

**MAKING AND BREAKING THE RUSSIAN EMPIRE:
THE CASE OF KIEV'S SHUL'GIN FAMILY**

An NCEEER Working Paper by

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Executive Summary

Over the course of the nineteenth century, the tsarist authorities struggled to consolidate their control over the diverse population of the Russian empire's western borderlands. In the early part of the century, Polish-Catholic nobles (or *szlachta*) were the dominant social and political force in the region, which also contained large numbers of Jews, Estonians, Latvians, Lithuanians, Belarusians, and Ukrainians; in 1830-31 and 1863, the *szlachta* participated in armed revolts that aimed to reconstitute the Polish state, which had been destroyed by partition in the late eighteenth century. In the aftermath of the insurrections, imperial bureaucrats attempted to diminish the influence of Poles in the region, to forestall the potential that other groups would embrace national separatism, and to enhance the authority of the state and the Orthodox church.

Introduction

Over the course of the nineteenth century, the tsarist authorities struggled to consolidate their control over the diverse population of the Russian empire's western borderlands. In the early part of the century, Polish-Catholic nobles (or *szlachta*) were the dominant social and political force in the region, which also contained large numbers of Jews, Estonians, Latvians, Lithuanians, Belarusians, and Ukrainians; in 1830-31 and 1863, the *szlachta* participated in armed revolts that aimed to reconstitute the Polish state, which had been destroyed by partition in the late eighteenth century. In the aftermath of the insurrections, imperial bureaucrats attempted to diminish the influence of Poles in the region, to forestall the potential that other groups would embrace national separatism, and to enhance the authority of the state and the Orthodox church.

A number of recent studies have investigated how bureaucrats crafted and implemented the new nationality policies that emerged in the nineteenth-century borderlands.¹ This paper examines the campaign to claim the region for the empire from a different angle, asking what local residents themselves contributed to this crusade.² It reconstructs the key role that several generations of a single family—the Shul'gin-Pikhno clan—played in the culture and politics of the southwestern region, which stretched from the right bank (west side) of the Dnieper river to the Austrian border. Following the family's efforts to reimagine the right bank as the very center of East Slavic civilization and a Russian nation-state, it provides a new perspective on the role of intellectuals in imperial Russia, the relationship between state and society, and the connections

¹ See, for example, Theodore R. Weeks, *Nation and State in Late Imperial Russia: Nationalism and Russification on the Western Frontier, 1863-1914* (DeKalb, IL: Northern Illinois University Press, 1996); Witold Rodkiewicz, *Russian Nationality Policy in the Western Provinces of the Empire, 1863-1905* (Lublin: Scientific Society of Lublin, 1998); Alexei Miller, *The Ukrainian Question: The Russian Empire and Nationalism in the Nineteenth Century* (New York: Central European University Press, 2003); M. Dolbilov and A. Miller, *Zapadnye okrainy rossiiskoi imperii* (Moscow: Novoe literaturnoe obozrenie, 2006); Darius Staliunas, *Making Russians: Meaning and Practice of Russification in Lithuania and Belarus after 1863* (New York: Rodopi, 2007).

² For a similar approach, see Catherine Evtuhov, *Portrait of a Russian Province: Economy, Society, and Civilization in Nineteenth-Century Nizhnii Novgorod* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2011).

between the center and periphery.

In the aftermath of 1830-31 and 1863 revolts, the family patriarch, Vitalii Iakovlevich Shul'gin, distinguished himself as an ardent supporter of the “Russian cause.” He also was also a devoted “Little Russian” patriot. (The term “Little Russian” was used by tsarist officials to describe the largely peasant population of the region—a group that we today would think of as Ukrainians—but was also embraced by local elites who expressed pride in folk traditions while rejecting Ukrainian national separatism.)³ V.Ia. Shul'gin insisted that far from undermining the integrity of the empire, Little Russian culture could serve as a powerful weapon in the officially-sponsored campaign to undermine Polish-Catholic civilization in the western borderlands and to unify the East Slavs. If Shul'gin sought to marshal Little Russian culture in defense of the empire—a notion that I will refer to as the Little Russian idea—his successors viewed it as a foundation on which a Russian (by which they meant East Slavic) nation-state could be built. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Shul'gin's protégé, Dmitrii Ivanovich Pikhno (who would go on to marry his mentor's widow), and his son, Vasili Vital'evich Shul'gin, presided over the emergence of a powerful, mass-oriented Russian nationalist movement. This movement soon became the dominant force in southwestern politics and expanded its influence across the empire.

Amidst a literature that has often focused on the intensifying conflicts between the cultures and people of the periphery and the centralizing imperial state, the story of the Shul'gin-Pikhno family provides a glimpse into an understudied universe of intellectuals who sincerely believed that the best way to protect local interests and mores was through collaboration with the

³ For more on the empire's “Little Russians,” see Olga Andriewsky, “The Russian-Ukrainian Discourse and the Failure of the ‘Little Russian Solution,’ 1782-1917,” in *Culture, Nation, and Identity: The Ukrainian-Russian Encounter (1600-1945)*, ed. Andreas Kappeler, Zenon E. Kohut, Frank E. Sysyn, and Mark von Hagen (Edmonton: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies Press, 2003).

state. It also shows that in spite of Russia's autocratic system, committed activists—and organized interest groups—could play a consequential role in influencing policy and shaping identities. However, this paper shows that the family's efforts to reconcile local, imperial, and national interests also produced unexpected consequences and unleashed ideological forces that they proved unable to contain. Ultimately, these forces would destroy the movement that the family had created and destabilize the empire that they had hoped to save.

The Little Russian Idea and the Career of V.Ia. Shul'gin

Shortly after the Polish revolt of 1830-31, a mid-ranking bureaucrat named Iakov Shul'gin accepted a new post in Kiev. The administrative center of the southwestern borderlands, that city served as the regional headquarters of the imperial state's efforts to de-polonize local high society and to reinvent the southwest as a "primordially Orthodox" locale. Like many of the officials who moved to Kiev to serve in this campaign, Shul'gin was a native of the Dnieper's left bank who traced his ancestry to the military elite of the Cossack hetmanate. Although Little Russian notables had been absorbed into the imperial nobility in the eighteenth century, men like Shul'gin retained a unique historical memory. They thought of the Ukrainian lands as the cradle of East Slavic civilization, their Cossack ancestors as the direct descendants of the Rus' princes, and they celebrated the role that their forebears had played in defending all Orthodox believers from alleged incursions by the Polish-Catholics and Jews who also resided in their homeland.⁴

Little Russian elites frequently lamented that the imperial state had infringed on the autonomy that their Cossack ancestors had once enjoyed. In the aftermath of the first Polish revolt, however, left-bank notables began to realize that their long-running interest in defending

⁴ The classic formulation of this worldview is the "Istoriia Rusov," widely circulated among the left-bank gentry in the early nineteenth century and published as: "Podrobnyi obzor Istorii russov," in *Chteniiia v imperatorskom obshchestve istorii i drevnostei Rossiiskikh pri Moskovskom universitete* 3 (26 October 1846): 1-31 (second pagination).

Orthodox traditions from “foreign” threats now coincided with the state’s desire once and for all to claim the borderlands for the empire. M.A. Maksimovich, a Poltava noble, accepted a position as the first rector of Kiev’s newly founded university; already acclaimed for his collection of Little Russian folk songs, he continued to encourage research on the region’s folk traditions in his official capacity. In 1840, he launched *Kievlianin*, an historical almanac that chronicled the efforts of local Orthodox leaders and Cossacks to preserve the values and faith of the Kievan princes over the centuries.⁵

Maksimovich was a founding member of the Commission for the Analysis of Historical Documents, convened by the Kiev Governor-General in 1843. Directed to consolidate church registers and court documents under the imperial state in order to prevent Poles from forging proof of their noble status or claiming other historical privileges, the Commission provided an official forum in which Little Russian notables could continue their local historical and ethnographic research. Uniting elite clergy, bureaucrats, and left-bank notables with a younger and more radical local patriots such as T.G. Shevchenko, P.A. Kulish, and N.I. Kostomarov, the Commission published Ukrainian-language Cossack chronicles and historical accounts that bemoaned the exploitation of the “Little Russian” people by Poles and Jews.⁶

Little is known about Iakov Shul’gin’s bureaucratic career or family life, but it is clear that his two sons came of age in the semi-official Little Russian milieu that flourished in post-revolt Kiev. One son, Nikolai, married the daughter of an illustrious Ukrainian *litterateur* and

⁵ See M.A. Maksimovich, *Kievlianin* (Kiev: Universitetskaia tipografiia, 1840).

⁶ On the activities and membership of the Commission, see: O.I. Levitskii, *Piatidesiatiletie Kievskoi Kommissii dlia razbora drevnikh aktov, 1843-1893: Istoricheskaia zapiska o eia deiatel'nosti* (Kiev: S.V. Kul'zhenko, 1893). On Ukrainian-language chronicles, consult O.I. Levitskii, ed., *Pamiatniki, izdannye vremennoi kommissieiu dlia razbora drevnikh aktov* (Kiev: Universitetskaia tipografiia, 1898), V.

followed in his father's footsteps, finding employment in the governor-general's chancery.⁷

Another, Vitalii (1822-1878), found his calling in the world of ideas. Reserved and hunchbacked, he had struggled to navigate the social obligations of the urban *beau monde* throughout his youth; once he enrolled in the history department of Kiev University, however, he discovered his talents as a writer and researcher. Having completed a master's thesis on the status of women in early modern Russia, he accepted positions as inspector of the Kiev gymnasium for noble girls and a part-time lecturer in history at the university. Aggravated by the Polish student protests that regularly shuttered establishments of higher education, he soon became an active member of the city's local history groups (including the Kiev Commission) and gained a reputation as an eloquent supporter of the "Orthodox cause."⁸

By the early 1860s, it became clear that the joint efforts of imperial officials and Little Russian elites to undermine Polish claims on the southwest had not entirely succeeded, and that a second Polish insurrection was imminent. Impatient with the slow pace of de-polonization, a new generation of youth initiated more radical efforts to promote the interests of the Orthodox masses and to undermine the borderlands' non-Orthodox populations. M.P. Dragomanov, an impoverished left-bank noble and Kiev University student, and Nikolai Shul'gin's son (and Vitalii's nephew), Iakov (1851-1911), organized Ukrainian-language Sunday schools that simultaneously endeavored to enlighten peasants and workers. Both men also joined the Kiev *Hromada*, a group that sought to raise awareness of the dignity and value of Little Russian folk culture—and to "liberate" the peasant masses from the feudal yoke that they insisted that the

⁷ V. Shcherbyna, "Pamiaty Iakova Shul'hyna," *Zapysky Ukrain's'koho Naukovoho Tovarystva v Kyivi*, Kn. X (1912): 11.

⁸ "Vitalii Iakovlevich Shul'gin," *Kievljanin* (Kiev: I.I. Zavadskii, 1880).

szlachta had imposed on them.⁹

The long-expected Polish revolt, which began in 1863, outraged Kiev's large and influential Little Russian intelligentsia. It was particularly disturbing for V.Ia. Shul'gin, for it coincided with a set of unsettling events in his personal life. In the spring of 1863, in the midst of the insurrection, Kiev University refused to hire him on a full-time basis, a decision that the historian attributed to the ongoing political influence of Poles at the top levels of the institution. Around the same time, an infectious disease swept through his family, claiming the lives of his brother, sister-in-law, and parents. Left to care for his orphaned nieces and nephews—including Iakov, the *Hromada* member—Shul'gin fell into a deep depression and became incapacitated by migraine attacks that paralyzed him for days at a time.¹⁰

By late 1863, Shul'gin had begun to emerge from his depression. He came to understand his own suffering as part and parcel of the misfortunes that had befallen the entire Little Russian people, whom he saw as victims of the “the triple yoke of Catholic clergy, Poles (landlords, rentiers, and estate managers) and Jews.”¹¹ This realization led him to believe that the Orthodox believers of the right bank needed a force that could unify and mobilize them against their putative oppressors. Enlisting the help of fellow Kiev Commission members as well as radical young *Hromada* activists such as Dragomanov, Shul'gin established Kiev's first daily newspaper, *Kievlianin*, in June 1864. He secured an official subsidy for the organ shortly thereafter.

⁹ M.P. Dragomanov, “Avtobiograficheskaia zametka,” in *Literaturno-publitsychni pratsi* (Kyiv, Naukova dumka, 1970), 1: 43-46; Ihnat Zhytets'kyi, “Kyivs'ka Hromada za 60-tykh rokov,” *Ukraina* 1 (1928): 91-125.

¹⁰ “Vitalii Iakovlevich Shul'gin,” 8-11; “Shul'gin, Vitalii Iakovlevich,” in V.S. Ikonnikov, ed., *Biograficheskii slovar' professor i prepodavatelei imperatorskogo universiteta Sv. Vladimira (1834-1884)* (Kiev: Imperatorskii Universiteta Sv. Vladimira, 1884), 770.

¹¹ The quote is from V.Ia. Shul'gin, “Iugo-zapadnyi krai pod upravleniem D.G. Bibikova,” *Drevniaia i novaia rossiiia* 6 (1879): 89, which is a reprint of an 1864 essay.

“Our region isn’t the Kingdom of Poland and it isn’t even Lithuania,” thundered the paper’s first issue. “Our region is Russian, Russian, Russian.”¹² Shul’gin’s insistence on the “Russianness” of the southwest did not, however, mark him as a Great Russian chauvinist or proponent of administrative centralization, as some have claimed.¹³ Rather, *Kievlianin*—whose nod to Maksimovich’s earlier publication of the same name surely was not coincidental—continued to celebrate Little Russian folk culture, which it presented as the purest manifestation of East Slavic traditions. Described by Dragomanov himself as “radically democratic” in spirit, the paper overtly praised the *Hromada*’s cultural and political activities as it claimed to defend the welfare of the toiling masses.¹⁴ Railing against “illegal encroachments” by Polish nobles and Jewish capitalists on peasant communities, it demanded the democratization of governance institutions (albeit on a national basis that limited Polish and Jewish participation), the redistribution of land to Orthodox believers, and affirmative action programs that would enhance the influence of East Slavs within the bureaucracy.¹⁵

As officials struggled to regain control of the southwest in the wake of the revolt, not all approved of the prominent role that the Little Russian idea had come to play among the local intelligentsia. The most prominent skeptic was Minister of the Interior P.A. Valuev, who expressed his concern that Polish nationalists might use Little Russian activism for their own purposes. To forestall this threat, he issued the notorious Valuev edict, which banned the

¹² “Ob”iavlenie.” *Kievlianin*, 1 July 1864, 1.

¹³ For claims of *Kievlianin*’s “reactionary” character, see John D. Klier, “Kievlianin and the Jews: A Decade of Disillusionment, 1864-1873,” *Harvard Ukrainian Studies* 5,1 (1981): 83-101; Iuliia Polovynchak, *Hazeta “Kievlianin” i Ukrainstvo: Dosvid natsional’noi samoidentyfikatsii* (Kyiv: Natsional’na akademiia nauk, 2008).

¹⁴ Dragomanov, “Avtobiograficheskaia zametka,” 47; “Zapiski ob universitetskoi zhizhi (1860-64),” *Kievlianin*, 13 August 1864 and 25 August 1864, 1.

¹⁵ For example, “Ob”iavlenie,” 1; “Narod i narodnye shkoly,” *Kievlianin*, 4 August 1864, 4; “Kiev,” *Kievlianin*, 1 August 1864, 1; Zhdai’ ili iskazhat?” *Kievlianin*, 8 April 1871, 1-2; *Kievlianin*, 9 January 1875, 1.

distribution of mass-oriented publications in the Ukrainian language.¹⁶ Others in the bureaucracy, however, insisted that Little Russian activists could serve as useful partners in the de-polonization campaign; consequently, the Valuev edict failed to halt the ongoing collaboration in Kiev between Little Russian patriots and imperial officials. Several of Shul'gin's associates launched penny papers that cited *Kievlіanin* as their inspiration and aimed to familiarize the masses with its ideas. And Little Russian activists manage to convince the authorities to erect a monument to the seventeenth-century Cossack leader Bohdan Khmelnytsky, which they presented as a celebration of the victory of the Little Russian people over Polish and Jewish "enemies."¹⁷ Shul'gin, Maksimovich, Dragomanov, and other Little Russian intellectuals joined ethnographic research projects organized by the Imperial Geographic Society that delineated the features and cultures of the Little Russian masses; on the heels of this effort, they convinced the authorities to allow them to open a Kiev branch of the Geographic Society in 1872.¹⁸

By the early '70s, however, internecine conflicts had begun to emerge within Kiev's Little Russian lobby. After an extended research trip outside of the Russian empire in the early '70s, Dragomanov returned to Kiev in 1873. He now openly criticized his comrades—including Shul'gin by name—for passively accepting the new limitations that the Ems Decree placed on their activities.¹⁹ Meanwhile, Dragomanov and his young associates had begun to supplant

¹⁶ David Saunders, "Russia and Ukraine under Alexander II: The Valuev Edict of 1863," *The International History Review* 17,1 (1995): 23-50.

On these developments, see Faith Hillis, "Ukrainophile Activism and Imperial Governance in Russia's Southwestern Borderlands," *Kritika* 13,2 (Spring 2012): 303-28. On officials' relationship with southwestern activists, see also Miller, *Ukrainian Question*.

¹⁸ Research on the southwest resulted in: P.P. Chubinskii, ed., *Trudy etnograficheskoi-statisticheskoi ekspeditsii v Zapadno-Russkii krai* (6 vols.) (St. Petersburg: Imperatorskoe Russkoe Geograficheskoe obshchestvo, 1872-76). On the founding of the Kiev branch of the Geographic Society, see Fedir Savchenko, *Zaborona ukrainstva 1876 r.* (Munich: Wilhelm Fink, 1970), 14-17.

¹⁹ See M.P. Drahomanov, "Antrakt z istorii Ukrainofil'stva (1863-1872)," *Vybrane* (Kyiv: Lybid', 1991), 204-33;

Shul'gin's influence in the Kiev branch of the Geographic Society, excluding him from the census that the group carried out in 1874.²⁰ Outraged at these slights, Shul'gin initiated a campaign against those who had offended him. In an 1874 editorial in *Kievlianin*, Shul'gin accused the Geographic Society of having permitted a threatening brand of Ukrainian national separatism to take the place of salutary Little Russian patriotism.²¹ A fellow elder founder of the Society, who had also been demoted in its ranks, took Shul'gin's allegations even further, claiming before the imperial authorities that the group served Polish revanchist interests and hoped to see Ukraine secede from the empire and join a free Poland.²²

The St. Petersburg authorities, who had relied so heavily on Little Russian activists to claim the southwest for the empire, took these allegations very seriously, convening a commission on the "Ukrainophile" threat. Having reviewed the commission's final report, tsar Alexander II issued the Ems Decree, which disbanded the southwestern branch of the Geographic Society, removed Dragomanov from his position at Kiev University, and placed further limits on the public use of Ukrainian.²³ Choosing to live in European exile for the rest of his life, Dragomanov would begin to formulate an alternative to the Little Russian idea: a vision that presented local folk culture not as the purest expression of East Slavic values, but rather, as the foundation of a distinct Ukrainian national culture. Dragomanov's vision of a Ukrainian nation would win the support of some who had once supported the Little Russian lobby—including Iakov Shul'gin, who, in the wake of the scandal within the Geographic Society,

Dragomanov, "Avtobiografia," 59.

²⁰ F. Volkov, "P.P. Chubinskii," *Ukrainskaia zhizn'* 1 (1914): 47; Miller, *Ukrainian Question*, 162-63.

²¹ *Kievlianin*, 3 October 1874, 1.

²² "O tak nazyvaemym ukrainofil'skom dvizhenii," c. 1875, Tsentral'nyi Derzhavnyi Istorychnyi Arkhiv Ukrainy, m. Kyiv (hereafter TsDIAUK), KMF-22, op. 1, d. 21.

²³ The findings of the commission are contained in Rossiiskii Gosudarstvennyi Istoricheskii Arkhiv (hereafter RGIA), f. 1282, op. 1, d. 374.

disowned the uncle who had raised him. The younger Shul'gin followed Dragomanov into exile in 1876 and donated his inheritance to the scholar; by the turn of the century, he would resettle in Odessa and join that city's *Hromada*, which by then called for Ukrainian national autonomy.²⁴ V.Ia. Shul'gin's provocation of a crisis within the Geographic Society had not only produced a schism between Little Russian activists who remained loyal to the imperial state and a new group who embraced a Ukrainian nationalist and separatist program; it also created a division within his own family that would last for generations.

D.I. Pikhno, the Little Russian Idea, and Mass Politics

By the time that the seriousness of the schism between Ukrainian nationalists and the Little Russian lobby became clear, V.Ia. Shul'gin lay on his deathbed. It would fall to D.I. Pikhno (1853-1913)—a professor of economics at Kiev University and the man to whom Shul'gin turned over control of *Kievlianin* in 1878—to determine the future of the newspaper and the Little Russian idea. The succession was clouded by scandal: Pikhno quickly married Shul'gin's widow Mariia, and was rumored to be the father of Vasili, the infant to whom Mariia had given birth just before her late husband's death. Following Mariia's death several years later, Pikhno eloped with his own step-daughter (V.Ia. Shul'gin's biological daughter)—a union that Ober Procurator K.P. Pobedonostsev himself later intervened to annul.²⁵ Although these scandals impugned Pikhno's reputation, the influence of *Kievlianin* continued to grow under his direction. The paper became not only the premier media outlet in the southwest but also an influential voice in imperial politics, whose circulation would surpass five million by the early

²⁴ M. Hrushevs'kyi, ed., *Z pochyniv ukrains'koho sotsiialistychnoho rukhu. Mykb. Dragomanov i zhenets'kyi sotsiialistychnyi brutok* (Vienna: Institute Sociologique Ukrainien, 1922), 53.

²⁵ Sidney Harcave, ed., *The Memoirs of Count Witte* (Armonk, NY: ME Sharpe, 1990), 82-83.

twentieth century.²⁶

Even more than Shul'gin, Pikhno conceived of himself as a defender of the Little Russian simple folk. The son of a poor petty trader from the right bank and a pupil at one of the earliest schools run by *Hromada* activists, he was open about and proud of his modest origins.²⁷ Determined to lift his Little Russian comrades out of poverty and ignorance, he was also an outspoken opponent of the capitalist take-off then transforming the southwest. In his academic publications, Pikhno lamented that the state's economic policies favored the interests of bankers, sugar magnates, and railroad industrialists over those of the toiling masses.²⁸ In the pages of *Kievlianin*, Pikhno fused his critique of the capitalist system with Shul'gin's earlier narratives of Little Russian suffering under "foreign exploitation." If Shul'gin had presented the feudal system allegedly supported by Polish landed interests as the primary threat to the welfare of the masses, Pikhno now denounced Jews engaged in the capitalist marketplace as the new oppressors of the simple folk—in his words, a "*kulak* nation that is strong by virtue of its unity, solidarity, single faith and beliefs, and views and has mastered the art of exploiting all non-Jews for more than ten decades."²⁹

Yet alongside these harsh denunciations of the "enemies" of the simple folk, the populist and liberationist rhetoric expressed in earlier manifestations of the Little Russian idea survived. Pikhno's *Kievlianin* took a hard line against "Ukrainian separatists" such as Dragomanov, whom

²⁶ "Spisok povremennym izdaniiam, vypushchennye v svet v g. Kieve v 1906 g.," TsDIAUK, f. 295, op. 1, d. 139, l. 3.

²⁷ O Levits'kyi, "Storinka z zhyttia Volodymyra Antonovycha," Instytut rukopysu, Natsional'na biblioteka Ukrainy im. V. I. Vernads'koho (hereafter IR NBUV) I. 8076; Ikonnikov, *Biograficheskii slovar'*, 553.

²⁸ D.I. Pikhno, *Kommercheskie operatsii Gosudarstvennogo Banka* (Kiev: Universitetskaia tipografiia, 1876); *O svobode mezhdunarodnoi torgovli i protektsionizme* (Kiev: I.N. Kushnerev, 1889); D.I. Pikhno, *Po povodu polemiki o deshevom khlebe* (Kiev: I.N. Kushnerev, 1897).

²⁹ The quote is from: "Evrei i trudiashchaisia massa v nashem krae," *Kievlianin*, 20 March 1881, 1. See also *Kievlianin*, 18 February 1883, 2; "Sakharnoe proizvodstvo i normirovka," *Kievlianin*, 21 January 1894, 1; "Zasedanie sakharozavodchikov," *Kievlianin*, 11 January 1894, 3.

the paper excoriated as servants of “foreign” plots.³⁰ Nevertheless, the paper remained a reliable voice of Little Russian patriotism, praising the “unique features of the southern Russian people”—which it presented as the purest expression of native East Slavic traditions and a source of inspiration for the local peasants struggling to resist foreign incursions.³¹ Pikhno and his paper called for political reforms, including the introduction of *zemstva* in the southwest and new initiatives to expand peasants’ access to land, cheap credit, and education. But these reforms must, he insisted, be carried out in a “national” spirit that would benefit only the “native” toiling masses—and limit the power of the Poles and Jews who allegedly had exploited them for centuries.³² Pikhno had begun to build a reformist, populist movement—though one that professed its loyalty to the imperial state and railed against putative “internal enemies”—on the foundations of Shul’gin’s efforts to reconcile Little Russian culture with the interests of the de-polonizing state.

In the last years of the nineteenth century, the southwest’s industrialists, liberal intellectuals, and supporters of the Jewish, Polish, and Ukrainian national causes began to band together to contest the claims made by prominent Little Russian activists. By 1905, this local movement had become part of the all-imperial “Liberation Movement,” which spearheaded a revolution demanding basic civil rights for all imperial subjects. Even as it remained an organ that claimed to represent the wishes of the Orthodox toiling masses, *Kievlianin* now evolved into a gathering place for the opponents of the Liberation Movement. The paper’s contributors did not altogether dismiss the need for change; indeed, they demanded major political, social, and

³⁰ “Narodnaia shkola na iuge rossii,” *Kievlianin*, 14 February 1881, 1; Andrei Ivanov, “Po povodu khokhlomanii,” *Kievlianin*, 20 March 1881, 2.

³¹ The quote is from N. Petrov, “O stepeni samobytnosti ukrainskoi literatury,” *Kievlianin*, 20 March 1881, 1.

³² For example, *Kievlianin*, 26 April 1881, 1; “Kredit i sel’skoe khoziastvo,” *Kievlianin*, 24 February 1883, 1; *Kievlianin*, 18 February 1883, 1; “Eshche raz o volostnykh sudakh,” *Kievlianin*, 27 April 1882, 1; “Obkhod novago zakona o evreiiakh,” *Kievlianin*, 5 May 1882, 1.

economic reforms. They insisted, however, that the equal rights platform endorsed by the liberationists would only enslave the Orthodox toiling masses; true reform must undermine the privileges enjoyed by Poles, Jews, and other “enemies of the people” and benefit the East Slavs alone.³³

Over the course of 1905, *Kievlianin* became the center of a community of self-identified “true Russians,” who penned letters to the paper and shared their political views in its pages.³⁴ As one correspondent who described herself as previously apolitical explained, *Kievlianin*’s leadership in defining the anti-liberationist platform in 1905 had showed her for the first time what it meant to be a “truly Russian citizen.”³⁵ But the paper and its readers also deepened the divides that had emerged in southwestern society. Contributors to the organ defined themselves against a variety of others—Poles, Armenians, revolutionaries, and socialists—but they reserved special vitriol for Jews, whom they branded as both capitalist oppressors *and* dangerous revolutionaries bent on destroying the empire.³⁶ During the three-day pogrom that ravaged Kiev in the aftermath of the October manifesto, rioters momentarily halt their violent acts to gather in front of the newspaper’s headquarters. There, they waved portraits of the tsar, sang patriotic hymns, and cheered Pikhno prior to resuming their attacks on Jewish homes and businesses.³⁷ Far from distancing himself from the violence, Pikhno celebrated the pogrom as the rightful revenge of a people whose “national sensibility” had been insulted by foreign populations who

³³ See, for example, D.I. Pikhno, *V Osade: Politicheskie stat'i* (Kiev: Kushnerev, 1905). For more on the anti-liberal concept of liberation that developed in Kiev, see Faith Hillis, *Children of Rus': Right-Bank Ukraine and the Russian Nationalist Imagination* (forthcoming, Cornell University Press), chs. 4-5.

³⁴ See, for example, *Kievlianin*, 25 November 1905, 4; *Kievlianin*, 26 November 1905, 4; *Kievlianin*, 27 November 1905, 3; “Iz pisem v redaktsiiu,” *Kievlianin*, 8 November 1905, 2.

³⁵ Ol'ga Chubina to D.I. Pikhno, 20 December 1905, TsDIAUK, f. 296, op. 1, d. 27, l. 149. There are dozens of letters in this file that express similar sentiments.

³⁶ For example, *Kievlianin*, 1 October 1905, 3; “Sborishche v universitete,” *Kievlianin*, 9 October 1905, 3.

³⁷ Report of Police Chief Tsikhotskii to Civil Governor Savvich, 26 October 1905, TsDIAUK, f. 442, op. 855, d. 391, ch. 1, ll. 121-123ob.

had treated them as slaves.³⁸

Pikhno, V.V. Shul'gin, and Russian Nationalism

Pikhno's role in mobilizing self-professed "true Russians" amidst the unrest of 1905 endowed him with more influence than ever. In the winter of 1905-6, as elections to the newly convened imperial Duma approached, he now worked to maintain the unity of his followers. He began to hold mass meetings that attracted hundreds of city residents at a time; these meetings, which convened in the impoverished urban periphery as well as in the city center, ultimately evolved into a formal political coalition that agreed to support a common slate of "truly Russian" candidates.³⁹ The anti-liberationist coalition that emerged from Kiev demonstrated the substantial intellectual influence of *Kievlianin*: it railed against any equalization in the rights of minorities and denounced Ukrainian nationalists even as it called for the democratization of politics, enhanced local self-governance, comprehensive land reform, and improved access to education and credit for Orthodox peasants.⁴⁰ Pikhno's stepson, V.V. Shul'gin (1878-1976), a recent graduate of Kiev University law school and a frequent contributor to *Kievlianin*, played a key role in these organizational efforts as well. Imbuing the Little Russian idea with the language of modern nationalism, he presented the southwestern simple folk as members of a proud and united, yet long-oppressed, Russian nation.⁴¹

³⁸ Editorial of 19 October 1905, reprinted in Pikhno, *V Osade*, 48-49.

³⁹ On one such meeting that attracted hundreds in late 1905, see *Kievlianin*, 2 January 1906, 4.

⁴⁰ On party meetings and platforms, see Hillis, *Children of Rus'*, chapter 6. Note the resemblance of Kiev's self-professed Russian nationalists to the anti-Semitic, mass-oriented nationalist parties of Vienna and Prague: John W. Boyer, *Political Radicalism in Late Imperial Vienna: Origins of the Christian Social Movement, 1848-1897* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981); T. Mills Kelly, *Without Remorse: Czech National Socialism in Late-Habsburg Austria* (Boulder: East European Monographs, 2007).

⁴¹ On Shul'gin's early years, see D.O. Zaslavskii, *Rytsar' chernoi sotni: V.V. Shul'gin* (Leningrad: Byloe, 1925); "Avtobiografiia Vasiliiia Vitaliavicha Shul'gina," 1932-33, Hoover Archives [hereafter HA] Mariia Vrangeli' Collection, Box 19, Folder 37.

In the elections to the first дума, the efforts of Pikhno and Shul'gin came to naught: the “truly Russian” bloc was soundly defeated by a coalition of liberals, progressive Jews, and Polish and Ukrainian nationalists, who elected a Kadet to Kiev's Duma seat.⁴² (Iakov Shul'gin, who had returned to Kiev in the 1900s, and his son, an ardent Ukrainian nationalist who preferred to go by the Ukrainian version of his name, Oleksandr Shul'hyn [1889-1960] supported this liberationist bloc.) In response to this disappointment, Pikhno, Shul'gin, and their sympathizers only redoubled their mobilizational efforts. *Kievlianin* contributors organized a network of “Russian nationalist” workers' unions, women's clubs, voluntary associations, and penny papers aimed at Kiev's urban masses.⁴³ By September of 1906, one liberal organ (with little reason to exaggerate the power of its rivals) reported that the “truly Russian” coalition in Kiev had amassed 10,000 active supporters.⁴⁴ Activists also expanded their focus beyond Kiev. Shul'gin and Pikhno organized all-regional conferences to unite their sympathizers and held voter mobilization drives across the southwestern borderlands.⁴⁵ They forged close contacts with monks at Volyniia's Pochaev monastery, who created extensive networks of anti-liberationist unions and parties and published pamphlets imploring Little Russian peasants to save the empire from “foreign” threats.⁴⁶

Following these new mobilizational efforts, self-professed “Russian nationalist” activists began to secure solid electoral victories. In the elections to the second Duma, Kiev city chose as its representative an Orthodox bishop who had been a reliable supporter of the anti-liberationist

⁴² “Izbitatel'naia kampaniia v Kieve,” *Kievskaiia zaria*, 26 March 1906, 3.

⁴³ “Sobranie chlenov 'kassy zhertv dolga,” *Kievlianin*, 23 October 1906, 3; “Strakhovanie monarkhistov ot revoliutsionerov,” *Zakon i Pravda*, 11 October 1906, 3; “Zibrannia robitnikiv,” *Rada*, 25 September 1906, 3.

⁴⁴ I.V. Omel'ianchuk, *Chernosotennoe dvizhenie na territorii Ukrainy (1904-1914 gg.)* (Kiev: NIURO, 2000), 63.

⁴⁵ “Oblasnyi z'ezd 'russskykh' vybortsiv pivdenno-zakhidnoho kraiu,” *Rada*, 22 November 1906, 3; “Oblastnoi s'ezd Russkikh izbiratelei v Kieve,” *Kievlianin*, 21 November, 1906, 3.

⁴⁶ Archbishop Vitaly, “Chto ia pomniu o sebe,” in *Motivy moey zhizni* (Jordanville NY: Holy Trinity Monastery: 1955), 180; N.D. Talberg, “The Life's Journey of Archbishop Vitaly.” *Pravoslavnaya Rus' (Orthodox Russia)*, 3 (February 1959): 4.

coalition. The success of the “truly Russian” movement was even more striking in Volynia. Twelve of the thirteen peasants, priests and landowners elected by that province’s overwhelmingly agrarian voters declared themselves “true Russians”; the most prominent was V.V. Shul’gin, who had acquired a small estate there.⁴⁷ The southwest’s Russian nationalists performed better still in the elections to the third Duma, claiming thirty-six of the region’s forty-one Duma representatives. Right-bank Ukraine had become one of the most staunchly anti-liberationist and Russian nationalist regions in the entire Russian empire.⁴⁸

Pikhno, Shul’gin and the Plan to Nationalize the Empire

As their “truly Russian” compatriots exclaimed that “ancient Kiev” again had intervened to save Orthodoxy, East Slavic civilization, and the imperial state from “foreign” threats,⁴⁹ Shul’gin and Pikhno now focused their efforts on enhancing the contacts between the opinion-makers of the imperial capitals and the southwestern masses. In 1908, they helped establish the Kiev Club of Russian Nationalists. Soon claiming nearly a thousand members (ranging from gentry to clergy, urban intellectuals, workers, and women of various stations) and operating several provincial offshoots, the Club became a powerful lobbying organization.⁵⁰ As the Club of Russian Nationalists gained traction, Shul’gin and Pikhno both acquired growing influence in

⁴⁷ Information culled from M.M. Boiovich, *Chleny Gosudarstvennoi Dumy. Portrety i biografii. 2-oi sozyv. 1907-1912 g.* (Moscow: I.D. Sytin, 1907).

⁴⁸ Data culled from *3-ii sozyv Gosudarstvennoi Dumy. Portrety. Biografii. Avtografii* (St Petersburg: N. Olshanskii, 1910). Several decades ago, Robert Edelman noted the strength of the Russian nationalist movement in the southwest, but he described this party’s base as conservative nobles. See Robert Edelman, *Gentry Politics on the Eve of the Russian Revolution: The Nationalist Party, 1907-1917* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1980). As I have argued here and elsewhere, the southwest’s Russian nationalist movement (and the party that later developed out of it) was directed by urban professionals and aimed at the masses; it was relatively late in the movement’s history—between 1906-8—that a conservative noble contingent joined its ranks.

⁴⁹ The quote is from: “Provody chlena Gosudarstvennoi Dumy ot Kiev, preosviashchennogo Platona, episkopa Chigirinskogo,” *Kievskie eparkhial’nye vedomosti* 7 (1907): 157.

⁵⁰ *Sbornik kluba russkikh natsionalistov* (Kiev: Kushnerev, 1910), 2: 121-40; Edelman, *Gentry Politics*, 113.

elite bureaucratic circles. The former, a fiery orator, became one of the most prominent spokesmen of the *duma* rightists; the latter acquired an appointed seat on the State Council in 1907.

The ongoing mobilizational efforts of Shul'gin and Pikhno culminated with the creation of the All-Russian Nationalist Union in 1909, which unified Little Russian activists as well as conservatives and rightists from central Russia. Reflecting the curious mixture of anti-liberal populism and imperial loyalism that had been evident in *Kievlianin* since the days of V.Ia. Shul'gin, the party called for a constitutional monarchy with a strong parliament elected by a broader franchise, the devolution of self-governance rights to local communities, universal elementary education, and the creation of new social safety nets while insisting that the limitation of the influence of the empire's "internal enemies"—that is, its non-Russian minorities—was a prerequisite to achieving a prosperous and equitable society.⁵¹ Although it retained a strong regional base—the majority of the party's *duma* delegates hailed from the empire's western borderlands—the party rapidly assumed national importance. Within a year of its founding, it had become the second-largest party in the *duma* and Prime Minister P.A. Stolypin's main partner in governance.⁵²

Russian nationalists demanded a "Russia for Russians," calling for reforms that would organize imperial governance structures on a national rather than an estate basis. In 1909, Pikhno introduced a proposal in the State Council that would nationalize the elections to that institution,

⁵¹ "Proekt platformy, ob"ediniavshchei russkikh narodnykh natsionalistov," (1911 pamphlet with no further publication information), 1-4; "Russkaia natsional'naia fraktsiia," *Rossia*, 27 October 1909, 1; "Otkrytie Vserossiiskogo natsional'nogo kluba," *Kievlianin*, 3 December 1909, 2-3; for further details on the party's formation and platform, consult Kotsiubinskii, *Russkii natsionalizm*.

⁵² Of the State *Duma* delegates who affiliated themselves with the party, 37 self-identified as Great Russians, 35 as Little Russians, and 15 as Belarusians. See *Natsionalisty v 3-ei Gosudarstvennoi Dume* (St. Petersburg: A.S. Suvorin, 1912), 141.

limiting the electoral power of Poles in the western borderlands.⁵³ That same year, Shul'gin penned a pamphlet calling for the introduction of *zemstva* in the western provinces. These institutions, too, would be organized on a national basis, offering an extremely broad franchise to East Slavic peasants, limiting the participation of Poles, and barring Jews altogether.⁵⁴ Backed by the Kiev Club of Russian Nationalists and the All-Russian National Union, Stolypin himself soon endorsed Shul'gin's plan as well.

From the very beginning, however, these demands provoked controversy from many quarters. Conservatives objected to nationalists' calls to broaden the franchise for ordinary East Slavic workers and peasants. Moderates complained that the plans encouraged ethnic strife between the diverse inhabitants of the borderlands. Liberals and radicals objected that they would deprive whole classes of the population of their civil rights on the basis of ethnic criteria ascribed by the state.⁵⁵ In response to these criticisms, Stolypin agreed slightly to restrict the franchise for Orthodox believers and to eliminate the most controversial limitations that the original plan had placed on the activities of non-East Slavs. But he continued to endorse the basic premise of the bill, insisting that it would finally deliver "Russian-Slavic" people from the clutches of Jewish and "Polish-Latin" civilization.⁵⁶ On 29 May 1910, a large *duma* majority passed the bill, which established nationalized *zemstva* in six western provinces and set the economic thresholds that qualified "Russians" to vote at half the level of other provinces.

When the State Council met to consider the bill in 1911, conservatives, moderates, and

⁵³ *Sbornik kluba russkikh natsionalistov* (Kiev: Kushnerev, 1919), 1:55-57.

⁵⁴ V. Shul'gin, *Vybornee zemstvo v Iugo-zapadnom krae* (Kiev: Kushnerev, 1909).

⁵⁵ E.S, *Istoricheskoe znachenie*; "Prozorlivtsy iz 'Dziennik'a Kijovsk'ago [sic]," *Kievlianin*, 1 November 1909, 2.

⁵⁶ RGIA, f. 1276, op. 5, d. 73, ll. 774-775; 778-786.

liberals subjected it to blistering critiques.⁵⁷ Despite Pikhno's rousing defense of its provisions, on 4 March 1911, Kadets and Polish representatives in that body joined Octobrists and rightists to defeat the bill. *Kievlianin* printed protests (many from members of the Kiev Club of Russian Nationalists and the All-Russian National Union) complaining that the bill's defeat guaranteed that "Western Rus'" would become "Polish property."⁵⁸ Bowing to this ongoing pressure from his allies in the southwest, a week later, Stolypin promulgated the bill through extra-judicial means.

The implementation of the western *zemstvo* bill marked the apex of the influence of the Russian Nationalist movement that Pikhno and Shul'gin had constructed on top of the older effort to marshal Little Russian culture in defense of the empire. But it also laid bare the weaknesses in the Russian nationalist camp. In addition to the resistance that Pikhno and Shul'gin had encountered from detractors on all sides of the political spectrum, tensions had begun to emerge within the movement itself. Its most extreme members (including the Pochaev monks) now claimed that the government and even Pikhno had not done enough to protect East Slavs from the racial threats supposedly posed by Poles and Jews.⁵⁹ Peasants and workers, who had been an important constituency in the nationalist movement since 1905, expressed similar frustrations, challenging the mostly bourgeois, urban professionals who ran the Kiev Club of Russian Nationalists for control of the movement.⁶⁰

A week after Stolypin implemented the western *zemstvo* bill, children playing in a

⁵⁷ *Stenograficheskii otchet. Gosudarstvennyi sovet. Sessia VI* (St. Petersburg: Gosudarstvennaia tipografiia, 1911), 155-57; 1998-1239.

⁵⁸ Quote from *Kievlianin*, 8 March 1911, 2.

⁵⁹ For example, *Dvuglavyi orel*, 20 March 1911, 1; clipping from *Volyńskaia zemlia*, 8 August 1912, in TsDIAUK, f. 442, op. 665, d. 101b, ch. III, l. 57.

⁶⁰ On these tensions, see F. Postnyi to Chief of Kiev Okhrana, August 1911, TsDIAUK, f. 275, op. 1, d. 2534, l. 2; Savenko to Chernov, 20 July 1911, IR NBUV, f. 167, no. 99, 1ob-3.

working-class district of Kiev found the corpse of Andrei Iushchinskii, a local schoolboy, which was covered with multiple shallow wounds. Both the intellectuals and the proletarian “truly Russian” groups that had decried the alleged indifference of imperial officials and nationalist leaders toward the needs of the East Slavs took great interest in the crime. They staged a protest at the victim’s funeral, alleging that the murder had been perpetrated by Jews as part of a blood ritual and urging attendees to beat the Jews “until there is not one Yid left in Russia!”⁶¹ Over the course of the next month, they organized several more demonstrations highlighting the alleged threats that Jews posed to “true Russians,” one of which attracted a crowd of at least a thousand and attempted to incite a pogrom.⁶²

Pikhno and Shul’gin, who had emerged as the major theoreticians of a Russian nationalist movement that had justified the pogroms of 1905, now distanced themselves from the movement’s ever more radical and violent impulses. In editorials in *Kievlianin*, they dismissed the blood ritual rumors as “legends” and expressed full confidence in the ability of the police to solve the case.⁶³ Initially, local officials and police also expressed great skepticism about the blood ritual allegations. By April 1911, however, local activists had managed to gain the attention of Minister of Justice I.G. Shcheglovitov, who ultimately pressured the Kiev prosecutor (a Club of Russian Nationalists member) to investigate the case as a ritual murder.⁶⁴ A medical expert (also a Kiev Club member) who conducted an autopsy of Iushchinskii’s body declared the crime a “vendetta of the sons of Jacob”; by summer, the local authorities charged Mendel Beilis,

⁶¹ Kiev Governor A.F. Girs to Governor-General F.F. Trepov, 31 March 1911, TsDIAUK, f. 442, op. 641, d. 2, ch. 1, ll. 180-180ob.

⁶² Presentation of G.G. Chaplinskii to Kiev District Court, 16 April 1911, in TsDIAUK, f. 317, op. 1. d. 5482, l. 6ob.

⁶³ See the clippings in *Ibid.*, l. 9.

⁶⁴ On local attempts to sway opinion-makers, see Vladimir Golubev, “L’Enfant-martyr: Andre Iouchinsky, élève de l’Ecole religieuse de Sainte Sophie martyrisé par les Juifs,” IR NBUV, f. 81, no. 131, ll. 11-12; “Evreiskii vopros,” Bakhmeteff Archive, A.F. Girs Papers, Box 1, Folder 4, 10.

an employee of an enterprise adjacent to the land where Iushchinskii's body was found, with the murder.⁶⁵

The September 1911 assassination of Stolypin in Kiev by an *okhrana* double agent of Jewish heritage deepened the anti-Semitic frenzy that Beilis' accusers had incited. The Pochaev monks and the more radical of the southwest's nationalist *duma* deputies declared Jews the "enemies of Russia and its state structure."⁶⁶ Peasants who aligned themselves with the nationalist movement gathered to denounce their Jewish neighbors.⁶⁷ Radical Russian nationalist organizations rapidly proliferated in the southwest; many established their own publishing houses and trade schools and even organized strikes against Polish landlords and Jewish long-term leaseholders.⁶⁸ A study commissioned by local church officials found that the ultra-nationalist Union of Russian People operated 117 chapters with more than 20,000 active members in Kiev province alone.⁶⁹

Alarmed by these developments, Shul'gin made a bold attempt to reclaim control of the nationalist movement. Having assumed editorial control of *Kievlianin* following Pikhno's July 1913 death, Shul'gin used the paper to denounce Jewish blood rituals as a "shameful superstition" and to condemn local activists for promoting mass violence and persecuting an innocent man.⁷⁰ In a follow-up article that clarified his point, Shul'gin explained that he was no defender of Jews: Jews, he claimed, had seized control of the "press, liberal professions, trade,

⁶⁵ Chaplinskii to Kiev district court, 16 April 1911, TsDIAUK, f. 317, op. 1, d. 5482, ll. 6-8.

⁶⁶ Quote is from *Gosudarstvennaia дума. Stenograficheskie otchety. 1911 goda. Sessii piataia chast' 1. Zasedaniia 1-41* (St Petersburg, Gosudarstvennaia tipografiia, 1911), 27. On the monks, see "Pered Vyborami," clipping from *Rech'*, dated 3 July 1912, TsDIAUK, f. 442, op. 665, d. 101b, ch. III, l. 46.

⁶⁷ Petition of residents of Iablunovetskii district of Kiev province, RGIA, f. 786, op. 1, d. 1192, d. 26.

⁶⁸ Office of Kiev Province Direction to Girs, 2 August 1911, TsDIAUK, f. 442, op. 861, d. 102, ll. 5-11ob; Memorandum of the Chief of the Kiev Province Gendarme Direction, 6 October 1911, in *Ibid.*, l. 20; "S Kievshchiny," clipping from *Russkoe znamia*, 2 August 1912, in *Ibid.*, l. 119.

⁶⁹ Undated letter of Metropolitan Flavian, TsDIAUK, f. 127, op. 789, d. 743, l. 2.

⁷⁰ *Kievlianin*, 27 September 1913, 1.

and capital,” and had “Yiddified” Russian culture by replacing traditional Orthodox values with capitalist exploitation and revolutionary violence. As much as he deplored “Jewish psychology” and “Jewish ethics,” however, he insisted that implicating “Yids” in absurd medieval legends detracted from efforts to build a “healthy and sensible anti-Semitism,” and to mobilize a Russian nation strong enough to resist alleged Jewish onslaughts.⁷¹

In the end, a jury consisting exclusively of Orthodox peasants found that Iushchinskii had likely been killed as part of a Jewish blood ritual, but it acquitted Beilis of the crime, pointing to a lack of evidence implicating him. If the outcome of the trial vindicated the critics of the prosecution, this victory was pyrrhic for Shul’gin: denounced by his one-time comrades as a crypto-Judeophile and a traitor to the toiling masses, he was also prosecuted and imprisoned by officials for having criticized the prosecution’s conduct in the case.⁷² In the months following the verdict, the Kiev Club of Russian Nationalists and the Nationalist party were rent by crisis, as radical intellectuals, workers, and peasants defected from the organizations that Shul’gin had built.⁷³ In their place, they began to create new political organizations and press organs that presented Jews as racial enemies of the East Slavic simple folk—adversaries whose deleterious influence could only be overcome by their complete exclusion from public life.⁷⁴ Local officials who had once eagerly supported the Russian nationalist movement as a means of claiming the southwest for the empire now expressed grave concerns that the violent, racially exclusive

⁷¹ “Antisemitizm,” *Kievlianin*, 15 October 1913, 2.

⁷² For denunciations, see “Otkrytoe pis'mo redaktoru ‘Kievlianina,’” *Dvuglavyi orel*, 4 October 1913, 3; “Otkrytoe pis'mo redaktoru gazety ‘Kievlianin’ V. Shul'ginu,” *Dvuglavyi orel*, 5 October 1913, 2; on Shul’gin’s legal troubles, “Prigovor po delu V.V. Shul'gin,” *Kievskaya mysl'*, 5 February 1914, 2.

⁷³ “V klube russkikh natsionalistov,” *Kievlianin*, 15 December 1913, 6; “V Klube russkikh natsionalistov,” *Kievlianin*, 19 December 1913, 4.

⁷⁴ A. Tregubov to Flavian, 24 October 1913, RGIA, f. 796, op. 205, d. 739, l. 1; *Dvuglavyi orel*, 1 December 1913, 1.

rhetoric that the movement had spawned threatened to destroy the empire's very foundations.⁷⁵

Conclusion

In some respects, the efforts of the Shul'gin and Pikhno to mobilize the Little Russian people and culture in defense of the Russian empire were remarkably successful. The family helped to popularize the notion that an imperial periphery far from the centers of power was the spiritual center of East Slavic civilization and built a powerful mass political movement that echoed these claims. Yet its efforts ultimately spawned centrifugal forces that spun out of control. Alienated from the one-time colleagues who had turned against him, Shul'gin found himself increasingly at odds with the tsarist state as well, whose disastrous handling of the Iushchinskii murder was soon eclipsed by its self-defeating conduct in the First World War. Injured on the Eastern front in the first months of the war, Shul'gin returned to his *duma* obligations after his recovery, eventually joining with the Progressive Bloc to denounce the tsarist leadership as criminally ineffective.⁷⁶ Convinced that the tsar and his servitors would never be able to build the strong Russian nation-state of which he still dreamed, Shul'gin was a direct witness to the demise of the empire: he was one of the two *duma* delegates dispatched to a railroad car on the Eastern Front to convince tsar Nicholas II to abdicate the throne in February 1917.

Ever the intellectual entrepreneur, Shul'gin continued his efforts to build a Russian nation on the ruins of the old empire. He returned to Kiev in mid-1917 to organize Russian nationalist parties, which won the most votes of any party in the free and fair elections to the Constituent

⁷⁵ For example, Sukovkin to Trepov, 14 January 1914, TsDIAUK, f. 442, op. 864, d. 34, l. 1.

⁷⁶ On the collapse of the Nationalist Party and the participation of its more moderate members in the Progressive Bloc, see Edelman, *Gentry Politics*, 181-217.

Assembly.⁷⁷ But he now faced competition not only from the liberals, anarchists, socialists, Zionists, and Bolsheviks vying for control of the Ukrainian lands, but also from his cousin, Oleksandr, who remained a convicted Ukrainian nationalist and played prominent roles in the revolutionary Ukrainian state. As Oleksandr Shul’ghyn and his comrades struggled to create a national history for Ukraine—one that excised the Russian branch of the Shul’ghin/Pikhno family from local history⁷⁸—Vasilii joined the White Army and helped to organize its intelligence bureau. In this capacity, he and his associates continue to draw up plans for a post-war national order that would guarantee equality and prosperity for ordinary East Slavs—and minimize the influence of their putative enemies.⁷⁹

Forced to flee Russia for European exile in the ‘20s, the cousins would continue their polemics against each other for decades. Oleksandr, who settled first in Prague and later in Paris, continued to conduct research on Ukrainian history and remained active in attempts to restore Ukraine’s independence.⁸⁰ After short stays in Bulgaria, Germany, and France, V.V. Shul’ghin settled in Belgrade. Radicalized by the trauma of war and revolution, Vasilii now drew closer to the views of the extreme nationalists whom he had once denounced: he presented the Bolshevik government as a Jewish plot to destroy the Russian people and praised the fascist parties emerging across the continent as a new force that could deliver Russians from their enemies.⁸¹

⁷⁷ Steven L. Guthier, “The Popular Base of Ukrainian Nationalism in 1917,” *Slavic Review* 38,1 (1979): 43. For more on Shul’ghin’s views and activities in this period, see the journal *Malaia Rus’*, which he edited in 1918.

⁷⁸ See, for example, Mykhailo Hrushevs’kyi’s journal *Ukraina*.

⁷⁹ HA, Vrangel’ Collection, Box 29, folders 4, 14, 15, 18, 20. See also Peter Kenez, *Civil War in South Russia, 1918-1919: The Defeat of the Whites* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977), 65-71; Victor Bortnevskii, “White Intelligence and Counter-Intelligence during the Civil War,” *The Carl Beck Papers*, no. 108 (1995).

⁸⁰ For example, Alexandre Choulguine, *L’Ukraine contre Moscou, 1917* (Paris: Alcan, 1935); Mykhailo Hrushevs’kyi, *Cours d’histoire de l’Ukraine*, ed. Oleksandr Shul’ghyn (Paris: Première Impr. Ukrainienne en France, 1959).

⁸¹ For example, V.V. Shul’ghin, *Chto nam v nikh ne nraivit’sia: ob antisemitizme v Rossii* (Paris: Russia Minor, 1929); V.V. Shul’ghin, *Anshluss i my!* (Belgrad: NZ Rybnski, 1938.)

If the empire ultimately proved unable to contain the Little Russian idea promoted by V.Ia. Shul'gin—and its elaboration and reinterpretation by his successors—the ideas that emerged in the nineteenth-century southwestern borderlands would survive to shape a new era of total war and ideological polarization. Vitalii Shul'gin's strong local patriotism and populist spirit would live on in his grand-nephew's Ukrainian nationalism, and his longing for the spiritual unity of the East Slavs and the defeat of their enemies led his son Vasiliï to embrace fascism.