

Field Research Methods of Russian Orientalists - Ethnographers in the Second Half of the XIX Century (Using The Example of N. Miklouho-Maclay And N. Katanov)

Yulia A. Martynova¹, Dmitry E. Martynov², Ramil M. Valeev², Valentina N. Tuguzhekova³

¹Kazan Federal University, Leo Tolstoy Institute of Philology and Intercultural Communication, ²Kazan Federal University, Institute of International Relations, History and Oriental Studies, ³Nikolai Katanov Khakass State University (Abakan)

Abstract

The relevance of the investigated problem is caused by the emergence of new facts about the Russian researchers activities of East during the "Geographic race" epoch. The aim of the article is the structural analysis of field research methods used by N. Miklouho-Maclay in New Guinea and by N. Katanov in Tuva and Xinjiang. The leading method of research is the historical-genetic and comparative methods, which made possible to analyze the array of undifferentiated data contained in the diaries of both researchers. The article contains the structural analysis results of the diaries of the first Miklouho-Maclay's expedition to New Guinea in 1870 - 1871, and Katanov's Tuva expedition in 1889 and a trip to Xinjiang in 1890. The main subjects of ethnographers' interest of the XIX century are disclosed in the context of the humanity unity proof. It is proved that the single researchers acting on behalf of the Russian Geographical Society were also engaged in intelligence activities. The materials of the article may be useful for professionals who deal with Eurasian Studies, the history of the East and the foreign policy of the Russian Empire, historiography, and Oriental history.

Key words: Cultural Studies, Eurasian research, Oriental studies, Ethnography, Anthropology, Russian Geographical Society

INTRODUCTION

In the last third of the XIX century, there was the specific set of historical factors that had a beneficial effect on the close cooperation between Russian geographers, orientalist and militarists in the organization of large-scale expeditions. Basically, they were directed to the regions of the Far East and Central Asia. Primarily it was determined by the intensification of Russian foreign policy in the East, and - broader - in the Pacific[1].

By means of organizing and carrying out geographic expeditions can be divided into two types. The first

were crowded troops with military discipline under the guidance of professional soldiers. The second were the individual activities of single researchers who, at best, had a small team of assistants and work in close cooperation with the local population. The examples of the first type expeditions are paradigmatic; it is ample to mention the names N.M. Przewalski, P.K. Kozlov, Grum-Grzhimailo brothers, and many others [2]. Expeditions of the first type were always complex, secured large spatial scale and solved foreign policy problems. The interests merging of the state, science and ideology is apparently in the organization of complex expeditions [3]. In Russia the initiators of research were the Academy of Sciences and the Russian Geographical Society (RGS).

The missions of the second type involved, first of all, specialists-linguists or naturalists who solved alone a lot of non-detachable from each other tasks. Among the researchers attributed to the second type are the heroes of our article: Nicholas Miklouho-Maclay[4] and Nikolai Katanov[5].

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Corresponding Author: Yulia A. Martynova, Kazan Federal University, Leo Tolstoy Institute of Philology and Intercultural Communication.
E-mail: juliemartynova82@gmail.com

METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

The opportunity of a comparative analysis of Miklouho-Maclay's and Katanov's scientific and expeditionary heritage needs to be substantiated. The similarity of compared entities steps forward in comparative study. Especially it concerns the field of the history of science, which has a high degree of personalization itself [6, 7]. Externally two researchers have even similar life circumstances: severe childhood and youth, education in a foreign country. These circumstances determined the scientific isolation Miklouho-Maclay and Katanov, both researchers were not too eager to work in the trunk for that time fields of science. The difference is in the fact that Katanov chose for himself the path of the ethnographer-linguist for himself very early and he consciously was preparing for that role consciously, while the Miklouho-Maclay's conversion from naturalist generalist into anthropologist, who was involved in the manifestation of human culture within the geographical environment, occurred largely by accident, due to the confluence of certain life circumstances [4]. Miklouho-Maclay as Katanov preferred stationary working methods staying for months and years in one place, talking to native informants.

The comparison is based on the use of a number of historical research methods. First of all, they are historical-genetic and historical-comparative methods. Historical-typological method was used in the analysis of diary entries in which the information is in the undifferentiated and non-adapted form, in the form that the researcher recorded it on the certain day[8].

As a source of comparison, we used the published diaries of the first N. Miklouho-Maclay's stay in New Guinea [9]. To characterize the working methods of N. Katanov we used the travel diary published in Tuva[10] and the unpublished diary of scientific travel to Dzungaria and East Turkestan (1890) preparing for the publication by our group; his manuscript is in the National Archives of the Republic of Tatarstan.

RESULTS

Expeditionary methods of N. Miklouho-Maclay

Nikolai Miklouho (1846-1888) studied zoology at the University of Jena under the guidance of an outstanding scientist Ernst Haeckel (1834-1919). Miklouho made an expedition to the Canary Islands together with Haeckelin 1866. In 1868 and 1869, Miklouho-Maclay committed two distinct zoological expeditions - to Sicily and to the Arabian coast of the Red Sea. Here he first was in contact with non-European cultures, trying to impersonate himself as an Arab and he wore Arabian clothing. It is characteristic that

the main object of his interest in this period were already the living conditions of people in the environment [11].

In October 1869, Miklouho-Maclay presented the project of expedition to the Pacific Ocean in Russian Geographical Society. The plan was approved very quickly: a comprehensive study of New Guinea, which was unknown to the science of that time, was the first item in it. The most important initiative of the Society was an appeal to the Ministry of the Navy, to deliver Miklouho-Maclay to a destination on a military ship [4]. The reasons that the imperial government became interested in the project of Miklouho-Maclay, who sympathized with the Polish insurgency, have long been unknown. A note of military intelligence staff baron A. Kaulbars 'About the Russian colonization of New Guinea', dated by May 22, 1870 was found only in 2013 in the archive of RGS[11]. This proves that at least there were people interested in the study of the South Pacific in the War Ministry. Thus, it appears that private research plans of Miklouho-Maclay coincided with the foreign policy interests of the Russian Empire that explains the huge promotion of 24-year-old scientist, including the rerouting of a warship, the provision of recommendation letters to the authorities of the Pacific European colonies, personal acquaintance with the heir to the throne, etc. [12]

In order of appearance, New Guinea diaries of Miklouho-Maclay include the following subjects:

First contact with the Papuans (September 20, 1871).

Determination of stationary studies methods (September 26).

Visits to the Papuan village, a hostile reception (October 1 and October 3, December 3).

Lack of Papuans' terms of sale (October 1).

Musical Instruments (October 1, March 2).

The use of tobacco by Papuans (October 14).

Papuans' Fishing (October 20).

Household habits of Papuans due to anthropological measurements (November 1, 10, 13, December 14 and 28, February 19 and April 7, May 31, 1872).

The language barrier (November 17 and December 6, January 25, May 6).

Papuans' villages and houses (January 11, March 6).

The extraction of bone remains for anthropological measurements (February 12 and 26).

Trial to steal and its exposure (February 16).

Miklouho-Maclay's inclusion in Papuan society (Feb. 18).

The position of women in Papuan society (February 21, April 3, May 29).

Papuans' agriculture (February 22).

Burial ritual (May 25).

The moral and ethical concepts (June 30) [9]

During two long trips to New Guinea, Miklouho-Maclay decided a number of important for the science of the time issues, particularly relating to the physical characteristics of the Papuans. They also include information about common diseases among the Papuans, life expectancy, etc. Findings clearly indicated the species (in the biological sense) the unity of all human races [4].

Field research methods of N.F.Katanov

Nikolai Katanov (1862-1922) was born in a family of Khakassgraziers. Feeling attraction to studying, supported by Krasnoyarsk Goldminers Kuznetovs, Nikolai Katanov went to Krasnoyarsk when he was 14, where he graduated from high school with honors. The first Katanov's article dedicated to the description of the Khakass shaman *buben* was published in 1883. In 1884, Katanov entered the Faculty of Oriental Languages of St. Petersburg University, where he was actively engaged in comparative-historical linguistics leading by V.V. Radlov, who had recently moved from Kazan to St. Petersburg [13:363].

Still in 1887, when N. Katanov was a student, V.Radlov proposed his candidacy for the planned expedition of the Russian Geographical Society in order to "study the remnants of the Turkic tribes in the far East"[5]. N. Katanov was "sent with a scientific purpose" in Siberia and China by Imperial Decree of December 22, 1888 [5:31]. The expedition took place on the territory of Tuva, Semirechye, Dzungaria and East Turkestan from May 1889 to March 1892.

Compared with the diaries of N. Miklouho-Maclay, the materials of N.F. Katanov are striking by much greater fragmentation of information that practically was not subjected to systematization and recorded immediately after the reception of the information. For example, in Tuva diary the information about the river crossing ways is in the records of May 2 and 4 and about traditional musical instruments is in the records of March 28, May

1 and 6, 1889. Here are the main themes that are found in the "Essays of Uryankhai land", in chronological order:

Rules of the domino game (May 2, June 3) and of chess (May 12 and 17).

Methods of fishing and hunting (May 13 and 30).

Funeral rituals, traditional notions of life after death (March 28, May 1 and 20, June 27, July 30, August 27).

Getting an inheritance (May 21, August 27).

Punishment of offenders under the Manchu (Qing) government (August 9).

Theft in Tuva (May 23 and 25, June 1 and 4).

The life of Russian immigrants and their interaction with Tuvinians (May 2, July 21 and 22).

Courtship and marriage (June 27 and August 27).

Guest Reception Traditions (March 23, April 5 and May 11).

Cosmology (June 30).

Demonology (May 20 and 21, June 4, 9, 15, 22 and 24, August 26).

Bear in Tuvan representations (May 20, 23 and 27, June 9 and 24).

Tuvan traditional vows (June 24, 27 and 30, August 23).

Sacrifice (June 25, July 30).

Blood Sacrifice (May 10 and 29, June 29).

Shamanic rituals (March 26, May 4 and 13, June 1, 7, 25, July 22 and 31, August 25).

Lamaist liturgy in the Chadan monastery (July 15).

Diary of the first journey to Xinjiang (from the border city Chuguchak to Urumqi and *vice versa*), in its structure and content does not differ from the Tuvan travel notes. Exactly the same is the method of working with informants, with the only difference that N.F.Katanov posed himself as an Inspector of Russian foreign trade and used the services of an interpreter-guide, an ethnic Kazakh, who found informants from among the Turks, whose languages were familiar to the researcher, and communicates with the local authorities. Russian merchants, artisans and professionals

working in Xinjiang, also served as a reliable supplier of a wide variety of information.

Topics covered in the diary of 1890 are following (in order of appearance):

Ethnography of the Kazakh border regions (July 11 and 15).

Chinese monetary system (July 14).

Tribal division of the Kazakhs (July 17).

Durbuldzhin uprising in 1886 (July 23).

Border guards of the Qing Empire and the guard system (August 4 and 5).

Russian merchants trading with China (August 5).

Dungan Ethnography (August 5 and 9).

Life in the Turfan oasis (August 6).

Market prices for different goods, services and food (August 6, October 1, 3, 5 and 15).

Fraud and oppression in Russian-Chinese trade; Chinese judicial injustice, tortures (August 6, 11, 13, 19 and 26, September 26, 28 and 30, October 5).

Gardening and melon growing in Xinjiang (August 8).

Interpretation of Dreams from Uighurs folklore (August 13).

Description of Uighur wedding (August 13).

Protestant and Catholic missionaries in China (August 16 and September 21).

Ethnography of Sarts and Uighurs (August 21 and 23).

Chinese numerals (August 23).

Stance on smallpox patients (August 24 and 25).

Prostitution and sexual practices (August 29, September 11, October 3).

Defectors across the border (September 4 and 14).

Buddhism in Xinjiang (September 7).

Russian-Chinese school in Urumqi (September 8 and 13).

Uyghur love letter-writer (September 13).

China commemoration of the dead (September 14).

Baths in Urumqi (September 18).

Chinese Theater (September 21).

Muslim merchants - Russian subjects trading in Urumqi. The detailed description of the range of their products and the level of prices is given (September 22).

Russian subjects married to Chinese citizens (September 22).

Russian citizens who own cattle in Urumqi (September 25).

Russian citizens - Muslims, permanently residing in Xinjiang (September 30).

The advantages of camels as pack animals (October 4).

Grilled urchins as a drug (October 6 and 7).

Sino-Muslim relations in Xinjiang (October 10).

Kalmyk Ethnography (October 15).

Operation of Kazakhs by Chinese population (October 15).

This shows that besides the ethnographic information N. Katanov's 1890th diaries contained intelligence information that was strategic and tactical value of the Turkestan Military District.

DISCUSSIONS

The main problem is the one that Miklouho-Maclay had no special education in the field of ethnographic observations, the same concerns its theoretical base. Moving thematically from natural science observations he used the old methods for anthropological material. Nicholas wrote in the report to RGS: "The only way is to see everything with your own eyes, and then, being aware (in recording) of seen, we must be on our guard if not the imagination, but the actual monitoring would give a complete picture of a custom or ceremony"[4]. This is the evidence of extreme positivism, in which Miklouho-Maclay was raised in German Universities. According to this approach, the forms of social organization almost did not respond to the interpretation, as well as religious beliefs, folklore and any other manifestations of spiritual culture. For example, Miklouho-Maclay noticed that the Papuans villages are usually divided into quarters, with special names, but he was never able to notice that a quarter inhabited by the

related group - clan. Soviet ethnographers revealed this in the 1970s [4]. The language barrier was difficult too. Miklouho-Maclay wrote figuratively in his diary about this. In general, he was not able to learn the languages of the Maclay Coast sufficiently to judge about domestic folklore, apart from the more complex forms of spiritual life.

The most important advantage of the N.F. Katanov as an ethnographer-folklorist was the complete lack of a language barrier [14]. He learned Tuvan language very quickly, being able not only to understand what he was informed, but he expressed himself so well that he was taken for the Tuvan even by native speakers [10]. Recorded Tuvan texts were translated into Russian the same day and were recorded in a diary in that form.

CONCLUSION

Studies have revealed a correct comparison of N. Miklouho-Maclay's New Guinea diaries and Tuvan records of N. Katanov. Reported results are invaluable for ethnographic research of Maclay Coast Papuans and the Turkic peoples of the Sayano-Altai region, living in primitive conditions at that time. Miklouho-Maclay as Katanov used extensively-descriptive method for traditional culture study, which required in-depth knowledge of the language and empathy in the traditional society. All that demanded the participant observation. Miklouho-Maclay ignored the spiritual life forms of New Guineans, limited by the external aspects of life and living conditions. N.Katanov, on the contrary, pay the utmost attention to the folklore and mythology of the Turkic peoples who primarily underwent a transformation after the collision with Western civilization.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The material of the article is interesting to specialists who are engaged in Eurasian research, the history of the East and the foreign policy of the Russian Empire, historiography and history of Oriental.

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