

## From the Series Editors

The Wildman Group came together during the mid-1990s as an informal discussion forum for those interested in labor and social history, especially as those topics pertained to the Russian revolutions of 1905 and 1917. The group, which took the title The Allan K. Wildman Group for the Study of Russian Workers and Society, eventually encompassed many scholars whose scholarly interests revolved around the Russian Revolution and related phenomena at a time when many academic publishers, journals, and those who led graduate programs had moved to different research priorities. The group's interest in promoting continued research in revolutionary studies led to the 2002 publication by Slavica of *New Labor History: Worker Identity and Experience in Russia, 1840–1918*, a collection of new research about labor history from American and Russian scholars under the editorship of Michael Melancon and Alice Pate. The studies contained in the volume and the responses to them in the field demonstrated the continued vitality of late 19th- and 20th-century social history and its ability to place familiar historical episodes and phenomena in new perspectives. This factor gave rise to the idea of the *Allan K. Wildman Group Historical Series*, which Slavica agreed to publish. In order to broaden its scope to one more appropriate for a series, the group also renamed itself The Allan K. Wildman Group for the Study of Russian Workers, Peasants, and Intelligentsia during the Revolution and the Soviet Era. The *Wildman Series* now focuses on the entire revolutionary experience, especially in terms of the broad social strata most involved in making the Revolution and sustaining the state and society that resulted.

The *Wildman Series'* first monograph, Page Herrlinger's *Working Souls: Russian Orthodoxy and Factory Labor in St. Petersburg, 1881–1917*, further underscores the possibility of eliciting surprising new findings from intense examination of the history of workers' experience in Russia and, by extension, other social groups during the revolutionary era. *Working Souls* demonstrates the continued vitality of religion for numerous workers even after they arrived on the urban scene, in this case St. Petersburg. This finding raises questions about the widely held assumption that workers' reliance on religious values and practice quickly dissipated upon exposure to the urban environment. Herrlinger's data and analysis demonstrate the sharp challenge that urban life posed for workers' religion but also indicate that the process of secularization was not automatic, quick, nor inevitable. For many workers, the often harsh and confusing realities of city life and factory work acted as a spur to seek the

spiritual and emotional solace of religion. The Orthodox Church responded to this interest, albeit with mixed degrees of success. So did various unorthodox religious groups and tendencies. This study, which Page Herrlinger plans to augment with an examination of worker religion after 1905, distinctly alters our sense of working-class culture prior to and during the 1905 Revolution. The editors hope that other researchers will follow suit in re-examining the lives and experiences of Russia's large social groups during the revolutionary era.