



Copyright © 2023 by Cherkas Global University
All rights reserved.
Published in the USA

European Journal of Contemporary Education
E-ISSN 2305-6746
2023. 12(3): 1031-1036
DOI: 10.13187/ejced.2023.3.1031
<https://ejce.cherkasgu.press>

IMPORTANT NOTICE! Any copying, reproduction, distribution, republication (in whole or in part), or otherwise commercial use of this work in violation of the author's rights will be prosecuted in accordance with international law. The use of hyperlinks to the work will not be considered copyright infringement.



**European Journal of
Contemporary Education**



ELECTRONIC JOURNAL

The History of Education

The System of Public Education in Don Host Oblast (1790–1917). Part 1

Goran Rajović^{a, b, *}, Sergei N. Bratanovskii^c, Aleksandr E. Epifanov^{d, e}, Sergey A. Buryanov^e

^a Cherkas Global University, Washington, DC, USA

^b Volgograd State University, Volgograd, Russian Federation

^c Plekhanov Russian University of Economics, Moscow, Russian Federation

^d Management Academy of the Ministry of the Interior of the Russian Federation, Russian Federation

^e Moscow City Pedagogical University, Moscow, Russian Federation

Abstract

This study explores the system of public education in Don Host Oblast in the period 1790–1917. The present part of the study focuses on the period 1790–1900.

The principal sources for the study are periodicals associated with Don Host Oblast, including *Transactions of the Don Host Statistics Committee*, *Memorandum Books for Don Host Oblast*, *Don Host Oblast Directory*, and the reference periodical *Don Oblast and the North Caucasus*, as well as the yearly *Most Faithful Report of the Chief Procurator of the Holy Synod*.

The study's findings revealed that during the period 1790–1900 Don Host Oblast witnessed brisk development in its public education sector. In that time, serious work in this area in the region was carried out by the Ministry of Public Education and the Holy Synod. By 1900, the Don region had an entire network of schools, which included 15 secondary, as many lower, and more than 1,500 primary educational institutions. For a long time, the region experienced a significant gender imbalance (girls accounting for 10–15 % of the total number of students). In the late 19th century, this imbalance began to decrease, with the number of girls reaching 39 % in 1900 – a definite success in terms of making education equally accessible for both genders in the region.

Keywords: Don Host Oblast, Russian Empire, system of public education, schools, gymnasiums, period 1790–1917.

* Corresponding author

E-mail addresses: dkgoran.rajovic@gmail.com (G. Rajović)

1. Introduction

During the prerevolutionary period, Don Host Oblast was part of the Kharkov Educational District, which also included Voronezh, Kursk, Penza, Tambov, and Kharkov Governorates. As at 1897, Don Host Oblast had a population of more than 2.5 million people, with 265,000 of those residing in cities and the rest – in the countryside (Naselenie..., 1898: 27). The region was dominated by Orthodox Christians. This part of the work focuses on the system of public education in Don Host Oblast in 1790–1900.

2. Materials and methods

The principal sources for the study are periodicals associated with Don Host Oblast, including *Transactions of the Don Host Statistics Committee*, *Memorandum Books for Don Host Oblast*, *Don Host Oblast Directory*, and the reference periodical *Don Oblast and the North Caucasus*, as well as the yearly *Most Faithful Report of the Chief Procurator of the Holy Synod*. Of note is the fact that the above-mentioned periodicals provided statistics on public education in the region only occasionally. On top of that, the information available at the time also included data on military (e.g., a cadet corps or a junker school) and ecclesiastical educational institutions (e.g., an ecclesiastical seminary or an ecclesiastical female school). This prompted the use in the present study of the content analysis method. The use of this method helped extract from a vast body of statistical information only the data on the region's educational institutions under the purview of the Ministry of Public Education. In addition, use was made of the retrospective method – in order to examine the development of the system of public education in Don Host Oblast in historical sequence.

3. Discussion

The historiography on the subject may be divided into two thematic groups: 1) publications on the history of the system of public education in Don Host Oblast; 2) publications on the history of the system of public education in the Kharkov Educational District, which Don Host Oblast was part of.

The first group includes the work by M.A. Kolomeytseva, which explores the making and development of school education in Don Host Oblast during the post-reform period (Kolomeitseva, 2015), the one by M.A. Kolomeytseva and A.N. Komandzhayev, which looks at similar processes in the second half of the 19th century (Kolomeitseva, Komandzhaev, 2014), the one by A.Yu. Peretyat'ko and T.E. Zul'fugarzade, which examines a draft reform of education in the Don region (Peretyatko, Zul'fugarzade, 2017), the one by I.D. Palkina, which covers music education in the region (Palkina, 2014), and the one by A.A. Solov'yev and his colleagues, which addresses the literary education of students in Don Host Oblast (Solovyev et al., 2020).

The second group includes the works by A.A. Cherkasov and his colleagues, which explore the development of the system of public education in Voronezh Governorate (Cherkasov et al., 2020; Cherkasov et al., 2020a), the ones by G. Rajović and his colleagues, which look at similar processes in Tambov (Rajović et al., 2023; Rajović et al., 2023a) and Kursk Governorates (Rajović et al., 2023b; Rajović et al., 2023c), and the ones by A.M. Mamadaliyev and his colleagues, which cover the system of public education in Penza Governorate (Mamadaliyev et al., 2022; Mamadaliyev et al., 2022a; Mamadaliyev et al., 2022b).

4. Results

Educational institutions under the purview of the Ministry of Public Education

The first educational institution in Don Host Oblast, a main public school, was established in the city of Cherkassk in 1790. In 1805, the school was moved to the city of Novocherkassk and transformed into Novocherkassk Male Gymnasium (Robush, 1867: 119).

Starting in 1820, public schools were opened in various stanitsas across the region. By 1836, Don Host Oblast had 13 schools – 8 primary (two-grade) and 5 parish. The schools were maintained through the stanitsas' own funds (Robush, 1867: 119).

During the period 1836–1839, the region had 1 male gymnasium, 7 district schools, and 19 parish schools.

In 1844, the region became home to another parish school and a two-grade Kalmyk school. This combined total of 29 educational institutions remained unchanged until 1859. Of note is the fact that education in the region was mainly for boys, with girls having to go about it on their own – they could either enlist the services of special tutors specializing in instruction in the reading of ecclesiastical books or enroll in a parish school that admitted females (Robush, 1867: 120).

In 1859, the appointed ataman of the Don Host, Adjutant General M.G. Khomutov, proposed setting up in Novocherkassk a female gymnasium and second- and third-class female schools and opening more male parish schools.

Table 1. Student Body in Don Host Oblast in 1805–1860 (Robush, 1867: 119-120)

Year	Number of students in educational institutions			
	Gymnasium	Primary schools	Parish schools	Total
1805	49	279	142	469
1810	59	346	105	510
1815	36	311	47	394
1820	28	488	114	630
1825	90	555	274	919
1830	102	724	225	1,051
1835	58	783	244	1,085
1840	254	340	898	1,492
1845	228	396	906	1,530
1850	295	407	1,092	1,794
1855	307	512	994	1,813
1860	518	455	1,210	2,211

As evidenced in Table 1, the period 1805–1860 witnessed noticeable fluctuations in the size of the student body at the region’s male gymnasium – especially in the first 30 years of its existence. At the same time, there was a similar situation with its parish schools. Nevertheless, starting in the 1840s the region witnessed a virtually continuous increase in the number of students in its educational institutions.

In 1862, the region became home to 13 male parish schools and 2 third-class female parish schools, i.e. primary schools. In 1863, the stanitsa of Ust'-Medveditskaya became home to the region’s second male gymnasium. The following educational institutions were also established: 2 second-class female schools, 4 third-class female schools, and 11 male parish schools (Robush, 1867: 130).

In 1864, the region became home to 2 second-class female schools, 2 third-class female schools, and 8 male parish schools. In 1865, Don Host Oblast became home to another 8 parish male schools, and in 1866 – to another third-class female school and another 2 male parish schools (Robush, 1867: 131).

As at 1866, Don Host Oblast had three secondary-education gymnasiums (two male and one female) with a combined enrollment of 968 students, with 199 of those being girls. The region’s lower educational institutions had a combined enrollment of 688 boys (enrolled across eight district schools) and 170 girls (four second-class schools). The primary education sector had a combined enrollment of 5,137 boys (97 male parish schools) and 479 girls (13 third-class female schools) (Robush, 1867: 131). Overall, in 1866 Don Host Oblast had a combined enrollment of 7,442 students, with 848 of those being girls (Robush, 1867: 131-132). As a reminder, all of the above-mentioned educational institutions were under the purview of the Ministry of Public Education.

The Great Reforms produced a substantial effect on the system of public education in Don Host Oblast. In 1873, the region now had 277 educational institutions. Its capital, Novocherkassk, had eight educational institutions: Novocherkassk Male Gymnasium (471 boys), District Lower Male School (218 boys), Mariinsky Don Institute (162 girls), Mariinsky Female Gymnasium (356 girls), Alekseyevsky Orphanage (200 girls), and three primary parish schools (403 boys). In all, Novocherkassk had a combined enrollment of 1,103 boys and 718 girls (Pamyatnaya knizhka, 1875: 1). The following district educational institutions operated in the region: Ust'-Medveditsk Gymnasium (218 boys), 2 male progymnasiums (169 boys), 4 female progymnasiums (268 girls), 3 district schools (231 boys), 14 third-class female schools (552 girls), 127 primary parish schools (7,345 boys and 874 girls), 117 rural schools (3,335 boys and 198 girls), and 1 monastery-based private school (33 girls). In all, this sector had a combined student body of 11,318 boys and 1,925 girls (Pamyatnaya knizhka, 1875: 2).

In 1892, Don Host Oblast had the following male educational institutions under the purview of the Ministry of Public Education: 4 gymnasiums, 3 real schools, 1 teacher’s seminary, 1 progymnasium, 4 trade schools, 2 technical schools, 3 nautical schools, and a combined 388 district, urban, and rural schools. In addition, the region had the following female educational

institutions: 1 institute, 3 gymnasiums, 2 progymnasiums, 6 urban schools, 1 Armenian school, and a combined 35 parish schools and orphanages ([Spravochnik..., 1893: 9-10](#)).

In 1897, the total number of educational institutions under the purview of the Ministry of Public Education in the region was 715. The figure reached 749 in 1898 and 792 in 1899 ([Pamyatnaya knizhka, 1901: 46](#)).

In 1900, Don Host Oblast had the following secondary educational institutions: male – 3 gymnasiums, 4 real schools, 1 progymnasium, and 1 teacher's seminary; female – 1 institute for noble maidens, 4 gymnasiums, and 1 progymnasium ([Donskaya oblast'..., 1902: 16](#)). The region had the following lower educational institutions: male – 6 trade schools, 2 technical schools, and 3 nautical schools; female – 3 four-grade schools and 1 school for Armenian girls ([Donskaya oblast'..., 1902: 16](#)). The total number of primary schools in the region, inclusive of those under the purview of the Ecclesiastical Department, was a combined 1,518 schools for boys and both genders and 162 schools for girls ([Donskaya oblast'..., 1902: 16](#)).

Educational institutions under the purview of the Ecclesiastical Department

Parochial schools, based at churches and monasteries and run by the Russian Empire's Ecclesiastical Department, were present in the Don region from the 19th century. Normally, such schools were set up entirely on the initiative of local clergymen and were housed in their own dwellings or in back rooms temporarily designated for the purpose. As a result, there typically were serious issues concerning school equipment and supplies. Outmoded teaching methods were employed in teaching the children how to write, read, and count and no salaries were paid to the teacher-priests. Hence, this sector lacked stability. Nevertheless, in 1860, i.e. on the eve of the abolition of serfdom in Russia, Don Host Oblast had 105 parochial schools with a combined enrollment of more than 2,000 students.

While there were no major changes in terms of the organization of the educational process at the region's parochial schools immediately after the abolition of serfdom in Russia, the Great Reforms period did introduce the impetus in efforts to open more schools in the region. However, subsequently the number of such educational institutions decreased continually, with the figure dropping to a historical low in 1882. A new impetus in the development of this sector was provided in 1884. The Emperor signed into law a special regulation, *Rules on Parochial Schools*, and the Russian government provided the Ecclesiastical Department with funds for the organization of parochial schools and to cover teacher payroll in this sector. Eventually, this helped bring order and stability into the region's parochial school sector, with such schools getting equated in status to primary schools under the purview of the Ministry of Public Education. As early as 1900, Don Host Oblast had 497 parochial schools with a combined enrollment of more than 23,000 students.

[Table 2](#) displays the data on parochial schools in the Don Diocese in 1860–1900.

Table 2. Parochial Schools in the Don Diocese in 1860–1900 ([Iz vlechenie iz otcheta..., 1862: 88](#); [Iz vlechenie..., 1867: 94](#); [Iz vlechenie..., 1871: 94](#); [Iz vlechenie..., 1875: 90](#); [Iz vlechenie..., 1879: 90](#); [Iz vlechenie..., 1884: 92](#); [Vsepoddanneishii otchet..., 1886: 92](#); [Vsepoddanneishii otchet..., 1888: 94](#); [Vsepoddanneishii otchet..., 1901: 63](#); [Vsepoddanneishii otchet..., 1902: 63](#))

Year	Number of schools			Number of students		
	Church schools	Literacy schools	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
1860	-	-	105	1,788	244	2,032
1866	-	-	121	2,296	318	2,614
1870	-	-	80	2,115	234	2,349
1874	-	-	34	927	152	1,079
1878	-	-	14	615	78	693
1882	-	-	4	92	28	120
1884	-	-	41	1,116	178	1,294
1886	-	-	125	3,780	598	4,378
1899	-	-	397	12,369	7,394	19,763
1900	-	-	497	14,347	9,224	23,571

When looking at [Table 2](#), it is worth remembering that there was no distinction made in said period between parochial schools and literacy schools. In terms of the student body's gender composition, girls accounted for a mere 12 % of all students in 1860. More or less similar proportions persisted up until 1882, and only in 1884 did the gender balance begin to change.

In 1884, the number of girls was now 13.6 %, in 1886 – 13.9 %, in 1899 – 37.5 %, and in 1900 – 39.2 %. There was a similar state of affairs with the region's primary educational institutions under the purview of the Ministry of Public Education.

5. Conclusion

During the period 1790–1900, Don Host Oblast witnessed brisk development in its public education sector. In that time, serious work in this area in the region was carried out by the Ministry of Public Education and the Holy Synod. By 1900, the Don region had an entire network of schools, which included 15 secondary, as many lower, and more than 1,500 primary educational institutions. For a long time, the region experienced a significant gender imbalance (girls accounting for 10–15 % of the total number of students). In the late 19th century, this imbalance began to decrease, with the number of girls reaching 39 % in 1900 – a definite success in terms of making education equally accessible for both genders in the region.

References

- [Cherkasov et al., 2020](#) – Cherkasov, A.A., Bratanovskii, S.N., Koroleva, L.A. (2020). The Public Education System in Voronezh Governorate in the Period 1703–1917. Part 1. *European Journal of Contemporary Education*. 9(1): 202-211.
- [Cherkasov et al., 2020a](#) – Cherkasov, A.A., Bratanovskii, S.N., Koroleva, L.A., Zimovets, L.G. (2020). The Public Education System in Voronezh Governorate in the Period 1703–1917. Part 2. *Bylye Gody*. 56(2): 428-436.
- [Donskaya oblast'..., 1902](#) – Donskaya oblast' i Severnyi Kavkaz na 1902 g. [Don region and the North Caucasus in 1902]. Rostov-na-Donu, 1902. [in Russian]
- [Iz vlechenie iz otcheta..., 1862](#) – Iz vlechenie iz otcheta po vedomstvu pravoslavnogo ispovedaniya za 1860 g. [Extract from the report on the Department of Orthodox Confession for 1860]. Sankt-Peterburg, 1862. [in Russian]
- [Iz vlechenie..., 1867](#) – Iz vlechenie iz vsepoddanneishego otcheta ober-prokurora svyateishego sinoda po vedomstvu pravoslavnogo ispovedaniya za 1866 g. [Extract from the most loyal report of the Chief Prosecutor of the Holy Synod for the Department of Orthodox Confession for 1866]. Sankt-Peterburg, 1867. [in Russian]
- [Iz vlechenie..., 1871](#) – Iz vlechenie iz vsepoddanneishego otcheta ober-prokurora svyateishego sinoda po vedomstvu pravoslavnogo ispovedaniya za 1870 g. [Extract from the most loyal report of the Chief Prosecutor of the Holy Synod for the Department of Orthodox Confession for 1870]. Sankt-Peterburg, 1871. [in Russian]
- [Iz vlechenie..., 1875](#) – Iz vlechenie iz vsepoddanneishego otcheta ober-prokurora svyateishego sinoda po vedomstvu pravoslavnogo ispovedaniya za 1874 g. [Extract from the most loyal report of the Chief Prosecutor of the Holy Synod for the Department of Orthodox Confession for 1874]. Sankt-Peterburg, 1875. [in Russian]
- [Iz vlechenie..., 1879](#) – Iz vlechenie iz vsepoddanneishego otcheta ober-prokurora svyateishego sinoda po vedomstvu pravoslavnogo ispovedaniya za 1878 g. [Extract from the most loyal report of the Chief Prosecutor of the Holy Synod for the Department of Orthodox Confession for 1878]. Sankt-Peterburg, 1879. [in Russian]
- [Iz vlechenie..., 1884](#) – Iz vlechenie iz vsepoddanneishego otcheta ober-prokurora svyateishego sinoda po vedomstvu pravoslavnogo ispovedaniya za 1882 g. [Extract from the most loyal report of the Chief Prosecutor of the Holy Synod for the Department of Orthodox Confession for 1882]. Sankt-Peterburg, 1884. [in Russian]
- [Kolomeitseva, 2015](#) – Kolomeitseva, M.A. (2015). Stanovlenie shkol'nogo obrazovaniya v krest'yanskikh poseleniyakh na Donu v poreformennyi period [The formation of school education in peasant settlements on the Don in the post-reform period]. *Vestnik Tambovskogo universiteta. Seriya: Gumanitarnye nauki*. 1(141): 120-126. [in Russian]
- [Kolomeitseva, Komandzhaev, 2014](#) – Kolomeitseva, M.A., Komandzhaev, A.N. (2014). Krest'yanskije narodnye shkoly v oblasti voiska Donskogo vo vtoroi polovine XIX veka [Peasant public schools in the region of the Don Army in the second half of the 19th century]. *Vestnik Chuvashskogo universiteta*. 4: 36-44. [in Russian]
- [Mamadaliyev et al., 2022](#) – Mamadaliyev, A.M., Nikitina, V.S., Svechnikova, N.V., Cherkasova, I.Yu. (2022). The System of Public Education in Penza Governorate in the second half of the 19th and early 20th centuries. Part 1. *European Journal of Contemporary Education*. 11(1): 275-285.

[Mamadaliyev et al., 2022a](#) – Mamadaliyev, A.M., Nikitina, V.S., Svechnikova, N.V., Cherkasova, I.Yu. (2022). The System of Public Education in Penza Governorate in the second half of the 19th and early 20th centuries. Part 2. *European Journal of Contemporary Education*. 11(2): 632-644.

[Mamadaliyev et al., 2022b](#) – Mamadaliyev, A.M., Nikitina, V.S., Svechnikova, N.V., Cherkasova I.Yu. (2022). The System of Public Education in Penza Governorate in the second half of the 19th and early 20th centuries. Part 3. *European Journal of Contemporary Education*. 11(3): 1021-1031.

[Naselenie..., 1898](#) – Naselenie imperii po perepisi 28-go yanvary 1897 g. Po uezdnam [Population of the empire according to the census of January 28, 1897. By county]. Sankt-Peterburg, 1898. [in Russian]

[Palkina, 2014](#) – Palkina, I.D. (2014). Muzykal'noe obrazovanie v oblasti voiska Donskogo: osnovnye tendentsii XIX v. [Musical education in the area of the Don Army: main trends of the 19th century]. *Yuzhno-Rossiiskii muzykal'nyi al'manakh*. 1(14): 4-7. [in Russian]

[Pamyatnaya knizhka, 1875](#) – Pamyatnaya knizhka oblasti voiska Donskogo na 1875 g. [Commemorative book of the Don Army region for 1875]. Novochoerkassk, 1875. [in Russian]

[Pamyatnaya knizhka, 1901](#) – Pamyatnaya knizhka oblasti voiska Donskogo na 1901 g. [Commemorative book of the Don Army region for 1901]. Novochoerkassk, 1901. [in Russian]

[Peretyatko, Zulfugarzade, 2017](#) – Peretyatko, A.Y., Zulfugarzade, T.E. (2017). Project of reforms proposed for the don public education in the first half of 1860: A.M. Dondukov-Korsakov, Kh.I. Popov, N.I. Krasnov. *European Journal of Contemporary Education*. 6(4): 817-829.

[Rajović et al., 2023](#) – Rajović, G., Bratanovskii, S.N., Epifanov, A.Y., Buryanov, S.A. (2023). The Development of the System of Public Education in Tambov Province in the second half of the XIX – early XX centuries. Part 1. *Bylye Gody*. 18(2): 798-811.

[Rajović et al., 2023a](#) – Rajović, G., Bratanovskii, S.N., Epifanov, A.Y., Buryanov, S.A. (2023). The Development of the System of Public Education in Tambov Province in the second half of the XIX – early XX centuries. Part 2. *Bylye Gody*. 18(3): 1447-1454.

[Rajović et al., 2023b](#) – Rajović, G., Bratanovskii, S.N., Epifanov, A.Y., Buryanov, S.A. (2023). The System of Public Education in Kursk Governorate (1808–1917). Part 1. *European Journal of Contemporary Education*. 12(1): 259-266.

[Rajović et al., 2023c](#) – Rajović, G., Bratanovskii, S.N., Epifanov, A.Y., Buryanov, S.A. (2023). The System of Public Education in Kursk Governorate (1808–1917). Part 2. *European Journal of Contemporary Education*. 12(2): 736-744.

[Robush, 1867](#) – Robush, S. (1867). O narodnom obrazovanii v voiske Donskom [On public education in the Don Army]. *Trudy Donskogo voiskovogo statisticheskogo komiteta*. Vyp. 1. Novochoerkassk. Pp. 119-136. [in Russian]

[Solovyev et al., 2020](#) – Solovyev, A.A., Zakharov, A.V., Vinogradova, N.L., Solovyeva, L.S. (2020). Literary Enlightenment in the Russian Province in the second half of the 19th century (the Examples of the Don Cossack Host and the Kamishin Region). *Bylye Gody*. 57(3): 1179-1185.

[Spravochnik..., 1893](#) – Spravochnik dlya oblasti voiska Donskogo [A handbook for the region of the Don Army]. Novochoerkassk, 1893. [in Russian]

[Vsepoddanneishii otchet, 1886](#) – Vsepoddanneishii otchet ober-prokurora svyateishego sinoda po vedomstvu pravoslavnogo ispovedaniya za 1884 g. [The Most Submissive Report of the Chief Prosecutor of the Holy Synod for the Department of Orthodox Confession for 1884]. Sankt-Peterburg, 1886. [in Russian]

[Vsepoddanneishii otchet..., 1888](#) – Vsepoddanneishii otchet ober-prokurora svyateishego sinoda po vedomstvu pravoslavnogo ispovedaniya za 1886 g. [The Most Submissive Report of the Chief Prosecutor of the Holy Synod for the Department of Orthodox Confession for 1886]. Sankt-Peterburg, 1888. [in Russian]

[Vsepoddanneishii otchet..., 1901](#) – Vsepoddanneishii otchet ober-prokurora svyateishego sinoda po vedomstvu pravoslavnogo ispovedaniya za 1898 g. [The Most Submissive Report of the Chief Prosecutor of the Holy Synod for the Department of Orthodox Confession for 1898]. Sankt-Peterburg, 1901. [in Russian]

[Vsepoddanneishii otchet..., 1902](#) – Vsepoddanneishii otchet ober-prokurora svyateishego sinoda po vedomstvu pravoslavnogo ispovedaniya za 1899 g. [The Most Submissive Report of the Chief Prosecutor of the Holy Synod for the Department of Orthodox Confession for 1899]. Sankt-Peterburg, 1902. [in Russian]