

Euclid, Lobachevsky, and teaching geometry in the Russian Empire of the early 19th century.

Lobachevsky's work that eventually led him to the discovery of Non-Euclidean geometry during the 1820s aimed primarily at producing a new introduction to geometry for pedagogical purposes. The contemporary geometry textbooks known to Lobachevsky, and particularly those available in Russian to the date, constitute a context in which Lobachevsky's work can be fruitfully understood and interpreted. This diverse literature comprises early Russian translations of Euclid's Elements (since 1739) as well as attempts to improve on Euclid by writing new geometry textbooks such as S. Gouriev's (1811). In my talk I shall briefly overview this literature and describe Lobachevsky's stance vis-à-vis the Euclidean tradition.