

## IMAGINED INTERREGNUM: DISINTEGRATION AND RE-ESTABLISHMENT OF RUSSIAN ACADEMIC NETWORKS IN 1917–1924.

5–6 of August 2013 in Helsinki, Finland

The Colloquium «Imagined Interregnum: Disintegration and Re-Establishment of Russian Academic Networks in 1917–1924» took place on the 5–6 of August 2013 in Helsinki, Finland. More than 30 researchers from different academic institutions of Europe and Russia participated in the academic event devoted to the networking of Russian scholars during the period of the so called Imagined Interregnum.

Imagined Interregnum was a period of political turmoil and academic stagnation, which happened during the years after the Revolution 1917. The main objective of the Colloquium was to widen the understanding of the academic «Russian diaspora», and the objective was fully met during the colloquium.

The two-days conference was organized by the group of Finnish and Russian researchers: Dr. Kirsti Ekonen (University of Helsinki), MA Jussi-Pekka Hakkarainen (University of Turku), MA Ianina Kruglikova (University of Turku) and professor Dr. Evgeni Petrov (St. Petersburg State University). It was presented conjointly with the Society of Finnish Slavists and the Slavonic Library at the National Library of Finland. The Colloquium was divided in 6 sessions according to the topics of the presentations and a lively discussion followed each session.

The first day was officially opened by an introductory speech of Dr Irma Reijonen, a chief of the Slavonic Library in Helsinki. On behalf of the Slavonic Library of Helsinki University Dr Ekonen welcomed all participants of the conference. Doctorate Student Jussi-Pekka Hakkarainen delivered the formal greeting on behalf of the organizers of the Colloquium. The speaker of the day was Dr Lukáš Babka, the Chief of the Slavonic Library of Prague, Czech. In his presentation he informed about the Role of Inter-War Czechoslovakia in the academic activity of Russian scientists in exile

and provided important information about the Slavonic Library in Prague as well as about the possibilities of contemporary research.

Session 1 of the Colloquium included papers on the themes about local and transnational dimensions of Russian emigration. Associate professor Dr Simo Mikkonen (University of Jyväskylä, Finland) emphasized the importance of Russian emigration to Changhai during the mentioned period. The next speaker Dr Petr Bazanov together with Dr Olga Bazanova informed the auditorium about the number of Russian scientists, escaped from the Bolsheviks to Finland. He acknowledged that the scientists and scholars admitted Finland as a saving place if to compare with the terrifying context in the Soviet Russia. The last speaker of the session was one of the organizers of the Colloquium Doctorate Candidate Jussi-Pekka Hakkarainen. He considered the Proekt Fersmana as a case-study on the Transnational Scientific Networks of Fenno-Russian Scholars.

Session 2 consisted of presentations on networks of scientists. In this session Dr Aleksandr Dubrovski from Nevsky Institute (Russia) shared interesting facts based on archive documents about non-formal organizations of scientists related to Soviet-Mongolian academic collaboration. Doctorate Candidate Ianina Kruglikova informed about the Academician M.I. Rostovtsev and the Activity of the Russian Liberation Committee in London in 1919–1922 on the documents obtained from the William's archive of the British Library. And Dr Olga Kuznetsova (St-Petersburg State University) closed the session with a short presentation on professor S. Prokopovich and his impact on academic network.

Selected biographies of scholars were presented through the papers of the third Session, which was named «The Parts of the Whole – Individual Fates». Professor Dr Mikhail Bryantsev

284 (Briansk State University, Russia) considered the case of I. V. Kulaev, the founder of Kulaevsky Charity. Bryantsev explored the initial stage of Kulaev's exile in the 1920s. Professor Dr Alexey Antoshin from Urals Federal University (Ekaterinburg, Russia) focused on the Russian Emigré Lidia Nadejina, pointing out her connections with Soviet and American academic communities. Antoshin's paper was based on the materials deposited at Manuscript Division at Library of Congress, especially on the personal archival collection of Nadejina. PhD student Petr Mazhara (St-Petersburg State University) presented the biography of historian Leonid Strakhovsky, who was a nephew of Russian-American historian and academician Michael I. Rostovtsev and a son of Ivan M. Strakhovsky, a senator and governor of several provinces in Imperial Russia.

After the sessions a Rector's reception and an evening lecture with the Friends of the National Library took place at the Helsinki University.

The second day of the Colloquium started with the keynote lecture held by Professor Dr Evgeni Petrov. He examined Baron Serge A. Korff's activity as a Chairman of «Russian Academic Group» in the US – in 1921–1924. The presentations related to the publishing issues were included into the Session 4. During the session Dr Jürgen Warmbrunn (Marburg, Germany) pointed Publishing of Russian academic works in Berlin during the period of «Imagined Interregnum». Dr Tatiana Yusupova (Institute of History of Science and Technology RAS, St-Petersburg, Russia) examined in her presentation the history of the publication of the book written by Petr Kozlov, a explorer of Central Asia. Publication of the book became a result of the international scientific cooperation between Wilhelm Filchner, Sven Gedin and Petr Kozlov. Dr Natalia Ostashova (St-Petersburg) reported about interfaith dialog in Russian emigrant community on the materials of the journal «Put»<sup>1</sup>.

The 5th Session aimed to survey the establishing academic relations with Soviet Russia. In this Session Dr Vladimir Nikiforov (St-Petersburg, Russia) presented his paper considering effect of foreign academic contacts on

the Russian scientific and technical intelligentsia emigration. Dr Peter Gorlyakov (St-Petersburg, Russia) spoke about the lack of culture and intercultural in the methods of teaching the foreign languages at Higher School in 1917–1924 in Soviet Russia. Dr Elena Elts (St Petersburg University School of International Relations) informed about the state protection of cultural heritage in Soviet Russia. The closer of the session was Dr Natalia Nikiforova (St-Petersburg, Russia), who presented the image of American technology in Soviet public discourse of 1920s and examined the formation of capitalist myth by analyzing the usage of the notion of technology (tekhnologiia).

Session 6 was devoted to the topics of Academic Institutions in the mentioned period. Dr Ludmila Dubjeva (University of Tartu Library) shared with the auditorium the history of the evacuation of Yuryev University, which was occupied in 1918 by German military forces. Dubjeva especially emphasized on the fates of scholars of the University. Dr Larisa Nikiforova (St-Petersburg, Russia) made her presentation examining the political challenge and reorganization of scientific relations in the art historians' community. She compared the professional traditions and working relationships of several generations of researchers and museum workers who struggles for the museumification of the emperor residence in Soviet Russia. The last presentation was made by Dr Kirsti Ekonen and her paper provided valuable insight on the case of Sergei Korff in Finland. Thereafter Ekonen and other organizers thanked all the participants and expressed optimistic approach in organising such conferences in the future. After the official closing of the Colloquium the participants had possibility to get acquainted with the Slavonic library.

In conclusion, the valuable insights and recommendations were gained from contributions of the participants. Moreover, the colloquium provided a new angle to the history of Russian emigration. The study of academic history in diaspora have been in the shadow of other fields like literary and cultural history or political history. The case studies showed how the spheres of science, politics and economy were closely interrelated during the 'imagined interregnum'.

<sup>1</sup> «Путь» – прим. ред.