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Ph.D. Proposal: "Count Sergei Stroganov and the Development
of Moscow University, 1835-1847"

Purpose

During the 1830s and 1840s, Moscow University developed into the center of educated Russian society and enjoyed its golden age. Around the school, a constellation of brilliant thinkers, such as Aleksandr Herzen and Timofei Granovskii, gathered, and an intelligentsia formed of critically minded men opposed to the tsarist regime. In the conservative atmosphere of the period, the relative freedom of thought enjoyed by students and intellectuals in Moscow stemmed largely from the "benevolent" attitude of Count Sergei Stroganov, the curator of the Moscow Educational District from 1835 to 1847. One participant later recalled those years as "the happiest time for Moscow University because of the absence of all repressions."

Nicholas I deeply believed in the traditional values of order, service and discipline; and, Sergei Uvarov, Minister of Education, 1833-1849, actively promoted them as part of the ideology of Official Nationality (Orthodoxy, Autocracy and Nationality); yet, an intellectual flowering that resulted in the "Marvellous Decade" occurred. What part did Stroganov, the quintessential aristocrat, play in shielding this intellectual challenge to the existing order from repression? What powers did he possess, and how did he use them? What relationship existed between Stroganov, Uvarov and Nicholas? How did intellectuals respond to the more liberal conditions of his administration?

Was he an "enlightened bureaucrat?" How did the university faculty, students and programs change under his supervision?

In this study of Sergei Stroganov, I intend to examine in detail his role in the growth of Moscow University and the formation of a Russian intelligentsia during the reign of Nicholas I, and I will show that as curator in Moscow, he played a crucial role in the expansion of the university and in the birth of the intelligentsia. An exceptionally enlightened aristocrat, Stroganov successfully defended the school from reactionary forces and thus had a profound, but little-known, impact on the course of Russian history.

Historiography

Until recently, scholarship on the reign of Nicholas I and the history of Moscow University has remained dominated by pre-revolutionary works.¹ These treatments emphasize the emergence of a radical intelligentsia as a result of Nicholas' oppression but do not examine the institutional structure which fostered that development.² Most Western and Soviet historians have not

¹Theodor Schiemann, Geschichte Russlands unter Kaiser Nikolaus I [History of Russia under Tsar Nicholas I], 4 vols. (1904-09); Istoriia Rossii v XIX veke [A History of Russia in the 19th Century], 9 vols. (1907-11); Pavel Miliukov, Ocherki po istorii russkoi kultury [Essays on the History of Russian Culture], 2nd ed. (1896-1903). Memoirs have also been extremely influential in shaping our image of the period. For example, Aleksandr Herzen's Byloe i dumy [My Past and Thoughts].

²There are few studies of Russian institutions. For example, S. Rozhdestvenskii, Istoricheskii obzor deiatel'nosti Ministerstva narodnogo prosveshchenia, 1802-1902 [A Historical Survey of the Ministry of Education] (1902); M. N. Tikhomirov, et al, Istoriia Moskovogo universiteta [A History of Moscow University], 2 vols. (1955); N. P. Eroshkin, Istoriia

challenged this negative assessment of the reign of Nicholas.³

Recently, however, the appearance of a number of studies by Western scholars has signalled a reevaluation of the period.⁴ Several works have examined the phenomenon of "enlightened bureaucrats"--men who implemented limited reforms and helped pave the way for the serf emancipation of 1861,⁵ and have challenged the previously widespread consensus that the regime was overly bureaucratic and stagnant, and in this regard, some studies have treated specific aspects of education under Nicholas.⁶

Still, though contemporaries, such as Herzen and Vissarion Belinskii, and present-day scholars, such as Priscilla Roosevelt

gosudarstvennykh uchrezhdenii dorevoliutsionnoi Rossii [A History of the State Institutions of Pre-Revolutionary Russia], 3rd ed. (1983).

³Constantin de Grunwald, Tsar Nicholas I (1946); Nicholas Riasanovsky, Nicholas I and Official Nationality (1959); Semen Okun, Ocherki istorii SSSR, vtoraiia chetvert' XIX vek [An Outline History of the USSR in the Second Quarter of the 19th Century] (1957); Vladimir D'iakov, Osvoboditel'noe dvizhenie v Rossii, 1825-1861 gg [The Liberation Movement in Russia, 1825-1861] (1979).

⁴W. Bruce Lincoln, Nicholas I (1978); Cynthia Whittaker, The Origins of Modern Russian Education: An Intellectual Biography of Count Sergei Uvarov (1984); James T. Flynn, "Tuition and Social Class in the Russian Universities: S. S. Uvarov and 'Reaction' in the Russia of Nicholas I," Slavic Review, 35 (June 1976): 232-48.

⁵On this topic, W. Bruce Lincoln has written numerous articles and a major book, In the Vanguard of Reform: Russia's Enlightened Bureaucrats, 1825-1861 (1982).

⁶Charles Steinger, "Government and Policy and the University of St. Petersburg, 1819-1849" (Ph.D., Ohio State, 1971); Steven Allister, "The Reform of Higher Education in Russia during the Reign of Nicholas I, 1825-1855" (Ph.D., Princeton, 1974); Constantin Galskoy, "The Ministry of Education under Nicholas I, 1826-1836" (Ph.D., Stanford, 1977).

and Patrick Alston, have hinted at Stroganov's importance, no work on the man or his office has yet appeared.⁷

Sources

Numerous published, primary sources are available in the United States, including documents from the Ministry of Education⁸ and Moscow University.⁹ An extensive memoir literature and an array of contemporary journals also exist.¹⁰ However, to examine Stroganov's work as curator, it is indispensable to consult archival materials located solely in the USSR. The primary repository of the pre-1917 archives of Moscow University is the Tsentral'nyi gosudarstvennyi istoricheskii arkhiv g. Moskvyy (The Central State Historical Archive of Moscow). Fond 418 contains the university archive and fond 459 the records of the curator of the educational district. The Ministry of

⁷With the exception of encyclopedia entries. For example, "Stroganov, Sergei Grigor'evich," in Russkii biograficheskii slovar' [The Russian Biographical Dictionary] (1909), 19: 523-30.

⁸Sbornik postanovlenii po Ministerstvu narodnogo prosveshcheniia [The Collection of Resolutions Concerning the Ministry of Education], 17 vols. (1864-1904); Zhurnal Ministerstva narodnogo prosveshcheniia [Journal of the Ministry of Education] (1834-1917).

⁹Stepan Shevyrev, Istoriia imperatorskago Moskovskago universiteta [The History of the Imperial Moscow University] (1855); Otchet o sostoianii i deistviiakh imperatorskago Moskovskago universiteta [Report on the Condition and Activities of Moscow University] (Annual, 1834-62).

¹⁰For example, Boris N. Chicherin, Moskva sorokovykh godov [Moscow in the 1840s] (1929). Some of the more important periodicals are Moskvitianin [The Muscovite], Otechestvennyiia zapiski [Notes of the Fatherland], Sovremennik [The Contemporary].

Education archives are located in Leningrad in the Tsentral'nyi gosudarstvennyi istoricheskii arkhiv SSSR (Central State Historical Archive of the USSR)--fondy 733-735. Sergei Stroganov's personal archive is located in fond 17 of the Leningradskoe otdelenie Instituta arkheologii AN SSSR (The Leningrad Division of the Institute of Archaeology of the Soviet Academy of Sciences). Finally, the Stroganov family archive, covering the years from 1517 to 1918, is in fond 1278 of the Tsentral'nyi gosudarstvennyi arkhiv drevnikh aktov (The Central State Archive of Ancient Acts). In addition to these archives, I would also like to use the facilities of the following libraries: Gosudarstvennaia Ordena Lenina biblioteka SSSR imeni V. I. Lenina (The Lenin State Library in Moscow), Gosudarstvennaia Ordena Trudovogo Krasnogo Znameni publichnaia biblioteka imeni M. E. Saltykova-Shchedrina (The Saltykov-Shchedrin State Public Library in Leningrad) and Biblioteka Akademii nauk SSSR (The Academy of Sciences' Library in Leningrad).

Research plans

I have discussed this project with Professor Hugh Ragsdale of the University of Alabama who was recently in the USSR on an IREX. He, along with faculty at the University of Virginia, believes my research to be feasible and worthwhile.

At present I am studying background material before working with available primary sources, so that by next year, I will be able to take full advantage of a research opportunity in the Soviet Union.