
NEWS OF THE PROFESSION

SERGEI GERMANOVICH PUSHKAREV, 1888–1984

Sergei Germanovich Pushkarev died on January 22, 1984, almost halfway through his ninety-sixth year.

He was born August 8, 1888 in Staryi Oskol, the fifth of five children of landowning nobles of Kursk province. The family's home base was a farm of about 630 acres near Prokhorovka, on the railroad some sixty miles south of Kursk and not far north of Belgorod. This farm came to Sergei Germanovich's mother, Aleksandra, from her father, Ivan Shatilov. Pushkarev's father, German Iosifovich, was active in zemstvo affairs and served in the Ministry of Justice in Kursk as a *notarius*, or verifier and keeper of legal documents. The character of the family is suggested by the fact that all four of its sons completed the university, and the daughter completed a *gimnaziia* for women.

Sergei Germanovich spent his childhood at the Prokhorovka farm and in Kursk, where he entered the classical *gimnaziia* in 1899. Upon graduating with top honors in 1907, he continued his studies in history at Khar'kov University.

In January of 1910, by which time he was pro-Menshevik although not a party member, the police intercepted a package of Menshevik leaflets he had agreed to transport to Kiev for a first cousin and close friend who was an active Menshevik (Nikolai Nikolaevich Popov, later a Bolshevik and author of the official history of the VKP[b]). Pushkarev was released from prison after some two months but was classified as politically excluded from any university in the empire.

Fortunately his mother (his father having died in 1906) enabled him to study abroad. He spent 1911–12 at the University of Heidelberg. After more trouble with the police back in Khar'kov he went abroad again, this time to the University of Leipzig. When war came in 1914 he was detained in Germany, having missed by three hours the last prewar train back to Russia. A Red Cross exchange eventually brought him home. He was excused from military service on account of extreme nearsightedness and a hernia, and still barred from university studies as lacking "political reliability," but his oldest brother Vladimir, a right-wing official of the provincial zemstvo, managed to persuade the governor of Kursk province to relent, and in January 1916 Sergei Germanovich reentered Khar'kov University.

Another interruption came in 1917, when from June to December his political convictions prompted him to serve as a volunteer in the army of the Provisional Government. After the dissolution of his unit in Poltava, he returned to the family farm. Protected there by the friendly local peasants against the winter's "class warfare," he studied for his final examinations. He took them at Khar'kov in 1918 and was kept on by his adviser, Mikhail Vasil'evich Klochkov, to prepare for a professorial career in history.

The Civil War changed that. When in July 1919 the White Army came to Khar'kov, Pushkarev joined it. In December 1919 he was seriously wounded in battle. He eventually returned to further service in the Crimea and was evacuated with Vrangel's army to Turkey in November 1920.

Like many others, Pushkarev next found a haven in Prague. There he lived from 1921 to 1945. He passed his master's examination; he became a docent of the Research Unit of the Russian Free University and a member of the council of the Russian Historical Archive Abroad; he was employed as a research associate of the Slavic Institute of the Czech Academy of Sciences, working on a comparative dictionary of Slavic law; he administered an evening school for children of the Russian colony; and all the time he carried on independent research. His many publications of that period dealt with such varied subjects as the origins of the peasant commune, the Orthodox church, medieval

Pskov, the legal and administrative system of the Muscovite state, Peter the Great, Russia and the West, and medieval Czech cities. It was in Prague, in 1927, that he married Iuliia Tikhonovna Popova, a longtime friend and fellow-native of Kursk province with whom he had corresponded over the years, and who had just obtained permission to emigrate from Leningrad. Their son Boris was born in 1929.

In April 1945 the Pushkarevs fled from the approaching Red Army. There were ordeals and narrow escapes, during which Pushkarev lost his diaries and personal archives and all his other belongings. In August the family arrived in Bavaria, where for four years they lived in various camps for displaced persons. There Pushkarev organized and taught in schools for Russian children.

In 1949 George Vernadsky, an old friend from Prague days, helped the Pushkarevs move to New Haven. Sergei Germanovich was 61 by then, and his English was poor. It was too late for him to become a professor of history in an American university. But he adapted. He taught Russian at Yale until the age of 67. He lectured in Russian on Russian history at Fordham in 1951–52 and at Columbia in the summer of 1954. With the Yale library at hand he plunged again into research and writing.

During the New Haven period he extended his earlier research on the development of the peasant commune. He completed two texts of Russian history in Russian, one of which was expanded and translated as *The Emergence of Modern Russia, 1801–1917*. He compiled a *Dictionary of Russian Historical Terms*. He was the key person in a group that produced a three-volume *Source Book for Russian History*. He also revised Mel'gunov's *Bolshevik Seizure of Power* and produced articles and short items in Russian, especially on Lenin and on the development of freedom and self-government in Russia.

Meanwhile, Pushkarev generously donated many hours to the individual tutoring of Yale students and more than one young instructor. After 1961, when Iuliia Tikhonovna died, he characterized his life as that of a hermit, but he always welcomed eager learners to his "cell" in the Yale library.

By 1976 his eyes and ears were failing badly, and his legs could no longer carry him to his beloved library. Yielding finally to the urging of his son Boris and daughter-in-law Iraida, he moved to their home near New York. Thanks to his determination, his excellent memory, and the help of Boris and Iraida, he continued to write, especially on significant episodes in his youth. A complete list of his works is reportedly planned for publication in the *Zapiski russkoi akademicheskoi gruppy v S.Sh.A.*, on whose editorial board he had long served. He will be admiringly and fondly remembered.

RALPH T. FISHER, JR.

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign