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Published in the Slovak Republic
European Journal of Contemporary Education
E-ISSN 2305-6746
2019, 8(1): 208-214
DOI: 10.13187/ejced.2019.1.208
www.ejournal1.com

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Development of School Education in the Vologda Governorate (1725–1917). Part 1

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Abstract

The paper highlights early steps in the development of the school system and its progression with a focus on the Vologda governorate in 1725–1917. Speaking of the materials, this part reviews the works on the history of pedagogy published in the pre-revolutionary period, as well as modern Russian scholarly literature.

Research problems were addressed using both general scientific methods (concretization and generalization) and traditional methods of historical analysis. The work applied the historical and situational method which is based on the study of historical facts in the context of the period under review and in connection with “neighboring” events and facts.

In conclusion, the authors emphasize the fact that the system of public school education in the Vologda governorate in 1725–1850 underwent rather dynamic evolution – from arithmetic schools and theological seminaries to the creation of uezd schools and a gymnasium. The teaching staff at Russian gymnasiums was requested to conduct almost obligatory research as early as in the 19th century, and this, in turn, enhanced efforts to study various regions of the Russian Empire and in particular the Vologda governorate.

Keywords: public education, gymnasium, schools, Vologda governorate, Russian Empire, teachers.

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1. Introduction

First research institutions in the Vologda governorate were established already in the fourteenth century. They were founded by Saint Stephen, the apostle and enlightener of the land of Perm, who preached the Christian doctrine among the indigenous pagan population (Popov, 1885: 40). Striving to strengthen Christianity among the people, the enlightener opened schools at churches and personally taught children the Book of Hours and other church books translated into the Zyriane language.

However, after the death of Saint Stephen, the written tradition ceased to exist in the land of Perm in no more than 100 years. Later, it was forgotten, as pastors endeavored to transfer the tradition from Zyriane to Slavic. School education was restored only under Peter I. In the first part of this paper, we would like to explore the development of the public education system in the period from 1725 to 1850.

2. Materials and methods

The materials used in the paper include the works on the history of pedagogy published in the pre-revolutionary period, as well as modern Russian literature.

Research problems were addressed using both general scientific methods (concretization and generalization) and traditional methods of historical analysis. The work applied the historical and situational method which is based on the study of historical facts in the context of the period under review and in connection with “neighboring” events and facts.

3. Discussion

A wide range of issues and aspects related to public education in the Vologda governorate has long been brought into the research focus of the history of pedagogy. Initially, this subject was studied in the context of the history of Orthodoxy, namely against the background of the activities of Saint Stephen of Perm in the fourteenth century. This subject was described or referred to by such researchers as E.A. Popov (Popov, 1885), N. Otto (Otto, 1866), as well as discussed in the work “For the history of Vologda directorate of schools” (Dlya istorii, 1860).

In the reign of Peter I, Russia initiated the process of creating educational institutions, namely, arithmetic schools and theological seminaries, which subsequently grew into secondary and primary schools, and later into gymnasiums and uезд (uezd – a district; in pre-revolutionary Russia, an administrative and territorial unit, divided into units called volosti, a component of the guberniya (governorate)) schools. The subject of public education in the Vologda governorate was spotlighted by pre-revolutionary Russian researchers such as: N. Bunakov (Bunakov, 1864) and A. Ivanov (Ivanov, 1879), as well as the “The historic overview of the activities of the Ministry of Education. 1902–1902” (Istoricheskii obzor, 1902).

In the recent period, the history of Vologda educational facilities was reviewed by such researchers as: N.S. Vorotnikova (Vorotnikova, 2015; Vorotnikova, 2015a; Vorotnikova, 2016) and L.N. Kolos (Kolos, 2015).

4. Results

In the eighteenth century, the area enjoyed the opening of government schools – arithmetic schools in Vologda and Ustyug under Peter I, theological seminaries in the same cities, and finally, public schools in different cities in the reign of Catherine the Great. However, the existence of arithmetic schools was very brief*. Moreover, the Ustyug authorities only implemented the concept as a mere formality: in 1725, they gathered 15 pupils there with a plan to teach them the primer and numbers, but since no teacher was found, the school was closed without delay (Otto, 1866: 9). The Vologda arithmetic school had a similar fate as the facility failed to find pupils (Dlya istorii, 1860: 66).

A more successful project was the foundation of the Vologda Theological Seminary that was opened in 1730 by a scholar and philologist, Athanasius Kondoidi. In 1738, a school for children of the clergy was opened in Ustyug and in the same year was reorganized into the Ustyug Theological Seminary. By 1744, the seminary already taught three classes – poetics, syntaxima and infima.

* An arithmetic school was opened in Vologda in 1714 (Dlya istorii, 1860: 65)

The total seminary enrollment reached 167 pupils (Otto, 1866: 10). However, after the Ustyug diocese was stopped, the seminary was closed and the remaining pupils were transferred to Vologda.

An important fact to be noted – in Vologda, even before the first Statute of Public Schools was published, the Department or *prikaz* (*prikaz* – an administrative (palace, civil, military, or church), judicial, territorial, and executive offices in Russia of 15th-18th centuries) of Public Charity, on the basis of the Statute for the Administration of Governorates, on November 7, 1775, recognized the need to take care of the education for orphans and children of poor parents. As a consequence, this initiative launched two charitable institutions in Vologda – an orphanage and a school. The orphanage was set up in 1784, and the school – a little earlier. According to the available data, already in 1781 the school curriculum included French, arithmetic and drawing; later, it was expanded to cover Latin and Russian grammar (Otto, 1866: 11).

In 1782, an order of Empress Catherine II established a commission on the institutions for public schools (Dlya istorii, 1860: 67). On August 5, 1786, the first general Statute of Public Schools was approved, and it ordained to open public schools in 25 governorates of the Russian Empire, including Vologda. According to the Edict in the same 1786, a secondary public school was opened in Vologda, and in 1787 primary public schools were opened in 5 other towns: Veliky Ustyug, Totma, Solvychegodsk, Gryazovets and Lalsk (however, in the latter two schools operated no more than a decade). So, only 4 schools operated in the Vologda governorate, of which the Vologda school alone was funded by the government, while the rest were supported by the local population.

It is known that there were 172 pupils in all Vologda schools in 1804 with 82 in the secondary public school, 38 in Ustyug, 30 in Totma and 24 in Solvychegodsk. The number included: nobles – 17, company officer children – 31, clerk (*prikaznye*) children – 30, merchant children – 7, townspeople children – 41, soldier children – 35, master's servants – 11. The operation of 4 schools required about 3,235 rubles of annual spending. The cost structure by school was as follows: in the Vologda school, salaries to the director – 500 rubles; to 6 teachers – 1,450 rubles; house maintenance, heating, lighting and servants – from 300 to 600 rubles. The sum total was 2,275 rubles. In the three-class Ustyug school (as of 1803): a teacher of the 3rd class – 250 rubles; a teacher of the two lower classes – 180 rubles; school maintenance – up to 100 rubles. In total, it was 555 rubles. In the Solvychegodsk school: a teacher of the 1st and 2nd classes – 120 rubles, house maintenance and teaching aids – up to 100 rubles. In total, it was 220 rubles. In Totma, a teacher's salary – 100 rubles, house maintenance – from 50 to 85 rubles. The sum total was around 185 rubles. (Otto, 1866: 15).

The curriculum in primary public schools was generally limited to elementary knowledge; only the Ustyug school, despite the reluctance of local inhabitants, introduced a historical class, and later opened the course of Latin, despite the strong resistance of Ustyug inhabitants. The resistance can be explained as local residents better needed the German language, accounting and commerce to do trade in Arkhangelsk (Otto, 1866: 18).

In 1804, the Moscow University sent to the Ustyug school books worth 297.5 rubles. As a result, a small collection of books was formed in the Ustyug school, and teachers were proposed to give out books to pupils and check the read material. In addition, other residents were also allowed to take books but for a fee of 3 kopecks per book (Otto, 1866: 19). It is important to note that the books purchased or donated included 5 antique books of Latin classics.

Despite the resistance of the population, a Latin class was opened in the Ustyug school in 1804.

We should also provide a brief description of other schools. The Solvychegodsk school began to operate on January 1, 1788 with 25 pupils. When the primary school was created by merchants and townspeople, it was decided to donate 60 rubles annually for its needs; but living in poverty, the community was unable to supply even this small money. In this situation, burgomaster (town mayor) Litvinov contributed a sum for school maintenance in 1788 with the endowment not to spend it on other needs. In 1801, the sum amounted to about 1 thousand rubles, and was called a merchant bank where the capital, thanks to the charity of other people, gradually increased, but, unfortunately, subsequent mayors and town councilors depleted the bank in violation of the philanthropic will (Otto, 1866: 21).

The orphanage was created in 1784, and according to the personnel chart it had 20 pupils. The orphanage admitted children from 8 to 17 years old, and the pupils included children of different estates: of nobles, officers, clerks and soldiers. Initially, wardens were a public school

teacher and later war department representatives. Pupils wore a uniform: a frock coat, a vest and trousers of gray thick cloth, a leather felt peaked cap and an overall. A few years later, the pupil uniform was redesigned – gray frock coats were replaced with blue ones, and green peaked caps replaced with black leather ones.

On November 5, 1804, a new Statute for Educational Institutions of the Ministry of Public Education was introduced in the Russian Empire. However, the Vologda governorate belonged to those few regions where the first gymnasium was opened even before the introduction of the new statute. In the late 1803, a Moscow University trustee, M.N. Muravyov, sent the lexicon, 4 grammar books and one Latin reading book to the administration of the Vologda public school with a proposal to start teaching Latin. The trustee's proposal was soon put into practice. To this end, the administration selected 20 pupils, including 2 from noble families, 3 of the officer estate, 7 of the clerk estate, 5 of the soldier estate, 1 of the townspeople estate and 1 of the free estate (Otto, 1866: 24-25).

On August 18, 1804, the Vologda secondary public school was reformed into a provincial gymnasium. With the pedagogical staff shortage, teachers were invited via classified advertisements in the Moskovskiye Vedomosti newspaper. In 1806, the gymnasium founded an extraordinary jurisprudence class for senior gymnasium students.

To improve financing in uezd schools, in 1811, the position of honorary superintendent was introduced, who was elected from the merchant community and was obliged to annually donate sums for public education needs (Dlya istorii, 1860: 80).

The Directorate of Vologda Schools was under the jurisdiction of the Moscow School District until 1825, and the Governing Senate's decree of December 31, 1824, assigned it to the Petersburg School District.

Over the first 20 years of its operation, the Vologda gymnasium was visited several times by Moscow University professors. In 1832, the Vologda gymnasium was reorganized and henceforth had 7 classes instead of 4 classes*. It is necessary to note that over 60 years, in the period from 1804 to 1863, the number of students in the Vologda gymnasium varied greatly from 23 people in 1824 to 242 in 1847 (Otto, 1866: 45-46)

It is also interesting to look into the distribution of students by estates and classes (Table 1 and Table 2).

Table 1. Students at the Vologda gymnasium in the breakdown by estates (Otto, 1866: 46)

Years	Total number	of Children nobles	of Children company officers	of Children distinguished citizens	of Children merchants	of Children townspeople	Children of the clergy	of Children clerks	of Children soldiers	Children of free people
1809	44	6	19	-	1	3	-	9	4	2
1835	106	42	54	1	5	4	-	-	-	-
1836	129	55	62	1	6	4	1	-	-	-
1841	224	96	104	1	5	16	2	-	-	-
1844	195	76	89	2	7	20	1	-	-	-

* Studies lasted 5 years: the 1st, 2nd and 3rd classed were allocated one year each and the 4th class – 2 years (Dlya istorii, 1860: 82).

Table 2. Students in the breakdown by classes (Otto, 1866: 47)

Years	Total number	Classes						
		1st	2nd	3d	4th	5th	6th	7th
1809	44	16	11	8	14	-	-	-
1832	69	17	14	10	12	7	5	4
1841	230	30	43	51	38	16	31	21
1845	200	28	26	37	32	28	29	20

In the early nineteenth century, with outbreak of the war of 1812, many nobles hurried to joining the army, leaving the institutions where they studied. As a result, the number of students in the Vologda gymnasium was not large at that time too, and continued to go down as young people were called out to St. Petersburg to do the military service.

The library at the Vologda gymnasium and its physics and natural history classrooms were replenished thanks to donations from various individuals. For example, there were about 500 book titles in the gymnasium’s library by 1824, and the classrooms had 26 physical and geometric instruments and devices, 15 geometric wooden solids, 4 globes, 229 fossil bodies, an herbarium arranged according to the De Candolle system, including 200 dried plants, 102 seeds and 91 shells (Otto, 1866: 52). However, it would be unfair to omit the role of the government in providing educational institutions with course books. For example, already at the time when the Vologda gymnasium was established, the trustee of the Moscow School District, M.N. Muravyov ordered to allocate 1,5 thousand rubles to the Vologda gymnasium to purchase books. The library also received new titles from benefactors on the gymnasium's inauguration day. It is known that the Chairman of the Civil Chamber, Petrov, donated 116 books in German, and the daughter of the former inspector of the Vologda medical office, Yak. Friza, donated 118 books in German (Dlya istorii, 1860: 71).

There also were other sources that provided new items to the library. For example, in 1808, the gymnasium bought 8 essays for 374 rubles, which were auctioned at the University of Dorpat (duplicate copies) (Otto, 1866: 53).

Another noteworthy fact is that a number of teachers at both the gymnasium and schools were engaged in collecting a broad variety of scientific data. Moreover, the University of Vilna sent information in the school district so that naturalists gathered materials in the areas such as witchcraft, folk medicine, natural minerals and dye reserves. Concerning witchcraft, the university wanted to know answers to the following questions: what items of the kingdoms of plants, animals and fossil minerals witchdoctors used in their art, in particular what kind of plants do they utilize to cast spells against snake bites and other reptiles, as well as how they treated various internal and external diseases of people and animals, Polish plait (*Plica polonica*), hernia, how they sent insanity and treated it, how they did harm to bees or lure them into their beehives, how they charmed guns and removed the spells? Naturalists were also asked to accurately specify the names, harvesting time and method of such plants, and, if possible, to send them to the university, in the dry or fresh form or in seeds (Otto, 1866: 65).

In the late 1828, a new Statute of Educational Institutions of the Ministry of Public Education was ratified in Russia. However, the reorganization of the Vologda gymnasium was slowed down by an outbreak of cholera in the city. The gymnasium was transformed only on April 3, 1832. Following the reform, the curriculum started to include: Law of God, sacred and church history; Russian philology, logic and grammar; languages: Latin, German and French; mathematics, up to conic sections inclusive; geography and statistics; history; physics; penmanship, drawing and sketching (Otto, 1866: 74). At the same time, the number of students reached 88 people. The enrollment included hereditary nobles – 23, personal nobles – 52, merchants – 3, townspeople – 5, *raznochintsy* (literally “people of miscellaneous ranks”; a social estate that included the lower court and governmental ranks, children of personal nobles, and discharged military) – 5. The term of gymnasium study was extended to 7 years, and in *uezd* schools from two to three years (Dlya istorii, 1860: 74).

Uezd schools taught the following subjects: Law of God and sacred history, reading of the book “On duties of man and citizen” (*O dolzhnostyakh cheloveka i grazhdanina*), Russian

grammar, penmanship, orthography, syllabic division rules, general geography and fundamentals of mathematical geography, Russian geography, history of the world, Russian history, arithmetic, fundamentals of geometry, fundamentals of physics and natural history, fundamentals of technology related to local conditions and manufacturing, sketching (Dlya istorii, 1860: 84-85).

In 1835, the gymnasium introduced several improvements to the teaching organization. For example, to support teachers, tutors were chosen from the best students to explain and check lessons of weaker students. To maintain order and discipline in classes, monitors were chosen from reliable students of the 7th class. The children of poor parents, who demonstrated particular progress were given allowances for clothes from the budget determined for pupil awards.

On September 8, 1835, a noble high school was started at the Vologda gymnasium. Noble families of the Vologda governorate made provisions as early as in 1834 that the established educational facility should have 30 students, and the yearly tuition fee was 400 rubles per student. The school was supposed to have three supervisors: a Russian, a German and a French. Beginning in November of the same year, the gymnasium introduced the course of Greek.

Since 1850, the Directorate of School Districts made it a requirement that the teaching staff should submit research works. This in turn led to a significant number of new projects accomplished by teachers. Some of the works received preliminary approval from the Directorate and were published in the provincial newsletter. The best studies were sent to the Ministry of Public Education. It is necessary to note that a significant part of teachers would subsequently continue to pursue this line of activity almost until 1917. To improve the quality of the materials received, the Vologda Directorate, in collaboration with gymnasium teachers, developed guidelines on research work for history, geography, physics, chemistry and other sciences (Otto, 1866: 87).

Their efforts soon came to fruition, and along with first modest experiments, they started to receive essays with rather strong content. Some of the best works sent by teachers included “Fairs in Vashka in the Yarensky uezd” (Yarmarki na Vashke, v Yarenskom uezde), “Hunting for squirrels” (Okhota za belkoy), “Information on the Solvychegodsk cathedral” (Svedeniya o Solvychegodskom sobore), “Description of peasant wedding customs in some uezds” (Opisaniye svadebnykh oby chayev krestyan nekotorykh uezdov) and other. These research initiatives refreshed local provincial news sheets that acquired good correspondents among teachers who provided a lot of interesting information on the governorate. This way was laid the foundation for the start of exploration into the Vologda governorate.

On the other hand, the senior school management initiated and encouraged gymnasium teachers to carry on scholarly, scientific and literary work. The rector at the St. Petersburg University, who was responsible for the school district at the time, reported in 1840 to the Vologda Directorate that the trustee of the Kazan University, when he audited the entrusted gymnasiums, noted that teachers mostly limited themselves to curriculum materials, taking no care of any research. As a result, he issued an order in 1838 that required teachers to discuss the branches of knowledge they taught, analyze books, perform translations, deliver statistical, ethnographic, topographical and historical research, as well as collect and record local lore and legends. The best works were planned to be published in the “Zapiski Kazanskogo universiteta” journal (Otto, 1866: 92-93).

In 1845, by ordinance of the school management, literary conversations were introduced to read and review the essays of the 6th and 7th class students (twice a month) to enhance academic performance and strengthen the practice of the Russian language and literature.

The curriculum, which was determined by the Statute of 1828 and finally settled down only in 1832, remained in force and with changes at that only until 1849, when a fundamental shift again took place in the gymnasium program. A totally new subject was introduced in the three higher classes as an experiment – jurisprudence. The course in Latin was reduced from 7 years to only 4 (Dlya istorii, 1860: 89), and natural history was now taught in all classes (Otto, 1866: 94-95). With the regulation of 1848, the public education obtained inner integrity and systemic view (Shevchenko et al., 2016: 366). The provision expanded programs in the gymnasium curriculum and also set forth an increasing number of uezd and parochial schools, but the key achievement was that the dispersed educational facilities in the region were brought together under a single center (Kobakhidze, 2015: 87-88).

5. Conclusion

Summarizing the above points, we would like to note that the system of public school education in the Vologda governorate in 1725–1850 underwent dynamic evolution – from arithmetic schools and theological seminaries to uezd schools and a gymnasium. The teaching staff at Russian gymnasiums was requested to conduct almost obligatory research as early as in the 19th century, and this, in turn, enhanced efforts designed to study various regions of the Russian Empire and in particular the Vologda governorate.

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