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**UNIVERSITY DELOPROIZVODSTVO  
(PAPERWORK)  
AS A CULTURAL PRACTICE AND  
INSTITUTION  
IN RUSSIA IN THE FIRST HALF OF THE  
19TH CENTURY**

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IN RUSSIA IN THE FIRST HALF OF THE 19TH CENTURY<sup>2</sup>**

The article analyzes documentation management as a cultural practice and institution through which university professors' corporations in Russia in the first half of the nineteenth century lost their autonomy, acquiring instead a bureaucratic identity and ethics of state service. The study draws on official documents from university archives of Kazan, Moscow and Kharkov, and the archive of the Ministry of Education (St. Petersburg). It focuses on changes in the language of university record keeping, describing the self-identification matrices of professors as well as the growing role of quantitative and standardized information about university life they had to provide in their reports.

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A researcher embarking upon the study of paperwork (*deloproizvodstvo* or *pis'movodstvo*) at universities is faced with a paradoxical situation. In the positivist value system, official documents have traditionally occupied the top position in the hierarchy of historical sources. They were credited with objectivity and credibility, and few scholars failed to use their evidence to strengthen their arguments. In Soviet times, too, historians wrote a lot about universities, and they quite often drew upon data from chancery documents. However, the workflow system in universities itself has not been studied up to now.<sup>3</sup>

The probable reason is that official documents fell within the domain of interest of source studies at the time. Quite naturally, specialists in source studies viewed chancery workflow and the whole system of paperwork in the Russian Empire as a process of historical source production.<sup>4</sup> They assessed the information value of the products, stressing that paperwork "allows us to obtain information concerning 1) the contents and the structure of the documented activity; 2) the rules of documenting this activity; 3) the system of documents that were used and created as a case was handled (or a decision was made); 4) the system of documents generated during the implementation of the decision; 5) the document management system of the body in question; 6) the system of documents recorded during the workflow."<sup>5</sup> Apparently, the logic of the structuralist interpretation of history molded the historian's view in such a way that official texts were regarded solely as results of the recording process and as reflections of reality.

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<sup>3</sup> Historians have studied the information potential of individual groups of documents. See, for example, Shchetinina G.I. *Posluzhnye spiski kak istoricheskiy istochnik o sostave professorov v poreformennoy Rossii* (Service records as historical sources on the composition of the professors in post-reform Russia...) // *Istoriya SSSR*. 1977. № 1, pp. 84-96; Bulgakova L.A. *Otchety popechiteley po uchebnym okrugam i universitetam kak istoricheskiy istochnik* (Curators' reports on educational districts and universities as a historical source...) // *Vspomogatel'nye istoricheskie distsipliny*. T.10. L.: Nauka, 1978, pp. 244-251.

<sup>4</sup> Mityaev K.G. *Istoriya i organizatsiya deloproizvodstva v SSSR: ucheb. posobie* (The history and organization of documentation management in the USSR: A textbook...). M., 1959; Livshits Ya.Z. *Istoriya deloproizvodstva v SSSR: Ucheb. posobie* (The history of documentation management in the USSR: A textbook...)/ Pod red. Ya.Z. Livshitsa, V.A. Tsikulina. M., 1974; Sokova A.N. *O sozdaniy russkoy traditsionnoy formy dokumenta v deloproizvodstve gosuchrezhdeniy XVIII-nachala XX vekov* (On the establishment of the traditional Russian form for record keeping in government agencies from 18<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> centuries...) // *Trudy VNIIDAD*. T. 5. Ch. 1. M., 1974, pp. 206-236; Litvak B.G. *Osobennosti deloproizvodstva ministerskogo perioda i ikh vliyanie na massovuyu dokumentatsiyu XIX – nachala XX v.* (Peculiarities of the documentation management during the time of ministries and their impact on the mass documentation of the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries ...) // Litvak B.G. *Ocherki istochnikovedeniya massovoy dokumentatsii*. M., 1979; Vyalova L.M. *Organizatsiya deloproizvodstva tsentral'nykh organov upravleniya v zakonodatel'nykh aktakh Rossiyskoy imperii. Pervaya polovina XIX v.* (The organization of documentation management in imperial government bodies as reflected in the legislation of the Russian Empire. First half of the 19<sup>th</sup> centuries ...): Avtoref. dis. ... kand. ist. nauk. M., 1987. 23 s.; Yankovaya V.F. *Russkoe deloproizvodstvo v sbornikakh obraztsov dokumentov kontsa XVIII- nachala XX vv.* (Russian documentation management as reflected by collections of sample documents from the late 18<sup>th</sup> till the early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries ...) // *Sovetskie arkhivy*. 1989. № 4, p. 29; Lukashovich A.A. *Razvitiye gubernskoy deloproizvodstvennoy dokumentatsii 70 - 90-kh gg. XVIII v.* (The development of provincial administration documents in the 1870-90's ...) Avtoref. dis. ... kand. ist. nauk. M., 1995; Prikhod'ko I.N. *Zakonodatel'nye akty i deloproizvodstvennaya dokumentatsiya kak istoricheskiy istochnik po nalogovoy politike pravitel'stva v pervoy chetverti XVIII veka* (Laws and administration documents as a historical source concerning the taxation policy of the government in the first quarter of the 18<sup>th</sup> centuries.): dis. ... kand. ist. nauk. Chelyabinsk, 2010. 177 s.

<sup>5</sup> Quoted in: Litvak 1979, pp. 123-128.

The concept of paperwork as a management practice and cultural institution was imported into history from neighboring disciplines and took a long time to overcome resistance and become established.<sup>6</sup> Clearly, before the circular motion of records, reports, memoranda and briefing notes could be regarded as cultural mechanisms, historians had to assimilate a whole new understanding of history in general and the history of universities in particular. This process was launched in Russia in the 2000s. Then, following the criticism of structural functionalist descriptions of the university as an institution, Russian social sciences began to adopt a new approach that combined the approaches offered by interpretive sociology (Max Weber), interpretive anthropology (Clifford Geertz) and the theory of everyday life (M. De Certeau).<sup>7</sup> This new approach construed the university as a space in which meanings and rules are produced through the diverse and volatile practices and interactions of its participants.<sup>8</sup> The meanings produced there were now seen as undergoing a constant process of formation and reformulation. Proponents of this approach have focused their attention on academic routine, everyday life and habitual practices.

The study of university document management using the designated approach offers heuristic possibilities. It shows us 1) how officials in the Ministry of Education understood and interpreted academic freedom, 2) what their methods of managing university life were, 3) how professors who worked far away from ministries learned about the authorities' points of view, 4) how

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<sup>6</sup> The sociological approach is described in the article: Smith D.E. *The Social Construction of Documentary Reality // Sociological Inquiry*. 1974. Vol.44 (4), pp.257-268. The perspective of cultural studies on document and 'documentness' is articulated in the article: Kaspé I.M. *Kogda govoryat veshchi: dokument i dokumentnost' v russkoy literature 2000-kh* (When things speak: document and documentness in the Russian literature of the 2000s ...). GU Vysshaya shkola ekonomiki. Gumanitarnye issledovaniya. Preprint WP6/2010/02. Seriya WP6. M., 2010. 46 s. Studies drawing on Russian sources include Orlova G.A. *Rossiyskaya byurokraticheskaya mental'nost' (1801-1917 gg.)* (The Russian bureaucratic mentality...). Diss. ... kand. psikh. nauk. Rostov n/D., 1999; Larin M.V. *Upravlenie dokumentatsiyey v organizatsiyakh: problemy istorii i metodologii* (Documentation management in organizations: historical and methodological issues...): avtoref. dis. ... d-ra ist. nauk. M., 2000. Online version: URL <http://dissertation1.narod.ru/avtoreferats2/av191.htm> (accessed 20.11.2011). Vinogradova T.V. *Organizatsiya deloproizvodstva gubernskikh administrativnykh uchrezhdeniy Rossiyskoy imperii v pervoy polovine XIX veka: na materialakh Olonetskoy gubernii* (The organization of documentation management in provincial administration bodies of the Russian Empire during the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century: A study based on sources from Olonets Province...): dis. ... kand. ist. nauk. M., 2004; Remnev A.V. «Iskusstvo kantselyarii» i «iskusstvo redaktirovaniya» v imperskoy Rossii XIX – nachala XX veka ('The chancery art' and 'the art of editing' in the imperial Russia in the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century...) // *Sotsial'naya istoriya*. (unpublished manuscript).

<sup>7</sup> For more on this subject, see: Zaporozhets O.A. *Universitet kak korporatsiya: intellektual'naya kartografiya issledovatel'skikh podkhodov* (University as corporation: intellectual cartography of the research approaches). NRU Vysshaya shkola ekonomiki. Gumanitarnye issledovaniya. Preprint WP6/2011/06. Seriya WP6. M., 2011. 46 s.

<sup>8</sup> *Universitet dlya Rossii: Vzgl'yad na istoriyu kul'tury XVIII stoletiya* [T.1] (A university for Russia: Looking at the history of 18<sup>th</sup> century Russian culture ... Vol. 1) / Red. V.V. Ponomareva i L.B. Khoroshilova. M., 1997; *Universitet dlya Rossii. T.2: Moskovskiy universitet v Aleksandrovskeyu epokhu* (A university for Russia. Vol. 2: The Moscow University during the reign of Alexander I...)/ Red. V.V. Ponomareva i L.B. Khoroshilova. M., 2001; Kulakova I.P. *Universitetskoe prostranstvo i ego obitateli: Moskovskiy universitet v istoriko-kul'turnoy srede XVIII veka*. (The university space and its inhabitants: The Moscow University in the historic and cultural environment of the 18<sup>th</sup> centuries ...) M.: Novyy Khronograf, 2006. Vishlenkova E.A., Malysheva S.Yu., Sal'nikova A.A. *Terra Universitatis: Dva veka universitetskoy kul'tury v Kazani* (Terra Universitatis: Two centuries of university culture in Kazan...). Kazan': Kazanskiy gosudarstvennyy universitet, 2005. Vishlenkova E.A., Galiullina R.Kh., Il'ina K.A. *Russkie professora: universitetskaya korporativnost' ili professional'naya solidarnost'* (The Russian professors: the university corporate spirit or the solidarity of a trade... ). M.: Novoe literaturnoe obozrenie, 2012.

professors felt the presence of the authorities in their everyday life, 5) how professors communicated with representatives of the government and 6) how they fulfilled their requirements. And, most importantly, thanks to this approach, we can see how a certain sort of anonymous uniformity (referred to as ‘the university system’ in official documents) was generated in the course of this interaction and subsequently imposed on all members of the community. Reconstructing the history of university workflow from this standpoint uncovers latent processes. It shows, for example, how people adapted to different institutions established by the government, how life scenarios materialized at each university, and how the imposed rules were loosened and redefined.

This approach determined our document search criteria in the archives. My participation in an international project sponsored by the German Historical Institute in Moscow<sup>9</sup> allowed me to view separate pieces of text as fragments of a single system. In the project, we studied the State Archives of the Kharkov Region (DAKhO), the National Archives of the Republic of Tatarstan, the Department of Manuscripts and Rare Books of the Research Library of Kazan Federal University (Kazan), the Central Historical Archive of Moscow, the Russian State Archive of Early Acts, the Written Records Department of the State Historical Museum (Moscow), and the Russian State Historical Archives and Manuscript Department of the Russian National Library (Saint Petersburg). Although we were searching for evidence of other processes (such as traces of corporate interaction), reading paperwork in full introduced us to the everyday life of universities. I realized that, in addition to (and to the detriment of) attending meetings of self-government bodies, lecturing and doing research, the everyday life of university employees included such enormously time-consuming duties as compiling and studying instructions and orders, exchanging letters with the ministry and subordinate schools, responding to officials, and writing reports.

### *Professors’ engagement in bureaucratic communication*

Established in 1803-1804 at the order of the supreme authority, Russian universities were in a difficult situation from the outset. Professors who came to Russia from Western Europe spoke little Russian (if any) and were unfamiliar with local laws and paperwork rules. Most Russian professors and students did not have much administrative or clerical experience, either. Nevertheless, the ‘academic class’ received from the government the privilege of self-

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<sup>9</sup> Project ‘Ubi Universitas, ibi Europa: The transfer and adaptation of the university concept to Russia in the second half of the 18th and first half of the 19th century’ (AZ 02/SR/08) sponsored by the Gerda Henkel Foundation.

management in its internal affairs and communications with government offices of the empire. This implied learning the art of writing business letters, which not every literate person could do. In addition, the rules of document management kept changing, and one had to keep up with these changes.

From the beginning of its administrative reforms, Alexander I's government strove to harmonize and optimize workflow and simplify the bureaucratic language of official documents ('chancery style' or 'business style'). The basic ideas for the reorganization of the clerical system were formulated in the report "On the Reform of the State Economy Dispatch Office" (1803) by the Minister of Interior Viktor Kochubey.<sup>10</sup> Criticizing the inherent shortcomings of the collegiums and their methods of government work, he proposed new rules for document management.<sup>11</sup> The minister assured the monarch that record keeping would be considerably simplified and speeded up if one made the bureaucratic language and papers more elegant, which "means being clear, decent, and simple." "1. Nothing redundant should be tolerated in the form of documents," Kochubey insisted, "no matter how unimportant these redundant things may appear: for, given the great influx of papers, a multitude of unimportant stops adds up in the end to a very considerable hurdle. 2. In the face of a great influx of papers, each paper should bear all the signs by which one could identify at first glance not just the department but also the desk and folder to which it belongs."<sup>12</sup>

Apparently, the growing complexity of government work made it necessary for ministries to adopt a more rigid system of document management and a simplified language of description. The development of both was the task of Mikhail Speransky, Kochubey's right hand.<sup>13</sup> In 1803, he designed forms for governor reports and samples of 'incoming' and 'outgoing' papers for his own department. In 1811, he provided all other ministries of the empire with standardized reporting forms and defined the handling time for documents. As Speransky was designing his document management reform, he insisted on clerks drawing up brief memoranda reflecting the contents of minutes of meetings. Each paper sent to the ministry was to be accompanied by a summary describing the issue and the decision taken.

The government's management modernization efforts reached universities later than other state

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<sup>10</sup> Doklad ministra vnutrennikh del o novom obrazovanii Ekspeditsii Gosudarstvennago Khozyaystva. (Report by the minister of the interior on the reformation of the State Economy Dispatch Office...) [4 iyunya 1803 goda].

<sup>11</sup> Ibidem, pp. 49–57.

<sup>12</sup> Ibidem, pp. 58–59

<sup>13</sup> Cf. Romanenko A.P. Problemy normalizatsii russkogo kantselyarskogo stilya pervoy poloviny XIX v. (On the normalization of the Russian bureaucratic writing style in the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century...) Diss. ... kand. filol. nauk. M., 1981.

institutions. We are able to track the points in time when the effects of their introduction became visible. At first, the professors did not feel the need to get acquainted with new ‘forms’ and to learn the reformed ‘business style’ of writing, because the university statute of 1804 granted the ‘scholar caste’ a number of privileges. For instance, the professorial councils were exempt from the obligation to acquire and use stamped paper.<sup>14</sup> They were allowed to keep paperwork short, so that it "under no circumstances could prevent [them] from teaching."<sup>15</sup> That is why, in their correspondence with the ministry and other agencies in the 1800s, university secretaries and clerks used cheap paper and formulated the texts at random or relied on document samples from the eighteenth century.

Such autonomy did not last long, since the logic of rationalization and harmonization did not allow for an individual approach. Citing the experience of other ministries, each new minister of education declared the state of university document management unsatisfactory and began his work in office with its improvement. For example, Alexey Razumovsky, who was appointed minister in 1810, insisted that his predecessor Peter Zavadovsky had not assured good governance. Alexey Razumovsky himself marked his appointment by circularizing a number of ‘propositions’ concerning the form, content and frequency of reports to be presented by universities.<sup>16</sup> His successors acted in a similar way. Modern scholars regard this collective work as a sign of modernization accompanied by the development of written management technologies and the strengthening of the vertical power structure.<sup>17</sup>

Even if they desired, Russian professors could not resist the rapid advance of clerical routine on university life. Although it granted privileges to professors, the statute also required them to participate in the workflow that assured the coherence of the state machinery’s action. In the

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<sup>14</sup> O nerasporyazhenii polozheniya o gerbovoy bumage na universitety, 9 sentyabrya 1815 (On the universities being exempt from the regulation concerning the use of stamped paper...) // Polnoe sobranie zakonov Rossiyskoy imperii [Sobranie Pervoe]. T. 33. SPb., 1830. № 25940, pp. 278; O proizvodstve del v universitetakh na prostoy bumage, 6 marta 1822 (On the use of simple paper for documents at universities...) // Ibidem. T. 38. SPb., 1830. № 28960, p. 102.

<sup>15</sup> Ustavy Imperatorskikh Moskovskogo, Khar'kovskogo, Kazanskogo universitetov, 5 noyabrya 1804 (Statutes of the Imperial universities of Moscow, Kharkov and Kazan...) // Sbornik postanovleniy po ministerstvu narodnogo prosveshcheniya. T.1. Tsarstvovanie imperatora Aleksandra I. 1802–1825. Izd.1. SPb, 1864. Col. 296.

<sup>16</sup> Tsirkulyarnoe predlozhenie o dostavlenii spiskov postoronnikh slushateley universitetskikh kursov (A circular proposition concerning submission of lists of extraneous auditors attending university courses...), № 49, 26 aprelya 1810 // Sbornik rasporyazheniy po Ministerstvu narodnogo prosveshcheniya. T.1 1802–1834. SPb, 1866, column 169–170; Tsirkulyarnoe predlozhenie o predstavlenii svedeniy o nagradakh, uvol'neniyakh i smerti uchilishchnykh chinovnikov, 5 maya 1810. № 50 (A circular proposition concerning submission of information about decorated, dismissed or deceased university officials ...) // Sbornik rasporyazheniy po Ministerstvu narodnogo prosveshcheniya. T.1 1802–1834. SPb, 1866, column 170–171; Tsirkulyarnoe predlozhenie o forme attestatov, vydavaemykh chinovnikam, podvergayushchimsya ispytaniyu dlya proizvodstva v vysshie chiny, 27 maya 1810, № 53 (A circular proposition concerning the form of certificates to be handed out to public servants undergoing examinations for promotion to higher ranks...) // Sbornik rasporyazheniy po Ministerstvu narodnogo prosveshcheniya. T.1 1802–1834. SPb, 1866, column 172–173.

<sup>17</sup> Remnev; Biktasheva A.N. Kazanskoe gubernatorstvo pervoy poloviny XIX veka: antropologiya vlasti. (The Kazan governorship in the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century: the anthropology of power...) Diss... dokt.ist.nauk. Kazan', 2011, pp.11–12.

early nineteenth century, this workflow was governed by the General Regulations of 1720 and by regulations designed for individual collegiums. These acts established written management.<sup>18</sup> The central figure in collegium document management was the chancery secretary.<sup>19</sup> He reported on issues to assessors and maintained two registers: one for finished and one for pending affairs. A notary drew up the minutes of meetings.<sup>20</sup> Collegiate registrars kept books on the flow of documents. Incoming documents were registered in Books S (documents received from the Emperor or the Senate) and D (documents received from other collegiums and local agencies). Outgoing documents were registered in Books A (documents sent to the Monarch or the Senate) and B (documents sent to collegiums, provincial institutions and individuals). To speed up searching, registrars maintained a reference journal in which a summary of each case was recorded.<sup>21</sup> The professorial council chanceries were required to introduce a similar system of internal document management.

Clerks drew up tables in which they recorded the sequential numbers of outgoing documents, their dates of issue and summaries. In some cases, the contents of received replies were also recorded. Copies of letters to the minister, the board, the Academic Committee, gymnasium boards and directors were often kept in such journals, too. This makes it possible for us today to get an idea of the extent and nature of the external communications of a university and to assess the scope and nature of the sources that have been lost.

The university council composed of full and distinguished professors and chaired by the rector was the supreme authority “for learning and judicial matters” (§ 47, 48). Its members were empowered to elect professors, honorary members and adjuncts, appoint ‘able persons’ as university professors and school and gymnasium teachers all over the district and control the manner and progress of their teaching, test students, discuss the ‘proposals’ of authorities, consider litigatory cases transferred from the board (§ 54), and discuss “works, new discoveries, experiments, observations and research” (§ 55). Using special reporting forms, council members had to communicate their decisions to the district curator. These decisions were subject to approval by the Minister of Education. Twice a year the secretary drew up a report and a bulletin about the university and secondary schools in the district (§ 52). Once a year, the Council was to examine the financial accounts and to report his results to the curator (§ 53).

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<sup>18</sup> General'nyi reglament, 28 fevralya 1720 (The General regulation...) // Reformy Petra I. Sb. dokumentov. M.: Gos. sots-ek. izd-vo, 1937, p. 110.

<sup>19</sup> Ibidem, pp. 112, 122.

<sup>20</sup> Ibidem, pp. 123–124.

<sup>21</sup> Ibidem, p. 125.

A Council Secretary, who was elected among the full professors, maintained a bound journal in which he recorded the names of the members attending each meeting, the issues discussed and the resolutions taken. Minutes as a form of record keeping were introduced in Russia at the beginning of the eighteenth century together with collegiums. It reflected the new manner of solving issues through collegial discussion and debate. In universities, minutes were drawn up during debates at meetings of councils, boards, academic committees and departments (later called faculties) as well as for public defense of dissertations. Minutes in bound journals allow us to reconstruct changes in the criteria for awarding academic degrees and admission to the caste of professors. At the beginning of the century, the assessment of knowledge and professionalism was not yet coded in points. Evaluations were descriptive, and minutes reflect the atmosphere of the discussions and the arguments of the parties.<sup>22</sup>

The university statute (§ 70) contained rules for the universities' communication with external bureaucratic institutions and officials of the empire. When addressing the Senate, a minister or a curator, the university council was to send them a report or a representation, as the legislator ordered. Extracts from the minute journals were to be sent to officials. Letters of order signed by the rector or by one of the council members and the secretary were to be sent to subordinates. Professors had to send to St. Petersburg reports and information notes written *ad libitum* or according to a sample received from the Ministry of Education. During Alexander I's reign, foreigners were allowed to fill out business papers in their native language. The records were then translated into Russian by translators on the staff of university councils.

Since professors and adjuncts were considered state employees in Russia, the university council was required to provide annual copies of the service records of all its members to the Office of the Minister and the Heraldry. One copy of the list of professors with the court rank of Chamberlain or Kammerjunker went to His Imperial Majesty's Office.<sup>23</sup> In the event of any changes, the council was obliged to immediately notify the 'highest authority', i.e. the curator and the ministry.

In the first two decades of the nineteenth century, service records were required to contain information concerning a person's age, origin, education, career, merits, censures, and service attitude. Teachers wrote their service records on cheap and plain paper. They did it themselves,

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<sup>22</sup> Cf., for example, the minutes of an exam kept in the Central Historical Archives of Moscow (= TSIAM): Collection (= Coll.) 418. Catalog (= Cat.) 496. File 1. Fol. 3.

<sup>23</sup> National Archives of the Republic of Tatarstan (= NART) Coll. 92, cat. 1, file 1961, fol. 1r-1v.

referring to themselves in third person and writing in any form, simply recalling and describing their service experience.<sup>24</sup> In these texts the voice of the university employee is clearly perceptible. It began to weaken later, and, in the 1830s, narrative self-description vanished completely from official documents.

The changing status of students was clearly reflected in the changing forms of university council reports about them. At the beginning of the century, the offices sent the curators lists of students specifying their name, age, origin, place of gymnasium or home schooling, branch of study, and academic performance. In this kind of reports, students got personal and detailed characteristics. After the late 1810s, however, the Ministry of Education demanded that professors combine such lists to form summary statements covering ten year periods, where students lost their personal characteristics and were distributed by categories.<sup>25</sup>

By sending annual reports and information notes to the capital, professors (regardless of nationality and origin) became involved in the network of special bureaucratic relationships (known as "institutional relations") and were incorporated into the bureaucratic hierarchy. Still, in the first decade of the nineteenth century, the degree of inclusion was fairly low, giving professors the illusion of corporate exclusivity. Cases of universities failing to submit annual reports and other forms of self-accounting were not improbable and did take place in the 1800s and 1810's. Subsequently, this became impossible. In the 1820s, the ministry insisted on council secretaries drawing up official documents "with perfection."<sup>26</sup> Inspectors examining the memoranda paid increasing attention to the quality of paper (despite the fact that the exemption from the use of stamped paper was officially confirmed in 1815 and 1822), the person's handwriting and his writing style. Metropolitan clerks most often criticized and rarely praised the university councils for this. "Not to mention the clearness and accuracy of writing and the clarity of meaning ... which should particularly distinguish places of learning," a ministerial officer arrogantly instructed a rector in 1815.<sup>27</sup>

Judging from journals of those years, the frequency of council meetings varied depending on the university. In Moscow, they were held twice a week. If the resolution adopted at a meeting evoked objections by individual council members, their stances and arguments were attached to

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<sup>24</sup> Cf.: NART. Coll. 92, cat. 1, file 105, fol. 6v.

<sup>25</sup> Zagoskin N.P. *Istoriya Imperatorskago Kazanskago univeristeta za pervyya sto let ego sushchestvovaniya. 1804–1904* (The history of the Kazan Imperial University during the first hundred years of its existence...): v 4 t. T. 1. *Vvedenie i chast' pervaya. 1804–1814*. Kazan': Kazanskiy imperatorskiy universitet, 1902, p. 528.

<sup>26</sup> NART. Coll. 92, cat. 1, file 599, fol. 72v.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibidem*.

the journal as a 'dissenting opinion'. This could be mistaken for a manifestation of university democracy, but, in actual fact, this practice had already existed in the eighteenth century with collegiate assessors. It was their experience of collective decision-making that ministry officials used as a model in their relationships with professors. The reason was that the university statute compared universities to collegiums.<sup>28</sup> In the mind of a Russian public servant, this generated associations which had nothing in common with Western corporate privileges. Therefore, foreign professors coming to Russian university cities found themselves in an ambivalent position: from their experience of corporate life in Western universities, professors believed that Russian universities enjoyed autonomy, while officials in charge of the implementation of government decisions interpreted this paragraph as endorsing bureaucratic collegiality.

The same ambivalence can be observed in the interpretation of relationships within universities. While granting universities autonomy, the 1804 Statute did not qualify disputes and conflicts as indicators of poor performance of a university. It stated that arguments and contradictions were to be settled at council meetings. Professors made use of this provision, bringing up ethical and status issues for open discussion.<sup>29</sup> The university documents of Alexander I's time are full of descriptions of such cases. Ministry officials, on the contrary, viewed this as a sign of mismanagement. They meddled in relationships between members of the academic corporation, informed professors about their 'displeasure' and removed 'trouble-makers' from universities. In the bureaucratic language of the time such decisions and actions were attributed to the need to "settle feuds", which meant silencing the aggrieved minority and letting the dominant group "do anything it liked."<sup>30</sup>

This ambiguity may have led to personal dramas for many Russian professors during the reign of Alexander I and made them think that officials violated the statute granted to universities by the emperor. In the archive of the Ministry of Education, we find correspondence between Kazan professors, University Director Yakovkin and Curator Rumovsky from 1805-1806 that bears evidence to this.<sup>31</sup> Professors and adjuncts argued that the council was entitled to administer the university treasury and appoint authorities within the university, while Director Yakovkin and

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<sup>28</sup> Utverditel'naya Gramoty Imperatorskikh Moskovskago, Khar'kovskago i Kazanskago Universitetov, 5 noyabrya 1804 (The Statutory Charters of the Imperial universities of Moscow, Kharkov and Kazan...) // Sbornik postanovleniy po Ministerstvu narodnogo prosveshcheniya. T.1. Tsarstvovanie imperatora Aleksandra I. 1802–1825. SPb, 1864.

<sup>29</sup> Vishlenkova E.A. Pamyat' o konfliktakh: osobennosti arkhiva Kazanskogo imperatorskogo universiteta (Remembrance of conflicts: peculiarities of the Kazan Imperial University's archives) // Ekho vekov. 2008. № 3, pp.54–71.

<sup>30</sup> Russian State Historical Archives (= RGIA). Coll. 733, cat. 40, file 116, fol. 62 v.

<sup>31</sup> NART. Coll. 977 cat. 'Rector', file 1. 13 fols.; NART. Coll. 977 cat. 'Rector', file 2. 40 fols.; NART. Coll. 977, cat. 'Rector', file 3. 33 fols.; NART. Coll. 977, cat. 'Rector', file 4. 12 fols.; NART. Coll. 977, cat. 'Rector', file 5. 25 fols.

Curator Rumovsky qualified their statements as turmoil and collision of "parties." Tellingly enough, the outraged professors were dismissed from the university.<sup>32</sup>

"University management" elected by subordinates was an exotic phenomenon in Russia's administrative culture. The elections of the rector and deans usually took place in May. Based on their results, data sheets were drawn up and sent to the district curator who then made a representation to the minister, adding his own "opinion." A few years after the statute was promulgated, these data sheets began to be sent for approval to the Ministry of Education. This procedure gave officials the temptation to impose their preferences on the scholar caste.

All curators wanted to have professors of "quiet disposition" as subordinates.<sup>33</sup> They considered it their duty to remove "troublesome" employees with "noisy personalities" from universities.<sup>34</sup> From the perspective of officials involved in relations based on subordination and execution, this was natural. As a result, they always pursued this policy, although it was contrary to the principle of academic democracy. Guided by their own opinion or by others' recommendations, curators insisted on the appointment of rectors that suited them personally rather than rectors elected by councils. This explains the delayed approval of election data sheets in St. Petersburg or the annulment of elections (as was the case with the election of Rector I.O. Braun in Kazan).<sup>35</sup>

In any case, the election results sent to the ministry were interpreted by officials in the interests of the state rather than the corporation. This is why professors of Kharkov University were ordered to elect Prof. Stoikovich, who "combines well-known activities with a perfect knowledge of Russian."<sup>36</sup> Comments ("opinions") written by officials in the margins of election data sheets pointed to the inability of professors to act in the public interest. For example, curator P. Obolensky wrote, "When electing the rector, professors tend to neglect the benefit of the place and are mostly attracted by his personality."<sup>37</sup>

On the eve of the war and after it, foreigners were suspected by officials of being unable to uphold the interests of the Russian state. As Curator of Moscow University, Count Alexey Razumovsky felt uncomfortable about foreigners being elected deans because they

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<sup>32</sup> RGIA. Coll. 733, cat. 39, file 40, fol. 1–14.

<sup>33</sup> RGIA. Coll. 733, cat. 39, file 95, fol. 9.

<sup>34</sup> NART. Coll. 92, cat. 1, file 340 JI. 38–40.

<sup>35</sup> RGIA. Coll. 733, cat. 39, file 95, fol. 9.

<sup>36</sup> RGIA. Coll. 733, cat. 49, file 90, fol. 1 v.

<sup>37</sup> RGIA. Coll. 733, cat. 28, file 307, fol. 3.

"don't know the language and don't have a sufficient understanding of our laws," which would lead to "frequent misunderstandings" at the University.<sup>38</sup> He was echoed by Curator Pototsky in Kharkov.<sup>39</sup> Obviously, the curators preferred that universities be governed by their fellow countrymen, who were accustomed to obeying and had no place to go, rather than by foreigners who "thought too highly of themselves."

The same reasons were behind the manipulations of "higher authorities" concerning the rector's term of office. According to the statute, the shortest term was one year. The councils expressed no discontent on this issue. One year was enough for professors to see the elected person's administrative ability, and, if he proved incompetent, they would not give him their votes again in the next election. The rector, in turn, had a chance of getting rid of the "cumbersome position" after one year in office.

However, the frequent turnover of rectors created a lot of inconvenience for ministry officials. First of all, elections caused turmoil. They were accompanied by professors' struggle for reputation, as well as provoking the formation of "factions".<sup>40</sup> Secondly, one year was not enough for a rector to "get accustomed", i.e. to understand the interests of the government and to learn to get along with the curator. Since the annually elected rectors depended on the opinions of their colleagues rather than on the wishes of the "higher authorities," they did not strive to execute the instructions of the Main Academic Board. This led all the curators to unanimously advocate longer terms for rectors. They encouraged and even imposed the re-election of rectors for two, three and more terms. By 1811, members of the Main Academic Board adopted a resolution legalizing this and got the emperor's assent to include it in the statute. The logic of bureaucratic experience served as rationale for this.<sup>41</sup>

According to the statute, the rector sat on several university self-government bodies. In addition to the council, he chaired the meetings of the administrative board which was in charge of the university's budget and economy.<sup>42</sup> "Cash Books" usually served as a basis for reprimanding universities during government inspections. Therefore, keeping these books required special

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<sup>38</sup> RGIA. Coll. 733, cat. 28, file 71, fol. 18.

<sup>39</sup> RGIA. Coll. 733, cat. 49, file 90, fol. 1v.

<sup>40</sup> RGIA. Coll. 733, cat. 49, file 90, fol. 16v.

<sup>41</sup> Ob izbranii Rektora v Moskovskom Universitete na tri goda, 16 sentyabrya 1809 (On electing the rector of the Moscow University for three years... ) // Sbornik postanovleniy po Ministerstvu narodnogo prosveshcheniya. – T.1. Tsarstvovanie imperatora Aleksandra I. 1802–1825. – SPb., 1864. – T. 1.–№ 115, column 522–523; Ob izbranii Rektorov v Khar'kovskom i Kazanskom Universitetakh chrez kazhdye tri goda (26 maya 1811) (On electing the rectors of the Kazan and Kharkov Universities every three years... ) // Ibidem. № 161, column 634–635.

<sup>42</sup> For example: NART. Coll. 92, cat. 'Board', file 1. 1 fol.

knowledge and thoroughness. All expended amounts and all excess expenditures had to be reported to the curator on a monthly basis. The administrative board had to send him a "detailed and accurate statement of income and expenditure." In January, the board presented its annual report to the council.

To be sure, the statute did not direct professors to sit on several boards simultaneously. However, since provincial universities failed to hire all the 28 professors that they were supposed to, all available teachers were assigned to self-government bodies. As a result, the same persons sat on the council, the administrative board, the Academic Committee and faculty councils. This assured good connections and transparency of action. However, the ministry demanded that the interaction between all the "academic places" should take place in form of written communication. Therefore, the administrative board communicated with the council not verbally but with the help of written copies of resolutions, petitions, excerpts from meeting minutes ("journals"), and reports.

The largest amount of correspondence was most likely handled by the university Academic Committee. Its task was to create educational institutions and organize teaching in them. Its members reported in writing to the Main Academic Board about the elected directors of schools, petitioned for "recommendable teachers," sent special letters of warning to irresponsible ("negligent") teachers and sought dismissal of bad workers. Besides, they were to draw up special reports to notify the council and curator of emergencies in schools and state their reasons. Professors elected to the Academic Committee corresponded with the directors of gymnasiums and schools and studied their reports (§ 166). In addition, they compiled consolidated reports on inspection trips (carried out by professors sitting on the same committee or appointed by the council) to district secondary schools. In these accounts they presented themselves to the government as civilizing the empire.<sup>43</sup>

According to §52 of the "Statute of educational institutions under the jurisdiction of universities" teachers and directors of gymnasiums were obliged to draw up 'historical notes'. Reformers in the government hoped that they would be used one day to write a history of the Russian State describing educational activities in the language of facts and figures. By January 1 of each year, a copy of every "historical note" was to be submitted to the Academic Committee, whose members were charged to monitor the timely implementation of this requirement and, if necessary, to request a report from the institutions that failed to submit their notes on time. The collected 'historical notes' were sent to the district curator, who handed them to the Main

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<sup>43</sup> NART. Coll. 977, coll. 'Council', file 359a.

Academic Board. Using the data collected from teachers, professors had to prepare reports on their respective district as a whole. This required some data verification, generalizing, comparing, and reasoning. The final version of the text was a history of education spread over the district. After its discussion the council sent this document to the curator for subsequent submission to the Minister of Education (§ 168). Most likely on the basis of these reports, the ministry formed a view of the status and problems of education in the empire as a whole.

The rapid process of involving the allegedly ‘self-governing’ scholar caste in serving the needs of the government quickly changed the activities of the Academic Committee. In addition to creating new schools and controlling already existing ones, the ministry demanded from committee members various figures on the resources of the empire.

As a matter of fact, neither the statute of Moscow University (1755), nor the general university statute (1804) envisaged that professors were to engage in such activities. Universities were required to be "hotbeds of science," which implied the promotion of regulatory knowledge and the fostering of an educated elite. However, almost immediately after the adoption of the statute, universities began to receive orders of the Ministry of Education demanding that they examine and describe the parts of the empire falling within the range of their activities.<sup>44</sup>

In October 1812, Minister Alexey Razumovsky sent instructions to curators on collecting the required information.<sup>45</sup> In contrast to the reformers of the early phase of Alexander I’s reign, Razumovsky wanted no stories about the establishment of schools: he sought topographical, meteorological, ethnographical and economic data. Apparently, the minister’s idea was to turn departmental records into a scientific description of the empire. This initiative required members of academic committees to perform enormous analytical work and created special committees to interpret the collected data.<sup>46</sup>

A study of ‘historical notes’ submitted over a long period of time has shown that the initiative of the ministry could only be implemented through constant coercion. Whenever the ministry’s pressure on the provincial universities weakened, disruptions occurred in the supply of empirical data. Accordingly, to gather this data, professors overloaded with other duties had to overwork on a daily basis, corresponding at length with teachers and repeatedly sending them reminders and clarifications. After receiving the reports, it was a challenge for members of the committee

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<sup>44</sup> Cf.: RGIA. Coll. 733, cat. 49, file 13, fol. 5 v.

<sup>45</sup> TSIAM. Coll. 459, cat. 1, file 712, fol. 1.

<sup>46</sup> TSIAM. Coll. 459, cat. 1, file 712, fol. 2v; TSIAM. Coll. 459, cat. 1, file 712, fol. 5.

to make a general description of the district out of these disparate texts. Most often, the ministry was not satisfied with the quality of their work and concluded that professors were unable to govern schools.

From 1823 on, St. Petersburg officials demanded a new type of reports from Academic Committees. Professors were required to make statistical tabulations on the basis of the data they collected.<sup>47</sup> This requirement brought Academic Committees to a standstill. Not being able to create tables from extensive heterogeneous data, professors asked ministry officials to design uniform reporting forms for all secondary education institutions.

Having silenced ‘feuds’ – that is, professors’ discontent with and resistance to bureaucratic harassment – ministerial clerks began to treat the university self-government bodies as ordinary government offices and even ranked them.<sup>48</sup> Thus, an Academic Committee had no right to speak directly with state institutions (the so-called ‘direct communication’ right). To address gymnasiums, schools, courts or police stations, committee members turned to their colleagues from the university council or board for help, sending them all the petitions, reports and other documents. As a result, apart from their own duties, board and council members also had to deal with the affairs of academic committees (which meant the affairs of all secondary schools of their respective district), writing queries, reports, memoranda, etc., on their behalf. Such an order of communication created a bureaucratic hierarchy (the board came to be inferior to the council, and the Academic Committee began to depend on the board) and imposed double the amount of paperwork on self-government bodies.

The development of university document management in the first third of the nineteenth century appears to have been aimed at subjecting universities to norms imposed by the government and at their dissolution in the administrative system of the empire. As a result, professors no longer identified themselves as members of a self-governing corporation and as civilizers of Russia: they only dreamt of having their clerical duties reduced.

#### *University as a ‘state-run corporation’*

In the 1830s, the technology and nature of university document management changed. The growing production of high-quality low-cost paper made it possible to provide all offices with

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<sup>47</sup> TSIAM. Coll. 459, cat. 1. T.1, file 2256.

<sup>48</sup> NART. Coll. 92, cat. 1, file 4268, fol. 1.

blank forms and multiply their copies. As a result, the volume of paperwork in those years grew faster than universities. The Moscow University Council pointed out in its 1833 report that the intensity of its activity is attested by the number of incoming (4,675) and outgoing (5,417) documents.<sup>49</sup> The University of Kazan, although its staff was significantly smaller than that of Moscow University, had a similar document turnover in those years.

Still, the life of university teachers was affected even more by the new concept of government based on what was termed *Polizeywissenschaft* ('administrative science') in German than by the new paperwork technology. In the political utopia, the *Polizeystaat* – a state in which the people prosper and are happy – was to be achieved through personal development of the people and improvement of governance. The State itself was represented as a living organism distinguished by versatile and all-encompassing administrative activity.

Count Sergey Uvarov was among those that set out to build such a state in Russia. After carrying out an audit of Moscow University, he was appointed Deputy Minister of Education (1832), then Ministry Manager (1833), and finally Minister of Education (1834). He started his work in office by designing an ideology for his ministry and disseminating it among the curators of educational districts. Later on he explained that it was important for him to create a circle of fellow believers.<sup>50</sup> Forcing the curators to read and write ideological texts, the minister strove to solve the important tactical task of shaping a new type of enlightened bureaucrats.

In the pursuit of rational and unified management, the ministry sent out standardized forms for official papers to all districts. For example, track records were now (1833) to be submitted in table form common to all government offices of the empire. The tables were based on the civil servants' personal file form that had been imposed by a Senate decree in 1798. The service record of a professor became an important public document which was drawn up by a clerk, signed by the rector and the originator, filled in with cliché phrases, and stitched into a single book with a name index attached.<sup>51</sup> Such service records contained only data that was demanded by the ministry. It was the ministry who defined the parameters of the model civil servant. Therefore, every professor compared himself with the given model. Anything that did not coincide with the pattern fell into the category of marginality (such as "belonging to all kinds of

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<sup>49</sup> TSIAM. Coll. 418, cat. 2, file 234, fol. 12v.

<sup>50</sup> Desyatiletie ministerstva narodnogo prosveshcheniya. 1833–1843 (The tenth anniversary of the Ministry of Education...) // Uvarov S.S. Izbrannye trudy. M., 2009, p. 348.

<sup>51</sup> Tsirkulyarnoe predlozhenie o svoevremennom predstavlenii formulyarnykh spiskov i svedeniy o peremenakh chinovnikov, 21 dekabrya 1834 (A circular proposition concerning the timely submission of service records and information about changes in officials ...) // Sbornik rasporyazheniy po Ministerstvu narodnogo prosveshcheniya. T.1. 1850–1864. SPb, 1866. № 510, column 985–987.

societies, including secret ones"). As time passed, though, the range of information of interest to the ministry expanded. The report forms transferred the professor's private life (religion, marital status, children, property) into the public space.<sup>52</sup>

After the introduction, of this practice professors were no longer entitled to self-description, which meant they became identical to other government officials. From that time on, if a professor had to render personal data about himself, he did so by submitting certificates from other institutions. His loyalty was demonstrated not by an oral statement (oath) or action (performance of duties) but by a written testimony from third parties (e.g., a priest's statement that a foreign national's children were born in Russia).

Drawing up the annual report was now tantamount to taking stock of the university and making an inventory of its property.<sup>53</sup> Quantitative indicators came to play the leading role in the evaluation of its performance. A verbal description of the work done during the year was no longer enough. Professors had to supplement the text with tables filled with data from the report and other documents. This allowed ministry officials to check the accuracy of the information and consolidate data from different universities. Summary tables showed differences in the number of students, teachers, chairs, rooms, books, etc., between universities, which made it easier to justify decisions aimed at further standardizing or prioritizing universities.

One of the statements was a list of teachers and other employees of the university. It indicated their rank, office, place of birth, birth status, age, religion, marital status, time in office, place of study, academic degree, publications, work in other places, salary (regular and additional), and dining and lodging allowance (or use of official housing).<sup>54</sup> In these lists, the 'professorial caste' dissolved in a larger and more amorphous group of 'university officials' or 'class of academic officials'.

Even before the corresponding social reality evolved, clerical texts recorded the new political status of the university community. Under the Uvarov system, professors, adjuncts and lecturers ceased to be subjects of university life. Through personnel selection<sup>55</sup> and significant salary increases, the ministry turned university employees into objects of management, suppliers of raw

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<sup>52</sup> Shchetinina 1977, pp. 84–96.

<sup>53</sup> TSIAM. Coll. 418, cat. 2, file 234, fol. 1–157.

<sup>54</sup> Bulgakova 1978, p. 247.

<sup>55</sup> Cf. Kostina T.V. *Peresmotr kadrovogo sostava russkikh universitetov v 1835–37 gg.* // *Trudy istoricheskogo fakul'teta Sankt-Peterburgskogo universiteta* (An overhaul of the personnel of Russian universities in 1835-37...). SPb., 2011 (forthcoming).

data on the empire, and cogs in the state machine ("the government's tools"<sup>56</sup>). The minister insisted that their task was to teach young people "to think and feel Russian: only in this way the future members of society will make up one large family sharing the same thoughts, the same will, and the same feeling."<sup>57</sup> The government managed to achieve this goal without resistance from intellectuals because it had imposed bureaucratic rules of life, a bureaucratic language and an ethos of public service on them.

During the reign of Nicholas I the government progressively eradicated individualistic language from administration. Rationality was believed to mean depersonalization and mathematization of all spheres of public life, stock-taking, and accurate calculations. People affected by this trend suffered heavily from "excessive statistical tendency."<sup>58</sup>

Fulfilling Uvarov's instructions, universities sent council memoranda to the ministry every month. Three times a year they sent statements about donations, information about the results of examinations for officials, and lists of expelled students. Every six months, they drew up lists of students,<sup>59</sup> lists of designated and hereditary nobility, lists of young nobles, chamberlains and kammerjunkers, and lists of companions of orders and persons decorated by badges of honor for immaculate service. Twice a year, the council was obliged to submit a list of employees to the Third Section of the Imperial Chancery. In addition, professors compiled Senate decrees every month. Three times a year they supplied the ministry with information about physicians,<sup>60</sup> budget expenditures and teachers who missed their classes.

Requiring strict observance of the prescribed forms and deadlines of reports, the minister assured his subordinates that all efforts were aimed at the timely execution of affairs. At the same time, the ministry kept tightening the deadlines and increasing the amount of papers to be presented for each issue, accelerating thereby the pace of employees' life. For example, after sending out

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<sup>56</sup> Uvarov S.S. Tsirkulyarnoe predlozhenie upravlyayushchego ministerstvom narodnogo prosveshcheniya nachal'stvam uchebnykh okrugov o vstupenii v upravlenie ministerstvom (A circular proposition of the head of the Ministry of Education to the curators of educational districts concerning his assumption of office...) // Zhurnal ministerstva narodnogo prosveshcheniya. 1834. Ch.I, №1, p. L.

<sup>57</sup> Tsirkulyarnoe predlozhenie popechitelyu Moskovskogo uchebnogo okruga, 1847 (A circular proposition to the curator of the Moscow educational district ...) // Uvarov S.S. Izbrannye trudy / Sost., avtor komment., perevoda V.S. Parsamov. M., 2009, p. 500.

<sup>58</sup> TSIAM. Coll. 459, cat. 2, file 1741, fol. 52–52v.

<sup>59</sup> TSIAM. Coll. 459, cat. 2, file 1741, fol. 4, 7, 9, 18–18v.

<sup>60</sup> TSIAM. Coll. 459, cat. 2, file 1741, fol. 27v.

samples of new documents in the summer of 1833, Uvarov demanded six months later that professors submit their reports in compliance with the new forms.<sup>61</sup>

Impersonal lists and tables came to prevail among the numerous papers circulating between universities and the Ministry of Education.<sup>62</sup> Uvarov believed that figures were the main indicator of the well-coordinated functioning and efficiency of the entire system as well as a means of depriving professors of the right to evaluate their own performance. No one could say anything about the quality of research or teaching or about the necessity of professional expertise anymore. Uvarov's employees took little interest in the opinion of professors or in the scientific quality of their work. After receiving tables that were drawn up at the price of titanic efforts, officials were outraged that "book-keeping at most of them [i.e. universities] was not in proper order."<sup>63</sup>

Curators tried to back themselves up by sending copies of all their orders to the ministry and requesting the minister's permission for everything. The university councils reported the smallest incidents to St. Petersburg.

When presenting the summary report to the emperor, the minister accompanied it with his 'humble report'.<sup>64</sup> Upon their approval by the tsar, both texts were published in the *Journal of the Ministry of Education* (reformed by Uvarov), while reports of curators were published separately by university publishing houses.

The matrix invented by Uvarov to describe universities represented them as properly arranged bureaucratic institutions or government departments (in fact, officials referred to it them as "the University department"), leaving out some of their functions such as extracurricular communication between professors and students or other scholars, corporate conflicts and scientific debates, as well as educational activities not authorized by the government. All of this was either prohibited or assigned to the private sphere. In the annual reports, there was no place anymore for instructors' personal opinions, student voices, or the expression of different

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<sup>61</sup> Tsirkulyarnoe predlozhenie o nablyudenii pravil i form kantselyarskago poryadka, 8 fevralya 1834 (A circular proposition concerning the observance of rules and forms of paperwork...) // Sbornik rasporyazheniy po Ministerstvu narodnogo prosveshcheniya. T. 1. SPb., 1866, column 899–901.

<sup>62</sup> The curator of the Moscow University testified to this: TSIAM. Coll. 459, cat. 2, file 1741, fol. 52r–52v.

<sup>63</sup> O pravilakh i formakh otchetnosti, 1 sentyabrya 1834 (On the rules and forms of reporting...) // Sbornik rasporyazheniy po Ministerstvu narodnogo prosveshcheniya. T. 1. SPb., 1866. №492, column 942.

<sup>64</sup> Bulgakova 1978, p. 246.

opinions or emotions. Individual persons merged in these texts, first into depersonalized 'students' and then into a homogenous 'student body'.

Uvarov justified the total bureaucratization of universities by saying that his intention was to "elevate university teaching to a rational form."<sup>65</sup> And, since bureaucrats understood rationality as columns of verified figures and easy-to-control structures, the entire corporation of professional civil servants did their best to make professors submit their reports. Gradually, this management system began to change the identity of academic personnel. As the report became the end purpose of everything done at a university, all things that were not mentioned in the report seemed redundant. It was clear to lecturers that performance indicators were the number of admitted students, the staff size, the capacity of hospitals, the budget, the total work time and the number of publications rather than the quality of lectures, the students' interest in subjects, or the scientific discoveries made. Qualitative characteristics were rarely discussed by university councils. If this occurred, such discussions were perceived by officials as chaos or disorder – a noise disturbing the unanimity of opinions and the homogenous spirit of teaching.

This kind of system existed from the early 1830s until the end of the 1840s, when the monarch began to show distrust to the information that he was being offered. Count Alexander Benckendorff, who competed with Uvarov, put in doubt the reliability of reports by the Ministry of Education as early as in the 1830s.<sup>66</sup> "These results are contrary to reality," - he continued to insist in 1843.<sup>67</sup> Researchers believe that Nicholas I "did not really trust Uvarov but realized that he could not find a better minister; therefore, he preferred to content himself with his optimistic reporting for the time being."<sup>68</sup> As to the professors, their negative reaction is understandable, considering how much time they spent on collecting, compiling, and processing data for their reports.

The district curators, too, notified the emperor that the Uvarov management system was inefficient. Relying on the personal support of the monarch, the Moscow curator fearlessly spoke about this to the minister himself.<sup>69</sup> Insubordination and disrespect cost Stroganov his office: he had to resign in 1847. Yet, by that time, Uvarov's position had become much weaker, too, and he soon resigned.

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<sup>65</sup> Uvarov 2009, p. 355.

<sup>66</sup> Rossiya pod nadzorom. Otchety III Otdeleniya. 1827–1869 (Russia under surveillance. Reports of the Third Section...). M., 2006, p. 210.

<sup>67</sup> Ibidem, pp. 333–334.

<sup>68</sup> Parsamov V.S., Udalov S.V. Sergey Semenovich Uvarov // Uvarov 2009, p. 20.

<sup>69</sup> RGADA. Coll. 1278 The Stroganovs, cat. 1, file 173, fol. 115.

Almost immediately after the fall of the omnipotent minister, his subordinates began to dismantle his system.<sup>70</sup> It was important for teachers to concentrate on teaching and not spend too much time on paperwork, according to Uvarov's successor Platon Shirinsky-Shikhmatov.<sup>71</sup> The need for change was easy to justify, since Uvarov's resignation coincided with a change in policy after the European Revolutions of 1848 and a critical revision of the entire system of government. In this regard, a *Committee to search for measures to reduce paperwork for civilian agencies* was formed in the spring of 1851 in St. Petersburg. Its task was to optimize and restructure public administration. To this end, the committee gathered input from stakeholders on necessary and unnecessary papers.<sup>72</sup>

"The main reason why record keeping and writing reached such an exuberant scope in our country," wrote the Moscow curator Vladimir Nazimov, "is, in my opinion, the uneven distribution of power between different instances of the same department. An excessive concentration of all kinds of cases in higher institutions and the lack of independence in the activities of medium and lower agencies and individuals, who completely depend on higher institutions even in the most unimportant cases, cannot fail to generate an enormous correspondence, reducing which would be so helpful. This leads to all the shortcomings that we observe in our administration, the slowdown in the course of affairs, and the inevitable confusion and excess writing work, which burdens all government agencies and makes it necessary for the government to maintain a huge number of officials."<sup>73</sup>

The curator realized that he could only motivate bureaucrats to make changes by referring to their own interests rather than the hardships of professors. So he talked about the benefits of the state: "Such excessive centralization is harmful to the very essence of the affairs handled, because metropolitan institutions, far from the range of local interests, can hardly be free from fallacy in their views and decisions taken on issues that can be sufficiently familiar only to local authorities."<sup>74</sup> Rectors and directors of secondary schools asked the minister to abolish all the intermediate forms of reporting and to consolidate different forms into one.<sup>75</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> On the abolition of the Uvarov 'system' see: Vitteker Ts.Kh. Graf Sergey Semenovich Uvarov i ego vremya.(Count Sergey Uvarov and his time...) SPb., 1999, p. 258.

<sup>71</sup> TSIAM. Coll. 459, cat. 2, file 1741, fol. 11r-11v.

<sup>72</sup> TSIAM. Coll. 459, cat. 2, file 1741, fol. 1.

<sup>73</sup> TSIAM. Coll. 459, cat. 2, file 1741, fol. 51r-51v.

<sup>74</sup> TSIAM. Coll. 459, cat. 2, file 1741, fol. 51r-51v.

<sup>75</sup> TSIAM. Coll. 459, cat. 2, file 1741, fol. 38.

In January 1852, the State Council passed a resolution on the reduction of paperwork and correspondence for the civil administration, and the Ministry of Education abolished many types of reporting previously required from universities.<sup>76</sup> In 1857, Nikolay Varadinov, an official in the Ministry of the Interior, published a manual on document management in the Russian Empire.<sup>77</sup> It contained samples of necessary and sufficient documents classified by type and identified the purpose of each and its place in the system. Varadinov, an ideologist of bureaucratic rationality, claimed that 'paperwork' or 'document management' is 1. "A science which sets the rules for drawing up work papers, acts, and records" and 2. "The general order of procedure to handle cases in government agencies according to forms prescribed by law and in accordance with established patterns of work papers."<sup>78</sup>

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The archival sources we studied have provided convincing evidence that, due to historical circumstances, the university culture in Russia formed on the basis of the presumption that "the university is an agent of the government's policy." This attitude defined the nature of paper flow and the type of communication between university councils and government offices (administrative institutions) in the Russian Empire. It should be pointed out that the transformation of the university into a state institution was not a unique phenomenon in Russian history. In the nineteenth century, the production and circulation of knowledge were put under government control in many European countries. Russia was unique insofar as the Ministry of Education required that universities stick to the same rules of document management as other administrative institutions, comply with its rules, and speak the language of *bureaucratese*. In a gentle and gradual manner, this social practice changed the semantics of university self-government. Standardized forms of reports and minutes, the standardized language of representations, synchronized paperwork procedures, and impersonalized texts left professors no opportunities to express their own opinions and to take the initiative in communicating with the state.

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<sup>76</sup> Sbornik rasporyazheniy po Ministerstvu narodnogo prosveshcheniya (Collection of instructions of the Ministry of Education...). T. 2. SPb., 1866, column 50–52, 54–58, 60, 81–82, 493–499.

<sup>77</sup> Varadinov N.V. Deloproizvodstvo ili teoreticheskoe i prakticheskoe rukovodstvo k grazhdanskomu i ugovnomu, kollegial'nomu i odnolichnomu pis'movodstvu, k sostavleniyu vseh pravitel'stvennyh i chastnyh delovyh bumag i k vedeniyu samih del, s prilozheniem k onym obrazcov i form (Paperwork or a theoretical and practical guide to civil and criminal, collective and individual documentation management, to the drawing up of government and private documents and to the handling of the cases themselves, with samples and forms attached...): v 2-h ch. SPb., 1857.

<sup>78</sup> Varadinov 1857. Ch. 1, p. 1.

Without resorting to harsh measures and direct coercion, the ministry introduced a regime in universities under which professors involved in university management became bureaucrats. Due to the logic of paperwork, the Russian university in the first half of the nineteenth century was a structural unit of the state machine rather than a partner or ally of the state. This was a clear disadvantage in comparison with the status of universities in the West.

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