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## **A Modern Research for the Turkish Ethnography**

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**Abstract:**

*The urgency of the problem under study is caused by the need to consider the achievements of field researchers of the XIXth century from the standpoint of modern science.*

*The purpose of the article is to characterize the research method of the ethnographer and folklorist Nikolai Katanov (1862-1922). The historical-genetic method is the leading one to the study of this problem.*

*The main results of the research consist in the systematization of the unrecognized intellectual heritage from N. Katanov to the end and its analysis in the context of contemporary Turkish studies.*

*The article is of interest to the experts who are involved in Eurasian studies, the history of Russia, the history of Oriental studies, anthropology and ethnography of the Turkish people of Central Asia.*

**Keywords:** *Eurasian Studies, The History of Oriental Studies, Central Asia.*

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## **1. Introduction**

The diverse scientific and pedagogical activity by Nikolai Katanov (1862-1922) is a vivid testimony of Turkish science and national humanitarian studies and scientific school development in Russia. The phenomenon of his personality and heritage in the history of Russian oriental studies and the culture of the peoples of Russia has not been studied sufficiently yet to a great regret (Rykin, 2011). Today the biography by Katanov represents not only historical and scientific significance. Life and works of the turkologist and the ethnographer Katanov should be evaluated not only in the coordinates of Oriental studies history in Russia and Europe, but also considering a broad social-political and cultural context of the Turkic peoples historical development during the second half of the nineteenth and first two decades of the 20th century (Katanov, 2011). The legacy and the fate of the scientist-enlightener was determined by the unity and the diversity of the history and the cultures of the Turkic-speaking peoples of Russia at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries. (Valeev, Zakiev and Zainullin, 2006).

In its entirety, his materials seem to be a complex and encyclopedic heritage about many Turkic peoples living in Russian and Qing empires - Khakas, Tuvinians, Uighurs, Kazakhs, Kirghiz, Tofalars, Tatars, Bashkirs, etc. These valuable materials were formed following field ethnographic and folkloristic expeditions and trips (Oglezneva, 1994). They demonstrate especially vividly the scientific diligence, scrupulousness and high level of the research culture by N.F. Katanov (Chvyr, 2012).

## **2. Methodology**

The study is based on a complex of historical methods, in particular - historical and genetic one. It allows us to consider the phenomenon in dynamics from its very origins. The biographical method was also used, without which it is inconceivable to work with the biography of the scientist who works not only at academic institutions, but also in the field, especially among the people living in the conditions of traditional society.

## **3. Results**

During 1889 - 1892 N.F. Katanov collected and generalized a variety of ethnographic material about the Turkic, Samoyed and Mongolian peoples on the vast geographical spaces and historical and ethnographic regions of Central Asia (Baskhanov, 2014). The center of ethnographic study was represented by modern Turkic-speaking peoples of the Altai-Sayan highland - Khakas, Tuvinians, Tofalars. Besides, ethnographic materials on the Turks of Eastern Turkestan were collected - the Uighurs, Kazakhs and Kirghiz (Valeev, 2009).

The first published information and materials on the history and ethnography of the Turkish people (1889 - 1893) are grouped in the following areas. These are geographical, administrative, economic, linguistic, folklore, cultural, historical and religious studies. There is almost no anthropological information. During this period, Katanov personifies the type of folklorist-ethnographer, who is engaged in "field" collecting work. Especially during this period, the types of his ethnographic work are personal observations, the survey of the local population and a comprehensive collection of various folklore texts (Katanov, 2011).

The main trends of ethnographic study allowed the traveler to formulate the conclusions that the Turkish and other ethnos conducted an active historical and cultural interaction and mutual influence on the spaces of Central Asia. The historical and the ethnographic descriptions and the reviews by Katanov during the expedition period were made under the influence of program requirements formulated during the 50-80-ies of the XIXth century by the Ethnography Department of the Imperial Russian Geographical Society. As you know, these first special ethnographic programs focused on a comprehensive study of the language, home life, education, folk traditions, etc. These principles and requirements formed the basis for the development of Russian pre-revolutionary Turkish ethnography (Oglezneva, 1994, p. 21-23). This trend was also presented at all stages of the Society of Archeology, History and Ethnography activities at the Kazan University, especially during the time, when headed this scientific community.

The period of 1894-1907 is the next important stage of the historical and ethnographic study of the Turkish people and ethnos by Katanov (Ivanov, 1973). This whole period relates to the beginning of his teaching and research work at the Kazan University. The symbolic final historical and scientific event is the publication of the ninth volume "The samples of folk literature of the Turkic tribes" in 1907 by Radlov. The texts collected and published by Katanov in this fundamental edition bear an invaluable ethnographic material. Basically, these folkloric texts are considered by Katanov as an original source for the study of the material and spiritual culture of modern Tuvinians, Khakas and Tofalars. The materials in the domestic historiography of the Turkic ethnography of the late nineteenth century allowed to conclude that the Turkic peoples of Eurasia have a variety of mythology and different genre of folklore (Tuguzhekova, 2012).

The first lecture by Katanov, the professor of the Kazan Imperial University "Ethnographic review of the Turkish-Tatar tribes" (January 29, 1894) became a significant turn in the biography of the scientist-turkologist-ethnographer and in the development of ethnography teaching university tradition. His innovative contribution consists in the presentation of an original comprehensive research program in the national Turkology and the university ethnography of the Turkic

peoples at the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The lecture "Ethnographic review of Turkish-Tatar tribes" was the first university experience of an object, a subject and a trend presentation for an emerging discipline (Valeev, 2009). The sphere of his complex ethnographic study of the Turkish people is represented by their languages, geographical zones of settlement, religions, writing, way of life, economy, anthropology, Turkic states, and the sources and the level of information on Turkic ethnography, statistics, history and language.

The trend of the scholar scientific work was the publication and the introduction into the scientific circulation of many diverse materials on the history and the culture of the Turkic peoples of Siberia, Eastern Turkestan, the Volga region and the Urals. Throughout 1894 - 1911 he published more than 170 works on the language, literature, history, archeology, ethnography of the Turkic peoples. Türkological historical and ethnographic materials took an important place in the heritage of the professor at Kazan University and in the history of national Turkology (Sultanbaeva, 2009).

The first ethnographic publications by Katanov during this period are the articles "On the funeral rites of the Turkic tribes from ancient times to our days" and "On the wedding ceremonies of the Tatars from East Turkestan" (Pokrovsky, 1923).

In the first publication he summarized the Turkish funeral rites he recorded in 1889 - 1892 during the expedition to Siberia, Mongolia, China Turkestan and Tarbagatai region. In addition to his personal observations and descriptions, Katanov attracted Chinese and European sources, as well as modern national ethnographic literature. The second article also presents the results of the trip to East Turkistan during 1890-1892. Determining the relevance of these materials, Katanov notes that "Eastern Turkestan is known in Europe more in the natural historical sense than in the ethnographic one". The ethnographer presented the original material about Turkish weddings in the villages and cities of Xinjiang. In general, the historical and ethnographic works by Katanov testify not only to the stage of factual material accumulation. They show a certain stage in the development of the basic principles and problems of the ethnography theoretical generalization among Turkish people (Nazipova, 2004)

Various ethnographic information about the Turkish people (economic, property, tribal and family relations, the settlement of the Turkish clans, administrative structure, economy, dwelling, clothing, everyday life, food, beliefs, folklore, folk art, etc.) gave an interesting generalized factual material. First, Katanov generalized ethnographic materials, proceeding from research tasks. At that, this research work does not seem to be a simple description and collection of ethnographic facts (Kokova, 2012).

#### **4. Discussion**

An original group of Turkish historical-ethnographic and literary publications by Katanov and his colleagues with whom he actively collaborated (Pantusov, Nasyri, Potanin, Moshkov, Divaev, etc.) in 1890-ies and 1900-ies is devoted to the publication of original Turkish texts and their translations into Russian, as well as to the study of Turkic manuscripts in general. These texts were published, first, with historical and ethnographic purpose and research commentaries. In many ways, the original texts and translations met the basic scientific requirements (Kiyukova, 2012).

An interesting material, carried out on the initiative by Katanov, was the publication of Russian translations of Azerbaijani, Turkish, Khakass and Uighur versions of tales about three brothers. His attention to these Turkish texts was dictated by the following circumstance: *"... 4 Turkish tales about 3 brothers-princes and 3 brothers-heroes are similar in some features with the tales of other Turkish tribes ..."* (Sultanbaeva, 2009).

In general, Katanov's folklore and ethnographic materials acquainted a reader with the diverse world of Turkic folk customs, traditions, songs, legends and fairy tales. Attention was paid to the shamanistic rites of the Central Asian Turks. The next significant group of materials by Katanov is a review, a bibliographic description of various domestic and foreign ethnographic publications and obituaries dedicated to Russian ethnographers in several periodicals. This is his trend of research, the evidence of great attention to various ethnographic problems and domestic and foreign ethnographic literature (Geraci, 2001).

The university professor is focused on various works in the field of ethnography of the Turkish, Finno-Ugric and Slavic people of Russia. The interest was conditioned by the analysis and the generalization of historical and ethnographic materials in published works of domestic and foreign contemporaries. In these reviews by Katanov his ethnographic ideas, methods and principles are noticeable especially. Research methods and principles were formulated by Katanov N.F. in 1895 in the review of the work by Divaev "Ethnographic materials: fairy tales, fables, proverbs, signs and bylines of the native population of the Syr-Darya region" (1895). Noting the original material about the folk signs of the peoples of Central Asia, Katanov wrote that "the author will bring great benefit to ethnography, if he applies his profound knowledge of the Turkish tribes of Central Asia language and life to the compilation of a collection of signs". Then, highlighting the promising areas of ethnographic study of the peoples of the region, he wrote the following: "It would be interesting to know step by step how the Sarts woo a bride, how they see her off to a groom and how they celebrate a wedding. It would be advisable to know: 1) the

rituals during weddings, funerals, the naming of the rich and poor, 2) the arrangement of weddings for widows, etc." (Valeev, 2009).

In 1898, Katanov gave a critical assessment of the ethnographic materials presented in the book *"The description of the journey to Western China"* by Grum-Grzhimaylo (2014). The appearance of this review gave the reason to Grum-Grzhimailo (2014) to express his objections in respect of the material by Katanov in the second volume of *"The descriptions of the Journey to Western China"* (1899).

In this case, the interest in the review by Katanov relates to the fact that this material allows us to describe the position of the ethnographer-researcher once again. According to the reviewer's comment: "... from such a traveler as Grum-Grzhimailo (2014), every scientist will demand and have the right to demand that the observed peoples are described in detail and in all aspects: religious, domestic, language one, etc". Again, the center of Katanov's criticism is the ignorance of the Central Asian people languages studied by the Russian travelers of the nineteenth century. - Grum-Grzhimailo (2014), N.M. Przewalski (1839-1888), M.V. Pevtsov (1876-1902), B.L. Grombchevsky (1855-1905) and G.N. Potanin (1835-1920). A close attention is paid to the use of materials "from manuscripts or little-known Chinese or other oriental books" in the historical sections devoted to Dzungaria and Kashgariya. Estimating the value of the illustrations made by the phototypical method, Katanov writes the following: "However, the items necessary for household use are not photographed at all, the embroidery designs and fabrics that the Chinese Turkestan is so famous for are also not photographed; their occupation with agriculture, gardening, silk worming, weaving, etc. are not photographed". In general, Katanov's review is distinguished by promising research tasks. According to his idea: "... it should be studied ... in detail and thoroughly also in ethnographic aspect, that is, to study the life, the language and the beliefs of the peoples of China specifically" (Valeev and Tuguzhekova 2014).

His active bibliographic work allowed to follow a variety of domestic and foreign ethnographic materials, as well as to evaluate them critically.

In general, these materials show that Katanov was the follower of the classical ethnographic rule - the knowledge of the language of the people being studied. Another important research principle is the use of the comparative ethnographic material of the Turkish, Finno-Ugric and Slavic people by Katanov. Besides, the historical-ethnographic and folkloristic works of the professor at the Kazan University were based on the original field, textual and museum material of the author and his predecessors. Folklore, ethnography and linguistics were organically linked in the creative Katanov's biography.

In general, assessing the legacy by Katanov it is necessary to emphasize its decisive influence on the development of historical and ethnographic collections in several museums in Russia - the acquisition and the study of collections from material and spiritual culture of the peoples of Eurasia.

## **5. Conclusion**

In its entirety, original articles and materials on various types of ethnography of the Turks make it possible to single out the established historical, cultural and ethnographic concept by Katanov at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries. The concept was formed under the influence of Russian social-political ideology, the level of ethnographic knowledge and social environment of the late nineteenth and the early twentieth centuries.

The heart of this concept is represented by the idea of unity and originality of the history and culture of various Turkish peoples; A purposeful and a consistent study of the traditional culture and the worldview of the Turks; A persistent struggle with the public "opinion that non-Russians are doomed to extinction"; "The influence of the Russian population on the Tatars, on their language, way of life, economy", etc. Also, the concept by Katanov includes the system of concepts, principles and methods, the emerging national scientific ethnography of the Turkic peoples.

## **6. Recommendations**

The article is of interest to the experts who are involved in Eurasian studies, the history of Russia, the history of Oriental studies, anthropology and ethnography of the Turkic peoples of Central Asia.

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