The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Culture Minister Keeps His PhD After Thesis Scandal

October 12, 2016



Culture Minister Vladimir Medinsky **Sergei Porter / Vedomosti**

Russian Culture Minister Vladimir Medinsky is to keep his PhD, despite his thesis being branded "absurd" by academics.

Russia's Higher Attestation Commission (HAS) formally withdrew its application to strip Medinsky of his doctorate degree in historical sciences on Wednesday, the Vedomosti newspaper reported.

HAC representative Vladimir Filippov said that the application had expired after a two-month period, but still had not been examined by the dissertation council at Russia's Ural Federal University. A hearing on
Medinsky's work had originally been scheduled, but then
had been postponed at the request of the Culture Minister, he told RIA Novosti.

The application to strip Medinsky of his doctorate degree was filed by activists from online

network Dissertnet in April. Late Renaissance specialist Ivan Babitsky, who worked with historians Vyacheslav Kozlyakov and Konstantin Yerusalimsky to verify the minister's work, claimed that the dissertation was “not scientific, and in some places simply absurd.”

The historians argued that Medinsky's thesis should not be considered historical research due to a number of "grave errors" in its content. The mistakes included a claim that Russians in the time of Ivan the Terrible could read the Bible printed in Russian, while Protestants and Catholics in the West could not, as their holy texts were written in Latin.

The historians also accused Medinsky of using his own historical methodology and compared the conclusions of his dissertation to a “propaganda pamphlet.”

According to data presented by Dissernet, one in nine members of Russia's previous State Duma plagiarized parts of their academic work. The groups says it has evidence that 33 people who ran for the Duma in the Sept. 18 elections also cheated on their doctoral and thesis papers.

Original url: https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2016/10/12/culture-minister-keeps-his-phd-a55707