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Published in the Russian Federation

European Journal of Contemporary Education

ISSN 2304-9650

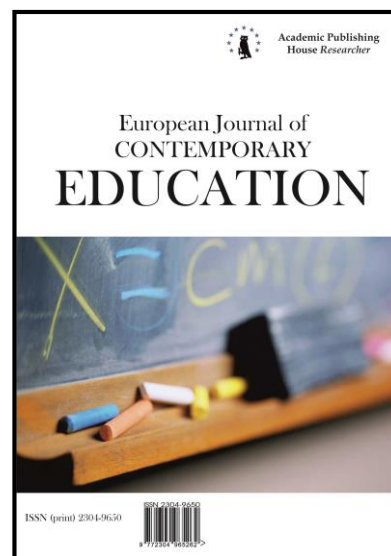
E-ISSN 2305-6746

Vol. 18, Is. 4, pp. 418-429, 2016

DOI: 10.13187/ejced.2016.18.418

www.ejournal1.com

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Public Education in the Russian Empire during the Last Third of the XIX Century: Parish Schools

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Abstract

The article deals with the parish schools development in Russia in the last third of the XIX century. Particular attention is paid to the analysis of the church school development during the period of office of I. D. Delyanov as the Minister of Education (1880–1890) and the transition of the parish and peasant literacy schools under the jurisdiction of the Holy Synod, thus giving the primary education an ecclesiastical character. The measures taken by the government and by the Synod in order to raise the parish educational level, the place of the parish schools in the educational process (spiritual, moral and intellectual education) and the contribution towards reducing the illiteracy of the population are considered in this work.

The works of the researchers of late XIX – early XXI centuries are used as materials. The materials of the periodical press are the most essential, for example, the “Pribavleniya k tserkovnym vedomostyam”. Personal materials, such as letters and recollections were also used in the work.

In conclusion, the authors sum up that in the last third of the XIX century the parish school underwent a complex transformation and became an important part of the pre-revolutionary national educational system. Due to this it was involved in the educational activities, especially for children.

Keywords: parish schools, church school, the Russian Orthodox Church, The Holy Synod, the primary public education, the Ministry of Education, I. D. Delyanov, the Russian Empire.

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1. Introduction

The beginnings of literacy in Russia and their progress took place since the acceptance of Christianity and were spread out with the direct participation of the Russian Orthodox Church. The classes were held at the monasteries and in the church parishes, conducted by priests, monks and clergies (Miropol'skii, 2011: VI-VII). This order lasted for centuries until Peter I (1682–1725) reformed all the spheres of the Russian society. Under Peter I the public education came under the control of the government and the result benefited the nobility, however the educational situation was deteriorated for the majority of population. The centralized program of establishing the state system of the primary public education was missing until the rule of Catherine II (1762–1796).

The organization of primary public education was initiated by the decree of Catherine II on February 16 (27), 1781. The school reform was carried out in 1782–1786 (the "Plan of the Austrian educational system" of 1774 taken as a model). In 1786 the "Charter of public schools" was adopted, proclaiming the goals and objectives of the public education, first achieved by the religious education, and after – by the "civil" one. Thus the government reiterates its appeal to involve the Russian Orthodox Church in public educational activities. Three types of secondary schools were established in Russia by the beginning of the XIX century: small (2-forms), middle (3-forms) and main (4-forms) comprehensive schools.

On the accession of Emperor Paul I (1796–1801) the further implementation of the reform provisions were carried out, which did not lead to any great changes in the educational system. In 1800, in order to meet the demands of the Holy Synod, the Emperor opened public schools with a traditional set of religious subjects: Reading, Writing, Brief catechism, Brief holy history, Regulations and Singing.

After Empress Catherine II, Emperor Alexander I (1801–1825) continued to spread the ideas of humanism. In 1802 the Ministry of Public Education was established by the Decree of Emperor Alexander I. The publication of the "Charter of schools, subordinated to the universities" (November, 5, 1804) was the result of the educational reforms of 1803–1804, which determined the four kinds of schools to be established for the Russian Empire citizens: parish schools, district schools, provincial schools or gymnasiums, universities. Education was to be free and available to all classes. At the same time the priests were not employed in the state schools. The "Charter" (1804) stated that the priests were to be involved in the primary education, but the parish school was considered to be an administrative and territorial unit, not a church subordinate (as it was controlled by the Ministry of Education through the county schools' superintendent) (Yashchenko, 2015: 146, 148). At the same time, the opening of the parish schools on the landowners' territory was the duty of the landowner, and on the state owned land – the duty of the clergy. The landowners rarely opened schools for their serfs, and on state owned lands no support to parish schools from secular authorities was provided (State interest was mainly focused on the district and provincial schools' system and was funded from the Treasury), consequently, the parish school maintenance was carried out by the parish priest and on the expense of the local population (Bychkova, 2009: 13-14).

A new political setting was formulated during the reign of Nicholas I (1825–1855), focusing on the further development of the national system of upbringing and education. Nicholas I centred on the spread of religious education, which contributed to the strengthening of the Russian Orthodox Church in the public education. In particular, the necessity of the studies of Russian language and Orthodox disciplines was emphasized. The spread of literacy among the non-Russian population of the Empire was a separate area of the internal policy. In 1828 a new "Charter of gymnasiums and schools system, administered by universities" was published. It was the main act that defined the organization of the primary education during the reign of Nicholas I. In 1833, count S. S. Uvarov was appointed the Minister of Public Education position and designed an ideological educational doctrine, based on the three main principles: orthodoxy, autocracy and national character. Minister Uvarov sought to raise education in Russia to the European level, preserving Russian traditions and national education superiority over the foreign one (Yashchenko, 2015: 147).

The Holy Synod Decree on October 20, 1836 was to fill in the gaps of the parish schools "Charter" of 1828, and emphasized that "the primary education of village children was the duty of the parish clergy" (Bychkova, 2009: 15-16).

The network of primary schools in Russia grew gradually. If by the end of the first quarter of the XIX century there were 349 parish schools, by the year 1841 their number grew up to 1021, and in 1858 – up to 2270, situated mostly in the cities (Konstantinov i dr., 1982). By the Imperial decree of 1842 the Ministry of State Property was instructed to provide financial support for the opening of the parish schools (Bychkova, 2009: 15-16). Meanwhile, before 1861 the clergy established 18587 primary schools (Plekhanov, 2007: 70), which later got the name of "parish schools" (as well as the "priest schools", "church schools", "schools for the peasants' children").

In the second half of the XIX century the primary education structure was the main problem in the relations of the Holy Synod and the Ministry of Public Education.

Under the influence of the social movement of the 1860s the Imperial government was forced to carry out the peasant (the abolition of serfdom), judicial, military, rural and school reforms. First of all, the abolition of serfdom in 1861 contributed to the increase of the parish schools. According to some reports, about 21400 parish schools were opened only by the initiative of the clergy during the period from 1859 to 1865 (Vasil'kova, Vasil'kova, 2000: 158). However, the struggle to transfer the parish schools under the Ministry of Education erupted in Russia in the 1860s. At this time the disputes on the public school curriculum gained a wide public resonance. The intelligentsia (and later the Zemstvos) considered it necessary to bring public school to the European standards, criticized parish schools for their religious restrictions, advocated a scientific learning approach, as well as the need to update the educational content and to introduce new subjects (Sidorov, 2006: 29). The Synod tried to keep the Orthodox Church school free from the influence of Western Europe and offered a general model of primary national education in Russia. The clerical authority addressed this issue to the government in 1859.

Since the beginning of 1860 the Ministers of Public Education E. P. Kovalevsky (1858–1861) and A. V. Golovnin (1862–1866) tried to lobby all the primary schools transfer under the Ministry of Public Education administration. They also specified the introduction of the universal primary education in Russia. The action taken by Alexander II was indecisive. The public schools were to be administrated by the establishing authorities, as it was stated by the highest order on January 18, 1862. The parish schools were administrated by the Synod, and their establishment was entrusted to the Ministry of Public Education on the agreement with the relevant authorities. The authority of the Synod and the Ministry in relation to the primary school was not specified, leaving a broad field for rivalry.

In legislative terms the question of the primary public education foundation was raised again in 1864. According to the Zemstvo reform on January 1, 1864, the Zemstvos were given the right to open, administrate and manage local schools. The Zemstvo school, that acquired considerable independence from the state and the Church, was the most notable result of the Educational Reforms of the 1860s (Kalachev, 2011: 23).

"Regulations for the primary public schools" was later adopted on June, 14, 1864. It referred to the schools of all departments – the Ministry of Public Education, the Holy Synod (parish schools) and others. According to the "Regulations" all schools, regardless the department to which they belonged, had a unified curriculum (Law of God, Church and Civil lectures, Writing, Arithmetic, Choir) (Bychkova, 2009: 16). Although the religious and moral education played the main goal of primary public schools, the parish schools, however, were administrated by the school boards. The school boards consisted of the Ministry of Education and Internal Affairs officials, as well as the representatives of institutions that supported schools financially. The diocesan hierarch was appointed the provincial school boards chairman as a compromise with the clergy office.

According to A. V. Kalachev: "The church lost this battle during the second half of the 60–70s. The church school, unsecured and left in disgrace was unable to withstand the Zemstvo's financial possibilities and the influence of high society administration. In fact, the clergy was on the sidelines in the primary education. Parish schools gradually began to decline, disappear, and many were transferred under the Zemstvos' full authority. According to the report of the Synod Procurator, there were 21,420 parish schools in 1865, and only 4,348 left in 1880. Many of these schools languished" (Kalachev, 2011: 23-24). However in rural areas, despite the disorder, poverty and lack of parish schools, and often even the impossibility to attend them due to the distance, the peasants mostly preferred parish schools (Bychkova, 2009: 17).

The new Minister of Education D. A. Tolstoy (1866–1880) combined his post with the duties of the Holy Synod chief procurator, his appointment intended to establish the "unity of direction"

between the Orthodox clergy and the education authority, which failed to be achieved by any other measures. The measures to introduce compulsory primary education with the right to choose an educational establishment were taken with the personal participation of the Minister. All primary public schools that were previously run by different ministries and departments, were now made subordinates to the Ministry of Education ("[Regulations for the primary public schools](#)", 1874) and a greater ministerial inspectors' control of all the educational institutions was provided. However, the exception was made for the primary schools opened by the clergy - they were under the jurisdiction of the Holy Synod and their establishment was again encouraged ([Yashchenko, 2015: 147](#)).

The revival and spread of parish schools took place during the reign of Alexander III, (1881–1894), with the beginning of a new stage of reforms of the Russian Empire's system of primary education. These measures were designed to weaken the influence of the radical democratic and liberal ideas in the society. Since 1882, after Ivan Davydovich Delyanov's appointment to the post of the Minister of Education, the positions of the Church in the education strengthened. The parish schools' funding was provided by the state and the "Regulations for the parish schools" were developed and adopted at the state level (1884). During 1884 the "revived" parish schools were transferred under the subordination of the Holy Synod. The number of parish schools in Russia grew again under the influence of the new educational policy, and in the mid-1890s their number was estimated to be more than 31,000. In addition, literacy and church schools were also administrated by the Holy Synod ([Sidorov, 2006: 29](#)). The essential feature of the parish schools functioning was their availability, due to the free education.

2. Materials and methods

2.1. The works of the researchers of late XIX – early XXI centuries are used as materials. The materials of the periodical press are the most essential, for example, the "Pribavleniya k tserkovnym vedomostyam". Personal materials, such as letters and recollections were also used in the work.

2.2. The scientific methods (analysis and synthesis, concretization, generalization) were applied in solving the researched problems, as well as the traditional methods of historical analysis. The historical-situational method used in this research, involves the examination of the historical facts in the context of the studied era in conjunction with the "neighbouring" events and facts. This method was applied in the study of the factors that influenced the parish school development during the period of 1860-1870.

The diachronic comparison is used to compare the same institution position during different periods of its activity. Thus, the functioning of the parish school in Russian Empire can be studied in four consecutive periods: 1864–1881; 1882–1897; 1898–1905; 1906–1917.

3. Discussion

As noted by V. M. Bychkova, "XIX century became a century of endless reforms in Russia. The reforms were carried out not only during the reign of every new emperor, but also during the period of office of every new Minister of Education. Religious education suffered from these reforms, which had a character of a pedagogical experiment» ([Bychkova, 2009: 14](#)).

In the second half of the XIX century there were new frequent appointments for the Minister of Education position: A. V. Golovnin (1861–1866), D. A. Tolstoy, (1866–1880), A. A. Saburov (1880–1881), A. P. Nikolai (1881–1882), I. D. Delyanov (1882–1898), N. P. Bogolepov (1898–1901), P. S. Vannovsky (1901–1902), N. E. Zenger (1902–1904), V. G. Glazov (1904–1905), I. I. Tolstoy (1905–1906), P. M. Kaufman (1906–1908), A. N. Shvartz (1908–1910), L. A. Kasso (1910–1914), P. N. Ignatyev (1915–1916). In 1917 N. K. Kulchinsky, A. A. Manuylov, S. F. Oldenburg, S. S. Salazkin alternately took the position of the Minister of Education.

M.V Boguslavsky characterizes the educational setup of the second half of the XIX century as a "radically new situation" ([Boguslavskii, 2008](#)). He points out that "the unique social and cultural situation opened up favourable prospects to reform the Russian education" (preparation and the abolition of serfdom, the era of the reforms of the 1860s).

The Church began to take an active part in the education of the younger generation. Let us consider the opinion of M. V. Boguslavsky: "In the late 50s - 60s the public largely influenced the education, in the 70s – it was influenced by the state and in the second half of the 80th – 90th (XIX century – *Author*) – by the Church» ([Boguslavskii, 2008](#)).

Our work pays attention to the "revival" and the development of the parish school in the 1880–1890 during the period of office of the Minister of Education I. D. Delyanov (Fig.).

4. Results

The Ministry of Education could not achieve all the educational goals due to the vastness of plans, therefore there was a need to "attract" other interested authorities, the public, etc. "Certainly, the Orthodox Church, being the main educational institution in the Russian Empire could not stay apart from all these changes" (Boguslavskii, 2008).

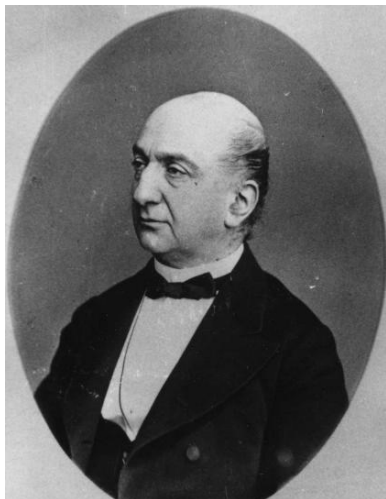


Fig. I. D. Delyanov, the Minister of Public Education

A. V. Kalachev emphasized that the ruling circles became gradually concerned of the general moral decline due to the development of capitalism and the populist activities in Russia, including those of a terrorist character. The opinion that the school failed to fulfil its main task – the religious and moral education of the younger generation, gained more and more supporters in the government. Mainly, the Zemstvo school was accused of prioritizing the general knowledge, to the lack of moral upbringing and the religious outlook formation.

In addition, after another attempt on the life of Alexander II, the government realized that the fight against revolutionary terror could not be won by taking only repressive measures. In April 1879 the Special Council was held in order to clarify the reasons of the "destructive doctrines" rapid spread among the younger generation and to develop the efficient practical measures to put their "corrupting influence" to an end. The members of the Special Council addressed the issue of the primary school reform that would provide a "proper influence on public education" to the Orthodox clergy.

Later this issue was often discussed at the meetings of the Ministers' Committee. On March 17, 1881, on one of those meetings, which was held during the reign of a new tsar, Konstantin Pobedonostsev (the Procurator of the Holy Synod from 1880 to 1905), didn't only focus on the issue of strengthening of the clergy's role in all primary schools, but also on the role of the parish schools in the public education. He noted that these schools "due to the conditions of their education and supervision represent much more guarantees for the proper and trustworthy education in the religious and national terms than other public schools, and therefore they deserve a special support and promotion from the government» (Kalachev, 2011: 24).

One of the first tasks that I. D. Delianov carried out as the minister was the transferring of parish and peasant literacy schools under the jurisdiction of the Holy Synod, giving thus the primary education an ecclesiastical character, but undoubtedly, the ideas of the Holy Synod's Procurator K. P. Pobedonostsev affected this action. The parish school was the embodiment of the idea of common purpose of education and the faithful life for the Procurator.

In a letter to Emperor Alexander III K. P. Pobedonostsev wrote that along with the "destruction of the tavern as the first strong demand / the required action in order to save Russia" (Oranienbaum, 1973) there was another one. "To save and to raise the people, you need to give them a school that would educate and bring them up in its true spirit, a simplicity of thought,

without taking them from the environment where their life and work take place" (Oranienbaum, 1973). Then the chief prosecutor expresses the consent on this matter to I. D. Delyanov. That is remarkable, because Evgeny Mikhailovitch Feoktistov – the censor, the Privy Councillor (since January 1, 1883), the Head of the Central Administration of Press of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Senator (since May 23, 1896) – writes: "The public loved Ivan Davydovich for his kindness, though, that very kindness was some sort of a loose and passive one; he was ready to plead for anyone: for decent people, and for the people at all dishonest, so that his recommendations were not often paid attention to, and he did not take any offense on that. An undoubtedly being an honest man, distinguished by an extreme simplicity of his lifestyle, never proud of his position, he was always available to anyone who wanted to see him, so that his office doors were always open for people..." (Feoktistov, 1991).

E. M. Feoktistov described I. D. Delyanov: "Delyanov was an example of how a man could reach a very high position without any outstanding merits; he wasn't only a non-hard worker, and it is amusing to admit that he wasn't even a businessman in the ordinary meaning of the term; no one, of course, heard him expressing any ideas that would be a result of a mature and independent thought; but he couldn't be called foolish, and he was not, of course, a clever man; like all his fellow Armenians, he was cunning on a large extent, knew Petersburg at his fingertips, was on good terms with everyone, had no enemies, because even a quarrel with him was somehow strange: he was capable to disarm anyone with his imperturbable good nature" (Feoktistov, 1991).

I. D. Delyanov believed that primary school should be "the most important tool of religious education" and thus a wide network of primary schools established under churches, had to be a subordinate to the clergy office. According to K.P. Pobedonostsev, they had to pay attention on upbringing and not on education as done in secular schools.

So, in the letter to Alexander III K. P. Pobedonostsev wrote "At this moment the regulations for parish schools are already finished. But when they will be actuated, it will be necessary to seek help from the state Treasury. God knows whether this petition will be successful, but this investing of course, will be a lot more profitable than the millions spent on many scientific institutions" (Pobedonostsev, 1883).

K. P. Pobedonostsev believed the church school was a means to maintain the people's loyalty without any deep economic, social and administrative reforms (Tal'berg, 2000). Therefore, during the office of K. P. Pobedonostsev neither the rights of the clergy and parishioners were extended, nor the necessary changes in the church structure were carried out. Some researchers believe that this doomed his plans.

Let us give an opinion on the influence of church education. "Implanting of the parish school had a triple objective: first, the formation of the Orthodox worldview; second, the strengthening of the Orthodox autocratic monarchy and the union of the tsar and the people in faith, and third, the preservation of national traditions, relevant to the Orthodox understanding and to life needs, strengthening of national consciousness, the unity of the various segments of the population. In the context of intelligentsia's commitment to the formation of an outside-of-the-Church, often an anti-clerical civil society, Pobedonostsev tried to create an alternative – a religious civil society, the parish school being a part of it" (Pobedonostsev, 2011).

Regulations for the parish schools (1884). In September 1882, the Holy Synod commission was established, on the decision of the Committee of Ministers and by the suggestion of Pobedonostsev, which included representatives of the Synod, the Ministry of Education and capital Zemstvos, headed by S. A. Rachinsky, with the goal to discuss and draft the future "Regulations", coordinating the parish and literacy schools statuses. The Committee was in session for two years and during that time worked out the basic regulations of the parish schools, outlined the principles of work of the governing authorities and of the funding sources (Goncharov, Plokhova, 2012: 105). In May 1884 "the Committee report hearing was held along with the consideration of the parish school Regulations". The chief prosecutor presented the "Regulations for the parish schools" to be approved by the Emperor on July 8, 1884. K. P. Pobedonostsev in his note to the "Regulations" stated, pointing out the role of the Church in the spread of primary education in the nation: "... only simple education, connected to the church literacy, is clear and compassionate to the peasant population" (Yashchenko, Vorob'ev, 2013: 73).

On June 13, 1884 Alexander III adopted the "Regulations for the parish schools" (valid until 1917), according to which the parish schools were to become the main form of peasant children

education. "These schools, – the document stated (§ 1), – are intended to assert the Orthodox doctrine of the Christian faith and morals among the people, to give the initial useful knowledge". This underlined the religious foundation of primary education. Also the "Regulations" specified that "the education in parish schools is to be performed by the local priests or other members of the clergy under the agreement, as well as by the specially appointed teachers, with an approval of the Diocesan Bishop and under the supervision of a priest" (§ 10). Moreover, "teachers' positions in the parish schools are to be replaced mostly by individuals who received religious schools or female clerical schools education" (§ 12) (Khrestomatiya, 1936: 73). Following the adoption of the "Regulations", a systematic funding of parish schools began.

Parish schools management (from 1891-1892, and of the so-called literacy schools) was carried out by a specially created authority – the school boards of the Holy Synod, which was in charge of all the church schools, using equal to the Ministry of Education programs for primary schools. Therefore, these schools – according to A. V. Kalachev – with a full justification can be considered the state ones, because by the beginning of the XIX century, the Synod, in fact, became one of the "ministries" of the central government authorities in Russia (Kalachev, 2011: 24). School boards took over the full authority and supervision of the church school: the general management, the methodological support and the approaches to the formation of teachers' staff. Locally the parish schools fell under the control of the dioceses and the diocesan school boards. The network of parish schools was not a narrow ethnic one, offered only for the Russian Orthodox population, but covered the national composition of the country. It provided the schools for non-Russian population of the country as well, which was especially important for the multinational provinces. Following the logic of the Synod, the new schools were to operate within the framework of the general missionary policy (Goncharov, Plokhova, 2012: 105).

On the educational side, the parish school was defined as a primary religious and comprehensive facility. It was supposed to perform a dual function. On the one hand, to form spiritual and moral qualities of the child's personality (faith in God, love for the Fatherland, respect for elders, hard work, diligence, sense of duty and moral responsibility). On the other hand, during the students' development, the parish school had to give "useful practical knowledge" (reading, writing, arithmetic) to children.

If earlier the content of education in the parish schools did not have any clear outline, the school year could be extended or shortened at random and many schools did not have their own facilities, now the situation changed (Kalachev, 2011: 24). The government and the Synod undertook measures to raise the level of the parish education. The status and the curriculum of the one-class (the course of 2 years increased up to 3 years in the 1890s) and the two-class (the course of 4 years increased up to 5 years at the beginning of the XX century) was defined; a secular component took an important place in the parish school's educational process. The Law of God (Prayer study, Holy history and Worship study, Brief catechism), Church singing, Church and civic readings and Writing and Basic arithmetic were taught in one-class school. In a two-class school the Beginnings of the church and country history, Geography, Drawing and Art were among the added courses.

The result of the approval of the "Regulations" of 1884 was the design of a new educational parish school curriculum in 1886. In 1898, the development of special programs for two-class parish schools was completed, which, in addition to providing public education, focused on the school staff training (Yashchenko, Vorob'ev, 2013: 73-74). The educational curricula of parish schools largely coincided with those of other elementary schools, and by the beginning of XX century they became completely identical. Since the mid-1880s the network of parish schools started to develop and strengthen, thus by the end of the XIX century, they were accounted for about a half of all the Russian primary schools.

The first place in these schools, of course, was given to the "upbringing in the Orthodox Church spirit" with the God's Law being the core of the curriculum. A particular attention was paid to Singing, which was not a compulsory subject, but was welcomed due to the power of emotional influence it had on parishioners – on students and their parents. The students were required to read prayers in the morning and evening, before the studies and after, to go to church on Sundays and holidays, to participate in religious and moral readings and to sing in the church choir (Kalachev, 2011: 24).

On May 4, 1891 the "Regulations for the literacy schools" were adopted, according to which, this type of elementary school (opened in the villages and towns at the expense of the parish villagers themselves, and where – before – any literate person could be a teacher) was transferred under the Synod's authority. In 1892, there were about 16 thousand peasant literacy schools, later reorganized into parish schools (Plekhanov, 2007: 70).

Practically, in addition to religious education and teaching children basics of reading and writing, the task of strengthening of Orthodox faith among the whole parish population was assigned to the primary church school. For this purpose (when needed and on the amount of available funds) parish schools intended to open additional evening classes of one-class and two-class schools; daily lessons for adults; special handicraft and needlework classes, as well as Sunday schools for those who can not study daily. On weekends and holidays teachers had to conduct religious and moral readings for students and their parents (Kalachev, 2011: 24). In literacy schools students studied for two years and received minimum knowledge. In particular, they studied common prayers, reading in Russian and Old Church Slavic languages, performing simple arithmetic operations with small numbers. Literacy school leavers could continue their studies in the second part of a parish or ministry school (Goncharov, Plokhova, 2012: 105).

Since the mid-1890s the development of libraries was significant in parish schools, thus copying the all-European trend (Tišliar, 2013). The school board Publishing Committee of the Holy Synod was engaged in supply and organization of school libraries. The literature of the religious and moral content, books on medicine and hygiene, on church and civil history, on agriculture and crafts as well as fiction were provided for the libraries for extracurricular reading. For example, only in 1896 (in honour to the coronation of Nicholas II) diocesan authorities initiated opening of more than 900 libraries in parish schools in various parish districts of Russia. Each of these libraries had from 100 up to 500 books (Funtikova, 2002: 74-75). In the early twentieth century, the number of parish schools continued to increase and thus the number of church libraries increased as well (more than 30 thousand in 1906) (Vanchakov, 1908: 11-12).

The number of parish schools began to increase and reached 5517 in 1884 after a period of decline due to the prevailing development of the Zemstvo schools (reduction from 21420 to 4348) in 1865–1880. Ten years later there were already 29,746 schools, and in 1901 – 43,602. The number of students increased from 137,313 to 1,764,912 during the period from 1884 to 1901 (Table 1). T. I. Zhitenev believes that "the term 'school' was imprinted in the late XIX century, due to the wide spread of parish schools" (Cherkasov, 2011).

Table 1. Church schools and students in number in 1884-1908. (Pribavleniya k tserkovnym, 1904; Chekhov, 1912: 105)

Years	Number of schools	Number of students
1884	5.517	137.313
1894	29.746	917.442
1901	43.602	1.764.912
1908	39.929	1.927.555
1914	~ 38.000	~ more than 2 million

With the beginning of the Russian-Japanese War (1904–1905) the government reduced the funding of the church schools and their number began to decrease. In 1914 the number of parish schools has reached 38 thousand with more than 2 million students (Cherkasov, 2011).

M.V. Boguslavsky noted that "for the first time the question raised was not about a simple increase in the number of students, but of a radical increase – only regularly enrolled students' number should be up to 4–5 million people" (Boguslavskii, 2008). Due to the fact that Russia was beginning to emerge into the continuous education, M.V. Boguslavsky pointed out the steps towards a multiple increase of the education funding, the creation of a powerful new material base of the educational process, its infrastructure, as well as the designing of the educational policy reform of all the education sectors, especially in terms of the formation of its new legal framework (Boguslavskii, 2008).

Financing. Local church schools funding during the given period rose from 434,000 roubles in 1884 to 6,707,900 roubles in 1901.

In 1884 the funding from the State Treasury was 55.5 thousand roubles, in 1901 – 6.826.000 roubles. In 1884 nothing was provided from the provincial gatherings (the non-Zemstvo provinces), while in 1901 – 826,900 roubles. The total budget of church schools increased from 489,500 roubles (in 1884) to 14,360,800 roubles (Pribavleniya k tserkovnym, 1904).

In 1901 local funding had the following sources: churches and monasteries – 1333855 roubles, parish patronage – 406524 roubles, township, village and stanitsa communities – 1773659 roubles, Zemstvos – 442969 roubles, cities – 136433 roubles, private donations – 2082526 roubles and other local sources – 531918 roubles. (Pribavleniya k tserkovnym, 1904). At the beginning of the First World War appropriations for public education decreased, and during the war, this source of funding was reduced (Shevchenko i dr., 2016: 370).

Expenses. In 1901 from the total of 13697200 roubles spent, 12,487,100 roubles or 91.2 % was spent on the maintenance of schools, 195 800 roubles (1.4 %) – on the in-service training for religious schools' teachers, 512200 roubles (3,7 %) – on the inspection, 241700 roubles (1,8 %) – on the Holy Synod school board, Chancery of the diocesan school boards and district offices and 260400 roubles (1,9 %) – on expenses of other origin (Pribavleniya k tserkovnym, 1904).

Teachers. As a rule, at the early stage of parish schools development the children were taught by the clergy, who generally had no pedagogical training (basic pedagogy began to be taught in seminaries only in the second half of the 1860s) and using ineffective teaching methods. Thus, the education given in parish schools was of a distinct religious character. But in the 2nd half of XIX century the parish school curriculum began to expand gradually, acquiring a more secular and scientific character at the beginning of the XX century. At that time (1859–1865) the Holy Synod recognized the need for the pedagogical training of the clergy, thus the basics of the pedagogy along with religious subjects was added to the curriculum of the seminaries during the mid-1860s (Sidorov, 2006: 28-29). Later the Educational 'committee of the Holy Synod was established, responsible for the religious and educational facilities, for opening and maintenance of religious schools, the development of their regulations, the organization of the academic part, preparation of tutorials etc. A definite step in the parish school development and improvement of the quality of education was the Order of the Synod on 26 November 1888, when "the parish school teacher" title was introduced (Goncharov, Plokhova, 2012: 108).'

The rapid growth of the parish schools number, the increased requirements for the provided education, the development of extra-curricular education – all this required a significant number of teachers, who could teach (for relatively low wages), all subjects of the course, including Singing and the Law of God. Meanwhile, some secondary religious schools' (religious schools, diocesan female colleges, seminaries) graduates considered the school only as a temporary job: men – mostly until taking a vacant position in the parish and women – until getting married. For many graduates of the Ministry of Education secondary schools, the work in the church school was unattractive due to the low wages and a lack of prestige of work in the rural areas (Kalachev, 2011: 24).

In this regard, the Office of the Orthodox confession faced a shortage of teaching staff in the 1890. Various measures were taken to solve this problem, including the coercive ones. For example, a compulsory distribution of theological seminaries graduates' for the positions of parish schools teachers was introduced (they had to work at least 2-3 years and only then could take a position in the clergy). Along with this, the Holy Synod ordered deductions in the amount of one-third of income from the priests, who were not engaged in teaching in 1892.

In the mid 1890-s the 2-class parish schools with a three-year training course began to open in the dioceses in order to improve the parish schools. The graduates were prepared to be the literacy school teachers. To meet the rapidly growing demand for the professionally trained personnel who could replace the priests, the church-teachers' training schools were established, a period of education in which was also 3 years. At the same time church school's teachers received extended rights granted to the Ministry of Education schools' teachers – the exemption from the active military service, benefits for children's education etc. (Kalachev, 2011: 24-25). A positive role in the teaching improvement had the growth of the parish school state funding, which increased from 3.5 million roubles in 1896 to 16.7 million roubles in 1908 (15.8 million roubles in 1911). The number of church-teachers' training schools reached 448 with 22526 students in 1908 (Chekhov, 1912: 105).

All these measures helped to significantly raise the level of church schools at the beginning of the 1900 and even the opponents of these educational institutions were forced to admit that the church school advanced, improved the teachers' structure, the educational content and was geographically accessible to the most of the villagers. Thus, the parish school became an actual rival to the Zemstvo school at the end of XIX – early XX century. In some periods (1861–1869, 1892–1894) the number of parish schools even exceeded the number of the Zemstvo schools (Plekhanov, 2007: 69). At this time, for example in the Central Europe – the Austria-Hungary, an opposite trend has been observed. Parish schools have been losing their positions to the exclusion of the secular ones (Kmet, 2010: 23).

Table 2. Schools and students in number in 1905 (Chekhov, 1912: 105)

Schools	Number of schools	%	Number of students	%
Min. of Public Education	48.288	52	3.660.628	63
Holy Synod establishments	42.696	46,5	1.983.817	35,5
Other establishments	1.517	1,5	93.844	1,5
Total	92.501	100	5.738.289	100

In 1904, according to statistics, the characteristics of the teachers' staff in parish schools were as follows. In the European part of the Russian Empire and the Caucasus out of the total number of 22110 teachers, 8619 (38.9 %) were less than 21 years old, 6879 (31,1 %) – 21–25 years old, 3168 (14,3 %) – 26–30 years old, other 3444 – more than 30 years old.

Of the 15191 female teachers 6642 (43.9%) were less than 21 years old, 4505 (29,8 %) – 21–25 years old, 1948 (12,8 %) – 26–30 years old, other 2096 – more than 30 years old (Pribavleniya k tserkovnym, 1904).

Most of the church schools teachers were single. There were 5799 male married teachers (26 % of the total), 202 widowed (1 %); 949 female married teachers (6 %) and 591 widowed (4 %) (Pribavleniya k tserkovnym, 1904).

The teachers had 6024 male and 6092 female children. The majority of children under age wasn't studying anywhere (3799 boys and 4033 girls), or was enrolled in primary schools – one-class and two-class (1172 boys and 976 girls). 548 boys were enrolled in higher types of schools (246 – in church or city schools, 79 – in teachers' schools, 25 – in the specialized secondary schools and 180 - in secondary and higher education institutions). 342 girls were enrolled in higher types of schools, including 38 – in the preschools, 19 – in teachers' schools, 285 – in secondary schools. 505 boys and 741 girls were not enrolled in any type of schools; some of them took a course in secondary (or diocesan literacy school) or lower schools (Pribavleniya k tserkovnym, 1904).

In 1907, as a result of the advancement of the church school, only 4788 out of the total number of 48433 teachers didn't have any pedagogical training – i.e. about 10 % (Plekhanov, 2007: 72).

Elimination of parish schools in 1917. The Provisional Government Decree on 20 June 1917 defined that the schools of various departments were to be united under the administration of the Ministry of Education in order to introduce a universal education standard. This meant that the Orthodox Church was deprived of one of its educational functions. All primary schools were to be transferred from the jurisdiction of the Holy Synod under the Ministry, including the schools funded by the government, as well as educational institutions that trained teachers (2-class and church-teachers' training schools). More than 37 thousand religious schools were rejected (which at that time was a half of all the primary schools of the country), while about one thousand schools was under the control of the Synod (not included in the school network and funded locally). This step was the actual destruction of the church school, since the schools was requisitioned along with the buildings and the libraries (Zhitenev, 2014).

The complete elimination of the church school took place after the October Revolution. The Decree of the Commissariat for public education № 126 on December 11, 1917 "The transition of upbringing and educational sphere from the clergy office under the jurisdiction of the Commissariat for public education" was much more decisive than the decree of the Provisional Government on June 20, 1917: "The transfer shall be subject to all the parish (primary one-class,

two-class) schools, teachers' seminaries, theological schools and seminaries, women's diocesan schools, mission schools, academies and all other bearing different names lower, middle and high schools and institutions of the clergy office, with the staff, grant of funds, movable and immovable property, which means with buildings, outdoor constructions, with the land under the buildings and school grounds, with mansions (if there will be), libraries and all kinds of benefits, values, funds, securities and interests on them and with all intended for the above mentioned schools and institutions" (*Sobranie uzakonenii*, 1942: 129).

5. Conclusion

The parish school in the last third of the XIX century underwent a difficult transformation and became an important part of the pre-revolutionary public educational system. Due to this it became actively involved in the educational activities of the population, especially for children. At the same time the establishment of parish schools was initiated by the government, though all the arrangements were made by the clergy, who played an important role in improvement of the educational level of the country during the period of the church schools functioning, up to December 1917. T. E. Zhitenev points out that " during this period about a third of the students received education in parish schools, so these schools were not only a very important part of public education, but also had a significant influence on the social life development in the country" (*Zhitenev*, 2004).

Thus, the period of I. D. Delyanov at the post of the Minister of Education (1882–1897) was the time of the primary parish schools' active development. Schools advanced both in quantity and financial support. They had a number of compelling advantages over the other types of rural schools. First of all – they were available, completely free of charge for the public and low-cost to the state. The spiritual, moral and intellectual education was carried out with an emphasis on historical, religious, moral and cultural traditions of the Russian people, on universal Christian values in the best parish schools. In general, the parish school took its rightful place in the process of the national education democratization and helped to overcome the illiteracy of the rural population.

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