

THE PEOPLES OF THE MIDDLE VOLGA REGION FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF HISTORICAL-RELIGIOUS STUDIES OF J. D. KOBLOV (THE END OF XIX – BEGINNING OF XX CENTURIES)

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ABSTRACT

In the second half of XIX – early XX centuries the leading missionary and ethno-political institution in Russia, one of the major centers for the study of history, culture, ethnography and language of the Turkic, the Finno-Ugric and the Mongolian peoples was the Kazan spiritual Academy (1842-1921). The authors review scientific and educational activities of Yakov Dmitrievich Koblov – the graduate of the only in the whole of Russia missionary departments of the Kazan theological Academy. The study of the life and work of a public figure, anti-Muslim and anti-pagan missionary of the diocese of Kazan, the teacher J. D. Koblov, his contribution to the studying of the history, ethnography, languages and culture of the Turkic and the Finno-Ugric peoples of the Middle Volga in the late XIX – early XX centuries, is of great interest. This article uses the principles of historicism and integrity, methods for systematic and comprehensive analysis, statistical and sociological methods. The study revealed missionary and social activities of J. D. Koblov, his contribution to the Christianization and Russification of the peoples of the Volga region, to the education of the Tatars, the Chuvash, the Maris, to the monitoring of their religious and moral condition is shown. The authors have analyzed the scientific papers and have evaluated the contribution of Koblov in the historical-confessional and ethnopolitical studies of the Turkic and the Finno-Ugric peoples of Russia in the late XIX – early XX centuries to the preservation and development of their languages. The problem, raised in this work, was discussed in Russian and foreign historiography, mainly only in the context of a study of missionary policy of the Russian state in XVI – early XX centuries, in large-scale integration processes on the basis of Christian Orthodoxy and the Russian language. The article can be useful to all those, interested in missionary politics and modern ethno-political processes in the Russian Federation.

Keywords: *Russia, society, national studies, identity, the peoples of Russia, the Kazan theological Academy, ethnography, history, culture.*

INTRODUCTION

In recent decades, in connection with the intensification of national and religious components in the regions and subjects of the Russian Federation, we face the problem of development of professional competence in addressing religious issues, ethnic conflict and removing ethnic tensions. Humanitarian sciences are becoming increasingly important, as they are connected with the studying of ethnic properties and phenomena, national structures and relations. The study of history, ethnography, cultural heritage and languages of peoples and ethnics of Russia is becoming of important theoretical and practical significance. In this regard, a comprehensive historiographical and source study of the educational, scientific and public activity of teachers and graduates of the missionary departments of the Kazan Theological Academy, missionaries of the Kazan province, their contribution to the study of history, ethnography, language and culture of the Turkic and the Finno-Ugric peoples of the Middle Volga region, Urals and Siberia in Kazan in the second half of XIX – early XX centuries is of academic and applied interest to modern scholars and practitioners.

A historical and cultural phenomenon of the interaction of the adherents of Islam and Christianity is most clearly manifested in the Volga-Urals region. After the conquest of Kazan (1552) and Siberian (1583) khanates by the Russian government, an active Imperial missionary policy was conducted there. Orthodox educational activities of the Russian state against non-Slavic peoples of Russia are reflected in the writings of V. D. Dimitriev [5], L. A. Taimasov [24], M. Batunsky [2] A. Bennigsen [3], R. Geraci [4], R. Pipes [22], P. W. Werth [26], G. Hosking [27], J. Pelenskii [23] etc.

The study of the educational, missionary, scientific and social activities of the graduate of the missionary Department of Kazan Theological Academy J. D. Koblova, analysis of his analytical reports, scientific works on history, ethnography, language and culture of the Turkic and Finno-Ugric peoples of the Middle Volga region in Kazan at the end of XIX – beginning of XX centuries is of great practical and theoretical interest for modern scientists. Occupying for many years, the position of anti-Muslim and anti-pagan missionary of the diocese of Kazan, J. D. Koblov was the conductor of the actions of the Russian authorities in the region, he had made a significant contribution to the education of the baptized Tatars, Chuvash, Maris and others. The basis of our research is in new archival materials and sources, which allowed the author to provide a comprehensive assessment of the problem.

METHODS

The methods of this study are based on the modern principles and ideas – philosophical, epistemological and logical, which play an important role in the study of events, stages and directions of forming of missionary policy in the Volga region, researches of J. D. Koblov in history, ethnography, language and culture of the Turkic and the Finno-Ugric peoples of the Middle Volga region in Kazan in the late XIX – early XX centuries.

The methodological basis of research is formed by general scientific methodological principles and methods, used in modern historical science. The following principles of historical knowledge were taken as the basis for the study:

- the principle of historicism, which requires consideration of any historical phenomenon in its development, identifying both the specific characteristics of each phenomenon and its causing factors;
- the principle of integrity, which requires to study each phenomenon as a system of interrelated elements and reasons, determining them;

Methods of systematic and comprehensive analysis allowed us to create a complete picture of the formation of world outlook of J. D. Koblov, its formation as a scientist and a missionary, study his

biography and analysis of works. Taking into account the specifics of the studied object were involved in the statistical and sociological methods.

RESULTS

In the second half of XIX – early XX century the Kazan Theological Academy was a large religious, educational and a leading centre for the study of history, ethnography, culture and language of the Turkic and the Finno-Ugric peoples. In the National archives of the Republic of Tatarstan, a variety of unpublished materials of teachers of the Academy, graduates and students on culture, everyday life, customs and traditions of the peoples of the Russian state are saved. These sources are of great scientific importance for modern researchers [17, 20, 21].

Kazan theological Academy was founded in 1842. To solve the complex “indigenous” question in Russia, in 1854, the missionary Department, the only in the country, was established in the Academy [18, 19]. Four missionary Departments were opened in the Academy: 1) anti-dissenter, 2) anti-Muslim, 3) anti-Buddism and 4) Cheremis-Chuvash.

In these departments of the Academy Ethnography and Languages of the Tatars, the Kyrgyz, the Bashkirs, the Chuvash, the Maris, the Udmurts, the Mordovians, the Mongolians, the Buryats, the Kalmyks and other peoples of Russia were taught, and also the foundations of religious education, and the Russification of the peoples of Russia, forms and methods of distribution of Orthodoxy among Finno-Ugric, Turkic and Mongolian-speaking peoples and nationalities were developed [28].

In the Russian historiography, the history of the missionary offices of the Kazan Theological Academy, the legacy of its teachers, as well as the problems of the peoples of the Middle Volga region, Urals and Siberia were reflected in the works of Russian authors – R. M. Valeev [1] A. A. Khabibullin [30] A. V. Zhuravsky [6] etc.

Among the talented graduates of the missionary department, a theologian, a public figure and a teacher J. D. Koblov (1876–?) is distinguished. As a student of E. A. Malov, and M. A. Mashanova, he linked his activities with the study of the Turkic and the Finno-Ugric peoples of the Middle Volga region. In his works the history of the Tatar religious education, the development of Islam among Tatars and paganism at the Mari, the role of the mullahs, the issues of Islamic studies and others are examined [29].

In the years of 1900-1908-J. D. Koblov worked as an anti-Muslim and anti-pagan missionary of the diocese of Kazan, in the years of 1908-1914 he was an inspector of public schools in Kazan district of Kazan province, and since 1914 - in Kiev educational district. The revolutionary events of 1917 forced J. D. Koblov to leave Kiev and return to the Kazan Theological Academy. In 1920-1921 he held the post of Professor of philosophy of History-Philological faculty of the State Far-Eastern University and taught History of Pedagogical Theories, the General Course of Pedagogy, Psychology of the Will. On the initiative of J. D. Koblov, the Department of Pedagogy was established there, which was engaged in the training of teachers, taking into account local conditions and needs. In the 1923-1924 academic year, as a result of a higher school "cleaning", Koblov, as a former missionary, was sent as a teacher of Russian language to Vladivostok evening working faculty.

In their professional activities J. D. Koblov managed to create an interesting ethnographic works on the peoples of the Middle Volga region, which are of great interest to modern researchers [7]. In the course of numerous trips to the villages of the Kazan province, he managed to gather considerable ethnographic material about the multinational people of the Kazan province [8], their culture, way of life, religious beliefs [9], education [10] and educational institutions [11]. In his works he pays considerable attention to

the study of the activities of the Muslim clergy [12], confessional schools of the Tatars [13], mythology [14], Tatar Muslim holidays [15], religious rites and customs [16], etc.

In the process of a long-term residence of different ethnic and religious groups in a single ethno-cultural space, there was a gradual interpenetration of cultures, some national and household traditions and religious rites. For many non-Russian peoples of different religions and for centuries living in close proximity, some of the customs and rites of other ethnic and religious groups of the rural population over time ceased to be perceived as not pleasing to God. In this respect, the penetration of some Orthodox holidays to cultural and domestic environment of the Tatar village is of particular interest. Thus, we find evidence for this in the work of J. D. Koblova "Tatar Muslim holidays" [15]. He noted that in the villages with mixed population, the Muslims celebrate Orthodox holidays, not giving them a religious significance.

J. D. Koblov, on the specifics of his profession, being anti-Muslim diocesan missionary, paid great attention to the problems of religious and moral state of the Tatars in the Muslim community (makhallya). He noted that a tremendous impact on the formation and development of Muslim communities, on the exercising of their functions and the activities of religious institutions in pre-revolutionary period, was provided by the mullahs. They performed all the rites of the life cycle (naming, marriage, and burial of the dead, etc.), acted as judges in civil cases, were teachers and were the spiritual authorities for members of religious communities, led by them. Y. D. Koblov attached great importance to the figure of the Mullah in the life of the Muslims of the Middle Volga; his views and arguments he presented in his work "Of the Mohammedan mullahs (religious-home essay)" [12].

J. D. Koblov describes in details the content of education, educational process, internal rules of madrasas and makthabs in the work "Confessional school of the Kazan Tatars" [13].

His observations of the Turkic and Finno-Ugric peoples J. D. Koblov summarized in the work "On Tatarisation of foreigners of the Volga region", with which, as a speaker, acted at a missionary Congress in Kazan on 13-26 June, 1910 As the title of the work denotes, the Tatars became the main subject of study. "Tatars Mohammedans,-he noted,-occupy a dominant position among the foreign tribes of the Volga region. They surpass other foreigners in number, in firmness of their religious beliefs, in stability, and in constancy of customs and manners, formed under the influence of the Mohammedan religion...The Tatars, as the most powerful nationality in comparison with other foreign tribes, colonize weak nationalities, who have no capacities, slightly developed, dehumanize them and unite with them" [8].

One of the main causes of Tatarization of peoples of the Middle Volga, and dissemination of Islam among them, according to Koblov, was living together with the Tatar population. Another important factor of Tatarization of the peoples of the Middle Volga, and dissemination of Islam among them, is the establishment of a network of prayer houses and development of enlightenment and education. The main task of the Tatar schools, in his view, lies primarily in the study of the teachings of Islam and in the formation, on its basis, of students' religious outlook and worldview [8]

In the Middle Volga region Tatarization and Islamization was aimed at the Chuvash, the Maris, the Udmurts, the Mordvinians, but unlike the baptized Tatars, it was not in such a massive scale. In his work J. D. Koblov gives a description of the religious condition of all the Turkic and the Finno-Ugric peoples of the Middle Volga region. According to the remark of the researcher, all of them have experienced a strong influence from the Muslim Tatars.

In fact, from the report of the Kazan anti-Muslim and anti-pagan missionary of the diocese of Kazan J. D. Koblov, it follows, that the activities of the Russian state and the Russian Orthodox Church, aimed at Russification and Christianization of the peoples of the Middle Volga region, have not achieved the

expected results. The actions of Russian missionaries were met with strong, well-organized and massive opposition from the Tatar people, who subordinated to its educational and cultural influence the Turkic and the Finno-Ugric peoples of the Volga-Kama region. J. D. Koblov himself wrote about this: "As can be seen from a brief review of the religious and domestic status of foreigners of the Volga region, advocacy of the Tatars-Mohammedans is quite successful and achieves more than satisfactory results. If it continues, we'll face the risk of a total Tatarization, if not all, but of the significant part of the foreigners of the Volga region. And instead of separate small nations, in the near future we will see a cohesive fanatical Mohammedan mass. After all, the same position, as the Volga foreigners, had formerly the Kirghiz and the Bashkirs, and now they do not separate themselves from the Tatars, and act together with them and quite unanimously. Currently, in the Birsky district of the Ufa province it is difficult to distinguish between the Tatars, the Bashkirs and the Cheremis; they all look like the Tatars. Other foreigners may achieve the level, where now are the Kirghiz, the Bashkirs and a part of the Cheremis of the Birsk district, that will lead them to the final Tatarization" [8].

CONCLUSION

J. D. Koblov by his practical work and scientific heritage has made a significant contribution to the historical-confessional and ethno-political study of Ethnography of the Finno-Ugric and the Turkic peoples of the Middle Volga region, to the preservation and development of languages. His research contributed to the process of integration of peoples into the Imperial political, economic, cultural and educational space of the Russian state. Many modern scholars refer to the works of the scientist, because they are sometimes the only source of information about the lives of ordinary people. In his writings he, with the missionary positions, analyzed the causes of Tatarization and the Islamization of the peoples of the Middle Volga region, and methods of struggle with it. As a scientist, he managed to gather considerable ethnographic material about the multinational people of Kazan province, their culture, way of life, religious beliefs, education system, etc.

The authors of the study managed to disclose a missionary and social activities of J. D. Koblov, to analyze the contribution of the scientist in education of the Turkic and the Finno-Ugric peoples of the Volga and Urals regions, to show the personality of the scientist in the context of missionary Islamic studies and Oriental studies in Kazan in the late XIX – early XX centuries, to study the works of the scientist and to identify their scientific novelty in comparison with predecessors and contemporaries. In the author's view, the problem of studying of the peoples at the missionary departments of the Kazan Theological Academy, and its graduates, was studied for the first time. Overall, the article presents a review of the original material, allowing in further to illuminate the life and work of J. D. Koblov, general and particular in the study of the heritage of the representatives of missionary Orientalism and their contribution to the study of the history, culture, ethnography and language of the Turkic and the Finno-Ugric peoples of the Middle Volga region. The article can be used in the writing of scientific articles and monographs.

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