



"All the past we leave behind,
We debouch upon a newer mightier world, varied world,
Fresh and strong the world we seize, world of labor and the march,
Pioneers! O pioneers!"

— **Walt Whitman,**
Pioneers! O Pioneers!

Dear colleagues,

In 2013 the Higher School of Economics had approximately 40 faculties and schools in total. This number has significantly shrunk since we are in the middle of a major restructuring that is collecting some smaller faculties into bigger formations. There were times, however, when the HSE was a single discipline institution. In this issue of our bulletin we will have a look at the oldest faculty, the Faculty of Economics. Established in 1992, it has since then served as the foundation of the HSE. A lot has changed since the early 1990s and yet the faculty hasn't lost its pioneering spirit and in many respects it serves as a role model for the university in general.

Director of Internationalization
Yulia Grinkevich

The Faculty of Economics: The Oldest at a Young University

This article is based on a conversation with Oleg Zamulin, the Dean of the HSE Faculty of Economics.

Oleg Zamulin defended his PhD thesis in economics at the University of Michigan in 2001. Before joining the HSE Zamulin worked as an Assistant Professor at the New Economic School (NES) where he also held several administrative positions from 2001 – 2011, as lead economist at the Centre for Economic and Financial Research in Moscow, and was a visiting lecturer and researcher at Stockholm Institute for Transition Economies. Since 2011 Zamulin has been the Dean of the HSE Faculty of Economics and a professor at the Department of Theoretical Economics. Zamulin teaches courses in macroeconomics and runs a freshman seminar in economic thinking. He was selected by students as being one of the best instructors in 2011, 2013 and 2014. Beyond work Prof. Zamulin enjoys spending time with his wife Olga, who is also a professor at the faculty, and their three children.

This is how the university emerged...

The Faculty of Economics was founded in 1992 and at that time it was known as the Higher School of Economics. The body of professors was created as a result of a campaign aimed at gathering Russia's best economists under one roof. Some of them came from Moscow State University, others had worked at research institutes in Moscow and other cities. The basic principle was formulated at the outset: "We try to teach economics as it is known in the international academic world. There should be no difference between economics taught in North America, Europe, Russia or any other country. There is one common economic theory," explains the dean. This objective encouraged active cooperation with European universities such as the Sorbonne and Humboldt University. International agreements were signed and HSE professors were frequent visitors to western universities to learn how to create progressive academic programmes and curricula. As a result, an educational institution was formed where economic disciplines were studied in a completely new way for Russia.

“Due to obvious historical reasons Russian economists have been significantly isolated from the international academic community. Consequently, Russian economic science was not integrated into the global profession. Moreover, there is hardly a common ground shared by Russian economists inside the country,” Prof. Zamulin adds. “There is a tendency for many colleagues in Russian universities and institutes to work in the framework of their own economic theory which they apply and develop. In such a way many of our Russian colleagues remain separated from the economic science as it is taught at Harvard or the HSE. Despite such obstacles we continue working on improving the situation in higher education in Russia as far as economic disciplines are concerned. We promote the international integration of Russian economic science, and hope that the very term “Russian economic science” ceases to exist. There is one common economic science studied by economists all over the world, and we are either part of it or not.”

Going international

Following the pioneering International College of Economics and Finance (ICEF), the Faculty of Economics moved to a new level of development by hiring their first full time international academic in 2008. Later on, the faculty moved from hiring on an ad hoc basis to international recruitment as a regular strategy. “It is essential to bring in some ‘fresh blood’ with PhDs from leading universities from abroad, as unfortunately there is no similar resource at home. This is what helps us set goals and reach them. We are especially interested in gaining colleagues specializing in the areas underrepresented at our faculty. International economics, for instance, is not our strongest field, and we need to hire experts in international trade, capital flows and other similar areas,” says the dean.

“We face some challenges in international recruitment, of course. Some of them are related to different academic cultures and traditions. For example, in Russia it is not common for professors to be in their offices every day and this is the reason why they traditionally don’t have separate offices. In the West it is a common practice for professors to go to work every day, so that students and colleagues can easily reach them to discuss research. Our university is setting new standards that are more in tune with international academic practices. Some of our Russian colleagues struggle to adapt to and live up to these new standards. However, in some cases our international colleagues have to work towards getting up to our Russian standards.”

Structural reform

In many ways the Faculty of Economics was a pioneer of transformation – they were the first at the HSE to eliminate the old kafedra system (“kafedra” is a traditional division in a Russian university devoted to a particular discipline) and move towards the internationally universal department system. The Faculty of Economics currently consists of five academic departments: the Department of Theoretical Economics,

the Department of Applied Economics, the Department of Finance, the Department of Mathematics, and the Department of Statistics and Data.

The structural reform connected with the formation of “big” faculties will influence the Faculty of Economics to a smaller extent than other faculties undergoing this transformation. The change will reveal itself in the fact that the faculty will gain several associated units in the form of research institutes, international labs and expert centres. The International College of Economics and Finance (ICEF) will also become an associated unit of the Faculty. Prof. Zamulin explains: “ICEF is a separate faculty, so in our case it will be an alliance of equal entities. ICEF will remain independent regarding such issues as faculty management, academic programmes, and academic staff recruitment. At the same time ICEF as well as other associated units will start taking a more active part in the joint work of expert committees, academic commissions, and councils of different kinds.”

As already mentioned in previous issues, the essence of the structural reform lies in granting more responsibilities to the university’s subdivisions. The aim is to optimize the management system at the university level: several big faculties will take over part of the decision making and other responsibilities that used to be in the Rector Council’s domain. It means that the university’s strategy will be executed by the faculties directly with central administrative bodies fulfilling a mainly controlling function. “For us it means that we will have more work to do from the administrative point of view. We will have to cover and collaborate with a bigger number of departments. However, I think this is the right way to go. The central body has too many functions and they need to delegate some of them to ‘local’ administrators,” says Prof. Zamulin.

“The goal is clear and we know how to reach it”

Beyond their direct duties the academic staff is involved in various community service at national or local level: “I believe it’s an essential part of our mission to work for the benefit of the city and the country as a whole. Many things we do as part of our profession is devoted to this aim. If I understand something in macroeconomics, it’s my duty as an academic to participate in public discussions on this topic. The same is true for my colleagues working in other spheres,” the dean says.

As for the primary activities of the faculty - research and teaching - the dean is optimistic: “We strive to meet the best international practices and standards. Of course, there is a long way ahead before gaining recognition by the international academic community as one of the leading economic faculties, nevertheless, the goal is clear and we know how to approach it”.

Welcome Aboard

In September 2014 two international professors joined the Faculty of Economics. Assistant Professors Quentin Paris and Levent Celik introduce themselves in brief interviews. The HSE Look wishes our new colleagues a smooth start at the HSE and is glad to welcome them aboard!

“More Cooperation with Researchers from Other Departments”

Quentin Paris was born in England and traveled a lot in Europe with his family as a child. He graduated from Ecole Normale Supérieure de Cachan, France, where he defended his PhD thesis in Statistics in 2013. After that, he worked as a postdoctoral researcher at the Centre de Recherche en Economie et Statistique (CREST), France and lectured at Paris Graduate School of Economics, Statistics and Finance (ENSAE). Since September 2014 Quentin works as Assistant Professor at HSE's Faculty of Economics. Statistical Learning Theory and Nonparametric Statistics are among his research interests. Apart from work, Quentin practices yoga and enjoys Russian ballet and painting.

— How did you learn about the vacancy at the HSE?

— During my year as a postdoc in Paris I was lucky to meet an eminent Russian colleague there, Professor Alexander Tsybakov (CREST, France), who told me about this position in an informal talk. I never really considered Moscow before, but I decided to apply. I didn't think it would work because for an assistant professor position you usually need more experience. Luckily, it worked and here I am.

— Do you think Moscow is a good place for an academic?

— Before coming here some people told me that I might end up being a little bit isolated scientifically. Now I see it's not true. I have many nice and interesting colleagues and I am already involved in a project with Professor Mark Kelbert, an eminent mathematician and very kind man, who happens to be my neighbour at the faculty. Many very interesting specialists are invited regularly to give mini courses on their subject of research and there are nice seminars given at the HSE. I am also a member of the Laboratory of Stochastic Analysis and its Applications which is very active. Plus I am only three hours away from Paris. Here I really have a sense that people want the HSE to be a great place for research and they seem to be open to new ideas to let this happen. I have a feeling that I will have more freedom here than I would have in France, for instance, to create my projects, contribute in constructing new courses, master programs, and research groups.

There might be a little bit more problems at the HSE than in some other well established universities around the world but I think you have to see the positive side: the HSE is a young institution, I feel there is a lot of energy here and many interesting things to do. I guess that one of the reasons I came here is that I wanted to take part, to some extent, in the development of this institution.

I should also mention that, on the administrative level, there is somebody who really helps me a lot, it's our international faculty coordinator, Daria Nikolyuk, who is doing a great job and solves the problems I encounter in less than two days.

— So what is your strategy of getting integrated and not feeling isolated here?

— Going to the right conferences, staying in touch with people I know and starting new collaborations. Anyway, you cannot work with 50 people at the same time. Now I have enough material to work on and great people to collaborate with.

— What are your plans so far?

— I had some teaching in the first semester so I've been focusing on trying to deliver nice lectures. I am still involved in a project that I started last year with my colleague from Paris. I will go to a conference in Marseille in December, which is one of the key French conferences in mathematical statistics. I will have less teaching in the second semester so I will be able to focus more on research and projects with students. I will try to finish the project with Prof. Mark Kelbert, my Russian colleague. Also I have been writing lecture notes for my data mining course and I would like to publish them together with my colleague from the Faculty of Computer Science, Geoffrey Decrouez, who started working at the HSE this year as well. It would be nice cooperating more with researchers from different departments. I already had a few discussions with people from ICEF and a colleague from the Faculty of Law.

“Adding Russia to the Mix”

Levent Celik was born in Turkey and studied economics at Boğaziçi University in Istanbul. He received his PhD from the University of Virginia in 2007 and later worked there as well as in the University of Auckland and California State University as a visiting lecturer. In 2006 - 2014 Celik worked as Assistant Professor of Economics at the Centre for Economic Research and Graduate Education - Economics Institute (CERGE-EI), Prague. He joined the HSE Faculty of Economics in September 2014 as Assistant Professor. Celik's research interests include industrial organization with a focus on information disclosure, advertising, product differentiation and consumer search, international trade, and political economy.

— What are your work plans for the coming year?

— I will work closely with my colleagues from the Department of Economics. I specialize in the fields of industrial organization, international trade and political economy, so I will continue this line of research and potentially start new ones here. Besides, I will continue supervising students as I did before in Prague, and bring my current co-author to the HSE for research visits.

— **What are your impressions from your fresh start in Moscow so far?**

— A new country and culture, new people, new ideas and new cooperation... What else can a researcher ask for? The HSE Moscow has very clearly laid out goals and is hiring good people to achieve those goals in the coming years. I enjoy a very research-active and productive environment. It is also exciting for my wife; we are now a part of the HSE team as a couple as she started as a Research Fellow at the HSE Centre for Institutional Studies in September.

The interview with Levent Celik is adapted from the HSE website.

— **Do you plan to learn Russian?**

— In Prague I lacked the right incentives to study Czech because the community I was in was fully international. After I met my wife who comes from Slovakia, I began mixing my poor Czech skills with Slovak. Now I plan to add Russian to the mix. I will definitely try hard to learn Russian, but I understand that it takes a long time to master a language. Hopefully, our daughter will be fluent in Slovak, Turkish and Russian, so that she could correct us all the time!

Getting Ready for XVI April Conference

University's major academic event, April International Academic Conference on Economic and Social Development will take place in Moscow for the 16th time.

Submission from participants willing to present papers is closed (applications were accepted until November 11, 2014), but it is still possible to submit a paper for one of the PhD seminars planned in the framework of the conference (application deadline is **December 15, 2014**) or register online as an ordinary participant (until **March 20, 2015**).

The event is traditionally supported by the World Bank and the programme committee of the conference is chaired by its permanent leader, Professor Yevgeny Yasin. From 1994 till 1997 Prof. Yasin was the Minister of Economic Development of Russia and thus stood at the origins of the liberal economic reforms of the 1990s. Today Prof. Yasin, who celebrated his 80th birthday in May 2014, is HSE's academic supervisor and the president of the Liberal Mission Foundation (<http://www.liberal.ru>).

Plenary sessions and roundtables of the 16th April Conference will feature top international scholars such as Dale Jorgenson, Samuel W. Morris University Professor of Economics at Harvard University and Gustavo Piga, Professor of Economics at the University of Rome Tor Vergata, as well as senior international (Vaclav Klaus, Second President of the Czech Republic from 2003 to 2013) and Russian officials including representatives of the presidential administration, high-level representatives of the World Bank, OECD, and CEOs of some of the largest Russian and international companies.

Main topics of the conference include

- Institutions and Economic Growth
- Reasons for Reforms' Success and Failure
- Global World: Integration or Disintegration?
- Demand for law: Factors and Dynamics

The following PhD seminars will be held during the conference:

- **Universalism and Relativism in the Philosophy of Language and Mind**

Keynote speaker: **Maria Polinsky**
(Professor of Linguistics at Harvard University, Head of Polinsky Language Sciences Lab).

- **Comparative Economic Studies: Country and Regional Level**

The seminar will be organized in cooperation with the European Association for Comparative Economic Studies (EACES).

Keynote speaker: **Marcello Signorelli**
(Professor of Economics at the University of Perugia; President of EACES in 2010-2012).

- **Formality vs. Informality Interaction: Reflection in Institutions and Practices**

The seminar will be organized in cooperation with the Freie Universität Berlin.

Keynote speaker: **Katharina Blum**,
Professor of Sociology at Freie Universität Berlin.

- **Contemporary Management Research in Emerging Markets: New Challenges and Perspectives**

Keynote speaker: **Wesley J. Johnston**
(CBIM Roundtable Professor of Marketing at Georgia State University).

For more information on the conference visit <http://conf.hse.ru/en/2015/>.