



TURKESTAN COLLECTION AS A VALUABLE DOCUMENTARY SOURCE ON THE HISTORY OF COLONIAL TURKESTAN

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Article history:	Abstract:
Received: 10 th May 2024 Accepted: 7 th May 2024	Turkestan collection of essays and articles relating to Central Asia in general and the Turkestan region in particular" is a collection of various printed materials (books, magazine and newspaper articles, newspaper clippings and magazines) on various topics relating to the Central Asian possessions of the Russian Empire. The compilation of the collection was started at the suggestion of the Turkestan Governor-General K.P.Kaufman in order to provide information to representatives of the Russian administration and the intellectual community regarding the situation in various areas of life in the newly annexed region. The appearance of the "Turkestan Collection" marks an important stage in the comprehensive study of Central Asia during the period of its annexation to the Russian Empire. This article provides information on the use of the Turkestan collection as a valuable documentary source for the history of Colonial Turkestan.

Keywords: Turkestan collection, Colonial Turkestan, Central Asian possessions, books, magazine and newspaper articles, newspaper clippings, several catalogs and indexes, the comprehensive study of Central Asia.

INTRODUCTION

This unique collection of materials on Turkestan consists of 594 volumes and is currently in the collection of the State Library of Uzbekistan named after Alisher Navoi. The history of compiling the collection is inextricably linked with the history of the organization of the Turkestan Public Library, which later became the State Library of Uzbekistan named after Alisher Navoi. Since the Turkestan region, which in 1867 was ninety days' journey from the cultural center of Russia – St. Petersburg, was a little-studied but extremely interesting area for many, the need for systematic research of this region for the most effective use of all the opportunities hidden in it, the need to find communication routes, which would combine the export of those raw materials in which Russian industry was so interested – all this put forward the task of collecting material relating to Turkestan and the countries adjacent to it.

MAIN PART: REASONS FOR THE CREATION OF THE TURKESTAN COLLECTION

The initially sparse literature about the region began to quickly be replenished with new materials from scientific researchers and a number of translations of foreign monographs. The works of N.M.Przhevalsky, I.V.Mushketov, travel notes of A.A.Semenov and N.A.Severtsov – researchers of the Tien Shan, works of N.A.Maev about the Turkestan region and etc. were

published. At the same time in periodicals Many articles have appeared, often for the first time touching upon and covering political and economic issues, history, ethnography and culture of Central Asia. Anyone interested in one or another issue relating to Turkestan had to leaf through many newspapers, magazines and books. And if the search for literature and familiarization with it, associated with painstaking work, were still possible in St. Petersburg, then locally, in Turkestan, this possibility was completely excluded. [1]

In this regard, the Governor-General of the region K.P.Kaufman on August 16, 1867 turned to the Minister of Public Education D.A.Tolstoy, Vice-President of the Imperial Academy of Sciences V.Ya.Bunyakovsky, Director of the Imperial Public Library I.D.Delyanov, to the President of the Imperial Russian Geographical Society F.P.Litka and the Chief of the General Staff F.L.Heyden with requests to donate doublets of books of scientific content for the newly organized Turkestan book depository. The Department of Public Education donated to Tashkent some of the publications of the Archaeographic Commission (collection of Russian chronicles, historical acts, etc., in 25 volumes). The Board of the Imperial Novorossiysk University donated 87 titles of various books in Russian, French and German from doublets of the university library to the Tashkent library. The Council of the Imperial Moscow University sent 66 essays on various branches of knowledge.



MEZHOV AND VON KAUFMAN

It is not surprising that it was he who was approached by the administration of colonial Turkestan with a proposal to compile a collection covering all newspaper and magazine publications relating to Central Asia and neighboring countries, as well as scientific works on the same topic by both Russian and foreign authors. V.I.Mezhov readily responded to this proposal. He wrote: "The acquisition of such a region as Turkestan is of great importance for Russia. It secured our eastern borders... but it is especially important in terms of trade, opening up the Central Asian markets for us to sell our manufactured goods.

Perhaps the time is not far when our caravans will reach India and, in exchange for our manufactured products, will bring us treasures of the East. The construction of a railway, in the near future, through our Central Asian possessions all the way to India, for which there are many projects, will further develop our trade. It is not for nothing that the British, who everywhere protect their trade interests, vigilantly monitor every forward movement of the Russians deep into Central Asia... In their literature, they closely monitor everything that comes out on the Central Asian issue, compile bibliographic indexes. Will we doze off in this is the time". [2]

Mezhov himself spoke about the history of the creation of the collection in one of his letters: "In 1867, K.P.Kaufman approached me through I.S.Idarov with a proposal to compile for him bibliographic indexes of books and articles related to Central Asia in general and Turkestan region in particular. During a personal meeting with him, I imagined that one bare list of titles, given such a distance from Tashkent from the capital, would have no practical meaning for him. Instead, I suggested that he compile a "Turkestan Collection", which would include the books and articles themselves. He agreed and for the first time, as an experiment, I sent him 10 volumes to Tashkent, for which I received a reward of 1000 rubles. Such an unexpected and generous reward forced me to intensify my work and in the following years, for the same fee, I sent from 20 to 30 volumes. Finally, in the subsequent years of the management of the Turkestan region by K.P.Kaufman, I agreed to deliver him annually from 40 to 50 volumes for 1000 rubles in compensation".

Being constantly in St. Petersburg and thus having the opportunity to monitor the published books and periodicals, Mezhov, having the funds allocated to him for this by the Turkestan Governor-General, acquired and collected everything relating to Central Asia and the countries adjacent to it. He collected not only major works, but also the smallest insignificant

notes: "The library, which contained everything that was written about the region, should bring undoubted benefit. Why do you know, perhaps some of the articles included in the "Collection", and not only major ones, but even, apparently, insignificant ones, can throw new light on some administrative and economic issue. As a result, when compiling the "Turkestan Collection", I did not neglect a single article relating to Central Asia in general and the Turkestan region in particular". [3]

In addition, having in my collection at hand everything that has been written about Central Asia and Turkestan in recent years, you will have the opportunity to refute in print various fables and often deliberate distortions of facts by those individuals who wrote from hearsay or tried to see the subject through the prism of self-interested views and petty personal interests". According to the assumption of the famous bibliographer of Uzbekistan E.K.Betger, the prototype of this colossal collection was the "Collection of articles relating to the Central Asian khanates and the Kyrgyz steppe" compiled by the former manager of the Treasury Chamber S.A.Idarov for his own use, consisting of six volumes with 84 articles. Idarov compiled them in a systematic order: volume 1 is dedicated to Semirechye, volume 3 to the Kyrgyz steppe, volume 5 to Khiva, volume 7 to the Aral Sea and the Syr Darya. These collections were very important and, according to Dmitrovsky, "at that time they constituted the only material for getting acquainted with the region". [4]

Kaufman attached great importance to the "Turkestan Collection", valued it very much, and emphasized its significance "for the benefit and development of knowledge of our Central Asian possessions." He pointed out that the collection is excellent material for those wishing to study Central Asia. At first, Kaufman kept the first ten volumes as his personal library. In 1876 they were transferred to the Turkestan Public Library. [5] In total, 250 volumes were published during Kaufman's governorship. In 1882-1889. under governors Chernyaev and Rosenbach, another 166 volumes were compiled. Thus, the total number of volumes was 416, containing 4,713 titles in Russian, French, German, English, Italian, Spanish and Latin. The total cost of compiling the Collection was 23,169 rubles.

STRUCTURE OF THE TURKESTAN COLLECTION

All the material collected for the "Turkestan Collection" was formatted as follows: newspaper articles were cut out, pasted onto white sheets of paper, articles from magazines and books were embroidered and individual sheets were pasted into paper frames. There



were over ten thousand magazine and newspaper clippings alone in the Turkestan Collection. The material processed in this way was bound into volumes of the same format, which were supplied with title pages printed in the printing house.

Mezhov selected books, magazine and newspaper articles as they were published, thus maintaining a chronological sequence. In 1868, in the preface to the first volume, the compiler writes the following: "Whoever constantly follows literature knows how poor it is in works relating to distant countries lying in the depths of Central Asia. Three - two works a year - that's our entire mental contribution to a treasury of knowledge about countries that are becoming more and more interesting for us every day. I'm talking about books here. Their sheer number already proves that society is extremely interested in our new acquisitions in Central Asia.

As a result of this, I, wanting with my weak works to be of some use to the newly acquired region, decided, in addition to the library... to add my present collection of articles scattered in numerous our, and, if possible, foreign periodical publications. There will be four volumes for 1867. The first two volumes contain articles from newspapers, written, for the most part, under the influence of the moment and the event that took place, and as a result have a polemical, one-sided and superficial character. In the next two volumes I propose to publish articles from journals. Being more thoughtful and having more or less serious and scientific research and descriptions as their subject, they, I hope, will be more useful than the first ones". [6]

SYSTEMATIC AND ALPHABETICAL INDEX

A "systematic and elementary index of works and articles in Russian and foreign languages", also compiled by Mezhov, allows one to navigate the large and varied material of the "Turkestan Collection". The alphabetical indexes are divided into three parts:

1. index of authors, translators and names appearing in the bibliography.
2. location and name indicators.
3. index of authors and subjects found in foreign bibliography.

In these indexes, along with a reference to the corresponding volume of the "Turkestan Collection", a link is given to the publication in which this or that material is placed. This makes it possible to use the literature included in the collection not only in Tashkent, where it is stored. Mezhov himself wrote in the preface to the first volume of the index: "In general, I compiled my index in such a form that it would be suitable not only for those people who have the opportunity to have

the "Turkestan collection" at hand, but also for everyone interested in literature, about Central Asia in general and the Turkestan region in particular. For this purpose, next to each title of an article in the "collection" I placed a link to the periodical from which it was extracted". [7]

CONTENTS OF THE TURKESTAN COLLECTION

The content of the "Turkestan Collection" is extremely rich and varied. On the pages of this unique chronicle you can find messages and descriptions concerning various aspects of the life of our region in every detail. The conquest of the Central Asian states, the structure and colonization of the region, its economy, the study of productive forces, the history and ethnography of the peoples of Central Asia - everything that was reflected in the press at one time was collected in the "Turkestan Collection".

A researcher working on any topic of colonial Turkestan does not need to carry out lengthy and painstaking searches in catalogs and card indexes, subscribe to dozens of sets of magazines and newspapers, collect many books, brochures, maps, reference books, some of which may simply not have been preserved in individual publications. It is enough, armed with indexes, to turn to the collection - and all the huge printed material will reveal to the interested person all the details of the topic he is developing. [8]

Flipping through the pages of the Collection volume by volume, we can reconstruct the entire life of the region in every detail. In 1867, the Turkestan Governor-General was formed. The pages of St. Petersburg and Moscow newspapers are flooded with articles that often have a superficial, biased polemic nature, but can lead the researcher to forgotten facts, illuminated from an unexpected angle. The beginnings of the organization of the region, discussions of the draft regulations on the management of the region, the first steps of the tsarist administration, its relationship with local residents - all this is reflected in the first volumes of the Collection. Starting from volume 5, the Collection contains a lot of articles about trade, about Central Asian markets, and about the possibilities of the region. Engineer Tatarinov publishes articles in the Mining Journal about coal deposits in Karatau and the possibility of its development.

The magazines "Military Collection" and "Bulletin of Europe" publish articles by Sobolev, Kostenko, Ibragimov, Kolokoltsev and others, which also examine the Khiva campaign from different angles. Volume 88 of the Collection concludes with a book by the American journalist McGahan, a direct participant in the campaign (published in America and translated into



Russian in 1875), which fully summarizes the events of 1873. All materials of a historical, economic, statistical, ethnographic, literary, and art nature facilitated the work of the modern researcher, as D.I. Logofet aptly said, "in finding the smallest grains among the boundless and bottomless abyss of the paper sea of printed works"[9].

TERMINATION OF COMPILATION OF THE COLLECTION

The compilation and publication of the Turkestan collection continued regularly until 1887. On average, 20 volumes were published per year. In 1884, the Governor-General of Turkestan N.O. Rosenbakh, having doubted the completeness and value of the collection compiled by Mezhev, and mainly being interested in the financial side of this work, instructed N.P. Ostroumov and N.V. Dmitrovsky to familiarize themselves with the collection and give their opinion conclusion on the advisability of its continuation. N.V. Dmitrovsky, in "Note from a member of the commission on the compilation of the "Turkestan Collection"," written jointly with N.P. Ostroumov, gave a detailed analysis of Mezhev's work. The text of this note, unfortunately, has not survived, but a draft of it was discovered in Leningrad in 1924 by the famous bibliographer and local historian N.A. Burov.

Of course, many of the listed shortcomings of the "Turkestan Collection" actually occurred. But on the whole, the Collection - an undoubtedly valuable publication - did not deserve such a critical assessment. Most likely, we were talking about a wider coverage of materials published about the Turkestan region, about their more careful selection, that is, about improving the "Collection", and not at all about its liquidation. A letter from the ruler of the office of the Governor General to Mezhev dated July 3, 1887, stored in the Central State Archive of Uzbekistan, states: "In view of the reduction in the loan for the maintenance of the Turkestan Public Library and the insufficiency of it to cover all expenses incurred by the Library so far, including according to the publication of the "Turkestan Collection", if any, form the appropriate number of volumes of the Collection, which continue to be sent to the Governor General's Office". [10]

Thus, from 1887, by order of the administration, work on such an important scientific enterprise at that time ceased, which caused great harm to the further study of the region. It should be said that other circumstances also played a significant role in the issuance of the above-mentioned order. N.P. Ostroumov wrote: "For Kaufman's time, this collection (that is, the Turkestan collection) was of invaluable importance,

since in Russian literature only with the conquest of Tashkent did geographical, ethnographic and historical information about the newly conquered region, hitherto unknown for scientific research, begin to appear Europeans". [11]

CONCLUSION

To sum up, The first twenty years of the organization and development of the Turkestan region were a period of vigorous activity of numerous expeditions, research, and the creation of large capital works, and in the next twenty years there came a time of some calm. In the surviving letters of Mezhev himself, for whom the above-mentioned order was a big blow, one can hear genuine grief. In a letter dated August 24, 1887, he writes: "... with great regret I learned that I.O. Rosenbach decided to stop compiling the Collection. Well, there is nothing to object to this. There is no opposition, says the proverb, and there is no judgment".

And in another letter dated October 10, Mezhev, sending the last 16 volumes of the collection to Tashkent, writes: "It was very sad for me to end the work that I had been doing for 25 years, but apparently there was nothing to do". [12]

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