

The Achievements of Białystok School of Criminology

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Abstract. *The aim of this article is to bring the most important achievements of Białystok School of Criminology closer to the readers. The Faculty of Law of the University of Białystok, specifically the Department of Criminal Law and Criminology, is one of the leading Polish academic entities conducting extensive research in the field of criminology. In 2016, in the ranking organized by the Rzeczpospolita daily newspaper, the Faculty received the highest score of all the evaluated Polish universities which have law faculties, both state and private, in the area of international cooperation. What is more, Białystok is the leader in the 2017 ranking of the 25 faculties of law of Polish universities, prepared as a result of the most important evaluation performed every four years by the Ministry of Science and Higher Education and was awarded the highest (A) category.*

The paper presents not only the international criminology conferences and research that Białystok School of Criminology has been part of, but also its own initiatives both at the national and international level. For example one of the pioneering ventures on a national scale was the 1st Poland-wide Forum of Young Criminologists held by the Faculty of Law of the University of Białystok as a regular event. One of the most impressive recent initiatives of BSC was the creation of the International Centre for Criminological Research and Expertise. The paper contains more information about the projects mentioned and others as well as an introduction to the diverse and interdisciplinary topics undertaken by Białystok's criminologists.

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The Faculty of Law of the University of Białystok, specifically the Department of Criminal Law and Criminology, is one of the leading Polish academic entities conducting extensive research in the field of criminology.

The international activity of the Department of Criminal Law and Criminology has been recognised within the regular rankings in which the Faculty of Law of the University of Białystok receives high scores every year. In 2016, in the ranking organised by the Rzeczpospolita daily newspaper, the Faculty received the highest score of all the evaluated Polish universities which have law faculties, both state and private, in the area of international cooperation.¹

What is more, the Faculty of Law of the University was considered to be one of the best 20 faculties in Poland in 2012 and awarded the accolade of “The Best

¹ Guzik-Makaruk E.M, Pływaczewski E.W, Current Problems of the Penal Law and Criminology — origins and present status at Criminology School in Białystok, [in:] Pływaczewski E.W, Guzik-Makaruk E.M (Eds), Current Problems of the penal Law and Criminology. Aktuelle Probleme des Strafrechts und der Kriminologie. Białystok, 2017, p. 28.

Field of Study” in the area of law by the Minister of Science and Higher Education (the title received so far by only two law faculties in Poland). Białystok is the leader of the 2017 ranking of the 25 faculties of law of Polish universities, prepared as a result of the most important evaluation performed every four years by the Ministry of Science and Higher Education and was awarded the highest (A) category.²

It needs to be emphasised that the Department of Criminal Law and Criminology has made significant achievements in its research, which confirms its leading role in studies on terrorism, organised crime, money laundering and on broadly defined issues of homeland security in Poland. It was the Department that conducted, in the years 2003–2006, the largest research project commissioned so far in Poland, entitled “Legal and organisational-technical solutions in countering organised crime and terrorism with special emphasis on the problems related to trial evidence and the institution of immunity witness”. It was the first joint undertaking of academic circles and bodies of law enforcement and administration of justice.³

In October 2007, Prof. Emil W Pływaczewski was entrusted with the position of the director of another commissioned research project titled “Monitoring, identification, and countering threats to citizens’ security”, conducted between 2007 and 2010. The project was carried out by the consortium established by the University of Białystok and the Military University of Technology in Warsaw. The primary goal of this project was to create integrated computer tools to support various activities in the area of public security.⁴

The first project, led by Prof. Emil W Pływaczewski, entitled “State-of-the-art technologies for/in the criminal process and their use — technical, forensic-science, criminological, and legal”, aimed to conduct in-depth technical research on enhancement of the safety of citizens owing to the knowledge of law, forensic science, and criminology. In particular, this involves solutions that could support law-enforcement agencies, secret services, and the judiciary in the performance of their tasks, both in operational reconnaissance and process-related activities.⁵

Security is one the areas of interest of employees of the Institute of Criminal Law and Criminology of the Faculty of Law of the University of Białystok and this can be demonstrated by their involvement in the project entitled “Elaboration of a system for detection of threats to the safety of blind and vision-impaired persons, with particular focus on road traffic. Criminal-law and technological aspects”. There have been no projects of this type in Europe so far. The aim of the research, performed in three fields: information technology, law, and criminology, was to design methods of ensuring the safety of blind and vision-impaired persons in road traffic,

² *Ibid.*, p. 21.

³ *Ibid.*, p.23.

⁴ *More on the Polish Platform for Homeland Security (PPHS)*, see: Pływaczewski E.W, Rau Z, *The Polish Platform for Homeland Security — a pioneer initiative for up-to-date security in the European Union*, [in:] Pływaczewski E.W (Ed.), *Current Problems of the Penal Law and Criminology. Aktuelle Probleme des Strafrechts und der Kriminologie*. Białystok, 2009, pp. 445; Pływaczewski E.W, Guzik-Makaruk E.M, *Polish Platform for Homeland Security and its place in the research on security in Poland*, [in:] Dworzecki J (Ed.), *Selected aspects of internal security*. New York: Inglobal Writer Inc., 2015, pp. 219–234.

⁵ Guzik-Makaruk E.M, Pływaczewski E.W, *op. cit.*, pp. 25–26.

in particular in urbanised areas. This is particularly important in view of problems which blind and visually-impaired people face every day while getting around.⁶

Employees of the Faculty of Law of the University of Białystok are also involved in other important Poland-wide projects. One example is the project entitled “SIC — Modular multi-task Foreigner Identification System with a module for analysis of human trafficking crime victims”, performed between 2014 and 2016. The key objective of the project was to develop a smart network-centric system that would enable identification of manifestations of crime and victimisation factors amongst foreigners and would use a database containing information on phenomena taking place among foreigners and on human trafficking. The system also included a training component for staff of operational and investigative departments, foreign departments, and border departments.⁷

Between 2014 and 2016, another project, entitled “Infrastructure and equipment and technical and legal procedures related to protection and storage of the so-called difficult process evidence”, was conducted by the Police Academy in Szczytno in partnership with the University of Białystok, the Industrial Research Institute for Automation and Measurements (PIAP), the Military Institute of Chemistry and Radiometry, and the Przedsiębiorstwo Sprzętu Ochronnego Maskpol S.A. (Protective Equipment Company Maskpol Inc.) The objective of the project was to develop infrastructure and equipment for handling (in the broad sense) the so-called dangerous process evidence, i.e. for transport, storage, and elimination of dangerous process evidence. Moreover, technical and legal procedures were elaborated for handling the so-called difficult evidence. The staff of the Department is also involved in the performance of the project of the National Centre for Research and Development, entitled “Development and creation of an information management system for the Centre for Kidnapping”. The main objective of this project, implemented in the years 2012–2015, was to elaborate the principles, and to build and test in simulated conditions at the Centre for Kidnapping, an analytical and management unit that supports the process of detection and the leadership in cases of kidnapping for ransom.⁸

What is more, the National Centre for Research and Development, in the 1st Contest of the Social Innovations Programme, granted financing to the project entitled “Pilot implementation of a ‘Community Court’ module in Poland as an institutional bridge between the judiciary, the local and regional government, and the community organisations that facilitate the practical implementation of restorative justice” — the University of Białystok was one of the institutions implementing this project between 2014 and 2016. The aim of the project was to elaborate and conduct a pilot implementation of an innovative social service similar to the Community Court model common in English-speaking countries where close cooperation between the court and a community organisation (or a coalition of such organisations) is intended to ensure the broadest implementation of the principles of restorative justice.⁹

⁶ Guzik-Makaruk E.M, Sprawozdanie z konferencji inaugurującej projekt badawczo-rozwojowy poświęcony bezpieczeństwu w ruchu drogowym osób niewidomych i słabowidzących. *Paragraf na Drodze*, 2012, No. 5, pp. 77–80.

⁷ Guzik-Makaruk E.M, Pływaczewski E.W, *op. cit.*, p. 20.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 21.

⁹ *Ibid.*

The high evaluation rating of the scientific and research achievements of the staff of the Department of Criminal Law and Criminology, and their huge involvement in research, resulted in opening criminology as a new field of study in the academic year 2014/2015. Until then, criminology had been merely a supplementary course in legal studies. Now, it is not only the obligatory course for all students, but is also a separate field of study and students are able to study Criminology in a 3-year undergraduate course and a 2-year graduate course.¹⁰

In particular, the latest area of interest, i.e. medical criminal law, is being extensively developed at the Department of Criminal Law and Criminology of the Faculty of Law of the University of Białystok. This activity is undertaken within the framework of the Academic Forum — Legal and Medical Aspects of Human Health. The forum is a venue for cooperation between legal and medical sciences. Law and medicine, which represent social sciences and life sciences, are inseparably bound to each other. In the framework of the aforementioned Forum, an academic network agreement was signed on November 8, 2014. The partners of the agreement are: the University of Cambridge, United Kingdom as well as leading Polish medical universities, such as the Medical University of Białystok, the Silesian Medical University in Katowice, and the Faculty of Law of the University of Białystok — the leader of the Network.¹¹

The academic network agreement is titled “Research network — scientific research and development works for solving legal and medical problems of human health”. The research and development cooperation performed as a part of the Network covers mostly broadly defined fields in the area of both legal sciences, in particular criminal law, criminology, and forensic sciences, health care law, and civil law, medical sciences, and health sciences through organising regular meetings, symposiums, and academic conferences.¹²

In October 2015, the 1st Polish-British academic seminar titled “New directions in criminology research and their prospects” was held. It was attended by Prof. Lawrence Sherman, the Director of the Institute of Criminology of the University of Cambridge, as the guest of honour. In the context of the topic of the seminar, one should note that criminology research combined with legal knowledge are ever more focused on the creation of new technologies and IT solutions that are intended to improve the security of individuals and the state.¹³

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 22.

¹¹ Kalinowska-Maksim I, Pawluczuk P, Sprawozdanie z konferencji „Wybrane prawne i medyczne problemy ginekologii dziecięcej”. *Prokuratura i Prawo*, 2016, No. 1, pp. 186–199.

¹² *More on the Academic Forum — Legal and Medical Aspects of Human Health conferences*, see: Guzik-Makaruk E.M, Szamatowicz J, Skrzypulec-Plinta V (Eds), *Wybrane prawne i medyczne aspekty ginekologii dziecięcej*. Białystok, 2015, p. 280; Jurgielewicz-Delegacz E, Truskołaska E.M, Międzynarodowa konferencja „Prawne, kryminologiczne i medyczne aspekty wykluczenia społecznego” (Supraśl, 11–14.5.2015). *Prokuratura i Prawo*, 2016, No. 4, pp. 174–183; Guzik-Makaruk E.M, Pływaczewski E.W (Eds), *Wybrane prawne, kryminologiczne i medyczne aspekty wykluczenia społecznego*. Białystok, 2016, p. 403.

¹³ Truskołaska E.M, Tywończuk-Gieniusz A, I polsko-brytyjskie seminarium naukowe „Nowe kierunki badań kryminologicznych i ich perspektywy”, Białystok 8.10.2015. *Prokuratura i Prawo*, 2015, No. 4, pp. 189–198.

In November 2015, the 1st Polish-German-Belarusian academic symposium was held at the Humboldt University in Berlin. The topic of the seminar was criminal law responsibility of businesses for prohibited acts that carry a penalty. Cooperation with Belarus is conducted in the framework of a unique initiative of the University of Białystok, namely the aforementioned Borderland University Network.¹⁴

An important event that constitutes a part of international cooperation took place on March 14, 2016 at the Faculty of Law of the University of Białystok, namely the academic seminar titled "State Crimes from a Historical and Current Perspective". The seminar was organised through cooperation between the Faculty of Law of the University of Białystok and the Institute of National Remembrance — the Branch Commission for the Prosecution of Crimes against the Polish Nation in Białystok.¹⁵

Between 19 and 20 May 2016, the Faculty of Law of the University of Białystok held the 1st Poland-wide Forum of Young Criminologists as a regular event.¹⁶ The purpose of the Forum was to integrate young scientists (including lawyers, criminologists, sociologists, educators, psychologists, and physicians) who represent various fields of study and to provide them with the opportunity to exchange professional information, experiences, and research achievements in the area of criminology. The first edition of the Poland-wide Forum of Young Criminologists was titled "Contemporary crime and social pathologies from the standpoint of interdisciplinary criminology research".¹⁷ Academic discussions were conducted in four panels whose participants were scientists at different stages in their academic careers: students, doctoral students, PhD holders, and trainee lawyers, while the panels were moderated by professors.¹⁸

As a direct result of BSC's work, 30 doctoral dissertations have been written under the supervision of professors E W Pływaczewski, E M Guzik-Makaruk and K Laskowska. These three professors were reviewers in 60 doctoral programmes and several habilitation proceedings, as well as in a number of proceedings to grant the title of professor. Representatives of BSC are authors of 14 monographs¹⁹, editors

¹⁴ Guzik-Makaruk E.M, Pływaczewski E.W, *op. cit.*, p. 27.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ Pływaczewski E.W, Jurgielewicz-Delegacz E, Dajnowicz-Piesiecka D (Eds), *Współczesna przestępczość i patologie społeczne z perspektywy interdyscyplinarnych badań kryminologicznych*. Warsaw, 2017, p. 304.

¹⁷ *For more about the interdisciplinary research of BSC, see:* Perkowska M, Jurgielewicz E, *Kierunki badań prawnokarnych i kryminologicznych prowadzonych w Zakładzie Prawa Karnego i Kryminologii Wydziału Prawa Uniwersytetu w Białymstoku*, [in:] Sepiolo I (Ed.), *Interdyscyplinarność badań w naukach penalnych*. Warsaw, 2012, pp. 423–438.

¹⁸ *See: The Criminologist*, 2016, Vol. 41, No. 5, p. 47.

¹⁹ Filipkowski W, *Zwalczanie przestępczości zorganizowanej w aspekcie finansowym*. Kraków, 2004, p. 452; Filipkowski W, *Money Laundering — Legal and Economic Aspects*. Białystok, 2008, p. 51; Filipkowski W, Chlebowicz P, *Analiza kryminalna. Aspekty kryminalistyczne i prawnowodowe*. Warsaw, 2011, p. 220; Guzik-Makaruk E.M, *Sekty religijne w Polsce*. Warsaw, 2004, p. 326; Guzik-Makaruk E.M, *Transplantacja organów, tkanek i komórek w ujęciu prawnym i kryminologicznym. Studium prawnooporównawcze*. Białystok, 2008, p. 532; Guzik-Makaruk E.M, *Transplantacja narządów, tkanek i komórek. Wybrane aspekty kryminologiczne i prawnokarne*. Białystok, 2016, p. 390; Laskowska K, *Nielegalny handel narkotykami w Polsce*. Białystok, 1999, p. 248; Laskowska K, *Rosyjskojęzyczna przestępczość*

of 30 monographs by more than one author, as well as authors of 200 academic articles, including 40 in foreign journals. Their participation as authors (or co-authors) in monographs and other non-serial publications includes 310 items, 90 of which are publications in foreign languages.

The young criminologists of BSC are also focused on such topics as grooming, stalking, homelessness, surrogacy and more. Topics undertaken by young criminologists are diverse and interdisciplinary. They include the most pressing problems of crime and social pathologies of the 21st century. Examples of innovative topics include: "The perpetrators and victims of homosexual homicide — a criminological study", "Traffic robberies in legal, criminal and criminological aspects", "Bribery in the Police and methods of its combating", "Countering money laundering with particular consideration given to financial market institutions", "Convicted and temporarily arrested and HIV/AIDS. A criminological and penitentiary study", "Legal and criminological aspects of hunting", "Criminological aspects of foreigners' criminality at the eastern border of Poland", "Criminological and legal aspects of the offence of taking and detaining a hostage (Article 252 of the Penal Code)", "Polish counter-terrorism information policy as a tool to prevent terrorist offences and their results", "Poles' criminality in London". One of the doctoral dissertations, titled "Traffic accidents involving handicapped persons, in particular blind and vision-impaired persons. A legal and criminological study", received the 1st Award of the Commissioner for Human Rights in the contest for the best academic work on social exclusion.

It should be mentioned that talented young people from Poland and abroad have the opportunity to publish the results of their research in the publication series *Current Problems of Penal Law and Criminology. Aktuelle Probleme des Strafrechts und der Kriminologie*. Outstanding criminologists and criminal lawyers from all over the world publish therein.

The achievements of BSC, for years, have been presented at prestigious annual conferences of the American Society of Criminology, the European Society of Criminology and other international conferences attended by criminologists from all over the world. Some of the issues undertaken by young criminologists were presented at the 17th Annual Conference of the European Society of Criminology, that took place between 13 and 16 September 2017 in Cardiff, UK.²⁰ It should be noted that representation from the Faculty of Law of University in Białystok was greater than of any other law institutions from Poland.

zorganizowana. Studium kryminologiczne. Białystok, 2006, p. 501; Laskowska K, Przemysłowość w Rosji z perspektywy kryminologii i prawa karnego. Białystok, 2016, p. 525; Perkowska M, Przemysłowość graniczna cudzoziemców. Warsaw, 2013, p. 232; Pływaczewski E.W, Cebulak W, Prostitution in the United States and Poland. A Cross-cultural Criminological Study from a Religious Perspective. Białystok, 2007, p. 152; Zatyka E, Lekarski obowiązek udzielenia pomocy. Warsaw, 2011, p. 232; Pływaczewski E.W, Bezpieczeństwo obywateli — prawa człowieka — zrównoważony rozwój: polskie kierunki interdyscyplinarnych badań kryminologicznych nad bezpieczeństwem obywateli oraz w zakresie przeciwdziałania wykluczeniu społecznemu. Białystok, 2017, p. 652.

²⁰ *Electronic source:* <https://www.eurocrim2017.com/programme?day=2>, accessed: 15.11.2017.

Most recently in 2017, BSC's achievements were presented at a separate session during the 73rd Annual Meeting of the American Society of Criminology in Philadelphia, PA.

The conference was attended by a six-member team from the Faculty of Law, University of Białystok. These were the only representatives from Poland at the forum, attended in total by 4 112 scientists and researchers from 43 countries. During the conference, 1 156 various events were organised (panel, thematic, working and poster sessions, round tables and other meetings). On November 16, 2017 the poster sessions took place, attended by Dr Emilia Jurgielewicz-Delegacz, who presented a poster titled *Road safety in European Union and in Poland* and Aleksandra J Lewandowska, with a poster titled *The Sexual Offender Therapy as a Precautionary Element of Sex Crime*.

The 73rd Annual Meeting of the ASC was unique for the Polish criminology. For the first time, in the several-decade history of these conferences — being the largest criminological forum in the world — a separate thematic session was devoted to the Polish criminological centre. What is more, never before has any Polish scientific centre been represented in such a large group. On November 17, 2017 the session devoted to the Białystok School of Criminology, titled *Criminology School in Białystok (Poland) Achievements and New Direction in Criminological Research*, took place, where the up-to-date achievements and future research plans were presented. The session was led by Prof. Emil W Pływaczewski, who also gave the introductory speech titled *Introduction and some information about Criminology School in Białystok (Poland)*. The second paper, titled *Summary of research project regarding actions for safety of the blind and partially sighted people in road traffic and achievements of Young Criminologists of Criminology School in Białystok (Poland)*, prepared by Prof. Ewa M Guzik-Makaruk and mgr Emilia M Truskolaska — discussing *inter alia* achievements of the young generation of the Białystok School of Criminology — was presented by Emilia M Truskolaska. The following speeches were given by world-class criminologists, who have cooperated with the BSK for years. The first speech, titled *Experience about Criminology School in Białystok (Poland) and Polish — USA scientific ties over the years*, was given by Prof. S George Vincentnathan (University of Texas-Rio Grande Valley in Edinburg, USA). The second speech was given by Prof. Chris Eskridge (University of Nebraska, USA) — Executive Director of the American Society of Criminology — who presented his consideration in the paper titled *Teaching Criminology in a Globalized Community: Experiences from Poland*. It was the only presentation of the Executive Director during this Annual Meeting of the ASC. Also Prof. Michael Berlin (Coppin State University, USA), César Barros Leal (Federal University of Ceará, Brazil), Prof. Joseph F Donnermeyer (The Ohio State University, USA), Prof. Obi Ebbe (University of Tennessee, USA), Prof. Greg Newbold (University of Canterbury, New Zealand), Prof. Jianghong Liu (University of Macau) and Prof. Rick Sarre (University of South Australia, Australia) — attended the session and took part in discussion on the BSC's achievements.

One of the most recent initiatives (2016) of BSC was the creation of the International Centre for Criminological Research and Expertise (ICCRE). The aims of the ICCRE include *inter alia*: cooperation with government bodies, private sector entities as well as non-governmental organisations in Poland and abroad; preparing experts' opinions for the needs of government bodies, private sector entities

and NGOs in Poland and abroad; and publishing and popularising activities. The purposes of the ICCRE include also: conducting and coordinating inter-disciplinary studies on criminology, initiating and coordinating the participation of the University in research consortia both nationally and internationally, as well as organising conferences, seminars and obtaining research grants.

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Streszczenie. Celem artykułu jest przybliżenie czytelnikom najważniejszych osiągnięć Białostockiej Szkoły Kryminologii. Wydział Prawa Uniwersytetu w Białymstoku, w szczególności Katedra Prawa Karnego i Kryminologii, jest jednym z wiodących polskich podmiotów naukowych prowadzących szeroko zakrojone badania z zakresu kryminologii. W rankingu organizowanym przez dziennik Rzeczpospolita w 2016 r. Wydział uzyskał najwyższy wynik w zakresie współpracy międzynarodowej spośród wszystkich ocenianych uczelni polskich, zarówno państwowych, jak i prywatnych, posiadających wydziały prawa. Co więcej, Białystok jest liderem rankingu 25 najlepszych wydziałów prawa w Polsce w 2017 r., przygotowanego w wyniku najważniejszej oceny przeprowadzanej

co cztery lata przez Ministerstwo Nauki i Szkolnictwa Wyższego, otrzymując najwyższe wyróżnienie — kategorię A. W artykule przedstawiono nie tylko międzynarodowe konferencje kryminologiczne i badania, w których Białostocka Szkoła Kryminologii brała udział, ale także jej własne inicjatywy zarówno na poziomie krajowym, jak i międzynarodowym. Przykładowo jednym z pionierskich przedsięwzięć o skali ogólnopolskiej było pierwsze Ogólnopolskie Forum Młodych Kryminologów zorganizowane przez Wydział Prawa Uniwersytetu w Białymstoku jako regularne wydarzenie. Jedną z najbardziej imponujących ostatnich inicjatyw Białostockiej Szkoły Kryminologii było stworzenie Międzynarodowego Centrum Badań i Ekspertyz Kryminologicznych. Artykuł zawiera więcej informacji o wspomnianych oraz o wielu innych projektach Białostockiej Szkoły Kryminologii, a także przedstawia różnorodne oraz niejednokrotnie interdyscyplinarne zagadnienia naukowe podejmowane przez naukowców Białostockiej Szkoły Kryminologii.

Резюме. Цель статьи — ознакомить читателей с важнейшими достижениями Белостокской криминологической школы. Юридический факультет Белостокского университета, в частности Кафедра уголовного права и криминологии, является одним из ведущих польских научных единиц, проводивших обширные исследования в области криминологии. В 2016 году в рейтинге, составленном ежедневной газетой «Rzeczpospolita», факультет получил самую высокую оценку в области международного сотрудничества среди всех оцененных польских университетов, как государственных, так и негосударственных, имеющих юридические факультеты. Более того, «Белосток» является лидером в рейтинге 25 юридических факультетов польских университетов в 2017 году. Рейтинг был составлен после важнейшей, проводимой каждые четыре года Министерством науки и высшего образования РП оценки, в результате которой вузу присвоена высшая категория — А. В статье описываются международные криминологические конференции и исследования, в которых принимали участие представители Белостокской криминологической школы, а также собственные инициативы вуза как на национальном, так и на международном уровне. Например, одним из новаторских проектов общенационального масштаба стал первый Национальный форум молодых криминологов, проводимый юридическим факультетом Белостокского университета в качестве регулярного мероприятия. Одной из самых впечатляющих последних инициатив Белостокской криминологической школы являлось создание Международного центра исследований и криминологических экспертиз. В статье содержится дополнительная информация о вышеупомянутых и многих других проектах Белостокской криминологической школы, а также представлены разные и часто междисциплинарные научные вопросы, решением которых занимаются научные сотрудники Белостокской криминологической школы.

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