

# Not for Citation

*Yoko Aoshima* (Tokyo University)

## **The Emergence of Professional Elites during the Great Reforms: the Teachers Collectives in Universities and Gymnasia**

### **Introduction**

In the 1990s, the study of Russian professionals began to attract the attention of Russian history scholars as a means of reevaluating Russian civil society in Late Imperial Russia. In these studies, professionals were regarded as a main component of the “middle class,” the social basis of civil society. The contributors of these studies, through studying professionals, attempted to reveal various aspects of the civic network and the characteristics of “a new public culture,” instead of just repeating the traditional view that Imperial Russia failed to create “a strong, autonomous civil society.”<sup>1</sup>

The most notable feature of the new studies on professionals was that the strong power of the Russian state was no longer regarded as simply an obstacle for professionals. These studies indicated that the state might also be an “important partner” and “an opportunity”<sup>2</sup> for Russian professionals seeking to perform their services. Furthermore, some scholars even argued that the state was “the parent of occupational groups”<sup>3</sup> and “the major agent of social transformation.”<sup>4</sup> Therefore, the real issue was

---

<sup>1</sup> Clowes, W., Samuel D. Kassow and James L. West. Between Tsar and People: Educated Society and the Quest for Public Identity in Late Imperial Russia. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991; Balzer, Harley D. Russia's missing middle class: The Professions in Russian History. Armonk: M.E. Sharpe, 1996. With regard to the traditional image of Late Imperial Russia, it is enough to remember the following Raeff's comment: “Civil society fell apart before it had a chance to develop an autonomous corporate structure.” Raeff, Marc. Understanding Imperial Russia: State and Society in the Old Regime. Trans. Arthur Goldhammer. New York: Columbia University Press, 1982. 223-225.

<sup>2</sup> Balzer. “Introduction.” Russia's missing middle class. 6, 10.

<sup>3</sup> Orlovsky, Daniel T. “Professionalism in the Ministerial Bureaucracy on the Eve of the February

now not any longer political oppression and liberation of professionals from the state. Rather, what was important was that Russian professionals were faced with a dilemma. They wished “to free themselves from the tutelage of the state, while still using the state for their own ends.”<sup>5</sup> This dilemma, called the “Janus-faced relationship,” was an essential element which led to both the development and stagnation of Russian professionals in Late Imperial Russia.

These studies, however, have not made clear the origin of this “Janus-faced relationship,” because they focused on professional activities mainly in the Late Imperial period. In point of fact, the framework for the status and activities of Russian professionals was formed during the Great Reforms. At the same time, a complicated relationship among professionals, state, and society correspondingly was being generated. This paper will show how the government and professionals were making up the fundamental framework for the status and activities of Russian professionals, taking the example of teachers collectives in universities and gymnasias under the Ministry of Public Instruction (the MNP).

Teachers were one of the most important professional groups, because they were large in quantity, and played an important role in spreading new knowledge and new culture within Russian society. There have already been prominent studies of

---

Revolution of 1917.” *ibid.* 268.

<sup>4</sup> Kassow, Samuel D. “Russia’s unrealized civil society.” *Between tsar and people*. 368.

<sup>5</sup> Bailes, Kendal E. “Reflections on Russian Professions.” *Russia’s missing middle class*. 45.

teacher collective such as those of Kassow, Roune, Seregny, and Eklof.<sup>6</sup> These studies clearly explained social conditions, as well as the professional and political activities of teachers in Late Imperial Russia. In particular, they highlighted conflicts between the government and teachers collectives, and among teachers themselves in the Revolution of 1905. Kassow and Roune, through the study of university and city (secondary level) teachers respectively, focused on the mingled and strained identities of teachers collectives between those of state servants and professionals. The conclusions from this analysis, however, were divided between Kassow and Roune; Kassow stressed failure to develop a stable university system owing to the ambiguous position of the professorate, while Roune argued that city teachers created “a new work ethic” from the traditional state service ethic. At any rate, their studies indicated that their dual identity and interwoven relationship with the state had decisive meanings, either positive or negative, for the professional activities of teachers collectives. Little attention, however, has yet been given as to how this fused relationship between the state and professionals was created. In relation to this problem, when we remember that Seregny underlined politicization and radicalization of village (elementary level) teachers against the government, it is worthwhile asking if their situation was fundamentally different from

---

<sup>6</sup> Kassow, Samuel D. Students, Professors, and the State in Tsarist Russia. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989; Ruane, Christine. Gender, Class, and the Professionalization of Russian City Teachers, 1860-1914. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1994; Seregny, Scott J. Russian Teachers and Peasant Revolution: The Politics of Education in 1905. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1989; Eklof, Ben. Russian Peasant Schools: Officialdom, Village Culture, and Popular Pedagogy, 1861-1914. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986.

teachers collectives of higher and secondary education.<sup>7</sup> To answer these questions, we should turn attention to the Great Reforms.<sup>8</sup>

The first decades of the Great Reforms were the crucial period for the Russian teachers collectives. Firstly, in this period, the government started creating a full-scale educational system in earnest, and reformed all the existing laws on educational institutions. In this process, the government produced clear divisions between higher, secondary, and elementary education. Correspondingly, teacher's statuses were divided. Secondly, the teachers themselves took part in this reform process by providing opinions on educational legal bills. In doing so, teachers expressed their desires for how to secure a basis of their professional activities.

The main strategy of teachers collectives under the MNP was, above all, to get a guarantee of their social status and salary from the state. The reason they desired state support was that they could not expect support other than that of the state. The MNP was established in the first years of the 19<sup>th</sup> century by Alexander I, who attempted to introduce a new general education system based on Enlightenment thought. This general

---

<sup>7</sup> Seregny's analytical framework was "village teachers," while Roune's was "city teachers." In this paper, teachers are classified according to educational hierarchy: higher (university level), secondary (gymnasia/pro-gymnasia level), and elementary school (*narod* school level). In this structure, we can consider secondary school teachers as being analogous to the city teachers on which Roune writes, while elementary school teachers are analogous to Seregny's village teachers.

<sup>8</sup> Several studies have been made on the educational reform process of the Great Reforms. The focus of the studies, however, was on the confrontation between the state and educational professionals. See, for example, the following; Mathes, W.L. "The Struggle for University Autonomy in the Russian Empire during the First Decade of the Reign of Alexander II." Ph.D.diss., Columbia University, 1966; Eimontva, R.G. *Russkie universitety na putiakh reformy: shestidesiatye gody XIX veka*. M. 1993; Smirnov, V.Z. *Reforma nachal'noi i srednei shkoly v 60-kh godakh XIX v. M.* 1954; Kohls, W.A. "The State-sponsored Russian Secondary School in the Reign of Alexander II: The First Phase: Search for a New Formula(1855-1864)." Ph.D.diss., University of California, 1967.

education, which was open to all estates, was in contrast to the traditional practical education, which was closely connected with the Russian estate system.<sup>9</sup> The new education system, therefore, was not easily accepted in society because it was incompatible with the existing social order. Due to this situation, teachers were forced to be exclusively dependent on the state.

The reason, however, was not only that they preferred stable salary and status as state servants. They also required special status as professionals different from mere officials. The general education system itself was newly introduced by the state in order to change Russian society, and teachers collectives were an important corps for accomplishing this aim of the state. Teachers, becoming aware of their professional consciousness, demanded guarantee of the firm status as this important corps, that is to say, professional elites. They thought they were performing a significant task for society, commissioned by the state. And as such, they claimed they should be supported and privileged by the state.

They even tried to create a basis for their professional activities in the state administration, avoiding influences from social estates. This was supposed to be done by changing the form of the administrative organization from a bureaucratic (hierarchical) to a collegiate (nonhierarchical) one. In order to secure their autonomous activities in this collegiate body, they also required nonintervention from other officials. By

---

<sup>9</sup> Vladimirskii-Budanov, M.F. Gosudarstvo i narodnoe obrazovanie v Rossii XVIII-go veka. Iaroslavl', 1874.

avoiding such influences, they tried to create a quasi-professional corporation within the state administration.

Therefore, a mingled relationship between the state and professional teachers was created as a result of the desire of teachers collectives to found a basis for their professional activities within the state administration, independent from the traditional society. The groups which actually got this status of professional elites were teachers collectives of universities and gymnasia. The following chapters will examine these two groups. In addition, to clarify the status of these two groups, the last chapter will refer to elementary school teachers, a group which lost the status of professional elites.

### **1. University teachers as “the scholarly estate”**

The foundation of the professional consciousness of university professors was created in the formative process of the new university law of 1863. The professorate started to regard itself as an autonomous corporation called “the scholarly estate”, which was privileged by the state.

The model that the professors in the Great Reforms sought for was an original status of the Russian university in 1804. The Russian university system was established by laws of 1804, through which new universities were founded at Khar’kov and Kazan (later in St. Petersburg in 1819), and Moscow University was renewed<sup>10</sup>. At the same

---

<sup>10</sup> Polnoe Sbranoie Zakonov (PSZ) I, no.21497, 21498, 21499, 21500(1804/11/5); no.27675(1819/2/8).

time as the new laws, special charters to the universities were promulgated from Alexander I. There the universities were defined as “an estate of scholarly men (*soslovie uchenykh myzhei*)” under the direct auspices of the Emperor. The charters gave to this “estate” privileges and rights, such as the right to elect their rectors, to decide personnel affairs and internal rules, and rights of publication and censorship. The main organization of this “estate” was a collegiate university council of all teachers. These teachers, comprised of professors and assistant-professors, were regarded as state servants with 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> ranks respectively.<sup>11</sup>

These autonomous rights of the universities were based on the German university model,<sup>12</sup> but also closely connected with the administrative role in the newly introduced general educational system. Each university was built in the central city of a given educational district (originally six), and in addition to the management of its own affairs, was supposed to manage educational and administrative matters concerning all secondary and elementary schools in the district.<sup>13</sup> In other words, the Russian university was established not only as a privileged estate to spread the new general education, but also an administrative organization under the MNP.

In practice, the management of a whole district was next to impossible; both

---

Prior to this 1804 law, Derpt (Tartu) University and Vil’no University were reorganized. PSZ I, no.20551(1802/12/12), no.20701(1803/12/4), no.20765(1803/5/13).

<sup>11</sup> PSZ I, no.21502, no.21503, 21504(1804/11/5).

<sup>12</sup> Flynn, James T. The University Reform of Tsar Alexander I, 1802-1835. Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1988. 16-21.

<sup>13</sup> PSZ I, no.20407(1802/9/8), 20597(1803/1/26), 21501(1804/11/5).

because the number of professors was not nearly great enough and many of them were non-Russian. Therefore, the MNP started to install its own administrators—curators of educational districts—and undertook the management of given districts by itself beginning in the 1830s. This “bureaucratic centralization” freed university teachers from the heavy burden of the district management, but partially reduced autonomous rights concerning internal university problems, as well.<sup>14</sup> In addition, in the 1830s and 1840s the MNP promoted the training and creation of new Russian professors, and resultantly the number of professors gradually increased.<sup>15</sup> In the second half of the 1850s, the professorate started to become a substantial group in terms of being able to perform autonomous activities.

It was the MNP that stimulated the professorate to awake their professional consciousness. In the first years of the Great Reforms, the MNP called for an active role of the professorate in the educational administration. In this period, the MNP set about uniting all educational institutions under the jurisdiction of the ministry. The minister Norov explained that the unification of all educational systems was critical for merging a multiplicity of differences between “the moral and social beliefs and interests, [as well

---

<sup>14</sup> Whittaker, Cynthia H. The Origins of Modern Russian Education: An Intellectual Biography of Count Sergei Uvarov, 1786-1855, DeKalb, Ill.: Northern Illinois University Press, 1984. 156-160; Flynn. The University Reform of Tsar Alexander I. 217-241; PSZ II, no.8262(1835/6/25), no.8337(1835/6/26).

<sup>15</sup> There were 285 teachers and administrators in universities (Moscow, Petersburg, Kazan, Khar’kov, St.Vladimir [Kiev]) in 1865, but 222 posts were still vacant. “Prilozheniia.” Obzor deiatel’nosti ministerstva narodnogo prosveshcheniia i podvedomstvennykh emu uchirezhdenii v 1862, 63, i 64 godakh. SPb., 1865. 227-229.



as] all local and territorial patriotisms and attachments” in the Russian state.<sup>16</sup> For this reconstruction of the education system, the MNP needed the help and participation of professors. In fact, the MNP invited professors to the inquiry commission in the ministry, which was charged with the revision of the existing educational laws. Also, the elected professors from the university councils came to participate in the council under the curator of the educational district.<sup>17</sup>

The need of partnership with the professorate grew stronger by riots of university students in 1861.<sup>18</sup> The MNP thought that the cause of the student riots lay in the inactivity of the professors and their lack of a sense of responsibility regarding university matters. For the purpose of improving the university condition, the 1862 bill set the principal “to strengthen autonomous activity (*samodeiatel’nost’*) of the scholarly university estate.” According to the MNP, this principal was meant to impose on universities “more positive duties,” that is, not only “all purely-scholastic activity” but also “administrative” activity, closely related to university matters. For, “to impose new duties on the universities will doubtlessly encourage increasing enthusiasm of their respective members.” Consequently, the increasing enthusiasm of teachers would have a desirable influence on students.<sup>19</sup> The MNP intended to motivate vigorous activity and

---

<sup>16</sup> RGIA, f.733, op.37, d.69, l.8-12.

<sup>17</sup> PSZ II, no.30594(1856/6/15), no.35578(1860/3/20)

<sup>18</sup> Miliutin, D.A. Vospominaniia, general-fel’dmarshala grafa Dmitriia Alekseevicha Miliutina 1860-1862. Moskva, 1999. 157-170.

<sup>19</sup> The main change of the existing law in this bill was to set the inspector of the students under the university council from under curator. Zamechaniia na proekt obshchego ustava imperatorskikh Rossiiskikh universitetov. V.1. SPb., 1862. 45-50.

consciousness of the responsibility of the professorate for university matters. To this end, it tried to widen authority of the university council by calling it a “scholarly estate”.

The professorate, in turn, welcomed this policy of the 1862 bill. They took advantage of the offer by the MNP, and tried to further enlarge the authority of the university council. Above all, they insisted on the nonintervention of the curator of the educational district into university matters. They complained that intervention of the curator was the main obstacle to universities charting the right course. The professorate, conceding that it was inactive, ascribed the cause to the bureaucratization after the 1830s. This was not necessarily, however, to say that they demanded independence from the state and the ministry itself. For example, Moscow University and Petersburg University professors suggested that the university council be permitted to make proposals directly to the minister as their “chief superior,” passing through the curator as an intermediary administrative power. To put it another way, their goal was to have “a voice of their own” as a collegiate body within the educational administration.<sup>20</sup>

Khar’kov University professors justified these opinions by referring to the 1804 laws. They argued that the 1804 laws defined the university as an estate, which was “a college, that is to say, corporative body,” acknowledged by the state and pursuing a “definite civic purpose.” It was thought, therefore, that the government should return to this guiding principal for the Russian university system, and protect

---

<sup>20</sup> Ibid. 83-87, 98-99, 244, 251-252, 392-393.

“the scholarly college and its dignity” by weakening the bureaucratic power of the curator.<sup>21</sup>

A figure who gave one of the most comprehensive arguments on this issue was Kachenovskii from Khar’kov Univreisty. According to him, the Russian university was established as an “autonomous organization for offering civic education,” and given plentiful rights and privileges from Alexander I. “University in Russian society has been the institution of the state, at the same time, of *narod*.” Because the university was a state institution, it could have had “civic meaning,” different from an “estate spirit”. This “civic spirit” in university implied the concept, “in front of which all classes were equal, and in which talents could find defense and support.” He insisted, therefore, that the government should restore the autonomy and dignity of “the scholarly estate” and protect it from “alien influence from outside,” in order that Russian universities could offer proper “civic education.” On the other hand, he pointed out that “the scholarly estate” would not be “states in state” as in the medieval age. For, the Russian universities “had received capital, laws and privileges exclusively from the government; the tie between them and the supreme power hasn’t be cut off.” Hence, it was quite natural for Russian university to be placed under certain governmental control.<sup>22</sup> Such ideas as Kachenovskii’s became an ideology connecting between the governmental policy and the professorate requests.

---

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.* 281, 297-300.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.* 345-361.

The MNP principally accepted the requests from the professorate and protected them as an honorable corporation. To this policy of the MNP, the minister of Internal Affairs Valuev was strongly opposed. He suggested reducing the support to the professorate from the state, and opening the university to society by introducing a system in which professors would receive payment from students for each lecture.<sup>23</sup> In spite of his opposition, the MNP insisted on protecting the professorate, and allowed professors to be independent from society. The new law in 1863 actually gave back ample rights to the university council, such as decision making authority over financial problems and student matters. Also, the salary of professors was doubled and the state service rank was raised from 7<sup>th</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> rank. Moreover, in the commentary of the 1862 bill, the MNP, borrowing from Kachenovskii, admitted based on the 1804 law that the Russian university was as an autonomous corporation. The MNP had explained that the university should “be the resource of enlightenment in the state”. In order to accomplish this task, the university should have the possibility to develop “according to motives of their own,” not “as a result of alien influences from outside.” At the same time, the ministry used Kachenovskii’s words and stated that it was not society, but the government that made Russian universities, and that the university should be under “certain governmental control.” These basic principals were settled in the new law of

---

<sup>23</sup> “Zamechanie na proekt universitetskogo ustava, predstavlennyi ministrom narodnogo prosveshcheniia pri vsepoddanneishem doklade 15 dekabria 1862 g.” Proekt obshchego ustava imperatorskikh rossiiskikh universitetov. SPb., 1862-1863. 4-10.

1863.<sup>24</sup>

On the other hand, the new law did not give them complete independence from the curator and the right to propose directly the minister. However, this was, to some degree, an inevitable consequence of the professors' desire to be under state protection. The university council certainly remained an administrative body inside educational administration, but by doing so, they secured themselves as a corporative body independent from "alien" powers, such as traditional estate groups or other officials outside the MNP. This ambiguous status of the professorate caused conflict between them and the government in later years. For all that, one may also say that this protection maintained the privileged status of the professorate in society and encouraged them to develop not only self-regulated activities, but also the consciousness and responsibility of their profession.

## **2. Secondary school teachers—searching for the university model**

The ideal model for secondary school teachers in the Great Reforms was the Russian university. They tried to get autonomous collegiate power of the pedagogical council in gymnasium, similar to that of the university council. Despite their desires, however, the pedagogical council did not attain the rights on personnel matters or the

---

<sup>24</sup> "Ob'iasnitel'naia zapiska k projektu obshchego ustava Imperatorskikh Rossiiskikh universitetov." *ibid.* 1-32; "C proektami obshchego ustava i shtatov Imperatorskikh Rossiiskikh Universitetov." *ibid.* 1-22; "Po povodu novogo universitetskogo ustava." *Zhurnal Ministerstva Narodnogo Prosveshcheniia*(ZMNP) CXIX (1863). 333-404.

honorable status of organization to the same extent as the university council.

There was no tradition in Russian gymnasia of having autonomous councils like those of universities. When the gymnasium system was established in 1804, teachers were supposed to have a meeting once a month under the director. This meeting, however, was not regarded as a collegiate body to have decision-making authority of its own. In 1828, this meeting was raised to the status of “the council of gymnasium,” which consisted of a director and senior teachers. But the council still did not have the right to elect its chairperson by itself; the director, as “the master of gymnasium,” was nominated by the university. In 1835 the right to select directors and teachers shifted from the university to the curator. As a result, the bureaucratic centralization strengthened.<sup>25</sup>

When the Great Reforms started, the MNP tried to foster vigorous support for secondary education from both teachers and society. In this period, the most urgent issue for the MNP was reform of the secondary education system. Because the university was thought to be relatively well-developed, the ministry focused on secondary education as the next stage.<sup>26</sup> In order to revitalize secondary schools, the MNP gave a great deal of weight to teachers and petitioned Alexander II to grant former

---

<sup>25</sup> PSZ I. no.21501(1804/11/5); PSZ II, no.2502(1828/12/8), no.8262(1835/6/25).

<sup>26</sup> The Ministry thought that the reintroduction of classicism into gymnasia was especially important for creating firm general education system. “Iz vlechenie iz otcheta ministerstva narodnogo prosveshcheniia za 1857 god.” ZMNP XCVIII (1858). 141-145; “Iz vlechenie iz otcheta ministerstva narodnogo prosveshcheniia za 1858 god.” ibid CIII (1859). 138-139. There were 409 teachers and administrators (54 schools) in 1808, 775 (56 schools) in 1825, 2337 (86 schools) in 1863. Materialy dlia istorii i statistiki nashikh gimnazii. SPb., 1864. 16-23, 74-75.

pension privileges to teachers as early as 1855. Also, in 1859 the MNP gained a considerably higher budget for the salary of gymnasium teachers.<sup>27</sup>

Decentralization of educational administration was also thought as a means to draw out the active participation of teachers and society in secondary education. As early as the first bill of 1860, the MNP changed the council of gymnasium to “the pedagogical council.” This new council was composed of all gymnasium teachers and given decision-making rights including selecting school books, as well as all other decisions regarding student related issues, etc.<sup>28</sup> According to the commentary of the bill of 1862, the previous system, in which the council consisted only of senior teachers under the strong control of a director, was against the fundamental educational principal that “all teachers and tutors of educational institutions should work collectively and seek one goal harmoniously.” As a result, the previous system engendered apathy for their work and maintained intellectual stagnation among them, which, in turn, had a harmful influence on students. In order to change this passive attitude on the part of teachers, the 1862 bill gave the pedagogical council “the possibility to develop freely, [and] autonomously.” The rights which the 1862 bill granted the council were greater than those of the 1860 bill: the rights to make teaching plans, to give remarks and reprimand to teachers, and to decide if a teacher should stay in the post after 25 years

---

<sup>27</sup> PSZ II, no.29195(1855/4/5); Ministerstvo finansov, “Gospodinu ministru narodnogo prosveshcheniia.” Materialy (Gosudarstvennyi sovet, Departament zakonov). V.27. SPb., 1864.

<sup>28</sup> “Proekt ustava nizshikh i srednikh uchilishch, sostoiaschikh v vedomstve ministerstva narodnogo prosveshcheniia.” ZMNP CV (1860). 129-132.

service, to name but a few. The power to appoint and dismiss teachers was also moved from the curator to the director in line with the decentralization policy.<sup>29</sup>

On the other hand, the 1860 bill created a new organization, “the trustees’ council (*popechitel’nyi sovet*),” comprised of representatives from each estate group, “for bringing schools closer to society.”<sup>30</sup> The 1862 bill gave the council substantial power, such as the right to inspect financial matters of gymnasias and to select the students to be exempted from fees. What the MNP hoped for from this council was to establish a “moral relationship between educational institutions and communities.” It was thought to be able to be accomplished by allowing “direct participation of representatives from society in management of educational institutions” through this council.<sup>31</sup>

At the same time, the 1862 bill suggested one more organization to breathe new life into teachers: the provincial school council (after the model of the teachers’ congress in Germany). This provincial school council was supposed to be held in each provincial city once a month, by gathering all administrators and elected teachers of the secondary schools (including girls’ schools) from the entire province. Moreover, any people who wanted to participate were able to take part in the council, even if they were “outsiders.” The aim of this council was to maintain the “relationship and unification of

---

<sup>29</sup> Zamechaniia na proekt ustava obsheobrazovatel’nykh uchebnykh zavedenii i na proekt obshego plana ustroistva narodnykh uchilishch. V.1. SPb., 1862. 134-142.

<sup>30</sup> “Proekt ustava nizshikh i srednikh uchilishch.” 103.

<sup>31</sup> Zamechaniia na proekt ustava obsheobrazovatel’nykh uchebnykh zavedenii i na proekt obshego plana ustroistva narodnykh uchilishch. V.1. 143-144



educational principals among individual educational institutions” in a given province, in view of the widening decision-making power of each pedagogical council. The MNP also hoped to develop “healthy pedagogical ideas among people dealing with nurturing the young, or generally people sympathizing with educational work”.<sup>32</sup>

Judging from these measures, the MNP tried to transfer administrative powers equally to local administrators, teachers, and society so as to arouse their interests and cooperation for secondary schools. Teachers, however, were interested only in the pedagogical council. What they demanded most was authority for the pedagogical council as a collegiate organization, similar to the university council. The pedagogical councils of Volyn’ Gymnasium and Kazan Gymnasium, for example, strongly insisted that managerial positions such as ‘director’ should be mutually elected in the pedagogical council. Otherwise, they said, the pedagogical council would not be “a genuine entity of college as a legal organization,” but rather just “a sewing factory, where a chief cutter gives out each fixed work, demanding it be executed without any thinking.” What is more, Nemirov Gymnasium criticized that the 1862 bill did not grant them the power to select their own colleagues. For, so long as the director had an arbitrary influence on the fate of teachers, they would be led into being divided and confronting each other, and could not work in a body in society. For that reason, they hoped to entrust personnel affairs to the pedagogical council, following the university

---

<sup>32</sup> Ibid. 77-81, 140-142.

model. If not, they preferred restoring the curator's rights, rather than giving rights to the director, who was their direct superior.<sup>33</sup> In response to these requests, some local administrators condemned them, remarking that there was no precedent in Russia or abroad for the elective system in secondary schools; "this desire comes from a less than correct comparison between the rights of the gymnasium council and those of university."<sup>34</sup>

Teachers, along with administrators, thought that the trustees' council was an organization which would violate their rights. The director of the Second Moscow Gymnasium asked why "representatives of various estates" were necessary just because gymnasia were open to all estates and offered general education. Teachers also felt the trustees' council "inflicted a loss on the importance and significance of the pedagogical council," and "infringed on the even autonomy of the pedagogical council." For example, the Fourth Moscow Gymnasium and Dinaburg Gymnasium insisted that the inviting of outside powers into schools brought conflicts between various powers and disorder into educational institutions, and that therefore, the government would do well to trust in the goodwill and honor of teachers, and rely on their education and pride. They maintained that financial inspection rights and authority over student fee exemption decisions should be returned to the pedagogical council, and the trustees'

---

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.* 290-296; *ibid.* V.6. 5; *ibid.* V.3. 518-524.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.* V.1. 166-168, 320-331.

council should focus strictly on the raising of school funds.<sup>35</sup>

Meanwhile, teachers generally showed little interest in the provincial council. Some expressed their approval and added that more teachers should be able to participate in the council, while others negatively remarked that the provincial council would be just a bureaucratic or formalistic organization.<sup>36</sup> In general, they rarely mentioned the council. A teacher of Dinaburg Gymnasium asked if Russian pedagogues showed an aspiration to get mutually closer and to exchange their observations and experiences. He continued that “this aspiration, which is totally natural among other pedagogues, does not exist among us.”<sup>37</sup>

The new law of 1864 resolved these problems in keeping with the views of the teachers. Firstly, the range of autonomous activity of the pedagogical council was enlarged. Secondly, the trustees’ council was given up and the only remaining position was that of “honorable trustee,” whose duty was simply to provide funds for schools. Thirdly, the provincial council dissolved completely.<sup>38</sup> In the end, the interest of gymnasium teachers was in keeping their status within the administrative organization. In response to their desires, the MNP raised their salary, heightened their status as state servants (from 9<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup>), and protected the authority and independence of the pedagogical council from estate groups. The MNP, however, did not grant a corporative

---

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.* V.3. 372; *ibid.* V.4. 429-430; *ibid.* V.2. 279.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.* V.1. 377; *ibid.* V.2. 113-114, 160, 179, 326; *ibid.* V.5. 71.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.* V.4. 284-285.

<sup>38</sup> "S proektom ustava gimnazii i progimnazii." *Materialy.* V.27; *PSZ* II, no.41472(1864/11/19).

status to the pedagogical council, not wanting to weaken the director's authority on teachers. In this sense, their autonomous rights were fewer than those of the professorate, and the pedagogical council became more a mere accumulation of officials. For all that, they still achieved higher status as well as greater and more numerous autonomous rights as professionals than they had previously had.

### **3. Elementary school teachers—independence from the state**

Having examined the cases of two elite groups, we will turn our attention to the case of elementary school teachers who in the Great Reforms lost their rights and status. Elementary school teachers were deprived of protection from the state and left vulnerable individuals in society, though the necessity to expand an elementary school network became recognized by everyone in government as well as society.

The schools which can be categorized as elementary schools under the MNP in the pre-reform period were parish schools and county schools. These schools, however, were very few and almost exclusively concentrated in and around cities.<sup>39</sup> The main reason for the underdevelopment of elementary schools under the MNP was that, the ministry was creating the educational system beginning with the university level, which

---

<sup>39</sup> In the 1862-1863, elementary schools under the MNP were only 692. There were 16,907 ecclesiastical elementary schools, the Ministry of Internal Affairs had 4,961 schools, the Ministry of State Domains had 5,492, and the Ministry of Imperial Household had 2,127. Compared with other institutions, the MNP had only about a 2 % share of all elementary schools. "Pakazaiushchaia chislo nachal'nykh narodnykh uchilishch raznykh naimenovanii i vedomstv i chislo uchashchikhsia v onykh v 1862-1863 g. v tekh guberniakh, na kotorye predpolozheno rasprostranit' novoe polozhenie o sikh uchilishchakh." Materiali (Gosudarstvennyii Sovet Departament Zakonov). V.24. SPb., 1863.

was supposed to manage schools of all other levels; elementary schools were the last undertaking to be founded. Accordingly, the number of teachers at that time was very few. Because of the scarcity of elementary school teachers, however, the MNP could afford to guarantee their status. Teachers of county schools were regarded as state servants with 12<sup>th</sup> rank in 1804. In 1828 parish school teachers were given the right of state service with 14<sup>th</sup> rank as well.<sup>40</sup>

In the first years of the Great Reforms, with the thought of the connection with secondary schools in mind, the MNP set about reforming elementary schools. At first, the ministry just tried to extend the previous elementary school system.<sup>41</sup> However, the situation was changed after the emancipation of 1861, which faced the government with the problem of educating the sudden influx of peasants. The government requested the MNP to make a plan for the issue. In response to this request, though the MNP did not have a clear policy on this issue, the ministry insisted that all elementary schools under various ministries should be integrated under the MNP. Although all schools were not transferred immediately to the MNP, the range of the elementary schools which the MNP would manage in the future increased considerably. In addition, the task of preparing elementary school teachers was entrusted exclusively to the MNP.<sup>42</sup>

---

<sup>40</sup> PSZ I, no.21501; PSZ II, no.2502.

<sup>41</sup> “Izblechenie is otchota ministerstva narodnogo prosveshcheniia za 1858 god.” 141-142; “Proekt ustava nizshikh i srednikh uchilishch.” 85-116.

<sup>42</sup> “Ob’izsnitel’naia zapiska k proektu obshchego plana ustroistva narodnogo uchilishch.” Zamechaniia na proekt ustava obshcheobrazovatel’nykh uchebnykh zavedenii i na proekt obshchego plana ustroistva narodnykh uchilishch. V.1. 18-25; PSZ II, no.41068(1864/6/14).

In keeping with this, the MNP was forced to change the policy on the elementary school system. They would have to manage numerous elementary schools, but the budget allocated to the MNP was still far from sufficient. Moreover, the MNP had to use the budget for higher and secondary schools as well. Therefore, the ministry adopted two main measures in the 1862 bill. Firstly, the MNP legally abolished county schools and divided them into pro-gymnasia and *narod* schools. Secondly, the ministry cut off *narod* schools and deprived *narod* school teachers of the state service right.

They justified these two measures with the same reason: decreasing the number of “*chinovniki* (officials)” for reducing the burden on the Treasury. According to the MNP, county schools had become mere a specialized educational institution for producing “*chinovniki*,” and therefore, the school lost the trust of society. The ministry emphasized the burden of Elementary school teachers on the Treasury as well. The ministry explained that, though the state service right could be used as “bait” to attract people of talent, their sons were destined, like their fathers, to be “*chinovniki*,” which would further increase the burden on the Treasury.<sup>43</sup> The MNP had created a legal framework for elementary schools, by which any private person or group could open schools freely.<sup>44</sup> At the same time, the ministry gave up supporting elementary schools.

The elementary school problem attracted a great deal of attention from teachers

---

<sup>43</sup> Zamechaniia na proekt ustava obshcheobrazovatel'nykh uchebnykh zavedenii i na proekt obshchego plana ustroistva narodnykh uchilishch. V.1. 98-100, 130-133.

<sup>44</sup> Obzor deiatel'nosti ministerstva narodnogo prosveshcheniia. 204-214.

and administrators. In the discussion on the 1862 bill, the problem was treated most lively. In general, many people insisted that the MNP's policy on elementary school teachers was too flawed and that teachers needed greater guarantees from the state.

County school teachers hoped to change their county schools into pro-gymnasia, which were closely connected with gymnasia. If they became pro-gymnasium teachers, they could receive almost the same level of treatment as that of gymnasium teachers. Though one teacher said he would be anxious if made a pro-gymnasium teacher as he did not have enough educational background, most teachers seemed optimistic for reorganizing their county schools into pro-gymnasia.<sup>45</sup>

Teachers of parish schools, on the other hand, were offended by the policy. For example, a teacher of Novgorodsever Parish School implored that state service rank should be given elementary school teachers as "a reward." He insisted that the elementary school teacher was an official, and that such a concept was already in their blood. The point he stuck to was the hereditary rights of state servant. If he lost the status as a state servant, even though the government compensated them with practical rights, such as the status of personally honorable citizens, the rights were not applied to his children. He worried that he would lose the trust of his family.<sup>46</sup>

A teacher of Sergiev Lancaster Parish School regarded divesting of state

---

<sup>45</sup> Zamechaniia na proekt ustava obshcheobrazovatel'nykh uchebnykh zavedenii i na proekt obshchego plana ustroistva narodnykh uchilishch. V.4. 358-360, 437; ibid. V.5. 414-416, 420, 429, 440-442, 443-444, 446-447.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid. V.4. 199.

service rank as an “insult” to elementary school teachers. He rhetorically asked what the reason was that the government regarded the elementary school teacher, who was essential to the state, as “a petty official, who is a burden to the Treasury.” He insisted that teachers of elementary schools should be protected by the state in order to heighten their status and authority in the eyes of student parents. Because elementary school teachers were so humbled and vulnerable, there was no interest in trying to be a teacher other than from a person of lower class such as a townspeople. But “a townspeople-teacher” could not be accepted and trusted in society. The government, therefore, had to make them “an official-teacher.” According to the teacher, “society in our country has not had independence which constructs self-consciousness apart from rewards and titles endowed by the state”. For these reasons, he claimed that the support from the state was indispensable.<sup>47</sup>

In spite of their desperate opinions, the new law of 1864 did not guarantee the status of elementary school teachers at all, not even mentioning a teacher’s minimum wage. Though the MNP widely touted the importance of elementary schools and insisted that all elementary schools should be under the jurisdiction of the MNP, the ministry refused to help elementary schools. The ministry responded with a cold attitude towards reports from local administrators which requested financial support for elementary schools. The MNP said that it could not afford to, and added that to maintain

---

<sup>47</sup> Ibid. 98-101, 455-466. See also; ibid. V.5. 375-390.



elementary schools was the work of the *Zemstvo*.<sup>48</sup>

In this reform era, everyone in government and society became aware of the necessity to expand the elementary school system. Discussion about the problem in society became active. Spontaneous movements to teach peasants and other lower classes began as well. Nevertheless, because the MNP focused on making a firm basis for the higher and secondary school system, it could not allocate a sufficient budget for the elementary schools. In the end, the MNP was forced to cut off the elementary school teachers from state protection. On the other hand, however they still belonged to the general education system under the MNP, and shared with higher and secondary education teachers a sense of mission to enlighten estate society from above. They were regarded as “a member of a divine brotherhood for devoting one’s self to the great task of educating *narod*.”<sup>49</sup> Despite this strong sense of mission, they were abandoned by the state, and left severely humbled and vulnerable within society.

## **Conclusion**

The educational reforms in the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century molded the essence of teachers collectives. Beginning in the middle of the 1850s, the MNP intended to integrate, reorganize, and expand the general education system. In order to create and

---

<sup>48</sup> Obzor deiatel’nosti ministerstva narodnogo prosveshcheniia. 230-263.

<sup>49</sup> Zamechaniia na proekt ustava obshcheobrazovatel’nykh uchebnykh zavedenii i na proekt obshchego plana ustroistva narodnykh uchilishch. V.5. 397.

carry out this new system, the MNP had a keen need of professional groups. For this reason, the ministry, of its own accord, attempted to boost professional consciousness among teachers. Teachers, in turn, having had an opportunity to express their collective voices for the first time in Russian history, aimed at forming a foundation for maintaining their status and activities as professionals.

What all the teachers demanded for performing their professional work was state protection, which allowed them to be independent from social groups and other officials. Teachers collectives in universities and gymnasias attempted to create the basis of their professional activities in administrative organizations, such as the university council and the pedagogical council. They tried to change these organizations to the collegiate body, which had autonomous power, independent from their superiors and society. The MNP largely accepted these requests. The ministry protected them as state servants with high ranks, and gave sufficient rights to the councils. These measures permitted them to promote their professional activities and to nurture their professional consciousness in society.

The MNP, however, did not grant status of an autonomous corporation to the collegiate bodies completely. The professorate nearly attained the status of a corporation, but the university council was still not entirely free from the curator. The pedagogical council was still less autonomous. The council did not have the right to regulate their members or their chairperson. In the end, they were positioned inside the administrative

hierarchy under the MNP. The result was, however, inevitable, to some degree, since teachers themselves desired to be in the administrative order and protected by the state. For teachers, the merit which they achieved from being protected by the state was far greater than that of being independent from state administration.

On the other hand, the MNP decided to cut off elementary school teachers from state service. The ministry preferred firmly establishing higher and secondary educational systems, and protecting teachers collectives of higher and secondary education. The state could not afford to employ all the teachers of elementary schools, which would expand enormously in the future. As a result, elementary school teachers were left humbled and vulnerable in society. This situation, however, led elementary school teachers to seek for other ways to protect themselves and develop their professional activities. As the number of elementary school teachers increased, they started to create mutual-aid associations at a local level by themselves. These organizations, nurturing their professional consciousness, developed into the basis of the nationwide teachers' movement in the first years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>50</sup> The radicalization of elementary school teachers was caused from their loss of state service rights and independence from the state.

Teachers collectives in universities and gymnasia were tightly fixed in the mingled relationship with the state, simply because their desires were realized, and they

---

<sup>50</sup> Zolotarev, S. "Ocherk po istorii uchitel'skogo ob'edineniia v Rossii." Professional'nye uchitel'skiiie organizatsii na Zapade i v Rossii. Petrograd, 1915. 231-293.

were acknowledged as professional elites. In later years, this mixed status of the teachers collectives caused both fruitful partnership and serious confrontation between the state and professionals. The status of elementary school teachers, which lost state protection in order to protect two elite teachers collectives, added more complexities between the state and professionals. The “Janus-faced relationship” between the state and professional elites, with more independent activities of non-elite professionals, would produce stress and dynamism in the transforming Russian society. It was the reform process during the Great Reforms that created the foundation of the complicated relationship, which led to a new civic network and new public culture in later years.