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A. L. Shanyavskii University in the Epicenter of the Revolutionary Movement of Late 19th – Early 20th Century

Abstract

The article is devoted to the history of revolutionary unrest among students at the turn of the 20th century. Activities of informal student associations that conducted a broad agitation campaign within the walls of the A. L. Shanyavskii University in the early 20th century serve as an example. Unlike many other higher educational institutions, the Moscow City People's University became a hotbed of revolutionary outbreaks, fueled both by teachers and students of the university. University professors N. N. Polyansky, M. D. Zagryatskov, V. V. Krasnokutsky, A.

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V. Gorbunov, P. P. Gensen, P. N. Sakulin, A. A. Kizevetter called for democratic reforms in their lectures and criticized the foundations of the monarchy. Among other politicized communities of the University, the Latvian Social-Democratic group, which included M. I. Latsis and I. V. Tsvitsivadze, was especially prominent. Many students united around Social Democrat Ts. Zelikson-Bobrovskaya and Bolshevik A. A. Znamensky. The students of Shanyavskii University equipped a printing house and printed leaflets of revolutionary content. On the account of frequent cases of political agitation in the student environment, university lectures were attended by the police. Nevertheless, despite the police surveillance, the atmosphere at the university was quite liberal, and the revolutionary-minded associations continued to thrive there. The revolutionary events that were prepared with such energy (among others) by students of the A. L. Shanyavskii University and liberal-minded part of their professors, eventually led to greater collapse of the ideals of accessible higher education that A.L. Shanyavskii preached. The Bolsheviks, having received the reins of government in 1917, could not establish a working system of administration or even approximate the however well established pre-revolutionary order, and thereupon in 1920 the University of A.L. Shanyavskii ceased to exist. Several documents found in the State Archive of the Russian Federation allow to recreate the historical picture of the revolutionary movement within the walls of the Moscow City People's University.



Keywords

Sources, students, A. L. Shanyavskii Moscow City People's University, revolutionary situation, underground student organizations.

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