

**Federal State Budgetary Educational Institution of Higher Education
“RUSSIAN ACADEMY OF NATIONAL ECONOMY
AND PUBLIC SERVICE
under the PRESIDENT OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION”
Srednerussky Institute of Management – branch**

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**ORGANIZATION AND ACTIVITIES
OF THE SECURITY OF HIS IMPERIAL MAJESTY
(1881–1894)**

Abstract of the dissertation for the degree of candidate of historical sciences

5.6.1. Domestic history

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Orel – 2026

Relevance of the research topic. The mid-19th century became a time of escalation of political terror. The assassination attempts on US President A. Lincoln, French Emperor Napoleon III, and Queen Victoria of Great Britain demonstrated that the assassination of the head of state had turned into a priority target for radical groups or their individual, most determined representatives. The wave of terror did not bypass Russia either. In 1866, the first assassination attempt on Alexander II was committed, and in 1879, a real manhunt by Narodnaya Volya members began against the Tsar, which ultimately led to his death. The attempts of the leadership of the Third Section of His Imperial Majesty's Own Chancellery and the imperial security units to repel terrorist attacks ended in a fiasco. The successor of the deceased autocrat realized that he needed an effective security system. Within several months, the Security of His Imperial Majesty was established, which became a reliable barrier against new perpetrators and occupied an important place in the structure of the Russian state mechanism.

The study of the circumstances of the creation, the evolution of the structure and staff of the Security of His Imperial Majesty and its subdivisions, and the analysis of the areas of its activity in ensuring the safety of Alexander III and his family make it possible to characterize an important stage in the development of the institute of domestic state security, when most of the security structures were subordinated to a single command center and concentrated on the task of physically ensuring the safety of the first person in conditions of a high level of terrorist threat. The analysis of the evolution of security bureaucratic structures, interdepartmental interaction with the Ministries of the Imperial Court, Ways of Communication, and Internal Affairs, the War Ministry, the Special Corps of Gendarmes, and other structures makes an important contribution to the study of the state institutions of Russia.

Degree of scientific elaboration of the problem. The historiography of the issue under study is represented by a large number of works, which should be divided into several groups: 1) works on the history of the state apparatus and domestic policy of the Russian Empire; 2) studies devoted to the House of Romanov, court life, and palace structures; 3) works on the history of the revolutionary movement in Russia; 4) works on the history of domestic special services and the police; 5) studies on the history of the Russian

army; 6) monographs and articles on the history of imperial residences; 7) works devoted to the development of railway transport in Russia and imperial trains; 8) works devoted to the development of state protection in Russia; 9) works on the history of individual subdivisions of the imperial security; 10) studies devoted to the Holy Brotherhood; 11) works devoted to individual historical figures associated with the development of the Security of His Imperial Majesty.

An analysis of the historiography made it possible to conclude that existing studies address individual aspects of the evolution of the imperial security system in 1881–1894 or present an analysis of the organization and activities of specific security structures and do not provide a holistic picture of the formation and development of the Security of His Imperial Majesty under Alexander III. In addition, numerous errors are transmitted from one work to another, having managed to become peculiar clichés, especially due to the emergence of a large number of abstract articles written by non-specialists. This dissertation is intended to fill the existing historiographical lacuna by presenting a comprehensive scientific characterization of the formation and main areas of activity of the Security of His Imperial Majesty in 1881–1894. In addition, the author intends, relying on published and unpublished sources, to correct the errors made by predecessors.

The object of the dissertation research is the system of ensuring the security of Emperor Alexander III and members of his family in 1881–1894.

The subject of the research is the organizational and legal framework for the functioning of the Security of His Imperial Majesty and the main areas of its practical activity in 1881–1894.

The goal of the dissertation work is a comprehensive scientific characterization of the organizational and legal framework for the functioning of the Security of His Imperial Majesty and the main areas of its practical activity in 1881–1894.

To achieve the goal of the dissertation research, the formulation and resolution of the following tasks are deemed necessary:

- 1) to characterize the key principles of the projects for reorganizing the imperial security developed in 1881;

- 2) to investigate the status of the Security of His Imperial Majesty and its Chief Head;
- 3) to carry out an analysis of the factors of organizational and staffing development of the Security of His Imperial Majesty and its structural subdivisions in 1881–1894;
- 4) to examine the principles and schemes of interaction between the Security of His Imperial Majesty and its structural subdivisions and other bodies and structures that took part in ensuring the security of Emperor Alexander III and members of his family;
- 5) to present an essential characterization of the practical activities of the Security of His Imperial Majesty in ensuring the security of imperial residences;
- 6) to investigate the forms/features of participation of the Security of His Imperial Majesty in securing supreme railway journeys;
- 7) to analyze the role of the subdivisions of the Security of His Imperial Majesty in protecting Alexander III and members of his family while staying in places of temporary residence;
- 8) to substantively characterize the participation of the Security of His Imperial Majesty in ensuring the safety of Alexander III and members of his family during large-scale security operations (using the example of the coronation festivities of 1883).

The chronological framework of the study encompasses the historical period from 1881 to 1894 and is determined by the dates of the beginning and end of the reign of Alexander III.

The territorial framework of the study is determined by the European part of the Russian Empire within the borders of 1881–1894. It was here that the imperial residences were located and all routes of movement of the Tsar lay.

The source base of the study. The study is based on a rich source base. Its foundation was made up of unpublished and published documents and materials. In working on the dissertation, an analysis was carried out of sources stored in three federal archives – the State Archive of the Russian Federation (GARF), the Russian State Historical Archive (RGIA), the Russian State Military Historical Archive (RGVIA), the Research Department of Manuscripts of the Russian State Library (NIOR RGB), and the Russian Book Fund of the National Library of Russia (RKF RNB). In addition, materials of the Central

State Historical Archive of St. Petersburg (TsGIA SPb), the Central State Archive of Moscow (TsGAM), and the State Archive of the Oryol Region (GAOO) were used. The identified body of sources makes it possible to comprehensively examine the issues of organizing the security system of Emperor Alexander III and members of his family, as well as the development and activities of police and military units included in this system.

Sources on the topic of the dissertation research can be divided into five groups.

1. 1. State and departmental normative legal acts that determined the tasks, rights, and powers of officials and subdivisions of the Security of His Imperial Majesty.
2. 2. Record-keeping documents (projects and plans of security operations, service memoranda, reports, accounts, materials of official inquiries, post rosters, duties of sentries, orders for individual security subdivisions).
3. 3. Published and unpublished materials of personal origin.
4. 4. Publications in the periodical press.
5. 5. Reference publications that make it possible to clarify data on the leadership of security subdivisions and other structures involved in the preparation and conduct of security operations, as well as to characterize the protection of the Emperor's travel routes through St. Petersburg and palace towns due to linking post rosters to the terrain.

The scientific novelty of the dissertation lies in the fact that for the first time in domestic historiography, a task of significance for historical science has been formulated and resolved: a comprehensive scientific analysis of the process of creation, organizational development, and main areas of activity of the Security of His Imperial Majesty and its structural components in 1881–1894 has been carried out. A number of unpublished documents from the funds of RGIA, GARF, RGVIA, NIOR RGB, TsGIA SPb, TsGAM, and GAOO have been introduced into scientific circulation for the first time. The main projects for creating a unified imperial security service developed in 1881 have been identified and substantively characterized. The place of the Security of His Imperial Majesty and its Chief Head in the system of state bodies of the Russian Empire has been determined. The factors have been revealed and the dynamics of the organizational and staffing development of the Security of His Imperial Majesty in 1881–1894 have been traced. The scheme of interaction between the Security of His Imperial Majesty and other

structures that took part in ensuring the security of Alexander III and members of his family has been characterized, and its strengths and weaknesses have been identified. The main areas of activity of the Security of His Imperial Majesty in ensuring the security of imperial residences in 1881–1894 have been identified and substantively characterized. The place of the Security of His Imperial Majesty in ensuring the safety of Alexander III and his family during railway journeys, when attending theatrical performances, as well as during the days of coronation festivities has been determined.

Theoretical and practical significance of the work. The theoretical significance of this dissertation research lies in clarifying the place and role of security agencies in the protective policy pursued in the Russian Empire in the late 19th century. The work makes a major contribution to the study of the theoretical foundations of examining methods and means of countering political terror, showing how the schemes and principles of protecting imperial residences, royal trains, and places of temporary stay of Alexander III and his family were improved in conditions of a persistent threat of assassination attempts. The analysis of the interaction of the Chief Head of the Security of His Imperial Majesty and the heads of individual subdivisions with officials of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the War Ministry, the gubernatorial corps, etc., contributes to clarifying the principles of functioning of the state mechanism of the Russian Empire, which develops the theoretical foundations for studying the history of state institutions and bureaucracy. In studies devoted to various aspects of the activities of state protection bodies, attention is paid either to operational search work, to the organization of sentry service, or to the ceremonial accompaniment of security measures. In this dissertation research, an attempt has been made at a comprehensive analysis of the multifaceted activities of the Security of His Imperial Majesty during the reign of Alexander III, designed not only to provide physical protection for protected persons, but also to contribute to strengthening the authority of the head of state.

The materials and conclusions of this dissertation research can be used in developing general lecture courses on national history, as well as special courses on the history of Russian special services and state security agencies. The conclusions obtained in the

work are of interest to personnel of operational units of the state security agencies of the Russian Federation.

The scientific problem of the study is determined by the need to carry out a comprehensive analysis of the formation and development of the Security of His Imperial Majesty during the reign of Alexander III, to substantively characterize the main areas of its activity in ensuring the safety of the Tsar and his family in the territory of residences, during trips, and in places of temporary stay.

Provisions submitted for defense:

1. All projects for the reorganization of the imperial security developed in 1881 were based on the principles of creating a single command center headed by an accountable person and increasing the number of personnel operating inconspicuously both for those around them and for the protected persons themselves. In the process of institutionalizing the security of Alexander III and his family, it was required to determine which formations would be in the permanent subordination of the Chief Head of Security, to reorganize the Protective Guard, turning it into a secret security service of the Tsar, to develop a security system during railway journeys, and also to establish constructive interaction with political police bodies (Item 2. Prerequisites for the formation, main stages, and features of the development of Russian statehood; Item 8. Military history of Russia, development of its armed forces at various stages of development; Item 15. Historical experience of Russian reforms of the Passport of Scientific Specialty 5.6.1. National History).

2. Created in August 1881, the Security of His Imperial Majesty, headed by the Chief Head, became the first unified institution in domestic history responsible for the security of the Emperor, members of his family, places of permanent and temporary stay, and travel routes. The Security of His Imperial Majesty had a specific non-departmental status, which was determined both by the subordination of the Chief Head directly to the monarch and by granting him the unrestricted right to demand the immediate assistance of all institutions and officials of the empire. The permanent part of the Security consisted

of the Guards Infantry Detachment of the Honorary Escort, the Palace Police Team, the Secret Section, the Railway Inspection, and the 1st Railway Battalion. The temporary part of the Security of His Imperial Majesty consisted of military and civil ranks seconded to the disposal of its Chief Head, as well as military, naval, and police forces (Item 2. Prerequisites for the formation, main stages, and features of the development of Russian statehood; Item 15. Historical experience of Russian reforms of the Passport of Scientific Specialty 5.6.1. National History).

3. The change in the organizational and staffing structure of the subdivisions that were in the permanent subordination of the Chief Head of the Security of His Imperial Majesty in 1881–1894 was mainly due to objective reasons, expressed in the quantitative growth and increasing complexity of service tasks. A certain influence on the organizational and staffing development of the permanent part of the Security was also exerted by subjective factors such as conflicts between the Chief Head of Security and the heads of subdivisions subordinate to him, as well as the career ambitions of the heads of subdivisions permanently subordinate to the Chief Head of the Security of His Imperial Majesty, and their ideas about the need for statutory consolidation of the changes implemented in practice (Item 2. Prerequisites for the formation, main stages, and features of the development of Russian statehood; Item 8. Military history of Russia, development of its armed forces at various stages of development; Item 17. The individual in Russian history, historical personalities of the Passport of Scientific Specialty 5.6.1. National History).

4. The exceptional status of the Chief Head of the Security of His Imperial Majesty and his informal contacts with the heads of key departments involved in security measures led to the fact that the activities of the imperial security subdivisions were not always coordinated with the tasks of the general and gendarme police, the troops called in to guard the railways, railway employees, etc., which led to conflict situations (Item 2. Prerequisites for the formation, main stages, and features of the development of Russian statehood; Item 8. Military history of Russia, development of its armed forces at various stages of development; Item 17. The individual in Russian history, historical personalities of the Passport of Scientific Specialty 5.6.1. National History).

5. In 1881–1894, the Security of His Imperial Majesty was designed to provide comprehensive security for imperial residences through a combination of sentry and patrol-reconnaissance service, the introduction of several security perimeters, and the organization of an access-control regime. However, the interaction of subdivisions participating in guarding palaces and adjacent territories was not always organized at the proper level, and access regulations, largely based on the visual memory of sentries, could lead to inadvertent admission of persons who did not have the right of passage (Item 2. Prerequisites for the formation, main stages, and features of the development of Russian statehood; Item 4. History of relations between authorities and society, state bodies, and public institutions of Russia and its regions; Item 8. Military history of Russia, development of its armed forces at various stages of development of the Passport of Scientific Specialty 5.6.1. National History).

6. The protection of the railway journeys of the Tsar and his family was an exceptionally complex system, the core of which was the 1st Railway Battalion, while the peripheral layers were formed by the gendarme-police directorates of the railways, military units, ranks of the general police, and Cossacks. The security scheme developed in 1881 by L. M. Albertov provided for cordoning off the entire route of the imperial train, which necessitated calling in a significant number of military units for security. In some cases, due to a shortage of lower ranks, it was necessary to involve local residents who were poorly acquainted with security regulations. Throughout the reign of Alexander III, the security of railway journeys was continuously improved: governing documents were constantly updated, the duties of individual subdivisions were clarified, prerequisites for conflict situations were eliminated, and with the establishment of the Inspection of Imperial Trains in 1890, the monitoring of rolling stock condition was improved. However, the necessity of constantly involving troops and railway employees, who found it difficult to combine the performance of their main duties with security responsibilities, did not allow for the complete elimination of interdepartmental conflicts (Item 2. Prerequisites for the formation, main stages, and features of the development of Russian statehood; Item 4. History of relations between authorities and society, state bodies, and public institutions of Russia and its regions; Item 8. Military history of Russia, development of its armed

forces at various stages of development of the Passport of Scientific Specialty 5.6.1. National History).

7. Subdivisions of the Security of His Imperial Majesty took part in protecting supreme persons in places of their temporary stay, being assigned the tasks of sentry and surveillance service, along with the local police, responsible for maintaining public order, and the administration of visited institutions, which ensured order inside buildings. Ensuring the safety of Alexander III and members of his family in places of their temporary stay (educational institutions, places of worship, exhibitions, etc.) involved mobilizing ranks of the Special Corps of Gendarmes, troops, as well as voluntary guards from local residents. Special attention was paid to the security of theaters, which the Emperor and members of his family visited regularly. The security plan was developed by special commissions that included architects, engineers, and technicians. Based on their conclusions, alterations and reconstructions were carried out in theater buildings, eliminating the possibility of fires, accidents, and penetration by unauthorized persons, as well as attacks on protected persons. (Item 2. Prerequisites for the formation, main stages, and features of the development of Russian statehood of the Passport of Scientific Specialty 5.6.1. National History).

8. The preparation and conduct of large-scale security operations were carried out by the Security of His Imperial Majesty with the assistance of a large number of military units, police, and the Secret Section of the Moscow Chief of Police (Ober-Polizeimeister). Measures of an operational-search and technical nature were taken, aimed at gathering information on potential threats to the life and health of members of the imperial family and monitoring politically unreliable persons. Control over the travel routes of the supreme persons was intensified, as was the provision of public safety in places of security events (palaces and other buildings) and adjacent territories. Access rules to places of large-scale events were developed. (Item 2. Prerequisites for the formation, main stages, and features of the development of Russian statehood; Item 4. History of relations between authorities and society, state bodies, and public institutions of Russia and its regions; Item 8. Military history of Russia, development of its armed forces at various stages of development of the Passport of Scientific Specialty 5.6.1. National History).

Compliance of the dissertation topic with the requirements of the VAK specialty passport.

The study complies with the passport of scientific specialty 5.6.1. National History:

- item 2 “Prerequisites for the formation, main stages, and features of the development of Russian statehood”;
- item 4 “History of relations between authorities and society, state bodies, and public institutions of Russia and its regions”;
- item 8 “Military history of Russia, development of its armed forces at various stages of development”;
- item 15 “Historical experience of Russian reforms”;
- item 17 “The individual in Russian history, historical personalities”.


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