

The development of education and pedagogical thought in Russia in the era of Empress Catherine II (the second half of the XVIII century)

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ABSTRACT: The article characterizes the most important features of the development of education in Russia during the reign of Empress Catherine II in the second half of the XVIII century (1762-1796). The work of progressive figures of education F.I. Yankovich de Mirievo and I.I. Betskoy on the creation of an education system in Russia, the opening of major and small public schools and the Smolny Institute of Noble Maidens is shown. The description of the content of the work of these educational institutions is given. Attention is paid to showing how the education system was implemented in the Russian province (on the example of the Vyatka province). The views of prominent teachers and thinkers of the time N.I. Novikov, G.S. Skovoroda, A.N. Radishchev are revealed.

EET/TEE KEYWORDS: Empress Catherine II; Smolny Institute of Noble Maidens; N.I. Novikov; G.S. Skovoroda; A.N. Radishchev; XVIII Century.

1. Russian Empress Catherine II and French educators

Empress Catherine II of Russia (1729-1796) (born Sophie Auguste Friederike von Anhalt-Zerbst-Dornburg) reigned in 1762-1796, a much longer period than any other ruler in the history of Russia. During her reign, Russia's territory increased significantly, a large number of industrial enterprises were built, and Russia's influence in European affairs increased considerably. At the same time, she went down in history as probably the most wasteful ruler: the national debt that she left behind was covered finally only in 1891, i.e. almost a century after her death!

In the second half of the XVIII century, the cruel exploitation of serfs by landlords was brought to extreme limits. The class struggle between peasants and landlords intensified, and a formidable peasant war under the leadership of the Cossack Emelian Ivanovich Pugachev broke out (1773-1775). The young Empress understood clearly the need to develop education in the country. After the death of the great reformer of Russia, Emperor Peter I (years of life – 1672-1725, years of reign – 1682-1725) all the following Russian Emperors and Empresses (Catherine I, Peter II, Anna I, Elizabeth I, Peter III) practically didn't pay any attention to the development of education in Russia. The lag in this issue from the leading European countries was becoming more and more obvious and threatened the very existence of the Russian Empire. It was clear for everybody that few, separate, unrelated and devoid of continuity educational institutions, small and primitive at that, weren't able to serve as a reliable basis for ensuring progress in the socio-economic, military and cultural spheres of the Russian society. These were usually parish schools, not gymnasiums.

Catherine II began her reign with a promise to improve state laws and regulations of various estates¹. She corresponded with French famous educators (Voltaire, Diderot), whom she hypocritically invited to participate in the development and implementation of public educational projects on the territory of the Russian Empire. Catherine II suggested Denis Diderot (1713-1784) to publish the *Encyclopedia of Sciences, Arts, and Crafts* in Russia because its publication in France faced significant difficulties. The Empress's gesture concealed not only an intention to strengthen her reputation, but also a desire to satisfy the interest of the Russian educated society in this publication. Diderot refused, but as an option that suited both sides, he suggested some extracts from the Encyclopedia. As a result, 25 fragments of it were published in Russia in the last quarter of the XVIII century.

In 1773, Diderot visited Russia at the invitation of Catherine II. He lived in St. Petersburg from October 1773 to March 1774, and was elected a foreign honorary member of the Academy of Sciences of Russia. At the request of the Russian Empress, he drew up the so-called *University Plan for Russia*, that would mean the establishment of the solid educational system in the country. Diderot didn't have to think about it for long. The plan he proposed to the Russian Empress was an exact copy of the French educational system that has been in existence for a long time. According to the Diderot's plan, the whole territory of Russia had to be divided into several University districts. The University in each district was supposed to play the role of the governing center for all other educational institutions. This plan was completely inapplicable in Russia at the time, where almost the entire population was concentrated in the western, European part of the Empire, while there were almost no schools in

¹ N.A. Konstantinov, E.N. Medynsky, M.F. Shabaeva, *Istoriya pedagogiki* [History of pedagogy], Moscow, Prosveshchenie Publ., 1982, p. 162 (in Russian).

the Asian part of it, let alone any more or less significant educational institutions. In its main features, the implementation of this plan has begun under Alexander I in the first quarter of the 19th century, when the ministry of public education and four new Universities (Vilna, Dorpat, Kharkov and Kazan) were opened at once, in addition to the previously existing in Moscow and St. Petersburg. It was fully completed only in the 20th century. In Catherine's Russia, conditions haven't yet matured for the implementation of the Diderot's plan².

Another great French educator, Voltaire (1694-1778), was Catherine II's favorite author. The Empress even referred to herself as his "disciple". For his part, Voltaire, from the very beginning of Catherine II's political activity, expressed respect for her. After the palace coup of 1762 in Russia, the educator actively used compliments. He named Catherine II *Semiramis*. Voltaire and Catherine II have corresponded for 15 years. In his letters, he drew the Empress's attention to the education of ordinary citizens of Russia.

However, occasional communications with prominent educators couldn't replace constant work in the field of the development of education. The economic development of Russia, the growth of cities and the increase in its size of the state apparatus, as well as the increasingly obvious need to spread literacy among the unprivileged, primarily urban, population, prompted Empress Catherine II to pay close attention to the problems of public education. She understood that an educational system should be designed to meet the educational needs of as many citizens as possible, with an exception, of course, of those whom the authorities referred to as the «vile class», i.e. the serf peasantry. For some time, Catherine II hesitated about choosing the specific plan of education development in the country...

2. *Creation of major and small public schools in cities and county towns*

The rise of the Russia's economic development, the growth of cities and an increase in the urban population forced the government to start opening schools for the underprivileged urban population. In 1782, the commission for the establishment of public schools in Russia was founded in St. Petersburg. It was a governmental bureaucratic body, which didn't include the most prominent figures of Russian culture and education of the time. In this sense, the exception was the most active member of this commission Fyodor Ivanovich Yankovich de Mirievo (1741-1814), the Serb by nationality, who had been invited by the Russian Empress from Austria-Hungary at the recommendation of the Austrian Emperor. Yankovich was a great didact, a faithful follower of

² V.B. Pomelov, *100 velikih pedagogov [100 great teachers]*, Moscow, Veche Publ., 2018, p. 67 (in Russian).

J.A. Komensky and his ideas. Earlier, Yankovich had created an educational system for the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and in Russia the system established by the Empress Catherine II took this model as an example³. In 1786 the commission prepared a *Charter for public schools in the Russian Empire*, according to which it was supposed to open four-grade major public schools (hereinafter – MPS) with a five-year term of study in provincial cities, and small public schools (hereinafter – SPS) with a two-year term of study in county towns. After graduating from SPS, a student could go to study in the senior classes of MPS, because their curricula were aligned.

The following subjects were included in the curriculum of the MPS: reading, writing, counting, a short catechism, sacred history, penmanship, drawing, arithmetic, history (universal and Russian), geography, grammar, geometry, mechanics, physics, natural history and architecture. The subjects of the first two classes were studied at SPS. Libraries and classrooms were opened at the MPS; visual aids on natural history, physics and mathematics were supposed to be here.

The scholars of the Academy of Sciences and Moscow University have created textbooks for all subjects included in the curriculum of public schools. Serious didactic treatises *Rules for students in public schools* and *Guidance to teachers of public schools* were written. The latter gave instructions on all issues of the educational work at school. Classroom-based organization instead of an individual learning system was advisable. The following methods were recommended: collective reading, cumulative instruction, tables, image in initial letters, questioning and tests.

Some words about each of these innovations. «Collective reading»: in the classroom a teacher, or a student called by him, should stand up and read loudly an educational book that all other students repeat after him in chorus. «Cumulative instruction», i.e., the teacher's explanation of difficult parts of a textbook. «Tables», i.e. drawing up plans, abstracts, and taking notes of the textbook's text. «Image in initial letters», i.e. an image on a blackboard or in a notebook of definitions in initial letters of words. It was a mnemonic device that made it easier to remember new notions. «Questioning», i.e., interviewing of students. A teacher was recommended, by interviewing students, to find out if they understood his previous explanations. «Tests» had to be conducted twice a year in public schools: in the middle of the school year, – private tests of students in the presence of teachers of other classes, and at the end of the school year, – public tests in the presence of a large number of invited persons and guests from the nobility, merchants, clergy and city officials. The public tests were conducted in a solemn atmosphere: teachers had to give welcoming speeches in which the importance of science and public education was promot-

³ *Ibid.*, p. 200.

ed. The students recited poetry. Guests had the right to ask students questions in accordance with the test program. *Guidance* was considered an official didactic tutorial, and teachers were instructed to follow all recommendations of the manual strictly, without deviating from it even in the slightest. *Guidance* assumed that a teacher shouldn't so much appeal to the memory of students, but mostly to their mind, i.e. to seek understanding, and not just memorization. However, the then methods were designed mainly for memorizing texts of textbooks.

As a textbook on moral education, *Book on the Positions of Man and Citizen* was used, which explained to children their duties towards God, the king (or the queen), the family and other people in the spirit of autocratic serfdom ideology.

The material support and management of the MPS and SPS were entrusted to orders of public charity, which were headed by officials of the province, and not by the pedagogical administration⁴. These secular, provincial, general educational institutions, – the first in the history of Russia, – were supposed to open with special solemnity. The first school day was announced on September 22, Catherine II's namesake day, as it was indicated in the highest the decree received by governors of provinces. This day, famous in the history of Russia, got a special glory as a day of the beginning of universal public enlightenment⁵.

In the first year, it was supposed to start the educational process at the MPS in twenty-five provincial cities. It was also planned to open, – and this plan was fully implemented, – a significant number of SPS. By the end of the XVIII century, 315 small and major schools with a total number of students of about 20,000 people had opened in Russia; 790 teachers worked in them⁶. For such a huge country as Russia, the quantity of schools and students was, of course, extremely insufficient. But, nevertheless, the beginning of the public educational system in Russia was laid.

⁴ V.B. Pomelov, *Soderzhanie i metody raboty v Vyatskom glavnom narodnom uchilishche* [The content and methods of work at the Vyatka major people school], «Primary school», n. 7, 2011, p. 11 (in Russian).

⁵ V.B. Pomelov, *Glavnye i malye narodnye uchilishcha Vyatskoj gubernii, (k 225-letiyu sozdaniya sistemy svetskogo obrazovaniya v Rossii)*, «Vestnik Vyatskogo gosudarstvennogo gumanitarnogo universiteta», seriya «Pedagogika i psihologiya» [The major and small public schools of the Vyatka province (to the 225th anniversary of the creation of the secular education system in Russia)], «Bulletin of the Vyatka State University for the Humanities», The series «Pedagogy and Psychology», vol. 2, n. 3, 2011, p. 73 (in Russian).

⁶ Konstantinov, Medynsky, Shabaeva, *Istoriya pedagogiki*, cit., pp. 164-165 (in Russian).

3. *How was the task of establishing the major and small public schools solved in the province (at the example of the Vyatka province)?*

The highest decree on establishing schools was signed on August 12, and soon the Kazan Governor-General, Prince Platon Stepanovich Meshchersky received it, along with other governors⁸. The decree gave notice of the decision of the commission of public schools, approved by the Empress, to establish the major and small public schools in Russia, and expressed the requirement to prepare everything necessary for the establishing of a single major public school and several small ones in county towns of the Vyatka province⁹. It was also necessary to find funds for the maintenance of these schools from the revenues of the city and the order of public charity, but without burdening the treasury and without impoverishment for other useful institutions¹⁰.

On August 25, the Vyatka vice-governor Fyodor Fyodorovich Zheltukhin received from the Governor-General P.S. Meshchersky a copy of the imperial decree and an order from him to establish the MPS in Vyatka and the SPS in the town of Slobodskoy¹¹. Soon, funds for the purchase of books and visual aids in the amount of 425 rubles arrived to Vyatka¹².

Soon the teachers assigned to work at the Vyatka MPS also arrived. The chairman of the main commission of public schools, the Count Pyotr Vasilyevich Zavodovsky (1739-1812), later (in 1802-1812) the first Minister of Public Education of the Russian Empire, entrusted the Kazan Governor-General with a special care to patronage the newborn schools.

Some words about each of the first Vyatka teachers of the first state secular school. Efim Viglinsky, the son of a priest, a native of the village of Viglina in the Vesjegonsky district of the Tver province. He had been educated at the Alexander Nevsky Seminary. Grigory Tikhomirov, the son of a deacon, originated from the village of Khoroshevo in the Moscow district of the Moscow province. Ivan Myshkin turned out to be the only native of the Vyatka prov-

⁷ The Vyatka province was part of the Kazan gubernia at the time. Its largest city was Vyatka. Today, it's the Kirov region [Kirovskaya oblast] and the city of Kirov, which is located 1.000 km northeast of Moscow.

⁸ V.B. Pomelov, *Istoriya obrazovaniya v Vyatskom krae v XIV-XVIII vv* [The history of education in the Vyatka region in the XIV-XVIII centuries], Kirov, VyatGGU Publ., 2011, p. 76 (in Russian).

⁹ A.A. Spizin, *Istoriya Vyatskogo glavnogo narodnogo uchilishcha (1786–1891)*, in *Pamyatnaya knizhka i Kalendar' Vyatskoj gubernii na 1891 g.* [The history of the Vyatka Major People School (1786-1891), in A Commemorative book and Calendar of the Vyatka province for 1891], Vyatka, 1890, pp. 1-79 (in Russian).

¹⁰ *Stoletie Vyatskoj gubernii. 1780–1880, Sbornik materialov k istorii Vyatskogo kraja* [The centenary of the Vyatka province. 1780-1880, in: Collection of materials on the history of the Vyatka region], 2 vols., Vyatka, 1880, Vol. 1, p. 236 (in Russian).

¹¹ Pomelov, *Istoriya obrazovaniya v Vyatskom krae v XIV-XVIII vv.*, cit., p. 76.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 78.

ince among the first group of teachers. The son of the deacon of the village of Kyrmyzh, Vyatka district. He received his education at the Vyatka Theological Seminary. Timofey Titovich Rapinov came from a family of a priest. He graduated from the Kazan Theological Seminary. Later, in 1811 he headed the first Vyatka men's gymnasium. All these four teachers were as well graduates of the St. Petersburg Main National School that was opened in 1782. It was at that time the only educational institution in Russia that trained specialists destined for teaching positions. The head of this first *alma mater* of Russian teachers was F.I. Yankovich de Mirievo. In fact, it was a first Russian teacher's seminary.

Moreover, these first four teachers who came to Vyatka were the students of the first graduate class, which numbered no more than two dozen people. The fifth part of the class was sent specifically to Vyatka. Thus, all four of them, – Viglinsky, Tikhomirov, Myshkin and Rapinov, – had the best pedagogical education of the time, and besides in different specialties. It's highly likely that at that time, no other provincial school in Russia had such qualified teachers as the school in Vyatka. On November 20, 1786, collegiate assessor Ivan Stefanovich was appointed the first director of the first secular school in the Vyatka land at the recommendation of the governor. Stefanovich was of a Polish nobility. In his youth he graduated from the Kiev Theological Academy. Simultaneously the first SPS, as it had been planned, was opened in the ancient town of Slobodskoy of the Vyatka province.

The educational work in the newly created schools was carried out on the basis of the principles and methods that had been developed by F.I. Yankovich de Mirievo together with the Russian scientists who took an active part in the work of the St. Petersburg Main National School.

4. I.I. Betskoy's pedagogical activity

Ivan Ivanovich Betskoy (1704-1795) spent many years in France, among his friends were French educators. He's got acquainted with European educational institutions. In 1763, on his initiative, an "Educational House" with a maternity hospital was opened in Moscow, later, – the similar institution in St. Petersburg, and then in provincial cities. I.I. Betskoy changed the setting of educational work in cadet corps and gymnasiums, increased the time of study in them, opened new educational institutions for different social groups, except serfs, namely, the School at the Academy of Arts, the Commercial School for Noble Youth (for boys), the Smolny Institute of Noble Maidens in St. Petersburg with special departments for girls from the nobility and from the bourgeoisie, etc.

I.I. Betskoy, like all the enlighteners of the XVIII century, highly valued

the role of education in public life. He was convinced, that the root of all evil and good is education or its absence. He presented to Catherine II a report on the general reorganization of education in Russia. The report was published in 1764 under the title *General Institution for the Education of both genders of youth*, and received the force of a law. It spoke about the need to educate in Russia a «new breed of people» by organizing closed educational institutions in which children should stay from 5-6 years old to 18 years old. All this time, they should be isolated from the surrounding life in order to avoid the corrupting influence of society of the time. Betskoy hoped, that educated in such a way nobles should be able, to treat peasants more humanely and govern the state fairly.

I.I. Betskoy considered the main means of moral education to be the suggestion of the “fear of God”, the isolation of children from the inappropriate environment, and demonstration of positive examples of behavior that girls had to see during their schooling. He proposed to support children’s tendency to hard work in closed educational institutions, to instill a habit of avoiding idleness, to educate girls so that they had to be courteous, compassionate to poverty and misfortune. He attached great importance to physical education, and considered clean air the main means of it, as well as entertainment with innocent amusements and games. As for mental education, he pointed out that the learning process should be pleasant for children; it had to be conducted without coercion, and should be based on children’s inclinations. He recommended teaching young people «more from looking and hearing than from mindless memorization». He warned that excessive coaching of children to study could lead to blunting children’s abilities. Therefore, he categorically insisted on the prohibition of physical punishments. Betskoy loved to quote his own words from the *General Plan of the Moscow Educational House*: «Once and for all to introduce the law and strictly assert, – never and for nothing to beat children»¹³.

His idea of educating a «new breed of people» concerned not only the nobility, but also the commoners [Russian: *raznochintsy*]¹⁴, or the «third rank of people», who should be engaged in industry, trade and craft. He also hoped that these “new people” would pass their valuable views and habits to their children, who, in turn, would pass them to future generations, and so people’s morals and actions should gradually change for the better, and therefore society would be improved. He proposed to carry out significant social transformations, but, at the same time, with the obligatory preservation of the serfdom

¹³ Konstantinov, Medynsky, Shabaeva, *Istoriya pedagogiki*, cit., p. 164.

¹⁴ A commoner [Russian: *raznochinets*] was a person who didn’t belong to any of the established estates, i.e. not attributed to the nobility, nor to the merchants, nor to the burghers, nor to the guild artisans, nor to the peasantry, and who didn’t have personal nobility or spiritual dignity.

system. A supporter of women's education, Betskoy recognized the important role of women in the upbringing of children, especially at an early age, and spoke about the need to create respectful attitude for women in society as mothers and educators. He played a major role in the establishing the first women's educational institution, – the Institute of Noble Maidens [Smolny Institute].

However, in Betskoy's views, the stamp of class and noble limitations clearly appeared. It manifested itself in his demand to "root" the "fear of God" into the hearts of children, in the illusory belief that it would be possible to improve the serfdom system through education, finally, in an effort to isolate children from the surrounding reality and to organize a class educational system which could be available only for privileged classes of the society. As for serfs they were deprived of an opportunity to study at all.

5. *The Smolny Institute of Noble Maidens*

An important achievement of I.I. Betskoy was the establishing of the first closed women's educational institution in Russia. It was opened in St. Petersburg in accordance with a decree signed by Catherine II on April 24 (May 5), 1764. Catherine II, an enthusiastic admirer of the progressive ideas of Michel Montaigne, John Locke and Francois Fenelon, didn't at all seek to establish an educational institution like the Saint-Cyr Institute in Versailles. After all, the French institute wasn't given higher tasks than the training of ladies-in-waiting for the royal retinue, and, therefore, all training was mainly limited to teaching elegant manners. The Russian Empress set a much higher goal for the educational institution she founded. As stated in the decree, it was created in order to give to the state educated women, good mothers, useful family members and worthy members of the society.

As we have said, Betskoy hoped to create a «new breed of people», for example, fair nobles and humane merchants, in order to mitigate class contradictions by means of education. He considered the strict isolation of children from the harmful influence of a society, full of vices and prejudices, to be a prerequisite for the formation of such «a breed». He created a number of closed educational institutions, among which the Smolny Institute occupied a special place. Initially, the school was called *The Imperial Educational Society of Noble Maidens*, and it was located in the premises of the Voskresensky Novodevichy Convent (architect F.B. Rastrelli), located in the vicinity of the capital, near the village of Smolnaya, where the Smolny Yard was located in Peter's time. Hence the more common name – The Smolny Institute of Noble Maidens.

According to the charter, children had to enter an institution no older than

6 years of age and stay in it for 12 years¹⁵. A receipt was taken from parents stating that they wouldn't demand their daughters back under any pretext before the expiration of this period of time. The Empress hoped by opening the Institute to contribute to strengthening morale in the Russian society. The Senate was ordered to send the charter of the institution to all provinces and cities, so that each noble could, if he wished, entrust his daughters in their infancy to the Smolny Institute.

Anna Sergeevna Dolgorukaya was appointed the first head of the Institute of Noble Maidens. However, a few months later she was replaced by Sophia Ivanovna de Lafont, a graduate of Saint-Cyr, who led the Institute for 33 years. Further management of the Institute was carried out by Elizaveta Alexandrovna Palmenbach (1797-1802), Julia Fedorovna Adlerberg (1802-1839), Maria Pavlovna Leontieva (1839-1875), Olga Alexandrovna Tomilova (1875-1886), Maria Petrovna Novosiltseva (1886-1895), Elena Alexandrovna Lieven (1895-1915), Vera Vasilyevna Golitsyna (1915-1919).

To enter the Smolny Institute, it was necessary for girls to pass exams in French and Russian, as well as to pass an interview on knowledge of tenets of the Orthodox faith. Every year, 200 daughters of hereditary nobles, with a rank not lower than colonel or actual state councilor, were admitted to the Institute at the state expense. However, few of the nobility were willing to condemn their daughters to a "no-go" 12 years of study, after which a difficult question arose of marrying «an overly educated» girl. That's why the main composition of students were, although well-born, but relatively poor girls. Among the students of the Smolny Institute were the daughters of famous people as well, for example, the daughter of the great Russian military leader, Generalissimo A.V. Suvorov.

In addition to government places for pupils, some girls were supported by scholarships contributed by the imperial family. I.I. Betskoy taught ten girls of each class at his own expense. He put a special fund for this purpose in the bank. The great nobles (Orlovs, Golitsyns, Demidovs, Saltykovs, etc.) made annual contributions to the scholarship. The Smolny girls who studied at the expense of a private person wore a ribbon around their neck, the color of which was chosen by their benefactors. So, the scholarship holders of Catherine II's spouse Paul I had blue ones, the Demidov's had orange ones, Betskoy's proteges tied green ones, and Saltykov's scholarship holders had crimson ones. Relatives paid for those who couldn't receive any scholarship. At the beginning of the XX century, it was about 400 rubles a year.

The 12-year study period was divided into 4 classes. Each class lasted for three years. The training program included teaching of a wide range of sub-

¹⁵ I.I. Betskoy, *Ustav vospitaniya dvuhsot blagorodnyh devic* [The charter of education of two hundred noble maidens], in *Anthology of pedagogical thought of Russia XVIII century*, Moscow, Pedagogika Publ., 1985, pp. 16-163 (in Russian).

jects. In the junior class, Russian and two foreign languages, arithmetic, drawing, dancing, music and needlework were studied. In the 2nd class geography and history were added to these subjects. In the 3rd class reading of moral and historical books, as well as elements of architecture and heraldic studies were introduced. In the 4th class the law, rules of good upbringing, good moral and courtesy were provided. An important place during education was occupied by religion, secular manners and various types of home economics. The students of the Institute wore uniforms of a certain color: 1st grade – coffee, 2nd – dark blue, 3rd – blue, 4th – white. The coffee color symbolized proximity to the earth and was more practical, especially for younger children. Lighter colors symbolized neatness of girls. The first three ages were given white aprons, the girls of the oldest 4th grade were given green ones.

The appearance of students was strictly regulated. A specific hairstyle was developed for each class, and all girls were required to have namely this hairstyle. But they simply didn't have an opportunity to somehow show their individuality in the matter of hairstyles, since they were all served at school by single master, who was given the strictest instructions. That's why all of them had one and the same hairstyle defined for a particular age. The younger girls were often cut short, and the older ones were forced to pin their hair strictly.

In 1765, the Institute, originally established as a closed privileged educational institution for daughters of the nobility, opened a department for petty-bourgeois girls of non-noble estates, except for the serf peasantry. They received basic general education training; special attention was paid to sewing and home economics. Teachers at the Institute, who were under the beneficial influence of humane ideas of French enlighteners, sought to give girls a universal education, sought to shape them comprehensively. At the same time, in 1783, the commission for the establishment of public schools in Russia ascertained the poor knowledge of the Russian language by pupils and it gave instructions to increase several hours for its study, as well as to conduct all subjects in Russian.

After the death of Empress Catherine II (1796), Emperor Paul I instructed the management of charitable, medical institutions and women's educational institutions to his wife, Empress Maria Feodorovna. In 1854 the Department of Institutions of Empress Maria opened; it existed until October 1917. Over time curricula were changed, the "coffee" class was canceled, and girls began to be accepted from 8-9 years old for only nine years. The Empress Maria Feodorovna believed that the education of middle-class girls should be limited to the preparation of kind mothers and kind housewives, for which six years was quite enough. Middle-class girls started to be accepted from the age of 11-12. The Emperor approved a set of petty-bourgeois pupils of 200 people. According to the new plan, reading, writing and grammar of three languages, geography, history and arithmetic were taught at the first class, and all subjects were introduced gradually. At the same age, it was supposed to teach girls

dancing, drawing, beginnings of music and needlework peculiar to female sex. 42 hours a week were required for all subjects. The reform changed the nature of the Educational Society. The broad tasks set by Catherine II were replaced by narrower and more utilitarian ones. At the same time, graduates took strict exams, and real tests were introduced. According to results of them awards were distributed.

Lessons were usually continued from 7 to 11 o'clock, and then from 14 to 16 o'clock. The main subject was considered to be the language of the nobility, – French. Dialogues between teachers and girls weren't encouraged. It was also not supposed to ask questions on the topic under study. Marks were awarded on a twelve-point scale. By the end of the Institute, many girls knew French better than Russian. There were inspection exams that were taken in the presence of the inspector of classes, i.e. deputy director. Public exams, sometimes in the presence of royalty, were a formality: the best students retold the tickets they had learned in advance.

Upon graduation six best graduates received the so-called cipher. That was a gold monogram in the form of the initial of the reigning Empress; it was pinned to a white bow with gold stripes and worn on the left shoulder. Gold and silver medals were also awarded. Awards were given at the end of each class as well: books, pencils, needlework tools. According to academic success such insignia were given as a bow, the color of which indicated the degree of success of its wearer, as well as laces with tassels that were tied on one's hair.

The Charter pointed out the need for the development of pedagogical abilities: older pupils had to study for several hours a week with younger ones, so that later they could teach their own children. In their free time, pupils were recommended to read historical books and moral stories, mainly in French. Fluency in foreign languages, music, playing the harp, singing, modeling, drawing, embroidery, drawing of geographical maps were especially appreciated. Physical education lessons were compulsory for everyone. The Institute had a strict daily routine. The rise was at 6 o'clock. The usual menu at breakfast included a piece of bread with a small piece of butter and cheese, a portion of milk porridge or pasta. For lunch they got liquid soup without meat, for the second dish – meat from soup and a small pie. In the evening there was tea with a bun. During the fasts, the diet became even more meager: for breakfast girls could get several potatoes with vegetable oil and porridge, for lunch – soup with cereals and a lean pie. Some girls ended up in the infirmary with a diagnosis of exhaustion. If a girl had pocket money, then she could have a heartier breakfast in the teachers' room, separate from other girls. They could also quietly arrange with servants to buy groceries, although this was officially severely punished by overseers.

Free time was strictly regulated. Girls lived in bedrooms (dormitories) designed for nine people with a lady assigned to them. In addition, there was also a class lady who monitored girls' behavior during classes. For vulgar behavior,

girls could be expelled from the Institute. Much attention was paid to religious education. Moral education included the assimilation of secular virtues: gentleness, courtesy, good behavior, modesty and generosity. A special place was given to economic education. Mathematics was taught in conjunction with home economics. The pupils wrote daily bills, kept a daily record of household expenses, “negotiated” with suppliers about the purchase of food supplies, “determined the price” of each product, etc. Indoor classes were followed by walks in the palace park. Here fountains and three ponds were arranged; one pond was for swimming in summer, the other two served as garden decorations.

Meetings with relatives were limited to two reception days a year. The date could last no more than two hours. It was especially difficult for girls who were from far away. They sometimes didn't see their relatives for a long time. All correspondence was strictly controlled by class ladies, who read each letter before sending it to relatives and after receiving the reply. Class ladies were obliged to monitor the decent upbringing of girls. The main criterion for the selection of them was usually an unmarried status. This was because she had to spend all day with pupils.

Institute girls were fenced off from the influence of a family, but not from the world in general. They were taken out for walks and even court events; gala dinners and performances were held within the walls of Smolny. Sometimes they were taken to the Tauride Garden, but under strict control: everything was done to prevent their contact with other walkers. Balls were held several times a year: on the birthday of the Emperor and Empress, on the New Year's Eve, etc. These events were attended by all pupils and superiors. Girls danced with each other for several hours. Occasionally, balls were held with the invitation of cavaliers, but they had to be necessarily... relatives of girls; kinship was considered a prerequisite for the invitation. With the beginning of wars these few holidays also stopped: it was considered reprehensible to have fun. Corporal punishment wasn't accepted for pupils but shouting and swearing were often included in the pedagogical arsenal of some mentors. It wasn't uncommon for an offender to be ashamed in front of the entire Institute. It was especially difficult for those suffering from enuresis; they were forced to go to breakfast with a wet sheet tied over their dress. One could get a reprimand for a loud conversation at recess, a carelessly made bed, an improperly tied bow or a stray curl from a strict hairstyle. The most important thing was to follow the rules of the Institute unquestioningly. Obedient pupils were called «parfaits» [in French, *parfaite* – *perfect*]; minx girls could be called «moveshka» [in French, *mauvaise* – *bad*]¹⁶.

¹⁶ V.B. Pomelov, *Smol'nyj institut blagorodnyh devic. K 250-letiyu so dnya osnovaniya [Smolny Institute of Noble Maidens. To the 250th anniversary of its foundation]*, «Primary school», n. 2, 2015, p. 87.

Following the example of the Smolny Institute of Noble Maidens, similar educational institutions began to open in other cities of Russia. However, this Institute continued to be a kind of a center, and other women's Institutes and boarding schools looked up to it¹⁷.

In the second half of the XVIII century, the outstanding representatives of the pedagogical thought of Russia N.I. Novikov and G.S. Skovoroda were the exponents of anti-serfdom sentiments. A.N. Radishchev was the outstanding representative of the first generation of the Russian revolutionary enlightenment.

6. *Pedagogical views of G.S. Skovoroda*

The outstanding Ukrainian philosopher, democrat and educator Grigory Savvich Skovoroda (1722-1794) was a fearless denouncer of the official religion and dead church scholasticism. He graduated from the Kiev Theological Academy and the Faculty of Philosophy in the German town of Halle. Then he was a teacher at the Pereslavl Seminary¹⁸. In 1759-1766, he was a poetry teacher at the Kharkov collegium. For the next 28 years, he was an itinerant philosopher, preacher, and poet. In streets and squares, at rural fairs, he taught people in the form of sermons or fables, denounced nobility and higher clergy. His oral presentations expressed the ideology of peasant masses, the middle and lower Cossacks, and the urban poor. He put forward the ideal of a free personality, saw the meaning of life in self-knowledge¹⁹.

Although his worldview was idealistic in general, there were many materialistic elements in his views that make him related to the greatest Russian scholar Mikhail Vasilyevich Lomonosov (1711-1765). G.S. Skovoroda believed

¹⁷ During the 155 years of the Smolny Institute's existence there were 86 graduations. The first took place in 1776, the 85th, – the last in St. Petersburg, – in 1917. It was then that Nina Vladimirovna Kostenko-Radzievskaya (born Kruber) (1900–2004, USA) graduated from the Institute. With her death, the last living thread connecting us with Smolny broke. In summer of 1917 the Institute was closed. The building was seized by the Bolsheviks; there they were preparing their Great October Socialist Revolution (1917). They willingly used the building because it was warm and cozy, had electricity, steam heating, running water, and, finally, it was very significant in size. The Institute of Noble Maidens itself, headed by Princess V.V. Golitsyna, moved to Novochoerkassk, where its last, 86th graduation, took place in February 1919. In summer of 1919, the Institute left Russia and continued its work in Serbia for some time. As for the Smolny Palace it became the «headquarters of the revolution», and even in many ways its symbol. The city's Communist party government has been located here for many years, and even up to nowadays. Today, the Governor of St. Petersburg has his residence just in this building!

¹⁸ Pereslavl-Zalessky is one of the oldest cultural and educational centers in Russia, located in the Yaroslavl region, 140 km from Moscow.

¹⁹ N.A. Konstantinov, *Istoriya russkoj pedagogiki* [History of Russian pedagogy], Moscow, Gosuchpedgiz Publ., 1938, p. 102 (in Russian).

that nature was the beginning of everything; that it's boundless in space and time, and it had neither begun nor end. Skovoroda denied innate ideas and considered the world around him to be a source of knowledge. He sharply criticized the then prevailing domestic ideas of education. One of the most important positions that he defended was the statement about the ability of ordinary people to independent pedagogical creativity. Another important idea he preached was the need to develop own national interests rather than to follow instructions from outside. He argued that blindly following foreign theories was harmful.

In the parable *Grateful Herodius* he ridiculed the desire of the Ukrainian nobility to imitate mechanically French and German laws, habits, and overall lifestyle. In this regard, he told a parable about a monkey who gave its children a noble upbringing. This education was carried out by French teachers who taught monkeys to speak French, to sing, to play, to dance, and to have secular manners so that they could get into the court of the Moroccan owner. In contrast to the monkey, which ape-imitated the tastes and requirements of the Moroccan rulers (i.e., Russian nobles), Skovoroda brought out a simple, truly and noble stork Herodius. By raising its children, he tried to save them from arrogance, idleness, immorality and selfishness.

Skovoroda, like Rousseau, demanded a natural education, but at the same time he didn't consider the primitive state of people an ideal form of social life; he didn't idealize children's nature and didn't demand the removal of children from the complexities of social life «into the bosom of nature». His idea of realizing the education in accordance with natural characteristics of children had a positive social content. It should also be noted that this thought wasn't a borrowing from Rousseau, whose *Emile* was published only in 1761, and Skovoroda returned from Europe back in 1753. In Russia, Rousseau's work was strictly forbidden, and Skovoroda came to the idea of natural education independently of the French thinker. Finally, a pupil and biographer of Skovoroda P. Kovalinsky wrote that his teacher Skovoroda applied principles of free and natural education back in the 1750s, i.e. before the appearance of the book *Emil, or On Education*²⁰.

Skovoroda demanded that people should be assigned to a particular activity in accordance with their abilities and interests. He believed that educator should lead upbringing; natural inclinations of children should be developed through exercises and activities. In the parable *The Grateful Herodius*, the stork tells the monkey: «My father gave me wings, and I learned to fly myself. He gave me a good heart, and I use it as I see fit». Skovoroda attached great importance to labor education in the matter of moral improvement of a person. He put forward advanced didactic requirements. In particular, he pointed out

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 103.

that students should study the material consciously. Based on the material they have studied, they should draw their own conclusions. Skovoroda considered it necessary to educate all children, regardless of their social status, and was a proponent of equal education for men and women.

7. *Pedagogical activity and views of N.I. Novikov*

The famous educator and teacher of the second half of the XVIII century Nikolay Ivanovich Novikov (1744-1818) was educated at the Moscow University, where his worldview was formed. His educational activities began in the youth years. N.I. Novikov led a movement for organizing such public schools which could be independent of the tsarist government. He directed public initiative in creating schools for the underprivileged population. He opened and ran two schools for children of underprivileged stratum with his own funds. Novikov sought to help teachers to organize the education of children properly and published a large amount of educational literature: ABC books, alphabets, textbooks on various subjects. N.I. Novikov was the creator and editor of the first Russian children's magazine «Children's Reading for Heart and Mind».

At the time Novikov was the most famous Russian publisher. His printing house published the third part of all books in the country. He has published hundreds of books on all branches of knowledge. In his satirical magazines «Drone» and «Painter» N.I. Novikov published articles on pedagogical topics. They drew public attention to issues of education. He believed that the cause of all human errors was ignorance, and the cause of perfection was knowledge. Nikolay Ivanovich was the first organizer of the book trade and it spread to many Russian cities. Novikov opened a library in Moscow at his own expense. He organized the so-called *Friendly Society*, the purpose of which was to educate people and to promote a new progressive system of education. It was the forerunner of the pedagogical society.

N.I. Novikov stood at the origins of Russian pedagogical science. In his essay *On the Education and Instruction of Children* (1783), he used the term «pedagogy» for the first time in Russia. By pedagogy he meant a special and important science about the education of body, mind and heart. The purpose of this science, he wrote, was to educate children to be happy and useful citizens. The whole work is imbued with love for children²¹. Novikov was a great humanist. He spent all his available funds on organizing aid for the hungry.

N.I. Novikov's entire educational activity was imbued with hatred of autoc-

²¹ N.I. Novikov. *O vospitanii i nastavlenii detej* [On the Education and Instruction of Children], in *Anthology of pedagogical thought in Russia of the XVIII century*, Moscow, Pedagogy Publ., 1985, p. 289 (in Russian).

racy, serfdom regime and all its offspring, including the serfdom educational system. He led the fight against slavery, despotism and arbitrariness not as a revolutionary, but from a moderate educational position. Novikov named education the main means of resolving social issues. He called for the moral improvement of people. He believed that people would become virtuous only by means of education. Novikov sought to reconcile science with religion and saw religious education as an integral part of the moral education of children and youth.

Novikov wasn't a defender of the official religion and the dominant Orthodox church, but he was a proponent of religious tolerance, criticized the Orthodox clergy, put forward anti-clerical ideas, and suggested that the development of the world should take place according to its natural laws. The purpose of education, in his opinion, was to form an active virtuous person who directed his activities to benefit the Fatherland and his fellow citizens. Every person was useful to the state if his mind had been enlightened. That is why N.I. Novikov insisted on giving children a broad and versatile mental education. He believed that education shouldn't only enrich children's minds with new knowledge, but it should also develop their mental ability. He said, their minds should be exercised and enriched with various knowledge²².

Guided by the idea of national education, which occupied a large place in his entire pedagogical system, N.I. Novikov believed that children should, first of all, learn their native language and literature, history and geography of their country. He included in the content of training elementary foundations of humanitarian and exact sciences, as well as knowledge about nature. N.I. Novikov believed that children should explore the world of plants and animals, get acquainted with the work of people and with labor processes. He openly called to instill in children respect for workers and peasants, to take them into the houses and granaries of the peasantry, into the workhouses of artists and needle workers; to show them how the diverse riches of the earth were processed and how they were prepared for use for the benefit and pleasure of people; to teach them to know the main tools used for that, and to honor those who were engaged in it²³. Children should be taught to love all people regardless of their religion, nationality, social position in the society. In order to arouse children's compassion and respect for the poor and the destitute, he advised taking them to the sad but instructive homes of the poor, the sick and the dying, to show how difficult it's for the sick and the needy to get bread. It's

²² G.P. Makagonenko, *Nikolaj Novikov i russkoe prosveshchenie XVIII veka* [Nikolai Novikov and the Russian Enlightenment of the XVIII century], Moscow, 1952, p. 29 (in Russian).

²³ Ya.A. Rortkovich, *O pedagogicheskikh i metodologicheskikh vzglyadah N.I. Novikova* [On the pedagogical and methodological views of N.I. Novikov], «Soviet Pedagogy», n. 10, 1953, p. 35 (in Russian).

very important to educate children with a love of truth and a firm intention to defend the truth, to teach children to value useful work from an early age²⁴.

Novikov also made a lot of valuable suggestions in the field of moral education. He considered it necessary to love and to respect children, to educate them on positive examples, to make them think about motives of their actions, to practice moral actions constantly. He opposed physical punishment strongly. He pointed out that the consciousness of children should be enriched with correct moral ideas and, above all, they must deeply impress the natural equality of people.

His article *On the Education and Instruction of Children*, published in the magazine «Addition to the Moscow Gazette» was the most important pedagogical work of the time. The author called in it for the development of pedagogy as a theory of education. He argues with those who believed that there was already enough material for this science. He sought to inform a wide range of his readers, parents and educators with information already available in pedagogy²⁵.

Catherine II was well aware that all of Novikov's activities were imbued with hatred of autocracy and serfdom. In 1779, his printing house was taken away from him, and in 1792, without trial and investigation, he was thrown into prison. It was only in 1796, immediately after the death of Catherine II, that Emperor Paul I, her son, who succeeded her, released Novikov, but he never received the right to publish his views. Novikov's activities and views had a great impact on the formation of the worldview of the advanced people of Russia of the time, in particular of A.N. Radishchev.

8. *The outstanding revolutionary educator A.N. Radishchev*

The greatest representative of progressive pedagogical thought in Russia in the second half of the XVIII century was the founder of the Russian revolutionary movement Alexander Nikolaevich Radishchev (1749-1802). He was the son of a wealthy landowner, and was educated in the Page Corps (1766-1766). Then he studied at the Law Faculty of the University of Leipzig (1767-1771). Upon his return to Russia, he was appointed an official in the Senate.

In his main work *Journey from St. Petersburg to Moscow* (1790), Radishchev faithfully reflected the life of ordinary people, sharply denounced autocracy and serfdom. Catherine II, after reading the first 30 pages of the book, regarded the author as «a rebel worse than Pugachev». On June 30, 1790, on her

²⁴ N.A. Trushin, *Social'naya i pedagogicheskaya deyatel'nost' N.I. Novikova* [Social and pedagogical activity of N.I. Novikov], «Soviet Pedagogy», n. 6, 1956, p. 72 (in Russian).

²⁵ Novikov, *O vospitanii i nastavlenii*, cit., p. 293.

order, Radishchev was arrested and imprisoned. He was sentenced to death for writing his book but was eventually sentenced to 10 years of hard labor in Siberia. He was stripped of the rank of nobility and his entire fortune. After serving his sentence, he committed suicide in protest against the autocracy.

Radishchev lived in the era of increasing serfdom and merciless exploitation of people, but nevertheless boldly and courageously stood up for the downtrodden and humiliated. He was one of the few advanced Russian nobles who rose in the XVIII century to understand the need for a revolutionary struggle against autocracy. The revolutionary Radishchev carefully studied the experience of the peasant war under the leadership of Pugachev and developed a theory of the people's revolution. According to this theory poor people should have the right to change the social system of Russia for the better one. The time would come soon, when there would be no exploited or exploiters, and the working people would take power into their own hands²⁶.

Radishchev relied on the scientific discoveries of M.V. Lomonosov, whom he worshipped, considering his views the pinnacle of scientific thought of the XVIII century. He developed the advanced positions of Russian philosophical materialism in his views on nature, the origin of man and his consciousness. Radishchev recognized the existence, materiality and cognizability of the world, and called the official church ideology and masonic teachings mystical nonsense, reminiscent of the old days of scholasticism. A.N. Radishchev considered the main task of education to be the formation of a person with civic consciousness, high moral qualities, with love to his Fatherland. Unlike many contemporary thinkers, he believed that only a person who was able to fight actively the autocracy for the benefit of the oppressed people could be named a true patriot. He outlined these lofty thoughts in his essay *A Conversation about what a Son of the Fatherland is*.

In his main work, *Journey from St. Petersburg to Moscow*, he painted a depressing picture of suffering to which landlords subjected peasant children. He pointed out that the serfdom system hindered the spiritual development of peasant children, stifled their natural abilities, blunted their intelligence. That's why he demanded education obligatory for all children regardless their social status. He believed that one of the greatest points of the Constitution of the state had to be education, both public and private. The state is obliged to ensure that younger generation should receive proper education; it would help develop the child's strength and make him a true patriot, a true son of

²⁶ V.Z. Smirnov, *Pedagogicheskie vzglyady A.N. Radishcheva* [Pedagogical views of A.N. Radishchev], «Soviet Pedagogy», n. 9, 1952, p. 36 (in Russian).

²⁵ A.N. Radishchev, *Beseda o tom, chto est' Syn Otechestva* [A conversation about what a son of the Fatherland is], in *Anthology of pedagogical thought of Russia of the XVIII century*, Moscow, Pedagogy, 1985, p. 380 (in Russian).

²⁶ V.K. Bobrovnikova, *Pedagogicheskie idei A.N. Radishcheva* [Pedagogical ideas of A.N. Radishchev], «Soviet Pedagogy», n. 8, 1949, p. 72 (in Russian).

the Fatherland. Radishchev opposed the blind subordination of children to the will of their parents. He pointed out that the relationship between parents and children wasn't their private matter, but a deeply public one.

A.N. Radishchev believed that the relationship of parents to children should be based on mutual respect, love, reasonable demands; the whole society and every individual citizen were equally interested in it. Radishchev devoted a great place in the upbringing of a true son of the Fatherland to the process of mastering knowledge and mental development. Together with all leading men of his time, he strongly insisted that the Russian language should become the language of science and education. He was counting this as a necessary condition for the development of science in Russia, as well as the initial point of democratization of education. He put forward an intensive educational program, which should include knowledge about society and nature.

Radishchev highly appreciated the views of the French enlighteners, but at the same time he thoroughly criticized their theories on the relationship of man and society. Objecting to Rousseau, who argued that man's loss of freedom and the emergence of inequality of people was the result of their social unification, Radishchev pointed out that in the primitive state people were weak, debilitated, relaxed, and only by uniting into society they have become much stronger.

A.N. Radishchev considered a man to be a social being. The latter needed communication with other people for his formation. Radishchev criticized Rousseau's individualistic concept of education, bitterly ridiculed his fans, pointed out the incongruity of their educational means and methods, «emile-like representations of forests, meadows and fields», objected to the idealization of children's nature. At the same time, he urged to consider the natural characteristics of children. The main thing in the formation of a person, according to Radishchev, wasn't his natural data, but the circumstances of life, social factors that surround a person²⁷. He criticized closed educational institutions, isolated from the surrounding life, and pointed out the need for such organization of education that would help incline a person to a society. Radishchev believed that in conditions of education isolated from society, it would be impossible to form a person with social aspirations, interests and inclinations.

In the works *The Life of Fyodor Vasilyevich Ushakov*²⁸ and *Journey from St. Petersburg to Moscow*, he noted that daily participation in the fight against

²⁷ A.N. Radishchev, *O Cheloveke, ego Smertnosti i Bessmertii* [About Man, his Mortality and Immortality], in *Anthology of pedagogical thought of Russia of the XVIII century*, Moscow, Pedagogy, 1985, p. 393 (in Russian).

²⁸ Fyodor Vasilyevich Ushakov (1747–1770) was a Russian materialist philosopher and jurist. He studied at the University of Leipzig and was a close friend of Radishchev. The latter is the author of the only biographical essay of Ushakov *The Life of Fyodor Vasilyevich Ushakov*, St. Petersburg, 1789.

despotism, violence, and injustice played a huge role in the formation of true sons of the Fatherland²⁹. A.N. Radishchev holds a place of honor among the Russian thinkers of his time. He had an undoubted influence on the foreign public thought of the XVIII century. The bust of Radishchev was exhibited in Paris during the French bourgeois revolution. His book *Journey from St. Petersburg to Moscow* was distributed in handwritten form among the leaders of the French Convention. This book was soon translated into German in Leipzig and then in many countries of the world. Radishchev's influence on the development of revolutionary democratic thought in Russia was especially great.

Summing up the above, we can state that the era of Catherine II, or Catherine the Great, was eventful in terms of the organization of the educational system in the Russian Empire. The first teachers-organizers (F.I. Yankovich de Mirievo, I.I. Betskoy) by their practical activities, and the first original teachers-thinkers (N.I. Novikov, G.S. Skovoroda and A.N. Radishchev) by their written works, numerous local education figures determined the directions of the development of education and pedagogical thought in the Russian Empire.

²⁹ Radishchev, *Beseda o tom, Chto est' Syn Otechestva*, cit., p. 380.

