

Tashkent Period Of The Turkestan Collection

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Annotation: The main part of the “Turkestan Collection” (volumes from 1 to 416) was prepared in St. Petersburg under the leadership of the famous Russian bibliographer Vladimir Mezhov from 1867 to 1887. Then the compilation of new volumes of the collection resumed only in 1907 in Tashkent. By 1910, under the leadership of bibliographer N.V.Dmitrovsky, 127 volumes (from 417 to 543) were published, and in 1911-1916, under the leadership of orientalist Alexander Semenov, another 48 (from 544 to 591). The last three volumes of the “Turkestan Collection” (from 592 to 594) were compiled under the leadership of bibliographer E.K.Betger in 1939. In addition, at different times several catalogs and indexes to the materials in the collection were compiled. This article provides information on the use of the Turkestan Collection of the Tashkent period as a valuable documentary source for the history of colonial Turkestan.

Key words: Turkestan Collection of the Tashkent period, bibliographers and a number of outstanding local historians, unique collection of printed materials, newspaper editorials and articles, military governor-general.

INTRODUCTION

The “Turkestan Collection” is usually divided into two parts: the first part includes volumes from 1 to 416 (1867-1887), collected by the outstanding Russian bibliographer V.I.Mezhov (1830-1894), and the second – volumes 417-594. This division of the “Turkestan Collection” is quite natural and is explained, of course, by the fact that between the named parts there is a large period of time of as much as twenty years. First of all, it must be said that the Collection was kept in good conditions and was in perfect order, and it was the most popular among other books of the Turkestan Public Library (for example, in 1903 it was issued to the reading room (it was not allowed to be taken home) 609 times). And it is not surprising that many wanted to revive this unique collection of printed materials, but Mezhov was no longer alive by that time, and in St. Petersburg and Moscow there were no longer people like him, as if created for bibliographical endeavors of this kind.

MAIN PART

However, by that time in Tashkent there were already bibliographers and a number of outstanding local historians grouped around the Turkestan Department of the Geographical Society, and by this time the Public Library itself had grown significantly and strengthened. And now the “St. Petersburg” period in the history of the “Turkestan Collection” is being replaced by the “Tashkent” period, when all the work on its compilation is carried out mainly within the walls of the Turkestan Public Library by local figures. The question of resuming the compilation of the “Turkestan Collection” was raised in 1898, but the matter did not go further than discussion. Only in 1907, on the initiative of the Supervisory Committee, created back in 1876 for better management of the library’s work (at that time it was called the “Special Commission”), this large and necessary work was started. The committee entrusted the task of compiling the Collection to a Bureau chosen from among itself, which included many

willing members, but in fact it included a retired state councilor, bibliographer N.V.Dmitrovsky, a retired collegiate councilor, ethnographer A.A.Divaev and the titular head of the Turkestan Public Library advisor I.P.Zykov, and subsequently the provincial secretary, orientalist Yu.F.Bonch-Osmolovsky, who was not a member of the committee, expressed a desire to help.

Getting acquainted with the post-Mezhov volumes of the “Turkestan Collection”, we first of all notice that the name has changed in them: instead of the complex title given by the first compiler (“Turkestan collection of works and articles relating to Central Asia in general and the Turkestan region in particular, compiled on behalf of Mr. ... Turkestan military governor-general ... V.I.Mezhov”, with the place of publication in St. Petersburg), on the title pages of the last 175 volumes we read: “Turkestan collection of articles and notes from Russian and foreign newspapers. The collection is compiled on behalf of the Turkestan Governor-General”, below the place of publication is Tashkent. On the first 34 of them (volumes 417-450) “N.I.Grodekov” and the year is given – 1907.

Starting from volume 451, the name of the governor-general disappears, and the year is indicated as 1908 up to volume 492 inclusive. Volume 494 is marked with the same year; Volumes 493 and 495 are somehow dated again to 1907. From 496 to the end there is no release year. It should be noted that the volumes published under the leadership of N.V.Dmitrovsky (volumes 417-543) were created completely differently from the first Mezhov collections.

Their compilers worked on a remote outskirts, which was Turkestan in those days, and could not take advantage of the advantages that the capital’s bibliographer had decades before. Being far from Russian book centers, the Supervisory Committee “decided to include in the newly published collection only articles that appear only in periodicals or in small brochures, and individual works about Asia should be stored in the library on a general basis.” To obtain materials, the compilers contacted the editorial offices of mainly local newspapers, as well as Siberian, Caucasian, Moscow and St. Petersburg, the editorial offices of the magazines “Russian Thought”, “Historical Bulletin” and others, regional statistical committees and scientific institutions. 81 volumes out of 127 (64%) consist entirely of newspaper materials from 1907 and the following years, mainly local (4 of them in the Uzbek and Tatar languages – Volumes 423, 446, 452, 476. The first two are occupied by clippings from the “Turkestan Native Newspaper” and “Time”, compiled exclusively by Divaev). It should be noted, however, that 13 of them also contain clippings from newspapers from the 70s to the 90s, which indicates attempts by the compilers to some extent fill in the gaps left by the twenty-year gap. But these attempts could not but be only the most modest, because a more thorough replenishment of the “Collection” with missing materials exceeded the capabilities of Tashkent bibliographers, even such as N.V.Dmitrovsky.

Much more important material contained in magazine articles, brochures and books, which the compilers, despite the title they adopted, did not dare to neglect, is contained in only 46 volumes (36%), of which 5 again included newspaper clippings. Thus, their share in post-Mezhov volumes increases even more. This will become especially noticeable if we compare the digital data relating to these 127 volumes and to V.I.Mezhov’s 416 volumes. It turns out that the latter contain only 4713 numbers, and the first - 5728, that is, 127 volumes of 1907-1910 contain 55% of the total number of clippings available in 543 volumes of the “Turkestan Collection”, and 416 volumes of 1867-1887 - only 45%. In other words, one volume of Mezhov has an average of 11 issues, and the next one (ending with 543) has 45, that is, four times more. Thus, the

collection of this period, despite the abundance of volumes, in terms of the completeness of the material, its versatility and concentration, is much inferior to the volumes compiled by V.I.Mezhov. For example, an article entitled “Exercise of the hunting team of the sapper half-battalion in 1888” (vol. 426) or “Hindu legend about the origin of a woman” (vol. 451) have nothing to do with Turkestan. Volumes 430 and 431 are occupied by clippings from “The Russian Invalid” about Krasnov’s travels through Siberia, Manchuria, China and India.

Articles were published that were absolutely not of any regional interest in content: “On horse breeding in the British army” (vol. 424), “Episode from the Russian-Turkish war” (vol. 460), polemics of Muslim newspapers with Nemirovich-Danchenko, who wrote in “Russian word” that the removal of deputy Shulgin from the Duma hall is like the flight of Muhammad from Mecca to Medina (vol. 421), Correspondence from Tejen about the public abuse of a priest (vol. 428), Note on the decrease, due to martial law, in the number of resort summer residents in the city of Yalta (vol. 460). The material included in 127 volumes of the “Tashkent period” is systematized, but the chronological sequence is not followed, which would allow tracing the main events in the life of the region. Many volumes lack a table of contents, making it difficult to reconstruct the original sources of many articles. In 1910, the Turkestan Collection experienced a new crisis. Again the question arose about the funds allocated for its preparation. The main thing is that by this time Dmitrovsky, under whose leadership all the work was carried out, had passed away. In this regard, in 1911, the prominent orientalist Alexander Alexandrovich Semenov (1873-1958) was involved in compiling the collection. In total, under the leadership and direct participation of A.A.Semenov, 48 volumes of the “Turkestan Collection” were compiled (from 175 volumes of the Tashkent period).

Semenov revised the methods that guided his predecessors and came to the correct conclusion about the need to stop collecting newspaper clippings. This decision was explained by several reasons. Firstly, it should be taken into account that during Mezhov’s time - during the period of the conquest of the Central Asian states by Russia, the latter’s relations with England and neighboring countries were of the utmost importance and occupied the attention of not only the Russian but also the foreign press, giving rise to numerous newspaper editorials and articles, and Mezhov had there is every reason to preserve them on the pages of the Turkestan Collection. In Soviet times, work on the “Turkestan Collection” was continued by E.K.Betger, the largest bibliographer and local historian of Uzbekistan. As an outstanding specialist in local history and bibliography, E.K.Betger could not ignore Mezhov’s unique collection. He is credited with compiling the Turkestan Collection of a number of very valuable and useful bibliographical aids - catalogues, indexes, etc., of great scientific interest. In 1939, under the editorship of E.K.Betger, the last three volumes of the “Turkestan Collection” (volumes 592-594) were compiled, containing the work of M.A.Terentyev, prepared at the beginning of the 20th century, “The History of the Conquest of Central Asia with Maps and Plans”, after which further continuation of the collection was finally discontinued.

INDEXES BY MASLOV AND BETGER

Indexes to the 175 volumes of the “Collection” of the Tashkent period (vol. 417-591) were compiled by Soviet bibliographers O.V.Maslov and E.K.Betger. “Systematic index to volumes 417-591 of the “Turkestan Collection”,” compiled by local history bibliographer Maslova in 1940, covers materials reflected in the collection relating only to Turkestan. The classification of literature in it is given in accordance with

modern requirements of bibliography. Within the headings, the material is arranged in chronological order. In total, the index contains 3630 descriptions, some of them are accompanied by annotations. There is an alphabetical index of authors and an index of geographical names. As O.V.Maslov points out in the preface to her index, they were compiled using a slightly different method from Mezhov: Firstly, material relating only to Turkestan was taken, secondly, a new classification system was applied, thirdly, details of the distribution of material were introduced. E.K.Betger, who paid a lot of attention to revealing the contents of the "Turkestan Collection", in 1948 compiled an index to volumes related to countries adjacent to the former Turkestan region. Like Mezhov, Maslov and Betger, when describing any material, in addition to references to the corresponding volume of the Turkestan Collection, indicated the source from which this material was taken.

CONCLUSION

Thus, the index has the value of an independent bibliographic aid: it allows you to use the richest material about the countries adjacent to Turkestan without referring to the collection. The material in the index is arranged by country in chronological order. Almost all descriptions contain detailed annotations that reveal the contents of the book, article or clarify the title. At the end there are auxiliary indexes: authors, proper names, geographical and ethnographic names mentioned both in titles and in abstracts.

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