



FELIKS VOLKHOVSKII
A REVOLUTIONARY LIFE

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7. Final Years

Many Russian revolutionaries in exile abroad began to return home in the second half of 1905, a stream that became a flood following the proclamation of the October Manifesto, which at least rhetorically guaranteed freedom of the press and open political debate. Volkhovskii was—eventually—among those who made their way back to Russia. One of the leading historians of the Socialist Revolutionary Party, Manfred Hildermeier, has suggested that Volkhovskii was already in St Petersburg by the end of December, in time to take part in the first Congress of the SR Party using the pseudonym Glazov, although he acknowledges that the real identity of Glazov ‘is not completely secure’. If the suggestion were correct then it would cast some interesting light on Volkhovskii’s views, since his putative *alter ego* argued—*contra* Volkhovskii’s long-standing position—that the revolutionary parties should call for an immediate mass revolution. Hildermeier goes so far as to suggest that Volkhovskii / Glazov pushed their position to one of ‘suicidal heroism’ in supporting such a revolt, even though most of the peasantry lacked a developed political consciousness.¹

Volkhovskii was not in fact Glazov, and not only because Glazov’s views were so different from the ones he had expressed over the

1 Manfred Hildermeier, *The Russian Socialist Revolutionary Party Before the First World War* (New York: St Martin’s Press, 2000), 138–39. For a discussion of the Conference, see M. I. Leonov, *Partiia sotsialistov-revoliutsionerov v 1905–1907 gg.* (Moscow: Rosspen, 1997), 226–48. Glazov’s views were in many ways a curious mixture of Blanquism—with a strong focus on the role of the Party in creating revolution—and faith in the spontaneous revolutionary instincts of the *narod*. A trenchant discussion of the Conference and the Programme approved there can be found in Oliver H. Radkey, *The Agrarian Foes of Bolshevism: Promise and Default of the Russian Socialist Revolutionaries from February to October 1917* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1958), 24–46. The Congress was held in Imatra in Finland.

previous few years.² Volkhovskii's health was too poor to allow him to travel to Russia for the Congress. He was still sending letters *from* a hospital in Switzerland at the start of January 1906, including one to his daughter Vera in England,³ and a second to Robert Spence Watson listing his various ailments (the wound of an operation had failed to heal properly creating an abscess on the skin).⁴ While one delegate recalled that Volkhovskii was present throughout the proceedings, the accuracy of his memories are negated by the minutes, which include a note that Congress sent greetings to Volkhovskii 'detained abroad through illness'.⁵ Although some questions remain about the real identity of Glazov, it seems likely that it was the pseudonym of Mark Natanson, another *narodnik* veteran and former Chaikovets.⁶

Volkhovskii was convinced by reports filtering through to him in Switzerland that the revolution taking place in Russia was 'not only political but also social'. He believed that both workers and peasants had 'shown splendid capacities, in solidarity, in organising, in self-sacrifice for an ideal'. He was confident that what he called 'autobureaucracy' was dead, and that while the regime might seek to fight to regain its lost power, 'it will be unable to establish its rule with any steadiness again'. He was also confident that the old peasant demands for 'Land and freedom through a good Tzar' had been replaced by a desire for 'Land and freedom through democratic self-government and nationalisation of land'. Volkhovskii glumly told Spence Watson from his hospital bed in Lausanne that despite the massive upheavals in Russia his own plans were 'very unsettled'. He had a few months earlier hoped to return to Russia to work for the Socialist Revolutionary press in St Petersburg, since 'the centre of gravity of all ... political activity has been fully and entirely transferred to Russia', but he was subsequently warned by

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- 2 It is, though, worth noting that Volkhovskii was seen by some of his comrades as being on the left of the SR Party during his final years. See, for example, Ritina [I. I. Rakitnikova], Obituary of Volkhovskii, *Mysl'*, 40 (January 1915).
 - 3 Volkhovskii Papers (Houghton Library), 66M-197 (miscellaneous material relating to the Volkhovskii family), Feliks Volkhovskii to Vera, 3 January 1906.
 - 4 Spence Watson / Weiss Papers (Newcastle University), SW 1/19/4, Volkhovskii to Spence Watson, 2 January 1906.
 - 5 Maureen Perrie (ed.), *Protokoly pervogo s" ezda Partii Sotsialistov-Revolyutisionerov* (Millwood, NY: Kraus International Publications, 1983), 354.
 - 6 Glazov was however listed as a member of the London delegation in the *Protokoly*, which is curious given that Natanson had few links with Britain.

friends in the Russian capital that he could face arrest if he did so. Nor was his health likely to be up to the journey. Volkhovskii nevertheless found it excruciatingly hard to remain abroad at a time when his country was going through such an upheaval, telling his old friend that 'to an active man inactivity is one of the worse trials'.⁷

Volkhovskii's absence from the first Congress meant that he missed a critical moment in the evolution of the SR Party. The Congress approved a Minimum and a Maximum Programme (which had been under discussion within the Party for nearly two years).⁸ The Minimum Programme specified among other things the need for a democratic republic and full civil rights, the socialisation of the land, and the creation of a federal state structure that would provide national minorities with a high degree of autonomy including the right to secede. The Maximum Programme outlined the more fundamental socialist transformation that the Party was committed to pursuing over the longer term. The discussions at the Congress highlighted the wide range of views within the SRs. There were particularly sharp divisions over the land question. Chernov defended the inclusion in the Minimum Programme of the principle of 'socialization' of the land, rejecting 'nationalization', which he feared might increase the power of a bourgeois state apparatus over the countryside. The 'Maximalists', by contrast, emphasised the right of poor peasants to take land without interference from outside. Beneath the abstruse language was the perennial question of the peasantry's capacity to create a rural revolution through its own efforts. The Congress eventually supported Chernov's position, which sought to maintain a balance between *étatist* and *syndicalist* views, supporting the 'right to land' within a framework that maintained it was the 'general property' of the people.⁹ While the Minimum Programme was still ready to accept

7 Spence Watson / Weiss Papers (Newcastle University), SW 1/19/4, Volkhovskii to Spence Watson, 2 January 1906.

8 For a discussion of the SR programme, see Radkey, *Agrarian Foes*, 24–46; Maureen Perrie, *The Agrarian Policy of the Russian Socialist-Revolutionary Party* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976), 143–52. For a lucid discussion of attitudes within the Socialist Revolutionaries towards revolution, see Manfred Hildermeier, 'The Socialist Revolutionary Party of Russia and the Workers, 1900-1914', in Reginald E. Zelnik (ed.), *Workers and Intelligentsia in Late Imperial Russia: Realities, Representations, Reflections* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1998), 206-27.

9 Hildermeier, *Russian Socialist Revolutionary Party*, 83.

the temporary continuation of private property in the industrial sphere, its commitment to an immediate end of the private ownership of land reflected the *narodnik* roots of the SRs.

Vera Figner wrote in her memoirs that when Volkhovskii did eventually return to Russia, he played an important role producing propaganda targeted at the military rank-and-file. She also noted that he was active in the SR Military-Organisation Bureau, created in the summer of 1906, which sought to coordinate the Party's efforts to promote revolutionary sentiment in the army and navy.¹⁰ Viktor Chernov similarly recalled that Volkhovskii was 'closely connected' with the Military-Organisation Bureau during the months he spent in Finland and St Petersburg in 1906–07.¹¹ Another SR activist, Inna Rakitnikova, described in her obituary of Volkhovskii how he had 'rushed' back to Russia like a 'youth' in 1906, despite his age and poor health, editing publications aimed at soldiers and sailors before fleeing the country to avoid arrest.¹² Other references to Volkhovskii's time in Russia are scattered through memoirs and SR documents, although once again without much detail, with the result that his activities can only be sketched out from the fragments of information available.¹³

Konni Zilliacus suggested to Volkhovskii that he should consider moving to Finland at the end of 1905, when he was still living in Switzerland, telling his old friend that it was comparatively easy to enter the country without a passport. Zilliacus also noted that 'mutual friends' would provide him with assistance once he was there. He added that it would be easy to move on from Finland to St Petersburg.¹⁴ Volkhovskii's health meant that he could not put such a plan into effect until the summer of 1906, when he travelled from Britain to Finland via Denmark and Sweden, staying for a time in the countryside outside Helsingfors (Helsinki), where he 'contrived to enter into communication with our Finnish friends'. When he moved to the Finnish capital, he

10 Vera Figner, *Posle Shlissel'burga* (Moscow: Direct Media, 2016), 347–48. Figner wrongly recalled that Volkhovskii returned to Russia at the end of 1905.

11 Viktor Chernov, *Pered burei* (Moscow: Direct Media, 2016), 495.

12 Ritina [I. I. Rakitnikova], Obituary of Volkhovskii, *Mysl'*, 40 (January 1915).

13 For one of Volkhovskii's few public comments on his whereabouts during this period, including his time in Finland, see SR Party Archive (Amsterdam), 148 (Minutes of the fifth Party Council, Session 11, 6 May 1909).

14 Volkhovskii Papers (HIA), Box 3, Folder 36, Zilliacus to Volkhovskii, 23 December 1905.

found things easier than he expected, despite the large number of troops on the streets, in part because the local police were reluctant to arrest political agitators. Although the local revolutionary parties were not well organised, Volkhovskii was confident that the SRs and their allies commanded considerable popular support, noting approvingly that preparations were underway to launch two new publications.¹⁵ He was also surprised at how easy it was to travel from Helsingfors to St Petersburg (Vera travelled to Finland with him, and regularly moved between the two cities, while Volkhovskii's elder daughter Sof'ia came to Finland on several occasions to see her father and sister). Volkhovskii went to St Petersburg on short visits, almost certainly for meetings of the Military-Organisation Bureau, but spent most of his time in Finland, finding the country safer than Russia even though some of the towns were 'full of spies'. He remained there until April or May 1907, living for most of the time in the house of a local SR sympathiser, before returning to London. He spent some time trying to develop a new commercial venture, which would if successful have provided funds to support revolutionary activities, but it does not appear to have come to anything.¹⁶ Volkhovskii devoted most of his energy to producing propaganda aimed at soldiers and sailors, including the SR newspaper *Soldatskaia gazeta* (*The Soldier's Gazette*), which contained articles on issues of interest to a military readership.¹⁷

The first SR Party Congress recognised that the government would try to use the army and navy to put down any mass uprising,¹⁸ and the Party leadership subsequently allocated a good deal of money to

15 The SR leadership was, though, worried about both the loyalty and behaviour of some of its putative supporters in Finland. See 'Bulletin du Parti Socialiste Révolutionnaire', *La Tribune Russe* (31 January 1907). *La Tribune Russe* was produced in Paris, where it was edited by Iliia Rubanovich, who regularly reproduced information from other SR publications.

16 For Volkhovskii's trip to Helsingfors and his early impressions, see GARE, f. P5805, op. 2, del. 156 (Letters between Volkhovskii and Chaikovskii), in particular Volkhovskii to Chaikovskii, 14 September 1906; Volkhovskii to Chaikovskii, 19 October 1906. The commercial enterprise was presumably meant to make money to support SR Party activities.

17 On the establishment of *Soldatskaia gazeta*, see 'Bulletin du Parti Socialiste Révolutionnaire de Russie', *La Tribune Russe* (15 June 1906).

18 For consideration of the SR's views about the Government's likely response to an armed uprising, and the need for agitation among the troops, see Perrie (ed.), *Protokoly pervogo s"ezda Partii Sotsialistov-Revolyutsionerov*, 307–09, 313.

supporting agitation in the military, while allowing both local SR military organisations and the Military-Organisation Bureau extensive freedom to determine their *modus operandi*. It also agreed that agitation among soldiers and sailors should have a revolutionary non-party character that focused on broad issues rather than demanding full commitment to the SR program. It is not entirely clear how Volkhovskii's activities fitted into this broader picture, although he almost certainly acted as editor of *Soldatskaia gazeta*,¹⁹ while playing a significant if uncertain role in the SR Military-Organisation Bureau.²⁰ He had throughout the 1905 Revolution believed that promoting local armed uprisings would undermine the regime, since soldiers and sailors would be reluctant to use force against civilians whose revolutionary sentiments they shared.²¹ Volkhovskii appears to have already been in Finland when a significant mutiny took place at the military fortress of Sveaborg, close to his place of residence in Helsingfors, and it seems likely that it helped to reinforce his interest in identifying ways of building on unrest in the military as a way of fomenting a wider revolution. On returning to London in spring 1907, he became the principal editor of a new newspaper targeted at readers in the army and navy, *Za narod* (*For the People*), which was smuggled back into Russia using many of the routes used by the Free Press Fund in the 1890s.

Soldatskaia gazeta first appeared in August 1906, shortly after Volkhovskii moved to Finland, and it is possible that he had been asked to set up the new publication while still living in Western Europe. He had certainly decided as early as February 1906 that 'the most vivid

19 Chernov recalled in his memoirs that Volkhovskii became editor of the journal *Narodnaia armia*, although the publication did not appear until 1907, while Volkhovskii certainly later edited *Za narod* which had a format that was closely modelled on *Soldatskaia gazeta*. See Chernov, *Pered burei*, 495.

20 For a useful brief discussion of the Military-Organisation Bureau, see A. A. Okseniuk, 'Voennye organizatsii eserov v 1905–1907 gg', *Vestnik Moskovskogo Universiteta*, Ser. 8 (Istoriia), 6 (2012), 74–82. For an excellent discussion of the impact of the 1905 Revolution on the tsarist military, see John Starkes Bushnell, 'Mutineers and Revolutionaries: Military Revolution in Russia, 1905–1907' (PhD thesis, University of Indiana, 1977). See, too, the book based on the thesis, *Mutiny Amid Repression. Russian Soldiers in the Revolution of 1905–1906* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1985). Bushnell's PhD contains useful material, particularly on events in 1907, not included in the book.

21 See, for example, Volkhovskii Papers (Houghton Library), 66M-197, Feliks Volkhovskii to Vera, 13 January 1906.

propaganda is now needed [for] the soldiers and the working people ... I can do whatever is necessary. I have some weapons—the power to instill my beliefs and the ability to express them’.²² *Soldatskaia gazeta* was written in a lively and engaging manner, and included articles and reports about developments across Russia, as well as short stories and poems. The second issue contained an article arguing that recent events showed how the patience of the Russian people with arbitrary bureaucratic rule had finally run out after centuries of oppression. It also included first-hand accounts of the Sveaborg uprising and a description of the recent mutiny on board the warship *Pamiat’ Azova* off Reval (modern-day Tallin).²³ The following edition continued in a similar vein, reporting on outbreaks of disorder across Russia, and listing assassinations of senior officials and military leaders that had taken place over the previous year.²⁴ The fifth number opened with a piece celebrating the importance of freedom,²⁵ while the sixth included a long discussion of recent developments in the Duma, arguing that political rights were only a means to achieving more fundamental social and economic goals.²⁶ Poems that appeared in *Soldatskaia gazeta* were typically rousing pieces with titles such as ‘Pesnia o pravde i krivde’ (‘Songs of Truth and Falsehood’),²⁷ while short stories were usually about soldiers and sailors fighting for justice in the face of oppression. *Soldatskaia gazeta* was more than crude *agitprop*, instead combining emotional appeals and logical argument with reportage, and was designed to encourage soldiers and sailors to feel that they were part of a process of dramatic change. The paper was apparently produced in Finland, and transported back into Russia, although it did not list either the editor or the place of publication. While the contents were printed anonymously, or with obvious pseudonyms, Volkhovskii probably wrote many of the articles and *belles-lettres* himself. When *Za narod* began to appear in the spring of 1907, in London, it was closely modelled on *Soldatskaia gazeta*.

22 Volkhovskii Papers (Houghton Library), 66M-197, Feliks Volkhovskii to Vera, 14 February 1906.

23 ‘Otkuda poshla Russkaia Revoliutsiia?’; Razskaz uchastnika Sveaborgskago vozstaniia’; ‘Vozstanie na kreisere Pamiat Azova’; all in *Soldatskaia gazeta*, 2 (22 September 1906).

24 *Soldatskaia gazeta*, 3 (8 October 1906).

25 ‘O svobode’, *Soldatskaia gazeta*, 5 (1 January 1907).

26 ‘O Gosudarstvennoi Dume’, *Soldatskaia gazeta*, 6 (10 February 1907).

27 ‘Pesnia o pravde i krivde’, *Soldatskaia gazeta*, 3 (8 October 1906).

While still living in Finland, Volkhovskii also wrote a lengthy pamphlet, *Pro voinskoe ustroistvo* (*On the Organisation of the Military*),²⁸ which examined the economic cost to Russia of maintaining a large standing army. He was still more exercised by the government's use of the army as an instrument for suppressing dissent (the SR Party had at its first Congress committed itself to eliminating the army in favour of a popular militia). Volkhovskii argued that military service by its nature broke the psychological ties that bound young soldiers to the *narod*, turning them into servants of the autocratic state, while blinding them to the suffering of ordinary workers and peasants. He praised the system of military service found in Switzerland, where every young man went through a short period of initial training, after which they were required to report annually for special instruction to keep their skills up to date. Volkhovskii believed that such a system allowed a country to defend itself while ensuring that soldiers remained rooted in society rather than forming a separate estate. While there was no prospect of adopting such a system in Russia, so long as the tsarist state remained intact, he was convinced that revolutionary parties needed to foment military unrest to weaken the government's ability to crush a popular uprising.

Volkhovskii's growing interest in military matters was in many ways surprising. Unlike some other SR veterans, like Leonid Shishko, he had never served in the army. Nor had he shown much interest in the subject earlier in his career. Yet Volkhovskii's previous cooperation with Zilliacus and Chaikovskii in putting together plans to smuggle weapons into Russia reflected his conviction that armed uprisings would be central to a successful revolutionary struggle. He also recognised that such uprisings could only be effective if they had the means to avoid being crushed by force. His private papers suggest that he read a good deal of history to improve his knowledge of military affairs, particularly at times of political unrest, focusing in particular on how 'the citizen soldier' could be more effective than his professional counterpart since 'he willingly gives his life in defence of [his] country'.²⁹ Volkhovskii continued to believe in the importance of propaganda, but in the years after 1905 he focused his attention less on peasants and workers, and

28 F. Volkhovskii, *Pro voinskoe ustroistvo* (Moscow: Knigoizdatel'stvo E. D. Miakova 'Narodnaia mysl', 1906).

29 Volkhovskii Papers (HIA), Box 11, Folder 1 (various notes by Volkhovskii).

more on producing material to persuade soldiers and sailors of the pivotal role they could play in forging a successful revolution.³⁰ He also established a wider reputation within the SR Party as an expert on the growing challenge posed to the European left by the rise of militarism, attending conferences of the Second International, and contributing to debates about how best to counter the growing influence of nationalism across the continent.

Following Volkhovskii's return to London in the spring of 1907, he immediately devoted much of his energy to producing *Za narod*, working out of an office in Hammersmith almost next door to the old premises of the Russian Free Press Fund.³¹ The paper was also printed in London (including some copies on thin paper designed for smuggling back into Russia).³² Volkhovskii was assisted by Vasiliĭ Iarotskii, who was at this stage of his career close to the SRs, although he subsequently joined the Bolsheviks. In later years, an important editorial role was played by Vladimir Lebedev, who had been active in the SR Party's Military Organisation in the aftermath of the 1905 Revolution, before fleeing to Paris in 1907. Volkhovskii also consulted regularly with other leading figures in Paris, including Andrei Argunov, who kept him informed about the Central Committee's views on important issues (Argunov headed the transport commission responsible for dispatching SR literature to Russia and his Paris address was often listed in *Za narod* for correspondence).³³ Volkhovskii's own role was not formally

30 In 1906 Volkhovskii published a story, *Vylechennyi prints* (*The Cured Prince*) which featured the antics of an imaginary royal family. The story was more ironic in tone than his previous *skazki* and seems to have been aimed at a broader readership than the peasantry alone.

31 For details of Volkhovskii's addresses during his final years in London, see Lara Green, 'Russian Revolutionary Terrorism in Transnational Perspective: Representations and Networks, 1881–1926' (PhD thesis, Northumbria University, 2019), 124.

32 For useful details on the production of *Za narod*, see Green, 'Russian Revolutionary Terrorism', 123 ff. K. N. Morozov among others suggests that the paper was based in Paris, but in practice production and much of the editorial work took place in London, although as Volkhovskii got older more of the business was transferred to the French capital. Volkhovskii himself travelled regularly to Paris, both to coordinate editorial work and to discuss developments with senior figures in the SR leadership, including Argunov (whose office address was listed in *Za narod* for readers wishing to contact the editors).

33 For Volkhovskii's letters to Argunov, including a good deal on the finances of *Za narod*, as well as discussions about its content and distribution, see SR Party

identified on the masthead of the paper, while the editorials typically reflected the (sometimes uncertain) views of the Party leadership, but he was still able to put his own stamp on *Za narod*. The paper was, like *Soldatskaia gazeta*, no crude propaganda publication, but while it in some respects resembled the *Letuchie listki* of the 1890s, printing information about what was taking place across Russia, and downplaying divisions between the Socialist Revolutionaries and the Social Democrats, the tone was far more radical in calling for revolution.³⁴ Volkhovskii once again included a significant amount of literary material, including poems and short stories, believing that it would engage the sympathies of readers in ways that more polemical articles could not always achieve.

The first number of *Za narod* appeared in April 1907, shortly after a meeting of the St Petersburg SR Military Organisation proposed setting up a new non-party All Russian Union of Soldiers and Sailors, tasked with creating closer links between revolutionaries in military units across the country.³⁵ The SR leadership was ready to allow its own local organisations significant autonomy in determining relations with other parties,³⁶ believing that such a strategy would prove more effective than trying to control events from above. It was an approach defended on the pages of *Za narod*, although building ties with other parties in the event proved difficult, both because of local tensions and disagreement about tactics and strategy. While the Mensheviks and (especially) Bolsheviks had come to believe by 1907 that revolutionary fervour was subsiding in the army and navy, the SRs still hoped that a well-planned programme of agitation could weaken the loyalty of the armed forces, making it harder for the government to restore order in cases of further civilian unrest.

Archive (Amsterdam), 645; Volkhovskii Papers (HIA), Box 1, Folder 4. Argunov had, when still in Russia, been less than complimentary about SR members in emigration, believing they had little sense of what was taking place 'on the ground', but following his arrival in Western Europe he seems to have established good personal relations with Volkhovskii.

34 For a useful discussion of the relationship between the SR Party organisation and SR agitators in the military, see Bushnell, 'Mutineers and Revolutionaries', 379–91. *Za narod's* non-party status was emphasised by its claim to be the paper of the All-Russian Union of Soldiers and Sailors, although in practice that organisation was itself dominated by the SRs.

35 The decision to launch *Za narod* was part of a bigger reorganisation of the SR press which saw the journal *Znamia truda* launched just a few weeks later.

36 Bushnell, 'Mutineers and Revolutionaries', 384–86.

The opening editorial in *Za narod* argued magisterially that the outcome of 'the great struggle of the working people with the tsarist government for freedom and land depends on ... what position in the struggle will be taken by the army and navy'.³⁷ Volkhovskii was probably the author of an article on 'Socialism' in the same issue, which avoided any detailed discussion of the kind of complex economic questions that preoccupied the SR *intelligentsia*, preferring to ask the simple question of 'Why is it today that the rich can live without working?', concluding that 'Things will only change when the worker can look at the factory as their property and the peasant at the land as theirs'.³⁸ The same edition of *Za narod* contained a lengthy article on the second Duma, which included a number of SR representatives, urging radical deputies to build closer links with the wider revolutionary movement in order to strengthen the opposition to tsarism.³⁹ The paper supported SR participation in the Duma—a subject of controversy within the Party—and defended the record of socialist deputies in the face of official hostility.⁴⁰ It bitterly attacked the Government's attempt to arrest a number of left-wing deputies, in the days leading up to the dissolution of the second Duma in June 1907,⁴¹ and condemned the new electoral law subsequently announced by the Prime Minister Petr Stolypin, which was designed to reduce the electorate in order to minimise radical voices among those serving in a future Duma.⁴²

The early numbers of *Za narod* also had to deal with the vexed question of terrorism. During the upheavals of 1905-6, a huge increase took place in the number of attacks on officials throughout the Empire. More than two hundred killings were the work of individuals claiming affiliation to

37 'V edinonii voiska s narodom – sila neodolimaia', *Za narod*, 1 (2 April 1907).

38 'O sotsialisme', *Za narod*, 1 (2 April 1907).

39 'Vtoraia Duma i voiska', *Za narod*, 1 (2 April 1907). For a description of the attitude of the SR Party towards the Duma, including decisions taken at an Extraordinary Congress held in February 1907, see *Rapport du Parti Socialiste Révolutionnaire de Russie au Congrès Socialiste International de Stuttgart* (Gand: Volksdrukkerij, 1907), 193–99. For a broader discussion of SR views towards the Duma, see Leonov, *Partiia sotsialistov-revoliutsionerov v 1905–1907 gg.*, 260–95 and 353–80.

40 'Bezsilie Dumy', *Za narod*, 2 (20 April 1907).

41 'Khlopnulo, grianulo: komar s duba svalilsia', *Za narod*, 4 (6 June 1907). For a review of the dissolution in another leading SR paper, see 'Le Coup d' État', *La Tribune Russe* (30 June 1907).

42 'Tret'ia Duma', *Za narod*, 5 (8 July 1907).

the SRs (although many had no official sanction).⁴³ Many other attacks simply formed part of a campaign of 'expropriations' of somewhat dubious character.⁴⁴ The whole question of terrorism had prompted renewed debate within the SR Party, following the decision to take part in elections to the second Duma, given that it seemed inconsistent to pursue a programme of assassinations while deputies took their place in the state legislature. The rather tortured formula used by the Party early in 1907—in effect that acts of terror could still be directed against tsarist officials and officers guilty of particularly egregious behaviour⁴⁵—was echoed on the pages of *Za narod*. Volkhovskii himself still had no ethical qualms about the use of terror, although he continued to believe like most of the *stariki* (party elders) in emigration that it should form part of a broader strategy, reflecting his concern that uncoordinated and isolated acts of violence could not alone weaken the power of the tsarist state.

Volkhovskii's activities were not confined to journalism in the years following his return to London from Finland. While much of his attention focused on promoting revolutionary sentiment within the tsarist army and navy, he was also increasingly concerned about the rise of 'militarism' across Europe. Many of those active in the Second International feared that international tension could create divisions among the European working class, allowing governments to use nationalism to justify using force against those who challenged the existing order. Volkhovskii was not, for some reason, among the seventeen SR delegates who attended the 1907 seventh Congress of the Second International,⁴⁶ held at Stuttgart in August, which passed a resolution on militarism condemning war as a product of capitalist competition that allowed the bourgeoisie to

43 More than 200 individuals were killed in some 250 attacks by individuals at least notionally associated with the SRs. See O. V. Budnitskii, *Terrorizm v Rossiiskom osvoboditel'nom dvizhenii: ideologiia, etika, psikhologiia (vtoriaia polovina XIX–nachalo XX v)* (Moscow: Rosspen, 2000), 177.

44 The 'degradation' of terror during 1905–07 is discussed at length in Budnitskii, *Terrorizm*, 177–217; Anna Geifman, *Thou Shalt Kill. Revolutionary Terrorism in Russia 1894–1917* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993), 123–53.

45 See, for example, *Rapport du Parti Socialiste Révolutionnaire de Russie*, 199; 'Bulletin du Parti Socialiste Révolutionnaire', *La Tribune Russe* (28 February–31 March 1907).

46 While Michael Melancon suggests that Volkhovskii led the SR delegation at Stuttgart, his name does not seem to appear in the records. See Michael Melancon, *The Socialist Revolutionaries and the Russian Anti-War Movement 1914–1917* (Columbus, OH: Ohio State University Press, 1990), 21.

maintain its power and advance its economic interests.⁴⁷ Nor, despite the significance of the Stuttgart Congress, was much attention given to its proceedings in *Za narod*. The first edition of the paper to appear after the Congress instead contained a piece celebrating the life of the SR veteran Mikhail Gots on the first anniversary of his death,⁴⁸ along with the usual articles on 'Voices from the Army and Navy' and 'The Revolutionary Struggle in the City and Countryside'. Since Volkhovskii attended both the previous Congress in Amsterdam in 1904, and the following Congress in Copenhagen in 1910, it seems likely that his non-attendance at Stuttgart was due either to his indifferent health or the need to devote his energy to overseeing *Za narod*. The lack of coverage of the Stuttgart Congress in a paper aimed at a readership of soldiers and sailors was nevertheless both striking and curious.

The years following the Stuttgart Congress were difficult ones for the Socialist Revolutionary Party. Deputies from the Centre and Right dominated the third Duma, which Volkhovskii denounced as a mere 'semblance' of parliamentary government, which could not conceal the fact that 'the country is being more arbitrarily governed than ever by an irresponsible bureaucracy with a despot at its head'.⁴⁹ Stolypin's repressive policies, which included mass executions of thousands of peasants, brought a degree of order back to the countryside while making it harder for revolutionary parties to organise effectively in the cities.⁵⁰ The

47 *Internationaler Sozialisten-Kongress zu Stuttgart 1907* (Berlin: Buchhandlung Vorwärts, 1907), 64-66. Detailed coverage of the Conference and its resolutions, written from a distinctly SR perspective, can be found in *La Tribune Russe*, 31 July 1907.

48 For a brief discussion of Gots' career, see L. E. Shishko, 'M. I. Gots', *Byloe* (November 1906), 283-92. Chaikovskii and Lazarev were among those who had provided fulsome tributes on Gots' death. See the supplement to *La Tribune Russe* (30 September 1906).

49 Volkhovskii Papers (HIA), Box 11, Folder 1 (Untitled and apparently unpublished article by Volkhovskii).

50 While the use of force to end revolution in the Russian countryside led to the familiar description of Stolypin as a 'hangman', his views on political questions, in particular the challenge of creating orderly change, were more complex than sometimes supposed. For a good discussion of Stolypin's time in government, see Abraham Ascher, *P. A. Stolypin. The Search for Stability in Late Imperial Russia* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2001). For a valuable discussion of attitudes within the SR leadership concerning the potential of armed uprisings to achieve any significant results at this time, see Konstantin Morozov, *Partiia sotsialistov-revoliutsionerov v 1907-1914 gg.* (Moscow: Rosspen, 1998), 278-304.

failure of SR agitators in the military to build momentum, culminating in the collapse of a planned mutiny at Sevastopol' in September 1907, meant that it was increasingly difficult for the revolutionary parties to challenge the state directly.⁵¹ So too did the collapse of an uprising in Vladivostok.⁵² A meeting held in November 1907 between members of the SR Central Committee and local representatives agreed to continue work among rank-and-file soldiers and sailors,⁵³ but the resources devoted to such activities were cut drastically, as the Party struggled to raise funds both in Russia and abroad.⁵⁴ The publication of *Za narod* was also suspended due to lack of funds and the paper only began to appear once more at the start of 1909.

Although many left-wing 'Maximalists' and right-wing 'Legalists' had broken away from the SRs in 1906, in principle allowing for greater unity among those who remained, the Party was still disorganised and demoralised at the time of the first All-Party Conference that convened in the summer of 1908.⁵⁵ Most leading SRs in emigration believed, like Volkhovskii, that the tsarist state's resilience in the face of the challenges of 1905-6 showed that it was naïve to think that uncoordinated unrest could bring about lasting change. A significant number of SRs based in Russia by contrast believed that local organisations should be free to determine their own course of action. The disagreement was about more than tactics. It also reflected competing views about the locus

51 On the events at Sevastopol, see 'Sevastopol'skiia sobyitiia', *Za narod*, 9 (5 October 1907).

52 Volkhovskii Papers (HIA), Box 4, Folder 19, ('Izvlachenie iz doklada Ts. Kom. PSR o Vladivostokom vozstanii v oktibre 1907 goda'). The Central Committee report concluded among other things that the uprising, which was supported by former SR Maximalists, had taken place without sufficient preparation.

53 SR Party Archive (Amsterdam), 153 ('Soveshchanie Ts. K. s gruppoi voenn. rabotnikov, November 1907').

54 On the financial crisis, see Morozov, *Partiia sotsialistov-revoliutsionerov*, 265-78.

55 The collection edited by N. D. Erofeev, *Partiia sotsialistov-revoliutsionerov. Dokumenty i materialy. 1900-1907 gg.* 3 vols., II (Moscow: Rosspen, 2001), suggests that the first All-Party Conference took place in Paris, although other sources suggest that it met in London (see, for example, Hildermeier, *Russian Socialist Revolutionary Party*, 12). For a useful discussion of the Conference, see Morozov, *Partiia sotsialistov-revoliutsionerov*, 305 ff. Morozov's work, which is based on an extensive use of the archives, contains a wealth of detail about the organisation and membership of the SR Party, along with the debates about tactics, and has been used extensively in the pages that follow.

of decision-making in the Party. The tension between 'centralists' and 'democrats' loomed large in the debates that took place at the Conference.⁵⁶

Volkhovskii opened the Conference thanks to his status as the oldest delegate present (Breshko-Breshkovskaia, who was two years older, had recently been arrested in Russia). He planned his speech to give heart to the delegates, drawing on examples from his own long revolutionary career to argue that the SRs could achieve their goals even with little money, as long as they remained enthusiastic and determined. He reminded delegates of the revolutionary pantheon to which they were heirs, recalling the contribution of Grigorii Gershuni, who had died a few weeks earlier, and Lev Sinegub, son of his old friend Sergei, who had been hanged in 1906 for the attempted murder of a tsarist minister. It was striking that these names, both so closely associated with terrorism, were the first that Volkhovskii chose to mention. The SR leadership had reasserted its commitment to the use of terror in its report to the 1907 Stuttgart Congress of the Second International, noting that it did so not out of any 'sanguinary fetish', but rather as a tactic to secure a popular insurrection against the tsarist government.⁵⁷ The tactic was nevertheless increasingly questioned by some on the right of the Party, who believed that recent setbacks showed that it should focus its energy on working with legal organisations such as trade unions. Despite such tensions, Volkhovskii's opening speech remained positive about the prospects for revolution, suggesting that each wave was like an incoming tide, pulling back before returning higher than before.⁵⁸ His words were those of a revolutionist rather than an evolutionist.

Volkhovskii joined other leading SRs at the Party's first All-Party Conference in seeking compromise between the various factions. He echoed Chernov in supporting the view that using terror was still

56 Hildermeier, *Russian Socialist Revolutionary Party*, 305.

57 The report noted firmly that the SR Party 'will not cease using the tactic of terror in the political struggle'. *Rapport du Parti Socialiste Révolutionnaire de Russie*, 21. On shifting attitudes towards terror among the SRs, and the determination of the Party leadership to bring the use of terror by the Combat Organisation more firmly under central control, see Morozov, *Partiia sotsialistov-revoliutsionerov*, 375–442; 484–95.

58 Volkhovskii's speech along with the corrected minutes of the first All-Party Conference and other related material can be found in SR Party Archive (Amsterdam), 138.

an acceptable tactic in the struggle against the government, but only when combined with a policy of building up the cadres of workers and peasants necessary to lay the foundations for a popular revolution. It was a position that reflected Volkhovskii's own long-standing view that successful insurrection depended on effective agitation and propaganda. Yet it did not really address the Party's past failures nor consider how such principles might be put into practice in the future. Nor did it allay the fears of delegates who fretted that the principle of hierarchical centralization was supplanting intra-party democracy. The proceedings of the Conference showed how difficult it was to achieve much at a time when the tsarist regime was looking more secure and the SRs, like the rest of the revolutionary movement, were increasingly divided.⁵⁹

Divisions within the Party were even more visible at the fifth Party Council that met at Paris in the spring of 1909, shortly after Vladimir Burtsev's unveiling of Evno Azef as an *Okhrana* agent, which created an enormous crisis of confidence across the SR Party both in Russia and abroad (it also led to a fall in sales of SR publications including *Za narod*).⁶⁰ The Party's Central Committee was already facing sharp criticism for not acting more quickly once concerns about Azef's loyalties had been raised, and the rancor quickly spread to debates about tactics and strategy, including the value of the continuing use of terror.⁶¹ Volkhovskii was like many SRs shattered by the revelations about Azef, which he described as 'an enormous blow to our Party', that could only be overcome by a wholesale process of 'moral disinfection' and

59 For the *Okhrana's* view of the Conference, which emphasised that the SR Party was still committed to regicide, see GARF, fond 102, op. 260, delo 281 (Secret Circular, 7 October, 1908).

60 See, for example, Volkhovskii Papers (HIA), Box 17, Folder 1 (Bulletin 9 of the Foreign Committee of the SR Foreign Organisation). See, too, the financial appeal to comrades by the editors of *Za narod* in the same folder. The rapid decline in circulation for all SR publications can be found by comparing the figures in *La Tribune Russe*, 11 November 1907 with those given just three years later in *Znamia truda*, 32 (November 1910).

61 See, for example, the numerous criticisms of the Central Committee made by delegates to the third Conference of the Foreign Organisation in SR Party Archive (Amsterdam), 207–08 (Minutes of the third Conference of the Foreign Organisation, 27 March–1 April 1909). For a useful example of discussion over the issue of terror, see G. Borisov, 'Nuzhen li eshche terror?', *Znamia truda*, 19 (July 1909).

transformation of its 'facilities and arrangements'.⁶² His contribution to the discussions in Paris was however limited almost entirely to military questions. In a long intervention on 5–6 May,⁶³ he argued that while it was critical to continue distributing propaganda among the soldiers and sailors, the Party also needed to support a more ambitious programme of agitation that would actively prepare the ground for insurrection. He also maintained that both propaganda and agitational work should retain a 'non-party' character to ensure the greatest impact. Volkhovskii's words were, like his interventions in London the previous year, designed to support a 'middle course' between Party members who still believed in the spontaneous revolutionary instincts of the Russian people and others who doubted whether a successful revolution could take place in Russia for many years to come.

While Volkhovskii played a significant role at the 1908 SR All-Party Conference and the fifth Party Council, he does not seem to have attended many other Party meetings, although the cumbersome nature of the SR records makes it difficult to trace his activities in much detail. He was not present at the third and fourth conferences of the Foreign Organisation,⁶⁴ held in March 1909 and April 1911 respectively, although it was admittedly by now a more marginal body in the Party's decision-making. His correspondence shows that he remained in close contact with many leading figures in the SR Party, like Argunov in Paris, but developed fewer close relations with the new generation of Party members. Nor was Volkhovskii particularly active among SRs resident in London (his name seldom appears in the London group's accounts and reports).⁶⁵ He was nevertheless selected as a member and *de facto* leader of the SR delegation to the eighth Congress of the Second International,

62 Spence Watson / Weiss Papers (Newcastle University), SW 1/19/5, Volkhovskii to Spence Watson, 4 June 1909.

63 SR Party Archive (Amsterdam), 148 (Minutes of the fifth Party Council, Session 9, 5 May 1909; Session 11, 6 May 1909).

64 For the records of the third Conference of the Foreign Organisation, see SR Party Archive (Amsterdam), 207–08; for the records of the fourth Conference, see SR Party Archive (Amsterdam), 209. For the role of the revamped Foreign Organisation in the wake of the 1905 Revolution, see M. I. Leonov, 'Zagranichnaia organizatsiia i Zagranichnyi komitet partii eserov v nachale XX veka (Na putiakh partinoini institutsionalizatsii)', *Vestnik Samarskogo universiteta: istoriia, pedagogika, filologiya*, 27, 2 (2021), 27–36; Morozov, *Partiia sotsialistov-revoliutsionerov*, 249–65.

65 For various records relating to the London group of SRs see, for example, SR Party Archive (Amsterdam), 239.

which met in Copenhagen in 1910, where he played a significant if ultimately ineffective role in discussions about military matters.

The Copenhagen Congress established a series of commissions, including one on antimilitarism, which set up a sub-commission to produce a resolution building on the one agreed at Stuttgart three years earlier. The group did not at first include any Russian representatives, a decision met with fury by Volkhovskii, who pointed out that such a proposal made no sense given that Russia was one of the most militarised countries on earth. He was himself eventually selected to take part in this sub-commission, where discussions were often fractious, given the different views about how best to mobilise workers to prevent war. Volkhovskii argued that the proposed resolution should include a demand that the civil rights of soldiers and sailors be enshrined in national legal systems. More controversially, he also called for the resolution to emphasise the need to conduct socialist propaganda in the armed forces, making it harder for governments to use soldiers to snuff out any incidences of revolution. He criticised a draft proposal tabled by the British Labour politician Keir Hardie and the French socialist Édouard Vaillant for being too timid. The chair of the sub-commission rejected Volkhovskii's proposal for being outside the remit of the Commission on Antimilitarism, much to the indignation of its architect, and it was set aside in favour of the one put forward by Hardie and Vaillant. Volkhovskii's defeat was in part due to his failure to master the bureaucratic machinations and compromises that were an inevitable consequence of the deep fissures within the Second International.⁶⁶ He also failed to understand that some socialist parties in Western Europe were more or less eager participants in mainstream politics and wary of agreeing to anything that could compromise their increasingly 'established' status. The SR press by contrast predictably endorsed Volkhovskii's views and attacked the timidity of the resolution endorsed by the Commission on Antimilitarism.⁶⁷

66 For details of Volkhovskii's protests and the eventual rejection of his draft resolution, see *Huitième Congrès Socialiste International tenu à Copenhague du 28 août au 3 septembre 1910: compte rendu analytique* (Gand: Volksdrukkerij, 1911), 187–90.

67 See the articles 'VIII Mezhdunarodnyi Sotsialisticheskii Kongress' and 'Vopros o militarizme na Kopenagengskom kongresse' in *Znamia truda*, 31 (October 1910).

Volkhovskii continued to devote much of his energy to *Za narod* after it resumed publication in 1909, although with a much lower print run, given a sharp fall in demand.⁶⁸ The paper continued to take a 'non-party' revolutionary line, carrying reports of disturbances across Russia, and printing letters from revolutionaries of all political colours including Social Democrats. It dismissed the third Duma and the constitutional experiment more generally without setting down any clear views about the political direction that the SRs should follow (a subject that continued to cause division within the Party). Despite the generally bleak revolutionary climate, Volkhovskii argued that there were still a number of positive developments, including the growing radicalism of the peasantry.⁶⁹ He also wrote further pieces showing his interest in the Swiss political system, arguing that it gave electors real power, not least through the use of referenda on important issues of policy.⁷⁰ Although he did not spell it out, Volkhovskii was clearly pondering how new forms of 'direct democracy' could avoid the compromises of parliamentary politics while dovetailing with the political culture of the Russian countryside, in effect keeping alive at least a remnant of the traditional *narodnik* idealization of the peasant *mir*.

Volkhovskii was determined that *Za narod* should continue to publish poetry and short stories. The literary content of the paper remained unashamedly propagandistic and the titles of many of the poems provided a vivid clue to their character. 'Pesnia o tirane' ('The Song of Tyranny') condemned a government 'drunk on the people's blood' that ruled over a land where 'there is no law or love'.⁷¹ 'Pamiati pavshikh' ('To the Memory of the Fallen') celebrated 'the torch' lit by revolutionaries who had been executed for their actions.⁷² Each verse

68 See, for example, Volkhovskii Papers (HIA), Box 7, Folder 4, Bowman to Chevin, 31 July 1907 (indicating that 2,000 copies of the paper had been sent to Paris); Woodruffe to 'Comrade', 2 February 1910 (noting that the radical East End publishing house which printed *Za narod* made almost no money from the business); Woodruffe to Volkhovskii, 23 April 1910 (discussing arrangements for the Cyrillic type face used to print *Za narod*, which may have been the type face previously used for publications of the Russian Free Press Fund).

69 'Chto narod dumaet o tsare', *Za narod*, 28 (April 1910).

70 See, for example, 'Kak shveitsartsy vybiraiut svoikh deputatov', *Za narod*, 14 (February 1909).

71 'Pesnia o tirane', *Za narod*, 5 (8 July 1907).

72 'Pamiati pavshikh', *Za narod*, 6 (25 July 1907). The poem was described as a 'hymn'.

of 'Druzheskaia beseda Rossii s tsarem' ('A Friendly Conversation of Russia with the Tsar') began with the ironic claim that Nicholas was the little father (*batiushka*) of his people.⁷³ Most of the poems had a strong beat, in some cases with a suggested tune, indicating that they were intended to be recited or sung out loud. The stories published in *Za narod* were also typically short—often no more than fifteen hundred words—and written in an easily-readable style.⁷⁴ Many stories had a soldier as the central character, who was typically portrayed sympathetically, while officers were depicted as incompetents who had no interest in the welfare of the men who served under them. Only a few stories were attributed to a named author. Some were written by the novelist Aleksandr Amfiteatrov.⁷⁵ Volkhovskii probably contributed many of the poems and stories himself.

Volkhovskii's editorial activities were not limited to *Za narod*. He was also involved in the production of several numbers of *Narodnoe delo: sbornik* that was published irregularly by the SR press between 1909 and 1912.⁷⁶ The *sbornik* included less literary material than the issues of *Narodnoe delo* that Volkhovskii edited a few years earlier, in favour of articles on such questions as 'Autocracy and Revolution' and 'What Kind of Agricultural Order Should There Be in Russia?'⁷⁷ It is not easy to identify Volkhovskii's role in editing the *sbornik*, although some of the work of production and distribution appears to have been done in Paris by Argunov,⁷⁸ suggesting it may have been quite limited. There is nevertheless evidence that the *sbornik* and *Za narod* were closely connected, not least through occasional transfers of money between them, although some of this once again seems to have been the

73 'Druzheskaia beseda Rossii s tsarem', *Za narod*, 14 (February 1909).

74 Some stories were however significantly longer. See, for example, 'Nasel', *Za narod*, 8 (12 September 1907).

75 See I. S. Zilbershtein and N. I. Dikushina (eds), *Gorkii i russkaia zhurnalistika XX veka: Neizdannaiia perepiska, Literaturnoe nasledstvo*, 95 (Moscow: Nauka, 1985), 133 (Amfiteatrov to Gorkii, 10 December 1908).

76 For a useful discussion of *Narodnoe delo: sbornik*, including its relation to other SR publications, see Green, 'Russian Revolutionary Terrorism', 118–22.

77 A. Bakh, 'Samoderzhavie i revoliutsiia', *Narodnoe delo: sbornik*, 1 (1909), 4–38; Dikii, 'Kakovy dolzhny byt' zemel'nye poriadki na Rusi?', *Narodnoe delo: sbornik*, 5 (1910), 27–54.

78 Argunov was regularly in St Petersburg until 1909 but subsequently seems to have based himself in Paris.

work of Argunov.⁷⁹ The regular use of pseudonyms makes it difficult to identify how much of the content Volkhovskii contributed to the *sbornik*. He certainly wrote 'Skazka o soldatskoi dushe' ('The Tale of a Soldier's Soul') that appeared in the fourth issue,⁸⁰ in which the devil discusses with some of his minions how to corrupt ordinary soldiers, who seem to be far less responsive to Satan's blandishments than their officers. The story was simpler in tone than many of the more serious pieces published in the same number, none of which were written by Volkhovskii, and it was probably intended as light relief in an issue that also included articles on 'The Glory Days of the Turkish Army' and 'The Army and the Great French Revolution of 1789'.

Although Volkhovskii did not publish much new poetry under his own name in the final years of his life, when he lived in Finland in 1907 he arranged for publication of some of his earlier verses (although most copies were confiscated and destroyed soon after he fled the country).⁸¹ A new collection of his children's stories appeared in Moscow the following year, dedicated to his daughters, under the title *Diuzhina skazok* (*A Dozen Tales*).⁸² He also appears to have cooperated on the translation of a number of Ukrainian stories about peasant life in the south-west of the Empire into Russian,⁸³ as well as publishing in *Sovremennik* a translation of Clementina Black's novel 'The Agitator', described by Eleanor Marx as one of the most realistic fictional portrayals of the British socialist movement (Black was a long-time Fabian and sister of Volkhovskii's old friend Constance Garnett).⁸⁴ There is, too, an intriguing question as to whether Volkhovskii turned his hand to writing novels during his final

79 Green, 'Russian Revolutionary Terrorism', 122. At least some of the practical work of editing *Za narod* was done in Paris in the years before 1914, by Vladimir Lebedev, making it still more difficult to establish the relationship between the two publications.

80 F. Volkhovskii, 'Skazka o soldatskoi dushe', *Narodnoe delo: sbornik*, 4 (1909), 5–12.

81 This was the collection, *Sluchainyia pesni* (Moscow: Knigoizdatel'stvo L. I. Kolovatova, 1907), which appeared under Volkhovskii's own name.

82 Ivan Brut (Feliks Volkhovskii), *Diuzhina skazok* (Moscow: V. M. Sablin, 1908). A further collection appeared five years later. See Ivan Brut, *Rakety. Skazki dlia detei sovershennago vozrasta* (Paris: L. Rodstein, 1913).

83 M. Kotsiubinskii, *Razskazy*, trans. F. Volkhovskii and Mikh. Mogilianskii (Moscow: Knigoizdatel'stvo pisatelei v Moskve, 1914). Volkhovskii and Mogilianskii also translated an edition of children's stories from Ukrainian into Russian.

84 *Sovremennik* 10 (1911), 120–60; *Sovremennik*, 11 (1911), 135–72; *Sovremennik*, 12 (1911), 28–58.

few years. In 1913, the German publisher Heinrich Caspari issued a book entitled *Admiral Chagin*, under the pseudonym Brut, which was loosely based on the real-life suicide of its eponymous hero (Volkhovskii had of course often used the pseudonym Ivan Brut in his earlier work and started to make considerable use of it once again in the years after 1905).⁸⁵ Chagin had enjoyed a distinguished naval career before his appointment as captain of the Royal Yacht *Shtandart*, which he was commanding when it hit a rock off the Finnish coast in August 1907 (the boat remained afloat and the Royal Family was unharmed). An investigation largely cleared Chagin of responsibility for the accident, and he continued to command the *Shtandart*, but it seriously damaged his reputation, and according to some accounts led to a cycle of depression that led five years later to his suicide. The inquiry following his death concluded by contrast that he took his life in despair following his rejection by a young woman. The rumour mill quickly provided a more dramatic account. Stories circulated that the Admiral's lover had been a member of the SRs who used her relationship with Chagin to help Party members infiltrate the ship's crew. Reports even circulated that the Tsarevich had been shot on board the *Shtandart* through Chagin's negligence (claims repeated in a garbled form in several newspapers abroad).⁸⁶ The whole affair clearly appealed to Volkhovskii's sense of the dramatic. He may also have hoped that penning a novel could bring him some much-needed income.

The plot of *Admiral Chagin* revolves around the relationship between the Admiral and 'Annochka', a young provincial woman, who attracts the romantic interest of a group of radical students whose conversation is replete with stilted discussion of such ideological questions as the nature of economic development in Russia and the need to build closer relations between the revolutionary *intelligentsia* and the *narod*. She also, however, attracts the love of Admiral Chagin who has known her since she was a child. Annochka is in this telling of the story genuinely torn between her respect for the Admiral and her love for a student (Bronnikov), who becomes an agitator among

85 [Ivan] Brut, *Admiral Chagin* (Berlin: Heinrich Caspari, 1913). The published version in fact only gives the author as 'Brut', raising the question of authorship discussed below.

86 See, for example, the *Daily Mail* (25 October 1912). The rumours probably gained extra credence because Aleksei was very ill at the time and widely believed to be close to death.

the sailors at the Kronstadt naval base, after narrowly escaping arrest in a student demonstration. The story lacks clear heroes and villains. The Admiral is portrayed as a sympathetic character ready to turn his back on a possible marriage to a prominent aristocrat to win the hand of Annochka. Bronnikov by contrast shows a streak of ruthlessness, threatening to denounce Annochka as an *agent provocateur* if she does not use her relationship with the Admiral to further the revolutionary cause. The book is at its heart a melodramatic love story set against a revolutionary background rather than a revolutionary novel *per se*. One Russian academic has suggested that *Admiral Chagin*—and a second novel *Peterburg* published by ‘Brut’ the following year—were written by the journalist and translator M. A. Sukennikov.⁸⁷ The evidence he provides is quite thin. But neither, it must be said, can a draft of either novel be found in Volkhovskii’s papers (nor indeed any other material relating to its publication). Both the pseudonym of the author and the subject matter—not least Bronnikov’s role in agitation among the military—suggest that Volkhovskii was the more likely author. Material in his papers certainly shows that he had previously tried his hand at writing novels.⁸⁸ It nevertheless seems unlikely that the authorship of *Admiral Chagin* can ever be conclusively determined.

While Volkhovskii focused much of his energy on supporting the revolutionary cause in Russia, he still spent most of his last ten years in Britain, although his social and literary connections there were never as extensive as they had been during his first few years in London. There was also a change in his political networks. Although many members of the SFRF continued to be drawn from the Liberal milieu personified by Robert Spence Watson, who continued to be active in support of the ‘cause’ down to his death in 1911, criticism of the Russian government increasingly found its strongest expression in trade unions and the newly formed Labour Party. In 1907, Volkhovskii penned ‘An Open Letter to the Socialists and Workers of Great Britain’, noting that the ‘self-sacrifice’ and ‘heroic energy’ of the Russian labour movement had always appealed to British workers. He went on to argue that while in the 1860s

87 K. M. Azadovskii, ‘Iz slovaria “Russkie pisateli. 1800–1917” (M. A. Sukennikov. S. N. Shil’), *Literaturnyi fakt*, 7 (2018), 358–84.

88 Volkhovskii Papers (HIA), Box 11, Folder 6, for example, contains the title page of Ivan Brut, ‘Novel Without a Hero’.

and 1870s 'the fight in the interests of the working man was carried on almost exclusively by the advanced, idealistic elements of the educated, privileged, governing classes', today 'the numerical strength of the army of progress is supplied by these masses themselves'. Volkhovskii added that the events of 1905–06 had given 'working people' practical experience in 'municipal affairs ... the land question and parliamentary elections'.⁸⁹ The letter was presumably written to help raise funds. It also reflected Volkhovskii's recognition that the political complexion of support for the cause of Russian freedom had changed.

In an astute article published in June 1906 in the short-lived SR paper *Mysl'*—a few weeks before he set off for Finland—Volkhovskii had been sharply critical of the Liberal Government in London. He told his readers that many ministers, above all the Foreign Secretary Sir Edward Grey, were fervent imperialists who always put the interests of empire ahead of such principles as freedom of conscience. By contrast prominent members of the Labour Party, including Keir Hardy and Will Thorne, were active in calling for a tougher policy towards Russia (both men had recently spoken out strongly in Parliament against a planned visit to Kronstadt by a flotilla from the Royal Navy). While Volkhovskii expressed hope that the British government would be forced to listen to public opinion in such matters, he acknowledged that interests of *Realpolitik* usually prevailed in foreign policy, and that it was naïve to expect ministers to take a hard line against Russia at a time of growing fear about the threat posed by Germany.⁹⁰ It was a shrewd assessment of the challenge involved in bringing public opinion to bear on British foreign policy.

The whole question of Britain's relationship with Russia was thrust to the centre of the political stage by the signing of the Anglo-Russian Convention in August 1907, a few weeks after Volkhovskii returned to London from Finland. The Convention was designed to reduce imperial tensions between the two countries in central Asia, establishing clear spheres of influence, while freeing them up to focus on the threat posed

89 Volkhovskii Papers (HIA), Box 11, Folder 2, ('An Open Letter to the Socialists and Workers of Great Britain'). The letter appears to be in Volkhovskii's handwriting although it is not clear if it was ever published.

90 F. Volkhovskii, 'Chto delaetsia za granitsei—Angliskii liberalizm i Rossiia', *Mysl'* (24 June 1906).

by the erratic policy of Wilhelmine Germany.⁹¹ Although it did not bring a complete halt to the tension between Russia and Britain, particularly in Persia,⁹² the agreement was an important step in shaping the two international blocs that went to war in 1914. The decision to seek an entente with Russia was driven by the views of senior figures in the Foreign Office, including Sir Edward Grey, and took place despite significant misgivings among some Cabinet ministers and a wider strand of public opinion. Volkhovskii acknowledged in his article in *Mysl'* the previous year that some ministers including James Bryce and John Morley were opposed to any policy of building better relations with St Petersburg. The Liberal Prime Minister Henry Campbell-Bannerman had also reacted to news of the suspension of the first Duma with a rallying cry of 'La Douma est morte, Vive la Douma'.⁹³ Grey and his Permanent Secretary, Sir Charles Hardinge, were however adepts in the culture and practice of the Old Diplomacy. They were able to shepherd the agreement onto the books in part through using a veil of secrecy to limit public debate.⁹⁴

There was significant public opposition in Britain to any attempts to improve relations with the Russian government. Six weeks before the Convention was announced, the SFRF organised a meeting in Trafalgar Square to protest at the recent suspension of the second Duma. A number of those present subsequently headed to the Foreign Office,

91 Among the large literature on Anglo-Russian relations in this period, including the 1907 Convention, see Michael Hughes, *Diplomacy before the Russian Revolution: Britain, Russia and the Old Diplomacy, 1894–1917* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2000); Keith Neilson, *Britain and the Last Tsar: British Policy and Russia, 1894–1917* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995); Jennifer Siegel, *Endgame: Britain, Russia and the Final Struggle for Central Asia* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2002); Fiona K. Tomaszewski, *A Great Russia: Russia and the Triple Entente, 1905–1914* (London: Praeger, 2002). For an account emphasising how fear of Germany shaped British policy towards Russia, see John Charmley, *Splendid Isolation? Britain and the Balance of Power, 1874–1914* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1999).

92 See, in particular, Siegel, *Endgame*, 50–116.

93 For details of the Prime Minister's outburst and the subsequent 'Memorial' signed by many prominent Britons, see Barry Hollingsworth, 'The British Memorial to the Russian Duma, 1906', *Slavonic and East European Review*, 53, 133 (1975), 539–57.

94 On the idea of the Old Diplomacy, see Hughes, *Diplomacy before the Russian Revolution*, 3–18. For a useful brief discussion of changing patterns of diplomacy, see Kenneth Weisbrode, *Old Diplomacy Revisited. A Study in the Modern History of Diplomatic Transformations* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014). Also see Keith Hamilton and Richard Langhorne, *The Practice of Diplomacy: Its Evolution, Theory and Administration* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2011), 93–140.

where they were forcibly dispersed by the police after a demonstrator attempted to enter the building, a form of direct action that would have been anathema to many original members of the Society.⁹⁵ Emotions were running particularly high given that rumours of talks between London and St Petersburg had been circulating for months. Once the Anglo-Russian Convention was signed, the Society's Executive Committee sent a memorial to the British government condemning the treaty 'as calculated to improve the credit of the Russian Government and to discourage those who were fighting for liberty in Russia'.⁹⁶ It also argued that the agreement should be submitted to Parliament for approval, a move that was not constitutionally required, but echoed a growing sense among some on the left of the need to open up the secret world of diplomacy to public gaze.

While the cause of improved Anglo-Russian relations attracted opposition, it also found considerable support in some quarters, not least from the *Times*, which in later years published a Russian supplement that combined articles about the country's buoyant commercial prospects with other pieces praising the unique character of its culture. The development of the 'Russia craze' in Britain since the 1890s—which manifested itself in everything from interest in Russian literature through to the Ballets Russes—undoubtedly helped to reshape attitudes towards Russia by challenging old notions of the Russian 'bear'. Writers like Maurice Baring produced books and articles presenting Russia as a place of mystery and intrigue.⁹⁷ Bernard Pares of the University of Liverpool worked to develop Russian Studies in Britain, in order to build up a cadre of young men with the expertise required to strengthen the country's commercial presence in Russia.⁹⁸ Many yearbooks and gazetteers were published containing detailed commercial information for those interested in doing business with Russia. Volkhovskii was quick to recognise the challenges posed by this

95 *Daily Telegraph* (15 July 1907).

96 'Our Activity', *Free Russia* (January–March 1908).

97 Among Baring's numerous writings on Russia, see, for example, Maurice Baring, *With the Russians in Manchuria* (London: Methuen, 1905); Maurice Baring, *The Russian People* (London: Methuen, 1911).

98 Michael Hughes, 'Bernard Pares, Russian Studies and the Promotion of Anglo-Russian Friendship, 1907–14', *Slavonic and East European Review*, 78, 3 (2000), 510–35.

new wave of cultural and commercial Russophilia. Following his return to Britain in 1907, he used the columns of *Free Russia* to persuade readers that the 1905 Revolution had in reality changed very little, and that the tsarist government remained a threat both to its own people and the wider world.

Free Russia continued to print numerous articles reporting abuses committed by the tsarist government, as well as condemning its neglect of the welfare of the people, including its failure to respond to such crises as the cholera outbreaks that swept across parts of the country in the summer of 1908.⁹⁹ The paper also regularly criticised West European governments that extradited members of the Russian opposition back to Russia.¹⁰⁰ Particularly striking was the harsh criticism of the Tsar himself, who was the subject of a number of unflattering cartoons, as well as several pieces by Volkhovskii challenging the claim that Nicholas knew little of the abuses carried out in his name. In the first edition of *Free Russia* to appear in 1908, he savagely condemned the Tsar for being the effective head of the Black Hundreds—the bands of thugs who carried out anti-Jewish pogroms across European Russia—adding confidently that in the face of such evils ‘the British people acknowledges in the last resort for improvement the sacred right of revolution’.¹⁰¹ Volkhovskii repeated his claims in the next number, insisting that the Tsar welcomed the pogroms and was personally responsible for the ‘heartless tyranny’ of his government.¹⁰² In an unpublished article, apparently intended for *Free Russia*, Volkhovskii argued that the Russian people were ready to fight for their freedom, and attacked the complacency of many Britons who believed that ‘terrorist methods ... are wrong as well as mistaken’. He argued that Britons too would be ready to turn to violence, if faced with similar circumstances, adding that if ‘the atrocities ... of the official world never met with revolutionary punishments the masses would by now have lost all faith in the eventual triumph of equity over injustice’.¹⁰³ The fact that the article remained unpublished suggests that Volkhovskii

99 ‘Cholera’, *Free Russia* (July–September 1908).

100 ‘The Extradition of Vassilev’, *Free Russia* (April–June 1908).

101 F. Volkhovskii, ‘The Present Situation’, *Free Russia* (January–March 1908).

102 F. Volkhovskii, ‘The Tsar’s Responsibility’, *Free Russia* (April–June 1908).

103 Volkhovskii Papers (HIA), Box 11, Folder 1 (Untitled and unpublished article by Volkhovskii, c. January 1908).

recognised that such sentiments were still likely to alienate many of his British readers.

Both the SFRF and *Free Russia* attacked attempts to build closer relations between Britain and Russia in the wake of the signing of the Anglo-Russian Convention. In the early summer of 1908, in response to news that Edward VII was going to meet with the Tsar on board ship in the Bay of Reval, the Liberal MP Charles Trevelyan established a Russian Committee in the House of Commons. Volkhovskii took a leading role in editing the Committee's Bulletin, circulated to MPs and the press, which was predicated on the view that Russia was an unsuitable diplomatic partner for Britain given the despotic character of its government. Copies included numerous articles on such subjects as 'The Tsar and the Organisers of the Pogroms', as well as detailed evidence about the use of torture, along with extensive statistical information on the number of exiles condemned by the regime without trial.¹⁰⁴ The question of royal visits became still more pressing the following year, when it was announced that Nicholas was to come to Britain, although in the event he only set foot on the Isle of Wight (home of the royal residence Osborne House).¹⁰⁵ Volkhovskii inveighed against the visit on the pages of *Free Russia*, condemning the British government for welcoming 'the head of the Black Hundred', pointing out with some justice that the unpopularity of the Tsar in Britain meant that he could only be received in 'a remote corner' where he would not have to face protesters.¹⁰⁶

Volkhovskii was encouraged by the opposition to the Tsar's visit from the Labour Party and the Independent Labour Party, as well as various trade unions and the Church Socialist League, along with newspapers like *Justice* which carried a column referring to Nicholas as 'the prince of butchers'.¹⁰⁷ The *Daily News* was more restrained, but it too condemned the visit, suggesting that the Tsar had given tacit support to the Black Hundreds.¹⁰⁸ Thousands attended a mass meeting in Trafalgar

104 'Bulletin Issued by the Russian Committee in the House of Commons: No. 4' (16 September 1908).

105 For a useful analysis of the symbolic importance of the visit, see Fiona Tomaszewski, 'Pomp, Circumstance, and Realpolitik: The Evolution of the Triple Entente of Russia, Great Britain, and France', *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas*, 47, 3 (1999), 362–80.

106 F. Volkhovskii, 'The Tsar's Visit to England', *Free Russia* (July 1909).

107 *Justice* (14 August 1909).

108 *Daily News* (16 June 1909).

Square to demonstrate against the visit.¹⁰⁹ Many more attended protest meetings up and down the country.¹¹⁰ Such demonstrations did little to influence British policy towards Russia. The Foreign Office was remarkably successful at insulating policymaking from the influence of the *hoi polloi*—whether in the form of Labour MPs, Church of England bishops or émigré journalists—while most of the British press in any case defended both the visit and the broader principle of the 1907 agreement. The *Times* argued that Russian foreign policy was peaceful and condemned politicians who attacked the visit for ‘mischief-making’.¹¹¹ Many local papers reported with approval the Tsar’s gift of £1000 to support those in need on the Isle of Wight.

Free Russia also regularly carried pieces criticising the 1905 Aliens Act, which was passed by Parliament to limit immigration, although it also represented the culmination of more than a decade of concern that political violence and ‘anarchism’ were imports contrary to British political traditions and values.¹¹² The nature and composition of the Russian revolutionary emigration in London changed significantly during the first decade of the twentieth century. Jewish émigrés from the western borderlands of the Tsarist Empire continued to find a home in the self-contained diaspora in the East End,¹¹³ where it was possible

109 *Justice* (24 July 1909).

110 See, for example, a description of various protests by trade unions at the prospect of the Tsar’s visit in the *Daily News* (22 June 1909).

111 *Times* (2 August 1909).

112 The paper had opposed the legislation long before it was passed. See, for example, ‘The Aliens Bill’, *Free Russia* (1 May 1904). Prominent members of the SFRF had for some time taken a leading role in opposing the Bill. See Stow Hill Papers, (Parliamentary Archives), STH/DS/1/GRE 12 (Flyer headed ‘The Aliens Bill’). For a useful overview of the Aliens Act, see Helena Wray, ‘The Aliens Act and the Immigration Dilemma’, *Journal of Law and Society*, 33, 2 (2006), 302–23. See, too, Jill Pellew, ‘The Home Office and the Aliens Act, 1905’, *Historical Journal*, 32, 2 (1989), 369–85. For an examination of the Act in its historical context, see Bernard Gainer, *The Alien Invasion. The Origins of the 1905 Aliens Act* (London: Heinemann, 1972). For a very different approach to the history and significance of the Aliens Act, see David Glover, *Literature, Immigration and Diaspora in Fin-de-Siècle England. A Cultural History of the 1905 Aliens Act* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012).

113 On the development of the Jewish community in Britain see, for example, David Feldman, *Englishmen and Jews: Social Relations and Political Culture, 1840–1914* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1994); Lloyd P. Gartner, *The Jewish Immigrant in England, 1870–1914* (Detroit, MI: Wayne State University Press, 1960). For a valuable examination of radicalism among the Jewish population in London’s East

for new arrivals to live a life that seldom brought them into contact with the host communities surrounding them.¹¹⁴ Some of the most prominent figures in the revolutionary movement also made London their home, including Vladimir Lenin, although few of these new arrivals developed many friendships with Britons beyond a small coterie of radical socialists.¹¹⁵ While the names of Stepniak and Kropotkin resonated widely among a section of British society in the 1880s and 1890s, made familiar through their writings in newspapers and journals, the 'new' revolutionaries who flitted in and out of Britain in the years following the 1905 Revolution were altogether more shadowy figures.

A short piece in the first number of *Free Russia* that appeared in 1908 noted that several members of the SFRF had the previous year attended the fifth Congress of the Russian Social Democratic Party that took place in London (which included Lenin and Stalin among its delegates). The paper did not, though, provide many details about the proceedings.¹¹⁶ A reporter from the conservative *Morning Post* noted at the time that there was no secrecy about the event, describing his interviews with delegates milling round the Socialist Club in Whitechapel, including one who told him that the Marxist Social Democrats had no sympathy for 'anarchism'.¹¹⁷ Other papers took a bleaker view, detailing rumours that the delegates hoped to buy arms in London,¹¹⁸ and that some of those who had previously been expelled from Denmark planted a bomb there in revenge.¹¹⁹ The press was nevertheless still fairly relaxed about the presence of Russian revolutionaries in London. The *Daily News* went so far as to complain about police harassment of delegates to the

End, see William J. Fishman, *East End Jewish Radicals, 1875–1914* (London: Five Leaves Publications, 2004).

114 For a wealth of useful material on the pattern of ethnic settlement in the East End, see the relevant sections of James Perry, 'Foreigners, Aliens and Strangers: Foreign-Born Migration and Settlement in England and Wales, 1851–1911' (PhD thesis, Lancaster University, 2019).

115 On Lenin in London, see Robert Henderson, *The Spark that Lit the Revolution. Lenin in London and the Politics that Changed the World* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2020). Also see the relevant sections of Helen Rappoport, *Conspirator: Lenin in Exile. The Making of a Revolutionary* (New York: Basic Books, 2010).

116 'Our Activity', *Free Russia* (January–March 1908).

117 *Morning Post* (11 May 1907).

118 *Evening Mail* (13 May 1907).

119 *Leeds Mercury* (11 May 1907).

Congress, given there was no evidence that they sought to create any unrest in Britain.¹²⁰

Things changed sharply over the next few years. At the start of 1909, two Jewish immigrants from Latvia, Paul Helfeld and Jacob Lepidus, killed two passers-by when fleeing from a factory in north-east London where they had carried out an armed robbery. They may—or may not—have intended to use the money to support revolutionary activities both in Russia and abroad.¹²¹ The *Morning Post* reported that many émigrés from Russia refused to denounce Helfeld and Lepidus.¹²² The *Daily Telegraph* attacked the Metropolitan Police for allowing foreign revolutionaries to remain at liberty, despite knowing that many plots were hatched in the British capital to carry out killings abroad.¹²³ The Siege of Sidney Street that took place two years later, after several members of a gang of Latvian refugees killed three policemen who interrupted a raid on a jewellery shop in Houndsditch, re-enforced growing concern about the threat posed by foreign ‘anarchists’.¹²⁴ The *Times* printed a long editorial arguing that the British police were now confronting the same kinds of challenges that had faced the Russian authorities for many years, as ‘the old blaze ... leapt out into the country to which so many of the refugees have escaped—that is, East London’.¹²⁵ The image of the ethical Russian revolutionary, so carefully cultivated in the pages of *Free Russia* over the previous fifteen years or so, was undermined not by the insinuations of tsarist agents but rather by real sanguinary events in London’s East End.

The *Okhrana* continued to use retired Scotland Yard detectives to monitor the activities of Russian revolutionaries in London (as well as

120 *Daily News* (23 May 1907).

121 For a lively account of the events in Tottenham see, for example, Geoffrey Barton, *The Tottenham Outrage and Walthamstow Tram Chase: The Most Spectacular Hot Pursuit in History* (Hook: Waterside Press, 2017).

122 *Morning Post* (26 January 1909).

123 *Daily Telegraph* (26 January 1909).

124 On the siege and the events leading up to it, see Colin Rogers, *The Battle of Stepney. The Sidney Street Siege: Its Causes and Consequences* (London: Robert Hale, 1981); Donald Rumbelow, *The Houndsditch Murders and the Siege of Sidney Street* (London: W. H. Allen, 1988).

125 *Times* (25 January 1911). The *Okhrana* provided London with information likely to help them identify the culprits in the Houndsditch murders. See *Okhrana Archive* (HIA), Index Vc, Folder 1, Letter of thanks for information to A. Krassilnikoff, 31 December 1910; Letter of thanks for information by John Ottoway, 6 February 1911 (microfilm 69).

maintaining good working relations with some serving officers). The Paris *agentura* became increasingly frustrated by the poor character of the reports submitted by their principal agent in London, Edgar Farce, who seems to have been curiously silent about the activities of Jewish radicals in the East End despite claiming to know Yiddish.¹²⁶ Volkhovskii himself made regular trips to East London, to meet with couriers who carried material to and from the continent, presumably including both confidential letters and material relating to the publication of *Za narod*. He also had close links with the Free Russian Library in Whitechapel, which served as an important cultural hub for the Russian community in the area, but was in the opinion of the Russian and French secret police 'the rallying centre of the Russian revolutionary movement in London'.¹²⁷ Volkhovskii did not, though, ever develop close links with the more prominent members of the Bolshevik Party who regularly made London their home (he does not appear to have ever met Lenin).¹²⁸ Nor did he develop close links with the Jewish radical émigré communities of Whitechapel, and he had no connections with the networks to which the perpetrators of the Tottenham and Houndsditch murders belonged. *Free Russia* itself was oddly silent on the Tottenham Outrage, perhaps reflecting the challenge posed by such events to the paper's long-standing mission to present a positive picture of the revolutionary movement, but Volkhovskii did write a long letter to the *Manchester Guardian* intended to counter the potential damage to the 'cause' resulting from the dramatic events that had been played out on the streets of London.

Volkhovskii described the events in Tottenham as 'a particularly sore spot' for Russians who had found 'friendly asylum' in Britain after being

126 Developments in the East End became more prominent in some of Farce's later reports, though the Paris *agentura* continued to be frustrated about the lack of definite information. Farce for his part feared (wrongly) that Melville wished to replace him. See Okhrana Archive, Index Vlk, Folder 23, Report by Edgar Farce, 9 May 1904 (microfilm 107).

127 Henderson, *Spark That Lit the Revolution*, 26. On the Whitechapel Library see Robert Henderson, 'A. L. Teplov and the Russian Free Library in Whitechapel', *Solanus*, New Series, 22 (2011), 5–26.

128 While it is possible to exaggerate the fragmentation of Russian émigré communities in London and other west European cities, at least in the ten years or so before the First World War, the divisions certainly complicated the pattern of life in Russian émigré communities set out in such magisterial terms in Faith Hillis, *Utopia's Discontents: Russian Émigrés and the Quest for Freedom, 1830s–1930s* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2021).

driven from their own country by 'tyranny and official lawlessness'. He also acknowledged that the killing of a policeman and a young boy seemed a poor 'repayment for political hospitality'. Volkhovskii went on to argue that the brutality of the Russian government had effectively 'trained' men like Helfeld and Lapidus to turn to violence since, like thousands of young men, they saw no other way of bringing about change. He also claimed that the Socialist Revolutionaries and the Social Democrats 'most emphatically' condemned 'expropriations of private persons and institutions' and could not therefore be held accountable for the actions of Helfeld and Lapidus.¹²⁹ Such words were disingenuous. All the main revolutionary parties raised money in Russia through robbery and expropriations. The boundary between political and criminal activity was in any case often porous. Helfeld and Lapidus had criminal records, but they were also active in smuggling revolutionary literature into Russia, and they had both been living in Paris when Helfeld's brother was killed by the premature explosion of a bomb designed to assassinate the French President. The two men belonged to the Latvian Socialist Party, which was formally distinct from both the Socialist Revolutionaries and the Social Democrats, but in the confused maelstrom of revolutionary organisations such categories were seldom precise ones. Volkhovskii must have realised that his skilfully chosen words did not fully capture the complex reality of the East End revolutionary diaspora.

Volkhovskii was more comfortable when welcoming Vera Figner to Britain in the summer of 1910, introducing her to a meeting in north London as 'the embodiment of all the sorrow, all the martyrdom but also of all the best hopes and sublime aspirations of our beloved country'. Similar sentiments were expressed by other members of the London emigration, including Petr Kropotkin, who suggested that her ideals were not simply Russian but 'universal'.¹³⁰ Such language was designed to create a rhetoric of integrity that not only celebrated a revolutionary icon but also wrapped the contemporary revolutionary movement in her mantle.¹³¹ The same was true of other revolutionary

129 *Manchester Guardian* (27 January 1909).

130 'To Welcome Vera N. Figner', *Free Russia* (July 1909).

131 Figner's presence in Britain was also welcomed by much of the Liberal press. See, for example, *Daily News* (22 June 1909).

veterans. After Ekaterina Breshko-Breshkovskaia was sentenced to a further bout of exile in Siberia, at the start of 1910, Volkhovskii described her on the pages of *Free Russia* as an icon of 'the whole revolutionary cause'.¹³² In the same number, he wrote an obituary of his old friend Leonid Shishko, warmly recalling his revolutionary career from his time in the Chaikovskii circle ('His memory ... will shine with a permanent, unflagging soft starlight').¹³³ Volkhovskii may well have been genuine in believing there was a vital connection between the revolutionaries of the 1870s and their successors of the 1900s. He was indeed himself a living expression of the lineage. Yet there was also something calculated in his attempt to persuade British readers to see the contemporary revolutionary movement through the prism of the past. The perpetrators of the killings in Tottenham and Hounsditch were very different in both background and ideological outlook from the young men and women who flocked to the Russian countryside in the 1870s and later joined the ranks of *Narodnaia volia*.

Volkhovskii's health declined still further in the last few years before his death in 1914. Constance Garnett heard that he had developed kidney problems to add to his other woes. Several correspondents urged him not to allow his physical ailments to undermine his good spirits ('It is only your illness that makes you downcast. You must not allow yourself to think sadly of the past').¹³⁴ He nevertheless kept up a regular correspondence with old friends including Korolenko and Vera Figner. And, despite the challenges, he remained as hard working as ever, even though he periodically made clear that he wanted to 'retire' (he told Robert Spence Watson as early as 1909 that 'I can no longer do the same amount of work I did in times gone').¹³⁵ One of his obituarists subsequently noted that Volkhovskii edited the main SR newspaper *Znamia truda* (*Banner of Labour*) from 1912–14,¹³⁶ while

132 F. Volkhovskii, 'The Grandmother of the Russian Revolution', *Free Russia* (April 1910).

133 F. Volkhovskii, 'A Great Loss', *Free Russia* (April 1910).

134 Volkhovskii Papers (HIA), Box 6, Folder 11, 'Teddie' to Volkhovskii, 5 January 1911.

135 Spence Watson / Weiss Papers (Newcastle University), SW 1/19/4, Volkhovskii to Spence Watson, 4 June 1909.

136 Ritina [I. I. Rakitnikova], Obituary of Volkhovskii. The author—I. I. Rakitnikova—was a regular contributor to *Znamia truda* and there is no reason to doubt her claim.

continuing to edit *Za narod*, although the surviving material suggests that his contribution to the former may have been quite limited.¹³⁷ His work for *Za narod* by contrast continued unabated, although Vladimir Lebedev in Paris took on an increasingly active role, editing many of the submissions and contributing a good deal of material (including short stories and poems as well as articles on military questions). Lebedev was however careful to keep Volkhovskii informed of his decisions, addressing numerous letters to 'grandfather', a correspondence that continued until shortly before Volkhovskii's death.¹³⁸ Andrei Argunov also continued to be involved in overseeing the production and distribution of *Za narod* in his role as head of the SR Transport Commission. The Russian authorities still considered Volkhovskii to pose a threat. When the former Scotland Yard detective Francis Powell, who had for many years worked closely with William Melville monitoring Russian revolutionaries in London, began working for the *Okhrana* in 1912, he devoted significant time reporting to the Paris *agentura* on the ageing Volkhovskii's activities.¹³⁹

Za narod continued to appear every two or three months, following the familiar format, with regular columns on 'Voices from the Army and Navy' and 'What is Happening in Russia'. Lebedev appears to have taken a growing role in collecting material, typically provided by informants in Russia, although, like Volkhovskii, he regularly scoured the European press for information. The paper also published numerous obituaries of SRs, including a lengthy one of 'Jan' (Stanislav Mikhailevich), who had played a central role directing the work of the Party's Military-Organisation Bureau in fomenting agitation among the

137 Victor Chernov also suggested that Volkhovskii was closely involved with *Znamia truda* although without spelling out his precise role. See Chernov, *Pered burei*, 495.

138 See, for example, the correspondence between Volkhovskii and Lebedev contained in Volkhovskii Papers (HIA), Box 2, Folder 17. The description of Volkhovskii as 'grandfather'—a clear counterpart to the description of Breshko-Breshkovskaia as 'grandmother'—had been increasingly common among some SRs since at least 1908.

139 Okhrana Archive (HIA), Index Vlk, Folder 39, Reports by Powell, 30 June 1912; 21 September 1912; 8 November 1912; 3 January 1913; 4 July 1913; 21 July 1913 (all microfilm 119). Okhrana Archive (HIA), Index Xe, Folder 38, Report by Powell, 17 August 1913 (microfilm 152). See, too, the surveillance reports on Volkhovskii during one of his regular visits to Paris, in 1912, almost certainly to discuss publishing issues with Lebedev and Argunov, in Okhrana Archive (HIA), Xe, Folder 45 (microfilm 154).

troops.¹⁴⁰ *Za narod* continued to print articles on more general themes likely to be of interest to its readers, ranging from elections to the fourth Duma to the rumours and scandals surrounding Rasputin and his arch-opponent Iliodor.¹⁴¹ Another piece discussed the growing labour unrest in Britain.¹⁴² The paper still avoided the shrill tone characteristic of some other publications, instead combining restrained anger with detailed descriptions of abuses to create the greatest impact. A typical piece on 'Russia's Disgrace' described how Russian troops occupying territory in northern Persia had hanged many locals suspected of opposition, complete with a graphic photograph, even though the country was not at war and Persia was a 'foreign land'.¹⁴³

In December 1912, *Za narod* published a lengthy account of the ninth Congress of the Second International held at Basel, presumably written by Volkhovskii, who, despite his indifferent health, served as one of the SR representatives.¹⁴⁴ The war that had recently erupted in the Balkans, threatening to suck in the great powers, seemed to many delegates both a threat and an opportunity. The Congress passed a resolution that, in the event of a major war, '[the workers] shall be bound to intervene for it being brought to a speedy end', while taking advantage of the situation 'to rouse the masses of the people and to hasten the downfall of the predominance of the capitalist class'.¹⁴⁵ Volkhovskii welcomed the rhetoric of proletarian internationalism, telling readers of *Za narod* that there were no differences on the subject between the Socialist Revolutionaries and the Social Democrats, a claim that was not entirely accurate and reflected his habitual impatience with ideological squabbling. He enthusiastically endorsed the principle that the workers of all countries had a shared interest in mobilising to prevent their

140 'Tan', *Za narod*, 54 (March 1913).

141 'Vybory', *Za narod*, 49 (August 1912); 'Skandal v tsarskoi sem'e', *Za narod*, 48 (June 1912).

142 'Stachka transportnykh rabochikh v Londone', *Za narod*, 49 (August 1912).

143 'Opozorenii Rossii', *Za narod*, 50 (September 1912).

144 On the Basel Congress, see Egbert Jahn, *World Political Challenges. Political Issues Under Debate* (Berlin: Springer, 2015), 55–72. See, too, the piece probably penned by Volkhovskii on the 'Chrezvychainyi mezhdunarodnyi sotsialisticheskii kongress v Bazele', *Znamia truda*, 47 (December 1912).

145 *Justice* (25 December 1912).

governments from going to war.¹⁴⁶ Despite the air of international crisis surrounding the Congress, Volkhovskii like many other delegates was hopeful that international working-class solidarity would prove stronger than the call of patriotism.

Volkhovskii's reputation as one of the SR's leading experts on military matters meant that he often received requests for practical advice and assistance. He had back in 1905 been asked to support efforts to help the sailors who had found refuge in Romania following the mutiny on the Battleship *Potemkin*.¹⁴⁷ Six years later, he met representatives of the men to offer advice about how they could move to Canada, at a time when they were increasingly anxious that the Romanian government was about to expel them, writing to the British authorities asking them to facilitate their emigration.¹⁴⁸ Volkhovskii was also approached in 1912 by a leading figure in the newly established Union of Black Sea Sailors, Mikhail Adamovich, asking him to use *Za narod* to support efforts to organise sailors at a time when the leading figures in the movement had been forced to flee abroad to avoid arrest.¹⁴⁹ The Union had established a newspaper, *Moriak (The Sailor)*, which shared the commitment of *Za narod* to avoid party factionalism, in order to coordinate efforts to promote revolutionary sentiment in the military (most of those involved in the Union of Black Sea Sailors were in fact Mensheviks). Although Volkhovskii was not able to offer much more than rhetorical support in such cases, he was despite his age and growing infirmity still seen as an influential figure in the revolutionary movement, as well as someone who had extensive insight into the challenges involved in fostering revolution in the military.

Volkhovskii also cooperated with Vladimir Lebedev during his final years on a new series titled 'On Military Matters'. Three numbers

146 'Mezhdunarodnyi sotsialisticheskii kongress (S'ezd') v g. Bazele', *Za narod*, 52 (December 1912).

147 Volkhovskii was also involved in plans to publish an account in English of the mutiny by one of its leading figures, Afanasii Matiushenko, although this appears to have come to nothing at the time. See Volkhovskii Papers (HIA), Box 5, Folder 5, Perris to Volkhovskii, 31 October 1905.

148 Volkhovskii Papers (HIA), Box 5, Folder 5, Undated draft of letter from Volkhovskii to Smith (Asst. Superintendent of Emigration).

149 Volkhovskii Papers (HIA), Box 5, Folder 6, Adamovich to Volkhovskii, 17 January 1912. For Adamovich's memoirs of this time, see M. Adamovich, *Na Chernom more: ocherki proshloi bor'by* (Moscow: Politkatorzhan, 1928).

appeared before the outbreak of war in the summer of 1914. The essays covered issues ranging from the role of officers in promoting revolution through to the readiness of the Russian army to conduct wartime military operations. Volkhovskii contributed to each of the publications. The collection *O nashei sovremennoi armii* (*About Our Army Today*) included his article on the scandal surrounding the dismissal of General E. I. Martynov, who had raised questions about corruption and embezzlement in the tsarist military from the time of the Russo-Japanese War onwards.¹⁵⁰ Volkhovskii described Martynov as ‘an exemplary officer’ who was disliked by many senior figures in the tsarist regime as much for his left-wing (*vlevo*) views as his efforts to expose wrong-doing.¹⁵¹ In a second piece, in *Oborona strany* (*The Defence of the Country*), Volkhovskii pointed out that Russian army officers had in the past often been on the side of the ‘nation’, noting that some prominent figures in the revolutionary movement including Stepniak and Shishko had served in the military. He concluded that officers should inform themselves about social and political questions, while ‘revolutionary workers’ needed to make every effort to understand the more technical aspects of warfare, breaking down the sharp distinction between soldier and worker in ways that would make it harder for the government to use force to crush future disorders.¹⁵²

In a third collection, *Koe-Chto o nashikh zadachakh* (*Something About Our Tasks*),¹⁵³ Volkhovskii contributed a piece designed to spell out the most effective ways to approach ‘military-revolutionary work’, noting that the editors of ‘On Military Matters’ had received numerous letters from soldiers and sailors asking for practical advice about how best to promote the cause of revolution. He added that the letters had come from Socialist Revolutionaries and Social Democrats alike, which he believed

150 F. Volkhovskii, ‘Delo generala E. I. Martynova’, in Aleksandrov and F. Volkhovskii (eds), *O nashei sovremennoi armii* (Paris: n.p., 1914), 37-54. Lebedev used the name Aleksandrov for much of his published work including numerous pieces in *Za narod*.

151 Martynov did later hold senior military positions in the Red Army after 1917, suggesting that his political views were indeed left-wing, though he later fell foul of Stalin’s purge of the officer corps in 1937.

152 See the introduction by Volkhovskii in Aleksandrov and F. Volkhovskii (eds), *Oborona strany* (Paris: n.p., 1913), 3-6.

153 F. Volkhovskii, ‘Konkretizatsiia voenno-revoliutsionnoi zadachi’, in Aleksandrov and F. Volkhovskii (eds), *Koe-Chto o nashikh zadachakh* (Paris: n.p., 1914), 17-43.

showed that ideological and organisational divisions on the ground were often of little importance, going on to praise those like Adamovich who had pursued a non-party line when setting up the Union of Black Sea Sailors. Volkhovskii argued that sympathetic members of the officer corps had a critical role to play in preparing for revolution—a view he had held for many years—and believed that every effort should be made to coordinate future military uprisings with popular unrest to increase the chance of overthrowing the government. Volkhovskii had read extensively about the career of Giuseppe Garibaldi to help him understand how volunteers could be mobilised into an effective military force, and although he did not spell out his ideas in detail, he clearly once again believed that in a revolutionary situation the boundary between soldier and civilian would fade, and that militants and radically-minded officers could work together to create a new force that would fight on the side of the people.

Although Volkhovskii's attention was focused during his final years on fostering revolutionary sentiment in the army and navy, he could not ignore other issues altogether. The assassination of the Prime Minister Petr Stolypin in Kyiv, in September 1911, once again raised the issue of the efficacy and ethics of terrorism as a tool in the struggle against autocracy. The question was made still more stark by the fact that the assassin, Dmitrii Bogrov, was a sometime *Okhrana* informant who may have carried out the killing in part to assert his revolutionary credentials and persuade his fellow revolutionaries to spare his life.¹⁵⁴ Volkhovskii appears to have been the author of pieces defending the murder on the pages of *Za narod* and *Znamia truda*, noting that foreigners often struggled to understand how such violent actions could be justified,¹⁵⁵ since they had no personal experience of the ways in which the Russian Government regularly acted in ways that were totally unconstrained by law. He went on to argue that Stolypin's repressive policies had

154 On the Bogrov affair see, for example, Geifman, *Thou Shalt Kill*, 237–40.

155 Although unsigned, making it impossible to identify authorial provenance with certainty, both internal and external evidence suggests that Volkhovskii was the author of 'Terror i delo Bogrova', *Znamia truda*, 38 (October 1911) and 'Kievskie vystrely', *Za narod*, 43 (October 1911). The argument of both articles closely resembles pieces signed by Volkhovskii that appeared in the English press, while as the principal editor of *Za narod* it seems certain that he must at least have approved the inclusion of the piece.

led to thousands of executions, usually without anything like a fair trial, leaving behind grieving families bereft of any means of support. Volkhovskii's defence of Stolypin's assassination also made much of the fact that the Prime Minister had acted in ways that challenged the collective values and material interests of the Russian *narod*. The SRs had always been intensely suspicious of the Prime Minister's agrarian reforms, 'a wager on the strong', which sought to transform the social and economic character of the Russian countryside by allowing peasants to secede from the commune and farm the land as individual proprietors.¹⁵⁶ Although he did not spell out the comparison, Volkhovskii seemed to hope that the assassination of Stolypin would ease the tide of change that threatened the communal foundations of peasant life, just as an earlier generation of Russian revolutionaries believed they were in a race to protect the peasant commune from the development of capitalist relations in the countryside.

There was nevertheless something rather muted about Volkhovskii's articles about Stolypin's assassination in both *Za narod* and *Znamia truda*. He knew that growing numbers of SRs believed that the Party should focus on legal forms of opposition at a time when the Azef *débauche* continued to cast a long shadow. In an exchange of letters with Boris Savinkov, that took place early in 1912, Volkhovskii responded cautiously to the idea of expressing himself more forcefully in support of using terror. Savinkov had replaced Azef as head of the SR Combat Organisation, and was frustrated by the Central Committee's growing ambivalence over terrorism, which he believed was both a tactical mistake and a betrayal of those who had given their lives for the cause.¹⁵⁷

156 On the long-term background of the Stolypin agrarian reforms, see David A. J. Macey, *Government and Peasant in Russia, 1861–1906: The Prehistory of the Stolypin Reforms* (DeKalb, IL: Northern Illinois University Press, 1987). See, too, the same author's useful revisionist essay "'A Wager on History': The Stolypin Agrarian Reforms as Process', in Judith Pallot (ed.), *Transforming Peasants. Society, State and the Peasantry, 1861–1930* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 1998), 149–73. On the reforms themselves and their consequences, see Judith Pallot, *Land Reform in Russia, 1906–1917: Peasant Responses to Stolypin's Project of Rural Transformation* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1999).

157 On Savinkov, see Richard B. Spence, *Boris Savinkov: Renegade on the Left* (Boulder, CO: East European Monographs, distributed by Columbia University Press, 1991). See, too, Morozov, *Partiia sotsialistov-revoliutsionerov*, 396–442. Some insight into Savinkov's views and activities can be drawn from his less than reliable memoirs, *Vospominaniia terrorista* (Kharkov: Izd-vo 'Proletarii', 1926).

He was therefore anxious to encourage Volkhovskii to speak out on this issue.¹⁵⁸ Volkhovskii, for his part, drafted a reply urging caution on a subject that could so easily cause division among the SRs.¹⁵⁹

Volkhovskii also faced substantial constraints when writing about Stolypin's assassination in the British press, since he was well aware that the use of terror appalled many of his readers. His articles were crafted in response to the coverage in newspapers like the *Times*, which condemned the 'dastardly attempt' on the Prime Minister's life, praising him as 'the stoutest and most formidable' opponent of the 'anarchical designs' of those who wanted to kill him.¹⁶⁰ Volkhovskii told the *Manchester Guardian* that, while 'we all regard the taking of human life as deplorable', the killing was a natural response to the Prime Minister's brutal repression of dissent, and was welcomed by many Russians as proof there was 'justice in the world'.¹⁶¹ He nevertheless recognised that the assassination of the Prime Minister could damage still further the image of the Russian revolutionary movement in Britain, telling the paper in rather convoluted terms that the Central Committee of the SRs had opposed the killing. He wrote a further piece in *Free Russia* on 'Spy Rule', suggesting that the killing of Stolypin had been authorised at the highest levels of the *Okhrana* (a charge that may have contained some truth although the full picture remains unclear). It was a shrewd move. By suggesting that Stolypin's murder had been actioned by 'the secret police, that pet child of the Tzar's rule', Volkhovskii was not only able to echo his earlier justification of terror as a legitimate response to brutal despotism, but also locate the crime within the corrupt world of the tsarist government itself.¹⁶²

During his final years, Volkhovskii also continued to use *Free Russia* to campaign against efforts to treat tsarist Russia as a 'normal' European country and a suitable diplomatic and trade partner for Britain. The paper railed against the visit of a delegation of 'representative Englishmen' to

158 Volkhovskii Papers (HIA), Box 3, Folder 9, Savinkov to Volkhovskii, 9 April 1912. I am indebted to Dr Lara Green for this reference, which escaped my attention during my first visit to the Hoover archives.

159 Volkhovskii Papers (HIA), Box 3, Folder 9 (incomplete draft of reply by Volkhovskii).

160 *Times* (16 September 1911).

161 *Manchester Guardian* (22 September 1911). See, too, the sentiments Volkhovskii expressed in F. Volkovsky, 'The End of Stolypin', *Free Russia* (October 1911).

162 F. Volkovsky, 'Spy-Rule and the Douma', *Free Russia* (January 1912).

Russia in 1912, organised by Bernard Pares, as part of his campaign to improve Anglo-Russian relations.¹⁶³ Following its return to Britain, the writer Maurice Baring, who had been part of the delegation, took part in an angry dialogue with J. F. Green and Thomas Unwin, suggesting that the 'so-called' friends of Russia should really be regarded as enemies for perpetuating outdated ideas about the Tsarist Empire at a time when it was undergoing a process of rapid change.¹⁶⁴ The intensity of the polemic revealed that both sides understood how the image of Russia in Britain had become a significant factor in framing the economic and diplomatic relationship between the two countries. Writers like Baring sought to mobilise the Russia 'craze' as part of a broader Anglo-Russian rapprochement in which cultural affinities and understandings bolstered diplomatic and economic relations. Unwin and Green by contrast followed Volkhovskii's lead in arguing that everything that was valuable about Russian culture, and indeed Russian life, was an authentic expression of a society fighting to emancipate itself from the harsh rule of autocracy.

Volkhovskii still contributed occasional pieces on Russian culture to *Free Russia*, including one following Tolstoi's death in 1910, in which he emphasised Tolstoi's role as a moralist rather than a novelist.¹⁶⁵ Volkhovskii was, though, more focused on the campaign against closer Anglo-Russian political and economic relations. *Free Russia* gave enormous coverage to the Lena goldfield massacres that took place in the spring of 1912, when troops fired on striking workers, with the loss of hundreds of lives. Volkhovskii railed against 'British Responsibility' for the killings, suggesting (wrongly) that most of the capital invested in the mine works was British. He told readers that since 'gentlemen of the type of Professor Pares and Mr Maurice Baring are nowadays very assiduous in their invitations to British capital to back up Russian enterprises [surely] the British investor ought to give a little thought as to the kind of dealings he is going to support'. While an individual investor might be ignorant of the situation on the ground, it was wrong of them as 'a Christian and an Englishman' to close their eyes to 'the

163 On Pares's role in organising the trip, see Hughes, 'Russian Studies'.

164 The debates which took place in the journal *Eyewitness* were reproduced almost *verbatim* in 'The British Visit', *Free Russia* (April 1912).

165 F. Volkhovskii, 'Leo Tolstoy', *Free Russia* (January 1911).

blood and sweat out of which his profits are squeezed'.¹⁶⁶ Although he may not have been aware of it, Volkhovskii's words pointed to a profound tension in early twentieth-century British liberalism. Its *laissez-faire* strand held that free trade and freedom of investment flows would improve material conditions around the world and make war less likely. Its nonconformist-humanitarian strand believed that decisions about foreign policy, and by extension foreign investment, should be based on ethical judgements about the rights and wrongs of the issues involved.

Europe seemed to be at peace during the last few months before Volkhovskii's death. The two Balkan wars had ended without leading to conflict between the great powers, and the rhythms of international life continued as normal in the fine summer of 1914, as diplomats and ministers headed for the fashionable spas and resorts dotted across the continent. The assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand at the end of June was at first met with a shrug in many quarters, even if the following weeks were to shatter such complacency, as the great powers stumbled into war. Volkhovskii lived alone at this time, for Vera had long since left Somerville College in Oxford and was teaching at a girl's boarding school. When David Soskice saw him a few weeks before his death, 'there could be no mistaking the fact he was terribly ill ... His limbs were swollen with dropsy, his waxen bloodless face bore traces of intolerable suffering, and he was stone deaf'.¹⁶⁷ Vladimir Burtsev, who visited his old friend around the same time, later recalled that 'He was already old and very sick. He talked a lot about death'. But even though in suffering and pain, he found that Volkhovskii continued to 'be the same [person] I knew ... He knew how to live and knew how to die—calmly, with faith in the future'.¹⁶⁸ Volkhovskii ruefully told his old friend that he believed he would after death get the recognition that had often eluded him in life. He also told Burtsev that he had left instructions that he wanted to be cremated. He got his wish. A few days after his death, on 2 August 1914,

166 F. Volkovsky, 'British Responsibility', *Free Russia* (July 1912).

167 David Soskice, 'Feliks Volkovsky', *Free Russia* (October 1914–January 1915). This was the last number of *Free Russia* to appear.

168 V. L. Burtsev, *Bor'ba za svobodnuiu Rossiiu. Moi vospominaniia* (Moscow: Direct Media, 2014), 100.

Volkhovskii's funeral service took place at Golders Green Crematorium in north London. His ashes were scattered on the crocus lawn there.

It was perhaps inevitable that Volkhovskii's death was rather lost among the tumultuous events of the July Crisis and its aftermath. His cremation service was held the day after Britain declared war on Germany. The *Manchester Guardian* carried a short obituary two days after his death celebrating a man whose health had been ravaged by his fight against the tsarist government.¹⁶⁹ The *Daily Telegraph* carried a shorter piece that confined itself to a brief account of Volkhovskii's life.¹⁷⁰ The *Times* did not even refer to his death. Those who had worked closely with Volkhovskii in Britain were more generous in their memories. J. F. Green praised 'the loveableness of his disposition', his acute literary sense and his devotion 'to animals and children'. Herbert Thompson recalled Volkhovskii's 'sweetness of character'. Henry Hyndman praised him as 'a martyr type whose self-service and sacrifice lasted as long as his life'.¹⁷¹ Obituaries in the Russian radical press also praised Volkhovskii's personal qualities and literary talent, while focusing more on showing how his life fitted into the broader history of the Russian revolutionary movement,¹⁷² evidence perhaps of the fact that there had always been something of a distinction between Volkhovskii's 'English' and 'Russian' identities. Even David Soskice, who like Volkhovskii lived a life defined in large part by its division between the two countries, acknowledged that it was only when he began to write his friend's obituary that he really understood the scale and drama of his 'trials'. Obituaries are by their nature a place for eulogy rather than critical analysis, but Soskice was neither a sentimentalist nor a hypocrite, and there was something genuine in the warmth with which he finished his account:

He is dead, but his memory will live long not only in the hearts of his own people, but also in those of his foreign friends for whom he was a glorious example of a man whose spirit throughout his long career of suffering and struggle never faltered for a moment, never deviated from the bright ideal which he put before himself in his very early youth.¹⁷³

169 *Manchester Guardian* (4 August 1914).

170 *Daily Telegraph* (4 August 1914).

171 See the memoir notes by J. F. Green, H. M. Thompson and H. Hyndman, 'Death of Volkhovskii', *Free Russia* (October 1914–January 1915).

172 N. V. Chaikovskii, Obituary of Volkhovskii, *Golos mimovshago*, 10 (1914), 231–35; N. E. Kudrin, Obituary of Volkhovskii, *Russkoe bogatstvo*, 9 (1914), 364–65; Ritina [I. I. Rakitnikova], Obituary of Volkhovskii.

173 Soskice, 'Feliks Volkhovskii'.