

Anti-Semitism in Russia

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**Introduction**

This paper will assess the severity of Russian xenophobia, in the form of anti-Semitism, through vehicles of: the state and society. This paper will use a methodology which will encompass various theories, typologies, and arguments relating to ethnic violence and anti-Semitism. A mode of analysis will be used which ranges across historical, sociological, political, cultural and critical contributions. Testing these models using empirical research allows for the disaggregation of the various factors that contribute to the general character of anti-Semitism in Russia. Such analysis provides a thorough insight into the extent of anti-Semitism in Russian society. This facilitates the signposting of fundamental issues and adaptations of models to specifically fit the framework for assessing the scale and intensity of anti-Semitic attitudes, and actions in the exclusion and discrimination of Jews. The argument put forward by Frank Dikötter (2008) in, "*the racialization of the globe: an interactive interpretation*", is useful for understanding how global racist belief systems operate, which as he states "are neither uniform nor universal" (Dikötter, 2008, p.1478). He continues by arguing "that racist belief systems share a common language based on science, that they have a common political tension derived from an egalitarian philosophy and that they can also diverge considerably according to local cognitive traditions and political agendas" (Dikötter, 2008, p.1478). Dikötter, therefore, suggests that an interactive approach be used, to determine 'the reason behind' the formation of racist belief systems in a global context. In reply to Dikotters argument, Goldberg (2009) proposes that relational methods be used in the study of race and racisms. Therefore, this essay will take careful consideration in reaching a balance between comparative and relational methods.

Firstly, this essay will apply the scapegoat model testing it against traditional and contemporary forms of anti-Semitism as seen in Russia in the Soviet era and today. It will explore the relationship between deep-rooted prejudices and race thinking. This will help in identifying the source of anti-Semitism in the Russian Federation, therefore enabling us to determine the validity of this model. The second section focuses on ethnic violence and the relationship between nationalism and anti-Semitism. Disaggregating violence into the messages of communication it sends as proposed by Richard Arnold (2009), will allow for a deeper understanding of the possible motives behind anti-Semitic attacks. This typology will be heavily scrutinised and adaptations drawn upon, to increase its effectiveness and to signpost key issues for future consideration when studying ethnic violence. The next section looks into media race hate and the freedom of the press in the Russian Federation. Such an analysis will help to determine how the reproduction of 'race' thinking via the media can contribute to the racialization of Jews; and its potential to ignite anti-Semitic hatred. This paper has identified the Russian media as not being 'free', and therefore, relates this to the concept of democracy, and the governmental use of pro Kremlin propaganda (racial and political) to divert attention away from the 'real' issues. Weak law enforcement regarding xenophobic material and propaganda in the media has allowed radical-nationalist publications to provide a platform for far-right extremists to incite anti-Jewish hatred. It is against this background that an examination will take place regarding the nature of religious belief and affiliation among Jews in Russia today. This paper is concerned with the levels

and nature of religious belief among Jews and what connection they see between Jewish ethnicity and Jewish religion.

### **Testing the scapegoat model against traditional and contemporary forms of anti-Semitism**

In the last two decades or so, "Russia has experienced extraordinary political, social and economic tumult. The Soviet Union collapsed, the Communist Party lost its grip on power, the rouble was decimated on several occasions and Russia forfeited its designation as a world 'superpower'" (Gibson and Howard, 2007, p.194). History has also shown that for long periods of time Jews in Russia have been victimised through violence and repression and have been perceived as scapegoats for a multitude of Russia's domestic problems. As a result and at different times in history, Russian Jews have had to contend with, "pogroms, purges, show trials, professional and educational quotas, bans on religious expression and ridicule in the popular culture" (Gibson and Howard, 2007, p.194). These attitudes and actions towards Jews in Russia have often been explained by using the scapegoat theory to blame and victimise innocent, weak and minority groups when turmoil has arisen in a country - often involving political and economic crises (Gibson and Howard, 2007). A crucial question arises, as to what may be the source for this stereotyping, other than simply identifying economic factors. Downing and Husband (2005) argue that "when prejudices are widely shared, as part of a common culture, they can be very resilient and difficult to eradicate. Such prejudices become racist when race thinking and racial ideologies are drawn upon to provide the content of the stereotype and to legitimate the reasonableness of the hostility" (Downing and Husband, 2005). Therefore, prejudices towards Jews in Russia, are the seeds of race thinking; forming stereotypes to justify their hostility towards the Jewish population. This can link in with the scapegoating model as stereotypes form the ammunition for which racist thinking can develop into the racialization and scapegoating of Jews by means of deep rooted prejudices. History has also shown that forms of racial prejudice can develop in a hierarchical manner within society, often emanating from government. The genocide in Rwanda, where 800,000 Tutsi were murdered serves as a painful example for the development of politically influenced racial prejudices. The seeds of racial prejudice as planted by the Rwandan government, thrived in fertile surroundings, as people compounded their misery by scapegoating the Tutsi (Uvin, 1997).

The scapegoat theory has failed to materialise in post-soviet Russia due to a greater tolerance of Jews; "no legal restrictions were placed on Jews, and no systematic repression of Jews was implemented by the Russian state" (Gibson and Howard, 2007, p.194). It is still the case, however, that anti-Semitism exists in Russia. Jews have been subjected to isolated attacks and torment from various levels of Russian society. The present government does not sponsor or support anti-Semitism, but there appears to be a scattering of anti-Semitic views among some politicians in various parties. In particular some politicians from the Communist Party have been known to participate in anti-Semitic activities. Krasnodar Kray Senator Nikolai Kondratenko of the Communist Party of the Russian Federation allegedly made anti-Semitic remarks; blaming Zionism and Jews for many of the country's problems including their contribution in the demise of the Soviet Union - according to a November 2003 article in Volgogradskaya Tribuna (US Department of State, 2005). Accusations of anti-Semitism have also been directed towards "Nationalistic parties, such as Rodina and the Liberal Democratic Party of Russia (LDPR), [who] gained a wider voter base by addressing issues of nationalism, race, ethnicity, and religion" (US Department of State, 2005). It can however be seen that processes of racialization can indeed, or at least to some degree, be explained by using the scapegoating model. In Theory, contemporary Russia pays witness to the scapegoating of Jews, but in an almost dormant, de-activated stage. The deactivated stage is characterised by disguised, deep rooted prejudices apparent in all sectors of Russian society. Activation is achieved primarily through the state sponsorship of

anti-Semitism or other forms of state sponsored xenophobia. This also ties in with Dikotters argument relating to factors which contribute to racist belief systems; in particular political agendas and race science. Examples include the genocide in Rwanda, and the German 'final solution'. "In the early 1990s, Hutu extremists within Rwanda's political elite blamed the entire Tutsi minority population for the country's increasing social, economic, and political pressures" (UHRC, 2012). The Nazi racial policy between 1933 and 1945 comprised of two elements: eugenics and racial segregation (later racial extermination). The Nazis thus tried to keep their own "race" free from abnormalities and illnesses (eugenics) and keep the Aryan race closed to other "inferior" races (racial segregation and extermination).

In an historical context, anti-Semitism has demonstrated its adaptability, and therefore, new forms of anti-Semitism have developed. As well as having characteristics similar to that of traditional forms of anti-Semitism, newer forms can be differentiated by their "criticism of Zionism or Israeli policy that—whether intentionally or unintentionally—has the effect of promoting prejudice against all Jews by demonizing Israel and Israelis and attributing Israel's perceived faults to its Jewish character" (U.S. Department of State, 2008, p.4). However, this is often a disguise for a more general hatred of Judaism. The Soviet state saw Zionism as a threat to communism and the soviet regime as well as being "a major source of evil in the world" (Chlenov, 1994, p.127). New forms of anti-Semitism are common throughout societies in the Middle East and the Muslim world. Through anti-Semitic propaganda and discrimination, Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, has been known to incite hatred towards Jews; specifically the state of Israel - calling for its destruction (U.S. Department of State, 2008). The European Union's Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA, 2008) in its Working Paper on anti-Semitism observed that "Anti-Semitic activity after 2000 is increasingly attributed to a 'new anti-Semitism,' characterized primarily by the vilification of Israel as the 'Jewish collective' and perpetrated primarily by members of Europe's Muslim population" (FRA, 2008, p.19). In many aspects this does not relate to the general character of Russian xenophobia aimed towards Jews; blatant forms of traditional anti-Semitism remain a problem. This also relates to Dikotters (2008) argument that racist belief systems are to some degree determined by regionalist factors. The example of Iran, highlights the ideological differences between the Muslim and western world. This lack of universality can to some extent relate to the on-going tensions between both Judaism and Islam, and Israel and the Muslim world though there is an overlap between the two. This section has broken down the processes of racialization, in relation to, the scapegoating model and the different stages of progression; from deep rooted prejudices to large scale state-sponsored anti-Semitism. If turmoil arises in a state- causing instability both economically and politically, then the scapegoat model becomes particularly relevant as a means to identifying the source of anti-Semitism within society. Early in the 1990's, during the transitional period from communism, Russia experienced numerous difficulties, and this resulted in a fragile and unstable state – perfect conditions for anti-Semitism to flourish. However, this was not the case, despite growing fears that a new wave of anti-Semitism was imminent. Therefore, this example does not support the theory behind the scapegoat model; Russian anti-Semitism was not supported by the state but existed during that period, among some sections of society, as it still remains today.

### **Ethnic violence: the relationship between nationalism and anti-Semitism**

"Over the past two decades, anti-Semitism has continued to form the ideological basis of many right-wing, ultra-nationalist organizations in the former Soviet Union" (Rosenthal, 2011). According to the SOVA Centre (2004), Russian nationalism and anti-Semitism are "genetically related". This relationship assists in our understanding of the complex workings and formation of anti-Semitic thinking in post-soviet Russia. The relationship between the two could explain to some extent how the growth of nationalism may in turn increase an anti-Semitic movement among Russian society (SOVA Centre, 2004). Anti-Semitism remains a permanent feature of xenophobic attitudes in Russia; however, since the breakup of the

Soviet Union, it has become overshadowed by other forms of racialization towards other minority groups; this remains the case today (Porat and Webman, 2007; Grüner, 2009). For example, Neo-Nazi groups have frequently targeted foreigners, non-Slavic and Russian Muslim citizens in on-going racially motivated attacks. It's important to differentiate between the terms 'skinhead' and 'neo-Nazi'. In Arnold's (2009) opinion, "skinhead" refers to a subculture whereas "neo-Nazi" refers to specific quasi-political racist organizations". An overlap exists between the two terms, specifically regarding ideology (Arnold, 2009, p.649). However, the fundamental difference between neo-Nazi organisations and the skinhead movement is the degree of organisation involved.

Richard Arnold, (2009) in his report "*Thugs with Guns*": *Disaggregating "Ethnic Violence" in the Russian Federation*, develops a typology that attempts to categorise forms of ethnic violence, in order to differentiate the messages that violence communicates. He contends that in some cases, negative messages of communication will overlap between categories. The recurrent factor in all forms of violence, however, is according to Arnold (2009) the negative messages of exclusion. His typology does not account for all types of messages that violence communicates, this therefore is a limitation. However, it is useful when testing cases of violence instigated by ethnicity. Firstly, a distinction is made for the legal division of targets involving people and property. The Scale of violence and the number of targets involved is also then considered; both acting as a set of indicators as to the intensity, frequency, scale, and form of violent attacks. Within this framework are four distinct forms of violence: symbolic violence, lynching, pogrom and massacre. These correspond to the categories of messages that violence communicates; which Arnold (2009) proposes as being: cower, behave, leave, and perish. He has shown that disaggregating violence into the messages it portrays is useful for understanding the fundamentals of the messages that ethnic violence communicates; and regarding the typology as proposed in this case study, it helps in measuring the severity of Russian anti-Semitism and the forms it takes.

The War in the North Caucasus areas, in addition to extremist Chechnyan Islamic terrorism has established those from the Caucasus regions as Russia's main enemy. This wave of national hatred towards Chechnyans and people from the Caucasus regions results from past events (DellaPergola, 2004). "Anti-Semitism, however, is a permanent phenomenon embedded deep in the Russian national and religious conscience" (DellaPergola, 2004, p.391). Porat and Webman (2007), raise an interesting and significant point in relation to the reasons why Russian Jews are not perceived to be primary targets of race motivated attacks. They argue that Jews, unlike other ethnic and minority groups are difficult to identify due to physical appearance. However, in most cases, victims of anti-Semitic attacks, are "those bearing religious symbols" and therefore identifiable as being Jewish (Porat and Webman, 2007, p.31). This was apparent when in 2006, Alexander Kopstev, a suspected neo-Nazi, entered a synagogue in central Moscow, stabbing eight Jewish worshippers (Kozhevnikova and Verkhovsky, 2006). Jewish communities are often victims of property damage as vandals have been known to target religiously symbolic, cultural institutions and facilities in an overtly harsh and traditional form of anti-Semitism. In Krasnoyarsk, Russia, vandals have been known to target Jewish cemeteries; with additional acts of cemetery desecration reported in 1998, 2001 and 2007. In one attack on October 8, 2007, 64 gravestones were desecrated (U.S. Department of State. 2008).

Using the typology as proposed by Arnold (2009), it is possible to measure the severity of anti-Semitic violence in the Russian Federation. Attacks involving property appear to be the most common form of violence against Jews in Russia. The vandalism of "Jewish religious and cultural facilities", graffiti, and the widespread distribution of anti-Semitic leaflets around almost all parts of Russia contribute to the general understanding and atmosphere of anti-Semitic behaviour in the Russian Federation (Kozhevnikova and Verkhovsky, 2006). The messages that violence communicates, are difficult to identify; a collective motive does not exist. However, in simplified terms, it can be argued that a

combination of symbolic violence and, to a lesser extent lynching, contribute to the general atmosphere of far-right extremist violence towards Jews; often sending the messages of 'cower' and 'behave'. The more serious messages of 'leave' and 'perish' appear to be mostly associated with people from the Caucasus regions including Chechnyans. However, nationalism as an ideology implies a strong identification of a group of individuals with a nation. These primordialist conceptions of ethnicity, attempt to exclude Jews from Russian society in favour of the Aryan race. This, therefore, could indicate, a need for a re-examination of the messages that violence communicates. Ideologies are therefore a crucial factor in assessing the motives of attacks against Jews. Arnolds (2009) typology often neglects for such an approach. Skinhead groups and neo-Nazi organisations, however, account for only a minority of the Russian population. According to the Russian Interior Ministry's All-Russian Research Institute, "racially and religiously intolerant groups are on the rise. Indeed, more than 150 radical neo-fascist groups are currently operating in Russia" (Rosenthal, 2011). However, as Rosenthal (2011) points out, racially motivated violence decreased to a six year low in 2010 and, therefore, it is unlikely that Russian Jews will be subjected to mass societal aggression.

### **Media race hate and the freedom of the press in the Russian Federation**

"Explicit, racially motivated violent attacks against Jews are fairly rare in the context of rapidly growing racist violence in Russia" (Verkhovsky, 2006). The SOVA Centre, in their 2006 *"Anti-Semitism in Russia report"*, identified the various ways in which Jews were being targeted. The most persistent and reoccurring source of anti-Semitism within Russia resonates from those sections of the mass media, not excluding newspapers with wide circulatory figures and respectable reputations; who openly publish articles containing Anti-Semitic propaganda (Kozhevnikova and Verkhovsky, 2006). The Mass Media can often act as a vehicle for racialization processes as it provides for the "reproduction of 'race' thinking" (Downing and Husband, 2005, p.20). Although there are some exceptions, generally law enforcement agencies are 'tolerant' towards anti-Semitic propaganda (Kozhevnikova and Verkhovsky, 2006). In Russia, article 282 (Art.282) of the Criminal Code attempts to criminalise against those individuals who participate in racist propaganda with the intention of inciting racial hatred against other ethnic or racial groups (Kozhevnikova and Verkhovsky, 2006). However, the inconsistent usage of Art.282 of the Criminal code puts into question the relationship between the government, political parties, the judiciary and the media. The European Commission on Racism and Intolerance (ECRI, 2005) identified an increasing amount of race hate speech in the Russian media. Moreover, an insufficient attempt by the state to eradicate the issue of race hate speech in the media has provided journalists and editors with a platform with which to publish racist statements, without great fear of punishment.

A number of small radical-nationalist newspapers continue to publish articles containing anti-Semitic material with the estimated number of xenophobic publications now exceeding 100. Anti-Semitic articles have also featured in "regional papers such as Stenogramma in the Komi Republic and the Orthodox Simbirsk in Ulyanovsk" (U.S. Department of State, 2008, p.57). A minimum of at least seven publishing houses, have connections with extremist movements. In addition, neo-Nazi and extreme right organizations have a vast amount of websites (over 800), containing xenophobic literature and providing an outlet of expression for racial hatred towards Jews (Law, 2012). Increasing interconnectivity within the international system of online communication enables extreme right groups to use Internet networks "as a vehicle to mobilise and disseminate racist ideology" both internationally and regionally (Law, 2012, p.1). The Committee to Protect Journalists (2010) reported that "Certain mass media outlets, including print and electronic, openly aid the formation of negative processes in the spiritual sphere, the affirmation of the cult of individualism and violence, and the mistrust in the ability of the state to defend its citizens, this practically involving the youth in extremist activities".

As previously mentioned in section one, political parties such as Rodina and the Liberal Democratic Party of Russia have been known to express anti-Semitic views; this also reflects in racist discourse as published in some sections of the media. In Russia the distribution of racist messages within the media can be attributed to both mainstream and specialist publications. However, what is of prime concern is the degree of freedom in the press; attention therefore turns to the state. Hedwig de Smaele (1999) in her journal article “*The Applicability of Western Media Models on the Russian Media System*” summarises effectively the limitations of applying the western media model in regards to the post-communist media system in the Russian federation:

*For decades the (western) media world could be divided along the simple dichotomy of western vs. communist media systems. When the communist world collapsed, the corresponding media model was declared history as well. At first sight, it was fully replaced by the western model in the same way as the society was reorganised according to western principles. On a closer look, however, western influence seems to be restricted primarily to the market area. The reshaping of the media system into a pluralist and independent Fourth Estate, the transformation of the journalistic community into an autonomous professional group dedicated to a public service ideal and the redefinition of the audience into a group of citizens all failed to occur (Smaele, 1999, p. 173).*

This argument can be supported by Reporters Without Borders who in their 2011/2012 Press Freedom Index ranked Russia 142<sup>nd</sup> out of 179 (Reporters Without Borders, 2012). Moreover, the Freedom House report in their global press freedom rankings (2011) named Russia 173<sup>rd</sup>, with their media status described as ‘not free’. Therefore, a crucial question arises as to what extent the present government has control over the media? Authorities in Russia continue to exercise their influence on media outlets and news content through a vast state-owned media empire. According to Freedom House (2011) “the government owns, wholly or in part, two of the 14 national newspapers, more than 60 percent of the more than 45,000 registered local newspapers and periodicals, all six national television networks, and two national radio networks” (Freedom House, 2011). This indicates a lack of freedom within the press which relates back to democracy, and how it is “closely interwoven with a free and independent media” (Smaele 1999). The emergence of a modern liberal democracy in Russia has failed to materialise; there are still signs of an authoritarian regime. The media often misled Russian society into believing pro-Kremlin propaganda, for the government “to avoid coverage of rising unemployment, bank failures, declining industrial production, and the falling value of the rouble” (Freedom House, 2011). An unintended consequence of this manipulation of the press by the government could stop anti-Semitic prejudices from developing into the full racialization of the Jews. A lack of press freedom is evident, however, the inconsistent usage of Art. 282 of the criminal code, allows journalists and editors to publish anti-Semitic articles, without great fear of reprisal. It is therefore apparent, that an opportunity has arisen for politicians, academics, extremist nationalist groups and journalists to use the mass media as an expressive outlet for a politically motivated anti-Semitic rhetoric.

### **The impact the Soviet Union has had on Jewish identities’ in the Russian Federation**

There is uncertainty regarding how Jews should be defined. “Jews have debated whether they are a racial, religious, ethnic or cultural group” (Chervyakov, et al., 1997, p.280). In an historical context, Jews have often been perceived as having both a religious and ethnic identity. However, in the former Soviet Union, Jews were classified solely as an ethnic group, ignoring religious beliefs and practises. (Chervyakov, et al., 1997) “From the Soviet

point of view, the Holocaust confirmed that the Jews are a race or ethnic group. After all, Hitler exterminated Jews because of their family trees, not because they expressed religiosity" (Vinogradov, 2011, p.13). In more recent times, Judaism in Russia has to a large degree become an act of ethnic loyalty rather than an attachment to its faith and religious practises; "Judaism was preserved in Russia in rudimentary form, and few individuals can be recognized as genuine believers" (Chervyakov, et al., 1997, p.295). "Moreover, the policy of state anti-Semitism had the effect of reinforcing assimilatory tendencies and Russianisation, particularly among the Ashkenazim. This process is now on-going, and even the abolition of state anti-Semitism cannot stop it completely" (Chlenov, 1994, p.135). The ethnic identity of Russian Jewry could take the form of a civil religion which in turn would assist in the social functions of integration, legitimation and mobilization of Jews in Russia which previously was controlled by the state under communist occupation. Elazar's (1978) concept of Neo-Sadduceeism argues that some Jews seek to identify themselves as Jewish not through theological understandings of Judaism nor by fully accepting Jewish Religious law but through the Jewish people, its traditions and "the corporate interests and needs of Jews" (Chervyakov, et al., 1997, p.301). DellaPergola (2004), slightly differs from this viewpoint and argues that, "the majority of Jews define themselves as secular and are far removed from any religious or traditional symbols of Judaism" (DellaPergola, 2004, p.370). The prospect for a thriving Jewish community in Russia seems unlikely, but progress has been made since the collapse of the Soviet Union. In the *2004 –2005, Annual Assessment* by the Jewish People Policy Planning Institute, DellaPergola (2004) argues that, Jewish institutions and cultural facilities that emerged after the collapse of the Soviet regime are now in a transitional period which renders them fragile and susceptible to both negative and positive outcomes. Therefore, in order to achieve a thriving Jewish community it is necessary for the younger generations to form an attachment to Judaism and subscribe to the traditional conceptions of Jewish values, as a means for Jewish identity in Russia to flourish and continue however small the community may be (DellaPergola, 2004). Forming an attachment to a religion and its practises are gained most efficiently in the early stages of the socialisation process (Chervyakov, et al., 1997).

As a result of an atheistically socialist regime, religious ignorance has had a profound impact on religious identities in post-soviet Russia, in this case Russian Jewry and according to Chervyakov, Gitelman, and Shapiro (1997) will take many years to reverse. "By the 1980s, one of the strongest religious taboos, marriage with non-Jews, was being violated by over half the Jewish population. In 1988, 58.3 per cent of Jewish men, and 47.6 per cent of Jewish women marrying in the USSR, married non-Jews" (Tolts, 1992, p. 19). Those children born into mixed marriages would in many cases have no affiliation or attachment to Judaism. This, therefore, would severely impact upon the Jewish population, further increasing assimilation and thus diluting traditional conceptions of Judaism. By the mid-1990s marriages to non-Jewish partners increased; 81.6 per cent of Jewish males and 73.7 per cent of Jewish females married outside of Judaism (DellaPergola, 2004). The number of births to couples with two Jewish parents declined from 1,562 in 1988 to 169 in 2000. Births to couples with at least one Jewish parent were estimated at 5,858 in 1988 and 1,057 in 2000 (DellaPergola, 2010). These figures reflect the significant impact the Soviet regime had on Soviet Jewry, even after the collapse of communism. Moreover, according to Jewish law (Halacha), a child born to a Jewish mother or an adult who has converted to Judaism is considered a Jew; one does not have to reaffirm their Jewishness or practice any of the laws of the Torah to be Jewish. When assessing the Soviet impact on Jewish population figures in the Russian Federation the statistics regarding the number of births to Jewish parents only therefore becomes relevant if the mother of the child was Jewish. According to DellaPergola (2010), the Jewish population in Russia is estimated to be in the region of 205,000, 6<sup>th</sup> highest Jewish population in the world. However, the Jewish population was reported by the 1989 Soviet census to be in the region of 1.4 million persons (Heitman, 1990), therefore emphasising the drastic decline in the Russian Jewish population. In 1991 alone, 185,000

Jews emigrated to Israel; high rates of emigration were connected to fears of a new wave of anti-Semitism (Chlenov, 1994).

Sustained efforts by the State failed to eradicate religion all together in the Soviet Union but instead citizens were severely restricted access to religious institutions, thus limiting knowledge and understanding of religious practises, and, thereby increasing the chances of assimilation and nationalisation towards the state. To gain a more thorough insight into the political dynamics of racism, it's therefore important to focus on "how opposition to the notion of equality often prompts the formulation of a racial discourse", rather, than to just focus on how racism legitimatises social hierarchies and social exclusions (Dikötter, 2008, p.1486). A question which arises from this outlook is whether Soviet Communism - which in theory promoted an egalitarian society – provides us with an example of how an ideology promoting equality can in fact be highly racialized; at the expense of religion as a means to society's full assimilation toward the nation-state. The communist ideology as endorsed by the Soviet Regime, promoted a radical interpretation of an egalitarian society, but in doing so, compromised individual freedoms in the case of the Jews – access to religion. Therefore, freedom and equality are symbiotically related, to the very notion of universal human rights, if an imbalance occurs between the two, in the context of race and ethnicity; racialization processes are used to legitimize social hierarchies and social exclusions.

## **Conclusion**

The processes of racialization as outlined in the first section show how forms of anti-Semitism develop, in particular reference to political motives and ideologies. The present government does not appear to sponsor or promote anti-Semitic hatred; no policies have been implemented to suggest otherwise. However, the Russian political system has a fragmented anti-Semitic representation amongst some parties and politicians. It is, however, difficult to identify a collective motive; both traditional and new forms coexist. Democracy does not, however, reduce deep rooted prejudices nor eliminate anti-Semitism altogether; far from it. Historical prejudices against Jews, remains as a constant thorn in the battle against anti-Semitism. The racialization, stereotyping and scapegoating of Jews in Russia is in an almost dormant de-activated stage, disguising predispositions and prejudices. The intrinsic relationship between nationalism and anti-Semitism assists in our understanding of the complex workings and formation of anti-Semitic thinking in post-soviet Russia. Anti-Semitism has historically featured as "an ideological foundation of the Russian ethno-nationalism" (Verkhovsky, 2005). Many right-wing ultra-nationalist organizations in the former Soviet Union, therefore, remain as a permanent feature in Russian society and contribute to the general atmosphere of anti-Semitism. Arnold's (2009) typology is useful for understanding the messages that ethnic violence communicates. Applying it against this essays hypothesis, the scale and intensity of Russian anti-Semitism, has proved to be complex, and raised a number of significant issues. This essay revises this typology and suggests that greater consideration be made to ideological factors. The nature of nationalism as an ideology, in the form it often takes in far-right extremist groups, often contains strong racial connotations, thus, implying the exclusion of all but the Aryan race in Russia. The majority of Russian citizens do not endorse these views nor does the Government.

This essay has highlighted how the media can act as a vehicle for the reproduction of race thinking. It is evident from the course of preceding discussions that Russia's media system is characterised by a lack of freedom in the press; thus indicating the non-occurrence of a modern liberal democracy. Pro-Government Propaganda is used to manipulate the press, diverting attention away from undesirable national issues. Small radical-nationalist newspapers continue to publish anti-Semitic material; law enforcement agencies are slow and weak in the crackdown against xenophobic literature. The inconsistent usage of art.282 of the criminal code, therefore, provides opportunities for journalists, editors, and far-right organisations to incite hatred towards Jews, through the media, without fear of

repercussions. Moreover, Government manipulation of the press, therefore, indicates a possible source through which to promote anti-Semitism via racial propaganda; this is unlikely to be the case, but political parties such as Rodina and the Liberal Democratic Party of Russia have been known to do so. It is still uncertain and perhaps too early to assess whether a normalisation process will occur, where Jewish identity in Russia reclaims its traditional heritage, both in religious and cultural terms. Jewish identity is relative to geographical factors including differences in culture, religious practises and type of Jew; the three main groups being Ashkenazi, Sephardic, and Mizrahi Jews; the degree of assimilation towards the state. Therefore, regional factors, to a large degree, reflect the outcome of Jewish identities. For a detailed analysis of the variations of global Jewish identities it is therefore necessary to adopt an approach consisting of comparative and relational methods. However, our primary concern here is the impact to which the Soviet regime has impacted on post-soviet Jewry, and, the scale and intensity of contemporary forms of anti-Semitism through vehicles of the state and society. If racist predispositions are not sufficiently widespread, then racial issues carry few political incentives. We come to the conclusion “that anti-Semitism in Russia is not widespread enough to be mobilized successfully in electoral politics” (Gibson and Howard 2007). The racialization of other ethnic minorities has increased tolerance levels towards Jews. However, deep rooted prejudices and predisposition’s remain as the catalyst for anti-Jewish thinking in Russia.

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