**Anastasia Kochetova**

The given research aims to compare the cases of political conservatism in Russia and

Germany in 1905-1918 on an example of conservative parties in both countries. The main focus

lies on significant transformation of conservative strategies and values, which took place in

right-wing parties in both countries almost simultaneously.

For long time the leading role of left-wing political movements in the revolutionary

process put the history of left parties in trend while neglecting the study of conservative ones. In

the Soviet Union, for instance, conservative parties and its politics haven’t been studied duly, but

simply identified with tsarism and &quot;masses oppression&quot;. In Germany, political conservatism of

the Imperial period was until late entirely associated with the Prussian Junkers and considered to

be a priori unable to present any up to date model of political development to the society. For the

German case in historiography took palace a tendency to search for the roots of National

Socialism in prerevolutionary political conservatism. Some scholars also insisted on fascist

nature of Russian right parties.

The most modern studies tend to be more careful with such kind of associations, but

there is no doubt about significant change in conservative politics took place. The growing

democratization of the society, the engagement of masses in politics, the crisis of elites, and

finally the war – all these challenges required response from the conservatives and received it. It

is obvious that the conservative parties in both countries tried their best to prevent revolution and

were ready to adopt new methods of political struggle for this purpose. In order to expand the

base and solicit support of people in general, conservative parties started to adapt the ideas

unallied to them before (nationalism, anti-Semitism, militarism, catch-all party concept), to get

closer to the formerly unacceptable alliance partners, and trying to get rid of the reputation of an

elite party. But despite the existence of modern studies and approaches, the nature and trails of

the transformation of political conservatism in Russian and German Empires still remain

understudied and vague. Also, the question, if the modification of conservative political

strategies had the long-term traces, continues to be opened.

The comparative case study as a chosen method enables to follow the features of

conservatism’s transformation in each of studied countries and to detect some common patterns

of conservative behaviour under the similar historical challenges. As the main common pattern

appears to be the process of transformation and radicalization, it deserves to be studied not only

as a single occurrence, but also as one of the triggers for the outbreak of the revolutions and even

further aftermath in history of both countries.

Russia and Germany in the studied period can be best described as “catching up

countries”, modernization in which is controlled from the “top”, i.e. initiated by political elites.

The similarities in historical paths of these countries (monarchies, strong players in the global

arena, active participants of the First World War, high pace of industrialization) set a similar

socio-historical context for political conservatism in this countries, in which both conservative

camps, failed to maintain status quo and picked up new radical platform.

The given study makes it possible to take a fresh look at the process of transformation

and radicalization of political conservatism in both countries, as well as at the role of this process

in the outbreak of the revolution. The comparison of ways how conservatives were dealing with

all challenges, reveals not only the complexity of transformation process but also its unobvious

traces and aftermath. Furthermore, this work contributes to the study of political systems in

Russia and in Germany in revolutionary era. The main research objectives are:

1) to evaluate how the adaptation of new strategies affected the essence of conservative

policy and ideology in both countries.

2) to determine the influence of separation from “traditional conservative policy “on

failure in preventing the revolution.

3) to confirm or refute the hypothesis that transformation of political conservatism

contributed to the revolutionary outbreak instead of preventing it.

The inability of Russian and German conservative forces to present an adequate alternative of

political development is a historical fact, but it’s still false to consider their failure inevitable.