



Moving to the Future by Studying the Past: on the Course in the History of Transport in Russia



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The history of transport in Russia: Textbook. Ed. by T. L. Pashkova.

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ABSTRACT

The peer-reviewed textbook is dedicated to the history of origination and development of all modes of

transport in Russia. Its main goal is to show evolution historical process of development of technological progress in the transport sector. It is intended for the 1st and 2nd year students of higher education institutions training personnel for transport industry.

The publication may be useful to researchers, Ph.D. students, employees of ministries and departments, as well as to a wide circle of readers, whose attention is drawn to the history of transport and of the transport industry.

Keywords: aviation, mechanical engineering, modes of transport, water transport, railway transport, urban transport, history of transport, sea transport, professional transport education, river transport, pipe transportation.

The year of 2019 was a jubilee one for Russian transport public administration and transport education. Therefore publication of the textbook «History of transport of Russia», published at «Training Methodological Center for Railway Education» is largely a symbolic one.

It is particularly important for any young specialist to know the history of the industry and the profession that he chose as his deed of life. It is to underline that the history of science and technology is an inherent part of the educational process, and the knowledge there-of is mandatory for any professional researcher, engineer, or

technician, and this is the long tradition of the Russian science that finds its roots in 18th century. More than 100 years ago the outstanding Russian scientist and thinker Vladimir Vernadsky, who was also an outstanding historian of science and engineering knowledge, wrote that a historical study always gave the opportunity to correctly assess and address substantiated critics towards new achievements. «The history of science, he noted, is the tool to achieve the new», and the ideas of the past can help generate future ideas.

The publication of the textbook on the history of the industry related to national development which is the

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transport system exactly in 2019, should be interpreted as a successful attempt to use retrospective view to suggest a vision of the core trend of development of the Russian single transport system, providing through the interaction of all the modes of transport the connectedness of the territory, increasing availability of transport services for citizens and economic entities, realization of transit potential, etc. This tentative is supplemented by the attention that along with a retrospective approach is paid to a promising vision of development of independent transport systems and of the transport system of the country. This approach has been sustainably and with the evident success implemented in the textbook prepared by the large team of highly professional authors headed by T. L. Pashkova.

If we refer directly to the text, then we shall start by saying few words about how the textbook is organized. The authors tried and finally successfully solved a particularly important didactic task to achieve reasonable convenience and clearness for those who will work with that educational project. Each section (and they are eight) includes training material itself, chronology of the most important events, glossary, test questions, test tasks and a list of recommended references; most chapters include additional information on the sectorial awards and badges, followed by relevant images. Such a feed of material significantly facilitates perception and allows to attain deeper understanding of the subject by the students mastering enlarged groups of transport specialties and fields of training.

We should note the following feature of the textbook. Evidently, there is a constantly monitored desire of the authors to provide readers with concept apparatus and terminology related not only to the history, but to systemic perception of the modern transport system as well. Hence, it is implemented in a balanced, phased, logically justified manner, as you move from a section to another.

The first section is dedicated to general issues of maturing and development of national transport, while it serves as a kind of introduction to understanding the singularity of the transport system, integration of modes of transport. For example, a reader gets acquainted with the concepts of «transport», «modes of transport» and «history of transport».

Then there are six sections, which are related to the history of modes of transport, comprising urban, civil aviation, road industry and road transport (including automotive construction issues), railway, sea and river transport demonstrating the evolution process of existing modes, but focusing on culmination points of growth. The summarizing and final section of the course is based on the already mastered material and gives deep insightful understanding of development prospects of transport in 21st century both for its modes and for transport as for a holistic system.

Here we can see the obvious innovation of a textbook, since earlier, at least in such a systemic form, the history of transport of the country was not set out. A mode-based approach previously focused on a specific mode of transport, while mentioning other modes of transport in a rather «obligatory» or imposed, rather than in a targeted manner. The systemic presentation of the genesis of the Russian transport naturally results in practical purpose of a textbook for students of all transport specialties.

As the merit of the textbook we can note that the authors overcome the constraints of presenting the events themselves and their chronology only, and the dense narrative story if followed by the historical portraits of prominent statesmen who glorified themselves playing an important role in the development of transport. Besides,

this humanistic element could be strengthened, as setting out the history of transport often focuses either on the technical side (appearance of new vehicles, inventions, technology), or operational aspects (transportation processes, their scope, directions, organization features, etc.). The textbook proposed balanced approach that links both sides of development of transport. It seems that this is the best way to present so sophisticated matter.

The main feature of professional transport education in Russia has always been associated with a alienable connection with the tasks of the industry, clear focus on achievement of public goals, consideration of the interests of employers, and ensuring continuous learning at all levels. The textbook purposefully and continuously shows development of transport education in connection with evolution (and, for certain periods with the technical revolution) of the transport industry.

It is characteristic that the authors of the textbook noted especially the development of pipeline transport that plays a key role for the country's economics. Development of trunk gas and oil pipelines serves as a definite important factor in the growth of foreign trade and Russia's integration into the world economy. Everyone has heard about the gas projects «Yamal–Europe», «Nord Stream», «Blue Stream», «Turkish stream». Among the most famous oil pipelines one can quote «Druzhba» [Friendship], Baltic pipeline system 2 (BTS-2), pipeline system Eastern Siberia – Pacific (VSTO), Caspian Pipeline Consortium (CPC). Many of these projects have already been implemented. It is quite difficult to overestimate the value of pipe transport for Russia. This is the cheapest way of delivery and it guarantees energy independence of Russia. Therefore, as the authors of the textbook correctly noted, its developments must draw special attention.

In conclusion, on the last pages of the textbook the authors published data about the main transport universities of the country, recalled the leaders of the Russian transport system starting from times of Russian Empire to the present day, naming their official posts and years of service.

Word, or text, are most important for a textbook or manual. Besides, modern techniques of structuring and presenting of the contents (the very sense of the text) presupposes expressive visual images and design. In that context the design of the textbook, and particularly the illustrations of the artist E. A. Vedina, deserve special attention.

In general, despite comparatively condensed textual space (less than 24 conventional printer's sheets) the authors have managed to present a huge array of facts on the history of Russian transport, while good structure, laconic form, and chosen style of narration made the textbook consistent while not overloaded with information. That form is rather attractive for both the students, and the readers for whom the Russian history, and particularly the history of transport are of interest. The contents of the textbook is quite sufficient for the reader receives sufficiently full and systemic vision of the history of originations, maturing and development of Russian transport and transport education. The textbook will be a goot incentive to search for additional information and data regarding the topics which have attracted readers' interest and will also become a starting point for own research.

As Russian transport is amidst most rapidly developing economic and technical sectors subject to changes at a daily pace then it is advisable, without postponing it for indefinite future, to consider a publication of a new edition of the textbook entitled History of Russian Transport, which invites the students to move into the future through acquiring deep knowledge about the past. ●