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Elizaveta Litvinova

Canonical name	ElizavetaLitvinova
Date of creation	2013-03-22 17:15:41
Last modified on	2013-03-22 17:15:41
Owner	Mravinci (12996)
Last modified by	Mravinci (12996)
Numerical id	5
Author	Mravinci (12996)
Entry type	Definition
Classification	msc 01A60
Classification	msc 01A55
Synonym	Elizaveta Fedorovna Litvinova
Synonym	Elizaveta Fedorovna Ivanskina
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Elizaveta Fedorovna Litvinova née *Elizaveta Fedorovna Ivanshkina* (1845 - 1919?) Russian mathematician, biographer and women's activist.

Born in czarist Russia, young Elizaveta's early education was at a women's high school in St. Petersburg. In 1866 Elizaveta married Viktor Litvinov and took his last name. Unlike Vladimir Kovalevskii (Sofia Kovalevskaya's husband), Litvinov would not allow his wife to travel to Europe to study at the universities there. Litvinova studied with Strannoliubskii (who had also privately tutored Kovalevskaya). As soon as her husband died, Litvinova went to Zürich and enrolled at a polytechnic institute. In 1873 the Russian czar decreed all Russian women studying in Zürich had to return to Russia or the consequences. Litvinova was one of the few to ignore the decree and continue her studies in Zürich. When Litvinova returned to Russia, she was denied university appointments because she had defied the 1873 recall. She taught at a women's high school and supplemented her income by writing biographies of more famous mathematicians such as Kovalevskaya and Aristotle. After retiring, it is believed that Litvinova died during the Russian Revolution in 1919.

References

- [1] A. H. Koblitz "Sofia Vasilevna Kovalevskaya" in *Women of Mathematics: A Bibliographic Sourcebook* L. Grinstein, P. Campbell, eds New York: Greenwood Press (1987): 129 - 134