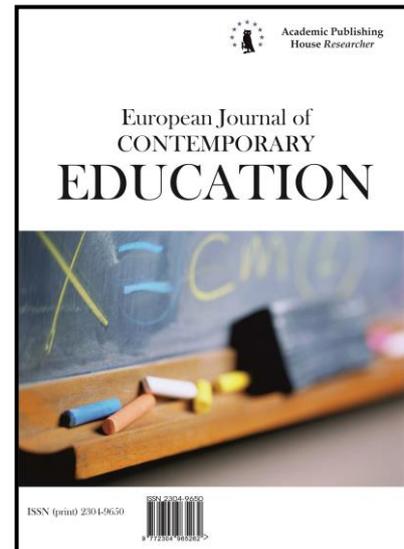




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Development of the Secondary-Level Education in Serbia from 1808 to the 1870s

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Abstract

The article describes the secondary education system in Serbia from 1808 to the 1870s. It focuses on the secondary education development, and the difficulties that were arising during the organization of the educational process.

Scientific and reference literature on the research topic were used as materials. The methodology used a set of scientific methods: multi-factor and integration methods, periodization, typology, comparison, etc., which in unity, ensure the reliability of the results on the studied problem. This is interdisciplinary research, based on the comparativist principle, which allows various informative sources to be revealed. Ultimately, application of these methods made it possible to create a coherent picture of the secondary education in Serbia.

In the conclusion the authors note that by the 1870s an extensive network of secondary schools were developed in Serbia. These schools were represented by the Lyceum (the Great School), gymnasiums, semi-gymnasiums, non-classical secondary schools, and an all-girls school. These educational institutions were focused on training professionals for the public service, including teachers. Thanks to the work of the secondary schools in Serbia it became possible to dramatically increase the number of people with secondary and secondary professional education. This ultimately allowed for the opening of the first higher educational institution in the beginning of the 20th century, the University of Belgrade.

Keywords: secondary-level education, Serbia, gymnasium, development, historic experience, 19th century.

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1. Introduction

In the 19th century it was fairly obvious to the leading European states that not even the most enlightened government could undertake efficient reforms without a significant number of educated people. In other words, without a bureaucratic apparatus who would follow the government's policies? One should understand that in the middle of the 19th century the majority of educated people were graduates of secondary level schools. So, for example, in Prussia, only 10 per cent of the apparatus were people with a university education, and 90 per cent were graduates of secondary educational institutions, gymnasiums, non-classical schools, and higher public schools.

Importance of secondary educational institutions was growing even more because their graduates specifically were enlightening the masses and creating a favorable environment for the sustainable development of education in the country.

2. Materials and methods

Scientific and reference literature on the research topic were used as materials. The methodology used a set of scientific methods: multi-factor and integration methods, periodization, typology, comparison, etc., which in unity, ensure the reliability of the results on the studied problem. This is interdisciplinary research, based on the comparativist principle, which allows various informative sources to be revealed. Ultimately, application of these methods made it possible to create a coherent picture of the secondary education in Serbia.

3. Discussion

Various aspects of the history of the system of primary and secondary education in Serbia in the period of the XIX century began to be considered since the 1870's. One of the first publications on this topic were the works of Rozen-Chudnovskii ([Rozen-Chudnovskii, 1870](#); [Rozen-Chudnovskii, 1870a](#)). The author analyzed the system of primary and secondary education in Serbia in 1830-1860. L. Trgovčević studied women's education in Serbia ([Trgovčević, 2011](#)). It is important to note that, along with women's education, the researchers turned to the topic of academic and intellectual exchanges of Serbs with the representatives of the other peoples of Europe ([Stoianovich, 1959](#)). The pedagogical problems of Serbian innovators, published in the XIX century ([Bakic, 1878](#); [Bakic, 1897](#)), researches in the field of school education ([Cunkovic, 2016](#); [Nikolova, 2017](#)), as well as works on the formation of the Serbian intelligentsia ([Karanovich, 1998](#); [Paunic, 1998](#)) can be mentioned among other problems covered within the research.

4. Results

The system of secondary education in Serbia was represented by the following types of educational institutions: the Lyceum, gymnasiums and pro-gymnasiums, non-classical schools and an all-girls school. Let us consider these institutions one by one.

4.1. The Lyceum.

The Lyceum in Serbia was called the Great School, since it was the highest educational institution of the Principality. The first Serbian Great School was founded in 1808, during the Serbian national liberation uprising. However, due to the small number of taught disciplines it resembled the elementary (primary) school with the three years' training more. The reason for this was the complete absence of other schools in the Principality. The Great School existed until 1813, when Turkey, taking advantage of the fact that Russia was busy with the war against France, attacked its breakaway territory and annexed it to the Ottoman Empire yet again. Despite the continuation of the national liberation struggle against the Turks until 1838, there was no idea of establishing the Great School, which was due to the fact that the Serbian Government has fully engaged in establishing a broad network of primary schools ([Rajović et al., 2018](#)) and gymnasiums.

Reconstructed in 1838, the Great School as well as many other similar projects, began its work in the harsh conditions of understaffing. The School only had a Philosophy Department, but in 1841 the Lyceum acquired a Legal Department and in 1853, the Department of Natural Sciences. It is important to note that it was the Lyceum that gave start to the University of Belgrade in 1905.

In 1863, the life of the Lyceum was radically changed. According to new law, the Great School was divided into three departments: philosophical, technical, and legal. Each of the taught disciplines were assigned to a certain department. The teachers were broken down into levels:

Professor and Assistant Professor. The Lyceum academic year was divided into two semesters, July and August were appointed for holidays.

4.2. Gymnasiums and pro-gymnasiums.

It is important to understand that the European enlightenment trends were well realized in the Serbian Principality. Yet in 1830, the first gymnasium was open in Serbia, and towards the end of 1833 it already had three grades. One would like to point out that Prince Miloš*, unable to neither write nor to read, was pro-actively advocating the idea that the gymnasium had to meet its intended purpose. In December 1835, he personally participated in the exam of the senior grades and praised the students' achievements.

By 1838 Serbia already had 4 gymnasiums. Apart from the first gymnasium in Kragujevac, educational establishments were also open in Šabac, Čačak and Zaječar (Rozen-Chudnovskii, 1870b: 241). The Šabac and Čačak gymnasiums had two grades each, and the Zaječar gymnasium had one grade. The reason for such an imbalance in the composition of the gymnasium grades was a common problem of misunderstanding. Parents of the students did not understand the importance of education. The Serbs felt it more useful to give their children a plough and a scythe, than a book. It is important to note that this opinion was wide-spread not only in Serbia, but also in many areas of the European part of the Russian Empire and the Caucasus (Shevchenko, 2016).

In 1839, a new gymnasium was founded in Belgrade. It was continuously evolving and by 1845 already had 6 grades (Rozen-Chudnovskii, 1870b: 242). Thus, by 1841 Serbia already had 5 gymnasiums. It is important to note that there were no institutions of secondary education in Turkey until the 1860s. (Rozen-Chudnovskii, 1870b: 242)

In 1842, the Obrenović Princes dynasty was overthrown, and this had an immediate impact on the secondary education. The Kragujevac gymnasium was closed in the same year. After the situation stabilized, it became apparent that the center of the country absolutely required a gymnasium. In this regard, the government of Alexander Karadjordjevic ordered the Chagan semi-gymnasium to be transferred to the capital of the Principality in 1845. In 1861, this semi-gymnasium was reorganized into a 6-grade gymnasium.

As for the gymnasium course subjects, the disciplines continued to teach until 1844 and their scope was approved by the Prince's order dated September 26, 1838:

The 1st grade:

- 1) The Slavic history;
- 2) The world ancient history;
- 3) Mathematical geography and political geography of Serbia;
- 4) Natural history (animal kingdom);
- 5) Arithmetic (to fractions);
- 6) Exercises in the Slavic language;
- 7) The German language.

The 2nd grade:

- 1) Serbian grammar;
- 2) Reading with etymologic study and grammar exercises;
- 3) The world average history;
- 4) General geography and political geography of Europe;
- 5) Natural history (the kingdoms of plants and minerals);
- 6) Arithmetic (to the rule of three);
- 7) The German language.

The 3rd grade:

- 1) Serbian syntax;
- 2) Reading of authors;
- 3) The new world history;
- 4) Geography (Asia, Africa, America and Australia);

* The second leader of Serbia, Prince of Serbia in 1817-1839 and 1858-1860, founder of the Obrenović dynasty. Participated in the first Serbian Uprising, earned the title of Duke after the battle of Užice.

- 5) Anthropology;
- 6) Arithmetic;
- 7) The German language.

The 4th grade:

- 1) Rhetoric;
- 2) Reading of authors;
- 3) The Greek Antiquity;
- 4) The history of the Slavic peoples;
- 5) Arithmetic;
- 6) Rhetorical exercises;
- 7) The German language.

The 5th grade:

- 1) Poetry;
- 2) Reading of authors;
- 3) The Roman antiquity;
- 4) All Serbian history;
- 5) All arithmetic;
- 6) Exercises in poetic compositions (Rozen-Chudnovskii, 1870b: 242-243).

In addition to the above mentioned subjects, Catechism was taught in all grades, and the Greek language was taught in grades 4 and 5. It is obvious that the Serbian gymnasium did not reach the level of the European schools, because the Latin language had not been taught whatsoever. Therefore, the Serbian youth could not acquire serious scientific training at home and had to make up for deficiencies of the domestic schools in the foreign universities of the west. At that time, the lack of Latin literature was particularly felt. Medicine, law, engineering, and natural sciences were exclusively taught in Vienna and Pest through the Latin language at the time. Students were also weak in real sciences, not to mention physics and chemistry. In other words, the newly established gymnasiums were far from the European standards, and the main reason for that was the shortage of trained personnel, rather than the Government's unwillingness.

Also an important cause of the secondary education unsuccessfulness at that time was the teaching system and multidisciplinary approach. Together with that, the curriculum also included the subjects that should not have been included in the gymnasium course. Thus, such subjects as anthropology, the Greek and Roman antiquity were to be taught in the University course. It seems to us that the introduction of these disciplines to the gymnasium course was due to the presence of specialists and the desire to bring special features into the weak Serbian education methodology.

It is also clear that the gymnasiums teaching staff was not particularly talented in what refers to teachers' training. Thus, the majority of the gymnasium teachers were undereducated people, never especially engaged in pedagogy.

These were the conditions under which the Serbian schools celebrated the year of 1844, when a new Education Act was announced. The new law established the Latin language as the most important subject among others subjects. Paragraph 8 defined the purpose of gymnasiums. It was to introduce the Serbian youth to the higher science and prepare them for the Lyceum and other higher institutions.

Gymnasiums were divided into six grades, and semi-gymnasiums were divided into four. Gymnasiums had seven teachers, semi-gymnasiums had four, apart from the Head Master, of course.

Curriculum per grades was as follows:

The 1st grade:

- 1) Catechism;
- 2) Serbian grammar;
- 3) Geography;
- 4) Natural history (Zoology);
- 5) Arithmetic;
- 6) Calligraphy.

The 2nd grade:

- 1) Catechism;
 - 2) Serbian grammar (syntax);
 - 3) Latin grammar;
 - 4) German grammar;
 - 5) Geography (Serbia, Montenegro and Austria);
 - 6) The history of the Serb people;
 - 7) Arithmetic;
 - 8) Calligraphy.
- The 3rd grade:
- 1) The Scripture history;
 - 2) Latin grammar;
 - 3) German grammar;
 - 4) Geography (Serbia, Montenegro and Austria);
 - 5) The history of the Serb people;
 - 6) Arithmetic;
 - 7) Calligraphy.
- The 4th grade:
- 1) History of the Christian Church;
 - 2) Latin syntax;
 - 3) German syntax;
 - 4) Geography (Russia and Greece);
 - 5) Arithmetic;
 - 6) History of the Russian, Polish, and Greek peoples;
 - 7) Drawing.
- The 5th grade:
- 1) Catechism;
 - 2) Rhetoric;
 - 3) The Latin classic writers;
 - 4) The German classic writers;
 - 5) Mythology (Greek and Roman);
 - 6) Geography;
 - 7) The history of Rome;
 - 8) The Greek Antiquity;
 - 9) Mathematics;
 - 10) Drawing.
- The 6th grade:
- 1) Catechism (On love and hope);
 - 2) Poetry and the Serbian classic writers;
 - 3) The Latin classic writers;
 - 4) The German classic writers;
 - 5) Antiquity (Roman and Slavic, with mythology);
 - 6) Geography (Australia and America);
 - 7) History (France);
 - 8) Mathematics;
 - 9) Anthropology;
 - 10) Moral sciences;
 - 11) Drawing (Rozen-Chudnovskii, 1870b: 244-245).

The new law gave a positive impetus to the secondary education development in Serbia. In addition, teaching staff improved significantly. Requirements to the teachers were also tightened. From 1844, the right to teach was attributed only to those people who completed a course of philosophy and mastered at least one foreign language, apart from Serbian. Salaries of the teachers were also increased in connection with the specified requirements. Thus, a gymnasium teacher began earning up to 350 Thalers, and semi-gymnasium teacher earned up to 250 Thalers*.

* Cost of 1 Thaler was 1.25 Rubles in silver.

To address the shortage of textbooks, a School Board was established. It was dealing with compiling the textbooks and was rewarding the authors of the best books.

Since then, the main supervision over schools was concentrated in the hands of the Minister of National Education, who would annually send his auditors to inspect the activities and successes of the gymnasiums on site.

In 1853 the system of secondary education was improved. Thus, instead of a 6-grade education, a 7-grade education was introduced in gymnasiums. Apart from the Latin and German languages, Greek, Old Church Slavonic, and French were introduced. Mathematics was expanded by trigonometry and geometry, and physics became a compulsory subject for all students.

However, in September 1863, a new law on the gymnasiums structure was adopted, and according to it the 7-grade gymnasiums were reorganized into 6-grade gymnasiums yet again. But the main purpose of the new Act was to give young people a classical education. Along with the Latin language, history, and theory of poetry, there was physics, botany, zoology, mineralogy with geognosy. Theory of prose and history of literature were next to calligraphy and drawing.

In 1863, music was introduced to gymnasiums. It was very willingly approached by the Serbian youth.

By the end of 1867 Serbia had six gymnasiums and two pro-gymnasiums. Penetration rate of the gymnasium education is presented in the following chart (Table 1).

Table 1. The number of teachers and students in the gymnasiums of Serbia by 1867.

Gymnasium	Professors	Teachers	Students
Belgrade	12	4	571
Kragujevac	9	2	294
Belgrade	6	-	185
Šabac	5	-	106
Negotin	5	-	80
Požarevac	5	-	199
Total	42	6	1375

4.3. Non-classical secondary schools.

The secondary education system also included non-classical schools. So, in 1865 four non-classical schools were established in Serbia. The main purpose of these schools were to teach young people 'useful skills for civilian life' and prepare these young people for studying higher technical sciences. Apprenticeship in non-classical schools lasted six years. The subjects were: Christian Science; Serbian grammar; arithmetic; mathematical, physical and political geography; natural sciences; history of the Serb people; accounting; the German and French language; the basic experimental physics; elementary chemistry; familiarization with ordinary materials of manufacturing and trade; algebra; geometry; mechanics; explanation of machines; a popular presentation of the national economy; the science of agriculture, forestry and animal husbandry; architecture; the science of trade; common history with an overview of geography; history of trade and various professions, calligraphy, geographical and free drawing; topographical and perspective drawing; modeling. As well as, singing, music, and gymnastics were taught as special subjects.

4.4. All-girls school.

In addition to non-classical schools, there was also a Serbian all-girls school. The aim of this school was to equip the girls with higher education and train the teachers for the elementary all-girls schools. The all-girls school had four grades and taught the following subjects:

The 1st grade:

- 1) The Scripture history;
- 2) Serbian grammar;
- 3) Mathematical and physical geography;
- 4) Natural history (Minerology);
- 5) Arithmetic;
- 6) Calligraphy;

- 7) Drawing;
 - 8) Gymnastics and dance.
- The 2nd grade:
- 1) Catechism;
 - 2) Serbian syntax;
 - 3) Universal geography;
 - 4) Zoology;
 - 5) Arithmetic;
 - 6) The world ancient history;
 - 7) Calligraphy;
 - 8) Drawing;
 - 9) Gymnastics and dance.
- The 3rd grade:
- 1) Catechism;
 - 2) The Serbian language;
 - 3) Political geography of Europe;
 - 4) Arithmetic;
 - 5) Popular physics (with experiments);
 - 6) Universal history;
 - 7) Dietetics;
 - 8) Calligraphy;
 - 9) Drawing;
 - 10) Dancing and gymnastics.
- The 4th grade:
- 1) Moral theology;
 - 2) The Serbian language;
 - 3) Political geography;
 - 4) The basics of algebra;
 - 5) Universal history;
 - 6) Popular chemistry (with experiments);
 - 7) Pedagogy;
 - 8) The Serbian and general literature;
 - 9) The history of the Serb people;
 - 10) Economic technology;
 - 11) Methodology;
 - 12) Drawing;
 - 13) Dancing and gymnastics ([Rozen-Chudnovskii, 1870a: 251-252](#)).

In addition to these compulsory subjects, those wishing to, could also study piano and singing lessons, German and French, for a special fee.

5. Conclusion

Thus, by the 1870s Serbia had an extensive network of secondary educational institutions which was represented by the Lyceum (the Great School), gymnasiums, semi-gymnasiums, non-classical schools and an all-girls school. These educational institutions were focused on training professionals for the public service, including teachers. Thanks to the work of the secondary schools in Serbia it became possible to dramatically increase the number of people with secondary and secondary professional education. This ultimately allowed for opening the first higher educational institution in the beginning of the 20th century, the University of Belgrade.

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