. 1.
[226] Ibid., p. 2.

practically independent states. The Kadets agreed to wait and observe the development of events in Poland, and to act accordingly.

As for other national minorities, the Kadets were not as open to granting widespread autonomy. Miliukov reported that he received a letter from the Lithuanian Kadets in Moscow, demanding autonomy for Lithuania. Was it treason for a Kadet party member to demand national autonomy? Fedor Kokoshkin thought so. Even though he was one of the proponents of wider freedoms for national minorities, he argued that the party did need such members, who threatened the territorial integrity of the empire.[227] Nikolay Kishkin, one of the left-wing Kadets, argued that all party members should be free to make up their minds regarding the nationalities question, and that it should be singled out from other issues. However, it was necessary to clarify that the Kadets allowed rights to independence within Russian statehood. A discussion of autonomy for one nation might provoke further interest among other nations, and snowball: "as soon as we allow Lithuanians to present their demands for Lithuanian autonomy, deputies from Kiev would instantly demand Ukrainian autonomy."[228] At the beginning of the war, Lithuanians generally separated into three political camps: those with a pro-Russian orientation; nationalists in favour of autonomy; and extreme leftists favouring Marxist revolution. In addition, Lithuanian groups abroad were rather active and influential. While at the beginning of the war they were discussing autonomy within the Russian state, already in June of 1916, at a conference of oppressed nationalities in London, the Lithuanian right to an independent state was recognised.[229]

Poland

The Old Regime had intended Poland to be an autonomous republic within the Russian Empire. With the outbreak of the Great War, the Russian quest to acquire Poland resumed. In November 1914, Nicholas II met the French ambassador,

[227] *Protokoly Tsentral'nogo Komiteta i Zagranichnykh Grupp Konstitutsionno-Demokraticheskoĭ Partii, 1905–Seredina 1930-Kh Gg. 1915–1920*, 3, pp. 339–340. Minutes of the Central Committee session 6 January 1917.
[228] Ibid, p. 340.
[229] Piotr S. Wandycz, *The Lands of Partitioned Poland, 1795–1918.* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1975), pp. 348–349.

Paleologue, to discuss the war aims of the respective governments. The tsar focused on European affairs and highlighted his desire to 'correct' the borders of Poland, specifically in East Prussia. New borders, according to the Russian monarch, should be formed according to the nationalist principle, with East Galicia becoming part of Russia, while West Galicia, Poznan', and Silesia would become parts of the reformed Poland.[230] In the summer of 1914, the Russian government's plans regarding Poland were articulated to the Polish people: Grand Duke Nikolaĭ Nikolaevich addressed the Poles with the following proclamation: "let the borders that were dividing the Russian people be erased. Let it be united under the sceptre of the Russian tsar. Let Poland be reborn under the same sceptre – free in its religion, language and self-governance."[231] The Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Sergei Sazonov, was concerned about the practical challenges of keeping the Polish lands under Russian influence. He was equally worried about the influence of German anti-Russian propaganda, as well as the Polish nationalist movement. On 17 April 1916, Sazonov explicitly wrote that there should be such a political organisation Poland that would ensure Russian influence and discourage a wider nationalist movement.[232] In terms of post-war aims, it was paramount for Sazonov to create a pro-Russian buffer state between Russia and Germany, on the basis of Poland. Russification policies, however, did not have any support among the local population, just as before. When the Russians occupied Eastern Galicia in August of 1914, the tsarist regime enforced policies of Russification which only awakened local identities even further, and exacerbated anti-Russian sentiments.

As for the Kadets' view on the Polish question, they argued that the future of Poland should be discussed with Polish representatives, and the Kadets should only work out a plan regarding the Polish question for further international discussion. This idea was shared at the Central Committee meeting at Count

[230] Maurice Paléologue, *An ambassador's memoirs.* (London, Hutchinson & co., 1924)
[231] *God Voĭny: S 19-Go Iiulia 1914 g. Po 19-e Iiulia 1915 g. Vysochaĭshie Manifesty.* (Moscow: Izd. D. IA. Makhovskogo, 1915), p. 1.
[232] Original quote: "Надо создать в Польше такую политическую организацию, которая сохранила бы за Россией и ее монархом руководство судьбами польского народа и в то же время не давала бы его национальному движению широкий выход." 'Pamiatnaia Zapiska Ministra Inostrannykh Del Sazonova Ot 17 Aprelia 1916 g. s Prilozheniem Osnovnykh Postanovleniĭ Ustava o Gosudarstvennom Ustroĭstve TSarstva Pol'skogo.', in *Russko-Pol'skie Otnosheniia v Period Mirovoĭ Voĭny* (Moscow: Moskovskiĭ Rabochiĭ, 1926), pp. 85–94.

Dolgorukii's apartment, and supported by most members in February 1916.[233] Although the matters concerning Russia's interests in Poland had been discussed by the Kadets in the pre-World War I period, and the tensions between the Polish demands and the tsarist government's reluctance to meet them were evident, the outbreak of the Great War made the issue of the Polish state an international debate. After the Duma delegation visit to Great Britain in 1916, Pavel Miliukov thought that he had secured the Allies' approval to create a united Poland as an autonomous part of the Russian state. Miliukov was hoping that the particularities of this agreement would remain to be regulated between the Russian and the Polish governments, without any further intervention of the Allies. As the war progressed, Polish demands for a uniform and autonomous Polish state were becoming more and more pronounced. Two years later Miliukov had to acknowledge that the Polish question was no longer a subject of negotiation by either the Russian government or the Russian people, and that under the influence of France and Great Britain, it had become subject to international negotiations. In case the Allies won, Poland would be granted some form of autonomy. The only question remaining was the nature of future Polish–Russian relations. While Polish leaders wanted a complete split from Russia, the Kadets thought that this would be unacceptable, as the Russians should definitely have a say in the future of such a relationship. The committee members unanimously agreed on the fact that the principles of the Polish question should be discussed in the Duma. As for the Allies, despite the Kadets' belief that the Entente members pressured the Russian government to open the Polish question to international negotiation, some historians have not agreed with this. Arguably, France had more interest in the future of Poland than Britain did, and was under more pressure from the Polish community. The British prioritised satisfying Russia and keeping it faithful to the Allies while negotiating independence for Poland. British officials agreed to acknowledge the Polish question as a Russian domestic affair,[234] and did not formulate an official policy towards Poland until the end of the war, attempting to please Russia. When the Provisional Government came to power, it was willing to

[233] 'Minutes of the Kadets' Meeting in Count Dolgorukii's Apartment' (February 1916), RGIA (Rossiĭskiĭ Gosudarstvennyĭ Istoricheskiĭ Arkhiv), F. 1278, Op. 5, D. 1401.
[234] Mankoff, "The Future of Poland, 1914–1917: France and Great Britain in the Triple Entente".

grant independence to Poland and only bind it to the new Russia with a military agreement. This allowed the Allies to make the Polish question subject to international discussion, just as the Poles were hoping.

After the February Revolution, when the Kadets finally gained power, it was already clear that the Polish question was an international matter, and that the Poles were strongly oriented towards an independent state. Yet the Kadets were still hoping that even in this unfavourable scenario, this would essentially be a Russian proxy state. In February 1917, the Provisional Government made a new appeal to the Polish, recognising their full state independence but inviting them to live in unity with Russia. After the fall of the tsarist government, national minorities, including Poles, were hoping for improvements in their status. Although the Provisional Government did recognise the right to self-determination, Russia's position on national minorities became ever more contradictory – as seen in the presence of the Petrograd Soviet. About two weeks after the establishment of the Provisional Government, the Soviet issued a decree on Poland and acknowledged its rights to "complete independence in national and international affairs".[235] The Provisional Government followed with its own decree the following day, also recognising Polish independence, but expressing hope that the new independent Polish state would be in union with Russia.[236]

In February 1917, Miliukov was concerned that his party was not far from recognising Poland as an independent state. In fact, there were already discussions of Poland as a non-sovereign state, rather than an autonomous region, as it had its own political institutions of executive power. The only element Poland was lacking in the new Kadets' programme was an independent army. It would be a quasi-autonomous state dependent on Russia and sharing its foreign policy. On the other hand, he realised that even such vast autonomies would not satisfy the Polish people, as nothing but full independence could do so. The Kadets agreed that the Polish question should be raised in the Duma with Polish representatives; however,

[235] Robert Paul Browder and Aleksandr F. Kerensky, eds., *The Russian Provisional Government, I9I7: Documents*, 3 vols, (Stanford, I96I), I, p. 321. Quoted in: M. B. Biskupski, "The Poles, the Root Mission, and the Russian Provisional Government, 1917", *The Slavonic and East European Review* 63, 1 (1985), p. 56.
[236] Biskupski, 57.

they opposed Polish plans to bring these discussions to an international level, and to raise the issue of Poland's future at the Paris Peace Conference.[237]

An official committee on the Polish question was established in Russia, with Sazonov as one of its members, advancing the Kadets' position towards Poland in the government. This position, however, was very unclear. The Kadets kept revisiting the Polish question, but delayed issuing a party policy on the matter, waiting for some clarity on the war front. The future of Poland, the impact of German influence, and future territories Russia might acquire after the war, were all unknown. Generally, the Kadets were inclined to see Poland as Russia's proxy-state; they argued that the future of Poland should be discussed by the Polish Sejm and the Russian Duma, but not at the Paris Peace Conference, between Poles and Entente members. The US sent a delegation to the Provisional Government in order to publicly recognise the new administration, and ensure that Russia would honour its promises to the Allies by staying in the war. It was headed by the former Secretary of State, Elihu Root. While scholars have largely agreed that the mission failed (not only because it attempted to establish a relationship with a short-lived government, but also because any recommendations it drafted were ignored by the US state), one of the unexpected results of the delegation was that it gave a chance for national minorities to promote their cause to the US representatives. In particular, the Polish people were seeking an audience with the Root Mission. It was widely known that Woodrow Wilson had a 'soft spot' for the Eastern European cause, and for Poland in particular. One of the Polish representatives who succeeded in gaining the Americans' attention was Aleksandr Lednitski, a Polish lawyer and a member of the Kadets, who advocated for Polish independence; he sought to establish a relationship with the Polish community in the US. Following successful meetings of Lednitski and Root, and Lednitski's entire Liquidation Commission with the American Mission, Root issued a statement recognising Poland's "place among the nations of the world".[238] For the Poles, it was a sign that the United States was aware of their position, which

[237] *Protokoly Tsentral'nogo Komiteta i Zagranichnykh Grupp Konstitutsionno-Demokraticheskoĭ Partii, 1905–Seredina 1930–Kh Gg. 1915–1920*, 3, pp. 346–348. Minutes of the Committee session 5 February 1917.
[238] Biskupski, "The Poles, the Root Mission, and the Russian Provisional Government, 1917", pp. 61–62.

improved their morale. Unfortunately, as the further chapters will show, the following Paris Peace Conference revealed that even despite some examples of successful cooperation, there was little knowledge in the West in general, and in the US in particular, regarding national minorities of the Russian Empire.

Hopes to return Poland to the Russian borderlands were not abandoned by liberals, even after the Bolshevik revolution, as subsequent chapters will demonstrate; however, in addition to the Polish question, other national minorities were also demanding more autonomy. Both Russia and Germany, as well as Austro–Hungary, were contemplating the future of Poland at the start of the war. Germany was similarly considering the possibility of a united Polish state. Russian plans for Poland were clearer than those of the Central Powers, and were articulated to the international community at the start of the war.

While being caught between the interests of Russia and the Central Powers, the Poles tried to pursue their own agenda and move towards uniting the Polish people in a uniform state. Another obstacle on the way was a clash with other surrounding national identities: Lithuanian, Ukrainian, and, to some extent, Belorussian. These national identities were also undergoing a period of awakening – particularly Ukrainians, whose national identity was treated with scepticism by both Russia and Poland.

Ukraine

Already in early August 1916, the Ukrainian National Council issued a manifesto speaking of future liberation and forming a Ukrainian state, possibly under Russia's rule. Using the February Revolution to their advantage, Ukrainians formed the National Rada on 4 March 1917. Although the Rada members included both supporters of autonomy within Russia, and separatists, the latter group was less influential in the beginning, and the Rada publicly expressed its support for the Provisional Government. Effectively, the Rada represented the centrists in Ukrainian politics, and those who supported autonomy; it did not include more conservative elements who opposed an autonomous structure, or the more radical ones who argued for complete independence. The most influential political parties in the Rada were the Socialist Federalists, Social Democrats and Social Revolutionaries. The first of these was the closest Ukrainian alternative to the

Kadets, while the third was the most radical among the three. Even the more radical groups, however, were supporting Ukrainian autonomy within a federation.[239]

The Provisional Government had to accept the Ukrainian Rada's existence, but it attempted to overrule it by establishing general secretariat – a special governing body with appointed members. The appointments would be discussed by the Provisional Government and the Rada, but should include representatives of other nationalities who resided in Ukraine. In addition, the Provisional Government attempted to delay any decision-making on Ukrainian governance and territory until the Constituent Assembly, thus visibly acknowledging the work done by the Rada, but effectively shelving it until an unforeseen future.[240] For several months the Provisional Government's relations with the Ukrainian Rada followed the same pattern: a series of negotiations and formations of different committees discussing the Ukrainian position in Russia, where the Russian side tended to be much more conservative and kept declining Ukrainian demands, which the Ukrainians interpreted as imperialist ambitions.

The government rejected the Rada's initial proposals, but once the Rada unilaterally declared autonomy on 10 June 1917, the Provisional Government had to negotiate. Liberals played a pivotal role in these discussions. The previous month, the Rada delegation had arrived in Petrograd to meet Georgii L'vov on 16 May, asking merely for a favourable attitude to autonomy. L'vov, in turn, suggested forming a special committee to discuss the Ukrainian question. The committee consisted of six Russian representatives, five of whom were liberals; and five Ukrainians, including two liberals. The Russian side declined most of the Ukrainian demands; it announced that it was merely able to discuss future plans, but did not have any legitimacy to make official agreements, insisting that such matters be postponed until the election of the Constituent Assembly.[241] This position was typical of the Russian liberals and the Kadet Party specifically, whose policy towards Ukraine had not changed substantially since 1905: the Kadets were

[239] Johannes Remy, "'It Is Unknown Where the Little Russians Are Heading to': The Autonomy Dispute between the Ukrainian Central Rada and the All-Russian Provisional Government in 1917", *The Slavonic and East European Review* 95, 4 (2017), p. 698.
[240] 'Proekt Postanovleniia Vremennogo Pravitel′stva Po Voprosu Ob Upravlenii Kraevymi Delami Na Ukraine', 1917. GARF F. 579, Op. 1, D. 1930, p. 1.
[241] Remy, "'It Is Unknown Where the Little Russians Are Heading To"', pp. 701–703.

prepared to decentralise the government and make some concessions towards national minorities, but were not willing to grant autonomy to any nations other than Poland and Finland.

The Kadets, however, were concerned about the Ukrainian initiative, and especially about its party members who had joined Rada. They established that a local Kadet committee had approved their Rada membership without any discussions with the party's centre.[242] Although the Kadet party had always had a right and left wing, and its members sometimes disagreed on its policies, Miliukov always worked hard to confine the disputes to the internal meetings, and ensure that the party presented a uniform position in the Duma through its resolutions. Rapid developments in the government, followed by the February Revolution, as well as on the war front, caused growing disagreements within the party, which became evident to those outside. The issue of nationalities' rights became one of the starkest examples of such disagreements, because national minorities made use of this momentum, and started to act more decisively on their own behalf. While the Kadets in general moved swiftly from the centre to the right of the Russian political spectrum over the course of the February Revolution, the segregations in the party became more apparent, and its leaders became more mindful of the threat that those in favour of more freedoms for national minorities could pose for the future of Russia. The Kadets' programme did not treat national minorities equally from the beginning, making arguments of more and less developed nationalities, and the degree of freedom and self-governance they deserved. This policy was projected into the Provisional Government. The freedoms it was willing to give did not meet the growing demands of most national minorities. Thus, aiming to make as few concessions as possible, it acted on a case-by-case basis, whereby Latvia and Estonia were granted a local elected governing body – a temporary zemstvo council (*vremennyĭ zemskiĭ sovet*), based on universal suffrage – while Ukraine was not. In addition, the Provisional Government anticipated disagreements on the Estonian and Latvian borders, and upon issuing a decree on the temporary governance of Estonia, made a provision that the disputed borders

[242] 'Rezoliutsiia TsK Kadetskoĭ Partii o Vstuplenii Kievskikh Chlenov Kadetskoĭ Partii v Sostav Pravitel′stva Ukrainskoĭ Rady', 1917. GARF F. 579, Op. 1, D. 718, p. 1.

with Latvia would be discussed by a special committee with representatives from both sides.[243] The fear that concessions to certain national minorities could lead to greater demands from other nations was very real for the Kadets. Miliukov, in his account of the Provisional Government, wrote that the announcements regarding the autonomy of Poland and Finland, as early as March 1917, resulted in "elevated expectations among other nationalities of Russia, particularly those bordering the theatre of war".[244] He stressed the "special position" of these two nations, and argued that there were no reasons to apply the same rules to other nations within Russia, including Ukraine.

The Caucasus

The peoples of the Caucasus had very diverse agendas and interests during the First World War. Armenia was more heavily involved in the military action of the war, as Turkey became involved on behalf of the Central Powers. The Kadets maintained the position that Russia was playing a defensive role in the war, against the aggressor. This rhetoric was especially commonly applied in the Turkish-Armenian conflict, where Russia was portrayed as the defender of a fellow Orthodox nation against Muslim aggression. In practice, accounts of both World War I historians and witnesses of the event acknowledge that it was unclear what position the Ottoman Empire would take in the conflict.[245] Eventually, they estimated that Germany would be a strong enough power to counterbalance Russia, whereas Germans, in return, thought that the Ottomans would be able to undermine Russia in the Black Sea, and encourage Muslims within Entente Powers to unite against Russia, France and Britain.[246] As a result, in the aftermath of the February Revolution, Armenians were among the minority who supported the Provisional Government's call for war until victory, whereas Georgia and

[243] Ibid., p.1. Decree on provisional administrative organisation and local self-governance of Estonian region.
[244] Pavel Miliukov, *Istoriia Vtoroĭ Russkoĭ Revoliutsii*, vol. 1 (Sofia: Rossiĭsko-Bolgarskoe knigoizdatel'stvo, 1921), p. 65.
[245] Evgenii Maslovskiĭ, *Mirovaia Voĭna Na Kavkazskom Fronte 1917–1917g.* (Paris: La Renaissance, 1933); Michael A. Reynolds, *Shattering Empires: The Clash and Collapse of the Ottoman and Russian Empires, 1908–1918* (Campridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011). Maslovskii was a general at the Caucasian Front who later joined the Volunteer Army of the South of Russia during the civil war. He emigrated to Constantinople in 1920 and eventually settled in Paris.
[246] Reynolds, *Shattering Empires: The Clash and Collapse of the Ottoman and Russian Empires, 1908–1918*, pp. 121–122.

Azerbaijan were against it. Terek Cossacks also agreed with the Russian war aims; they formed a union that supported a Russian democratic federative republic, with recognition of a Terek-Dagestan government, Don and Kuban Cossacks as independent states within the federative structure, and they pledged to help the central government in the war effort.[247] Following the October revolution, the Cossacks did not change their position; they would become a driving force in the Provisional Government of the South of Russia and within the Volunteer army, as the subsequent chapters will demonstrate.

During the First World War, non-Russian minorities were also conscripted to the military service, including Caucasian Muslim groups; this was an unpopular policy among local peoples. After the February Revolution, zemstvos were revived across the Russian Empire, to encourage limited principles of self-governance. Muslim areas, especially the Volga Tatars, were some of the most politically involved groups in local zemstvos, creating groups to represent their interests in St Petersburg, as well as locally. These included the Provisional Central Bureau for the Muslims of Russia in St Petersburg, the Muslim People's Council in Kazan, and the Muslim War Council in Moscow. These organisations were focused on representing the interests of Muslim people in Russia, and usually combined representatives and policies of various political parties, including the Kadets, SRs and Mensheviks.[248] A representative body for Caucasian interests was also formed with the initiative of the Provisional Government. The Special Transcaucasian Committee was organised by the Provisional Government in March 1917, with very limited powers. As a subordinate of the Provisional Government, the committee had no power to introduce any laws and had solely executive purposes: to administer the Transcaucasian Krai and manage local funds.[249]

Georgians were among the most politically conscious minorities in the south of Russia. Following the February Revolution, anti-Russian sentiment became especially apparent in Georgia, where Russian Orthodox Bishops were expelled, and the Georgian patriarchate was re-established. Local intelligentsia

[247] *The Russian Provisional Government 1917.*, vol. 1 (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1961), pp. 427–428.
[248] James Forsyth, *The Caucasus. A History.* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), p. 337.
[249] The Special Transcaucasian Committee, *The Russian Provisional Government 1917*, vol. 1, pp. 424–425.

became heavily involved in local self-governance, and the Kadets were playing a prominent part in local zemstvos and war committees.

The growing demands of national minorities forced the Provisional Government to pay more attention to this issue. During the First World War, however, the Kadets did not seem to seriously consider the prospect of these nations decoupling from Russia. Their tactic, therefore, was to provide as few liberties as possible, beyond individual rights. The possibility of the emergence of independent nation-states was still out of question, even for Poland. The vertical grading of borderline nations' development was starting to form at this time; however, it was still very primitive. It aimed to distinguish Finland and Poland, with their autonomous status, from all other national minorities, in order to avoid more demands for autonomy. Subsequent chapters will discuss how in the aftermath of the October Revolution, the national grading rapidly developed several new pillars, as national movements became more radicalised.

Aftermath of the October Revolution: radicalisation of the Kadets

The period of Russia's involvement in the First World War was pivotal to the Kadets and their political growth. They managed to use the war to their advantage to build reliable connections with the Allies, won the respect of foreign diplomats, and were recognised as the face of the new post-tsarist Russia. Their success in securing government positions signified a shift of the party from the centre to the right. Faced with pressure from the Allies, national minorities and Soviets, Miliukov and L'vov were more concerned about preserving the country's borderlands than ever before. Losing territory became an acute and very real threat, which the party tried to address through negotiating potential liberties and rights with national minorities on a case-by-case basis.

The Kadets' Central Committee made an important change to their programme at a meeting that took place on 10–13 March 1917. This changed the acceptable form of governance from parliamentary monarchy to a democratic republic, in response to the abdication of Nicholas II and the establishment of the

Provisional Government.[250] While the period of Provisional Government was supposed to be the height of political success for Russian liberals, in practice they were overwhelmed with immediate tasks and torn between trying to fight the Soviet, organise a government, and build trusting relations with the Allies.

A new party resolution, following a failed attempt to gather a Constituent Assembly on 28 November 1917, took a more radical turn to the right. The Kadets agreed on the need to establish a form of autocratic power to deal with anarchy in the country, and to re-elect the Constituent Assembly when order was restored. Importantly, the Kadets repeated their commitment to the Allies, and mentioned the need for their help in establishing order in Russia. The words 'Bolshevism' or 'revolution' were not mentioned in the new decree. Instead, the Kadets talked about German influence and attempts to sabotage the Russian government.[251] In the following months, as the subsequent chapters will demonstrate, the position of the Constitutional Democrats became more conservative, and they spoke openly about the need for a dictatorship in Russia, to confront the Bolsheviks.

The end of the Great War was a period of great turmoil for Russia. The separatist peace treaty of Brest-Litovsk, signed by the Central Powers and the Bolsheviks in March 1918, signified the end of the war for Russia. However, the Whites, with liberals among them, refused to acknowledge the Brest-Litovsk peace, and insisted that Russia's involvement in the war continued after March 1918. This was especially important for the Kadets, who maintained their position of carrying on with the war effort until victory was achieved. They had invested much hope in the Allies' help in the civil war, as well as in reconstructing the borderlands of post-Bolshevik Russia. As a result, when Germany signed the armistice on 11 November 1918, it was unclear how Russia would be treated in the subsequent peace negotiations, where the Whites, the Bolsheviks, the Allies, and the Central Powers all had a say in deciding Russia's position, borderlands and rights. Russian liberals played an important role in the Paris Peace conference, as

[250] *Protokoly Tsentral'nogo Komiteta i Zagranichnykh Grupp Konstitutsionno-Demokraticheskoĭ Partii, 1905–Seredina 1930-Kh Gg. 1915–1920*, vol. 3 (Moscow: ROSSPEN, 1998), p. 361. Minutes of the session of plenary members of the Central Committee and parliamentary fraction of the Party of People's Freedom, with party members from the State Senate and former Dumas. 10–13 March 1917.
[251] 'Rezoliutsii TsK Kadetskoĭ Partii o Vnutrenneĭ i Vneshneĭ Politike, Ob Otnoshenii k Soiuznikam i Nerazdel′nosti Rossii', GARF F. 579, Op. 1, D. 717, pp. 1–4.

well as in the events leading up to it. While the Bolshevik government had not yet been recognised internationally, Russian liberals worked hard as representatives of the future liberated Russia. The following chapter will analyse the Russian liberals' impact on the post-war Paris Peace Conference, the position they took on the question of the rights to national self-determination, and how they thought they could serve Russia from abroad.

Chapter 3

Russia at the Paris Peace Conference: the impact of the liberals

"Russia was a jungle, in which no one could say what was within a few yards of him": this was Lloyd George's warning to the War Cabinet while attending the Paris Peace Conference.[252] Indeed, by 1919, Russia was already an unknown land, after the Allied powers had withdrawn their diplomats from St Petersburg in 1918.[253] By January 1919, Russia was torn between the Reds, the Whites, national minorities, and foreign intervention. It goes without saying that all political powers of the former Russian Empire awaited the start of the Paris Peace Conference with great anticipation, seeing it as a chance to bring clarity to their situation. National minorities were hoping that their full independence would be recognised internationally; while the Russians, on the contrary, worked hard to postpone any final rulings on the matter of Russian borderlands and national minorities until the end of the civil war, and the establishment of a new government. Liberals within the White forces were preparing to use their connections with the Entente governments to persuade the international community to recognise the Whites as the representatives of Russia, and to sustain almost all imperial borderlands, with the exception of Poland. The Paris Peace Conference was equally anticipated by the Whites and national minorities, who were all hoping to make their pleas and to receive some final resolutions from the international community regarding the territorial disputes.

This chapter will consider the position of the Whites and their expectations of the Paris Peace conference, highlighting the role played by the liberals among them. It will also analyse the position of minorities of the Baltic and the Caucasus regions, who were seeking recognition of their independent nation-states, as well as the overall impact that the Paris Peace Conference had on the situation in Russia. Although the problems associated with Russia were looming over the Peace Conference participants, they were only a part of the larger task of redrafting the

[252] Martin Gilbert, *Winston S. Churchill: World in Torment, 1916–1922*, 2nd ed. (Hillsdale: Hillsdale College Press, 2008), p. 229.
[253] Margaret Macmillan, *Peacemakers: The Paris Conference of 1919 and Its Attempt to End War* (London: John Murray, 2001), p. 72.

borders and the order of the entire European continent. To some extent, the 'Russia issue' kept being avoided. Although the participants agreed that a general policy towards Russia had to be adopted, they moved on to another subject, rather than working out this policy.[254]

The problem of Russian representation was not resolved by the time of the Paris Peace Conference. Several groups wanted to speak on behalf of the Russian Government, including General Denikin and Admiral Kolchak. Eventually, the Russian Political Conference, which represented White Russia, included both Denikin's Southern Government and Kolchak's Omsk Government. In addition, the newly independent nationalities – Finland, Poland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Belorussia, Ukraine, Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, and even the Don and Kuban Cossacks – all sent their delegations to Paris. While the Allies were prepared to support the anti-Bolshevik groups, however, they were concerned that allowing only one side of the Russian Civil War to be present at the conference would compromise the previously established agreement not to deal with only one side of the conflict.[255] While all of the newly independent nations were demanding state recognition, the Cossacks had less radical demands. Ivan Efremov, a moderate Cossack liberal who had been a member of the Progressive Party in the last Duma, suggested that "Don Cossacks could not think of themselves as an independent state, […]", but that "we must have complete autonomy on a federative basis".[256]

Russian liberals perceived themselves as key to the international negotiations. The official representative of the Whites in Paris, effectively representing Kolchak's government, was the Russian Political Committee (RPC) (*Russkoe politicheskoe soveshchanie*). Its representatives were former members of the tsarist government. Headed by a member of the Kadets – former Prime Minister of the Provisional Government, Georgy L'vov – the RPC also included the former Minister of Foreign Affairs in tsarist Russia, Sergey Sazonov; the former

[254] James Headlam-Morley, *A Memoir of the Paris Peace Conference 1919* (London, 1972), p. 7.
[255] An earlier conference at Prinkipo was meant to bring together all sides of the Russian Civil War, including not only the Whites and the Reds, but also representatives of the newly independent states. For more on this, see: Eric Homberger and John Biggart, *Prinkipo and After,* in Eric Homberger and John Biggart, eds., *John Reed and the Russian Revolution* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1992); John M. Thompson, *Russia, Bolshevism, and the Versailles Peace* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1966).
[256] "Minute of Conversation with Mr Yephremoff", 26 June 1919, In: Charlotte Alston, 'The Suggested Basis for a Russian Federal Republic: Britain, Anti-Bolshevik Russia and the Border States at the Paris Peace Conference', *History* 91, no. 1 (2006), pp 22–44, p. 29.

ambassador to France, who became Minister of Foreign Affairs in the Kolchak Government, Vasiliy Maklakov; and Nikolaĭ Chaĭkovskiĭ, who was a socialist member of the Soviets during the Provisional Government, and head of the Northern White Government of Arkhangel'sk. Other members were Aleksandr Konovalov, a Minister of Trade in the Provisional Government; Boris Savinkov, one of SR leaders; Aleksandr Titov, a national socialist, and his wife. L'vov, Maklakov, Sazonov and Chaĭkovskiĭ made up a delegation which was supposed to represent Russia's interests. The Whites were hoping that the RPC members' pre-existing connections with the Allies would help them to represent White Russia's interests. Although the Whites were urging the Allies to recognise them as official representatives of the Russian state and to ignore the Bolsheviks, they nevertheless understood the Allies' reluctance to do so. Mikhail Karpovich, who served as personal secretary to Ambassador Bakhmeteff in the US, wrote that neither the international situation, nor the way political events were developing in Russia, made it likely that that the international community would recognise the All-Russian Government of Kolchak.[257]

The question of Russian representation was a difficult problem for the Allies to resolve. The Whites' position was to convince the Allies that the Bolsheviks posed an international threat, in order to secure foreign military support. The issue of Russian borders and the future government, on the other hand, was supposed to be Russia's domestic issue. In practice, the questions of Russian future government, its territories and borders, became subject to international discussion in light of the emergence of the new post-War Europe.

When the issue was raised, the French Foreign Minister, Stephen Pichon, and British Prime Minister Lloyd George agreed that RPC should not be considered the official Russian delegation; however, they should be allowed to express their views.[258] Some Russian scholars have interpreted the Allies' reluctance to give the RPC an official status at the Paris Peace Conference as a betrayal of Russia's contribution to the First World War, and a result of pursuing

[257] Anatoly Smolin, "'Karpovich M. M. Russkoe Politicheskoe Soveshchanie v Parizhe, 1919 g.", *Trudy Kafedry Istorii Novogo i Noveĭshego Vremeni*, 14 (2015), p. 190.
[258] Boris Nolde, "La Fin de Guerre En Russie Au Point de Vue Du Droit International", *Extrait de La Revue de Droit International et Législation Comparée* (1923), p. 396.

their own political goals; but this was not entirely true.[259] On the one hand, the growing success of the Bolsheviks was of concern. Russian Whites declined any possibility of negotiations with the Reds. To them, this was a fundamental principle of their position: the illegitimacy of the Bolsheviks. Where possible, White representatives were hoping to reverse all the Bolsheviks' decisions in the aftermath of the war, as if they had never happened. Miliukov wrote about the need to annul the Brest-Litovsk treaty and its territorial decisions.[260] Negotiating with the Reds, especially in the presence of foreign states, meant acknowledging their rule. Lloyd George, on the other hand, was concerned by the fact that the "Bolsheviks were the *de facto* Russian government". In the past, Britain had recognised the tsarist government, despite its being "absolutely rotten", and now supported the governments at Omsk, Archangel and on the Don, "although none of them were good".[261] In addition, the British were concerned about some conservative imperialist positions of the RPC, who were reluctant to recognise any territorial losses of Russia. This position indeed threatened the imperial interests of Britain, which wanted to see an independent Armenia, as well as to create a buffer zone between Russia and Germany, in order to prevent German influence in the unstable, war-torn Russia.[262]

The Russian position at the Paris Peace Conference

Russian representatives at the Paris Peace Conference continued to argue for the necessity of smaller nationalities being protected by larger, more stable and developed states, just as they had beforehand. Regarding the emergence of newly independent states, the rhetoric of the 'level of development' of nations was widely discussed and debated, not just in the Russian community. Keith Neilson convincingly showed the British Foreign Office's difficult position on the question of Russia's borderlands. Some members were rather sympathetic to the Whites' position: for instance Rex Leeper, a member of the Political Intelligence

[259] For instance: Smolin, "Karpovich M. M. Russkoe Politicheskoe Soveshchanie v Parizhe, 1919 g."; Anatoly Smolin, *Beloe Dvizhenie Na Severo-Zapade Rossii. 1918–1920gg* (St Petersburg: Dmitrii Bulanin, 1999).
[260] See Chapter 5, on Miliukov's writings in *The New Russia*.
[261] Neilson, "'That Elusive Entity British Policy in Russia': The Impact of Russia on British Policy at the Paris Peace Conference", p. 80.
[262] Ibid., pp. 73–75.

Department of the Foreign Office, was worried about making any territorial decisions without Russia, which would re-emerge as a Great Power. According to him, Russians would accept the independence of Poland, Finland and Armenia, whereas an independent Ukraine would be out of question. This position was challenged by another member of the Foreign Office, E. H. Carr, who argued that allowing Russia to judge what nation deserved or did not deserve a state would be problematic, anti-democratic and autocratic.[263]

The All-Russian Provisional Government managed to establish more prominent foreign connections, forming a Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and a special commission within the embassy to discuss the Russian delegation's position at the Paris Peace Conference. Several members of the commission were Constitutional Democrats: S. Elachich, G. Gins and V. Vinogradov. Among them, Vinogradov was the only Kadet who had joined the party in 1905, after starting a political career in late imperial Russia through the Duma. Both Elachich and Gins were less-known local party members.[264] The All-Russian Provisional Government of Siberia did not face the same challenges regarding national minorities as the governments on Russia's borderlands. However, its members were aware of the situation in the Caucasus and north-western Russia. In preparation for the Peace Conference, the special commission met in January 1919 to discuss the issue of national self-determination (*vopros o samoopredelenii narodnosteĭ*), as the head of the commission, Zhukovskii, put it. Elachich, a member of the Constitutional Democrats within the group, finally raised the issue of terminology, claiming that the idea of "national self-determination" in war-torn Russia had started to mean "full political separation of self-determining nations from the principal state".[265] Meanwhile, according to Elachich, the Americans, as the main proponents of the idea of self-determination, defined it as "local self-governance". Defining Russia's position too rigidly caused a number of complications for its international interests: on the one hand, Russian White

[263] Ibid., pp. 73–74.
[264] There are few mentions of Elachich and Gins in historiography. See: Vladimir Khandorin, *Natsional'naia Ideia i Admiral Kolchak* (Moscow: Universitet Dmitriia Pozharskogo, 2017) ; Evgeniia Vasil'eva, 'Po Puti Demokratizatsii: Proekt Kadeta G. K. Ginsa Po Reformirovaniiu Sistemy Vlasti v Sibiri v Pravlenie; A. V. Kolchaka.', *Genesis: Istoricheskie Issledovaniia* 9 (2019): 24–31.
[265] 'Minutes of the Special Commission Meeting in Preparation for the Peace Conference', 9 January 1919. GARF F. P200, Op. 1, D. 261A, p. 9.

Governments and liberals within them wanted to maintain Russia's borderlands of 1914, except for an independent Poland. On the other hand, they supported the emergence of independent Slavic states in Central Europe: Czechoslovakia and Bessarabia.

Attaining both aims appeared to be mutually exclusive, as the same definition of 'self-determination' could not apply to both cases. The Kadets understood this. Georgii Gins agreed that the term was too arbitrary, and argued that the most beneficial approach would be to define it "from the point of view of our own interests". This would ideally prevent Romania from occupying Bessarabia, while allowing Russia to maintain its own national minorities within its borders.[266] In addition, the Kadets were concerned that national minorities were demanding to be present at the Peace Conference. V. Vinogradov urged the commission to discuss the terminology issue in advance, since Ukrainians, Finns, Georgians, etc., would inevitably raise this question at the conference. As a result of the negotiations, the commission decided to avoid very specific phrasing, and to focus on individual political examples.[267]

The ideas behind the discussion resulted in a memo, sent exactly three months later to the head of the Peace Conference from the Russian Political Commission in Paris; it was signed by Sazonov, L'vov, Chaikovskii and Maklakov.[268] They recognised the effort of national minorities in the anti-Bolshevik struggle, as well as their aspirations for complete independence. The RPC tried to defend Russia's interests by postponing final decision-making on the fate of national minorities. Russia, having emerged from revolution and having left the centralist tendencies of the Old Regime behind, was ready to satisfy these peoples' lawful desires to organise their national lives. However, these agreements would have to be made between Russia and these nations. Considering the situation in Russia, the nation was evidently not currently prepared to address these issues. On the other hand, the RPC suggested that the Entente Powers could temporarily de facto recognise the newly established independent governments, in

[266] Ibid., p. 10.
[267] Ibid., pp. 10–11.
[268] 'Letter from the Russian Political Commission in Paris to the head of the Peace Conference', 9 March 1919. GARF F. R-200, Op. 1, D. 58, pp. 8–11.

order to help maintain order and some economic, political and social structures, given that these nation-states were "enthusiastic about democratic principles".[269]

Neither the Omsk nor the Southern Russian Governments were recognised by the Allies as full participants at the Paris Peace Conference. However, the issue of national self-determination was becoming increasingly acute for the Russians. In the spring of 1919, when Denikin acknowledged Admiral Kolchak as the Head Commander of Russia, Ivan Sukin, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Omsk Government, received a telegram informing him that the Allies would acknowledge Kolchak's government on the condition that Russia recognised not only Polish, but also Finnish independence, and established diplomatic relations with the Baltic states and the Caucasus.[270] However, Sukin later wrote to Sazonov that the reactions to the Allied ultimatum were rather negative, especially among the Kadets, who thought that the Russian government was allowing the Allies to interfere in Russian internal political affairs and make too many compromises.[271] Although the All-Russian Provisional Government was geographically very remote from the national self-determination tensions at the borderlands, it was nevertheless involved in these issues. Sazonov telegraphed an update regarding the Allied position on the Baltic states. He informed the Omsk Government that the US was considering supporting the anti-Bolshevik struggle in the north-western region, and would recognise local national groups as parts of Russia. In return, the Americans wanted to see a specific policy towards minorities, and a demonstration of guarantees of future autonomous structures. Sazonov himself strongly advised the All-Russian Government to delay resolving this issue for as long as possible, until the Constituent Assembly was formed.[272] Sazonov argued that Iudenich did not have the authority to speak on behalf of Russia, and to make such decisions.[273] In any case, many believed that after the collapse of Bolshevism, national minorities, including Estonians, would revert to becoming part of a new Russia on

[269] Ibid., p. 10.
[270] Ibid., p. 20.
[271] Ibid., p. 25. Secret telegram from Sukin to Sazonov. June 1919.
[272] Ibid., pp. 30–31. Secret telegram of the Minister of Foreign Affairs from Paris to the Head of the Ministers' Council. 15 July 1919.
[273] Ibid., p. 86. Secret telegram from S. Sazonov to Stockholm. 17 August 1919.

a federalist basis. This case again brought to light the issue of authority that the Whites struggled with.

In the first draft of a memorandum on Russia's participation at the Paris Peace Conference, written by Boris Bakhmeteff, the ambassador also placed strong emphasis on the Russia of the future – a strong and unified state, one of the guarantors of peace in Europe. Russian representatives believed that despite the civil war, the Bolsheviks' coup d'état and the Brest-Litovsk treaty, Russia deserved that its vital interests be satisfied at the Paris Peace Conference, due to its losses and sacrifices during the Great War. A failure to consider Russia's interests at the conference would bring complications in the future.[274] Bakhmeteff suggested some conditions on which Russia would participate in the conference, most of which aimed to ensure its presence and equal position to the Allies at the negotiations. Firstly, all matters concerning Russia should be addressed in the presence of the Russian delegation; secondly, Russia had to have an equal position to the other Allies; thirdly, it had to take part in all economic agreements addressing post-war reconstruction; and lastly, Russia had to be a full and equal participant in all negotiations addressing the future of international relations.[275] Although the independence of Finland was non-negotiable for the Allies, in April 1919 the Russian Delegation was still not prepared to recognise Finnish independence. Bakhmeteff argued that the Finnish matter had to be settled between the Finnish Sejm and the new post-war Russian government. The Russians were only prepared to grant Finland a "special status".[276]

Throughout the civil war, one of the Whites' concerns was to stress the importance of foreign intervention, and the Allies' help in fighting the Bolsheviks. At the Paris Peace Conference, discussions of foreign intervention in the Russian Civil War were not as prevalent. Instead, the Russian Political Committee tried to shift the focus to the future post-Bolshevik Russia and its place in the international arena. Russian representatives were interested in defending Russia's interests. This task entailed securing – or, at least, attempting to secure – as many territorial gains

[274] 'Memorandum on Russia's participation at the Pace Negotiations', 5-6 December 1918. Bakhmeteff Archive, Columbia University, Bakhmeteff Papers, Box 57, Subject File: Paris Peace Conference.
[275] Ibid., 6–7.
[276] 'Strictly Confidential'. 19 April 1919. Bakhmeteff Archive, Columbia University, Bakhmeteff Papers, Box 57, Subject File: Paris Peace Conference, Document 23A.

as possible, among those that Russia was supposed to achieve as a result of the Great War, and to avoid losing any territories. Miliukov's negotiations regarding Constantinople and the Dardanelles were among these successes. In an outline of Russia's peace negotiations with Turkey, written for the Paris Peace Conference, the importance of Russian interests in the Black Sea was emphasised. The document explained Russia's "natural" rights to secure its position on the Black Sea and developing commercial relations with the region. It was stressed that Russia had no "aggressive or annexationist aspirations", but merely wanted to secure its rightful position, which had already been fairly acknowledged by the Allies during the Great War. Despite the crisis in Russia, its interests remained intact.[277] The Russians employed the same rhetoric that they had during the Great War, stressing the insecurity of Christians in the region – specifically, the Armenians. Russia again was portrayed as the protector of the smaller nation, oppressed by the Turks, although it acknowledged independence of the Armenian state. To sum up the Russian demands in the Black Sea region, the PRC suggested de-militarising the Black Sea; ensuring freedom of commercial navigation between the Black and Mediterranean Seas at all times; and, finally, international control of Constantinople, where Russia would take part, but no nation could claim the city.[278] Miliukov maintained his position as the lead negotiator regarding Russia's borderlands. According to the liberal-imperial mindset of the Kadets' leader, the Entente members would have the final say on the fate of national minorities. As long as Russia's claims did not infringe those of other Entente members, the demands of the Whites should be satisfied. In addition to the territorial claims, the Whites were adamant in insisting that the Allies did not negotiate with the Bolsheviks and did not recognise their government. Although the liberals refused to see any benefits in negotiations with the Bolsheviks, their approach in fact further complicated Russia's position at the negotiations.

[277] Bakhmeteff Papers, Box 57, Subject File: Paris Peace Conference. Outline for the Peace Conference concerning peaceful negotiations with Turkey.
[278] Ibid.

The Allied position towards revolutionary Russia

According to George Kennan, the Allies actually made several attempts to resolve the Russia issue during the Paris Peace Conference, and the invitation to a conference at the Prinkipo Islands in January 1919 was only the first attempt. Much to the RPC's dislike, some of these attempts were directed at reaching a truce with the Bolsheviks. In fact, as Lloyd George argued in the beginning of the Paris peace negotiations, he would gladly have dealt with the Soviets as the de facto government of Russia, as would Woodrow Wilson. However, the Allies were very much constrained by strong domestic anti-communist feelings in their respective countries and governments.[279] After the failed attempt to bring all sides of the Russian conflict to the table at Prinkipo, Winston Churchill tried to compel the Bolsheviks to cease their military operations. The British and American side sent a diplomatic agent, William Bullitt, to Moscow to talk with the Bolshevik government, and Friedtjof Nansen attempted to collaborate with the Bolsheviks by providing food for the starving Russian population. All these attempts were unsuccessful, largely due to the Allies' lack of a coherent position towards the Russian question. US and British representatives were more willing to resolve the situation in Russia, and to include some of Russia's representatives in the Paris negotiations. Clemenceau, on the other hand, saw the signing of Brest-Litovsk as a betrayal, which stripped the Russians of any rights to make claims at the conference. According to him, they were to be treated like the Germans.[280] In addition, the Allies failed to grasp the real situation in Russia at the time. When they made the first attempts to negotiate with the Bolsheviks, the Reds were not in a strong position and were willing make many territorial concessions so that the Allies would retrieve their troops from Russia. On the other hand, by the time Nansen prepared a proposal to supply food to the Russians and made no promise to remove the troops, but demanded that the Bolsheviks ceased hostilities, the Bolsheviks were making significant progress. Despite the fact that they desperately needed provisions, they were not willing to accept the Allies' terms.[281]

[279] George Kennan, "Russia and the Versailles Conference", *The American Scholar* 30, 1 (1960), p. 17.
[280] Ibid., pp.16, 18.
[281] Ibid., pp. 32–34.

A lack of reliable information on the Russia issue was another factor. In its report, the American Mission to the South of Russia and Ukraine highlighted the lack of a workable plan in Russia. According to Francis Riggs, chief of the mission, numerous committees with various political opinions in Russia insisted that the Allies "immediately occupy all Russia, establish strong Russian Government and only then will anything begin to work".[282] The Allies were relying on the information provided by the Whites; this put them in the same situation as Russian liberal émigrés, who had the same sources of insight and maintained close connection with the Allies. Thus, the US, Britain and France shared the same overly optimistic perception of the Whites' position in Russia, as did the Russian community abroad. The Allies failed to adequately assess not only the military situation, but also the spirit of society under the Reds or the Whites. The Russian liberal émigrés, as Chapter 4 will demonstrate, were to some extent deliberately misleading in their promises of a democratic Russia, trying to connect it to Western principles of liberalism and democracy, and to portray it as "self" rather than "other", in Benedict Anderson's terms.[283]

George Kennan recognised the strong influence of Woodrow Wilson's personality and his feelings towards Russia and Eastern Europe. According to him, the revolution and civil war in Russia overturned his entire attitude to what the Versailles Peace Treaty should embody. His original proposed response to the European War was similar to that of Lenin and Soviets: peace without annexations and contributions. Kennan attributed this to the fact that Wilson was hoping that a democratic Russian state would emerge from the revolution, which would become a strong ally to the United States.[284] His "Fourteen Points" speech in fact argued for a liberal treatment of post-war Russia:

> The evacuation of all Russian territory and such a settlement of all questions affecting Russia as will secure the best and freest cooperation

[282] FRUS. 1919, Russia. Chapter 5, Southern Russia and the Ukraine. Telegram from the Chief of the Mission to Southern Russia (Riggs) to the Commission to Negotiate Peace. 28 March 1919, p. 755.
[283] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 2006). Anderson argued that communities share a group perception of friends, who share the same values and principles and are identified as "self" and "others", who do not belong to the same imagined community by not sharing the same values/traditions, etc.
[284] Kennan, "Russia and the Versailles Conference", pp. 15–16.

> of the other nations of the world in obtaining for her an unhampered and unembarrassed opportunity for the independent determination of her own political development and national policy and assure her of a sincere welcome into the society of free nations under institutions of her own choosing; and, more than a welcome, assistance also of every kind that she may need and may herself desire.[285]

The final attempt was directed at the Whites, aiming to make the Kolchak Government promise to make liberal democratic changes in the future Russia: specifically, to permit local elections, ratify a constitution, make concessions to national minorities, and join the League of Nations, in return for the Allies' support, supply of food and munitions. At that time the Allies had already been supplying the Whites, and Kolchak's power was rapidly disintegrating; thus, this seemed to be more of an extension of moral support, rather than any coherent plan to support the anti-Bolshevik struggle. Soon after Kolchak's representatives had drafted a reply, the US ambassador to Japan, Ronald Morris, was sent to Siberia to discover the true facts of the situation. Morris concluded that the Kolchak government could not possibly maintain itself any longer, and Woodrow Wilson had to make a decision to retrieve the Allied troops from Russia at once.

Formulation of White Russia's position and liberal influence

The issue of Russian interests at the Paris Peace Conference was complicated by not only a lack of representation of a legitimate Russian government, but also the inconsistencies between the old and the new (future) regimes, and Russian demands. On the one hand, the Whites and the Russian representatives abroad argued that Russia deserved the same position at the negotiations as the other Allied states, because of its sacrifices in the Great War and devotion to the cause of the Whites, despite the Bolshevik takeover. On the other hand, they had to break the link with the Old Regime, claiming that the new Russia would be built on new democratic principles and electoral government. This was where the role of

[285] Woodrow Wilson, *Fourteen Points*. Point VI. Available Online: <http://www.exodusbooks.com/Samples/VP/O3FourteenPoints.pdf>

Russian liberals became pivotal. On the one hand, they had already established ties with foreign powers under the Old Regime, and some of them had even shown that they could run the state during the short-lived Provisional Government. Miliukov was one of the clearest examples: while advocating for the interests of the state, he had already expressed his disagreement with the Old Regime, and was promoting a change. He seemed to embody the new Russia. On the other hand, the Whites' conservative imperialist position towards Russia's foreign policy and national minorities, which the liberals did not object to, weakened the image of a free democratic Russia that liberals abroad were trying to portray. The Russian position at the Paris Peace Conference reinforced this situation.

Indeed, in his draft of the declaration for the Peace Conference, Maklakov stressed the discontinuity between the old and the new Russia, and that the new regime would end oppression. He argued that the new government would be the government of the people: "People's sovereignty will be the foundation of the law and order."[286] The new Russia would have a new policy towards nationalities: it would recognise the rights of national minorities, as well as individual rights. He clearly stated, however, that these rights would be guaranteed within Russian territory. While Russia recognised the independence of Poland, it was prepared to negotiate new terms with Finland and grant further autonomy to the Baltic states. Nonetheless, one of the aims of the new Russia would be to "eradicate artificial excuses to stir unhealthy separatism, which entail remembering old grievances, distrust in the faithfulness of the new state and spite towards Bolshevist despotism".[287] According to Maklakov, these issues should be resolved through federations, or the creation of autonomous republics.

Count Georgii L'vov, one of the liberal members of the RPC, shared similar views. The Russian right to participate at the Paris Peace Conference was unquestionable for him, in view of Russia's sacrifices. Its defeat was explained by

[286] Bakhmeteff Papers, Box 57, Subject File: Paris Peace Conference. Declaration: first draft by Maklakov. December 1918, 3–4.
[287] Bakhmeteff Papers, Box 57, Subject File: Paris Peace Conference. Declaration: first draft by Maklakov. December 1918, 3–4. Original quote: "Новая Россия поставит своей задачей уничтожить в корне те искусственные поводы к нездоровому сепаратизму, которые заключаются в воспоминаниях о старых обидах, в недоверии к лояльности государственной власти и в озлоблении против большевистского деспотизма".

"German intrigues", while the Russian intelligentsia remained loyal to the Allies and denied the Brest-Litovsk treaty. Even during the civil war, according to L'vov, Russians in the Urals, Siberia, Kuban and Crimea continued to fight against the Bolsheviks and the Germans. The League of Nations would not be secure if Russian people were forced into relations they did not agree to. In that case, Russia would want to reconsider the negotiations once it had regained its force.[288] Unlike other members of the Russian delegation, L'vov acknowledged the lack of a Russian government, as recognised by the Allies, and addressed this issue. However, according to him, the consolidation of power in Russia was happening very fast. He argued that it was in the Allies' interests to recognise the Russian Siberian Government in Omsk as official Russian representatives, in order to grant Russia full rights to participate in the peace negotiations.[289]

Boris Bakhmeteff was sympathetic to different nationalities' desire to secure their position as independent states, given the overwhelming uncertainty in the region. Nevertheless, he echoed Miliukov, arguing that once the situation in Russia stabilised, national minorities would realise that their identity would be best protected within the Russian state, on the basis of either autonomy or federations.[290] Bakhmeteff recognised the minorities' desire to turn to the Allies in order to determine the legitimacy of their governments; however, similarly to Maklakov, he argued that it would be unwise for the Allies to make any such ruling without Russia, as this would cause more instability in the future. In summary, the Russian ambassador suggested the following practical steps: final decisions on any territories which were part of Russia prior to 1914 had to be addressed with Russian representatives present. Unlike L'vov's proposal to immediately recognise the Omsk Government, Bakhmeteff suggested making temporary provisions for the nationalities during the "transition period". In future, the rights of all nationalities residing in Russia would be guaranteed not only by the new Russian government, but also by the League of Nations, of which Russia would be

[288] Bakhmeteff Papers, Box 57, Subject File: Paris Peace Conference. The first project of Count G. E. L'vov on Russian participation at the Peace Negotiations, 30 December 1918, 1–2.
[289] Ibid., 3–4.
[290] Bakhmeteff Papers, Box 57, Subject File: Paris Peace Conference, Document 12. Note by B. A. Bakhmeteff, 24 February 1918, 1–2.

a member. The League would not only protect the minorities, but also guarantee Russia's sovereignty.[291]

While there were certain disagreements among the Whites, and even within the RPC, on particularities of conditions in which Russia could participate in the peace negotiations, the Whites' demands in general were coherent and uniform across various individuals and political groups: they were hoping that the Omsk Government would be recognised as a Russian government by the international community, and issues related to the national self-determination of former Russian territories would be regulated in consultation with the Russian representatives. It was commonly understood that in the aftermath of the civil war, nationalities would benefit from being citizens of the new Russia. While the question of state structure was open for future discussion, a special committee (formed to discuss the issue of autonomies in Russia) recognised a potential need to treat different regions separately according to their needs, rather than introducing a single form of autonomous divisions across the country. The committee suggested four groups of autonomies: the Baltic states and Georgia; Ukraine, Siberia and the Cossack territories; Azerbaijan, Turkestan and the East Caspian region; and finally, protectorates. Importantly, Finland and Armenia were not considered by the committee due to their special position, which was already recognised by the Whites in June 1919.[292] The first group would be granted the most rights, "not because of the political power of these nationalities, but as a result of the recent international events which allowed them to strengthen their position abroad and made the Allies recognise their moral right to a privileged position, if not full autonomy".[293] The remaining three groups were listed in order of rising levels of central authority. Ukraine, Siberia and the Cossack territories, according to the committee, had a high level of cultural development, united national groups, and an organic connection to ethnic Russians; whereas Azerbaijan, Turkestan and the East Caspian region showed a lower level of cultural development and a culturally

[291] Bakhmeteff Papers, Box 57, Subject File: Paris Peace Conference, Document 12. Note by B. A. Bakhmeteff, 24 February 1918, 2–3.
[292] Bakhmeteff Papers, Box 57, Subject File: Paris Peace Conference. Soobrazheniia zasedaniia 28 iiunia 1919 g. komissii po obsuzhdeniiu voprosa ob avtonomiiakh, predostavliaemykh razlichnym oblastiam Rossii, 1–2.
[293] Soobrazheniia zasedaniia 28 iiunia 1919 g. komissii po obsuzhdeniiu voprosa ob avtonomiiakh, predostavliaemykh razlichnym oblastiam Rossii, 3.

very mixed society. The level of autonomy was presupposed by the central-to-local powers ratio. Generally, the lack of Russian representation left a sense of unresolved business among the Whites. Boris Nol'de later discussed the end of the Great War and Russia's place in it in 1923. He pointed out that while the Treaty of Versailles annulled the Brest-Litovsk Treaty, it remained unclear when the Great War had in fact ended for Russia. This raised a number of issues: for instance, the fact that Russia's international relations, either with the Allies or with Germany, were not regulated by international legal order.[294]

The anticipation around the Paris Peace Conference resulted in all participants having high expectations for its results. Although the Russian representatives abroad kept demanding that Russia be recognised just like the other Allies, it was clear that they looked up to the Allies for approval of their position towards both the Bolsheviks and the national minorities. Great expectations, a very wide agenda, but a lack of a coherent agenda, resulted in many disappointments emerging from the conference. Paul Cambon, former French ambassador to Great Britain, described the events in Paris as a shambles, chaos, incoherence and ignorance.[295] The negotiations were delayed, while all the leaders had to balance the Peace Conference with their own domestic affairs: for example, Woodrow Wilson had to leave for Washington for a month in February 1919.

The decision-makers at the conference were challenged not just by the scope of issues they had to address, but also an absence of coherent rules to adhere to. While Woodrow Wilson's ideas of the New World, articulated in his "Fourteen Points", were inspiring, they lacked particularities, structure, or a plan to achieve this new order. In addition, European representatives felt that the Fourteen Points were being imposed on them.[296] In an absence of a coherent set of rules, those rules had to be drawn up from scratch, and participants wanted to suggest their own strategy to benefit their own political agenda. Woodrow Wilson's view of equality for all nations was subject to interpretation: What was the best way to ensure the

[294] Boris Nolde, "La Fin de Guerre En Russie Au Point de Vuew Du Droit International", *Extrait de La Revuede Droit International et Législation Comparée*, 1923, p. 396.
[295] Paul Cambon, *Correspondance*, vol. 3 (Paris, 1946), p. 311.
[296] Alan Sharp, "Dreamland of the Armistice", *History Today* 58, 11 (2008), pp. 28–34.

stability and protection of a small nation? While representatives of smaller nations came to demand recognition of their full independence, the Whites were insisting that smaller nations would be better off under the protection of larger, more powerful states. In addition, the question was often posed in the following way: Who deserves an independent state? The concept of judging a nation's merit and right to an independent state by its level of development was a widely accepted approach at the conference. National minorities recognised it and adhered to these rules in their pledges. Delegations from newly independent states pointed to the maturity of their national culture, the richness of their cultural heritage, and their distinctions from Russia. On the contrary, Russians argued that the emergence of new nation-states in Russia's borderlands would create more global instability. There were some similar patterns in delegations from the newly independent states, as well as some differences.

Delegations from the Baltics and the Caucasus – including Estonia, Latvia, Lithuanian Poles, Georgia, the Republic of North Caucasus, and Azerbaijan – even signed a collective note to the Allies, pledging their position. They argued that despite Russia's official claims that its future state would be based on principles of self-determination, the actions of the troops of General Denikin showed that the republics of Georgia and Azerbaijan had already been threatened. Recognising Russians' territorial demands would destroy the national minorities, who would be forced to continue their struggle against Russian oppression.[297] Notably, Polish representatives also signed the note in solidarity with the rest of the nations. The secretariat of the Peace Conference forwarded a copy of the note to the secretariat of the American delegation, described as "a note signed by a certain number of Russian Delegations".[298]

[297] Foreign Relations of the United States (FRUS). United States Department of State. Papers relating to the foreign relations of the United States, 1919, Russia. Chapter 5, Southern Russia and the Ukraine. Telegram from the Secretariat-General of the Paris Peace Conference to the Secretariat of the Commission to negotiate Peace, (with an enclosed copy of note from the delegations), 12 July 1919, pp. 765–768.

[298] FRUS Telegram from the Secretariat-General of the Paris Peace Conference to the Secretariat of the Commission to negotiate Peace, (with an enclosed copy of note from the delegations), 12 July 1919, p. 765.

The Baltics

Most of the territories of the Baltic states were occupied by the German army after the Great War. These areas remained under German control, according to the Breast-Litovsk treaty. However, already in November 1918 the German army had started to lose control over the Baltic states following the unrest in Germany.[299] In light of German failure, both the Bolsheviks and the Allied states started to compete for control over the Baltic states. The Bolsheviks had already started their military operations by November. At the same time, the states of Estonia and Lithuania were fighting for their independence, and turned to the Allied states and the Whites to seek protection against the Bolshevik threat. Russian historians have tended to emphasise the importance of the Allied influence in the Baltics, especially that of Great Britain.[300] In November, the Minister of Justice reported the creation of a committee dedicated to fighting Bolshevism. He was concerned that Bolshevist ideas were finding resonance in Eastern Europe, including Finland, Hungary, Estonia, Latvia and Germany. The committee was supposed to study "all aspects of social life of foreign states and influence of Bolshevism on the people".[301] In addition, a special department of propaganda and agitation was working on spreading anti-Bolshevik propaganda in the North-Western Government. While their work did not touch upon the issue of nationalities directly, it nevertheless transmitted the perspective of the White Army regarding a "united and indivisible Russia", which weakened the propaganda. The Entente Powers, and especially Great Britain, had to act as a mediator between the Russian White Government and the new national governments of Estonia and Lithuania. In the months leading up to formation of the North-Western Government, Estonia had been exposed to the Bolshevik threat and was turning to the Allies for support.[302] Charlotte Alston agreed that Great Britain was relatively more

[299] Nikolay Bogomazov, 'Sozdanie Russkikh Antibol′shevistskikh Otriadov v Latvii v Kontse 1918 g', *Noveĭshaia Istoriia Rossii*, 2018, pp. 322–36., p. 323.
[300] Smolin, *Beloe Dvizhenie na Severo-Zapade Rossii*. 1918–1920gg. pp. 50–52; Natalya Dumova and Vladimir Trukhanovskiĭ, *Cherchil' i imperialisticheskaia interventsiia v Rossii,* in: S. L. Tikhvinskiĭ (ed.), *Istoricheskiĭ opyt Velikogo Okeiabria: k 90-letiiu akademika I.I. Mintsa*. Moscow: Nauka, 1989, p. 182.
[301] 'Report of the Minister of Justice to the Council of Ministers of the North-Western region'. GARF F. P-6385, Op. 1, D. 18, pp. 30–31.
[302] Smolin, *Beloe Dvizhenie na Severo-Zapade Rossii*, gives a detailed account of diplomatic and military negotiations between Estonian, Russian governments and the Entente representatives. (see pp: 48-61).

sympathetic to the Estonian cause.[303] Representatives of the Baltic states demanded recognition of their independence by the Allies, as a guarantee of their future independence. In August 1919, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Estonia, Jaan Poska, wrote a letter to Britain's Brigadier General F. G. Marsh, stipulating that Iudenich's army would be allowed to conduct military actions only if the Allies recognised Estonian independence.[304] Estonians made many attempts to secure their future independence in these trilateral negotiations. Poska called for Marsh's "personal friendliness" towards the Estonian nation, and for the Allies' benevolent attitude towards Estonia.[305] The Allies, however, were hesitant to openly acknowledge the independence of the new nation-states, but did promise independence to the Estonians in bilateral negotiations.

The struggle for recognition of the Baltic States went on after the Paris Peace Conference, and became one of the tasks of the League of Nations. The Whites had reluctantly recognised the independence of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, similarly to the case of southern Russia, where Georgia was claiming its state independence. The situation between the Provisional Government and national minorities was further complicated by the diplomatic advancement of the Soviet Regime: for instance, the Baltic states eagerly accepted the Bolsheviks' recognition of their state independence.[306] In March 1921, Soviet Russia (representing both Russia and Belorussia) and Soviet Ukraine signed a peace treaty with Poland in Riga, signifying the end of the conflict between the states.[307]

Some delegations were better prepared than others. In the case of Lithuania, for instance, several diplomats presented their credentials independently of each other, adding to the already existing confusion.[308] Prior to the conference, the Lithuanian National Council in the US published a pamphlet, *Lithuania's Case for Independence*, which aimed to acquaint the American public with "Lithuania and her people, her history, her struggles against annihilation, her ideas and her

[303] Charlotte Alston, *Piip, Meierovics & Voldemaras: The Baltic States* (London: Haus Publishing, 2010).
[304] 'Letter by J. Poska to Brigadier General F. G. Marsh', 16 August 1919. GARF F. P-6385, Op. 1, D. 6, p. 18.
[305] Ibid.
[306] Alston, *Piip, Meierovics & Voldemaras: The Baltic States*.
[307] Peace treaty between Russia and Ukraine of one side and Poland on the other side. Hoover Institution Archives, Russia. Posol'stvo (U.S.) Folder 5, Box 23, p. 101
[308] Alston, *Piip, Meierovics & Voldemaras: The Baltic States*, p. 63.

aspirations".[309] All of the Baltic states relied on the Wilsonian rhetoric of recognising all nations, and constructed their arguments on the basis of the ethnic coherence of their proposed newly independent states.[310] The pamphlet started by stressing the fact that Lithuanians were distinct from Slavs and Germans, and had their own language, different from Slavic languages.[311] Upon asking to be heard at the Peace Conference, the Lithuanian representative, Voldemaras, sent a letter to representatives of Great Britain, France and the US (Balfour, Pichon and Lansing), saying that: "We Lithuanians are a small nation. We are a distinct nation, distinct in breed, in language and in culture…".[312] The Polish commission for preparatory works for the Paris Peace Conference disputed Russia's rights to Lithuanian and Belorussian lands, arguing in their report that Russians were a minority in Lithuanian territory (which also included some Belorussian land); they did not share a common language group, and were actually different ethnographic groups. The main argument, however, was economic. According to Professor Stanislas Kutrzeba, the author of the pamphlet, Russia colonised Lithuanian land and was ruining the economies of Lithuanian provinces, to the advantage of the empire's centre. In addition, the Russian government deprived Lithuanians of any right to self-determination, by preventing them from having a local zemstvo, which were organised in other provinces of Russian Empire; it also denied them access to any public services. In addition, the level of education in the area had declined, while the control over the population and oppression of the Catholic Church had become widespread.[313] Kutrzeba concluded that Russian territorial claims on Lithuania were based on a history of violent conquest; ethnographic claims were unsustainable, since Russians and Lithuanians were ethnically different and very few ethnic Russians lived on Lithuanian lands; while Russian claims of "culturally protecting" other nationalities were simply untrue, since Russians did nothing but oppress the local Polish, Lithuanian and Belorussian peoples.[314]

[309] T Norus and J Zilius, *Lithuania's Case for Independence.* (Washington: B.F. Johnson, Publishers, 1918). Introduction.
[310] Alston, *Piip, Meierovics & Voldemaras: The Baltic States*, p. 83.
[311] Norus and Zilius, *Lithuania's case for independence*, p. 3.
[312] Quoted in: Alston, *Piip, Meierovics & Voldemaras: The Baltic States*, pp. 64–65.
[313] Stanisław Kutrzeba, *Droits de La Russie Sur La Lithuanie et Sur La Ruthénie-Blanche* (Paris, 1919).
[314] Kutrzeba, p. 11.

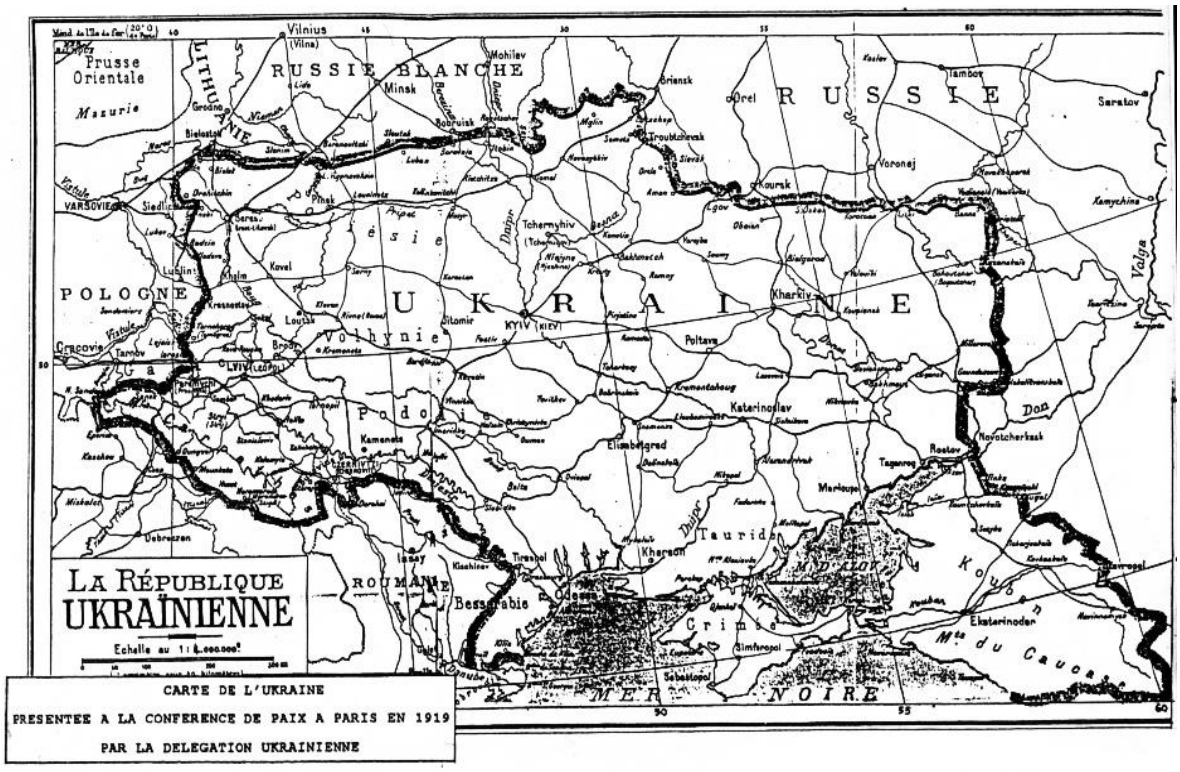
The Estonian submission to the Peace Conference, presented by their delegation, started similarly to the Lithuanian pamphlet by briefly acquainting the conference participants with the history, geography and ethnography of Estonia. It stressed that, unlike Russians, they belonged to the Finnic ethnic group, and pointed out that although they were the predominant majority in their land, they had been pushed into poverty and exploited by both Russians and German barons, who came from noble backgrounds and were the main landowners in Estonia. A large part of the memorandum outlined the economic capabilities of the independent state, to prove its financial capability. It also presented its proposed political structure: a democratic republic which would have amicable relations with all neighbouring states, while protecting national minorities. Unlike the Russian delegation, the Estonians were open about not intending to give national minorities any local self-governance. The annexe to the Estonian memorandum stated that national minorities, including Russians, Jews, Germans and Swedes within the democratic Estonian republic, would have rights to cultural autonomy.[315] The memorandum also outlined that while Estonia hoped to establish amicable relations with Russia, it did not see itself in any way dependent on Russia, and the possibility or re-joining Russia voluntarily as a federation would be entirely out of question. While the revolution of 1917 had destroyed the Old Regime, Estonians saw no indication that the Russia of tomorrow would not return to the policies of oppression towards national minorities.[316]

Ukraine

Ukraine sent its delegation to the Paris Peace Conference, asking for recognition of an independent Ukrainian republic, and for admission to the League of Nations. In their memorandum, the Ukrainian delegation presented a very detailed history of their nation, highlighting its differences not just from the Russians, but from other Slavic nations as well. They argued that throughout the nineteenth century, Ukrainian nationalism had been actively developing despite Russian oppression, while the experience in the aftermath of the first Russian revolution of 1905

[315] *Mémoire Sur l'indépendance de l'Estonie Presenté à La Conférence de La Paix Par La Délegation Esthonienne* (Paris: Imp.de la Bourse de commerce, 1919), pp. 1–6, 30.
[316] Ibid., p. 32.

allowed them to develop local self-governance, as well as the Rada. National minorities within Ukraine, the majority of whom were Russians and Jews, would be granted "personal autonomy".[317] A letter sent by the head of the Ukrainian committee, Grigoriĭ Sidorenko, highlighted that forming an independent state was the desire of the Ukrainian people. He also wanted to reassure Clemenceau that the new state would be economically viable through the production and export of wheat, cast iron and coal.[318] The territories claimed by Ukraine are represented in the map below.



Map of Ukraine Presented by the Ukrainian Delegation at the Paris Peace Conference, 1919.
Picture Source: likbez.org.ua.

The Ukrainian delegation had to justify its territorial claims, not just against Russia, but also against Poland, which was claiming its rights to Eastern Galicia. Territorially, the Ukrainian delegation made claims to many places that were also contested by Russia, Poland, the Cossacks and Hungary: Crimea, Kuban and Stavropol', Kursk, Eastern Galicia, and Ukrainian Bessarabia. Interestingly, the

[317] *Mémoire Sur l'indépendance de l'Ukraine Présenté à La Conférence de La Paix Par La Délégation de La République Ukrainienne* (Paris: La délégation de la république Ukrainienne, 1919).
[318] *Notes Présentée Par La Délégation de La République Ukrainienne a La Conference de La Paix a Paris. Fevrier–Avril 1919* (Paris: Robinet-Houtain, 1919).

Ukrainians recognised the Cossacks' independence, but were hoping that they would willingly join the Ukrainian state.[319] The Ukrainian question was further complicated by not only the Russian claims, but also Polish interests in Eastern Galicia, where the population overwhelmingly supported Ukrainian independence. In addition, the voice of Ukrainians was not unified. For example, the Lemko Rusyn Republic, based in the north Carpathian Mountains and formerly part of Austrian Galicia, originally formed a pro-Russian government, but in the sixteen months of its existence it also experienced a pro-Ukrainian and its own Carpatho-Rusyn identity.[320]

The United States sent an American mission to Ukraine, to observe the military and political situation. American observers considered the south of Russia and Ukraine to be a uniform region, and a part of Russia.[321] They reported a strong Ukrainian nationalist sentiment in Galicia, where "all classes wish an independent Ukraine".[322] The commission also acknowledged that Petliura and his cabinet had formed a competent government that enjoyed support from the local population, and national minorities of Jews and Poles were well-treated. Nevertheless, the mission concluded the telegram by suggesting that this information be treated with caution, as they observed that the situation in Ukraine was highly unstable.

The Caucasus

By the start of the Paris Peace Conference, the Caucasus region was in turmoil. It had already experienced a failed Transcaucasian Republic, which had attempted to unite Georgians, Armenians, Tatars and Azeri, and lasted for less than a month; and a conflict with the Turks over the Batoum and Kars regions, which had been annexed by the Russian Empire as a result of the Russo-Turkish War in 1878. In addition, Armenia was in an open conflict with Azerbaijan over Karabakh region. As Arnold Toynbee, British Consultant at the Paris Peace Conference argued, it

[319] *Mémoire Sur l'indépendance de l'Ukraine Présenté à La Conférence de La Paix Par La Délégation de La République Ukrainienne*, p. 117.
[320] Paul Robert Magocsi, "The Ukrainian Question between Poland and Czechoslovakia: The Lemko Rusyn Republic (1918–1920) and Political Thought in Western Rus'-Ukraine", *Nationalities Papers* 21, 1 (2007), pp. 95–105.
[321] FRUS. Papers relating to the foreign relations of the United States, 1919, Russia. Chapter 5, Southern Russia and the Ukraine, p. 755.
[322] FRUS. 1919, Russia. Chapter 5, Southern Russia and the Ukraine: Telegram from the Commission to Negotiate Peace to the Acting Secretary of State, 11 June 1919, p. 778.

was impossible to draw an even roughly ethnographic frontier between Armenia and Azerbaijan.[323] Once Georgia proclaimed its independence as a result of the Treaty of Batoum on 26 May 1918, Armenia and Azerbaijan followed its example two days later. While delegations from the Caucasus presented their claims to certain territories to the Allies at the conference, they did not talk very much about the conflict with Turkey, or the Armenian-Azerbaijani War. After the Armistice of Mudros on 30 October 1918 was signed between the Ottoman Empire and the Allied Powers, followed by the Armistice of Compiègne on 11 November 1918 between Germany and the Allies, Turkey arguably became a lesser threat to Armenians in the region.[324] Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan all sent their own delegations to the Paris Peace Conference, to represent their nations and demand independence. Unlike the Baltics, the memorandums from the Caucasian nationalities did not have such a strong anti-Russian tone. In fact, one of the members of the Azeri delegation, a lawyer and a former State Duma member, Alimardan Topchibashev, was hoping to protect Azerbaijan against the Bolshevik influence; he was originally not against joining Russia, and changed his opinion later on.[325] Their pleas for independence also started with educating the Allies about their respective nations, and highlighting their cultural and ethnographic distinctions.

The Georgian submission to the conference, unlike the Baltic states, drew a more positive image of Russia. It attributed Georgian development and integration into European culture to Russian influence, and argued that in the revolution of 1905, Georgians were fighting with Russians against oppression, for the freedom and equality of all nationalities.[326] The memorandum stressed independence from the Bolsheviks and made no mention of potential relations with democratic post-Bolshevik Russia. Georgians were more modest about their capabilities than their Baltic counterparts: the memorandum acknowledged that due to the war and being geographically remote from Europe, they would need

[323] Kamala Imranli-Lowe, "The Paris Peace Conference and the Armenian Arguments on Garabagh", *Central Asian Survey* 34, 2 (2015), p. 223.
[324] Ibid., p. 220.
[325] Irina Babich, "Western Adighes and Cossacks: Together and Separately in In European Emigration (1919–the 1930s)", *The Caucasus and Globalization* 5, 3–4 (2011), p. 153.
[326] *Mémoire Présenté à La Conférence de La Paix (Revendications Politiques-Frontières) Suivi de l'acte de l'indépendance de La Géorgie et d'une Carte* (Paris, 1919), pp. 7–8.

economic support from the Allies. However, despite temporary restraints, Georgian economic resources were significant, and it was a viable independent state. As for the borders, Georgians were claiming the contested Sochi and Abkhaz regions, which the Kuban Government of White Russia considered Russian territory.[327]

Similar to the Georgians, the Azerbaijani delegation stressed that most of its hardship was caused by the Bolsheviks and anarchists. Azerbaijan contested the Georgian claims to Batum, demanding access to the Black Sea and arguing that the entire Batum region was supported by the economy of Baku. Among their demands was also secure navigation in the Caspian Sea, free trade with Western Europe, and recognition of Azerbaijan's political independence.[328] Interestingly, the demand for independence came last, and the priority was clearly given to territorial and trade provisions.

Armenians acknowledged the failure of the short-lived Transcaucasian Republic, arguing that the nationalities comprising it – Armenians, Georgians, and Azeri Tatars – had too many differences. The memorandum of the Armenian delegation was relatively brief, concerning the future political structure of the country. Similar to the Whites in Russia, they were hoping to elect a Constituent Assembly which would adopt a written constitution. However, independent Armenia had already started to exist as a democratic republic with a parliament that issued legislation, and a cabinet of ministers responsible for the executive branch of the government.[329] Turkey undoubtedly presented a much more serious threat to Armenia than the Russian imperialists claimed. On the other hand, Armenia was threatened by the Bolsheviks. In the memorandum submitted to the Paris Peace Conference, Armenia tried to use ethnic, historical and economic arguments to define Armenian territory, and attempted to claim the Karabakh region. To achieve their aim, the Armenians even used data to mislead the conference, downplaying the number of Tatars and overestimating the numbers of

[327] Ibid., 12, 24–25 (map).
[328] *Situation Économique et Financière de La République de l'Azerbaïdjan Du Caucase* (Paris: Délégation de l'Azerbaïdjan à la Conférence de la Paix à Paris, 1919), p. 8.
[329] *La République Arménienne* (Paris: Délégation de la République arménienne à la Conférence de la Paix, 2020), pp. 4–5.

Armenians in Karabakh.[330] As Imranli-Lowe argued, this proved that Armenian nationalism was ethnic, aiming to secure a state that would unite Armenians and construct an ethno-nation.[331]

The Versailles Peace Treaty and League of Nations

The New World Order, followed by the Versailles Treaty, redrafted the frontiers of European states. It brought an end to empires, by consolidating the Balkans into the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes at the cost of the Turkish and Austro-Hungarian Empires; yet it divided Eastern Europe by creating new national tensions in the newly emerged states. All the new states became dissatisfied with the borders, and national groups which were formerly parts of larger empires became locked up within smaller nation-states. Larry Wolf described the Versailles settlement as "… an attempt to apply Wilson's abstract, high-minded principle of national self-determination to the messy reality of the geopolitical and ethnographic map".[332] As a result, there were inevitable tensions between the new nation-states and other groups that remained within their borders, such as the Jews and Ukrainians in Poland, and Germans in Czechoslovakia. In fact, only about two-thirds of the population of Poland were Poles.[333] As a result, the concept of 'national minority' acquired an entirely new meaning, and the former minorities of Russia became majorities in their own states. These border disputes and new minority groups were precisely those the Russian representatives had emphasised at the Paris Peace Conference, arguing that these issues would inevitably weaken Europe; especially in light of the threat of Bolshevism spreading into European countries. These were also the same issues Miliukov warned about in his articles, titled "Balkanization of Russia".[334] While Miliukov was far too radical in his claims, the issue of territorial disputes was in fact an important part of the wider debate on the future of Eastern Europe. Importantly, the Paris Peace Conference

[330] Imranli-Lowe, "The Paris Peace Conference and the Armenian Arguments on Garabagh", p. 229.
[331] Ibid.
[332] Larry Wolf, *Woodrow Wilson and the Reimagining of Eastern Europe* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2020), p. 4.
[333] Susan Pedersen, "Back to the League of Nations", *The American Historical Review* 112, 4 (2007), p. 1099.
[334] "Balkanization of Russia – II", *The New Russia* (8 April 1920). Bakhmeteff Archive, Columbia University, Tyrkowa-Willliams papers, Box 28.

was the first occasion when the states were actually considering ways to enforce minority rights protection around the world. Previous international congresses had resulted in empty, unfulfilled promises. In the post-World War I situation, however, Woodrow Wilson pushed for an international cross-border policy towards national minorities, since the Versailles Treaty was establishing an international organisation that was allowed to intervene in the domestic affairs of states.[335] The scope of the problem had shifted at least for some parts of the world, from imperial oppression to a titular nation refusing to grant the same rights to minorities in their new nation-states; thus, the issue had not been resolved by redrawing the European borderlands.

The experience of the World Order under the League of Nations has been widely studied and criticised by scholars. It is a common conclusion that the Western principles that laid the foundation for the League were not applied globally. Woodrow Wilson tried to ensure religious and cultural rights and freedoms across the world, and to make protecting these rights the primary task of the League of Nations, but he failed. The Western principles of religious freedom and equality were not applied globally, and minority protection became a secondary task for the members of the Paris Peace Conference.[336] The approach to the World Order was Western-centric – not just because it served European interests, but also because it relied on European concepts of Christianity, morality and civilization, while the mandate system helped to maintain colonial order and the civilized/uncivilized dichotomy between the West and Third World countries.[337] The founders of the League and the leading nations at the conference were all empires, and were very protective of their imperial status and influence. This undoubtedly influenced the League from the start.[338] Similarly, David Stevenson also argued that the dominance of old-world imperialist approaches to the liberal attempt at peace-making was the main reason the Versailles Treaty

[335] Carole Fink, "The League of Nations and the Minorities Question", *World Affairs* 157, 4 (1995), p. 195.
[336] Ibid., p. 198.
[337] Anthony Anghie, *Imperialism, Sovereignty and the Making of International Law* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).
[338] Susan Pedersen, "Empires, States and the League of Nations", in: Glenda Sluga and Patricia Clavin, eds., *Internationalisms: A Twentieth-Century History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), pp. 116–117.

failed to maintain peace.[339] Although Woodrow Wilson wanted to see the League of Nations as a replacement for old-style great-power politics, this was far from the case. Instead, it became a new addition to the existing system, a new mechanism for conducting the great-power politics.[340]

These arguments and the flaws of the League show that the World Order after Versailles was both old and new: on the one hand, the disappearance of several empires and the emergence of smaller nation-states in Europe, as well as the establishment of an international organisation, were radical changes to the international arena. On the other hand, the predominance of surviving empires prevented the system from bringing a completely 'fresh start' to the world order. In addition, while an international supra-state organisation was formed, the concept of the state as the central and 'natural' international actor continued to dominate liberal conceptions. The new liberal world order merely propagated stronger cooperation and the peaceful coexistence of states; but its world view, dictated by Western Anglo-American liberals, was built on pre-existing concepts. The only other alternative, which regarded this approach to international relations as too conservative, was socialist internationalism.[341]

The Russian Political Commission approached the peace negotiations with the same mindset as the remaining empires. Their arguments demonstrated obvious protectionism of Russian imperial borders, and their approach to the world order and international structure was based on the assumption that states were the main actors, and they stipulated peace or conflict. In this mindset, the clearly imperialist argument of potential conflicts among smaller and less stable nation-states, which needed protectionism from more powerful counterparts, might not seem unreasonable if one assumes that the main aim of the Peace Conference was to bring peace and stability, rather than to protect minorities specifically. It took an entire year between the opening of the Paris Peace Conference and the establishment of the League of Nations. The New World Order did not start in

[339] David Stevenson, *The First World War and International Politics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988).
[340] Zara Steiner, *The Lights That Failed: European International History, 1919–1933.* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), p. 299.
[341] Daniel Gorman, ed., "Anglo-American Conceptions of International Society in the 1920s", in *The Emergence of International Society in the 1920s* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), pp. 176–177.

January of 1919; at that time, it was only intended. The new system with an international body was supposed to mark the new order where international agreements were supposed to protect minorities and resolve conflicts, while seemingly equal sovereign member-states were supposed to operate according to the new norms and agreements.

The Allies made an attempt to separate 'the Russian case', similarly to how the Sèvres Treaty had dealt with the Ottoman Empire. On 22 January 1919, the Supreme Council of the Peace Conference laid out a proposal regarding Russia, which suggested inviting delegates from "every organized group that is now exercising or attempting to exercise political authority or military control anywhere in Siberia, or within the boundaries of European Russia as they stood before the war except in Finland" to the Island of Prinkipo in the sea of Marmora, not far from Constantinople.[342]

The proposal was not met with enthusiasm by any government. All the representatives of the White Governments, including Sazonov and Chaikovskii, refused to participate in any negotiations with the Bolsheviks. It was deeply worrying for them that the Allies were considering negotiating with the Bolsheviks, thereby recognising them as one of the legitimate powers in Russia. The Georgians also declined the invitation, while the Estonians and Lithuanians were upset that they categorised with the political groups of European Russia, whereas Finland was already recognised as independent. They were willing to attend, provided that the Allies recognised these countries' independence. The Lithuanians made it conditional that Russians withdraw troops from their territory, and were willing to come to sign a peace treaty with Russia. As negotiations in Paris were protracted long past January, both sides continued to maintain their positions. In the spring of 1919, the North-Western Provisional Government was formed, practically in the territories of foreign states. The Whites continued to ignore Baltic pleas for independence. Estonian demands for independence stalled the military operations, which was the main reason this government had been organised in the first place. As a result, the North-Western Government agreed to

[342] Hankey's Notes of a Meeting of the Council of Ten, Quai D'Orsay. January 22, 1919. Prinkipo Declaration. Available Online: < https://novaonline.nvcc.edu/eli/evans/his242/Documents/Prinkipo.pdf>

sign a decree recognising the independence of Estonia, in order to proceed with military operations against the Bolsheviks. The decree was signed on 11 August 1919, just a couple of months after the government's establishment. The White Government in Omsk did not approve of the decision to recognise Estonian independence.

The Versailles Treaty disappointed both the Russians and the national minorities of the former Russian Empire. It made a brief mention of Russia in Articles 292 and 293, which annulled the Brest-Litovsk Treaty, but made no clear provisions even for formerly German-occupied territories – although Article 116 ensured independence of all territories of the former Russian Empire from Germany. Article 433 obliged Germany to retrieve any troops from the Baltic provinces and Lithuania. The independence of Armenia was recognised later on in the Treaty of Sèvres, signed on 10 August 1920. Later on, other states recognised the new Baltic states and the Soviet Government.

As this chapter has demonstrated, all the participants of the Paris Peace Conference, the Whites and the national minorities alike, were hoping for a breakthrough and a comprehensive settlement of their issues. Prior to the conference, there seemed to be a sense that the New World Order would start very soon, and would bring clarity to those seeking independence or seeking to reinforce their state. In practice, however, January of 1919 signified the start of a very long process of unclear negotiations, with the Russian Civil War continuing simultaneously. The entire 'Russian Question' was, in fact, unresolved until later, when the Bolsheviks showed a clear advancement over the Whites. In addition, the Russian émigrés, who had been working very hard on cooperation with the Allies, realised that the latter were actually more willing to negotiate with the Bolsheviks than the Whites had anticipated. As for the national minorities, those seeking independence from Russia did not receive any coherent resolution until after the peace negotiations. Their memorandums submitted to the conference largely followed the same pattern: showing their ethnic, linguistic and cultural uniqueness; and, to some degree, 'othering' themselves from Russia, demonstrating their ability to exist as independent states politically and

economically. They were learning the new language of liberal democracies, portraying themselves as safe, democratic, liberal neighbours to the Allies.

After the First World War and the October Revolution in Russia, most Russian liberals had to flee from Moscow and St Petersburg. Some were scattered across different White governments, while others left Russia and settled abroad. In the aftermath of October 1917, these liberal groups played important roles in the anti-Bolshevik campaign: some were involved in local politics in the White movement, while others tried to help the cause from abroad by working with other Entente members, educating them about the situation in Russia and the dangers of Bolshevism – or they negotiated for military support of the Whites, or prepared to represent Russia's interests at the Paris Peace Conference. Consequently, as all these groups were operating simultaneously, it is not helpful to analyse their activity in the civil war chronologically. Instead, the following chapters will focus on various groups and consider their input, as well as determine whether the liberals' perception of nationalities' rights to self-determination differed in any way depending on where they lived. Chapter 4 will analyse the work of Russian liberals within the provisional governments of White Russia, while Chapter 5 will focus on the activity of Russian liberals abroad. Then, Chapter 6 will continue by analysing foreign groups of liberals; it will focus on their debates within the Russian community, rather than what they were discussing with the Allies. Lastly, Chapter 7 will address the liberals' perception of the civil war in retrospect.

While a chronological approach to the subject may not be useful, a brief chronology of the Russian Civil War will help to put the events discussed in the following chapters into perspective. The first few months of the civil war determined the key territories that were controlled by the Bolsheviks and the Whites. Between November 1917 and February 1918, the Red Army took Moscow, Petrograd and Ukraine, pushing the Whites out into the Russian periphery. During this early period of the civil war, the Bolsheviks had wider support among the population, which explained their rapid success; whereas the White movement was operating largely in the shadows, going through a

"clandestine-guerrilla period".[343] Nonetheless, it was a useful experience for the organisation of the White Armies, as it laid the foundation for the Whites' future government structure, which emerged later in the civil war. However, between March and November 1918, the Bolsheviks lost a significant amount of support, due to unpopular decisions. These included dissolving the Constituent Assembly; signing the Brest-Litovsk Peace Treaty with Germany; assassinating the Russian royal family; introducing the policy of forced grain requisition; and finally, the Red Terror. These unpopular acts resulted in growing support for the Whites. At the same time, the White movement was actively developing, and some of its regional governments were in the process of formation. The Don Cossacks successfully revived the power of their local Ataman and formed a Cossack division, strengthening the army of General Denikin and the Government of the South of Russia.[344] In May, a Czechoslovak Legion was formed in Ukraine, comprising Czech and Slovak soldiers of the former Austrian Army, under the command of Russian officers. In addition, several anti-Bolshevik governments were established, with the intention of extending their power over the whole of Russia: one in the Volga region, known as *Komuch* (Committee of Members of the Constituent Assembly), and another in Siberia, the Provisional Siberian Government. The latter proved to be more successful, and in September, the Komuch merged into the All-Russian Provisional Government. While all these governments included members of various non-Bolshevik parties, their armies were headed by Russian officers who shared monarchist views and saw military dictatorship as the only viable regime able to resist Bolshevism. Thus, the White movement evolved from clandestine groups to relatively successful armies, which secured their positions in the North Caucasus, Siberia, the Volga region and the Urals. Aleksei Nikitin argued that the summer and autumn of 1918 was also the

[343] Arkadiĭ Danilin, Elena Evseeva, and Sergei Karpenko, 'Grazhdanskaia Voĭna v Rossii (1917-1922)', *Novyĭ Istoricheskiĭ Vestnik*, 2000, pp. 1–38, p.7.

[344] The south-west of Russia survived through a series of White Governments. The first one was formed under General Mikhail Alekseev, who was the first head of the Volunteer Army. In 1918 he established the General Command of the Armed Forces of South Russia (*Osoboye soveschaniye pri Glavkome VSYuR*) in Ekaterinodar. Starting from 1919, the government was headed by General Denikin. Until it ceased to exist in 1920, the government adopted a series of names and capitals: Government Under the Head Commanders of the Armed Forces of South Russia (*Pravitel'stvo pri glavnokomanduiushchem Vooruzhënnymi Silami IUga Rossii (VSIUR*); and South Russian Government (*IUzhnorusskoe Pravitel'stvo*) with the capital in Novorossiysk, Kuban, which later had to be evacuated into Crimea and was subsequently dissolved in Feodosia.

period when the statehood of the White Governments was formed. While situated largely at the borderlands, together they represented a confederation, which emerged in the beginning of 1919.[345]

The end of 1918 until March 1920 was the period of the most intense military activity. Ultimately, the White Governments lost their momentum and failed against the Red Army. The White Governments arguably consolidated into institutionalised states in the first half of 1919.[346] Although they had some forms of limited self-governance in local areas, they centralised the military dictatorships headed by army generals. During this period, the final Provisional White Government in the north-west emerged, as an attempt to combine with the Allies and the Baltic states in an attack on Petrograd. The White movement's failure is often attributed to the strong presence of ultra-right monarchists and the open desire to return to imperial times. Peasants feared a return of the old order, which favoured landowners, and chose Bolshevism against the Whites as "the lesser of two evils".[347] The lack of liberal democratic reforms in the White Governments also complicated their relations with the Allies. Military and financial aid from the Entente did not compensate for the White armies' losses. In addition, the White Governments proved reluctant to recognise the independence of newly emerging nation-states. As a result, the Red Army gained a much more advantageous position during this period. In May to June of 1919, it achieved one of its most significant military breakthroughs, and had defeated the Kolchak Army by January 1920. This success was followed by another operation in the south of Russia, which eliminated the Caucasus front; and by March 1920, the Bolsheviks took the Don and Kuban regions, forcing the remains of Denikin's army to evacuate to the Crimea. Finally, between April and November 1920, the Red Army eliminated the Armed Forces of South Russia; newly emergent nation-states signed peace treaties with the Bolsheviks; and the Allies, following the defeat of armies led by Denikin, Iudenich and Kolchak, withdrew their support from the Whites.

[345] Aleksei Nikitin, 'Gosudarstvennostʹ «beloĭ» Rossii: Stanovlenie, Ėvoliutsiia, Krushenie (1918 -1920 Gg.)' (Moscow, Moskovskiĭ gosudarstvennyĭ oblastnoĭ universitet, 2007).
[346] Ibid.
[347] Danilin et al., "Grazhdanskaia voĭna v Rossii (1917–1922)", p. 17.

Historians debate the date of the end of the Russian Civil War. Some suggest it came when the Crimean Government evacuated in November 1920; others date it to 1921, when the Bolsheviks abandoned the War Communism and introduced the New Economic Policy, focusing on internal affairs. Alternative suggestions include 28 December 1922, when the Russian, Ukrainian, Transcaucasian and Belorussian SSRs announced the creation of the new Soviet State; or when the Yakut revolt was suppressed by the new Soviet State in June 1923. Jonathan D. Smele argued that these dates, while commonly accepted, were far too early, and continued his story until 1926 at the Turkestan front, where the Red Army suppressed the Muslim rebels.[348] Russian liberals perhaps did not believe at the start of 1921 that the civil war was over, but after Vrangel's defeat and withdrawal of Allied support, there was definitely a sense that whatever struggle might continue, it would not be the same as in the previous three years. However, drawing a line under the events of the civil war is not part of the discussion in this thesis. Most of the Russian liberals had all emigrated by 1921. They all had different perceptions of the Whites' defeat, and argued about the ways to move forward in the anti-Bolshevik struggle, as the final chapters will demonstrate. The next chapter will consider the liberals' position within the White Governments, and their views on the national minorities.

[348] Jonathan D, Smele, *The 'Russian' Civil Wars, 1916–1926: Ten Years That Shook the World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), pp. 117, 236.

Chapter 4

Liberals within the White Governments and their input into local reforms

Ariadna Vladimirovna Tyrkova-Williams described the October Revolution as "a series of nonsensical and meaningless accidents", and acknowledged that very few people understood the strength and depth of the approaching Bolshevist danger. After the Bolsheviks took control of the centre of Russia, the Kadets, along with the rest of the Bolsheviks' opponents, fled to the outskirts of the former empire. Provisional White Governments formed across regions, with the centres in Omsk, Siberia (the Provisional all-Russian Government), as well as in north Russia, north-western Russia, and the south of Russia. What role did members of liberal parties, such as the Kadets and the Progressists, play in them? Certainly, many members of the Kadet party started to take prominent positions within the new White Governments.

While there is an exhaustive amount of literature on the White movement in the civil war, there is much less research on the impact of the liberals; particularly those in the White Movement. One of the most recent and comprehensive publications encompassing the history of the "long" Great War in Russia aimed to bring recent Russian and Western scholarship together to showcase various aspects of the First World War, the revolutions, and the Civil War in Russia in the scope of eight volumes. It included the position and the influence of Russian liberal groups on the events on 1914-1920.[349] Scholarly literature on the Whites often focuses on the military aspect of the anti-Bolshevik struggle, or on the politics of establishing and running the White Governments, rather than on the liberals' impact on policy-making regarding nationalities.[350] In

[349] Russia's Great War and revolution series (Bloomington: Slavica, 2014-2021).

[350] For example, Anatoly Smolin, *Beloe Dvizhenie na Severo-Zapade Rossii. 1918–1920gg* (St Peterburg: Dmitrii Bulanin, 1999). Smolin writes an exhaustive account of the formation of the North-Western Government. The Constitutional Democrats are included in his account and he highlights their impact on the creation of the government, particularly emphasising their achievements in cooperation with the Allied states. Also: John Bradley (*Civil War in Russia, 1917–1920*. London: B. T. 1975) emphasises the military aspect of the civil war and briefly mentions that the Whites failed to meet the interests of national minorities, while the Bolsheviks were more flexible and sensitive to the issue (p. 162).

Soviet scholarship, the Kadets held the title of "the main bourgeois party",[351] which formed the perception of the party. Their imperialist approach was emphasised, above liberal aspects of the party's political agenda. Brovkin later agreed with this statement, and concluded that "Constitutional Democrats were imperialists and not democrats", which explains why they "ended up in the company of the Black Hundreds".[352] Elsewhere, he argues that the Kadets in European Russia were more left-wing during the civil war, whereas in Siberia they were more right-wing and largely cooperated with the monarchists.[353]

The issue of national minorities has also received little attention. Jonathan Smele considered Kolchak's position on national minorities, arguing that his policies were dictated, and often restricted, by the more general sentiments among the Whites, and the Kadets' "half-baked legalistic principles".[354] He concluded that some of Kolchak's views were rather progressive – such as on land reform, where he was a strong proponent of individual peasant farming.[355] Oxana Sotova, in her dissertation on the national politics of the Kadets within the White Governments during the Russian Civil War, analysed the Kadets' input into the nationalities policies in the south-western and north-western regions, as well as in Siberia.[356] While studying the Kadets in White Governments across various regions in Russia, Sotova drew only one general conclusion regarding the overarching party position towards national minorities. This was that the Kadets in general changed their policies in the summer of 1917 by emphasising national minorities' rights to pass local legislation; and they changed their policies yet again once the national minorities declared their independence, with the Kadets prepared to grant autonomous status to the minorities, while still envisioning them as part of the

[351] Kirill Gusev, ed., *Neproletarskie Partii Rossii v Trekh Revolutsiiah* (Moscow: Nauka, 1989), Natalia Dumova, *Kadetskaia kontrrevoliutsiia i ee razgrom (Oktiabr' 1917–1920 gg)* (Moscow: Nauka, 1982). Both analyse all the reasons behind the Kadets' (as well as the Whites') failure, and the Bolsheviks' subsequent triumph.

[352] Vladimir Brovkin, 'Identity, Allegiance and Participation in the Russian Civil War', *European History Quarterly* 22, no. 4 (1 October 1992), pp. 541–67, p. 552.

[353] Vladimir Brovkin, *Behind the Front Lines of the Civil War: Political Parties and Social Movements in Russia, 1918-1922* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), pp. 206–207.

[354] Jonathan D Smele, *Civil War in Siberia: The Anti-Bolshevik Government of Admiral Kolchak, 1918-1920* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), p. 306.

[355] Ibid., p. 285.

[356] Oxana Sotova, 'Natsional'naia Politika Kadetov v Sostave Belogvardeĭskikh Pravitel'stv v Period Grazhdanskoĭ Voĭny v Rossii' (Moscow, Moskovskiĭ gosudarstvennyĭ universitet im. MV Lomonosova, 2002).

Russian state. These findings, however, do not take into account the different strategies that the Constitutional Democrats were envisioning for the future Russian state. In addition, Sotova did not consider the work of Kadets in emigration, and thus overlooked their ties with the Allies and the position towards national minorities that they presented for public consumption abroad.

Liudmila Novikova recognised the national minority rights issue as "the stumbling block for the Whites".[357] Unlike Sotova, she acknowledged different outlooks on the national minorities within different White Governments, arguing that the Northern White Government in Arkhangel'sk was more willing to find a compromise with national minorities than Kolchak's government in Siberia, since it had to work closely with the Karels' demand for self-determination.[358] This chapter will demonstrate a similar pattern across a wider spectrum of the White Governments, and demonstrate that those governments on the borders of Russia, and the liberals within them, had a greater propensity to recognise the independence of national minorities – as opposed to the All-Russian White Government in Siberia, or the émigré communities, who took a more conservative position.

Overall, this chapter will analyse the impact of the liberals within the White movement in Russia, and consider the position of the Kadets within Russia towards national minorities. It will examine the role they played in the nationalities policies of the White Governments of the north-western region, the south of Russia and in Siberia. It will investigate the position of liberal parties in light of the national minorities' struggle against the Whites, the threat of the Bolshevik occupation, and the role of the Paris Peace Conference in their activities. Acting within government structures and facing resistance from national minorities on a daily basis was the reality for White Governments on the borders. This inevitably changed the situation for the Kadets in Russia, and affected their attitude towards national minorities and their demands.

[357] Liudmila Novikova, *Provintsial'naia «kontrrevoliutsiia». Beloe Dvizhenie i Grazhdanskaia Voĭna Na Russkom Severe, 1917-1920* (Moscow: Novoe literaturnoe obozrenie, 2011).p. 181.
[358] Ibid, p. 182.

Liberals and the White movement on the borderlines of Russia

The discrepancy between the Constitutional Democrats' party programme and the daily political reality was especially evident during the civil war. The Bolshevik revolution, and the necessity of coexisting in opposition with a wide range of political positions, put pressures on the party and highlighted the problems its members were generally always aware of. The anti-Bolshevik struggle involved the Kadets in creating a unified national front, which was impossible with the Kadets' old programme. The narrow electoral base of the party, consisting largely of educated bourgeois elements, did not allow the Kadets to work towards achieving their immediate aims. The party had to devise not party-level, but national slogans: it had to "rise above its party position in order to reach such a level of national state consciousness, where all parties and political groups come together through collective thinking, open-mindedness, and realising the urgency of their common political task."[359] Once the issue of temporary military leaders was solved, the Kadets were hesitant about deciding on a more permanent political structure. They intended that the people should decide whether Russia should be a republic or a monarchy through the Constituent Assembly, although the new party programme of 1917 promoted a republic. Thus, the Kadets were hoping to unite more political groups – monarchists and republicans. Pavel Novgrodtsev, one of the prominent members of the party since 1905, acknowledged that the party should have given more attention to the issue of regional formations (*kraevye obrazovaniia*), which were established during the anti-Bolshevik struggle. The Kadets even considered using the successful experiences of self-governance during the war and applying them elsewhere in Russia. However, the idea of reviving a united and indivisible Russia was the only way forward for the Kadets.[360] The party agreed that the newly established states could only be recognised until a single indivisible Russia was formed. A full reunion that restored the old imperial borders was supposed to follow. The Kadets thought that Russia would be reunited around the new centres of power: the White Armies. One

[359] Pavel Novgorodtsev. Bakhmeteff Archive, Columbia University, Panina Papers, Box 13, Subject File: Civil War, p. 1.
[360] Novgorodtsev, Panina Papers, Box 13, Subject File: Civil War, pp. 2–3.

of the challenges for the party, as Novgorodtsev acknowledged, would be creating a wider platform to unite right- and left-wing political groups.[361]

Another important factor that caused the Kadets to move further away from the liberal agenda was a widespread understanding among the Whites that Russia needed a strong centralised state to re-establish order. In terms of party action, it was responsive to the new realities: in January 1918, the Central Committee issued a decree affirming the Kadets' plan to fight against Bolshevism and anarchism. The decree agreed with the necessity for a temporary military regime, which would not decide the post-war future of Russia. Calls for order and strong uniform power became prevalent in the Kadets' agenda. However, the Kadets avoided stressing this point abroad. Unlike those in emigration, the Kadets in Russia were not as concerned about liberalism and advancing the liberal agenda. Instead, they were facing daily tasks of running the governments in the midst of the military conflict with the Bolsheviks. Considering the circumstances, cooperation with members of other political parties within the governments became the most pressing issue for the Kadets at home. The ideas of civil liberty and democratic principles of self-determination were pushed to the side as something to aspire to in the future, but not an immediate task.

Pavel Miliukov argued that a dictatorship already existed in Russia at the time of the Peace Conference, and the question was not whether or not to accept this form of government, but which one of the existing dictatorships to choose. According to him, the Volunteer army represented the "highest degree of dictatorship". Miliukov also agreed that during the civil war, following examples of coalition government would open up a democratic opportunity and, as a result, cause another failure. Instead, he defended the idea of aiming for a strong centralised state.[45] Vasilii Shulgin, a conservative liberal, described General Denikin as "an honest man of moderate views. Neither a monarchist nor a republican, a deep patriot of United Russia", in his letter to the Russian Embassy in France in October 1918.[362] Local provisional governments across Russia did follow a military dictatorship model, allowing few freedoms. The heads of the

[361] Ibid., pp. 3–4.
[362] 'Letter from V. Shulgin received in the Russian Embassy in Paris', 26 October 1918. GARF F. P-200, Op. 1, D. 285, p. 1.

White Army were recognised as rulers in their respective regions. Chebyshev, who was to the right of the Kadets but worked closely with them in the Right Centre (*Pravyĭ Tsentr*), wrote in 1919 that "in case of a conflict of interest between a military and a civil matter, the former must prevail".[363] For instance, already in August 1918 the heads of the Provisional Government of the Northern Region forbade freedom of association.[364] The Kolchak government in Omsk wanted to ensure "firm Russian power" in the Far East, and to abolish any independence of separate institutions.[365] The Kadets did not argue against any such policies, and supported the idea of a strong centralised state. Political orientation within the White Governments was linked directly to the anti-Bolshevik struggle. General Vrangel wrote to Chebyshev in 1921 that

> The Russian Army cannot be called apolitical. The nature of a civil war in itself puts every side of the conflict into some political camp. In our case, it is either Bolshevist-Internationalist or Anti-Bolshevist-Nationalist. The Russian army is first and foremost a national army, and it unites everyone who wants to free the Motherland from the enemy of the people, the enemy of all national parties, and it is fighting for the Russian national idea.[366]

Leopold Haimson argued that the political programme of the Whites, focusing on a centralised state and a united and indivisible Russia, was not drawing upon the Old Regime; rather, it represented nation-state interests which were articulated by the right-wing Kadets and the Progressists on the eve of the First World War, and was carried into the Provisional Government.[367]

The Kadets' position on liberties was realised in some White Governments; for example, in the south of Russia. The meeting of the local self-governance

[363] Chebyshev's article "Iasnaia dilemma" (*A clear dilemma*) in *Velikaya Rossia* newspaper. GARF F. P5955, Op. 1, D. 2, p. 59.
[364] 'Minutes of the Supreme Administration of the Northern Region', August 1918. GARF F. P16, Op. 1, D. 1, p. 5.
[365] 'Correspondence with the ministers of the Russian Government'. GARF F. P176, Op. 1, D. 20, p. 21.
[366] 'Letter from Vrangel to Chebyshev', December 1921. GARF F. P5955, Op. 1, D. 7, p. 53.
[367] Leopold Haimson, 'The Problem of Social Identities in Early Twentieth Century Russia', *Slavic Review* 41, no. 1 (1988), pp. 1–20.

committee of the Special Committee of the Council in Chief of the Armed Forces of South Russia (*Zasedanie Komissii po mestnomu samoupravleniu pri Osobom Soveshchanii pri Glavnokomand-uiushchem Vooruzhennymi silami Iuga Rossii*), its members, headed by Nikolaii Astrov, also supported the idea that Russian society was not sufficiently stable, educated or reliable to allow universal suffrage. Astrov was a long-standing member of the Kadet Party in Denikin's government. Trained as a lawyer, he joined the party in 1905 and was elected a member of the party's Central Committee in 1916. During the Provisional Government, Astrov was the head of the All-Russian City Union (*Vserossiĭskiĭ Soiuz Gorodov*).

Nikolai Astrov left substantial work, written during his later emigration period, on Russian zemstvos and cities before the revolution. He believed that cities' self-governance was the very civil society that would have developed liberalism in Russia, in opposition to the oppressing regime. He argued that the First World War had accelerated this trend, as city zemstvos took on increasing responsibilities.[368] This was the traditional mode of liberal development, with which the Kadets had hoped to conduct their political work. In light of the Bolshevik Revolution and the civil war, Russian liberals had clearly become "less liberal". Documents from the Government of Southern Russia report that ministers' discussions acknowledged at least a temporary need for an authoritarian regime, "to restore order" in the country. Even though Astrov had been a keen supporter of local self-governance before the Bolshevik Revolution, and considered zemstvos to be the basis of civil society and a "nursery garden" of culture,[369] he nevertheless argued that the population could not be self-governed in the current situation, and it needed to learn to work and discipline itself.[370] Nikolai L'vov agreed with his colleague. Although he acknowledged that a reconstructed Russia would have to be organised on the basis of self-governance and universal suffrage, he thought that immediate implementation would only bring negative results. According to him, the uneducated masses could not be

[368] Nikolaii I. Astrov, 'Vserossiĭskiĭ Soiuz gorodov i russkaia revoliutsiia'. Bakhmeteff Archive, Columbia University, Panina Papers, Box 11.
[369] 'Minutes of the self-governance committee on public governance of the cities'. GARF F. P439, Op. 1, D. 52, p. 1; Nikolaii Astrov, 'Russkie goroda'. Bakhmeteff Archive, Columbia University, Panina Papers, Box 11.
[370] Ibid., pp. 1, 11.

relied upon to save the country, and a strong intellectual minority had to be put in charge.[371] Mikhail Mikhailovich Fedorov, another Kadet, was one of the few people – and the only liberal – who spoke up to defend the wider Russian population as victims of the situation.[372]

Following the debate, the committee approved the existence of elected city councils and dumas in the Provisional White Government. The councils' duties, however, were limited to overseeing maintenance of public places, schools, churches, as well as streets and highways, street lightning, exhibitions and similar affairs, without any legislative power.[373] Similarly to zemstvos, the councils and city dumas had their own budget, to distribute in accordance with the local needs. They were also expected to address the population's issues, provide free legal counselling, and generally run the administration of local areas. Once again, the electoral governance was confined to small-scale local areas and very limited decision-making, similar to the pre-1917 political structure under Nicholas II.

The "Temporary Regulations on Governing the Areas under the Control of Denikin's Army" was one of the most significant legislations passed in the south of Russia, and it was entirely the work of the Constitutional Democrats.[374] The temporary provisions recognised the full power of the General Commander of the Volunteer Army and re-established the legislation of pre-25 October 1917, giving equal rights to all citizens of the territory under the army's control, regardless of their nationality, religion or social background. The Cossacks were given special rights and immunity. The Orthodox Church was recognised as the main religion, although other confessions were granted full freedom, guarded by the law. The use of local languages was allowed, while Russian was recognised as the national language. Citizens were granted individual rights to personal integrity, private property, private correspondence, as well as freedom of speech and rights to peaceful gatherings. At the same time, the head of the army was essentially recognised as the head of state, with rights to carry out international negotiations,

[371] Minutes of the self-governance committee on public governance of the cities, p. 3.
[372] Ibid., p. 11.
[373] Ibid., pp. 12–18.
[374] Lieutenant-General Aleksandr Lukomskiĭ said at the meeting on the issue of power structure in the areas occupied by the Volunteer Army, and on terms of cooperation with the Kuban Regional Government (GARF. F. 439, Op. 1, D. 34, p. 1): "our public figures, members of the Party of People's Freedom, worked out the regulations on governing the areas liberated by the Volunteer army and the Kuban Cossacks."

declare war and peace, and be the head of state defence.[375] Once again, the Kadets' emphasis on individual rights prevailed in the White Government. The Kadets continued to understand nationality as a civic concept, with civic rights being more important than ethnic or religious belonging.[376]

The issue of individual rights in White Governments was closely linked to the national question, especially since the Kadets' programme presupposed dealing with national self-determination through granting individual freedoms. The North-Western Government[377] released a statement to the head of the Council of Ministers of Finland, stating that all citizens, regardless of their nationality, had equal rights and responsibilities.[378] This position reiterated the Kadets' principle of state structure, where individual rights and freedoms were prioritised over national demands. In addition, the North-Western Government did implement a form of electoral self-governance by temporarily restoring zemstvos in the territories under its control. Zemstvos were supposed to operate under the same conditions as those set by the Provisional Government in 1917. As before, they were largely expected to address local issues at the level of *Volost'*, organise charities to help the poor, improve local infrastructure, establish educational facilities, support local entrepreneurs, and ensure public safety. Replicating the zemstvos that had been in place before the October Revolution, these zemstvos'

[375] 'The Temporary Regulations on Governing the Areas under the Control of Denikin's Army'. GARF. F. 439, Op. 1, D. 32.

[376] Eric Lohr, *Nationalizing the Russian Empire: the campaign against enemy aliens during World War I* (Harvard University Press, 2003). In his study of Russian liberalism, Lohr argues that the predominance of civic rights became the focal argument of the Kadets already during the First World War. They evidently maintained the same attitude after 1917 and throughout the civil war.

[377] The North-Western Provisional Government was the last government of White Russia to be formed. It was established in May 1919. With General Iudenich as the Military Minister and Stephan Lianozov as the head of the government, the North-Western Government was the last attempt of the Whites to attack the Bolsheviks. It was the closest area to the Bolshevik centre of Petrograd, as well as closest to the Allies, which seemed to be the right strategic position. Soviet troops were marching towards Revel' (now Tallinn), and the newly established Estonian Government was fighting for independence. The cabinet of ministers was decided at the last moment. Stephan Lianozov wrote that negotiations with different political figures were continuing until the very last days, aiming to create a viable cabinet of ministers and to strengthen the coalition of bourgeois and socialist parties. Several Kadets occupied prominent ministerial positions in the government. While some of these people were not as famous as some better-known Constitutional Democrats, they nevertheless occupied prominent positions and were members of the party's Central Committee. Generally, the liberal wing of the North-Western Provisional Government was quite diverse, representing people of different backgrounds and ages. In some cases, their political and party careers started later than those of their colleagues.

[378] 'Declaration of the Government', 24 August 1919. GARF F. P6385, Op. 1, D. 20, p. 1.

powers were very limited. Nevertheless, they allowed an element of electoral power, even in heavily militarised White Governments.

In the case of the North-Western Government, compromises had to be found; not just within the cabinet of ministers – who were representatives of different parties, as elsewhere in White Russia – but also with the newly established governments of Estonia, Lithuania and Finland. Estonian troops were prepared to defend their state against the Bolshevist threat, whereas White Russians continued to stand for "Russia united and indivisible" (*Rossiia edinaia i nedelimaia*); meaning that Estonia had little hope of national autonomy within the Russian state. While this difference did not prevent the government from forming, it nevertheless posed numerous challenges for the military actions of the White Army. Similarly, the Finnish policy towards Soviet Russia was described by its slogan, "neither war, nor peace". White Russian armies were hoping for Finnish support in offering their territories for the Russian White Army. General Iudenich wrote to Gulkevich in 1919 about the situation in Finland and Estonia, and constantly mentioned that he was in "hostile territory" where "all interests but Russian are taken into consideration"; Russians were repressed, he wrote, and local government was heavily influenced by the Germans. In addition, many Russian refugees fled to Finland from Petrograd. In 1918–1920, around 15,000–20,000 Russians were estimated to live in Finland.[379] In the autumn of 1918, in fact, a Special Committee of Russian Affairs in Finland was formed; Aleksandr Trepov was the head, and Baron Taube was one of its members. While the committee's main focus was supposed to be protection of Russian refugees in Finland and propagating support for the Whites abroad, the committee members did not hide their support for a united and strong Russia. This, in turn, worried Finnish officials, which did not help the Russian army in Finland. Interestingly, the Kadets in Finland once again assumed the role of informing the Western audience about the development of the Russian Civil War, just as they had in France and Great Britain. A Russian newspaper, *Russkaia Zhizn'*, published in Heslingfors (Helsinki), was run by the Kadets.[380] In contrast to the case of Estonia, where most party members

[379] Smolin. *Beloe Dvizhenie na Severo-Zapade Rossii.* p. 61.
[380] Ibid., p. 71.

denied its right of independence, the Kadets' opinions on Finland were rather different. Petr Struve, for instance, came to the conclusion that Finnish independence should be recognised in December 1918 to January 1919, months before the North-Western Government was formed. The correspondence with Russian diplomats abroad shows that the North-Western Government was prepared to recognise the independence of both Estonia and Finland, but only on condition that they would fully support the White Army.[381]

Vasilii Gorn wrote in his report to the Council of Ministers that an entire committee had been set up to work on settling the Russian–Estonian relations. However, according to him, Estonians were impeding Russian efforts by denying Margulies the right to live in Revel' and become the part of the committee. In addition, further questions regarding the ammunition of Russian soldiers had to be settled with help of the foreign powers, since neither the Russians nor the Estonians were willing to make any compromises.[382]

As for the rights of national minorities, some Kadets in the borderland White Governments sometimes had to diverge from the traditional "Russia united and indivisible" slogan. Importantly, these were only personal opinions, rather than the party's position. In the North-Western Provisional Government, Nikolai Ivanov was one of the Kadets who understood the Baltic's struggle for independence. Ivanov was one of the youngest members of the government, having assumed his post aged 33. He was also quite understanding of the Baltic states' position towards the Russians. Russian military units were formed within Estonian territory and at the expense of the Estonian government, which was very unpopular with the local media and population. Since the unit was planning an offensive on Bolshevist Petrograd, the Russians were hoping to get rid of the Estonian commanders once they reached Russian territory. Ivanov disagreed with these 'patriotic' calls to rely on Russian officers; he believed that the Estonian

[381] 'Telegrams to the Russian Ambassador about Russian organisations in Finland'. GARF F. P5936 Op. 1, D. 394, p. 5. On 21 March, General Iudenich wrote to the ambassador in Sweden and copied the following message to Nabokov, Sazonov and Struve: "While acknowledging the principle of Finnish independence we find it possible to formally on condition that the Finnish government, return, will allow us to form large military bases on its territory." On 9 April (GARF F. P5936 Op. 1, D. 395, p. 2.), Iudenich followed up saying that the Finns would agree to support the White Army on condition that Eastern Karelia became a part of Finland and Finland would expand its access to the Arctic Ocean.
[382] 'V. Gorn's report to the council of ministers', 29 November 1919. GARF F. P6385, Op. 1, D. 17, p. 6.

military command was more skilled and bold than the Russians. However, Ivanov was outnumbered in his position: "It is not appropriate for a Russian concern to be under the Estonians. Don't we have our own leaders, our own Pozharskis?"[383] In addition, Ivanov was critical of the slogans that the White Army was using. He was concerned about Iudenich's conservative, chauvinistic position: "It was clear that we would enter Russia not just with a landowner approach towards the land and the peasants, but with actual landowners who would toss out the autocratic flag at the first sight of military success."[384] Ivanov confronted General Rodzianko, pressuring him to agree with the slogans of "Constituent Assembly", "civil freedoms", and "land to the people". However, he acknowledged that the White Army was looting local villages, taking away land, and creating rampant corruption. As a result, peasants became more supportive of the Bolsheviks. While acknowledging the wrongdoings of the White Army, Nikolai Ivanov did not associate himself with it. Instead, he claimed to belong to a "democratic circle", which included a strong Russian-Estonian military group, comprising over half of the Estonian army. This army was willing and able to fight against the Bolsheviks, though it refused to be under Iudenich's command.[385]

In the south of Russia, the Don Cossacks played an important role in the White Government. The Cossacks identified themselves as an independent ethnic group; they did not acknowledge the Bolshevik power and formed their own independent republics in the Don and Kuban regions. They had their own electoral government: the Voiiskovoy Krug and the Kuban regional Rada. Some scholars have even argued that when the Bolsheviks came to power in 1917, only the opposition from the Don Cossacks was considered a serious threat.[386] Thus, the Cossacks' presence in the region strongly influenced the formation and policies of the Southern White Government; the White generals had to take their interests into serious consideration. On the positive side, the Cossacks did not demand full state independence, and were willing to become a part of post-Bolshevik Russia on the

[383] Nikolai Ivanov, *O Sobytiiakh Pod Petrogradom v 1919 Godu. Iudenich Pod Petrogradom. Iz Belykh Memuarov.* (Leningrad: Krasnaia gazeta, 1927), p. 246. Original quote: "Невместно-де русскому делу быть под эстонцами. Разве нет у нас своих вождей, своих пожарских?"
[384] Ibid., p. 247.
[385] Ibid., p. 249.
[386] Anatol Shmelev, 'The Allies in Russia, 1917–20: Intervention as Seen by the Whites', *Revolutionary Russia* 16, no. 1 (2003), pp. 87–107, p. 88.

basis of regional autonomy. The Kadets within the White Government of the South of Russia were prepared to satisfy such demands. In addition, the views of the Cossacks were very close to those of the Whites. They rejected any possibility of cooperation with the Bolsheviks, disapproved of the newly established independent state of Georgia, and were equally concerned about nationalistic and pro-German sentiments that were spreading in Ukraine. Such close similarities made the work of the Russian Whites relatively easier in the region.

Concerning the governance of national minorities, some Kadets were unclear on what strategy to take after the war. Vladimir Zeeler, a Kadet and the Minister of the Interior in the Government of the South of Russia under General Denikin, confessed that he saw no difference between a federative or autonomous structure, and thought that "they are the same thing".[387] Another Kadet, Vasilii Stepanov, who also worked with the General Command of the Armed Forces of South Russia (*Osoboye soveshchaniye pri Glavkome VSYuR*), and was one of the authors of the regulations on governing the areas under the control of Denikin's army (*Polozhenie ob upravlenii oblastiami, zanimaemymi Dobrovol'cheskoĭ armieĭ*), defended military dictatorship as the most expedient form of governance in light of the civil war. However, he added that a military dictatorship should not prevent new federations from being granted wide rights to autonomy.[388]

The broader span of political ideas among liberals in the White Governments was partly due to the fact that liberal representatives were more diversified, and younger members of the Kadet party became members of the government. Traditionally, a typical member of the Constitutional Democratic Party's Central Committee was a member of the intelligentsia, usually coming from a noble background, educated (most frequently as a lawyer), and wealthy. These people were undoubtedly present in the White Governments. For example, in the North-Western Government, Evgenii Kedrin and Fyodor Ern were representatives of the old elite circle, with respect to both their age and background. Evgenii Kedrin, who served as Minister of Justice, was one of the

[387] 'Minutes of the meeting under the chair Lieutenant-General Aleksandr Lukomskiĭ on the issue of power structure in the areas occupied by the Volunteer Army and on terms of cooperation with the Kuban Regional Government'. GARF. F. 439, Op. 1, D. 34, p. 4.
[388] Ibid., p. 5.

more prominent Kadets and one of the older members of the government. Born to a noble family and educated as a lawyer, Kedrin was among the founders of the Constitutionalist Democratic party in 1905. The period of his life in the Baltics was a brief one: he evacuated to Finland from St Petersburg in 1919, and joined the North-Western Government at the age of 68. Due to the short existence of the government, Kedrin emigrated to Paris in 1920 and joined the Paris Committee of the Kadet party. Fyodor Ern, who became Minister of Education, was another representative of the old Russian elite. A descendant of a Swedish noble family, Ern was born in Smolensk in 1863. In 1889 he had already moved to Riga, where he became a member of the Constitutional Democratic party in 1905.

On the other hand, Ilya Evseev represented the younger generation of politicians. Evseev served as Minister of Religious Affairs, and later replaced Aleksandrov as the Minister of the Interior. Born in 1877, Evseev was in fact of peasant background, but succeeded in his career with the help of the Orthodoxy. Evseev was born in northern Russia and graduated from a local Orthodox school, and then a zemstvo seminary. He was trained to be a teacher and joined the local zemstvo. In 1912, Evseev was elected into the Duma, representing St Petersburg *guberniya*; he then started in the Duma as a Progressist, but eventually joined the Constitutional Democrats. Evseev emigrated to Estonia in 1919 and joined the North-Western Provisional Government in August 1919.

Konstantin Aleksandrov, Minister of the Interior, who was later replaced by Ivanov, had a typical background in legal training; however, he built his liberal career in Zemgor. Aleksandrov had previously served as a local judge in Petrograd and was a member of Petrograd Zemgor; he remained a member during emigration in Finland. Some other ministerial positions were taken by moderate and right-wing socialists: for example, Pyotr Bogdanov (Minister of Agriculture), Manuil Margulies (Minister of Industry), Vasilii Gorn (State Controller), and Nikolai Ivanov.

The liberal wing of the Government of the South of Russia was slightly more conservative. It boasted some very prominent members of the Kadet party, who represented a very traditional elitist circle of Russian politicians, including Mikhail Fyodorov, Nikolay Astrov, Nikolai L'vov, and Sofia Panina. Several

members had also worked together in the All-Russian National Centre (*Vserossiĭskiĭ natsional'nyĭ tsentr*). Mikhail Fyodorov joined Denikin's General Command of the Armed forces in the South of Russia, having previously taken part in the Yassy Conference. Fyodorov had been a member of the Kadet Party since 1906, but left it and joined the Progressists in 1912. He was a member of a zemstvo, and had headed the Moscow Zemstvo Committee for Army Provision since 1914. After the Bolshevik Revolution, Fyodorov was a member of the Right Centre, but left it because he did not support its pro-German orientation, like many other liberals. Along with Nikolai Astrov and Vasilii Stepanov, Fyodorov became one of the leaders of the National Centre. Nikolai L'vov was also a member of an elitist political group. A lawyer by education, L'vov had been a Kadet party member since 1905, and a member of its Central Committee since 1906. He also had experience in creating new Russian centrist parties: the Party of Peaceful Renovation (*Partiia mirnogo obnovleniia*, which only existed for a brief period in 1906–1907), and the Progressive Party in 1912. Countess Sofia Panina only joined the Kadet Party's Central Committee in May 1917. Prior to her political career, she had done charitable work in Russia. Panina became Assistant Minister of State Welfare, under Minister Prince Dmitrii Shakhovskoi during the Provisional Government.

Some other liberal members, however, were less prominent in the Kadet circles: for example, Maslov and Fedorov. Sergei Maslov was one of the co-founders of the Octobrist party, although took a more leftist position. Vasilii Stepanov also joined the Kadet's Central Committee slightly later, in 1916. He served as Deputy Minister of Trade and Industry in the Provisional Government, and was one of the co-founders of the Right Centre, later joining the National Centre along with Astrov and Fyodorov. Among less famous members was R. R. Glindzich. As a local Kadet, he had helped set up the party in Stavropol' in 1905; he stayed in the south of Russia throughout his career, eventually joining Denikin's government.[389]

[389] Vladimir Zabelin, 'Obrazovanie Organizatsiĭ Liberal′nykh Politicheskikh Partiĭ Na Severnom Kavkaze v Gody Pervoĭ Rossiĭskoĭ Revoliutsii 1905-1907 Gg', in *Sovremennye Problemy Razvitiia Ėkonomiki, Obshchestva i Iskusstva: Mezhdunarodnaia Kollektivnaia Monografiia* (Stavropol′: Svekoĭia, 2015), pp. 105–26, p. 114.

The presence of younger party members, and tensions between national minorities and White Governments on Russia's borderlands, meant that varied opinions on the rights of national minorities were circulating within liberal circles. While some Kadets were more open to the idea of independent Baltic states, the independence of some other nations, especially Ukraine and Belorussia, was completely inadmissible to their agenda.

The liberal position towards Ukraine and Belorussia

The case of Ukrainian nationalism was especially problematic for the Constitutional Democrats to address, following their brief period in power during the Provisional Government. The growing demands for national self-determination among Ukrainian nationalist groups were becoming increasingly prominent among Ukrainians. In March 1917, the Ukrainian Central Rada was set up, which united members of several political parties, as well as civil organisations. Since it was not endorsed by the Provisional Government, the Rada originally lacked legitimacy, and served primarily as a unifying body for Ukrainian political thinkers. However, already in April 1917, the All-Ukrainian Nationalist Congregation recognised the Rada as the Ukrainian Parliament, endowing it with legislative powers. While there were very few members who argued in favour of full Ukrainian independence, the idea of national autonomy within Russia was very popular among the local population and parties in the Rada. In July 1917, the Rada unilaterally announced Ukrainian autonomy. A week later, an executive organ was established too. This precedent was followed by negotiations between the Russian and Ukrainian sides, who agreed to recognise the Rada as the legislative centre of a Ukrainian autonomous republic, and the General Secretary was given executive powers. In response, three Kadet ministers of the Provisional Government, Andrei Shingarev, Aleksandr Manuilov and Dmitrii Shakhovskii, resigned to protest against this decision. [390] The situation in Ukraine in 1917 demonstrated the Provisional Government's inability to contain the demands of

[390] Aleksandr Gol′denveĭzer, 'Iz Kievskikh Vospominaniĭ (1917-1921)', in *Arkhiv Russkoĭ Revoliutsii*, vol. 6 (Berlin: Terra, 1922), pp. 180–181. Gol'denveĭzer also noted that both the Rada and the General Secretary had to be filled with representatives of "national minorities". Importantly, the author pointed out that it was the first time they have ever heard this term (p. 180).

national minorities. While the Government tried to convince Ukrainians to postpone the question of autonomy until the election of the Constituent Assembly, the Ukrainian Rada understood that its position would be weakened by then, and pushed for the decision to be made.[391]

There were many Ukrainians among members of the Kadet party, who advocated a more conservative position towards Ukraine. As members of the intelligentsia, many of them were educated in Russia and spoke Russian, genuinely perceiving themselves as Russians, which they did not see as conflicting with being Ukrainian. They supported the broader Kadet policy towards national minorities – allowing cultural autonomy, freedom of conscience, and the right to use local languages. Evgenii Efimovskii was one of these members. A prominent member of the Kadet party, he was born in Ukraine, educated in Moscow State University, and served as the head of the Kiev Kadet Committee during the party congress in Kiev in April 1918. Efimovskii described Kiev in his memoirs as the cornerstone of Russia, "a particular kind of a knot, that tied together the indivisible trio: Great, Small and While Rus'".[392] For Efimovskii – as well as many other members of the Kadet party, including Pavel Miliukov himself – Ukraine was essential to the wider Russian identity. Both these men were heavily influenced by their teacher, Vasiliy Kliuchevskii, for whom Kievan Rus' remained the cradle of Russian nationality.[393] Efimovskii's father was a nobleman from Orlov, and his mother was a Chernigov Cossack. Upon contemplating his national identity, Evgenii Efimovskii concluded that he felt he was "neither a '*katsap*' nor a '*khokhol*', but simply a Russian".[394] Efimovskii became a strong proponent of the Slavic movement, and genuinely believed in the close interconnection of Russians, Belorussians and Ukrainians; he did not understand the nationalist aspirations of the Belorussians and Ukrainians.

Thus, Efimovskii himself was not a proponent of an independent Ukraine. In Moscow, during the meeting of the Moscow Slavic Committee, he urged them to separate Polish and Ukrainian national issues: "The Polish issue – is a matter of

[391] Ibid., p. 178.
[392] Evgenii Efimovskii, 'V russkom Kieve v 1918 gody. Politicheskie siluėty', p. 129. Bakhmeteff Archive, Columbia University, E. A. Efimovskii Papers, 1953–1964.
[393] Interestingly, Miliukov was among the first graduates of Kliuchevskii, while Efimovskii was one of the last. Efimovskii made a note on his conversation with Miliukov about it in his memoir: 'Vstrechi na zhiznennom puti'. Bakhmeteff Archive, Columbia University, E. A. Efimovskii Papers, 1953–1964, p. 34.
[394] Efimovskii, 'V russkom Kieve v 1918 gody', p. 129.

nationality, while the Ukrainian issue is a matter of legal guarantees. Restoration of the Polish state is the issue of Poland having the right to pursue its national aspiration, whereas for Ukraine this would be an act of state treason."[395] Nevertheless, Efimovskii acknowledged that the number of supporters of independent Ukraine had increased in late imperial Russia; partly because of the growing influence of Ukrainian radical nationalists, but also largely due to rising discontent with the national politics of imperial Russia.[396] Reminiscing about the Russian Kiev of 1918, Efimovskii sympathised with the Russians, who were caught between Ukrainian-Russian revolutionaries and the threat of German occupation. He also criticised the Ukrainian Kadets for their willingness to cooperate with the Germans: "their philosophy was the following: In the sphere of international relations there is neither morality, nor law. Everything is relative. […] Treaties with the Allies were made under the assumption of the existence of Imperial Russia. It does not exist anymore."[397] During the Ukrainian Kadet meetings, Efimovskii fiercely argued in favour of a pro-Entente orientation, and urged the Kadets to reconsider their position towards monarchy (Efimovskii remained a proponent of monarchy over a republic, even after the Kadet's Central Committee approved a republic in their policy in 1917).[398] However, as soon as the Germans were defeated by the Entente, the situation changed for pro-German party members, and the debate became irrelevant.

If Russian liberals were to list national minorities from 'most to least advanced' in their imperialist fashion, the Ukrainian and Belorussian nations would undoubtedly be placed at the bottom of the list. As a result of the Brest-Litovsk Treaty, Belorussia ended up under German occupation. Immediately after German troops were forced to leave under the Treaty of Versailles, most of the Belorussian territory was occupied by the Red Army. The rest of the territory was fighting for its independence, and was also being contested by Poland, Lithuania and White Russia. Importantly, the argument that Belorussia was not 'developed

[395] Ibid., p. 131.
[396] Ibid., p. 132.
[397] Ibid., p. 136.
[398] Efimovskii wrote: "I have always been a Monarchist", *Vstrechi na zhiznennom puti*, p. 41.

enough' to form its own state was shared more widely, even by other national minorities. Lithuanians debated on the future of Belorussia in their newspaper, *Lietuvos žinios*, in 1924.[399] They argued that both Lithuanians and Belorussians were suffering from Polish abuse, and considered four different scenarios for a Belorussian political structure: full state independence; federation with Poland; federation with the Lithuanian republic; and federation with the Soviet Union. Full independence was considered impossible, due to its geographical proximity to two strong states (Poland and Russia), and the "immaturity of the nation" (*nezrelost' natsii*).[400] The unknown author went on to explain that by "immaturity" he also meant financial hardships, which made Belorussia unable to afford a state, its own foreign representatives and its own press. Importantly, the author also noted that under Bolshevik control, Belorussia showed signs of "superficial independence", which was expected to be removed once Russia grew stronger. Of course, the article drew the conclusion that the most logical and beneficial solution for Belorussia was to unite with Lithuania, as they were "brotherly nations".

The Belorussian National Rada, in its short existence, was in constant close communication with the Lithuanians; however, it had a different opinion on the closeness of the two nations. The major point of discussion was the Wilno Region, which it considered Belorussian land. An agreement between Lithuania and Belorussia of 11 October 1920 defined the area as Lithuanian; however, Belorussian representatives were accepted into the local government to represent interests of their people living in the region. The Belorussian National Rada was registering complaints about Lithuanians abusing the treaty, ill-treating Belorussians on their soil, and generally the relations between the new states were deteriorating. Such territorial disputes between the newly independent states acted in favour of the Whites, helping them to stress the immaturity of these nation-states and the instability that they were bringing to the area.[401]

[399] "Belorussians and Us", (Author unknown), *Lietuvos žinios* (N23), 27 January 1924. GARF. F.6063, Op. 1, D. 11, pp. 1–3.
[400] Ibid., p. 2.
[401] 'Notes on relationships between the governments of Independent Belorussian Republic and Moscow'. (Author unknown) GARF. F.6063, Op. 1, D. 11, pp. 4–12.

Belorussian national history was a heavily contested area of discussion for the Belorussians themselves, who struggled to present themselves as a strong nation that deserved its own state in the international political arena. Later, in 1956, Nicholas Vakar – a historian and an active member of the Kadet party – wrote a book on the history of the Belorussian nation's development; he recognised its distinct national identity, and took a critical approach to the history of Belorussia and the nation's origins, as well as the country's national myth.

The issue of authority and representation among the Whites and the All-Russian Provisional Government

Both the North-Western and Southern Governments enjoyed some degree of local authority. The Regional Government of Kuban and the High Command of the Volunteer Army met with representatives of the newly independent Georgia on 12–13 September 1918. The Russian side was questioning the position of Russians in the Georgian republic, implying their ill-treatment. Georgian representatives, in turn, took a defensive position, denying any such accusations:

> It was hard to listen to all these accusations […] We are being accused of violence against Russian officials and officers in Georgia. We are being accused of creating an atmosphere that prevents mutual cooperation. I must say that when I encounter such accusations from irresponsible authorities […] I assume that credible authorities do not share this position. But when General Alekseev, who is known in all of Russia, known and respected by us, repeats such accusations, it takes a serious turn […] With regard to prosecutions of Russia, I can testify to the falsehood of these facts.[402]

This was the second day of tense negotiations concerning Georgia's independence, its borders, and the treatment of Russians in Georgia. Contested territories included the Abkhazia, Sochi and Gagarinskiy regions. The Russians

[402] 'Minutes of the committee meeting of the High Command of the Volunteer Army, Kuban Government and Representatives of the Republic of Georgia'. GARF. F 439, Op.1, D. 35, p. 9.

accused the Georgians of unlawful occupation of historically Russian territories, and demanded that the Abkhaz people be allowed to exercise their right to national self-determination, as the Georgians had. The White government argued that the borderline between Georgia and Russia should be based on the borders of 1904, when the Chernomorskaia regional border was established. It stated that there were "no geographical, historical, ethnical or strategic reasons to reconsider the borders".[403]

Importantly, both the Kuban Regional Government and the Volunteer Army recognised Georgia's independence. For instance, General Alekseev extended a warm welcome to the representatives of "friendly and independent Georgia",[404] and stated later that "Georgia has the right to independence" – which the Kuban Government had no objections to.[405]

Failing to reach an agreement regarding the contested territories, the following conversation occurred between Georgian and Russian officials:

> Glenchkori: The Volunteer Army is a private organisation […] This means that one cannot consider the Volunteer Army as the Russian state.
>
> Alekseev: Just try to call us a private organisation!
>
> Glenchkori: I am speaking in the sense that it has no national significance.
>
> Alekseev: It will have national significance.
>
> Glenchkori: Well, when it does, then it will be a different story.[406]

This was clearly a very different rhetoric compared to the first day of negotiations, when Glenchkori had been praising General Alekseev. While the

[403] Minutes of the committee meeting…, p. 6.
[404] Ibid.
[405] Ibid., p. 7.
[406] Ibid., p. 18.

Georgian officials chose to speak to the Kuban Government about their interests, in case of a lack of agreement, they were quick to call the Kuban Government a "private organisation". Once again, the issue of authority in the Provisional Government was highlighted. On the one hand, the Georgians decided to turn to the Kuban Government with the questions of territorial divisions; yet on the other hand, it was not clear to either party whether their word was final and official. The Georgian reaction was not surprising, considering that the same attitude to local governments was often shared within Russia. In October 1918, the Chair of the General Command of the Armed Forces of South Russia, Abraham Dragomirov, sent a number of Kadets to carry out negotiations with the Kuban Rada about control of the territory shared between the Rada and the Volunteer Army. Vladimir Zeeler, one of the Kadets of the delegation representing the Volunteer Army's interests, also argued that the Army had nationwide recognition, unlike the Rada.

> I cannot consider the Volunteer Army as a local representative of Stavropol' or Chernomorskiy *gubernias*, but I consider it a real force, resolving state-level issues, and neither Crimea nor Don can stand on the same level as the Volunteer Army, since it is not local, but of a nationwide importance.[407]

Zeeler implied that the Volunteer Army would also play the pivotal role in unifying Russia in the aftermath of the civil war. Members of the Provisional Governments on the borders of Russia tended to be more flexible in recognising the independence of nation-states. In the cases of the North-Western and Kuban Governments, such recognition allowed them to continue the anti-Bolshevik struggle without fighting national minorities. The All-Russian Provisional Government in Omsk took a more radical position, continuing to insist on a "one and indivisible Russia", similarly to the groups in emigration. The opinions of liberals within these governments were divided along similar lines.

[407] 'Minutes of the meeting under the chair Lieutenant-General Aleksandr Lukomskiĭ on the issue of power structure in the areas occupied by the Volunteer Army and on terms of cooperation with the Kuban Regional Government'. GARF. F. 439, Op. 1, D. 34, p. 4.

In the light of the approaching Paris Peace Conference, the issue of authority was an especially important issue.[408] The High Command of the Volunteer Army and Kuban Government also discussed internally how to gain recognition in Paris. They were hoping to claim legitimacy through securing relations with the Entente. With the Great War coming to an end, the Volunteer Army hoped that the Allies would want to find a connection in Russia that did not associate itself with the Germans. This could be the Volunteer Army and the Kuban, which would give them the authority to speak, if not on behalf of Russia in its entirety, then at least on behalf of Russia's south. As such, the governments of Georgia, the Don, and Ukraine would not have the same position, since they had been collaborating with the Germans.[409] Many members of the White Government were also hoping that any previous signs of a pro-German position would hinder any given party from arguing its cause at the Paris Peace Conference. Indeed, the Allied Powers maintained their concerns about Lithuania, fearing a strong pro-German mood at the Peace Conference.[410] Similarly, Lieutenant-General Aleksandr Lukomskiĭ of *VSYuR* counted on the fact that the Allies would welcome the Volunteer Army and Kuban, and would not want to cooperate with Ukraine, Georgia or the Don.[411] The Volunteer Army also avoided having much contact with these states, hoping that their independence would not be recognised on the international level, due to a fear of German influence.

Interestingly, this language and discussion starkly contrasted with how the Kadets abroad, especially in Paris, discussed Russia's future. Despite the fact that they were constantly in close contact with the White Governments is Russia, they do not seem to have worried about the issue of "who speaks for Russia". Neither did they worry about whom the Russian delegation would be accountable to, in international negotiations. According to Miliukov, for instance, it would be "the Russian people", rather than any specified head of state.[412] This difference also reflects the attitude of liberals within and outside Russia, regarding the

[408] Minutes of the committee meeting of the High Command of the Volunteer Army, Kuban Government and Representatives of the Republic of Georgia, p. 15.
[409] Minutes of the meeting under the chair Lieutenant-General Aleksandr Lukomskiĭ… p. 2.
[410] Charlotte Alston, *Piip, Meierovics & Voldemaras: The Baltic States* (London: Haus Publishing, 2010), p. 57.
[411] Minutes of the meeting under the chair Lieutenant-General Aleksandr Lukomskiĭ… pp. 1–2.
[412] See Miliukov's articles in "The New Russia".

nationalities issue. The Kuban Government, for example, was ready to recognise Georgian independence, whereas the Kadets in Paris did not want to negotiate the fate of any nationality, with the exception of Poland.

The only White government that succeeded in attaining a more formal form of foreign recognition was the All-Russian Provisional Government in Siberia. The Siberian region, similarly to the south of Russia, had also experienced several White governments. Local regional powers had been arising in Siberia since the end of the nineteenth century, and they used the October Revolution to declare independence. Regionalism (*oblastnichestvo*) stood for democratic principles and the division of power. The Provisional Siberian Government was formed partly with members of the local Siberian Provisional Government, and partly with an unsuccessful group, the Committee of Members of the Constituent Assembly (KOMUCH) in Samara. The Provisional Siberian Government, founded in September 1918, was later succeeded by the Provisional All-Russian Government. In November 1918, Admiral Kolchak took the power from an unpopular regional government and became the Supreme Leader of Russia.[413] As a military dictatorship among other White Governments, Kolchak's government also established a heavily centralised state and eliminated the power of local councils.[414]

Some Baltic organisations corresponded with the provisional Siberian Government before the North-Western Government was formed. In June 1918, the Lithuanian National Council in Russia wrote to the Siberian Government to justify Lithuanian independence based on the Brest-Litovsk Treaty, according to which Russia gave up the territory of Lithuania, and subsequently its independence was recognised by Germany. The committee informed the Siberian government that as an independent nation, Lithuanians would not become involved in any political and military affairs in Siberia, and would maintain neutrality.[415]

[413] Vasilii Tsvetkov, *Beloe Delo v Rossii. 1919 g. (Formirovanie i Èvoliutsiia Politicheskikh Struktur Belogo Dvizheniia v Rossii* (Moscow: Posev, 2009). Tsvetkov wrote an extensive account of the history of the White movement in Russia, and the formations and renaming of governments.
[414] 'Report of a local Lieutenant', 10 June 1919. GARF, F. R-176, Op. 3, D. 20, p. 16.
[415] 'Letter from the Lithuanian National Committee in Russia to the Provisional Siberian Government', 8 June 1818. GARF. F. R-200, Op. 1, D. 258, p. 15.

While the Russian White movement seemed to have formulated Russia's position towards national minorities thanks to the Kadets' significant impact, they faced pressure from foreign powers, as well as newly emerged states, at the Paris Peace Conference. The Baltic states in particular were an area of very intense diplomatic struggles. The Russian side was arguing for the need to expand the White Army in the newly independent states in order to succeed in the attack against the Bolsheviks, thus threatening the Allies with the spreading threat of Bolshevism. In November, the Minister of Justice reported the creation of a committee dedicated to fighting Bolshevism. He was voicing concerns that Bolshevist ideas were finding resonance in Eastern Europe, including Finland, Hungary, Estonia, Latvia and Germany. The committee was supposed to study "all aspects of the social life of foreign states and the influence of Bolshevism on the people".[416] In addition, a special department of propaganda and agitation was working on spreading anti-Bolshevik propaganda in the North-Western Government. While their work did not touch upon the issue of nationalities directly, it nevertheless transmitted the White Army's perspective regarding a "united and indivisible Russia", which weakened the propaganda.

The Estonians and Lithuanians, on the other hand, were concerned about their future in post-Bolshevik Russia. Most of the territories of the Baltic states were occupied by the German army after the Great War. In light of the German failure, both the Bolsheviks and the Allied states started to compete for control over the Baltic states. The Bolsheviks had already started their military operations by November. At the same time, the states of Estonia and Lithuania were fighting for their independence, and turned to the Allied states and the Whites to seek protection from the Bolshevik threat. Russian historians have tended to emphasise the importance of the Allied influence in the Baltics, especially that of Great Britain.[417] Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania indeed turned to the Entente Powers to plead for their independence. Charlotte Alston agreed that Great Britain was

[416] 'Report of the Minister of Justice to the Council of Ministers of the North-Western region'. GARF F. P-6385, Op. 1, D. 18, pp. 30–31.
[417] Smolin, "Beloe Dvizhenie na Severo-Zapade Rossii. 1918–1920gg", pp. 50–52; Natalya Dumova and Vladimir Trukhanovskiĭ, *Cherchil' i imperialisticheskaia interventsiia v Rossii.* In: S. L. Tikhvinskiĭ (ed,), *Istoricheskiĭ opyt Velikogo Okeiabria: k 90-letiiu akademika I.I. Mintsa*. Moscow: Nauka, 1989, p. 182.

relatively more sympathetic to the Estonian cause.[418] Representatives of the Baltic states demanded recognition of their independence by the Allies as a guarantee of their future independence. In August 1919, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Estonia, Jaan Poska, wrote a letter to Britain's Brigadier General F. G. Marsh, stipulating that Iudenich's army would only be allowed to conduct military actions if the Allies recognised Estonian independence.[419] Estonians made many attempts to secure their future independence in these trilateral negotiations: for instance, Poska called for Marsh's "personal friendliness" towards the Estonian nation, and for the Allies' benevolent attitude to Estonia.[420] The Allies, however, were hesitant to openly acknowledge the independence of the new nation-states, but did promise independence to the Estonians in bilateral negotiations. The Entente Powers, and especially Great Britain, had to act as a mediator between the Russian White Government and the new national governments of Estonia and Lithuania. In the months leading to the formation of the North-Western Government, Estonia was exposed to the Bolshevik threat and was turning to the Allies for support.[421]

The Kadets' input into the White Governments and their nationalities policies

Did the Kadets' position stand out in the White Governments within Russia? Generally, although many of the party's prominent members were involved in the governance of White Governments, the Kadets failed to represent their party as an independent political group. Instead, they aimed for a greater unity within the White Governments and acknowledged the control of the army and the militarised nature of the regimes. In addition, the Kadets fully supported the idea of a single, indivisible Russia, which did not set them apart from the more right-wing parties of the Whites, although they did not sound so categorically. The Kadets' position was more apparent in their plans for the future Russia. While they supported the idea of a strong centralised state in the aftermath of the civil war, they were hoping

[418] Alston, *Piip, Meierovics & Voldemaras: The Baltic States*.
[419] 'Letter by J. Poska to Brigadier General F. G. Marsh', 16 August 1919. GARF F. P-6385, Op. 1, D. 6, p. 18.
[420] Ibid.
[421] Smolin, *Beloe Dvizhenie na Severo-Zapade Rossii*, gives a detailed account of diplomatic and military negotiations between the Estonian and Russian governments and the Entente representatives (pp. 48–61).

to return to their 1917 ideas in the longer term: to call for a Constituent Assembly, establish an electoral government, and create equality across Russia on the basis of individual rights, rather than national struggles. They attempted to re-create the order of Provisional Government on regional basis by reinstituting zemstvos, which partially contributed to the development of a civil society. As this chapter has demonstrated, some individuals' opinions diverged from the party line and developed according to the different political realities of borderland governments, the Siberian Government or émigré communities. Due to the realities of the civil war and attempts to create a uniform anti-Bolshevik front in the form of the White movement, the liberals' position as a political group in any form inevitably became less visible. In his assessment of the Kadets' input into the White movement, Vladimir Brovkin concluded that "the Kadet party failed to lead the White movement".[422] As a party that contained active politicians in the Dumas and the Provisional Government, as well as professors and legal scholars, it was not counterintuitive to expect the Constitutional-Democrats to be at the head of the anti-Bolshevik movement.

By focusing on the Kadet party more specifically, we can separate the party's programme from the individual members, and their respective positions across the White movement. The party's position towards the military regime demonstrates a clear divergence from ideas of liberalism, democracy and civil liberties. Their position was further complicated by differing opinions on national minorities within different Provisional Governments. In addition, emigrant liberals had their own opinions and agendas. Kadets operating from abroad made great efforts to persuade the Allies to recognise the Whites as Russia's official government. Their views regarding national minorities changed abroad, partly due to lacking exposure to the day-to-day situation in Russia's borderlands. The next chapter will consider liberal groups residing abroad, and their positions regarding the rights to self-determination.

[422] Brovkin, "Identity, allegiance and participation in the Russian civil war".

Despite the fact that the Kadets essentially blended into the wider White movement, their party was still recognised by the foreign powers. André Mazon, a Russianist and Slavophile, wrote to Paul Boyer that the Kadets were a liberal party in Russia and were very devoted to the Allies.[423] However, the Kadets justified this position as a temporary necessity, for the sake of the country's future. The Kadets' involvement in regional White governments as individuals, rather than as a party, made their position often invisible, especially when assessing the current situation during the civil war. It was their views on the future of Russia that helped liberals, and the Kadets specifically, to stand out in the White movement and find a common ground with the Allies. Their temporary position on nationalities, formulated by the Kadets and adopted by Russian representatives abroad more widely, benefitted neither the party nor the Whites in general. National minorities were understandably concerned about this position, and worked towards gaining recognition from the Allies. While the Kadets' position on the broader democratisation of the future Russia yielded positive results in White Russia's relations with the Entente Powers, their inflexible position on national minorities clearly did not benefit them. In retrospect, compared to the Kadets' policies towards Russia's nationalities, this shows that their position had changed only partially since the Duma times. The realities of the civil war made them acknowledge the necessity of more political freedoms on Russia's borderlands, and further decentralisation of the country. This was an advance compared to the cultural and religious freedoms they had originally discussed; however, the gap between the demands of national minorities and the Kadets' programme, which became visible during the short-lived Provisional Government, became more evident during the civil war.

As the Civil War progressed, more and more members of the Russian liberal community fled abroad, with one of the final evacuations taking place from Crimea as the last stronghold of the Whites. Throughout the entire civil war, the Russian community abroad, and liberals among them, were very vocal in their position on the Bolsheviks and the events taking place in Russia. The following chapter will

[423] Hoover Archives Russian Posol'stvo (France) Reel 2, Box 2.

discuss their views and their efforts to maintain the old Russian imperial borderlands.

Chapter 5

Russian liberal émigrés serving White Russia's interests

The Paris Peace Conference failed to provide Russian Whites with the solutions they sought; however, while negotiations were still taking place, the Russian émigré community adopted a role of educating their Western colleagues about the civil war in Russia, as well as representing the White Government. The issue of national minorities became an important factor in these negotiations. To begin with, liberals were still hoping to gain territories provisionally promised to Russia by the Entente at the end of the First World War. Secondly, the émigré community had to have a strong position towards nationalist movements within Russia's borderlands. They considered themselves to be in the right place to explain their position to the Allies and convince them of the ephemeral nature of demands for national self-determination, while also assuring the Allies that White Russia would take a liberal position towards national minorities and encourage local governance.

This chapter will analyse how the liberal émigré communities worked to achieve their aims. It will consider propagandistic material that liberals published abroad, their personal correspondence, and speeches given at the Yassy Conference, as well as the work of their organisations abroad. The issue of labelling national minorities will be one of the areas used to assess the liberal position on the matter. This chapter will focus on the work done by Russian liberals to create a positive pro-Entente image of White Russia. Importantly, the liberal émigré community had a more vocal political position than those in Russia. While liberals within White Provisional Governments quickly blended into the wider anti-Bolshevik movement, those who were abroad still formed Kadet party groups, and separated themselves from socialist or monarchist movements to a greater extent. This chapter will also examine the ways in which liberals tried to preserve their liberal political identity and use it to advance their position on national minorities.

Studies of Russian history have explicitly analysed Russian liberal émigrés' attempts to cooperate with the West and influence them to support the White

movement in the Russian Civil War.[424] Accounts of European history, however, focused on the Entente's relationship with the Bolsheviks, noting that already in March 1919 the British were arguing in favour of withdrawing Allied forces from Russia.[425] These studies provided an account of discussions in France, Britain and the US about Russia and its position in 1918, excluding the voice of Russians themselves. For example, Richard Ullman, in his account of British relations with Russia during the civil war, focused on the particularities of Britain's diplomatic negotiations with both the Whites and the Bolsheviks.[426] Killen provided a comprehensive account of the US position towards Russia, during the complex story of the struggle.[427]

International negotiations: the Yassy Conference

One of the roles adopted by Russian liberals abroad was to serve as a link between White Russia and European countries, to ensure the White movement received support against the Bolsheviks. A major part of this was the military effort. The presence of British and French troops in Russia was considered to be one of the principal strengths of the White movement, which usually lacked resources and people. In the anti-Bolshevik struggle, military success was one of the most important goals of the Whites, and nobility who lived abroad took the role of mediators with Western representatives, to ensure their support. This was done partly through organisations and partly through personal connections and meetings. The most important official negotiations between Russian liberals abroad and the Allies happened at the Yassy Conference and the Paris Peace Conference. The former was an event arranged specifically to address the Russian issue in the aftermath of the October Revolution and the subsequent Brest-Litovsk treaty, signed by the Bolsheviks. The latter conference took place in Yassy in Romania on 16–23 November 1918. Its main purpose was to bring together

[424] For example: V. A. Kuvshinov, *Kadety v Rossii i za rubezhom (1905–1943 gg.)* (Moskva: Univ. gumanitar. litseĭ, 1997), p. 116.
[425] Zara Steiner, *The lights that failed: European international history, 1919–1933* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), p. 142.
[426] Richard Ullman, *Anglo-Soviet relations, 1917–1921. Vols. 1 & 2, Intervention and the war* (Princeton: University Press, 1961).
[427] Linda Killen, 'Self-determination vs. Territorial Integrity', *Nationalities Papers* 10, no. 1 (1982), pp. 65–78.

members of the Russian White movement and representatives from the Entente to discuss foreign intervention in the Russian Civil War, as well as Russia's place at the Paris Peace Conference. The Russian side was represented by twenty-seven delegates, ranging from moderate monarchists to moderate socialists. About one-third of the delegation were liberals. Military support for the White movement and the future of Russia were the main issues discussed at the conference; therefore, the issue of Russian borderlands inevitably became an important topic. There are several reasons why Yassy, a small provincial Romanian town, was selected to host the conference. Nikolai Astrov mentioned that Emile Henno, head of the French vice-consulate in Kiev, invited his colleague, Vasiliy Shulgin, a conservative member of the Whites, to Yassy to discuss the Allies' military intervention in Ukraine. Henno claimed he had initiated the conference. Astrov also recognised the impact of Colonel Il'in, a representative of the Red Cross in Romania, who claimed to have invited international representatives to Yassy.[428]

The delegates' position towards Russian borderlands in 1918 was more categorical than it became two years later. The one point, the Russian delegation agreed on the idea that old Russian imperial borders should be preserved to the greatest possible extent. As the civil war progressed, Russian liberals became more willing to recognise the independence of some areas. Firstly, the liberals believed that separatist movements were closely linked to the spread of Bolshevik propaganda. For instance, the conference opened with a discussion of sending Emile Henno from the French vice-consulate in Kiev to Ukraine, in order to report on the Whites' position. Members of the conferences agreed that it would be desirable for Henno to establish close links with the Russians in Kiev. Hence, they tried to suggest a way for the White movement to send a message showing that they had foreign support, without intimidating the Ukrainian military commander, the Hetman. At the same time, Miliukov stated that Ukrainian independence was completely out of the question.[429] Emile Henno was the leading voice of the Entente and was not a strong proponent of Ukrainian independence; some historians believe that this was due to his close ties with conservative Vasiliy

[428] Nikolai Astrov, 'Iasskoye Soveshanie. Iz dokumentov', 1919. GARF F 5913, Op. 1, D. 8, p. 4.
[429] Iasskoye Soveshanie, 1918, *Russkoe proshloe*. *Istoriko-dokumental'niy al'manakh*, Vol. 3 (Leningrad: Svelen, 1992).

Shulgin.[430] Secondly, cases of self-proclamation of nation-states on Russia's territory were interpreted as a result of German activity to undermine Russia. Paul Miliukov called for non-recognition of separate states that were "organised with the help of Germany in order to divide Russia". He also urged the Entente delegation at Yassy to recognise "Russia as one and indivisible in the borders of August 1914, except for Poland. Unification of all three parts of Poland was considered as an act of justice on behalf of the Entente members and Russian Provisional Government".[431] This statement implied denying the Brest-Litovsk treaty, signed by the Bolsheviks with the Central Powers, and considering Finland as a part of Russia. Representatives of the Allied states were urged to recognise Russia's pre-revolutionary borders, based on belief that self-proclamation of independence was not an act of national desire, but rather an act against Russia facilitated by Germany, in order to undermine the White movement. Miliukov made a similar argument with regard to Armenia. The Brest-Litovsk treaty acknowledged all territories Russia gained in the war as part of Turkey, and in 1918, Armenians were still fighting against the Turks. Paul Miliukov argued that the question of borders must be reconsidered by the Allies with Russia having a say in the matter, just as he had negotiated with Sir Edward Grey in 1916.[432]

Grishanin argued that the Yassy Conference was an important milestone for the Whites, as it allowed the Volunteer Army to represent itself in the international arena.[433] For the most part, however, scholars agree that the members of the Yassy Conference did not significantly advance relations between Russia and the Allies.[434] In fact, there was an evident lack of foreign representatives at the conference. Compared to the twenty-seven delegates of White Russia, only seven

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[430] Aleksandr Puchenkov, *Ukraina i Krym v 1918–Nachale 1919 g. Ocherki Politicheskoĭ Istorii.* (St Petersburg: Nestor-istoriia, 2013), p. 93.

[431] Iasskoe soveshchanie, 1918. Original quote: «…Признание единой, неделимой России в границах августа 1914 года, за исключением, однако, Польши; воссоединение всех трех частей Польши <…> признавалось актом справедливости и союзными державами, и русским Временным правительством» (p. 250).

[432] Iasskoe soveshchanie. 1918 (p. 253).

[433] Petr Grishanin, "Vneshnepoliticheskaia Strategiia Komandovaniia Dobrovol′cheskoĭ Armii (1918 g.)", *Novyĭ Istoricheskiĭ Vestnik* (2004), pp. 118–25.

[434] Melissa Stockdale, *Paul Miliukov and the Quest for a Liberal Russia 1880–1918* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996), p. 271; Boris Achkinazi, "Antanta i Beloe Dvizhenie Posle Okonchaniia Mirovoĭ Voĭny: Iasskoe Soveshchanie (16–23 Noiabria 1918 g.)", *Fundamental'nye i Prikladnye Nauchnye Issledovaniia: Aktual'nye Voprosy, Dostizheniia i Innovatsii Sbornik Stateĭ Xxxi Mezhdunarodnoĭ Nauchno-Prakticheskoĭ Konferentsii* (2020), pp. 115–17.

participated on behalf of the Entente, and they did not attend every meeting. Astrov pointed out that the conference should not be considered as a negotiation between Russian and foreign diplomats, but rather as a discussion between Russia's leading political organisations, in an attempt to find a common ground and agree on a course of action.[435] The conference highlighted a lack of consensus among representatives of the Whites; they failed to establish a coherent plan of cooperation with the Allies, or to express a uniform position of White Russia.

The Russian Liberation Committee

Aside from official meetings with Entente representatives, Russian émigrés tried to raise awareness of the situation in Russia among Europeans, through the Western press and various émigré groups. The Russian White movement, including its prominent liberal figures, used other ways to present their position to the Allies. The liberals played an important role in this, because they could talk to their Western colleagues and the wider public in liberal, democratic terms.[436] They also produced publications aimed at foreign audiences.

There were several political organisations of White émigrés in London, but the Russian Liberation Committee was one of the most active.[437] Founded in London in 1919, it was among the Russian organisations that addressed mostly a foreign, British audience rather than a Russian one. Some executives of the Russian Liberation Committee were prominent Russian liberals, including Paul Miliukov, Ariadna Tyrkowa-Williams, Petr Struve and Vladimir Nabokov. They were all supporters of the Western image of constitutional democracy, and seemed to be in a perfect position to inform the British audience about Russia. The committee published its own journals and bulletins, and also supplied material for British newspapers.[438] Generally, the Russian Liberation Committee aimed to appeal to a British audience and inform it about the civil war in Russia, in order to ensure that the British public would support Britain's military and financial

[435] Nikolai Astrov. 'Iasshoye Soveshanie. Iz dokumentov', 1919. GARF F 5913, Op.1, D. 8, p. 2.
[436] Charlotte Alston, *Russia's Greatest Enemy?: Harold Williams and the Russian Revolutions.* (London: Tauris Academic Studies, 2007), p. 137.
[437] Alston, "The Work of the Russian Liberation Committee in London, 1919–1924", p. 6
[438] Ibid., p. 7.

support of the White movement. It collected material about developments at the civil war fronts in Russia, about the advances of the White Army, and about life under the Bolshevik regime. The Russian Liberation Committee clearly portrayed Bolshevism as an unstable regime that was holding Russia back, and at the same time was unsustainable and would soon collapse. On the other hand, the committee's publications aimed to represent White Russia's interests. By contrast with the Bolsheviks, the White movement was portrayed as "liberating Russia". Some bulletins of the Russian Liberation Committee emphasised the liberal nature of the White Government, reiterating its plans to elect a Constituent Assembly in the future Russian State, "based on universal and equal suffrage without distinction of sex";[439] while others talked about a future Russian Democratic Government with "no distinction of class or nationality".[440] Since the committee was run by prominent Russian liberals, some of their publications show how they attempted to connect to the British on the basis of liberalism. Vladimir Nabokov wrote a compelling article titled "British Liberalism and Russia", in which he warned against supporting the Bolsheviks, pointing to the fact that true Russian democrats did not adhere to the socialist programme, and that Russian liberals hoped to find allies among British liberals.[441]

Many of the publications of the Russian Liberation Committee touched on the subject of nationalities. The concept of a united and indivisible Russia remained central to much of the published material; in fact, one of its slogans was "Russia united and free". For instance, in November 1919 there appeared a short note titled "Anti-Separatist Sympathies in Little Russia", which stated that: "The majority of the population of Little Russia is perfectly indifferent to the idea of an independent Ukraine."[442] This note used a standard twofold argument against Ukrainian national self-determination: the first part suggested that the common people were not interested in national independence. The bulletin cited a Ukrainian newspaper, *Gromada*: "ninety per cent of the mobilised officers are intensely

[439] 'Bulletins of the Russian Liberation Committee'. 18 August 1919 (N 26). Bakhmeteff Archive, Columbia University, Tyrkowa-Williams Papers, Box 27.
[440] Ibid.
[441] Vladimir Nabokov, "British Liberalism and Russia", *The New Russia* (5 February 1920), pp. 7–10.
[442] 'Bulletins of the Russian Liberation Committee'. 22 November 1919 (N 40). Bakhmeteff Archive, Columbia University, Tyrkowa-Williams Papers, Box 28.

antagonistic to the idea of an independent Ukraine, and only awaiting the arrival of Denikin's army to join its ranks". Also, the bulk of the Ukrainian army was originally formed of Carpatho-Russians from Eastern Galicia, who had now abandoned the cause and "dispersed to their own homes". The second part of the argument explained the origin of the nationalist movement: not originally Ukrainian, but rather brought in by German troops to sabotage Russia through the Ukrainian nationalist leader, Petliura. Another bulletin quoted Denikin's proclamation, where he stated that:

> … desirous of weakening the Russian state before declaring the war against it, Germans long before 1914 aspired to destroy the unity of the Russian race, crafted after centuries of hard struggle. For this purpose, they supported and fanned into flame a movement in the South of Russia, which aimed to separate nine Russian Provinces under the title of 'The Ukrainian Power.' The aspiration to separate the Little Russian branch of the Russian people has not been abandoned even now. The former German agents – Petliura and his adherents – who laid a beginning of the dismemberment of Russia, are still carrying on their evil task of creating an independent 'Ukrainian State', and fighting against regeneration of a United Russia.
>
> However, all activity inspired by the love of one's native land, of its peculiarities, its traditions and local language, must be completely separated from the treacherous movement directed towards the dismemberment of Russia.[443]

The above quote clearly leads the reader to believe that the nationalist movement lacked a popular local foundation. Most importantly, if portrayed common Ukrainians as victims of German saboteurs, who exploited people's genuine love for their homeland to weaken Russia. It was common to argue that the local populations were in favour of being Russian subjects. Even in the case of Bessarabia, occupied by Romanians, the Russian Liberation Committee argued

[443] Bulletins of the Russian Liberation Committee. 18 October 1919 (N35).

that their regime was reminiscent of the Bolsheviks, who were oppressing a strong popular movement in support of Russia: "Russia is the sole object which unites all parties and all the nationalities in Bessarabia."[444] Such arguments were commonly used by Russian liberals abroad. At the meetings during the Yassy Conference, the Russian delegation made the same arguments about Ukrainian self-determination. Paul Miliukov called for non-recognition of separate states that were "organised with the help of Germany in order to divide Russia". He also urged the Entente delegation at Yassy to recognise "Russia as one and indivisible in the borders of August 1914, except for Poland. Unification of all three parts of Poland was considered as an act of justice on behalf of the Entente members and Russian Provisional Government".[445]

On another occasion, the bulletin suggested that the Bolshevik presence in Ukraine harmed its national interests, implying that it would prosper under White Russian control. Soviet internationalists did not fulfil their agreement with the Ukrainian nationalists and expelled the Directory committee, "the cradle of 'Independent Ukraine'". The Bolsheviks then exploited Ukraine as their "granary."[446] The bulletin clearly implied that the Bolshevik force was damaging for Ukraine; however, White Russia did not support a nationalist movement either.

Concerning other territories, the committee argued that national minorities welcomed the White Armies in their territories and were willing to cooperate with them to rebuild Russia. For example, a bulletin about Denikin told the readers that when the general toured the south of Russia, "everywhere he received a most enthusiastic welcome".[447] Denikin also reached an agreement with the Don and Terek Cossacks, about the administration of liberated non-Cossack territories.[448] A later bulletin further informed readers that there was no separatism in the Kuban, and the Kuban Rada pledged to work closely with the Volunteer Army against the

[444] Bulletins of the Russian Liberation Committee. 12 April 1919 (N8).
[445] Iasskoe soveshchanie. 1918.
Original quote: «...Признание единой, неделимой России в границах августа 1914 года, за исключением, однако, Польши; воссоединение всех трех частей Польши <...> признавалось актом справедливости и союзными державами, и русским Временным правительством» (p. 250).
[446] Bulletins of the Russian Liberation Committee. 19 April 1919 (N9).
[447] Bulletins of the Russian Liberation Committee. 18 August 1919 (N26).
[448] Bulletins of the Russian Liberation Committee. 18 August 1919 (N26).

Bolsheviks in the aftermath of the "Bysh affair".[449] The bulletin also denied reports that Denikin had dispersed the Rada and appointed a new Ataman from among his generals.[450]

The language of the bulletins was generally very positive when delivering information about White Russia. Aiming to make the British audience sympathise with the White cause, it portrayed the White Governments as defending the common people from Bolshevik exploitation and oppression. Materials published by the Russian Liberation Committee created an impression that the Whites had the support of the majority of the population (on one occasion, workers were even said to have thanked General Denikin for liberating them from the "Bolshevist Yoke"[451]). The committee made it appear that the White movement stood for democratic values: freedom; equal rights of all classes, genders and nationalities; universal suffrage rights; and mutual respect for cultures, identities and languages. The White Governments were portrayed as liberal and democratic: one bulletin quoted a proclamation, signed by Denikin in October 1919, stating that:

> the organisation of the territories of South Russia will be based upon the principles of self-government and decentralisation, the local peculiarities being necessarily respected. While preserving Russian as the language of the State throughout all Russia, I consider inadmissible and forbid all persecution of the Little Russian language…

As for the Bolsheviks, the committee used different language to talk about them as exploiters, abusers, German agents and saboteurs. It gave the impression that the Bolsheviks had no internal support, and caused famine and terror across Russia. The Bolshevik regime was also portrayed as unstable, and was soon likely to be crushed.

[449] Bulletins of the Russian Liberation Committee. 3 January 1920 (N45). Luka Lavrent'evich Bysh was one of the members of the Kuban Rada and later the head of the Kuban government. A proponent of federalism, he supported the idea of autonomous Kuban – much to the displeasure of General Denikin. See: Andrei Zaĭtsev, 'Kubanskoe Kraevoe Pravitel′stvo v Gody Revoliutsii i Grazhdanskoĭ Voĭny Na Kubani v 1917–1920.', in Andrei Zaĭtsev, ed. *Istochnik: Protokoly Zasedaniĭ Kubanskogo Kraevogo Pravitel'stva: 1917–1920*, vol. 1 (Krasnodar: Biblioteka Kubanskogo kraia, 2008), pp. 7–14.
[450] Bulletins of the Russian Liberation Committee. 3 January 1920 (N45).
[451] Bulletins of the Russian Liberation Committee. 18 August 1919 (N26) and 18 October 1919 (N35).

In addition, the Russian Liberation Committee relied on zemstvo circles for information: in particular, about the life of Russian refugees in newly independent countries. In pre-revolutionary Russia, zemstvos were the main origin of civil society, representing local self-governance. Evidently, the existence of a civil society was closely associated with liberal development, which the zemstvos represented. The main role associated with zemstvos during the Great War was medical aid and hunger relief. At the same time, zemstvos continued to play their role in local government representation, and other roles they had adopted before the war. In the aftermath of the October Revolution, the All-Russian Union of Zemstvos continued its work abroad, aiding Russian Refugees. *The New Russia*, a journal published by the Russian Liberation Committee, reported on their efforts, as well as on poor conditions and shortages of basic supplies of food and clothing for Russians. The situation was especially grave in Constantinople, which accommodated the majority of the Russian refugees. Nevertheless, *The New Russia* focused on communities of Estonia and Finland. The zemstvo report described the plight of the sick in Estonia, as well as the general hardship of refugees' life across the region, including Finland.

The issue of Russian minorities in Finland and Estonia was further complicated by the presence not only of refugees, but also the army of the north-western front and their families. The journal included them in its discussion of the issue, and pointed out the restrictive policies of Estonians and Finns towards Russians, preventing the latter from gaining employment and thus allowing them few means to survive, relying entirely on aid.[452] The governments of Finland and Estonia, in their turn, were of course worried about both Bolshevist and nationalist tendencies among the Russians. The issue of nationalistic Russians made the Finnish population hostile to Russian refugees. Combined with newly obtained independence, the rise of Finnish nationalism and the memory of Russian occupation, this was understandably a cause of the Finnish-Russian conflict. The main Swedish-language newspaper in Finland, *Hufvudstadsbladet*, issued an article suggesting that "Russian immigrants who live in Allied states are doing

[452] 'Tragedy of the Russian Refugees', *The New Russia*, 8 April 1920, pp. 317–318. Bakhmeteff Archive, Columbia University, Tyrkova-Williams Papers, Box 28.

everything they can to make our [Finnish] people distrust those who work to Restore Russia". It was concerned about the claims by the Russian Political Conference at the Peace Conference, that among all "bordering states" only Poland deserved to be recognised as an independent state.[453] The existence of the North-Western White Front since 1919 further complicated the position of Russians in Finland. The next chapter will examine the North-Western Provisional Government and its uneasy relationship with Estonians and Finns, who were concerned about their national security. However, the Russian community abroad tried to attract foreign allies' attention to the issue of ill-treatment of Russians, and the allegedly deprived conditions in which they had to live.

The national question was also addressed by prominent members of the Liberation Committee. Paul Miliukov wrote extensively on the matters of newly emerging states on Russia's borderland. In April of 1920 he devoted a series of articles to this issue, titled "Balkanization of Russia." A long piece, divided into three consecutive publications, discussed the issues that were arising for the newly independent states. Miliukov described "Balkanization" as:

> Creating new and artificial petty imperialisms, directly starting endless wars, entering unnatural and momentary groups of alliances and practically serving as petty change for the conflicting ambitions of great expanding powers. Estonia is now in an open conflict with Latvia; Lithuania prepares for a desperate fight against Polish claims; Georgia and Azerbaijan expand over Armenian lands, not to mention the more serious violations of national rights of defenceless Russia by Finland, Poland and Romania.

Therefore, according to the leader of the Russian Constitutional Democrats, the rise of small independent states that claimed rights to national self-determination was leading to instability in the region, hinting at a similar situation to that in the Balkans, where nation-states were fighting over contested territories.

[453] 'Finnish papers on the new policies towards Russians'. Bakhmeteff Archive, Columbia University, Miliukov Papers, Box 16.

Miliukov also implied that Russia was a victim of this instability, since the smaller nation-states took advantage of its weakened position. It became clear that "victimisation of Russia" was developing as one of the central arguments of the liberal agenda abroad. Russia was continuously portrayed as the victim of Germans, of the Bolsheviks, and of national minorities who were all trying to undermine it at the same time.

Miliukov further developed his argument, suggesting that the emergence of nation-states in the Russian imperial borderlands was "undemocratic" and "unnatural":

> All this is an unavoidable result of forcible dismemberment of a national organism which grew up in a process of natural expansion over the great eastern European plain in the dark centuries when no national consciousness was awakened in smaller ethnographic units…. To denounce that stage of peaceful amalgamation of races would be equivalent to a useless attempt at remaking history. I know that the recent quasi-'democratic' formula of 'disannexations' pretends to be inversely applied far back into the past. However, I also know that a more genuine democratic doctrine, more consistent with the facts of long historical development, sees an undisputable sign of progress in the apparition of larger political units bound to coalesce, in a future not far remote, into a peaceful society of nations.

As is clear from this introductory paragraph, Russian expansion was natural for Miliukov. This is really a reflection of the wider belief within the Kadet party that nations were divided into Rulers and Ruled, by the natural order of things. Miliukov then argued that throughout the centuries, Russia had been peacefully colonising neighbouring nationalities, while the expansion of the Russian state helped to promote national consciousness in the borderlands. Among more recent Russian territorial acquisitions, nationalities joined the Russian Empire voluntarily, "in order to avoid more oppressive submission" the only exception according to Miliukov was Poland, which was the only nationally independent

state that had been forcibly destroyed. Real national awakening, in Miliukov's opinion, only started in 1905, and the Constitutional Democratic party had addressed all the real needs of national minorities in its programme of 1906.

Another interesting aspect of Miliukov's article is that he compared Russian expansion to that of Turkey and Austro-Hungary. This is relatively rare in the writings of this period. Mostly, Russian liberals did not seem to treat the rise of nation-states in the aftermath of the First World War as a triumph of liberalism, since it posed uncomfortable questions for the future of Russia's own national minorities. Miliukov, however, defined the emergence of Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Poland as the "liberation of forcibly annexed oppressed nationalities from a foreign yoke". He suggested that national minorities in Austro-Hungary were more oppressed than in Russia:

> … not even at the darkest intervals of triumphing nationalist policy in Russia, neither the system nor the results of "Russianisation" could be compared to "Madjarisation" in Hungary. […] The only method – if it can be called a "method" – of effective Russianisation was by the process of peaceful colonisation.

In the second part of his article, Miliukov suggested that every nation in Russia, with the exception of Poland, came under the Russian governance "voluntarily, in order to avoid some other, more oppressive, submission". The message of "Balkanization of Russia" was similar to other Kadets' work on national minorities, in terms of arguing for the unsustainability of the newly emerged states; however, the focus of Miluikov's writing was not a lack of popular support for the new states. Instead, he actually recognised these nation-states as independent agents, acting in their own national interest. Moreover, he even recognised the existence of national movements among minorities before the First World War, but argued that the Kadet party was ready to address them. He reiterated the pre-revolutionary Kadet idea of prioritising universal rights and

freedoms above national questions, since those rights were supposed to make national minorities equal to ethnic Russians.[454]

London, of course, was only one of the European capitals with a large diaspora of Russian émigrés. Paris, Berlin, Constantinople and others also had Russian communities, with a wide variety of 'White' journals and newspapers. The distinctiveness of *The New Russia* is that it catered for the British audience, rather than the Russian émigrés in Great Britain. Most Russian publications elsewhere were in Russian and were circulated within the Russian communities. Why was it so important for the Russian Liberation Committee to tell the British readers about their position? There are several ways in which Britain stood out as an ally for the Russian liberals, as opposed to other Entente members. One of the most convincing explanations is that by 1918, Britain was more involved in the Russian Civil War than any other Entente country.[455] Military assistance in the anti-Bolshevik struggle was one of the key factors for the Russian liberals in Britain, who took it upon themselves to convince the British that overthrowing Bolshevism was a necessity, not just for Russia, but for the stability of all of Europe.

Secondly, Britain held a special place in Russian liberals' political beliefs. As Chapters 1 and 2 have demonstrated, already before the revolution, Russian Kadets admired the British political system and were hoping to attempt it in Russia. The Russian Liberation Committee aimed to influence the British public as well as the ministers, and aid the anti-Bolshevik struggle. They tried to react to British policies towards Russia, and, where possible, shape them.[456] Anglophiles among the Kadets were arguably relatively prominent in Britain when in came to Russian matters, and could influence the policies towards Russia.[457] Konstantin Nabokov (brother of Vladimir Nabokov, one of the founders of the Kadet party), who worked in the Russian Embassy in Great Britain, thought that during World War

[454] 'Balkanization of Russia – II', *The New Russia*, 8 April 1920. Bakhmeteff Archive, Columbia University, Tyrkowa-Willliams papers, Box 28.
[455] Richard Ullman, *Anglo-Soviet Relations, 1917–1921, Volume 1: Intervention and the War.*, vol. 1 (Princeton, 1961).
[456] Charlotte Alston, "The Work of the Russian Liberation Committee in London, 1919–1924", *Slavonica* 14, 1 (2008), p. 7.
[457] Olga Kaznina, *Russkie v Anglii. Russkaia Ėmigratsiia v Kontekste Russko-Angliĭskikh Literaturnykh Sviazeĭ v Pervoĭ Polovine XXv.* (Moscow: Nasledie, 1997).

I, Russophiles were widespread in Britain, and the British public in general was very interested in Russian affairs.[458] The importance of influencing the Entente members was recognised by Russian Whites across the world. Boris Bakhmeteff wrote to Ekaterina Kuskova that achieving favourable policies through influential groups in England was the most important task in the international sphere, even more so than in the United States.[459] Ekaterina Kuskova was one of the founders of the Union of Liberation, the predecessor of the Kadet party, although she was on the left wing of Russian liberal traditions. It is no coincidence that Bakhmeteff put so much emphasis on the importance of the British in Russian affairs. On the basis of advice from Russian émigrés in Britain, for instance, the British Foreign Office expected that once the White movement reached Moscow, it would reconvene the Constituent Assembly of 1917 until a new one could be re-elected, free local and general elections were permitted, and the new government would stand for civil and religious liberty and equality. Russian liberal émigrés in Great Britain gave the impression that they were prepared to recognise the independence of Finland and Poland, and that the fate of other countries would be discussed at the League of Nations.[460]

Unfortunately for the Whites, however, the picture drawn by the bulletins of the Russian Liberation Committee was far from reality. The White Governments were essentially authoritarian military regimes, and justified authoritarianism as a necessity in light of the civil war. Another important factor that caused the Kadets to move further away from the liberal agenda was the widespread understanding among the Whites that Russia needed a strong centralised state in order to re-establish order. Military regimes were formed throughout the White regions. At the Yassy Conference, most members of the Russian delegation supported the idea of military dictatorship and were merely discussing the ideal candidate. Milukov argued that dictatorship already existed in Russia at the time of the conference, and the question was not whether to accept

[458] Konstantin Nabokov, *Ispytaniia Diplomata* (Stockholm: Severnye ogni, 1921), p. 111.
[459] 'Letter from Boris Bakhmeteff', 3 October 1923. Bakhmeteff Archive, Columbia University, Kuskova Ekaterina Dmitrievna papers, Box 4.
[460] Foreign Office, 28 May 1919. Bakhmeteff Archive, Columbia University, Tyrkowa-Williams Papers, Box 27.

this form of government, but which one of the existing dictatorships to choose. According to him, the Volunteer Army represented the "highest degree of dictatorship". Miliukov went on to argue that during the civil war, following the examples of coalition government would open up a democratic opportunity and, as a result, cause another failure. Instead, he defended the idea of aiming for a strong centralised state.[461]

Notably, there was some feedback to *The New Russia*, though it was limited. One of the journal's subscribers wrote a letter to the editors in May of 1920, asking to cancel his subscription. As the reader explained, although he remained a strong proponent of the anti-Bolshevik struggle, he decided that such a publication as *The New Russia* could not help the White cause, because it "devotes too much space to condemnation of other nations and individuals". The writer also criticised the journal's constant attacks on England and Lloyd George, which he found unfair, since "England has done more for Russia than any other of the Allies …". Lastly, the attacks on Poland seemed to the reader "equally out of taste".[462] From the Kadets' point of view, the position of Russia on nationalities remained had unchanged since the pre-October 1917 period, since they regarded the Bolshevik Government as a temporary misfortune; and once it was overthrown, Russia would erase this memory and return to the state of being among the victors of World War I, under the Provisional Government that was working towards the Constituent Assembly. They realised that Russia would need a period of strong centralised government for some time, but refused to acknowledge that national minorities were undergoing a period of rapid development themselves; and this "post-Bolshevist set-back" that they envisioned for Russia would not benefit the newly independent states.

This chapter has explored the life of Russian liberals abroad and focused on their outlook on the issue of national minorities. It examined the work that Russian liberals put into their relations with the Allies. Liberals thought that their political beliefs would put them in an ideal position to represent White Russia, since they

[461] 'Letters to Chebyshev'. GARF F. P5955, Op .1, D. 8, p. 12.
[462] 'Anonymous correspondence'. Bakhmeteff Archive, Columbia University, Miliukov Papers, Box 6.

shared their values with their Western colleagues. As this chapter has demonstrated, the rhetoric of Russian liberals was becoming increasingly conservative, especially in relation to nationalities policies. At the same time, it is clear that the Kadets kept emphasising the importance of individual civil rights in conversation with their Western colleagues, rather than the rights of specific nations. Throughout the preparations for the Paris Peace Conference, as well as during its course, Russian liberals in emigration worked hard to create an image of a future reformed Russia, although they justified a short-term military dictatorship as a necessity to overthrow the Bolsheviks and re-establish order. Their ideas of reinstating the Constituent Assembly, free elections, and equal rights for citizens, were supposed to send a message to the Allies that post-Bolshevik Russia would be a strong ally that shared the values of Entente members. The emphasis on individual freedoms took some attention away from the national rights, although it remained a concern for the émigrés. Hoping that the Paris Peace Conference would recognise old Russian borders, with exception of Poland and Finland, liberals nevertheless started to separately consider the national interests of some nations on the Russian borders. Although they inevitably concluded that those nations would benefit from being a part of Russia on some basis of regional autonomy, the degree of autonomy would be subject to future negotiations on a case-by-case basis. In general, Russian liberals were slowly advancing their position regarding national minorities. Circumstances were pushing them to consider revising their policies towards nationalities that were demanding full independence from Russia. In practice, however, the Kadets had very limited tools to work on their nationality policies, and they kept returning to prioritising individuals' rights over those of national minorities.

While the Allies were aware that many forces among the Whites were competing for power in Russia, liberal émigrés worked hard to show some degree of unity among the Whites, assuring the Allies that once the civil war was over, the rival forces would come to an agreement. In practice, of course, the diversity of the Russian White movement, which included everyone from the far right to socialists, inevitably raised the issue of authority, as well as disagreements on the course of action. Differences were prominent not only among various political

parties, but also within liberal groups, particularly in the Kadet party. These disagreements, and their impact on liberals' views towards the end of the civil war, will be the subject of the next chapter.

Chapter 6

Disagreements among liberal émigrés

Challenges faced by the Russian émigré community

The Kadets, as well as other White Russian émigrés, were facing a wide range of challenges in emigration, both personal and political. For most of them, their standard of living decreased substantially compared to those in Russia. Although they still had considerably greater means than émigrés from lower social classes, the difficulties of their daily lives were exacerbated by frequent relocations and trying to stay in contact with their colleagues, friends and family. One of the émigrés, the monarchist Count Mikhail Mikhailovich Perovsky-Petrovo-Solovovo, described the life of Russian aristocracy abroad:

> Thousands of noble families have been […] compelled to flee to countries abroad, where they are now struggling for existence and trying hard and sometimes against overpowering odds to create for themselves a new and decent life – so different, of course, from that which they formerly enjoyed and possibly did not always sufficiently appreciate.[463]

Another issue that Russian émigrés faced was, inevitably, their limitations to travel as citizens of Russia. Nansen passports improved the situation, when they were introduced in 1922, but before then, Russian liberal émigrés shared their own travel experiences and places where border-crossing would be easier. Vinaver wrote to Pertunkevich with the hope of leaving Marseille by ship, where no formalities were necessary other than a border police stamp.[464] Attempts to travel back to Russia from Europe, as well as moving across the European continent, were a constant concern for Russian émigrés. Politically, the Kadet party became not just dispersed, but also short of funds and unable to organise party meetings as

[463] Perovsky-Petrovo-Solovovo. Article giving experience of aristocratic Russian refugees, p. 1. The New York Public Library. Breshkovsky-Dietrich Papers. ZZ-10485.
[464] 'Letter to Ivan Petrunkevich', 30 September 1919. Bakhmeteff Archive, Columbia University, Vinanver papers, Box 1.

before. Claiming political asylum was challenging for Russian refugees, even if they came from the upper classes. British and French authorities, for instance, accused each other of not accepting enough refugees from Russia, especially after the fall of the Crimean Government. Great Britain, which had been widely tolerant of refugees in the nineteenth century, due to both economic growth and the idealisation of Victorian liberalism that respected the right to political asylum, became very restrictive in its immigration policies in the twentieth century.[465] Elina Multanen convincingly demonstrated the British authorities' restrictiveness towards admitting Russian refugees after the October Revolution, despite supporting the anti-Bolshevik struggle. In 1917, the Home Secretary, Sir George Cave, argued to the Foreign Office that a likely influx of refugees from Russia would not yield any economic benefit for Great Britain and, on the contrary, would only deplete the country's resources. As a result, British visas were not given to Russian refugees unless in exceptional circumstances, which usually meant personal petitions considered on a case-by-case basis. Because of such restrictive British policies, exceptions were almost uniquely made for upper-class Russians with connections to members of the British government, who would plead not just on their own behalf, but also for their friends, relatives and servants.[466]

Historiography of the Russian émigrés

Scholars have written extensively on the life of Russian communities across Europe and Asia.[467] The historiography of this period is largely focused on the lifestyle, culture, religion, and education in Russian émigré communities.[468] The

[465] Elina Multanen, "British Policy towards Russian Refugees in the Aftermath of the Bolshevik Revolution", *Revolutionary Russia* 12, 1 (1999), pp. 45–46.
[466] Ibid., pp. 52–53, 57.
[467] For example: Thomas Riha, 'Russian Émigré Scholars in Prague after World War I', *Slavic and East European Journal* 16, no. 3 (1958), pp.22–26; Catherine Gousseff, *Russkaia Ėmigratsiia vo Frantsii: Sotsial'naia Istoriia 1920–1939 Gody* (Moscow: Novoe literaturnoe obozrenie, 2014). On the Russian diaspora in different European locations: Grigoriĭ Starodubtsev, 'Stanovlenie Russkoĭ Nauchnoi Mezhdunarodno-Pravovoi Diaspory v Berline (20-e Gg. XX Stoletiia)', *Vestnik Rossiiskogo Universiteta Druzhby Narodov. Seriia: Iuridicheskie Nauki* 4 (2014): 337–46.
[468] For example, Eneeva, Kolosova and Mironova (Natalia Eneeva, et. al., *Problemy Istorii Russkogo Zarubezh'ia: Materialy I Issledovaniia* (Moscow: Nauka, 2005) edited a three-volume book on Russian emigration focusing on the church, Russian organisations, and the culture and ideology of Russian émigrés. Peter Holquist, 'Dilemmas of a Progressive Administrator: Baron Boris Nolde'.) is one of the very few scholars who focuses specifically on Nolde's attitude to the nationalities question, arguing that his views became more conservative in the aftermath of the revolution. Once a prominent supporter of the federal model of the Russian state, Nolde suggested a model of "individual nationalism" instead of territorial-based federation in 1917.

vast amount of literature dedicated to the Russian émigrés has largely focused on their lifestyle and challenges they faced abroad. As Catherine Gousseff argued, the history of Russian emigration was initially written by the émigrés themselves.[469] This has heavily influenced the research in this area. For instance, scholarship that focuses on settlements of Russians abroad and their adaption to the new conditions is often based on the memoirs or reflections of émigrés.[470] As a result, earlier accounts of their impact and engagement with local communities were more positive: for example, Thomas Riha noted that some liberal lawyers and historians successfully worked at the university in Prague, where any student of Russian history could choose to work with Russian émigré scholars, who were leaders in the field.[471]

Thirty years later, this view was contested by Marc Raeff, who believed that Russian émigrés created a distinct diaspora and a unique identity abroad. Raeff's analysis of the lifestyle and culture of the Russian émigrés focused on the nobility.[472] One of Raeff's fundamental arguments was that Russian émigré communities believed that their refugee status was temporary. All of them expected to return home after the civil war. He suggested that Russian scholars failed to engage with local researchers, as they showed little interest in studying local histories, while the rest of the world was not interested in Russia. Although Raeff acknowledged the émigré Russian scholars' contributions to the study of Russian history, the author notes that they were based on materials gathered before leaving the country, and that émigrés were reflecting on the past selectively.[473] This has largely been accepted by scholars of Russian emigration.[474] Russian

[469] Catherine Gousseff, *Russkaia ėmigratsiia vo Frantsii: sotsial'naia istoriia 1920–1939 gody* (Moskva: Novoe literaturnoe obozrenie, 2014).
[470] Misha Glenny and Norman Stone, *The Other Russia* (London: Faber and Faber, 1990).
[471] Riha, 'Russian Émigré Scholars in Prague after World War I', p. 24.
[472] Marc Raeff, *Russia Abroad: A Cultural History of the Russian Emigration, 1919–1939* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), p. 5.
[473] Ibid, p 42-43.
[474] See also: Elim Pivovar, *The Russian Emigration: The Sociohistorical Phenomenon, Its Role and Place in the Cultural and Historical Legacy* (St Petersburg: Aletheia, 2013), Grigoriĭ Starodubtsev, 'Stanovlenie Russkoĭ Nauchnoi Mezhdunarodno-Pravovoi Diaspory v Berline (20-e Gg. XX Stoletiia)'. Starodubtsev noted the activity of Russian legal scholars in Berlin and acknowledged their significant input into the Russian community. The émigrés did not integrate into local communities and largely existed as a separate group, which allowed them to actively publish material and run organisations within the Russian circles. Some of the émigrés to Berlin contributed to the new collection of essays – *Smena Vekh*, the rethinking of *Landmarks*, published before the Revolution.[474]

liberals abroad, like the rest of their compatriots, did not anticipate that the Bolsheviks would win the war, and did not expect to have to remain in exile for the rest of their life. This strong belief in the victory of the Whites, and a feeling that their position was temporary, was the main driving force behind all the Russian liberal émigrés' political and propagandistic work, and the foundation for their efforts in the anti-Bolshevik struggle. Elim Pivovar also noted how politically active the Russian émigré nobility was in the Russian Civil War.[475]

Considering that Russian liberals made up a part of the White movement and did not have a significant independent movement in emigration, they are not often featured as a separate category of analysis in the study of Russian emigration. Vandalkovskaia studied ideas that developed among the Russian emigrants. In her analysis of liberal thought, she also highlighted striking disagreements among liberals, and reflections on the Russian parliament experience and the revolutions.[476] An alternative approach to the study of Russian émigrés was to focus on the Russian print press abroad. Thus, Julitta Suomela and Tatiana Krasnova both analysed Russian émigré newspapers' reflections on world events.[477] In fact, analysis of the activity of Russian émigrés abroad proved to be a useful resource in pointing to individuals or areas in which ideas about Russia's future were still discussed. Subsequently, liberals became featured as part of the wider émigré diaspora that attempted to collaborate with the White movement from abroad. For instance, Mironova examined the engagement of Old-Regime Russians, who remained abroad, in the anti-Bolshevik resistance and support of Russian refugees. Although they had a severe lack of funds, diplomats managed to provide significant monetary relief for Russians who had fled territories occupied by the Red Army, and could establish local Russian communities and cooperate

[475] Elim Pivovar. *The Russian Emigration: The Sociohistorical Phenomenon, Its Role and Place in the Cultural and Historical Legacy* (Sankt-Peterburg: Aletheia, 2013).
[476] Margarita Vandalkovskaia, *Istoricheskaia Mysl' Russkoĭ Migratsii: 20–30-e Gg. XX v* (Moscow: Institut Rossiiskoi Istorii RAN, 2009).
[477] Julitta Suomela, *Zarubezhnaia Rossiia: Ideiino-Politicheskie Vzgliady Russkoii Ėmigratsii Na Stranitsakh Russkoii Evropeiiskoii Pressy v 1918–1940 Gg* (St Petersburg: Kolo, 2004). Tatiana Krasnova, *Drugoĭ Golos: Analiz Gazetnogo Diskursa Russkogo Zarubezh'ia 1917–1920 (22) Gg* (St Petersburg: Severnaia Zvezda, 2011).

with local governments, directing the flow of refugees.[478] As for the scholarship on Russian liberals abroad specifically, Valentin Shelokhaev wrote probably the fullest account of the history of the Russian Constitutional Democratic Party.[479] In his book on the Kadet party in Russia and in emigration, Shelokhaev focused on the overarching issues that the party faced in Russia and in exile. His work also focused on the anti-Bolshevik struggle and the wider party programme in the early 1920s. Shelokhaev did not, however, devote much attention to the Kadets' opinion on the nationalities question. In addition, Shelokhaev relied uniquely on Russian sources in his work: the Minutes of the Party's Central Committee Meetings were the dominant source for his chapters on the Russian Kadets in emigration.

While not connected to the issue of national minorities, the lifestyle of Russian liberal émigrés, as well as the overall change in political outlook, inevitably affected the Kadets' position on the nationalities issue and the amount of attention they could devote to this matter, given the other priorities. Although the subject of Russian borderlands and the rights of non-Russian nationalities had been at the forefront of the Kadets' discussion, both internally and in the international arena before the February Revolution – and even between the February and October Revolutions – the situation changed after October 1917. All the private as well as logistical and financial issues inevitably affected the Kadets' policies. The issue of national minorities and Russia's borderlands became a relatively minor point in larger issues of the anti-Bolshevik struggle and the challenges of life abroad. These other challenges were meticulously documented by the Kadets themselves, and later analysed by scholars of Russian émigrés and of the Russian Whites more broadly. Prior to the October Revolution, national minorities were an inextricable part of liberal thinkers' agenda when discussing the future of Russia. While the subject of nationalities in Russia was much discussed, the discourse changed throughout the Russian Civil War. Miliukov started to speak more about respect for other nationalities and the route to self-determination and independence, than he had at the start of the civil war. As

[478] Elena Mironova, "Diplomaticheskoe vedomstvo antibol′shevistskoĭ Rossii"; Mironova, "Obzor osnovnykh napravlenii deiatel′nosti russkikh predstavit′el′stv v izgnanii", in: Eneeva, Kolosova, and Mironova, *Problemy Istorii Russkogo Zarubezh'ia: Materialy I Issledovaniia*.
[479] Valentin Shelokhaev, *Konstitutsionno-demokraticheskaia partiia v Rossii i ėmigratsii* (Moskva: ROSSPEN, 2015).

Russian Whites had failed to devise a coherent strategy and failed in their military struggle against the Bolsheviks, while the national minorities' campaign for independence succeeded, liberals turned their efforts to discussing their future strategies. The question of nationalities now mattered much less than in previous years. Questions of the rights of self-determination were analysed mostly in retrospect, as in the case of Miliukov, when he looked back at the revolutionary events in Russia. When debating the future strategy for liberals after 1921, the Kadets were more cautious about making any promises regarding a future post-Bolshevik Russia, and the question of how to address the issue of different nationalities did not extend beyond hopes that they would want to be closely linked to a strong and democratic Russia, for mutual economic and security benefits.

The year 1920 was unsettling for Russian liberals, as well as for others in the White movement. The Paris Peace Conference concluded in late January, without any official universal recognition of any Russian White Government, and without accepting White Russia's proposal on the non-Russian nationalities, some of which had successfully formed independent states. The last hope was the remaining White Army under General Vrangel in Crimea, but it was defeated in November 1920, with the remaining soldiers fleeing from Bolshevik Russia. In addition, the Allies withdrew their support from Russia, much to the liberals' discontent, and a wider sense of betrayal among anti-Bolshevik Russians. The year ended with a growing number of Russian émigrés, and a defeat that for some signified the end of a period of open combat with the Bolsheviks.

This chapter will focus on internal issues and dilemmas that Russian liberals faced in emigration. The life of the Kadet party abroad was completely different from their experience in Russia, and disagreements that had always existed between right- and left-wing party members became exacerbated in exile. Although, as the previous chapter demonstrated, the Kadets tried to present a united front for the Allies, as the civil war progressed, the members had more and more disputes on their future policies. The Paris Peace Conference turned out to be a false dawn for Russian liberals. The members of the conference did not recognise the White government, nor did they rule on Russia's borderlands in the manner that the liberals had hoped for. As a result, the same issues of authority

and degree of autonomy for nationalities were carried into the 1920s, while the prospects of successfully defeating the Bolsheviks were rapidly vanishing. In this environment, Russian liberals focused on their strategy on dealing with the Bolsheviks, while the issue of nationalities and Russian borderlands became less prominent, as liberals were seeking new strategies in the civil war. In some cases, the issue was considered as a tool in the anti-Bolshevik struggle.

It is important to reflect on the environment in which Russian liberal émigrés operated. These distinguished members of the old Russian intelligentsia, some of whom were university professors or Duma members, fled abroad with their families from the Bolshevist threat, along with several million other Russians. They made up what Marc Raeff labelled as the first wave of Russian emigration.[480] Generally, life for Russian liberals abroad took different turns. Some, such as Baron Boris Nol'de, continued their academic career, while others, like Tyrkowa-Williams and Miliukov, focused on publishing. What united Russian White emigrants in general, including the proponents of liberalism, was their close connections to the Russian community abroad. Russian émigrés adopted a rather isolated lifestyle. Vladimir Nabokov wrote that in fifteen years of residing in Germany, he "did not get to know a single German person closely, did not read a single German newspaper or a book, and did not feel in any way disadvantaged by not knowing the German language".[481] The reasons for this isolationism lay in both the Russian and local communities.

On the one hand, the huge number of people who emigrated meant that they could survive within their own fairly large communities, instead of having to undergo socialisation and culturalisation within local societies. Some emigrants, like Nabokov, simply lacked linguistic knowledge, whereas it was genuinely hard for others to rebuild a successful career abroad. Academia is one example of an area where many former Russian professors failed to fulfil themselves. Tsepilova pointed out that many Russian scholars failed to adapt to new conditions, since their research, mainly Russia-focused, was of little interest to European academic

[480] Marc Raeff, *Russia Abroad: A Cultural History of the Russian Emigration, 1919–1939*, p. 4.
[481] Vladimir Nabokov, *Drugie berega. Sobranie sochinenij,* Vol. 4 (Moscow: Pravda, 1990, p. 282).

communities.[482] Marc Raeff agreed that Russian publications that made no impact were based on materials collected before emigration.[483] Of course, the above does not take into account the wider mass of Russian émigrés with a non-political background who fled the country in the aftermath of October 1917, in search of a relatively safe and stable life.[484] Nevertheless, the Russian liberal community abroad was facing the same challenges as everyone else. In addition, European societies were not very welcoming to the Russian refugees. Europe's resources were scarce after the war, and the influx of Russians further complicated the position of disrupted European cities and communities.

Publishing, another area of work available for political émigrés, was also a key factor that kept the Russian community very close-knit and isolated. A substantial number of Russian journals and newspapers appeared in Europe; the biggest were *Roul', Nakanune* (both published in Berlin) and *Parizhskie Novosti* (published in Paris) – all of which were in Russian.[485]

Constitutional Democrats: political activity in emigration, and polarisation of the party

While the members of the émigré community mentioned in this chapter were lucky and successful enough to be employed, political work was the area that really drove them, and was why they considered their position abroad to be so important for Russia. Political work as such, however, had drastically declined abroad. For instance, few members of the Constitutional Democratic party emigrated in 1917: the majority stayed in Russia and supported different White Governments before emigrating in 1919–1920, when the White Army suffered its most dramatic losses. Even then, however, the numbers were still very modest. For instance, in Paris,

[482] Vera Tsepilova, 'Nekotorye Problemy Izucheniia Istoricheskoĭ Mysli Russkogo Zarubezh′ia 1920–1930- Godov', *Voprosy Istorii* 1 (2007), pp. 155–66.
[483] Raeff, *Russia Abroad*, p. 70.
[484] Estimates on the number of Russians abroad by 1923 range from 750 thousand to 2.5 million people, according to the League of Nations and the Red Cross respectively. For more detailed numbers see: Irina Sabennikova et. al., *Zarubezhnaia Rossiia: Organizatsii Rossiĭskoĭ Ėmigratsii 1917–1939: Materialy k Mezharkhivnomu Spravochniku* (Moscow: Direct Media, 2017), pp. 14–15.
[485] There is a vast Russian scholarship on the subject of the Russian émigré press. For example: Julitta Suomela, *Zarubezhnaia Rossiia: Ideiino-politicheskie Vzgliady Russkoii ėmigratsii na Stranitsakh Russkoii Evropeiiskoii Pressy v 1918–1940 gg.* (Sankt-Peterburg: Kolo, 2004); Tatiana Krasnova, *Drugoĭ golos: analiz gazetnogo diskursa Russkogo Zarubezh'ia 1917–1920 (22) gg.* (Sankt-Peterburg: Severnaia Zvezda, 2011).

which hosted around 100,000 Russian emigrants, the Kadet party numbered only 20 members in the beginning, which later expanded to 40–50 members. This is compared to the 70,000 members and over 380 organisations across Russia, which the Kadets had in April 1917.[486] Other countries had even smaller groups: Kadets formed their parties in Berlin, Constantinople, Sofia, London, Belgrade and in Finland. Ever since the party had been made illegal in Russia by the Bolsheviks, it had ceased to exist as one coherent unit and was referred to as groups in emigration. A lack of funds, difficulties in communication, as well as the changed political atmosphere, prevented the party from operating as usual. This does not mean, however, that the Kadets abandoned their work or their ideas; rather, they reshaped themselves under the new conditions.

Most Kadets were determined to hold on to their party affiliation and maintain their 'liberal' title. Shelokhaev argued that the Kadets managed to survive in emigration as a party for over ten years because they still shared the fundamental liberal ideas of the rights and freedoms of individuals, the concept of civil society, the rule of law, and the right to private property.[487] Loyalty to the party and a desire to sustain the previous achievements were particularly seen in the early stages of emigration. Shelokhaev broadly classified the period of May 1920 to July 1921 as the time when the party worked most intensively to organise groups in different countries and tried to maintain a close connection. Miliukov was one of the key proponents of party unity abroad. Despite his several shifts in loyalties in internal and foreign policies, he nevertheless continued to press for the importance of the Kadet party as a political body abroad. Paul Miliukov was hoping that the Kadets' liberal views would help them serve as a bridge between the right and left, and thus maintain more influence and gain support on both sides.

The Kadets as a party faced many challenges, which inevitably affected their policies during emigration. After the October Revolution, once the Soviet of People's Commissars proclaimed the Kadets "the party of enemies of the People" and began to prosecute its leaders, they were forced to flee from Moscow and St Petersburg to Provisional White Governments or abroad, and the very nature of

[486] Vladimir Kuvshinov, *Kadety v Rossii i za rubezhom (1905–1943 gg.).* Moskva: Univ. gumanitar. litseĭ, 1997, p. 116.
[487] Valentin Shelokhaev, *Konstitutsionno-demokraticheskaia partiia v Rossii i ėmigratsii*, p. 700.

the party began to change. Following the emigration of its most prominent members, the party lost most of its rank and file. Members of the Central Committee were settling across Europe, trying to re-form units of the party they had left behind. The first Kadet leaders to go abroad were the Russian post-February officials of the Provisional Government – mostly diplomats, emissaries or journalists. This inevitably restrained the Kadets and affected their political judgements, making some members divert quite significantly from the party line agreed upon in 1917. Miliukov's plan to use the party's centrist position between socialists and conservatives did not work to the Kadets' advantage, as the party became polarised.

While the issue of national minorities persisted in some discussions and publications of the Kadets abroad, mostly their attention was focused on two major issues: the struggle against Bolshevism, and the future political organisation of Russia after the Bolshevik regime failed. The discussion of the borderlands of future Russia, as well as creating a place for all nationalities, fell within this much broader rhetoric. Operating under the White movement umbrella restrained the Kadets, forcing them to collaborate with a number of political positions, including traditionalist-conservative, liberal, and moderate-socialist.[488] This choice between adjusting to the new political circumstances, or acknowledging and preserving their past, became the main dichotomy for Russia's main liberal party in the coming years, and grew only more exacerbated in the aftermath of the Bolshevik Revolution. Some Russian liberal émigrés were strong proponents of unity in Russian coalitions. The Russian Foreign Convention of 1926, organised by Petr Stuve's initiative, would also refer to "foreign Russia" as a uniform community and a "conscious part of Great Russia".[489] In practice, however, in attempts to overlook the differences, new societies and organisations were being established abroad as well as within Russia. A wide range of political beliefs within those groups further undermined the meaning of party loyalty. As a result, the

[488] Valentin Shelokhaev, "Osnovnye techeniia politicheskoĭ mysli v Russkom Zarubezh′e v 1920-e gg". In: V. Cherniaev, *Zarubezhnaia Rossiia 1917–1939*, Vol. 2 (St Petersburg: Liki Rossii, 2003), p. 22.
[489] TSentral′nyĭ Organizatsionnyĭ Kommitet po sozyvu Rossiĭskogo Zarubezhnogo S'ezda. Tezisy doklada: "Osnovnye cherty budushchago khoziaĭstvennago ustroĭstva Rossii". Bakhmeteff Archive, Columbia University, Rozhdestvenskii papers, Box 2.

Constitutional Democrats failed to maintain their unity: the party itself became very polarised, rather than bringing others together.

While the Kadets tried to represent a united front for the Allies, and focused on goals of the White Government that other members of the movement agreed on, in practice the Kadets were relatively alienated from other groups in the White movement. In search of a more suitable position and direction for the party, it created further factions, which ultimately led to the dissolution of the Constitutional Democrats. During this period, the nationalities question featured in the Kadets' discussions only marginally. Some members of the groups considered it a necessary element of the party's future strategy, but the general focus of the group was reconsidering the results of the civil war and using their conclusions to move forward.

One of the earliest disagreements was prompted by Miliukov's decision to try to collaborate with the Germans instead of the Allies in 1918. For most part, throughout the First World War and the civil war, Russian liberals emphasised the importance of staying loyal to the Allies. In the midst of this rhetoric, a decision to cooperate with the Germans, supported by some Kadets – including Miliukov himself – seemed rather surprising. The idea of relying on help from the Germans had in fact originated in Ukraine, partly because of strong Ukrainian nationalism. Once the Bolsheviks took over Moscow and Petrograd, and the Whites had organised peripheral governments, defeating the Bolsheviks became the most important task for liberals, as well as for other White forces. In Kiev, national forces were stronger, and in October 1917 a nationalist Rada took over. The Kadets in Kiev had to face the fact that in the anti-Bolshevik struggle they would have to work with Ukrainian nationalists. As Rosenberg concluded, the Kadets had to decide whether separatists were better than the Bolsheviks.[490] In February to April of 1918, Germany and Austro-Hungary occupied Ukrainian territories and disbanded the Ukrainian national Rada. According to Miliukov, Germans had plans to advance into Russia, overthrow the Bolsheviks and, potentially, reinstate

[490] William Rosenberg, *Liberals in the Russian Revolution: The Constitutional Democratic Party, 1917–1921* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1974), p. 303.

the monarchy.[491] Effectively, Russian liberals in Ukraine were faced with a choice between the Bolsheviks and the Germans. For a brief period, the prospect of collaborating with the Germans gave liberals an opportunity to retake both Kiev from nationalists and Petrograd from the Bolsheviks.

This opportunity pushed Miliukov to attempt negotiations with the Germans, and to convince the Central Powers of the same idea that the Whites promoted to the Entente Powers: that the post-Bolshevist Russian government would be based on liberal principles and would bring stability to Europe. In a conversation with Major Haase of the German military, Miliukov described his party's position as more leftist than the national-liberals in Germany, or similar to German national-liberals of the pre-Bismarck period.[492] Haase proceeded to a logical question: "How could you support the Volunteer Army, since they have absolute monarchists, such as Denikin and Markov?"[493] Although Miliukov denied Denikin's and Markov's monarchical views, Haase's question expressed the main concern of foreign states, as well as the internal White movement's struggle: How to align liberals, monarchists, and socialists in the anti-Bolshevik struggle. This move was not supported by most party members, and Miliukov soon abandoned it. Nevertheless, feelings of Germanophilia persisted among some liberal émigrés in the 1920s, especially those who lived in Germany, which became home to a large community of Russian émigrés. The majority of the Kadets, however, called for cooperation with the Entente, rather than with Germany; Astrov, Struve and Shepkin were among the greatest sceptics of the pro-German group. In addition, a less discussed middle position was briefly suggested by Nikolaii Ustrialov, which he called the "free-hands policy" (*politika svobodnykh ruk*). In 1918, Ustrialov became head of the Kaluga Kadet party committee and started to publish a weekly journal, *Nakanune,* where he first discussed his "free-hands policy". He believed that after the Bolsheviks had signed the separatist peace with Germany, a complete pro-Entente position would no longer be viable, since it would require Russia to re-enter the war, which was not possible. In addition, the Allies inevitably

[491] Pavel Miliukov, *Rossiia Na Perelome: Bol'shevistskïi Perïod Russkoĭ Revoliutsïi.* (Paris: Imprimere d'Art Voltaire, 1927), p. 303.
[492] Pavel Miliukov, *Dnevnik Miliukova. 1918–1921* (Moscow: ROSSPEN, 2005), p. 37.
[493] Ibid., p. 38.

considered Russia as one of the losing countries in World War I. Therefore, Ustrialov advised against discarding the Brest-Litovsk peace, but instead proposed redrafting it in a way that would be beneficial for both Germany and Russia.[494] This policy alienated Ustrialov from the Kadet party. In the 1920s, Ustrialov considered himself a member of Smenovekhovtsy, accepted the Soviet Union, and became one of the founders of the National Bolshevist ideology.[495]

A second split within the Kadet party divided those who supported cooperation with socialists in the anti-Bolshevik movement (the left centre) from those who favoured cooperation with monarchists and unions of landowners (the right centre). After Vrangel's defeat in Crimea, the right and left-wing divide became even more acute. By making the defeat of the Whites a matter of time, this fostered stronger disagreements on the future course of action for those determined to resist the Bolsheviks. In 1920, Miliukov presented his speech "What can we do after the Crimean fiasco?" (*Chto delat' posle Krymskoĭ katastrofy?*), where he advised against continuing the internal struggle against the Bolsheviks and against foreign intervention. This view was not shared by many Kadet members, and Miliukov resigned as head of the party. Valentin Shelokhaev argued that the speech marked the final division of the party and ruined any hope for any uniform party action. The Kadet group in Paris, which began as the largest and the most prosperous in emigration, was boycotted by the rest of the party in Berlin, Constantinople, Sofia and elsewhere. Watching events develop in Russia from abroad, the Kadets agreed that Bolshevism was the result of an "incidental revolutionary process" which the Bolsheviks used to their advantage, then brutally suppressed as soon as they had gained power. As a result, liberal groups abroad took Lenin's replacement of War Communism with the New Economic Policy as a sign of the Bolshevik regime's potential end. Elements of a market economy were a clear departure from Bolshevik beliefs, and potentially stimulated the growth of a middle class and petty bourgeoisie, who had been the Kadets' electoral

[494] Nikolai Ustrialov, "Soiuzniki i My", *Nakanune* (1918).
[495] Jane Burbank, *Intelligentsia and Revolution: Russian Views of Bolshevism, 1917–1922* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), pp. 223–224. Oleg Vorobiev, "«V Stalina Nuzhno Streliat′»: Perepiska N.V. Ustrialova i N.A. Tsurikova 1926–1927 Gg.", *Voprosy Istorii* 2 (2000), pp. 136–143.

base in the past. This gave Miliukov and his supporters the idea that the Bolshevik regime would be eventually overthrown from below.

Others opposed any cooperation with the Bolsheviks. Aron Lande, who published under the pseudonym Aleksandr Izgoev, was a right-wing member of the Kadet party who stayed in the Soviet Union until 1922, when he was exiled to Germany. Izgoev was from a non-noble background: his father was a notary. Although he was a member of the Kadets' Central Committee, he claimed not to have had much influence in the party, compared to other CC members. Izgoev was an editor and contributor to several well-known Kadet publications, including *Rech'*, *Russkaia Mysl'*, *Vestnik Partii Narodnoĭ Svobody*, *Nash Vek*, and many others. The party's factions caused by the socialist debate were a signal to Izgoev that the entire existence of the party as whole was compromised. He remembered that almost immediately after the October Revolution, the Kadet party no longer existed in its original form, and the print press became more widely liberal than specifically Kadet.[496] Izgoev was already opposed to collaborating with socialists in 1917, when the Provisional Government was trying to coexist with the Soviets. Since he spent the first post-revolutionary years in Petrograd, being arrested several times before he was exiled, he was not involved in those White Governments where non-Bolshevik socialists' groups collaborated with liberals and conservatives. As a result, he did not make a significant distinction between the Bolsheviks and other socialist groups. As far as he was concerned, collaboration with any socialist elements was a deviation from the Kadet party's ideology. On the eve of the October Revolution, around the time of the Kornilov Revolt, Izgoev spent some time in Estonia.

Interestingly, despite the failure of Miliukov's idea of using the Kadets' centrist position between the right and the left to the party's advantage, it did not go unnoticed. Readers of the Kadets' publications understood the problems of the party, and some even expressed their solidarity with Miliukov's position. In April 1922, Miliukov received a letter from a regular reader of *Poslednie Novosti*, who seemed very supportive of Miliukov's position and sympathised with the problems

[496] Aleksandr Izgoev, "Piat"Let v Sovetskoĭ Rossii", *Arkhiv Russkoĭ Revoliu,tsii* 10 (Berlin: Slowo-Verlag, 1923), pp. 13–14.

that the Kadet leader was facing. The author wrote that Miliukov could do "a lot of good for our beloved Russia"; he even attached a caricature of Miliukov being attacked by both left-wing Bolsheviks and right-wing monarchists.[497]

"Reactionary birds. They are ready to peck out your eyes, one from the right and the other one from the left."

Image Source: Bakhmeteff Archive, Columbia University, Miliukov Papers, Box 6, Unidentified correspondence.

However, the divisions between the right and the left became too vast. They affected the members too deeply, and prevented them from devising a coherent party strategy. As a result, on 14 December 1922, a meeting of the Berlin group of Kadets concluded that the Constitutional Democratic party had ceased to exist in Russia, and, effectively, abroad. In 1922, Izgoev, along with Gessen, argued in favour of dissolving the Kadet party. According to them, the divergence in opinions was irresolvable within a single party; this was exacerbated by the loss of members, and by strategic and logistical difficulties caused by the isolation of groups spread across Europe. The rest of the Kadets in exile opposed the

[497] 'Letter From Evgenii B-Go', 7 April 1922. Bakhmeteff Archive, Columbia University, Miliukov Papers, Box 6.

suggestion to dissolve the party. The period in emigration, and especially after November 1920, was used by many party members as a time to reflect on their political past, and to reconsider themselves as politicians and as a group. They began to debate the revolutionary process, discussing the reasons for the failure of the Provisional Government. The more conservative right-wing Kadets highlighted the difference between the events of February–March and October of 1917. The first revolution brought about a positive liberal change, destroyed autocracy, and put Russia on the road to liberal-democratic reforms. All these positive processes were reversed in October, they believed. Therefore, they credited liberal political circles for the February Revolution, and blamed the Bolsheviks for their coup in the October Revolution. Both causes, however, came from above, and the wider population were not agents of the revolution. This group continued to believe that the people of Russia were incapable of driving political change and needed to be educated, to gain political consciousness before they could participate in political decision-making. They persisted with the idea that in order to restore order, the Bolsheviks had to be overthrown by another force from above; an authoritarian regime was therefore required. This was a position shared by the White movement and other conservative elements within it.

Miliukov, Gessen, and some other Kadets reconsidered their view of the Russian revolutionary process and its consequences. They interpreted the February and October Revolutions as one event, and regarded the revolution in Russia as a single process. They argued that the revolution had put an end to the oppressive Old Regime, as the Russian monarchy had failed to exist in a liberal form. According to them, the revolution originated from below. It was the incoherent decision-making process of the Provisional Government, and its inability to address the most pressing problems of the wider population, that had led to the eruption of events in October. This view of continuity in Russia's revolutionary process emphasised the wider populace as agents of revolution. Centrists and left-wing Kadets, following Miliukov's argument, saw the Bolsheviks as the oppressing force from above, and Russian masses as the counter-Bolshevik revolutionary force from below. This was a clear departure not only from the earlier ideas of recognising the dictatorial government of Kolchak, but even from

Miliukov's earlier reflections on his and his party's impact on the February Revolution – for instance, where he had claimed that his infamous "Stupidity or Treason" speech served as the deciding factor in pushing for the revolution. This approach to the Russian Revolution allowed liberal thinkers to include the Bolsheviks in their image of the revolutionaries as agents, rather than just enemies, and to develop the plan of continuing the revolutionary process from below. Jane Burbank illustrated this party split through contrasting the positions of the two party leaders: Miliukov and Struve. According to her, Miliukov separated Bolsheviks from other socialists, and found it undesirable that other socialist groups were more dedicated to party unity and more willing to sacrifice their own opinions and beliefs.[498] Struve, on the other hand, had an overtly spiritual concept of nation; he had strong patriotic feelings that defined his political beliefs, above tactics. They agreed in some areas: they shared a similar understanding of the origins of the revolution, and equally despised the Bolsheviks. Both nationalists, they sometimes turned to monarchy as a solution, and refused to reconsider their commitment to a 'core' Russian identity. Like Miliukov, Struve also believed that the Allies had betrayed Russia's struggle and could have done more for the cause.[499] However, a crucial difference was how they interpreted the outcome of the revolution, which resulted in disagreement on future action: Had the revolution moved Russia 'forward'? According to Struve, it was a major setback in terms of private property, individual liberty and institutional democracy. While Miliukov did not argue that Bolsheviks had made a major breakthrough, he thought that the revolution had awakened people's feelings and political interests, urging them to stand up for their own interests – hence, he believed that the people would be quickly disappointed in the Bolshevik rule, and it would be overthrown from below.

In 1924, the remaining Kadets abroad attempted to reinvent themselves as a broader democratic party: the Republican-Democratic Group. Several groups were organised across Europe, with the majority concentrated in Paris and Berlin.

[498] Burbank, *Intelligentsia and Revolution: Russian Views of Bolshevism, 1917–1922*, pp. 126, 130–32.
[499] Ibid, pp. 138, 166.

Its main goal was to try to establish a support base in Russia through the clandestine circulation of publications, and by building connections with those opposed to the Bolsheviks. In a report in Paris in 1924, "On the White Movement", Miliukov outlined his approach to the Whites and his assessment of the movement, as an introduction to his changing tactics. The report was reprinted in *Posledniia Novosti* and published two days later. The Republican-Democratic Union devoted part of its programme to the future structure of Russia and the place of nationalities within it. The programme was not very different from the Kadets' earlier plans to create a federative parliamentary republic, where a federative structure would be organised on national and territorial principles. The government would guarantee an independent judicial system, equal rights and civil liberties.[500]

Miliukov, who wrote the programme for the Union, made a special mention of the newly independent states that were formerly parts of the Russian Empire. He argued that the Union would not abandon hopes that at least some of these newly independent states would have "communication with Russia in one form or another"; however, achieving this rapprochement with Russia would be discussed at an international arena and be subject to Russia's foreign policy, as it was no longer an internal Russian question. According to him, once a re-established Russian state became prosperous and democratic, these newly independent territories would be more interested in re-joining Russia for economic benefits, as well as due to strong "historical and geographical connections". The prospect of using military force to restore old Russian borders was criticised by Miliukov:

> For "us, democrats", a path of forceful annexation is unnatural. It is worth adding that it is not only our doctrine and the idea of republican democrats that goes against suppressing nations by force in the twentieth century, but also ideas of expediency. For we know from the example of Poland the results of such a forceful approach to suppress a developed nationality […] Our relations with Finland were just as unnatural.[501]

[500] Pavel Miliukov, *Tri Platformy Respublikansko-Demokraticheskikh Ob"edineniĭ: (1922–1924)* (Paris: Imprimere d'Art Voltaire, 1925), pp. 59–63.
[501] Ibid, pp. 25–26.

The Republican-Democratic Union was supported by the former Russian ambassador to the US, Boris Bakhmeteff, and by other Kadets, including Aleksandr Konovalov and Ekaterina Kuskova; several right-wing socialists, including Sergei Maslov, the head of a right-wing SR party, Peasant Russia (*Krest'ianskaia Rossiia*); Sergei Prokopovich, a Russian economist; and others. Although the idea of cooperating with moderate socialists was criticised by many Kadets, who chose not to support this initiative, the programme proposed by the Republican-Democratic Union was not radically different from the Kadets' programme developed in 1921, with regard to the future Russian government. The ideas of reinstituting a Constituent Assembly and forming a democratic republic once order was restored, had been advocated by the Kadets since the early period of emigration. It was largely the methods involved that created a split in the party.

Introducing the Republican-Democratic Union, Miliukov argued that the White movement was almost canonised by its members, which prevented them from assessing its impact and its faults objectively.[502] The White movement became idealised because its proponents were motivated by several principles that they considered noble. First came loyalty to discipline, duty, morality, religion, and the idea of statehood. Second was loyalty to the ideas of the past, including the monarchy and a certain form of Orthodoxy. Last was the idea of loyalty to the Allies. Instead of idealising the White movement and considering it the righteous group that stood for high moralistic principles, Miliukov suggested moving away from analysing the White movement from the point of view of "internal experiences" (*vnutrennie perezhivaniia*), and instead as a historical phenomenon ('*s tochki zreniia istoricheskogo iavleniia*').[503] This critical approach would allow a more objective assessment of the White movement and, most importantly, work out the future strategy. While Miliukov argued that his position was "clear and objective", as opposed to being "emotionally attached to the White movement", his description of Vrangel's defeat was not that of an objective approach; rather, it

[502] Pavel Miliukov, "Respublikansko-Demokraticheskoe Ob"edinenie. Doklad P. N. Miliukova «O Belom Dvizhenii»", *Posledniia Novosti* (6 August 1924).
[503] Ibid.

was a daring attempt to rescue the situation and find new allies in the changing circumstances.

The activities of the Republican Democratic group did not yield any tangible results, and in 1927 Miliukov acknowledged that their publications were much more popular among émigré circles than in the Soviet Union. The group also failed to attract a broader political base: neither Socialist Revolutionaries nor National Revolutionaries supported it, and it quickly suffered internal fragmentation, similarly to all the Kadets' previous attempts to organise a political coalition. Discussions on national minorities' involvement in the civil war were largely abandoned at this stage; the Kadets reverted to reconsidering Russia's borderlands when they retrospectively revisited and assessed the civil war period.

According to Miliukov, the White movement comprised all anti-Bolsheviks: socialists, democrats, liberals, conservatives and reactionaries. Only in a narrower sense was it represented by proponents of monarchy and nationalism. The White movement had started with a broader political base and ended with the narrower monarchical position.[504] Although the Kadet leader argued that his assessment of the White movement from the viewpoint of a historian, rather than a participant, was more objective, he refused to recognise some of the Whites' shortcomings. He gave his primary reason for the failure of the anti-Bolshevik resistance as "insufficient and poorly timed Allied support, driven by their own self-serving interests", followed by the growth of reactionary elements within the White movement, and, as a result, popular disappointment with the White cause.[505] Miliukov presented his report several more times that year in Prague and Brno, and he did not mention the nationalities question in any way when discussing the reasons behind the Whites' failure. Three years later, in 1927, Miliukov published a two-volume book, *Russia at the Crossroads* (*Rossia na perelome*), where he once again sought to consider the Russian revolutions of 1917 and the Bolsheviks' success from the point of view of a historian, rather than a politician; this time in greater detail.[506] In the second volume of this expanded version, dedicated to the

[504] Ibid.
[505] Ibid.
[506] Miliukov, *Rossiia Na Perelome: Bol'shevistskiĭ Perïod Russkoĭ Revoliutsiĭ.*

anti-Bolshevik struggle, Miliukov included national minorities in his assessment: he mentioned the population of the borderlands (*okrainnoe naselenie*), but placed his emphasis on the Cossacks as one of the leading socio-political forces among the Whites. He also admitted that one of the reasons for the Whites' defeat was their leaders' negative attitude to national and autonomous aspirations in the areas where the Whites were operating.[507] Nevertheless, the issues concerning national minorities and the formation of independent states were mentioned by Miliukov very briefly, merely acknowledging the national minorities groups' annoyance with the Russian representatives in Paris, who were reluctant to accept the autonomy of the new governments.[508]

Although Russian émigrés played an important role in the White movement, especially at the international diplomatic negotiations since the early stages of the civil war, Miliukov considered the anti-Bolshevik movement abroad as the last stage of the Whites' struggle, which only started in 1921 after the evacuation of General Vrangel's army from Crimea. While Miliukov acknowledged some mistakes of the White movement, he did not attempt to write an alternative history of the civil war, or to propose any alternative steps that the Whites could have taken.

Liberals who did not support the strategy of cooperating with the socialists were also in fundamental disagreement with Miliukov about admitting military defeat and moving to new strategies of overthrowing the Bolsheviks from below. Nikolai L'vov and Vladimir Davatts, another Kadet party member who became more active after 1917, wrote a book on the history of the Crimean evacuation and the fate of the Russian White Army abroad.[509] A special section was dedicated to criticising the position of Miliukov and his followers. The leader of the Kadet party was accused of betraying the White movement in general, and "hundreds of thousands of volunteers who gave up their young lives at the northern, southern,

[507] Pavel Miliukov, *Rossia Na Perelomie: Bol'shevistskïi Perïod Russkoĭ Revoliutsïi. Antibol'shevistskoe Dvizhenie.*, vol. 2 (Paris: Imprimere d'Art Voltaire, 1927), pp. 1, 6–7.
[508] Ibid., pp. 106–107.
[509] Vladimir Davatts and Nikolai L'vov, *The Russian Army in Foreign Lands* (Belgrade: Russkoe izd-vo, 1923).

and eastern fronts in the tireless fight against the Bolsheviks".[510] According to L'vov and Davatts, Miliukov betrayed the soldiers who had to flee from Crimea. They also criticised Miliukov for calling the evacuation from Crimea "a disaster" instead of presenting it as a timely strategic manoeuvre. The authors claimed that the ideas of criticising the White movement and the Russian army had been an ongoing strategy of SRs abroad, who were the first to represent the Crimean evacuation as a flight, and Miliukov merely echoed a pre-existing discourse.

People such as L'vov and Davatts were precisely the ones criticised by Miliukov for idealising the White movement and not being able to assess it objectively, because they only considered it from the position of their own values. In fact, L'vov and Davatts criticised Miliukov personally first and foremost, accusing him of being "selfish", lacking sensitivity, and treating people like "pieces on a chessboard".[511] According to these writers, the political elite of the Russian émigré community had a moral obligation to the rank and file of the White movement: soldiers and volunteers. The revised position was considered a betrayal of these people and the ideas that they were fighting for. The chain of Miliukov's decisions, from his adoption of a pro-German stance to his "What to do after the Crimean disaster" speech – neither of which was done in consultation with other party members – cost him his leading position, as the other Kadets renounced their own party leader.[512]

The criticism of Miliukov by L'vov and Davatts, a year after Miliukov's publication, was of a different nature to Miliukov's own writings and lectures. They called for compassion for the Russian émigrés within their own community, maintaining a tone of respect for the Allied support in the Russian Civil War, and basing their argument precisely on the ideal of moral standards, honour, and the noble aims of the White movement. Importantly, their book told the story of the evacuation and resettlement of White Army soldiers abroad. It was neither a historical assessment of the White movement nor a proposal for future action. Miliukov, on the other hand, aimed precisely for a critical review of the history of

[510] Ibid., p. 37.
[511] Davatts and L'vov, pp. 37–38.
[512] Stockdale, *Paul Miliukov and the Quest for a Liberal Russia 1880–1918*, p. 120; Rosenberg, *Liberals in the Russian Revolution: The Constitutional Democratic Party, 1917–1921*, pp. 462–463.

the Russian Revolution and Civil War in an attempt to identify weaknesses; although this exercise was not always necessarily very objective. The debate between the right- and left-wing Kadets was taking place not only in the official publications, but, of course, also in private correspondence between the party members, who each defended their own vision and political beliefs.

Right- and left-wing liberal debate in exchanges between Petrunkevich and Vinaver

Ivan Petrunkevich and Maxim Vinaver debated the future of the White movement in their correspondence as emigrants. Petrunkevich was one of the founders of the Kadet party. Coming from a noble Russian family, he trained as a lawyer and joined the Russian liberal movement in the late 1800s, when he was already active in zemstvo circles. Petrunkevich left Russia in 1919, and in the summer of 1921 he had just moved to Switzerland from France, where Vinaver stayed, remaining at the heart of Kadet circles in Paris. Vinaver, who had worked closely with Petrunkevich in the Kadet party from its formation, as well as in the first Duma, also emigrated in 1919, fleeing to France from Crimea, where he was Minister of Foreign Affairs in the Crimean White Government. Vinaver was more left-wing than his colleague, which affected their positions on the future of the party after the Whites' defeat in 1921. Both supported the need for a change in tactics after the Whites' defeat in Crimea, as well as the idea of a National Committee (*Natsional'nyĭ Komitet*). However, they disagreed on what strategy to adopt and who to include in the National Committee – in other words, who would be the official representatives of anti-Bolshevik Russia.

Vinaver sided with Miliukov on the matter, supporting the need to include Socialist-Revolutionaries in the National Committee.[513] He explained to Petrunkevich that it was his idea initially to create the National Committee, which he announced on the day the news of Vrangel's defeat reached Paris. The plan was fully supported by Maklakov, as well as by a majority of the Kadets, who all agreed that the Socialist Revolutionaries would have to join the committee. Pavel Miliukov supported the idea, along with Nol'de, Kartashev, and several other

[513] Maxim Vinaver. 'Letter to Ivan Petrunkevich'. 18 February 1921. Bakhmeteff Archive, Columbia University, Maxim Moiseevich Vinaver papers, Box 1.

prominent Kadets in the Paris Group. Thus, only a minority, according to Vinaver, were in favour of closer cooperation with monarchist groups. Vinaver had several reasons to side with the socialists: first, as Miliukov suggested, after defeat in Crimea, the Kadets did not expect an open military conflict with the Bolsheviks to continue, as this had been shown to be an ineffective tactic.[514] Therefore, they anticipated that the military groups among the Whites, who actively supported monarchy and dictatorship, would no longer be so relevant and influential. Instead of a military struggle, the Kadets hoped to help create a 'revolution from below' in Russia by bringing in and secretly spreading anti-Bolshevik ideas within the newly formed Soviet Union. As a result, they hoped that the SRs would help gain the support of the Russian peasants, who traditionally were not the electoral base of the Kadets.[515] Petrunkevich, on the other hand, disagreed with Vinaver and Miliukov's idea of working with the SRs. Petrunkevich himself was not a supporter of the more radical right-wing groups, but in his understanding of the political arena among the Whites, the socialist groups were becoming more left-wing and moving away from the centre, which would impede cooperation with the Kadets. He argued that due to radicalisation of the SRs, the Kadets compared them to a right-wing party.[516]

The question was whether or not the Russian liberals had a common political ground with socialist groups, and whether such a union – even if temporary – would compromise the ideological principles of the liberals. The opinions on the matter were starkly contrasted, and the party became increasingly polarised. Those who were against the collaboration with the socialists largely blamed Miliukov for suggesting this idea, and for causing division in the party. In practice, however, the debate did not necessarily arise from Miliukov's radical thinking, at a point when he thought that all was lost and only a new strategy could save Russia. It was, perhaps, an inevitable part of liberals' thinking at the time, because they had to reconsider their strategy and programme – this was based on the fact that they were not in opposition to absolute monarchy, as they had been

[514] Ibid., pp. 4–5.
[515] Maxim Vinaver, 'Letter to Ivan Petrunkevich'. 25 July 1921. Bakhmeteff Archive, Columbia University, Vinaver papers, Box 1, p. 5.
[516] Ivan Petrunkevich, 'Letter to Maxim Vinaver'. 30 September 1921. Bakhmeteff Archive, Columbia University, Vinaver papers, Box 1, p. 3.

before the revolution, but rather in opposition to a newly emerged socialist regime that was being established more successfully than they had anticipated. This was precisely why Vinaver was arguing to Petrunkevich that collaboration with socialist parties was not Miliukov's own idea, and it had already been discussed within liberal émigré circles before Miliukov joined the debate. Although each side made their arguments in terms of ideology or whether or not this would compromise the ideological purity of liberal ideas, this debate primarily originated in a political need to remain relevant in the new political environment. The Kadets' division was taken by liberal politicians even outside the party, who further expanded the debate on the possibility of collaboration with the socialists.

Right- and left-wing liberal debate in exchanges between Boris Bakhmeteff and Vasili Maklakov

Most of the liberal émigrés were members of the Constitutional Democratic party. In addition, official representatives of Russian Provisional Government, who remained abroad after the October Revolution, also made up a part of the liberal community. Into this category, for example, fell Boris Bakhmeteff, Russian ambassador to Washington, and Vasilii Maklakov, Russian ambassador to Paris. Both official representatives and political groups played pivotal roles in the White movement. Primarily, they tried to use their old connections with the Entente Powers to negotiate for Western support of the Whites in the civil war, especially given that the Provisional Government that they represented had been endorsed by foreign powers.

While people within the Kadet party did not consider the nationalities question within the scope of party planning, other liberals thought about the role of Russia's borderlands in the Russian Civil War in greater detail. Vasilii Maklakov, Russian ambassador to France, and Boris Bakhmeteff, the ambassador to the United States, had both been appointed by the Provisional Governments; after resigning, they remained in emigration, where they put more emphasis on the role of national minorities in their correspondence.[517] The chain of letters between the ambassadors ran from 1919 until 1951. They discussed current events,

[517] Oleg Budnitskiĭ, *"Sovershenno Lichno i Doveritel'no!": B. A. Bakhmetev–V. A. Maklakov: Perepiska, 1919–1951: V 3 Tomakh*, vol. 1, 3 vols (Moscow: ROSSPEN, 2002).

informed each other about moods in the US and France towards Russia, discussed their position regarding the civil war, their ideas on the future of Russia, as well as their lives in emigration. Maklakov, as a more doctrinaire liberal than his colleague in the United States, was sceptical of this idea, as well of the general success of democracy in post-war Russia.[518] While Maklakov was a Kadet, with the role of ambassador and head of the Russian Political Committee in Paris, his letters to his colleague discussed his position outside the party framework. Vrangel's defeat in Crimea, and the factionalism within the Kadet party, made both men reconsider the future of Russia.

While not quite a liberal himself, Bakhmeteff was an adherent of the ideals of "humanistic socialism", and was rather optimistic about the future democratic Russia during the revolution and the civil war.[519] In addition, Boris Bakhmeteff represented the only liberal government Russia had ever had. Life in the United States had impacted his political views and further reinforced his belief in liberal democracies. Ideas of liberalism had always been imported to Russia by the intelligentsia. While many members of the Kadet party were admirers of the British government system, especially before the revolution, Bakhmeteff similarly appreciated the American experience of liberal democracy. To him, the doctrine of liberal democracy was closely associated with the concepts of nationalism and patriotism. Although Maklakov was sympathetic to the left-wing Kadets' policy of collaborating with socialists and undermining the Bolshevik regime from within through peasant communities, he was nevertheless sceptical of the outcomes of such an approach. He foresaw a "senseless and pitiless" peasant revolt, in Pushkin's terms, which would destroy local communists and the remaining intelligentsia and bourgeoisie; however, it would be brutally repressed from Moscow, which would cause even further violence. Ultimately, Maklakov did not believe in the revolutionary power of the peasants to overthrow the existing government apparatus, which the White army had a chance of doing. According to him, a revolt within the peasantry would mean the end of Bolshevism, but not the Bolsheviks. Referring to the New Economic Policy, Maklakov thought that more

[518] Terence Emmons, *Foreword*, in *"Sovershenno Lichno i Doveritel'no!"*, p. 9.
[519] Ibid.

revolts would cause Lenin to move further from the economic policies of Bolshevism, but it would not remove the Bolsheviks from power.[520]

Another way to defeat the Bolsheviks, which Maklakov considered more plausible, would involve more national minorities departing from Russia and proclaiming their independence. While he did not believe that peasants were able to defeat the regime and establish their own power in any territory, he argued that this scenario might have been possible for those borderlands that contained distinct national sentiment. In western Russia, these new states could all establish relationships with Europe. He saw this as being plausible for Crimea, the Caucasus, and Ukraine.[521] Independent areas could also be formed in the far east and Siberia, which historically had some relative independence due to their remoteness, and where remains of the White Armies were still present. Of course, this would entail the further 'dismemberment' of Russia, which would make the future of these territories more uncertain. However, it would deprive the Bolsheviks of their control over such a vast landmass and the resources available there, and could make the regime unpopular. This position raised the overthrow of the Bolsheviks to being the liberals' main goal, above the interests of Russia and its future. Furthermore, Maklakov questioned the possibility of establishing a liberal government in post-Bolshevik Russia. The liberal ideology was the opposite of Bolshevism, and would fight against an oppressive centralised power in the name of the rights and freedoms of the people. While the liberal agenda may sound tempting for Russians who were deprived of freedoms under the Bolsheviks, it would also mean establishing a democratic state, which Maklakov thought was impossible in the circumstances.[522]

In response, Bakhmeteff agreed that there was no clear successor to power if the Bolsheviks were overthrown. He was rather critical of the idea of separating and creating new nation-states in the Russian borderlands, especially in the far east, where independence would be possible only with Japanese support. Bakhmeteff was more certain that the newly independent states on Russia's

[520] Letter from Maklakov to Bakhmeteff. 15 April 1921. Budnitskiĭ, "*Sovershenno Lichno i Doveritel'no!": B.A. Bakhmetev–V.A. Maklakov: Perepiska, 1919–1951: V 3 Tomakh*, 1, pp. 346–347.
[521] Ibid., pp. 349.
[522] Letter from Maklakov to Bakhmeteff. 21 April 1921. Budnitskiĭ, 1, pp. 366–367.

western border were independent only in the current conditions, and would re-join Russia under a different regime. Unlike Maklakov, Bakhmeteff thought that an oligarchic regime leading the peasantry would be a plausible outcome for a post-Bolshevik government. On the other hand, he criticised the liberals' generally patronising attitude to the peasantry, and particularly their belief that they should be governed by the intelligentsia for the people's own good.[523] Such an approach, according to Bakhmeteff, undermined the belief in the Russian nation and its abilities as a whole, and was somewhat reminiscent of the Bolsheviks' approach. Part of the reason why Bakhmeteff was against the further 'dismemberment' of Russia was his belief that the Allies, and especially the United States, being motivated by a strong anti-Bolshevik sentiment, were more likely to support a strong, united Russia.[524]

Previously, the two ambassadors had discussed and largely agreed on an ideal image of Russia: Bakhmeteff was a major proponent of liberalism, but also of a united and indivisible Russia. He wrote to Vasilii Maklakov that:

> the general idea of American parties before elections is the idea of Americanism. Americanism, in essence, is a conservative idea that involves the struggle to protect the essence of the American lifestyle, which was tried and tested by years of experience. Protection of true democracy is connected to the stability of social basis and loyalty to the constitution… you can feel that the idea of nationhood can be protected by the people in the name of their own interest. The only requirement is that the real interests of the state and the order are consistent with those of the wider population. This is the key to true democracy.[525]

[523] Letter from Bakhmeteff to Maklakov, 6 July 1921 Budnitskiĭ, 1, p. 416.
[524] Letter from Bakhmeteff to Maklakov, 27 June 1921 Budnitskiĭ, 1, p. 397.
[525] Letter from Bakhmeteff to Maklakov. 2 December 1919. *"Strictly private and confidential",* Vol. 1, p. 124. Original Quote: «Основная идея, которая разделяется обеими готовящимися к выборам партиями – идея американизма. Американизм по существу идея консервативная и заключается в борьбе за сохранение начал американской жизни, укрепленных и испытанных долголетним опытом. Защита истинной демократии связывается с незыблемостью социальных основ и лояльностью конституции… чувствуется, что идея государственности может охраняться народом во имя своих же собственных интересов. Все дело лишь в том, чтобы действительные интересы порядка и государства совпадали с интересами обывателя в широком смысле. В этом и есть ключ истинной демократии».

It is important to acknowledge how physically remote Baris Bakhmeteff was from Russia and the civil war front, and how it influenced his understanding of the situation and formed his ideas. Bakhmeteteff gained most of his information from the correspondence or newspapers that he could access in America.

Bakhmeteff commented on Admiral Kolchak's pledge of an "autonomous arrangement", which he gave to the Allied Powers. Bakhmeteff believed that Kolchak's government in its provisional form would be reformed in the new Russia. The rights of nationalities would be guaranteed by the constitution, which, in turn, would be the prerogative Constituent Assembly – an elected government. Therefore, Bakhmeteff wanted to avoid commenting on any particularities; however, he stated that the principle of national autonomy had been widely accepted by the liberals as a constructive idea, and some autonomous arrangement would be guaranteed to national minorities.[526]

In a letter to Maklakov, Bakhmeteff described his vison of the future Russian Government: it would have to move a long way from the current Provisional White Governments' systems, where far-right monarchist elements were included. "Everything to the right of the Kadets would have to go",[527] while more socialist-wing members would have to be included. A coalition government would be unavoidable, and the Kadets and industrialists would have to be positioned towards the right of it, while the centre would belong to popular socialists and right-oriented SRs. In his reply to Bakhmeteff, Maklakov argued that the Socialist Revolutionary press painted a different picture to the reality. While they discussed the rights of national minorities and gradual democratisation, their abilities were very restricted; and, according to Maklakov, they were no longer a real force in the civil war.[528]

As an ambassador to the US, Bakhmeteff thought that emphasising liberalism in the Russian future government would help him advance Russia's

[526] 'Aide-Memoire', 2 May 1919. Bakhmeteff Archive, Columbia University, Bahkmeteff Papers, Box 57.
[527] Letter from Bakhmeteff to Maklakov. 15 November 1920. *"Strictly private and confidential",* p. 275. Original Quote: «Коалиционный состав почти неизбежен … Необходимо отбросить все правее кадетов… Центром должны быть народные социалисты и правые эсеры; кадеты и промышленники – на правом крыле».
[528] Letter from Maklakov to Bakhmetev, 25 November 1920. *"Strictly private and confidential",* p. 277.

interests. Even twenty-five years after the civil war, he would still revisit the issue of national minorities in a speech he prepared; he was still critical of the fact that Russia had ended up with no say in the New World Order. Bakhmeteff argued that the liberal left in Russia was siding with President Woodrow Wilson, who was always firmly against the "dismemberment of Russia". He proposed that while wide support for national self-determination was understandable, the problem arose when this issue was solved only on one side (the side of national minorities), and therefore no permanent and stable solution was achieved. As a result, the post-Versailles European order became unstable, since it was reliant on small states that were unable to defend themselves.[529]

First and foremost, the life of members of the Russian liberal community in emigration was contingent on lifestyle difficulties that all the community members could relate to. However, for members of a significant and sizeable political party, such as the Constitutional Democrats, emigration posed difficulties to the party's survival as a uniform organisation. Russian liberals in exile felt very strongly about keeping to their political beliefs and maintaining their liberal identity. They felt that this connected them to foreign powers, and would simultaneously put them in a central position between right- and left-wing Russian émigrés. In practice, however, they had to not only work within their own party, which proved to be very challenging abroad, but also learn to exist within the framework of wider political Russian émigré communities. The Kadets struggled to maintain party activity, since groups were remote from each other, small in numbers, and lacked sufficient funds. In addition, the party could not agree on a uniform strategy and broke into two opposing blocks, which, according to Shelokhaev, became detrimental to its future survival. On the other hand, with regard to the nationalities question, the party's opinion was more uniform. In fact, it was consistent across the Russian émigré community abroad. Regardless of the future form of governance in Russia, all spectrums of political thought agreed that the newly proclaimed nation-states would have to become part of "united and indivisible

[529] 'Bakhmeteff Manuscript', 30 April 1943. Bakhmeteff Archive, Columbia University, Bakhmeteff papers, Box 37.

Russia". Ideally, liberals envisioned national minorities gaining some degree of autonomy within the Russian state. In other words, their outlook on the issue had not changed in any significant way from their pre-revolutionary position: liberals were still emphasising individual rights and freedoms over national interests.

The Paris Peace Conference was an obvious milestone, and an extremely important event in the history of the Russian émigré community; this chapter has demonstrated the position that Russian liberals wanted to represent. However, it was clear that the Versailles Peace Treaty did not affect the work of the Russian liberal émigré community in any significant way, nor did it change their position towards the future of Russia. The same arguments and suggestions were reiterated in the early 1920s with respect to the nationalities question, regardless of the fact that the Peace Conference was over. Since the Allies had failed to agree on a true representative of Russia, it ended up not having a formal say at the Paris Peace Conference. Hence, the Russian liberal émigré community persisted in its work with the Allies and in the anti-Bolshevik struggle for another couple of years, in the same fashion as it had in 1918 and 1919.

The expectation of changes within Russia lasted for decades, and none of the Kadets would see them fulfilled in their lifetimes. However, even as attempts to develop a strategy to return to Russia slowly died out, they never ceased to watch the events in the Soviet Union and to exist in the realm of Russian émigré communities – both collectively and individually reliving their past and cherishing their roots. Generally, the Kadets parted from liberal views during the civil war. Although they found themselves collaborating with a wide range of powers in the White movement, they sided with the Kolchak government's autocratic ideas of military dictatorship. Their liberal ideas of free and equal elections, freedom of speech, and the representative government of the Constituent Assembly, were pushed into some distant future once order had been restored. After 1921 they came to revisit their liberal ideas, and some tried to reconsider their views of the Russian population and their ability to act as a civil society. Importantly, liberal ideas were developed in somewhat of a vacuum for many years, under the autocratic tsarist government; and from the establishment of the Kadet party until the revolutionary year of 1917, their ideas were developing in opposition to the

ruler. Already during the brief Provisional Government, the Kadets had to consider their political position as being in opposition to radical socialists, and they came to realise that they were more able to work with a tsarist regime than with socialist demands for universal equality, division of land, and the abolition of most private property.

Did the Russian liberals have a common political ground with socialist groups, and if so, would such union – even if temporary – compromise their ideological principles? Opinions on the matter were starkly divided, and the party became increasingly polarised. Those who opposed collaboration with the socialists largely blamed Miliukov for suggesting this idea and causing division in the party. In practice, however, the debate owed relatively little to Miliukov's radical thinking, at a point when he thought that all was lost and only a new strategy could save Russia. It was, perhaps, an inevitable part of liberal thinking at the time, because they had to reconsider their strategy and programme once they were no longer in opposition to an absolute monarchy, as they had been before the revolution; but rather, in opposition to a newly emerged socialist regime that was establishing itself more successfully than they had anticipated. This is precisely why Vinaver argued to Petrunkevich that collaboration with socialist parties was not Miliukov's own idea, and had already been discussed within liberal émigré circles before Miliukov joined the debate. Although each side made their arguments in terms of ideology or whether or not this would compromise the ideological purity of liberal ideas, this debate had primarily originated in a political need to remain relevant in the new political environment.

With regard to the national minorities, whichever side of the debate the Kadets took when discussing their further options in 1921, both sides equally avoided making any claims regarding newly independent territories. The nationalities issue became a topic for reflection about the past, analysing the chain of events in the late Russian Empire. The debate between both sides of the broken party focused on the immediate strategy to overthrow the Bolsheviks. Part of the right-wing liberals' concern about collaboration with socialist parties was what such a collaboration, if successful, would mean for future Russia. Regardless of the party faction, the Kadets largely failed to advance in their position regarding

national minorities. They perceived other nationalities from an imperialist perspective,; they kept thinking in terms of developed and undeveloped nationalities, and the latter's natural dominance over the former. The other nationalities were seldom given agency in the works of the Kadets, and were discussed as areas of interest of Russia, the Allies, or the Central Powers. Despite the rapidly evolving situation regarding Russia's borderlands and the emergence of new states, the Kadets' rhetoric did not change in this regard.[530]

[530] This was a more widespread opinion before the civil war, and was discussed by Russian liberals in their own meetings, as well as with the Allies. As Galperina-Ginsburg argued, the Russian model of self-determination went against any logical definition of this right or international law, as it would only allow a smaller nation to become autonomous if it was in the interest of a patron-state. This attitude became outdated with the end of the age of empires (Elena Galperina-Ginsburg, *Mir Russkoĭ Revoliutsii Ili Mir Vil'sona?: Garantii Prochnago Mira* (Kiev: Pod znamenem prava, 1919).

Chapter 7

Reconsidering the past, and minority voices among the liberals

The Russian community abroad was formed of White émigrés with different political and social backgrounds, but who were united in the belief that their emigration was temporary. However, plans to return to Russia became only dreams for many, who lived the rest of their lives in exile. In the aftermath of the civil war and cessation of military activities, many émigrés became focused on adjusting to their new lives, and took this opportunity to reflect on the past and the mistakes that had affected them. This final chapter examines how some Russian liberals reflected on their past and their policies, when considering them in retrospect. What part did the question of rights to self-determination play in these memoirs? Some liberals continued to write on the issue of national minorities and self-determination, while most did not pay much attention to this aspect of the civil war. For them, there were many other reasons for the Whites' failure. This chapter considers the importance of writing in emigration for the Russian liberals, the kinds of issues that they discussed, and what position the question of national minorities held in their writings. It will also focus on members of the Kadet party whose position towards national minorities diverged from the official party lines.

Revisiting the nationalities question in the early 1920s

After the Allies had retrieved their troops from Russia and the Paris peace negotiations had concluded, fewer Russians abroad continued to discuss their strategy and plans for Russia to the same degree as before. There was less overall interest in the Russian question, no reason to influence the Allies' opinions on Russia and the Bolsheviks, and no need continue the old struggle. As Russians abroad, including liberals, started to debate a change of tactics, it was also time to regroup their thoughts. People started to reconsider their past experiences and reflect on them; hence, fewer publications addressed the current issues.

Furthermore, liberals were not the only ones who changed their perception of the future tactics or reconsidered their past. Discouraged by their evacuation from Crimea, Whites of all political beliefs started to slowly realise that the Bolshevik regime might remain for longer than they had anticipated. On the wave of reconsidering Russia's past and its revolutionary experience, many émigrés started to ponder Russia's special way of development.

Smenovekhovtsy was one of the first groups to reconsider the circumstances of the civil war, and to come to terms with the Soviet regime. Nikolaii Ustrialov, one of the main proponents of the Smenovekhovtsy movement, partly based his theory of National Bolshevism on the impact that the New Economic Policy (NEP) had on Soviet Society. He advocated returning to the Soviet Union and working within the regime there. Nikolaii Ustrialov was joined by a journalist, Sergeii Lukianov; an Octobrist, Aleksandr Bobrishev-Pushkin; and a Kadet, Iurii Kliuchnikov – all of whom were strongly disappointed by the withdrawal of Allied support from Russia, and the outcome of the Paris Peace Conference. Together they published the *Smena Vekh* (*Changing Signposts*) journal in Prague in 1921, and also started the *Nakanune* journal in Berlin, advocating a return to the Soviet Union.[531] The short-lived period of the NEP in the Soviet Union gave hope to some émigrés that the Bolshevik regime would later be overthrown from within. As the previous chapter demonstrated, some Kadets – including Miliukov, Maklakov and Vinaver – supported the idea of coming to terms with the Bolshevik state; however, they did not take it as far as Smenovekhovtsy. The Kadets merely advocated seeking options to undermine the Soviet regime from within, by working with remaining members of the opposition within the Soviet Union. All four founders of the Smenovekhovtsy movement returned to the Soviet Union, where they ultimately fell victim to Stalin's Terror in the 1930s. Eurasianism was another one of the new political movements; it began in a group of young Russian émigrés in Bulgaria, who were disheartened by the Whites' failure and sought deeper explanations for the Bolsheviks' success, by redefining the meaning of Russianness. Eurasianists saw Russia as a product of a

[531] Hilde Hardeman, *Coming to Terms with the Soviet Regime: The 'Changing Signposts' Movement among Russian Emigrés in the Early 1920s* (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 1994), pp. 70–72.

larger Eurasian civilization, which was much broader than Western European or Asian.[532] The idea, initially introduced by Nikolai Trubetskoi, borrowed from conservative Slavophile views.

Pavel Miliukov remained one of these exceptions. He was one of the few émigrés who reflected on the rights of national minorities explicitly in the aftermath of the civil war. In 1925, Miliukov revisited this topic in his book, *The Nationalities Question* (*Natsional'nyĭ Vopros*).[533] Despite all the changes that had occurred in Russia and its borderlands, Miliukov's position on nationalities had changed little since before the revolution. However, when revisiting this question in emigration, he tried to focus on the sociological aspect of nationalities' development, rather than on traditional liberal views on nationalities.[534] He devoted the first part of the book to a general theory of nationalities and the origin of the concept. The second part looked specifically at the nationalities question in Russia, starting with the Middle Ages and ending with nationalities under Bolshevik rule. Miliukov repeated his previous beliefs that Russia's borderlands had expanded not through conquest, but rather through a long process of assimilation, where Russians shared as well as borrowed traditions from other nationalities, in a peaceful coexistence. Thus, the oldest ideas of national conscience – which, according to Miliukov, were largely based on oral legends – could only be All-Russian (*obshcherusskoe*), not Ukrainian or Great Russian. These terms, according to Miliukov, were political concepts, not those of people's natural self-consciousness.[535]

Miliukov roughly divided all nationalities in Russia into three categories depending on when they became part of the Russian Empire. According to him, the earliest to join in the Middle Ages, such as Ukrainians and Belorussians, had developed their nationality alongside the Russian one, and hence had a very similar culture. The second group were those whose national consciousness had not yet

[532] Mark Bassin, *The Gumilev Mystique: Biopolitics, Eurasianism, and the Construction of Community in Modern Russia* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2016), p. 104; Sergei Glebov, *Evraziĭstvo Mezhdu Imperieĭ i Modernom: Istoriia v Dokumentakh* (Moscow: Novoe izdatel′stvo, 2010), p. 7.
[533] Pavel Miliukov, *Natsional'nyĭ Vopros: Proiskhozhdenie Natsional'nosti i Natsional'nye Voprosy v Rossii* (Prague: Svobodnaia Rossiia, 1925).
[534] Natalia Antonenko, "Kontseptsiia Natsional′nogo Voprosa P. N. Miliukova", *Vestnik Tambovskogo Universiteta* 5, 61 (2008), p. 421.
[535] Miliukov, Natsional′nyĭ Vopros, pp. 115–116.

been fully formed when they joined the Russian Empire. Eventually, nationalistic ideas were brought into these communities later, and spread through a local intelligentsia. Miliukov put the Crimean and Volga Tatars into this group. The final group, he argued, had joined Russia relatively recently, in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and already had their own long-developed national cultures. This group included Poland, Georgia and Armenia. Their cases were exceptional, since their own nationalism was in competition with Russian nationalism, where it caused a certain tension.[536] Miliukov stressed that in all cases, the Russian government supported and encouraged the development of local cultures. He argued that the Russian government played a positive role in the development of Finnish as well as Caucasian cultures.[537] Nevertheless, Miliukov acknowledged that Russian nationalism became more aggressive and official towards the end of the nineteenth century, which led to the Polish uprising in 1863. The reign of Alexander III was the first time in Russian history when nationalism was used against entire peoples, especially against the Finns and the Jews. It was also due to this period of the radicalisation of Russian nationalism that the Ukrainian question appeared.

Around the time of the first Russian Revolution, Miliukov examined each nationality of Russia's borderlands; he traced the formation of their respective nationalist movements, and their early nationalist demands, which the author found relatively modest. He still argued that most of these national movements were very young, except for those of the Poles and Finns, and hence most of their political demands were "artificial". The "real" demands were largely cultural and could have been fulfilled in 1904–1905, if the tsarist regime had not prevented it.[538] These cultural demands were precisely the concessions that the Kadet party was willing to make to national minorities at the time.

Following the first Russian Revolution of 1904–1905 and establishment of the Duma, Nicholas II continued with his right-wing policies; and, especially during the conservative third Duma, which limited the number of national minorities' representatives, they became radicalised and demanded more political

[536] Ibid., pp 150–154.
[537] Ibid., pp. 155–156.
[538] Ibid., p. 173.

freedoms. Miliukov argued that the policies of late tsarist Russia exacerbated nationalist and separatist feeling among national communities. Another aspect of the nationalities question that Miliukov considered here was other European states' impact on the formation of the consciousness and demands of Russian national minorities. Already before the First World War, some nationalist thinkers from the borderlands of the Russian Empire were considering independence and discussing it in nationalist circles in Switzerland. As the war broke out, both the Entente and the Central Powers supported nationalist movements in Russia, and were interested in undermining the Russian state. This was a new argument that Miliukov made in the aftermath of the civil war, having become disappointed with the Allies' help for the Russian White movement:

> Liberal and radical circles were uncomfortable to talk about Russia as an ally. On the contrary, representatives of the oppressed nations were welcomed in European salons with open arms. Nobody asked them about their credentials. The concept of 'national self-determination' was the main ideology of the Allies during the last war.[539]

In 1912, the Union of Nationalities was formed in Paris, where delegates from Latvia and Lithuania made speeches, and declarations from the Finns and Ukrainians were read and discussed. The opposing side was also using the growing discontent of national minorities in Russia to undermine its military power, even before the war. Miliukov also pointed out a statement made by Charles Levermore, an American pacifist, and a strong supporter of the League of Nations. He argued that the demands made by national minorities in their programme – including equal civil rights, freedom of the use of national tongues, and freedom of conscience – might be problematic to enforce in larger states through international agreements, as no nation would agree to such involvement in its own affairs, unless it lost in a major conflict. Even in that case, such notions would have to be consistently enforced by foreign powers.[540]

[539] Ibid., p. 177.
[540] Ibid., pp. 178–179.

Once the Allies' triumph was inevitable, the fate of the Turkish and Austro-Hungarian Empires was written – the Allies helped suppressed nations to find their independence and ethnographic borders. Russia, according to Miliukov, was treated in the same way, and was considered a defeated state. Miliukov talked about this period as a betrayal by the Allies, who supported national minorities in order to serve their own interests. Thus, the Allies continued with the German policy of the dismemberment of Russia: '*politika raschleneniia Rossii*'.[541] Although Miliukov still argued that not all national minorities were demanding full independence, and many asked for autonomy and equal rights within the Russian state, he concluded that national minorities were somewhat confused at the beginning of the October Revolution. He continued to insist that newly independent states did not have "the same old culture, like Poland, and the same ancient ideas of statehood, such as Finland, but they have a newly developing or redeveloping national culture".[542] The feeling of betrayal by the Allied Powers was widespread in Russian White communities. Maklakov wrote to Bakhmeteff that his friends who stayed in Bolshevik Russia also felt angry that 'Europe' was not coming to Russia's rescue, and were blaming the émigré community for not putting more pressure on the Allies.[543]

Miliukov skipped the period of the civil war and the changes that occurred on the former borders of Russia. The final section of his book was devoted to the nationalities question in Soviet Russia, where he argued that Lenin's decree to recognise the rights of all nationalities, up to and including complete separation (which was included into the Soviets' "Declaration of rights of nationalities in Russia"), remained only on paper, as the Bolsheviks used terror as the main method to maintain their authority. Similarly, federations that were formed in the newly established Soviet state had no real local authority, as they were following the orders from Moscow. Miliukov unsurprisingly concluded that the system of governing national minorities in the Soviet Russia was very repressive, and

[541] Ibid., p. 184.
[542] Miliukov, *Tri Platformy Respublikansko-Demokraticheskikh Ob"edineniĭ: (1922–1924)*, pp. 26–27.
[543] Oleg Budnitskiĭ, "*Sovershenno Lichno i Doveritel'no!": B. A. Bakhmetev–V. A. Maklakov: Perepiska, 1919–1951: V 3 Tomakh*, vol. 1 (Moscow: ROSSPEN, 2002), p. 345.

forcefully suppressed all the nationalist movements that had formed before the revolution.[544]

Thus, Miliukov's position towards the rights to self-determination did not change very much in the mid-1920s, compared to the revolutionary period. He still did not consider all nationalities equally deserving of a state, and divided them into developed stronger nations, which bring stability to the world order, and weaker smaller nations. The latter type were used by stronger nations to serve their own interests, and would largely bring instability, due to their unstable governments, underdeveloped economy, and petty quarrels about borderlands. Most of all, Miliukov was concerned with Russia's interests, and felt that he was trying to protect the Russian state from disintegrating. This view was shared by many of his fellow party members, as well as widely outside the Kadets' circle; however, some liberals were more understanding of the nationalities' desire to form independent states. Usually this was due to their own experiences of living in areas where Russians were the minority.

New voices among liberals

Most of the prominent members of the Kadet party had a clear imperialist vision regarding national minorities; however, some members of the party showed a slightly more open-minded approach. While most Kadets abroad had already had prominent party positions before emigration, some new voices also joined the discussion on the future of Russia: this 'new' generation of the Kadets developed their own opinions. One of them was Iulii Semenov, who was a proponent of Struve's ideas of "free nationalism", which the latter believed was able to create a great empire.[545] In 1921, Semenov delivered a report at the Russian National Committee meeting, on the issue of the borderlands: "*Okrainnyĭ Vopros*". Similarly to more famous Kadet members, he argued that this state independence was "forced" on national minorities, to undermine Russia and break it apart. However, he recognised this very period of national development that the newly independent states experienced. He further developed the "maturity" grading

[544] Miliukov, *Natsional'nyĭ Vopros: Proiskhozhdenie Natsional'nosti i Natsional'nye Voprosy v Rossii*, pp. 182–193.
[545] Sergei Glebov, "Doklad I. F. Semenova Na Pervom s"ezde Russkogo Natsional′nogo Ob"edineniia v 1921 Godu.", *Ab Imperio* 3, 4 (2000), pp. 205–208.

system of these nation-states, arguing that the Baltic States, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania eventually "used their nationalism to protect themselves against these very Germans and then against the Bolshevik oppression", thereby developing anti-Russian sentiments. Thus, they became "developed sufficiently", and the newly restored Russia would have to find a mutually beneficial agreement with them. While Semenov's wording was very vague, and he did not openly talk about officially recognising their independence, this seemed open to interpretation and subsequent dialogue; whereas this was not the case for the Caucasus and Central Asia. These southern states, according to Semenov, were too diverse and lacked a strong national character. Therefore, according to him, they could only achieve their own cultural self-determination either as part of Russia or of Turkey, as they would require a strong defender. It was, of course, in the interest of Russia to protect these nationalities. Thus, while deriving his ideas from Struve, Semenov nevertheless left more room for negotiations with national minorities, arguing that post-Bolshevist Russia would have to re-establish its relationship with these nationalities based on their new experience, and taking into consideration the demands and interests of both sides.[546]

A similarly less radical imperialist view was expressed by a Belorussian liberal, Nicholas Vakar. A member of the Kadet party, like Semenov, the height of his career had already occurred in emigration. In 1956 he published a book reflecting on Belorussian nationalism.[547] Regarding the origins of his homeland, Vakar disagreed with the Kadets' argument of Russia's "peaceful amalgamation", arguing that Russification was indeed forceful, and as a result of it certain segments of the Belorussian population had become denationalised. As a result of both Polish and Russian claims over Belorussian territory, Belorussians developed bitter resentment towards both nations. During the revolutionary period of 1905 and even in 1917, however, the masses remained largely indifferent to political ideas of autonomy or independence, even though the period of 1906–1917 was a "decade of revival" of Belorussian identity.[548] Vakar found that even in the 1917

[546] Iulii Semenov, 'Okrainnyi Vopros', 1921, Bakhmeteff Archive, Columbia University, Russkii Natsional'niy Commitet Records, Box 24.
[547] Nicolas Vakar, *Belorussia. The Making of a Nation* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1956).
[548] Vakar, pp. 64–74.

elections, there was a very poor turnout at zemstvo and municipal elections, leaving the issue of national self-determination in the hands of the political elites.[549] Eventually, Vakar agreed with the traditional Kadets' argument that independence came to Belorussia as a result of the Austro-German occupation: "It has been said that nationhood came to the Belorussians as an almost unsolicited gift of the Russian Revolution. It was, in fact, received from the hands of the Austro-German Occupation Army authorities and depended on their good will." He argued that the independence was "incidental and trivial", and the self-appointed government lacked any means to pass reforms, or the legitimacy to become an internationally recognised state.[550]

Another example of this minority view was represented by Aleksandr Izgoev (aka Aaron Lande). Izgoev left Russia relatively late, in 1922; he then wrote his memoirs, contributing to *Arkhiv Russkoii Revolutsii*, and sharing his perspectives on the late revolutionary period and his experience in the early Soviet State. He had been spending some time during the summers in Estonia since 1910, and was last living there in 1917 during the Kornilov revolt. He noticed that in the years before the First World War, there were very few Russians in the regions. The Estonian *gubernia* looked different to most areas of Russia: very neat and well-organised farms were populated by welcoming people who would not even lock their doors at night. While the Russian population steadily grew, they managed to coexist peacefully with Estonians, working in the fields or trading. The two cultures peacefully coexisted next to one another. According to Izgoev, their attitude towards the Russians was originally amicable.[551] Of course, this was a relatively unrealistic picture of life in Estonia under the tsarist rule, when many started to complain about Russian culture being enforced in Western provinces. Nevertheless, Izgoev focused on how the situation deteriorated in just a few years. When the Great War started, most Estonians perceived Russians as protectors from the German aggressor. However, during the war, as more and more Russian army

[549]Vakar, pp. 86, 97. The proves the theory of "national indifference". Tara Zahra ("Imagined noncommunities: National indifference as a category of analysis", *Slavic Review* 69, 1 (2010), pp. 93–119) suggested that nationalistic struggle often did not spread among the masses, and remained confined to the educated political elite.

[550] Vakar, *Belorussia. The making of a nation,* p. 105.

[551] Aleksandr Izgoev, 'Piat' Let v Sovetskoĭ Rossii', in *Arkhiv Russkoĭ Revoliutsii*, vol. 10 (Berlin: Slowo-Verlag, 1923), p. 18.

units arrived in the region, these relationships deteriorated. By 1917, especially when discipline in the army collapsed, local people feared and resisted the Russian Army. Soldiers would loot villages, steal local produce, break into homes, and damage property. By 1917, Estonians were already looking forward to seeing the German Army as liberators.[552] Based on his own observations, Aleksandr Izgoev understood the Estonians' decision to become independent from Russia, even though he was a right-wing Kadet. These opinions above were not included in the Kadets' official programme and were expressed from a more personal point of view, yet they showed how personal experiences affected the liberals' views on national minorities. Russian émigré communities formed rather specific circles, which became known as Marc Raeff's term, "Russia Abroad".[553] Unlike many other immigrant communities, Russian refugees of the 1920s were moving not to start a new life abroad, but in the hope of returning to Russia and influencing the course of its political struggle. Among them, politically active members of the intelligentsia undoubtedly maintained a close involvement in Russian politics, as previous chapters have demonstrated.

Publishing in emigration, and different perspectives on the past from Tyrkova-Williams, Gessen and Obolenskii

While some publications addressing the policies of the Whites still appeared, more people started to publish their memoirs, reflecting on their life in Russia, their revolutionary and civil war experiences, and sometimes trying to understand where the Whites' policies went wrong. Throughout the 1920s it was becoming apparent that there would be no opportunity to return to the Soviet Union. This realisation came quickly after the evacuation of Vrangel's army from Crimea. As a result, more and more people in emigration were turning to the past and reconsidering their experiences. Publishing memoirs became a very popular activity among the émigré community. However, other liberals did not necessarily focus on the question of national determination, and preferred to discuss other aspects of the revolution and the civil war; nevertheless, the issue of nationality sometimes

[552] Izgoev, pp. 17–19.
[553] Marc Raeff, *Russia Abroad: A Cultural History of the Russian Emigration, 1919–1939* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), p. 5.

inevitably persisted. Countless publishing houses and journals set up by Russian émigrés were overflowing with manuscripts, whose supply by far exceeded the demand. Some were published very early: for example Tyrkova-Willims' *Na Putyakh k Svobode* appeared in London already in 1919; whereas others were written and published much later. Vasilii Maklakov, for example, started to work on his memoirs in the 1940s, and they were published in 1954, only three years before he passed away. Publishers, of course, looked for prominent Russian émigrés who had been closely involved in the politics of late imperial Russia or the White Governments. People with experience of working with newspapers and journals in Russia tried to continue with their profession in emigration. Gessen remembered meeting a young artist from Russia who had emigrated to Germany and was looking for a job as a caricaturist for journals. Gessen noticed that like many other Russians abroad, the artist did not ask, but rather demanded help from the Russian community. There was no one else he could turn to, as he did not speak a word of German.[554] The rush to get published did not subside for decades. In 1953, Ariadna Vladimirovna Tyrkova-Williams received a letter from an émigré lady, who had escaped the Soviet Union in the aftermath of the Second World War and was trying get published abroad. She decided to reach out to Tyrkova-Williams, claiming that they had attended the same gymnasium in pre-revolutionary St Petersburg and had the same teacher. The unknown lady, named Evgenia Danilovskaia, attached her story to the letter, describing her prosperous life in Russia as a daughter of a merchant, followed by a rapid change under the Soviet regime. She was placed in labour camps, until she found her way to Riga when the Second World War broke out – and eventually Germany and Switzerland – as she had managed to avoid deportation to the Soviet Union. Seemingly driven by extreme financial need, Evgenia asked Tyrkova-Williams for help in getting her story published in one of the Russian journals. She claimed to have experience in the pre-revolutionary journal *Lukomor'e*, and in a Riga newspaper *Za Rodinu*, in the Soviet period.[555] There was no sign of a response from Ariadna Vladimirovna; but of course, there were thousands of similar experiences within

[554] Iosif Gessen, *Gody Izgnaniia. Zhiznennyi Otchet.* (Paris: YMCA Press, 1979), p. 182.
[555] 'Letter from Evgeniia Danilovskaia'. Bakhmeteff Archive, Columbia University, Tyrkova-Williams papers, Box 29, Miscellaneous Pamphlets.

exiled Russian communities, providing too much repetitive material for the publishers.

Generally, an opportunity to work with an émigré journal was sought after among Russians abroad. Editing, publishing, writing – all these were opportunities that Russian émigrés were keen to take. Not just memoirs, but also articles, brochures, and discussions on future tactics from abroad were getting published in numerous émigré journals. To an extent this was due to the financial need that most émigrés were faced with abroad. However, other factors were important in getting their voice heard and sharing their views and personal experience. Expressing the views of the Russian community was important for those who were involved in Russian politics, finding a new sense of belonging and re-establishing their own political identity. While some journals, such as *The New Russia* in Britain, were aimed at the local population, this was the exception rather than the rule. However, despite the fact that most journals were published in Russian, editors still tried to form links with the local governments and authorities, and educate them about the situation in Russia. Gessen wrote that following the success of his journal *Slovo*, a wide variety of competitors started their own publications. He remembered there had been seventy-two Russian-language publishers just in Berlin – even St Petersburg had less before the revolution. Some journals published the same material. For example, after the death of Aleksandr Blok, his works were published in several journals, especially one of the most famous poems, "The Twelve".[556] Nevertheless, the most important difference between these rivals was their political position and view on Russia. Trying to portray a certain angle, and to appeal to certain audiences, editors looked for authors with specific opinions. For example, Baron Mikhail Aleksandrovich von Taube, a renowned international lawyer and historian, successfully continued his career in emigration – particularly by getting published in Germany, due to having a pro-German position. Starting his journey in the newly independent Finland, Taube became a member of the Special Committee on Russian Affairs (*Osobyi komitet po delam russkikh v Finliandii*) – one of the most active social institutions of the Russian émigré diaspora in Finland. Later, he moved to Germany and then France,

[556] Gessen, *Gody Izgnaniia. Zhiznennyi Otchet*, p. 106.

and taught at universities in Paris and at the Russian Science Institute in Berlin (*Russkiĭ Nauchnyĭ Institut v Berline*). His first post-revolutionary publication appeared only in 1920: an obituary of his relative, Senator Nikolai Erastovich Taube. This was followed by a short essay, "Perpetual Peace or Perpetual War? Thoughts on the League of Nations", which appeared in a Russian expatriate publication in Germany – *Detinets,* edited by Ivan Nazhivin – in 1922. In the early days of the Soviet Union, following the Whites' failure in Crimea, the theory of cooperating with groups left in Bolshevist Russia and undermining the regime from below, was regarded by émigré publishers as a call to connect writers in the Soviet Union and abroad. A wide variety of publishing houses and print periodicals were circulating in Europe. In the early 1920s, this number grew even further. Detinets was one of over seventy publishing houses that opened up in Germany: mostly in Berlin, and some in Munich. Ivan Nazhivin, who was more of a writer than a politician himself, saw the revolution of 1917 as a tragedy. He turned more towards conservative groups, feeling nostalgic for the old imperial Russia, even though before the revolution he had shared some more radical socialist views. Detinets was a publishing house, as well as a publication that only had one issue. It was established in order to cater to a wide audience of anti-Bolsheviks with various political beliefs, as well as to start a dialogue between the émigrés and those who remained in the Soviet Union. Nazhivin deliberately refrained from associating the publications with any narrow political belief, and claimed to include a wide variety of monarchist and nationalist views.

Published after several months of negotiation with the editor – and a special request to submit a typescript version, due to Taube's illegible handwriting – Taube's work finally offered a direct reflection of his views on Woodrow Wilson's New World Order. Taube was not featured in Detinets' own issue, which collected a variety of views from members of the White Guard, writers, and even a member of a liberal political group, the Union of Liberation. However, in 1922, Detinets published Taube's book: *Perpetual Peace of Perpetual War? Thoughts on the League of Nations* (*Vechnyĭ mir ili vechnaia voĭna? Mysli o "Lige natsiĭ"*). According to Taube, in 1917 Wilson had argued that a truly stable peace could not be a "peace of winners" versus the losers. His original idea of a peace treaty had

four priorities: the self-determination of nations; the breakdown of coalitions and a move away from "balance of power" politics; state governance according to the will of the governed; and, finally, disarmament.[557] This was, according to Taube, a logical set of ideas, from which the American president reverted once Germany started the submarine war and the US became involved. As a result, in Wilson's famous Fourteen Points that followed, only one was related to the legal union of states: "A general association of nations must be formed under specific covenants for the purpose of affording mutual guarantees of political independence and territorial integrity to great and small states alike" – Taube criticised this point for being "extraordinarily short".[558] Taube then proceeded to list member-states, referring to Yugoslavia as "Extended Serbia", and noting that the absence of Russia and Germany among members was especially notable. Nazhivin, when discussing the piece with Taube, mentioned that he would be "extremely pleased if there will be a glimpse of our Germanophile point of view. This is programmatically necessary for us, and there is no similar article in sight".[559]

Reflecting on the past, some Russian liberals preferred to focus on their time in Russia, more frequently overlooking the years in emigration. In her memoirs, Ariadna Vladimirovna Tyrkova-Williams focused mostly on her life in Russia, focusing on small details of the Duma and revolutionary period. She paid great attention to personalities of her colleagues, recreating the atmosphere of Kadet party meetings for the reader. From Tyrkova-Williams' perspective, the personalities of the Kadets played an important role in their reaction to the revolution, and their ability to find supporters and influence the course of events. When describing Pavel Miliukov, Tyrkova remembered him as a smart and persistent man, with strong moral and political convictions. While speaking confidently in the Duma, he nevertheless lacked the kind of charisma that would

[557] Mikhail Taube, *Vechnyĭ Mir Ili Vechnaia Voĭna? Mysli o 'Lige Natsiĭ'* (Berlin: Detinets, 1922), pp. 88–89.
[558] Taube, p. 91.
[559] Ivan Nazhivin, 'Letter to Taube', 21 August 1921, Bakhmeteff Archive, Columbia University, Taube Papers, Box 1, Catalogued Correspondents, "Буду весьма рад, если в ней проскочит как-нибудь наша германофильская точка зрения. Нам это программно необходимо, а других таких статей на горизонте не видно."

make him appealing to people. In addition, he sometimes talked down to his opponents, which did not make a good impression.[560]

"Russian Liberals were spoiled by years of being the opposition. They were too true to the liberal values and too picky when it came to means."[561] Ariadna Tyrkova-Williams came to this conclusion when reflecting on the revolution, while in London in 1919. While the civil war was still continuing, and hopes of the Whites were still high, for some it was already time to reflect on the mistakes of the failed Provisional Government. The only female member of the Kadet's Central Committee, she decided to leave Russia with her husband, Harold Williams, in March 1918. Like other supporters of the Whites, they were hesitant about their decision, worrying that this would be a betrayal of Russia. It was, however, becoming increasingly dangerous in Russia, and the Tyrkovy-Williams family left St Petersburg to settle in London.[562] Tyrkova-Williams continued her reflections: "Ministers truly felt that they were 'Provisional,' but when Lenin got the power, he was not going to share it with anyone. They [Ministers of the Provisional Government] lacked a firm grip. Miliukov did not grab onto the power himself, and only became the minister of foreign affairs. He lacked a sense of state as an organism, something that every British politician even of the middle range, carried in their blood."[563] The paragraph was overflowing with Tyrkova-Williams' sense of regret at the Kadets' practices, and their inability to withstand the pressure of socialists, which led to the subsequent chaos. However, Tyrkova-Williams' comparison of the Russian liberal tradition to the British here is rather telling. Implying that British officials would be more likely to be proactive in response to the situation in the state and people's moods, they would be more likely to prioritise maintaining their grip on power, over a liberal ideology. Russian liberals had looked up to their British colleagues, especially during the Great War, as the first chapters have shown; however, Tyrkova-Williams focused not just on how the British political system was structured (which had been praised by other

[560] Ariadna Tyrkova-Williams, *Na Putyakh k Svobode* (New York: Izd-vo im. Chekhova, 1952), pp. 372–373.
[561] Tyrkova-Williams Papers. GARF, F. 10230, Op. 1, D. 27.
[562] Charlotte Alston, *Russia's Greatest Enemy?: Harold Williams and the Russian Revolutions.* (London: Tauris Academic Studies, 2007), pp. 129–130.
[563] Tyrkova-Williams Papers. GARF, F. 10230, Op. 1, D. 27.

Kadets, such as Kokoshkin), but also on the British ability to implement order where needed, while at the same time giving the people what they wanted.[564] The political parties of revolutionary Russia were imposing policies they developed in their cabinets, while the people on the streets faced with difficulties and shortages, which these cabinet policies could not solve.

The experience of Russian liberals in emigration, and their desire to write about their experience, very much depended on their success abroad. Gessen wrote his memoirs on his life in emigration, describing what aspects of politics and social life were especially important to him at that time. While many émigrés struggled to redefine themselves in emigration and start a new life, Iossif Gessen had a relatively successful career in Berlin, editing and writing for very prominent Russian-language journals: *Slovo* and *Roul'*. Later he became famous across Russian émigré community for publishing *Arkhiv Russkoii Revolutsii* (*Chronicles of the Revolution*), in 22 volumes. It was only when he moved to Paris in 1936 that he felt inadequate. His wife had passed away, and *Slovo* and *Roul'* had to close. In addition, he had to sell most of his remaining belongings and move into a more modest apartment. He remembered lacking any motivation or interest in starting over in a new country.[565] This is where Gessen's memoirs end, with a very brief story of his life in Paris, but still largely focusing on his reasons for leaving Germany.

Gessen was struck by the number of societies that Russians organised abroad. While he supported the idea of professional societies, such as groups of writers, doctors, lawyers, and others, he found that political groups did more harm than good. Old political parties reorganised themselves abroad, but their activities did not yield any results. Former Duma members and state officials became refugees, yet still tried to maintain loyalty to their party. In addition, all these émigré parties started to divide into smaller groups, as their members widened their political horizons and took positions that diverged from what the party stood for originally. Party division did not occur only in the Kadets; according to Gessen, it

[564] Fedor Kokoshkin, *Angliia, Germaniia i Sud'by Evropy* (Moscow: Izd. Komiteta po uvekovecheniiu pamiati F.F. Kokoshkina i A.I. Shingareva, 1918).
[565] Gessen, *Gody Izgnaniia. Zhiznennyi Otchet*, p. 238.

was a very widespread phenomenon across the entire political spectrum. According to him, this was a natural thing to happen, since the old party programmes clearly had not withstood the revolution. Although the plurality of opinions and new approaches to politics were a positive change for Gessen, he believed that the existence of the old parties in these new conditions was redundant. Hence, Gessen was one of the greatest proponents of dissolving the Kadet party and finding new approaches to express political views, within new groups that shared revised political ideas. Izgoev shared Gessen's views, but the majority of the members were against party dissolution and existed for another couple of years in emigration. According to Gessen, however, the party was divided into several groups, whose members disagreed with each other on even the most basic points.

In addition, the circumstances of living in emigration predisposed old political rivals to make unexpected friendships and alliances. United by a tight-knit Russian community that often failed to integrate into local societies, as well as by support for the Whites, many people from different political groups were drawn together. Tyrkova-Williams remembered how heated the Duma debates were between the ultra-right wing, the Kadets, and the left. Yet in emigration, many members of the opposition became close friends. She reconnected with one of the Orthodox clergy members in the Duma, Metropolitan Evlogii.

- Would you have believed, Ariadna Vladimirovna, if anyone told you back in the Tauride Palace, that you would welcome me in your home one day? – Asked Evlogii
- And would you have believed that both you and I would be labelled as Judeo-Masons? – responded Tyrkova.[566]

This interaction showed how inapplicable the old political parties had become in emigration, and how far the liberals had shifted on the political spectrum.

[566] Tyrkova-Williams, *Na Putyakh k Svobode*, p. 336.

Gessen did not make many comments on relations between the Russian émigrés and the Entente, or with the Germans, in terms of political or military cooperation. However, from his experience of living in Germany, it is evident that he did not believe any close relationships between the Russian communities and host-countries were possible. In terms of cooperation between the anti-Bolshevik groups and the Germans, Russian émigré circles failed to provide a coherent agenda and plan of action. Numerous political organisations made efforts to establish relations with local Reichstag deputies, trying to influence their views towards Russia and Russian émigrés. For the most part, Germans were confused and overwhelmed by contradictory ideas coming from different Russian groups, which led to frustrations and did not yield any results. Culturally, even those Russians who tried to integrate into the German society and establish personal connections often found themselves lacking any common interests with their German friends. In the beginning of Gessen's life in Germany, most of the conversations revolved about the situation in Russia. There was also a great deal of curiosity regarding the émigrés' personal experiences: for instance, many people wanted to know how it was possible to leave almost all one's possessions behind. However, once these topics were exhausted, there was little else to discuss. Such sentiments were common among émigrés, no matter where they lived. For instance, Vladimir Nabokov wrote about a "glass wall" between the Russians and the British.[567]

Count Vladimir Obolenskii, unlike Gessen, did not enjoy his life outside Russia. A prominent Kadet, who had been a member of the first Duma and a zemstvo activist, Obolenskii was a close friend of Countess Sofia Panina and supported her in her political career.[568] A Kadet Duma deputy representing the Yalta region, Obolenskii was widely published in emigration. In the 1920s he wrote several manuscripts about his life and evacuation from Crimea, his work in the Zemstvos, and memoirs about his life and his colleagues.[569] His last memoir

[567] Iosif Gessen, *Gody Izgnaniia. Zhiznennyi Otchet*, p. 98.
[568] Adele Lindenmeyr, *Citizen Countess: Sofia Panina and the Fate of Revolutionary Russia* (University of Wisconsin Pres, 2019), p. 147.
[569] Obolenskii was published in several journals in Belrin: a White Journal *Na chuzhoĭ storone* published his memoirs on Crimea under Denikin and Crimea under Vrangel ("'Krym Pri Denikine", *Na Chuzhoĭ Storone* 8 (1924); "Krym Pri Vrangele", *Na Chuzhoĭ Storone* 9 (1925).). Obshchestvo dlia izucheniia

was published in 1988. Although he had a successful career abroad, he did not want to talk about it in his last work. Obolenskii finished his memoirs with the story of his evacuation from Crimea on one of the last of the French boats leaving for Constantinople. Obolenskii referred to the remaining twenty years of his life spent abroad as "not life, but survival", and refused to immortalise this period in his recollection of life. Although he took part in various émigré groups, he argued that he did it out of habit, lacking his previous motivation and energy.[570] Rather than dwelling on the new life in emigration, which was filled with daily challenges, as well as failed attempts to reconstruct the old political communities, writers gave much more attention to the Duma period, which was fondly remembered as the glory days of the Kadet party and of Russian politics in general. The Great War, followed by the revolutionary period of 1917, was also discussed widely by the Russian liberal community abroad, in an attempt to understand the revolution better from a new perspective.

Count Obolenskii shared some of Tyrkova's views on the Kadets in the period of the Duma and Provisional Government. He agreed that the Kadets failed to adequately act upon the growing revolutionary moods in the country. However, Obolenskii was more sympathetic: as events happened so quickly in 1917, it was nearly impossible to make timely decisions.[571] After Tyrkova-Williams' criticism of the Kadets, and Miliukov as the leader, for lacking courage in 1919, Miliukov became much more open to the idea of maintaining the power at all costs; but the momentum of the February Revolution was long gone. Obolenskii interpreted Miliukov differently to Tyrkova. The Count was convinced that already in the summer of 1917, Miliukov had been prepared to support a military dictatorship in order to prevent the Russian government from disintegrating. The leader of the Kadets was speaking at a Central Committee meeting, calling its members to support Kornilov's revolt; according to Obolenskii, most of the central committee

gorodskogo samoupravleniia v Chekhoslovatskoĭ Respublike published Obolenskii's work on zemstvos ("V zemstvakh", *Mestnoe samoupravlenie* 4 (1927). There is little account of Obolenskii's activity by other historians. Orlando Figes mentions him as one of the members of the First Duma (*A People's Tragedy: The Russian Revolution, 1891–1924* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1996). Adele Lindenmeyr references his memoirs regarding Countess Sofia Panina (*Citizen Countess: Sofia Panina and the Fate of Revolutionary Russia* (University of Wisconsin Pres, 2019)).

[570] Vladimir Obolenskiĭ, *Moja Zhizn'. Moi Sovremenniki.* (Paris: YMCA Press, 1988), p. 705.

[571] Ibid., pp. 513–515.

members agreed to support Kornilov, and his potential dictatorial regime, had the plan succeeded.[572] Interestingly, Maklakov also believed in the success of Kornilov's revolt at the time, but argued in favour of reinstating the monarchy if the plan succeeded.[573] At that point, most Duma deputies supported the idea of centralisation of the government. Obolenskii recalled that the only member who had disagreed with a more centralised government was a former Kadet and Duma member from Estonia, who argued in favour of Estonian independence. This claim seemed nonsense to Obolenskii and his colleagues, because "at the time, the mere thought of an independent Estonian state seemed like pure fantasy".[574] With the exception of this comment on Estonian demands, which seemed too radical in the summer of 1917, Obolenskii did not discuss the rights of minorities in any detail in his memoirs. He brushed off the claims of the Estonian deputy as an anecdotal story that did not deserve any further commentary or reflection. However, Obolenskii paid much attention to reflections on his life in Crimea following the Bolshevik Revolution in 1917, until he was evacuated in 1920. He inevitably addressed the issue of nationalities in the context of the Crimean Peninsula, which experienced three different governments in the three years that Obolenskii lived there. Russians, Germans, Crimean Tatars were all forced to reinterpret their own national identities and consider who was the new alien in the changing political circumstances. Obolenskii was convinced that when Crimea was occupied by the Germans, they had aimed to create an independent Muslim state under a German protectorate, and deliberately stirred nationalist sentiments among the Crimean Tatars, encouraging them to liberate themselves from Russian oppression.[575] Obolenskii recalled the way nationalities interacted with one another under the German rule. Bolsheviks who were in Crimea perceived other Russians as 'self' (*svoi*), as opposed to nationalist Tatars, or German imperialist occupants. The class hatred that the Bolsheviks had stirred among their supporters faded in these circumstances, overpowered by nationalist hatred.

[572] Ibid., pp. 538–539.
[573] Gessen, *Gody Izgnaniia. Zhiznennyi Otchet*, p. 214.
[574] Obolenskiĭ, *Moja Zhizn'. Moi Sovremenniki*, p. 540.
[575] Ibid, p. 589.

The majority of the Kadets condemned the pro-German orientation for their leader, along with a minority group at the time, calling it an unforgivable betrayal of the Allies. From Obolenskii's memoirs, it is clear that the decision to support the Germans was viewed differently by those in the occupied territories, compared to those in White governments or abroad. Having to face a literal choice between the Germans or the Bolsheviks changed the perception of enemy and 'other'. Obolenskii recalled the unsettling feeling of triumph when the Germans took over Crimea. Yesterday's enemies had pushed the Bolsheviks out, and local Tatars returned to their homes safely. He himself recalled the unsettling feeling of order that came to Crimea under the Germans. A sense of 'national shame' (*oshchushchenie natsional'ogo pozora*) was mixed with a sense of personal triumph, as he and his loved ones escaped death at the hands of the Bolsheviks.[576] At the same time, Obolenskii acknowledged that life in Crimea under German occupation was better than in the other periods of the civil war. The German Army was able to bring and maintain order in everyday activities, ensure the functioning of the local government, and prevent petty crimes. Life returned to normal: people returned to work, started to pay taxes, trade was recovering, and inflation was under control.[577] While Obolenskii remained a proponent of local governments and zemstvos – similar to most Kadets, who supported a strong dictatorship to bring order – he nonetheless acknowledged that it was the presence of the strong German Army that enforced the order, and ensured that local zemstvos could run and do their job. In the period between German occupation and the White forces' entry into Crimea, local Dumas and zemstvos were expected to maintain order in the area, which they failed to do in absence of any real military force.[578]

After the Germans took control of Crimea, most Kadets still considered them as enemies; nevertheless, they agreed that it was important to participate in the new government, along with nationalist Crimean Tatars. For the Kadets, it was necessary to not only take part in civil government in an occupied territory, but also to represent the Russian population of Crimea – where Tatars, despite being a national minority, could gain control of the entire government. This was

[576] Ibid., p. 592.
[577] Ibid., p. 603.
[578] Ibid., p. 629.

unacceptable for Obolenskii, as was the potential 'dismemberment' of Crimea from Russia. Similar to the idea of the Provisional Government that formed in February 1917, the Kadets stressed the provisional nature of the Crimean government. In their proposal, Crimea remained a part of Russia, *temporarily* detached from the centre and occupied by the German army. The government should consider itself provisional until the Bolsheviks were overthrown, and a new Russia government could form. The government should refrain from establishing any diplomatic connection with other states, due to its dependent nature.[579] To an extent, the Kadets' programme was successful, but the position of Minister of Foreign Affairs was established and assigned to a Tatar nationalist, Cafer Seydamet. Obolenskii stressed the instability of the new government of Tatar majority, forced on a mostly Russian population. He was convinced that most of the ministers of the new government were not interested in Crimean independence, and mostly took their new positions to advance their own careers.[580] The discussion of nationalities and self-determination arose within the Crimean–Ukrainian relationship, where Ukraine refused to recognise an independent Crimea and stated that it should be part of Ukraine. Obolenskii was involved in the Ukrainian–Crimean debate through the Ukrainian Kadet party, which continued to work with the Crimean Kadets. To him, these territorial claims were just as invalid as full Crimean independence. Both territories were occupied by Germany at the time; and, while Count Obolenskii was certain that the Germans had started this 'pseudo-war' between Ukraine and Crimea, he failed to find a reason why this would serve German interests.[581] Obolenskii travelled from Crimea to Kiev to participate in the Kadet Party meeting, where Miliukov announced his pro-German position. In his memoirs, Obolenskii mocked the Ukrainian struggle for national independence, pointing out that former Petrograd ministers who had fled to Ukraine to escape Bolshevism, had now found new careers in the Ukrainian government. They had started writing their names in Ukrainian instead of Russian, while ultimately only perceiving their own career aspirations, where possible.[582]

[579] Ibid., p. 594.
[580] Ibid., p. 599.
[581] Ibid, pp. 603–604.
[582] Ibid., pp. 607–608.

Nevertheless, claims of an independent Ukraine, which included Crimea angered him. Obolenskii was enraged by his conversation with Bogdan Kistiakovskii, one of the co-founders of Ukrainian Federal democratic Party, who claimed that he was not certain "if Russia would perish or not, but Ukraine would exist as an independent state and Crimea would be part of it whether voluntarily or by force".[583] Thus, Obolenskii and other Crimean Kadets supported the idea that national minorities were being manipulated by the Germans in order to further disrupt Russia and create controllable small states. The same argument was made by Miliukov when addressing the Allies in Yassy, and arguing against the establishment of independent nation-states on the borders of the former Russian empire.

The arrival of Denikin's Volunteer Army in Crimea posed a new set of challenges for the Kadets. Counterintuitively, liberation from the Germans caused more instability for them, as a new government had to be formed. Discussions of separatism became more alarming for Obolenskii in this period. The proposed independence of different peoples in the south-west of the former Russian Empire raised the possibility of several independent states. Ukraine had already started a campaign against the Russian language and culture. The federative structure of Kuban worried Obolenskii, although the Kuban Cossacks supported a united Russia. A zemstvo meeting was supposed to reunite the 'peoples of the South of Russia' (*narody iuga Rossii*). However, the multi-party nature of the White government prevented the new local governments from reaching any conclusions, due to wide disagreements on policies.[584] Furthermore, Denikin's military government was highly centralised, and local authorities had very limited functions, which made it challenging for them to control their local areas or enforce order. In addition, it was challenging to comply with the orders from the Centre in Ekaterinodar. For instance, Obolenskii remembered that it was hard to meet the requirements regarding the mobilisation orders of the White Army. Local peasants resisted forced mobilisation, and there were numerous cases of deserters and strikes against mobilisation. It was the role of the local governments, however, to

[583] Ibid., p. 609.
[584] Ibid., p. 638.

catch the deserters and to punish them, which was difficult with a lack of means and authority.[585] It was also challenging to request and obtain funds for the local governments, as the paperwork had to be sent first to Ekaterinodar and then to Rostov. On several occasions, Obolenskii had to travel to Rostov himself to collect the money for the local zemstvo. Denikin's government functioned much worse than the Germans, according to Obolenskii. Corruption, growing bureaucracy and a lack of order were spreading quickly in the territories controlled by the Whites. Locals continued to live in a multinational environment, while the issue of nationalities' rights was in no way addressed. Thus, although Obolenskii did not necessarily address the national minorities' rights to self-determination, he was inevitably involved into the debates on autonomy and independence from the Russian state. The Count considered himself a Russian patriot, clearly standing for a one and indivisible Russia throughout his experience in the civil war. For him, political debates prevailed over nationalist ones. He recalled that on the boat to Constantinople, he was sitting next to an Armenian family who hardly spoke any Russian. In order to identify themselves as 'self' or 'other', they would rely on their political background. Obolenskii shared a memory of the following conversation he had with them:

- Who do you like? Do you like Lenin?

  Of course, I had to answer that I did not like Lenin.
- Do you like the tsar?

  I gave a negative answer again. This confused my acquaintance, as he only imagined me as either a revolutionary, supporting Lenin, or a counter-revolutionary, supporting the tsar. If I was neither, what was I? All of a sudden, the man's brother who had remained silent before exclaimed:
- I know! You like Kerenskii![586]

[585] Ibid., p. 673.
[586] Vladimir Obolenskiĭ, *Moia Zhizn'. Moi Sovremenniki.* (Paris: YMCA Press, 1988), p. 751.

Although Obolenskii did not support Kerenskii in particular, he nodded in agreement, trying to avoid any confusion, while at the same time roughly indicating which political camp he belonged to. To the Armenians, 'liking Kerenskii' meant standing for democracy and freedom, which Obolenskii never lived to see in post-revolutionary Russia.

Thus, such memoirs reflected each individual's experience of revolution and the civil war. For Obolenskii, the issues of national minorities were not a subject he specifically discussed. He had no doubt whatsoever that both Ukraine and Crimea were inextricable parts of Russia, including all the non-Russian nationalities who populated these territories. Importantly, the idea of patriotism dominated over the discussion of rights to national self-determination. Preserving the borderlands of the Russian empire was a question of loyalty to the Russian state. First and foremost, he considered himself a Russian patriot, and the interests of the Russian state came before ideas of liberalism as such. His account of the fast-changing governments in Crimea showed that he was placed in several governments, and was forced to work with the Germans, socialists and conservative Whites, but he managed to do so. Obolenskii did not mention loyalty to liberal values in any way; he was more interested in supporting the work in zemstvos, and bringing security and order to the chaotic Crimean Peninsula in this period of turmoil. However, discussions of national belonging featured in his memoirs unexpectedly, as they were inevitable in the changing governments of Crimea. The loyalty of Russians, Ukrainians, Cossacks and even Germans in the region often fell along nationalist lines, and Obolenskii was surprised to find unexpected allies in Germans and enemies in Russian Bolsheviks. These factors showed a new level of discussion of the ideas of national belonging – the *svoi* and *chuzhoi* dichotomy – and revealed the complexity of the question of national belonging, in the context of a broader state crisis.

While Russian émigrés wrote memoirs with a particular audience in mind, and a clear image of how they wanted to portray themselves, they provide an important insight into their personal reflections on their life in Russia and abroad during this tumultuous period. Many Kadets considered the Duma period and the

Provisional Government the peak of the party, and often the peak of their own personal careers. For the most part, each writer made a conscious decision to focus on the part of history which seemed to be the most successful and prosperous part of their own life. And yet, this provided readers with a broader scope of perspectives. Evidently, everyone had their own experience of the revolution and wanted to voice their own opinion on the past events. Life in emigration changed the liberals' own political views and, to an extent, made them more accepting of some of their opponents. New alliances were formed, while some old ones could not withstand the test of the new environment. These events affected the Kadets' perceptions of their party, their programme, and their own personal roles. The issue of national minorities was not always necessarily explicitly addressed, but from the context and small remarks, it was clear that the Kadets maintained the belief in "Russia united and invisible". For them, this remained a question of patriotism, of a commitment to protect Russia in its old borders to the greatest possible extent. This idea of patriotism prevailed over discussions of the rights and interests of other nations, or the question of the New World Order established by the League of Nations.

When Count Vladimir Obolenskii recalled the events in Crimea in his memoirs, he concluded that the fall of the Crimean government was inevitable, due to the shortcomings of Wrangel's officials, lack of communication between the local areas and the centre, and lack of understanding of the situation on the ground.[587] He pointed out that when the Allies entered Crimea, they did not even know that an independent Crimean government had been formed. They did not even know whether it was the government of the Whites or the Bolsheviks, so they refused to have any negotiations with the local ministers without consulting their own governments first.[588] Wrangel's army in Crimea was unaware of the situation in many areas, and failed to send support where it was needed. Retrospectively, Obolenskii concluded that the Crimean government had no way of succeeding against the Bolsheviks, due to its disorderly governance.[589] However, at the time,

[587] Vladimir Obolenskiĭ, *Moia Zhizn'. Moi Sovremenniki.* (Paris: YMCA Press, 1988), p. 737.
[588] Ibid., p. 623.
[589] Ibid., p. 735.

the fall of Wrangel's Crimean government and the final evacuation came as devastating and surprising news for the émigrés, and the liberals among them. The failures of Denikin and the previous White governments also came as a surprise. Russian liberals in emigration, who focused on serving as the link between White Russia and the Allies, worked on portraying a prosperous picture of the White Army's successes. Foreign publications gave the impression that the fall of the Bolsheviks would come shortly, and yet it did not happen. The mismatch between the situation on the ground and what the liberals were claiming in the press abroad was not predominantly due to a desire to mislead the international community, but was caused by a lack of reliable information from Russia. Sources of the Whites were more optimistic than the reality. For example, General Denikin's reports on the progress of the Southern White Army were filled with optimism, and seemed to be very promising until the very end. It seemed that the Whites' advances were significant, while the setbacks were not as shattering as they later turned out to be. While some of the liberals' publications were not intended as propagandistic, such as arguments that the Russian Empire was peacefully uniting national minorities under its flag, in general it was clear that the liberals genuinely had no way of knowing the gravity and scope of the nationalist movements; and neither could they estimate the real position of the White Army. There was almost no information from the Bolsheviks' side, both during and after the civil war. This one-sided information prevented Russian émigré communities from adequately assessing the situation in Russia, and liberals were no exception. For this reason, one can find no disparity between liberals' personal communications and those with the Allies, or in print material. The rapidly changing situation made it even harder to keep up to date with the events in Russia.

Misconstrued visions of the situation in Russia and of the Bolsheviks led some members of the White movement to believe that they could safely stay in Bolshevist Russia. Vladimir Obolenskii, Ariadna Tyrkova-Williams and many others refused to leave until the very last opportunity. Obolenskii's decision was met with some criticism by his colleagues, and he had to explain that he was leaving to protect his family. Some Whites stayed behind thinking that the situation could not deteriorate further after the civil war. Others did not fully understand the

dangers of the Soviet Regime, even for those who were sympathetic to the Whites. Obolenskii recalled that most of his colleagues and friends who decided to stay in the Soviet Union fell victims of the Soviet Terror, but with one exception. In the early years, the Cheka, the Soviet secret police, was not yet operating properly and had many gaps in its knowledge; thus, for a few years, members of the White movement managed to survive in the Soviet Union. Obolenskii knew a Social Democrat, Voroshilov, who was too sick to leave during evacuation – he remained in hiding for year, but then managed to move to Kazan and live under his own name for several years without getting caught, until he died of natural causes.[590] Another example of the damage caused by misinformation is Shulgin's trip to the Soviet Union in 1925, which turned out to be planned by the GPU (Soviet Political Directorate), known as Operation Trest. GPU set up a counterintelligence unit aiming to spread disinformation with the émigré circles, as well as uncover any remaining pro-White citizens in the Soviet Union. Shulgin later confirmed that he was in touch with the Soviet authorities; but as Iosif Gessen argued, this confession did not greatly undermine his reputation in emigration.[591]

The lack of information affected not only liberals' perception of the military situation in Russia and the Bolshevist regime, but also their position towards national minorities. Relying on the information from the Whites also meant relying on information from pro-White organisations and communities elsewhere; these were supportive of a strong Russia, as were liberals abroad. Letters from pro-Russian organisations or individuals expressed their loyalty to Great Russia, and confirmed the ingenuity of nationalist movements and their German origins, thus fuelling the liberal imperialist position.[592] For example, some communities among the Slavic peoples who were part of the Austro-Hungarian empire supported Russian imperialist ambitions. Bulletins of the Russian Liberation Committee, for example, cite Dr Kramář, Prime Minister of Czecho-Slovakia, who supported General Denikin's army in the South of Russia. Kramář reiterated the same ideas,

[590] Ibid., p. 738.
[591] Iosif Gessen, *Gody Izgnaniia. Zhiznennyi Otchet.* (Paris: YMCA Press, 1979), pp. 190–191.
[592] For example, Paul Miliukov received a letter from a Polish Citizen complaining about Polish oppression of the Orthodox Church and the Orthodox clergy ('To the Polish People', 22 November 1922. Bakhmeteff Archive, Columbia University, Miliukov Papers, Box 14).

that both Bolshevism and nationalism were the work of German propaganda to undermine Russia, and he advocated a strong Russian state:

> Their [Yugo-Slavs'] desire is that Russia should become the mainstay of order, liberty, democratism and progress … The Slavonic peoples look to Russia … We think of the future of Russia as a decentralised state, with broad regional autonomy, but not as a federation. A treaty between Russia and the Ukraine is unthinkable. The Ukrainian problem must be solved by Russia.[593]

Another national minority that supported Russian imperialism was the Carpatho-Russians, who occupied the territory of Eastern Galicia, previously part of the Austro-Hungarian empire. While not a homogenous national group, Carpatho-Russians nevertheless strongly associated themselves with Slavic identity, and showed strong resentment against Polish dominance over them. Some of them were prominent Russophiles and saw Carpatho-Russians as "a small part of the multitudinous and mighty Russian people … from Petrograd to Kamchatka".[594] They formed several groups: the Russian National Council of Carpatho-Russians and the League for the Liberation of Carpatho-Russians, with groups in the United States and Canada. The Russian National Council of Carpatho-Russians issued a memorandum for the Paris Peace Conference, demanding to be recognised as the rightful government of Carpatho-Russia, and arguing that their people would suffer under oppressive Polish occupation. They wanted an independent state of Carpatho-Russia to operate under the protectorate of the League of Nations, before reuniting with democratic Russia. The Council was also critical of independent Ukraine, calling it a "mirage" driven by "Little

[593] 'Bulletins of the Russian Liberation Committee', 13 December 1919 (N43). Tyrkowa-Williams papers, Box 28.
[594] Ivan Filevich, "Ugorskaia Rus' i sviazannye s neiu voprosy i zadachi russkoi istorichskoi nauki", *Carshavskiia universitetskiia izvestiia* 5, 3 (1894), pp. 1–32. Cited in: Paul R. Magocsi, *The shaping of a national identity: Subcarpathian Rus', 1848–1948*. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1978), p. 194.

Russians out of purely opportunistic motives, who have declared themselves as apparent supporters of the project of Polish protectorate".[595]

Russian communities abroad were too often exposed to this pro-White and pro-Russian position, and often remained deaf to national minorities' demands for self-determination. Given the imperialistic attitude to most nationalities groups, and the belief that they were not 'stable enough' to form their own state – which was further exacerbated by the need to serve Russia's interests – liberals' position towards minorities rights was understandable. They were genuinely convinced that minorities demanding complete independence from Russia had been influenced by the Bolsheviks and the Germans, in order to undermine the Russian state. It was also very reasonable for them expect post-Bolshevik Russia to eventually re-establish its sphere of influence, even if new nation-states were formed temporarily during the civil war. There were only very few occasions when particular individuals had been sufficiently exposed to the affairs of different nationalities groups; hence, they realised that the desire for independence came from within those communities, and they understood the reasons for negative attitude to the Russians. However, these sentiments were never incorporated in any official policy towards minority communities.

[595] Memorandum and Declaration of the Russian National Council of Carpatho-Russia in Lvov, of the League for the liberation of Carpatho-Russia in America and the League for the liberation of Carpatho-Russia in Canada. 19 September 1919, pp. 13–14. Hoover Institution Archive, Russia. Posol'stvo U.S. Carton N96, Box 22, Folder 11.

Conclusion

This thesis has considered the development of the Russian liberal position regarding the rights of national minorities, from the revolution of 1905 to the 1920s. It discussed what the right to self-determination meant to Russian liberals in general, and in Russia's case specifically. The Constitutional Democratic party took a central part in the discussion, as the leading liberal party of the Russian Empire. Both individual members' views and the party's official policies were taken into consideration. Throughout the first two decades of the twentieth century, Russian liberals underwent a series of radical changes, in their political position, careers and personal lives. They evolved from being the "His Majesty's Opposition", in Miliukov's words, to being at the head of the Russian government in a coalition with the socialists – and then became a centrist party within a very politically broad spectrum of the Whites.[596] The political experience of Russian liberals affected the way they viewed the issue of national minorities. Their position towards minority rights originated in their core beliefs, regarding the individual rights and freedoms that they wanted to grant to all subjects of the Russian empire, regardless of religion or nationality. The Kadets' programme presupposed that granting equal rights and an electoral representative government would solve the issues of national minorities. Among the main features of liberals' policies towards non-Russians in the imperial government were granting freedoms of cultural self-determination, religion, and right to use their own language. These too originated from the idea of individual rights and freedoms, which had been removed by the late tsarist government's harsh policies of Russification. However, the interests of national minorities as collectives were hard for the Russian liberals to address, because their programme was based on the equality of all subjects of the Russian Empire. Once they were faced with this challenge, they did not have the relevant tools in their programme to respond. In many ways, there was little unique about the liberals' experience, as all the Russian émigrés who did not support the Bolshevik regime were faced with the same challenges and had similar experiences. Throughout the twentieth century, liberals in Russia had very few

[596] Pavel Miliukov, "Miliukov's London Mansion House Speech", *Rech'*, 21 June 1909.

opportunities to develop an independent policy of their own, let alone implement it. Following the February Revolution of 1917, they found themselves collaborating with more right-wing and left-wing powers, and were constrained by the rapidly changing political environment in Russia. This was also the first time they had acted on behalf of the government, rather than in opposition, which was a new experience. Rather than suggesting alternatives and criticising the regime, they were now in charge of the policies and were the ones being criticised. Coupled with the crisis that was rapidly evolving in Russia at the time, the failure of the Provisional Government and the liberals within it retrospectively seemed inevitable. During this time, liberals were faced with the challenge of managing the political and economic crisis in Russia. Devoted to the Allies and determined to stay in the First World War, the imperialist side of Russian liberalism became especially evident at that time. Miliukov, as the new Foreign Minister, was determined to expand Russia's borderlands following the Great War. A similar policy of equal rights would have been applied to the new Russia's spheres of influence. After the Bolshevik Revolution, however, Russian liberals started to leave Moscow and St Petersburg for the White Governments outside the country's political centre, and then abroad. During this time, liberals took a more right-wing conservative position. Supporting the White Governments that were effectively military dictatorships, Russian liberals believed that re-establishing order in Russia and defeating the Bolsheviks were more important than liberalising the former Empire.

Nevertheless, political convictions remained important for Russian liberals, both within the Provisional White Governments and in emigration. For the Constitutional Democrats, party belonging and liberal values remained key features in navigating their position during these tumultuous times. Their views on the future of Russia, and on the rights of national minorities in particular, helped them to define their role during the civil war as negotiators with the liberal West, as well as to define their position on the New Wilsonian World Order. For the Russian liberals, the issue of non-Russians' rights to self-determination was a considerable part of their political agenda, especially throughout the First World War and the Provisional Government. Following the October Revolution and

exodus of Russian liberals abroad, their views on national minorities became less of a political agenda, and more a propagandistic element in their work. Focused on overthrowing the Bolsheviks and the Paris Peace Treaty, liberals were less focused on how non-Russian nationalities would be governed, and more concerned with preserving as much of Imperial Russia's territory as possible for the future post-Bolshevik state. Their audience also changed from the minorities in question, to other Entente members. The Kadets fully understood that the future of European borderlands and the fate of national minorities were in the hands of the larger states who had defeated Germany: Britain, France and the United States. Their language and position, therefore, changed accordingly. They were focusing their argument on regional stability, Russia's protectionism towards smaller nations, and 'a clean slate' that would include recognition of nationalities' rights within a future Russian state – post-imperial and post-Bolshevik. Articles, letters and speeches that Russian liberals produced when living abroad, aimed at the local audiences, promised that the new Russian state would bring prosperity and stability to the entire region, and also grant minorities' rights to self-determination. However, these were very vague, in terms of any concrete programmes or plans.

In 1924, the remaining Kadets abroad attempted to reinvent themselves into a broader democratic party: the Republican-Democratic Group. Several groups were organised across Europe, in Paris and Berlin. Its main goal was to try and establish a support base in Russia through the clandestine circulation of publications, and by building connections with those who did not support the Bolsheviks. Their activities did not yield any tangible results, and in 1927 Miliukov acknowledged that their publications were much more popular among émigré circles. The Group also failed to attract a broader political base: neither Socialist Revolutionaries nor National Revolutionaries supported the Group, and it quickly factionalised within as well, similarly to all the Kadets' previous attempts to organise any political coalition. The wait for changes within Russia lasted for decades, and none of the Kadets would see it in their lifetimes. Nonetheless, even as attempts to develop a strategy to return to Russia slowly died out, they never ceased to watch the events in the Soviet Union and to exist in the

realm of Russian émigré communities, both collectively and individually reliving their past and cherishing their roots.

Generally, the Kadets parted from liberal views during the civil war. They found themselves collaborating with a wide range of powers in the White movement; however, they sided with the Kolchak government's autocratic ideas of military dictatorship. Their liberal principles of free and equal elections, freedom of speech and a representative government of the Constituent Assembly were pushed into some distant future, once order was restored. After 1921, they began to revisit their liberal ideas, and some tried to reconsider their views of the Russian population and its ability to act as a civil society. Importantly, liberal ideas were developed in somewhat of a vacuum for many years under the autocratic tsarist government; and since the establishment of the Kadet party until the revolutionary year of 1917, their ideas were developing in opposition to the ruler. Already during the brief Provisional Government, the Kadets had to consider their political position as being in opposition to the radical socialists; they came to realise that they were more able to work with a tsarist regime, than with the socialists' demands for universal equality, division of land, and the abolition of most private property.

For Russian liberals, the question of national minorities' rights to form independent states was closely linked to the question of patriotism. Supporting new nation-states' complete independence from Russia meant 'dismembering' Russia on its borderlands. With civil war and forced emigration, Russian liberals became increasingly more focused on the issue of patriotism – an issue that haunted them in most decisions they made. Was leaving Russia in the midst of war considered a betrayal of *Rodina*? The decision to leave was not easy for most, and was often dictated by a life-threatening situation for the liberals themselves and their families. Reconsidering the strategy after the Crimean evacuation, and suggestions to accept the Bolsheviks and work out a new plan while acknowledging their government, was also a sign of betrayal, in the view of right-wing members of the Whites. Similarly, supporting new independent states could not be considered as acting in Russia's best interests. Anna Procyk argued that in Ukraine, Denikin failed to create a viable military alliance with Ukrainians

because he was not willing to negotiate on their rights, and even discussed federalism.[597] However, similar aims of preserving Russian borders were common among the Whites across the borderlands of the former Russian Empire, and were shared by émigré groups as well. Some liberals in the Volunteer Army supported Denikin in this, becoming more nationalist and right-wing than before. For many Russian liberals in emigration, the nationalities question become side-lined more rapidly than when they were participating in White Governments at home, where some people understood the national minorities' desire to form independent states. The sense of patriotism and the desire to serve Russia's interests was the main reason for liberals' conservative turn. While Russian liberals became more right-wing during the civil war, and prioritised restoring order in the country to implementing liberal reforms, they nevertheless stayed true to their political convictions. For the Constitutional Democrats, party belonging and liberal values remained key concerns when navigating their position during these tumultuous times. They had few opportunities to practise liberal policies in the White Governments, which only allowed liberal zemstvos to run relatively minor local initiatives, Russian liberals were confident that an elective government would be restored, and that the policies of liberalisation that the Provisional Government aimed to introduce would be implemented.

Throughout the First World War, the Russian Revolution and the civil war, the Russian liberals' position towards the rights of national minorities did not change very substantively. One of the most important aspects of the minorities' question was unequal treatment of different nations. The question of how 'developed' certain *narody* were was directly linked to how much freedom and political rights they would gain, ranging from regional autonomy to merely freedom of cultural and religious practices. The Kadets, as a party and as individuals, generally maintained this approach, and categorised different nations. Eventually, due to growing international pressure, liberals reluctantly acknowledged the independence of Poland and Finland, but they still planned to maintain close ties and exercise influence over these states. Where does the

[597] Anna Procyk, *Russian Nationalism and Ukraine: The Nationality Policy of the Volunteer Army during the Civil War* (Toronto: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies Press, 1995).

Russian liberal position on minorities' rights fit into the wider international discourse at the time? The end of the First World War was seen as a triumph of liberalism, and the time when the map of Europe was redrawn. When President Woodrow Wilson argued that all nationalities should have rights to national self-determination, he did not consider how far he would be willing to push this statement. In practice, there was little agreement on how to define the principle of self-determination and how to apply it fairly. No state could have been formed without minorities groups remaining within the new frontiers. In the reshaped Europe, there were about 25–30 million people who remained within national minority groups of the newly established states, comprising around 20 to 25 per cent of the overall population.[598] Russian liberals followed their Western colleagues in categorising nationalities by their level of development; however, this approach was largely dictated by the circumstances in which Russia found itself after 1917. While liberals' ideas on national minorities' treatment changed throughout the civil war, they were largely driven by the changing circumstances and the fact that they had no control over the creation of new nation-states on Russia's former borderlands, rather than by a change in their political beliefs. They remained true to liberal imperialist concepts, and they continued to hope that post-Bolshevist Russia would eventually reunite the newly independent states. However, due to a lack of reliable information and the absence of a full picture, the Kadets failed to acknowledge the widening gap between their policies towards minorities and minorities' demands.

While the international community acknowledged the need to protect national minorities at the end of the First World War, every side in the conflict interpreted the rights to self-determination in their own manner, based on their own political interests. The issue of national minorities was one of the areas that Kadets returned to in retrospective analysis of their experience. The nationalities' rights to self-determination became widely discussed, not just by the liberals, but also by other political groups. A contested and complex issue, which proved hard to tackle while satisfying everyone's interest, became commonly used as propaganda.

[598] C. A. Macartney, *National States and National Minorities* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1934), p. 211.

While the Whites had been actively representing Russia as the "defender of the smaller nations" to their Western colleagues, the Bolsheviks, for example, were using the nationalities policies of not just the tsarist regime, but also of the Provisional Government, to demonstrate the oppression of national minorities by the old Russian ruling class, and the exploitative nature of the arrangement of territories on the Russian Empire.

National minorities pleaded their cases at Versailles, not always successfully. Those who were making a plea for their independence adjusted to the new situation in post-war Europe and framed their arguments to impress the Entente members. Often this meant familiarising representatives from Britain, France and the United States with the origins of their countries, their culture and ethnic identity. In many instances, the Allied delegations were unaware of the situation, and became overwhelmed with what turned out to be an insurmountable task of accommodating the demands of all nationalities. As a result, self-determination was applied to the territories of defeated powers – Germany and Austro-Hungary. Which side did the Russian Empire align with during this time? This was a difficult question to answer, after the Bolsheviks had signed the Brest-Litovsk Treaty with the Central Powers. One of the biggest challenges facing the Russian liberals abroad was to serve as a link between White Russia and the liberal governments of the Allies, and to represent Russia as a member of the Entente. They ultimately failed to complete this task. When considering the Russian liberals' position within the wider international discussion of the rights of national minorities, it was not opposed to the Allied position on the rights to self-determination: the liberals were prepared to recognise national minorities' rights as long as they did not infringe on Russia's own interests. The liberals' position before and during the Paris peace negotiations precisely reflected this position of representing Russia's interests above all others. Preserving the old borderlands as much as possible, and gaining international recognition of the White Government, were the ultimate goals that they were hoping to achieve.

The Bolsheviks also used the nationalities' cause in their own agenda. Lenin believed that ultimately, class would overpower national identity; however, being aware of the nationalist policies of the Old Regime, and growing discontent

among minorities, he was eager to recognise their rights to self-determination. Already in 1915, Lenin called to "link the revolutionary struggle for socialism with a revolutionary programme on the national question".[599] Similarly to the Kadets, Lenin separated states into categories with different levels of development of self-determination: advanced capitalist countries of Western Europe; developing Eastern European countries, and multinational empires, where self-determination had to be developed; and semi-colonial and colonial countries.[600] The fact that bourgeois European states were the makers of the new post-war Europe was significant in itself for the early Bolshevik state, giving it an opportunity to emphasise the exploitative nature of the liberal-bourgeois states versus the workers' state. In 1926, Soviet publishers released a book on Russo–Polish relations, publishing secret documents from the Imperial Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs at the time of the First World War.[601] Editors of the volume commented that the documents, which mostly contained correspondence between Russians and the Entente regarding Poland, attested to the exploitative and bourgeois nature of both Russia and the other Entente members: they were just pretending to lead the war in the name of liberating smaller nations, whereas in practice they used this opportunity to divide and exploit national minorities for their own gain.[602]

A discussion of the rights of nations of western Russia's borderlands was one of the key elements of the Brest-Litovsk Treaty. The Bolsheviks were forced to recognise the independence of Ukraine, Georgia and Finland. While Germany and Austro-Hungary expanded their own borders with territories in the Baltic states, the Central Powers also used the argument of minorities' rights to their own state in order to exert their influence over newly established states in Eastern Europe – or, in Miliukov's terms, in order to undermine Russia. Therefore, all parties during the Great War interpreted national minorities' rights differently,

[599] Vladimir Lenin, *Polnoe Sobranie Sochinenii*, vol. 21 (Moscow: Politizdat, 1964), p. 408. Cited in: Borislav Chernev, "The Brest-Litovsk Moment: Self Determination Discourse in Eastern Europe before Wilsonianism", *Diplomacy & Statecraft* 22, 3 (2011), pp. 370–371.
[600] Chernev, "The Brest-Litovsk Moment: Self Determination Discourse in Eastern Europe before Wilsonianism", p. 371.
[601] N. M. Lapinskiĭ, *Russko-Pol'skie Otnosheniia v Period Mirovoĭ Voĭny* (Moscow, 1926).
[602] Ibid., p. 4.

disagreed on which minorities should have rights to self-determination, and used the issue to advance their own interests.

When considering where to finally draw a line under the history of the Russian Civil War, we naturally turn to the events within Russia itself, rather than considering Russia Abroad. The Bolsheviks had been celebrating the October Revolution as the day of their victory, and did not emphasise the civil war that followed, when writing their own history. Trotsky, perhaps purposefully, wrote that the Crimean campaign was the last episode of the civil war, to suggest there was no further resistance against the Bolshevik state.[603] For the Whites, October 1917 was just the beginning of the fiercest resistance against the Bolsheviks' coup. Similarly, émigré communities did not envision October 1917 as the end of Russia and the beginning of the Soviet State at the time. As regards the Russian émigré community, it is hard to find a specific point in time when their story ended. Was it when they saw that the creation of the Soviet Union was inevitable? Or when they realised they would live the rest of their lives in emigration? Émigrés' attempts to change tactics and reconsider their position towards the Bolsheviks was one of the focal points where the history of Russian liberals abroad took a turn, but it is difficult to date it precisely. Marc Raeff argued that Russia Abroad formed a distinct community, where émigrés created their own society, even if they were in different countries and cities, rather than integrating with the local population.[604] While this was true, the Russian émigré community was also highly diverse, with radically different political convictions and personal beliefs. For this reason, different individuals in emigration had their own views towards the Soviet Union, the fellow Russian émigrés, and their own future.

For the rest of their lives, most émigrés who never returned to the Soviet Union continued to observe the events there, and commented on them. There was also no clear point at which liberals came to an understanding that they were not able to return to the Soviet Union. According to Gessen, some émigrés failed to settle abroad and chose to return to the Soviet state, as they were struggling to find

[603] Leon Trotsky, *My Life: An Attempt at an Autobiography* (New York: Pathfinder, 1975), p. 438.
[604] Marc Raeff, *Russia Abroad: A Cultural History of the Russian Emigration, 1919–1939* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), p 15.

employment and hoping that the situation in the Soviet Union had stabilised. Others, on the other hand, left later during the NEP, having survived the economic shortages of war communism under the Bolsheviks, and had a much more cynical view of the Soviet Union.[605] The fate of all Russian liberals abroad was similar in some respects, and different in others. For the Kadet members, it was hard to part from their party, regardless of whether they supported the party dissolution. The 'nationalities issue' faded in emigration, as it was ultimately overpowered by other challenges that émigrés were facing; nevertheless, they remained true to liberal ideas of individual rights and liberties, and also patriots of Russia, however they remembered or envisioned it.

[605] Iosif Gessen, *Gody Izgnaniia. Zhiznennyi Otchet.* (Paris: YMCA Press, 1979), p. 180.

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