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Khar'kov's Progressive Duma, 1910–1914: A Study in Russian Municipal Reform

Like their zemstvo counterparts, the municipal dumas played a major role in determining the quality of life in tsarist Russia from the Great Reforms until the Revolution in 1917. During this period of rapid urban growth, the dumas had the authority to regulate housing conditions. They bore major responsibility for ensuring an appropriate level of public health and sanitation, welfare and social services and for developing public education, transportation, parks, and recreational facilities.

The restrictive municipal "counter reform" of 1892 destroyed some of the promise of urban self-government, however, and with few exceptions, city government entered the twentieth century with a reputation for apathy, indolence, and indifference to all but the narrow concerns of the tiny propertied elite to whom local affairs had been entrusted.[1] Perhaps *Den'*, a leftist paper, was too harsh when it characterized the record of a St. Petersburg duma as one of "criminal indifference and cynical unconcern."[2] But recently historians have taken a similar, if less biting view:

> By the 1890s . . . civic affairs had deteriorated so far that the duma was propelled into action. But where the city did take over essential municipal services in place of the traditional practice of granting concessions, improvements in service were not introduced fast enough to gain the upper hand over the rate of deterioration. Epidemics took their toll right up to the Great War. The issues of proper municipal sewage and water-systems, for instance, were continually set aside. Profitability and minimal per capita debt seem to have been the prevailing elements in the essentially mercantile ethos which characterized city government. Social and educational programmes, however liberally defined, were meagerly financed when compared with those of other European capitals.[3]

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1. This statute gave tsarist officials wide authority over duma policies, which could be vetoed on the grounds of illegality or "inexpediency." It also restricted the franchise to a tiny minority of homeowners and prosperous merchants and manufacturers. In cities with populations greater than 100,000, homeowners with valuations of 1,500 rubles or more could vote. Assessments were usually based on income potential of the property (*dokhodnost'*), were often arbitrary, and were almost always far below the real market value of the property. Nearly all renters were disenfranchised, and in general, only about 1 percent of the urban population could vote after 1892.

2. *Den'* (St. Petersburg), November 1, 1912. The paper reported with sarcasm the duma's "historic call" not to drink unboiled water and said it was indicative of city government inaction. St. Petersburg actually had its own statute, issued in 1903, which gave some renters the right to vote, but the performance of the duma did not improve. Of the major city dumas, Moscow and Riga won reputations for relatively high levels of energy and performance.

3. James H. Bater, *St. Petersburg: Industrialization and Change* (Montreal, 1976), p. 409. See also the essays of Michael F. Hamm and Frederick Skinner in Michael F. Hamm, ed., *The City in Russian History* (Lexington, 1976) for similar points of view.

During the half decade before the outbreak of World War I, concern over urban problems seemed to intensify. A new journal, *Gorodskoe delo,* which began publication in 1909, quickly became a national forum for the discussion of issues of municipal concern. In a few cities—Penza, Samara, Tiflis, and Arkhangel'sk—local journals with similar formats appeared.[4] In the State Duma a municipal lobby embracing all parties except the Social Democrats formed in 1913. Chaired by Octobrist M. Aref'ev, its ninety-five members included ten mayors or former mayors and such well-known deputies as A. F. Kerenskii, P. N. Miliukov, and A. I. Shingarev.[5]

More significant was a surge of interest in local politics itself, where reformist parties, often armed with far-reaching developmental programs and a sense of urgency, mounted new challenges to political inertia in many cities. These activists were often called "progressives," and the name came to denote energy and initiative in developing municipal services and utilities which in turn would enhance the quality of city life and earn new revenue for local budgets.

The municipal progressives should not be confused with the Progressists, a national political party. In fact, the role of the national parties in city politics is not entirely clear. V. S. Diakin contends that in 1907 the liberal and moderate parties began to display a new interest in city elections. The Kadets, for example, tried to organize "Societies of Residents" in a number of towns, including Khar'kov. In St. Petersburg they tried to create a union of neighborhood societies that would be more representative of the city's inhabitants and more responsive to local needs than was the city duma. The government successfully resisted these efforts, however, and a Kadet attempt to organize a central committee of progressive city councilors (*glasnye*) in Moscow also failed.[6] At one point, the Octobrist paper *Golos Moskvy* accused Moscow's municipal progressives of serving as a cloak for the local Kadets. A recent study of Moscow between 1906 and 1914, however, found little evidence that local politics were manipulated by any of the national parties. Developmental issues, and not national partisan causes, dominated Moscow's politics.[7]

Rightist forces, including the Union of Russian People, played a prominent role in many city dumas, especially in the south and in the western borderlands.

4. Most local duma journals simply published data from the various budgetary accounts. These new journals discussed local problems and often reprinted articles from *Gorodskoe delo* and *Izvestiia Moskovskoi gorodskoi dumy.* This enabled provincial city officials to maintain some familiarity with new municipal thought in Europe and America.

5. This lobby, and the broader coalition called the Progressive Bloc, worked out a major reform bill for Russian cities during World War I. But the issue of franchise extension split the Bloc, dividing Kadets from Octobrists. The latter wanted voting curiae if renters were given the vote. The issue stalled action on the entire bill, which otherwise seemed to have the approval of the Ministry of the Interior.

6. V. S. Diakin, *Samoderzhavie burzhuaziia i dvorianstvo v 1907–1911 gg.* (Leningrad, 1978), pp. 175–79. Diakin also claims that the publication of *Gorodskoe delo* in 1909 was inspired by the Kadets. The journal continued to be published until 1917.

7. See Robert William Thurston, "Urban Problems and Local Government in Late Imperial Russia: Moscow, 1906–1914" (Ph.D. diss., University of Michigan, 1980). Thurston cites the reference to *Golos Moskvy* on page 129, but in general ascribes little importance to the role of national parties in Moscow politics. There were two major parties in Moscow, the Progressives and the Right-Moderates. They differed little on most issues and both "worked to promote gradual social change and improvement in the city" (ibid., pp. 144–45).

Nationalists were active in Kiev and Kishinev,[8] but only rarely were municipal parties openly identified with moderate or leftist parties in provincial cities. In Kiev and Ekaterinoslav, the reformist Non-Party Groups were said to have an Octobrist coloring,[9] though in Kiev the Nationalists saw the Group's "nonpolitical" stance as a thinly disguised effort to hide its "Kadetism."[10] In Ivanovo-Voznesensk, one paper made an unsubstantiated claim that the local reformers were "Kadets and Social Democrats" and warned that voter apathy would produce a duma dominated by "aliens, Social Democrats, and Socialist Revolutionaries" next time around.[11]

There is little evidence to indicate that city elections served as microcosmic battlegrounds for the national parties. Local Kadets, Progressists, and Octobrists rarely ran under party banners, if only because government officials refused to allow the opposition parties to "politicize" city affairs. Moreover, city politics almost always centered on local issues or individuals, and electoral campaigns reflected these concerns. At least in their platforms, municipal progressives tended to avoid the controversies that brought disunity to the liberal and moderate ranks at the national level. They attacked the Municipal Statute and called for a broader franchise and for greater autonomy for city government, but they seldom took specific positions on how far to expand the electorate or whether voting curiae should be introduced, questions that divided Kadets and Octobrists in the State Duma. In Khar'kov one duma candidate made it clear that the city's Progressive Party was not a political party at all, but stood only for "progressive city management."[12]

Hence the progressives campaigned for sewers and universal elementary education and for municipalized services and utilities. They were not afraid to incur debt. Frequently they promised to improve conditions in the poorer outlying city districts, and they believed that city government should play a more active role in combating poverty and the rising cost of living. In much of the empire, progressivism became *the* issue in city politics. While the goals of the reformers were not always new, their sense of urgency and commitment often marked a break with the inactivity of the recent past.

8. State Duma deputy A. I. Savenko was active in Kievan politics, where his Nationalists succeeded in injecting Polonophobia and anti-Semitism into the campaigns even though Poles had little influence in city politics and Jews could not vote at all. See *Kievskaia mysl',* October 5, 1910. For Kishinev, see *Bessarabskaia zhizn',* May 15, 1913. In his study of the Nationalist Party, Robert Edelman notes that it had its greatest influence in the western borderlands, and one may surmise that Nationalists were also active in Minsk and Vitebsk (see Robert Edelman, "The Election to the Third Duma: The Roots of the Nationalist Party," in Leopold H. Haimson, ed., *The Politics of Rural Russia, 1905–1914* [Bloomington, 1979], especially pp. 103ff).

9. *Kievskaia mysl'* said Kiev's Non-Party Group was "like the Octobrists politically" (see *Kievskaia mysl',* December 1, 1910). *Iuzhnaia zaria* (Ekaterinoslav) referred to the Non-Party Group in that city as Octobrists (see *Iuzhnaia zaria,* September 7, 1913). According to *Gorodskoe delo,* the 1909 duma in Kazan' included thirty-five Kadets or Progressists, twenty-three Octobrists, five Rightists, and twenty-two unknown or unaffiliated. Few breakdowns of dumas by political party seem to exist, however (see *Gorodskoe delo* [St. Petersburg], 1909, no. 4, pp. 177–78).

10. *Kievskaia mysl',* October 12, 1910.

11. *Ivanovskii listok* (Ivanovo-Voznesensk), February 27 and March 1, 1911. Later bemoaning an "unjust" attempt by the city to tax factories and clean up the river, the paper proclaimed that the city's leaders were "caught up in a democratic ferment" (see the editorial in ibid., April 4, 1914).

12. *Khar'kovskiia vedomosti,* February 11, 1910.

Enticed by the assertion in *Gorodskoe delo* in 1913 that progressives had triumphed in a score of cities (among them, Moscow, St. Petersburg, Odessa, Kursk, Smolensk, Saratov, Revel', and Kostroma),[13] I investigated the elections in more than a dozen of the largest and most important provincial cities during the years 1909–14, the last years of "normalcy" before World War I and the Revolution. Relying mainly on the local press, which often gave extensive coverage to city elections, I discovered that organized reformist parties did not exist in all of these cities. In Kishinev the word progressive did not appear, and *Bessarabskaia zhizn'* noted that the real issue in the 1913 campaign was who would get to spend the 4.5 million ruble loan the city had just received.[14] And in Riazan' one commentator criticized the absence of any real party or competitive campaign in that city's election: "There were only separate, selfish battles between various individuals who cared only about their own interests."[15]

In several cities, national rivalry and confrontation dominated the campaigns or became intertwined with local developmental issues. In Minsk and Kiev, Polonophobia pushed questions of reform to the background.[16] In Kishinev, the Nationalist Union, one of three major parties in the 1913 election, spoke out against "all foreigners, whether Greek, Armenian, German, Polish, or whatever."[17] The conservative German Party in Riga turned back a challenge from the Progressive-Latvian coalition which sought more funding for public assistance programs and a greater commitment to expanding services in the less prosperous outlying districts of the city.[18] In nearby Revel', an Estonian-Russian alliance, united around progressive principles, maintained the control it had won from the Germans in 1904.[19] In the Caucasus, national, family, and religious conflicts prevailed, but even in Tiflis, where Armenian control of the duma was the central issue, the election of 1911 attracted more attention than any other in the city's history.[20]

In many cities, however, the reformist challenge was clearly the primary issue in local politics. In Samara, *Volzhskoe slovo* saw the demand for change as a "rebirth" of initiative and a welcome departure from the traditional view of city government as a "fat pie" to be exploited for personal advantage.[21] *Kostromskaia*

13. *Gorodskoe delo,* 1913, no. 11–12, p. 832.

14. *Bessarabskaia zhizn'* provided excellent coverage of city affairs in Kishinev and opposed the rightist, pro-mayor faction supported by the newspaper *Drug*. Both papers were examined for the period April-June 1913. Besides being a valuable source for historians, the local press played an important role in city politics. According to one commentator, the voter saw local issues only insofar as the local press illuminated them (see *Gorodskoe delo,* 1913, no. 12, pp. 984–85).

15. Gorozhanin, *Riazan'skii vestnik,* February 14, 1914.

16. In Minsk, where Russians outnumbered Poles two to one, Poles still dominated the electorate. The Russians talked about boycotting the election, and ultimately only ten ran, mainly nationalistic "dark people," in the view of *Kurjer Litewski.* See *Severo-zapadnaia zhizn'* (Minsk), March 19, April 2, and April 6, 1913. In Kiev, while only six of the eighty city councilors were Poles, the Nationalists accused some councilors of being "Polish hirelings."

17. *Bessarabskaia zhizn',* May 15, 1913.

18. See Michael F. Hamm, "Riga's 1913 City Election: A Study in Baltic Urban Politics," *Russian Review,* 39, no. 4 (October 1980): 442–61.

19. See *Revel'skiia izvestiia,* April 3, 1913, and *Gorodskoe khoziaistvo Revel'ia, 1905–1915* (Revel', n.d.), pt. 1, pp. 82–84.

20. *Zakavkazskaia rech'* (Tiflis), November 27 and 28, 1911. The paper said the election "bore a purely national" and even "chauvinistic" character.

21. *Volzhskoe slovo* (Samara), August 13, 1913.

zhizn' called Kostroma's election the most important in the city's history: only one member of the outgoing executive board (*uprava*) risked reelection, and he was soundly defeated in a big progressive win.[22] In Ivanovo-Voznesensk—the "Russian Manchester" notorious for its pollution and an inactive duma controlled by local factory owners—"the *fabrikanty* thought the city was theirs." But "a storm is brewing," warned *Staryi vladimirets,* a storm that would end *fabrikanty* control of the duma.[23] The reformers promised to clean up the city and build a library and a theater for all. "Not a theater of and for aristocrats, and not a fairground sideshow with its white slaves for the drunks and profligates, but a peoples' theater where a man can breathe deeply and feel good."[24] In Saratov, where an Old Believer claimed his sect could turn out 512 votes, two progressive groups won in coalition. "Adrianople fell because the Serbs and Bulgars joined forces," offered *Saratovskii vestnik.*[25]

But nowhere did progressives attract more national attention than in Khar'kov. After their landslide victory in 1910, Khar'kov became a test case of what reformers might attempt and what they might accomplish. Khar'kov's progressive duma provides an interesting case study not only of the reform initiative, but of the nature of city elections and the priorities of a progressive duma as the tsarist era drew to a close.

A garrison town of 12,892 inhabitants in 1817, Khar'kov grew rapidly as a trade and manufacturing center after the Great Reforms. In 1866, the city had 60,798 residents and by 1873, four years after the coming of the railroad, 82,173. That number grew to 102,049 in 1879, 155,751 in 1897, and 239,904 by 1912.[26] By the mid-1880s, "natives no longer predominated in the city duma."[27]

Local politics remained relatively free both of national conflict and controversial personalities (unlike Samara, where the crusading and often absentee mayor M. D. Chelyshov, who believed his mission was "to rid Russia of its public poison, alcohol," became a political issue in his own right).[28] The 1892 statute eliminated

22. *Kostromskaia zhizn',* April 18, 1913. The *uprava* managed the day-to-day administration of the city.

23. *Staryi vladimirets* (Vladimir), January 23 and 30, 1911. The paper carried a daily column on life in Ivanovo-Voznesensk, whose local paper, *Ivanovskii listok,* said little about local government other than to worry about "Kadets and Social Democrats" in its ranks (see the March 1, 1914 edition). Regarding the reference to Manchester, an article in *Gorodskoe delo* noted that after sampling the filth of Ivanovo-Voznesensk, the English might take offense at such a comparison (see *Gorodskoe delo,* 1912, no. 24, p. 1552). The city's factories paid few local taxes and reassessment of property by the city had not been carried out for eighteen years.

24. *Staryi vladimirets,* January 30, 1911. According to *Gorodskoe delo,* the reform movement was led by small homeowners (see *Gorodskoe delo,* 1912, no. 24, p. 1550).

25. *Saratovskii vestnik,* March 9 and 19, 1913. I was unable to learn whether the Old Believers carried out this pledge or how they voted.

26. For the 1817 figure, see the excellent history of Khar'kov by D. I. Bagalei and D. I. Miller, *Istoriia goroda Khar'kova za 250 let ego sushchestvovaniia s 1655 do 1905 g.,* vol. 2 (Khar'kov, 1905), p. 114. For the other years, see *Glavnye itogi perepisi goroda Khar'kova 8 dek. 1912 goda* (Khar'kov, 1914), p. 39. In 1873, 45 percent of the city's population came from other guberniias; by 1897 about two-thirds. Kursk guberniia was by far the leading supplier of migrants both years.

27. Bagalei and Miller, *Istoriia goroda Khar'kova,* p. 121. Bagalei was a member of the Khar'kov city duma and a well-known historian at Khar'kov University.

28. *Golos Samary* and *Gorodskoi vestnik* (Samara) both carried interesting discussions about Chelyshov on June 7, 1911.

Jews from the electorate, and of the roughly two thousand five hundred homeowners who could vote in 1910, more than 90 percent were Russian or Ukrainian. The property rolls classified both groups as "Orthodox," and if national differences existed, they played no apparent role in city politics.[29]

Progress did not stop after 1892, but its pace was slow. The duma of 1892–95 built a hospital, a coal warehouse for the poor, and introduced the city's first electric lights. City administrations continued to benefit from the participation of local educators. Khar'kov had six institutions of higher learning, including the university founded in 1805. One engineering professor, A. K. Pogorelko, served for twelve years as mayor, beginning in 1900. A strong advocate of city-run services and utilities, he struggled with the commercial concessionaires, particularly the Belgians, and won the right for the city to open its own electric streetcar line in 1906.[30] Khar'kov nevertheless continued to be plagued by severe epidemics, especially typhus, and in 1910 still lacked sewers.[31]

In the election of that year, the Progressives were not early favorites. One voter called the term "progressive" perplexing: he knew only "progressive taxation, progressive paralysis, and progressive atrophy."[32] The goal of securing a majority in the duma for any party would be difficult, for by election time, 491 Khar'kovites were running for office, and at least ten lists of candidates appeared at one time or another. Organizing electoral lists was a means of promoting alliances of candidates which presumably would appeal to various blocs of voters and was a way of trying to arrange in advance a coalition of likeminded candidates who would constitute a stable majority in the duma. Candidates often ran on more than one list, and in Khar'kov at least one candidate ran on every list. Of the eighty candidates on the Progressive list, perhaps no more than half were well known to the voters. Many Progressives ran on certain other lists as well, including the business (*delovoi*) list, which was similar in composition to that of the Progressives, though it had more merchants and fewer members of the professions. A Non-Party list representing wealthy commercial and manufacturing interests also circulated, as did several "wild" (*dikie*) lists representing compromise alliances of various kinds.[33]

29. Of the remaining 10 percent of the homeowners, about half were Jews, the rest Poles and Germans. These calculations are based on the tax assessment rolls for Khar'kov found in the Tsentral'nyi gosudarstvennyi istoricheskii arkhiv (Leningrad), fond 1288, opis' 25, delo 77, list 71 (1913) (hereafter cited as TsGIA). In 1912–13 Khar'kov had 9,180 homeowners on the tax rolls, 3,434 assessed at 1,500 rubles or more, which enabled them to vote. Often 20 percent or more of a city's homeowners could not vote because they owed back taxes.

30. Pogorelko's career is summarized in *Gorodskoe delo,* 1913, no. 3, pp. 176–77. During Pogorelko's mayoral terms, the city also took over the electric and water utilities, giving the city important new sources of income.

31. I could not find data for the incidence of disease in Khar'kov. In 1909 the city had six major epidemics, with eight thousand cases of typhus and fifteen hundred recurrences (see *Iuzhnyi krai* [Khar'kov], February 14, 1910). Khar'kov had the reputation of being a center of typhus epidemics, as did St. Petersburg, where more died from typhus in 1907 than in all German cities combined. See Z. Frenkel's survey in *Gorodskoe delo,* 1910, no. 5, pp. 279–80.

32. *Iuzhnyi krai,* February 14, 1910.

33. Voters could vote for eighty candidates from the various lists. Names had to be clearly written on the ballot or they could be voided. "Wild" lists were often made up by independent candidates who placed themselves on lists with popular candidates from the major parties, often without authorization from the latter. A voter could vote for an entire list or split his ticket. Of the 1,038 votes cast in the 1910 election, the leading vote-getter received 877 votes. Mayor Pogorelko, running on four lists, received 724,

But the most formidable opponents were the Rightists, supported by the newspaper *Khar'kovskiia vedomosti* and by the provincial governor and his staff. The moderate press called the Rightists "Black Hundreds" and "dark forces," and accused them of "bringing Odessa morals to Khar'kov."[34] In all likelihood, the Rightist candidates were predominantly merchants, though they did not bill themselves as the spokesmen for any one occupational group. They espoused no definite program, but instead claimed to be the defenders of "orthodoxy, autocracy, and *narodnost'*." They attacked the "democrats and Octobrists" in the Progressive ranks and alleged that several of them had allocated money to striking postal-telegraphic workers in 1905. They attacked "liberal education shorn of teaching about God, duty to the fatherland and Tsar" and warned that the city's Jews and Poles supported the Progressives. "Can't they find enough energetic, patriotic Russians?" demanded *Khar'kovskiia vedomosti.* Appealing to conservative principles and to general suspicion of "politics" and fear of change, they warned of a return "to the stormy days of 1905" and promised the voter that "the Right will not threaten you."[35]

The Progressives were the only party to publish a specific program and therefore, strictly speaking, were the only real party in the election. Their program won the endorsement of *Iuzhnyi krai,* the city's major moderate newspaper, which hoped that the very appearance of a definite program would signal "a new era" in Khar'kov's politics, an end to elections without specific commitments by the candidates, an end to "elections in the dark." In their program the Progressives advocated universal and upgraded education, sewer construction, expanded water treatment, renovation of the city market, the securing of loans to finance these endeavors, orderly bookkeeping procedures, and the creation of precinct committees to study neighborhood needs. One voter, apparently unimpressed with the need for these innovations, accused the Progressives of "thinking Khar'kov can be turned into Paris."[36]

Preelection meetings were well attended and often stormy. Cried one voter: "I have the misfortune to live on Pushkin Street. During the typhus epidemic I saw the grieving burial processions daily on their way to the cemetery. I did not ask which party the deceased belonged to. . . . Our entire city is a refuse heap." Another inveighed that "even in uncultured Africa, even in Tunis there are lights and sewers. In one year, more people die from typhus in Khar'kov than in all of Germany."[37]

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good for sixth place; 255 candidates received fewer than ten votes; 139 received one vote. About three hundred seventy-five votes were needed to win a seat in this election. See *Iuzhnyi krai,* February 20, 1910 and May 2, 1914.

34. The reference to Odessa underlines the fact that Black Hundred terrorism was openly tolerated in that city. *Rech'* (St. Petersburg) carried a column entitled "Odessa morals in Khar'kov" after Black Hundred thugs severely beat and nearly blinded *Iuzhnyi krai* correspondent Iu. Volin. The incident apparently had nothing to do with the election (see *Rech',* January 28, 1910). While the Rightists clearly occupied the far right of the local political spectrum, it is unclear how many actually belonged to the Black Hundreds, and the exact occupational breakdown of their list is unknown. Merchants and artisans were often said to be the major supporters of the Right, although as business people and property owners, some feared the disruption and violence that Rightist demagoguery was capable of inciting.

35. *Khar'kovskiia vedomosti,* February 7, 13, and 14, 1910. This paper served as the major organ of Khar'kov's Right, and Progressives assumed that it received government subsidies.

36. *Iuzhnyi krai,* February 5 and 14, 1910.

37. *Khar'kovskiia vedomosti,* February 14, 1910.

Iuzhnyi krai said the future of the city was at stake and warned against "the usual absenteeism" at the polls.[38] On election day *Khar'kovskiia vedomosti* accused Progressive "agitators" of leading drunken voters from the Commerce Hotel to the polls.[39] Despite the excitement, only one-third of the tiny electorate voted, but the darkhorse Progressives carried the day, winning at least fifty-eight seats.[40] The Rightists refused to concede, however, and with good reason. Citing a technicality, the governor vetoed the results and called for a new election in May.[41]

Such tactics often produced desired results. In Riga, guberniia officials announced that they would not validate the election if the Progressive-Latvian Party won.[42] In Poltava, a progressive victory in 1909 was annulled, and a new election was orchestrated to produce a poorly educated, rightist majority. In Odessa, Black Hundred elements openly "terrorized" the opposition, which included six bank officials, a former mayor, and a former *gradonachal'nik,* so that the personal favorites of General Tolmachev could win.[43]

But in Khar'kov these tactics backfired, and the May election produced startling results. At least sixty of the eighty new councilors were considered progressive. Fifty had studied at institutions of higher learning.[44] Table 1 summarizes the composition of the 1901, 1906, and 1910 dumas by profession. Although occupational breakdowns of the competing lists of candidates were not published, we may speculate that the Progressives attracted a larger number of professional people to their cause, and that consequently, the 1910 duma had fewer merchants and more doctors, lawyers, engineers, and "employees of public and private institutions"—

Table 1. *Composition of Khar'kov's Dumas by Profession*

Profession	1901	1906	1910
Merchants	38	35	23
Doctors	6	5	9
Engineers	4	5	10
Lawyers	1	6	10
Professors	10	14	7
Employees of Public and Private Institutions	4	12	23

Source: *Spravochnik po gorodskomu obshchestvennomu upravleniiu* (Khar'kov, 1913).

38. *Iuzhnyi krai,* February 13 and 14, 1910.

39. *Khar'kovskiia vedomosti,* February 16, 1910.

40. According to *Khar'kovskiia vedomosti,* the Progressives received about half of their votes from voters who supported the entire ticket, or nearly all of it. The rest of the votes were garnered by Progressive candidates who appeared on other lists (see ibid., February 17, 1910).

41. The moderate press claimed that the election had been conducted with the utmost concern for legality, and officials took almost two weeks to count the ballots. May was selected for the second election because the government assumed many voters would be out of the city.

42. This warning was made clear in advance of the election. See *Gorodskoe delo,* 1913, no. 11–12, p. 833.

43. *Poltavskii golos,* January 6, 1913, and V. V. Khizhniakov, "Gorodskie vybory," in *Gorodskoe delo,* 1909, no. 12, pp. 580–81. Tolmachev was the current *gradonachal'nik* in Odessa.

44. See *Spravochnik po gorodskomu obshchestvennomu upravleniiu* (Khar'kov, 1913), pp. 96–101.

probably either persons in management positions or *intelligenty* who were eligible to run for city office because they sat on the boards of directors of commercial enterprises or privately endowed philanthropic agencies.[45]

Although the results of the second election were allowed to stand, relations between the new duma and guberniia officials did not improve. Formal approval of the new city councilors was delayed, and when some of them met at city hall to organize an agenda, the governor took them to court, claiming the meeting violated the Temporary Rules on Gatherings of March 4, 1906. The electoral process had taken six months (normally, one to two months was required for voting and validation), and the reform duma opened its first session more than half a year late.

A year later, in December 1911, A. Iu. Vegner, a prominent Progressive leader and proponent of urban fiscal reform, was arrested for refusing to turn over 500 rubles of city funds to the local garrison for heating and lighting costs. The city was not required by law to make such advances, and Vegner claimed it lacked the money to do so. Said one local commentator: "Even the most beautiful woman cannot give more than she has."[46]

Again the case divided the city's electorate. *Khar'kovskiia vedomosti* said Vegner had been singled out for his "progressive obstinacy."[47] *Utro,* rapidly becoming the main defender of the new duma, called this "unacceptable cynicism,"[48] but some eighty pages of documents now in Soviet archives reveal that the arrest did have political overtones. In a letter to the tsar, Khar'kov's governor called Vegner "a social democrat by conviction" and warned that the Progressives were "sworn opponents of all government measures."[49] Vegner was later exonerated, but the absence of his leadership was felt, particularly since A. K. Pogorelko, elected mayor for a fourth consecutive term by a 54–16 vote, died in December 1912. For the final year and a half of its term, Khar'kov's reform duma did not have a mayor.[50]

Not surprisingly, the duma got off to a slow start, and at the end of its first session, in June 1911, a *Gorodskoe delo* correspondent expressed disappointment at its failure to develop a general plan (a charge frequently levelled at city government during this period) and at its failure to involve the public in its work. Furthermore, the duma failed "even once to raise the central burning issue" of high rents and the need to improve the living conditions of the poorer classes.[51] The journal also carried a report criticizing the duma for creating an *uprava* insufficiently sympathetic to progressive principles. This was ironic, for the Progressives were sensitive to the "fat pie" image of city government, and many refused to accept adminis-

45. By class, the 1910 duma contained twenty hereditary and twenty-three personal nobles, nineteen merchants, nine *meshchane* (artisans and lower middle class citizens), five hereditary *grazhdane,* two members of guilds (*tsekhovye*) and two peasants. By religion, seventy-one were Orthodox, five Catholic, two Lutheran, and one was a Karaite.

46. N. N. Kovalevskii in *Utro* (Khar'kov), January 26, 1912.

47. *Khar'kovskiia vedomosti,* January 11, 1912.

48. *Utro,* January 15, 1912. In general, government officials discouraged the press from discussing the case.

49. TsGIA, f. 1288, op. 5, d. 126 (1912), l. 10. The letter is dated April 3, 1913.

50. Guberniia officials had veto power over such appointments and could not agree with the duma on a suitable replacement. By law, a replacement could not be named during the final year of a duma's term. The mayor had substantial authority, for he could determine the agenda at duma meetings.

51. *Gorodskoe delo,* 1911, no. 19, pp. 1384–86.

trative positions. Thus, the city invited qualified voters from outside the duma to participate in municipal administration. Khar'kov was probably the first Russian city to implement this policy, though it had long been advocated by reformers.[52]

Despite the slow start, the overall Progressive performance was stunning by any standard, and particularly by that prevailing in urban Russia at this time. In about three years, the duma completed a new electric utility with five times the capacity of the old, while lowering electric rates in some cases by about 40 percent. It built a new covered market, remodeled the children's hospital, and began construction on four new tram lines, including one to the outlying district of Cold Hills. The city's first sewer network was scheduled for completion in the central neighborhoods by mid-1914. Between 1910 and 1914, forty-one schools were opened, compared to a total of forty during the two previous duma terms. The number of pupils was increased by one and a half times.[53]

Fueled largely by a doubling of income from city enterprises, Khar'kov's budget doubled between 1910 and 1914. Of the major provincial cities, during the years 1910–13 (for which the data are more complete), only Baku had a higher rate of budgetary growth. Khar'kov's budget grew 62 percent during those years; by contrast, Tiflis and Warsaw posted gains of 46 percent, Saratov 38 percent, Riga 32 percent, Kiev 29 percent, Samara and Odessa 13 percent each. Kiev, about twice the size of Khar'kov, had a budget barely three-quarters as large in 1913.[54]

At a time when loans of one to three million rubles were common in provincial cities, Khar'kov's reform duma sought to borrow more than twenty-eight million rubles, mainly for the construction of city-run utilities and services. In June 1912, it petitioned for 18.7 million rubles, one of the largest single requests made by a provincial city to that time. Khar'kov ultimately received only about two-thirds of that sum. The funds earmarked for social, medical, and welfare programs—for the construction of a new doss house, for example—were vetoed at least in part, in the words of the governor, because "the duma's Kadet majority aspires to politicize everything" and take the credit for the city's accomplishments.[55]

52. See ibid., 1910, no. 19, pp. 1333–34.

53. *Iuzhnyi krai,* April 23, 1914 and *Utro,* April 9, 1914. In accordance with the law of May 3, 1908, Khar'kov received state subsidies for teachers' salaries because its plan for introducing universal elementary education had been approved by the Ministry of Education. Only 16 percent of Russian cities had similar plans approved by 1913 (see *Gorodskoi vestnik,* September 18, 1913). Expenditures on education in 1913 ranged from 31 percent of the city budget in Saratov, reflecting probably an abnormally high level of capital construction that year, to 5 percent in Vil'na and Kostroma. Most guberniia cities, including Moscow, Riga, Khar'kov, Kishinev, and St. Petersburg, spent about 10 percent. Thanks to the 1908 law, Khar'kov's spending for education jumped by 140 percent between 1909 and 1913. Of the major cities, only Saratov and Samara had higher rates of increase during these years.

54. Among reformers, Kiev was notorious for its "obsolete" philosophy of city management; in 1913 private concessionaires still held the tram and nearly all of the utilities. Only 10 percent of Kiev's budget came from city-run enterprises, compared to 50 percent in Chernigov and about 20 percent in Moscow (see *Kievskaia mysl',* May 31, 1912). Warsaw, for example, received two million rubles per year of income from its water system, Kiev nothing. See also *Gorodskoe delo,* 1913, no. 3, pp. 152–53. Revenue generated from city enterprises did hold down local property taxes, but the city consumer was still probably better off with municipalization. This generalization probably holds true for most urban consumers, including the working classes, although I know of no studies dealing with the fairness of utility rates, streetcar fares, and similar charges levied by city governments at this time.

55. Fiscal reasons were also cited for rejecting part of the loan. See TsGIA, f. 1288, op. 7, d. 38 (1913), ll. 1–2. The letter to the Ministry of Internal Affairs is dated January 20, 1913. Though tsarist officials spoke of a "Kadet majority," I found no specific breakdown of the political affiliations of

Administrative and fiscal reorganization also produced "sensations" in public and government circles alike. An audit revealed that previous duma commissions had neglected to record expenditures of up to 150,000 rubles and had left some accounts unexamined since 1904. A water tank, recently built but already in disrepair, had been constructed without a signed contract. Citing "complete chaos" in the city's books, the duma sought to abolish fictitious committees and reorganize the administrative structure of the city. The new electric plant and other enterprises were to be managed by specialists as separate corporate entities and no longer by committees of city councilors.[56] The governor warned Nicholas II that this was an effort by the Kadets to spread their influence in the city,[57] but, after several years of judicial proceedings, the Senate finally approved the plan. On the eve of the 1914 election, the government conducted its own audit of the reform duma's books, hoping to embarrass the Progressives who were seeking reelection. It found no irregularities.

Reforms of this nature made some enemies for the Progressives, as did general city property reevaluation, the first since 1895. The tax value of one home jumped from 3,000 to 8,000 rubles, but such increases were far from typical, and, as in other cities, tax assessments remained far below real market value.[58]

Finally, the duma organized the city's first permanent statistical bureau and authorized it to issue monthly reports on everything from births to apartment rents. This seems an insignificant act, but it must be remembered that aside from an occasional medical or sanitary survey, usually conducted during epidemics, the city had never bothered to gather vital data on a systematic basis. Even the Ministry of the Interior admitted that it possessed "only the most elementary data about its cities" and had little or no data on "such important matters as buildings and enterprises . . . loans, obligations on concession contracts, and many others."[59]

Khar'kov's Progressives had a distinctive record to submit to the voters in 1914, and they promised more of the same: expanded city-run services, lighting, street paving, park expansion, mandatory regulations on working conditions and hours, and "concern about the health and living conditions of the working classes."

Khar'kov's city councilors. Quite probably, Kadets were active at least in leadership roles in the duma, although, given the Kadet Party's advocacy of this cause at the national level, it is also possible that the officials used the word "Kadet" to refer to any outspoken proponent of municipal reform. Khar'kov's press did not refer to city councilors by their national political affiliation. *Gorodskoe delo* carried one vague reference to the presence of "democrats and socialists" in the duma's ranks (see *Gorodskoe delo,* 1911, no. 19, p. 1385).

56. *Iuzhnyi krai,* March 8, April 21, May 17, and May 18, 1911; *Gorodskoi vestnik,* June 3, 1911; and *Gorodskoe delo,* 1911, no. 23, p. 1661.

57. TsGIA, f. 1288, op. 25, d. 111 (1912), ll. 1–8. The letter is dated June 5, 1912.

58. Reassessment was supposed to be carried out every ten years, although data published in 1911 indicate that some cities had not revalued property since the 1880s. Kursk, Kostroma, and Vladimir were among these cities. See *Doklad Penzenskoi gorodskoi upravy po voprosu o pereotsenke gorodskikh nedvizhimykh imushchestve gorodskoi Penzi* (Penza, 1911), pp. 32–51, for a survey of city assessment procedures. Khar'kov's new rates were to be in effect for five years. Assessment was particularly controversial at this time because of rising public irritation with state and zemstvo tax increases levied against city real estate. The average increase resulting from city reassessment at this time is unknown.

59. TsGIA, f. 1288, op. 5, d. 155b (1914), l. 264. See also *Utro,* January 13, 1912. Two general statistical surveys made in 1904 and 1910 were published, but the absence of detailed data for Russian cities at this time is surprising.

But in 1914 they were soundly defeated. Their successors, bemoaned *Utro,* would include "the whole flower of the city's Black Hundreds." "This is an enlightened university city . . . not Bessarabia, not Odessa, not the *votchina* of Markov II," *Utro* continued, conveying, perhaps, a chord of uncertainty.[60]

The record of the 1910 duma was not without its blemishes, as a variety of critics pointed out in the 1914 campaign. The duma did build the first streetcar line to an outlying city district, Cold Hills, once a staging area for raids by Tatar and Zaporozhian bandits. But on the whole the Progressive duma paid little attention to the city's peripheral districts, despite numerous petitions demanding everything from paved streets to pure water. In this area the reform duma differed little from its predecessors.

The peripheral city districts were inhabited mainly by homeowners, often artisans, whose property valuations were too low to enable them to vote, and by workers and other lower income renters. Of the eighty councilors elected in 1910, only one came from the outer districts of Cold Hills and Bald Hills, even though they housed more than one-fifth of Khar'kov's population. By contrast, the central district of Pushinsko-Sumskii, with perhaps one-eighth of Khar'kov's population, was represented by at least forty councilors.[61] Hence, in Khar'kov, and in other Russian cities, streets in the outer districts remained unpaved, services unrendered. One survey revealed a death rate in Saratov's central district of 9.8 per 1,000, compared to 44.2 and 49.2 in two of the city's peripheral districts.[62] Similar figures were reported for the outskirts of Samara and Khar'kov.[63]

The central neighborhoods, with their higher property values and tax base, would understandably be the first to experience the benefits of urban development. Still, the failure of the Progressives to include a statement about the needs of the outskirts in their 1914 platform indicates a certain insensitivity that was by no means unique to Khar'kov. One of the city's "progressive" newspapers was alleged to have called candidates from the outskirts "mastodons of the tertiary period."[64] Samara's *Volzhskoe slovo* summarized one point of view of urban reform in Russia: "Anything done in Samara is done exclusively in the interests of the propertied classes."[65]

In the area of housing, city dumas had the statutory authority to organize rental bureaus, establish building codes, inspect for sanitary and safety violations, ban certain types of substandard apartments, and even donate land for cooperatives

60. *Utro,* May 14, 1914.

61. Cited in the *Penzenskii gorodskoi vestnik,* 1911, no. 19–20, p. 35. Hundreds of residents of Khar'kov's peripheral districts petitioned the Ministry of Internal Affairs to lower the franchise property qualification so that they could vote, but to no avail.

62. *Gorodskoe delo,* 1912, no. 10, p. 652.

63. *Gorodskoe delo* reported a mortality figure of forty per thousand in an outer district of Khar'kov (see ibid., 1914, no. 9, p. 553). *Volzhskoe slovo* noted that in Samara the poor suffered from epidemic mortality at a rate at least five times higher than in the central city (see *Volzhskoe slovo,* August 29, 1913). In Baku, residents of the city's squalid outskirts organized against "those who stand in servile dependence before the duma bigwigs for the right to live continuously in dirt, to live a hellish existence, perishing from epidemics" (see *Baku,* February 13, 1911). *Kaspiia* (Baku) called *Baku* typical of "the Tiflis school of polemics" (see *Kaspiia,* April 14, 1911).

64. *Iuzhnyi krai,* May 3, 1914. The allegation came from A. S. Viazigin, a Rightist candidate for mayor.

65. *Volzhskoe slovo,* August 29, 1913.

and other types of low rent housing. *Rannoe Utro,* a Moscow newspaper, called housing "the fundamental question of a healthy urban policy." Improving housing conditions was "the key to public health and sanitation in the cities."[66] In 1912, Moscow's duma approved in principle the decision to build low rent housing for 35,000 inhabitants. But in Khar'kov and elsewhere the problem was given scant attention.[67]

It is difficult to determine the exact nature of the housing situation in Khar'kov. Buildings in the central commercial and residential neighborhoods were mainly of masonry construction, while most of the other residential districts consisted of wooden or predominantly wooden one- and two-story houses. Much of the housing was relatively new. A 1912 survey revealed that 27 percent of the housing units had been built during the preceding seven years, 69 percent since 1896.[68] Data for 1911 show that 97 percent had iron roofs and only 6 percent had dirt floors. In 1892, 30 percent of the buildings and 15 percent of the apartments lacked floors.[69]

The prosperous renter faced no shortage of apartments. In 1914 many expensive units were vacant.[70] High rent, a common complaint throughout urban Russia at this time, was the housing problem most frequently discussed in the local press. In Samara, one newspaper decried the fact that local rents were approaching those in the capitals; rents in the capitals were among the highest in Europe.[71] "One would think only people with great incomes live in Khar'kov," *Iuzhnyi krai* proclaimed in 1911. "In the new buildings, only apartments with five to seven rooms or more are being leased, and at rents of 1,500–2,000 rubles minimum. There are almost no apartments with fewer than five rooms, and if one is fortunate enough to find a four-room apartment, it goes for at least 900 rubles. One owner wants 1,200 rubles a year for three rooms."[72]

Most of Khar'kov's inhabitants were renters, and the number of rooms, or corners of rooms, which the poorest of them could afford was probably declining in the early years of the twentieth century. This was true in Kiev, for example, where the number of rooms leased at 225 rubles or less fell by 12 percent between 1900 and 1908, while the city added about twenty-one thousand new residents each year.[73] Many of Khar'kov's poorer people lived outside the city limits in factory barracks

66. See the editorial in *Rannoe utro* (Moscow), December 4, 1912.

67. See N. M. Kishkin in *Gorodskoe delo,* 1913, no. 6, p. 357. See also A. D'iakonov, *Zhilishchnyi vopros i popytki ego razresheniia* (Kostroma, 1912) for a survey of city housing problems.

68. Based on data from *Poiasnitel'naia zapiska k proektu pravil proizvodstva otsenok nedvizhimykh imushchestv v g. Khar'kove* (Khar'kov, 1912), p. 1. See also *Iuzhnyi krai,* May 15, 1914.

69. *Spravochnik po gorodskomu obshchestvennomu upravleniiu,* pp. 80–83. About 9 percent of Khar'kov's apartments were in basements in 1911.

70. The availability of apartments fluctuated from year to year. In 1914, many buildings were for sale, allegedly because of high taxes and mortgage payments. *Iuzhnyi krai* worried that a "homeowners' crisis" was imminent (see *Iuzhnyi krai,* June 3, 1914). There are no data indicating number of inhabitants per room in Khar'kov, but the city did publish data indicating that the amount of living space per person in the central districts was higher than in certain of the outer neighborhoods. This could indicate crowding in the poorer outlying districts or the fact that barracks housing prevailed there.

71. *Volzhskoe slovo,* September 1, 1913.

72. *Iuzhnyi krai,* May 22, 1911.

73. *Gorodskoe delo,* 1914, no. 11–12, p. 739. According to my calculations, the average yearly increase of Kiev's population was about twenty-one thousand between 1897 and 1910. This estimate is based on data found in TsGIA, f. 1288, op. 25, d. 29, ll. 5–11, 25–50.

or in settlements that tended to "pop up each spring like mushrooms."[74] These people were beyond the authority of the duma. The poor inside the city frequently concentrated in the peripheral districts where living space, however crowded, was comparatively cheap. These districts had few representatives in the duma, and conditions there remained beyond the immediate concern of the city councilors, Progressive or not.

Thus, while the developmental priorities of the Progressives differed from those of the Right, in the short run both neglected the interests of the outer districts and the renter, and both reflected the interests of the more affluent landlords and homeowners. Not surprisingly, in 1914 Khar'kov still lacked a comprehensive housing or building code.[75]

Critics of the Progressives pointed out these failings in the 1914 campaign, although it was clear that the Right was hardly likely to do better in these areas. Even so, the effort of the Progressives to carry on their programs for another four years would succeed or fail not in the outskirts, and certainly not with the disenfranchised renters, but in the central districts where most property-owning voters lived.

Khar'kov's 1914 campaign seems in retrospect to have been one of confusion and paradox, emblematic, perhaps, of the urban political culture of late imperial Russia. For a while lists of candidates appeared every day, and at least four "party" lists remained in circulation on election day. Once again, the confrontation between the Progressives and the Right became the main attraction, although about forty candidates ran on both lists, indicating, perhaps, that whatever the differences over goals and priorities, many individuals were acceptable to all. Some candidates ran on every list: they included the university rector and city historian D. I. Bagalei and the controversial Vegner, whose broadsides against high zemstvo taxation of city real estate must have convinced the Right that, "radical" or not, he was an attractive candidate.[76]

The Rightist list was comprised primarily of merchants, or, in the words of *Utro,* "the darkest element . . . as in Odessa."[77] *Iuzhnyi krai* believed that the Rightist candidates were ignorant of city affairs and concluded that "they fear

74. *Iuzhnyi krai,* June 8, 1911. It is not clear whether this was a reference to settlements within the outer city districts or outside the city limits and hence beyond city jurisdiction. In Vladimir, Kostroma, and other heavily industrial guberniias, many factory workers lived outside of the major guberniia cities. In Khar'kov guberniia in 1913, only 11,236 of the 67,161 factory workers lived inside the city. Another 15,000 lived in Khar'kov *uezd.* Only 141 of the guberniia's 1,537 factories were located in the city, another 135 in the surrounding *uezd.* See *Obzor Khar'kovskoi gubernii za 1913 god,* TsGIA, f. 1284, op. 194, d. 52, l. 27.

75. *Gorodskoe delo,* 1914, no. 9, p. 554. Khar'kov's codes applied only to sidewalks, cesspools, and fireproof stairs. Riga, Kiev, and Odessa had more comprehensive codes.

76. See especially *Iuzhnyi krai,* April 28–May 9, 1914. The third major list, the Independents, differed little from the Right, and the fourth represented the outskirts. *Iuzhnyi krai* believed the Right was united mainly against the Progressives and would break apart after the election. Vegner became nationally known as an advocate of separating the large cities from the zemstvo, for in most cases the zemstvo provided few services for urban residents but levied controversial taxes against city real estate. See p. 31 of this article.

77. *Utro* noted that the Rightist list was mainly merchant, but the Right did not seem to orient its campaign toward the merchants or any particular social or occupational group (see *Utro,* April 22 and May 3, 1914).

knowledge worse than fire."[78] The Right sported a new name, Renovationists (*Obnovlentsy*), but still lacked a specific program and instead attacked the condition of the city's streets and bridges, which had deteriorated since 1910. Many were torn up because of sewer or waterline construction, and the political impact of this inconvenience should not be overlooked. One observer wrote in 1914 that Khar'kov "is a diseased and dirty hole (*iama*) whose inhabitants suffocate from the summer dust and sink into the mud the rest of the time."[79]

More decisive was the Right's attack on the duma for "excessive riskiness and experimentation," and on the growing city debt, which occasioned cries of fiscal irresponsibility. A diatribe entitled "The Unpaid Bills of the Progressives," delivered by Professor A. S. Viazigin, a Rightist who coveted the office of mayor, produced a sensation as the election drew near. Accusations of major cost overruns were denied by Progressives who pointed out that the new market had been built within the contract price and that the sewer overrun was only 5 percent, a modest figure in view of inflation. But the major spending initiatives of the Progressives brought on fears of higher taxes, and many voters no doubt listened to Rightist claims that mandatory sewer hook-ups would mean financial "ruin" for the homeowner. The Right called for "thrift," a euphemism meaning no more expensive developmental programs. *Utro* called the Right proponents of "narrow class interest."[80]

Spending was never a popular cause in Russian city politics, but in 1914 it seemed to be a particularly volatile issue. City tax rates remained low, but state assessment levies had increased in 1912,[81] and the ongoing controversy over the right of the zemstvo to tax city real estate compounded the political difficulties for the Progressives. Cities were poorly represented in zemstvo assemblies, and the fight to liberate them from zemstvo taxing authority brought formal petitions from at least thirty cities between 1906 and 1912. A. Iu. Vegner, speaking before the All-Russian Congress of Municipal Officials in Kiev in September 1913, argued that "the financial woes of the city are so closely tied to the overburdening of city real estate by zemstvo taxes, that for us, this is everything."[82]

Khar'kov officials published data alleging that rural landowners in the surrounding guberniia were raising zemstvo taxes on city property in order to maintain artificially low taxes on farmland. Furthermore, they offered data showing that only 28 percent of the tax revenue derived from city real estate actually went to the city's treasury. The district zemstvo took 27 percent, and the guberniia zemstvo and

78. *Iuzhnyi krai,* May 2, 1914.

79. This unsigned report appeared in *Gorodskoe delo,* 1914, no. 9, p. 558. The city faced a staggering thirty million ruble repair bill for its streets, to be financed through loans. The Right also attacked the Progressives for not having a general city plan, although comprehensive planning was rare in Russia at this time, and the Right gave no indication that it intended to develop a general city plan.

80. *Utro,* April 3, 1914. "Class" here no doubt refers to the property-owning voters who opposed developmental projects because of fear of higher property taxes.

81. The imperial law of June 6, 1910 went into effect in 1912. This law was intended mainly to standardize state assessment rates at 6 percent of net income from property, but it had the effect of raising state taxes nearly everywhere and by 56 percent between 1911 and 1912 in Khar'kov. City officials said the law made it even more difficult to raise city property taxes and claimed it also resulted in rent increases. *Kievskaia mysl'* (September 11, 1913) noted that by September 1913, 143 cities had petitioned to have it altered or annuled! See *Gorodskoi vestnik* (September 14, 1913) and *Penzenskii gorodskoi vestnik* (1911, no. 22, pp. 1–8) for surveys of its impact.

82. *Izvestiia Khar'kovskoi gorodskoi dumy,* 1913, no. 10, p. 195. Khar'kov's earliest petition for separation from the zemstvo came in 1882.

the state each grabbed about 23 percent. Between 1902 and 1913, city assessments rose by 37 percent, while state taxes on city property increased by 119 percent, guberniia zemstvo taxes by 117 percent, and district zemstvo taxes by 369 percent.[83] The last figure probably reflected the needs of rapidly growing settlements close to, though outside of, the city. But Khar'kov's taxpayers were angry, and many came to see the Progressives as big spenders. Progress was fine as long as it was gradual, disrupted no one's life, and threatened no one's pocketbook.

Thus, advocates of modernization confronted attitudes that were hardly unique to the Russia of 1914: fear of higher taxes, distrust of innovation, suspicion of "too much, too fast." In a sense, the Progressive loss in 1914 reflected a failure to educate the less sophisticated voter, for in the long run, the services and utilities constructed at this time would bring major new revenues to the city and keep property taxes down. It is perhaps significant that the neighborhood committees advocated by the Progressives in their 1910 program as a link between councilors and voters were never established. In any case, about thirty-five Progressive candidates were elected, and of these, twenty-eight appeared on the competing Rightist list. Despite a heated campaign, only 29 percent of the city's tiny electorate bothered to vote. The "Black Hundred" duma would soon face new strains on the urban environment, for during the first two years of World War I another one hundred thousand people would come to reside in the city.[84]

The reformist initiative, though probably not partisan in the national political sense, was widespread and well organized by prevailing standards, and it reflected the fact that at least some urbanites were deeply dissatisfied with the backward conditions and underdeveloped economy of the Russian city. In essence, the progressive challenge put public initiative, broad questions of reform and development, and the restrictions of the 1892 statute on trial.

Rightist forces similar to those in Khar'kov often met this challenge, particularly in the south and in the western borderlands. Sometimes they were organized by leaders of the local Black Hundred or by Union of Russian People leaders who appealed to the voters by means of nationalistic, racist, and anti-intellectual demagoguery. Occasionally the rightists were said to come from a particular class or occupational group—in Ekaterinburg and Kherson they were said to be mainly "dark *meshchanstvo,*" artisans and lower middle class elements[85]—but in general they were probably a socially diverse group united by their opposition to an activist

83. My calculations are based on data published in *Materialy po voprosu o vydelenii g. Khar'kova v samostoiatel'nuiu zemskuiu edinitsu* (Khar'kov, 1913), p. 86. See also *Spravochnik po gorodskomu obshchestvennomu upravleniiu,* p. 90. City officials seemed to have a valid point, although the impact of a city the size of Khar'kov on the local zemstvo budgets has yet to be studied. Incidentally, I found no evidence to indicate that zemstvo officials ran for office in Khar'kov, but in Kostroma, several prominent *zemtsy* lost, and *Kostromskaia zhizn'* spoke of voter antagonism toward *zemtsy* in city elections (see *Kostromskaia zhizn',* April 23, 1913).

84. *Mis'ki selyshcha USRR* (Khar'kov, 1929), p. 152, lists the city's population as 352,354 in 1916. It is not clear how many were new workers, how many soldiers or refugees.

85. *Zaural'skii krai* (Ekaterinburg), March 3 and 4, 1914. This paper was apparently a supporter of the local Kadets. For Kherson, see *Rech',* March 17, 1913. Hans Rogger notes that the Union of Russian People, founded in October 1905, was intended to be an all-class party of the right which retained "a popular aspect by the studied coarseness of its language and conduct, by its anti-intellectualism, and its willingness to employ social demagogy" (see Hans Rogger and Eugen Weber, eds., *The European Right* [Berkeley, 1966], pp. 487–99).

city government. Conservative merchants and other voters were sometimes repelled by their extremism, but many no doubt saw the rightists as a refuge from increased city spending and higher taxes. For many a Russian voter, to quote Saratov's right wing paper, *Volga,* the progressive parties had fallen ill with "mania grandiosa . . . the illness of the century."[86]

Provincial governors and other tsarist officials frequently gave political support and subsidies to these opponents of progress, but on the whole the imperial government began to show signs of responsiveness to at least the fiscal plight of the cities. Between 1910 and 1912, it approved 150 million rubles worth of loans for urban development, about one-third of the total sum borrowed by cities up to that time.[87]

For all the rhetoric, the segment of the well-to-do electorate aroused by the reformers remained rather small. Table 2 shows that voter turnout often improved between 1904–6 and 1909–10, but that in many cities this improvement was not sustained in 1913. In fact, one cannot find an overall trend of rising voter enthusiasm on the eve of the war. The number of voters in Moscow, Kursk, Kazan', and Smolensk dropped sharply from the previous election, just as the percentage of voters in Khar'kov dropped between 1910 and 1914. Riga, and smaller Baltic cities such as Pernov and Iur'ev, which are not listed on the table, were exceptions; their consistently high turnouts (usually between 70 and 90 percent) were attributable to near universal literacy, intense national rivalry, and a tradition of civic consciousness fostered by generations of Baltic German rule.

On the other hand, voter apathy is not surprising in an authoritarian culture where traditionally the vote meant little. Furthermore, urban voters were generally not accustomed to organized reformist initiatives, but were instead familiar with elections manipulated by the state to produce a politically palatable victor. Still, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that many propertied city dwellers simply did not concern themselves with city affairs or with the quality of urban life.

In concentrating on building income-producing enterprises, Khar'kov's Progressive duma seemed to epitomize the goals and priorities of Russia's pre-Revolutionary urban reformers. On purely social matters—welfare and public assistance, for example—Progressives advocated helping the needy and believed the duma should take a more active role in combating the high cost of urban living. Khar'kov's duma donated land for a children's hospital and continued to maintain a day nursery for children of working mothers and provide subsidies for a variety of shelters.[88] (One of these shelters, the city's doss house, located near the bazaar, was badly rundown, prompting a local investigative reporter to wonder: "If Jack London can spend a month in Whitechapel, can I risk a night in the Khar'kov bazaar?")[89] But

86. See the editorial in *Volga* (Saratov), March 29, 1913.

87. Based on data published in *Izvestiia Khar'kovskoi gorodskoi dumy,* 1914, no. 1, pp. 315–16. Russian cities were considered bad risks in international financial circles. In 1912 Moscow became the first Russian city to publish a brochure attesting to its financial solvency.

88. Khar'kov ran a *detskii sad* during the summer for 466 children, ages one through twelve, of the poorest of the city's population. Some of the children arrived at 5 AM and did not leave until 9 PM. This facility was opened in 1904; it was possibly the first city-run center of its kind in Russia (see *Izvestiia Moskovskoi gorodskoi dumy,* 1912, no. 11, p. 25).

89. *Iuzhnyi krai,* June 29, 1914. Jack London spent several weeks in Whitechapel, an East End London slum, in 1902, writing about his experiences in *The People of the Abyss* (1903). Khar'kov's doss house, originally built for the purpose of earning income for the city, had become permanent quarters for

Table 2. *Voter Turnout in Municipal Elections, 1900–14*

City	Year	Total Eligible	Actual Votes	Percentage Voting
The Ukraine				
Khar'kov	1902–05	2291	538	0.234
	1906–09	3097	722	0.233
	1910–13	2945	1038[a]	0.352
			1006[b]	0.342
Kiev	1902–06	2711	1214	0.448
	1906–10	2907	1312	0.451
	1910–14	3757	2219	0.591
Berdichev	1903–07	619	186	0.300
	1907–11	526	127	0.241
	1911–15	505	181	0.358
Nikolaev	1905–08	687	193	0.281
	1909–12	874	252	0.288
	1913–16	1031	379	0.368
Russia				
Moscow	1904–08	8817	1991	0.226
	1909–12	8151	3497	0.429
	1913–16	9431	3239	0.343
Kazan'	1905–09	1302	439	0.337
	1909–13	1327	533	0.402
	1913–17	2133	736	0.345
Kursk	1905–09	644	181	0.281
	1909–13	682	329	0.482
	1913–17	685	236	0.346
Smolensk	1905–09	793	238	0.300
	1909–13	630	263	0.417
	1913–17	1024	327	0.319
Kostroma	1905–09	685	153	0.223
	1909–13	659	184	0.279
	1913–17	814	265	0.326
Samara	1905–08	1290	289	0.224
	1909–12	1431	456	0.319
	1913–16	1533	541	0.348
Tver'	1905–09	765	214[a]	0.280
			177[b]	0.231
	1909–13	888	252[a]	0.284
			124[b]	0.190
	1913–17	1081	293[a]	0.271
			201[b]	0.186
Perm'	1905–09	774	160	0.207
	1909–13	865	271	0.313
	1913–17	1068	280	0.262
Penza	1905–09	1189	205	0.172
	1909–13	1284	221	0.172
	1913–17	1037	234	0.226
Other Regions				
Riga	1905–09	4047	3196	0.790
	1909–13	4223	2907	0.688
	1913–17	5169	4514	0.873

Vil'na	1901–05	736	306	0.416
	1905–09	971	389	0.401
	1909–13	1051	473	0.450
Astrakhan'	1905–08	2482	473	0.191
	1909–12	2243	575	0.256
	1913–16	2497	561	0.225
Baku	1902–05	1999	550[a]	0.275
			599[b]	0.300
	1907–11	1695	499[a]	0.294
			99[b]	0.058
	1911–15	1705	854[a]	0.501
			724[b]	0.425
Tiflis	1902–07	3222	750	0.233
	1907–11	2581	424	0.164
	1911–15	3567	1342	0.376
Erivan	1903–07	780	346	0.444
	1907–11	663	224	0.338
	1911–15	763	153	0.201

Sources: For Khar'kov, see Tsentral'nyi gosudarstvennyi istoricheskii arkhiv (Leningrad), fond 1288, opis' 95, delo 77, list 82 (hereafter cited as TsGIA). For Kiev, TsGIA, f. 1288, op. 5, d. 170, l. 135. For Berdichev, f. 1288, op. 5, d. 170, l. 152. For Nikolaev, f. 1288, op. 25, d. 78, l. 173. For Moscow, f. 1288, op. 25, d. 41, l. 48. For Kazan', f. 1288, op. 25, d. 24, l. 57. For Kursk, f. 1288, op. 25, d. 34, l. 64. For Smolensk, f. 1288, op. 25, d. 62, l. 44. For Kostroma, f. 1288, op. 25, d. 31, l. 81. For Samara, f. 1288, op. 25, d. 56, l. 55. For Tver', f. 1288, op. 25, d. 68, l. 55. For Perm', f. 1288, op. 25, d. 47, l. 101. For Penza, f. 1288, op. 25, d. 46, l. 66. For Riga, f. 1288, op. 25, d. 36, l. 363. For Vil'na, f. 1288, op. 25, d. 8, l. 76. For Astrakhan', f. 1288, op. 25, d. 4, l. 43. For Baku, f. 1288, op. 25, d. 5, l. 38. For Tiflis, f. 1288, op. 25, d. 70, l. 31. For Erivan, f. 1288, op. 25, d. 81, l. 31.

[a] First ballot returns.
[b] Second ballot returns.

clearly the Progressives did not see themselves *primarily* as social reformers. By necessity, developmental projects came first, and at least for the present, the Progressives did not view the city as the major provider of welfare services.

In this outlook they were reinforced by the prevailing Victorian attitude, which regarded charity as predominantly a private concern, and by the state, which feared that social activism in the city dumas might enhance the political image of the opposition among the poor. In 1902, Khar'kov spent only 1 percent of its budget on public care and assistance. Reflecting the developmental priorities of the Progressives, that percentage did not increase during the reform years of 1910–14. In 1913, Khar'kov spent 29 kopecks per capita on public care, slightly less than the average for guberniia cities and about one-fifth the average per capita expenditure in Russian Finland.[90]

some residents. In 1914, it housed 50 percent more men than its official capacity. The reporter spent the night at the doss house, finding it foul and dirty, though less crowded than he expected, since during the summer many slept outdoors. Incidentally, Warsaw provided free coffins and burial service for at least some of its poor, and although one city councilor suggested Khar'kov do the same, I found no evidence that this measure was ever given serious thought.

90. The average for guberniia cities was 36 kopecks per capita in 1913. Moscow and Nizhnii Novgorod ranked highest, each spending about 1.5 rubles (see B. Veselovskii in *Gorodskoe delo,* 1914, no. 11–12, p. 694). Khar'kov's largest budgetary expenditures went for debt repayment (16 percent) and medical-sanitary work (13 percent). See *Materialy po voprosu,* p. 77, for a complete breakdown.

"Times have changed," Ekaterinoslav's *Iuzhnaia zaria* announced in 1913. "It used to be difficult to find a Russian city in which the mayor and the great majority of city councilors were not merchants. But motivated by a sense of civic duty and by their dissatisfaction with the low level of merchant *kul'turnost'*, the '*intelligenty*' have once again become attracted to city affairs. . . . This is particularly important to a city like Ekaterinoslav," the newspaper continued. "Our merchants are not as cultured as Moscow's Guchkovs and Riabushinskiis, and so many of our most educated merchants are Jews and therefore not eligible to manage the city."[91]

One cannot push generalizations about political behavior of classes too far: not all merchants were obstacles to local developmental progress. But the municipal progressive movement was undoubtedly linked to a resurgence of interest in city affairs by local "*intelligenty*"—doctors, lawyers, engineers, and other professional people—although political necessity dictated that progressive coalitions include representatives from several segments of the narrow electorate. In Saratov, one newspaper called the local Progressives "the party of the third element and the free professions."[92] Members of these groups undoubtedly supplied much of the leadership and organization, but Russia's municipal progressives were probably defined more by their views on the role of city government than by occupational status.[93]

Perhaps Khar'kov could not be "turned into Paris," but cities like Riga and Helsinki, with their higher levels of per capita spending, did serve as realistic models.[94] If nothing else, Khar'kov's Progressives demonstrated that even under the 1892 statute, and despite a national government deeply suspicious of local initiative, the potential for significant developmental progress was not inconsequential on the eve of World War I.

91. *Iuzhnaia zaria,* September 21, 1913. In Ekaterinoslav an informal alliance of Progressives and "Non-Party Octobrists" upset a coalition between "Nationalists" and members of the Union of Russian People, giving the duma eight teachers or professors, seven doctors, four accountants, two veterinarians, and only seventeen merchants. Forty-two had studied in institutions of higher education, but very few represented the outer districts of the city.

92. *Saratovskii listok,* March 10, 1913. About sixty of the eighty city councilors in Saratov's duma had studied in institutions of higher learning. Kostroma was another city in which professional people came to dominate the duma after the triumph of the local Progressives. According to *Kostromskaia zhizn'* (April 20, 1913), the new duma included nineteen lawyers, eleven doctors, eleven engineers, and five teachers. Sixty percent of the city councilors had studied at institutions of higher learning.

93. Similarly, in the zemstvos at this time, the terms "left" and "progressive" referred to activist promoters of zemstvo cultural and economic services. As in the cities, their "conservative" opponents saw them as purveyors of higher taxes. See Ruth Delia MacNaughton and Roberta Thompson Manning, "The Crisis of the Third of June System and Political Trends in the Zemstvos, 1907–14," in Haimson, *Politics of Rural Russia,* pp. 190 and 194. Manning points out that the liberals never regained their influence in the zemstvos after they were repudiated in the elections of 1906–7 because of Kadet support in the State Duma for expropriation of private lands (see Roberta Manning, "Zemstvo and Revolution: The Onset of the Gentry Reaction, 1905–1907," in Haimson, *Politics of Rural Russia,* especially pp. 49–50).

94. Helsinki spent about three times more per capita, Riga twice as much as Khar'kov. Finnish cities had a more liberal municipal statute which provided greater access to revenue. By reputation the quality of urban life there was the highest in the empire. Riga's duma, dominated by local Germans, got an early start in municipalizing utilities and services, and Riga also acquired a reputation for a relatively high quality of urban life; for some, it was "indeed a German city" (see Hamm, "Riga's 1913 City Election," and *Gorodskoe delo,* 1912, no. 8, pp. 521–23, for a survey of Finnish cities).