



Russkie professora: Universitetskaia korporativnost' ili professional'naia solidarnost' by E. A. Vishlenkova, R. Kh. Galiullina, and K. A. Il'ina

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refusal to yield to French expansionism rivaled only by his conviction, fueled by a pietistic and mystical religious faith, that he was engaged in ideological conflict with Napoleonic evil. Rey is also especially strong in surveying the first stirrings of civil society, whether the nascent public opinion of the court and the urban elites or the inchoate nationalist sentiments of anonymous peasants forced into a national army by the exigencies of continental war.

Finally, Rey surveys in part 4 “An Increasingly Conservative Reign, 1815–1825.” This final section details the domestic and international events that led the “European Tsar” (293) of 1815, who by defeating Napoleon raised Russian prestige and geopolitical power to unprecedented heights, to the “twilight” of 1825, when Alexander, only forty-nine years of age, died. Rey is forced here to confront the question that hangs over Alexander’s reign: why did a tsar whose reign began in youthful aspirations to Enlightenment thinking and liberalism end in mysticism, hostility to popular sovereignty, and military colonies that regimented already enslaved peasant populations?

Historians have long puzzled over this enigma, and resolving it was central to Rey’s task. Judging from this fine scholarship, the answer is to be found partially in personality. The image of parricide shadowed Alexander throughout his life and led him to hedge and hesitate. Shaping the autocrat even more directly was his stubbornness, whether expressed in an uncompromising will to resist Napoleonic aggression or the arbitrary certitude of his final years. Beyond personality was the tsar’s personal experience of horrific warfare, especially the titanic struggle of 1812–14, and the solace he consequently sought in an increasingly fervent and mystical religiosity. As a result, he slowly withdrew from affairs of state and, contemplating abdication, arranged for the succession of his younger brother, Nicholas, to replace him.

As Rey notes, however, Alexander’s accomplishments both domestically and internationally were substantial. As much as his own personality and predilections, what constrained his actions, and those of the state over which he presided, was imperial society itself and in particular aristocratic and noble elites hostile to constitutionalism and any tampering with the institution of serfdom. To overcome such opposition would require another half-century, but the roots of that transformation, Rey convincingly demonstrates, were established during Alexander’s reign. This work will be a definitive study of Alexander I and the political history of his era.

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Russkie professora: Universitetskaia korporativnost’ ili professional’naia solidarnost’. By E. A. Vishlenkova, R. Kh. Galiullina, and K. A. Il’ina. Moscow: Izdatel’stvo “Novoe literaturnoe obozrenie,” 2012. xvi, 648 pp. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Hard bound.

This hefty volume explores the professional culture of the Russian professoriate: its relationship to administrative hierarchies, both within and outside the university; its interaction with student bodies; and its incomplete consolidation as a research community at Moscow, Kazan, and Khar’kov universities in the first half of the nineteenth century. The text itself, roughly one third of the book, is supplemented by a rich trove of archival material on Kazan University (from the Natsional’nyi arkhiv respubliki Tatarstan), Moscow (from the Tsentral’nyi istoricheskii arkhiv Moskvy) and, less abundantly, Khar’kov (located in the Rossiiskii gosudarstvennyi istoricheskii arkhiv, in St. Petersburg), and a helpful introductory essay describing the distinctive aspects of such archival holdings.

In part 1 the main thrust of the argument is that the Humboldt model of university governance underwent changes in Russia. The authors describe how the professoriate coalesced as a corporate entity, its obligations, and the source of professional recruitment and societal reaction to it. Professors initially had much freedom to involve themselves in administrative and fiscal matters, but they displayed little initiative in these areas; eventually, the state stepped in. Intervention was driven by ideological concerns as well, but the authors stress the shortage of candidates for administrative positions, in terms of both numbers and competence. Relying on a select number of anecdotes, the authors describe professors shirking their duties, especially under Alexander I, when supervision was minimal. Many also simply lacked qualifications or even a basic university degree themselves. The tendency was for individual professors to look after their own, rather than their communal, interests. The authors argue that the professoriate did gradually become a community of sorts (*soobshchestvo*) but not an organization. Initially, foreign cadres filled the teachers' ranks, many lacking even a basic knowledge of the Russian language. The state sought to keep foreign-born individuals from all administrative tasks, but with mixed results. Relations with local society were largely shaped by relations between professors and the local nobility; the authors draw a strong contrast between Kazan and Moscow. The curator (*popechitel'*) is a central figure in this narrative, defining the relationship between the state and university. Here the authors contrast the pernicious impact of Mikhail Magnitskii in Kazan with that of Aleksandr Stroganov in Moscow: the latter advanced research and sent young professors, including Sergei Solov'ev, abroad, but he also ran the university much like *pomeshchiki* at the time treated their landed estates.

Part 2, interestingly titled "In Their Own Likeness," examines the student body in relation to the professoriate. Initially, parents saw no advantage in a university education, which brought no status. But by the second quarter of the nineteenth century, higher education had become more attractive; both the state and professors wanted to establish norms for admission but also to shape the outcomes. Filters, such as exams in classical languages, were deployed to exclude graduates of classical seminaries. They were, for example, required to go to the gymnasium to take exams in these subjects. Even if they succeeded, professors could choose to administer a second exam, and if the candidate failed, the gymnasium that had passed him would be obliged to pay for the failed candidate's travel home. Professors tried to prevent students from making private living arrangements, instituted health standards, and had a long list of illnesses that merited immediate rejection or expulsion. Dress codes were also administered. In short, students gradually lost their independence, including their right to choose their own courses or instructors as control over class attendance was initiated. In this process professors relied heavily on the state in order to better control students' lives. But professors also often found themselves caught between the demands of the students and those of the state. This section is less about students as such and more about how both the administration and the professors joined together to control the selection and the very lives of the students.

Part 3 shows how professors gradually turned to research, both because they tended to favor it over teaching but especially because it was called for by the Ministry of Enlightenment as part of the imperial project. Those who sought financial aid in their research learned how to describe their projects in terms of an ideological framework incorporating history, ethnography, and geography. Then, as now, Moscow was much better situated to take advantage of opportunities to carry out academic research as well as pursue individual social mobility. In short, by the middle of the century the incompletely consolidated Russian professoriate had gradually come to fulfill the needs of the state, and they crafted their work in terms of the *gosudarstvennyi zakaz*.

In his memoirs, Boris Chicherin writes that Timofei Granovskii once lamented

that “the study of Russian history ruins even the best minds,” that the state looms so large in Russian history those who study it tend to lose track of all else. In so doing, “despite the respect they hold for history, they lose all faith in it.” Because the role of the state is emphasized in it at every turn, from this volume, too, we learn little about the social and cultural traits of the professoriate—their communicative culture, personal ties, patronage networks, or family lives. One might also wonder if the colorful anecdotes drawn from the archives to illustrate professorial incompetence or administrative abuse are representative, or whether they are just that—colorful anecdotes. The authors point to the silences in the archives, partially due to deliberate erasure by curators or other officials of records of one or another sort; one can only speculate how these missing traces might have modified the picture drawn here. Still, in its rich incorporation of previously unexplored archival material, and also in the level of its argumentation, this illuminating book sets a new standard for the study of higher education in Russia.

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New Soviet Gypsies: Nationality, Performance, and Selfhood in the Early Soviet Union. By Brigid O’Keeffe. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2013. xvi, 328 pp. Notes. Bibliography. Glossary. Index. Illustrations. Photographs. \$65.00, hard bound.

This brilliant new study of the Roma’s plight in the early decades of Soviet power in Russia opens new avenues of discussion and study of this fascinating ethnic group’s history. At a distance, the place of the Roma in Russian, or more particularly tsarist, society was seemingly quite different than what it was in other parts of eastern Europe. Aleksandr Pushkin was intrigued by them; his poem *The Gypsies* (1821) painted their nomadic lifestyle in highly idyllic terms. Lev Tolstoi used the Roma wife of a distant cousin as a model for Anna Mikhailovna Drubetskaia in *War and Peace*, while his brother Sergei had a Roma mistress. This, coupled with a growing fascination with Roma choral music, particularly among the tsarist aristocracy, helped promote a fanciful yet unrealistic image of the Roma in Russia up until the Bolshevik revolution, in 1917.

This image quickly disappeared once the Soviets came to power. They adopted the general stereotype of the Roma shared by many in other parts of Europe as that of a thievish, lazy group of nomads who shunned work and lacked any sense of social responsibility. But what changed the initial Soviet response to such prejudices was that they saw hope for the Roma in the context of a new revolutionary effort to draw Soviet Russia’s diverse ethnic populations into the larger scheme of creating the new Soviet man and woman. Traditionally, the Roma have been depicted as being so suspicious of *gadje* (non-Roma), particularly government officials, that they shun any contact with them. Brigid O’Keeffe, however, challenges this notion and paints a very different picture—one in which the Roma not only tried to take advantage of Soviet efforts to improve their lot but also embraced the various stereotypical dimensions of Roma backwardness in order to strengthen their pathway to new status in the Soviet Union.

Her study, chronologically speaking, follows the path of other scholars who have looked at this evolution, particularly through certain organizations and institutions, such as the All-Russian Gypsy Union and collectivization, and professional choral groups and theaters, such as Moscow’s Romen Theater and Leningrad’s Ethnographic