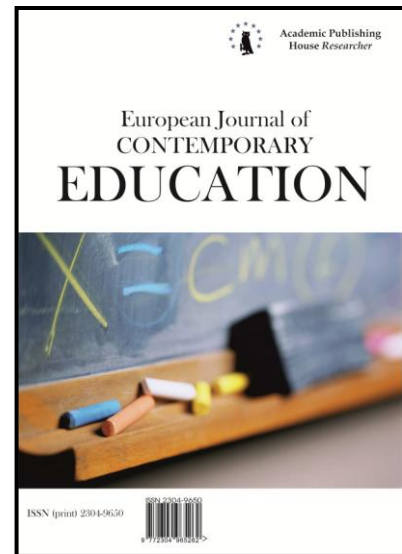




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Emancipation in Educational System: Formation of Women's Higher Education in Russia

Irina V. Kornilova ^a, Timur A. Magsumov ^{b,*}

^a Institute of the Tatar encyclopedia and regional studies of Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Tatarstan, Russian Federation

^b International Network Center for Fundamental and Applied Research, Russian Federation

Abstract

The focus of the article is on one of the turning points in the education development in Russia of the late imperial period, i.e., the establishment of women's higher education in the second half of the 19th century. The researchers involved various sources, including periodicals, ego-documents, documents of management and record keeping obtained from regional archives, regulatory documents and directories for a systematic study of the formation process of women's higher education against the backdrop of the socio-political life of the Russian empire going through modernization. The combination of macro- and micro approaches in the context of the theory of modernization and gender-based history made it possible to consider the first women's higher courses as one of the most outstanding achievements made by the progressive public in the struggle for the equality of women as well as the development of women's education. The subject of the study was the women's higher courses, opened in the capital cities (Moscow and St. Petersburg) as well as provincial ones (Kazan and Kiev). The issues under study, being covered in the article, are the ones related to the socio-cultural aspects of the Russian movement for the right to obtain higher education and pedagogical profession up to the beginning of the 20th century. It is shown that Russian women in the struggle for equality with men initially demanded equal rights in the field of education in order to gain the opportunity to expand their professional activities and, consequently, to use their abilities for the benefit of society and achieve economic independence. Instability and constant attack on women's higher courses by the government, concerned about the growth of the revolutionary movement among women and inability to exercise their rights prevented students of women's higher courses from becoming full-fledged students, while the

* Corresponding author

E-mail addresses: ivkornilova@list.ru (I.V. Kornilova), nabonid1@yandex.ru (T.A. Magsumov)

degree they got after graduating from the courses failed to provide them with equal civil and political rights with men. The results of the research can be applied in the practice of modernization of higher education and in studies on the history of Russian education.

Keywords: education, higher education, women's education, women's higher courses, Russian empire, St. Petersburg, Moscow, Kazan, Kiev.

1. Introduction

The study of various aspects of the issue of the formation and development of education in Russia has been one of the most urgent issues of the latest Russian historiography. Such degree of interest is due to the complex current situation in Russia and the ongoing reforms in connection with the transition to a whole new level of requirements for higher education. The success of solving these problems depends largely on the quality and direction of education, its aim being to help young people find their place in society and succeed in their chosen field of professional activity. Of particular relevance for modern education is also the study of the historical patterns of the formation of women's higher education in connection with the increasing role of women in modern society, especially in the issue of upbringing of the younger generation.

To date, the number of women employed in education is growing, and that of men, on the contrary, is declining. The feminization of education, which began at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries, has been going on to this day. Women's higher courses occupied the niche of higher education, thus meeting the needs of those who could not be admitted by state higher educational institutions, in terms of training teachers to work at women's secondary schools. In this regard, it is the scientific and practical importance of studying the experience of the development of women's higher education in the late 19th century, including in the territory of the Russian province, that is growing.

2. Materials and methods

2.1. The use of various sources allowed to consider different aspects of the issue under study. A significant research base was made up of various groups of records, published or kept in archives. They include documents characterizing the activities of the authorities in the field of education, as well as an array of information on the functioning of educational institutions and the organization of their educational process. The legal and regulatory documents specified the legal status of women's higher courses, students, teachers and graduates, showed the dynamics of changing their status, as well as defined government policies in the field of women's education.

Reference books allowed to build a presentational picture of the educational institutions network and provide their structural and functional characteristics. Russian periodicals revealed a number of pressing problems in the process of the formation of women's higher education, public discussion concerning women's school, showed its achievements and development difficulties. Ego-documents made it possible to consider representations by various subjects and groups of women's education, as well as get a better understanding of the individual appearance of the school.

2.2. The subject matter of the article allowed the authors to combine techniques of macro and micro approaches. The system approach and structural-functional analysis made it possible to break up and link the processes of emancipation and formation of women's higher education, as well as reveal their mutual dependence on the political, social and economic realities of the late imperial Russia that predetermined these processes. Meanwhile, periodic focus on particular educational institutions in micro perspective made it possible to understand the features of the perception of female education by different layers of Russian society and the specifics of school life both in and out of the capital. Biographical reconstructions enhanced the individualization of this understanding at the micro level and the awareness of political practices at the macro level.

The formation of women's higher education is seen as an element of modernization, acting in female education as a varied and ramified process, initially of the westernization type, and then increasingly acquiring alternative national features. The historical evolution of women's higher education is also studied in the perspective of gender-based methodology, which involves examining changes in public opinion on the issues of women's education and the cultural role of women, reconstruction of the evolution of Russian realities caused by emancipation in the

educational sphere, examination of various forms of interaction and complementarity of men's and women's education.

3. Discussion of the issue

The issue of women's higher education was being actively developed by researchers in the second half of the 19th – early 20th century. The most interesting section of the historiography of the issue is made up of the works of Russian (Ovtsyn, 1887; Derevitskiy, 1902; Pokrovskaya, 1906; Mizhuev, 1906; Margolin, 1915) and foreign (Mill, 1878) authors, who covered various aspects of the demand, problems and prospects for the development of women's higher education at the end of the 19th century, as well as mentioned the achievements made by women in the field of education. J.S. Mill noted synchronicity in the development of women's demand for higher education and the formation of educational systems in Russia. The reasons for the temporary delay in the further development of women's education were, according to the Russian authors, connected with the reactionary domestic policy of the government, including that in the field of education. Nevertheless, all their works had a pronounced journalistic character. This is due to the fact that the authors of these works had a limited number of sources at their disposal and were mainly guided by political goals while writing. Quite a few of their assessments and conclusions are actually significantly outdated. In the first decades, Soviet historical science, due to inattention and even a negative perception of the Russian feminism history issues, practically withdrew from studying this issue, using it just as a means of emphasizing the conservative educational policy of czarism. Changes in the ideological atmosphere of the second half of the 20th century contributed to the revival of such studies, whereas the prevalence of women among the researchers of the history of women's education is becoming quite noticeable. The "women's issue" still remains one of the main themes of Russian and foreign historiography (Johnson, 1987), but the focus of Russian specialists has shifted towards studying particular higher educational institutions for women, special attention being paid to The St. Petersburg Bestuzhevskiye Courses (Valk, 1965; Fedosova, 1980).

Modern Russian historiography, being freed from the constraints of Soviet ideology, is characterized by the growing popularity of female and gender studies. The formation of women's higher education is being considered as the first stage of the struggle for emancipation, attempts have been made to show the systemic history of women's schools, the number of studies on the regional aspects of the topic is growing (Perova, 2007; Ponomareva, Khoroshilova, 2008; Kornilova, 2012; Cherkasov, Smigel, 2016; Kornilova et al., 2016; Shevchenko et al., 2016; Taran et al., 2016).

4. Results

The struggle of women to obtain equal rights in education began and developed within the framework of the activation of women's emancipation in the 2nd half of the 19th century. As for men, obtaining higher education for them was limited by scarceness of higher education institutions, class barriers or financial conditions. As for women in Russia, they were legally deprived of the right to study at a university.

In Russia, the idea of establishing a higher educational institution for women came up in the late 1860s. It was originated within a group of women, gathering at that time around M.V. Trubnikova and N.V. Stasova (Zinchenko, 1901: 26) who had organized the first Russian women's artel to publish translated works. The main impetus for this idea was the fact that women, as having been unable to obtain higher education in Russia, rushed to universities abroad and sought the right to study, often at the cost of significant moral and material sacrifices and deprivations. The development of women's education was considered by "that constantly increasing part of Russian society" in the context of spreading and deepening of higher education as "one of the surest ways to a better future" (Pervoe dvadtsatipyatiletie, 1903: 894).

The easiest way to meet the demand for higher female education in Russian society would have been to open doors for women to university audiences. Indeed, in the early 1860s, just for a while, women were allowed to enter universities.

When compiling the university statute of 1863, the issue of female higher education was debated by the government for a long time. Minister of Education A.V. Golovnin had a circular survey of universities concerning this subject. All of them, except for the Moscow and Dorpat

Universities, spoke in favor of admitting women to university lectures and for granting them the right to seek academic degrees (Zamechaniya, 1862).

It should be noted that the Moscow professors, while giving a negative answer, justified it only with a speculation that men and women's co-education might have a harmful effect on the successful course of studies. The Kharkov and Kiev professors even expressed their readiness to accept women not only as noncredit students, but also as credit students, moreover, they suggested that women should be equalized with men in the right to receive academic degrees (Svatikov, 1916: 2). And the St. Petersburg University council found that the admission of women to higher educational institutions was hampered by the only one obstacle, namely, the novelty of the phenomenon and historical habit of the opposite order of things (Zamechaniya, 1862: 521-523).

The Kazan professors "found it possible to admit female students to university lectures as noncredit students. Concerning the acquisition of higher degrees by female noncredit students, the existing rules applied to noncredit students should be followed in this case, and those women who have passed the degree examination should be provided with all the rights associated with these degrees" (Zamechaniya, 1862: 525).

It was under the influence of the opinions of the professors' councils that a note was added to §100 of the new university statute draft (1863), permitting admission of women to universities provided they have passed specific tests.

The fate of the whole higher education system was determined by a random fact: at the end of 1861, among those who were arrested during student riots there was a woman attending a university. Therefore, the commission that was considering the final statute, turned the note down. Upon the introduction of the university statute of 1863, the issue of female higher education was silenced even in the press, so Russian women had nothing left but to escape abroad. In Western Europe, a considerable share of students were Russian, especially in universities in Paris, Geneva, Zurich and Bern (Ovtsyn, 1887: 41).

It was then when a group of advanced women, led by M.V. Trubnikova, N.V. Stasova, A.P. Filosofova, E.N. Voronina, as well as A.N. Beketov, as a member of the university commission, filed a number of petitions for the organization of higher education for women. First, they submitted a request to the rector of the St. Petersburg University to arrange lectures for women given by the university professors in their free time.

The rector had to apply to the Minister of Education for permission. However, D.A. Tolstoy then resolutely refused, pointing out that at the moment it was impossible to allow mere private lectures by the university professors. But at the end of 1869, after lengthy negotiations he agreed to public lectures readings by the university professors for people of both sexes on the basis of existing decrees on public lectures, rather than special women's courses. In fact, he agreed to this solely because, in view of the impossibility of obtaining university education in Russia, in the early 1870s, to obtain this, quite a few women went abroad, namely, to Switzerland, where they easily fell under the influence of socialist and anarchist propaganda to sheer displeasure of the government.

Therefore, it was the "protective" point of view that made it desirable to provide women with at least some opportunity to obtain higher or professional education at home. By 1875, the number of listeners of the Vladimirskiye evening courses for each subject amounted up to 40 people (Ovtsyn, 1887: 34). Both the Lubyanskiye women's courses, being quite famous, that were opened earlier – in 1868–1869 (in 1880 they were awarded the higher courses status) and the Alarchinskiye courses in St. Petersburg had teaching plans that copied the ones of men's gymnasiums (Margolin, 1915: 8; Ovtsyn, 1887: 35-36).

The struggle of Russia's advanced public for women's education, as well as the growing trend for young women to go abroad and get familiar with revolutionary ideas, forced the government to authorize the opening of various private women's courses. Thus, higher women's educational institutions were set up following a private initiative, and were allowed to open in university cities with the permission of count D.A. Tolstoy, Minister of Education (decree of April 9, 1876).

The start of higher female education in Russia was associated with the establishment of public higher women's courses (HWC) in the European part of the country, namely, in Moscow (1872), St. Petersburg (1878), Kazan (1876) and Kiev (1878).

The HWC in Moscow, established by V.I. Guerrier, were opened on November 1, 1872 in the building of the First men's gymnasium in Volkhonka, became the first higher educational institution in Russia with a university programme for women. And this was achieved thanks to the

activities of the outstanding Russian scientists, who were the first to start teaching at the courses free of charge as well as the ones who made it possible to have adopted the experimental charter of higher women's courses.

In 1874, a group of professors of the Kazan University, upon receiving approval for the extension of the cycle of natural-historical and mathematical courses, presented to the university council "a draft project for the establishment of higher women's education courses at the Kazan Imperial University in view of the need for female higher education felt by many as well as claimed from different sides, which the government itself countenances" (Shokhol', 1912: 183). Both the University council and the trustee of the Kazan academic district (KAD) reacted to the professors' proposal favourably and forwarded to the Ministry of Education (ME) their request to open women's courses along with the project and programme. The higher women's courses were opened in Kazan on October 3, 1876, as a two-year experiment based on the model of the already existing higher courses by Professor V.I. Guerrier in Moscow (NART, F. 92, Op. 1, D. 14815. L. 15).

The famous Bestuzhevskiy courses are traditionally considered as the third already functioning higher educational institution of the university type. They were opened on September 20, 1878 in the building of The Alexandrovskaya women's gymnasium. It was made possible thanks to the professors of the St. Petersburg University, who had been supporting the idea of the development of female higher education since the late 1850s (Pokrovskaya, 1906: 1-2).

Higher courses for women in Kiev, better known as the University of St. Princess Olga, date back to 1874, when a group of professors of the Kiev University, led by A.I. Selin, filed a request for pedagogical courses for women. Higher women's courses, also based on the courses by V.I. Guerrier, were opened on October 4, 1878 in Frommet's house in Bibikovskiy Boulevard (Nestrel'yay, 2017). It should be pointed out that the opening of the Kiev courses was initiated by women (Alekseeva, Antonovich, Vatinova, Gogotskaya, Gorokhova, Pokrovskaya, Tolochinova), who had raised the initial funds (500 roubles).

The founders of the courses were university professors, namely, N.V. Sorokin in Kazan, K.N. Bestuzhev-Ryumin in St. Petersburg, V.I. Guerrier and S.M. Solovyev (it was on his behalf that the courses were given permission to be opened) in Moscow, S.S. Gogotsky in Kiev (Nekrasova, 1882: 192).

All the complexities and contradictions of the courses' foundation period were fairly clearly represented in the solemn opening ceremonies. Thus, the opening of The Moscow HWC took place not in the university, but in the assembly hall of the First men's gymnasium, which placed emphasis on the status of the educational institution. As remembered by E. Nekrasova (one of the students), the priest, while trying to prove the statement that "female education does not in the least contradict with the Christian religion," nevertheless emphasized "that woman takes a noble position as mother as well as wife". S.M. Solovyov, pointing to the unsatisfactory level of women's education, noted, that "women fail to understand or share the interests, ideals of an educated man... They are hard to deal with," and therefore, it was decided to open the HWC, "which could give women higher general education" (Nekrasova, 1882: 192). It should be noted though that there was no such phrase, direct or otherwise, in the published solemn speech given by S.M., but almost all of that speech emphasized the priority of the general, not applied higher education for everyone, including men (Polozhenie, 1872: 10-17). Naturally, these words were perceived by the listeners with discontent as some were eager to major in specific subjects rather than being taught general courses (i.e. the demand was not for classical, but applied higher education, which could provide ample opportunities for professional and social self-fulfillment), while other listeners were offended by the reduction of the purpose of the courses "to turning female students into educated wives" (Nekrasova, 1882: 193). The aim of such actions on the day of triumph of all social forces that advocated the cause of women's education was to pay respect to the government, in order to, perhaps, reconcile the latter with new realities.

The ultimate objective of HWCs was to provide girls who had finished gymnasium and institute courses with an opportunity to continue their further general education as well as prepare a sufficient number of teachers with a good education level to work at senior grades of women's gymnasiums and institutions. While comparing the objectives of the courses with the rights their graduates acquired, one can note their explicit focus teaching, as, at the legislative level, the courses graduates were only entitled "the right to teach all subjects in upper grades of women's gymnasiums [and later at the home instructors institutions – author's note], thus receiving all rights, including pension ones", as well as

(though limited) “the right to teach in 4 junior classes of men’s secondary educational institutions concerning those subjects that are related to the branches of science that they themselves had studied at higher education institutions” (Margolin, 1915: 24-25).

A girl was to have a secondary education degree to be admitted to the courses; also, all applicants were required to produce a home teacher certificate (Ovtsyn, 1887: 38), which was most likely related to the narrow focus of their subsequent employment, since neither teaching science nor teaching techniques were given at the courses.

Those willing attend the HWCs could be registered as credit students or noncredit students. The former were to attend classes of all compulsory subjects, answer questions while in class and at rehearsals, undergo a final examination to obtain a certificate of successful completion of the courses, while the latter were admitted to the courses provided there were enough seats and the convenience of the premises allowed that. They were not allowed to take the final examination, except for some cases (NART, F. 92, Op. 1, D. 12512. L. 5).

Most of the teaching staff of the courses consisted of universities professors, as well as others being entitled to teach. Thus, at the higher women’s courses in Moscow among the teaching staff there were professors of the Moscow University F.A. Bredikhin, F.I. Buslaev, N.G. Vinogradov, V.I. Guerrier, I.F. Klein, V.O. Klyuchevsky, V.F. Miller, A.G. Stoletov, N.I. Storozhenko, N.S. Tikhonravov, A.N. Schwartz, A.I. Chuprov; Professors of the Kazan University N.N. Bulich, N.A. Firsov, N.A. Osokin worked at the HWC in Kazan; Professors of the St. Petersburg University, A.N. Butlerov, A.N. Veselovsky, N.I. Kareev, D.I. Mendeleev, E.V. Tarle, F.F. Zelinsky, S.F. Platonov, I.M. Sechenov, S.A. Wengerov worked at the HWC in St. Petersburg; Professors of the Kiev University G.K. Suslov, V.S. Ikonnikova, O. Shklyarevsky, M.E. Vaschenko-Zakharchenko, O.O. Kotlyarevsky, F.M. Garnich-Garnitsky and S.S. Gogotsky worked at the HWC in Kiev.

The hardest issue after overcoming all the bureaucratic obstacles to be allowed to open the courses was always the financial one. Unfortunately, the HWC was denied a government grant; the ME only provided certain support for women’s courses in the form of an annual grant of 1,000 roubles (Derevitskiy, 1902: 5). Therefore, the lectures attendance fee was the main source of subsistence. The noncredit students paid an hourly fee of three roubles per hour at the Kazan courses (NART, F. 92, Op. 1, D. 14815. L. 12) and five roubles for per subject at the Bestuzhevskiy courses. No students were admitted free of charge. It should be noted that was a lot of money for the time under consideration. Almost everywhere, the professors expressed their willingness to lecture free of charge during the first year. Voluntary donations made by certain societies or individuals were an additional source of subsistence.

In Kazan, in addition to the funds raised for attendance, certain donations were made by professors N.N. Bulich (100 roubles), N.V. Sorokin (100 roubles), N.A. Osokin (710 roubles) (NART, F. 92, Op. 1, D. 14815. L. 16). One can see how considerable these donations were by taking into consideration that, firstly, the professors lectured free of charge, i.e., they sacrificed their labour activities and time. Secondly, only if there was any money left, it was split up between the teachers according to the number of lectures being given as a reward for their work. And the annual hour at the Kazan women’s courses was paid at an average of 200-220 roubles, whereas the number of practical classes and seminars was not taken into account at all (Osokin, 1878: 438).

Some teachers in Kazan, as well as at other HWCs, donated a part of their fee earnings in favor of talented though needy students, since §23 of the HWC Rules allowed exemption from paying attendance fee provided private payments have been made in favour of such category of students. Meanwhile, it should be noted that the Kazan courses never received any of such payments. Despite the lack of funds, the courses were launched and became a success within two years.

The situation at the Bestuzhevskiy courses was partially different as substantial donations were regularly made by the Society for the Delivery of Funds to Higher Women’s Courses organized by A.P. Filosofova under the chairmanship of the rector of the St. Petersburg University, Professor A.N. Beketov, whom N.V. Stasova thought to be “the strongest competitor, employee and our assistant in all matters, despite having a lot of responsibilities at the university and worries about his huge family, which was totally dependent on him” (Stasova, 1899: 217). Some of the professors who lectured at the courses, namely, D.I. Mendeleev, A.M. Butlerov, I.M. Sechenov and others were among the courses’ regular sponsors. Baron O.I. Ginzburg annually contributed 1,000 roubles. O.N. Rukavishnikova, in addition to the donations, was the initiator of charity evenings and

concerts in favor of women's courses. Two societies, i.e., the ones of "aiding to the students" and "aiding to the graduates" helped both the students and graduates. In addition, since 1879 the St. Petersburg courses began to receive state funding (Rozhdestvenskiy, 1902: 514), and another 3,000 rubles provided by the city since 1882 (Zinchenko, 1901: 29). In addition, even private fund raising for the courses was limited, since "the Ministry of Internal Affairs banned newspaper publications on both accepting donations for the courses and subscribing for lectures attendance" (Zinchenko, 1901: 28). Nevertheless, even in the capital, attendance fees accounted for about 80 % of all earnings for the first period of the history of the courses (Ovtsyn, 1887: 39).

The financial situation of the higher women's courses in Kiev was also quite good as public donations were significant, but no proper distribution system was organized by the pedagogical council and board of the trustees. According to A.N. Derevitskiy, "on January 1, 1886, the pedagogical council and board of the trustees the courses had raised a total of 167,247 roubles for the current needs of the institution, besides the donations for special purposes making up to 21,320 roubles" (Derevitskiy, 1902: 11).

It should be noted that in both the capitals and provincial cities, the local city administration showed, as the periodical press noted, "shameful" indifference to the situation and needs of higher women's educational institutions during their entire existence. Though the St. Petersburg city administration was an exception to a certain extent. The insufficiency of the public funds inflow in favour of female higher education was influenced by the opinion of public figures as most of them failed to support the development of female higher education. This situation caused, first of all, the material constraint of the higher women's courses in the provincial cities, in particular, in the city of Kazan. According to M.L. Peskovskiy, a supporter of women's education, "some philanthropists do not go to the aid of higher women's education because they are not sufficiently familiar with its past and brilliant results that have been achieved so far; others, upon hearing the voices of false protectors, are likely to look at the higher women's education, being one of the most exalted manifestation of Russian social life, as something illegal" (Peskovskiy, 1882: 122).

The Kazan society reacted to the courses indifferently. N.A. Osokin wrote about this, "The Kazan public itself reacted with phlegmatic indifference to the opening of courses, and to their further destiny. Nobody came with the offer of their donations for the cause of higher women's education; nobody undertook to pay the required fee for a needy student; the so-called trustee council, working for the philanthropic purposes in Moscow, failed to be set up in Kazan; the concert that had been organized by the founder (N.V. Sorokin) and myself (that is, N.A. Osokin) raised a very insignificant amount of money" (Osokin, 1878: 435). Only the sympathy for the courses extended by the Kazan University, which provided the HWC an opportunity to use its classrooms and laboratories free of charge, supported the courses, thus significantly reducing the costs and maintaining their sustainability.

The striking poverty of the Kazan HWC did not stop the initiators from immediately putting the matter firmly and drawing the attention of the studying young women to serious scientific university-like work.

After the two successful years of the courses educational activities in Kazan, the pedagogical council resumed applying for permission to be called the higher women's courses at the Kazan University, in order to give more thoroughness to the courses and strengthen their scientific authority. However, before this idea was accepted, there was a decree issued by the ME, which determined the private status of the courses like that of other private educational institutions, thus making them subordinate in terms of general supervision and reporting to the AD trustee. In our opinion, the courses had never had the official nature, since they were launched upon the initiative of several professors along with the assistance of the university council. In the third year of the history of the Kazan courses (March 26, 1879) at the suggestion of their founder N.V. Sorokin the general curriculum of the courses was divided into two specialties, namely, historical-philological and physico-mathematical. Thus, the two departments were established taking the corresponding university faculties as the model, though being characterized by a two-year period of study.

The Moscow courses almost immediately acquired a historical and philological focus. There was also a two-year training course, in 1879 it was increased to three years. The Bestuzhevskiye courses in St. Petersburg had three departments: historical-philological, physico-mathematical and applied mathematical, the second and the third being differentiated only since the second grade. The teaching course, though originally designed for three years,

became a year longer since 1881 (Margolin, 1915: 8-9). The Kiev courses, like those in Kazan, had two departments: historical-philological or historical-philosophical and physico-mathematical. However, they adopted a three-year duration of study since the second year of their educational activities, and a four-year one two years later, just as The Bestuzhevskiye courses did (Derevitskiy, 1902: 11).

The curricula in all subjects were approved by the trustees of the academic districts, but they were not strictly regulated and allowed the pedagogical councils of women's courses, consisting of the teachers working there, to make adjustments to the content of training, in particular, in curricula and course programmes. So, among the compulsory subjects of the Moscow courses there were Russian literature, general literature, general history, history of Russia, history of civilization, history of art, physics. Foreign languages, mathematics and hygiene were taught to those who wished that. Later, solely for the pedagogical purposes, astronomy, encyclopedia of natural sciences and hygiene were introduced (Zotova, 2012: 147).

For all subjects, compulsory practical classes or experimental lectures were provided at all departments. At the historical-philological department, practical classes consisted of writing essays and abstracts on various topics, while laboratory work was added at the physico-mathematical department (Derevitskiy, 1902: 6). A distinctive feature of the Kiev HWC was having a great number of non-compulsory subjects while not enough practical training.

In Kazan, the following subjects were read at the historical-philological department: Russian grammar and history of Russian literature, natural history, general history, Russian history, history of philosophy, German literature, English, history of physical and mathematical sciences, and hygiene. The course of the physico-mathematical department consisted of natural science, geometry, algebra to geometry application, geography, physics, history of philosophy, hygiene, chemistry, history of physics and mathematics, English (Peskovskiy, 1886: 62). In November 1881, the curriculum was supplemented by teaching aesthetics and chemistry, which meant that the programme of teaching at both courses was finally established. In 1884, at the suggestion of N.A. Osokin, teaching of Latin was introduced as a non-compulsory subject (Peskovskiy, 1886: 62). In general, despite the introduction of special departments, the Kazan HWC kept their focus on general educational, especially at the historical-philological department.

Reading lectures at the Kazan courses took place in the university classrooms in the afternoon, i.e. during the time off university lectures. In those days, when lectures at the university were not read, there were no classes at the courses either. There were also evening lectures at the Bestuzhevskiye courses, originally operating in the gymnasium's building (Pokrovskaya, 1906: 2).

The students came from different parts of Russia. In St. Petersburg and Moscow, for example, quite a few students were from remote regions of Russia (Zhukov, 2015: 98). In Kazan, in addition to locals, there were students from Astrakhan, Tambov, Kiev, and Tomsk. In Kiev, the first students were the city's residents, and only 12 people were from Odessa and Kharkov (Derevitskiy, 1902: 11).

The students attending the courses came from different social strata. However, the vast majority came from the wealthy strata of the population. In the first decade of the Bestuzhevskiye courses, daughters of both the nobility and officials were a dominating group; in subsequent years the proportion shifted towards those from different social classes (Zhukov, 2015: 98). In Kazan, in the 1876/77 school year 14 students came from the families of the nobility or officials, 5 students came from the clergy families, 6 were children of the honorary citizens and merchants, and 2 came from the bourgeois families (NART, F. 92, Op. 1, D. 14815. L. 12).

Examinations at the courses were conducted annually to check the students' knowledge. Both the examinations and requirements for them were strict and voluminous. According to the memoirs of T.N. Klochko, a student at the Bestuzhevskiye courses, "examinations in mathematics consisted of two tasks and two theoretical questions, their presentation taking up to 4 pages of large format. The students who tried to pass the examinations without revising were called "happy-go-luckies." They were not respected and did not stay long at the courses" (Klochko, 1971: 25). An indispensable condition for obtaining a certificate of completion of the full course was making a special course essay or dissertation (Derevitskiy, 1902: 6).

As a rule, noncredit students were not tested. Nevertheless, at almost all the courses, even they expressed willingness to be tested in all subjects.

The works by the students of the Kazan courses, presented by the end of the second year of training (1878), were as often as not of the same quality level as the works by the best university students. According to the reports of the professors and the scientific supervisors, the following works were singled out: the ones by Lydia Kvashnina on “The internal state of Russia in the 17th century according to Kotoshikhin” as well as “On the Spirit of the Laws” by Montesquieu; by Elizaveta Kotelnikova on “The Kazan take in 1552”, by Elizaveta Milovidova “Alexander Nevsky”, by Alevtina Romanova “A brief overview of Russian textbooks on world history in terms of their applicability to the general educational goals of secondary schools” (Osokin, 1878: 437). Thus, it can be concluded that the students did not only dwell upon purely historical topics, but also turned their attention to their further pedagogical activities.

The pedagogical council of the Bestuzhevskiy courses annually awarded the students’ best works. So in the 1882/83 academic year, the following works were awarded: on chemistry by Davydova, on Russian history by Alexandrova, on mathematics by Serdobinskaya and Schiff, and the works by Siryatskaya, Peggerson, Balabanova, Golubkova, Efron and Chaychinskaya in 1884/85 academic year.

In 1878, there was the first graduation at the Kazan HWC. The final tests, conducted in April 1878 in the presence of the KAD trustee, showed the good quality of the classes and the students’ readiness to go through their studies. A total of 29 students (25 credit students, 4 noncredit students) completed the course; 4 of them received excellent assessment marks in all subjects (Lydia Kvashnina, Augusta Lavrova, Sofya Kotelova, Elizaveta Kotelnikova), 17 students received an average total “above good”, 8 students received an average total “below good” (Osokin, 1878: 437).

Despite the good level of education at the HWC, “yet it still fails to be equal to the university one. It is the initiators of the courses who consider them to be only the first stage in the development of a true higher educational institution for women in Russia” (Ovtsyn, 1887: 36).

All those who had completed the course expressed their willingness to devote themselves to teaching in secondary schools. However, in order to obtain the right to teach in all degrees of women’s educational institutions, under the order of the ME issued on March 11, 1878, the graduates had to pass special tests at university faculties. Therefore, following the same decree, the councils of universities were to draft rules to provide special tests. Then the project was to be considered by the board of trustees, and then to be submitted to the ME for approval. It should be noted that it was already in May 1878 that the council of the Kazan University presented its draft to the ministry.

The project was drawn up at joint meetings of the historical-philological and physico-mathematical faculties as applied to the rules of the ME for the testing of teachers of gymnasiums and progymnasiums, except for an examination in ancient languages as having been replaced by other subjects. The test subjects consisted of principal and additional ones, the applicants could give their answers either in written form or orally.

According to the Kazan draft, all those who had completed the secondary women’s educational institutions, as well as domestic teachers certified in three subjects (Russian, arithmetic, history with geography), were admitted to take part in the tests. The advantage of the HWC graduates was that they were to be exempt from being tested in additional subjects.

A total of 575 Russian women received higher education at the Kazan HWC. 152 women graduated from the course with a diploma (NART, F. 92, Op. 1, D. 16622. L. 10). 2,500 students graduated from the Bestuzhevskiy courses in 1878-1885 (Ovtsyn, 1887: 40). The Kiev Courses had 1,098 graduates, of whom “about 200 people passed all the required examinations, while 75 completed a full four-year course, but were not subjected to final tests” (Derevitskiy, 1902: 11).

Higher women’s courses made a huge contribution to the development of culture and education in Russia. Among the courses’ graduates there are such prominent figures as the poetess A.A. Akhmatova (Kiev), writers: O. Forsh, A.A. Karavaeva, E.M. Prilezhaeva-Barskaya, T.D. Russes (St. Petersburg), Z.S. Ivanova (Moscow), actresses: L. Block, E.I. Timme, O.G. Klementyeva (St. Petersburg), artist M.P. Chekhova (Moscow), as well as people of name in education N.K. Krupskaya and E.I. Likhacheva (St. Petersburg), first woman to receive a doctorate in history O.A. Dobyash-Rozhdestvenskaya (St. Petersburg), first Russian female astronomer S.V. Romanskaya (St. Petersburg), mathematics: Academician P.Ya. Polubarinova-Kochina and Professor V.I. Schiff (St. Petersburg), and others.

Table 1. Number of students at the higher women's courses (NART, F. 92, Op. 1, D. 16622. L. 9; NIOR RGB, F. 70, Op. 72, D. 11. L. 1-28; Valk, 1965: 5)

Academic year Name of the courses (opening date)	Number of students			
	The Moscow courses by I.V. Guerrier (1872)	The Kazan courses (1876)	The Bestuzhevskiy courses (1878)	The Kiev Courses (1878)
1872-73	58	-	-	-
1873-74	103	-	-	-
1874-75	116	-	-	-
1875-76	117	-	-	-
1876-77	116	96	-	-
1877-78	99	113	-	-
1878-79	106	85		324
1879-80	107	55	789	
1880-81	183	36	840	
1881-82	169	43	938	708
1882-83	179	32	217	
1883-84	213	24	163	
1884-85	256	43	112	
1885-86	227	47	39	195

Thus, we can conclude that, in general, over the years under study, the Kazan HWC were characterized by having a small number of students. The rapid increase in the number of female students in the first two years can be explained by a big number of young women, who were looking forward to being admitted to higher education. This phenomenon was typical for all other women's courses. According to M.L. Peskovsky, the number of female students was usually settled between the third and fifth year while the courses are in operation, and then rose steadily with different speed, provided the financial situation of the educational institution was favorable, and there were no hindrances. This was a general trend in the dynamics of the number of the students of all the courses (Peskovskiy, 1886: 63).

The decrease in the number of the students could be clearly seen in the third year (1879/80). In fact, even taking into consideration scarceness of the funds, there should have been at least 100 students, but for the decree by the ME issued in July 1879 concerning noncredit students. According to that, noncredit students could be admitted to the courses only "as an exception, following the decision of the pedagogical council of the courses. Such applicants are required to have been born into the families living in Kazan, or to have a steady job in the city, another requirement being personal acquaintance of the AD trustee to the applicant. The trustee is to provide a special permission for the applicant as well as is to bear full responsibility for the person" (Pravila, 1879: 1; NART, F. 92, Op. 1, D. 12512. L. 66).

Thus, this decree basically made null and void that part of "The Courses Regulations" which stated that noncredit students were admitted provided there were enough seats and the convenience of the premises allowed that. Taking into account the population of Moscow and St. Petersburg, both being over a million people each, then the decree of the ME did not play any significant role for them. But for the higher women's courses in Kazan, the city with just about 150 thousand residents, this decree did affect the number of female students.

In subsequent years, due to the above-mentioned decree, the number of noncredit students was immediately reduced by the local educational administration to eight people in 1879/80 academic year, to seven in 1880/81, to five in 1881/82 and 1882/83 (NART, fund 92, inv. 1, file 16622: 9). Judging by the official information, the Kazan educational administration actually applied a new rule to the extent that the Ministry of Education never meant to.

Such severity in relation to the Kazan HWC struck this young institution especially hard, finally undermining its unfavourable financial situation. The small number of students at the Kazan

courses during the later period meant that the institution eventually failed to tackle financial constraints. All this was soon to lead to its natural death.

As the female higher education system progressed, a significant part of the society, kept on denying its usefulness and predicted failure. In this, they were supported by a part of the press. Even at the beginning of the XX century, when the educational system for women was already highly developed, conservative hysteria was at its peak. For example, one of the authors, while trying to justify uselessness of keeping the women's educational system running, estimated that only 30% of the graduates were healthy enough to take up social or civil service provided that two-thirds of the capable graduates were eager just to get married, while the rest would not be capable of working at full capacity (Dididze, 1911: 2).

All kinds of accusations and criticism towards the courses could also be found in upper ruling spheres. These complaints were brought to the attention of the emperor. Therefore, in order to find out whether the information was correct, he demanded that it should be checked by the chief of the gendarmes, Adjutant General Drenteln, who was able to attest to correctness of certain accusations against the courses, mainly relating to the arrangement of courses, curriculum setting, etc.

However, considering the archival materials on the Kazan HWC, it can be concluded that the students of the Kazan courses were diligent in attending classes. Despite the inconvenient evening hours, despite the weather, often being quite stormy, they always came without delay in the university's classrooms, some of them getting from remote parts of the city. Only being sick could keep them at home. Not being content with passive listening to the lectures and writing down the highlights, they compiled them carefully at home using a variety of printed sources. For example, the teacher of the general history N.A. Osokin, while looking through lectures on his subject, concluded that there was very little to be added. This is just one positive aspect of the courses that can characterize their educational activities.

Despite the success of female higher education, the government saw the revolutionizing influence of education, especially higher education, on young women. Therefore, in the period of the restriction of education, women's educational institutions were the first victims of czarist autocracy. Since the government was frightened by the revolutionary-democratic movement of the 1880s, it closed a number of women's courses. In 1884, a special decree was issued by the ME, putting an end to students admission at the Kazan courses (Sbornik postanovleniy, 1895: 711). Two years later, the same was done concerning the rest of the courses (Rozhdestvenskiy, 1902: 628). Thus, the junior grades of the courses were to be gradually closed, the ones being always the most populous strictest in terms of following the curriculum.

The background for this decree was the fact that the ME had established a special commission under the chairmanship of the deputy minister to work out a new set of regulations for higher women's courses. It was due to this decision that the course of life at the courses was disrupted and the amount of the attendance fees significantly dropped. It took an extreme strain of all means to let students of the senior grades to complete their studies.

It should be especially emphasized that, along with the reduction of the classical higher and general education, the government took the course on the development of applied education. Almost simultaneously (in 1883) preparations began for the opening of higher women's medical courses, as, according to the remark of the Minister of Education, I.D. Delyanov, their establishment "would be much more expedient and useful than the higher women's courses" (Rozhdestvenskiy, 1902: 629). As a result, the St. Petersburg Women's Medical Institute was opened in 1897 (Margolin, 1915: 11).

At the second stage of female higher education development, the activities of the higher women's courses were resumed in St. Petersburg (1889) and Moscow (1900). That, as well as the opening of new courses, became possible only at the beginning of the 20th century, when under the pressure of the revolutionary movement, the government was forced to make certain concessions in women's education.

Over all these years (1886 to 1905), Russian society proved that there was the need for the scientific education of women at that period. The women's demand for higher pedagogical education was so intense that, for example, every year, short-term pedagogical courses, that were repeatedly opened in various cities of the Kazan province, had to turn down a lot of women, who were actually entitled to become their students, as their number nearly doubled the one of the available places (Magsumov, Nizamova, 2016: 691).

On the other hand, women's secondary educational institutions constantly had a shortage of teaching and educational personnel who had the appropriate scientific nature training, since the teachers of the upper grades of women's secondary schools were required to be good not only at the subject being taught, but also at related sciences to the extent of the university programme. Nevertheless, according to the archival data, applications for the resumption of the Kazan higher women's courses activities appeared only 15 years after their closure.

In 1904, with the permission of the KAD trustee, a committee for the organization of higher women's courses in Kazan was formed, its members being the professors of the Kazan University. However, the draft of the courses regulations was not approved by the ME due to the weak financial aspect of the project (Ot komiteta, 1904: 264-265). A similar refusal was received in 1905. Only under the influence of the first Russian revolution of 1905–1907, which had made millions of Russians involved in public social activities, on December 3, 1905, the ME was allowed to open private HWCs with education programmes other than those of secondary schools.

At the third inter-revolutionary stage, there was a rapid growth in the number of women's universities as well as introduction of specialization in higher women's education. On July 18, 1906 the ME allowed opening of the HWC in Kazan, but with the only historical-philological faculty, though the Kazan committee's draft initially included three faculties, namely, historical-philological, physico-mathematical and law faculties.

During the same year, the HWC was reopened in Kiev consisting of historical-philological, physico-mathematical and law faculties. Nevertheless, there were totally not enough women's universities, as evidenced by the colossal competition among the applicants: in 1904, more than 900 applications were submitted to the Women's Medical Institute, and only 250 people were enrolled; there were 1230 applications for 550 places at the St. Petersburg HWC. In 1905, the former institution got 1,555 applications and enrolled 200 students while the latter got 950 applications and enrolled 600 students (Pokrovskaya, 1906: 4). It should be noted that from December 1905 to January 1913, over 30 permissions for the opening of courses were given, i.e., the number of courses opened over those seven years is five times as big as the one over the previous 40 years (Shokhol', 1913: 2).

Finally, in 1911, women's education, in terms of its legal status, approached that of men as the courses had programmes that had been approved by the ME, which eventually gave them a status equal to the one that universities had; thus, their graduates were allowed to take state examinations at universities, receiving a full-rate degree (Margolin, 1915: 17-25).

5. Conclusion

5.1. The establishment of women's higher education in Russia became possible thanks to the broad social movement of the 1860s in the context of implementing the course for the modernization of the country. It took place along with the formation of the "women's issue" in Russia and, in terms of this aspect, made Russia ahead of the West.

5.2. The first stage of this process was characterized by the establishment of women's higher courses at universities. The model of establishment, the one chosen by the government, characterized the traditionalist and conservative foundations of the Russian state and, especially, its educational department. The authorities implemented the technology, the one being used at universities in the first half of the 19th century to set up privileged general education institutions, while limiting the possibility of professional fulfillment of graduates to the educational sphere.

5.3. Lack of state support along with meager or no financial assistance for the provincial courses from local community did not become a serious hindrance to the development of women's education. The distinguished professors and advanced public forwarded their knowledge, energy, potential and finances to modernize the higher school.

5.4. Universities and their professors played a significant role in the development of women's higher courses as universities lodged the courses, while the professors as often as not taught free of charge. Thus, enhanced by the gradual convergence of curriculum content of both universities and courses, the courses provided a high level of training for graduates.

5.5. The courses increased the number of Russians who had access to higher education, as well as enabled thousands of women to change and model their own way of life, improve quality of life and raise social status, giving them the opportunity to work in the pedagogical field at women's

secondary educational institutions, and subsequently, in some cases, to be able to engage in intellectual labour.

5.6. The possibility for women to receive higher education, despite all the hindrances of its development, contributed to the establishment of professional women's education, pedagogical education first and foremost, and subsequently medical education. This form of women's education became a kind of national response to the challenges of modernization, an attempt to maintain a certain balance in traditional gender relations.

5.7. The right for women to receive higher education, albeit characterized by limited possibilities for its implementation, and the subsequent granting to the courses graduates (upon meeting a certain number of additional requirements) to equate their degree with the one of university graduates testify to the legalization of the institution of education as both a social institution and value in a modernizing society, thus "removing" the opposition of modernization and traditionalism. Meanwhile, the WHC establishment in the modernization enclaves, namely, capitals and large provincial centers along with declaring equal rights and obvious inequality increased social discontent in these centres and deepened the differences in the way of life and mentality between the centers of modern life and the vast territories of the rest of Russia.

5.8. By the beginning of the 20th century, women in Russia failed to get equal education right with men. Moreover, the state, though being forced to recognize the right of women to receive higher education, which was contrary to the interests of the ruling elite, continued to hamper in every way the practical application of knowledge received by women as the result of studying. Women's higher educational institutions seemed to be the hotbeds of revolutionary ideas to the authorities. Russian women in the fight for equality with men focused their attention on getting both education and profession, aimed at winning equal civil and political rights with men. Women were still not admitted to state and many types of public service.

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