

# Cultural Identity and Civil Society in Russia and Eastern Europe



Cultural Identity and Civil Society  
in Russia and Eastern Europe:  
Essays in Memory of Charles E. Timberlake

Edited by

Andrew Kier Wise, David M. Borgmeyer,  
Nicole Monnier and Byron T. Scott

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**P U B L I S H I N G**

Cultural Identity and Civil Society in Russia and Eastern Europe:  
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In memory of  
Dr. Charles E. Timberlake  
*Scholar, Teacher, Colleague, Friend*



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## PREFACE

When some of Charles' former students, former colleagues, and I decided on themes that would be addressed in the Timberlake Memorial Symposium on Russian Studies (held annually since 2009 as part of the Central Slavic Conference), we chose topics Charles was most interested in during his professional career as teacher and scholar. A selection of papers presented at the symposia appears in this volume. They all address Charles' long-standing interests.

The first section of this volume deals with the themes of liberalism, education and cultural identity, as well as the fate of Russian peasantry in late tsarist Russia. Charles had a strong interest in nineteenth-century liberalism and its influence on the construction of civil society. He wrote his dissertation on Ivan Petrunkevich (1843-1928), who was a major figure and one of the early founders of the *zemstvo* movement in Russia. Charles had also been interested in Russian and Soviet education and had researched the educational reforms instituted by the *zemstvos* upon the freeing of the serfs.

The second section of this volume is dedicated to the theme of Russian Orthodoxy. This became a subject of great interest in Charles' scholarship and teaching, especially after his many research trips to Russia and the former Soviet Union. Charles was perhaps also influenced by his colleague Robert Nichols, who became interested in the Church while at the University of Washington. At the University they shared an office as graduate students, thus beginning a long and rewarding professional relationship. Nichols has contributed an essay to this volume (chapter four) that deals with Russian Orthodox monasticism.

The third section of this volume deals with the fate of education and civil society in post-Soviet states. Charles had long been interested in promoting the exchanges the University of Missouri had with Russian and other Eastern European universities. He and James McCartney decided that the exchange with the Republic of Georgia was of sufficient interest to warrant a paper that would trace the involvement of the University of Missouri and the city of Columbia with the Republic of Georgia. He was working on a paper with McCartney at the time of his death. This paper appears in final form as the concluding chapter of this volume.

Patricia Timberlake, Columbia, Missouri

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

*Civil Society and Cultural Identity in Russia and Eastern Europe: Essays in Honor of Charles Timberlake* is a selection of papers presented at the first three meetings of the Charles Timberlake Memorial Symposium. Since its inception in 2009, the Symposium has convened at the Central Slavic Conference (CSC) annual meeting in St. Louis.

The editors would like to thank the CSC for its support of the Timberlake Symposium, especially the efforts of Prof. Jacek Lubecki. During his time as president of the CSC, Jacek led efforts to provide a home for the Symposium and organize its panels, and the Symposium and this volume would not be what they are without him.

The Center for Russian and East European Studies at Saint Louis University and its Director, Prof. Daniel Schlaflly, have supported the CSC and the Timberlake Symposium for several years. Thanks are also due to the Center for International Studies at SLU and its former Director, Prof. Thomas Finan. Many colleagues contributed their comments, participation, and encouragement to the Symposium and its panelists, including Will Adams, Gene Barabtarlo, Betsy Blake, Kurt Jefferson, Martha Kelly, Tim Langen, Jerry Mikkelson, David Murphy, Nicole Svobodny, Michele Torre, and many others whose omission is not a mark of any less gratitude. The editors are indebted to them all.

Thanks are likewise due to *Slavic Review* for its permission to reprint the *In Memoriam* by Russell Zguta that appeared in its pages, as well as Robert Nichol's contribution to this volume.

Finally, we would also like to thank Gloria Nobleza Wise for her patience and skill in providing editorial support and Carol Koulikardi and Cambridge Scholars Press for taking on the project and seeing it through.

Andrew Kier Wise  
David M. Borgmeyer  
Nicole Monnier  
Byron T. Scott

## IN MEMORIAM

CHARLES E. TIMBERLAKE:  
1935-2008

RUSSELL ZGUTA

When Charles Timberlake learned in March 2007 that he had a rare form of melanoma, he was determined to deal with it in the same tenacious and focused fashion that he had dealt with the many professional challenges and responsibilities he had faced during his long and productive academic career. His year-long struggle with the disease ended on 21 March 2008.

Charles was born on 9 September 1935, in Greenup County, Kentucky, and spent his early years in the hills of Appalachia. A series of fortuitous encounters with caring teachers enabled him to leave Appalachia and begin his higher education, first at Berea College in Kentucky (which granted him its Distinguished Alumnus Award in 2002), then at Claremont Graduate School, and, ultimately, at the University of Washington, where he earned the PhD in Russian history in 1968. In the fall of 1967, he began his lengthy and productive academic career at the University of Missouri, where he would remain until his retirement in 2004.

Those of us who interacted with him as friends and colleagues will remember Charles as a person of boundless energy and enthusiasm. For almost four decades, we watched him dashing off to class, often at the last minute, with bundles of bulging folders and books under his arm. His enthusiasm for all things Russian was infectious. An exemplary teacher and mentor to hundreds of undergraduates and scores of graduate students, he was also a great believer in good writing, which prompted him to designate many of his courses “writing intensive,” with the unenviable corollary of providing him with scores of essays to grade during the course of a semester.

His broad and varied research interests included: the zemstvos (particularly Tver province and I. I. Petrunkevich, on whom he was working at the time of his death), Russian liberalism, education policy, religious

(particularly monastic) institutions, U.S.-Soviet relations, and post-Soviet rural sociology. Even before he had completed the PhD and begun his academic career, the name of Charles Timberlake was well known to Slavists, especially younger scholars planning to do research at the splendid University of Helsinki library. In September 1966, *Slavic Review* published his widely read and frequently consulted essay, "The Slavic Department of the Helsinki University Library" (vol. 25, no. 3). In addition to a number of edited volumes of essays and documents, Charles published a variety of articles and more than a dozen book chapters. He was a frequent contributor to *The Modern Encyclopedia of Russian and Soviet History*, with some eighteen entries in all. In 1992, he was selected by a group of former PhD students at the University of Washington to serve as editor of a Festschrift honoring his former mentor (and longtime editor of *Slavic Review*), Donald W. Treadgold. His more recent publications include: *The Fate of Russian Orthodox Monasteries and Convents since 1917* (University of Washington Press, 1995) and the jointly authored (with David O'Brien and others), *Services and Quality of Life in Rural Villages of the Former Soviet Union: Data from 1991 and 1993* (University Press of America, 1998).

Charles was a tireless advocate and promoter of Russian and Soviet studies on many levels: international, national, regional, and local. He taught and lectured abroad at universities and academies of science in England, Russia, Georgia, China, and Finland (where he taught a special short course on Russian history at Joensuu University on a regular basis from 2003 to 2006). In 2002, the University of Missouri recognized his contribution to the international academic community by bestowing upon him the Provost's Award for Leadership in International Education. At the national level, he served on the Board of Directors of the American Association for the Advancement of Slavic Studies from 1980 to 1982 and again from 1984 to 1986. Regionally, he was president of the Central Slavic Conference five times and a member of its Executive Board from 1972 until his death. Closer to home, he served as department chair in the Department of History from 1996 to 2000. Many of his faculty colleagues at Missouri, both in history and outside the department, especially in German and Russian studies, will remember Charles as an indefatigable supporter of and advocate for the university library. His determined effort to preserve and build upon its uncommonly excellent Slavic collection ranks among his major contributions to the university.

Charles earned the respect and admiration of those who knew him for his devotion to his family. Early in his career, he moved out of the city of Columbia to Clearview Farms so that his young sons, Mark, Dan, and Eric

(and eventually his nine grandchildren) would have more space and freedom to roam. His wife, Patricia, was a frequent companion on his numerous research trips and teaching engagements abroad. Together with family and friends, they had planned to celebrate their fiftieth wedding anniversary in December 2008.



## INTRODUCTION

# CHARLES TIMBERLAKE'S SCHOLARSHIP ON CIVIL SOCIETY AND CULTURAL IDENTITY

ANDREW KIER WISE

### ***Zemstvo* Liberalism and Civil Society in Late Tsarist Russia**

In recent years, scholars have clearly demonstrated that civil society, consisting of “organizations and networks of cooperation that are created primarily by the initiative of citizens . . . really burgeoned [in Russia] in the second half of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries” (Conroy 2006, 11). In his fruitful career as scholar and teacher, Charles E. Timberlake (1935-2008) made important contributions to our understanding of this process. This is especially evident in his research on the gradual emergence of a “public space” in late tsarist Russia in the form of *zemstvos*, educational institutions, professional organizations, and political parties. Moreover, after the collapse of the Soviet Union, Timberlake contributed in practical and significant ways to the resurgence of civil society in Russia and other post-Soviet states.

Timberlake and other scholars, such as Joseph Bradley, have also challenged the notion of Russian exceptionalism. Bradley explains that civil societies were still evolving in other European countries during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. He also debunks the notion that late-imperial Russian society was inert prior to the revolutionary upheavals of 1905 and 1917. Through case studies of select learned societies, Bradley has proven that voluntary associations “promoted values commonly regarded as deficient in autocratic Russia,” such as individual initiative and a spirit of enterprise (Bradley 2009, 256).

In some cases, select learned societies and the state shared mutual concerns: “an interest in science, education, and the diffusion of useful knowledge; patriotism and public service; and the public sphere of civil

society" (Bradley 2009, 10). Bradley identifies these goals as "three of the most important projects of the European Enlightenment," thereby connecting the Russian story to the broader European philosophical trends of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (Bradley 2009, 82). Russia, it seems, is not so far removed from the "European" experience after all. Indeed, Bradley demonstrates that the complex "partnership in the civilizing process" that bound civil society and state together was a common feature of the modernization project in Europe (Bradley 2009, 39).

Despite government restrictions, through public outreach initiatives (publications, public exhibitions and lectures, for example) the learned societies forged "horizontal linkages" that brought together disparate societal elements. As Bradley explains, over the course of the nineteenth century Russian society was increasingly "talking to itself" as learned societies engaged more people in the growing discussion about Russia's future. This challenged the state, which for centuries had relied on "vertical linkages" that bound state to society in a more static fashion (Bradley 2009, 197). In the debate over the expansion of educational opportunities for the general population, for example, the state opposed learned societies' attempts to bridge the gap between the educated elite and the masses for fear that the old order would be challenged.

After Russia's defeat in the Crimean War, however, Alexander II (1855-1881) recognized the need to promote a limited transformation of Russian society that would facilitate Russia's modernization and ensure its status as a great power. His Great Reforms featured the emancipation of serfs. They also led to the expansion of educational opportunities and the consequent development of a professional elite. In order "to reinforce the basis of traditional autocratic rule by controlled application of its opposite principles, Alexander conceded some of the basic elements of modern Western society" that included elements of "what in the Western context can be called civil society" (Engelstein 2009, 84-85). Yet this proved to be a problematic process:

In the absence of enabling political conditions . . . these changes generated an ambivalent and tension-ridden result: both the desire to perform the functions of an 'actually existing civil society' and its chronic frustration (Engelstein 2009, 81).

This tension was especially evident in the case of the *zemstvos*, which were institutions that were created as part of the Great Reforms and allowed for self-government in a limited way. The tsarist government controlled *zemstvos* by confining their activities to the provincial and county levels; they were not present at the lower (township) level, nor was



there a national *zemstvo*. Russia would finally convene a parliament (the Duma) in 1906, although it would have limited powers. The *zemstvo* reform also seemed incomplete in terms of powers granted to the new self-governing bodies. While they were empowered to take care of local economic and infrastructural needs—such as poverty relief and road maintenance—they were restricted in cooperating with one another across provincial boundaries. From early on, therefore, the “liberal” elements within *zemstvo* assemblies sought to expand their powers and develop civil society in ways not sanctioned by the tsarist government. And over time the number of *zemstvos* actually grew as well, as the government extended the reform to new regions of the empire. Until 1911 there were 392 provincial and county *zemstvos*; after that time there were 483 in the empire (Timberlake 1998a, 21).

The infrastructure for delivering social services in Russian society before the Great Reforms had been poorly developed. Moreover, the emancipation of the serfs also freed landlords from their obligations to provide social services in rural areas. The *zemstvo* institutions were created to fill this void, and also to provide new additional services for peasants (Timberlake 1998a). The Great Reforms thus spurred the development of civil society; indeed, it required self-governance up to a point. As Timberlake noted, “*zemstvo* institutions . . . became the major providers of social services in rural Russia . . . despite the significant restraints their bureaucratic creators placed on them out of fear” that they would become too powerful for the tsarist government to control (Timberlake 1998a, 19). Engelstein thus refers to a “paradoxical character of the autocratic regime” that oppressed society, yet also “created new sources of resistance” (Engelstein 2009, 78).

By the time of the revolution in 1917, “the provincial and county *zemstvo* institutions employed some 90,000 to 100,000 full-time specialists, a veritable second civil service” (Timberlake 1992b, 101). These employees constituted what one provincial governor referred to as a “third element”<sup>1</sup> that actively engaged in the construction of civil society. The main activities of *zemstvos* related to primary education and health care. Timberlake observed that

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<sup>1</sup> This term was coined in a 1902 provincial governor’s report. The “first element” were the aristocracy and civil servants working in tsarist institutions; the “second element” was made up of deputies in *zemstvo* assemblies; and the “third element” was made up of trained specialists who now had “a career alternative to working in the tsarist government’s civil service” (Timberlake 1998a, 22).

*zemstvos* began as a rather simple institutional infrastructure that continually built still other institutions in the Russian countryside. This institutional infrastructure was a transmission belt that delivered knowledge, funds, culture, and social services provided by specialists from the major urban centers to the provincial capitals and county towns. From there, to varying degrees, the *zemstvos* dispersed people, knowledge, and services to the villages (Timberlake 1998a, 22).

Timberlake believed that “*zemstvo* institutions constituted the first communications network that conveyed new concepts and values (among them ‘middle-class’ ideas) from the cities to the villages.” He contended that “the *zemstva* were giving birth to and nurturing a socioeconomic stratum of professionals (with salaried occupations) and their assistants that in Western European societies scholars include in the ‘middle class.’” *Zemstvo* jobs were contrasted to the tsarist civil service, since working among the people really reflected a dedication to the people rather than obedience to the state. This “produced a new consciousness or self-perception among its deputies and hired specialists” (Timberlake 1991, 164). Moreover, by the twentieth century the “*zemstvos*, rather than agencies of the autocracy, had become the initiators of action, controllers of events, in the provinces. They had become wielders of power . . .” (Timberlake 1998b, 54).

This led to tsarist attempts to stifle reform-minded *zemstvo* activists. *Zemstvo* representatives often encountered roadblocks in their work, as they were pitted against provincial governors who sought to limit their actions and define their powers in a narrow way. Timberlake mined archives in Russia to demonstrate that such governors as P.D. Akhlestyshchev (Governor of Tver’ Province from 1888 to 1898) feared that the *zemstvos* were havens for “people who are politically suspect or compromised.” As Akhlestyshchev complained in a 1891 report, the Tver’ *zemstvo* assemblies “devoted no small amount of time to high-flown phrases about freedom, about the worth of the individual, and the like . . .” (Timberlake 1998b, 34-35).

The limits on *zemstvo* activism that were put in place by the tsarist regime most notably included the counterreforms of 1890, which were intended to shift the composition of the *zemstvo* assemblies to favor conservative nobility. They also granted governors greater arbitrary authority over the *zemstvos* (Timberlake 1998b). In Tver’ Province, during the 1890s the governor sought to purge the *zemstvos* of “suspect elements.” For example, Fedor Rodichev (1854-1933) was elected chair by the 1891 session of the provincial *zemstvo* assembly, but the tsarist government refused to confirm his appointment. Indeed, a report from

1891 by Governor Akhlestshev referred to Rodichev as “clearly compromised and politically suspect . . .” (Timberlake 1998b, 41). The Governor was seeking a party in the *zemstvo* assembly that would focus on “solving practical tasks, attending to purely local needs” rather than striving continually to expand the *zemstvos*’ scope of action (Timberlake 1998b, 43). In essence, he sought to limit civil society by restricting *zemstvo* actions to local issues only.

The Governor’s concerns about Rodichev proved to be well founded. In December 1894, Rodichev helped draft an address to the new tsar Nicholas II (1894-1917) by the liberal majority of the Tver’ provincial *zemstvo* assembly. This address called for the further development of civil society, urging Russia to “move forward along a path of peace and lawfulness with the development of all existing social forces . . . in consultation with representatives from all estates of the Russian people.” The Tsar dubbed these hopes to be “senseless dreams,” and Rodichev was later stripped of his right to engage in public activities (Timberlake 1998b, 44-45). This was part of an effort by the Ministry of Internal Affairs to constrain those “people who have an evil influence” on *zemstvos* (Timberlake 1998b, 51). But Timberlake found that in Tver’ Province the “liberal party” was not eliminated by the counterreform movement. In 1898, Prince N. D. Golitsyn replaced Governor Akhlestshev. Although he made even greater use of arbitrary powers and sought to stifle civil society further, his policies seemingly did not effectively eliminate the “liberal party” as a powerful force in the Tver’ Province. Indeed, in a telling passage from a secret report from 1903, the authors complain that the *zemstvo* activists are essentially constructing civil society:

The old constitutionalists find fault with everything in the *zemstvo* assembly . . . Their children organize peasant banks, consumer cooperatives, volunteer fire departments . . . always because such organizations give them the possibility of uniting closer with the *narod* [people]. . . . These sons then find helpers among the *narod* itself, and these helpers become their pupils (Timberlake 1998b, 51).

But due to widespread disturbances that led to revolution, by the end of 1904 Minister of Internal Affairs Prince Sviatopolk-Mirskii allowed all suspect deputies from Tver’ Province to return to *zemstvo* activities (Timberlake 1998b).

In his analyses of the Tver’ Province, Timberlake found that a core group of liberals had formed in the province in the decades after the Great Reforms. According to Timberlake, there was a group of some 40 liberals in Tver’ Province at the turn of the twentieth century who

shared the belief that the best way to achieve a constitution for Russia was gradually to erode the foundation on which autocracy rested and replace it with institutions and a worldview that would create and defend representative government. They saw autocracy as both the cause and result of a backward and impoverished Russian population (Timberlake 1998b, 30).

One family that figured prominently were the Petrunkeviches, and Timberlake dedicated much of his professional life to a close study of Ivan Il'ich Petrunkevich (1843-1928) in particular. Petrunkevich was exiled from his home Chernigov Province in 1879. In 1891 he bought land in Tver' Province to become qualified for elections to the Novotorzhok County *Zemstvo* Assembly. Petrunkevich and reform-minded allies were active in promoting a liberal agenda in the *zemstvos*. They were most frequently referred to as "the liberal party" by the government, but the terms "liberal group," "opposition party," "antigovernment party," and "the party of reds" were also used (Timberlake 1998b, 33-34).

The "liberal party" that Timberlake described in Tver' would surely have embraced the "important principle" described by Engelstein: "the possibility of public activity independent of the state—the dream in which 'society' became 'civil society' . . ." (Engelstein 2009, 82). Conroy points out that the *zemstvos* "welded together former serfs, nobles, free peasants, and business people" in a way that transcended old class barriers to some extent (Conroy 2006, 14). Moreover, the new *zemstvo* infrastructure "attracted the attention of an emerging group of university-educated sons of nobles who spurned service in the tsarist bureaucracy" in favor of working in the villages among the peasantry in an effort to transform Russian life (Timberlake 1991, 167). These liberals believed that "the logical way to alter the foundation of Russian society" was through education among the peasantry at the village level, which would help "remove poverty and ignorance" (Timberlake 1998b, 30). Conroy notes that "[t]he enormous percentage of peasants in the empire meant that, in the aggregate, their education programs pushed civil society forward" (Conroy 2006, 16). Indeed, the government became concerned that students in Tver' Province were being influenced by "undesirable people" as schools were turned into venues for liberal propaganda. According to Timberlake, this exodus to the Russian villages to work led to an

altered consciousness. For many people, in *zemstvo* work as well as in the literary circles of Moscow and St. Petersburg, *zemstvo* service enjoyed much more approval than 'state service.' The distinction between the two was a part of the evolution of the consciousness of a society, *obshchestvo*, beginning to function independently of the central government. Thus, the

*zemstva* not only swelled the numbers of the Russian middle class by offering new employment alternatives but also contributed to a separate identity among these employees by creating a new provincial surrounding for their work (Timberlake 1991, 169).

## Education and Cultural Identity

Increasingly, members of the intelligentsia shifted their focus from serving the tsar to serving the “people” (Bradley 2009, 258). This sort of transition can be seen in the lives of Ivan Petrunkevich and other activists in the Russian Empire who sought to create a vibrant civil society. Aleksander Lednicki (1866-1934), the subject of chapter three, and many other activists had come of age during the reign of Alexander III (1881-1894). His “counterreforms” represented a reaction against the Great Reforms that swept the empire in the wake of the assassination of his father (Alexander II) in 1881. This included Russification in the borderlands (such as the Minsk region where Lednicki was raised), and included greater control over the education system. Timberlake explained the nature of this process:

First, St. Petersburg removed the schools from local control and placed them under direct control of tsarist ministries. Next, the ministry [of Education] replaced local teachers with Russians, or Russian-speaking teachers, and required all instruction to be conducted in Russian. The only exception was the primary grades, where children were allowed to receive religious instruction in the local language. But even they had to be taught all other subjects in Russian (Timberlake 1992a, 22).

Tsarist bureaucrats were continually confronted with a dilemma: they understood “the necessity of an educational system to create and disseminate scientific and technical knowledge,” but simultaneously realized that

the educational networks could also serve as conduits for religious and secular values that might threaten the time-honored bulwark of Russian society: the twin monopolies on politics and religion held by the autocracy and the Russian Orthodox Church. . . . insurrections in Poland and Lithuania in 1830 and 1863 combined Catholicism, local control over educational institutions, and autonomy for ethnic minorities as an evil brew in the minds of St. Petersburg bureaucrats, and they began serious efforts to subject all three to greater control by the tsarist central government and the Russian Orthodox Church. . . . Just as educational institutions in Poland and Lithuania served as centers for opposition to autocracy and Russian

Orthodoxy, so did the educational institutions created in the Great Russian territorial core of the empire (Timberlake 1992a, 4).

As Timberlake explained, "[t]hroughout the nineteenth century, the tsarist government accepted the contention that ideas are disseminated, and combated, most efficaciously by educational institutions" (Timberlake 1992a, 3).

In the case of Rzhev, a town of 3,000 on the Volga River in Tver' Province, tsarist authorities were convinced that several of the teachers at the local technical school that opened in 1871 were "undesirable people" (Timberlake 1992c, 134). The school closed after only two years of classes, due in part to problems central authorities had with faculty instruction that seemingly was at odds with Orthodox teachings. The case in Rzhev exemplifies the difficult dynamic at play in Russia in the post-Reform era between preserving traditional cultural identities, while simultaneously promoting the economic transformation needed to help Russia modernize and remain a military power (Timberlake 1992c).

Despite the attempts of the tsarist regime to emasculate young students politically throughout the empire, they became aware of the dangerous intellectual trends of the day (Sinel 1973). In Minsk, for example, young Aleksander Lednicki was influenced by the tradition of "organic work," the Polish equivalent of the Russian "small deeds" doctrine that promoted grassroots activism rather than violent revolution. It was during this era of intellectual ferment in the empire, in August 1885, that Aleksander Lednicki and two friends travelled to Moscow to begin their studies at the university. The young men evidently had debated whether to attend that institution, the one in St. Petersburg, or Kiev. Aleksander and his friends wanted to study medicine, in part because of the ideal of service to the people (W. Lednicki 1963-67, 1:267). This eliminated St. Petersburg University, which did not have a medical school, from consideration (Kassow 1989). Timberlake observed that

[s]ince two universities had no medical faculties, and since nearly one-third of the students were studying medicine in the late 1870s and early 1880s, Russia's six universities with medical faculties were primarily medical schools (Timberlake 1982, 327).

This was especially evident at Moscow University, where the medical faculty had 1,162 students (62 percent of the student body) in 1880 (Timberlake 1982, 327).

The young Poles arrived in Moscow at a time of great change and upheaval in Russian higher education. Just as the gymnasiums placed a

heavy emphasis on the classics, avoiding controversial, thought-provoking subjects, the 1884 University Statute introduced a similar curriculum into the universities. In the Legal Faculty, to which Lednicki transferred after one semester, the teaching of foreign constitutional law was abolished and sensitive fields such as state law downgraded to the status of "secondary subjects." Students were not tested in these areas, which consequently provoked less intense study on their part. The focus was on less abstract fields of study, such as Roman and church law, rather than legal theory or comparative legal systems (Kassow 1989).

The new statute also shifted power from faculty councils to the Minister of Education and his appointed curator. In addition to worsening the faculty-student ratio and producing higher fees, this more intrusive state presence made student life at Moscow University highly volatile. The student body took it upon itself to defend the integrity of the institution; this resulted in frequent protests and clashes with university officials and police (Kassow 1989).

Lednicki's decision to change majors was part of a bigger phenomenon. The most significant change in enrollment patterns at universities between 1880 and 1912 was the replacement of the Medical Faculty by the Legal Faculty as the most popular. In his study of higher learning and the professions in late imperial Russia, Timberlake provided data from five-year intervals from 1865 through 1899 and also for 1912; the data clearly indicate a marked increase in the popularity of the legal profession after 1880 (Timberlake 1982, 328; Kassow 1989).

## Student Activism

Many students had lofty reasons for pursuing higher education. Timberlake and other scholars have noted that over time students had become disgruntled with the state of affairs in Russia. After the Great Reforms of the 1860s, students no longer sought

university degrees primarily as a means of obtaining a position in the tsarist civil service. The *intelligent* [sg. of *intelligentsia*] looked upon an occupation not as a way of providing that particular service but as a means of drawing closer to the *narod* [the people] to provide the ultimate service of emancipating the *narod* from its miseries through social revolution. Teaching in a *zemstvo* school was nearly ideal for an *intelligent* (Timberlake 1992a, 19).

Law students of the 1880s, painfully aware of the oppression and arbitrariness of tsarism, resolved to struggle for the protection of human rights against tyranny. As Vasilii Maklakov (1869-1957) recalled:

My brief experience in life had shown me that the chief evil of Russian life was the supreme role of arbitrariness in it . . . The defense of a person against lawlessness—in other words the defense of the law itself—this was the substance of the legal profession's "societal" service. It was the goal I set as my own (Maklakov 1954, 220).<sup>2</sup>

Aleksander Lednicki and many of his provincial contemporaries would also devote their lives to the task of bringing the rule of law to the empire. As Timberlake noted,

life in a university city studying at a Russian university proved to be a transforming experience for many youths from the provinces whose previously unquestioned religious convictions and modes of thinking were replaced by Western secular ideas (Timberlake 1992a, 19).

These ideas also fuelled student unrest. While student unrest frequently erupted into disturbances, it was the subsequent state-sponsored repression that often politicized them (Fisher 1958).

For Lednicki, the decision to enter the Legal Faculty at Moscow University proved transformative. It exposed him to such constitutionalists as Maksim Kovalevskii (1851-1916), whom Evgeny Badredinov discusses in chapter two of this volume. Participation in meetings of the Moscow Legal Society introduced Lednicki to other leading liberals of the day, such as Viktor Gol'tsev (1850-1906). Gol'tsev served as vice president of the society, and he was also editor of the journal *Russkaia mysl'*. After receiving his law degree from Moscow University in 1872, Gol'tsev pursued a career in academia. His future as a scholar was cut short, however, after the police, acting on false accusations regarding his political activities, deemed him a subversive character. Ironically, as a result he focused all his energies in political activism. He published liberal journals critical of the tsarist regime, and actively participated in the *zemstvo* movement (Galai 1973).

Of special importance was Lednicki's relationship with the president of the society, Sergei Muromtsev (1850-1910), who greatly influenced the formation of the young generation's political outlook. Muromtsev was cited by Lednicki, for example, as a role model who symbolized the type

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<sup>2</sup> Also cited in Sanders 1985, 525. For more on Maklakov, see Davies 1972.



of "lawyer-activist" that many young lawyers sought to become. Lednicki later wrote that

Muromtsev blazed the trail for the Russian legal profession toward the Western European model of lawyers—political activists guiding the life of the country, tireless fighters for more perfect forms of government and social existences . . . (A. Lednitskii [Lednicki] 1917, 46).<sup>3</sup>

The Legal Society's meetings almost always had a political character. Under the guise of a scientific gathering, society members discussed topics otherwise off limits. "The Legal Society," Aleksandr Kizevter (1866-1933) recalled, "undoubtedly played not a small role in the popularization of constitutional ideas in Russian society" (Kizevter 1929, 25-26). However, "because of the independent expressions and activities of members of the Moscow Legal Society in the 1880s and 1890s, the Tsarist government abolished the society in 1899" (Timberlake 1982, 339).

Thus, while protests were one form of expressing student discontent, the politicization of the student body did not always manifest itself so dramatically. And despite official concern, student activism did not lead inevitably to radicalism. Politicization often meant liberal activism. Kizevter recalled that he and his colleagues at Moscow University "didn't dream of becoming revolutionary heroes; *legal* [emphasis in original] social work attracted us; but on this legal footing we all prepared ourselves for a struggle for our ideals, a patient, persistent and unwavering struggle" (Kizevter 1929, 170). With a belief in the philosophy of "small deeds" and a commitment to incremental change, many men of the 1880s embarked on careers in which they could create a civil society in a non-violent manner (Sanders 1985).

These men were challenging the autocracy's ongoing attempts to "coopt the new elites" by granting them status in the Table of Ranks that Peter I (1682-1725) had created in the eighteenth century as a way to extend state service. Under successive rulers, the nobility were freed from obligatory service; nevertheless, Timberlake argued that the regime's "dispensation of privilege contributed to, and then rewarded, upward social mobility" among the nascent middle classes. This created a privileged elite in higher education, the bureaucracy and military, and in commerce and industry. Timberlake contended that the tsarist government

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<sup>3</sup> This booklet contains the text of Lednicki's speech delivered on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary celebration of the Moscow bar on 23 September 1916.

consciously fostered vertical social mobility and obstructed horizontal integration. It did not wish horizontal integration geographically nor among disparate groups on the same stratum within the same estate (Timberlake 1992b, 86-87).

Thus, there was a difficult path for carving out independent niches in Russian society. For example,

the professional in Tsarist Russia could not escape government tutelage after graduation. As a practicing professional, he could not gather with fellow practitioners to set standards of competence or professional ethics, or merely to engage in group discussions about ways to solve practical professional problems unless he received official permission for such a meeting. (Timberlake 1982, 337-338).

Russian lawyers were among the first professionals to push for change and organize at the national level. In 1874, lawyers in Moscow successfully petitioned the government for permission to hold the first lawyers' congress. The Minister of Education regarded the congress (which met in June 1875 at Moscow University) as "an experiment" that required additional petitions in future for any new meetings (Timberlake 1982, 338).

## **The Mobilization of Civil Society on the Eve of Revolution**

There were several factors behind the political mobilization of civil society in the years prior to the Revolution of 1905. Judith Zimmerman has cited bankrupt government policies and bureaucratic oppression, combined with the emergence of a politically mature professional middle class, as the main causes for the emergence of the liberation movement (Zimmerman 1967), while Klaus Frolich has maintained that the economic crisis of the early years of the new century was the "final motivating factor" for political activism (Frolich 1981, 28).<sup>4</sup> The intelligentsia had developed a certain "social self-consciousness and cultural missionary conviction" in response to the oppressive nature of the tsarist regime (Frolich 1981, 35).

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<sup>4</sup> Frolich maintains that the heightened social conflicts during economic crises upset any feelings of security held by liberal professionals and those active in the *zemstvo* movement, spurring them to further challenges of the relationship between state and society.

During the first years of the twentieth century, *zemstvo* leaders and urban activists sought to unite in their work for a more robust and independent civil society. In 1901, Ivan Petrunkevich and Petr Struve (1870-1944) agreed to publish a new organ of the liberation movement. With Struve as editor, the first issue of *Osvobozhdenie* (*Liberation*) appeared abroad in Stuttgart in July 1902.<sup>5</sup> As part of a campaign to support this venture, "Friends of Liberation" (*Druz'ia Osvobozhdeniia*) circles were established throughout Russia. They served as centers for those who aimed to replace tsarism with a constitutionalist system. The success of *Osvobozhdenie*, and the popularity of the circles of "friends," resulted in the transformation of the radical-democratic wing of the liberation movement into the Union of Liberation. The Union was born at the Schaffhausen Conference, held in July 1903 in the Swiss town of that name on Lake Constance. Twenty-one representatives were present, including both *zemstvo* radicals and members of the professional intelligentsia (Galai 1973).

Among the conference participants was Ivan Petrunkevich, whose political career Timberlake analyzed in great detail. By 1903, Petrunkevich was a veteran of the liberation movement; in 1879 he was "exiled for seven years for being a 'troublemaker' in the Chernigov *zemstvo* assembly" (Timberlake 1972b, 31-32). Petrunkevich's exile ended in 1886, leaving him with greater

bitterness toward the bureaucracy, but he did not become disillusioned with his approach to political and social reforms; he remained convinced of the inevitability of representative government in Russia. The proper bases for such government had not been built by the end of the 1880s, but, he believed, much work had been done by persons like himself using the institutions created during the Great Reforms (Timberlake 1972b, 33).

Subsequent to the formation of the Union of Liberation, moderate *zemstvo* constitutionalists created the Union of *Zemstvo*-Constitutionalists. Its main function was the advocacy of constitutionalism within *zemstvo* assemblies and at all-*zemstvo* congresses (Tyrkova-Williams 1953). The Union of *Zemstvo*-Constitutionalists first met in November 1903. Members of this group, along with several invited representatives of the radical-democratic intelligentsia, resolved to convene a congress of the Union of Liberation in St. Petersburg as soon as possible. Attended by about 50 delegates, the congress met in January 1904 (Galai 1973).

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<sup>5</sup> *Osvobozhdenie* was well-financed; a trust fund of 100,000 rubles was established for its publication before the first issue appeared. See Chermenskii 1970, 27.

These efforts coincided with the outbreak of the Russo-Japanese War, which was precipitated by the attack on Port Arthur in January 1904. As the war continued, defeats in the Far East spurred the opposition to step up criticism of the tsarist regime. The *osvobodhentsy* clamored for peace and political reform, and many in the liberation movement hoped for a Russian defeat that would hasten the disintegration of the autocracy. In the meantime, oppositionists began to mobilize. The politicization of society was evident in conferences and congresses, such as those held by the *zemstvoists* and *zemstvo*-constitutionalists in 1904 and 1905. These gatherings increasingly assumed an "all-Russian" character, including not only Russian delegates, but also national minorities from all over the empire.

Many *zemstvo* activists from Tver'—Petrunkevich and Rodichev, for example—took part in the *zemstvo* congress of November 1904. Timberlake observed that the government's use of extraordinary measures against the *zemstvos* had failed:

The more frequently the government used its arbitrary power, the more it strengthened the resolve of the liberals to overthrow autocracy (Timberlake 1998b, 53).

Moreover, in 1904 and 1905 the government resorted to adopting policies the liberal party in Tver' had been recommending for the past two decades. Civil society had already expanded as "the provincial and county *zemstvos* in Tver' Province increased the sphere of their activities enormously from 1890 to 1905" (Timberlake 1998b, 53). This process that had begun at the provincial level was becoming an empire-wide movement by 1905.

In their fight for freedom, Ivan Petrunkevich and his colleagues regarded the tsarist bureaucracy as the enemy. Zimmerman concludes that "for all Russian liberals, practical politicians and theorists alike, the greatest enemy was *proizvol* (arbitrariness)" (Zimmerman 1980, 12). For the Russian government could

harass, hinder, humiliate and punish Russian citizens, even respectable, educated citizens like themselves, at will, and it was, thus, an intolerable infringement of human dignity (Zimmerman 1980, 12).

Aleksander Lednicki lamented that

adopting the motto: *divide et impera*, our bureaucracy strives for the complete disintegration of the social organism, for the pitting of one class

of people against another, one nationality against another (A. Lednicki 1906, 21).

According to Alla Barabtarlo's commentary in the first chapter of this volume, Petrunkevich's correspondence reveals that the liberal leader also believed in the spring of 1905 that Russia was in a very fragile condition.

Throughout 1905, *osvobozhidentsy* and *zemstvo* activists stepped up their organizational campaigns. In June, an assembly of municipal representatives resolved to merge with the *zemstvo* movement, with a joint gathering planned for July. The two groups established an organizational bureau of 35 men from both camps. The organizational bureau presented the July congress with a draft constitution, prepared under the direction of Sergei Muromtsev. Known as the "Muromtsev constitution," the document contained several provisions pertinent to civil society: more local self-government; the equality of citizens, regardless of ethnic origin, religion or estate; and the guarantee of freedom of religion (Bensman 1977).

The *zemstvoists'* decision to create a constitutionalist party prodded the *osvobozhidentsy*, who followed suit at the fourth and final gathering of the Union of Liberation. Held in August 1905, it was hosted by Lednicki in his Moscow home. Later that fall, in the midst of the October strike, the first "liberal" party in Russia came into being.<sup>6</sup> The constituent congress of the Constitutional Democrats (Kadets) convened in October in Moscow. More than 150 people were invited, but many were unable to attend. A railroad strike had paralyzed travel across Russia, preventing Kadets from the provinces, and also the radical contingent from St. Petersburg, from making the journey (Zimmerman 1967 and Bensman 1977). However, many future party leaders were able to attend, including Petrunkevich and Lednicki. In all, 81 delegates were present, of whom 36 were from Moscow (Bensman 1977, 764).

During the congress' deliberations, the tsarist government issued on 17 October a manifesto (the "October Manifesto") in response to the revolutionary challenge. By promising to create the foundations for civic freedom, Nicholas II seemingly opened the way for the expansion of civil society (Engelstein 2009). This rump congress realized it could only be considered a provisional body, and therefore refrained from making new pronouncements on any matter. As a result, the initial party program simply incorporated elements contained in the March program of the Union of Liberation, as well as resolutions approved by *zemstvoists* in

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<sup>6</sup> For more on the use of the term "liberalism" in the Russian context, see Timberlake 1972a.

September. The delegates rejected the October Manifesto, in part because it had not mentioned a constitution (Emmons 1983).

Although the Revolution of 1905 resulted in the creation of a parliament (the *Duma*), the Tsar effectively avoided the constraints of a true constitutional monarchy. Indeed, as the tsarist regime recovered from the near-collapse in 1905, the bureaucracy effectively reestablished its dominant role. Until its demise in 1917, the tsarist autocracy refused to fully empower civil society. The efforts of Ivan Petrunkevich, Aleksander Lednicki, Maksim Kovalevskii and their colleagues in the liberation movement could not obviate the need for the rule of law and other institutional safeguards for civil society, which failed to fully emerge in the wake of the Revolution of 1905.

### Contributions to this Volume

The nine essays in this volume relate directly to the themes of civil society and cultural identity that were main areas of scholarly interest for Charles Timberlake. The first section of the volume is dedicated to the theme of "Liberalism and Civil Society in Russia and Eastern Europe." Alla Barabtarlo's essay (chapter one) is an especially fitting contribution to this volume, since it builds directly on unfinished research conducted by Charles Timberlake. He nearly completed his commentary and editorial work on the correspondence (over 250 letters from 1886 to 1928) between Ivan Il'ich Petrunkevich and his son, Aleksander. Timberlake noted in an early article on this archival collection at the Yale University library that "it is rich in materials useful in studying the Russian liberal movement during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries . . ." (Timberlake 1967, 120). In 2008, he was preparing the Petrunkevich letters for publication. Barabtarlo explains the status of Timberlake's work on this project; while editorial work remains, she emphasizes that the task is worth the effort. Her essay also provides us with glimpses of the rich insights that Petrunkevich's letters offer about his role in liberal politics and his views on events in Soviet Russia. As we have seen already, Timberlake used the Petrunkevich archives to develop his research on the fate of *zemstvos* in Tver' Province. Barabtarlo opines that future scholars would benefit from a published collection of the correspondence of this important figure in the struggle to develop civil society in Russia.

In chapter two, Evgeny Badredinov contributes an original analysis of the social and economic thought of an important liberal lawyer and sociologist, Maksim Kovalevskii. He pays special attention to the analyses of Kovalevskii and other liberals concerning the Russian *mir* (village) and