

## Public initiatives and the genesis of professional commercial education in the Ural region

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**Abstract:** In the context of the emergence of vocational education in the Russian Empire the authors investigate genesis and subsequent development of schools of commerce in the Urals - an important commercial, mining and metallurgical region of Russia located at the crossroads of Europe and Asia. The research is based on the archival sources, pre-revolutionary periodicals, memories and modern historiography. Its purpose is to identify specific features of the origin of business education in the Urals by reconstructing the history of its first commercial institutions and considering the role of public initiatives in the genesis of professional commercial education. History of trading schools and specialized schools of commerce in the Urals confirms the fact that progress in the development of business education in the region resulted from the formation of the urban professional groups and associations at the turn of the XIX - XX centuries.

**Keywords:** commercial education, actors, Ministry of commerce and industry, Board of trustees, the Urals, trading schools, specialized schools of commerce, curricula.

**Introduction.** The history of vocational training in the educational system of different countries is of considerable interest in terms of rethinking the accumulated historical experience. The formation of system of the vocational education is a key element of the multifaceted process of modernization, unfolding in the modern times in different societies in accordance with their historical social and cultural characteristics. In this context it is very important to define the main actors of the process of professionalization, its historical specificity in particular countries and regions, as well as to compare vocational training systems in Europe and Asia. Thus, describing the features of its genesis in Russia, it should be borne in mind that, in contrast to the Western European - a university type - model of education, where professional school has developed on the basis of university education, in the Russian Empire, on the contrary professional school became the source for higher education.

The article focuses on one of the areas of vocational training - commercial education, explored within the largest metallurgical and commercial region of Russia - the Urals. The chronological framework of the study is the period of the late XIX - early XX century, the time of appearance of trading schools in the region in the final stage of the history of the Russian Empire.

**Commercial education in the Russian Empire.** The need for commercial education has increased with the growth of the Russian economy and its foreign relations, but this process has been lengthy, complex and heterogeneous in the vast territory of the Russian Empire. The Russian commercial education originated at the secondary schools. In some gymnasiums the curriculum was extended to study the accounting, trade and economic geography, merchandising, shorthand that allowed pupils to get basic knowledge and start their commercial career without completing any specific institution. Lack of professional commercial schools until the end of the XIX century

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was due to other causes too. In Russia echoes of natural economy sounded for a long time, hampering development of commodity-money production in the central provinces, and particularly in the peripheral regions, including the Urals. The trading activity was also characterized by nepotism, when all the details of a future profession handed down from parents to children.

After the Great Reforms of Alexander II (1860s - 1870s) and the accelerated development of capitalist relations, commercial specialization reaches the point where general education becomes inadequate for a professional merchant (2). The development of trade and industry in capitalist Russia (especially in the late nineteenth - early twentieth century) demanded a lot of people, specially trained for service in commercial and industrial establishments, and the further progress of business education in the various regions of the country was needed. In 1900, in the Ural cities and smaller settlements 39 000 shops and stores were active with sales turnover of 309 mln. rubles. (9. P.112).

Commercial education in Russia started to develop very fast after the publication of the special Regulation on specialized schools of commerce in 1896 (completed in 1900) and transition from the jurisdiction of the Ministry of finance to the Ministry of commerce and industry. Regulation provided for several types of schools of commerce, presenting only the general rules for their establishment and activities. Among these types were specialized schools of commerce and trading schools to train from childhood, trading classes and courses of commerce for training working adults and adolescents. Each educational institution required a special charter, approved by the Minister of finance. Trading school, for example, set a goal of training students in the short term to serve in the commercial and industrial establishments. These schools belonged to the category of lower schools, and could be one-class and three-class (11. P.53). Specialized schools of commerce were secondary and vocational schools, financed by the funds of zemstvo (local authorities), cities, associations and individuals, with three-year and seven-year curricula. First type of them provided merely commercial education, the second - the general and commercial education.

In Russia, until 1896, there were only 8 schools of commerce. Due to the efforts of the state and local public, after the approval of the "Regulations on specialized schools of commerce" (1896) their number increased rapidly: 147 business schools were opened from 1896 to 1902, including 51 specialized schools of commerce, 43 trading schools, 30 trading classes and 23 courses of commercial knowledge. By January 1, 1905 there were already 191 schools of commerce, including 68 specialized schools of commerce (47 public and 21 private), 63 trading schools (40 public and 23 private), 32 commercial classes (30 public and 2 private), and 28 courses of commercial knowledge (8 public and 20 private). In the beginning of the academic year 1903-4 these schools of commerce enrolled 32 316 people, including 18 269 in specialized schools of commerce, 8 029 in trading schools, 4 149 in retail classes and 1 869 people in the courses of commercial knowledge (8). By 1917, the number of schools of commerce exceeded one thousand (7. P.12).

In 1914, the Ministry of commerce and industry issued the Programs for specialized 8-class schools of commerce. They contained comprehensive guidelines for the curricula of the secondary school. The magazine "Commercial Education" explained increase in the number of schools of commerce not so much due to the awareness of the need for business education, but rather the desire to fill the huge gap that existed in the country with respect to all specialized schools, in particular, gymnasiums and real schools (7. P.12).

Community initiatives played a huge role in the creation of schools of commerce and specialized schools, and in their follow-up. Public commercial institutions were guided by the Boards of trustees, formed of representatives of the societies who financed the schools. Board of trustees, in addition to the function of superintendence had some opportunities to participate in the educational process (8). Analyzing financial statements, we uncover that these were mostly

communities and individuals who cared about financing the educational institutions, while the government contributed a few to their development. According to the data for the 1903-04 school year report, the schools of commerce totally received 4 100 000 rubles, including: education fee - 2 414 000 rubles (58.7%), collections from various strata of the society - 537 000 rubles (13.2%), interest on capital and donations - 295 000 rubles (7.3%), charitable capital 266 000 rubles (6.5%), benefits from towns and zemstvos 186 000 rubles (4.5%), from the state treasury 90 000 rubles (2.2%), and the remains of the estimated amounts of 312 000 rubles (7.6%). Expenditure in this period was 3 861 000 rubles (for 152 schools) (8).

**Commercial education in the Urals.** Specially organized commercial education in remote regions of Russia, including the Urals and Siberia started to develop only since the beginning of the XX century, but soon reached a notable success (10). In the Urals, first trading schools opened in the beginning of the twentieth century: 1901 - in Perm, 1902 - in Ekaterinburg, 1908 - in Chelyabinsk and in Vyatka, 1909 - in Ufa, 1910 - in Orenburg. Commercial vocational education in the Urals, as well as in many other Russian cities, was conceived thanks to public initiative. *A trading school in Perm* opened September 2, 1901. Its aim was to teach (with specialized training in accounting) children of the countermen, salesmen and employees of various trading institutions (12. P. 103-104). The idea of a commercial establishment in Perm came to a head of N. Velikoseltsev - a member of the Perm society of countermen. Perm society supported his idea of a trading school in the city. The first major contribution to the future school fund was a donation of 25 000 rubles by E. Lyubimova - the widow of a rich Permian merchant. His son - M. Lyubimov ceded his buildings for a school only for 15 000 rubles. (Buildings were actually estimated at a considerable sum in those days - 40 000 rubles), and the money he got a philanthropist also donated for the purposes of education - in favor of Alexander's secondary school. Thanks to donations from Lyubimov family and energetic actions of members of Board of the countermen, the trading school was successfully established. The majority of students were 13-16 years old boys. The school trained representatives of different classes: children of the nobles, merchants, burghers and peasants. The tuition fee was high (up to 80 rubles per year), not every farmer or tradesman could enroll his child in this school (5. P. 34-36).

January 14, 1907 the school of the Society for the mutual assistance of Perm city countermen opened the *trading classes*. Under the charter "the purpose of the classes was to provide persons of both sexes, all ages, not less than twelve years old, occupied mainly in the service of commercial and industrial establishments, with initial commercial knowledge required in the commercial business." To be enrolled those willing to get this knowledge, had to provide evidence of completion of the course of a lower educational institution (primary, parish, one-class rural or urban parish school) or the results of the appropriate "knowledge test". Preparatory classes for illiterate persons also functioned.

The curriculum of the trading classes included: the law of God, Russian language, national history "in connection with the history of trade in Russia", arithmetic with commercial calculations, accounting, business correspondence, political economy, tax laws, merchandising, foreign language, calligraphy. Each course did not last longer than two years. Courses of specific subjects opened if there was a demand for them (the number of the enrolled should exceed 15 people). Classes were held in the evening, including Sundays and holidays. The academic year lasted from 1 September to 1 May and was completed by the exams. Teaching committee draw up a training program and curriculum (approved by the Ministry of commerce and industry). (State archives of Sverdlovsk region. Fund 82. Register 1. File 46. Folio 1-2).

The next step taken by community of the city was the opening of the Permian public commercial educational institution in the region. Perm Bourse Company and a merchant company, headed by prefect A. Gavrilov initiated establishment of a *specialized school of commerce in Perm*.

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It was opened in 1914 (5. P. 39). Gavrilov patronized the trading school in Perm for many years, he financed equipment of chemistry and physics classrooms and bought typewriters (5. P. 60).

Commercial vocational education in *Ekaterinburg* also institutionalized due to the public initiative. First schools of commerce appeared there thanks to the energy and initiative of the activists from the Society for mutual assistance of countermen of Ekaterinburg. The *trading school* opened October 27, 1902, it operated under the auspices and supervision of this society. At the beginning the school had two classes (first and "prep").

Since the introduction of the idea of a school to its real appearance a lot of time has passed. In 1890 S. Vedrov, the former Chairman of the Management Board of the Society for mutual assistance of countermen in Ekaterinburg, expressed the idea to open a vocational school with the countermen society that would train children for salesmen work. At the same time the fund has been established, the initiator himself donated 300 rubles and 610 rubles were collected by subscription. Yet only 10 years later thanks to the energy of honorary citizen of Ekaterinburg and honorary member of the Society of countermen A. Kozhevnikov the dream was realized. The Management Board endorsed his call to take up the case. December 12, 1900 the General Meeting of the members of this society convened to discuss Kozhevnikov's proposal to open a trading school attached to the society. The meeting supported the idea and decided: the Society would assign annually 500 – 1 000 rubles until the school needs money; to initiate fundraising for the reserve fund, the interest from which would be supplied to the maintenance of the school; to authorize the Board to solicit at the local city council and the local district council for subsidies on trading school and to direct the Board to invite knowledgeable people for the working out of its charter. Subsequently the reserve fund of the trading school raised to 5 000 rubles. The City Council agreed to release each year 1 000 rubles for school maintenance and Ekaterinburg county district council - 500 rubles. Other philanthropists acted as well. March 30, 1901 a project of the trading school charter was ready and on January 25, 1902 it was approved by the Minister of finance. At the same time the Minister has approved the decision of the merchant meeting headed by M. Oshurkov which ruled to impose merchant certificates with a 6% tax in favor of the trading schools (13. P. 62-65). No questions were left about the need for this institution from the moment of its opening, when 90 students enrolled in the school, while 100 people submitted their applications.

A decade later the pedagogical committee of the trading school in Ekaterinburg "welcomed" the Society for mutual assistance of countermen in Ekaterinburg "as a pioneer of business education." The appeal addressed to the Society stated that the establishment of Ekaterinburg trading school, "was extremely valuable on the part of the society that launched the very idea of the need for business education and thanks to the energy of members of society it have got a real implementation." The address read: "Members of the community appreciate the fact that 249 people have graduated from the school course and now are scattered in the Urals and Siberia, benefiting the opportunity to earn money by honest labor for their existence and bring feasible contribution to the prosperity of our dear motherland." (State archives of Sverdlovsk region. Fund 82. Register1. File 46. Folio 5).

By its type Ekaterinburg trading school was three-class school, its own building located in the central part of the city on the Main avenue (State archives of Sverdlovsk region. Fund 62. Register1. File 460. Folio 48). According to its charter, the general superintendence of the school belonged to the Board of trustees, consisting of a chairman, four full members of the Society of mutual assistance of countermen (two of them were to be elected by the general meeting of the society, while the other two were members of the council), the inspector of the school and one member from the Ministry of commerce and industry (in the case of appointment); the Board of trustees, in addition, could be completed with one member from the government, rural and urban

public institutions, which invested in school not less than with 500 rubles per year. (State archives of Sverdlovsk region. Fund 62. Register 1. File 460. Folio 50 reverse).

Board of trustees of Ekaterinburg trading school was composed by well-known entrepreneurs and philanthropists of the city. It decided multifaceted issues: financial, human and partly educational. For example, the idea of establishing a charitable Society for support of impecunious students of the trading school was proposed and implemented, so 10% of the students were exempted from fees because of their poverty. (State archives of Sverdlovsk region. Fund 62. Register 1. File 460. Folio 51 - 52).

In 1913, the Board of trustees of Ekaterinburg trading school came to the conclusion that the school building does not meet with the requirements of modern business school. What was the daily life of students at the school, where students spent much of their time? As building deficiencies the Board of trustees attributed overcrowding of classrooms, lack of space for students in the locker room, "no recreational hall or at least bright corridors, thereby, students during the breaks had to remain in the classroom, or crowded in the room between the classes." The limited school space affected the ability of teaching and quality of the educational process.

The Board of trustees emphasized the task of any trading school "to provide its fosterlings with skills and knowledge that would enable them to quickly orient in any commercial enterprise, and special subjects needed to achieve this, particularly accounting and merchandising". Meanwhile, the city council drew attention to the fact that "in the absence of free space Ekaterinburg trading school could not proceed with the organization of the exemplary office and the introduction of laboratory studies on chemistry and merchandising." Finally, ten years of experience in school work proved that the four-year course for general and special training is not enough. The Board of trustees of Ekaterinburg trading school shared the opinion of the Training division of the Ministry of commerce and industry about model programs for trading schools and a possibility of converting Ekaterinburg trading school in the school with a 5-year course, which required the restructuring of school buildings (State archives of Sverdlovsk region. Fund 62. Register 1. File 460. Folio 2-2 reverse). Unfortunately, the First World War prevented the embodiment of plans developed by the pedagogical council of Ekaterinburg trading school.

Ekaterinburg trading school was maintained mainly thanks to the public and private money, not state funds. For example, according to the data for 1911-1912 academic year, its budget was formed in the following way: 3 000 rubles was the grant from the state treasury, while public charges, grants from the city and zemstvo, societies and individuals, bank interest, education fees and other income reached a total amount of 13 595 rubles 59 kopecks. (State archives of Sverdlovsk region. Fund 62. Register 1. File 460. Folio 53). A cost of annual training per student in Ekaterinburg trading school depended on the maintenance of the building costs and the total number of students. According to the data of the same academic year 1911-1912, maintenance of the institution demanded 11 575 rubles 13 kopecks. The average number of pupils was 131, the annual cost of education per student was 88 rubles 36 kopecks. (State archives of Sverdlovsk region. Fund 62. Register 1. File 460. Folio 54).

The training program in Ekaterinburg trading school included the following subjects: the law of God, Russian, German, arithmetic, algebra, geometry, history, general geography, natural science, commercial math, accounting, business correspondence, commerce, merchandising, commercial geography, calligraphy and drawing. (State archives of Sverdlovsk region. Fund 62. Register 1. File 460. Folio 57).

Special subjects, such as merchandising, commerce, accounting, and commercial correspondence were taught at the second and third grades. In the second class the pupils studied commerce with the introduction of principals of political economy, concepts of needs, benefits, values, prices of production, capital, information on domestic and foreign trade, trade policy

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analysis in the context of the concept of the state, the law and usages of the trade tax, forms of enterprises; in the third grade students got an idea of commercial transactions, credit and markets. (State archives of Sverdlovsk region. Fund 62. Register 1. File 460. Folio 70-71). At the lessons on merchandising visual aids were used. (State archives of Sverdlovsk region. Fund 62. Register 1. File 460. Folio 72 reverse – 73 reverse).

The number of students to the beginning of 1912-13 school year reached 151: in the preparatory class - 45, the first - 43, the second – 34, the third – 29. (State archives of Sverdlovsk region. Fund 62. Register 1. File 460. Folio 61). By the end of 1911-12 school year 124 student were left. One can imagine a historical portrait of a fosterling of Ekaterinburg trading school by the analysis of the annual school records. In terms of religion Orthodox pupils dominated, including the Old Believers - 121 (97.6%), Roman Catholic religion professed one student, one adhered to Lutheranism and one was a follower of Judaism. In terms of social strata the pupils were distributed as follows: children of nobles and officials - 7 (5.6%), children of honorable citizens and merchants - 12 (9.7%), the middle class children - 45 (36.3%), peasants' children - 58 (46.8%), other children - 2 (1.6%). Russians dominated by nationality - 121 (97.57%), representatives of other nations were only three, one Pole, one Latvian and one Jew. Taking into account the profile of the school is not surprising that its pupils were mainly children of the parents whose activity was related to trade, industry and business in general. Regarding the occupation of their parents, the children were distributed as follows: "service and freelance - 17 (13.7%), trade, industry, capitals - 37 (29.8%), commercial and industrial employees - 42 (33.9%), crafts, workers, servants - 17 (13.7%), agriculture - 7 (5.6%), other occupations - 4 (3.2)". Age of students ranged from 11 to 19 years. (State archives of Sverdlovsk region. Fund 62. Register 1. File 460. Folio 62 - 62 reverse). In 1911-12 academic year 20 students graduated the course. School assisted in applying for service or continuing education. Since the founding of the school 250 students graduated from it. (State archives of Sverdlovsk region. Fund 62. Register 1. File 460. Folio 65).

Trading school successfully functioned in Ekaterinburg and was popular with the local population. In September 1913, the Board of the society organized courses of accounting and correspondence, which enrolled about 50 students. In practice about half of those enrolled visited the courses and only 15 people received certificates. (State archives of Sverdlovsk region. Fund 272. Register 1. File 3. Folio 8). Teachers willingly responded to training opportunities. Chairman of the pedagogical committee P. Borodin, for example, visited the Commodity and Natural science courses, organized in St. Petersburg in summer of 1912 by the Department of education at the Ministry of commerce and industry. Such actions were particularly useful at the stage of initial development of business education in Russia. (State archives of Sverdlovsk region. Fund 62. Register 1. File 460. Folio 59).

The school boasted of a large fundamental library consisting of 1 834 titles and 2 336 volumes; besides, there were 2 030 titles of student books. Fundamental library had 80 books of spiritual content, 34 volumes of literature on accounting and business correspondence, 49 books on merchandising and chemistry, 235 textbooks and manuals, 79 books on history, 51 on geography, 64 on natural science, 28 on pedagogy, 55 on public and legal sciences, 55 reference editions, periodicals - 211, art books – 47, fiction - 103 and foreign literature – 140. (State archives of Sverdlovsk region. Fund 62. Register 1. File 460. Folio 76 reverse – 76 reverse).

Newspaper "The Ural life" promoted business education. In particular, it was reported that November 16, 1907 the board of Ekaterinburg Society for mutual assistance of countermen received permission (from the provincial administration) to open in Ekaterinburg courses of accounting, correspondence, commercial arithmetic and general geography. The newspaper article said that the courses would be organized by the society, classes would be held in the evening in the

room of the trading school (Accounting courses at the Countermen society // The Ural life. 1907. November 18. Number 217. P.3).

In Ufa (the capital city of the Bashkir people in the Southern Urals) the idea to organize specialized educational institutions in commerce were expressed in the statements of officials, at meetings of zemstvos and trade companies, in periodicals. In 1903, at the celebration of the 25th anniversary of the Ufa society of mutual credit, a decision was made to organize a vocational school of commerce and to allocate money in a special fund. A Mutual Credit Society, supported by the Ufa provincial zemsky assembly, petitioned to the local and central governments to organize a four-year trading school with one prep and three main classes. By the beginning of 1908 petitions were satisfied by the Minister of commerce and industry. A charter of the *Ufa trading school* was approved in March of the same year, and September 6, 1909 the school was inaugurated. The Board of trustees and the Board of education were the school's authorities. The main functions of the first body were financial, economic matters, human resources, public relations, as well as general issues of students' education. The second body dealt specifically with the questions of educational work. The school organized a Society for welfare of students, the purpose of which was to care about the satisfaction of material and spiritual needs of the inmates. The Society, formed of students, teachers and representatives of the business community, provided financial assistance to pupils in need (4).

Two years after the establishment, in 1911, the school moved into a new two-storey stone building. Its construction required 90 000 rubles, of which 50 000 were released by the state treasury, and the rest was contributed by the Mutual Credit Society. Education in Ufa trading school was not free; the fee was 40 rubles a year, but a significant proportion of children (about one-third of students) were exempt from payment. In total amount of school budget the fees were only 13%. So, in 1911, maintenance of the school costed 24 839 rubles, the sum was collected by grants from institutions (Society of mutual credit, zemstvo, etc.) - 11 258 rubles; donations - 6 810; loan of the Ministry of commerce and industry - 3 000; tuition - 3 410 and interest - 361 rubles (2).

Program of general subjects based on the curricula of real schools. The curriculum allocated 32% of time for special subjects. However the general subjects were also linked with the special ones. The school had and regularly modified a chemical laboratory, physical and natural-historical and geographical studies, commodities samples museum. Teachers organized visits to the enterprises of the Urals, trips to Moscow and St. Petersburg, where students visited commercial and industrial companies, factories, museums, botanical gardens and agricultural exhibition. At the lessons paintings, maps, tables, physical and chemical equipment were at hand (2).

Teachers applied subject, laboratory, heuristic, comparative, analytical techniques and methods in the classes. In terms of forms of teaching, lessons included lectures, new themes classes, lessons for systematization and generalization of knowledge, test lessons, repetition classes, practical and laboratory classes. The school had a 6-day working week, 5 lessons every day lasted for 50 minutes each. The academic year divided into three parts called trimesters. Final examinations included: the law of God, Russian, German, history, commercial arithmetic, bookkeeping with correspondence, commerce, merchandising and commercial geography (2).

In Ufa trading school, as in all professional educational institutions of the region, the fundamental (for teachers) and the student's libraries functioned, formed of educational, scientific and popular literature. In the third year of operation of the school, the library counted 2 602 books, of which 182 were books in foreign languages. The aim of the school was to prepare "students for service in commercial and industrial establishments" and to provide "necessary knowledge for commercial figures." The preparatory class (intended for leveling of knowledge) on the competition

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basis enrolled 11-14 years boys with the knowledge of the course not less than one-class parish schools. Graduated from school received a certificate and were awarded the title of personal honorary citizen; those graduated with honors received the title of Candidate of Commerce. According to the military and other obligations graduates of trading school equated to real school graduates (2).

Composition of students accepted in Ufa trading school was in all respects quite colorful. For example, in the third year of school activities of its 125 students: 40 studied in the preparatory, 41 - in the first, 26 - in the second and 18 in the third grade. Their basic education was very diverse: 35% were graduates of town parochial schools, 22% - two-year specialized schools and 12% - students of gymnasiums. In addition, some students previously attended madrassas, received home education and so forth. Of these, 93 students were residents of Ufa; the others were from the Ufa province. By age they were divided as follows: 11-year-old were 4, 12-year - 18, 13-year - 22, 14-year - 29, 15-year - 15, 16-year - 17, 17-year - 13, 18-year - 7 students. According to the ethnic composition: 112 students were Russian, 7 - Bashkirs; Jews, Poles and Germans were two each. In terms of their social origin, composition of students was quite democratic. Of the total number 79% came from the peasantry and petty bourgeoisie. About 43% of their parents were occupied in trade, next went the artisans, officials, clerks, and others. Ufa trading school delivered annually up to 40 specialists for industrial and commercial spheres (2).

One more institution in Bashkiria specialized in training students for trade and commerce - *Ufa specialized school of commerce* - opened in Ufa on 25 August 1912. Its curriculum was developed for 8 years, focused on both general and vocational education. For rational reasons it was combined with the trading school "in the administrative and financial relations", both schools shared one building and used common educational facilities: library, physics cabinet, chemical laboratory, a trade museum, general textbooks, had one director, common Teaching committee and Board of trustees. Its opening attended the Governor, provincial, school district and city authorities, bankers, businessmen, representatives of the Orthodox and Muslim faiths. Telegrams of congratulations, addresses, prayers of Orthodox and Muslim religions sounded (2).

The purpose of the school was: "to provide general and special education of commerce, as well as prepare for the commercial and industrial activities." The main course in Ufa school of commerce was 8-year long, but since two divisions (junior and senior) of the preparatory class were opened, it turned out that a full term of study at the school was equal to ten years. The director of the new school was simultaneously the head of the trading school. Teachers also mainly worked in both institutions simultaneously. School teachers were highly qualified, 4 of them have completed higher education, remaining 7 were with secondary and secondary education. Tuition in the junior preparatory class costed 60 rubles a year, in the elder - 70, in the 1-3 main classes - 100, and in the 4-8 major classes - 120 rubles. Not always and not all parents paid for their children's education, a permanent system of scholarships granted by the Society of Mutual Credit, zemstvos, city and other organizations existed. The number of accepted students in each class did not exceed 40 people. In terms of their social basis, compared to Ufa trading school, students originated mostly from families of the nobility, clergy, and military men. However, in the specialized school, as well as in the trading school, part of the students represented the democratic strata (petty bourgeoisie, peasants and others). In 1912, the figure was about 73%. 96 pupils of specialized school were Russian, 9 - Bashkirs and Tatars, 6 - Jews and 3 - Germans. In the first years of teaching only general subjects were taught, special subjects were studied from the 6th grade. It follows that the specialized school of commerce up to the 5th grade inclusive acted as a general educational institution, providing uncomplete secondary education (2).

In addition to the above courses, in the main classes students studied: mathematics, history, physics, chemistry, gym, political economy, jurisprudence, commercial arithmetic,

theoretical and practical accounting, business correspondence (in Russian and foreign languages), merchandising, commercial geography, practical training in laboratory of chemistry and merchandising. Optional (extra paid) subjects were French language, hygiene, drawing, shorthand, manual labor, dance, music. Thus, students in the Ufa specialized school of commerce studied more compulsory subjects than in the trading school; some special disciplines were studied separately, such as merchandising, accounting and physics (2).

In most professional pre-revolutionary schools, including the trading school and specialized school of commerce, teachers were not strictly limited to curricula and programs. Moreover, schools were free enough in this regard. We have already mentioned that trading schools in Russia normally were 3-year-classes, yet in Ufa it was 4-year-classes. Same with the specialized schools of commerce in Russia: they were 7-year-classes, while those organized in Ufa functioned as a 10-year-classes institution. The curricula of Ufa commercial educational institutions named subjects that have not been studied in other similar schools (1). Each teacher drew up programs in all subjects on their own. Of course, there were certain standards and requirements, but each institution had enough opportunities for independent creativity according to their own conditions (3).

Great was the need for a trading school in Chelyabinsk, a city in the Southern Urals known for its specialization in the wholesale trade of bread and tea. City's commerce needed competent experts. Chelyabinsk Exchange headed by its Chairman V. Pokrovsky took up the case in 1905-1906, when a special fund had been created, and entrepreneurs were very active with their donations. September 11, 1908 the Charter of *the Chelyabinsk Trading School* was approved. The statute stated that the course of study at the school lasted three years with the division into three classes. It taught both general and special disciplines. The general subjects were, for example: the law of God, Russian language, foreign languages, geometry, native history, calligraphy. Special disciplines included accounting, commerce, commercial arithmetic, geography and correspondence.

In the autumn of 1908 10 people (including entrepreneurs) formed the Board of trustees of the school. They were elected from the Exchange community (4 people), Chelyabinsk City Council (4 people) and by Chelyabinsk business officials (2 representatives) (6. P. 250-251).

*Vyatka private 8-grades specialized school of commerce* opened in 1908 on the initiative of teachers of the Industrial School and girls' gymnasium of Krasnoufimsk who were expelled outside the province after the suppression of revolutionary actions in 1905. Among the organizers was I. Manohin (1869-1942) - the grandson of Demidov's serf, who graduated from Krasnoufimsk real school, then from St. Petersburg Institute of Technology, after which in 1892 he went on a study trip to England (7. P. 15). A model for the organization of Vyatka school of commerce was the charter of Viborg specialized school of commerce approved by the Ministry of commerce and industry, May 30, 1906. According to it, the school accepted "persons of both sexes, of all estates and creeds. The duties of the pedagogical committee included: the review and approval of programs, preparation of which was responsibility of teachers; establishing system of school life; candidate for the position of director was elected by the pedagogical committee; the director of the school assigned with the approval of the pedagogical committee, the inspector, teachers, supervisors and other employees at the school; the general superintendence of the economy belonged to the economic committee ... » (7. P. 13). Organizers enthusiasts of Vyatka specialized school believed that under the conditions of 1907, such a school was a step forward. Particular attention was paid to the visibility of training, practical work on natural history, geography, arithmetic, drawing, modeling, laboratory work in physics, chemistry, botany, zoology, and work in workshops.

In line with the trend typical for a modernizing society towards gender equality, the initiators of Vyatka specialized school "discussed in detail the issue of co-education." Schools with

## Public initiatives and the genesis of professional commercial education in the Ural region

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co-education in Russia at that time were not numerous, and advantages of co-education opposite the separate education were to be proved to parents and city public. They were able to "introduce at school a joint education of children. This made it possible to improve the education of girls (compared to the girls' gymnasiums) and contributed to the positive solution of the question of a normal healthy upbringing of children and youth: establishment of good friendly relations between boys and girls from childhood, based on a common interest in academic work and cheerful holidays in common friendly school family» (7. P.13). Enthusiasts teachers were focused on the implementation of the "pedagogical ideas of great thinkers of the Russian intelligentsia of the XIX century - the revolutionary democrats Chernyshevsky, Belinsky, Dobrolyubov, Herzen, and the founder of Russian educational system K. Ushinsky. We wanted to give students profound knowledge, to construct the basis for the scientific picture of the world, to raise labor thirst, without which, as K. Ushinsky wrote, "life can be neither decent nor happy» (7. P.18).

At first, the budget was formed mainly from tuition fees: 50 rubles per year (7. P.27). The school was created by enthusiasm and tireless work of its organizers, the teachers who gave it all the time, eager to improve pupils' skills. Parents of schoolchildren - local intelligentsia - took an active part in the organization of children's leisure and learning in the new school. 78 people enrolled in the first, senior preparatory and alphabetic classes were mostly children of railway workers, postal countermen and teachers. Much attention was given to physical education of children, gymnastics, outdoors games, skating, skiing. On a regular basis - four times a year - a medical examination of children's health was conducted (7. P. 19).

Comprehension of theoretical material at the lessons of physics, chemistry, mineralogy, geography came along with practical study of natural history, geography, arithmetic, drawing, modeling, students' trips to the Ural mountains, and visiting Moscow and St. Petersburg (7. P.31). During excursions to the gun factory in Perm and iron works on Chusovskoy students had the opportunity to see all the stages of steel production from filling up ore to iron sheet rolling. In elder grades, students studied general courses of physics, chemistry, mineralogy, geography, got acquainted with the basics of chemical, metallurgical industries, the process of mountains formation, the structure of the Earth's crust. After school, the students enjoyed the right to enroll in the higher special educational institutions on a par with the graduated from real schools and girls' gymnasiums (7. P. 36). Classes ended at 2-3 p.m., and at 6 o'clock the doors of the school reopened for participants in study circles, laboratory exercises, work in workshops, offices, reading room, designing the school newspaper, the calendar, which marked major events of public life, science, art; children worked on the preparation of performances and parties. In the period under study Vyatka specialized school of commerce acted as a general educational institution.

Thus, the problem of the origin and development of business education in Russia is relevant for today's search for optimal and effective methods and forms of professional training and the possibility of analysis of historical experience. Commercial education in the Urals originated in the early twentieth century. The need for commercial education was caused by considerable economic potential of the Ural cities and growing trade and industry in the Ural region as a whole. The history of trading schools and specialized schools of commerce in the Urals confirms the fact that progress in the development of business education in the region was the result of the appearance and evolution of the urban professional groups and associations at the turn of XIX - XX centuries. The legislation provided considerable possibilities for public and private initiative in the establishment of commercial education. Trading schools and specialized schools of commerce were established in fact without financial participation of the state while the public process was very dynamic. Commercial education in the Urals emerged just in a decade; the schools appeared in big trading and industrial cities of the region. Ural region in terms of the development of business education went along with other Russian regions, sharing the trend

emphasized by the organizers of the 3rd Congress of Russian actors of technical and vocational education (1903): "Schools of commerce have recently showed so much tireless activity that it is very interesting to summarize what have been already done and identify starting points for the future". (State archives of Sverdlovsk region. Fund 82. Register 1. File 44. Folio 7).

To a large extent, these achievements were possible due to public activity and philanthropy on the part of the representatives of the Ural business elite - members of the Boards of trustees of trading schools and specialized school of commerce. Vocational school gave a fairly broad education; in the process of professional training attention was paid to special knowledge and general cultural competence and education, the teaching was fundamental and of a high level, it may be regarded as a prototype of modern business education. A holistic and rather effective pedagogical system was set up in schools of commerce. They applied advanced teaching methods and technology and rather quickly won credibility and popularity with the people of the Urals. The studied institutions (along with community organizations and municipal governments that patronized them) solved tasks of the training of industrial, commercial and managerial personnel of various levels, contributing to the overall increase in the level of knowledge in the Urals, and thus were effective actors of the Russian imperial modernization.

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