

**THE ORIENTAL PEDAGOGICAL INSTITUTE:  
ROLE AND PLACE IN THE FORMATION OF THE NATIONAL EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM OF  
TATARSTAN**

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**Abstract.** The relevance of the topic under discussion is determined by the need for further investigation of the scientific and pedagogical peculiarity of Tatarstan, its educational environment, which is connected with the study of the history of national education and serves as the basis for the development of the theory of national pedagogy.

The leading approach to the study of this topic is theoretical, conceptual, historical and scientific understanding of continuity in the sequential study of the theme.

The present article aims at reaching the following goal – analysis and evaluation of national education as part of the whole educational system, intended to ensure the implementation of the constitutional right of the citizens of the republic to education, based on ethnic and cultural traditions, corresponding to the character of the nation, its needs and major aspirations. It bears the responsibility of preventing degradation of the sense of tolerance as a means of co-existence with representatives of other nations, as well as preventing the emergence of destructive forms of national consciousness.

The main results of the present research include identifying and acquisition of the materials accumulated by the authors of the article in the declared subject, and further development of theoretical and practical foundation of revival of national education. Referring to experience and traditions accumulated over the centuries, it is important to turn to investigation of the history of the Oriental Pedagogical Institute and the department of oriental studies founded under its auspices, where teaching oriental subjects was a priority.

**Keywords:** Oriental Pedagogical Institute, national system of education, source study, historiography.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Kazan, the city of renowned scientific and educational traditions, boasting one of the largest universities in Russia, played a big and progressive role in the history of peoples living in the Volga region, Cisuranean area, Central Asia. The Russian revolutionary A.I. Herzen, foreseeing Kazan's peculiar mission, wrote: «The general importance of Kazan is great: it is the meeting point of two worlds... Kazan stands as the main caravansarai on the path of European ideas to Asia and Asian character to Europe». «Kazan for foreigners is as good as Moscow is for Russians», the outstanding linguist, professor N.F. Katanov considered.

Kazan was a famous academic center of the pre-revolutionary Russia, representatives of many ethnic groups studied at the educational institutions of the city. Kazan published the first works, scientific papers by writers and scholars of Udmurt, Mari, Chuvash, Bashkir, Mordvinian origin as well as belonging to other friendly nations.

Kazan «foreigners'» teachers seminary, Kazan and Vyatka missionary societies and other religious educational establishments training national teaching staff were among the first ones to make a conspicuous contribution into national education, into advancement of education of non-Russian peoples inhabiting the Volga region.

From late XIX and by early XX centuries, the humanities research concerning the local territory was conducted mainly at Kazan university. The society of archeology, history and ethnography at Kazan university contributed a lot into study of history, intellectual and material life, culture of Mari, Udmurt, Chuvash, Mordvinian peoples. Kazan as the center of the multi-national land opened the workers' school, and from the very start it prepared manpower for the national republics of the Middle Volga region and Cisuranean area.

The idea of opening the institute to prepare specialists for national school was put forward in May 1917 at the congress of peoples of the Volga region in Kazan.

The first national higher educational establishment was North-Eastern Archeological and Ethnographic Institute, later transformed into Eastern Academy. But together with that, teaching

national languages was introduced at the Higher Institute of Public Education.

According to the enactment of the Presidium of the Board of the Main Directorate of Professional Education of the People's Commissariat of Education of RSFSR, from 1922 teaching oriental disciplines concentrates at Oriental Pedagogical Institute (OPI), particularly at the Department of Orientalism.

The decree by the Council of People's Commissars of RSFSR of 1925 initiated opening of independent National Linguistic Departments at Oriental Pedagogical Institute which became the forerunner of numerous pedagogical higher educational establishments of the Volga region.

Tatar national department of language and culture emerged from the disbanded Department of Orientalism in 1925-1926 academic year, and by the time of its opening it already acquired a vast experience of work and accumulated materials, blueprints and methods of education, large library collections.

## 2. METHODS

Methodology and technique of investigation of the present topic contribute toward assimilation of the practice of the previous development of scholarly thought, diversity of scientific points of view, ways and techniques of scholarly research work by Russian authors. Until recently, the logic, conditions and factors of progressive or regressive development of the history of national education, advancement of ideas and topical problems of this humanities streamline were put aside. In the recent decades, historical, scholarly and historiographic research demonstrated the widening and deepening of the problematics, enhancement of professionalization of orientalist historians.

In the investigation of the topic under discussion, the documents kept at the National Archives of the Republic of Tatarstan (NA RT) (mainly, Fund No. 1487) were used. Fund No. 1487 holds proceedings of Kazan State Pedagogical University (archival series No. 1 – index of 1918-1937 – 689 items). The inventory is compiled in the chronological

order, each year folder contains files according to their significance<sup>1</sup>.

The issued proceedings of National Departments of Oriental Pedagogical Institute on the organization of work of 1922-1927 were used published in the magazine «New Educator» in 1927. The magazine was issued for the five-year anniversary of OPI and represented the report of activities during the mentioned years. The appendix provided a short list of work titles of both teaching staff and student assistants, as well as a number of questions for research (National Departments of OPI, 1972).

The memoir sources are represented by the letters of the famous missionary and translator, «the apostle of Kazan foreigners» Nikolay Ivanovich Ilminsky; diaries of Guriy Ivanovich Komissarov-Vanter, (Komissarov-Vanter, 2002) the founder of scientific Chuvash ethnology, history and area study, translator, linguist, teacher, educator; reminiscences of the «people's Chuvash enlightener» Ivan Yakovlevich Yakovlev (Yakovlev, 1997) and Nikolay Ivanovich Ashmarin (Ashmarin, 1995) (Ashmarin, 1994)– Russian and Soviet linguist, turcologist; as well as reminiscences of the only Udmurt associated professor on folklore studies and ethnography Kuzebay Пыкв (autonym Kuzma Pavlovich Chainikov).

### 3. RESULTS

The guarantee of the high level of moral development and informational awareness in the modern society should be provision of full-scale and quality education and upbringing based on national and regional prerequisites.

Tatar education, going back to the history of many centuries, is linked to the conspicuous Tatar enlighteners, public figures, historians, writers – Sh. Marjani, K. Nasyri, G. Barudi, R. Ibragimov, who emerged from madrasahs where G. Iskhaki, G. Kamal, G. Tukay, F. Amirkhan, M. Gafuri and others started their education.

In 1905 Kazan province alone numbered 845 Tatar schools and madrasahs teaching over 50 000 students. The number of national educational institutions increased: in 1907 there were 877 of them, and in 1913 they grew to 967.

Development of national education continued also following the October revolution, yet this was not a lasting process – limiting the sovereignty of Tatarstan to the position of autonomy, disestablishment of the administration of national schools stood in the way of the development of national education. From year to year, the number of Tatar schools decreased. By 1990, out of almost 200 comprehensive schools in Kazan only two taught in the Tatar language – Tatar secondary school No. 1 and boarding school No. 10 where orphans from rural areas studied. It was only in villages that Tatar schools remained. And in cities no more than 3% of Tatar children studied in the native language. All in all, around the republic about 28% Tatar pupils got education in the native language.

Such state of affairs could not but worry the public of the republic, the authorities and, of course, the best representatives of Tatar scholarly and creative intelligentsia, educators.

That is why one of the priority tasks in education of early 90s was the issue of restoration and development of national school founded upon the best historical and cultural traditions of Tatar and other peoples living in the republic.

The multi-ethnic nation entered the last decade of the XX century, announcing the Declaration on state sovereignty, adopting the new Constitution of the republic, the law of RT «On education», the law «On the languages of the peoples of the Republic of Tatarstan» which assigned the Tatar and Russian languages the status of the state languages. The «State program of the Republic of Tatarstan for preservation, studying and development of languages of the peoples of the Republic of Tatarstan» set out new tasks and goals for development of national education in the republic, envisaging the national accord, guarantees and rights of the peoples living in our republic to education, the right to study at school in the native language.

All of these and other legal acts made it possible to create in the republic the system of education that would suit the whole society, irrespective of the social, national and religious status of a person, would contribute to state building and national restoration, without damaging the value of political, legal, social and economic environment of the Russian Federation.

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<sup>1</sup> NA RT f.1487, s.1, д.34, л.2; NA RT f.1487, s.1, f.79, s.26, 50; NA RT f.1487, s.1, f.156, s.2, 5, 8, 13, 23, 26; NA RT f.1487, s.1, f.171, s.32; NA RT f.1487, s.1, f.205, s.11; NA RT f.1487, s.1, f.239, s.4.

In 1996-97 academic year, out of 2432 comprehensive schools of the republic 1126 were teaching according to the curriculum of Tatar schools. 124 Tatar gymnasiums and lyceums, 7 Tatar-Turkish lyceums were opened, as well as the firstborn of national higher education of Tatarstan – Tatar State Humanities Institute, their alumni joined the local intelligentsia, entered the areas of education, culture, literature and arts.

The republic did not overlook children of minority peoples either (8.2%). There are 143 Chuvash schools functioning, and this means that about 50% of children of Chuvash community in RT are taught in the native language; 39 Udmurt schools (62.3% of children are taught in the native language); 18 Mari schools (42%), 4 Mordvinian. Apart from that, there are 56 Chuvash, 18 Udmurt, 9 Mari children's pre-school institutions functioning.

In order to improve the work of national schools, the district and municipal administrations of education of the republic introduced at some schools a new staff position of the deputy department head or methodologist on national education. The schools with Russian as the language of instruction introduced the position of the deputy director on national education.

At present, the republic faces a new stage of development and improvement of national education. It requires contemporary theoretical understanding and multifaceted approach, as those processes take place under the conditions of transition from the concept of common unitarian school to forming the system of national education.

#### 4. DISCUSSION

Our work provides the analysis and evaluation of scholarly literature of pre-Soviet, Soviet and post-Soviet periods.

The study of traditions of cultural and historical interaction between the peoples of the Volga region in the formation of national system of education formed as early as in the pre-Soviet times. Soviet historians and educators of 1930-1980 also strongly emphasized the projects connected with the investigation of the educational current among Tatars and other peoples of the Volga region (Validov, 1914) (Gainullin, 1962).

During the post-Soviet decades, the problems of formation and development of national education

found a massive reflection in historical and pedagogical literature. It should be noted that we were using, first of all, investigations of educators of Kazan Federal University, well-known representatives of Tatarstan science – Vishlenkova Ye. A., Malysheva S. Yu., Salnikova A.A., (2005) Nigmatullin R. Sh. (2007).

The accumulated historiographic and source study experience of researching the problems of national education puts forth the problem of its methodological acquisition, development of theoretical foundation, scholarly generalization and popular scientific distribution. Of evident scholarly interest is the research of representatives of the scientific school of Kazan university as the ones carrying on the traditions and setting new trends of scientific inquiry in the topic under discussion. Today, R.R. Khairutdinov (2017, 2015), G.F. Mratkuzina (2017a, 2017b, 2015), R.I. Khoraskina (2015) and others are dealing with the history of formation of national education of the oriental area, proving to be specialists whose scholarly activities are characterized by intensification of the subject and object of the research. It is significant that today published research on the topic can be found, including that by the mentioned authors, in the English language.

#### 5. SUMMARY

Graduates of national departments of language and culture made the skeleton staff of teachers of the Tatar language and literature of schools, gymnasiums and lyceums, as well as higher educational establishments of the republic, became the heads of those educational institutions and education authorities. The outstanding educators of OPI were well-known not only in Russia, but also abroad as innovative teachers, active community leaders, leaving the rich scientific and pedagogical legacy behind. The fates of those laborers of pedagogical science and practice were difficult and in many respects similar – all of them became future leading figures of pedagogical labor. Most of them were honored graduates of Kazan university, many worked for a long time as supervisors of public schools in the multi-ethnic Middle Volga region, although most of them became political prisoners.

In the heavy fight «in the field of culture», national schools did not only survive, but also turned to be centers of education and culture, the «hotbed» of the local intelligentsia. OPI produced dozens and hundreds of outstanding educators working in

various parts of the Volga region and educating ethnic communities.

## 6. CONCLUSIONS

Thus, we see at present not only accumulation, but also conceptualization of historical material on the history of Russian pedagogy and problems of national education of the peoples of the Volga region in Tatarstan. In the recent decades those problems are viewed in the context of the modern stage of education.

In general, based on the condition of Russian historiography, we can observe the researchers' interest to this problem.

As a result, we should note that modern restoring Russia greatly values education and upbringing of fully equipped specialist. In this respect, the pedagogical legacy of internationalist enlighteners of the peoples of the Volga region holds a lot of lessons for our contemporaries.

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