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rpge.contato@gmail.com

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ZHILKIBAEVA, Razilia Rauilovna  
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**EVERYDAY LIFE OF THE PEOPLE'S TEACHERS OF THE RUSSIAN EMPIRE IN  
THE SECOND HALF OF 19TH - EARLY 20TH CENTURIES**

**COTIDIANO DAS PROFESSORAS POPULARES DO IMPÉRIO RUSSO NA SEGUNDA  
METADE DO SÉCULO XIX - INÍCIO DO SÉCULO XX**

**LA VIDA COTIDIANA DE LOS MAESTROS DEL PUEBLO DEL IMPERIO RUSO EN  
LA SEGUNDA MITAD DEL SIGLO XIX - PRINCIPIOS DEL XX**

Razilia Rauilovna ZHILKIBAEVA<sup>1</sup>

**ABSTRACT:** This article examines the features of popular teachers' everyday life in the Russian Empire during the second half of the 19th - early 20th centuries. The study is based on concepts such as everyday life, lifestyle, standard of living, and working conditions. As the part of the study of popular teachers' everyday life, the author focused on the consideration of the material, legal status, living and working conditions, and professional opportunities provided to teachers. Besides, the reasons for the frequent layoffs of national teachers were studied. Based on a deep analysis of historical sources and literature, the author concludes that by the end of the XIX - the beginning of the XX centuries most of the teaching positions in public schools began to be occupied by female teachers, and attempts were made to raise their material and legal status at the legislative level. Despite such attempts, female popular teachers in the Russian Empire had a low professional status in contrast to their male colleagues during the second half of the XIX - early XX centuries. This was because, during this period, woman were not full members of society yet and the processes of women's emancipation in Russia proceeded much slowly than in other countries.

**KEYWORDS:** Everyday life. Lifestyle. Standard of living. Multidisciplinarity. Legal status. Professional status. Popular teacher.

**RESUMO:** *Este artigo examina as características da vida cotidiana dos professores populares no Império Russo durante a segunda metade do século XIX e início do século XX. O estudo é baseado em conceitos como vida cotidiana, estilo de vida, padrão de vida e condições de trabalho. Como parte do estudo da vida cotidiana dos professores populares, a autora focou na consideração do material, status legal, condições de vida e de trabalho e oportunidades profissionais oferecidas aos professores. Além disso, foram estudados os motivos das frequentes dispensas de professores nacionais. A partir de uma profunda análise de fontes históricas e bibliográficas, a autora chega à conclusão de que no final do século XIX - início do século XX a maioria dos cargos docentes nas escolas públicas passou a ser ocupado por professoras, e foram feitas para tentativas elevar seu status material e legal no nível legislativo. Apesar dessas tentativas, as professoras populares no Império Russo tinham um baixo status profissional em comparação com seus colegas homens durante a segunda metade do século XIX - início do século XX. Isso se deve ao fato de que, durante esse período, as mulheres ainda*

<sup>1</sup> Kazan Federal University (KPFU), Kazan – Russia. Assistant of the Department of General and National History, Faculty of Philology and History, Yelabuga Institute. PhD in History. Candidate of Historical Sciences. ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9139-2251>. E-mail: [rasilya91@yandex.ru](mailto:rasilya91@yandex.ru)

*não eram membros plenos da sociedade e os processos de emancipação das mulheres na Rússia ocorreram muito mais lentamente do que em outros países.*

**PALAVRAS-CHAVE:** Cotidiano. Estilo de vida. Padrão de vida. Multidisciplinaridade. Situação jurídica. Situação profissional. Professor popular.

**RESUMEN:** *Este artículo examina las características de la vida cotidiana de los maestros populares en el Imperio ruso durante la segunda mitad del siglo XIX y principios del siglo XX. El estudio se basa en conceptos como la vida cotidiana, el estilo de vida, el nivel de vida y las condiciones laborales. Como parte del estudio de la vida cotidiana de los docentes populares, el autor se centró en considerar el material, la situación jurídica, las condiciones de vida y de trabajo y las oportunidades profesionales que se ofrecen al docente. Además, se estudiaron las razones de los frecuentes despidos de profesores nacionales. A partir de un profundo análisis de las fuentes históricas y bibliográficas, el autor llega a la conclusión de que a finales del siglo XIX y principios del XX la mayoría de los puestos docentes en las escuelas públicas estaban ocupados por maestras, y se realizaron en un intento de elevar su contenido material y jurídico. estatus a nivel legislativo. A pesar de estos intentos, las maestras populares en el Imperio Ruso tenían un estatus profesional bajo en comparación con sus contrapartes masculinas durante la segunda mitad del siglo XIX y principios del siglo XX. Esto se debe al hecho de que, durante este período, las mujeres aún no eran miembros de pleno derecho de la sociedad y los procesos de emancipación de las mujeres en Rusia avanzaron mucho más lentamente que en otros países.*

**PALABRAS CLAVE:** Vida cotidiana. Estilo de vida. Nivel de vida. Multidisciplinariedad. Situación jurídica. Situación profesional. Profesor popular.

## Introduction

Nowadays, history has entered a new stage of its development, in particular, its methodological basis has changed, new approaches and trends have begun to appear in history. These include historical anthropology, the history of everyday life, the history of mentality and others. The development of history within the framework of new trends presupposes its consideration from the point of view of a multidisciplinary approach when history penetrates into other disciplines.

## Methods

The work was carried out considering the principles of scientific objectivity and historicism. The article uses the following methods of scientific knowledge. The historical and genetic method made it possible to trace the evolution of folk teacher legal status. In particular, the paper gives a characteristic of the social and legal status development among folk teachers,

which went along with the reform in the Russian Empire. The use of historical retrospection method allows you to restore an objective picture of historical reality. This method is especially important when they work on a poorly studied problem, as well as when they use unpublished sources.

## **Results and Discussion**

The concept of a lifestyle comes to the fore as the part of the study of folk teachers' everyday life in the Russian Empire during the second half of the XIX century - early XX centuries. Lifestyle is defined as the way an individual or a group lives (The big explanatory sociological dictionary) or a set of consistently reproducible patterns of behavior or cultural practices (MASLENCEVA, 2010). During the period under study, the cultural practices of the Russian Empire population differed depending on occupation type. For example, not all categories of the population could be engaged in teaching, organization of public readings with vague pictures, managing libraries, issuing and reading pedagogical and methodological periodicals, etc. Naturally, these features of everyday life were inherent only to teachers.

Considering the lifestyle of teachers in a historical context, we take the following manifestations as the basis:

- 1) standard of living, including living conditions, and the level of material well-being;
- 2) quality of life, including the forms of free time;
- 3) daily work, including working conditions;
- 4) legal status, including the legal possibilities of teachers.

During the pre-revolutionary period, the gender aspect played a significant role in Russian society. The opportunities for women were severely limited, the women's movement in our country did not develop as it did in Europe. Women were less likely to go to the professional level, because female education in Russia was developed very poorly. The bulk of young girls who were educated in a girls' gymnasium or a diocesan school could become folk teachers. Russian teachers were generally subdivided into male and female teachers, male and female assistants. This also revealed the gender aspect of the education system in Russia.

The profession of a teacher provided an opportunity to gain some independence for young girls, but one cannot say that teachers needed it so much. As Chekhov noted, the teachers who got married, left their place of service more often for various reasons (ZUBKOV, 2010). In general, it should be noted that female teachers had more difficult to endure the hardships of

teaching life. Low financial situation, psychological pressure from the school authorities, local priests, teachers of the law, volost clerks and others often forced female teachers to leave their place of service. Male teachers also had a hard time, but the main reason for the dismissal from the position of a male teacher was low salaries, since a man was also the head of the family.

During the second half of the 19th century, the female teacher numbers increased, and a corresponding decrease of male teacher number took place in the Russian Empire. This was because women began to acquire the professional level, and men were looking for a more profitable job. For example, there were 76.4% of women in rural schools, and 82.9% in urban schools in the zemstvo schools of the Vyatka district during the academic year 1887-1888.

But at the same time, they discussed the fact of inconvenience to keep female teachers who got married, which resulted in frequent dismissals of such teachers. In particular, this happened in the Vyatka province. In 1903, the trustee of the Vilna school district asked the minister's permission to introduce the following provisions: first, "to declare circularly to female employees in the educational institutions that they would lose the right to continue their service without hindrance as teachers or class wardens; secondly, to oblige such persons to sign for the appropriate authorities to issue the orders for filling in vacancies" (The Russian state historical archive). The Deputy Minister P. Markov replied to this petition, that he did not approve:

*to accept that teachers and supervisors of the Ministry of Public Education were dismissed from service when they got married as a general rule, because marriage cannot deprive a teacher of the rights acquired by her education. If, in a separate case, family responsibilities prevent any teacher from successfully fulfilling her former duties during the service, then the issue of leaving her at a gymnasium should be resolved for each case separately (RGIA).*

Let's consider the features of the everyday life of the teachers in the Russian Empire and the difficulties they faced.

Housing conditions were one of the indicators of folk teacher living conditions. More often the teachers had to rent premises, since there were constant movements and there was no guarantee that a teacher would stay in one place for a long time.

The apartments of the folk teachers were often located directly in some school building, which, naturally, limited the teachers greatly. The data on the public education of the Kazan province presents the characteristics of the most inconvenient apartments. "The teacher's apartment is located in the school, but it is inconvenient because there is no separation from the classroom, as it is placed in the classroom itself" (Knyagorsk school of the Mamadysh district

of the Kazan province). “The apartment is located at the school and is separated from the classroom only by a board partition; It is wet, cold, the air is always spoiled in it” (Public education in the Kazan province).

Female teachers, as well as male teachers, had to put up with such living conditions, since low salaries did not allow them to hire more comfortable premises. Let's consider the level of salaries among teachers. During the academic year 1882-1883, the teachers in the public schools of the Vyatka province received the following salary. 36% of teachers (229) received the salary of 100 - 150 rubles. 20% (127 teachers) - 150 - 200 rubles. 38% (242 teachers) - from 200 to 300 rubles. The remaining 32 teachers received the salaries ranging from 0 to 100 rubles per year (NART).

The teachers who participated in the pension fund of national male and female teachers, had the right to receive pensions along with male teachers. They received such a right in the case when they left the service capable of working if they participated in the pension fund for 15 years at least. Participation in the pension fund meant that 6% of the salary was transferred to the pension fund.

They could also receive enhanced pensions if they left the service incapable of work, but only with the participation in the pension fund for 5 years at least (The Charter of the pension Fund of the people's teachers).

Another legal opportunity for teachers was to award them with gold and silver medals. Since 1893, “male and female teachers who attracted the attention of their superiors for a long and useful service were awarded by gold and silver medals with the inscription "For diligence" on the Andreevskaya and Aleksandrovsкая ribbons” (JARANSK, 1908).

Vacations were another option. At the legislative level, no vacation was provided for women. All Russian legislation existed for men exclusively. Nevertheless, the increasing number of female teachers pushed the Ministry of Public Education to focus on the women's issue. In particular, this concerned women's vacation. During the years 1850-1851 a circular decision was made to provide leaves on a general basis for the women who held the posts of female gymnasium teachers (RGIA). So, based on this decision, “all persons serving at women's educational institutions may ask to be dismissed on leave for one month or more for household chores or other needs, but not longer than 4 months” (RGIA).

The teacher daily work consisted of different aspects. The presence or absence of school premises, the frequency of movements of teachers, the relationships with the local population, etc. are of particular interest to us.

The absence of their own buildings in some schools clearly demonstrates the peculiarities of the daily work of folk teachers. This forced the zemstvo to rent premises. In rural areas, peasant huts were hired for these purposes. Newspapers tell about the working conditions in these huts. One teacher who worked in a similar peasant hut in the Oryol district recalled the following.

My class was housed in a rented building with the owner's heating and maintenance. It was a large hut with three tiny windows. The desks had to be moved very close to accommodate about 50 students. The classroom was dark, stuffy, and dirty. The owner did not even want to make one window. "I will not indulge your whims, spoil the frame and freeze the hut." The owners baked bread in the room twice a week and closed the oven early. They didn't care as they lived in another hut, and all the smoke went to us. When we opened the door, the owners said: "Close the door! Otherwise, we will not heat the premise! Why are you letting the heat out?" There were a lot of cockroaches in the hut. They fell from the ceiling on notebooks, crawled over the children heads and clothes. I asked the owners: "Let's freeze the cockroaches in winter, let us skip a day or two". "We will not freeze the hut for you". A member of the Zemstvo Council came. I had the following requests: to make vents, to convince the owners to bake bread in their hut and heat the classroom with zemstvo firewood. And he replied: "If you don't like it, we don't keep you here" (RUSSIA, 1957).

Another characteristic of the teacher's everyday life was the relationship with the local population. Zemskaya teacher from the village of Kurchum, Nolinsky uyezd, Benevitskaya, decided to leave the student after the lessons. She wanted to correct his behavior. The boy's father P. P. Bugrev came to the school when he knew about it and began to scold the teacher with cynical words, and then took his son home. Benevitskaya was terribly frightened and fell ill (VYATSKAYA, 1913). The everyday life of the folk female teachers was greatly overshadowed by the excessively strict teachers of the law, the volost clerks who did not pay their salaries on time, thus, the teachers had to go to the district council several times.

Participation in the revolutionary movement became part of the daily work of female teachers during the period under study. In particular, the dismissal of teachers for political unreliability was not uncommon during the period at the turn of the XIX-XX centuries. The result of such dismissals was a complete ban on teaching. Thus, the Ministry of Public Education recognized necessary to prohibit pedagogical activity in relation to Vera Fomina, a former teacher of the Shilninsk zemstvo school in the Menzelinsky district of the Ufa province (RGIA). Firing teachers was not always justified. "Six teachers have recently been removed from office by the personal power of the Oryol Romanov inspector in the Vyatka province. The only reason for their dismissal was the casual acquaintance and visit of the aforementioned persons by the exiles living in their area" (RGIA). Dvinyaninova, a teacher of the Adyshevsky

school, the daughter of a local priest, who served in this village for 14 years, was dismissed from her position because her brother knew the exiles living in this area (NEW SCHOOL, 1907).

The dismissal of teachers did not always happen unnoticed. There have been the cases when local residents, with whom teachers were very popular and highly respected, came to defend them. This situation arose in the Yaransk district of the Vyatka province. The newspaper "Vyatskaya Rech" (25 April 1908) reported that "the school in the village of Nikolskoye had to be closed, since the peasants declared a boycott of those teachers who would take the place of the teacher Dernova, who was very popular among the Nikolsk peasants" (ORLOV, 1908).

Cultural, racial, social, religious, ethnic heterogeneity of educational groups is a problem of modern education in the context of integration and globalization. This often becomes a reason for misunderstandings, sometimes aggression in the interaction of representatives of opposing worldviews, preferences or traditions (SOKOL, 2021).

## **Conclusions**

The position of female teachers in pre-revolutionary Russian society was rather difficult. On the one hand - the rights and opportunities provided by the kind of service, on the other - oppression and resentment from the authorities and the public. We associate the latter phenomena with the fact that the position of women in society has not yet taken shape during this historical period. On the one hand, woman reached a professional level, began to receive education at various levels and master a profession. On the other hand, the role of women in public opinion was limited to the role of mother and wife, which is associated with the patriarchal nature of Russian society. Under these conditions, a woman had to cope with growing responsibility on the one hand and oppression on the other, also to realize her place in Russian society. Sources show that not all women coped with this situation and were forced to leave their jobs. However, it is not uncommon for female teachers not only to keep their jobs, but also to achieve great success in their field.

## **Summary**

Thus, we have identified characteristics of the everyday life of female teachers, which consisted of such aspects as living conditions, legal security, and everyday work. Analyzing the sources, we concluded that by the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th centuries,

female folk teachers occupied the majority of teaching positions in public schools and, at the same time, had a low financial position and a low professional status in general. However, it is important to note that the attempts have been made to change their legal status at the legislative level. In particular, female teachers had the opportunity to receive pensions, awards, they were given vacation. Further study of the everyday life history of folk female teachers will allow us to determine the overall place of the teaching profession in the social hierarchy of pre-revolutionary Russian society.

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