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## **On the History of the Pedagogical Thought in South Russia: Pedagogical Views of Major Pedagogues at the Novocherkassk Gymnasium in the 19th century. Part IV**

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### **Abstract**

Recent years have witnessed the publication of a variety of scholarly papers highlighting region-specific peculiarities of education in the Russian Empire. However, they tend to focus on statistical information regarding the number of schools, the number of students, etc. Therefore, theoretical and pedagogical views and unique features of the methodological work done by major provincial teachers remain poorly researched. The paper discusses the case study of the Novocherkassk Gymnasium that was the most prominent scientific and educational center in the Don region in the 19th century and that boasted a teaching personnel of renowned local figures. Remarkably, the material on the actual pedagogical process in the gymnasium was already collected before 1917, mainly in the initiative to celebrate the facility's centenary, and as many appropriate documents lacked, much attention was paid to gathering information from former gymnasium students. As a result, the knowledge of real teaching practices used in the gymnasium is based both on official documents and on oral, often critical, accounts by contemporaries of its teachers, and the group of teachers include persons who played an important role in the Don history.

The third part of the paper analyzes the crisis at the turn of the 1870–1880s, when the Novocherkassk Gymnasium ceased to exist in its initial form. This was the outcome of the conflict between teachers with opposing pedagogical views. In respond to the snowballing problems with the discipline among students, the gymnasium's teaching staff splintered into two groups. The first one was led by gymnasium inspector M.K. Kalmykov, a prominent Don educator and author of a textbook on Russian literature. This group rallied local community support and believed that discipline issues should be addressed by engaging students in extracurricular activities. The leader of the second one was D.F. Shcheglov, the gymnasium's new director and author of works on the

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history of social doctrines, who came to the Don Host Oblast from another region. His supporters insisted only on punitive measures intended to teach children to be “serious”. The conflict ended when both groups discredited each other and most their members were dismissed, which ultimately destroyed the gymnasium’s authority as the most important cultural, research and educational center of the Don Host.

**Keywords:** history of pedagogy, teaching methods, historical pedagogical views, Novocherkassk Gymnasium, S.S. Kalmykov, D.F. Shcheglov.

### **1. Introduction**

In 1907, the Don Host's regional printing house published a substantial book by priest I.P. Artinskii, which described the history of the Novocherkassk Gymnasium. The author specifically emphasized in the preface that “the word ‘gymnasium’ in the title of the treatise is also defined using the adjective ‘military’, in addition to the attribute ‘Novocherkassk’” (Artinskii, 1907: V). Indeed, the Novocherkassk Gymnasium was a center of thought first for the Land and later for the Oblast of the Don Host over many years, and its graduates and teachers included the majority of Don academics, writers and public figures of the 19th century. It is hardly surprising that for the gymnasium's 100th anniversary in 1905, the local authorities made efforts to uncover and structure materials on the history of the institution. It early became clear that only few such materials survived: the gymnasium archive was damaged in fire in 1858, later its files and records were actively sold out by negligent employees, and most gymnasium directors failed to keep systematic records of their activities (Artinskii, 1907: IV). In this situation, the pedagogical council decided to ask I.P. Artinskii to help find information on the gymnasium’s past, and to this end, the latter contacted Don historians and local lore experts, many of whom once were students at the institution (Artinskii, 1907: IV). The outcome of the request was Artinskii’s book that was, therefore, based not only on official information, but also on the accounts provided by former students of the Novocherkassk Gymnasium.

We should say that I.P. Artinskii was not the first person whom the lack of sources on the history of the Don education prompted to use eyewitness accounts, the “oral history”, as defined by modern terminology. In 1859, a small book “Essays of the Don” by A.G. Filonov, which brought to light interesting facts from the past and present of the Don Cossacks in a somewhat haphazard manner. The last of the essays was entitled “Educational Institutions on the Don (from 1790 to 1807)” and was grounded, among other things, in the “unwritten accounts” given by several old men, of whom the author specifically singled out Esaul M.O. Nazarov, who in 1790 was accepted into the Don Principal Public School, later re-organized into the Novocherkassk Gymnasium (Filonov, 1859: 151-152).

So, we can now benefit from a fascinating first-hand source of information on the Don Host’s most important educational facility of the 19th century, a center of the intellectual life of the Don Cossacks. We thought it might be valuable to systematize the available evidence of how influential figures in the Don history carried on their teaching practice in the Novocherkassk Gymnasium and what theoretical pedagogical views they conveyed. It is also noteworthy that, as we will see below, for all its major role in the region, the Novocherkassk Gymnasium was rather an ordinary provincial school for the Russian Empire, and, moreover, the one that was chronically underfunded. With our research, we will be able to take a glance at famous Don figures from an unexpected angle by reviewing their pedagogical talents, as well as to better understand what methodology served as a basis for the learning process in the Russian province of the last century.

A relevant note should be made here that historians have become markedly more interested in recent years in studying the region-specific features of pre-revolutionary education in Russia. Articles and article series on the education system development in the Vilna Governorate (Natolochnaya et al., 2019a; Natolochnaya et al., 2019b), Vologda Governorate (Cherkasov et al., 2019a; Cherkasov et al., 2019b; Cherkasov et al., 2019c; Cherkasov et al., 2019d), and in the Caucasus (Shevchenko et al., 2016) have been published in recent years. Researchers are also striving to identify features of the primary education system in the Cossack territories (Molchanova et al., 2019a; Molchanova et al., 2019b; Molchanova et al., 2020). On the other hand, the experience of individual provincial pedagogues, which was greatly appreciated by contemporaries, has received only cursory learned attention so far. However, the large number of outstanding

graduates of the Novocherkassk Gymnasium shows that the experience deserves careful examination, at the very least.

## **2. Materials and methods**

In the fourth part of our paper, we will speak about the major crisis that evolved in the Novocherkassk Gymnasium from 1870 to 1880, the crisis engendered by a conflict between its teachers who adhered to differing pedagogical views. Although the publication activity of gymnasium teachers dropped visibly at the time as compared to the previous period, the leader of one of the opposing groups, M.K. Kalmykov, authored a very non-typical textbook on Russian literature (Kalmykov, 1880). His adversary, D.F. Shcheglov, in fact published a book that achieved certain popularity across Russia – “History of social systems from ancient times to the present day,” and although it largely focused on history and philosophy, rather than pedagogy, it still discussed the issues of school education (Shcheglov, 1870; Shcheglov, 1889). Thanks to the books, we can develop very accurate insights into the general pedagogical views of the Novocherkassk Gymnasium teachers in the period under review.

As for the specific teaching practices that were predominantly used in the gymnasium at the time, the most reliable source here is, of course, the book by I.P. Artinskii, who personally met with eyewitnesses of the years (Artinskii, 1907). However, much more information can be uncovered in the short novel by A.I. Kosorotov “Tower of Babel. History of one gymnasium” (Kosorotov, 1900), dedicated to the events under review. Unfortunately, this is a work of fiction, although it was appreciated by I.P. Artinskii for its credibility. As a result, individual statements it ascribed to the Don teachers can be inaccurate, and some of the events are hyperbolized. Nevertheless, all significant events, described by A.I. Kosorotov, can be verified in other sources, and he himself studied in the gymnasium at the time under review.

By using the historical comparative method to compare the sources with each other and with a number of other materials of minor significance, by resorting to the historical descriptive method to trace events depicted in them and by extensively applying the historical biographical method, we will try to understand what general pedagogical theories and specific pedagogical practices brought about the sharpest conflict between Novocherkassk teachers from 1870 to 1880.

## **3. Discussion**

The difficulties the Novocherkassk Gymnasium encountered in 1870 were not linked solely to criticism from above and disastrous performance of some of its graduates at university admission exams. The group of young teachers who just began their career in the gymnasium, once again started to show mediators of new ideas, who did not see eye to eye with S.S. Robush. A.I. Kosorotov defined them as opponents of the “barbarity” that pervaded classrooms, as “people who shared their antipathy to the patriarchal order and poor civility of students” (Kosorotov, 1900: 67-68). One of the teachers was even involved in a direct conflict with the director, and we should have a closer look on the episode.

As a reminder, D.F. Shcheglov, who later headed the Novocherkassk gymnasium, singled out a certain “Mister Polyakov” in the teaching staff as the only person who made efforts to stop the spread of revolutionary literature in the student dormitory apartment (Shcheglov, 2010: 5). However, most other authors, who wrote about the gymnasium, did not mention the “Mister Polyakov” either in a positive or a negative context. The reasons are revealed in I.P. Artinskii’s work: even this monumental piece of work contains only few references to the name of “Polyakov I.G., a child in a family the Don Host company officer,” and the biographies of the gymnasium staff point out that he was unable to pass the exam for “a teacher qualification” even after sixteen years of teaching mathematics (Artinskii, 1907: 328). I.G. Polyakov had neither outstanding students nor serious research works, gymnasium students could not evoke good memories of him, and therefore no one, except the notorious D.F. Shcheglov, felt any need to remember the teacher after his dismissal.

Nevertheless, I.G. Polyakov who might arouse anger among both students and colleagues, appeared to be rather a prominent figure in the Novocherkassk Gymnasium in the 1870s. He was extensively described by A.I. Kosorotov in his “Tower of Babel,” where he was introduced under the name of “mathematics teacher Gavril Ivanovich Korolev” (Kosorotov, 1900: 68). This serves as another confirmation that A.I. Kosorotov short novel deserves our credit as a source on the history of the Novocherkassk Gymnasium because the pedagogical ideals of G.I. Korolev/I.G. Polyakov,

which it highlights, are fully consistent with information from other sources. A former student of the Novocherkassk Gymnasium wrote the following about his mentor: “Gavrila Korolev was an ardent supporter of the toughest possible police control and went more frequently by the nickname “Radical” than by his own name. He knew of the nickname, had much pride of it, and often would say to his students with a businesslike frown, adjusting his gold glasses: “You are not mistaken, yes, you are not mistaken: in my stance towards vices, I am indeed a rrradical!...”. His favorite sport was hanging around outside at night and spying on gymnasium students” (Kosorotov, 1900: 68). The author may seem to somewhat caricature the portrait, but it explains well why I.G. Polyakov managed to uncover some sedition in the shared student apartment (that, by the way, was established by S.S. Robush for poor students), while, for example, I.P. Artinskii said the dwelling provided “the desired correspondence between the requirements and needs of student life” (Artinskii, 1907: 214-216). It should come as no surprise that I.G. Polyakov provoked unconcealed vexation in S.S. Robush, who covered minor misdemeanors of students. D.F. Shcheglov even wrote about the “persecution of the teacher” orchestrated by the Jewish director (Shcheglov, 2010: 5). More details of their conflict are provided by A.I. Kosorotov. In his interpretation, “Radical” received threats of beating from unknown persons unless he stopped spying on gymnasium students, but the self-confident and strong teacher not only remained undismayed, but also demonstrated his own muscles to his older students, claiming that such threats were just “ridiculous” (Kosorotov, 1900: 68). However, the teacher was indeed beaten on the same night, and after that he ran to the director to complain about the incident (Kosorotov, 1900: 69). But to the math teacher's insistent appeals that he “suffered for the truth,” and it was then necessary to “find and punish the culprits,” the head of the gymnasium only recommended “to leave it at that without action,” and in addition hinted that “Radical” “had already got enough from pupils of what <he > deserved” (Kosorotov, 1900: 69). We should emphasize the fact that this description belongs to a former gymnasium student who had no liking for I.G. Polyakov at all. But even the portrait makes it clear that Novocherkassk gymnasium students openly beat the teacher, who tried to maintain strict control over their “barbarous” behaviors, and the affair was hushed up by S.S. Robush. No matter how I.G. Polyakov's personality was assessed, the incident was ugly, and showed signs of much trouble in the future, as the group of those supporting new pedagogical views grew.

One factor made the situation in the Novocherkassk Gymnasium a totally confused tangle – for the first time in the school's history, supporters of change in the educational process had diverge pedagogical views. A.I. Kosorotov wrote: young teachers, opponents of “patriarchy” in relations and “barbarity” of students, “completely disagreed with each other on the methods to fight the evil” (Kosorotov, 1900: 68). The writer contrasted the rude and physically strong “Radical” with a certain teacher of the Russian language, K.S. Vetkin, with hair “always neatly slicked” and “insinuating manners,” “whose manner to speak was insinuating as well,” and who, “contrary to the habit of all patriarchs, always was on formal terms even with the youngest pupils” (Kosorotov, 1900: 69). The name concealed a teacher of the Russian language, M.K. Kalmykov, another character with a significant role in the history of Don, who worked in the Novocherkassk Gymnasium. Like many his colleagues, he was a prominent local historian, the author of the books “Cherkassk and the Don Host in 1802, as described by De-Romano” (Cherkassk i Voysko Donskoye v 1802 godu, po opisaniyu De-Romano) (Kalmykov, 1896) and “Facts about the Kochetovsky dialect” (Svedeniy o kochetovskom govore) (Kalmykov, 1898). Present-day authors also refer to the works, but, unfortunately, without providing any review of either their features or the personality of their creator (Voskoboinikov, 2009: 566-574). For contemporaries, M.K. Kalmykov was above all a pedagogue. Although he did not achieve such appreciation in this field as S.S. Robush, A.A. Radonezhskii or A.G. Filonov, he was within the memory of his students for a long time, and I.P. Artinskii gives the following very indicative testimonial of the person: “The personality of the “idealistic” pedagogue, M.K. Kalmykov, merits special attention. <...>. Born and received education on the Don (graduated from the Novocherkassk Gymnasium with a gold medal in 1865), M.K. devoted all his wealth of vigor and talents to his home land, and he gained consolation in return – of enjoying the favor, like few teachers, both of his students and of the local society” (Artinskii, 1907: 234).

It was the term “idealism” and its derivatives that dominated almost all reminiscences of M.K. Kalmykov, provided by students. The most negative recollections belong to A.I. Kosorotov, and are very emphatic: “In the teachers' council, he repeatedly spoke about the need to take some

special measures to alleviate the established setup. Each measure was more idealistic than the last. He most often called for immediate and broad introduction of arts of all kinds with public competitions and prizes for the best” (Kosorotov, 1900: 70). Much more sympathy for the teacher of Russian literature was shown by A.I. Petrovskii, future Don Host deputy to the State Duma of the Russian Empire: “His attitudes towards students, devoid of any sweet talk and sentimentality, were permeated with love and looked more like attitudes of an older friend rather than a boss. I remember him often calling us “lads”... <...>. Lack of dryness, encyclopedic erudition, which enabled M.K. to touch on all sorts of issues – of morals, everyday matters, economy – in his explanations on what they read, made his lectures true to life and interesting” (Petrovskii, 1902: 3). Despite this, even A.I. Petrovskii admitted that M.K. Kalmykov could cry in front of his students and, with tears in his eyes, read them the poems by V.A. Zhukovsky that “eternity – to vows, respect – to honor,” in hope the lines would produce moral impact (Petrovskii, 1902: 3).

Our discussion of M.K. Kalmykov's pedagogical views would be incomplete without a brief analysis of the Russian literature textbook he wrote (Kalmykov, 1898). A.I. Petrovskii had the highest regard of the textbook, considering “brevity, clarity and simplicity” to be its “undoubted and major merits,” generally characteristic of M.K. Kalmykov (Petrovskii, 1902: 3-4). Although we, in principle, agree with the statements, we should note that based on a set of parameters, M.K. Kalmykov's textbook demonstrated a reversion in the progress of the Don pedagogical thought, a lapse from the views of A.A. Radonezhskii and A.G. Filonov to the views of I.Ya. Zolotarev and A.G. Oridovsky. First, the textbook contained elements of the scholasticism that Don teachers of 1850–1860 struggled to root out, and what is more, the elements were included on the initiative of M.K. Kalmykov. For example, the entire introductory chapter in the new literature textbook was devoted to “Experimental psychology and logic,” which was not specified by the ministerial program (Kalmykov, 1898: 1). Meanwhile, “psychology” was interpreted by the author in a very odd way: he began its description with the statement that “a person consists of a body and a soul,” and “our body is a sensible object, while the soul is invisible and intangible” (Kalmykov, 1898: 1). Further, children were asked to memorize that, as the body consists of organs, the soul consists of “psychic forces,” which “are the following”: “memory, imagination, mind, inner feelings, ability to desire and will” (Kalmykov, 1898: 1). We cannot but recall the reasoning by A.A. Radonezhskii that it was wrong to start teaching a subject with a dry and abstract theory, that children only grew to hate school if, instead of true-to-life and interesting knowledge, they were “shown abstruse hieroglyphs” (Radonezhskii, 1861: 101-102). Regrettably, M.K. Kalmykov was engrossed in scholasticism in the worst sense of the term – instead of, for example, introducing children into some psychological notions with illustrations from literary works, he philosophized on the differences between imagination in general and fantasy as the highest form of imagination, on the differences between religious, moral and aesthetic feeling, on the differences between ideas and concepts and on many other equally subtle and ambiguous differences (Kalmykov, 1898: 2-10). The textbook's literary part proper also included scholastic digressions of unclear value – e.g. the section on elegies inexplicably provided a general classification of people into those in whom “reason prevails over heart” (“such people, of course, are incapable of being lyrical poets”), those in whom “reason and heart were equally developed” (A.S. Pushkin), those in who “heart prevails over reason” (V.A. Zhukovsky) and people with “weak reason” and “weak religious feeling” (M.Yu. Lermontov) (Kalmykov, 1880: 86-87). M.K. Kalmykov offered no explanation at all why at literature lessons children should learn by heart the information that had nothing to do with literature. For this reason, although M.K. Kalmykov's textbook was really concise and written in plain language, it was excessively scholastic, and the author's abstract, sometimes incorrect theorizing was uppermost in the book, sidelining the history of literature and analysis of specific texts. In terms of more general issues, when you read the textbook, it gives you the impression that M.K. Kalmykov shared early pedagogical views of A.G. Oridovsky, and, instead of trying to develop lessons that met the demands of the time and student needs, he counted on an abstract “good education” that would “protect the soul from harmful influences” (Kalmykov, 1880: 2). The teacher gave no clear description of this “good education,” but judging from everything we know about him it is apparent that the arts and humanities, especially literature, should be at the heart of in such upbringing. It is likely that sentimental and sensitive M.K. Kalmykov hoped that introducing pupils into the arts would cause the same effect on them as it did on him, and they would philosophize

over the pages of books on morality, ethics, types of personality and other universal human issues, while improving themselves and overcoming their “barbarity”.

So, we can conclude that, unlike previous decades, when educator generations changed in the 1870s, pedagogical views of Novocherkassk teachers were now divided not into two, but into three camps. The majority still supported S.S. Robush’s “patriarchal” pedagogy which assumed a robust “family atmosphere” in schools. However, some of the young teachers realized that it was just this form of pedagogy that gave birth to the student “barbarity,” and engendered the rudeness and unwillingness to develop in many pupils, who understood that the administration would do its best not to expel them from the Novocherkassk Gymnasium as long as there was the least chance to retain a child. In these situation, some teachers began to advocate the need for change by ultimately tightening discipline and imposing “police control” over gymnasium students. But the splinter group did not include any significant figures, and, in fact, those, who supported the position, were treated almost as outcasts in Novocherkassk society, persecuted by S.S. Robush from above. Other young teachers, on the other hand, sought to cure the “barbarity” by developing students and showing them respect as individuals. This group of teachers was led by “idealistic pedagogue” M.K. Kalmykov, a distinguished author of textbooks, and later of books of local history. Unfortunately, his pedagogical talent was not as great as that of the Novocherkassk teachers of the late 1850s. M.K. Kalmykov advanced no solid plan to combat the “barbarity,” and the information known about him makes us doubtful if he was at all capable of devising such a plan. Apparently, M.K. Kalmykov himself considered himself a person whose heart predominated over reason, he idealized such people, and as a consequence, was unable to efficiently systematize information even in a school textbook on a subject he taught for many years. The young teacher claimed broad generalizations and indefinite philosophizing, but in practice they turned out to be scholasticism and abstract theorizing, completely disconnected from reality. Another story, cited by A.I. Kosorotov is indicative in this respect. Even under the old administration, the teacher of Russian literature made an attempt to organize a dancing party with students invited from a women’s gymnasium, hoping that “a feminine society appeases a man to the greatest extent” (Kosorotov, 1900: 70). “You’re getting overwhelmed. It is already difficult to cope with these people without that,” one of the senior teachers answered him. (Kosorotov, 1900: 70). These words proved to be prophetic as the Novocherkassk Gymnasium was ruined not only by supporters of police measures, but also, just as much, by “idealistic teachers” led by M.K. Kalmykov.

However, in the 1870s, even such a veteran educator as S.S. Robush exercised increasingly less and less control over the situation in the gymnasium. This does not mean that his efforts in these years yielded nothing – for example, the Novocherkassk Gymnasium finally obtained its own building in 1875 (Artinskii, 1907: 272-277), and several years earlier, the facility adopted such attributes of an up-to-date school as school record books and backpacks (Artinskii, 1907: 265). And still, S.S. Robush, who once spoke ironically of the fact that in the era of Nicholas 1, officials were more “preoccupied with collar insignias on the uniforms of gymnasium students” than with the spread of education on the Don, probably did not feel very comfortable to work in the changing conditions (Robush, 1863: 125). Pedantic administrative control by the authorities of the educational district and the Ministry of Public Education, which became considerably weaker in the late 1850–1860s, was tightened again (Artinskii, 1907: 265). And it became quite clear by 1876 that the problems with knowledge levels and discipline of gymnasium students, revealed in 1870, did not improve at all, but even worsened. Once again, a group of Novocherkassk Gymnasium graduates failed at admission exams to a higher educational institution, this time to the Institute of Transport Engineers; the quality of teaching of the essential subject in the gymnasium – ancient languages – was criticized by the authorities of the Kharkov Educational District; finally, two gymnasium students were proved guilty of theft (Artinskii, 1907: 281). Another major incident occurred in the same year, which was also prophetic for the future gymnasium – a teacher of ancient languages, I.O. Urban, was forced to leave Novocherkassk after “an actual threat from students” (Artinskii, 1907: 281). We should say, I.O. Urban was one of the most odious educators in South Russia. He was sacked from several gymnasiums under threat of physical violence until he settled down in Taganrog. P.P. Filevsky, the historiographer of the Taganrog Gymnasium, being a man of fairly conservative views, characterized I.O. Urban as follows: “He as if made it his duty to identify politically disloyal young people, and since he had the gift of seeing through a student, he almost always guessed right and pursued them without mercy” (Filevskii, 1906: 31). However,

irrespective of I.O. Urban's personal traits, the short period of his teaching in the Novocherkassk Gymnasium came as a warning sign. It manifestly showed that I.G. Polyakov, who demanded "the toughest possible police control" over gymnasium students, had now those near him at work who shared his position. And gymnasium students, spoiled by S.S. Robush's indulgent attitude towards their "barbarity," were ready to fight against such teachers using the most brutal methods, perhaps inspired by the beating of I.G. Polyakov they got away with.

As a result, the teaching staff in the Novocherkassk Gymnasium was greatly revised in the 1876–1878s, and in 1878, S.S. Robush left the school as well (Artinskii, 1907: 282). According to I.P. Artinskii, the staff revision was a mistake: "Robush's successor, as a consequence, had to maintain educational and disciplinary work in the Novocherkassk Gymnasium, with few exceptions, in cooperation with "new" teachers, who had little knowledge of the local conditions, customs and traditions, little knowledge of the established practices in the local gymnasium. And doesn't it explain why Robush's time is described by his contemporaries as the bright times of "patriarchalism" in the gymnasium, while the times of his closest successors left a painful recollection of the disorder to the same contemporaries, even described by the general name "Tower of Babel"? (Artinskii, 1907: 282). We can see the term "Tower of Babel" was used not only by A.I. Kosorotov to define the events in the Novocherkassk Gymnasium at the turn between the 1870s and 1880s. The latter, however, suggested a slightly different, i.e. more detailed periodization of its history – in his opinion, a "patriarchal" period was followed by a "scandalous" period, which in turn was followed by a period of "revelations and outcomes" (Kosorotov, 1900: 59-60). The former gymnasium student apparently applied the "Tower of Babel" to the last two periods. A.I. Kosorotov also had different ideas about the root causes of the Novocherkassk Gymnasium's troubles – he believed they were brought about both by the resignation of many old teachers, and by the extremely inadequate choice of the new director and inspector for the gymnasium.

The position of the new director was given to I.V. Kansky, a Czech by birth, and a middle-aged man who had no faintest notion of the real Don background (Artinskii, 1907: 282). I.G. Fesenkov portrayed him as being a "kind," "simple," "frank," and "honest" administrator "with an excellent memory and rational mind" (Artinskii, 1907: 282-283). And here A.I. Kosorotov's opinion diverges from the accounts of more knowledgeable people for the first time: in the "Tower of Babel", the foreigner (Pole), S.K. Malyavsky, who replaced S.S. Robush, is depicted as a sugary, envious and not very clever schemer (however, the character of S.K. Malyavsky has some traits of the gymnasium's next director, V.Yu. Khoroshevsky, who we will subject of our discussion below) (Kosorotov, 1900: 72, 83-84). Nevertheless, this contradiction between I.G. Fesenkov and A.I. Kosorotov can be easily explained – as the latter was a student, not a gymnasium teacher, he hardly had close personal relations with the director, and described his image, preserved in the Novocherkassk society, rather than his real personality. Meanwhile, I.V. Kansky found himself in the situation of immense complexity from the very beginning. He openly acknowledged the effects of the very "barbarity" in gymnasium students, which S.S. Robush tolerated. According to the new director, all pupils in the Novocherkassk Gymnasium were deficient in "self-control, an acquired habit for appropriate work without breaks," but demonstrated "rudeness, disrespect, a tendency to evade student duties, absences at lessons, which were indulged by the family to some extent, appetite for pleasure" (Artinskii, 1907: 284). I.V. Kansky did not try to point the accusing finger at his predecessor or immediately switch to harsh measures, but still began to improve discipline and expelled the most underachieving students – the action that, as we remember, S.S. Robush made efforts to completely avoid. This position eventually damaged the director's reputation, who, to make things worse, was immediately drawn into conflict both with the local community and with teachers who took a stand against such actions. I.P. Artinskii provides examples of "insinuations" targeted against I.P. Kansky in the local and even in the metropolitan press, while the pedagogical council accused him of squandering state funds to install lighting fixtures in the gymnasium-owned apartment, and the critics were led by the second person in the gymnasium, its inspector, who said that the director "should at no times use a single nail of the gymnasium, apart from the room he occupies" (Artinskii, 1907: 283-285). To briefly summarize I.P. Kansky's activities, we would like to cite the words of D.F. Shcheglov: "His successor (S.S. Robush's) was instructed to remedy the gymnasium that desperately needed improvement. Students drank to excess, brawled, instilled fear in neighbors and in city ladies and were indulged in philosophical and political liberalism. Mr. Robush's successor did not reject the entrusted task, but they

pelted stones at his apartment, shot twice at his windows, and after a year and a half he was transferred to another city” (Shcheglov, 2010: 5).

The situation of I.P. Kansky and the next two directors was greatly complicated by the fact that their main adversary in the issue of measures taken to restore order in the gymnasium was its inspector. Amid the general change of teacher generations in 1878, the position was taken by M.K. Kalmykov (Artinskii, 1907: 282). This was the worst choice that could ever be: at pedagogical councils, the “idealistic teacher” not only confronted the directors on trifles, but also “mounted the most vehement agitation against all measures” of a punitive nature, proposed by the administration to “raise the teaching and education quality in the gymnasium” (Artinskii, 1907: 293). I.P. Artinskii, who appeared to be openly sympathetic to M.K. Kalmykov, explained that “two people” got along in the Don teacher – an excellent educator and a very weak administrator (Artinskii, 1907: 292-293). However, A.I. Kosorotov’s interpretation seems to be more reasonable to us. The latter believed that K.S. Vetkin/M.K. Kalmykov in the position of the gymnasium inspector tried quite consistently to address problems with the discipline among students, but adopted a very peculiar method.

One episode is very illustrative in this regard. It excellently brings forward the discrepant pedagogical practices of those who supported the “police control” over students and “idealistic teachers.” We have already mentioned the issue of illegal literature distributed in student apartments, the issue uncovered by I.G. Polyakov and ignored S.S. Robush. Here’s how A.I. Kosorotov described the views of the new gymnasium inspector in this regard: “He opened a conversation that a lot of self-made handwritten magazines with obscene poems and caricatures of teachers had begun to circulate recently between gymnasium students, that this evil was very dangerous, that methods of combating it should be very subtle, because it was impossible to get rid of underground literature with primitive repressive measures. <...>. He took it into his head to publish an annual collection of articles, stories and poems written exclusively by gymnasium students, but with the stringent requirement that no one caught with underground literature would be admitted into the collection’s staff” (Kosorotov, 1900: 83-84). The plan was initially crowned with remarkable success, and gymnasium students, inspired by the opportunity to see their works printed, lost interest in underground literature (Kosorotov, 1900: 84-85). However, opponents of the “idealistic teachers”, in particular, “Radical”, did not hail the success. On the contrary, they perceived it as an obstacle to the normal educational process, a distraction for children, who were not eager to gain new knowledge as they were, from regular studies (Kosorotov, 1900: 89). It is unlikely that A.I. Kosorotov accurately quotes “Radical,” but the latter quite probably did say something of the kind: “Children are given fire and a knife and suffer burns and cuts as a result... <...>. Philosophers, deciding the fate of mankind, still hardly out of swaddling-clothes... I genuinely feel sorry for you, playthings of wicked sages” (Kosorotov, 1900: 103-104).

Indeed, in 1880, the “Gymnasium collection” (Gimnazicheskii sbornik) was published, which featured the works of Novocherkassk Gymnasium students (Gimnazicheskii sbornik, 1880). I.P. Artinsky rated it very high and considered it to virtually the only encouraging event in the history of the gymnasium in this period (Artinskii, 1907: 286-287). In fact, unfortunately, we can hardly agree with the assessment as more than two-thirds of this small (less than 100 pages) book were “chrestomathies,” verbatim extracts and short paraphrases of the works of famous authors (Gimnazicheskii sbornik, 1880: 23-68). We will not analyze the literary attempts included in the collection, but as for research works, they were hopelessly shoddy. For example, the preface to the “chrestomathy” on V.G. Belinsky’s ideas provided neither a biography of the outstanding critic, nor a general essence of his ideas, nor any description of the environment in which he created his works. Instead, the author, a gymnasium student N. Turkin, fell into pompous and abstract praise, reminiscent of instances from the first half of the 19th century: “Each expression, each word of his (V.G. Belinsky’s) is filled with fire, excitement, hot breath of life, which convey them an ineffable potency that involuntarily vanquishes you. So does a bright sun ray, joyfully sparkling in the air, on the blue waters of the river, on the leaves of trees, reflected like diamonds in dew drops, and creating everywhere colors, glints, elusive tints, impart to nature beauty, brilliance, liveliness and an irresistible power of charm” (Gimnazicheskii sbornik, 1880: 24). This once again convinces us that M.K. Kalmykov, who was the editor of the book, had a very peculiar taste, and he, unlike the teachers of the late 1850–1860s, who advocated “conscious,” interesting and true-to-life elements in education, was drawn to abstract embellishments.



So, after his appointment as a gymnasium inspector, M.K. Kalmykov pursued a totally consistent policy that logically resulted from his general pedagogical views. As he saw the acute problems with the discipline among children, he made efforts to handle them not by means of a somewhat idealistic “good education” rather than imposing “police control.” School teachers and administrations were supposed to distract gymnasium students from pranks, hooliganism, and even from forbidden literature with the help of arts and sciences by offering them more engrossing activities. These ideas have still retained their popularity in pedagogy, but, no matter how efficient they generally were, M.K. Kalmykov was doomed to a complete failure because his actions were confused, had not link with real life and were opposed by part of the teachers. Perhaps the greatest mistake the inspector of the Novocherkassk Gymnasium made was that he counted on incentive measures to maintain discipline without introducing any punitive measures at all, and what was worse he fought against the gymnasium directors, who suggested such measures, apparently believing that they destroyed trust between teachers and students.

As for the directors, I.P. Kansky resigned from his position in 1880, and his successor, V.Yu. Khoroshevsky concluded that the situation in the gymnasium continued to deteriorate. As it was earlier the case with the A.G. Popov's and I. Ya. Zolotarev's retirement, a weak director who took the place of a strong one, quickly lost control over the teachers, and this wreaked complete havoc on the educational process: “No information on the progress for each term of the academic year was submitted by the teachers to the director; grades in class registers failed to properly and clearly reflect the student performance. Pupils were moved up next senior grades in a very original basis – promotion was granted not only to those who had 2.5 or 2.25 grades in one or two main subjects, but even to those with a straight two” (two is the second lowest grade in the Russian grade system. – Translator's note) (Artinskii, 1907: 286). Naturally, pupils, in turn, with such teachers “were little accustomed to order and had no adequate understanding of their student duties” (Artinskii, 1907: 286). However, V.Yu. Khoroshevsky stated the existence of problems, but was unable to put forward any conceptually new solutions to deal with them. Apparently, it was not by coincidence that A.I. Kosorotov combined him with I.P. Kansky in the character of “Pan Malyavsky” because their activities as heads of the Novocherkassk Gymnasium had much in common. For example, V.Yu. Khoroshevsky plainly repeated the key mistake of his predecessor – he allowed M.K. Kalmykov to organize all sorts of cultural events, retained him on the position of inspector, and seemed in general to seek support of the “idealistic teacher,” but at the same time continued to severely punish gymnasium students who violated order and discipline. The respective measures became even more draconian. While in 1879, 6 students were expelled from the gymnasium, and all for “academic failure,” in 1882, they expelled 90 students, most of them on grounds outside curriculum (Artinskii, 1907: 284, 289). As a consequence, V.Yu. Khoroshevsky obtained the same results as his predecessor – the new director faced rejection both by many teachers and the local society and conflicts with students and, eventually, was transferred to another region. “Mr. Robush's next successor went on with efforts to remedy the gymnasium; again stones were thrown at him; his glass windows were shattered more than once; he himself was beaten by hired Cossacks, and after a year and a half was transferred to another city,” D.F. Shcheglov wrote (Shcheglov, 2010: 5).

Meanwhile, it, obviously, dawned on the administration in the Kharkov Educational District that the activity of “idealistic teachers” to restore order in the Novocherkassk Gymnasium not only was useless, but harmful. In this regard, the attempt to publish the second issue of the “Gymnasium Collection” elicited a characteristic reaction from the district authorities: V.Yu. Khoroshevsky, who submitted a corresponding request, was responded that an edition of the type would only magnify “excessive conceit and a falsely exaggerated idea of their strengths and abilities” in the already unruly gymnasium students (Artinskii, 1907: 287). However, we have seen, both the majority of teachers and the Novocherkassk society upheld M.K. Kalmykov's approach to reject punitive action against students in the Novocherkassk Gymnasium. So, the administration of the Kharkov Educational District risked taking extreme measures by finally opting for supporters of “police control” over students and even going to the length of an open confrontation with defenders of troublemakers in classes. The first decisive step in this direction was already taken in the time of V.Yu. Khoroshevsky. Although most Novocherkassk teachers, believing in the idea of education being an absolute value, objected to the reduction in the number of students in the gymnasium, in 1883 the director, contrary to the pedagogical council's opinion, filed a request to

close down one of the parallel classes to improve control over the remaining gymnasium students, and the request was granted (Artinskii, 1907: 290).

However, it was clear that the “soft-hearted” V.Yu. Khoroshevsky, as described by I.P. Artinskii, was not suitable for the role and was unable to meet with criticism from both teachers and local society and forcefully reorganize the Novocherkassk Gymnasium (Artinskii, 1907: 285). In addition, as we have shown, although he recognized the need for “police control,” he shared the idea of cultural enlightenment of students. As a result, in 1883 he was replaced by D.F. Shcheglov, a man who quickly emerged as the ideological leader of M.K. Kalmykov's opponents, and whom we repeatedly quoted above in various excerpts from his correspondence. He soon became a real monster in the eyes of most Novocherkassk students, teachers, townspeople and Cossacks. The sense of style and plausibility blatantly failed A.I. Kosorotov, when he described this director, and the resulting character was a kind of caricatured personification of political investigation and control at school. “He was a man of rare energy and incredible gut feeling for all sorts of ‘search’ – something like the famous detective Lecoq. Having found out about the liberal inclinations in the Razboinsk (Novocherkassk) Gymnasium and the helpless Pan Malyavsky unable to stop this incipient malignant movement, the Russian Lecoq himself suggested that they swap positions. ‘My gymnasium is now toeing the line, and my job is done here,’ he wrote to Malyavsky” (Kosorotov, 1900: 105). As a result, the “Russian Lecoq”, “a man with a birdy surname” (slightly modified, as for all characters of the “Tower of Babel” – not D.F. Shcheglov, but I.E. Sorokin) was regarded by A.I. Kosorotov as some kind of fairytale personage who traveled to Russian gymnasiums and imposed a police regime there. The former gymnasium student also interpreted the pedagogical views of his director by attributing to him the following monologs: “I do not tolerate any misunderstanding, and therefore I say in advance what I require from you and what I forbid. My central point is as follows – you are boys and savages, and we are experienced and educated people. Another point logically follows from the above one – your opinions and judgments, as compared to our opinions and judgments, are not worth a button. Therefore, I require from a student that he: firstly, wear clean clothes, secondly, diligently do his homework, and, thirdly, do not talk. I will expel all talkers simply and quickly: get out of my gymnasium. No matter if the teacher is right or wrong – keep still! Because the main duty of a teacher is to order, and the main duty of the student to listen and obey” (Kosorotov, 1900: 109-110). But, it seems to us A.I. Kosorotov managed to reveal best of all not the disposition of the “Russian Lecoq” but his pedagogical views. There is a striking scene in the “Tower of Babel” when a gymnasium student, defending his right to walk and speak freely at break time, argues with the director that it is “intellectual development” that is most important in the gymnasium, and he will never be false to this statement. “The man with a birdy surname” in response objects that not “intellectual development,” but “discipline is the foundation on which the gymnasium rests,” and walking along in corridors and making noise at break time do not allow other students to prepare for their lessons (Kosorotov, 1900: 117-118). However biased they are, A.A. Kosorotov's numerous descriptions of “Russian Lecoq” are essential for the Don pedagogy history because other authors totally refrained from characterizing D.F. Shcheglov, and he appears in their works as some form of apophysis. Even I.P. Artinskii, who was well-disposed to the staff of the Novocherkassk Gymnasium, wrote nothing about the personality of D.F. Shcheglov, with only references pointing out that during the latter's term, a “suffocating atmosphere” reigned inside the gymnasium, and his short directorship left “vivid and abiding memories” (Artinskii, 1907: 290-292).

Nevertheless, D.F. Shcheglov had a very unconventional personality, for one thing. If not in the history of Russian pedagogy, his name is at least known in the history of the Russian social thought: he was the author of the monumental study “History of social systems from ancient times to the present day” (Shcheglov, 1870; Shcheglov, 1889). Printed reviews of the treatise were given, for example, by such authors as Nikolay N. Strakhov and Vladimir S. Solovyov (Solov'ev, b.g.; Strakhov, 1896). Despite the different views of the authors, they admitted that D.F. Shcheglov's work was unique to Russian literature in terms of the amount of information provided and was therefore quite useful at least for this reason (Solov'ev, b.g.: 318; Strakhov, 1896: 272). On the other hand, even a more favorably disposed review by N.N. Strakhov pointed out that D.F. Shcheglov proved to be a very odd researcher. Although the critic generally sympathized with the patriotic views of the author of the “History of social systems,” he noted that Shcheglov went beyond the mark in his patriotism: “One might think that, in his opinion, everything not concordant with

patriots' feeling is for this very reason bound to be unacademic" (Strakhov, 1896: 263-264). V.S. Solovyov, in turn, not only sharply criticized many of D.F. Shcheglov's theoretical constructs, but also paid special attention to the latter's disapproval of fictional prose, which reached the extent of some strange hostility (Solov'ev, b.g.: 315-316). Indeed, D.F. Shcheglov wrote about the dreadful "corruption of society by literature," and it makes sense to cite his arguments in this regard, because they are directly connected to the topic of our paper (Shcheglov, 1889: 574). "The school youth, who formed several gloomy pages in our history, would undoubtedly have studied with no worry at school if it had not been implanted into them that there are several projects to bring a golden age down to earth, and that these projects can be easily put into being, and that only malice poses obstacles in the way. And they must be put into being in the interests of lower brethren, who live in unbearable conditions; that this mainly is the responsibility of young people, who are the best hope and pride of a country" (Shcheglov, 1889: 576-577).

The above excerpt suggests that ideologically D.F. Shcheglov was an entity foreign to the Novocherkassk pedagogical community. With all the differences in the ideas of his predecessors, all of them – from M.K. Kalmykov to I.Ya. Zolotarev, from A.G. Oridovsky to S.S. Robush – considered education to be the greatest value no matter what various forms it took. For D.F. Shcheglov, such a value, apparently, was patriotism, and, consequently, education could be both useful, if aimed to strengthen it, and harmful as it "corrupted" young people. In particular, the Novocherkassk Gymnasium director turned against not only literary works in the school curriculum, but also against the works of "pragmatist historians," accusing some of them, for example, N.I. Kostomarov, of eliminating in children the feeling of love for their Motherland: "Kostomarov subjected everything in Russian history, which has an incontestable right to be respected by true Russians, to real desecration, beginning with first princes, who are just bandits and robbers for him" (Shcheglov, 1889: 569).

So, while the "History of social systems from ancient times to the present day" largely shed light to D.F. Shcheglov's philosophical and moral views, rather than his pedagogical ideas, his vision of ideals for school and teaching practices reveals itself in the letter to K.P. Pobedonostsev, which quoted more than once. According to D.F. Shcheglov's underlying pedagogical idea, it was the school, along with literature and life, that drew Russia into the most dangerous "political disturbances" and "mental disturbances," and only through the school is it possible to put these disturbances to end (Shcheglov, 2010: 4). To achieve this, it was essential that educational institutions across Russia totally redefined their focus, "so that pupils and students studied sciences in earnest, so that they were brought up in the spirit of religion and patriotism" (Shcheglov, 2010: 4). With this basis, D.F. Shcheglov singled out two controversies in the gymnasium education of the time. The first, and, oddly enough, lesser one, he believed, was that "the Law of God and Russian language are categorized as secondary subjects," and that "there are a whole array of other details instilling into students that both Russia and the Orthodox faith are something secondary" (Shcheglov, 2010: 4). But the major issue, as defined by D.F. Shcheglov, was the fact that "today's school is not at all strive willing to graduate earnest people," they might be even "cosmopolitans," but "capable of looking at things earnestly" (Shcheglov, 2010: 4). Unfortunately, the teacher did not provide any explanation for the concept of "earnestness," which clearly had a fundamental meaning for him, but it seemed to imply discipline, diligence, respect for the authorities and the preference for "sciences" over literature, hated by D.F. Shcheglov, and arts in general. From our point of view, with all the narrowness of the pedagogical ideal, it could be very beneficial for the Novocherkassk Gymnasium in the 1880s, whose students just lacked the above qualities. As a matter of fact, it would be appropriate here to describe the pedagogical ideal of G.I. Korolev/I.G. Polyakov in more detail, as interpreted by A.I. Kosorotov, an ideal close to the one of D.F. Shcheglov. The "Tower of Babel" cites the following words of the strict "Radical," addressed to a pupil repeatedly punished for poor discipline: "I am encouraging Golyashkin (another student) because I feel sorry for him. I am persecuting you because I love you. Golyashkin has no talents, you are very – very! – gifted. 'Whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required.' It is my duty to persecute you until you achieve what you are able to, but do not wish to achieve" (Kosorotov, 1900: 233). Therefore, it would be wrong to argue that supporters of "police control" over students did not love children, but this love had peculiar manifestations, not through encouraging a "family atmosphere" in the gymnasium or through the commitment to "properly bring up" children by means of arts and humanities, but through severity and "earnestness,"

in constant punishments, which were expected to help gymnasium students grasp curriculum material as deeply as possible.

Accordingly, D.F. Shcheglov's appointment as a director of the Novocherkassk Gymnasium was by no means an absurd move propelled by the desire of the "Russian Lecoq" to impose strict order everywhere. On the contrary, the Novocherkassk Gymnasium of the period was actually in desperate need for a leader to whom "discipline" would be more important than "intellectual development," for a forceful sort of person firmly convinced in his truth of his cause, a director, prepared to stand by teachers who had similar views, but at the same time was capable to cunning and compromise. Alas, D.F. Shcheglov did not possess just the latter traits.

He himself, in his letter to K.P. Pobedonostsev, when describing his managerial activities in charge of the Novocherkassk Gymnasium, very laconically wrote that "he continued the work of his two predecessors, and, according to the (written) confession of the lord appointed ataman, did it with considerable success" (Shcheglov, 2010: 4). D.F. Shcheglov's reluctance to go into specifics is quite understandable – the result activities of the new director yielded appeared to be opposite to expectations. D.F. Shcheglov's reports To Kharkov brimmed with accusations against gymnasium students: "To one teacher, a fifth-grade student insolently spoke with an almost explicit threat; to another, several students who received low marks, shouted the insulting nickname given to him while he was leaving the classroom," (Artinskii, 1907: 291); "I has been told that we should not hang maps and thermometers in classrooms, because the maps will be torn, and the thermometers will be broken or stolen in a few days" (Artinskii, 1907: 291); "Two teachers received anonymous letters threatening that they would be killed if they continued to give pupils bad marks" (Artinskii, 1907: 291); "There was a big scandal caused by drunk students" (Artinskii, 1907: 292); "Fourth grade pupils constantly drank vodka, visited brothels" (Artinskii, 1907: 292). Retaliating to this behavior, D.F. Shcheglov increased the number of expulsions from the gymnasium – 90 students expelled in 1882 were a fantastic figure for the time of S.S. Robush, in 1883, 139 students were forced to leave, and in 1884 – 142 (and again most of them on grounds outside curriculum) (Artinskii, 1907: 292). Those who remained, apparently, felt disgruntled and behaved even more outrageously. D.F. Shcheglov tried to spy on them, but failed to organize observation efficiently, and efforts to encourage whistle-blowing in the student environment produced seemed to a negative effect – the director even wrote with indignation to the district authorities that "the students' persistence in covering culprits of all kinds of wrongdoings is remarkable" (Artinskii, 1907: 292). Both I.P. Artinskii's book and A.I. Kosorotov's book and even D.F. Shcheglov's own letter to K.P. Pobedonostsev make it clear that the new head of the Novocherkassk Gymnasium only relied on force, hoping to break the "barbarity" and any independence of gymnasium students in general only through fear and intimidation. He took no steps to explain the importance of order and discipline and convince children that it was necessary to adopt and maintain them. Even A.P. Pyatnitsky, who replaced him as a director at the gymnasium, was struck how primitive and weak measures of educational influence were, whose effectiveness his predecessor counted on: "For example, for all misdemeanors in 1884, one type of punishment was administered (except for expulsion) – keeping students after the classes in the gymnasium for a more or less prolonged period. The detention itself was executed in a short form that did not provide for any remonstrating, or persuading, or putting to shame: all the latter was considered redundant. Extant records in old conduct sheets, with few exceptions, fully confirm this" (Artinskii, 1907: 297). And this, augmented with the fierce opposition against the new director, which, of course, was mounted by the very popular M.K. Kalmykov, resulted into the situation where the students, punished and expelled from the gymnasium, were envisaged as martyrs by themselves and by the local community, and D.F. Shcheglov – the very monster depicted by A.I. Kosorotov.

However, gymnasium students, portrayed even in the "Tower of Babel's" interpretation, were not angels at all. Here is how this chronicle novel describes the day on the eve of the ultimate catastrophe: "From the very morning all gymnasium students, both of senior and junior (especially senior) grades, just got out of hand, as they say. One incident was followed by another incident – now in one class, now in another, now in the corridor, now in the teachers' room. In one class, they made such noxious fumes by burning some rubber thing that they had to open windows. <...>. In another class, they gave a caterwaul concert for the Czech. They set fire to a blackboard here, the whole group walked in pairs along the corridor at break time there. <...>. Finally, it ended with a really outrageous incident – a seventh-grader smashed his fist in the warder's face" (Kosorotov,

1900: 215). But, instead of admitting their actually established guilt, angry children tried to stage a demonstration and march to the director in a huge crowd, demanding forgiveness for the offender (Kosorotov, 1900: 215). As a result, they were locked in the school assembly hall, threatened with punishment and detained almost until night (Kosorotov, 1900: 215-216). It is hard to say how D.F. Shcheglov would have dealt with the instigators of the commotion, but he did not have time to thoroughly go into the matter and identify perpetrators, because an explosion in the truest sense of the word rocked the Novocherkassk Gymnasium.

“My apartment was blown up; the explosion cracked a stone wall, shattered windows, broke several articles of furniture, broke several dishes. Afterwards, my wife suffered two consecutive miscarriages and lay in bed for about ten months,” D.F. Shcheglov complained in his letter to K.P. Pobedonostsev (Shcheglov, 2010: 5). I.P. Artinskii dryly and rather unsympathetically stated that “there was a big row at the time when an attempt was made to blast the director’s apartment and gymnasium” (Artinskii, 1907: 292). A.I. Kosorotov also wrote about a “terrible explosion” in the director’s apartment (Kosorotov, 1900: 217-218). Perhaps it was impossible to think out a more perfect symbol of the failure the pedagogical ideas of Novocherkassk teachers underwent in the 1870–1880s – students attempted to assassinate their director and in addition damaged the gymnasium’s building. Even worse, from our point of view, the explosion at D.F. Shcheglov’s apartment in 1884 marked the end of an epoch when the Novocherkassk Gymnasium was a true center of the Don culture and pedagogy, and its teaching staff regularly boasted prominent Don scientists and public figures.

However, it might seem at the first glance that the Novocherkassk society simply vanquished unpopular supporters of “police control” over students in debate. Indeed, the excessively big scandal cost M.K. Kalmykov his position of gymnasium inspector, and he was forced to leave the job, but remained there as a teacher (Artinskii, 1907: 292-293). However, these were the only sanctions that followed after the attempted bombing of D.F. Shcheglov. Instead the most notorious director was unequivocally hinted that even Don officials were in sympathy the bombers. D.F. Shcheglov complained that after the explosion, teachers and parents told him that another batch of explosives had disappeared from nearby mines, that Novocherkassk dwellers were somehow involved in the assassination of Alexander II, and the local authorities simply ignored the panicking director’s appeals for protection (Shcheglov, 2010: 5). Moreover, one of the Don’s most influential people, the regional marshal of nobility, D.I. Orlov, sent his version of the events to the Ministry of Public Education, following which D.F. Shcheglov was discharged from the post for “excessive suspiciousness and indiscretion” (Shcheglov, 2010: 5).

But amid the struggle, both groups of young Don teachers – supporters of “police control” over students and “idealistic teachers” – were defeated and tarnished their reputation. M.K. Kalmykov no longer wrote textbooks and remained an ordinary teacher of Russian language until his retirement in 1900 (Artinskii, 1907: 321). As we have shown, he left very controversial recollections on the Don – his pedagogical talent as a teacher of the Russian language was recognized by all his contemporaries, but his activity as an inspector of the Novocherkassk Gymnasium was unanimously condemned (it is indicative that A.I. Petrovsky did not mention this biographical page at all in his very favorable article about his teacher). I.G. Polyakov was fired against his will in 1886 when the gymnasium’s new administration suddenly “remembered” the fact that he never passed the teacher qualification exam (Artinskii, 1907: 328). This formal non-compliance was only an excuse, but the Novocherkassk society actually did not forgive “Radical” for backing up the odious D.F. Shcheglov. The latter wrote about this with anger: “Locals, seeing that the Ministry of Public Education is pliant, have begun to address other similar requests to it, and the authorities removed another teacher from the service, an excellent mathematician, a remarkable person precisely because he least of all connived at any liberal escapades of students, or liberal methods of teachers, that very Mr. Polyakov, who, ten years ago, revealed revolutionary propaganda in a student apartment, spread in the form of foreign editions, such as *Vperyod*, *Nabat*, etc.” (Shcheglov, 2010: 7). The “scandalous” period in the history of the Novocherkassk Gymnasium drew to an end as did the “patriarchal” period before it. The time came for the period of “revelations and outcomes,” which we would call the era of some triumph of typical, average teachers over bright personalities and talents.

The appointment to head the Novocherkassk gymnasium was given to A.P. Pyatnitsky. Being an undeniably honest person and educator, he, apparently, was not a particularly striking

character. A.P. Pyatnitsky pursued no active research, journalistic or literary lines of activity; on the other hand, his staying on the Don was only an episode in his career (he worked in Samara earlier, and later in Tomsk) (Artinskii, 1907: 312). In fact, only his work at the Imperial Tomsk University came in sight of present day researchers, and was somewhat highlighted in the paper by A.O. Stepanov and S.F. Fominykh “Through the pages of the penal book: the system of punishments and the practice of students’ resistance to disciplinary supervision at the Imperial Tomsk University (1893–1899)” (Po stranitsam shtrafnoy knigi: sistema nakazaniy i praktiki soprotivleniya studenchestva distsiplinarnomu nadzoru v Imperatorskom Tomskom Universitete (1893–1899 gg.)) (Stepanov, Fominykh, 2019). According to them, A.P. Pyatnitsky hid “honest intentions and the faculty for compassion” behind the “appearance of an uncompromising guardian of order” (Stepanov, Fominykh, 2019: 191). A.I. Kosorotov completely failed to create any convincing image of “A.S. Bogolyubsky,” who followed after “the man with the birdy surname.” But his interpretation as well hints at some double nature in the new director of the Novocherkassk Gymnasium, some contrast between appearance and true nature: “Despite its seeming ordinariness, his appearance is not easy to describe at all. Medium height, dark blond hair, average forehead, nose and chin – rather passport-like, common marks. And at the same time, he emanated some astonishing originality” (Kosorotov, 1900: 243).

Perhaps A.P. Pyatnitsky’s originality and duality, stressed by several contemporaries, were engendered by the fact that the new director of the Novocherkassk Gymnasium, being a good-hearted person by character, had no pedagogical creed of his own and acted as a consistent and efficient performer of exceptionally tough government policies on education. It is curious in this regard that I.P. Artinskii portrayed A.P. Pyatnitsky as a “person of the system” who carried on his activity in a “systematic and planned manner” (Artinskii, 1907: 312). In addition, he shaped his environment of people with similar traits. For example, instead of the vibrant M.K. Kalmykov, he appointed A.P. Nikolsky as an inspector. He was the second teacher of the Russian language and a person that did not merit any characterization in I.P. Artinskii’s book at all (Artinskii, 1907: 317). A.I. Kosorotov depicted “second teacher of the Russian language P.A. Belyankin,” who became an inspector under the new head of the gymnasium, as “the most inconspicuous and characterless person” (Kosorotov, 1900: 246). The gymnasium’s teaching staff gradually lost its individuality; a growing number of changes took place in the team, and figures with a significant role in the Don history no longer came to teach there (Artinskii, 1907: 299). The result was a substantial contradiction that immediately arose between A.P. Pyatnitsky’s pedagogical declarations and his actual activities. For example, it appears he won the trust of the local community by placing the biggest share of blame for the gymnasium accident not on students, but on “such a high turnover of persons whose responsibilities were solely to manage pedagogical and educative work,” i.e. on a continuous change of directors (Artinskii, 1907: 396). In addition, as we have already seen, he dismissed the odious I.G. Polyakov. However, after he had demonstrated these somewhat liberal attitudes, in practice A.P. Pyatnitsky continued the policy of D.F. Shcheglov. It was he who succeeded in establishing a functional process of watching gymnasium students, and, interestingly, he maintained it not out of his own zeal, but on the initiative of the district and military authorities (Artinskii, 1907: 294-296); mass expulsions of gymnasium students continued (103 students were expelled in 1886, and 136 in 1887) (Artinskii, 1907: 299); attendance of services at the gymnasium church was now a compulsory routine (Artinskii, 1907: 298). A.I. Kosorotov envisaged the new director as a “fox” who insinuated himself into students’ confidence by initially refraining from tough measures, and then effectively expelled the unreliable from the gymnasium, even if they cleverly disguised themselves (Kosorotov, 1900: 242-362). But even in his picture, the director looks as if he acts rather forcedly, in an openly conformist way, and not because he believes in severe punishments as a productive method to teach children to be “earnest.” For example, when he had get hold of the main troublemaker among senior students, who sympathized with nihilists, the new head of the gymnasium promises not to expel him in return for exemplary behavior (Kosorotov, 1900: 319-320). Nevertheless, in the end, the director, “with tears in his eyes,” throws out the young man, because one of the gymnasium graduates was involved in the assassination attempt on the emperor, and now he had to demonstrate to the authorities the combat against sedition (Kosorotov, 1900: 241-248).

Thus, in the middle of the 1880s, the situation started to change dramatically in the Novocherkassk Gymnasium. The agents of clearly distinguished pedagogical paradigms and prominent

Don figures gave way to ordinary teachers, and the gymnasium finally lost its status of a unique, “military” educational institution. It was hardly the blame of A.P. Pyatnitsky – on the contrary, he managed to revive a normal pedagogical process almost destroyed earlier in the gymnasium. However, shortly after his appointment, large cities, Rostov-On-Don and Taganrog, were integrated into the Don Host Oblast in 1887 and brought in famous educational institutions with their rich history. On the other hand, new cultural and research centers – a local statistical committee, newspaper offices, etc. – began to emerge on the Don from the middle of the 19th century. In these circumstances, the new director made, probably, a totally right decision to restore a conventional, standard gymnasium, rather than a center of the Don’s academic and pedagogical life. This renewed gymnasium notched its own achievements and successes (for example, A.F. Losev, an eminent Russian philosopher studied there in the early 20th century), but the era of the military gymnasium, where first Don researchers, major public figures and educators worked as teachers and played a significant role in developing Don pedagogy, passed into oblivion beyond retrieve.

#### **4. Conclusion**

The period from the end of the 1870s to the beginning of the 1880s was a very eventful and challenging time for the Novocherkassk Gymnasium, a time when it irrevocably lost its status as a primary research, cultural and educational center of the Don Host. Although S.S. Robush continued to run the gymnasium until 1878, the “golden age” of the school’s history, associated with his name, had already become a page in the past. Despite the director’s latest achievements, such as the construction of a gymnasium building, and the facility’s unimpeachable authority in the local community, the issue of students’ “barbarity,” inflicted in many respects by S.S. Robush’s pedagogical views, had profoundly deteriorated by the time. One teacher was beaten, another teacher received threats, theft was practiced by gymnasium students and similar incidents marred its reputation.

In this context, the issue of the “barbarity” and finding solutions for it became a focus of attention for a new generation of teachers. In other conditions, such teachers might be able to formulate a more integral system or even several systems of general pedagogical ideas and specific teaching practices. However, this possibility was precluded by a phenomenon unprecedented in Don education – a real conflict flared up between supporters of various methods of establishing discipline in the student environment, and it bore no resemblance to respectful discussions on pedagogical topics at the turn of the 1850–1860s.

Initially, the conflict started between S.S. Robush and supporters of “police control” over students. The latter included no important figures, and while the old director remained at the helm, they were in the position of outcasts from the Novocherkassk society, subjected to threats and even beatings. However, after S.S. Robush retired, with directors appointed from outside, this camp step by step strengthened their position as the situation in the gymnasium became increasingly tense. As a result, the next director, D.F. Shcheglov, in fact, found himself to be a leader and theorist of those among Don teachers who advocated strict discipline, and we use his works as a basis to reconstruct their general pedagogical views.

1) For D.F. Shcheglov, key values in education were patriotism, Orthodox faith and, especially, “earnestness” – a term he never decoded, which apparently embraced discipline, diligence in work, respect for the authorities and love for studies.

2) While earlier Don pedagogy postulated education to be good at all times, D.F. Shcheglov argued that many gymnasiums in the Russian Empire became hotbeds of “corruption,” and they did not cultivate the qualities, outlined in the previous paragraph, but, on the contrary, destroyed them.

3) Proceeding from the above, it was necessary to foster in students not “intellectual development,” first of all, but “discipline” as the pre-requisite quality required to become a good citizen of the Russian Empire.

We believe these general pedagogical views had the right to exist in principle, and, if efficiently implemented, they might have brought much benefit to the Novocherkassk Gymnasium, where students, in the end of S.S. Robush’s directorship, “were little accustomed to order and had no adequate understanding of their student duties.” It was implementation that became the stumbling block for further progression. Neither the community of Don teachers who advocated “police control” over students, nor the new gymnasium directors had a single leading teacher with suitable practical competencies. Meanwhile, the Novocherkassk society, which held its gymnasium in respect, was unwilling to see it change and meet initial attempts to tighten discipline

with a very negative reaction. And, in the end, D.F. Shcheglov and his followers found no other way out as to respond to such resistance with massive expulsions of students and harsh punishments, without even thinking of setting up some semblance of educative work so that children could accept new values not out of fear, but by understanding their advantages.

The major opposition to toughened discipline was represented not even by old teachers, but by other part of the youth, whose leader was an “idealistic teacher,” M.K. Kalmykov, appointed as inspector of the gymnasium. M.K. Kalmykov was the last prominent Don teacher, whose work was inseparably linked with the Novocherkassk Gymnasium. Unfortunately, his pedagogical talent was much more modest comparing to his predecessors, especially in terms of material systematization. For this reason, it is impossible to clearly structure his general pedagogical views. It is apparent, however, that the best means of ensuring discipline, according to M.K. Kalmykov, was “good education” that implied arousing in students’ interest in various arts, above of all, in literature.

However, it turned out that he was completely unable to make his idea of “good education” work. Main obstacles were his disconnectedness from real life and inclination to somewhat abstract and scholastic philosophizing. As early as before D.F. Shcheglov took office as director of the Novocherkassk Gymnasium, M.K. Kalmykov was allowed to organize a range of cultural events, which, he expected, were supposed to distract gymnasium students from hooliganism and improve their discipline. In practice, however, no such transformation took place. On the contrary, M.K. Kalmykov faced accusations that his activities were ruinous to discipline, distracted children from classes and contributed to their false conceit. After D.F. Shcheglov’s appointment, M.K. Kalmykov went into fierce opposition to the new director, inciting the local society and students against him.

The fateful denouement ensued in late 1884, when an attempt was made to blow up D.F. Shcheglov’s apartment, located in the gymnasium building. Subsequent events starkly illustrated that supporters of “police control” over students completely compromised themselves by their own actions, even in the eyes of the authorities – perpetrators were never found, D.F. Shcheglov was transferred from Novocherkassk, and his supporters from among the teachers were dismissed. Their adversaries, in turn, i.e. supporters of the “idealistic teacher” M.K. Kalmykov, were almost equally compromised – part of moral responsibility for what had happened was laid on the latter, he was removed from the position of inspector, and even his contemporaries who appreciated him severely criticized his activities in this capacity. In the end, the fight between the two camps of Don teachers mutually discredited their ideas and led to the crisis of the gymnasium itself. Its new director, A.P. Pyatnitsky, placed his bet not on idea-driven pedagogues and Don researchers, but on ordinary teachers, and he himself seemed to have no explicit pedagogical creed. The Novocherkassk Gymnasium now prioritized “people of the system” who carried out the instructions of their superiors and did not try to pursue their own educational policy. The gymnasium’s further successes showed that the decision was justified, but the role of the school in the life of the Don Host sharply fell in importance.

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Summarizing the above, we can draw several general conclusions on the pedagogical experience of the Novocherkassk Gymnasium in the 1800–1880s and the reasons for its rise in this time.

1) Until the 1880s, the Novocherkassk Gymnasium retained its relative independence from the higher authorities. For example, even at this time, teachers could in fact, contrary to established Russian rules, promote children with bad marks in key subjects to the next grade.

2) Thanks to this, the gymnasium could operate as a “military” school, an educational institution that served the Don Host needs. The status was even officially documented in the 1830–1860s, and the gymnasium curriculum offered special courses not available in other gymnasiums of the Empire.

3) The gymnasium experienced chronic underfunding for a long time and even did not have its own building. In these conditions, its employees had to choose other job options. On the other hand, because of this peculiarity, the gymnasium staff usually consisted of teachers from Don Cossacks or very young teachers at the start of their careers.

4) With the interplay of all these factors, the gymnasium regularly had to frame its own combination of pedagogical theories and practices, tailoring national trends in education to the needs of the Don. The process fell to the lot of the director and a limited number of the best teachers. The resulting solutions they synthesized from pedagogical ideas and implemented were



not innovative, if taken in the country-wide scale, and were never suitable to address all problems, but helped use available resources to the best advantage. Such synthesis was successfully brought into reality in three instances:

a) The 1800s. A.G. Popov and A.G. Oridovsky. Teaching was built on the idea of the unconditional benefit of arts and sciences for children, which was not elaborated but enabled a gymnasium with a very weak pedagogical methodology to gain a foothold on the Don land by means of propaganda.

b) The 1830s. I.Ya. Zolotarev. Teaching gradually switched to the idea that arts and sciences should have practical applications. Relying on this idea, the gymnasium attracted first Don researchers and writers and finally emerged as a major cultural and research center of the Don Host.

c) Late 1850s – early 1860s. S.S. Robush, A.A. Radonezhskii, A.G. Filonov. A return to the concept of the unconditional benefit of arts and sciences for children took place, but at a higher practical level, refined with the idea of a “family atmosphere” and “true-to-life,” interesting lessons, required in schools. The gymnasium becomes the Don Host’s educational center training teachers for rural schools.

5) Therefore, the gymnasium’s autonomy and its focus on regional interests allowed it to maintain for a long time a very peculiar situation on the Don – the gymnasium, far from being a model of performance, by creating a right set of general pedagogical ideas and specific teaching practices used by its teachers, commanded respect of the population and performed important social functions.

6) However, such a rewarding result was largely obtained by luck, because with each change of pedagogical ideas a strong and respected leader appeared to inspire most of the young teachers. When in the late 1870s, the gymnasium faced the need for a new synthesis of pedagogical ideas in line with the changed conditions, there was no such leader, and the supporters of change splintered and came into conflict with each other. The outcome was a complete pedagogical collapse of the gymnasium and an attempt to assassinate its director, following which a new head, assigned from outside, reorganized it into an educational institution conventional for the Empire.

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