

**THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
“BEYOND THE TRADITIONAL HISTORIOGRAPHY OF EDUCATION
IN RUSSIA IN THE LATE SEVENTEENTH
THROUGH EARLY NINETEENTH CENTURIES”***

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**МЕЖДУНАРОДНАЯ КОНФЕРЕНЦИЯ
«ЗА ГРАНИЦАМИ ТРАДИЦИОННОЙ ИСТОРИОГРАФИИ
ОБРАЗОВАНИЯ В РОССИИ КОНЦА XVII – НАЧАЛА XIX ВВ.»**

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On January 27–28, 2017, the conference, “Beyond the Traditional Historiography of Education in Russia in the Late Seventeenth through Early Nineteenth Centuries,” for the scholars of education history was jointly held at the German Historical Institute in Moscow with the Higher School of Economics National Research University. Conference organizers invited renowned experts from Russia, the United States, Ukraine, and Belarus. The objective of their meeting was to discuss the latest theoretical and practical issues in the study of education and to expose research gaps, lacunas, and limitations.

The conference included plenary papers and four thematic panels. The event opened with a talk, “Decentralisation of Educational Paradigms of Early Modern Age, or Has the Time Come to Move Beyond Secularization?,” by distinguished specialist in Russian studies Gary Marker (Stony Brook University, New York). His message served as a keynote for the conference. In his presentation, Marker questioned whether secularization can be

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considered key to understanding the major cultural shifts of eighteenth-century Russia, and to what extent religion and the church played a role in these changes. Marker concluded that the significance of secularization during the Russian Age of Enlightenment has been exaggerated and should be reviewed.

The first panel highlighted little studied aspects of the Greek Enlightenment's contribution to Russian education. Thus, Nikolaos Chrissidis (Southern Connecticut University, New Haven) presented the results of his study of Jesuit schools in Greece in the early seventeenth century. He argued that the Constantinople patriarch Cyril Lucaris's concern regarding the growth in popularity of these schools was a tribute to religious confrontation. Chrissidis tracked two paradigms in the development of education, one of which was represented by Russian Greeks, the Likhud brothers. Dzhamilia Ramazanova (Russian State University for the Humanities, Moscow) raised similar questions. She analyzed a collection of primary source evidence on the Likhuds' educational initiatives at the Slavic Greek Latin Academy. She demonstrated which initiatives were of a private nature, what limitations existed on state educational programs, how and where one can observe evidence of pedagogical freedom, and which elements of private initiative characterized the teaching practices of the Likhuds.

Vladislav Rzhetskii (German Historical Institute, Moscow) further explored correlations between state and private initiatives. Using the example of the Pastor Gluck School, Rzhetskii reviewed the programs of study at Russian schools in the Petrine era, in particular the study of foreign languages. This theme allowed for a deeper understanding of the education "prospectors (*starateli*)" and their methods, thanks to which the Russian Empire received a thin stratum of secular and religious elite. Rzhetskii also presented his database of foreign tutors and foreign language teachers, described its structure, material selection, and project objectives.

Conference participants then turned to the prosopographic approach to research during the discussion of a paper by Tatiana Kostina (Archive of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Saint Petersburg branch) about the Academic Gymnasium. She focused on the Academy employees' educational decisions for their sons (locations and modes of study). She presented the collected data about the academics' children in charts, which allowed the audience to see the achievements of the Academic University and Gymnasium as an important element of secular education in eighteenth century Russia. Igor Fediukin (National Research University "Higher School of Economics") continued the theme of state institutes forming new schools in Russia and reviewed the forms of educational entrepreneurship.

Olga Kosheleva's lecture (Institute of World History, Russian Academy of Sciences) opened the second day of the conference. Her paper immersed participants in the atmosphere of seventeenth century education and examined how the content of school textbooks changed and how a secular study tradition was established. Kosheleva described the technology of textbook creation, characterized their content, and shared her own experience of working with these texts. She also highlighted problems of

religious education. Similarly, Liudmilla Posokhova (The Vasyl Karazin Kharkiv National University) presented on the topic of historiographic stereotypes and cultural context in regard to these same problems. On the example of Orthodox academies and collegiums in Ukrainian lands in the seventeenth century, she demonstrated how modernization proved the syncretic nature of these educational institutes. She shared her experience in reconstructing educational ideals through an analysis of library collections. Denis Kondakov (Polotsk State University; Collegium, Université de Lyon) provided a detailed description of educational activities of the Jesus Society in the Russian Empire (1772–1820). He detailed interpretative opportunities for scholars on the basis of archival documents that he discovered during the course of his research.

To address the question of Russians' educational preferences, Alexander Feofanov (The St. Tikhon Orthodox University, Moscow) created a database on this subject and presented on the preferences of Russia's top officers in particular. His data revealed this group's choices in educational institutions for their children and highlighted the conditions that influenced these decisions. Iurii Zaretskii (National Research University "Higher School of Economics") studied Phillip Dilthey and his textbook, *The First Fundamentals of Universal History with Brief Chronology for Use by Students among the Russian Nobility*. He identified connections between state and private education in eighteenth century Russia.

The concluding presentation by Elena Vishlenkova (National Research University "Higher School of Economics") was dedicated to stumbling blocks that prevent scholars from reexamining their perspective in the study of education history. Based on a report by Minister S. S. Uvarov (1843), she revealed how ministry analytics made use of the available data to construct an image of progressive development in school construction in Russia in the eighteenth through the early nineteenth centuries. This report also justified an exclusive role for the state in educational matters.

The conference also hosted a roundtable discussion on the state of an empirical database for research into eighteenth century education. Its participants shared their experiences in working with new documents and collections, and discussed how to develop deeper interpretations of the published evidence.

The conference benefitted from the high level of research papers and effective organization. Interesting discussions allowed participants to exchange ideas, thus assisting one another in developing their research agendas. One can say with certainty that the organizers' objectives have been achieved: a significant layer of research problems that had been on the periphery of scholars' attention have been brought to the fore.

About the author

Zhanar T. Bermurzina is a PhD candidate at the National Research University "Higher School of Economics" (Moscow).