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### Pedagogical Education: History, Present Time, Perspectives

# NOVGOROD ARCHBISHOP SCHOOL AS A CENTRE OF EDUCATION FOR TEACHERS (1723–1725)

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### *Abstract*

The article is devoted to a fairly little-studied episode in the history of the Novgorod Bishop School of Peter the Great's era - a project aimed at turning it into a platform for training teachers for Russian diocesan schools. The article analyzes the well-known archival documents and the newly opened ones, considers possible reasons why the Novgorod School was chosen as a kind of pedagogical institute, and why this educational project lasted only two years. The authors assess the ideas prevailing in Russian historiography about the role and place of the Novgorod Bishop School in the history of education in Peter the Great's reign. In particular, the article focuses on the problem of teaching grammar of the Church Slavonic language in the Russian educational institutions in the first half of the 18th century, which in recent years has also been actively studied by Russian philologists. Special attention is paid to teaching reading and writing the Church Slavonic language using grammar. At the same time, researchers do not take into account the role of the Novgorod school in the formation of the so-called "grammatical" education although resources on the history of the Novgorod school testify to the fact that teaching grammar of both Church Slavonic and Greek began there in 1706. Relying on the results of the conducted study, the authors conclude that the Novgorod school was, along with the Kiev-Mohyla Collegium and the Moscow Slavic-Greek-Latin Academy, one of the most important education centres in Russia.

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**Keywords:** Novgorod Bishop School, the Holy Synod, Archbishop Theodosius (Yanovsky), the study of the grammar of the Church Slavonic language, history of education.



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## 1. Introduction

At the beginning of the XVIII century in Russia, the formation of the school system was in progress. Compulsory education for children of the clergy was legislated by the "Spiritual Regulation" of 1721, which ordered the bishops to open schools in their dioceses (PSPR, 1869). The implementation of this decision in practice was hampered, first of all, by the lack of teachers. The creation of a teacher training center was supposed to solve the problem. The issue of training future Russian diocesan schools teachers was considered by the Holy Synod in the fall of 1723. So, in the synodal protocol of October 15, 1723 it is said that the Holy Synod held a discussion about teaching the children of the clergymen grammar and other sciences necessary for the understanding of the Holy Scriptures in the dioceses. And, having examined this issue, they determined: that in those dioceses where there were teachers, the children of the clergy should be taught these sciences. In those dioceses where there were no such teachers, three people had to be selected from the "witty and skilful in reading" clerks or priestly children, aged 15 to 20, and later sent to Novgorod to Archbishop Theodosius (Yanovsky) in order to study at the bishop's school. When their training was completed they had to return to their dioceses to become teachers in the local diocesan schools (RGIA, n.d. a, p. 21). A synodal resolution on this issue followed on October 29, 1723. (RGIA, n.d. a, pp. 22–22 v.), signed on November 13, and on November 19 an order to delegate students from different dioceses was sent nationwide (GANO, n.d. a, pp. 382–382 v.). Thus, for the first time in Russia, the opening of a teacher training center was legalized. It happened to be the Novgorod Bishop School, created back in 1706 on the initiative of the Archbishop of Novgorod and Velikiy Luki Job by the Greek hieromonks named Ioannikius and Sofroniy, the Leichoudes brothers.

## 2. Problem Statement

In the scientific literature, this fact, unfortunately, is still underestimated. The only scientist who paid attention to it is Prilezhaev (1877). In his article on the history of the Novgorod Bishop School, the author, relying on the documents from the archives of the Holy Synod, gave a brief description of this episode. Although he did not set himself the task of consistently expounding all the revealed facts, he made an attempt to explain the reasons for choosing the Novgorod school as a teacher training centre. Therefore, he failed to put a significant part of the factual material contained in the archival documents into scientific circulation. For example, the author does not submit the names of students sent to study in Novgorod. None of the subsequent researchers who wrote about the Novgorod school considered this question in detail either, only mentioning the fact of pupils from other dioceses studying in Novgorod in 1723-1725, while referring to the article by E. M. Prilezhaev (Kislova, 2019; Strakhova, 1988; Voznesenskaya, 2005). Perhaps, the only exception is the article by T. G. Frumenkova, in which the author raised the problem of training teachers for diocesan schools, in many ways, however, repeating the observations of E. M. Prilezhaev (Frumenkova, 2003). Today, the archival documents introduced into scientific circulation by E. M. Prilezhayev remain practically unclaimed by contemporary authors, most of whom uncritically use the conclusions made by a XIX century scientist in their own research. In this regard, the re-examination and rethinking of these archival documents seems to us relevant. Moreover, in recent years, new documents have been identified that complement our knowledge about this episode from the history of the Novgorod

Bishop School, which is of great importance for studying the formation of the regular education system in Russia during the reign of Peter the Great.

### **3. Research Questions**

The fact of appointing the Novgorod Bishop School center for diocesan schools teacher training poses a number of questions for researchers of the history of Russian education:

**3.1.** For what reasons was the Novgorod bishop school chosen, and not some other one? Why, for example, the Moscow Slavic-Greek-Latin Academy, which was closer to the geographical center of Russia, was not chosen as it would be more convenient for students from other dioceses to get there?

**3.2.** Were there any changes in the educational activities of the Novgorod Bishop School after its transformation into a teachers' institute?

**3.3.** Is it possible to consider the "grammar teaching" proposed by Archbishop Theodosius (Yanovsky) an alternative model of church education in Russia of the 1720s.?

### **4. Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of our study is to change the understanding that has developed in Russian and world historiography about the role played by the Novgorod Bishop School in the history of education in Russia during Peter's time using unknown and newly discovered archival documents.

### **5. Research Methods**

The main methods of studying the history of the Novgorod Bishop School are an interdisciplinary approach and comparative studies. The interdisciplinary approach is applied due to the peculiarities of working with archival documents among which texts of paperwork and handwritten lists of training courses (grammar, rhetoric, philosophy) can be found. Accordingly, in the course of this study, such methods were used as methods of auxiliary historical disciplines (paleography, archeography, codicology, diplomacy) and philological sciences. In the history of education, the most promising method of studying the school educational activities is comparative studies. The authors resorted to the methodology of comparative studies too.

### **6. Findings**

The documents known to us today are identified in the fund of the Office of the Synod (f. 796) of the Russian State Historical Archive, in the fund of the Novgorod Spiritual Consistory (f. 480) of the State Archives of the Novgorod Region and in the collection of Assembly Books of the Archaeographic Commission (Coll. 2) of the Scientific and Historical Archive of the St. Petersburg Institute of History of the Russian Academy of Sciences. There are synodal protocols and decrees, reports to the Holy Synod from the dioceses on sending pupils to the Novgorod Bishop School, lists of students from the Novgorod Bishop School are also among them.

The analysis of archival documents allows us to reconstruct the history of teaching students from other dioceses in Novgorod. As soon as February-March 1724, reports began to come from the dioceses to the Holy Synod on the execution of the decree about directing students to Novgorod. Up until now, we know about four reports: from the bishop of Veliky Ustyug and Totem Bogolep (Adamov), from the bishop of Yaroslavl and Rostov Georgy (Dashkov), from the Archbishop of Tobolsk Anthony (Stakhovsky) and from Ananiy who served as the treasurer of the Ryazan bishop's house (RGIA, n.d. a, pp. 22, 44–45, 54–54 v., 88–88 v.). According to these documents, those students were sent to Novgorod: two from Veliky Ustyug - Ivan Prokopiev, Kiselnikov's son and Danilo Yakovlev, Popov's son (despite the fact that the decree ordered three people from each diocese to be sent to the Novgorod school, the bishop of Velikiy Ustyug sent only two, referring to the fact that there was no one else to send); three people from the Rostov diocese – priests' children Vasily Ivanov and Ivan Mikhailov, son of the clerk Vasily Yakovlev; three people from Tobolsk – priests' children Mark Savin, Ivan Scryabin and Fedor Scryabin; from Ryazan there came three people - clerks Timothy Ipatov and Stepan Rodionov, priests son Dmitry Evstafiev, a priest's son.

The most informative source on the history of the Novgorod Bishop's school is the students' registry, which contains information about their background, age, date of entry to school (or length of study at school), subjects studied, academic performance, diligence, etc. Three of the school registries, we know today, contain the information on the training of students sent from other dioceses to Novgorod: 1. "A list of students from different dioceses who study and used to study Slavic grammar in Novgorod schools", compiled in April 1725 (RGIA, n.d. a, p. 94); 2. "The list of Slavic school students" compiled in September 1725 (Archiv SPb II RAN, n.d., p. 44–45 v.); 3. The Registry of Novgorod Archbishop's School students who studied from 1706 till 1726 (RGIA, n.d. b., p. 111–185).

The first document was compiled as of April 18, 1725 and is a supplementary to the report of the Archbishop of Novgorod Theodosius (Yanovsky) to the Holy Synod on the training in Novgorod of students sent from different dioceses (RGIA, n.d. a, pp. 93–93 v.). It holds the names of 18 students who arrived in Novgorod at different times: November 25, 1723 two people arrived from the Tver diocese - Alexei Vasiliev and Stefan Dmitriev; February 15, 1724 two people from Velikiy Ustyug - John Prokopiev (Kiselnikov) and Daniil Yakovlev (Popov); March 7, 1724 three people from Rostov - Vasily Yakovlev, Ivan Mikhailov and Vasily Ioannov and one from Suzdal - Alexei Andreev; May 25, 1724 two more people from Tver - Vonifaty Dmitriev and Dmitry Korniliev; October 1, 1724 three people from Ryazan - Timothy Ipatiev, Stefan Herodionov and Dimitry Yevstafiev; January 4, 1725 three people from Kolomna - Petr Georgiev, Grigory Mikhailov and Ivan Mikhailov; March 2, 1725 two people from Voronezh - Mina Yevseviev and Maxim Nikitin. It can be noticed that the registry does not include the names of the students from Tobolsk. We are unaware of the possible reasons for that. By the time this document was compiled the course of grammar studies had already been completed by the students from Veliky Ustyug - John Prokopiev (Kiselnikov) and Daniil Yakovlev (Popov), from Rostov - Vasily Yakovlev, Ivan Mikhailov, from Ryazan - Timothy Ipatiev, Stefan Herodionov and all the students sent from Tver - Alexei Vasiliev and Stefan Dmitriev, Vonifaty Dmitriev and Dmitry Korniliev.

The second registry contains a special part named "Students sent from other dioceses". It holds the names of those 9 students who kept studying in the Novgorod Archbishop's School. Among them there are

three people from Ryazan (Timothy Ipatiev, Stefan Herodionov and Dimitry Yevstafiev), three from Kolimna (Petr Georgiev, Grigory Mikhailov and Ivan Mikhailov), two from Voronezh (Mina Yevsevieva and Maxim Nikitin). There is also one extra name which wasn't mentioned in the first document, Grigory Mikhailov (Archiv SPb II RAN, n.d., p. 45). He seems to be the third representative from Voronezh. Thus, of the 18 students enrolled in the school in April 1725, by September 1725, 10 people had been sent back from school, and one student was readmitted. By this time, the representatives of the Velikiy Ustyug, Rostov, Suzdal and Tver dioceses had finished studying the grammar of the Church Slavonic language; while the representatives of the Kolomna, Ryazan, and Voronezh dioceses continued their education.

Additional information is presented in the final list of students who studied at the Novgorod Bishop School from 1706 to 1726 compiled in 1727. Thus, the part of this document called "Students from different dioceses sent to master Slavic grammar" holds the names of 17 students: two from Velikiy Ustyug and Vyatka, three from Rostov, Ryazan, Kolomna and Voronezh, one from Suzdal (RGIA, n.d. b, p. 139). The four students from Tver mentioned earlier were excluded. At the same time this list contains the names of the students from Vyatka whom we had not come across yet in the two previous lists. One of them is Ivan Alexeev, a son of a warden at Archbishop's house in Vyatka. His name is placed among those who had been sent home when the course of grammar finished in 1726. However, they were not granted any certificates as they had been dropped out. The other student's name is Ivan Yakovlev who was in the process of studying only one part of the grammar course when he ran away in 1725 (RGIA, n.d. b, p. 139). The comparison of all the information that has been preserved in the above-described rolls gives us the total number of 21 students from other dioceses who studied at the Novgorod Bishop School in 1723-1725.

At the end of 1725, Archbishop of Novgorod Feofan (Prokopovich) made a proposal in the Holy Synod "to dismiss from the Novgorod Slavic school the clergymen's children collected from different dioceses for studying grammar and others sciences appropriate to understand the Holy Scripture" (RGIA, n.d. a, pp. 102-102 v.). The order about it was signed on December 22 1725 and sent to Novgorod (GANO, n.d. b, p. 246), and on January 14, 1726, the judge of the Novgorod Bishop's house, Archimandrite Markell (Radyshesky), informed the Holy Synod about the execution of the decree (RGIA, n.d. a, p. 104-101 v.).

Although the project to turn the Novgorod Bishop's School into a teacher training center lasted only two years, it can hardly be called unsuccessful. The project fulfilled its task - in the course of two years in Novgorod, the representatives of different dioceses were educated enough to return home to teach grammar themselves, which, in particular, can be evidenced by the report to the Holy Synod of the treasurer of the Velikiy Ustyug bishop's house monk Bogolep (Kirilov) dated May 1, 1737 about the students of the Ustyuzhenskaya school, who from May 1725 to September 1726 were taught by the clerks Danilo Popov and Ivan Kiselnikov, who had studied at the Novgorod school (RGIA, n.d. c, p. 219 v.). In the reports presented to the Holy Synod in 1727 about the schools created in the dioceses there is information on the graduates of the Novgorod Bishop's School teaching in the Kolomna and Ryazan dioceses (RGIA, n.d. b).

The question of choosing particularly the Novgorod bishop's school for teacher training was already asked by E. M. Prilezhaev. In his opinion, the reason was that at the Moscow Academy Slavic grammar was only introduced into education, and the academy itself was an educational institution where students were instructed in Latin (Prilezhaev, 1877). However, this point of view is contradicted by the fact that a large Slavic school existed at the Moscow Academy, which is confirmed by the "Register of the Slavic-

Russian school students", presented to the Holy Synod on June 10, 1724 by the rector of the Academy Gedeon (Vishnevsky) along with a list of students from Latin classes (RGIA, n.d. a, p. 75–78 v.). In our opinion, one should single out a set of factors that contributed to the choice of the Novgorod bishop's school. Firstly, we must take into account the role and place of the Novgorod diocese in the church hierarchy of that time, as well as the personal participation of Archbishop Theodosius (Yanovsky), who certainly influenced the choice of Novgorod as a place for training future teachers. Secondly, do not forget that the Novgorod Bishop School by that time had been successfully operating for over 15 years. The school graduates, educated by the Leichoudes brothers, themselves became teachers, both in the Novgorod school and in 13 particular schools, opened in the city and the Novgorod diocese. Thus, it was the Novgorod diocese that possessed significant human resources for the implementation of this project. Thirdly, in 1723, at the behest of the Holy Synod, a grammar of Church Slavonic was published, compiled by Fyodor Maximov, the teacher of the Novgorod Bishop's school, the ex-student of the Leichoudes brothers and the subdeacon of St. Sophia Cathedral, who taught the students sent to Novgorod.

Recently, Russian philologists have studied the problem of teaching grammar of the Church Slavonic language in Russian educational institutions in the first half of the 18th century (Kislova, 2015, 2019). In particular, Kislova (2015, 2019) put forward a hypothesis which essence lies in the fact that in the 1720s. there were three concepts of "church education" in Russia: the first "conventional, dating back to the traditions of the 16th – 17th centuries, which was based solely on teaching reading and writing, with the emphasis on memorizing Church Slavonic texts"; the second "Latin", aimed at creating a system of educational institutions on the model of Ukraine and Western Europe, which in principle omits teaching the Church Slavonic language, orienting students of theological schools from the very beginning to Latin or Greek, the third "grammatical" associated with the activities of Archbishop Theodosius (Yanovsky), which involved teaching reading and writing based on the grammar of the Church Slavonic language. It is this "grammatical" approach that the author considers Theodosius (Yanovsky)'s innovation (Kislova, 2016). The accessible archival documents related to the activities of the Novgorod Bishop School do not give a basis for such a conclusion. Until now, the main subject of study in Russian and world historiography has been the grammar and rhetoric books of the Leichoudes brothers, which they used in Moscow and Novgorod (Chrissidis, 2016). Previously researchers paid little attention to the practice of teaching, to such a type of source as student lists. At the same time, a careful analysis of the rolls of the Novgorod Bishop School, compiled in late 1725 – early 1726, suggests that all three concepts were combined in its teaching practice. Four teachers taught at the school: Bartholomew Fedorov taught according to the traditional model – memorizing the Psalms and other texts; Fedor Maximov - grammar of the Church Slavonic language; Pavel Goroshkovsky – the Latin language; Archimandrite Philemon – Greek (Archiv SPb II RAN, n.d., pp. 12, 13–14 v., 42–49). Moreover, there is no sufficient reason to believe that it was Archbishop Theodosius (Yanovsky) who initiated the introduction of "grammar teaching". Teaching the grammar of the Church Slavonic language, as well as Greek grammar, in the Novgorod Bishop School started from the moment it was founded in 1706. A multilevel system of instruction was developed in the Novgorod school, which made it possible for students to switch from studying one subject to another, a more complicated one. This made it possible to easily integrate students from other dioceses who had been trained according to the traditional model into the educational process of the Novgorod school.

## 7. Conclusion

The opening of the teacher training center at the Novgorod Bishop School was not accidental. The Novgorod school was one of the few diocesan schools successfully operating in the 20s. of the XVIII century in Russia, created not on the model of the Kiev (Jesuit) model. At the same time, the grammar, and even rhetorical education, which was given by the Novgorod school, could not be regarded as a higher education. However, such grammatical education was extremely important and necessary in the conditions of Russia at the beginning of the XVIII century and perhaps without it the opening of theological seminaries in Russia would not have taken place. Since, according to archival documents, teaching grammar of the Latin and Greek languages began in Novgorod only after studying the grammar of the Church Slavonic language. The closure of the center for training teachers from other dioceses in Novgorod was, in our opinion, one of the reasons that postponed the widespread emergence of theological seminaries in Russia for more than a decade. The reasons for the decline of the Novgorod bishop's school, which began with the entry into Novgorod of Archbishop Feofan (Prokopovich), should apparently be sought in the personality of the clergyman himself, since there were no objective prerequisites for closing schools in Novgorod in early 1726.

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