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Published in the USA

European Journal of Contemporary Education
E-ISSN 2305-6746
2023. 12(1): 286-294
DOI: 10.13187/ejced.2023.1.286
<https://ejce.cherkasgu.press>

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The System of Public Education in Astrakhan Governorate in the Second Half of the 19th and Early 20th Centuries. Part 3

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Abstract

This set of articles relies on reference and memorandum books from the period 1873–1917 to explore the development of the system of public education in Astrakhan Governorate. This is the third piece in the set. It addresses the period 1895–1907, which covers the entire reign of Emperor Nicholas II.

The principal source used in this work is the Memorandum Books for Astrakhan Governorate spanning 1895–1907.

Methodologically, use was made of sets of historical (historical-systematic, historical-comparative, historical-typological, historical-genetic, and historical-statistical) and general (synthetic analysis, content analysis, and systems analysis) research methods.

The study's findings revealed that between 1895 and 1907 the system of public education in Astrakhan Governorate witnessed brisk development, with the number of secondary and lower educational institutions in the region increasing 2 times and that of primary schools there growing 3.3 times. The largest growth was registered in 1898–1903, which can be attributed to demographic growth. The number of lower educational institutions in the region rose evenly year on year, whereas its secondary and primary schools posted a sharp quantitative increase in certain years.

Despite the Russo-Japanese War of 1904–1905 and the Revolution of 1905–1907, the system of public education in Astrakhan Governorate continued its brisk development. In fact, Astrakhan Governorate even outperformed some of the country's other regions in this respect.

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Keywords: public education, system of public education, public schools, Astrakhan Governorate, education in Astrakhan Governorate.

1. Introduction

This work is the third piece in a set exploring the development of the system of public education in Astrakhan Governorate in 1895–1907. A comparative analysis was conducted to explore differences between the system of education in Astrakhan Governorate and its counterparts in certain regions of the Caucasus Educational District, Vologda Governorate, Voronezh Governorate, and Volyn Governorate.

The timeframe 1895–1907 represents a complicated period in Russian history. It witnessed an industrial boom, the rapid development of the rail industry, and a demographic surge, which was associated not with migration but with the development of capitalism and increases in people's standard of living. Of particular note is the financial reform undertaken by S.Yu. Witte, which placed the Russian ruble on the gold standard. Based on this reform, the Russian government began minting 5- and 10-ruble gold coins with a face value close to the real value of the precious metal such coins were made of. Among the negative events, of particular note is the Russo-Japanese War of 1904–1905, which was highly unpopular with the people and would eventually have far-reaching implications for the Russian Empire. The war was not over yet when the country witnessed the First Russian Revolution (1905–1907), which would result in uprisings, strikes, and industrial disturbances and, as a consequence, in a decline in the material well-being and morale of the people. The event would also bring about a new form of government in the country – Russia moved from absolute to constitutional monarchy and adopted a party-based system, with the State Duma becoming its representative top lawmaking body. Naturally, both the nation's economic and social spheres reacted quite sensitively to the war and the revolution. The present work aims to investigate the development of public education in Astrakhan Governorate during that complicated period.

2. Material and methods

The principal source used in this work is the Memorandum Books for Astrakhan Governorate spanning 1895–1907 ([Pamyatnaya knizhka, 1895](#); [Pamyatnaya knizhka, 1896](#); [Pamyatnaya knizhka, 1897](#); [Pamyatnaya knizhka, 1898](#); [Pamyatnaya knizhka, 1899](#); [Pamyatnaya knizhka, 1900](#); [Pamyatnaya knizhka, 1901](#); [Pamyatnaya knizhka, 1902](#); [Pamyatnaya knizhka, 1903](#); [Pamyatnaya knizhka, 1904](#); [Pamyatnaya knizhka, 1905](#); [Pamyatnaya knizhka, 1906](#); [Pamyatnaya knizhka, 1907](#)). These sources offer fairly detailed information with regard to the number, whereabouts, type, and name of educational institutions in the region, as well as the teaching staff of most of them. However, they do not provide certain types of data (e.g., number of students). Besides, some of them offer no data on parochial schools and literacy schools in the region. Hence, these sources cannot be regarded as exhaustive. At the same time, the Memorandum Books are informative enough to provide a general idea of the development of the system of education in Astrakhan Governorate in the period 1895–1907.

Valuable data on the region's social makeup are available from the First General Census of the Russian Empire of 1897 ([Perepis'..., 1897](#)). An insight into the characteristics of legislation in the area of education at the time can be gained from 'The Complete Collection of Laws of the Russian Empire' ([PSZRI, 1914](#)).

In terms of methodology, use was made of both historical (traditional and non-traditional) and general research methods. The following traditional historical research methods were used: historical-systematic, historical-comparative, historical-typological, and historical-genetic. The only non-traditional historical research method used in this work was the historical-statistical method. The general research methods employed in this work were synthetic analysis, content analysis, and systems analysis.

3. Discussion

Below is a brief review of the historiography on the subject.

In terms of the prerevolutionary literature, of particular note are the works of N.F. Kazansky ([Kazanskii, 1898a](#); [Kazanskii, 1898b](#); [Kazanskii, 1898c](#); [Kazanskii, 1898d](#)), A.N. Shtyl'ko ([Shtyl'ko, 1897](#)), T.N. Ostroumov ([Ostroumov, 1914](#)), and V. Kalegulov ([Kalegulov, 1918](#)).

In terms of the works produced during the Soviet period, of particular note are the works of I.M. Bogdanov (Bogdanov, 1964), V.Z. Smirnov (Smirnov, 1963; Smirnov, 1956), and A.G. Rashin (Rashin, 1951) and the essays on the history of pedagogical thought in Russia (Ocherki..., 1976; Ocherki..., 1991).

In terms of the modern works covering the history of education in Astrakhan Governorate, of particular note are the works of D.Yu. Arapov (Arapov, 2004), V.M. Viktorin (Viktorin, 2008), I.Ye. Krapotkina (Krapotkina, 2011), A.M. Treshchev, G.V. Alferova, and Ye.A. Tarabanovskaya (Treshchev i dr., 2001), A.B. Olneva (Ol'neva, 1988), I.K. Zagidullin (Zagidullin, 1992), R.M. Islemisova (Islemisova, 2013; Islemisova, 2014; Islemisova, 2015), R.G. Rezakov and F.M. Rekesheva (Rezakov, Rekesheva, 2014), and Ye.A. Tarabanovskaya (Tarabanovskaya, 2016).

As part of the present study, a comparative analysis was also conducted of the development of the system of public education in Astrakhan Governorate during the period under review vis-à-vis a number of other regions in the Russian Empire, including Vologda Governorate (Cherkasov et al., 2019), Volyn Governorate (Cherkasov et al., 2022), and certain areas within the Caucasus Educational District (e.g., Magsumov et al., 2020, Magsumov et al., 2021, Mamadaliev et al., 2022b, and Molchanova et al., 2019). The purpose behind comparing the region's education system with that of other regions in the Russian Empire was to form an objective understanding of the state and pace of the development of the system of public education in Astrakhan Governorate.

4. Results

A classification of educational institutions in the Russian Empire by type was provided in the second piece of the set (Magsumov et al., 2022a).

Based on a set of relevant statutory instruments (PSZRI), Astrakhan Governorate's educational institutions can be divided into the following types: higher (universities, institutes (exclusive of teacher's institutes), and academies), secondary (gymnasiums, progymnasiums, teacher's institutes, ecclesiastical seminaries, teacher's seminaries, real schools, and technical schools), lower (urban schools, tradesman's (industrial) specialized schools, tradesman's schools, higher primary schools, Mariinsky schools, uyezd schools, madrasas¹, ecclesiastical schools, and diocesan schools), and primary (primary schools, parochial schools, parish schools, stavka schools, literacy schools, and maktab²). It is to be noted that at different times certain types of educational institution were referred to differently.

The present work will not consider the system of higher education in the region.

As at 1895, Astrakhan Governorate had the following 153 educational institutions:

– in the city of Astrakhan: secondary educational institutions – 1 male gymnasium, 1 Mariinsky female gymnasium, and 1 real school; lower educational institutions – 1 urban four-grade male school, 2 urban three-grade schools, 1 Armenian Agababov uyezd school, 1 urban four-grade female school, 1 tradesman's school of Emperor Alexander II, 1 male tradesman's school, 1 Armenian male tradesman's school, 1 female tradesman's school, and 1 deaf-and-dumb school; primary educational institutions – 8 male parish schools, 6 female parish schools, 1 nautical school, 1 non-Slavic Tatar one-grade school, 1 central Kalmyk male school, and 7 private schools;

– in Astrakhan Uyezd: lower educational institutions – 1 three-grade urban male school in the city of Krasny Yar; primary educational institutions – 1 parish female school in the city of Krasny Yar, Petropavlovskoye Primary School, Teplinskoye Primary School, and Nikolskoye Primary School;

– in Yenotayevsky Uyezd: lower educational institutions – 1 two-grade urban male school in the city of Yenotayevsk; primary educational institutions – 1 parish male school, 1 parish female school, and 11 uyezd primary schools;

¹ A lower religious Muslim (normally three- or four-grade) educational institution that provided free instruction in mathematics, literacy, and Islam. It was to be attended after completing one's schooling at a maktab. Education at a madrasa was similar to that at an ecclesiastical seminary. It empowered one to enter a university (i.e., attending a madrasa was identical to going to a secondary school). Yet the laws of the Russian Empire subsumed madrasa education under the lower level, i.e. the second level of education (after primary education).

² An elementary religious Muslim educational institution that provided instruction in grammar, counting, and the fundamentals of Islam.

– in Chernoyarsky Uyezd: lower educational institutions – 1 two-grade urban male school in the city of Cherny Yar; primary educational institutions – 1 parish male school, 1 parish female school, and 18 uyezd primary schools;

– in Tsarevsky Uyezd: lower educational institutions – 1 two-grade urban male school in the city of Tsarev; primary educational institutions – 31 uyezd primary schools;

– in the Kalmyk Steppe: primary educational institutions – 6 primary schools;

– in the Bukey Horde: lower educational institutions – 1 madrasa; primary educational institutions – 1 stavka two-grade school, 1 stavka female school, 4 primary schools, and 1 two-grade Russian-Kirgiz school;

– in the territory of the Astrakhan Cossack Host: primary educational institutions – 12 male stanitsa schools, 11 female stanitsa schools, and 4 township schools.

In addition, Astrakhan Governorate had 1 ecclesiastical seminary, 1 model school based at the seminary, 1 ecclesiastical school, 1 diocesan female ecclesiastical school, a network of parochial schools, 1 Armenian male ecclesiastical school, and 1 Armenian diocesan female ecclesiastical school.

As at December 31, 1907, Astrakhan Governorate had the following educational institutions:

1. Secondary educational institutions – Astrakhan Gubernia Male Gymnasium, Astrakhan Real School, 1 private real school of G.S. Sobolev in the city of Astrakhan, Astrakhan Mariinsky Female Gymnasium, Astrakhan Female Gymnasium of N.S. Shaverdova, 1 female gymnasium of N.A. Vutecic in the city of Astrakhan, 1 female gymnasium of Ye.N. Paltseva in the city of Astrakhan, and Astrakhan Ecclesiastical Seminary.

2. Lower educational institutions – Astrakhan Male Ecclesiastical School, 1 diocesan female school in the city of Astrakhan, Astrakhan Music School, Astrakhan School of Short-Distance Navigation, Astrakhan First-Class School of Horticulture and Gardening, Astrakhan School for Feldshers and Nurse Midwives, 1 first-class obstetric school, 1 artistic and technical-drawing school, 5 four-grade male urban schools (based on the 1872 regulation), 2 four-grade female urban schools (based on the 1872 regulation), 1 four-grade stavka urban school in the Bukey Horde (based on the 1872 regulation), 1 Armenian uyezd school, 4 uyezd urban schools (based on the 1872 regulation) in the cities of Krasny Yar, Tsarev, Cherny Yar, and Yenotayevsk and 1 madrasa in the Bukey Horde. There also were 6 tradesman's schools (the male tradesman's school of Emperor Alexander II, Nikolayevskaya Lower Tradesman's School, the male tradesman's school run by a charitable society, the Armenian male tradesman's school, the female tradesman's school run by a charitable society, and the tradesman's school for deaf-and-dumb children) and 12 second- and third-class private schools (those of V.V. Werner, M.M. Gosteyeva, O.A. Gulyanitskaya, U. Dzhemshidova, O.F. Dembitskaya, L.V. Drevskaya, K.P. Zhukova, S.V. Lanhammer, K.I. Likhacheva, Ye.S. Semenovskaya, A. Serebryakova, and A.A. Fedorova).

3. It is impossible to determine the exact number of primary educational institutions in the region based on the Memorandum Books alone. The 1907 Memorandum Book ([Pamyatnaya knizhka, 1907: 70-264](#)) lists 15 male and 14 female parish schools in the city of Astrakhan, 1 Kalmyk male school, 2 non-Slavic Tatar one-grade schools, 1 Jewish school, 31 stanitsa schools of the Astrakhan Cossack Host, 22 parochial schools in the city of Astrakhan, 16 primary public schools, 48 parochial schools, 21 literacy schools and 2 Sunday schools in Astrakhan Uyezd, 1 parish male and 1 parish female schools in the city of Krasny Yar, 5 one-grade primary schools in the city of Krasny Yar, 16 parochial schools and 16 literacy schools in Krasnoyarsk Uyezd, 1 parish male and 1 parish female school in the city of Yenotayevsk, 2 two-grade and 12 one-grade schools in Yenotayevsk Uyezd, 1 parish male and 1 parish female schools in the city of Cherny Yar, 21 parish schools in Chernoyarsk Uyezd, 1 parish male school in the city of Tsarev, 2 parish schools, 2 two-grade schools, 52 one-grade schools, 66 parochial schools and 43 literacy schools in Tsarev Uyezd, 6 schools in the Kalmyk Steppe, 1 one-grade Russian-Kirgiz female school, 5 uchastok schools, 2 two-grade schools, and 1 maktab in the Bukey Horde, 7 starshinstvo schools, and 2 mobile aul female schools.

The quantitative statistical data on educational institutions in the region are provided in [Table 1](#). The Memorandum Books spanning the period under review offer no quantitative data on the region's student body.

Table 1. Numbers of Educational Institutions (with a breakdown by type) and Students in Them in Astrakhan Governorate in the Period 1895–1907 (Pamyatnaya knizhka, 1895: 75-156; Pamyatnaya knizhka, 1896: 64-151; Pamyatnaya knizhka, 1897: 68-170; Pamyatnaya knizhka, 1898: 61-166; Pamyatnaya knizhka, 1899: 70-169; Pamyatnaya knizhka, 1900: 66-165; Pamyatnaya knizhka, 1901: 73-180; Pamyatnaya knizhka, 1902: 72-178; Pamyatnaya knizhka, 1903: 77-191; Pamyatnaya knizhka, 1904: 75-189; Pamyatnaya knizhka, 1905: 59-183; Pamyatnaya knizhka, 1906: 66-244; Pamyatnaya knizhka, 1907: 70-264)

Year	Educational institutions				Number of students
	Secondary	Lower	Primary	Total	
1895	4	21	128 ¹	153 ²	N/A
1896	4	22	136 ³	162	N/A
1897	5	24	157 ⁴	186	N/A
1898	6	25	181 ⁵	212	N/A
1899	7	27	206 ⁶	240	N/A
1900	7	28	230 ⁷	265	N/A
1901	7	29	254 ⁸	290	N/A
1902	7	33	291 ⁹	331	N/A
1903	7	36	322 ¹⁰	365	N/A
1904	7	39	359 ¹¹	405	N/A
1905	8	39	375 ¹²	422	N/A
1906	8	39	399 ¹³	446	N/A
1907	8	40	428 ¹⁴	476 ¹⁵	N/A

As evidenced in [Table 1](#), the number of educational institutions in the region increased in the period under review progressively. It was particularly pronounced during the prewar years.¹⁶ The largest increase in the number of secondary educational institutions was posted in the period from 1897 to 1899. There was a more or less even increase in the number of lower educational institutions. The number of primary educational institutions increased particularly sharply at the turn of the century (i.e., in 1898–1903), which can be attributed to the demographic surge witnessed by the Russian Empire in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The Russo-Japanese War and the Revolution of 1905–1907 did not stop that growth. Overall, in the period from 1895 to 1907 the number of secondary and lower educational institutions in the region grew 2 times and the number of primary schools there rose nearly 3.5 times. If we compare the system of education in Astrakhan Governorate with those in other regions in the Russian Empire, like certain areas within the Caucasus Educational District (e.g., [Magsumov et al., 2020](#), [Magsumov et al., 2021](#),

¹ The data are incomplete, as this information does not factor in parochial and religious schools in the region's uyezds.

² Data incomplete

³ Data incomplete

⁴ Data incomplete

⁵ Data incomplete

⁶ Data incomplete

⁷ Data incomplete

⁸ Data incomplete

⁹ Data incomplete

¹⁰ Data incomplete

¹¹ Data incomplete

¹² Data incomplete

¹³ Data incomplete

¹⁴ Data likely incomplete

¹⁵ Data incomplete

¹⁶ In 1904–1905, the Russian Empire was engaged in the Russo-Japanese War.

Mamadaliyev et al., 2022b, and Molchanova et al., 2019), Vologda Governorate (Cherkasov et al., 2019), and Volyn Governorate (Cherkasov et al., 2022), this growth appears quite substantial.

5. Conclusion

The study produced the following conclusions:

1. Between 1895 and 1907, the system of public education in Astrakhan Governorate witnessed brisk development, which can be illustrated by the following facts:
 - The number of secondary educational institutions increased 2 times – from 4 to 8;
 - The number of lower educational institutions increased nearly 2 times: from 21 to 40;
 - The number of primary educational institutions increased 3,3 times – from 128 to 428.
2. The largest increase in the number of schools in the region occurred at the turn of the century (1898–1903). This can be attributed to the sharp demographic surge experienced in the late 1890s. The number of lower educational institutions in the region rose evenly year on year, whereas its secondary and primary schools posted a sharp quantitative increase in certain years.
3. Despite the Russo-Japanese War of 1904–1905 and the Revolution of 1905–1907, which was a period characterized by economic recession in the Russian Empire and a decline in the standard of living of its citizens, the system of public education in Astrakhan Governorate continued its development.
4. In the period under review, Astrakhan Governorate's performance in the development of public education was fairly strong, with the region measuring up strongly against other regions in the Russian Empire and even outperforming some of them significantly (e.g., Vologda, Penza, and Stavropol Governorates).

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